



FINNEY INJURY LAW
- TRIAL LAWYERS -

1600 S. BRENTWOOD BLVD.
SUITE 220 • ST. LOUIS, MO 63144
FINNEYINJURYLAW.COM // 314-293-4222



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TRIALS & THEIR TALES

- NEWSLETTER -

1600 S. BRENTWOOD BLVD., SUITE 220 • ST. LOUIS, MO 63144 // FINNEYINJURYLAW.COM // 314-293-4222 // DECEMBER 2020

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HOW'S YOUR MENTAL HEALTH? 6 TIPS FOR TACKLING SEASONAL STRESS

We've almost made it through 2020, some with our mental health intact, others worse for wear. But you know what? That's okay. Feelings of stress, anxiety, and depression are normal reactions to the year we've had, and as we head into the holidays, they can become even more prominent. The holiday season often leads to added stress and depression, but staying mindful about your mental health and taking steps to address it can help you make the most of the season.

1. Acknowledge your feelings. If you're going through a hard time, for any reason, realize that it's normal to feel sadness or grief. It's okay to take time to cry or otherwise express your feelings. You don't have to force yourself to be happy for the sake of the holidays.

2. Reach out. If you feel lonely or isolated, as many of us do at this time, seek out community connection. Online forums and other groups can offer support and companionship that can lift spirits and broaden friendships.

3. Be realistic. The holidays don't have to be perfect. Families and circumstances change, which means traditions will, too. Hold onto some but be open to creating new ones. All favorite holiday celebrations start somewhere.

4. Learn to say no. Saying yes when you should say no can leave you feeling overwhelmed and even resentful. Colleagues and loved ones will understand if you can't participate in every activity or idea they have this season.

5. Take a break. No matter how busy your schedule or how full your house is, make some time just for yourself. Spending even 15 minutes alone without distractions per day can refresh you enough to tackle everything you need to do. Clear your mind by taking a walk, listening to music, or reading a book.

6. Seek professional help. Despite your best efforts, you may find yourself persistently stressed, sad, irritable, or anxious. If these feelings last for a while, talk with a doctor or mental health professional. There's no shame in seeking resources that are there for this exact reason.

This year and the upcoming holidays don't have to take control of your mental health. With a little planning and positive attitude, you can end the year in a place of peace.

LOOK TO THE CHILDREN THIS HOLIDAY SEASON ROLE MODELS FOR THIS UNIQUE TIME

By now, you have likely heard countless times how different this holiday season is. You will have had a Thanksgiving celebration of some sort — hopefully one you could enjoy. It might even have less drama this year. Maybe.

I am writing this (December) column exactly one week before Election Day. Yes, the columns are due that far in advance. My wife and I voted yesterday at the Mid-County Library in Clayton, MO. It was a breeze. The election officials were tremendous. They were professional, courteous, and efficient. It was safe and secure. The mood was upbeat and positive. There really is a tremendous feeling of pride that comes with voting. You just feel better. We even got to keep the pen we used. It was almost as if Chick-fil-A designed the process. Almost.

I have no idea how the election will turn out. No matter how it turns out, I am hoping for better role models for our young people. I am hoping for more belief in human beings and respect for their lives with less focus on corporate values. I am hoping everything goes well.

Christmas is approaching. The lights are going up and it is definitely getting cold. Thanksgiving has passed. My trial lawyer seminars, where I recharge, have been postponed. The virus is still here, and we are all still doing our best to cope. My wife and I continue to long for the Wednesday nights when we went out for dinner. It is now too cold to sit outside. Man, I sure miss that.

It's the children who continue to educate us all on mask wearing. They never complain about wearing them. They follow safety rules. They wash hands. They play. They do their homework. They are resilient and strong. They are beautiful. Undoubtedly, they will have some hiccups along the way. But they won't quit. Each day, I drop my two older boys off at school and I am continually impressed by the routine they have adjusted to and the work their teachers have done. Kids really don't know how to quit. It must be something we teach them. What a horrible lesson.



So, that childlike resilience is what I will try to emulate this holiday season and Christmas. I will try to follow the example of children. It seems like we've had a shortage of other positive role models, myself included. I will look for the joy in the new Thanksgiving dinner, which will have already come to pass when you read this. I will be excited to experience a new Christmas. I am going to make the most of the time I have with my family. We won't be running around to all different locations. We will be at our home, and my goal is to make it a loving and warm one, a Christmas that the boys and Christine never forget and look back fondly on with deep, resonant memories. I hope you are able to do the same, to have a warm, loving Christmas with those who are very dear to you. It is those experiences that are good for our souls, ones that help us find our souls and focus on what is important to us each, experiences that unify our hearts.

I hope getting this newsletter in my own mailbox is a reminder of sorts to myself. It should come just in time — the lull between Thanksgiving and Christmas, traditionally a very quiet time in my line of work. I also hope (doing a lot of hoping here) you stay safe and healthy this winter.

SNOWED IN FOR CHRISTMAS? IT'S BOARD GAME TIME!

3 NEW GAMES TO ENTERTAIN YOU THROUGH THE HOLIDAYS

"Oh, the weather outside is frightful, but the games are so delightful ..."

Those might not be the exact lyrics from the famous Christmas carol, but it's true that decks of cards and various board games get many families through the holiday season. You can only rewatch "It's a Wonderful Life" and "National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation" so many times before the jokes grow stale. While new movie releases can be fun, many have been stalled this year because of the pandemic. Luckily, board games are still coming out on schedule.

If you're on the hunt for alternatives to Monopoly, Clue, and Scrabble, check out these fresh 2020 games, which all come recommended by the experts at Thrillist.

1. The Alpha: A Nature Lover's Dream Game

If your childhood dream was joining a wolf pack like Mowgli in "The Jungle Book," this is the board game for you! The Alpha is a beautifully illustrated strategic game where players act as pack leaders and compete with other players to acquire territory and snag the best food. Gameplay is done in rounds that include four stages: stalk, chase, resolve, and advance. The game is rated for 3-6 players ages 10 and up.

2. Half Truth: Brilliant Minds Meet Here

If you're a fan of Trivial Pursuit, you'll love Half Truth. At its heart, it's a trivia game, but it ups the stakes by giving players the opportunity to bet on how many correct answers they'll get. Really though, there's only one thing you need to know about this game, and Thrillist said it best: "It's the brainchild of legendary Magic: The

Gathering creator Richard Garfield and 74-time Jeopardy! winner Ken Jennings." What a pedigree! Everyone 12 and over will want a seat at the table.

3. getCrewd: A Playground for Movie Buffs

getCrewd is a card game that comes in a retro-style film can, and that single trait speaks volumes. In this PG-13-rated game, you play a film producer in search of the perfect actor, director, and crew to make your movie happen. However, the deck will keep throwing obstacles in your way, including everything from flash floods to writers' strikes. If you have a competitive side, you'll love this mad scramble to the finish line.

With these games in your cabinet, you won't even notice the snowbanks outside!

5 WAYS TO MAKE YOUR HOLIDAY EXTRA ECO-FRIENDLY THIS YEAR

Sustainability is the gift that keeps on giving, so if you'd like to give a gift to the environment this December, make your holidays anti-plastic! Here are five ways that you can use the latest eco-friendly technology to make sure your Christmas is just as convenient as ever.

Set up recycling bins.

Nobody wants to sort through trash on their holiday, especially if you're hosting all the parties! To avoid dealing with the waste, set up recycling and composting bins before any home holiday festivities. It'll make your next trip to a local recycling center so much faster because everything will be organized and easier to manage.

Use paper containers for leftovers.

Give your celebration a restaurant-from-home feel by storing and giving away leftovers in paper containers rather than plastic. Paper will dissolve and leave behind much less chemical residue

than plastic. Want to make it look extra posh? Stamp the exterior with the family initials!



Change up your gift wrap.

Why use wrapping paper every year when you can make your packaging extra interesting, colorful, and creative? Use newspapers, magazines, comics, posters, maps, or even art by your kids to conceal your gifts this year.

Rent, borrow, or rethink your tableware.

If you're missing proper tableware for your holiday celebration, don't despair — some companies will actually let you rent out their dishes for your special evening! You can also borrow tableware from friends and family. But you don't have to use metal tableware. Try following another culture's customs and serve your food on local ingredients, like palm leaves, coconuts, or wood.

Localize as much as possible.

If you can buy ingredients like fresh meat or vegetables from local farms, you won't use as much plastic packaging and you'll support small businesses at the same time!

Never buy one-use plastics if you don't have to. For every holiday tradition, ask yourself: Can I reduce, reuse, or recycle any components to this? We hope you have a happy, eco-friendly holiday!



PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN RECOGNIZING THE SIGNS OF DAY CARE ABUSE

As more schools continue returning to in-classroom teaching, the use of day care and other child care services will also increase. Day care providers and their employees have moral and legal obligations to care for the children in their facilities properly, but there are times when they fail to meet the demands of their job or act negligently, harming the children in their care. As a parent, it can be devastating to think that your child might be a victim, but if you suspect abuse, you must be their advocate and take action.

What to Look For

Abuse can be difficult to identify. Anxiety in a child is often mistaken for their dislike of being separated from their parents, but if it's coupled with other signs, you may have a case. Look for symptoms such as unexplained bruises, cuts, or markings; fear when around their caregiver; behavioral or school performance changes; repeated injuries; bone fractures

in children who are not walking yet; or sudden unexplained nightmares or other issues with sleep.

Neglect is also a form of abuse that may not manifest as evidently as physical abuse but can be just as harmful. Signs can include children who are unusually hungry or thirsty when they come home, a day care facility with too few staff, a facility that discourages parental visits, children who are withdrawn or aggressive, and children who come home dirty or with dirty diapers and rashes in their diaper area.

What to Do Next

It can be frightening to accuse a facility of abuse, especially if you aren't certain about it. But if you have mounting suspicions that your child is suffering, you should take several important steps to protect them. Take your child to a pediatrician for a professional examination. If they confirm your suspicions, report the abuse to your local licensing authority and the Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-422-4453). Next, call the police and file a report. And finally, contact an attorney to assist you with your case. They can help you identify and connect with all the proper channels that need to know about the abuse and hold the day care facility responsible for their actions.

If you suspect day care abuse or neglect, don't delay protecting your child. Call Finney Injury Law so we can help.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

In October, our very own Kimberly Camarena gave a presentation at this year's virtual Missouri Association of Trial Lawyers Paralegal Seminar. Her presentation focused on educating her peers on the essential topic of how best to support their attorneys and their law firm while preparing for a trial.

Kimberly offered "tricks-of-the-trade" insights and advice such as the unexpected importance of getting up early to be the first one in the office, essential checklist creation and use, properly setting up equipment at the courthouse, and even tips for helping the client understand how to appropriately dress for court.

Having experts like Kimberly on the Finney Injury Law team makes us great at what we do, and we couldn't be more proud of the opportunity she had to share valuable knowledge with others in our industry.



YOUR REFERRALS MEAN THE WORLD TO US

There is no greater compliment we can receive than a client telling a friend or loved one about us. If you know somebody who has been injured and needs an attorney who will fight on their behalf and give their case the attention it deserves, please pass along this newsletter and have them give us a call at 314-293-4222. Thank you for spreading the word about Finney Injury Law.