



KEEPING WELL HEADING INTO 2024

The end of the year can be a fun *and* busy period. We hope you all take the time to recharge, enjoy yourselves and celebrate the achievements of 2023!

KEEP SIGHT OF WHAT'S IMPORTANT

The lead up to Christmas and the summer holidays are often busy, and pressures, risks and stressors can build up at work and at home.

It's important to continue to prioritise your wellbeing so that you can enjoy the best of the holiday break. This can be as simple as:

- being deliberate about scheduling in things that fill your tank, even if that's lingering over a coffee, savouring a hot shower or unwinding with your favourite music
- spending quality time with others – this helps to release the “feel good hormones” oxytocin and dopamine
- taking a couple of minutes twice a day to practice some mindful breathing or relaxation
- going for a walk in the bush or down the beach, throwing a ball around with your tamariki, or spending some time in the garden.

Keep an eye out for others — Christmas can be a lonely or challenging time for some. Be thoughtful of those who aren't able to be with friends or family over the holiday period, particularly if the last year has been a difficult one. Remember, giving time, words and presence not only helps others feel great, it also lifts your own mood and sense of meaning.

Virtual celebrations— If you'll be apart from friends and loved ones over the holiday period make a point of connecting on-line or over the phone. This could be a virtual festive catch up, the sharing of the opening of presents, or reading a favourite children's story together. Make plans too for a delayed celebration for when you can be together.

HEALTH AND SUPPORT SERVICES

For information on where to seek after hours health or dental care over the closedown period, refer to the Defence Health Hub — Pūtahi Hauora: health.nzdf.mil.nz.

NZDF support services continue to be available to our community during this time. Contact details and more information about the support options available can also be found on Pūtahi Hauora: health.nzdf.mil.nz.

KEY MESSAGES:

- ⇒ Prioritise your wellbeing
- ⇒ Enjoy celebrations that are inclusive and safe
- ⇒ Focus on giving quality time to others
- ⇒ Help is always available
- ⇒ Have a well deserved break!



NZDF4U WELLBEING SUPPORT

Confidential, 24/7, free wellbeing support for all members of NZDF and the Defence community.

Trained external mental health professionals are available to discuss the best support options for your needs. Over the phone, online or face-to-face counselling can be arranged when you call.

Contact information:

Call **0800 NZDF4U**
(0800 693 348)

Text **8881**

Overseas **+64 9 414 9914**

Email:
wellbeingsupport@nzdf4u.co.nz

HAVE YOURSELF A COST - FRIENDLY CHRISTMAS

Here are some budget - friendly ideas for the festive season:

- **Make use of the Force 4 Families discount scheme** when shopping (see force4families.mil.nz for information on this and other financial benefits available through the Force Financial Hub).
- **Buy food on special ahead of season**, when prices are lower. This can also help manage the Christmas budget.
- **Make Christmas arts and crafts.** Bake seasonal treats to give away as presents, create decorations, or DIY your own cards. Crafts are a great way to get tamariki involved in the festive spirit.
- **Take friends or whānau to look at Christmas lights** or head along to listen to some community Christmas carols.
- **Your advent calendar could include little tasks** such as picking flowers for a neighbour, ringing a distant family member, giving food/toys to charity, or putting a thank you note in someone's letterbox.
- **Visit people in your community** who may be a little lonely. Rest homes and animal shelters value companionship and Christmas cheer.



FINANCIAL HEALTH

This time of year can really put pressure on your finances so it's a good idea to look at your financial health. Check out the tools and resources on force4families.mil.nz to make sure your budgeting and retirement planning is on track or email: benefits@nzdf.mil.nz

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Respect each other: People can get frustrated, argumentative, and tired this time of year. It's okay to press pause on a conversation before things escalate. It's never okay to become physical or abusive with others. If you are worried about the safety of someone, check in with them. If you feel unsafe because of family harm, talk to someone and share what is happening to support your whānau wellbeing. Call Police on 111 if there is immediate concern or 0508 326 459 (Oranga Tamariki) if there are concerns for child safety.

Consent: Having open conversations about shared and different sexual wants, needs, boundaries and limits helps us form consensual and mutually pleasurable sexual experiences. Consent is freely given, look out for the clear and enthusiastic yes. Yes is communicated in many ways including verbal, body language and eye contact. **Consent is ongoing, someone can change their mind at any point and it must be respected.** Non-resistance does not equal consent.

Create safe spaces: Let's look out for one another within our social settings and events this summer. If you're worried about someone's safety, or someone committing harm, think about the role you can play. Remembering your safety comes first, things like calling Police, talking to bouncers, checking in with people at risk of harm or behaving in harmful ways, can all contribute to creating safer spaces.

It can be tricky recognising and disclosing harmful sexual behavior. If you'd like to talk, contact a Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Advisor (SAPRA). SAPRAs provide advice, resources, and support to individuals and teams to prevent and respond to harmful sexual behaviours.

SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE ADVISORS - 0800 693 324 - 365 days 24/7

Overseas: +64 4 527 5799 or SAPRA@NZDF.MIL.NZ

OP STAND - SAFER SUMMERS

As the holidays approach, Op Stand is again promoting safer summers which is about making sure our people have all the relevant information to keep themselves, their mates and their whānau safe regarding all things alcohol and other substances. It's been a long year for many and we want to encourage everyone to relax and unwind but with the knowledge and information to be free from harm.

Different situations bring different social challenges and so we offer the following top tips from the experts:

- ⇒ **Take it easy** and don't rush into drinking too much too soon or partying too hard
- ⇒ **Know your personal limits** and steer clear of peer pressure
- ⇒ **Be a good host** and set clear boundaries. Try to think of ways to entertain where alcohol doesn't need to be the catalyst for having fun.
- ⇒ **If you know someone who's using substances**, help them understand the current market supply risks and get them to always check their substances at a drug checking clinic
- ⇒ **Stay up to date** with the latest information on websites like the drugfoundation.org.nz, knowyourstuff.nz and thelevel.org.nz
- ⇒ **Know what to do if something goes wrong**
- ⇒ **And as ever – don't be afraid to ask for help**

For lots more information check out the Op Stand resources available [via DDMS](https://via.ddms.govt.nz), [Pūtahi Hauora](https://pūtahi.hauora.nz) or contact the team at Op Stand at OpStand@nzdf.mil.nz.

DEFENCE HEALTH HUB - PŪTAHI HAUORA

Maintaining good health, while recognising and getting on top of health concerns early, helps us to thrive and perform at our best.

Our Defence Health Hub - Pūtahi Hauora (health.nzdf.mil.nz) supports our NZDF community to achieve this.

An external website, it's accessible to our whānau and Defence community and is mobile and PC friendly.

This 'one-stop-shop' for health, provides a wide range of information for NZDF personnel, their families and veterans. It includes tools and information to empower people to maintain good health, while helping to recognise and manage common health concerns.

Alongside tools, self-checks, and handy information on facilities and services, there's information on fitness standards, medical gradings, and how the NZDF health system works for serving members. There's also information on support services across camps and bases for families and external connections for retired veterans.

The website includes:

- ⇒ Physical, mental, spiritual, and social/whānau health
- ⇒ Health at work including: workload and burnout, fitness standards, transition, deployments, injury rehabilitation to peak performance, nutrition
- ⇒ Men's and Women's health
- ⇒ Relationship tips, parenting, finances, mental wellbeing
- ⇒ Self-assessment tools
- ⇒ Resources and tips for self-management, goal setting and action planning
- ⇒ Where to go to get help and support NZDF facilities and providers by region
- ⇒ Videos, webinars, shared stories and links to additional resources.

Scan and check
out your Defence
Health Hub here:



Scan me

Pūtahi Hauora Defence Health Hub



Your one-stop-shop for health.
Check out how we can support
you and your whānau.

Here's a snapshot of
what's on offer:

- 👤 Tō Hauora
Your Health
- 🏃 Mahia Atū
Take Action
- 👨‍👩‍👧‍👦 Kaitiaki Tautoko
Support Providers

