

# BC Wellbeing News

#7  @BCCCWellbeing

Summer 2022

## Welcome to our summer newsletter!

We've made it to the end of another challenging, but undoubtedly rewarding, year and we are sure you are all ready to recharge the batteries and, with any luck, enjoy some summer weather. We have put together a variety of advice and suggestions for a fun-filled six-week break that won't break the bank.

**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/>

## Other ways to relax outdoors: it's as easy as A.B.C

### BE AWARE

Sometimes we are so busy worrying about our mental 'to do' list that we forget to notice the beauty around us- even in the city. The next time you are in a garden or a park, find a quiet spot and focus on something close to you; a blackbird foraging among decaying beech leaves, a dew-spangled spider web, or the furrowed trunk of an old oak tree. Use all your senses; be conscious of what you can hear and smell as well as see.

### Breathe

Get yourself sitting comfy on a bench or a blanket and practise some mindful breathing, a very basic yet powerful mindfulness exercise. The idea is simply to focus your attention on your breathing—to its natural rhythm and flow and the way it feels on each inhale and exhale. Focusing on the breath is helpful because it serves as an anchor—something to your attention to at any time if you start to feel anxious or invaded by negative thoughts.

### Collect

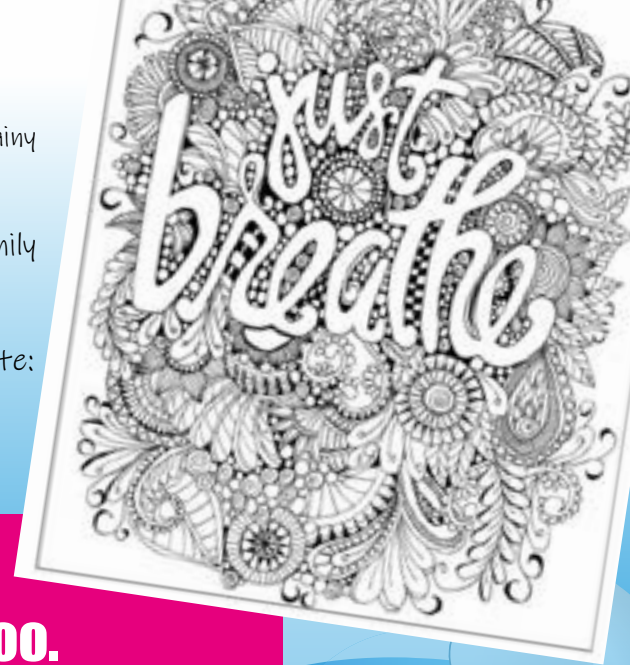
Setting yourself a gentle collecting mission on a walk can help take your attention away from other worries. What you collect is up to you but you might use your finds in crafts or decorations. At the beach look out for interesting shells, pebbles or pieces of sea glass. In the park you might collect a range of different coloured leaves, cones or interesting feathers.

# 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/>



## Don't forget in Birmingham we have lots of FREE museums and galleries too.

The IKON Gallery in Brindley Place has special family days each Saturday and a free Art Explorer Guide, made for each exhibition, contain short creative activities for families.

Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery in Chamberlain Square has something for everyone including, this summer, an exhibition entitled 'We Are Birmingham' reflecting the people of 21st Century Birmingham, a vivid celebration of the city that Birmingham is now, as well as aspirations of what the city could become.

# 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 talking 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.





# Hot weather: How to sleep in the heat

## Some advice from the BBC

With much of the UK experiencing high temperatures in recent weeks, many people are wrestling with the challenge of getting a good night's sleep. But there are things you can do to beat the heat.

These tips were based on suggestions by Prof Kevin Morgan, former director of the Clinical Sleep Research Unit at Loughborough University, and Lisa Artis, of the Sleep Council.

### 1. No napping

Hot weather can make us feel a bit lethargic during the day. That's because we're using more energy to regulate our internal temperature.

But if your sleep is disturbed at night, try to avoid napping during the day. When it's hot, sleepiness can be precious - save it for bedtime.

### 2. Keep to routines

Hot weather can encourage you to change your habits. Don't. That can disrupt sleep.

Try to keep to your usual bedtime and routines. Do the things you normally do before bed.

### 3. Remember the basics

Take steps to make sure your bedroom is as cool as it can be at night.

During the day, draw the curtains or blinds to keep the sun out. Make sure you close the windows on the sunny side of your home, to keep hot air out.

Open all the windows before you go to bed, to get a through breeze.

### 6. Stay hydrated

Drink enough water throughout the day but avoid drinking very large amounts before bed. You probably don't want to wake up thirsty - but you don't want to take an additional trip to the bathroom in the early hours either.

### 8. Stay calm

If you're struggling to sleep, get up and do something calming. Try reading, writing, or even folding your socks.

Just make sure you don't play on your phone or a video game - the blue light makes us feel less sleepy and the activity is stimulating. Return to bed when you feel sleepy.

### 5. Chill your socks

Using even a small fan can be sensible in hot weather, especially when it's humid. It encourages the evaporation of sweat and makes it easier for your body to regulate your internal temperature. If you don't have a fan, try filling your hot water bottle with ice cold liquid instead. Alternatively, cool socks in the fridge and put those on. Cooling your feet lowers the overall temperature of your skin and body.

### 9. Think of the children

Make sure usual bedtimes and bath times don't go out of the window just because it's warm.

As part of the bedtime routine, lukewarm baths are recommended by the NHS UK website. Make sure they aren't too cold, as that will boost circulation (your body's way of keeping warm).

### 4. Use thin sheets

Reduce your bedding but keep covers handy. Thin cotton sheets will absorb sweat.

However hot it is in your bedroom, your body temperature will fall during the night. That's why we sometimes wake up feeling cold.

### 7. But think about what you drink

Be careful about soft drinks. Many contain large amounts of caffeine, which stimulates the central nervous system and makes us feel more awake. Avoid drinking too much alcohol as well. Many people drink more when the weather is hot. Alcohol might help us fall asleep but it promotes early morning waking and a poorer quality of sleep overall.

### 10. Get over it

Most of us need about seven to eight hours of good-quality sleep each night to function properly and teens need even more. But remember that most people can function well after a night or two of disturbed sleep.

Although you might yawn a little more frequently than usual, you'll probably be fine.

# Self-care summer

for  
secondary students

#SelfCareSummer

## Relationships and connection

Spending time with trusted people, like friends and family, is important for your wellbeing. Whether it's a listening ear, shoulder to cry on or advice, we all need someone we can turn to.

**Week 1**

Resource

## Play and entertainment

Playing might not seem important for your wellbeing but it can help you explore your thoughts and emotions, escape from reality or simply to relax and have fun.

**Week 2**

Resource

## Relaxation

We can often find ourselves being busy with plans but remember it's okay to pause, take time for yourself, relax and recharge.

**Week 3**

Resource

## Physical activity

Keeping active can positively impact your mood and wellbeing, and you can do it your way, whether it's dancing, sports, going to the gym or simply going for a walk.

**Week 4**

Resource

## Creativity

Finding ways to be creative can be an opportunity to express yourself and focus on the present moment. This could be through acting, cooking, drawing, writing or making music.

**Week 5**

Resource

## Emotional health

Practicing self-kindness is not always easy but being your own best-friend, however this might look, is important when looking after your mental health and wellbeing.

**Week 6**

Resource



**The Samaritans**  
[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)  
24/7 365 days of the  
year. Call for free: 116  
123

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

**Childline:**  
[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

**Call for free**  
**0800 1111**

**The Trussell Trust:**  
**Stop UK Hunger.**  
**Find a foodbank near you**  
[www.trusselltrust.org](http://www.trusselltrust.org)

**Women's aid**  
Domestic violence support.  
[www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk)  
<https://chat.womensaid.org.uk/> For advice and support,  
not for emergencies.

**Kooth**  
an online mental  
health community.  
[www.kooth.org](http://www.kooth.org)

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