

DECEMBER 2020

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Happy Wednesday and welcome to our final newsletter of 2020!

As we head into the final weeks of what has been a disrupted and challenging year, we encourage you to read today's articles and keep taking the time to identify ways you can support your ongoing self-care and wellbeing.

In today's edition you can check out these great items:

- our health and wellbeing focus
- 'lunch and learn' - the final session for 2020!
- take your learning with you
- send a virtual 'thank you' card
- looking after yourself during the festive period
- creative festive season cheer with the kids
- staying safe during your holidays

**Stay well and have a great Wednesday.**



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## Our health and wellbeing focus

Throughout this year, we have all made significant effort to manage the challenges of the pandemic. We have had to adjust and adapt to new ways of living and working to keep

Supported by the 'Health and wellbeing initiatives' implemented by the Human Resources team, the safety and wellbeing of our staff, students and wider University community remains the highest priority.

The [Mental health and wellbeing information guide \(pdf, 620kb\)](#) continues to underpin the focus on providing information and positive approaches to enable you to thrive in a productive and safe work environment. The guidelines, daily routines and positive approaches to work and problem-solving contained in the guide have been complemented by the programs offered by Human Resources during 2020. These have included:

- daily meditation and exercise sessions
- 'lunch and learn' sessions
- Motivational Monday and Wellness Wednesday newsletters
- dedicated webinars for academics and managers

As the year comes to a close, it is important that we all take time to reflect on the year that has been, and find the silver lining and the strategies that have worked for us in building and maintaining health routines and habits.

This is the final week of the health and wellbeing initiatives for 2020, which concludes on Thursday with the final ['lunch and learn' session - 'The good loaf – turning your sour culture into bread'](#).

You are encouraged to participate in the final programs of 2020 and, using the [Mental health and wellbeing information guide](#), identify activities that allow you to focus on your self-care and continue to thrive as you head into the holiday break and 2021.

Our 2021 health and wellbeing initiatives will be launched in February.

**Stay well, stay safe and have a happy break.**



## Lunch and learn sessions

**This Thursday will be the final 'lunch and learn' session for 2020, so register now!**

[Register here for this 'lunch and learn' session.](#) A Microsoft Teams link will be sent following registration.

### Upcoming session:

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<b>10 December</b>	<b>The good loaf – turning your sour culture into bread</b>
12:00pm - 1:00pm	Brendan Carter, TAFE Teacher, Baking

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### On-demand access to session recordings

The series of 'lunch and learn' session were designed to provide you with information and assistance, as and when you need it, in a range of areas that support your personal and professional needs and interests.

benefits these have provided.

If you have missed a 'lunch and learn' throughout the year, or simply want to refresh your memory, you can access the recordings via the 'lunch and learn' section on the Human Resources [Health and wellbeing page](#).



## Take your learning with you

In partnership with ITS, the Human Resources team are pleased to offer staff access to LinkedIn Learning via our six-month pilot program. Federation University staff can access the benefits of LinkedIn Learning at no cost!

**If you haven't already, [activate your LinkedIn Learning account](#) to get the benefits!**

Once activated, LinkedIn Learning is accessible via desktop, tablet and mobile devices, and provides comprehensive learning paths as well as bite-sized video and audio content for those questions that you need answered quickly.

This is perfect for those wanting to continue accessing the broad range of content over the holiday break – whether that be for personal or professional interests.

As you prepare for the holiday break, check out these short 'gift of learning' videos that are focused on preparing for and escaping the stress of the holiday season.

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### Spending time with the relatives?



Check out the [Interpersonal communication](#) and [Communication foundations](#) courses.  
Only have a few minutes?

- [How to interpret nonverbal cues \(3 minute video\)](#)
- [How to handle an interruption \(3 minute video\)](#)
- [Building rapport \(5 minute video\)](#)



### Too many places to be and people to see?

It might be time to check out the [Manage your calendar for peak productivity](#) or the [Time management fundamentals](#) courses.

Only have a few minutes? These videos might assist:

- [Coordinating family schedules \(3 minute 24 second video\)](#)
- [Saying no to others \(3 minute video\)](#)



### Need some tips on managing your holiday spending?

Check out [5 personal finance tips](#) or the video [On budgeting \(1 minute 42 seconds\)](#).

Do your kids need help managing their pocket money this holiday season? It might be time for the course [Teaching your kids about finance](#).



**Editor's note** – A little elf has mentioned a ukulele might appear under the tree for me this year. If so, LinkedIn Learning will become my camp side companion as I access the ['Ukulele lessons: fundamentals'](#) course. Stay tuned!



## Send a virtual 'thank you' card

After what has been a challenging year for all of us, a little 'thank you' can go a long way!

A series of Federation University virtual 'thank you' cards have been created so you can send a personalised 'thank you' or 'well done' message to a colleague, supervisor, staff member, student, or any stakeholder that has made a positive impact on your year.

[Access and create a personalised card and message here](#)

Gratitude comes naturally, when you let it. Here are some of the benefits of sending a virtual 'thank you':

- they cultivate a thoughtful environment
- gratitude is contagious
- increases job satisfaction and performance
- beneficial to our overall health and wellbeing
- immediate boost of self-confidence and happiness

Read the article '[In times of crisis, a little thanks goes a long way](#)' and reflect on a very busy year and recognise the difference people have made!



## Looking after yourself during the festive period

The festive season can be a fun and an exciting time for catching up with family and friends, attending events, buying gifts, and preparing yourself for Christmas Day. This can be a busy time for many, but for others this can bring about feelings of isolation and loss. When getting caught up in these activities, it is easy to forget about taking care of ourselves.

Here are some guidelines to help you get through the festive season and into the New Year.

- **Take time out.** It is important that you also take time out to relax and have some space. Listen to your emotions and know your limits. Some great ways to take time out include going for a walk, listening to music, finding somewhere quiet to chill or listen to a guided meditation.
- **Self-care.** It is important that we look after ourselves by getting enough sleep, exercise, eating well, keeping hydrated, doing activities we enjoy, and being connected with our friends, family and community. Self-care helps keep us physically healthy, and helps us to feel good.
- **Manage your expectations.** Having the 'perfect' Christmas or expecting everyone to be on their best behaviour may be unrealistic. Focus on the positives and adjust and adapt as you need to make it a day you enjoy.
- **Practice mindfulness.** As the festive season can be a stressful or a difficult time, practicing mindfulness can help to calm the mind and relax us. Great ways to

- **Spend time outdoors.** Spending time in nature is great for your mental health and wellbeing. Possible benefits for mental health when spending time outdoors includes being more physically active, social connectedness and relationship building, relaxation, and reduced stress and blood pressure.
- **Act Belong Commit.** Act Belong Commit is about keeping mentally healthy by being active (socially, mentally and spiritually), having strong social connections and committing to deeper personal pursuits. For ideas, [visit the Act Below Commit website.](#)



## Creative festive season cheer with the kids

Between festive baking, The Elf movie played on repeat, decorating the tree and feasting with friends and family, Christmas can be the absolute best.

Every family has its own decorating traditions. Some might deck out their home from reindeer on the roof to festive toilet paper in the bathroom, while others prefer a minimal look: a bit of greenery here, a bit of sparkle there.

Whatever your style, check out these crafty ideas to do with the kids.



- [Reindeer lollypops](#)
- [Paper strip baubles](#)
- [Christmas snow globe](#)
- [Pinecone Christmas tree decoration](#)
- [Candy cane toddler craft](#)



## Staying safe during your holidays

We want our holiday period to be focused on relaxing and having fun with those we love and enjoy spending time with. Unfortunately, this time of year can also result in an increase in the risk of accidents and injuries.

Though we are off work and school-related duties, we get busy shopping and attending social engagements. We are also confronted with more road congestion, we tend to eat and drink more, and we are more exposed to the dangers lurking around our homes.

While any one of these things in isolation might not be noteworthy, in combination they can set us up for a fall – literally and figuratively.

As you go into this holiday break, be mindful of these common risks:

- **Climbing ladders.** Falls from ladders, tables and other raised surfaces are more prevalent during Christmas, when householders put up lights and decorations. These falls can result in lacerations and broken bones, or worse, serious head injuries.

for them or their loved ones. Make sure gifts are age appropriate and don't have small parts that may be swallowed.

- **Installing festive lights.** Many fires are triggered by some failure or malfunction in an appliance or a piece of equipment, including Christmas lights that are faulty or incorrectly installed.
- **Road trips.** Australia's road toll invariably spikes during the holiday time, when traffic volumes increase dramatically and people travel longer distances on unfamiliar roads, sometimes while fatigued and/or speeding. Make sure you plan for a safe trip using [these TAC road trip safety tips](#).
- **Sun protection.** Spending time outdoors has many benefits, along with the risk of spoiling it with sunburn and the risks associated with not protecting yourself from the sun's damaging rays. Make sure you follow the advice from [the Cancer Council](#) and 'slip, slop, slap'.

For more tips on how to stay safe, read the original article ['Surviving the holiday season: Safety tips for Christmas'](#).

Remember, holidays should be a time to enjoy. Please consider the safety of yourself and others in all that you do.



## Quick Links

[COVID-19 support for staff](#)