



SAFETY

Nebraska Building Chapter

AGC Safety Initiative E-News November 19, 2020

OUR Safety MISSION: Help each other enforce safety rules to ensure that every person on construction site goes home safe and healthy at end of the workday.

Supplement your safety program with [AGC Nebraska Building Chapter Safety Resources](#). The site offers on-demand, online or on-site training opportunities on a variety of topics; services; regulations and news within our industry. Share this link with team members!

Calendar of Events – [Learn more](#)

[Supervisory Training Program--Risk Management and Problem Solving](#)

1/03/2021--1/30/2021

Blended Learning

[Supervisory Training Program--Improving Productivity and Managing Project Cost](#)

1/31/2021--2/27/2021

Blended Learning

[Supervisory Training Program--Planning and Scheduling](#)

2/28/2021--4/3/2021

Blended Learning

COVID-19 stress isn't taking a break for the holidays: How experts say you should cope

"As we are coming up on the holidays – Thanksgiving, Christmas, Diwali, Kwanzaa, Hanukkah – these are celebrations where families traditionally come together and the thought of planning for them during the pandemic is definitely weighing heavily on people's minds," said Dr. Monalisa Tailor with Internal Medicine at Norton Healthcare.

Seasonal depression could be amplified in 2020, experts say: Here's how to handle it--

That stress is perhaps felt strongest among young adults, many of whom may be far away from home and looking at celebrating the holiday season alone for the first time. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Household Pulse Survey shows the highest percentage of adults who report symptoms of anxiety or depression are 18-29-year-olds. Between Sept. 30 and Oct. 12, the most recent dates available in the survey, 44.7% reported feelings of anxiety or depression.

For many, the "loss" of the holiday season can plunge people into depression and cause extra stress on top of a very anxiety-inducing year. But health experts like Tailor say not to lose hope. Tailor encourages her patients, regardless of age, to do their best to redirect their thinking, keep a glass half full attitude and paint the future in a more positive light.

"I am reminding them we are staying apart or limiting our traditional celebrations because we need to stay safe," she said. "We may not be able to spend this holiday with our loved ones this year, but we are spending time apart so we can be with them next year and the year after that."

Children can be impacted too

While this may be a concept most adults understand, it might not be so simple for children. "All of our lives are upended right now but remember that children are impacted by the stress of their parents," said Dr. Katy Hopkins, a pediatric psychologist with Norton Children's Hospital. "If parents are struggling with their mental health during the holidays, kids are likely to be impacted by that." Think of it like the airline safety briefing that reminds people to put on their oxygen mask first before safely assisting those around them. Hopkins said when adults take care of their own mental health and wellbeing during this unusual time, children will benefit.

"There is so much ambiguity about when things will get back to normal, and kids don't necessarily handle that well," she said. "If you can start to talk with your family now about the fact that the holidays are going to be different this year, you can start to make plans to make sure it's a year to remember in a special way."

Making alternate plans

Now is the time to start talking about alternate plans. What are your family's favorite traditions, and which will you miss the most? Discuss creative ways your family can safely adjust your traditions to make them possible and joyful during a pandemic. "The idea is to discuss how can you remain connected to the idea behind the meaning of the traditions so that kids (and adults) feel like that normalcy is still there," Hopkins said. For instance, in a typical year, your extended family may bring food to share at a large Thanksgiving dinner. While the CDC warns that big gatherings are not safe this year, you could recreate the feeling of a shared meal by holding a pie contest or best-looking dessert competition over a virtual Zoom call. "Or set up a time on Thanksgiving when the entire family joins on a Zoom call to play a game together," Taylor said. "Remind each other that this year we're looking for ways to be safe together but physically apart."

It's important to also keep older family members in mind as you create this year's holiday plans. Many are following COVID-19 protocols and have stayed isolated in order to remain healthy.

Group gatherings via Zoom can be a lifeline for the older generation but not if they don't know how to work the technology. Taylor reminds families to make certain to consider a lesson on group internet chats in advance of the holidays so everyone is comfortable with a virtual party and can take part.

Holiday traditions aren't just for the kids

If your family has gotten into the habit of spending time outdoors during the COVID-19 outbreak, include a walk, hike or bicycle ride as part of your holiday plans this year. Spending time outside, even just for a few minutes, will boost your mood and lower stress. Of course, some holiday traditions simply won't be possible to celebrate safely during the virus outbreak. Let's say every year your family spends New Year's Eve at Times Square in New York City. It's important to start talking about a different way to celebrate.

Just the blues, or something more?

Feeling extra sour this holiday season? Is it just the holiday blues or something more? Some key signs to look for include changes in mood or behavior that are different from the norm. Here are some questions to ask yourself:

- Does your loved one seem to be more withdrawn than usual?
- Are they sleeping excessively?
- Are they behaving more erratically and impulsively?
- Are they more irritable?
- Do they typically respond quickly to a text or phone call, but now they are not responding at all?
- It's also important to pay attention to the content of what a friend or loved one is talking or writing about.
- Do they avoid talking about future plans? Are they making references of wanting to escape or that they have nothing to live for? These could be cues that someone is feeling hopeless and may even be entertaining serious thoughts of self-harm.

If you notice these types of behaviors, Dr. Monalisa Taylor says to talk to your loved one with a kind and comforting tone. Let them know you are feeling concerned about them suggest they speak with a healthcare professional.

If you're experiencing a mental health crisis or having thoughts of suicide, go to an emergency room, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 or visit the National Alliance on Mental Illness site, nami.org, for additional resources. Read the [full story here](#)

Safety Initiative Goals:

As an AGC Nebraska Building Chapter member, are you participating with:

- 100% of all AGC members and other contractors on AGC jobsites enforcing OSHA standards as they apply to falls, electrical safety and possible another topic.
- 100% of all AGC members will have set their own company goals to improve safety in their firm and have a way to measure progress towards the goal.
- 100% of all AGC members will encourage and support all contractors on their jobsites to set their own company goals for improving safety.