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Keep it simple for a stress free Christmas

Local health experts are encouraging people to keep it simple this holiday season to ensure a stress-free and healthy Christmas.

South Western Sydney Local Health District Acting Director of Mental Health Penny Waldon said the key to keeping Christmas stress free was keeping the celebrations casual, simple and low cost.

“For many people Christmas can cause enormous pressure both financially and emotionally,” Ms Waldon said.

“The extra costs, arrangements, get-togethers and running around can all add up and have the potential to cause depression and anxiety if not effectively managed.

“It is important for people who experience these feelings to know they are not alone. They need to look after themselves over this busy period by getting plenty of rest, eating sensibly, exercising, drinking in moderation and most importantly seeking help if needed.

“Keeping Christmas a simple, affordable affair will help ensure the holiday season is joyous and stress-free,” she said.

Ms Waldon said the holiday period was a great opportunity to reflect, enjoy time with family and loved ones and reach out to others.

“If you see someone who doesn’t seem to be coping, offer your support in whatever way you can. By taking care of yourself and others and being grateful for all that you have, you are truly embracing the spirit of Christmas,” she said.

Tips for a stress free Christmas:

- Set a limit on how much you want to spend
- Organise a Kris Kringle within your family or workplace, so you only have to buy one present
- Share the cooking load for Christmas by asking each family member to bring a plate to share
- Drink alcoholic beverages in moderation
- Make sure you get enough sleep
- Exercise regularly in order to keep up with the demands of the season
- Above all have fun, relax and enjoy the time with family and friends.

For 24 hour telephone crisis support call Lifeline 13 11 14 or visit www.lifeline.org.au.