

The YoungMinds Wellbeing Advent Calendar



Looking after your wellbeing as you countdown to the holidays

The lead up to Christmas is a fun and exciting time, but for some pupils it can be a very difficult time, and leave them feeling anxious, lonely or stressed.

We've created a Wellbeing Advent Calendar, to help you and your class take 5 minutes a day throughout December to do an activity that will boost your wellbeing. This will also provide an opportunity for your pupils to learn activities and exercises that will help them look after their mental health.

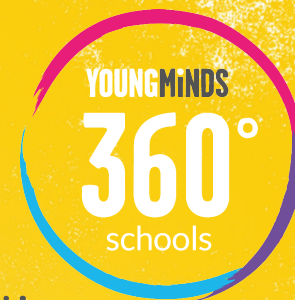
For some activities, we've given ways that you can do it solo or together, so it can be something you can do as a class together in tutor time, or maybe an activity your pupils can do themselves as they come in from lunch.

We would love to see how you use your Wellbeing Advent Calendar!

Send us any pictures or feedback to 360schools@youngminds.org.uk or use the hashtag **#360Advent** and tag **@YoungMindsUK** on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.

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MONDAY

2 Give a gold star

SOLO: Have cut out stars for pupils to write on and give to the person on their left. Have some examples such as – “I give you a gold star for always making me smile.”

TOGETHER: Ask each pupil to read their gold star aloud and hand them out.

TUESDAY

3 Quiet time

Play some calming music and ask everyone to close their eyes and listen, focusing on their breathing. Play music from festive films like Polar Express, Love Actually, Home Alone.

Tip: Try doing some yoga exercises from P.E with the music.

WEDNESDAY

4 The Giant Doodle

Have a large piece of paper rolled out across each table, where your class can gather round and do some doodling.

Tip: Start the doodle with circles, swirls, triangles and repetitive patterns.

THURSDAY

5 Have a giggle

Ask each pupil to share their favourite jokes to get everyone laughing.

SOLO: Pupils take it in turn to share their favourite joke.

TOGETHER: Make a big list of the best jokes! Here are some of our favourite jokes from Beano youngminds.org.uk/beano-jokes

FRIDAY

6 Three Good Things

Write down ‘three good things’ that have happened this week at school. For each thing, think about how it made you feel at the time and why.

9 Start with a stretch

Kick off your week with some stretching. Starting from the head, go down the body stretching out each part. Roll your neck, wiggle your fingers and rotate your arms...

Tip: Ask a few pupils in the class to lead the stretching exercises.

10 Saying thank you

Write a list of people to say thank you to. If they are in the class, try and say thank you by the end of the day.

SOLO: Pupils write down who they would say thank you to and why.

TOGETHER: Pupils share thank yous with the class.

11 And breathe...

Have a go at focusing on your breathing. Ask your class to close their eyes and listen to their breath as they inhale for four and exhale for four.

12 Get your body moving!

Play a song for a few minutes, to shake off the tension and have a dance.

SOLO: Put music on and let the class dance as they come in from lunch or break.

TOGETHER: Go round and let each pupil lead the class in a dance move.

13 Storytime

Write a funny story together as a whole class. Go round the class and each person has to say one line as you make a story together.

16 Alternative Christmas messages

Come up with a list of alternative messages you would say to someone who might not be facing a ‘happy’ Christmas this year. (E.g. Christmas is just another day I’ll be there for you).

17 Alternative Christmas Cards

Turn your alternative Christmas messages into Christmas cards!

18 Jumping Beans

Get the class to stand up. When you shout out one of the types of beans, the class have to do the action below.

Baked bean: crouch down into a ball, Runner bean: run on the spot, Jumping bean: jump up and down, Magic bean: freestyle move!

19 I am grateful

Write, or draw three things you are grateful for.

You could extend this by creating a ‘gratitude tree’. Draw a tree outline on a large piece of paper and ask pupils to write on tags what they are grateful for and stick them up.

20 Christmas karaoke

Put on a Christmas song (or any song) and have a sing along together.

Tip: you can find the lyrics to almost any song on YouTube.

