

# Hawkins County Schools Staff Wellness Newsletter



## Preventing Holiday Stress

The Holiday Season is a time full of fun, cheer, parties, and family gatherings. However, for some, the demands of entertaining, shopping, house guests, and financial constraints can also lead to high levels of tension and stress. Follow these tips to beat holiday stress:

- Keep expectations for the Holiday Season manageable. Try to set realistic goals for yourself. Pace yourself, organize your time, and only prioritize the important activities. Be realistic about what you can and cannot do.
- Be realistic. As families grow and change, traditions often change as well. Hold on to those you can, but understand that in some cases, old traditions might not be possible to keep. Make new traditions.
- Set differences aside. Try to accept family members and friends as they are, even if they do not live up to your expectations. Set aside grievances until a more appropriate time for discussion.
- Plan ahead. Set aside specific days for shopping, baking, visiting friends, and other activities. Allow extra time for travel so that delays won't worsen your stress.
- Learn to say no. Believe it or not, people will understand if you cannot take part in certain projects or activities. If you say yes only to what you really want to do, you'll avoid feeling resentful and overwhelmed.
- Forget about perfection. Expect and accept imperfections in any holiday plans.

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### Avoid Holiday Weight Gain

At Holiday Parties or Meals:

- Only eat the foods you really love.
- Try eating small to moderate portion sizes.
- Do not fast all day before a big meal. This slows your metabolism.
- Avoid going to a party or meal on an empty stomach. Have a small snack before you go to keep from overeating.
- Eat slowly and enjoy your food. Wait 20 minutes before you go back for seconds to avoid feeling overstuffed. Leftovers are usually available for another serving of your favorite food later in the day.