

Bolton

Together

Registered Charity in England and Wales (1163466)

# A Season of Warmth

*We stay warm when we care for each other*

***Winter Support for those aged 5-10***

# Introduction

Welcome to Bolton Together's Winter Wellbeing Workbook!

Winter can bring frosty mornings, dark evenings, and chilly weather. But it's also a special time to slow down, snuggle up, and care for one another. When we look after ourselves and the people around us, we find a different kind of warmth. The kind that comes from kindness and love.

This workbook is filled with fun activities, creative ideas, and gentle challenges to help you and your family:

- Keep your bodies and minds warm and healthy
- Show kindness and care to others
- Stay active, curious, and creative
- Feel connected, calm, and full of winter cheer

You can enjoy these pages on your own, with your family, or with friends. Each activity is a chance to share smiles, help one another, and spread warmth.

So wrap up, get comfy, and join us in discovering how caring, sharing, and having fun together can make even the coldest days feel cosy inside and out.



The Bolton Together Team



# Supporting Every Child This Holiday Season

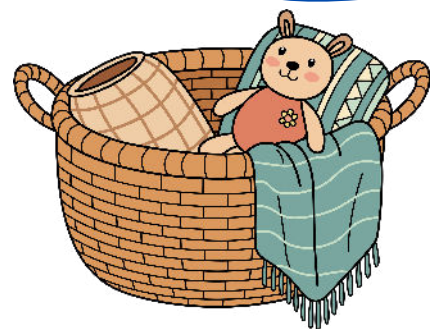
The holiday season, while joyful for many, can be overwhelming for children with sensory sensitivities or developmental differences due to loud sounds, bright decorations, and crowded spaces. Families may notice triggers affecting their child's mood and behavior.

It's important for parents to balance the desire for holiday magic with their child's comfort, recognising that adaptations can enhance the experience.

Thoughtful planning allows for a festive environment that promotes connection, and inclusion, focusing on comfort and meaningful moments rather than perfection.

## Tips to help

- **Create quiet spaces** with soft lighting and comfort items for retreats.
- Engage in sensory-friendly activities like tactile crafts and baking.
- **Use visual schedules** or timers for predictable daily routines.
- **Involve children** in planning family traditions to foster comfort.
- **Implement mindful breaks** with walks, calming music, or deep-breathing exercises for emotional regulation.



# Activities to try



## Drawing prompts



- Try drawing what you think your warm feelings look like, then your cold feelings. What colours are these? How would they look?
- Draw your own winter scene using your favourite activities.
- Design a present for a loved one, be creative it could be anything!



Check the next page  
to make your own  
comic book strip!

## Warm words wordsearch

T	U	M	D	M	D	Q	I	S	P	R	O	U	D
M	T	N	V	W	O	Q	Y	Y	T	G	H	H	H
E	C	M	E	B	Y	H	B	S	I	R	A	H	B
T	O	M	U	I	R	W	T	G	E	U	O	A	Q
A	Y	S	L	J	M	A	L	I	J	T	L	N	V
I	K	W	S	R	U	T	V	S	L	C	D	N	G
C	D	Z	A	T	A	L	Y	E	Q	X	W	M	S
E	A	W	P	K	Z	U	K	M	J	B	B	K	L
R	K	U	S	A	E	F	H	V	U	E	A	Q	M
P	P	S	E	E	P	E	F	R	C	S	G	V	W
P	Q	T	P	J	O	T	W	P	L	G	K	B	U
A	H	C	C	A	H	A	L	I	E	F	I	I	W
U	J	O	D	F	V	R	J	E	K	T	N	W	K
E	E	M	W	G	O	G	Y	Y	H	O	D	F	D

Find the positive words in the wordsearch for some examples of words you and your family can use with each other.



Can you spot:

**Appreciate, Kind, Strong, Grateful,  
Hope, Proud, Warm, and Brave.**



CAN YOU CONTINUE THE STORY?

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The end





# How parents can help

Parents/Carers are crucial in guiding and supporting their children, offering warmth, encouragement, and stability, particularly during the winter holidays when family connection is essential. Here are some ways you can help your child during this time.

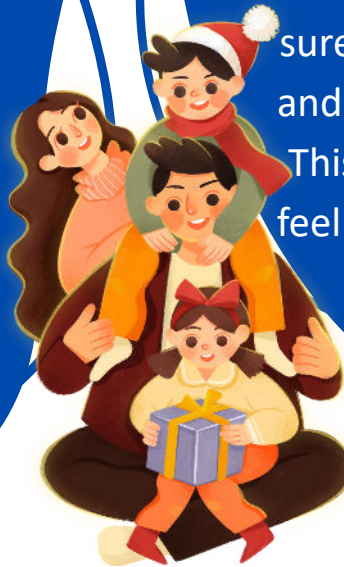
## Calmer conversations

When tensions are high at home, it can be hard to have calm conversations. These are some tips to help.

- Take 5 seconds to breathe before responding, this helps you to calm your body before you react.
- Try listening without interrupting and using open body language (making yourself seem calm and welcoming, relaxed shoulders, making eye contact) to help them feel safe and listened to.

## Listening

Sometimes children and young people struggle to open up so it's important to listen to them when they are feeling upset. Things like joining them at their level, putting down any distractions, and making sure you have open body language and don't appear angry or anxious. This will help the young person to feel safer opening up and that they are being listened to.



## Affirmations

Affirmations can help children feel seen and safer. Using simple affirmations helps them to remember these words when they are struggling. Some examples are:

- 'I see you'
- 'We're a team'
- 'It's okay to rest'
- 'You are safe'
- 'You can do this'





# How parents can help

## Phones



Mobile phones are amazing for taking pictures and communicating with loved ones, but they can also be a barrier between you and your child. Take a look at our 'My First Phone' poster for more information:

<https://bolton-together.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/My-First-Phone-Poster.png>

Create phone free times during your day- E.g. When eating, watching a movie, when family are visiting. Doing this would help you to improve your relationship and connection.

Remove unnecessary notifications to avoid distractions

## Supporting children with SEND

Children with SEND needs may struggle to communicate their emotions and feelings to you. Here are some ways you as a parent/carer can support them:



Doing an arts activity together such as 'drawing our feelings' or writing your feelings down could be an alternative way to communicate.



Use an emotions scale. There is an example of this further in this booklet (Page 12).



### Sensory Massage

Try supporting your child's emotional regulation by doing a sensory massage. On Youtube, there are plenty of guided videos for you to follow along to using fun, child-friendly songs. Copy the URL below into a web browser:

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLof4j58C5B6ei3qWv90ceM6BjxgAXixOf&si=wwGbgRE8WuXXfJUX>





# Community Warmth

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The HAF program, funded by the Department for Education and coordinated by Bolton Council, offers free physical and creative activities and hot meals to children and families eligible for benefits-related Free School Meals.



The Bolton Play & Youth Service provides free and low-cost play sessions for children aged 4-13, including after-school and holiday clubs that supporting social, emotional, and physical development. BLGC, Be The Change, Flowhesion Foundation, and BSCA have youth centres with activities on this winter. You can also learn more about Bolton's Family Hubs here.



Urban Outreach's Christmas Dinner on Jesus project unites Bolton's churches, schools, businesses, and volunteers to provide festive food hampers for those in need. Nominations for hampers must come from project participants. For more information, contact the Food Team at 01204 385848.



Families who are already receiving support from one of our following partner organisations may be eligible for help with Christmas presents this year through Urban Outreach, Bolton Lads and Girls Club's Operation Sleighbells, Fortalice, or the Bolton Toy Library. If you're not currently linked with these services, you may still be eligible for support through The Bolton Lions Club's Christmas Appeal through one of their partners. Visit each organisation below to find out more: Urban Outreach, Bolton Lads & Girls Club – Operation Sleighbells, Fortalice, Bolton Toy Library, The Hub at Westhoughton, and Bolton Lions Club Christmas Appeal.







# Finding light in Winter

Having a daily routine in winter can help with your wellbeing, it can be difficult not having your normal structure if you are at home over the holidays but the below tips and activities can help.

## Daily routines



Having comforting daily routines can help you and your family feel calmer and happier in the winter months.

Things like having a warm breakfast, a bedtime story, a family meal together at home or a short walk. Try to think about what comforts your family and add these in to your daily routines.

## Acts of Kindness

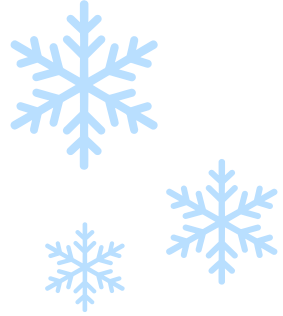
Even small amounts of care can light up a dark day. Try doing one act of kindness for someone in your family or one of your friends and see how good it makes them (and you!) feel.



## Joy Jar

Try an activity like the Joy Jar with your family to help brighten everyone's mood in winter, by remembering good things that are happening around you. Each week every family member writes one good thing that has happened, that they enjoy, or a memory, and they add it to the jar. You can then choose when to read out all the notes written in the jar, to make everyone think about these good times.





# Winter goals



What are some things you want to achieve before the end of winter? Write them down here so you can remember them and have something to aim for! These can be as simple as baking together as a family, calling a loved one, or creating a habit of something you enjoy like playing football once a week.

1

2

3

4

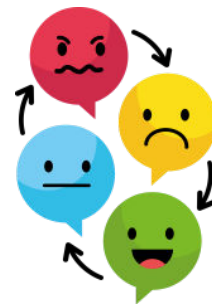
5







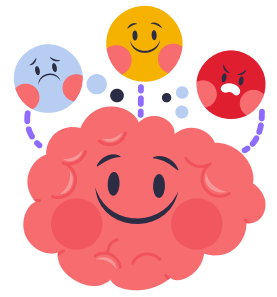
# Emotions scale



Winter can be overwhelming, there is a lot going on and this can make you feel some big feelings. If you have a plan for how to help yourself when you feel these it can help you feel better, sooner! That's what this emotions scale can do. We are using anxiety as our example scale below. The idea is the things you do at level 5 (the biggest feeling) should help you calm down until you are at level 4, then 3 until you feel calmer again.

5		<b>How do I feel?</b>  Really anxious and overwhelmed!	<b>What can I do to help?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Listen to music</li><li>• Ask for a cuddle</li><li>• Use my fidget toys</li></ul>	<b>What could someone else do to help?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Give me a cuddle</li><li>• Let me talk if I am ready</li></ul>
4		  My worries are rising.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Talk to someone about how I feel</li><li>• Take some deep breaths</li><li>• Do some colouring</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Listen to me</li><li>• Give me advice</li><li>• Do an activity with me</li></ul>
3		  Nervous.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Distract myself - watch a film</li><li>• Talk to someone</li><li>• Make a cosy space and wrap up in a blanket</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Help me get a snack</li><li>• Think of distractions for me</li><li>• Be calm</li></ul>
2		  Okay but starting to feel a little worried.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deep breaths</li><li>• Journal</li><li>• Talk to someone</li><li>• Have a warm drink</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Give me some fidget toys</li><li>• Play a board game</li></ul>
1		  Happy and calm.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do fun things</li><li>• Play games</li><li>• Play with friends</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Play games with me</li></ul>

# Template - Emotions scale

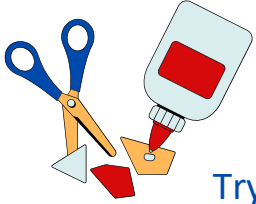


Now have a go at the template below! What is an emotion you struggle with? Think about how this emotion builds for you, and what might help you at each stage. Then you can stick it somewhere you and your family can see and it will help you tell them how you are feeling and what you might need at that time.

5	How do I feel?	What can I do to help?	What could someone else do to help?
4			
3			
2			
1			

# Family Activities

Have a go at trying some of the activities below with your family/friends, helping you stay connected from home.



## Crafts

Try making some crafts with whatever you have around the house:

**Decorate Mittens** - draw around your hand to make the outline of a mitten, then use whatever materials around your house to colour or decorate the inside. You can even cut these out and hang them up as a decoration once you're finished!

**Kindness Cards** - You can create your own kindness cards. Think of an act of kindness you could do to make someone smile, this could be giving them a compliment, letting someone go ahead of you in a queue, or helping out in your community. You can then write these all out on a card, and pick one out to make someones day.

**Build a snowman family** - Draw out however many people are in your family as snowmen, and decorate each one with their own personality.

**Colouring** - Try out some of the colouring pages in this booklet!



## Story prompts

Try drawing or writing your own winter story and telling it to a friend or family member.

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- A winter day when everyone helped
- The snowman who came to life
- Cheering up friends in the wintertime

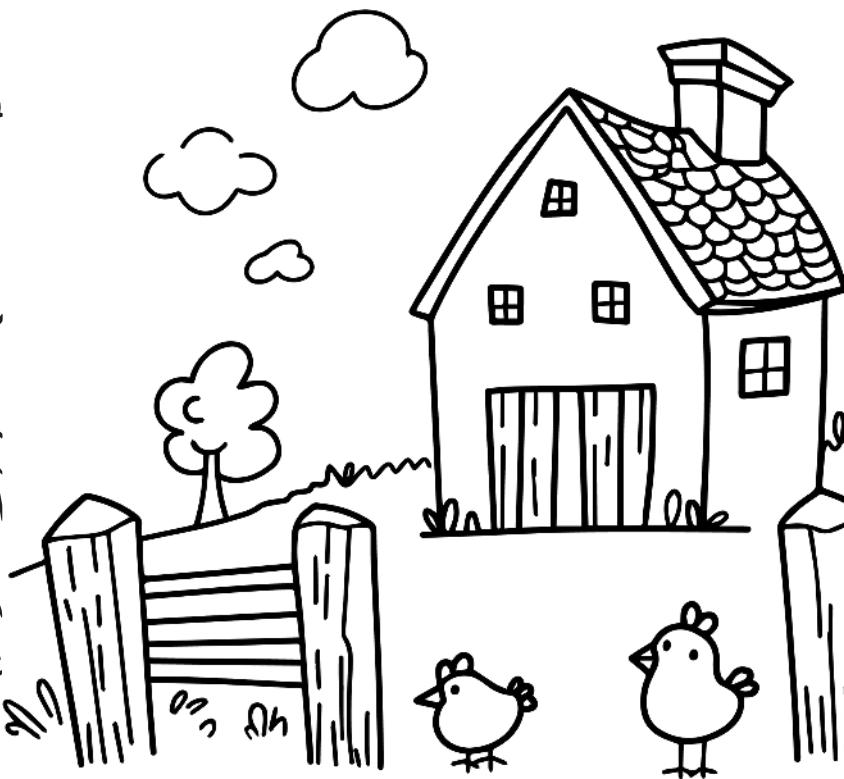








Which house feels  
most homely to  
you? Try colouring  
it in!









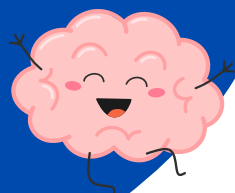
# Improving Wellbeing

Help improve your well being with things like making a music playlist or spending time in the community. The ideas below were provided by the Bolton Youth Council to help other young people this Winter.

## Winter Playlist

Music can make you feel happy! What are some of your favourite winter songs? Try making a playlist with your family, here's some examples to get you started provided by the Youth Council:

- Muppet Christmas carol
- All I want for Christmas
- Under the Christmas tree
- Last Christmas
- Let it snow
- Rocking around the Christmas tree
- It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas



## Activities in the community

Helping out in your community can make a difference to so many people over Winter. There might be something you can help out at being run by your school or you can attend events with family and friends:

- Bake with family/ friends
- Volunteer with family
- Attend Christmas markets with family and friends
- Take part in winter gift programmes in school.



# Extra Help When You Need It

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Bolton Together's IThrive Hub is not a crisis service. If you require urgent support, you can seek help through Bolton's 24.7 Mental Health Support Line by calling **111** for free. You could also speak to a health care professional such as your own GP, Pharmacist, School Nurse, calling 111, or in emergencies only, your local A&E department. Below you will also find details of other support services you can access.

## NSPCC

If you have concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing, you can contact the NSPCC's Helpline by calling **0800 800 5000** or emailing [help@NSPCC.org.uk](mailto:help@NSPCC.org.uk).

**HOPELINE247**  
0800 068 41 41

**HOPELINE247** advisers are here to support you in understanding the reasons behind any suicidal thoughts you may be experiencing. They aim to create a safe environment where you can openly discuss anything in your life that may be affecting your own safety or that of others.

## childline

ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME  
[childline.org.uk](http://childline.org.uk) | 0800 1111

**Childline** is open 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. Counsellors are available to listen and support you with anything you'd like to talk about.

**shout**  
**85258**

**Shout** is a free, confidential 24/7 mental health text support service for anyone in the UK. They provide round-the-clock support for anyone feeling anxious, stressed, overwhelmed or in crisis. Text 'Shout' to 85258 to speak to a trained volunteer.

## SAMARITANS

**Samaritans** is the charity that prevents suicide through the power of human connection. Connecting people in crisis with trained volunteers who will always listen. Whatever you're going through, call free any time, from any phone, on 116 123.

 **Bolton Listening Lounge**

**Bolton's Listening Lounge** is now open evenings and weekends, providing warm support and guidance for those facing emotional health challenges for those aged 17 years and above. Contact them at 01204 917739 or [boltonll@family-action.org.uk](mailto:boltonll@family-action.org.uk).

Welcome to



If you are at risk of homelessness, contact Bolton Council's Housing Options Service for advice and support at 01204 335900 or visit their website for more information.

Families in Bolton can get extra support over winter through the Household Support Fund and Local Welfare Provision, helping with food, energy, and essentials. Children on Free School Meals receive holiday vouchers, and the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme offers free meals and activities. Additional help includes money and debt advice, care leaver support, and warm spaces. More information is available at [Bolton Council Household Support Fund](#).

## Bolton at Home



If you or someone you know needs food support, Bolton at Home, in collaboration with Urban Outreach and volunteers, operates food pantries in Bolton. To access this support, email [pantries@boltonathome.org.uk](mailto:pantries@boltonathome.org.uk) or visit [the Bolton at Home Food Support website](#) for more information.

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic abuse, Fortalice offers confidential support 24/7. Call their advice line on 01204 365677 or send a secure message through their website to get help.

Bolton Together

If you are a parent or carer experiencing low mood or anxiety due to parental responsibilities, iThrive offers peer support, resources, and activities—contact [ithrive@boltontogogether.org.uk](mailto:ithrive@boltontogogether.org.uk) to find out about our parent peer support offer. Alternatively, you can visit our website - [www.bolton-together.org.uk/ithrive-support/ithrive-for-parents/](http://www.bolton-together.org.uk/ithrive-support/ithrive-for-parents/).



Parents and carers can access their own talking therapies through the NHS Talking Therapies service by self-referring online at <https://www.iaptportal.co.uk/bolt.html>, and the service will get in touch to provide support.

1Point offers independent counselling and psychotherapy support in Bolton for those aged 17 years and above. For more information, visit <https://www.1pointbolton.org.uk/> or contact Silverwellbeing on 01204 917732.



# Steps to Support: The IThrive Referral Hub

For young people aged 2–19 years (up to 25 with SEND) seeking emotional health and wellbeing support, our IThrive referral hub offers support when you first start to feel this way. We are not a crisis service. Support is short-term, goal-focused, and strength-based, tailored to each child's interests and needs using flexible, child-centered approaches. Our strategies and tools aim to improve emotional wellbeing long-term. Referrals can be made through our online form: [\*\*IThrive Referral Form\*\*](#).



Our free online resources for young people are available at [IThrive Support](#). They include:

- an overview of our services,
- previous wellbeing workbooks,
- and links to support from Be Kind To My Mind, Kooth, Mind, YoungMinds, and Shout.

Scan the QR Code below to access our referral form.



# Acknowledgements

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Bolton Youth Council for their invaluable contributions to these wellbeing workbooks. Your insights, creativity, and dedication have helped shape resources that are engaging, practical, and meaningful for young people.

We are also grateful to our partner providers for their input, including Bolton Toy Library, Urban Outreach, Fortalice, BLGC, and Breaking Barriers, whose expertise and support have helped make these workbooks more relevant and accessible.

In addition, we have drawn on a wide range of trusted sources to enrich the activities and guidance in this workbook, including YoungMinds, Mind, Papyrus, Kooth, MindEd, the BBC, and The Health Foundation. These organisations provide evidence-based information, practical tips, and supportive tools that complement the exercises and guidance you'll find here.



If you're looking for trusted mental health support in Bolton, [Be Kind To My Mind](#) is an invaluable resource. It's a youth-led campaign, co-created by the Healthy Minds Youth Project and NHS Bolton, that provides a central hub for mental wellbeing guidance. On the site you'll find an A–Z of mental health topics, a directory of local support services, urgent-help contacts, and practical advice for young people, parents, and professionals. It's a safe space to learn, connect, and know that "it's OK to talk."







BOLTONTOGETHER