

Mental Health and Wellbeing Autumn 2021

The run up to Christmas and the winter months can take its toll on our mental and physical wellbeing. I've been thinking a lot recently how the cold weather and dark nights have impacted on my own physical wellbeing and how in turn this can affect mental health. I miss the ease of exercising outside and the temptation to stay in and eat lots of chocolate!

There are many charities out there that support Mental Health, and in recent years it has become more acceptable to talk about Mental Health without the stigma previously attached to it. I have been researching some of these charities and have attached some links that you might find useful if you are struggling, especially at this time with Christmas so close.

Charities

Mind

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/christmas-and-mental-health/christmas-and-mental-health/>

Mental Health Foundation

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/christmas>

Priory Group

<https://www.priorygroup.com/blog/how-can-christmas-affect-your-mental-health>

Heads Together

<https://www.headstogether.org.uk/tips-on-looking-after-your-mental-health-this-christmas/>

These are just a few charities that offer support and advice, there are many more.

At St John's CE Primary School, we wish you all a Happy, Safe and Stress-free Christmas, as always if you do find yourself in need of some support or advice please contact the school in one of the following ways:

Email your child's class teacher: teachersname@stjohns.worcs.sch.uk, speak to a member of staff on the playground in the morning at drop off or after school at pick up, phone the office and ask to speak to your child's teacher, Mrs Lowe, Mrs Taylor or Mrs Love on 01562 745558.

Mrs R. Taylor

Mental Health and Wellbeing lead



Coping with Social Anxiety

For people who suffer from social anxiety, the festive season can be really daunting, with Christmas parties and family gatherings on the horizon. Here are 4 ways of coping with these events if they are feeling overwhelming.

1. Talk to someone before the party

Remember that whatever you're going through, it's ok to say.

Is there someone you can talk to about how you're feeling?

You may find that just talking through your worries can help.

Coping with Social Anxiety



2. Plan conversation topics

Meeting new people & making small talk can be daunting. Thinking of some topics to ask new people that you meet, might help you feel more relaxed on the day.

People might like talking about their Christmas plans, upcoming holidays, or New Year's resolutions.

Coping with Social Anxiety



3. Have a calming contingency plan

Think about what to do if you start to feel anxious. Could you take a moment outside or in the bathroom to take some deep breaths?

Keeping these calming ideas in the back of your mind can help you relax and give you tools to help yourself if you need to.

Coping with Social Anxiety



4. Be kind to yourself

If you feel the party will be too much for you right now, don't force yourself to go.

Try not to put yourself under too much pressure, and remember to put yourself first. And if you do go, know that you can leave at anytime.

Coping with Social Anxiety



Coping with Loneliness

Christmas can be a tough time of year to feel alone and if you have noticed that it's affecting your mental health, we've put together some simple tips to make the holidays happier.

1. Do what makes you happy

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What do you love to do? **Make Christmas your day to do exactly what you like** - you've got no one to please but yourself.

Finding meaningful ways to spend your time can help you reconnect with things you are passionate about and **doing things you love can help you feel better.**

Loneliness at Christmas



2. Do something for others

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Doing a good can have a positive effect on the way we feel.

There are many ways you can **make someone else's holiday happier** - you could volunteer your time and skills, visit someone who you think might be struggling, or offer help to a family in need. **You can make a difference.**

Loneliness at Christmas



3. Reach out to someone

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Whatever you're going through, remember **it can help to talk about it.**

Reach out to others however you feel comfortable - you might prefer to text, speak on the phone, meet in person, or connect with an online community.

There is always someone who wants to listen, even if you don't know it.

Loneliness at Christmas



4. Look after yourself

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Try to minimise your stress by avoiding taking on more Christmas responsibilities or commitments than you can handle, and remember to energise your body by **eating well, sleeping well and keeping active.**

Whatever you do, remember to **be kind to yourself.**

Loneliness at Christmas

