



NEWS

Getting into the spirit? Finding joy in little things important this year: CMHA

Kawartha Lakes residents seem to be putting a little more oomph behind getting into the Christmas spirit this year

By [Sarah Sobanski](#) Kawartha Lakes This Week

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Lindsay resident Bailey Coleman started wrapping garland around her banister just after Remembrance Day this year.

Since then, she's hung twinkle lights and put up a real tree in the living room, a fake tree in the dining room, and mini-trees in the bedrooms. That's not to mention signing up for Light Up Lindsay and taking neighbourly donations — “no matter how

tacky” – to decorate the lawn.

“We thought we might as well get as much out of the last months out of 2020 as we can. Since we have nowhere to go and nowhere to be, we might as well stay home and focus on that,” Coleman says, noting everyone’s had a hard year this year.

Coleman, and other Kawartha Lakes residents like her, seem to be putting a little more oomph behind getting into the Christmas spirit this year. She says she usually gets decorating as soon as it’s appropriate, but she’s noticed lots of cheer around this year already.

“I think even driving around Lindsay, even in our neighbourhood, we’ve seen a lot of lights go up and a lot of people putting up decorations,” she says.

“I think there’s more happening this year. I think people are looking at the bigger picture, and seeing things differently. Seeing that it’s important to be at home with your family, and spend more time with your family.”

Taking that time to enjoy the holidays and time with family might be more important than ever this year, according to Jack Veitch, manager of community engagement and education for the Canadian Mental Health Association, Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge.

“Finding the joy in the little things is going to be really important,” Veitch says. “I think it falls back to that sense of purpose, that sense of hope, that sense of normalcy.”

Veitch says residents first saw the value in having a holiday – even if it’s not the same as usual – at Halloween. He says even though kids weren’t trick-or-treating at homes, they still got to dress up in costumes, spend time with their families, have candy and have fun.

“All the important things still got to happen,” he says, noting somehow his kids still ended up with too much candy.

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While he doesn't want to set a silver lining around the whole world, Veitch says Halloween was a good reminder for people that even during hard times they can still socialize and be a part of something safely. Finding those new ways to connect is important.

"There's the simplistic of it's nice to spend time with people, but also just to have that support around me, to hear when I've had a bad day, to be that outside observer to say, 'Hey, you're not participating as you normally would. Let me help you out of that shell.'"

Coleman says she isn't planning on seeing her vulnerable family members or friends in person this year, but she's finding different ways to celebrate. She's planning present drop-offs for loved ones to open later on a video call.

Veitch also recommends people take their holidays this year, even though it might just be for a holiday at home. He says it's important to set clear boundaries for yourself when your whole life might be happening at the same address.

"Taking your vacation this year is maybe the most important this year," he says. "We have that risk of stress, or strain and burnout."

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