

Stress is not what happens to us. It is our response to what happens. And response is something we can choose.

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Wellbeing

and positive Mental

Health at Holmleigh

Stress Awareness Month

Connect

Doing mindfulness, physical and communication exercises as a family is a great way to support your mental health. Over Easter keep in touch with your family or friends, spend time together by inviting them over, going for a walk or playing games together. Perhaps you could give someone a call to check they're ok and reminisce over old memories. Start a group chat so you can send messages daily to see what everyone has planned over the holidays. By connecting with others, you can reduce feelings of loneliness – include other people in your activities so you're supporting the wellbeing of your friends and family too.

What is Stress Awareness Month?

The Easter holidays are the perfect time for adventures, laughter and enjoyable activities with the whole family. But as April is also Stress Awareness Month, there is no better time than now to refocus on your health and wellbeing. **Stress Awareness Month** has been held every April since 1992 to raise awareness of the causes and cures for our modern-day stress epidemic. It is the time when we have an opportunity for an open conversation on the impact of stress. Dedicated time to removing the guilt, shame, and stigma around mental health. To talk about stress, and its effects and open up about our mental and emotional state with friends, families, colleagues, and professionals.

What else could you do for Stress Awareness Month?

- Talk about Stress and its effects – lets work together to reduce the stigma that is associated with stress by talking about the topic openly and freely with friends, family and colleagues.
- Share your coping mechanisms – if something has worked for you why not share it. It might benefit someone you care about and in the meantime, it might help you take your focus off your own challenges.
- Be nice to those who are stressed and anxious – we are all undoubtedly going to experience stress and anxiety in our lifetime so treat others going through it with compassion and empathy.
- Look after yourself – we all need to think more about self-care. Take time out of your day to relax or do something that you enjoy. Don't forget to exercise and eat well, even when you feel too stressed.

You can't pour from an empty cup!

Family health and wellbeing activities for the Easter holidays

Here are some ideas for stress-reducing health and wellbeing activities you can do over the Easter break.



Things to do in Hackney over Easter

There are lots of free and cheap activities for your children to do during the holidays. There is free swimming for children at Hackney pools (not the Lido) and parks, [libraries](#) and [museums](#) all have free activities during the holidays. Children can also visit their local adventure playground.

Visit the [Young Hackney website](#) to find out more

Adventure playgrounds

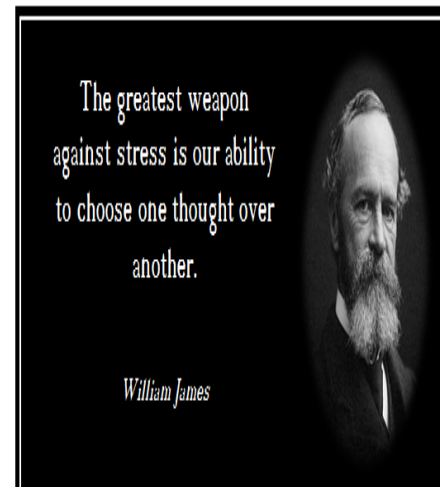
An adventure playground is a space dedicated to children's play. Skilled Play workers are on hand to encourage and make possible access to the widest range of play opportunities and experiences; from swinging, climbing and digging to building dens, cooking and painting.

The adventure playgrounds are free to enter and children can come and go as they choose. They are usually open after school, on Saturdays and in the holidays, and accept children aged from 6 to 15 years.

Be Active The Easter break gives you plenty of time to do various physical activities as a family, such as walking, dancing, jogging and ball games. Getting active outdoors in the sunshine and fresh air not only increases your Vitamin D levels but generally makes you feel better - improving your physical and emotional wellbeing. The level of exercise you choose is up to you and your family's capability, it could be playing hide and seek, completing jobs around the house or something more intense.

Stay Mindful

During the Easter break, you should try spending time outdoors every day to get the Vitamin D you need. Observing nature will help you reconnect with yourself and your surroundings. **Breathing practices** can make you feel calmer, taking the time to inhale and exhale slowly (with a longer exhale) can reduce levels of stress and anxiety instantly. You could try 4-7-8 breathing- breathe in for 4 seconds, hold for 7 seconds, exhale for 8 seconds. Another tip is the 'physiological sigh' - try two short inhales through the nose, one long exhale through the mouth and repeat this up to three times. **Tapping** is a great mindfulness exercise that can lower stress and anxiety instantly! Search 'Tapping for Kids with Alison, what is Tapping' on YouTube. **Cosmic Kids Yoga** on Youtube is great fun for the little ones.



Wishing you all a wonderful break remember...

The word 'Stressed' spelt backwards spells desserts...yum why not treat yourself!

How to Make Your Own Stress Ball



We can all feel stressed, worried and anxious at times. Learning to deal with your stress in a healthy way will help you to stay relaxed and be happier.

This is a fun craft idea to help you make your own stress ball. While you are making your stress ball, why don't you talk to the adult you are with about what makes you stressed and how you can manage that stress? Squeezing a stress ball is a great way of managing stress but what other ideas could you use as well?

To get started, you will need:

- A balloon
- Some flour
- An empty plastic bottle
- Wool or pipe cleaners
- Marker pen or felt tip



Instructions:

1. Pour some flour into an empty plastic bottle.
2. Stretch the neck of the balloon over the neck of the bottle then tip the bottle upside down to let the flour pour into the balloon.
3. Don't overfill the balloon.
4. Remove the balloon from the bottle and tie a knot in it.
5. Give your balloon some hair. You could wrap wool around the tie of the balloon or add pipe cleaners to create ears.
6. Decorate the balloon with a face. Try drawing eyes and a mouth or add some stick-on eyes. Be as creative as you want!

