



CHRISTMAS SURVIVAL GUIDE

Larkholme Primary School

December 2023

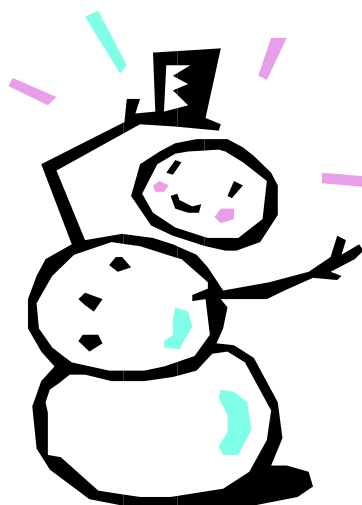
Tips for coping with Christmas

Christmas is an exciting time for children. Sometimes all the excitement can get a bit stressful for you and your child.

Christmas gives a wonderful opportunity for families to enjoy spending time together and to catch up with friends and extended family.

It is also a very exciting time for children. Sometimes all the excitement, visitors, special food and presents can get a bit stressful for you and your child. With all the build up to Christmas and with all the pressure of planning the day, the cost and the high expectations, it is natural for families to feel some stress or anxiety. Here are some tips for having a calm Christmas:

- Give your child lots of cuddles, attention and praise. During the busy Christmas season try to give them individual attention whenever you can. This will help them feel calm and secure over the busy period.
- Keep up your routine, as far as possible. Your child will find it reassuring if you try to keep to their normal mealtimes and bedtimes. Some children don't respond well to change. It may help if you explain what things will be different during your Christmas celebrations, such as who will be visiting and when you will open presents. Keeping to your bedtime routine can help ensure your child gets enough sleep. A lack of sleep can affect a child's mood and behaviour.
- Christmas shopping. Try to avoid shopping at busy times, and pack a drink and healthy snack. Try to keep shopping trips short. It is hard for children to be patient for long periods.
- Plan ahead. Try to avoid planning social visits and visitors back-to-back. When you go out and about have a few small toys, a drink and a healthy snack on hand.
- Try to balance fun time and quiet time. Babies and children can't always cope with too many new experiences, sensations, noise and activity all at once and may get over stimulated or stressed.



Useful websites:

<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/early-years-childcare-and-family-support/family-support/parenting-support/>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/>

<https://lancsyoungpeoplefamilyservice.co.uk/behaviour-parenting-support/>

<https://www.lancshiresafeguarding.org.uk/online-safeguarding/parents-and-carers/>

<https://www.lancashiremind.org.uk/pages/40-get-help-now>

Useful Numbers:

CASHER- [0800 121 7762](tel:08001217762)

CFWBS- 01253 741 117

Samaritans- 116 123

**Mental Health Urgent Response-
[0800 953 0110](tel:08009530110)**

Information on well being and additional support is regularly shared on our website page and our Facebook page.

<https://www.larkholme.lancs.sch.uk/well-being/>

<https://www.facebook.com/people/Larkholme-Primary-School/100063625748254/>

TOP TIPS FOR NEURODIVERGENT FAMILIES AT CHRISTMAS

PLAN

Think ahead about triggers. Use visual schedules and create plans WITH your child. All autonomy where appropriate & possible

IDENTIFY TRIGGERS

Places, people, music, smells, tastes, words... Go through them with your child if possible

WORK TOGETHER

Caregivers (parents, teachers, family members etc) can plan and work together to reduce overwhelm where possible.



PICK YOUR BATTLES

Adjust and adapt what you can to make it suitable. But accept when you just need to abandon some plans in favour for contentment! This includes food, socialising and family traditions.

NO SURPRISES!

They're stressful!



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Christmas Activities

That are good for your mental health



Make some homemade hot chocolate with real chocolate, it really has to be experienced!



Bake some treats, like gingerbread people. They're delicious and the activity taps into your creative side!



Watch a feel-good movie with an open fire. Films can help immerse you into the happier headspace.

Wrap up and go for a winter walk. Exercise is good for your mental health and we can't stop just cause it's a bit nippy out! Plus it's a great opportunity to look at Christmas Lights!



Donate some money/goods to charity. SVP's giving tree is a great appeal to help those in need. It feels good to give back!



Make a home-made Christmas jumper for any in person/zoom parties. Hot glue on tinsel and baubles or print off some memes or puns and stick them on. It's a great talking point and will give you a laugh!



Get Tidy. Christmas can get cluttered and messy with gifts and decorations. A tidy space can equal a tidy mind!



Do not neglect your mental health. Talk to a GP/Counsellor if you feel overwhelmed or low.

