

BC Wellbeing News

CHRISTMAS EDITION

December 2025

As we enter the season of Advent and look forward to celebrating the birth of Jesus, Christmas invites us to make space in our hearts for what truly matters.

For young people and their families, Christmas can be a joyful time, but it can also come with challenges. Feelings of pressure, tiredness, or worry can sometimes sit alongside excitement. Our faith gently reminds us that we are never alone, and we are called to care for ourselves and one another with kindness and compassion.

The Bishop Challoner Wellbeing Team would like you wish you and your family a peaceful, joyful and healthy Christmas season.

We've gathered some great suggestions from various sources and put together our own 12 tips.

TWELVE TIPS FOR CHRISTMAS

1. Accept that no-one's Christmas is really as perfect as it looks in the films. Be realistic about your expectations.

3. Give yourself some space. Take some time out with a book, do some mindfulness colouring or go for walk.

4. Maintain healthy habits: Drink plenty of water, get enough sleep, wrap up warm and get outside for some fresh air.

5. Give the screens a rest. #1 You don't need to be comparing your family's Christmas with airbrushed versions in the media.

6. Do something for someone else: Help with the meal preparation? Wrap some presents? Offer to collect some shopping for someone?

2. Don't forget the real meaning of Christmas. Make some time to go to Mass, go to a Christmas carol service or visit your local place of worship or spend some quiet time in prayer or meditation.

10. Remember the people you miss in your own way: Talk about them. Display a photo. Hang a decoration on the tree in their memory.

9. Give the screens a rest. #2 Don't allow yourself to be bombarded with adverts encouraging you to spend yet more, before Christmas Day is even over.

11. Before or after the bog day, have a clear out of things you no longer need. Can you donate some warm clothes, book or toys you no longer need to a local charity?

12. Don't hesitate to reach out for help if you need it (see links on last page).

8. Each evening, consciously think about, or write down, one thing you can be grateful for.

7. Make someone else happy by connecting with them. Drop a card through the door of an elderly neighbour? Write a thank-you note to a friend?

FREE FAMILY ACTIVITIES IN BIRMINGHAM DURING THE FESTIVE SEASON

Indoor & Museum Fun

- Library of Birmingham: Offers free festive crafts (calligraphy, origami) and sensory play in the Children's Library until late December.
- Birmingham Museums (BMAG & Thinktank): Free festive performances at BMAG, Christmas films at Thinktank's Planetarium, and Tudor Christmas fun at Blakesley Hall.
- Resorts World Birmingham: Hosts free weekend "North Pole Party Time" with kids' discos and games in their atrium.

Outdoor & Park Activities

- Kings Heath Park: Free family craft mornings in December with nature-themed decorations.
- City Centre Lights & Markets: Walk around to see the elaborate lights and enjoy the bustling atmosphere of the massive Frankfurt Christmas Market (entry is free).
- Lickey Hills: Enjoy nature walks with festive views.

General Festive Atmosphere

- Christmas Lights: Take a drive or walk through different neighbourhoods to see decorated houses.
- Christmas Markets: Even if you don't buy, browsing the stalls at the Frankfurt Market offers a great festive experience.

COPING WITH MONEY WORRIES

Christmas can be especially tough if you're struggling financially. It might help to:

Don't break the bank: Reject consumer pressure and remember that you don't have to buy anything for Christmas to make it meaningful. Instead, focus on the non-material aspects of the holiday.

Access financial guidance, this can help you find the right help if bills or other financial concerns have you worried.

[Creating a budget](#) and making a list of priority expenditures can help keep things manageable.

Talk openly with loved ones about your situation so you can explore free or low-cost ways to celebrate. Making deals with family and friends not to buy each other presents can help reduce financial pressure and stress.

Be kind to yourself. Financial worries can impact your mental health. Remember not to blame yourself for the situation.

Be present and be the best present: The greatest gift you can give to loved ones is your attention. Spending quality time together, rather than focusing on gifts, makes for a much more meaningful holiday experience.

Be Mindful of your Wellbeing

Even though Christmas can be overwhelming, there are ways to protect yourself:

Be gentle and set boundaries for yourself—don't be afraid to say no to things that aren't helpful.

Keep things in perspective: avoid the pressure that comes from unrealistic media portrayals of a perfect Christmas.

Remind yourself that the holidays won't last forever and set clear start and finish times for when you consider Christmas begins and ends.

Allow yourself to feel your emotions, even if they don't match the festive mood around you.

Take time out to do things that make you feel good, whether it's watching a non-festive film, reading, or enjoying some quiet time.

Make sure you get what you need, whether it's a break or just a bit of space.

PLANNING AHEAD

Anticipate challenges and prepare strategies to cope:

- If you'll be somewhere unfamiliar, consider what might help you feel more comfortable.
- Set boundaries: Make agreements with family about what you're comfortable with during the holidays. This way, you can opt out of events that cause you stress and avoid overcommitting yourself.
- Stick to parts of your usual routine to avoid feeling too disrupted, and gradually ease into holiday activities.
- Plan some quiet time: Allow yourself time to rest and recharge during the holidays. Setting aside some "me time" can help you stay balanced and well.
- Draw on your own experience. What has helped you in the past, and what's proved challenging? If you expect moments of distress, have a note of helpful strategies ready.
- Plan time in places that make you feel comfortable and avoid places that bring up difficult memories if you can.
- If you're feeling lonely, consider creative projects or nature walks to pass the time or check out some of the many opportunities our partners offer below.
- Make plans to connect with loved ones, whether in person or through a phone or video call, but don't feel pressured to attend every social event. It can be overwhelming. It's okay to say no to protect your mental health.
- Try new traditions if old ones aren't possible this year because of bereavement or family changes.
- Plan something nice to look forward to after Christmas.

MANAGING RELATIONSHIPS

Holiday gatherings can be stressful. Here are some ways to manage relationships:

Think of responses to difficult questions ahead of time and be ready to change the topic if needed.

Set clear expectations with others about budgets and plans in advance.

Connect with supportive people: Spend time with those who make you feel good; avoid those who create stress.

Share your feelings with others, but remember it's not your responsibility to convince them or justify your needs.

TIAAS

You may remember that last year we started our 3 year journey of TIAAS training (Trauma Informed and Attachment Aware Schools), completing our initial whole school staff training over the course of the last academic year. The great thing about this programme is that is all about prioritising relationships, and is in no way only suitable for adults working with young people who have experienced some sort of trauma.

We were delighted to hear recently that we have already been recognised with a national Bronze Award for our work in this area, and will certainly be 'going for gold' in the years to come!

We will be sharing aspects of our learning with parents/carers in the coming months and encourage you to get in touch if there is any aspect of wellbeing/emotional support for young people that you would like to know more about.

Below is the link to an article that looks at Teen Dysregulation:

[Anger, Angst & Tantrums: Teen Emotional Dysregulation — Let's all Talk Mental Health](#)



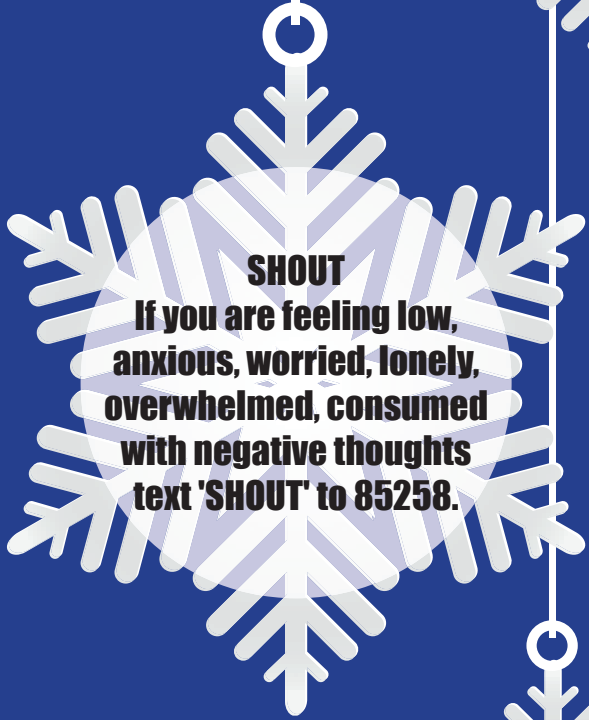
**Remember: If you are worried
about the safety of yourself or
another person at any time call
999**



The Samaritans
www.samaritans.org
24/7 365 days of the
year. Call for free:
116 123



Childline:
www.childline.org.uk
Call for free
0800 1111



SHOUT
If you are feeling low,
anxious, worried, lonely,
overwhelmed, consumed
with negative thoughts
text 'SHOUT' to 85258.



The Trussell Trust:
Stop UK Hunger.
Find a foodbank near you
[www.trusselltrust.org/
get-help/find-a-food-
bank/](http://www.trusselltrust.org/get-help/find-a-food-bank/)



Kooth
an online mental
health community.
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Women's aid
Domestic violence
support.
www.womensaid.org.uk
[https://chat.womensaid.
org.uk/](https://chat.womensaid.org.uk/) For advice
and support, not for
emergencies.

Wishing you a Happy, Holy and Peaceful Christmas!