



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

CLICK ON THE STORY YOU WANT TO READ

[Cheers to a Healthy & Safe New Year](#)

[Year End Reflection: Closing Out 2023](#)

[Enrich your Savings for the Unexpected](#)

[Reset, Recharge, Return to Healthy Habits](#)

[Family Friendly Activities During the Winter Break](#)



## CHEERS TO A HEALTHY & SAFE NEW YEAR

### NAVIGATING NEW YEAR'S EVE

New Years Eve is a great chance to celebrate the year gone by and the coming of a new one. However, these celebrations also come with great dangers and responsibilities. Here are a few tips to keep in mind as you make your New Years plans!

### FIREWORKS

First of all, make sure to check your local regulations regarding personal use of fireworks. If it is illegal or if you are unfamiliar with how they work, leave them to professionals! If you still decide to use legal fireworks, make sure to keep children and pets away from the area – even sparklers, which are often used by kids, burn at temperatures of about 2000 degrees and can be incredibly dangerous. Learn more about firework safety [HERE](#).

### PETS

Between fireworks, noisemakers and general revelry, pets can experience high anxiety on New Years Eve. Scared pets can bite or run and potentially get hurt, cause accidents or become lost. The best way to keep pets safe is to keep them indoors and comfortable; consider playing relaxing music to drown out any startling outside noises. Make sure fences and gates are secure and that your pet has a current ID tag and that all microchip information is up to date. If your pet has shown signs of extreme anxiety in the past, you might also consult your veterinarian and ask for anti-anxiety medications.

### ALCOHOL

The holiday season often sees a surge in [binge drinking](#), presenting not only the risk of impaired decision-making but also potential dangers such as drunk driving, blackouts, and various health issues. To avoid alcohol related incidents:

- **Plan your travel options ahead of time**, arranging for a designated driver, a hotel stay, or ride share options. If you leave your car overnight be sure to lock it and make sure no valuables are left inside.
- **Consider spacing out drinks**, allowing your body's metabolic system to efficiently process alcohol. Alternating alcoholic beverages with water is another effective method to maintain balance.
- **Try a nonalcoholic option**. Many bars offer nonalcoholic options or you can make your own at home with [these recipes!](#)

Recognizing the pressures of the holiday season, the treatment community offers numerous assistance options for those dealing with binge drinking or alcohol dependence. Taking the first step toward recovery is crucial, and valuable information can be found at [liveandworkwell.com](#) using the access code: EAP. For immediate support, connect with a specialist trained in addressing substance use through the confidential Optum Substance Use Disorder Helpline at **1-855-780-5955**, available 24/7.



## END OF YEAR REFLECTION

### CLOSING OUT 2023

As the new year approaches, many find themselves contemplating life and envisioning future goals. Despite the mixed reputation of New Year resolutions, often criticized for fostering unrealistic expectations, they can serve as a valuable starting point for prioritizing health and wellness on personal terms.

Starting small might involve resetting your sleep schedule or organizing your living space—one room at a time, perhaps beginning with the closet and gradually moving to the kitchen. Alternatively, it could be as simple as cultivating a positive mindset by incorporating inspiring quotes and daily affirmations into your morning routine.

Even if the journey to reinvention encounters initial challenges, remember that you can always recalibrate at any point throughout the year. Take a moment to explore the options presented below; consider focusing on your top five and approach 2024 as your year to prioritize self-care.

- Start a gratitude journal.
- Make time for family.
- Create and follow a budget.
- Practice mindfulness.
- Try new foods.
- Read more books.
- Drink less alcohol.
- Commit to a sleep routine.
- Try a new hobby.
- Quit smoking.
- Work on a balanced diet.
- Prioritize annual health screenings.
- Take the stairs instead of elevators.
- Hydrate better.
- Get in a body-positive mindset.

As we step into the new year, resolutions provide an opportunity for personal reflection and growth. Embrace the imperfections of your journey, recognizing it as a continuous process. Treat yourself with kindness, remain committed to your aspirations, and let 2024 be a year of transformative self-discovery.



## ENRICH YOUR SAVINGS FOR THE UNEXPECTED

### ACCESS A CERTIFIED PERSONAL FINANCIAL COUNSELOR

As the year ends, it's natural to reflect on the past twelve months, considering both personal growth and unexpected obstacles. End-of-the-year reflections often center on mental and physical health but one crucial aspect to consider is your financial well-being. As you think about how to improve in the new year and reflect on achievements, consider strengthening your financial situation, especially amid uncertainty.

Unexpected expenses can disrupt your finances. To handle these situations, it's crucial to have an emergency fund. Ideally, save three to six months' worth of expenses in it. This fund provides financial security, reduces the need for debt, and ensures you can continue your daily life even when unexpected expenses arise.

An emergency fund is particularly valuable if you're the sole earner in your household or self-employed. It offers financial flexibility during job changes or slow months. Plus, it prevents you from dipping into other savings goals when emergencies occur.

To start building your emergency fund, incorporate it into your monthly budget as a non-negotiable expense. Allocate a portion of your monthly budget, say one-fourth of your monthly expenses, toward your emergency fund. Adjust the amount according to your financial situation. Even if it takes longer than a year to reach your goal, persistently saving will become a habit.

Once you've accumulated three to six months' worth of expenses, you can redirect your monthly contributions to other financial goals. An emergency fund provides financial stability and peace of mind, allowing you to navigate unexpected expenses without financial stress.

While you may initially feel that allocating money to an emergency fund hinders other financial goals, its importance becomes evident when unexpected costs arise. Including it in your budget reflects your commitment to financial preparedness, ensuring you're ready for whatever life throws your way.

With Enrich tools you are able to get financial recommendations and access to a Certified Personal Financial Counselor, go to [fccThriveOn.com](https://fccThriveOn.com) and click on **Wellness Hub** at the top of your dashboard.



## RESET, RECHARGE, RETURN TO HEALTHY HABITS

### WITH WEIGHTWATCHERS

The holidays are stressful, and that can make it harder to eat well and feel good about your food choices. To help, we've partnered with WeightWatchers®. They've got the support, tips, and tools to help you build a happier, healthier relationship with food at the holidays, and all year round. (And you don't have to give up the foods you love!)

Give yourself the gift of WeightWatchers. All benefits-eligible employees and benefits-enrolled spouses/domestic partners get an exclusive discount of 50% off the retail price and can join now for as low as \$9.75 per month. Sign up at [WW.com/FCC](https://WW.com/FCC).



## FAMILY FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES DURING THE WINTER BREAK

### EXPLORE COLUMBUS

As you wrap up reflections on personal growth, financial well-being, and self-care strategies, it's time to focus on your well-deserved holiday break—a perfect opportunity to cherish and create lasting memories with your loved ones. With the end of the year approaching, consider exploring family-friendly activities that bring joy and connection during this festive season. Whether you're aiming to unwind, bond, or simply have fun, the following activities are designed to make the most of your holiday break. Read on for exciting ideas that cater to all ages and make this time of the year truly special for you and your family.

**December 29:** [Wonderful World of Bubbles Franklin Park Conservatory](#): 11:00 and 2:00 p.m. | Sue the Bubble Lady transports guests to a wonderful world of bubbles. See bubbles that change shape, turn square, walk a tightrope and more!

**December 30:** [Comedy Juggler](#): 11:00 a.m. at Franklin Park Conservatory | This international gold medalist juggler will thrill and captivate the audience with his one-man variety show of juggling, stunts, acrobatics, and comedy.

**December 30:** [Trans-Siberian Orchestra](#): 3:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. at Nationwide Arena | A Holiday classic!

**December 31:** [Countdown to 12 Noon](#): Noon at Franklin Park Conservatory | Goodbye 2023, hello 2024! Make a party hat, play some games and get ready to dance as we do a final countdown to noon with a one-of-a-kind bubble stomp. Then, for our late arrivals, we'll do it all again with a countdown to 1pm.

Remember many of the light displays stay up past Christmas. Check out the list: [Holiday Light Displays](#). Need other ideas on how to keep the kids entertained over break? Here are lots of suggestions: [75+ Free Winter Break Activities](#).