



Colleagues

***Wishing you a very happy and peaceful
Christmas and all the very best for 2017.***

***Nollaig shona agus athbhliain faoi mhaise
daoibh go léir!***

from the CSEAS team

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An Ideal Christmas



Planning your Ideal Christmas

What does Christmas mean to you?

What is important to you at Christmas?

What are your traditions?

What makes Christmas special for you?

How can you make Christmas special for others?

Christmas presents opportunities to...

Connect and reconnect with people

Enjoy family time

Have fun – enjoy the festivities

Take time to reflect on the good things in your life

Make it a special time for children



Festive Fun! Answers on back page

1. Why is Santa afraid of getting stuck in the chimney?
2. What do you call an elf who sings?
3. Who can change the constitution in the North Pole?
4. Why didn't the wise men give their camels some water?
5. How does Good King Wenceslas like his pizzas?



MERRY CHRISTMAS... OR ... MERRY STRESSMAS?

For most people, Christmas is a wonderful time for family events, meeting up with friends, relaxing and just chilling out. For others, it can be a stressful or lonely time, and finding the Christmas sparkle can be difficult. Here are some tips to help manage the Christmas Season.

Budgeting for Christmas

Planning ahead can take the financial headache out of Christmas.

- Work out a rough budget of expected Christmas costs as early as possible. This may include 'hidden' additional expenses such as food and heating bills and overseas telephone charges
- Choose gifts and Christmas fare to match your budget
- Talk to your family about an agreed approach to presents—consider Kris Kindle
- Remember that there are expenses after Christmas—life goes on....
- See more at consumerhelp.ie [Consumer Help Christmas Saving Tips](#)

Get Outdoors!

- Short walks, cycling, a run in the fresh air, all can re-energise us and clear the head
- It's a pleasant way to spend time with family and/or friends
- Walk off those extra mince pies! — exercise helps to feel good

(Check with your Doctor before exercising if necessary)

Family

Christmas can be a special and fun time for families. For some, this may not be the case. Christmas may give rise to family tensions. If you anticipate this, consider the following

- Avoid arguments
- Take a deep breath before answering if conversations get heated
- Remember you can't control how others behave, but you can control how you respond
- Be respectful to all

Alone at Christmas

If you know that you are going to be on your own for Christmas, you might consider planning the day

- Have a routine in your day
- Consider what you are going to wear
- Get some exercise, take a walk with a friend if possible
- Plan some treats for yourself
- Ask a friend if he/she/others are available to share Christmas lunch
- Maybe phone a friend or family

Be realistic in terms of your expectations of yourself, Christmas Day and the season as a whole. Remember to relax and enjoy the holiday.

See the CSEAS Tips for Managing the Christmas Season on the CSEAS website
www.cseas.per.gov.ie





STAYING SAFE AND HEALTHY DURING THE CHRISTMAS SOCIAL SEASON

Christmas presents the opportunity to relax and have fun; catch up with friends and socialise a bit more. You may be out and about more than usual – for Christmas shopping, festive parties and other social events. It is important to stay safe and healthy during this busy time.

Some tips to help

- Drink alcohol responsibly
- Make sure you have eaten sensibly during the day
- Plan your night out; tell someone where you are going and when you will be back
- Never walk home alone. Remember, safety in numbers.
- Have your phone charged fully when going out
- When getting taxis, it is better to be with others. Have a system whereby the last person to be left off contacts another to let them know they are home safe
- Never drive under the influence of alcohol or any substance likely to impair your judgement
- Take care when carrying your handbag, smart-phone or other electronic devices in crowded areas. Keep all personal belongings in a safe location, within view.
- Watch out for pickpockets in crowded areas. Keep handbags closed and don't put your wallet in your back pocket. In bars and restaurants take care about where you store coats and handbags.
- At ATMs only take out as much money as you need. Exercise caution when typing your pin number. Call the Gardaí if you believe the ATM machine has been compromised.
- Take care of your Christmas shopping and never leave it unattended
- Don't leave valuables, including Christmas shopping, visible in your car
- Park and lock your car in secure, well-lit areas

THE WORK CHRISTMAS PARTY is a time to celebrate and have fun with your colleagues. However, do remember that you need to be responsible about how you behave at this work event. Some additional tips to remember when attending a work social event:

- Drink sensibly. Alcohol can contribute to a loss of inhibitions which can lead to inappropriate behaviour, conflict and misunderstanding - you don't want to wake up the following day with regrets.
- Don't post photographs of your colleagues or write comments about them on social media that could cause offence
- Avoid office gossip
- Ensure that you have safe transport home from the event, check in with your colleague/s that you, and they, have arrived home safely
- Don't leave the event alone – make sure you are with others when going home
- Remember that you are at a work event. The same code of behaviour applies as if you were in work – treat all your colleagues with dignity and respect.



CSEAS

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Answers to Festive Fun!

1. *Because he gets claustrophobia!*
2. *A wrapper!*
3. *Refereindeer!*
4. *No well!*
5. *Deep-pan, crisp and even!*

ABOUT THE CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE SERVICE (CSEAS)

Who We Are

The CSEAS is a centralised service within the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER). Services and supports are provided on a regional basis to civil servants across Government Departments/ Offices. The aim is to positively enhance their wellbeing and promote an ethos of employee wellness, resilience and organisational effectiveness.

Contact us:

Phone: 0761 00 00 30

Email: cseas@per.gov.ie

On-duty Employee Assistance Officer
available by phone

Mon – Thurs: 9am to 5.45pm

Fri: 9am to 5.15pm

(except bank/public holidays)



BEING RESILIENT ALL YEAR ROUND

Resilience does not prevent difficult or stressful events occurring. It helps us to respond to life events and recover more quickly from the impact they can have on us. The CSEAS “Information Guide on Mental Health & Well-being in the Workplace” states “Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress – such as family and relationship problems, serious health problems or workplace and financial stressors”. Resilience can be strengthened over time. It involves learning how to behave, think and act in a positive way. It's all about tapping into your inner strength and resources. Building your resilience throughout the year will help if you find Christmas to be stressful

Be patient with yourself when in situations that are stressful

Understand that challenges are part of life – how did you cope with previous challenges?

Ignoring the problem will not help

Link in with those who understand and care about you

Don't isolate yourself

Remember to look after yourself

Eat well – your body needs good fuel, especially during stressful events

Set goals – set realistic goals and do little things to help you achieve those goals

Involve yourself in activities that you enjoy

Learning something new can bring a sense of achievement

If you are worried – share the worry

Exercise is important for your mental and physical health

Nurture a positive view of yourself – remind yourself of your strengths

Coping with a crisis - you can't change the crisis but you change your response

Engage help/support if required, from family/friends or services such as the CSEAS, GP, HSE etc.

