

Monthly Newsletter of

Community Coming Together (CCT)

December 2016

Save the Date

April 30, 2017

Move 4 Mental Health
Run/Walk
& Family Fun Fair

I made myself a snowball,
As perfect as could be,
I thought I'd keep it as a pet,
And let it sleep with me.
I made it some pajamas,
And a pillow for its head,
Then last night it ran away,
But first-- it wet the bed.



Community Coming Together (CCT) is 1 of 37 Mental Health Capacity Building School Initiatives in Alberta. CCT embraces the opportunity to inform children, youth, families and community members about mental health and to dispel many of the myths that surround mental illness.

Together we can begin to help students and families start to identify various ways to manage stress and build resiliency.





Trying to choose family friendly entertainment isn't always easy. Two websites that can help sift through what media is appropriate for your children are: Common Sense Media and Parent Previews. Both sites give a detailed breakdown of past and current movies, including a summary of the movie, the amount of violence, language, sexual content, and substance use. Each site has its own grading system to help you decide at a glance if you wish your child to view the item being reviewed. They also contain some great ideas for talking about movies after you watch them with your kids. This discussion guide was created from these two sites. The full reviews can be found here:

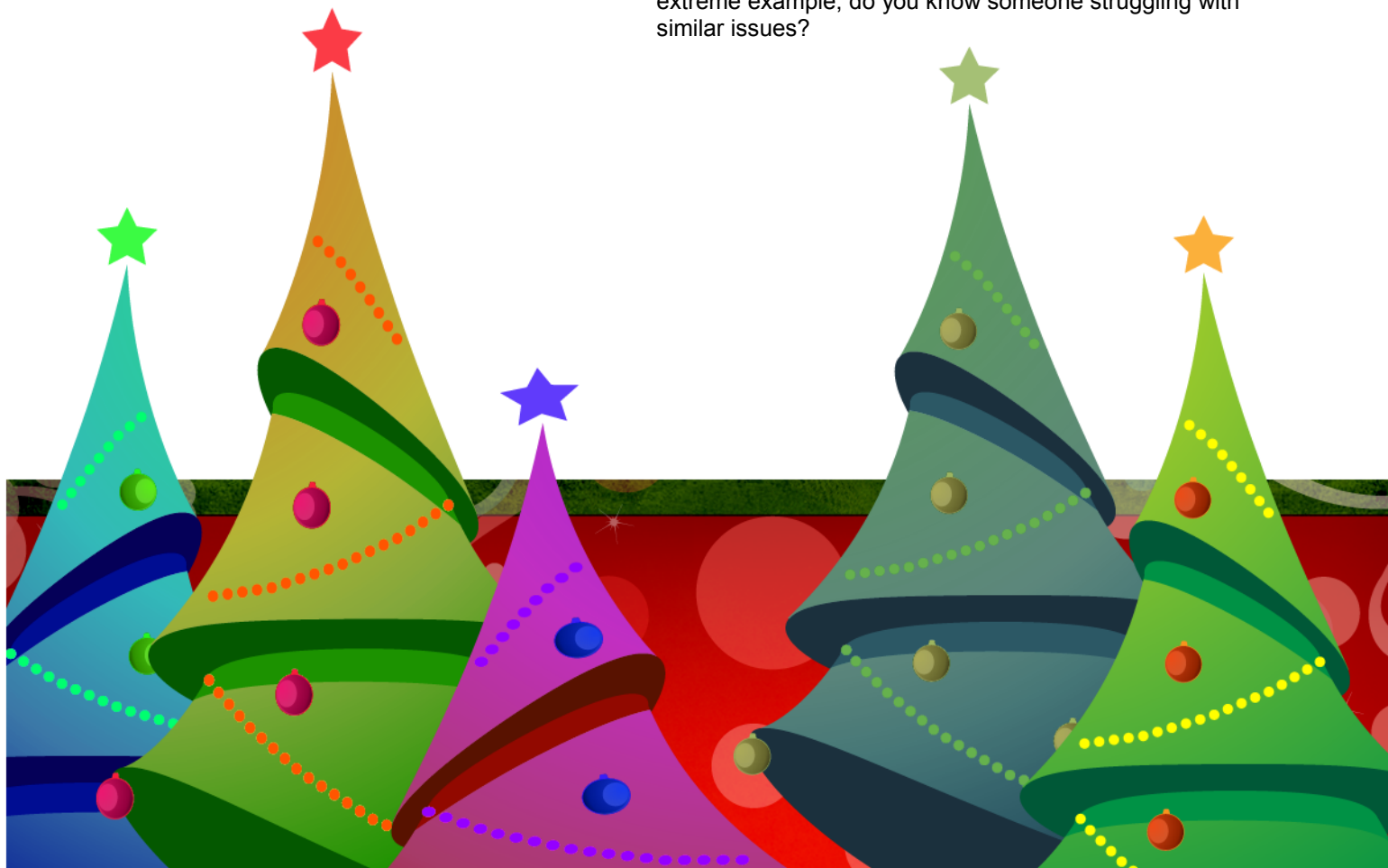
<http://parentpreviews.com/movie-reviews/review/elf>

<https://www.common Sense Media.org/movie-reviews/elf>

Elf

Family Discussion Guide

- Families can talk about whether Buddy is a role model. Do you think *Elf* intends for him to be someone people admire? Why or why not? Are you more likely to laugh *at* him or *with* him? Why? What's the difference?
- If you arrived in your town after 30 years at the North Pole, what do you think might surprise and delight you the way that the escalator and revolving door surprised and delighted Buddy?
- How does this movie compare to other Will Ferrell comedies? Why do you think he doesn't make more movies for kids?
- How do the characters in *Elf* demonstrate curiosity and integrity? What about compassion and gratitude? Why are these important character strengths?
- Having an orphan find their family is a very popular movie plot. Can you think of a few? Why do you think so many stories use this setup?
- Does your family know of anyone who has recently moved into your area from a very different place? Although the culture shock Buddy went through while trying to fit into NYC life is an extreme example, do you know someone struggling with similar issues?





Ideas for Holiday Entertainment

Making your own fun

Be creative - make things together like greeting cards or use beads to make some jewelry.

- Have an arts and craft day and get some canvas and paints, they can be bought in bargain shops for little and use paints or crayons and the kids can hang up their creations in their rooms.
- Make a list of your favourite childhood games - old favourites such as hopscotch, putting on a show or marbles won't cost the earth and your children will enjoy you reminiscing!
- In the evenings get the kids to design a game that you can make the next day - give them ideas to keep it simple such as a paper boat race in the paddling pool or homemade skittles using a tennis ball and empty toilet rolls.
- Have you ever thought about Origami? All you need is paper and instructions which can be found online, will keeps kids amused and they will learn a new skill

Don't try and fill every minute of every day. Encourage your children's imagination and independence - let them play in their rooms or the garden.

*The best of all gifts around
any Christmas tree: the
presence of a happy family all
wrapped up in each other.*

~Burton Hillis



Reducing Holiday Stress Quick Tips

Preparing for the holidays

Get organized. Make lists or use an appointment book to keep track of tasks to do and events to attend.

Share the tasks. You don't have to do everything yourself. Spend time with friends and family while you share tasks like decorating, wrapping gifts, and preparing the holiday meal.

Learn to say no. It's okay to say "no" to events that aren't important to you. This will give you more time to say "yes" to events that you do want to attend.

Be realistic. Try not to put pressure on yourself to create the perfect holiday for your family. Focus instead on the traditions that make holidays special for you. If you have a hard time being around your relatives, it's okay to set limits on your time at events and visits.

During the holidays

You may not be able to avoid stressful situations during the holidays, but you can plan to respond to them in a healthy way.

Take breaks from group activities. Pay attention to your own needs and feelings. Spend a little time by yourself if you can. Meditate, or do some relaxation breathing. Go for a short walk.

Keep a regular sleep, meal, and exercise schedule. Limit your alcohol. Taking care of yourself will help you deal with stressful situations during the holidays.

Get support if you need it. Holidays can sometimes trigger depression. They can be especially hard if you are already dealing with the death of a loved one or the breakup of a relationship. You may feel embarrassed to ask for help, or you may think that you'll get over "the blues" on your own. But most people need treatment to get better. Talk with your doctor about counseling and medicine for depression.

<http://www.webmd.com/balance/stress-management/tc/quick-tips-reducing-holiday-stress-get-started>

CCT Team

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