

BC Wellbeing News

#5  @BCCCWellbeing

Summer 2024

Welcome to our summer newsletter!

We have reached the end of another very busy year and we are sure you are all ready to take that well earned break and enjoy some summer weather (with any luck!) We have put together a variety of advice and suggestions for a cost-effective fun-filled six week break.

Looking for some free, outdoor, well-being activities for all the family this summer?



Checkout The Active Wellbeing Society, a Birmingham based community benefit society and cooperative working to build healthy, happy communities living active and connected lives. <https://theaws.co.uk/>

Now that the nicer weather is finally here it will hopefully stay with us for the next six weeks - here are Loughborough University's guide to outdoor activities:

8 OUTDOOR activities to boost wellbeing



1. Do some gardening



2. Discover new walks



3. Nature spotting



8. Get crafty



7. Practice mindfulness



6. Have a picnic



5. Take your workout outside



4. Forage for fruit and flowers

Advice from Forward Thinking Birmingham

BOOST YOUR MENTAL HEALTH DURING THE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Ahh the school holidays...time to relax and enjoy some sunshine (if the British weather allows).

For many of us, summer is the season of fun and freedom but if you're living with a mental health issue, you might not be quite so excited at the prospect of the weeks ahead. If so, we've put together some top tips for managing your mental health over the summer holidays.

1. Don't do away with the routine

Long lie-ins are a must sometimes but if you're sleeping lots every day, it can have a negative impact on your mental health. It's OK to relax your routine a little – we're not suggesting 6am starts – but try to go to bed at a reasonable time and get up not much more than an hour later than you normally would. Have a shower and get dressed, even if you've got no plans. You'll feel refreshed and more energised.

2. Get planning

If you're struggling to get motivated, planning your time can help. Give yourself something to do every morning and afternoon, and make sure you have a good mix. Schedule some time for gaming, reading or watching TV and add in a couple of chores. It's not just to keep your parents happy (although that's an added bonus), it'll give you a sense of achievement and make the fun stuff more enjoyable.

3. Enjoy the great outdoors

OK, so living in the UK's second city, it might feel like we're miles from the countryside, but there's more to see in Brum than you might think. As well as beautiful parks and nature reserves, a walk around the city itself can be pretty interesting. Whatever works for you, try to get outside at least a few times a week. And if you need some inspiration, the Birmingham Mail has some great suggestions for summer walks.

4. Practise a summer of self-care

Self-care is all about being kind to yourself, listening to what your body and mind need and making time for the things that make you feel good. Check-in with yourself each morning and evening to see how you're feeling and if there's anything you need. Sometimes a few minutes of mindfulness, a short walk or a nice relaxing bath can do wonders. Try making a list of some feel-good activities and plan them out for the weeks ahead.

6. Stay connected

If you can't meet up with your mates over the summer, six weeks can feel like a lifetime. Having some company is important for everyone, so make an effort to catch up with family members and keep in touch with friends if possible. If you're feeling lonely or need someone to talk to, come and see our friendly team at Pause. We've also got some great workshops where you can connect with other people your age.

Rainy Day?

We all know what to expect from the British summer, so perhaps some rainy day suggestions too?

How about some mindfulness colouring to keep the whole family absorbed?

Lots of printable pages like the one here are available from this site: <https://www.happierhuman.com/mindfulness-coloring-pages/>

Or how about visiting a wellbeing focussed café: <https://groundedcafe.co.uk/>



Exams results day, and the lead up to it, can be a stressful time – especially if you're worried that your exams didn't go as well as you had hoped, or are disappointed with your results.

We've shared some advice on how to look after yourself in the lead up to results day, and on the day.

Waiting for your results

The period of time from when you break up to when the exam results come out can seem endless and intense. Here are some top tips to cope with the interminable wait:



Make plans

Make plans with your friends and interact with people. Avoid sitting home and worrying. Even if exams went badly, focus on what you can change, not what you can't. It will help to regulate your mood and give you a lift if you see other people.



Get yourself into a routine

As much as we love the idea of a lie-in for 6 weeks, being out of routine can actually lead to more anxiety. Try to get up at a similar time each day, get some sunshine, eat healthily and get yourself organised.



Decide how you want to get your results

In a group? With your parents or friends? What would make things easiest on the day?



Be kind to yourself

Accept it's normal to feel worried and strange, and immerse yourself in something you love. Watch your favourite movie, go for a walk, have a relaxing bath and take yourself away from it all for a while.



Don't dwell on it

Be strict with how much time you spend discussing and thinking about exam results. It's likely you and your friends, and family, will want to discuss and debate what could, might, or has happened. Set aside time (say half an hour a day) where you think and talk about it – some people call this 'worry time'. The rest of the time, get on with your life!



Map out the scenarios

Facing the worst case scenario head on can take away its power. Make a plan of what you could do if you don't get the grades you need. Nothing is unsolvable, things will get better, and there are a tonne of alternatives to every situation.



Make a list of all the things you enjoy

Find the time to do them. This can reduce your stress levels, improve your mood, and help you feel refreshed and relaxed.

Water Safety

On average, over 700 people drown each year in the UK and Ireland. A sad but interesting fact for us landlocked in Birmingham is that more drown inland than on the coast. This is often due to people taking the plunge in hot weather in unsuitable and unsupervised places, such as canals and reservoirs. Read on for some advice from the Royal Life Saving Society

We want people to enjoy the water safely. These simple precautions can help minimise the risk, both at home and on holiday.



If you're looking for a place to cool off always find a lifeguarded swimming site.



Water at open water and inland sites is often much colder than it looks, cold water can affect your ability to swim and self-rescue.



Always swim parallel to the shore, that way you're never too far away.

Currents in the water can be very strong. If you find yourself caught in a riptide, don't swim against it, you'll tire yourself out. Swim with the current and call for help.



Never go swimming alone- that way, anything goes wrong you've got someone there to help.



Thinking ahead to September.

Check out the sleep charity 'sleeptember' campaign <https://thesleepcharity.org.uk/sleeptember-knowyoursleep/>;



Advice from Young Minds about returning to school in September:

As the holidays come to a close, for some children, the thought of going back to school can make them feel anxious and nervous. Here are some things you can do to make going back to school easier and less stressful for you and your child.

- Chat about school in your ordinary everyday conversations as the holidays come to an end. Keep it light and keep it positive.
- Ask how they're feeling about it and whatever they tell you, accept, validate and normalise their feelings - e.g. "You're right, it is a bit nerve-wracking on your first day back - same for me and work. I bet there are 30 other kids in your class feeling exactly the same."
- Plan a few interesting things to do in the evenings and at weekends in the next term to give them something to look forward to and remind them that school is only a part of their week.
- Establish a routine 'family feedback' time where everyone can air and share worries from their day, as well as the fun things that went on. This could happen over dinner time and involve questions like, "What was the silliest moment of your day? What was the most interesting fact you learnt today? Did anyone say anything kind or mean?"





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



**Birmingham and
Solihull Women's Aid:**
0808 800 0028
<https://bswaid.org/>



Childline:
www.childline.org.uk

Call for free
0800 1111



The Trussell Trust:
Stop UK Hunger.
Find a foodbank near you
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Kooth
an online mental
health community.
www.kooth.org

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