



Getting Through The Holidays When Your Teen Has A Substance Use Disorder

There is a different feeling in the air when the holidays roll around. We all have our traditions and dynamics that go on with family and friends. It can be an especially challenging time if you are the parent of a young person with a substance use disorder. Whether your child is in recovery or one that is still using, here are some tips to help make a better holiday experience for everyone.

1. *Check Your Actions:* Alcohol is part of the festivities for many families and **it is very important to remember that our children are watching us.** It can sometimes be a very big deal when we remove alcohol from the festivities. If you choose to do so, let family members know ahead of time that get togethers will be "alcohol free". Sometimes there can be a bit of frustration but eventually there will be acceptance and your decision respected.
2. *Manage your Expectations:* **There are a lot of expectations flying around the holidays.** If your child is still using, he/she may even be absent for much of the celebrations and there isn't much you can do about that. Another issue is that although they may be present, they can be difficult to deal with. Remember that we do not have to accept verbal abuse or unacceptable behavior from them.
If you have a newly sober young person, they probably have their own holiday agenda. They may wish to spend time with their program friends during their first sober holidays. While it may make you a little sad, just be grateful for the time you do get to spend with your child and let them know you are proud of them for putting their sobriety first.
3. *Remember To Be Good To Yourself:* The holidays are times of added stress with all of the busyness and dynamics that go on. **It is so important for us to take time out to be good to ourselves.** Make sure you spend some time with supportive people who can be there for you to remind you that you will get through this. You may want to attend a meeting with other parents of addicted loved ones to learn how they are coping with their holiday situations.

The holidays may not be exactly what we want them to be right now but they can be enjoyable if we are willing to do things a little differently, accept the way things are and take some time to take care of ourselves.

FHHS Lunchtime Speaker Series

On Wednesday, December 14th, FHHS students will be invited to attend our campus speaker event featuring Meg Bergeson, RN.

**IN A SPLIT SECOND.....
FROM CAREFREE FUN TO EMERGENCY ROOM REALITY**

Meg Bergeson, R.N.
Honor Health Trauma Center

Free pizza lunch in the Lecture Hall! Wednesday, December 14

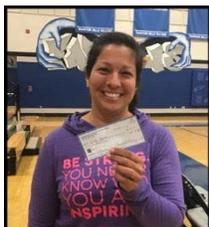
Ms. Bergeson has worked for over 15 years as an emergency room nurse with Honor Health. She will be talking to students about the dangers of underage drinking and illegal drug use from her real life experience as a trauma nurse.

This free event will be held in the Lecture Hall during the student lunch period. Complimentary pizza from The Hills' Pizza & Desserts will be served. Parents are welcome to attend.



**Congratulations to our \$100 Safe Homes Network
Sports Drawing Winners!**

Congratulations goes to Julie Doka, winner of the Girl's Varsity Basketball drawing on December 2nd



...and to FHMS student Carsten Sandvig, winner of the Boy's Varsity Basketball drawing also on December 2nd.



THANK YOU! Spotlight

Thank you to FHUSD for their partnership with us to help educate parents and students on the dangers of teenage drug and alcohol abuse. Through our Safe Homes Network sports promotions at Falcon football, volleyball, basketball and soccer games, our Network has grown to over 450 families!

For more information on Safe Homes and to access the member directory, please visit our website at FHCoalition.org.



WISHING YOU & YOUR FAMILY A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS

AND A SAFE, HAPPY NEW YEAR!