

**NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services  
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## **Agency offers tips on personal health and well-being during the holidays**

BISMARCK, N.D. – With only a few days remaining before Christmas, it's "crunch time" for holiday preparations. The holidays bring joy, but they can also leave some individuals feeling overwhelmed, stressed, or more anxious or depressed.

The North Dakota Department of Human Services shares some tips on managing the holidays in a healthy way.

"We encourage people to prioritize, and to set goals and realistic expectations. Keeping a routine, keeping things simple can help people maintain a healthy balance," said Jessica Brewster, supervisor of adult addiction services at the department's West Central Human Service Center.

She encourages people to be mindful of their responses to stressors and how that could affect mental well-being, as well as actions they can take to address stressors.

"The holiday season may be a difficult time for some. If you know someone who may be struggling, reach out. Talk to them about it or lend a helping hand," she said.

Brewster encourages people to have a plan to manage their stress and individual challenges. Some people journal or listen to music. Others go for a walk or run, or go to the gym. Others may want to call their sponsor or others in their support network to talk about it, decompress and get support and encouragement, she said.

"If you are struggling, reach out and enlist the help of those people in your life who know your personal struggles and can support you," Brewster said.

Brewster reminds people that treatment works, help is available, and recovery is possible. Helpful information is available online at <https://behavioralhealth.dhs.nd.gov/>.

The department's eight regional human service centers also staff crisis lines, and center contact information is online at [www.nd.gov/dhs/locations/regionalhsc/index.html](http://www.nd.gov/dhs/locations/regionalhsc/index.html).

This past year, an estimated 51,950 North Dakota adults had a substance use disorder and about 91,912 experienced a mental illness.

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