

Christmas time survival tips



- Get together and write a list of what everyone wants to do – decide what is really important, and if possible prioritise.
 - Make a list of who needs to see who – particularly important with extended stepfamilies.
 - Use a calendar - make a note of which family members are doing what and when.
- Schedule in some time to recharge your own batteries - if you're well rested you'll be able to enjoy your family more.
 - Don't try and do everything yourself - make a list of jobs which need to be done and allocate them between the whole family.
 - Don't try and keep everyone happy all the time - you'll collapse under the pressure.
 - If this is your first Christmas as a stepfamily your child may feel confused and maybe even angry – try to allocate some time that you can spend alone together to reassure them that your love for them has not changed.
 - Adults don't have to enjoy being with children all the time - allow some time for you to be alone with your partner, other family members or friends.
 - Don't assume that everyone else is having a wonderful time – everyone else is muddling through just like you, so try not to put pressure on yourself.
 - Routines can also go out of the window when dealing with excited children. This can be very unsettling for young children and therefore it might be helpful to try as a family to work out a daily plan to try and stick to.
 - Don't act in anger – if everything gets too much remove yourself from the situation and perhaps call a friend or relative. If you would like an objective view on the situation, the Family Lives helpline is open 24 hours a day throughout the Christmas period on telephone: 0808 800 2222.



Family Lives top tips

- Put the kids first. Christmas is a time for children to enjoy themselves and have fun, not feel torn between their families. Focusing on your child will make you feel better too.
 - Planning and good communication are the key to the success of Christmas. Children will feel happier if they know what is going to happen in advance.
- Take a fair approach over Christmas with your ex and their family. Children need continuing contact with grandparents, aunts and uncles from both sides of the family.
 - If you aren't spending Christmas day with your children, suggest having your own special day on a different date whereby you get to do all the things you would normally do on the day.

- If you can, talk to your ex about what you are buying so you don't end up with a disappointed child and two frustrated parents who have bought duplicate presents. You may even want to agree on a set budget so you avoid competing with your ex.
- Make the time special and try and make the most of the situation. An ex having the time with your children is important and can also give you time off to see friends and recharge your batteries.
- Remember as your kids get older they will want to be involved in the planning and may want time to do their own thing as well.
- If you are a resident parent make sure your ex knows about and has the opportunity to go to your child's nativity plays, events at school etc.
- If you are used to your ex doing all the shopping and feel overwhelmed and don't know what to do, talk to your ex and ask if they will share the kids wish list or a grandparent who may have some ideas.

Parents and carers struggling with contact issues this Christmas can call Family Lives on 0800 800 222 or visit the website www.familylives.org.uk for more support.

Christmas for separated families

Facing the prospect of Christmas without your children or another argument with your ex over contact issues, can add to the stress of Christmas time. By planning and communicating, Christmas can be a good one this year.

The break-up of a family can be traumatic for both you and your children, and research shows that where it is safe, continued contact between the child and the family members who are no longer living with them is important to their well-being.

Try to negotiate the time spent with your children over Christmas and involve your children in those plans. It's not just what's convenient for you – your children need to be happy with the arrangements too.



Refuge for Women and Children against Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is a serious crime that takes place all year round and kills two women every week. Domestic violence has been happening for centuries, to all races, all classes and at all times of the year. Thousands of women and children are living in daily fear and terror and Christmas is no exception.

It is perhaps at Christmas that women experiencing domestic violence feel, most acutely, a sense of isolation and despair. Christmas is meant to be a time of joy, a time of generosity, a time of love.

Get Help Now

If you are being abused, it may help to remember this:

You're not alone. One woman in four is abused during her lifetime.

You don't have to deal with this on your own.

The abuse is not your fault.

You cannot change your partner.

Domestic violence is against the law.

Freephone 24-Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline Run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge 0808 2000 247

Island Women's Refuge 24 hour helpline 01983 825981. Refuge and outreach service for practical and emotional help, support and advice.



Christmas Presents and Toy Safety



Toy Safety

Although play is not risk-free, most of the hazards children are exposed to can be controlled. Toys must be safe by law but how they are used and the age of the child that uses them are important factors in preventing accidents.

- Never give Christmas decorations as toys to children
- Look for the CE Marking symbol  which indicates that the toy meets European safety standards, and which all toys must have.
- Look also for the voluntary British Toy and Hobby Association 'Lion Mark' . A condition of BTHA trade association membership is that member's toys will meet the statutory safety requirements.
- If buying on the Internet we recommend that you buy from UK or other EU traders or suppliers that comply with EU Toy Safety Regulations.
- If buying toys from a jumble sale, car boot sale, or Internet auction site, extra care needs to be taken.
- Toys marked with this symbol  are not suitable for children under the age of 3.

Beware of toys with:

- Loose pile fabric or hair which sheds easily presenting a choking hazard
- Small components or parts that detach on which a child could choke
- Sharp points and edges or finger traps
- Loose ribbons on toys and long neck ties on children's costumes
- Small toys sold with items of food.

Top toy safety tips

- Buy toys where possible from recognised outlets.
- Make sure the toy is suitable for the child, check the age range.
- Be particularly careful with toys for children under three.
- Be wary of young children playing with older children's toys.
- Check toys regularly for wear and repair or dispose of them where necessary.
- Keep the play area tidy.
- Follow the instructions and warnings provided with toys.



Guests and Parties

Things that are second nature to parents are not so obvious to child-free guests so check everybody knows basic child-safety, house rules such as don't leave matches, lighters or medication lying around. On the reverse of this the homes of friends and family that you visit over the festive season may not be child-friendly so be aware of any potential hazards and dangers.

Other things to take in to consideration:

- Clean up after any parties, as children are likely to be up early and may choke on leftover food or come into contact with cigarettes and alcohol.
- Try to stick to your children's regular routines where possible to reduce tiredness and stress to both you and your children.
- If you have guests staying over night ensure they know how to escape safely in the event of an emergency. Show them where keys are kept and how doors open.



Christmas Tree's and Decorations

When picking that perfect tree this Christmas you should take into consideration the following safety tips:

- Natural trees are highly combustible, particularly as they dry out, consequently extra fire precautions need to be taken when keeping a live tree indoors.
- When purchasing a live tree, check for freshness. A fresh tree is green, needles are hard to pull from branches and when bent between your fingers, needles do not break. The trunk butt of a fresh tree is sticky with resin, and when tapped on the ground, the tree should not loose any needles.
- Do not put your tree up too early or leave up too long as this will dry the tree out too much.
- Always place the tree away from fireplaces, radiators or any other heat source. Heated rooms dry live trees out quicker so be sure to keep the stand filled with water.

- When purchasing an artificial tree, look for the label 'Fire Resistant'. Although this label does not mean the tree won't catch fire, it does indicate the tree will resist burning and should extinguish quickly.
- Ensure your tree is secure so that it can't tip over or be pulled over.
- Choose non-combustible or flame-resistant decorations for your tree, avoiding any that are sharp or breakable or that resemble sweets as children may be tempted to eat them!

Lights



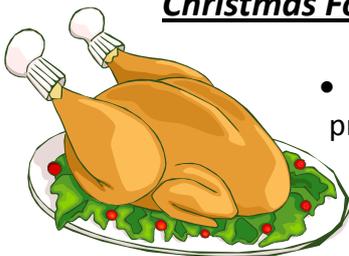
- Check your Christmas tree lights carry the British standard safety sign.
- Check every set of lights for cracked bulbs, exposed wires or loose connections and throw away any sets that are damaged.
- Don't overload sockets.
- Check the fuses.
- Only use lights outdoors that specifically state they are for outdoor use.
- Fasten outdoor lights to trees, house walls or any other firm support to protect the lights from wind damage.
- Plug outdoor lights into circuits with ground fault circuit interrupters to avoid potential shocks.
- ALWAYS turn all lights off when you go to bed or leave the house.



Candles

- NEVER leave a candle unattended.
- Keep candles out of reach of children and pets.
- Keep them away from combustible objects i.e. Curtains, Christmas cards or anywhere they may be knocked over.
- Do not put on top of TV's or anything else electrical.
- Do not put candles under shelves.
- Keep the wicks trimmed to keep the flame short.
- NEVER leave the house or go to bed with candles still burning.

Christmas Food Safety



- When you are cooking for large numbers of people, try to prepare in advance as this should help reduce the pressure on you.
 - Keep chilled food out of the fridge for the shortest time possible.
- If you are short of fridge space, take out wine and beers as these can be stored in the garage or somewhere else that is cold.
- Wash your hands frequently and make sure your children do the same.
- Keep hot liquids, food and cooking utensils away from worktop edges where they could be pulled off or fall onto your children.
- Do not put a spoon used to taste food back into food without washing it.
- Keep raw food and cooked food away from each other, and use separate utensils for each.
- Thaw meat in the fridge, and any food required to be refrigerated should never be left at room temperature for more than 2 hours.
- Never reduce cooking times – no matter how impatient your guests become! And always check your food is properly cooked before serving.
- Follow instructions carefully on the packaging of food, for example ‘*use by*’ means exactly that, don’t use after the date printed under any circumstances. ‘*Best before*’ dates mean that after the date printed the food won’t be at its best; however eggs must never be eaten after their BB date.
- Always be sure to carefully follow storage instructions and other instructions for example ‘*eat within a week of opening*’, but remember, if the ‘*use by*’ date is tomorrow then you must use the food by the end of tomorrow, even if the label says ‘*eat within a week of opening*’.



Christmas Helplines

Family Lives

Offers information, support and the chance to talk through any of the issues facing parents

Telephone: 0808 800 2222

Website: www.familylives.org.uk

Gingerbread

Provide expert advice, practical support and campaign for single parents.

For further information and advice please visit our website: www.gingerbread.org.uk

Telephone: 0808 802 0925

Island Women's Refuge

01983 825981

Samaritans

Emotional support line

08457 909090

In an Emergency

Fire Brigade, Police, Ambulance, Coastguard.

999 or 112

NHS Direct (out of hours)

For health advice and information 24 hours a day, 365 days a year

call **111**

St Mary's Hospital

01983 524081

Sexual Health Service IOW

01983 534202

Island's Emergency Dental Line

0845 0508345

Gas (Emergency)

0800 111 999

Water (Emergency)

0845 278 0845

Electric (Emergency)

0845 770 8090

Children's Safeguarding

Child at risk?
0845 650 0097

Childline

Helpline for children and young people in need to talk to someone
0800 1111

Get Connected

Get Connected is the UK's free, confidential helpline service for young people under 25 who need help, but don't know where to turn

Website: www.getconnected.org.uk

Telephone: 0808 808 4994

Youth Trust

Youth counseling service for under 25's
01983 529569

Isle of Wight Foodbank

Frontline care professionals such as Doctors, Health visitors, Social Workers, Job Centre plus, Children's Centres, Local Assistance Scheme, First Response, Citizens Advice Bureau, Choices and the Police identify people in crisis and provide them with a Foodbank voucher. These vouchers can be exchanged for three days worth of food at a Foodbank Distribution Centre.

For more information:

Telephone: 01983 292040 or visit their website <http://isleofwight.foodbank.org.uk/>

Drinkline

0800 9178282

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)

0845 769 7555

Island Drug and Alcohol Service (IDAS)

For help and advice on any problems relating to drug and alcohol use.
01983 526654

FRANK

Drug Helpline
0300 123 6600

Cranstoun Drug Service (CDA)

Isle of Wight CDA is one of Cranstoun's community based drug services. They offer a range of specialist services for those affected by drug use.

01983 821569

Cruse Bereavement Care

A national registered charity who aims to help those who have been affected by bereavement

01983 523030 or 0844 879 3448

YMCA Child Bereavement Service

01983 861072

Mind

The National Association for Mental Health in the UK

Info. Line: 0300 123 3393

Relate Solent

Marriage Guidance Service

01983 524402 or 023 8022 9761

Hampshire Family Mediation

Helps with Separation, Divorce and Family Conflicts

0845 230 9818

National Debt Line

0808 808 4000

<http://www.nationaldebtline.co.uk/>

Step Change Debt Charity

0800 138 1111

<http://www.stepchange.org/Howwecanhelpyou/Debtadvice.aspx>

Frontline Debt Advice Service

01983 291552

Citizens Advice Bureau

01983 520594

RSPCA

Royal Society of Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

01983 840287 or 0300 1234 999

Isle of Wight Council Call Centre

01983 821000

Island Roads

Highways Service

01983 822440

Isle of Wight Chemist Rota – Christmas & New Year 2013/14

Chemist	Address	Telephone number	Christmas day	Boxing Day	New Year 2014
Lloyds Pharmacy	22e Carisbrooke Road, Newport	01983 526868	Open 14.00 to 16.00	Closed	Closed
Boots The Chemist	122-126 High Street, Newport	01983 522595	Closed	Open 09.00 to 17.00	Open 10.00 to 16.00
Lloyds Pharmacy	41-42 Pyle Street, Newport	01983 522638	Closed	Open 14.00 to 15.00	Closed
Sainsbury's Pharmacy	J Sainsbury Plc, Foxes Road	01983 527431	Closed	Open 10.00 to 17.00	Open 10.00 to 17.00
Gibbs & Gurnell	34 Union Street, Ryde	01983 562570	Open 14.00 to 15.00	Closed	Closed
Regent Pharmacy	59 Regent Street, Shanklin	01983 863677	Open 12 noon to 13.00	Closed	Closed
Kemkay Chemist	3 Clifton Buildings, Avenue Road, Freshwater	01983 752908	Open 14.30 to 15.30	Closed	Closed

For further information on changes to waste collections and other council services over the Christmas period please visit the Isle of Wight Council website which is www.iwight.com.

Isle of Wight Council Service Updates can be found on their Facebook page which is www.facebook.com/isleofwightcouncil.

This booklet was put together by FIZ using information from the following websites:

www.familylives.org.uk

www.activityvillage.co.uk

<http://isleofwight.foodbank.org.uk/>

www.gingerbread.org.uk

www.wightchyps.org.uk

www.direct.gov.uk

www.iwight.com

Merry Christmas

