



# Holiday *Wellness* Guide 2019



MAZZONI CENTER  
LGBTQ HEALTH AND WELL BEING

# **Holiday *Wellness* Guide 2019**

**Strategies, and Resources  
for Maintaining Wellness  
through the Holiday Season**

An annual publication of Mazzoni Center's  
Behavioral Health program

Cover photography courtesy of Open Door therapist Bob Pileggi © 2017

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## Introduction and Welcome

Welcome to Mazzoni Center's Holiday Wellness Guide. We understand the holiday season can present many unanticipated feelings of loneliness, exhaustion, anxiety, and depression. With that in mind, we have identified resources and support for your emotional and physical well-being...and maybe a little fun, too! Understanding that LGBTQ+ people may encounter unique struggles during this time of year, we hope that this guide will assist you in identifying supports and allow you the space to find a sense of calm. While we know this information is not all encompassing, we consider it a step forward in supporting LGBTQ+ people in Philadelphia.

This guide's resources focus on engaging with your mental health around a difficult season, but we want to remind you that Mazzoni Center offers quality care year round in the following areas:

- Healthcare
- Counseling and Recovery
- Education
- Prevention and Care
- Legal Services
- Special Events

**Mazzoni Center Mission Statement:**

To provide quality comprehensive health and wellness services in an LGBTQ-focused environment, while preserving the dignity and improving the quality of life of the individuals we serve.

Thank you for coming to us, in whatever way feels supportive, and we hope that this guide will provide something to you this season.

All the best –

Mazzoni Center's Behavioral Health Team

## Emergency Resources and Contacts

### **Domestic Violence Counseling**

*Philadelphia Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-866-723-3014*

*Women in Transition: 215-564-5301*

**Hall Mercer Crisis Response Center (24 hours), (215) 829-5433** 245 S. 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Philadelphia

### **Mazzoni Medical Center**

1348 Bainbridge Street, Philadelphia PA 19147 (215)563-0658

(Non-emergency)

Family medicine, family planning, HIV/AIDS services, Lab services, Gender Affirming Services (GAS), Pediatric and Adolescent Comprehensive Transgender Services (PACTS), Adolescent Drop-in, Specialty Services, Walgreens On-Site Pharmacy.

<https://mazzonicenter.org/programs/medical-care>

### **Office of Supportive Housing, Emergency Housing Intake: 215-686-7150, or -7153**

1401 JFK Boulevard, 10th Floor

Philadelphia, PA 19102

<http://www.phila.gov/osh/aboutus/Pages/ContactUs.aspx>

**Appletree Family Intake Center** (Single Women & Families), 215-686-7150

1430 Cherry Street

M-F; 7am-5pm

**The Red Shield** (After Hours Reception for Single Women with Families), 215-787-2887

715 N. Broad Street

After 5pm, weekends and holidays

**Station House** (After Hours Reception for Single Men), 215-225-9235

2601 N. Broad Street

After 4pm, Weekends & Holidays

**House of Passage** (After Hours Center for Women & Families), 215-471-2017

111 N. 48th St.

After 5pm, Weekends & Holidays

**Roosevelt Darby Center** (Intake & Assessment for Single Men), 215-685-3700

802 N. Broad Street

M-F; 7am-5pm

**Emergency Assistance Response Unit** (Walk-ins Welcome), 215-685-9087

5252 N. 13th Street

M-Th; 9am-3pm

**Adult Protective Services**, Information and Referral Hotline: 215-686-5671 or 215-686-5672

### Cold Weather Hotlines

Homeless 877-222-1984

Homeless Veterans 215-814-6888

Stray Animals 215-686-8686

### Emergency Shelter Programs:

<http://philadelphia.pa.networkofcare.org/ps/services/subcategory.aspx?tax=BH-1800>

**Suicide and Crisis Hotline (24 Hours), 215-686-4420**

**Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

**The William Way Community Center, 215-732-2220**

(Non-emergency)

1315 Spruce St. Philadelphia, PA 19107

*Peer Counseling:* Monday-Friday, 6-9 PM.

By Phone, Walk-In or Appointment.

*Phone:* 215.732.8255

*E-mail:* [lgbtpeercounseling@yahoo.com](mailto:lgbtpeercounseling@yahoo.com)

*Website:* <http://www.lgbtpeercounseling.com/>

**Trans Lifeline Support Hotline, (877) 565-8860**

<http://hotline.translifeline.org/> (Availability posted online)

**Trevor Lifeline (24 hours), 866-488-7386**

FREE and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

TrevorText - Available on Thursdays and Fridays (4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. ET / 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. PT). Text the word "Trevor" to 1-202-304-1200. Standard text messaging rates apply.

TrevorChat - Available 7 days a week (3:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. ET / 12:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. PT). Online instant messaging with a counselor.

<http://www.thetrevorproject.org/>

**WOAR: Women Organized Against Rape 24-Hour Hotline (215) 985-3333**

Serving women, men, and the LGBTQ community

<http://www.woar.org/>

If You Decide to Report the Assault, Call 911 or

Contact the Special Victims Unit at (215) 685-3251

**Your Local Hospital's Emergency Room, Fill in the Address and Phone # Here:**

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## Are the Holidays Getting You Down?

### Depressive Symptoms and Coping Strategies

The holiday season can present many unanticipated feelings of loneliness, exhaustion, anxiety, and depression. At times, it is circumstantial and at others it presents deeper struggles with our mental health. If you're already diagnosed with depression, mood, or anxiety disorders, this time of year may present additional hardships. For those who are not diagnosed with one of these disorders, any combination of the stressors this time of year could lead to the "holiday blues" or "seasonal affective disorder (SAD)".

#### **Commonly-Experienced Stressors and Contributors to Depression, Anxiety, SAD, Manic episodes or the "Holiday Blues:"**

Increased levels of stress are invariably cited as one of the biggest contributors to the "holiday blues." In addition to stress, some of the other oh-so-common factors that can lead to the "holiday blues" include:

- Fatigue
- Unrealistic expectations
- Feeling bombarded by over-commercialization
- Strained relationship issues that surface when families get together
- Differing views among friends and family, in particular related to issues of identity politics.
- Reminders of past losses of significant loved ones
- Sadness over the contrast between "now" and "then"
- Adapting to changes in family configurations and logistics for celebrating together caused by such new situations as divorce, marriage, blended families, adolescents who no longer celebrate the holidays as "children," and grown children establishing their own independent holiday traditions
- Financial constraints and demands
- The inability to be with friends and family
- Triggers and temptations related to food, drugs, alcohol, or sex.
- Residue stress from unfortunate past experiences during previous holiday seasons
- Tension caused by the additional demands of shopping in holiday crowds, heavier-than-usual traffic, entertaining, holiday baking, long-distance travel, family reunions and/or houseguests

#### **Some tips for preventing and combatting Seasonal Affective Disorder or Holiday Stress**

- Exercise (something is better than nothing, a walk or gym session can alleviate stress).
- Limit unhealthy foods; whole foods and hydration are great ways to support your body.
- Get plenty of sleep (go to bed earlier and get up earlier to get the most hours of sunlight each day, if you can).
- Practice self-care through activities or interactions that you normally enjoy. Self-care can be meditation, exercise, time with friends, crafting, or creating quiet time to relax. Remember, at times you may not feel like doing these things because of your symptoms, but the act of even trying to engage is a positive step forward.

## Undiagnosed? Could it be a disorder?

The holiday and winter season pose a difficult question for people in regards to their mental health. Googling symptoms, isolation, and confusion are quite normal reactions to the feelings you are experiencing, but it is important to remember that your situation is unique to you, and there are resources to help support you through a difficult time. If you are experiencing feelings of intense sadness, worthlessness, anxiety, or moods that shift often and they are causing negative impacts on your life, it may be time to reach out for support. Persistent sad, anxious, or empty mood

- Sudden loss of pleasure and interest in activities that are usually enjoyed
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, helplessness
- Difficulty sleeping, or increased sleeping
- Behavior that is more nervous or agitated than normal, or more slowed and unresponsive than normal
- Complaints of being tired all the time and having low energy
- Significant weight loss or gain
- Persistent physical symptoms that don't respond to treatment, such as headaches, digestive disorders, muscle or joint pain
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, making decisions
- Thoughts of suicide\*\*

**\*\*Suicidal ideation is always a serious matter and should be immediately responded to by enlisting professional assistance, for instance, calling "911," and/or seeking help from a local suicide hotline (listed in your Yellow Pages under "Crisis Intervention Services"), and/or contacting a local mental-health professional.**

Often, it may take some time to find a covered program or available therapist to support you. To start, you can review this manual for support groups and resources. Additionally, considering there is often a waitlist for services at many locations, it may be helpful to take the first step towards securing support. Here at Mazzoni, we are happy to help answer questions. Although we may not be open on certain holidays, our staff is willing to support you as best we can. To start, we encourage you to contact Justin Benner, LCSE, CAADC, Intake Specialist in our Behavioral Health Department at 215-563-0652 X 248 to begin the intake process. While it may not be immediate, forward movement towards finding support often provides people with relief.

Additional information on behavioral health services at Mazzoni can be found at <https://www.mazzonicenter.org/counseling-and-recovery-services>.

## Useful Strategies for Managing Strong Emotions

Throughout the coming weeks, consider engaging some of the following strategies for getting around potential sources of stress around the holidays or symptoms that are difficult to manage.

### **1. *Keep your expectations for the holiday season manageable:***

While it can be tempting to find “perfect” solutions to ensuring everyone involved in the holiday celebrations are happy, remember, you are not responsible for everyone’s happiness. Asking for assistance, delegating or deciding which traditions are most important to continue may be helpful. We often recreate chaos during the holidays out of a sense of responsibility to carry out past experiences, but there can be great discoveries in simplicity. If you’re feeling overwhelmed, it can be helpful to create boundaries and ask others to contribute to the holiday in ways that will allow you space to enjoy them as well.

### **2. *Remember the holiday season does not banish reasons for feeling sad or lonely:***

During the holiday season, there's room for feelings such as sadness and/or loneliness to be present along with other more joyful emotions. You may be feeling out of sorts and periodically out of sync with the season's "jollier" aspects because of a current stressor, for example, a recent romantic break-up, or dealing with an adolescent child who's expressing their newfound independence by not participating in this year's family traditions. When you feel down, avoid critical self-perceptions, such as thinking of yourself as Scrooge and, instead, try to articulate the understanding you need from those around you. You might also consider seeking the help of a therapist to help you sort out your feelings and deal with the troubling issues.

### **3. *Limit predictable sources of stress:***

If you feel the annual trappings of shopping, decorating, cooking and attending social events risk becoming overwhelming and stressful, use discretion and limit the activities you commit to. Planning ahead of time and looking at your calendar early to hold time for these tasks may alleviate last minute stress. You can show love and caring in lots of thoughtful ways which don't cost a lot and that make the holidays all the more meaningful and personal.

### **4. *Finding YOUR version of self-care:***

No matter which approach you choose, the goal is to figure out which self-care strategies work best for you, learn how to use these strategies, and implement them in your regular routine so you can boost your well-being. YOU get to define this. Some examples are: setting boundaries, taking small emotional wellness breaks, playing with pets, taking an exercise or mediation class, cooking a meal for yourself, creating art, reading. Remember, you are the guard of this precious time and can allow for that time to be important and sacred.

**5. Join a social group:**

Feelings of loneliness and isolation can often be supported by participating in activities with others. Please visit the table of contents for resources and support groups.

## Four Easy Tips for Handling the Holidays like a Mindfulness P.R.O.

From Bob Pileggi

More fully experience what delights you this holiday season through mindfulness, which is paying attention to life in this moment. Not only can it help us enjoy more, it can help us cope with what's challenging.

As we are aware of the symptoms that show up for us in challenging holiday moments (such as tension in the body, sadness, or self-defeating thoughts of not being wanted, for example), we have the opportunity to choose consciously how we'll respond. Mindful awareness can lead to healthy choices! Here are a few easy mindfulness tips for enjoying the holidays more, and for making empowering choices when challenges arise.

**1. Savor your food**

- Gobble gobble – or perhaps instead mindfully eat your first bite. Notice the smells, colors, flavors, texture...
- Starting out this way may satisfy you more quickly, and help prevent overeating...in addition to making the food more enjoyable!

**2. Notice the delights**

- Instead of rushing through the holidays, delight in them.
- Pause and take in the lights, decorations, music – whatever you enjoy. Allow it to bring up feelings of joy or gratitude.

**3. Shop mindfully**

- Giving gifts to others? Or yourself (let's be honest about those holiday sales, right!)?
- Before buying, notice how it feels to hold this potential gift. Is it something that brings up joy, knowing that the other person will receive it? Or are you feeling compelled or stressed to get it just because it's such a "good deal"?
- Perhaps you'll end up enjoying the experience of shopping more, and not putting as big of a dent as usual in holiday finances.

**4. Handle challenges like a P.R.O.**

- When challenging interactions or emotions arise, consider following these steps to diffuse the challenge and to make a healthy decision.
- P – PAUSE: Notice that the challenge is happening; the emotions arising; the tension in the body.
- R – RELAX: Take a breath (or 2 or 3). Stretch. Back away from the situation a bit.
- O – OPEN: Open to the possibilities:
  - a) maybe things will be ok
  - b) maybe you are strong enough and maybe you do have other support (friends may be just a text away) to handle the situation. Perhaps access support and then move forward with a conscious choice.

## Handling LGBTQ-Specific Holiday Stress

The holidays can be a stressful time for LGBTQ people or families with LGBTQ members, but there are several strategies that you can use to help reduce stress and create a happy holiday this year. (from [PFLAG.org](http://PFLAG.org))

- **Don't assume** you know how somebody will react to news of your sexual orientation or gender identity — you may be surprised.
- **Realize** that your family's reaction to you may **not** be because you are LGBTQ. The hectic holiday pace may cause family members to act differently than they would under less stressful conditions.
- **Remember** that “coming out” is a continuous process. You may have to “come out” many times.
- **Don't wait** for your family's attitude to change to have a special holiday. Recognize that your parents need time to acknowledge and accept that they have a LGBTQ child. It took you time to come to terms with who you are; now it is your family's turn.
- **Let your family's judgments** be theirs to work on, as long as they are kind to you.
- If it is too difficult to be with your family, **create your own holiday gathering** with friends and loved ones.
- If you are transgender, **be gentle** with your family's pronoun “slips.” Let them know you know how difficult it is.
- Take the lead in **setting boundaries** if there are topics you believe will be upsetting like the political climate or current events.
- It can be easy to lose ourselves — stay connected to who you are.

### *Before the visit...*

- **Make a decision** about being “out” to each family member before you visit.
- If you are partnered, **discuss in advance** how you will talk about your relationship, or show affection with one another, if you plan to make the visit together.
- If you bring your partner home, **don't wait until late** into the holiday evening to raise the issue of sleeping arrangements. Make plans in advance.
- **Have alternate plans** if the situation becomes difficult at home.
- **Find out** about local GLBT resources.
- **If you do plan to “come out”** to your family over the holidays, have support available, including [PFLAG publications](http://PFLAG.org) and the [number of a local PFLAG chapter](#).
- **Make a plan with friends** — set up phone dates or video-chat dates, ask if you can email them and determine whether you would need an immediate response, balance out your obligatory socializing and more rewarding and enjoyable time
- Find out which friends or family are open to emergency phone calls.
- Have friends write you supportive notes that you can read during hard moments

### ***During the visit...***

- **Focus** on common interests.
- **Reassure** family members that you are still the same person they have always known.
- If you are partnered, **be sensitive** to their needs as well as your own.
- **Be wary** of the possible desire to shock your family.
- **Remember to affirm yourself.**
- **Realize** that you don't need your family's approval.
- **Connect with someone else who is LGBTQ**—by phone or in person—who understands what you are going through and will affirm you along the way.
- **Take some alone time** – go for a walk, read a book, journal meditate, listen to music, exercise

### **Have Boundaries!**

Discuss with friends you trust and/or therapist possible boundaries to have with your family. What do you need to feel safe? What is realistic? What's the difference between unsafe and uncomfortable and what are you willing to deal with? Some boundaries make and maintain for ourselves. Other boundaries have to do with other people's behavior – is it best to communicate these boundaries to the other person? What will you do if your boundaries are broken? Here are some examples:

- I will not tolerate it when my mother talks about my body in any way. If she does, I will ask her to stop. If she does not stop, I will walk away from her. I will communicate this boundary to her in an email before I arrive at her house.
- I will not allow my family to call my partner my "friend." We have been together for years and they are aware of the nature of our relationship. I will correct them when they say it.
- I will not drink alcohol with my family or be around them when are drinking heavily. If they start drinking, I will excuse myself politely and go to my room to read, call a friend, or go for a walk. I will speak to my parents on the phone before I get there to tell them this boundary.

**\*\*If you have a friend or partner coming with you – have a conversation ahead of time about what each of you would like from the other in terms of support. How will you ask for it? What would that support look like? What if the other person isn't able to give that support? Remember this could be hard at moments for both of you – be compassionate.**

### **\*\*If you're staying the night...What to pack:**

- Be sure to pack things that keep you connected to who you are – photos of friends, a favorite book, maybe even your pet.
- Pack things that comfort you – special pillow, scented candle, favorite bath products, food that makes you feel good.
- Pack coping tools – books, journals, favorite music, walking/running shoes, guided meditation

### ***After the visit...***

- Connect with your regular support community on your way home or immediately when you get home.
- Plan a fun activity with your friends, circle of support back in your community, to decompress and enjoy some holiday cheer among your chosen family.
- Acknowledge and affirm yourself for utilizing your coping skills.

## How to Plan Holidays in a Multicultural Family

By Laura Reynolds

Holidays are stressful enough but when you're dealing with family members from different cultural groups, you may have an added problem or two. Holidays are, by nature, times when families gather and bond. Deciding how and when to blend traditions in a multicultural family can be a challenge but your family will end up understanding its own traditions better and be richer for the addition of new traditions.

### Things You'll Need

- Holiday gathering
- Research
- Patience
- Willingness to compromise

1. Find out about your new relations' traditions. You may be more compatible than you think. Christians and Orthodox Christians celebrate the same holidays, just on different days. Certain holidays are country-specific, like Thanksgiving and Fourth of July. Find out which holidays have religious significance and what the others celebrate.

2. Share stories together and let family members share stories with the younger members. The story of Chanukah never failed to delight at our house, especially when accompanied by a new candle each evening on a little menorah commemorating the Maccabees given to us by a dear friend.

3. Agree ahead of time where and what to celebrate as a group. Plan ahead and be prepared to share with your in-law's family. It's best to be flexible and accept that there will be times that you just won't be able to be together. If you're open to new ideas and willing to compromise, you just might find

yourself being invited to another family's festivities.

4. Include family members in your family's traditions and participate in theirs. Some traditions are quite complex. Be open-minded and accept the validity of different cultural traditions. Be sure to find out how "orthodox" your new family member is--some families adapt easily, no matter how different.

5. Don't try to "universalize" everybody's tradition. Their value is that they are meaningful to its followers. Concentrate on the history and meaning of religious observances, rather than trying to reconcile beliefs. Understanding religious history leads to tolerance and tolerance leads to acceptance.

6. Accept the fact that some traditions don't translate well. Share what works and what makes your new relative comfortable. Leave adventures in dining to another time and serve "typical" dishes that everyone can enjoy. Find activities that kids can share and enjoy from each other's cultural background. The grown-ups will be drawn in by the laughter and fun.

### Tips & Warnings

Don't rush it. Beware of "overload." Don't try to tell--or learn--everything at one holiday dinner. Your new family member already feels like a minority. Concentrate on welcoming them as a member of the group.

Be aware of the climate right now around race and be mindful of the potential divide as well as finding opportunities to validate the experiences of others.

# How to Cope With Social Anxiety during the Holidays

By [Arlin Cuncic](#)

Knowing how to cope with social anxiety during the holidays is not easy. This time of year can be stressful for everyone, but for those with [social anxiety disorder \(SAD\)](#) the social pressures and obligations can become overwhelming. For those whose anxiety interferes with daily functioning, the holidays may also be an extremely lonely time of year. In order to survive the holiday season, there are things that you can do to cope with your anxiety.

## **Get a proper [diagnosis](#) and appropriate [treatment](#)**

If you are experiencing [symptoms of social anxiety](#) and are unsure whether they are signs of shyness or something more severe, make an [appointment with your doctor](#)<sup>5</sup> to discuss your problems. The holidays are a time when people make resolutions for the New Year, and it's a great time to get a handle on problems that may have plagued you for decades. Make a promise to yourself to get help. Coping strategies alone aren't enough to manage SAD -- you need proper treatment.

## **Be choosy about the social engagements that you attend**

If you receive invitations from people whose company you do not enjoy, it is OK to gracefully bow out. But, make sure that you still get out and participate in some social activities. Avoiding social contact altogether is a recipe for becoming more fearful.

## **Keep up your energy and keep stress at bay**

Ensure that you maintain good eating habits and exercise regularly. The endorphins released during exercise can have a calming effect on anxiety. Yoga is especially relaxing. Small animal studies even note that vitamins and minerals found in healthy foods can also help regulate anxiety (while it's not certain the same holds for humans, a nutritious diet can't hurt!) Make sure to get enough sleep and avoid stimulants, such as caffeine and nicotine.

## **Conduct some "social reconnaissance"**

Do as Bernardo Carducci of the Shyness Research Institute at Indiana University suggests and conduct some "social reconnaissance" before attending parties or gatherings. Learn who will be there and what they are interested in. You don't have to be an expert in every topic, but learning a little bit about people's favorite discussion topics will help you carry on conversations. Read the newspaper, magazines, or go online and learn a little bit about current events. Gather some jokes, and get up the courage to try one out.

## **[Try volunteering](#)**

If the holidays are a particularly lonely time for you, offer to help out at a local soup kitchen or distribute gifts to needy children. Volunteering gives you the chance to meet new people and work with them towards a common goal -- a great basis for new friendships. It also gives you something interesting to talk about if your social calendar includes parties or family gatherings.

### **Use coping techniques when anxiety builds**

There are many [self-help strategies](#)<sup>6</sup> that you can use if you feel social anxiety beginning to creep back into your life. The holidays are a time of year when all emotions become magnified, and anxiety is no exception. [Practicing deep breathing techniques](#) and learning to control [negative automatic thoughts](#) are two great ways to manage anxiety during times of stress.

### **Ask your family for help**

Having a great support system in place will make the process of overcoming social anxiety and managing your disorder that much easier. However, your family may not always know what it is that you need, and they may forget to ask during this busy time of year. Tell them how you are feeling and let them know [what they can do to help](#).

### **Be the early-bird**

Have you ever arrived at a party or gathering when everyone was already there and felt like the outsider looking in? Not sure where to start or who to talk to? Try to be one of the first people to arrive at the next holiday party and meet people as they come in. This gives you a chance to ease into the situation and gradually speak to people, instead of being faced with a group all at once.

### **Avoid using alcohol for "liquid courage"**

The holidays can be a dangerous time of year for those who tend to use alcohol as a coping strategy for dealing with social anxiety. Although one glass of wine, or a swig of spiked eggnog, might help ease pre-party jitters, overindulging will impair your ability to interact effectively with others. Set yourself up for success by planning ahead how much (or if) you will drink, and what [other methods](#)<sup>10</sup> you will use for coping with anxiety.

### **Take time for yourself**

The holidays can be a particularly busy time of the year, and it's important to put your own mental health first. If family obligations tend to wear you ragged, make a plan for how much time you will spend with relatives and stick to it. Then, make sure that the time you *do* spend with family counts.

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## Detaching From Emotional Pain (Grounding)

It is useful to have a selection of grounding exercises that you can draw upon to keep your mind and body connected and working together, particularly for those times when you are becoming overwhelmed with distressing memories, thoughts and feelings.

People who have experienced childhood sexual abuse or adult sexual assault can sometimes be confronted by flashbacks or intense memories of what was done, to the point that they are feel as if they are back there, re-living the abuse all over again.

Grounding exercises are a way for you to firmly anchor yourself in the present.

The following grounding exercises are about using our senses (see, hear, smell, taste, touch) to build our mind and body connection in the present. In working through the grounding exercises suggested here, you might find one or two that work for you – remembering only to use the exercises that you feel comfortable with.

- Remind yourself of who you are now. Say your name. Say your age now. Say where you are now. Say what you have done today. Say what you will do next.
- Take ten breaths, focus your attention on each breath on the way in and on the way out. Say number of the breath to yourself as you exhale.
- Splash water on your face.
- Sip a cool drink of water.
- Hold a cold can or bottle of soft drink in your hands. Feel the coldness, and the wetness on the outside. Note the bubbles and taste as you drink.
- As you wake, during the night, remind yourself who you are, and where you are. Tell yourself who you are and where you are. What age are you now? Look around the room and notice familiar objects and name them. Feel the bed you are lying on, the warmth or coldness of the air, and notice any sounds you hear.
- Feel the clothes on your body, whether your arms and legs are covered or not, and the sensation of your clothes as you move in them.
- If you are with other people, and you feel comfortable with them, concentrate closely on what they are saying and doing, and remind yourself why you are with them.

- If you are sitting feel the chair under you and the weight of your body and legs pressing down onto it.
- If you are lying down, feel the contact between your head, your body and your legs, as they touch the surface you are lying on. Starting from your head, notice how each part feels, all the way down to your feet, on the soft or hard surface.
- Stop and listen. Notice and name what you can hear nearby and in the distance. .
- Hold a mug of tea in both hands and feel its warmth. Don't rush drinking it, take small sips and take your time tasting each mouthful.
- Look around you, notice what is front of you and to each side, name first large objects and then smaller ones.
- Get up, walk around, take your time to notice each step as you take one then another.
- Stamp your feet notice the sensation and sound as you connect with the ground.
- Clap and rub your hands together, hear the noise and feel the sensation in your hands and arms.
- Wear an elastic band on your wrist (not tight) and flick it gently, so that you feel it spring back on your wrist as it
- If you can, step outside, notice the temperature of the air and how much it is different or similar to where you have just come from.

<https://www.livingwell.org.au/well-being/grounding-exercises/>

## Other Resources

[AnxietyBC.com](http://AnxietyBC.com)

Education about anxiety and PTSD, muscle relaxation, grounding techniques

[DrPattiLevin.com](http://DrPattiLevin.com)

Grounding sitting, mindful walking, statements, breathing, and grounding objects

[Self-Help.Tools](http://Self-Help.Tools)

Breathing, calming smells, and grounding statements

## Staying Sober During the Holidays

By Adam Ouanes

Surviving the holidays is a difficult task for many LGBTQ people, but for sober members of the community it can almost feel like an impossible feat. It seems like alcohol is woven into the fabric of the holiday season. Between family obligations, office parties, and your friend's annual ugly holiday sweater party, it can feel like liquor has an inescapable presence. Not to mention the stress of dealing with family members and financial pressures can really take a toll, which makes relaxing with a peppermint Schnapps hot chocolate all the more enticing.

Though every person has their own go-to strategies that allow them to pursue their sobriety, here are eight uncomplicated tips that can help you remain alcohol-free throughout the holiday season. Whether you're a sober individual in recovery or simply looking for ways to cut back on overconsumption of alcohol this holiday season, adhering to a few, simple strategies can help you successfully navigate through feeling overwhelmed to drink.

**Set clear boundaries for yourself and others.** If you've made the decision to begin the journey of sobriety, then that is the number one priority. It is perfectly okay to say no to anything you feel may put your sobriety at risk. If you are afraid that being at a family event will be too stressful and triggering for you, then don't feel obligated to engage.

**What to say when someone offers you a drink?** No is a complete sentence. If someone offers you a drink, it's okay to say no and leave it at that. Most people won't think twice about your response and will move on. In the event that someone pushes you to say more, try coming up with a brief response beforehand so you are not caught off guard. For example, "I'm just trying to be healthier" is a perfectly legitimate and truthful answer.

**Keep a drink in hand.** Nonalcoholic, of course. This is a way to avoid the dreaded "Would you like a drink?" question all together. Many people chose to nurse a club soda with lime, club soda and cranberry juice, or some other variation to easily blend in. After all, no one can spot the difference between a Lacroix in a glass or a gin and tonic.

**Bring your own transportation.** It can be helpful and comforting to know that you have the ability to leave a situation on your own whenever you may need to. In case you get uncomfortable, or conflict with family arises, it is helpful to be able to escape immediately.

**Know your limits.** You are responsible for your sobriety, and it is okay to honor your limits. You will become acutely aware of the situations that trigger your desire to drink or use other substances. Early on in recovery, this might even look like setting time limits for yourself when you need to be at a party.

If you are at a family event and find yourself in a conflict with a family member, try to remove yourself from the situation. Fighting with family can be extremely triggering, and it's best to make sure you are safe. Calmly walk away, and either go to a safe space to collect yourself or leave.

**“Book-ending.”** If you are concerned about a particular to together or family event, one good strategy is to book-end the event with something to do before and something to do or somewhere to go after. Bookending is a great way to ensure an easy escape in case the event is too much to handle. Try grabbing a cup of coffee with a friend prior to the event and setting up a hangout session with another friend afterwards.

**Use this holiday season to make some new, alcohol-free traditions.** There are a lot of awesome holiday events you can engage in that don't necessarily have to be centered around drinking. Try having a holiday cookie decorating party with your friends and watch some bad Hallmark Christmas movies. Gingerbread House contests can get pretty intense among friends too! LumiNature, Philadelphia's Zoo lights are a fun way to get out of the house and in the holiday spirit if you don't mind the cold. There's also plenty of events like the Gay Men's Chorus holiday show or, you can check out what is going on at The Kimmel Center for more performances. Making an annual trek out to KOP or the Christmas Village at JFK Plaza to get gifts for you loved ones can become a fun all day affair.

All it takes is a little bit of reorganizing what the holidays means to you. Creating new traditions and honoring your self-care choices can brighten up the season and help you not only survive, but also thrive this holiday season.

### 12 Step Recovery Support

Often times during the holiday season, specific 12 step fellowship groups may choose to host sober celebrations for those who need a place to go for Thanksgiving, Christmas, or New Year's. To learn about any events that may be happening in your area, it is best to either attend local meetings and ask other members for more information, or contact the local offices to ask directly. See the list below for numbers to Philadelphia offices.

*\*Note: Most groups meet every day of the year, regardless of whether or not it falls on a holiday.*

#### Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)

Ph: 215-923-7900

E: [info@aasepia.org](mailto:info@aasepia.org)

Online Meeting Directory: <https://www.aasepia.org/meetings/>

#### Al-Anon

Ph: 215-222-5244

Online Meeting Directory: <http://al-anon.org/find-a-meeting>

#### Crystal Meth Anonymous (CMA)

24-hour CMA Helpline: (855) 638-4373

Online Meeting Directory: <http://www.phillycma.org/>

#### Narcotics Anonymous (NA)

Ph: (215)745-9494

Online Meeting Directory: [www.naworks.org](http://www.naworks.org)

#### Overeaters Anonymous (OA)

Ph: (215) 674-4418

Online Meeting Directory: <http://oa-phila.org/>

#### LGBTQ Specific 12 Step Meetings

Online Directory: <https://www.gayandsober.org/meeting-finder-pennsylvania>

*Note: This website may be out of date. It is always a good idea to confirm a group is still meeting by checking the fellowship's directory. See fellowship contacts above.*

#### Philadelphia Freedom Roundup

The primary purpose of the Philadelphia Freedom Roundup is to carry the message of all 12 step recovery programs, based upon the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), with a special mission for the LGBTQ community. They seek to educate others on how to improve their spiritual, mental, social, and physical qualities of life by using the Twelve Steps. This group holds recovery events throughout the year in Philadelphia bringing the LGBTQ sober community together. Visit the link below for more info.

<https://philadelphiaroundup.org/>

## LGBTQ Philadelphia 12-Step Recovery Meetings

### Every Day

**5:30 - 6:30 PM - EARLY NIGHT OUT**

Washington West Center 1201 Locust St 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

**\*Holds Second meeting on Tues/Thurs at 7PM**

(AA, LGBTQ Friendly)

**8:30-9:30 PM - SOBER & GAY**

William Way Center, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 1315 Spruce St.

**11:30 PM - NIGHT OWL**

William Way Center Lobby, 1315 Spruce St.

(AA, LGBTQ Friendly)

**Crystal Meth Anonymous**

William Way Center, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 1315 Spruce St.

**7:00-8:00PM Tues, Weds, Fri, Sat, Sun**

**5:30-6:30PM Mon/Thurs.**

### Mondays

**7:30 PM – AA Philadelphia Gay & Lesbian Group  
BEGINNERS MEETING**

Trinity Episcopal Ch., 2212 Spruce St.

### Wednesdays

**7:30 PM - YOUNG PEOPLE'S**

St. Mark's Church between 16th and 17th on Locust. Entrance in middle of block, thru the courtyard and up middle stairs.

(LGBTQ friendly)

### Thursdays

**7:00PM Queer & Trans AA**

257 S. 45th St Phila PA 19104

### Fridays

**7:00 PM - CHESTNUT HILL AA LGBTQ - Open Literature**

Chestnut Hill United Methodist Church, 8812 Germantown Avenue

**7:30 PM –AA ACCEPTANCE**

Trinity Episcopal Ch., 22nd & Spruce St.

### Saturdays

**10:30 – 11:30 – 10<sup>th</sup> Step at 10:30**

Christ Church Meeting House 20 No American St  
(AA, LGBTQ Friendly)

**11:30 - 12:30 - BLUE SKY -**

Holy Trinity Church, Basement 1904 Walnut St.  
(AA, LGBTQ Friendly)

### Sundays

**12:30 - 1:30 - BLUE SKY -**

Basement of the Ethical Society.  
Across from the SW corner of Rittenhouse Square.  
(AA, LGBTQ Friendly)

**5:30 PM – Queer and Trans AA**

257 S. 45th St Phila PA 19104

## Non 12-Step Recovery Meetings

### LGBTQ Specific Groups:

#### LGBTQ SMART RECOVERY GROUP

**What:** A drop-in support group for LGBTQ persons in recovery or thinking about beginning the recovery process. This group aims to support each individual's unique recovery goals and strategies, while increasing insight and self-awareness, along with an educational component.

**When:** Mondays 2:30-3:30 PM or Wednesdays at 5:00-6:30 PM, at Mazzoni Center, 1348 Bainbridge Street.

*Note: These group's do not meet on days Mazzoni Center is closed.*

**Contact:** Kirk Parsons at 215-563-0652 x582 or [kparsons@mazzonicenter.org](mailto:kparsons@mazzonicenter.org)

### Find more SMART recovery meetings below:

<https://www.smartrecoverytest.org/local/>

### About SMART Recovery:

SMART Recovery's 4-Point Program<sup>®</sup> helps people recover from all types of addictive behaviors, including: alcoholism, drug abuse, substance abuse, drug addiction, alcohol abuse, gambling addiction, cocaine addiction, and addiction to other substances and activities.

SMART Recovery (Self-Management and Recovery Training) is not a 12-step group, like Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) or Narcotics Anonymous (NA).

SMART Recovery sponsors face-to-face meetings around the world, and daily online meetings. In addition, our online message board and 24/7 chat room are excellent forums to learn about SMART Recovery and obtain addiction recovery support.

Please note that registration at message board is required for online meetings.

## Philadelphia Overeaters Anonymous Meetings

### Monday Groups

**Center City:** 12:00pm

First Baptist Church (basement)  
1636 Sansom St. Philadelphia, PA 19103  
Contact: Mary C., 215-339-9405

Contact: Mary C., 215-339-9405

**Center City:** 5:30pm

Church of the Holy Trinity, "Recovery on Rittenhouse" (enter from Walnut)  
19<sup>th</sup> and Walnut Sts. Phila, PA 19103  
Contact: Judy, 484-574-7374

### Tuesday Groups

**Center City:** 12:00pm

First Baptist Church (basement)  
1636 Sansom St. Philadelphia, PA 19103  
Contact: Beth, 215-339-9405

**Mount Airy:** 7:00pm

Grace Epiphany Episcopal Church  
224 E. Gowen Ave, Philadelphia PA 19119  
Contact: Emily M, 202-503-8464

**Center City:** 5:30pm

Stephen Klein Wellness Center  
2144 Cecil B Moore Ave. Phila, PA 19121  
Contact: Bella, 267-596-3071

### Friday Groups

**Center City:** 12:00pm

First Baptist Church (basement)  
1636 Sansom St. Philadelphia, PA 19103  
Contact: Michelle, 856-298-6278

### Wednesday Groups

**North Philadelphia:** 11:00am

Circle of Hope Church, "We Are Never Alone"  
(room closest to the stairwell)  
2007 Frankford Ave. Philadelphia, PA 19125  
Contact: Jodie K., 267-752-3779

**NE Philadelphia:** 6:00 pm

Nazareth Hospital, "Attitude of Gratitude"  
Marian Building, Room A (front desk for help)  
2601 Holme Ave, Philadelphia PA 19152  
Contact: Hannah, 215-745-9661

**Center City:** 12:00pm

First Baptist Church (basement)  
1636 Sansom St. Philadelphia, PA 19103  
Contact: Mary C., 215-339-9405

**Center City:** 7:00 pm

Hahnemann Hospital, "A Power Greater Than Ourselves" (Picture ID needed to enter)  
245 N 15<sup>th</sup> St, Philadelphia PA 19102  
Contact: Enrique, 267-632-1030

**Fairmount:** 8:00pm

Brewerytown Fairmont Clubhouse  
"Stepping to Recovery"  
2044 Fairmount Ave. Philadelphia, PA 19130  
Contact: Julie Z., 207-431-7809

### Sunday Groups

**Center City:** 12:00 pm

William Way Community Center, "OA in the Moment" (call ahead for handicap access)  
1315 Spruce St., Philadelphia PA 19152  
Contact: Judy, 484-574-7374

### Thursday Groups

**Center City:** 12:00pm

First Baptist Church (basement)

1636 Sansom St. Philadelphia, PA 19103

## **Depression Support Group: Live well.**

A Local depression support groups - led by volunteer peers in the community - always free and easy to access: you just walk in!

### Monday

**Center City:** 8:00-9:15pm  
William Way Center  
1315 Spruce St. Philadelphia, PA

### Tuesday Group

**Center City:** 7:00-8:15pm  
Ethical Society, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
1906 S Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia, PA

### Wednesday

**West Philadelphia:** 8:00-9:15pm  
Inner Rhythms Studio, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
37 S. 42<sup>nd</sup> St (@Chestnut Street)

### Saturday

**South Philadelphia:** 10:30-11:40am  
Bok Building  
1901 S. 9<sup>th</sup> Street (@Mifflin St)

### Sunday

**Old City:** 6:15-7:20pm  
The Clay Studio  
139 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> St. (Arch/Race)

For more info visit: <https://www.livewell-foundation.org/>

## Mazzoni Center Drop-in Support Groups

### Group Webpage

<https://mazzonicenter.org/programs/support-groups>

*Groups Meet at Mazzoni Center 1348 Bainbridge Street, Philadelphia, PA 19147*

#### **Evolutions: Transgender Support Group**

**What:** A drop-in support group for anyone identifying along the transgender spectrum (or questioning their gender identity). Please join us for support and psycho-education surrounding issues of gender, such as gender identity, gender presentation, and coming out to friends and family. This group provides a positive and supportive environment for people to explore their own evolution, as well as offer their support to others.

**When:** Thursdays 6:00-7:00 PM, at Mazzoni Center, 1348 Bainbridge Street.

**Contact:** Gabe Grochowski, MS at 215-563-0652 X568 or [ggrochowski@mazzonicenter.org](mailto:ggrochowski@mazzonicenter.org)

#### **New Bois Club: Support and Resource Sharing Group for the Transmasculine Community**

**What:** A drop-in support and resource group for anyone along the transmasculine spectrum. This group provides a safe and supportive environment for FTMs, trans\* men and bois, and individuals assigned female at birth who are exploring masculinity. Join us for discussion, resource sharing, and psycho-education on topics such as coming into masculine identities, navigating within communities, sexuality, dating, coming out, medical transition, legal transition, aging, and developing/starting families.

**When:** Mondays 6:00-7:00 PM, at Mazzoni Center, 1348 Bainbridge Street.

**Contact:** Nikele Riek, LSW at 215-563-0652 x281 or [nriek@mazzonicenter.org](mailto:nriek@mazzonicenter.org)

#### **More than Two**

**What:** More Than Two is a support and resource group for people who are gender non-conforming, non-binary, gender expansive, genderqueer or otherwise do not ascribe to the gender binary. This group provides a safe and supportive environment to explore gender identity, the challenges of living in a society based on binary expectations, and the ways in which to navigate the world.

**When:** 1st and 3rd Wednesdays 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM, at Mazzoni Center, 1348 Bainbridge Street.

**Contact:** Nikele Riek, LSW at 215-563-0652 x281 or [nriek@mazzonicenter.org](mailto:nriek@mazzonicenter.org)

*\* Note: if you are coming to the group for the first time, please be aware that we do not allow group members into the lobby prior to 5:45pm. Out of respect for our fellow attendees, we do not allow anyone into the group space after 6:15pm. Meetings are not held on days that fall on holidays*

## HIV/AIDS and STD Testing and Counseling

### HIV and STD Testing

**Walk-in HIV and STD Screening at Washington West Project** 1201 Locust Street Philadelphia, PA 19107

Schedule: <https://mazzonicenter.org/programs/rapid-hiv-testing-std-screening>

Receive free & confidential HIV/STI Screenings, no appointment necessary.

Call for more information 215-985-9206.

Holiday closures: Thanksgiving Nov. 23-26, Christmas Dec. 24-26, New Years Dec. 31- Jan. 2

**Philly AIDS Thrift On-Site HIV Testing Center**, 710 S. 5th Street.2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19147

Walk-in times: 4th Saturday of every month: 12:00 p.m. -4:00 p.m

### HIV Testing and Counseling

**Philadelphia FIGHT**, 1233 Locust Street, 3rd floor, 215.985.4448 ext. 230

Walk-in times: **Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9am-5pm; Tuesday and Thursdays from 9am-7pm, and Wednesday late-nights from 8pm-1AM.**

**Action Wellness Center City Annex**, 1026 Arch St, Philadelphia PA 19107, 267-940-5515

Walk-in times:

Monday: 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Tuesday: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Wednesday: 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Thursday: 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**Action Wellness West**, 3901 Market Street Philadelphia, PA 19104 (Entrance on Filbert Street)

Walk-in times: Friday: 12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

<https://www.actionwellness.org/services/testing-prevention/>

## Activities Calendar



= FREE Admission



= LGBTQ-Focused

\*See [MazzoniCenter.org](http://MazzoniCenter.org) for updates on events that have **MORE DETAILS TO COME.**

### Directories of activities and events:

-  • <http://phillygaycalendar.com/pages/calendarlist.php>
-  • <http://www.waygay.org/calendar>
- <http://www.historicphiladelphia.org/>
- <http://www.visitphilly.com/events-calendar/>
- <http://www.oldcitydistrict.org/events>
- <http://www.meetup.com/cities/us/pa/philadelphia/>
- <https://www.philamuseum.org/calendar/event-series/holidays-museum#events>

**Nov. 14 -  
Dec. 31**

#### **Franklin Square Holiday Festival**, 200 N. 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Philadelphia, PA

- Sparked by Benjamin Franklin’s electrifying genius, the *Electrical Spectacle Holiday Light Show* is the key to holiday fun in Franklin Square.
- 4:30pm-8:00pm Sundays – Thursdays; 9pm Fridays and Saturdays
- Light show to soundtrack of Philly Pops. Two alternating shows every 30 minutes.
- Saturdays and Sundays, Lightning Bolt Holiday Express around the square. Adults \$5, Children \$4.
- <http://www.historicphiladelphia.org/franklin-square/holidays-in-franklin-square/>

 **Nov. 20**



#### **Philadelphia Transgender Day of Remembrance**, William Way Community Center, 1315 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, PA

- 6:00-9:00 PM
- Join us for an evening of reflection, and remembrance

 **Nov. 28**



#### **Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner**, William Way Community Center, 1315 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, PA

- 1-3pm
- Celebrate the holidays with friends, meet new people & enjoy some great food
- Admission is bringing something to share. Please indicate a dish you can provide. Food for all types of dietary needs: Turkey, dessert, vegetarian, vegan. Please RSVP: 215-732-2220

 **Nov. 28**



#### **The Philadelphia Thanksgiving Day Parade**, Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia

- Parade starts at 20<sup>th</sup> Street and JFK Blvd and proceeds down Ben Franklin Parkway to Art Museum
- From 8:30am – 12pm, Broadcast: 8:30 am- 12pm

**Nov 27** **Tree-Lighting Celebration on the East Terrace** Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2600 Benjamin Franklin Pkwy, Philadelphia, PA 19130

- 5:00-7:00 PM
- Music by Chelsea Reed and the Fair Weather Nine and the Sister Cities GirlChoir
- <http://www.philamuseum.org/holidays>
- See more holiday events at the Art museum below:  
<https://philamuseum.org/calendar/event-series/holidays-museum#events>

**Nov. 28 - Dec. 24** **Christmas Village**, 1400 JFK Blvd., Philadelphia, PA 19107

- Sunday – Thursday: 11am – 7pm; Friday/Saturday: 11am – 8p; Thanksgiving: 9am – 5pm; Christmas Eve: 11am – 5pm
- Charm of an authentic German Christmas market to Center City
- <http://www.philachristmas.com/>



**Nov. 29** **Turkey Hangover – Philadelphia Art Museum**, 2600 Benjamin Franklin Pkwy, Philadelphia, PA 19130

- 10:30 AM – 3 PM
- Work off your Thanksgiving feast with a stroll through the galleries. Then gobble up some art while creating expressions of thanks in the Balcony Studio.



**Nov. 29** **Cartoon Party with the Cartoon Christmas Trio Music – Philadelphia Art Museum**, 2600 Benjamin Franklin Pkwy, Philadelphia, PA 19130

- 5:00 PM – 8:45 PM
- The Cartoon Christmas Trio ushers in the spirit of the season with songs from classic holiday cartoons like A Charlie Brown Christmas
- Performances at 5:45 and 7:15 PM



**Dec. 1st** **Holiday Clay Family Festival – Philadelphia Art Museum**, 2600 Benjamin Franklin Pkwy, Philadelphia, PA 19130

- 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM
- Set a holiday table with your own clay creations and meet ceramicist Stefani Threet.
- This event is part of the Turkey Hangover celebration



**Dec. 4th** **Holiday Card-Making – Philadelphia Art Museum**, 2600 Benjamin Franklin Pkwy, Philadelphia, PA 19130

- 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
- Get into the spirit through hands-on holiday crafting with Groundswell Greetings. Materials are supplied by art museum



**Nov. 29 – Dec. 31** **Macy's Christmas Light Show**, 1300 Market St, Philadelphia, PA 19107

- Lights, Music, and Storytelling combine to make this holiday show.
- Daily Show times: 10am, 12pm, 2pm, 4pm, 6pm, 8pm
- Closed Christmas Day



**Nov. 29 – Dec. 31** **Macy's Dickens Christmas Village**, 1300 Market St, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Philadelphia, PA 19107

- A walk-through exhibit based on the Dickens' Book A Christmas Carol
- Daily Show: 10am – 7pm
- Closed Christmas Day



**Nov. 28 – Jan. 1** **Comcast Holiday Spectacular**, 1701 JFK Blvd., Philadelphia, PA 19107

- 15 minute music and video show on 83'x25' LED wall, shows at the top of the hour every hour 10:00am – 8:00 pm (except 5pm weekdays)
- Includes audio description and closed captioning.

**Nov. 28- March 3** **Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest** 101 S. Christopher Columbus Blvd, Philadelphia, PA 19147

- Contact: (215) 925-7465, [riverrink@drwc.org](mailto:riverrink@drwc.org),
- [www.delawariverwaterfront.com/places/blue-cross-riverrink-winterfest](http://www.delawariverwaterfront.com/places/blue-cross-riverrink-winterfest)
- Olympic-size ice skating rink with spectacular views of the Delaware River
- Monday – Thursday 1 PM – 11 PM; Friday 1 PM – 1 AM; Saturday 11 AM – 1 AM; Sunday 11 AM – 11 PM
- FREE to enter Winterfest; Skating admission: \$4; Skate rental: \$10
- FREE skating admission for *Independence Blue Cross* Cardholders



**Dec. 5- Dec. 7** **Philadelphia Gay Men's Chorus**, Suzanne Roberts Theatre, 480 S Broad St, Philadelphia, PA 19146

- Starry Night Holiday Concert. Tickets: \$25-\$65
- Dec. 5 & 6, 8pm; Dec. 7, 2pm and 8pm
- <http://www.pgmc.org/event/starrynight/>



**Dec. 14** **TOY "Tinsel and Tinus"**, African American Museum of Philadelphia, 701 Arch Street, Philadelphia, PA

- 7:00pm-10:00pm
- DVLF's annual TOY has been named, "Best LGBT Fundraiser" by the Philadelphia Gay News. TOY is The Delaware Valley Legacy Fund's annual holiday fundraising event that raises money to support the mission of DVLF and to provide toys for patients at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) and those served by ActionAIDS. It is a cocktail party, dance, and silent auction.
- <https://www.dvlf.org/toy>



**Dec. 14** **Action AIDS, GayBINGO! Holiday Toy Drive**

- "It's the right time to rock the night away!" Be a doll and help Santa fill his sleigh. Bring a new, unwrapped toy for a child infected with or affected by HIV/AIDS.
- Doors open at 6:00. Game begins at 7:00PM. Approximate runtime 2.5hours
- Call 215-731-9255 now for tickets (\$36 for floor)
- <http://www.aidsfundphilly.org/events/gaybingo>

**Dec. 26- 31 Winter Break Family Programs** Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2600 Benjamin Franklin Pkwy, Philadelphia, PA 19130

- 10:30am – 3:00pm
- Bring the kids and spread out, make art, and explore.

<http://www.philamuseum.org/holidays>

**Dec. 25 Being \_\_\_\_\_ at Christmas!** National Museum of American Jewish History, 101 S Independence Mall E, Philadelphia, PA 19106, 215-923-3811

- Snowy. Jewish. Happy. Caring. Buddhist. Generous. Family. Creative. Friendly. Sparkly. Fill in your own blank and join us for our annual day of family fun with music, children’s activities, and clay studio.
- Museum hours: 10:00am-5:00pm
- Free with Admission to the Museum: \$12 for Adults/Free for Members/\$5 for Children 12 and younger/Free for kids of Family Level Members and above
- <https://info.nmajh.org/calendar.aspx>

 **Dec. 29**

**PhilaVentures: Wissahickon Hike**, 8624 Germantown Ave at Bethlehem Pike

- 2PM – 4PM
- An opportunity for walking at a moderate pace with a talkative group of LGBT folks who enjoy free air and exercise.
- Wear proper footwear and be ready to hike!



## Volunteer Opportunities

### Seasonal Opportunities

**SERVE Philadelphia:** Search for volunteer opportunities

- One-day opportunities: Apply online <http://serve.phila.gov/>
  - Contact Tiffany Smith at (215) 851-1806 or [tiffany@globalcitizen365.org](mailto:tiffany@globalcitizen365.org)

**Reward Volunteers:** Search for volunteer opportunities

- <https://rewardvolunteers.coop/holiday-volunteer-opportunities-philadelphia/>

### Ongoing LGBTQ Opportunities



**Mazzoni Center**, 1348 Bainbridge Street Philadelphia, PA 19147

- Philadelphia's LGBTQ health and well-being center.
- Contact 215-563-0652 or visit our website for more information.
- <https://www.mazzonicenter.org/donate-now/volunteer-opportunities>



**Philadelphia FIGHT**, 1233 Locust Street, 3rd floor Philadelphia, PA 19107

- A comprehensive health services organization providing primary care, consumer education, research, and advocacy for people living with HIV/AIDS and those at high risk.
- Contact (215) 985-4448 or [fight@fight.org](mailto:fight@fight.org)
- <http://fight.org/how-to-help/volunteer/>



**GALAEI**, 149 W. Susquehanna Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19122

- GALAEI is a queer Latin@ social justice organization.
- Contact (267)457-3912 or [info@galaei.org](mailto:info@galaei.org)
- <http://www.galaei.org/>



**MANNA**, 2323 Ranstead St. Philadelphia, PA 19103

- Free home delivered meals for those with serious diseases. Volunteers needed for kitchen prep and packaging, meal delivery, assistance with events and general office work.
- Contact Glenda at 215-496-2662 x 100 or [gcooke@mannapa.org](mailto:gcooke@mannapa.org)
- <http://www.mannapa.org/volunteeratmanna/>



**Action Wellness**, 1216 Arch Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Fl. Philadelphia, PA 19107

- Action Wellness is a Philadelphia-based organization committed to helping people living with chronic diseases, including HIV/AIDS. Offer a variety of volunteer opportunities.
- Contact Jay Johnson at 215-981-3324 or [ejohnson@actionwellness.org](mailto:ejohnson@actionwellness.org)
- <https://www.actionwellness.org/volunteer/>



**William Way LGBTQ Community Center**, 1315 Spruce St., Philadelphia, PA 19107

- Contact 215-732-2220 or [info@waygay.org](mailto:info@waygay.org)
- <https://waygay40.org/volunteer/>

## Ongoing Opportunities

### **WOAR: Women Organized Against Rape**

- <http://www.woar.org/volunteer-with-woar.php>

### **Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP)**

- <http://www.chop.edu/about-us/volunteer-opportunities#.VhLCUexVhBc>

### **Rebuilding Together, 4355 Orchard Street, Suite 2R, Philadelphia, PA 19124**

- The mission is to bring volunteers and communities together to improve the homes and lives of low-income homeowners.
- Contact 215-965-0777 or <http://www.rebuildingphilly.org/volunteers.htm>

### **Habitat for Humanity**

- Volunteers work on construction sites across Philadelphia. Time commitment is flexible.
- Contact (215) 765-6000 x10 or [volunteer@habitatphiladelphia.org](mailto:volunteer@habitatphiladelphia.org)
- <http://www.habitatphiladelphia.org/individual-volunteering>

## Volunteer Directories

### **Volunteer Match**

- Find a cause that lights you up. Get in touch with a nonprofit that needs you.
- Search: [VolunteerMatch.org](http://VolunteerMatch.org)

### **SERVE Philadelphia: A Cities of Service Initiative**

- Search: <http://serve.phila.gov/>

### **Coalition Against Hunger**

- Search a Food Pantry Map to find a pantry or soup kitchen near you. Be sure to call ahead of time to ensure that they need volunteers on the day you are planning to go
- Search: <http://www.hungercoalition.org/food-pantries>