

BAS INCLUSIVE

“Safeguarding the rights of others is the most noble and beautiful end of a human being.”

~Khalil Gibran

Safeguarding together

Autumn/Winter 2023- Issue One



NOTE FROM THE DSL

It feels like a long time since I last wrote to you, with the sun shining, blue skies and the fresh smell of a Battle Abbey BBQ in the air! Now, the days are closing in again and there is a distinct festive feeling around school, which brings so much joy.

What a year it has been already, with lots of updates and changes in the sector for Parents to be aware of. The aim, as always, is that in this latest edition we will bring you all of the latest relevant help and advice on a range of issues we feel are of importance to you as parents and guardians.

This edition coincides with World Mental Health Day and within this edition, we have signposted you to the support available and we hope you find the links useful. We also want to remind you again of the dangers of vaping and some social media apps. Please be vigilant to what your child or young person is accessing, and have those discussions with them to support if needs be; it is as important as ever.

As always, if you need to speak with a member of the Safeguarding or Welfare team, do please get in contact via the details to the left, and we will do what we can to support.

Just a reminder that our Whole School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is available on our main website via our [Pastoral Care page](#).

Best wishes,

Rebecca Ingall
Whole School DSL/Head of Welfare

WHO TO CONTACT IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN ABOUT A CHILD?

If you are worried about a Child's safety or welfare, please do not hesitate to contact any of the Designated Safeguarding Leads straight away via the school or nursery office or via

safeguarding@battleabbeyschool.com

The following members of staff are the DSLs for Battle Abbey School:

Whole School DSL:

Rebecca Ingall (ingallr@battleabbeyschool.com)

Senior School Deputy DSLs:

Debbie White and Gary Wells

Prep School Deputy DSLs:

Joshua Barraclough and Trudy Golding

Nursery/EYFS:

Amy Brown and Jackie Richards

HELLO YELLOW! WORLD MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS DAY

World Mental Health Day was celebrated on 10th October this year, and the theme for 2023 set by the World Foundation of Mental Health was '*Mental health is a universal human right*'; a theme that we wholeheartedly agree with.

World Mental Health Day is aimed at raising awareness of mental Health and forging positive change for everyone's mental health. It is a chance to talk about mental health, how we need to look after it and how important it is to get help if you are struggling.



We recognise the importance of looking after and talking about our mental health, so this year we held a fundraising event for Young Minds and their "Hello Yellow!" day. As well as a whole school focus in assemblies and tutor time, there were a variety of different activities held throughout the day at the Senior school, including biscuit decorating, a photobooth, balloon races, a cake sale and a bracelet and badge sale.

We raised an amazing amount of £92.47p for Young Minds! A huge thank you to those that got involved.



Whatever we are worried about big or small, it is OK to feel overwhelmed, down, or anxious. Your GP is usually the first place to get help if you have concerns about your mental health that will not go away. You can also contact the following: NHS 24 Mental Health Hub by calling 111 if you need to get help when your GP isn't open or available.

Call Samaritans on 116 123 at any time of the day or night

Message [SHOUT](#) to 85258 for 24/7 text support on your mobile

Call the CALM helpline on 0800 58 58 58 or use their webchat [here](#). The helpline and webchat are both open 5pm to midnight, 365 days a year.

Call Breathing Space on 0800 83 85 87 or [visit their website](#)



YOUNG MINDS WELLBEING ADVENT 2023

While some are joyously preparing for the winter holiday season, there are some children and young people who struggle to manage the complexities around the winter holiday. Expectations are high, and there is a lot of societal pressure to have the most incredible time, when in reality, this can be impossible to achieve.

For many, this time can cause more anxiety or stress; our routines change; we may overindulge; we are thrown into sensory overload; we may become more isolated from our friends and they may feel it is difficult to manage without the support network of school. We know that for many in complex family situations, children may struggle with having to spend more time with family as this could become overwhelming.

“Hearing other people's plans makes me feel weird: My family aren't like that, and I don't have all those wonderful relationships in my life.”

Young Minds mental health charity have put together a Wellbeing advent count down for any child or young person who is feeling overwhelmed this Christmas. It's designed to help support those children who are struggling to regulate themselves, and provide an opportunity for them to learn different activities that will help them to look after their mental health over the winter season and beyond.

There are two versions of the resource: the first is a Primary aged version, and the second is a Secondary aged one. You can find whole page copies of these on the final pages of this newsletter.

For those families with Neurodiverse children, especially those with Autism, the National autistic Society have a great range of advice and resources to help, including these [Christmas tips for Autistic people and their families](#).



COST OF LIVING SUPPORT



With the cost-of-living crisis ongoing, the local council has provided schools with information to support families who might need help with accessing food in a crisis. Alternatively, you may want to be aware of this information for friends or family.

Foodbanks

Food banks can provide food and other support to local people in crisis. You can find a list of food banks and other food services on [East Sussex ISpace](#)

Local food partnerships

Local food partnerships bring together emergency food providers, sustainable food businesses and schemes to tackle food waste:

- [Hastings and Rother food network](#)
- [Eastbourne food partnership](#)
- [Wealden food partnership](#)

Holiday food and fun clubs

A range of activities and food is available during school holidays at our holiday food and fun clubs. It's [free for children on benefit-related free school meals](#)

Household Support fund also gives some avenues for anyone who is struggling with bills and essentials. See more information here: [Household Support fund](#)

ATTENDANCE

Why is school attendance so important and what are the risks of missing a day?



Education is a partnership between you as Parents, and us as the school; You play a pivotal role in shaping their future. Regular attendance at school forms the cornerstone of your child's educational foundation, and every child has a right to access their education. Every missed school day represents a missed opportunity to acquire essential knowledge and skills that build over time. Consistent attendance ensures that your child receives a comprehensive education, preparing them for future academic challenges and opportunities.

School is not just about academic learning; it's also a crucial environment for social development; Interacting with peers, participating in group activities, and engaging in classroom discussions help children develop essential social skills. Regular attendance fosters a sense of belonging and contributes to the formation of lasting friendships, promoting emotional well-being.

A consistent routine, such as attending school regularly, is crucial for the emotional and mental well-being of children. School provides a structured environment that offers stability and support, contributing to a positive mindset. It also allows for the identification and timely intervention in case of any emotional or behavioural concerns.

Attending school prepares children for the challenges they will face in the future. It instils a sense of responsibility, time management, and discipline – essential skills for success in adulthood. Regular attendance teaches children to meet commitments, an invaluable lesson that will serve them well throughout their lives, and it is important to tackle attendance issues early, in order to see fruition further down the line.

Here's what the data shows:

- Pupils with higher attainment at KS2 and KS4 had lower levels of absence over the key stage compared to those with lower attainment.
- Pupils who did not achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and maths in 2019 had an overall absence rate of 4.7% over the key stage, compared with 3.5% among pupils who achieved the expected standard and 2.7% among those who achieved the higher standard.
- Pupils who did not achieve grade 9 to 4 in English and maths GCSEs in 2019 had an overall absence rate of 8.8% over the key stage, compared with 5.2% among pupils who achieved a grade 4 and 3.7% among pupils who achieved grade 9 to 5 in both English and maths.
- Generally, the higher the percentage of sessions missed across the key stage at KS2 and KS4, the lower the level of attainment at the end of the key stage.
- Among pupils with no missed sessions over KS2, 83.9% achieved the expected standard compared to 40.2% of pupils who were persistently absent.
- Among pupils with no missed sessions over KS4, 83.7% achieved grades 9 to 4 in English and maths compared to 35.6% of pupils who were persistently absent

Source: [Gov.co.uk](https://gov.co.uk)

What if my child is struggling to attend school?

We recognise that for some children, there can be barriers to attending school. This can range from normal seasonal sickness, all the way up to persistent absence or even school avoidance. The Safeguarding and Welfare team will work with each child and family, in partnership with their Head of Year or form tutor to help support children attend school, with early intervention and support, in line with our [Attendance Policy](#).

The safety and well-being of children are paramount, and we recognise that we play a crucial role in ensuring a secure environment. Regular attendance allows teachers and school staff to monitor each child's well-being, promptly identify any issues, and take appropriate action. This collaborative effort between parents and educators contributes to a safer and more supportive school environment.

For more information around how to support your child's attendance, or to find out more about the legal responsibilities, please see links below:

- [Working together to improve school attendance](#)- Department for Education
- [Summary table of responsibilities for School attendance](#)- Department for Education
- [School anxiety and refusal- a guide for Parents](#)- Young Minds
- [Top tips for when your child won't go to school](#)- Amaze Sussex



ABSENCE

Please may we remind all Parents and Guardians that it is essential you are informing the school office of any absences as timely as possible, by phoning the respective school offices:

Nursery: 01424 213283 or emailing nursery@battleabbeysschool.com

Prep School: 01424 219 674 or emailing prep@battleabbeysschool.com

Senior School: 01424 772 385 or emailing attendance@battleabbeysschool.com

If a pupil is absent from school, and we do not have a reason for the absence, Parents/Guardians will be contacted by the office to establish where they are.

For Senior school pupils, please remind your children to sign in and out of the office if they are late arriving or early leaving for any reason. This helps us keep a track of who is on site.

If your contact details have changed, please do let the office know as soon as possible so we can keep accurate records.

MEDICATION AND MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Our medical team continue to ensure that all relevant medical paperwork is up to date; a very big thank you to all Parents and guardians who have completed the new medical forms recently. We are looking at ways to make this a more streamlined and efficient practice moving forward.

Just a reminder that if your child requires medication during the day for any condition, please do inform the medical team with as much detail as possible. You can email the Senior school medical team on medical@battleabbeysschool.com or alternatively contact the form tutor who will be able to pass the information along. For Prep school and Nursery children, please hand over the medication to the Office team. All prescribed medication must be handed over to an adult in the school by yourselves or your child, and a Medication form must be completed.

HUMANITARIAN CRISIS: HOW TO TALK TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

As parents, we are often faced with the challenging task of discussing complex and sensitive issues with our children. The ongoing humanitarian conflict in Gaza and Palestine is one such topic that demands careful consideration when broaching the subject with young minds. In addition to fostering understanding about the situation, it is crucial to equip children with the tools to discern reliable information from the influx of news, challenge discriminatory ideologies, and ensure their safety online.

Understanding the Conflict:

Before engaging in conversations with your children, it's essential for parents to educate themselves about the historical context and current events in Gaza and Palestine. Knowledge empowers parents to provide accurate information and encourages open dialogue, fostering a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding the conflict.

Talking to Children:

Approach conversations about the conflict with empathy and sensitivity. Tailor the discussion to the age and maturity level of your child, emphasising the importance of compassion, justice, and equality. Encourage questions and be prepared to provide honest, age-appropriate answers. Reinforce the idea that discussions about the conflict should be based on facts, not perpetuating stereotypes or biases.

Discerning Fake News:

In an age of information overload, distinguishing between credible news sources and misinformation is crucial. Teach your children to question the sources of information, cross-reference news stories, and rely on reputable outlets. Emphasise critical thinking skills to help them navigate through the complexities of media narratives and avoid falling prey to misinformation.

Challenging Discriminatory Ideologies:

Promote a culture of inclusivity and tolerance within your household. Address any prejudiced beliefs that may arise from the media or peer influence. Encourage your children to question stereotypes and challenge discriminatory ideologies, emphasising the importance of understanding diverse perspectives and fostering empathy.

Combating Anti-Semitism and Anti-Islamic Ideals:

Combatting prejudice requires active engagement. Teach your children the importance of respecting all religious and cultural backgrounds. Emphasise that the conflict in Gaza and Palestine is a political issue, and generalisations about entire religious or ethnic groups are not only inaccurate but also perpetuate harmful stereotypes. Encourage friendships with individuals from diverse backgrounds to foster understanding and empathy.

Online Safety:

The internet can be a challenging space for children, especially when it comes to accessing distressing information. Monitor your child's online activities, establish guidelines for internet use, and encourage open communication about their online experiences. Remind them to report any distressing content and provide tools to cope with the emotional impact of witnessing conflict-related images and videos.

Engaging in conversations about the ongoing humanitarian conflict in Gaza and Palestine with our children is an important step towards fostering empathy, understanding, and critical thinking. By equipping them with the tools to discern reliable information, challenge discriminatory ideologies, and navigate the online world safely, we empower the next generation to contribute to a more compassionate and informed global community.

Radicalisation:

What signs of radicalisation should I be alert to?

It's worth knowing what signs to be alert to, just in case. If you do see these signs, it doesn't necessarily mean your child is being radicalised – it could be nothing at all, or it could be a sign that something else is wrong.

- Becoming more isolated from friends and family
- Not being willing or able to talk about their views
- Becoming more angry
- Talking as if from a script
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- Being more secretive, especially about their internet use



Don't forget, the following sites have some brilliant resources to support Parents with talking to your children about a variety of concerns. Click on the icons to see more.

NSPCC



**educate.against.
hate**

If you're worried about your child and you need further advice, please contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead: Rebecca Ingall on ingallr@battleabbeysschool.com or safeguarding@battleabbeysschool.com

Further Resources

Particularly in relation to the conflict, and any anti-Semitic or anti-Muslim incidents emanating as a result of this, you may find the below links useful:

The [Community Security Trust](#) (CST) has published a number of resources on their social media feeds, including [guidance](#) on how to communicate about Israel in a non-antisemitic way. A host of other resources can be found on their website here: [Educational Resources – CST – Protecting Our Jewish Community](#). CST also has a national emergency number which should be used to report antisemitic attacks, alongside calling 999: 0800 032 3263.

Tell Mama is a confidential support service for those suffering from anti-Muslim hate and discrimination across the UK. Their website features a number of different ways to report anti-Muslim incidents, including via phone or WhatsApp: [Report in Anti-Muslim Hate or Islamophobia \(tellmamauk.org\)](#). The site also hosts useful [resources](#), including on mosque security.



THE DANGERS OF VAPING

In the UK, the proportion of 11–18-year-olds who vape doubled between 2020 and 2022. Unfortunately, the figure has continued to rise – contributing to this rise could be that social media platforms are frequently portraying vaping as cool and fashionable. Many young vapers simply aren't aware of the habit's potential pitfalls – but with risks including unregulated products, toxic ingredients and future nicotine addiction, there is plenty of information for parents or guardians to help children understand the dangers. For tips and information see ineqe.com/2023/04/20/youth-vaping

Risks

Addiction
Development issues
Health concerns
Loss of focus
Grooming behaviours
Exploitation

Red flags

Vaping can be a lot more discrete than smoking, and may be happening without a parent, guardian, or teacher noticing it. Some of the signs to be aware of with youth vaping, are:

- An unexplained cough, wheeze, or shortness of breath.
- Empty disposable vapes, plastic cartridges, containers, or bottles.
- Irritable behaviour if unable to go outside or have a break every few hours.
- Sudden moods swings, frustrations, paranoia, or anxiety.
- Lingering scents that are fruity or sweet smelling.

How to approach the concern

- ✓ Be observant. Keep an eye on a young person's behaviour. It is also helpful to know who they are friends with and if vaping is a regular part of hang outs.
- ✓ Don't panic. If you discover a young person in your care is vaping or has tried it, it is important to approach them calmly and avoid confrontation.
- ✓ Ask questions. Make sure you get your facts straight by asking questions, such as, "Have you ever tried vaping?" or "What do you like about vaping?"
- ✓ Listen to them. Rather than reacting in anger or disappointment, put your focus on them and give them space to open up to you without judgement.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

If you have any concerns at all around vaping or would like some further information, you can visit: FRANK website, call their helpline or use their text service (Text 82111) www.talktofrank.com/drug/vapes

A useful guide for parents on the dangers, signs to look for vaping-[Parent/carers guide](#)

If wish to seek professional advice on helping a young person to stop vaping, then speak to your GP. The NHS website also has some useful tips nhs.uk/young-people-and-vaping

The Guardian newspaper had an interesting article on tips and ways to encourage your child to quit vaping theguardian.com/how-can-i-help-my-teenager-quit-vaping



What Parents & Carers Need to Know about THE DANGERS OF VAPING

Data collected for ASH (Action on Smoking and Health) shows an increase in 11 to 17-year-olds experimenting with vaping: from 7.7% in 2022 to 11.6% in 2023. It's concerning that these age-restricted products are getting into the hands of under 18s as most contain nicotine, which can be detrimental to brain development and cause long-term addiction. Some schools have reported students having their focus in lessons affected by nicotine cravings; vaping in school toilets; and even trying vapes found in their local park. Raising awareness of the risks among young people could help to prevent these problems from escalating and reduce the number of young vapers.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

NICOTINE ADDICTION

Since they were initially developed to help people stop smoking, the vast majority of vape liquids contain nicotine. Not only is this a highly addictive stimulant, but it can also have detrimental effects on brain development in the under-25s. Nicotine can decrease the ability to pay attention, weaken impulse control, affect mood and increase the likelihood of substance addiction as an adult.

WHAT IS VAPING?

Vapes contain a liquid (vape juice/e-liquid) that is heated by a battery and evaporates, creating a chemical vapour which the user inhales. They can be disposable (once the liquid or battery runs out, the vape is thrown away) or rechargeable (the user replaces the liquid and recharges the battery on demand). Most vape liquids contain nicotine and other chemicals.

LACK OF AWARENESS

A proportion of young people tend to view vapes as harmless, mainly because of the products' appearance and the perception (often strengthened on social media) that "vaping is cool" and on trend. In many instances, young people don't fully appreciate the concept of addiction; that is, they aren't adequately aware of the risk of becoming hooked on nicotine before trying a vape.

POTENTIAL TOXICITY

Many vape liquids have been found to contain 'heavy' metals such as lead, tin, nickel and (in some cases) mercury – all of which are toxic. These metals often take the form of tiny shards inside a device's liquid tank, which are then inhaled into the body. Some media reports have suggested these metals are particularly prevalent in illegally imported vapes which don't comply with UK regulations.

UNCLEAR LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES

The liquids in vapes also contain solvents, which can create carcinogens at the point of evaporation. Vapes were only introduced into the UK in 2005 – and, because of the relatively short timeframe involved, there is insufficient medical evidence to assess the long-term harms that regular inhalation of these chemical fluids might have on the human body.

ATTRACTIVE PACKAGING

The packaging of many disposable vapes is very appealing to young people, frequently echoing the colours and flavours of the sweets or fizzy drinks they're used to buying. There's a relative lack of regulation around vape marketing, and vaping is often depicted positively on social media – which can lead young people to develop favourable views of vaping and overlook the possible harms.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

In the UK alone, around 5 million disposable vapes go to landfill every week. Due to such significant numbers of these products not being recycled, their components – a lithium battery and a chemical liquid – pose a toxic risk to the environment, the ecosystem and wildlife. Vapes are also predominantly made of plastic and metal; materials that, of course, do not naturally decompose.

WIDER HEALTH CONCERNS

Studies are already showing a link between vaping and oral health problems such as tooth decay and gum disease. This is because vaping reduces the amount of saliva in the mouth, while increasing bacteria – resulting in bad breath and a build-up of plaque. There are also concerns that, in some users, vaping could lead to the development of asthma, a persistent cough and breathing difficulties.

UNREGULATED VAPING PRODUCTS

The number of retailers willing to sell vapes to under-18s is a worry, as the chance of these products being unregulated (and therefore containing illegal chemicals and higher levels of nicotine) is high. A related concern is that the mechanisms inside unregulated products are unlikely to have been tested and safety checked – presenting a possible fire risk if the liquid and battery come into contact.

SCARCE INFORMATION

The lack of information about the ingredients and potentially harmful chemicals in a vape is troubling. Some vape fluids (unregulated in the UK) contain traces of nuts, which can cause an allergic reaction or anaphylactic shock. To date, medical warnings aren't required on vape packaging – with only medical disclaimers being found on the websites of the various brands.

VAGUE INGREDIENTS LISTS

Early research has suggested that the chemicals used to produce some strawberry and banana flavour e-liquids can kill cells in the blood vessels and heart. These ingredients aren't identified on the packaging, instead falling under the umbrella term 'natural and artificial flavourings'. Such vague listings mean that consumers aren't aware of the liquid's content so can't identify potential risks.

Meet Our Expert

Run by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Healthy Schools Service (commissioned by Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council), Catch Your Breath is a school-based project aimed at young people. Its goal is to embed a proactive, coordinated approach among both primary and secondary schools in discouraging smoking and vaping behaviours.



HEALTHY SCHOOLS
CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH

The National College

Source: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-65809924>



nationalcollege.com



@thenatcollege



/thenationalcollege

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 28.09.2023

ONLINE SAFETY WATCH

Staying safe online this winter break!

As the festive season approaches, we're spending more time online, shopping, gaming, watching movies or just booking those last minute winter holiday breaks: Our online activities surge, making it crucial for parents to be vigilant and protect their families from potential online scams and fraud. Fraudsters also love this time of year, taking advantage of the spirit and distractions to scam many vulnerable people.

With the right precautions, you can ensure a safe and enjoyable online experience for you and your children this winter.

The twelve tips of the season!



Buying online: Spot the signs of fake websites, insecure payment pages and counterfeit goods. Before you visit a

website, check if it's likely to be legitimate or fraudulent: www.getsafeonline.org/checkawebsite



Delivery notifications: Beware of texts claiming to be from a parcel firm telling you there's a 'delivery fee'. If in any doubt, **always call the courier or retailer** on the number you know to be correct to check if the message is authentic or not.



Mobile devices: Protect all new or second-hand internet-connected phones, tablets and computers with a reputable security app/software. Add a new and unique PIN or passcode as soon as you power up. Ensure all documents and photos are backed up automatically so you don't lose them. Check privacy and location settings for new and existing devices.



Smart devices: Always set up new and unique **passwords on internet-connected devices** like voice assistants, appliances,

cameras, kids' toys and fitness watches, as soon as they're switched on. Using the factory-set default passwords could result in them being hacked. And remember that voice assistants and smart speakers are designed to pick up what you're saying.



Updates: Download software, app and operating system updates on all your devices as soon as you get notified. Better

still, set them to update automatically. Otherwise, they could get infected by malware, leading to fraud, identity theft or snooping.



Second-hand devices: Do a factory reset to erase your data if you're selling or

gifting a computer, mobile device or console. Find out how from the manufacturer's website. If you've bought or been given a used device, remove the previous owner's settings and data if this hasn't already been done.



Mobile apps: Download new apps **only from official sources** such as App Store, Google Play or Microsoft Store. Downloading them from elsewhere could result in fraud or identity theft.



Out & about: Don't use **Wi-Fi hotspots** in cafés, pubs, hotels, on public transport and other public places for anything confidential as they could be either insecure or fraudulent.



Gaming: Avoid things like pirated games, grieving and in-game overspending. Keep track of how much time you're spending online.

Don't overshare private information on chats. **Keep an eye on your kids' gaming** by checking games' PEGI age limits, and talking with them about who they're or playing and chatting with.



Oversharing: Make sure **what you share online** is respectful and doesn't reveal confidential, sensitive or embarrassing information about yourself or others, including family members and friends. If you're away from home, keep it to yourself, as burglars keep an eye on social media too.



Safeguarding your children: Talk to your children about being safe and responsible online, including what they share, who they're talking to and the type of content they access, including in apps and games. Consider downloading a reputable parental control app and using ISP content filters. Make sure they aren't running up bills in games and other apps.



Video calls: Make sure those Christmas calls are **safe and secure** by using a service that needs a strong password, and don't share the call invitation or details outside the person or group on the call.



Source: Sussex Police in partnership with [Sussex Alerts](#)

When parents and carers finally have the chance to spend some quality time with their child over Christmas, many face a familiar struggle to prise their young one's attention away from their phone, console, tablet or computer. Fun family bonding over the festive period, however, doesn't have to exclude devices. There are sackfuls of Christmas activities and ideas online which grown-ups and children can enjoy together. We've compiled our own 'nice list' of seasonal suggestions for how to ...

MAKE THE MOST OF THE ONLINE WORLD THIS CHRISTMAS

1 EAT, DRINK AND BE MERRY

Budding bakers will relish helping out in the kitchen with some tasty festive treats. Spend some time together researching child-friendly Christmas recipes online (the BBC Good Food site is an excellent place to start), and then you and your little elves can rustle up gingerbread santas, marshmallow snowmen or reindeer shortbread. The only thing that's more fun is eating your creations afterwards!

WHEN THE SNOWMAN BRINGS THE SNOW...

2 THE OLD SONGS ARE THE BEST?

We've all had that Christmas compilation CD that was almost perfect, if it wasn't inexplicably missing one of your best-loved tracks. In this era of music streaming, however, your little helpers can assist you in compiling a definitive playlist of all your favourite seasonal songs – no more pining for The Pretenders or wishing for Wizard.

3 DECK THE HALLS

There's no such thing as 'too many' Christmas trimmings! Let your child channel their excitement into some creative crafting, and you'll make memories as well as your own DIY decorations. There are loads of step-by-step guides online (including video walkthroughs on YouTube) for seasonal showpieces like paper plate angels, handprint wreaths and cupcake wrapper Christmas trees.

7 A WINTER'S TALE

Everyone enjoys a story at this time of year: after all, the whole celebration is based on an engrossing yarn. Sites such as Audible are an excellent way of entertaining excited young ones, with classics like Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* and seasonal short stories by Enid Blyton alongside more contemporary Christmas tales by the likes of Tom Fletcher, JK Rowling and Ben Miller.

9 BROUGHT ME SOME CORN FOR POPPIN'

Snuggling up against the winter weather with the family (and a generous helping of chocolates) to enjoy a well-loved movie is a delightful Christmas tradition. The usual streaming services have some classic candidates on offer: *Home Alone* and *The Santa Clause* are on Disney+, while Amazon Prime has *Elf* and *The Grinch*, and Netflix goes with *The Princess Switch* and *The Christmas Chronicles*.

10 GUESS WHAT I FORGOT?

Friends and family pitting their wits against each other on Zoom, Teams or Skype really took off during lockdown, so why not revive the tradition over the holidays? Your questions could be on the biggest news, sport and showbiz stories of 2021, or be Christmas themed, or you could stick to classic general knowledge. Ideal for those days between Christmas and New Year.

4 A WORLD OUTSIDE YOUR WINDOW

From turkey on the beach in Australia to roller-skating to church in Venezuela, Christmas is celebrated in a variety of ways worldwide – curious youngsters might enjoy discovering other nations' festive traditions online. Google's Santa Tracker is a brilliant (and free) starting point, with games, activities and animations to help children enjoy learning as they count down to the big day!

5 THE NEAR AND THE DEAR ONES

Between time constraints, distance, the weather and Covid precautions (or a combination of all four) for many families it just won't be possible to physically spend time with everyone they'd ideally like to this Christmas. Video calling technology, of course, takes some of the sting out of the disappointment by virtually transporting loved ones into your living room.

6 KIDS FROM ONE TO 92

If Santa's brought your young ones a console this year (or they already had one), it's a perfect excuse for some quality time while they gleefully trounce you at FIFA or Mario Kart. Digital versions of traditional board games like Monopoly and Cluedo are available on most platforms, too; get the whole household together for a modern take on some old-school family fun.

8 CAN'T WAIT TO SEE THOSE FACES

People used to express their gratitude for a thoughtful Christmas gift with a thank you card or a dutiful phone call. Not in the digital age: now your relations can see first-hand on video calls how delighted the children are with their presents – and even how they look in that slightly questionable hand-knitted pullover.

Thank you



National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday



www.nationalonlinesafety.com



@natonlinesafety



/NationalOnlineSafety



@nationalonlinesafety

The YoungMinds Wellbeing Calendar 2023



Looking after your wellbeing as you count down to the winter break.

27 - MONDAY

Belly breaths

Take a big deep breath in and fill your belly up with air. Then slowly breathe out through your nose.

4 - MONDAY

Mindful colouring

Enjoy some quiet colouring in time and let your creative juices flow.



5 - TUESDAY

Feeling grounded

Silently, name five things you can see. Four things you can feel. Three things you can hear. Two things you can smell. And one thing you can taste. Use this exercise whenever your emotions feel too big.



28 - TUESDAY

Affirmation station

Spread some winter joy to your classmates by writing positive messages on cards. Then get your teacher to collect and pass them around. For example 'I am loved', 'I can do this'.



29 - WEDNESDAY

Stretch it out

Stretch your body from head to toe. Roll your neck, spin your arms and flex your toes!

30 - THURSDAY

Gratitude snowman

Draw three circles on top of each other to create a snowman. In each circle, write something you're grateful for today.



1 - FRIDAY

Dance party

As a class, get the month off to a great start by singing and dancing along to tunes that make you feel happy!



8 - FRIDAY

Random act of kindness

Do something nice for someone else today. Doesn't it feel great?



15 - FRIDAY

Your 2023

Write down your favourite school moments of 2023 and any hopes or goals you might have for 2024.

14 - THURSDAY

Get the giggles

Give laughter yoga a go. It's said to make you happier and less stressed! There are lots of free videos on YouTube.

13 - WEDNESDAY

Self-soothe session

Create your own self-soothe box to take home and use whenever you feel sad or worried. Include things like sensory toys, sour sweets and photos of things that make you happy. For more tips, check out the 'How to make a self-soothe box' blog on our website.

12 - TUESDAY

Body scan

Try a body scan meditation to help you let go of stress or worries. There are lots of free videos of this on YouTube!



11 - MONDAY

Signs of winter

As a class, take a silent, mindful walk around the school grounds. Noticing signs of winter along the way. Such as frost, falling leaves or even robins.



The YoungMinds Wellbeing Calendar 2023



Looking after your wellbeing as you count down to the winter break.

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

27 Affirmation station

Spread some winter joy by writing positive affirmation cards, then having your teacher collect and pass them around. For example: 'I am worthy', 'I can achieve my dreams'.

4 Star breathing

Breathe in or out for three seconds while visualising the shape of a star. Start on the left side of the top 'arm' of the star. Going clockwise, breathe in as you move up the first line, then out as you move down the second. And so on.



28 Positive paper chain

Each person writes a positive message on a strip of paper. Connect the strips and form a paper chain to display in your classroom.



5 In the moment

Try the 54321 grounding technique. Silently, name five things you can see. Four things you can feel. Three things you can hear. Two things you can smell. And one thing you can taste. Use this exercise whenever things feel a bit too much.

11 Signs of winter

As a class, take a silent, mindful walk around the school grounds. Noticing signs of winter along the way. Such as frost, falling leaves or even robins.



12 Worldwide winter

Learn how other cultures and countries celebrate different things about winter.



29 Stretch it out

From head to toe, give each body part a good stretch. Roll your neck, rotate your arms and flex your toes.



6 Get creative

Try to spend 30 minutes doing something creative today. That could be drawing, graphic design, dancing, or even learning a musical instrument. Whatever you like!



30 Gratitude snowman

Draw three circles on top of each other to create a snowman. In each circle, write something you're grateful for today.



7 Alternative Christmas card

Write a kind, supportive card that you'd give to someone who might be struggling this festive season - or for someone who doesn't celebrate Christmas. Your teacher can then collect and hand them out.



8 Random act of kindness

Do something nice for someone else today. Doesn't it feel great?



1 Positive playlist

Get into the Friday spirit! Suggest your favourite, feel-good songs and create a positive playlist as a class.



15 Your 2023

Write down your favourite school moments of 2023 and any hopes or goals you might have for 2024. Could you make them SMART goals?



For help and advice scan here



FURTHER SOURCES OF SUPPORT FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Being a Parent or Guardian can be hard. If you feel like you're struggling right now, you're not alone. We've gathered contact information for some helplines, so you know where you can turn to if you need some help.

Supporting family life:

Family Lives (support on any aspect of parenting and family life. Freephone) | 0808 800 2222 | askus@familylives.org.uk | familylives.org.uk

Mental health:

For you:

Samaritans (free) | 116 123 | jo@samaritans.org | samaritans.org

Mind (calls charged at local and network rates) | 0300 123 3393 | info@mind.org.uk | mind.org.uk

If you're worried about your child:

Young Minds Parents Helpline (free) | 0808 802 5544 | <https://bit.ly/3p8kpDp>

Domestic abuse:

According to the Office of National Statistics (ONS) about 4.2% of men and 7.9 % of women suffer domestic abuse in the UK during 2018. This equates to about 685,000 male victims and 1,300,000 women. If you find yourself suffering in an abusive relationship. Please note, we are an Operation Encompass school and work in close liaison with Sussex Police to support the children and young people in our setting who may have witnessed domestic violence in the home.

National Domestic Abuse Helpline (free) | 0808 2000 247 | nationaldahelpline.org.uk

Men's Advice Line (free) | 0808 8010 327 | mensadvice.org.uk

Galop (free, LGBT+) | 0800 999 5428 | galop.org.uk

Safe in Sussex – phone 0330 333 7416

Alcohol, drugs and gambling:

Drinkline (free) | 0300 123 1110

Drinkchat (calls charged at local and network rates) | 0300 123 1110 | bit.ly/2NoQx7T

Frank (for support around drugs and alcohol. Calls charged at local and network rates)

| 0300 123 6600 | talktofrank.com

National Gambling Helpline, run by Gamcare (free) | 0808 8020 133 | gamcare.org.uk

Adfam (for families of those affected by drug, alcohol and gambling problems) | find local support on their website: adfam.org.uk

