

# Relationships Australia

NEW SOUTH WALES

Media release

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## Plan ahead, budget well and take a deep breath in the week leading up to Christmas

With just a few days left before the jolly man in the red suit arrives many Australians are starting to worry about Christmas budgets, family feuds and holiday plans.

Anne Hollonds, Psychologist and Relationships Australia NSW CEO said: "In the lead up to Christmas it's important to focus on what really matters about Christmas – and it's not the size or quantity of the presents that matters most. Very few of us, including children need more stuff."

A recent survey from the Australia Institute found that last Christmas six million Australians received one or more presents they never used or later gave away.

"This Christmas, why not focus less on the presents and more on your presence. Time spent together with the people we care about is the most precious gift we can give," Anne Hollonds said.

"Based on the increase in calls we always get after the holiday break, we know that Christmas can be a difficult time for many families. In the true spirit of Christmas, make time to nurture the people you really care about."

Tips for surviving Christmas include:

- Plan ahead for your Christmas events and expenses
- Focus on the needs of children, especially if there has been a separation or divorce in the family
- Try to minimise stress and conflict on Christmas Day
- Avoid spending excess money on gifts to compensate – instead make a commitment to take steps to improve your relationships over the next few months
- Spend time with each child – playing games, having fun together, and listening communicates love to a child more than any gift
- Spend time outdoors so children can burn off energy and you can reduce your stress

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Individual, Couple & Family Counselling, Relationships & Parenting Courses, Post Separation Services, Children's Contact Services, Family Relationship Centres, Adolescent Services, Family & Workplace Mediation  
Corporate & Business Consultancy, Professional Training & Consultation

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- Spread your celebrations over the holidays, rather than trying to see everyone on Christmas Day
- Sharing stories or playing a game of backyard cricket are bonding experiences which build shared memories for the future
- If you are alone at Christmas, plan in advance to do something you enjoy or get together with a friend or neighbour who needs company or a helping hand.

Relationships Australia provides counselling, mediation and relationship education programs and has more than 200 centres nationally.  
For information call 1300 364 277.

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### **About Relationships Australia NSW**

Relationships Australia services include counselling for individuals couples and families (face-to-face, telephone and online); parenting and relationship education; support for families going through separation; specialist services for people who have been in care, refugee families and Aboriginal communities; workplace counselling and training; employee assistance programs and consultancy for companies; and training for family support professionals. Relationships Australia NSW is part of a national network of over 200 centres.

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