

Strategies for a Better Family Holiday

1. Understand that addiction is a disease
2. Know your triggers, and theirs!
3. Have a plan for success:

ALCOHOL – If alcohol is a part of your tradition, provide alternative beverages. Also be conscious of “availability” of alcohol, perhaps moving it to a safe area or put under lock and key...out of sight = out of mind.

PRESCRIPTION PILLS – If they are in the home, consider clearing out your bathroom cabinets (and other storage spots) and keeping under lock and key.

PRE-VISIT – Do a thorough room cleaning of your son’s bedroom, car and old clothes. Throw out any “debris” or triggers, i.e. look for any hiding places one could use as a stash.

4. Have realistic expectations. Maintain boundaries.
5. Allow for space and choices that reflect independent recovery, such as: allowing friends to visit, but under supervision – make sure they come to your house to visit instead of “going out”...they may not understand that their friend cannot have “just one beer”.
6. Require at least one AA/NA meeting while home. Drug screen if necessary.
7. Consider new family traditions without the use of alcohol, also around gift giving – your son is likely to feel some embarrassment around lack of funds – perhaps try an “anonymous” Secret Santa program with a \$\$ limit.