

Doing December Differently 2021

Activities and ideas for children and families



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Introduction

December can be a magical time of year often associated with the giving of gifts, and spending precious quality time with friends, family and loved ones making memories. A time when we can reflect on what has gone before and make plans to do things a little differently in the year to come and focus on what is important to us. For some people though the winter months can feel lonely and isolating.

So, this year's message is simple:

Be Kind.

Ways in which you can do that are by carrying out small secret acts of kindness to show how much you value and care about those around you. Make and hand deliver a homemade gift, make a call, or stand at the end of a neighbour's pathway to share a few moments chatting. This year's Doing December Differently is jam packed full of ideas and activities that families can do together, with suggestions for every day of the month to help you carry out your acts of kindness. The Action for Happiness Calendar: Do Good December contains lots of fabulous ideas to get you out and about enjoying and connecting with others. There are also lots of top tips to help you connect with nature, enjoy the outdoors and think about environment too.

We hope you enjoy taking part,

**From the Emotional Health
and Wellbeing Partnership**



Paper straw Christmas trees

Getting Started

Step 1 – Create Back of Tree

You are going to need two paper straws for the back of your tree. Add a little glue to the back to keep the straws together. Let it dry

Step 2 – Create Your Tree

Now it's time to start putting your tree together! Start off by adding the top of your tree, we cut our first straw about the same width as the two green straws. Then leaving a little more to the ends as we added for straws down the tree. Add glue to the back to stick to the straw tree trunk

Step 3 – Trim Your Tree Trunk

Next you're going to cut off any extra at the bottom of your tree trunk. So that you're left with a shorter trunk (don't cut it right up to the last straw branches you want to leave a good couple of cm's)

Step 4 – Add Your Star

You can use a pre-cut star or if you have one a star punch and some glittery paper. Glue your star to the top of the tree.

Step 5 – Add Ribbon

Finally, you needed to add ribbon so you can hang your ornament in the house or on the tree. A simple white ribbon can look effective, simply glue in place at the back of the tree.

Materials

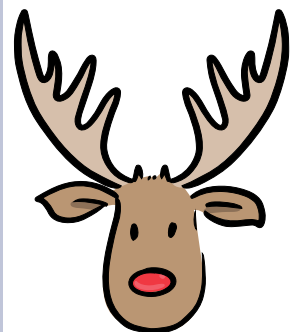
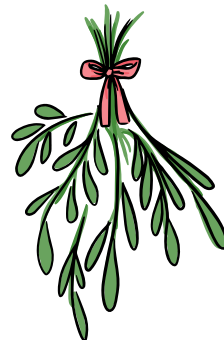
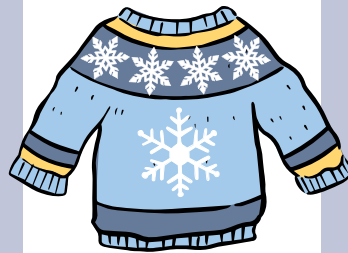
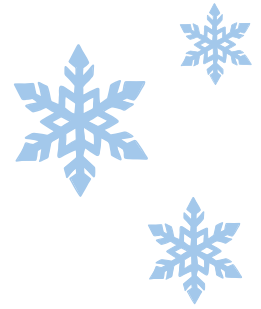
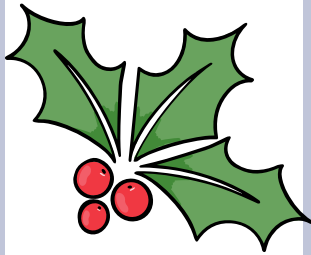
- Decorative paper straw
- Glue
- Star sticker
- Ribbon
- Scissors



Now you're ready to show off your new creation!

Movie bingo

Watching Christmas movies is even more fun if paired with Christmas movie bingo! As you watch holiday movies, mark all the squares that apply.





Cupcake tree decorations

Method

Use cupcake cases in festive designs and colours to make your own garland - to hang on a wall, above a window, or to decorate around your house. It's so easy!

Flatten the cupcake liners and place these on top of each other.

Glue together before adding your choice of embellishments and then glue/tape these onto a length of twine or string to hang up.

You can also use festive coloured/patterned cupcake cases make your own tree decorations. Flatten the cupcake liners and arrange them to make a tree shape, glue together and add a string hoop at the top to hang on your Christmas tree.

Materials

- Variety of cupcake cases
- Small decorations for the trees
- Twine
- Ribbon
- Glue
- Scissors



Top tip:

You can also make your own Christmas cards using colourful cupcake liners, or adorable tree angels. Both are easy to make, and the kids can create their own tree angels to top off the Christmas tree.

Scavenger hunt 1

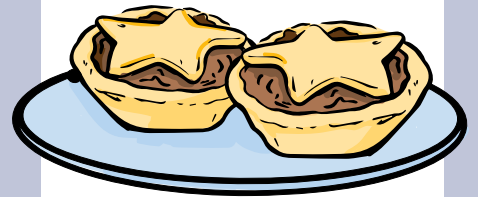
Set up a timer and find all the items. Once the timer ends, whoever has found the most items/all the items the quickest wins.



Wreath



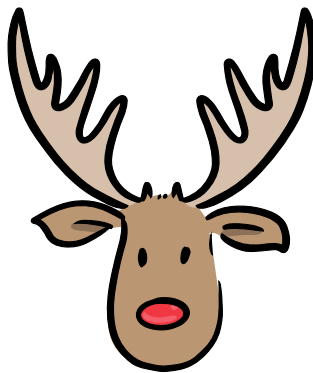
Present



Mince pies



Snowman



Reindeer



Christmas jumper



Mittens



Snowflake



Mistletoe

Scavenger hunt 2

Set up a timer and find all the items. Once the timer ends, whoever has found the most items/all the items the quickest wins.



Snowflake



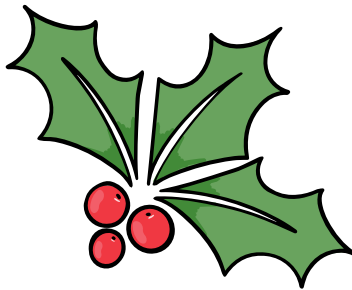
Christmas tree



Knit hat



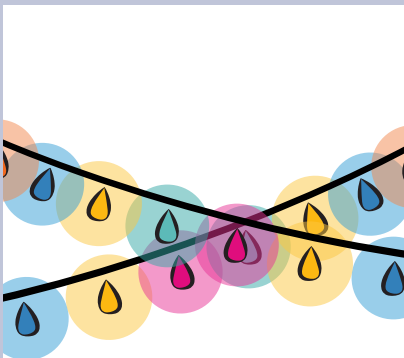
Hot chocolate



Holly



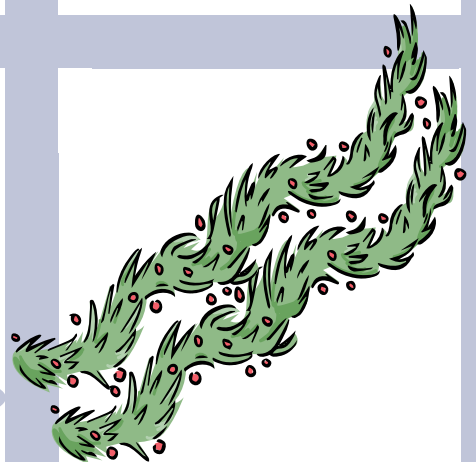
Christmas stocking



Christmas lights



Snow globe



Garland

Scavenger hunt 3

Set up a timer and find all the items. Once the timer ends, whoever has found the most items/all the items the quickest wins.



Santa



Gingerbread



Star



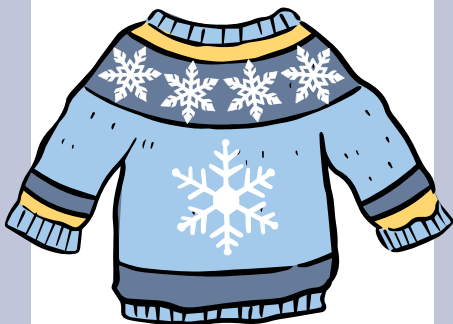
Wreath



Elf



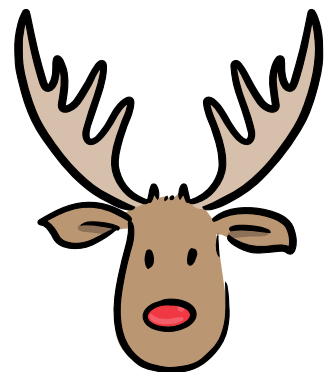
Bell



Christmas jumper



Christmas ornament



Reindeer

Santa and reindeer stick puppets

Materials for Santa stick puppet

- jumbo craft stick, or two lolly sticks stuck together
- red card
- white card
- white cupcake case
- apricot coloured crayon
- small white pom
- small red pom
- googly eyes
- glue stick



Directions:

1. Start by cutting 1/3 off the top of your white cupcake liner. Colour the inside circle section with your apricot crayon.
2. Cut a triangle out of your red cardstock paper. Glue your cupcake liner in the middle of your red triangle.
3. Cut a small circle and a thin strip from your white cardstock paper. Cut the circle in half.
4. Glue on all the finishing features to your Santa: A white pom at the top of the hat, the white strip for the brim of the hat, googly eyes, the two half circles for a moustache and your small red pom for the nose.
5. Cover your jumbo craft stick halfway down with glue and then attach your Santa to it. Let it dry completely before playing with it.

You can also use these as Santa Gift tags. Simply punch a hole in the hat of your Santa, write who the gift is to on the back, and attach it to a gift. Or give to someone special as a gift.

Directions:

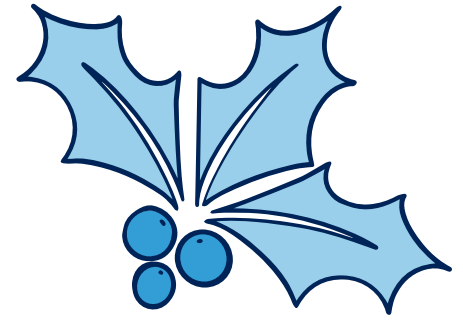
1. Start by cutting a triangle out of your brown card. I cut a square out about 4-inches by 4-inches and then cut out my triangle from that. Also cut out two small ears (I went with a leaf shape). Glue the ear onto the side of the reindeer face (triangle pointing down).
2. Cover your jumbo craft stick halfway down with glue and then glue on your triangle with the point at the bottom.
3. Use your glue to glue on your two googly eyes, and your red pom nose.
4. Cut your brown pipe cleaner in half, then those two pieces in half again. Cut two of those sections in half one more time. You will end up with 6 pieces. Twist two of the small pieces around one of the bigger pieces one time and then point the ends upwards to make antlers. Do the same with the other pieces.
5. Use a generous amount of glue or a hot glue gun if you have it to glue your antlers to the back of your reindeer. Let your puppet dry completely before playing with it. Again you can use this cute little reindeer as a gift tag, or give to someone special.

Materials for reindeer stick puppet

- jumbo craft stick or two lolly sticks stuck together
- brown card
- googly eyes
- brown pipe cleaners
- red pom
- glue stick



Reindeer finger puppet

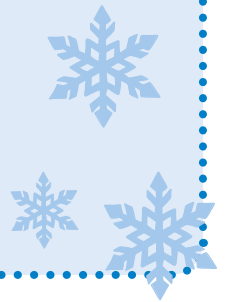


Directions

1. Gather all of your supplies. From your brown card, cut out two circles, one 4-inches in diameter and one 2 1/2-inches in diameter. You will also need to cut out two reindeer ears from your brown card. Punch two 3/4-inch circles in the bottom of your large circle for your fingers.
2. Cut a small strip off the sides of your smaller circle to make more of a reindeer head shape. Now you can assemble your reindeer finger puppet.
3. Glue the reindeer head onto the larger circle making sure that the finger holes are at the bottom. Glue the ears onto the back of the reindeer head.
4. Glue on your googly eyes and your red craft gem. Finish your reindeer by attaching the two clothespins at the top of the reindeer for its antlers.

Materials

- Brown card
- 3/4-inch circle punch
- 2 1/2-inch circle punch
- Small clothes pegs
- googly eyes
- Red craft gem
- Scissors
- Glue



Now your cute reindeer finger puppet is all ready for play! Put two fingers in the puppet holes, then have him dance and fly around while you sing Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, or you might want to re-enact a favourite Christmas story.



Create your own festive bookmark/ornament

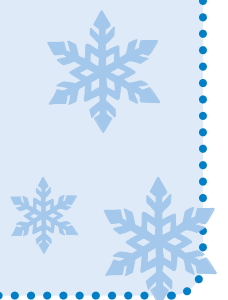


Directions

This project is perfect for the festive season but can also be fun to do year-round! Simply create an ornament in the shape and style that you want and attach a string or ribbon. Once you are finished, find the perfect place to hang your new decoration (doorknob, patio, etc). Alternatively you can leave the ribbon off and gift them to someone special as a book mark.

Materials

- Lolly sticks
- Felt
- Twine
- Googly eyes
- Card
- Piper cleaners
- Ribbon
- Colouring pens



Egg carton reindeer

Directions

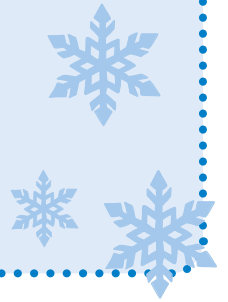
Start by cutting individual cups from an egg carton (the corner ones work best because they are bigger). Paint them brown and let them dry. Glue on some googly eyes and a red pom pom for the nose. Cut out some reindeer ears/antlers from brown card and glue them onto Rudolph.

You're done!! Let them dry before you play with them.

If you want you can also make egg carton Snowmen, Santa and angels.

Materials

- Egg carton
- Red pom pom
- Googly eyes
- Brown card
- Glue/ Hot glue gun
- Brown paint



Cotton ball snowperson

Directions

1. Draw the outline of a snowperson on your paper, stick cotton balls inside the outline to build the snowperson. Leave to dry.
2. Then glue decorations onto your snowperson to give them arms, eyes, noses, scarves, hats, and even a heart.

These make lovely Christmas cards to give to friends and family!

Materials

- Craft glue
- Cotton balls
- Craft paper
- Scissors (optional)

For decoration (for example):

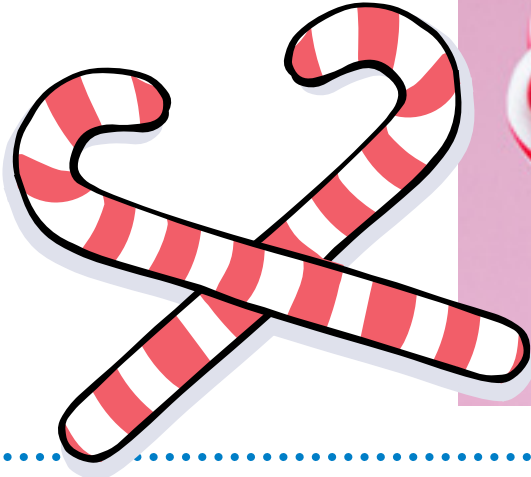
- Sticks
- Googly eyes
- Stickers
- Paper



Candy cane hunt

Directions

It's like an Easter Egg Hunt but with candy canes!
You can also add other festive treats.



Christmas song pictionary

Directions

Write down Christmas song names on pieces of paper and put them in a bowl. Players take turns picking a song from the bowl, and then silently drawing different Christmas songs while their team tries to guess what the drawing is. Teams compete against each other to have the most guessed words and win the game.



Mini paper angels

Directions

The best idea is to print the angel template out directly onto the paper you're going to use.

To create the angel shape, you need to make a cone shape with the paper and slot the two slits on opposite sides of the template together. This will leave you with the little round head popping up at the top and one quarter circle-shaped wing on each side. Once you get the hang of this it's quite easy. Secure the angel together with a piece of tape. The washi tape idea seemed good at the time, but clear magic tape would probably look better and you can stick it on the inside for a more seamless finish.

Tie a bead to the end of a piece of string. This stops it sliding out the top hole when you hang it on the tree. Pop the ribbon through the holes at the top and there you have it! Your angel is complete.

Materials

- Scissors
- Construction paper (or any paper you like)
- Ribbon or string and a bead for hanging
- Tape
- The Mini Paper Angel Template below:

 www.thecrafttrain.com/mini-paper-angels/

Paper straw snowflakes

Directions

1. With white card, cut 2- 1 1/2" circles for each snowflake.
2. Cut straws into 2 1/2" lengths. {8 or 10 of these are needed for each snowflake.} Cut a small straw circle that is only 1/4 inch in length for each snowflake.
3. Glue small 1/4" straw circle in centre of 1 1/2' white cardstock circle. Glue straw pieces around small straw centre as shown
4. Finish by adding a white card circle on top of snowflake design. Add button to finish. If you would like to add a hanging string, use a needle and thread to string clear fishing line through one straw as a hanging hook, or poke a whole and add a traditional wire ornament hook.

Materials

- Paper Straws – various colours
- White card
- Circle paper punch, or circles cut with scissors
- Wood buttons, or any buttons
- Glue gun or white craft glue

These can be sent as gifts or added to Christmas parcels as a gift tag.



Enjoy or wrap and give to friends and family as a wonderful festive gift.

Melted snowman biscuits and cupcakes

How to make them:

Set out your home made or bought biscuits/cupcakes. Mix icing sugar with water to create a smooth paste drizzle over the biscuits and/or cupcakes. If you want a thicker layer for the cupcakes use icing fondant. Roll this out and use a cutter/cup the same size as the top of the cupcakes, attach using icing paste

Place the marshmallows on the biscuits/cupcakes when the icing is nearly set. To add to fondant icing use a dab of icing paste to stick.

Then using a mixture of smarties, sugar balls and decorative icing add arms, facial features, bow ties, scarfs, buttons. Again, use dabs of icing paste to stick these to the fondant icing.

Finally use a brown icing pen, chocolate sauce to draw on arms and add eyes.

Allow to dry. Enjoy or wrap and give to friends and family as a wonderful festive gift.

What you need

- Pack of biscuits
- Plain cupcakes (alternatively you can make your own)
- Marshmallows
- Icing sugar
- Decorative icing or icing pens
- Chocolate sauce
- Smarties
- Sugar balls



Reindeer chocolate covered marshmallows

How to make them:

Get your assembly line ready. Break the small pretzels in half, not easy so have some spare. You'll need two halves for each reindeer's antlers. Have a small red jelly, or if you're using jellybeans, cut them in half to make the noses. Put the marshmallows on a stick (use something to stand them all up in, a foam block is great if you have one). Make small indentations at the top of the marshmallow to help slot in the antlers.

Now you're ready to go. Melt your chocolate in a glass bowl. Once you've done this begin dipping your marshmallows in the chocolate. Use the back side of a spoon to make sure its entirely covered and to remove any excess chocolate. Stand it up using whatever you have at home and repeat the process.

After about 6 marshmallows add the pretzel antlers by inserting them in to the top where you can see the indentations. Hold for a few seconds to make sure they're secure. This might take some practice, don't worry if you break a few along the way!

Repeat this process until you have used up all your marshmallows and chocolate

To attach the nose and eyes you can either do this when the chocolate is still a bit wet (semi-set) or wait until they are completely dry. To add when dry use a little bit of melted chocolate to dab a bit on each piece and then attach it to the marshmallow to finish making the face. The second method is a little less messy and, in my opinion, easier.

Once they are completely dry tie a small piece of ribbon around the stick to look like a scarf.

These would make a lovely gift for family, friends or a neighbour, just put them in a clear treat bag and add a bow/ribbon for decoration. You may even want to attach one of your home made Santa or reindeer tags.



What you need

- Large marshmallows
- Lolly sticks or pretzel stick
- Chocolate (to melt)
- Red jellies for the nose or red coloured jellybeans
- Small pretzels
- Some festive coloured ribbon
- Silver coloured sprinkles for eyes

Teacake Christmas puddings

How to make them:

Add some water to icing sugar and mix to a smooth consistency. When cooled a little drizzle over the top of the teacakes. When the icing is nearly set add the red jelly berries and green leaf jellies.

What you need

- One pack (or more) of teacakes
- Icing sugar
- Decorative jellies to make berries and holly



Christmas pancakes

How to make them:

Make the pancake batter, cook off a batch of pancakes or warm up ready made pancakes. Allow to cool slightly. Add halved strawberries to the top of the pancake to make the hat, use cream (whipped or squirty) to make a beard and line the bottom of the hat. Add eyes and a smile using chocolate sauce and finish off with a pom pom marshmallow at the top of the hat.

What you need

- Pancake mix/readymade pancakes
- Strawberries
- Marshmallows
- Cream
- Chocolate sauce

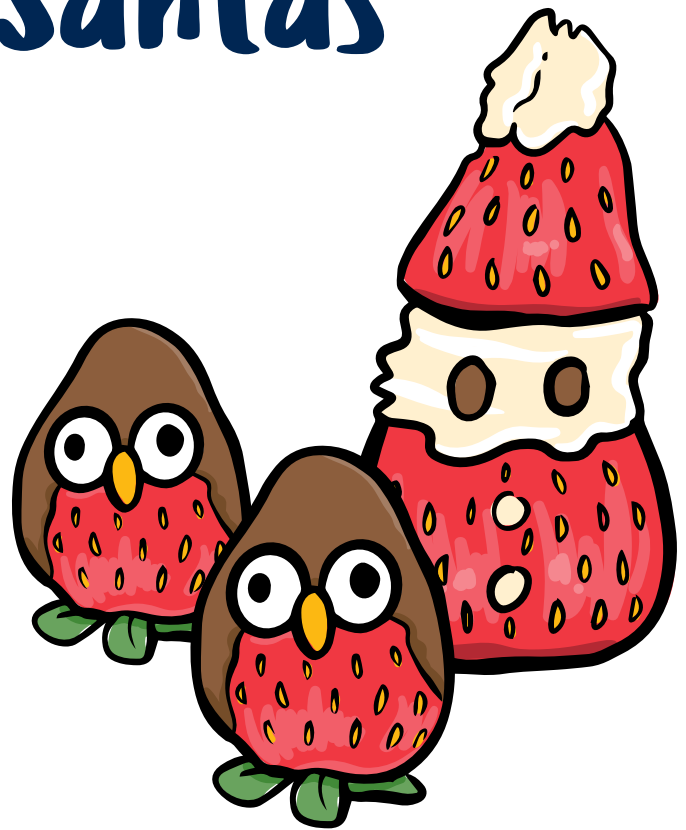
Now they're ready to eat, YUM!



Strawberry Santas and robins

What you need

- Strawberries
- Cream (squirty if you don't want to whip up your own)
- Chocolate chips for eyes
- Chocolate
- Decorative icing



How to make them:

Santas

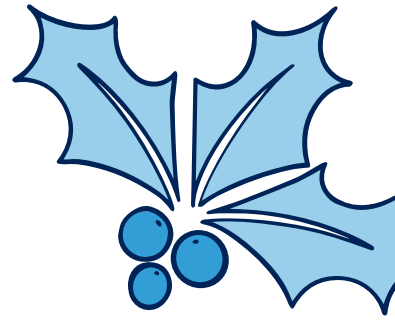
1. Rinse the strawberries and cut off the leaves.
2. Cut the pointed end off of each strawberry. Place the newly cut edge down on a clean napkin. The napkin will absorb the fresh strawberry juice, which is what you want.
3. The "body" of Santa needs to be quickly dabbed on a fresh paper towel as well. The extra juice will cause the cream to slide. By letting the paper towel absorb the fresh strawberry juice, the cream will stay in place better.
4. Either whip up some cream (from double cream) and put in a piping bag or use squirty cream
5. Gently swirl some cream on the top of the body.
6. Place the "Santa hat" (or the strawberry tip) on top of the cream.
7. Add a dab of cream on top to make his hat.
8. Next carefully add either two chocolate chips or dabs of black icing for the eyes.

Robins

1. Rinse the strawberries
2. Melt the chocolate and allow to cool a little. Dip the tip and one side of each strawberry into the chocolate, (to represent the brown feathers of the Robin). Place on a tray, leaves side down (to look like feet)
3. Whilst the chocolate is drying use decorative icing to make eyes, and noses
4. When completely dry use a little melted chocolate to dab on to the eyes and noses to stick to the strawberry
5. You can now enjoy with friends and family. Alternatively you can wrap and give them as a gift .

A wonderful sweet treat to share with friends and family!

More things to do this December...



Here's a collection of sources for a lot of different activities that you can try this December.

National Trust Christmas Craft how to guides

Follow the link to explore the National Trust 'how to' guides on how to make traditional decorations at home for a greener Christmas. Watch the video's and follow the step-by-step instructions to make decorations that will bring seasonal colours and scents into your home.

 www.nationaltrust.org.uk/lists/christmas-crafts-how-to-guides

The Wildlife Trust

If you're looking to make greener choices this Christmas, then check out the eco-friendly Christmas gift ideas or read through the top tips on how to have an eco-friendly Christmas.

 www.wildlifetrusts.org

If you're feeling more adventurous then you might want to take part in the '12 Days wild 2021' midwinter nature challenge

This festive nature challenge encourages us to do one wild thing a day from the 25th December to the 5th January. In those weird days between Christmas and New Year, winter wildlife is just waiting to be explored! Your wild acts could be little things to help nature - like recycling your Christmas tree or feeding the birds - or ways to connect to the natural world, like walking off your Christmas dinner in the woods or admiring the beauty of a winter sunset.

To sign up to the take part follow this link

 www.wildlifetrusts.org/12dayswild



Young Minds: Helping YP cope over the holidays – resources

Young Minds have some new resources for advent and the holidays. They have revamped their self-care advent calendar and added some new materials too. Find out more here:

👉 <http://us7.forward-to-friend.com/forward/preview?u=5c889624b166d3d24a24424d4&id=302f606013>

Charlie Waller Trust – Advent of Kindness

The Charlie Waller website also has some good ‘coping with Christmas’ advice for young people

👉 <https://charliewaller.org/information/mental-wellbeing/christmas-wellbeing>

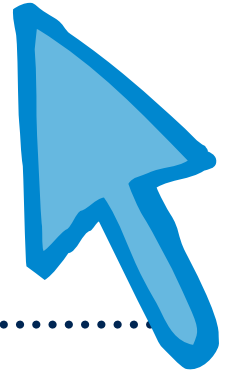
Action for Happiness Calendar

This month, the jolly lot at Action for Happiness are encouraging us all to carry out small acts of kindness. This has been another difficult year of uncertainty and ups and downs for many of us. Kindness is contagious and helping others has been proven to make us feel better too! Let’s try to focus on being generous with our time and attention rather than money - it’s free and better for everyone, as well as our planet

This month’s theme: Do Good December



What's on local guide for Christmas and winter 2021/22



What's happening in Cornwall this Christmas and winter?

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Time2Move Programme

Time2Move Holiday Programme over the Christmas Holidays is live. Currently there are over 55 providers across Cornwall delivering activities over the Christmas holidays focusing on Monday 20th December to Thursday 23rd December.

The provision is open to all children aged 5 to 16 but targets children eligible for Free School Meals where it is free and includes a meal.

Parents can book places for their children through the link below and those with children eligible for free school meals should have received the attached parent letter from their school.

 www.activecornwall.org/T2MHolidayProgramme

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Making Space for Nature

Check out what's happening locally to you and how you can get involved:

 <https://letstalk.cornwall.gov.uk/making-space-for-nature>

Action for Children

Action for children is hosting a range of festive activities across Cornwall this December all FREE to access and open to 11-19 year olds (up to the age of 25 for young people with SEND).

 **For more information see the poster on the next page.**



Join Kernow Connect for some Christmas Fun!

Would you like to join us for some Christmas fun? We are hosting a range of festive activities across Cornwall and would love for you to come along! These activities will include lots of Christmas crafts and other general festive activities. These are all drop-in and free of charge activities so there is no need to book. These sessions are open to all Young People aged 11-19 and 19-25 with SEND*.

EAST CORNWALL ACTIVITIES

- ★ Friday 10th December, 4pm-6pm, Bude Family Hub, EX23 8EA (max. 15 attendees)
- ★ Friday 17th December, 4pm-6pm, Camelford Family Hub, PL32 9UJ (max. 10 attendees)
- ★ Monday 20th December, 10.30am-2.30pm, Wadebridge Community Hub, PL27 7AL (Lunch will be provided)
- ★ Tuesday 21st December, 10.30am-2.30pm, Callington Community Hub, PL17 7EF (Lunch will be provided)

MID CORNWALL ACTIVITIES

- ★ Tuesday 30th November, 7pm-8.30pm, St. Austell Family Hub, Woodland Rd, PL25 4RA
- ★ Tuesday 14th December, 7pm-8.30pm, Newquay Family Hub, TR7 2LU
- ★ Thursday 2nd December, 6.30pm-8pm, Perranporth Family Hub, TR6 0EU
- ★ Thursday 9th December, 6.30pm-8pm, The Lighthouse Family Hub, Falmouth, TR11 2BB

WEST CORNWALL ACTIVITIES

- ★ Monday 20th December, 2pm-5pm, Helston Family Hub, TR13 8JF
- ★ Tuesday 21st December, 2pm-5pm, Redruth Family Hub, TR15 1NA
- ★ Wednesday 22nd December, 1.30pm-4.30pm, Hayle Family Hub, TR27 4ND
- ★ Thursday 23rd December, 2pm-5pm, St. John's in the Fields, St. Ives, TR26 2FB



*Young People with SEND who require 1:1 support can attend if accompanied by an assistant or adult. Please call 01872 321486 if your Young Person requires this support.



FOR MORE INFO CALL 01872 321486 OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE
services.actionforchildren.org.uk/kernow-connect

The Connect Card for 10-16 year olds

In the run up to and during the Christmas period the Connect Card site will include Christmas advice / support information as well as fun activities and competitions.

Order Connect cards or download Connect resources here:

 www.startnowcornwall.org.uk/connect-card/

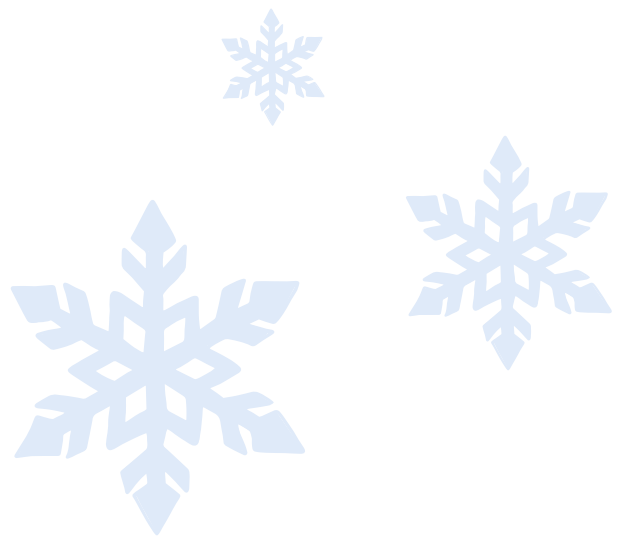


Blackbird Pie magazine

Welcome to the **FREE DIGITAL** winter issue of **BlackbirdPie - The What's On in Cornwall for families.**

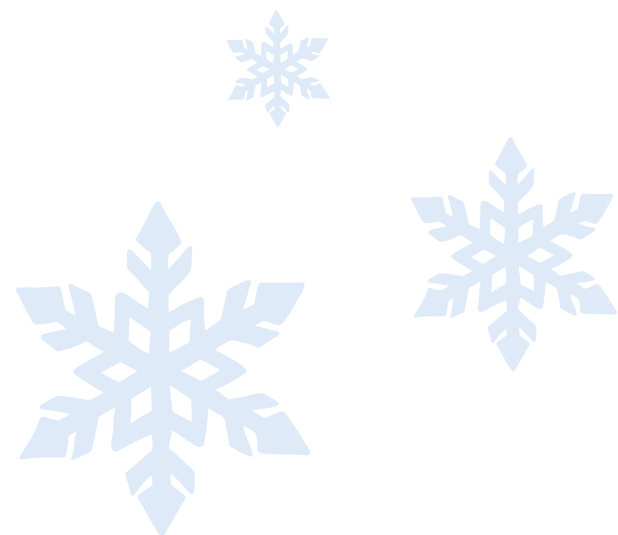
There is SO much to do, in the run up to Christmas and through until the end of January, from theatre shows and pantomimes, Santa and festive illuminations, gorgeous galleries & fascinating museums, free events & a few special offers.

 www.blackbirdpie.co.uk/





Find out more about the
5 Ways to Wellbeing at...
www.startnowcornwall.org.uk



**If you would like this information in another
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