



Wellbeing during the Festive Season

A self-help resource

Compiled by Richmind WA's Hearing Voices Network WA team

It takes courage

Richmind
WA

About Us

Richmind WA is Western Australia's largest provider of mental health services.

We listen deeply, see people as the individuals they are. We support people to discover the courage they have to shape their own lives and empower them on their journey to recovery, independence, and to build a rich future.

At Richmind WA, our inclusive mental health services are shaped by the voices of lived experience. Our supported accommodation, community-based and NDIS services are focused on supporting individuals to build the confidence and skills they need to meet the challenges of daily life.

Drawing on a rich experience of over 50 years, we work closely with influential organisations and the local community to shape the mental health landscape in Western Australia.

Information contained within this document has been taken directly from a variety of sources and collated, in the hope that it is a useful and accessible resource for people over the festive season. Richmind WA does not claim any IP.



Registered NDIS Provider: 4050002329



How to use this resource

Created by the Hearing Voices Network of Western Australia, this self-help workbook offers support in understanding why the holiday season can sometimes feel more stressful or overwhelming and provides space for thoughtful reflection on how to navigate these challenges with care.

No matter your beliefs, this time of year is not only about giving to others—it's also a chance to extend kindness to yourself. This can be especially meaningful if you experience voice hearing or other mental health challenges.

The holidays can bring joy, but the preparations and expectations may also stir up stress. With a bit of planning and some grounding practices, it's possible to soften these triggers. This resource invites you to look back on past holiday experiences and gently prepare for the season ahead in a way that feels supportive and empowering, reminding you that you don't have to face these moments alone.

Warm and heartfelt wishes for the festive season and the New Year from Richmind WA's Hearing Voices Network of Western Australia.

Wishing you a
Merry Christmas
from all of us at
Richmind WA

**The Cannington office will
be closed from Thursday
25 December, reopening
Monday 5 January**



What are some things that make Christmas so difficult for us?

This is by no means a comprehensive list and we ask that you take time to write down some of your own thoughts in the spaces provided.

Financial Pressure

Christmas can place a lot of financial pressure on us, especially when we think about gifts, decorations, food, and all the little extras that add up. Planning ahead can make this time feel more manageable. The search for the “perfect” gift can create unnecessary stress, so it may help to choose simpler options, like gift cards from your local supermarket or store. Setting a budget before the season begins can also protect you from overspending and the worry that might follow once the holidays are over.

Another supportive approach is to open a Christmas savings account and gently commit to spending only what you’ve set aside, helping you avoid the strain of credit card debt. Handmade gifts can also be a lovely way to keep costs down while offering something heartfelt and meaningful. Later in this booklet, you’ll find ideas for thoughtful, homemade gifts that might inspire you.

How will you minimise financial pressure on yourself this Christmas?

Social Pressure

Choosing which social events to attend and giving yourself permission to skip some altogether, can be an important way to reduce stress. It’s completely understandable to worry about disappointing others but remember that many people also feel stretched and overwhelmed as Christmas gets closer. They may even feel relieved if you decide to take a step back.

It’s okay to tell others that you’re planning a quieter Christmas this year, and it’s important to honour that choice, even if someone encourages you to fit in “just one more” visit. If there are gatherings you truly can’t avoid, try to carve out some time just for yourself to rest or do something that brings you comfort. A little intentional self-care can make a big difference in easing holiday pressure.

Can you think of ways to reduce social pressure on yourself?

Expectations of others

Try to gently shift your focus away from meeting everyone else's expectations and give yourself permission to prioritise your own wellbeing. It's okay to limit the time you spend in situations that feel overwhelming, whether that's visiting family and friends or navigating busy Christmas shopping.

Many of us feel pressure to make everything "just right," from the meal to the gifts to the social plans, but striving for perfection often creates unnecessary stress. In reality, if the food isn't perfect or a visit doesn't unfold exactly as hoped, it's unlikely anyone else will hold onto it the way we sometimes do.

You don't need to pretend that everything is easy if it's not. We all have moments of struggle, and there is strength, not weakness, in allowing yourself to be honest about how you're feeling. Compassion for yourself is just as important as kindness to others.

How will you prepare yourself for the expectations of others?

Painful Memories

Memories of past hurts, losses, or difficult experiences can surface at any time, and Christmas is often one of those moments. For many, a season that is commonly linked with joy and togetherness can instead feel heavy, lonely, or isolating. Even though Christmas is a meaningful celebration for those who hold certain religious traditions, your experience may be very different, and the season can sometimes stir up painful memories or past trauma.

If this is the case for you, planning ahead can be an important act of self-care. It may help to keep the contact details of trusted support services or people you feel safe reaching out to, especially since some services may have limited availability during the holiday period. You deserve care, understanding, and support, especially at this time of year.

What may prove most painful or difficult for you at Christmas?

Support

Christmas can be a good opportunity to seek support if you feel ready for it. Although opening up may feel intimidating, sharing with family or friends that this time of year is difficult for you can create space for deeper understanding and connection. You might also find comfort in offering support to others, many community organisations welcome volunteers during the holidays and helping can foster a sense of belonging and bring you into contact with people who share similar values. If volunteering feels like too much, simply attending a community event as a guest can still offer companionship without the same level of pressure. You'll find details about free community events later in this booklet.

Remember that support comes in many forms. You may choose to reach out to friends, family, support workers, neighbours, pets, or even to yourself—each can provide its own kind of comfort and care.

Who would you call on for support or friendship?

Can you think of ways in which you can support yourself?

What supports have you drawn on in the past that can support you this Christmas? This could include memories, friendships, holidays etc.?

Stay Connected and Enjoy

Many of us rely on technology such as Skype or Zoom to stay in touch with the people who matter to us. During the holiday season, when some usual supports may be closed, using these tools can be especially helpful in maintaining connection and reducing feelings of isolation.

We invite you to take a moment to consider what genuinely brings you comfort or joy at this time of year, or what you might like to experience this Christmas. This could mean connecting with family, taking some peaceful time to travel, or joining a local community event. While travelling or visiting loved ones may be possible for some, it can be challenging for others, and that's completely okay.

It's reassuring to remember that many community events take place over Christmas, offering opportunities to feel connected and supported. We've included a list of these events in this booklet, most of which are free or low cost.

What are you looking forward to or what would you like to happen?

Photos with Santa

One fun and traditional part of Christmas time is getting your annual photo with Santa! There are plenty of opportunities in Perth to get photos taken at shopping centres, markets, events, and you can even get your pets in on the action at some pet stores.

How to get the best Santa Photo of your children:

- Most of the Santa experiences across Perth allow your kids to visit Santa without having to have photographs taken. Don't feel pressured if you don't want to have pictures done.
- Go with a budget in mind – use our guide below to give you an indication of what you'll be paying. Prices start from around \$24.95 for one printed photo.
- Think about what to dress your kids/babies in before you go to visit Santa.
- Talk to your kids about visiting Santa before you go, tell them what the kids do when they get there. Visit the centre/store with your child/children and have a look at Santa a few times before going to have photos taken to make them feel at ease.
- Be prepared to sit in on the photo to make your child feel more comfortable.
- Prepare a letter to Santa to post in the post box – a wonderful experience, and all the centres that do this promise to write back if you have a return address on the letter and envelope.
- Don't be afraid to tell the photographer if you don't like the photos, ask for more to be taken or go back later and try again.

Have you always wanted to take your children to see Santa but worried about how they might react? Do your Kids have sensory challenges and would be fine to see Santa if only they didn't have to wait in line with crowds, feel the pressure of time and noise of lots of people walking around? Meeting Santa can be fun, and a Sensitive Santa session could be exactly what your child needs to visit Santa this year. Many shopping centres around Perth are offering Sensitive Santa sessions this year. They create a calm and sensory-friendly photo session with dim lights and no music or loud noises. Some sessions are also Auslan Santa sessions. All locations listed offer Santa photos and Sensitive Santa sessions.

Lakeside Shopping Centre

1 November – 24 December

lakesidejoondalup.com.au

Online booking only | Sensitive Santa
Real Beard Santa | Pet Photos

Myer Santaland, Perth CBD

8 November – 24 December

myer.com.au/mychristmas/santaland

Online booking | Sensory Santa | Pet Photos

Ocean Keys Shopping Centre

29 November – 24 December

oceankeys.net.au

Online booking only | Sensitive Santa
Pet Photos

Westfield Booragoon

9 November – 24 December

westfield.com.au/booragoon

Online booking | Sensitive Santa | Pet Photos

Westfield Carousel

9 November – 24 December

westfield.com.au/carousel

Online booking | Sensitive Santa | Pet Photos

Westfield Innaloo

8 November – 24 December

westfield.com.au/innaloo

Online booking | Sensitive Santa | Auslan
Santa | Pet Photos

Westfield Whitford City

8 November – 24 December

westfield.com.au/whitfordcity

Online booking | Sensitive Santa | Pet Photos



Pet Santa Photos

Let's face it, our pets are our best friends and family and can be our nearest and dearest supporters, so why wouldn't we want them to be part of our plans at this time of year? All of the above locations offer Pet Santa photos.

Other photos

Claremont Quarter

1 – 24 December

claremontquarter.com.au

Photos are \$25, which is donated to Foodbank

Where to get free Santa photos in Perth

Looking to save money this Christmas? We know the costs can mount up before you know it. One way to save a bit of money is to find somewhere that does free Santa photos. It is possible! We have rounded up a list for you.

- Your local Christmas Markets
- Santa Selfies at Dog Swamp Shopping Centre
- Take your own Santa photo at Forest Lakes Shopping Centre
- Local Christmas event

Christmas Events

City of Perth Christmas Light Trail

The Rio Tinto Christmas Lights Trail is back in town, lighting up the City for 31 nights with 22 amazing light installations. You can walk the full trail to see all 22 installations or take the family-friendly route, 'The Merry Mile'. Enjoy festive entertainment and performances throughout the City on select nights, including visits from Santa Claus. Be mesmerised as malls, streets and parks across the city brighten with animated lights, projections and lively festivities!

Wanneroo Botanic Gardens

Christmas has a timeless magic that fills hearts with wonder and excitement, no matter the age. This season, create cherished family memories and make 'The Magic of Christmas' a part of your tradition.

Step into a shimmering wonderland at The Wanneroo Botanic Gardens. Just a short 5-minute drive from Joondalup, our Gardens sparkle from late November to the beginning of January. Wander through 5 acres of mesmerising landscapes, adorned with an awe-inspiring array of twinkling trees. Join the festive fun with a unique, glowing twist, our Glow Golf promises fun for all ages.

Synergy Xmas Lights Trail: Perth's Best Christmas Lights

Check the website for a street near you:
xmaslightstrail.com.au

Armadale Xmas Lights Trail

Check the website to find out more:
engage.armadale.wa.gov.au

Mandurah Canal Christmas Lights

This is one of Western Australia's most popular holiday attractions. Every year, December 1st through to early January, the canals are transformed into a magical wonderland of lights and decorations. This stunning display is a must-see attraction for both locals and tourists alike. Costs apply and bookings are essential:
mandurahboattours.com.au/christmas-lights

Doing it tough in Wanneroo Christmas Party

We are so excited to welcome those doing it tough in the Wanneroo City Council area for a day filled with fun!

There will be a bouncy castle, face painting, a visit and gifts from Santa, sausage sizzle and sweets.

- **Wednesday 10 December 2025 10am - 12pm**
- **46 Highclere Blvd, Marangaroo**

Christmas Pageant

This is one of our favourite Christmas events in Perth. The brightest event of the year, the Alinta Energy Christmas Pageant. The free event is full of Christmas festivities for the whole family to enjoy – including delicious food trucks and an all-new Family Fun Zone.

- **Saturday 2 December 7:30pm**
- **Langley Park**

Supreme Court Gardens Carols

We're so excited to be bringing back Carols to the City at Supreme Court Gardens. You're in for a wonderful family-friendly night singing along to your favourite Christmas Carols culminating in an amazing fireworks display!

- **Saturday 20 December, 2025 at the Supreme Court Gardens, Perth**
- **6:30pm Pre-Show Entertainment**
- **7:30pm Christmas Carols**
- **9:15pm Fireworks**

Come on down from early afternoon to grab a picnic spot on the grass and enjoy the pre-show entertainment. There will be a visit from Santa in Santa Land with fun activities for the kids. Vendors will be on site with a variety of amusements, food, drinks, and much more!

Parking is free at all CPP car parks after 6pm on Saturday; CPP Terrace Road, Concert Hall and Council House car parks are the closest to the Supreme Court Gardens. Supreme Court Gardens is a 3-minute walk from Elizabeth Quay Station via Geoffrey Bolton Avenue.

Christmas Nativity

The beloved Christmas Nativity is back in Forrest Place! A cherished family tradition woven into the fabric of Perth for over 26 years, this concert invites everyone to join in singing along to Christmas favourites. Over two enchanting nights, the traditional story of Christmas will be brought to life on stage, complete with festive carols and captivating performances.

Share in the story of Christmas, brought to life on stage with sing-along carols performed by Perth choirs under the stars at Forrest Place. Gather your loved ones and celebrate the spirit of Christmas through song, story and togetherness.

- **Sunday 21 – Monday 22 December**
- **6:30 – 8:30pm Forrest Place**
- **Admission is free, tickets are not required**
- **Some seating is available**

Santa's Symphony in the Park

Set against the backdrop of the Swan River, enjoy a spectacular performance by the West Australian Symphony Orchestra, fabulous guest singers, and a special visit from Santa himself. Bring friends, family and your Christmas spirit for a FREE, fun-filled night.

- **Saturday 13 December 4pm**
- **Burswood Park**

Carols in the Park Claremont

Join us for a magical evening of Christmas carols and family festivities at the Town of Claremont's Carols in the Park event for 2025. Children and adults alike will be delighted by the fun activities and family-friendly entertainment. Keep an eye out for a special appearance by Santa and his elves! Catch the West Australian Symphony Orchestra with accompanying vocalists to perform everyone's favourite Christmas carols. There will be food trucks available or BYO a picnic. This is a free event for the entire community to enjoy.

- **Saturday 13 December 2025**
- **Claremont Park, Cnr Stirling Hwy and Bay View Tce**
- **4:30pm Start**
- **6:30pm West Australian Symphony Orchestra**

Carols by Candlelight & Christmas Parade – Armadale

With thousands joining in the festivities, Carols by Candlelight is the perfect mix of high-quality music, stunning candlelight atmosphere and families enjoying the festive spirit in the lead up to Christmas. This is a family-friendly, smoke, vape and alcohol-free event.

- **Saturday 13 December 5:30pm**
- **Orchard Avenue Memorial Park, Armadale**

Carols by the Jetty – Busselton

A whole community experience – enjoy an evening of carols, family fun and Christmas celebration – presented by the churches of Busselton. A heartwarming evening of festive cheer at Carols by the Jetty – a beloved annual community Christmas event with a visit from Santa! All are welcome.

- **Saturday 13 December 5:30–8pm**
- **Busselton Foreshore Amphitheatre & Stage**

Carols by Candlelight – City of Canning

Get in the Christmas spirit with the annual free Carols Concert 2025! This year's carols show includes performances and entertainment for the community, a short interlude to enjoy the event activities and also the chance to meet Santa! Featuring the Canning City Brass Band, the Rossmoyne Community Singers, Avenue Jazz Band, and more.

Bring a picnic blanket, chairs, the whole family and your best singing voices to share a night of singing, dancing, magical sparkling lights and merry tunes with the City of Canning.

- **Saturday 13 December 5:30–8pm**
- **Civic Amphitheatre
2 Civic Gardens, Cannington**

South Perth Carols at Sunset

Come and join the South Perth Lions Big Band for Carols at Sunset, our annual community Christmas concert. It's a fantastic, fun family event, complete with colourful candlelight, a sausage sizzle and cool drinks.

- **Sunday 7 December 2025**
- **South Perth Foreshore by the Mends Street Jetty**
- **5:30pm Pre-show entertainment, children's activities**
- **6:30pm Christmas carols by the South Perth Lions Big Band**
- **7:30pm Intermission and Santa's appearance on stage**
- **7:45pm Christmas carols by the South Perth Lions Big Band**
- **8:30pm Event ends**
- **Entry by donation**

The event sponsor, the Good Grocer South Perth will be selling fresh cherries on the night, with proceeds going to the Lions Club of South Perth. Complete our Culture Counts survey to be in the draw to win a donated \$100 Good Grocer gift voucher.

Carols by Candlelight Bayswater

Celebrate the most wonderful time of the year with a community sing-along under the stars. Enjoy performances by the West Australian Symphonic Wind Ensemble, Providence Bayswater Choir and Lady M & The High Society. The event will feature a range of food and beverage vendors, market stalls, free family-friendly activities and activations by local community groups. The performances will be AUSLAN interpreted. A reserved seating area in front of the stage will be allocated for those requiring access to this space.

- **Saturday 13 December 5-9pm**
- **Riverside Gardens, Bayswater**
- **5pm Doors open**
- **6:30pm Christmas Carols**

Cooby Carols by Candlelight

Come and join us for a family fun night. Bring your picnic rug or chairs, and let's make a joyful noise together as we sing Christmas Carols. Santa will be there, plus free kids' craft and a free sausage sizzle.

- **Saturday 13 December 5:30pm**
- **Hargreaves Park, 69 Counsel Rd, Coolbellup**

Stadium Park Christmas Festival

Our free Christmas Festival is back, bigger and brighter than ever. We will have a magical marketplace with 100+ food trucks, local gift stalls, family activities and live entertainment. Get your last-minute Christmas gifts, have an "elfie" with special guest Santa, or bring the family to watch a classic Christmas movie, presented by Schweppes on the big outdoor screen. The Jingle Bar will be serving ice-cold beverages, enjoy a drink and watch the sunset over the Swan River.

- **Saturday 20 December & Sunday 21 December 4-8:30pm**
- **Stadium Park at Optus Stadium**

Festive Flicks Mosman Park

Get into the Christmas spirit with a free outdoor screening of the much-loved holiday classic ELF! Bring your picnic rug for a relaxed evening under the stars. Enjoy free popcorn and fairy floss from Sweet Cart, plus tasty dinner and dessert options available to purchase from local food trucks. To help make the night safe and enjoyable for everyone, we kindly ask that dogs and alcohol are left at home. All welcome!

- **Friday 13 December**
- **Tom Perrott Reserve, Mosman Park**
- **6pm Gates open**
- **7:45pm Movie screening**

Christmas Markets

Fremantle Arts Centre's Bazaar

A curated market of WA makers, Bazaar Christmas Makers Market 2025 is the place to procure stunning handmade gifts and homewares, including jewellery, clothing, ceramics, woodwork, prints, stationery and toys.

- **Friday 5 December 5-9pm Food & Bar**
- **Saturday 6 December 9am-5pm Coffee, Food, Bar & Kids Activities**
- **Sunday 7 December 9am-5pm Coffee Food, Bar & Kids Activities**
- **Fremantle Arts Centre, 1 Finnerty St, Fremantle**

Summer X Salt Trigg Beachside Christmas Market

Dive into the salty vibes at Perth's favourite beachside market, where sun, sea, and sustainability meet! Whether you're hunting for ocean-inspired treasures, craving mouth-watering bites from Perth's best local food trucks, or just soaking in the beachy atmosphere with your fellow salty tribe, we've got it all.

- **Saturday 6 December & Saturday 20 December 8am-1pm**
- **Clarko Reserve, Trigg**

Be a part of our free activities:

- 6-7am Seagals Sunrise Dip - The perfect start to your day! Meet at 6am at Trigg Beach in front of Surfing WA and come get amongst it.

- 7-8am Community Meditation & Sound Healing - Start the morning with a rejuvenating meditation or sound healing session and cultivate that inner calm and peace.
- 8-9am Beachside Yoga - Bask under the sun and enjoy a beautiful community yoga session, all levels are welcome.
- 9-10am Coastal Pilates - Strengthen and tone at our uplifting Pilates class on the mat, all levels are welcome.
- 9-11am Kids Nature Craft Workshops - Bring the little ones down to our free kids workshops run by Kids Nature Club at the Little Legends Tent. From making sea creatures to creating Christmas decorations your little legends will love it!

Perth Hills Artisan Mega Market

The biggest indoor artisan market in the hills, it is held indoors and proudly showcases WA's finest woodworkers, potters, jewellers and gourmets under one roof, mixed in with wine, gin, artists, painters, clothing and toymakers! Plus, there is 'MINI PHAMs', an exciting selection of youth vendors aged 18 years and under! Adding to the fun is music all day long, indulge in a delicious meal or sweet treat from the food trucks on site. Sorry, no dogs allowed as this is an indoor event.

- **Saturday 13 December & 14 December 9:30am-3pm**
- **Mundaring Arena, 50 Mundaring Weir Rd, Mundaring**

Explore the Old Central Fire Station Early Access Autism Session

On the first Saturday of the month the DFES Education & Heritage Centre host an early access session to support children with sensory needs and their families to explore and enjoy the old Central Fire Station. A highlight for every child is to dress up as a fire fighter and sit in the driver's seat of a real fire truck!

- **Saturday 6 December 9-10:30am**
- **Old Central Fire Station Heritage Centre, 25 Murray Street**
- **Bookings essential**

New Year's Eve Celebrations

Elizabeth Quay, Perth

Enjoy a family-friendly fireworks show, amusement rides, food vendors, and roving entertainment. Expect additional free public transport services for the event.

- **8:30pm Fireworks show**
- **12am Fireworks show**

The Marina, Mindarie

The event is family-friendly and free, with various dining and entertainment options available at venues like The Boat, Indian Ocean Brewing Co, and Life Boat. The marina is a licensed venue, so no BYO alcohol, food, or seating is allowed. Only picnic blankets are permitted.

- **8:30pm Fireworks show**

Western Foreshore, Mandurah

An evening filled with excitement, family-friendly fun, and two spectacular fireworks displays that will light up the night sky. Indulge in a variety of delicious offerings from our food trucks. It will be buzzing with activities and entertainment for all ages, including carnival rides and other festive attractions.

- **6pm Event starts**
- **9pm Fireworks show**
- **12am Fireworks show**

Thomson Bay, Rottnest Wadjemup Island

Head off for a relaxing morning exploring the beauty of the island, followed by an afternoon filled with entertainment suitable for all ages. As the sun sets over the picturesque Indian Ocean, gather to mark the occasion with a spectacular free family fireworks display illuminating the skies. With ferries departing after the fireworks have concluded back to Fremantle and Hillarys, you can make the most of every moment before returning home.

- **8pm Fireworks show**
- **This event is free to attend, but registration is required**

Churchill Park and Bell Park, Rockingham Foreshore

The celebration will live music from headliner Sheppard after the 9pm fireworks show, and various family-friendly activities and food vendors.

- **5pm Event starts**
- **9pm Fireworks show**
- **12am Fireworks show**



Which of the community events appeal to you?

Gifts

Money can feel stretched at any time of the year, and even more so during Christmas. It's important to remember that gifts don't need to be expensive to be meaningful—a handmade gift, created with care and thought, can often mean far more than something bought in a store. There are so many wonderful resources available to help spark creative ideas - Search Pinterest for 'homemade Christmas gifts'.

Gift ideas don't have to be expensive to be meaningful. You might consider handmade wooden or soft toys, gift cards, baked treats, potpourri or fragrant sachets, framed photographs, or homemade preserves like pickles. Another thoughtful option is to re-gift something you no longer need or to offer your time to help someone. For example, you could create a "work voucher" or a coupon that can be redeemed later.



Feel free to get creative with these ideas—decorate your gifts by hand or use ready-made templates available online.

Second-hand charity shops are also wonderful places to find unique treasures, and factory outlets can offer discounted items that won't feel like your usual retail purchases.

This can be a fun and sustainable way to give gifts that carry personal meaning without adding financial stress.

3 Ingredient Tim-Tam Fudge

Ingredients

Sweetened condensed milk, choose a full-fat sweetened condensed milk, not skim
Milk chocolate, a good-quality chocolate melts will make all the difference in the final flavour, chocolate chips are not suitable as they hold their shape
Tim Tams, roughly chopped into chunks

Equipment

- Microwave
- Large microwave-safe bowl
- Metal spoon to melt the chocolate and mix with the condensed milk
- Knife and chopping board to chop the Tim-Tams
- Slice tray approx. 20cm x 20cm, lined with baking paper

Directions

1. Grease and line a 20cm x 20cm square baking tin with greaseproof baking paper
2. Place the sweetened condensed milk and chocolate melts into a microwave-safe bowl
3. Heat on 50% power in 30-second bursts, stirring each time with a dry metal spoon until just melted (approx. 1-2 minutes)
4. Once the chocolate mixture is smooth, add the chopped Tim Tams to the bowl
5. Stir the Tim Tam chunks through to coat all pieces well
6. Spread the mixture into the prepared tin, smooth the top, and place it into the fridge for 1 hour to set
7. Once set, slice to the desired size and place in gift boxes or decorated jars
8. Store in the fridge until gifted or eaten





Lemon Sugar Scrub

This lemon sugar body scrub is a simple and gentle scrub you can make with just 3 ingredients and makes a great low-cost gift.

Ingredients

- 1 cup of granulated sugar
- ½ cup fresh lemon juice and zest
- ¼ cup coconut oil

Directions

1. In a bowl mix all the ingredients together using a fork
2. Put into a glass jar with a lid
3. Your scrub is ready to use

Note: if the scrub is too runny, just add more sugar

The jars are easily and cheaply sourced from Kmart or other discount stores, and you can have fun decorating them.

How will you be creative with your gifts this year?

If the thought of visiting busy shops feels overwhelming during this time of year, online shopping can be a helpful alternative. You can use these services not only for everyday essentials like groceries but also for gifts and decorations. For example, both Coles and Woolworths offer delivery services seven days a week: **Woolworths** | **Coles**

The financial pressure of providing gifts for children can be particularly stressful at Christmas. Several charities gladly support families in need; these gifts are typically donated by members of the public and distributed to families who request assistance.

Some useful contacts for this support are:

The Smith Family 1800 024 069

Mission Australia 08 9225 0400

Salvation Army 1800 223 191

Anglicare WA 08 9263 2000

Some other major charities provide this service, please contact them directly to enquire.

Christmas Day Lunch

Across many Australian cities and regional areas, free community Christmas breakfasts and lunches are often held. These gatherings provide a wonderful opportunity to connect with others and experience the true spirit of the season, because it's the company we share that makes the day meaningful, rather than the extravagance of the food.

Below is a list of some of the events happening this year. If you'd rather not attend as a guest, you might consider volunteering instead, which can be a fulfilling way to contribute while enjoying the festive atmosphere.

Mission Australia's Christmas Lunch in the Park

Celebrate the 50th annual Christmas Lunch in the Park, centered around a traditional shared Christmas lunch. In the weeks leading up to Christmas, event wristbands are distributed to support service providers within the Perth city area. Collect yours from the nearest community support agency in December, then wear it on the day to streamline entry to the event. This event is for people most in need who may be experiencing homelessness, disadvantage, or marginalisation. If this isn't you, but you would still like to support the event, you can donate or get involved as a volunteer.

Free buses will transport people to and from Wellington St Bus Station from 10:30am.

- **Moort-ak Waadiny Wellington Square East Perth 11am-2pm**
- **Wristbands required**

Joondalup Christmas Lunch

This free event provides fellowship and a festive luncheon for local residents who may be experiencing financial hardship or are isolated from family and friends on Christmas Day. A fantastic spread is provided by WA Spit Roast Catering, consisting of roast beef, turkey and potatoes with condiments, five different salads, vegetarian lasagna, rice, BBQ and bread rolls. Polish off your lunch with a wonderful Christmas pudding and custard. For more information, call 0466 252 076.

- **Central Park, Joondalup 11am-2:30pm**
- **Registration required**
joondalupchristmaslunch.com/sign-up/

Wanneroo Christmas Lunch

A Christmas Day Lunch for residents living within the City of Wanneroo (Two Rocks to Girrawheen). This FREE ticketed event is open to those who are alone, are in need, recently moved to WA, seeking new friendships or are separated from their loved ones. If you need some company at Christmas, we want to share this special day with you.

For info, email:

wanneroochristmasdaylunch@gmail.com

- **The Impact Centre 198 Mary Street, Wanneroo 11:30am-2:30pm**
- **Registration required**
trybooking.com/events/landing/1472057

The Advent of Wellness

1. Don't do everything yourself

Enlist the help of family and friends, ask for help and remember, it's ok to say no.

2. Make a budget and stick to it

It's easy to get caught up in the excitement of the season and overspend, but a financial burden can create more stress. Sticking to a budget can feel satisfying too.

3. You can only do so much

Choose which activities and traditions are most important to you and which may be triggering. Only participate in the ones that make you feel good.

4. Be mindful of your triggers

Find coping strategies that work for you, like breathing, meditation or music and use them to cope with anything that might be triggering for you over the festive season.

5. Keep moving

We all know the science between a healthy body/healthy mind so be sure to find time to incorporate daily exercise into your routine by setting small goals over the festive season.

6. Plan for all eventualities

Many support services close over the festive season so discuss and plan alternatives in advance, in case of crisis.

7. Try something new

If your regular supports are not available during the festive season, give something else a go. Many people learn new hobbies like art or journaling as ways to express their feelings.

8. Keep in touch

We don't always have to be social but it is a good idea to stay in daily contact with others either on the phone or face-to-face.

9. Don't be overwhelmed by expectations

We sometimes imagine people to have greater expectations of us than they do so ask others what their expectations of you are over the festive season and don't be afraid to say no.

10. Keep in touch

We don't always have to be social but it is a good idea to stay in daily contact with others either on the phone or face-to-face.

11. Practice self-care

To give others our best self we need to be looking after our own self-care. Be compassionate to yourself.

12. Don't overdo it

It may be the season of excess but pace yourself and enjoy a little of everything in moderation.

13. Conflicts are possible

We can encounter people over the festive season we don't see often and this can cause conflicts. If you are unable to avoid these triggers, create a safety plan in advance.

14. Limit the Christmas spirit

Alcohol can have a very negative impact on mental wellbeing. Remember, it's completely ok to say no to alcohol if you know this will adversely affect you.

15. Don't be too hard on yourself

We often gauge our performance on how others appear to be doing but things are not always as they seem. Take comfort in knowing you are doing your best.

16. Think of others

Focusing on others over the festive season can bring a sense of achievement and a feeling of connection with community. There are many ways to give back to those who may be struggling too.

17. Recharge your batteries

This time of year can be exhausting so slow down and breathe. Try to do something nice for yourself each day.

18. Make an appointment with your worries

Set a specific time to work through your stresses and set a time limit to try and find solutions within this time frame so you can see things more clearly and find productive ways to cope.

19. Get enough sleep

Sleep deprivation is a big contributor to mental health distress, so try to create a good sleep routine to ensure you don't become exhausted or burnt out.

20. Eat something healthy

If you've overindulged in the turkey plan some healthy alternatives into your day. Meal preparation in advance can be a welcome relief if you're too tired to cook a healthy meal.

21. Find time to relax

The festive season can leave us feeling worn-out so try not to feel guilty for putting yourself first. It could be as simple as reading a book or watching your favourite movie.

22. It's only Christmas after all

Don't put too much focus on one day of the year, treat it like any other day. Know that it's ok to be you, whatever that looks like.

23. You are not alone

There are others out there feeling the same or similar as you this festive season and reaching out to others to ask for support is crucial.

24. It's ok to say no

Set boundaries and stick to them. If you feel you cannot say no, plan for all eventualities and have safety plans in place. Stay positive – you may not need to implement your plans and may thoroughly enjoy yourself.

25. Today's the day! So much build up what will you choose to do?

If you are spending time with loved ones have a wonderful time. If you choose to spend the day alone look after yourself and do something nice for yourself. If you would like company but have no one, consider taking part in one of the free Christmas breakfasts or lunches around Perth (see our free events section). Remember it's ok to do something completely left field for Christmas day, how about skydiving? However, you decide to spend the day have a happy and safe Christmas. Please tell someone if you're not ok. People will be honoured and thankful that you have spoken up and called on them for support. During the Christmas period our office will close down from December 24th until January 4th. There is a list of useful numbers for crisis and emergency at the back of this book.

Food Hampers & Gifts

Anglican Church Church of Ascension

For ongoing assistance with food, the Anglican church offers support, serving people primarily in the Midland area, but no one in need is turned away. A pension card is helpful but not necessary. One hamper provided per family, consisting of bread and other bakery products, fruit, vegetables and assorted groceries plus a frozen meal. Hot and cold drinks are available and a free sausage sizzle. At Christmas, there will be an additional festive hamper.

Fridays 10am-12pm

Anglican Church 8 Spring Park Road, Midland

Salvation Army

Salvos Assistance Line 1300 371 288. They offer emergency food hampers throughout the year and other assistance programs.

St Mary's Outreach Service

Take-away meals Monday 6-8pm

Victoria Park Community Centre, Crn Kent and Gloucester Streets, East Victoria Park

Star St Uniting Church

Food hampers Wednesday 9am-12pm

Cnr Star and Archer Streets, Carlisle

Manna Inc.

Take-away meals Monday to Friday 1:30pm

Weld Square Beaufort Street, Perth

Communicare

Emergency assistance, including digital food vouchers

Call 6370 1000, Monday to Friday 8-11am for an appointment

Sussex Street Community Law Services

Food vouchers and Foodbank referrals call 6253 9500 for an appointment.

St Vincent de Paul

Emergency relief, including digital food vouchers and bill assistance

Call 1300 794 054, Monday to Friday 9am-1pm

Uniting WA

Emergency relief, including digital food vouchers

Call 9220 1255 on Tuesday 11am for an appointment on Wednesday or Thursday

Riverview Community Services

Food vouchers, overdue bill assistance, rent assistance, fuel vouchers

Call 9416 0000, Monday to Thursday 8:30am-5pm for an appointment

Financial Advice

National Debt Helpline

Phone counselling

Call 1800 007 007, Monday to Friday 9:30am-4:30pm

Sussex Street Community Law Services, East Victoria Park

Phone counselling, including assistance with Centrelink matters

Call 6253 9500 for an appointment

Communicare, Cannington

Phone counselling

Call 9458 2611 for an appointment

Uniting WA, Perth

Phone counselling

Call 9220 1255 on Monday at 8:30am for an appointment the following week

Jacaranda Community Centre, Belmont

Call 9477 4346 for an appointment

Riverview Community Services

Financial counselling, information, support and referrals

Call 9416 0000, Monday to Thursday 8:30am-5pm for an appointment

Social settings

If the thought of a family Christmas gathering feels overwhelming but attending is unavoidable, planning ahead can help ease some of the stress. Thinking through how you might respond to the tricky or awkward questions that often come up from relatives you may only see once a year can make the experience feel more manageable and give you a greater sense of control.

What are some of the questions that you know you will face, e.g. what have you been doing with yourself this year?

Many people feel unsure about sharing their recovery, worrying that others might not be interested. In truth, most people genuinely want to hear about your year, the ups and the downs. It's important to only share what feels comfortable for you, and it's perfectly okay to step away from conversations if they start to feel overwhelming.

It can also be helpful to prepare a few responses in advance for personal questions, such as those about relationships, work, or changes in your life. Having a plan can make these interactions feel less stressful and give you more confidence in navigating them.

What are some responses that you would be happy to share?

Not everyone experiences supportive or understanding relatives. As the saying goes, "we can't choose our family," and even well-intentioned comments can sometimes feel hurtful or critical, leaving us feeling inadequate. Preparing some responses in advance can help you feel more in control and allow you to respond in a way that feels right for you.

Sarcasm or humour can be one approach, but honesty is often just as effective. In many social settings, there is usually someone you can lean on for support, someone who understands your journey, has stayed in touch throughout the year, or has simply taken the time to check in with you.

It's also perfectly okay to step away if things become overwhelming. You might take a short walk, find a quiet moment in another room, or excuse yourself from the situation entirely. Taking care of yourself is a valid and important choice.

Are you going to be alone at Christmas?

For some, the idea of a quiet, uninterrupted Christmas can feel peaceful and restorative, while for others, the thought of spending it alone may feel daunting. The holiday season can sometimes intensify feelings of loneliness, especially when it seems like everyone else is surrounded by family and friends. With many support services closed over this period, it's natural to feel more isolated.

If you're feeling anxious about being on your own, it can help to check which support services remain available and to explore events that might interest you. Please see the list of events provided for more information.

Some ideas for meaningful ways to spend the day include:

- Attending a community meal
- Volunteering at a local event
- Doing something completely unrelated to Christmas that brings you joy

Remember, there's no "right" way to spend the holiday, it's about finding what feels supportive and comforting for you.

What can you think of that you may do if you don't want to be alone?

What about if you would like to be alone?

Preparing a Comfort Box

This idea is meant to offer a little comfort during moments that feel overwhelming, especially around stressful times like Christmas. A comfort box can bring a sense of ease and help reduce anxiety. It's simply a collection of items that feel meaningful, soothing, or supportive to you. You can decorate the box in any way that feels right, sometimes the creative process itself can be calming. Inside, you might include things like:

- Beauty products or toiletries
- Snacks or favourite foods
- Magazines or books
- A comforting scent - perfume or aromatherapy
- Photographs or special memories

Choose items that engage your senses – something soft to touch, a scent you love, or a sound that relaxes you can be especially grounding. You might also take a moment to notice how you feel when using the box. Adding small reminders of coping strategies can offer gentle guidance and extra support whenever you need it.

What are some items that would bring comfort to you?

Memories

Christmas can bring a mix of joy and difficult memories, and sometimes the harder ones can feel especially strong during the holiday season. If this feels familiar, it can help to have a few supportive strategies in place for moments that feel overwhelming, particularly when some of our usual support networks may be less available over Christmas.

Journaling can be a comforting way to express what you're feeling in the moment, giving you space to return to those emotions later if you choose. For others, arts and crafts offer a different kind of outlet. Even if you haven't tried them before, creative activities can feel like a gentler, safer way to explore emotions without needing to find the right words.

A memory jar or box can also be a meaningful tool—somewhere to place thoughts or feelings that you want to acknowledge but may not be ready to revisit right away. It can serve as a reminder that your emotions matter and can be approached at your own pace.

And please remember, support doesn't completely disappear over Christmas. There are always some services available, including the ones listed below, and you may have additional people or resources you trust. It can be reassuring to know which options feel right for you and to keep their contact details nearby, just in case you need them.

What might you do should difficult memories arise for you this year?

Joy to You

We hope your holiday season brings you a sense of calm rather than chaos. It can help to remember that Christmas is, at its core, just one day, one out of many, and it will pass just like any other day of the year. You're allowed to decide how much or how little meaning it holds for you, based entirely on what feels right.

You might also choose to spend the day in a completely different way, perhaps doing something that has nothing to do with traditional Christmas plans. Sometimes stepping away from the usual expectations can ease the pressure and create space for something that feels more peaceful or grounding.

Ultimately, what matters most is what feels okay and manageable for you. Taking care of yourself is important, and you fully deserve that care and gentleness.

Wishing you a safe, comforting, and peaceful holiday, and warmth and hope in the New Year.

Contacts

Immediate assistance, all hours

Ambulance Police and Fire	000
Police Assistance Non-Urgent	131 444
Kids Helpline	1800 551 800
Men's Line Aus.	1300 789 978
Alcohol and Drug Info Service	9442 5000
Lifeline	13 11 44
Suicide Call Back Service	1300 659 467
Crisis Care	9223 1111
Samaritans	1800 198 313 or 9388 2500
Poisons Line	13 13 26
Health Direct Aus.	1800 022 222
Family Help Line	1800 643 000
Sexual Assault Resource Centre	9340 1828
Beyond Blue	1300 224 636
MHERL (Mental Health Emergency Response Line)	1300 555 788

For Urgent medical care you can also visit your nearest Public Hospital Emergency Department

Armadale Kelmscott Memorial Hospital

3056 Albany Highway, Mount Nasura | 9391 2000

Fremantle Hospital

South Terrace, Fremantle | 9431 3333

Fiona Stanley Hospital

11 Robin Warren Drive, Murdoch | 6152 4013

Joondalup Health Campus

Cnr Grand Boulevard & Shenton Ave, Joondalup | 9400 9400

Rockingham General Hospital

Elanora Drive, Cooloongup | 9599 4000

Royal Perth Hospital

Wellington Street, Perth | 9224 2244

Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital

Hospital Avenue, Nedlands | 9346 3333

St John of God Hospital Midland

1 Clayton Street, Midland | 9462 4000

Other useful contacts

Discharged

A group for anyone experiencing suicidal thoughts to talk about, vent, sit with, or make sense of suicidal experiences - without fearing hospitalisation or the police being called.

They also have a group specifically for transgender and gender diverse people. Online groups are being held throughout the holiday period.

Blackfulla Alt2Su

Online peer support group for Blackfullas to yarn about suicide.

Wednesday 25 December 3:30pm

My Circle

A free, private, safe and confidential social platform for 13–25-year-olds across Australia. Supported by clinical moderators who are specially trained in youth mental health, My Circle lets young people talk to other young people going through challenges.

Men's Anxiety Online Support Group

Run by Understanding Anxiety, groups are usually comprised of a small number of people who come together to share personal experiences and information in a safe, friendly and supportive environment.

Phone Support

Blue Knot | 1300 657 380

Short-term counselling and support for anyone affected by complex trauma to help them recover and build resilience.

SANE | 1800 187 263

A mental health organisation for people with complex mental health issues and for families and friends that support them, they provide a range of free telehealth and digital services.

eFriend | 9281 3338

eFriend is a free service for people who are feeling low, lonely or isolated to access virtual peer support sessions via video or phone call.

Listening Ear | 02 9477 6777

A free, confidential community support service provides a safe space to talk through issues.

StandBy | 1300 727 247

Free and confidential phone and face-to-face support for anyone bereaved or impacted by suicide, regardless of when the loss or experience occurred.

Peer CARE Companion Warmline | 1800 777 337

A suicide prevention call-back service provides a safe place for people with a lived experience of suicide to connect with others.

1800RESPECT | 1800 737 732

A free and confidential 24/7 counselling, information, and referral service for anyone impacted by domestic and family violence.

National Violence and Abuse Trauma Counselling and Recovery Service | 1800 386 578

Free, confidential 24/7 trauma specialist counselling.

Men's Domestic Violence Helpline | 1800 000 599

Information and referrals for men who are concerned about their violent and abusive behaviours and for male victims of family and domestic violence.

Griefline | 1300 845 745

Free and confidential counselling, resources and information to people experiencing grief and loss across Australia.

Butterfly National Helpline | 1800 334 673

Free and confidential counselling support for anyone concerned about eating disorders or body image issues, whether you need support for yourself or someone you care about.

Parent and Family Drug Support Line | 9442 5050

A free, 24/7 and confidential support and information by phone, text message and online chat. We help everyone in Western Australia, who may be looking for support with family issues, parenting, substance use, or supporting a friend or family member.

Family Drug Support | 1300 368 186

A 24/7 phone support line that provides information, online resources, and counselling for friends and family members of anyone struggling with alcohol and drug misuse.

National Alcohol & Other Drug Hotline 1800 250 015

A free and confidential 24/7 phone service that provides counselling, advice, and information for those struggling with addiction.

Here for You | 1800 437 348

A confidential, non-judgemental, telephone service for anyone in Western Australia concerned about their own or another person's mental health issues and/or alcohol and other drug use.

Alcohol & Drug Support Line | 9442 5000

A free, 24/7, compassionate and confidential support by phone and online chat. We help everyone in Western Australia, who may need emotional support with substance use.

Open Arms 1800 011 046

A free, confidential counselling service for Australian veterans, serving personnel, and their families.

National Dementia Helpline | 1800 100 500

Free, compassionate and confidential support over the phone and online chat. We're here to help anyone who may be struggling or looking for support with Dementia and Alzheimer's.

TIACS | 0488 846 988

A free mental health counselling service for tradies, truckies, farmers, rural, blue-collar workers and those who care about them.

Rurallink | 1800 552 002

An after-hours mental health phone service for people in Western Australian rural communities.

MATES Helpline | 1300 642 111

A 24-hour helpline to support construction workers. An integrated industry intervention and suicide prevention program that promotes good mental health and wellbeing.

SAMSN Peer Support Line | 1800 472 676

Support for all male survivors of child sexual assault.

Gambling Help Online | 1800 858 858

Offers free and confidential 24/7 support and online resources for anyone concerned about or affected by gambling.

Support Act Wellbeing Helpline | 1800 959 500

A free phone counselling service for anyone working in music or the creative industries

Children, Young People & Parents

headspace | 1800 650 890

Mental health and wellbeing support for Australians aged 12-25 as well as for their family and friends.

Youth beyondblue | 1300 224 636

General mental health support for young people aged 12-25 years old.

Dollys Dream | 0488 881 033

A counselling phonenumber facilitated by Kids Helpline, anyone can access support, whether you are a young person experiencing bullying or a parent concerned about what your child is going through.

PANDA (Perinatal Anxiety & Depression Australia) | 1300 726 306

Mental health support for parents and families during pregnancy and in their first year of parenthood.

Ngala Parenting Line WA | 1800 111 545

Advice and support for parents and carers of children up to 18 years.

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander

13YARN | 13 92 76

A free and confidential 24/7 national crisis support line for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are feeling overwhelmed or having difficulty coping.

Thirrili National Indigenous Postvention Service | 1800 805 801

Free, 24/7, confidential support. We are here for indigenous peoples in Australia who may be struggling or looking for support with grief and loss, self-harm, suicide, supporting a friend or family member, trauma and PTSD.

Brother to Brother | 1800 435 799

The crisis line provides phone support for Aboriginal men who need someone to talk to about relationship issues, family violence, parenting, drug and alcohol issues or who are struggling to cope for other reasons. It is staffed by Aboriginal men, including Elders, who have a lived experience in the issues that the line offers support for.

Support Act First Nations Support Line | 1800 959 500, press option 3

Feeling too ashamed to yarn with family or friends? If you work in music or the arts, give us a call. There's no judgement, and it's entirely confidential.

LGBTQIA+

QLife | 1800 184 527

Phone and online chat support for LGBTQIA+ people and their loved ones wanting to talk about things like sexuality, gender, bodies, feelings, relationships, mental health, and more.

Rainbow Sexual, Domestic and Family Violence Helpline | 1800 497 212

For anyone from the LGBTQIA+ community whose life has been impacted by sexual, domestic and/or family violence. Available 24/7.

Culturally & Linguistically Diverse

Hayat Line | 1300 993 398

A free and confidential crisis support line for Muslims, supporting individuals when experiencing a personal crisis or emotional distress. They provide emotional support for suicide prevention with compassion, connection, rahma, nasihah, and hope.

Witness to War | 1800 845 198

A multilingual hotline for people affected by overseas conflicts.



Richmind
WA

Contact us

1800 742 466

29 Manning Road,
Cannington WA 6107

rw.org.au

