

## Responsible drinking during the festive season

For many of us, Christmas time is often associated with increased alcohol consumption, but it doesn't have to be. Alcohol is a depressant and Christmas can be emotional, so sometimes drinking can add fuel to the fire. It's also important to show our children that it's possible to celebrate without being drunk or stoned is important for our communities.



Waitematā DHB, which operates the Community Alcohol and Drug Services (CADS) for the greater Auckland region, has some helpful advice to keep you and your whānau safe during the season:

- Abstinence for some may be important, especially for those people who know they struggle to stop at one. Don't put any pressure on others – or yourself – to drink alcohol.
- Delay the onset of the first drink until later in the day.
- Be a good host by providing non-alcohol-based options that taste great as well as some really good low-alcohol beers and wines.
- It is important there is plenty of food available when people are drinking alcohol – not just chips and dip.
- Space drinks out or alternate drinks with non-alcohol-based drinks to manage.
- Keep hydration up with water - it doesn't need to be boring. Add sliced lemon/lime/ watermelon/strawberries; garnish with mint and ice cubes.
- Decide who is going to be the sober adult to make decisions or get help should something happen.
- Don't top-up drinks without asking. If you see someone getting 'tiddly' get them to ease off the alcohol for a bit and offer them water or a non-alcoholic drink instead.
- Be mindful that it takes about an hour to process one standard drink (10grams of alcohol). That is 100ml of wine, 30mls of spirits or a 330ml can of beer. Check the labelling to be informed.
- Please ensure everyone can get home safely.

Anyone who needs advice or support after hours can call the Alcohol Drug Helpline 0800 787 797.

Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous meetings are running throughout the holiday period and CADS stays open throughout, closing only for public holidays.