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Mental Health and Wellbeing Christmas Message 2023



The holiday season can be a tough time of year for some. If there's someone who's finding this time of year difficult, you can make a difference by checking in and having meaningful conversations with the people around you who may be:

- Grieving.
- Unwell.
- Have had a tough year.
- Struggling financially.
- Have challenging family relationships.
- Have been affected by emergency incident events.
- Feeling overwhelmed by world events.

It can sometimes be tricky to know how to support someone who may be struggling at this time of year. By giving the gift of conversation you can make a difference and help someone better manage the ups and downs of the holiday season.

Remember the four ALEC steps when asking R U OK? These simple steps could change a life.



1. Ask



2. Listen



**3. Encourage
action**



4. Check in



Make the time:

Think about the people in your life who may be struggling and make time to check in with them. You might start with a text, send them a card, tee up a walk, call them on the phone or drop by for a visit. Even if you are not sure exactly what to say, the simple act of asking how they are and listening to their response will let them know you care.

Acknowledge it:

Let them know it's OK to feel overwhelmed, sad or stressed at this time of the year. Allow them to pause and reflect on their emotions. Acknowledging what they are feeling; physically and mentally, can help them manage the intensity of their emotions.

Be gentle:

Support them if they tell you they need some time for themselves this year. If someone isn't ready to talk, think about what practical support you can provide. Whether it is making a cup of tea, helping with childcare, or cooking a meal, small gestures can be comforting for those finding the holiday season difficult.

It's also worth reminding them of helpful phone services such as **Lifeline (13 11 14)** and **Beyondblue (1300 22 4636)** who operate **24/7** over the holiday period. You can also refer them to **DFES's Psychological Support Service (PSS)** for free and confidential clinical guidance.

As part of **Thriving at DFES** there are also a range of supports available for staff and emergency services volunteers to help boost resilience and manage stress.

For information on a range of support services, programs and resources available to DFES staff and emergency services volunteers, please visit the [Staff Intranet](#), [Volunteer Hub](#) or contact the DFES Mental Health and Wellbeing Team at thriving@dfes.wa.gov.au (or call us on 6392 1502).

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