



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: José A. Álvarez (619) 515-6635

## **HOW TO BEAT THE HOLIDAY BLUES** ***Health and Human Services Agency Offers Advice on Dealing with Loneliness, Anxiety and Depression***

For some people, the holidays may bring increased feelings of isolation, anxiety and depression. To deal with those feelings, some turn to alcohol and drugs, which can actually make matters worse.

“The holiday season can be one of the most difficult times of the year,” said Alfredo Aguirre, Director of Mental Health Services at the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA). “While many get into the holiday spirit with family parties and gift exchanges, others don’t have the time, energy or resources to create the ‘perfect holiday.’ Instead, they choose unhealthy ways to celebrate, turning to drugs and alcohol.”

To help alleviate the problem, HHSA is offering some constructive ways to accentuate the positive and cope with the holiday blues:

- Get involved with others and spend time with people who are supportive and caring.
- Look for opportunities to express kindness by volunteering at a shelter or nursing home.
- Exercise regularly and try to laugh; laughing is a great aerobic exercise.
- Attend alcohol-free festivities; there are several throughout the region.

For people suffering from depression or from an alcohol or drug-related problem, it is recommended that they seek help from friends, family members or a religious organization or contact one of the following resources:

- County Access and Crisis Line (800) 479-3339
- Alcoholics Anonymous: (619) 265-8762 [www.aasandiego.org](http://www.aasandiego.org)
- Narcotics Anonymous: (800) 479-0062 [www.sandiegona.org](http://www.sandiegona.org)
- Mental Health website: [www.sandiego.networkofcare.org/mh](http://www.sandiego.networkofcare.org/mh)

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