



Wellbeing Newsletter



Edition 2: Winter 2024

Welcome to the winter edition of our wellbeing newsletter! In this edition, we will be sharing ideas on how to look after your wellbeing and manage the pressures of the winter months. We will also be sharing some information about the work we do in school to support your child's wellbeing.

We wish you all a wonderful Christmas and New Year!

1. The importance of looking after our wellbeing in winter

Winter can impact our mental health, especially for young children adjusting to darker days and less time outdoors. Seasonal changes can sometimes lead to lower energy levels, mood dips, and disrupted sleep patterns. It's important to recognise these changes, as children often look to us for cues on how to handle seasonal adjustments. Here are some easy ways to promote positive wellbeing this season;

	<p>Establish routines: Consistent routines help children feel secure and regulate their body's natural rhythms, particularly during the darker winter months. Here are some ways to establish routines:</p> <p>Set a Regular Bedtime and Wake-Up Time: The body thrives on consistency. Sticking to the same sleep and wake-up times, even on weekends, can improve mood, focus, and energy levels. For younger children, try to make the evening winding down routine enjoyable with a story, bath, or some quiet music.</p> <p>Use Morning Light to Signal Wake-Up Time: With darker mornings, it can be challenging to wake up. Open the curtains, use a gentle light alarm, or turn on warm, low lighting to help your child wake up gradually. Exposure to natural light as soon as possible helps boost alertness and sets up a healthy sleep-wake cycle.</p> <p>Create a Wind-Down Routine for Bedtime: Reducing screen time at least an hour before bed can make a big difference in sleep quality. Instead, try reading, quiet drawing, or listening to calming music. Dim the lights in the hour before bed to signal to their body that it's time to wind down.</p>
	<p>Create cosy spaces: A warm, inviting environment can offer a welcome retreat from dark, chilly days and can become a place for relaxation, creativity, and emotional security. Here's how to build these spaces at home</p> <p>Set Up a Reading Nook or Creativity Corner: A comfortable chair with blankets, cushions, and soft lighting makes a great reading nook. A small desk or table dedicated to drawing or crafts can spark creativity and become a favourite spot for your child to relax.</p> <p>Use Soft Lighting and Warm Textures: Natural light is best during the day, but for early mornings or evenings, use warm, ambient lighting, like fairy lights or salt lamps, to keep things cosy. Warm blankets, fluffy rugs, and textured pillows make spaces more inviting and comfortable.</p> <p>Limit Noise and Visual Distractions: Especially for children who feel overstimulated easily, quiet and calm spaces can be very grounding. Keep the cosy area free from loud noises and electronics to make it a designated "calm zone."</p>



Stay active: Physical activity boosts mood, energy, and immune function, which can be especially beneficial in winter. Aim for a balance of indoor and outdoor activities to keep spirits high:

Outdoor Play for Sunshine and Fresh Air: Whenever possible, encourage outdoor play during daylight hours. Even a short time outside helps children get sunlight exposure, which supports vitamin D levels, mood, and physical health. Bundle up and try outdoor games, short nature walks, or bike rides.

Indoor Movement Activities: When it's too cold or rainy, make indoor exercise fun! Try family-friendly yoga videos, simple dance routines, or active games like "Simon Says" to get them moving. Indoor activity doesn't need to be long to be effective—15-20 minutes of movement can work wonders for energy and focus.

Break Up Screen Time with Active Breaks: If your child is spending more time on screens during the winter, schedule short breaks for physical activity, like stretches or a quick run around the house. This helps prevent lethargy and keeps them engaged in a healthy way.

2. Festive events around Barnsley



Visit the country park and gardens *Twelve Days of Christmas Trail* open every day until 24th December.

Parking is £5 for the day or £1 for 2 hours.

Bus number 94/94a from Barnsley interchange.



Visit the Heritage Centre's Christmas Trail.

Open every day until 2nd January 2025

10am – 4pm. Free parking.

Bus number 66 from Barnsley interchange.



Wentworth Castle Gardens

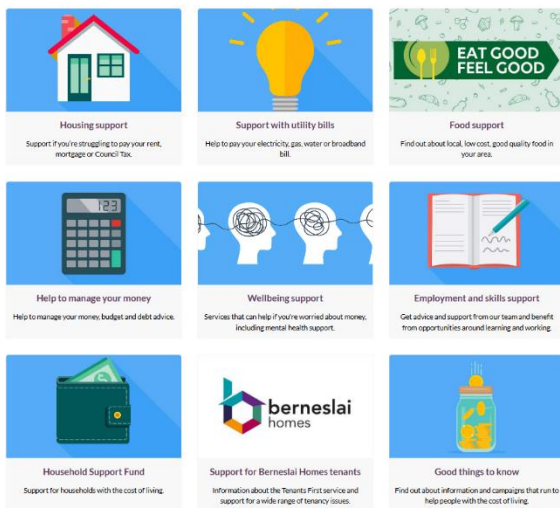
Visit the Enchanted Tree Trail this winter at Wentworth Castle Gardens.

Open every day in December and January 10am-4pm.

Parking is free. Admission is charged at £15 for a family ticket.

Bus numbers 24 & 34 from Barnsley interchange.

3. Help with the cost of living



For financial support, Barnsley Council’s Welfare Support offers advice on benefits, energy support, and emergency funds for families in need. Visit their website <https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/benefits/more-money-in-your-pocket-cost-of-living-support/> or contact **01226 773555**.

Many people are having difficulties due to the current cost of living. You might not realise you're entitled to some help. You can find out about the range of local help that's available, as well as national support, on this website.

In response to the cost of living, the government has also launched a campaign to let everyone know what national support is available. This is called Help for Households.

4. Supporting your child’s mental health and wellbeing

If you’re worried about your child’s wellbeing over the winter months, there are lots of services that may be able to offer advice.



Free, confidential support, help and advice for children and young people for issues related to mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Call; 01226 107377

Further information and support can be found on the website; www.compass-uk.org/services/compass-be-barnsley-mental-health-support-team/



Call free; 0800 1111

There is lots of support and advice available on the website; www.childline.org.uk



You can also contact Barnsley’s 0-19 Public Health Nursing Team on 01226 774411 or follow them on Facebook.

5. Supporting your own mental health and wellbeing

If you're worried about your own mental health, these services may be able to offer advice and support.

GOING THROUGH A STORM OR JUST BEEN THROUGH ONE?

ANDYSMANCLUB
are talking
groups for men to
HELP YOU through
those storms.



FIND OUT MORE info@andysmanclub.co.uk
www.andysmanclub.co.uk **#ITSOKAYTALK**

ANDYSMANCLUB BARNSELY

CENTRAL

Library @ The Lightbox, 1 The Glass Works, Barnsley S70 1GW
EVERY MON @ 7PM EXC. BANK HOLS

NORTH

Sports Academy (Upper), Honeywell Sports Centre, Honeywell Lane, Barnsley S75 1BP
EVERY MON @ 7PM EXC. BANK HOLS

WOMBWELL

Wombwell Library, Station Road, Wombwell, S73 0BA
EVERY MON @ 7PM EXC. BANK HOLS

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SAMARITANS

Whatever you're going through, a Samaritan will face it with you. We're here 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Call free, any time, from any phone; 116 123

Email; jo@samaritans.org

Online chat;



 **Mind**
Rotherham & Barnsley



Mind Infoline

Call: 0300 123 3393

Mind Infoline available Mon - Fri 9am-6pm

except for Bank Holidays.

6. How do school support my child's mental health and wellbeing?

Our recent wellbeing survey highlighted that some parents and carers are not aware of the things we do in school to support children's wellbeing and how we help them to learn to look after their own wellbeing. So, we thought it would be useful to share some of the things we do!

1. We start by creating a positive and safe environment in our school, ensuring that clear and predictable routines are in place for children to follow and that all adults work together to prioritise the wellbeing of every child.



We only get One Life, so let's learn how to live it well!

2. In school, we use the **One Life** programme to support the delivery of our PSHE curriculum. The programme includes a strong focus on developing 'mental fitness' throughout every year group. We also follow a morning routine linked to the programme, which includes a positive greeting for every child, an opportunity to reflect on their thoughts and feelings through journaling, mindfulness activities and practicing positive affirmations.

3. **Incredible Me!** is a wellbeing system that has been especially designed by schools in the ECM Academy Trust to support our children in developing resilience, independence and self-esteem. It also supports them to recognise and manage their own feelings. **Incredible Me!** identifies age-appropriate skills or 'superpowers' that we would like children to develop during their time in school. It provides school staff with activity ideas for whole class, group and individual support to ensure children develop the required skills.



4. In school, we have close links with **Compass Be**, who can offer support in school through workshops, assemblies, small group support and individual intervention. Our **Compass Be** link worker meets with us regularly and helps us to identify things that we can do to ensure we are offering the most effective support for children's wellbeing.

5. Each Friday we welcome Remedy, our therapy dog into school. Children can 'book' an appointment with her and she also sees all children on their way to/from Friday's special assembly.

