

# KINTOA

Strength of Family, Courage of Warriors

July/August 2024



# S.E.N.D

*Our Way*

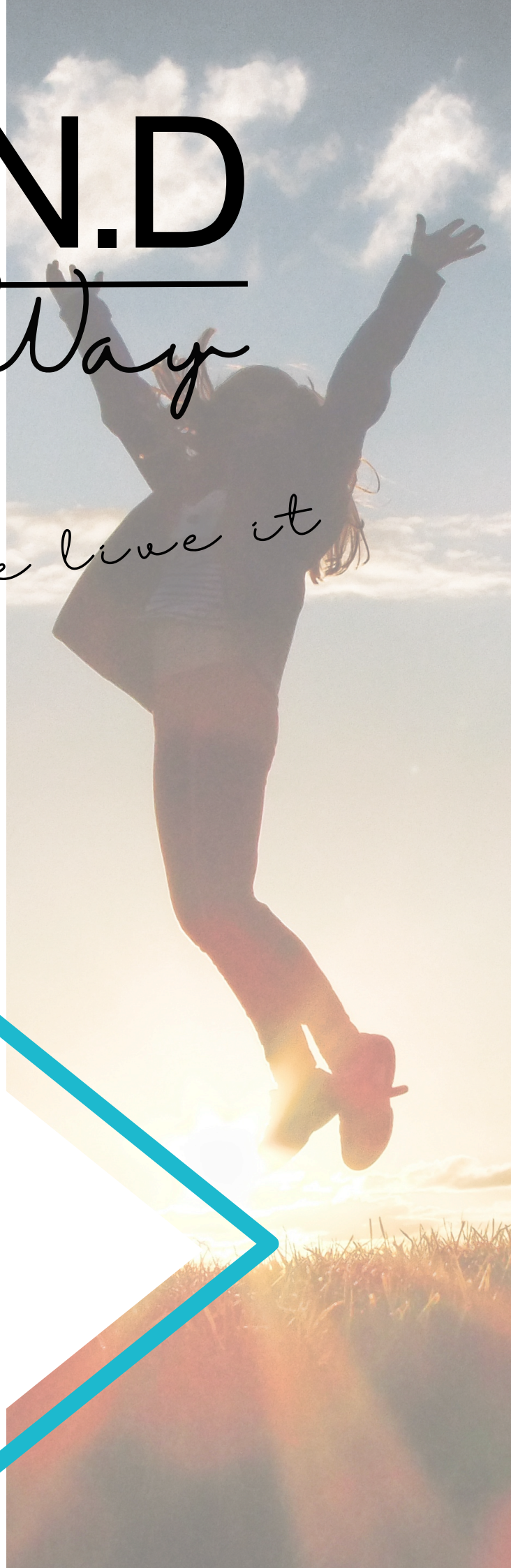
*Because we live it*

**S**UPPORT

**E**MPOWERMENT

**N**OURISHMENT

**D**ISCOVERY



# About KinToa

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Welcome to **KinToa**, your beacon in the journey of SEND parent caregiving. At KinToa, we see the real heroes: you, the parent carers, who navigate the complexities of special educational needs and disabilities with unmatched strength and courage.

**Our Philosophy:** KinToa, merging 'Kin' and the Maori word 'Toa' for warrior, stands as a symbol of your inherent bravery and resilience. It's more than our name—it's our commitment to honour your journey.

**Understanding Your Challenges:** Forget the superficial fixes like another hand massage at carers' meetings. You deserve practical, real-world support tailored to the unique demands of your life. KinToa is designed to be that robust pillar of strength, offering hands-on advice, relatable stories, and a sense of solidarity that cuts through the isolation often felt in the world of SEND caregiving.

**Why KinToa?** Because true strength lies in unity and shared wisdom. Our content is curated to resonate with your experiences, enlighten your caregiving path, and inject moments of joy and discovery into your daily routine. From navigating SEND systems to celebrating personal victories, we cover the spectrum, ensuring you feel seen, understood, and most importantly, not alone.



**Our Mission:** To empower you, the hero, in your quest. KinToa stands as your guide, illuminating the path with insights, empathy, and encouragement. We're more than a magazine; we're a companion and a champion for the incredible work you do every day.

**Join Our Family:** Dive into a world where empathy meets action, where your stories and challenges light the way for others. With KinToa, embark on a journey of empowerment and connection, knowing that, together, we're invincible.

Thanks to **Jodie** from  
**The Nurture**  
**Programme** for her  
amazing design work

# Editor's Letter

*Dear Reader*

Welcome back to KinToa, the magazine that's got your back through the twists and turns of the SEND journey!

If you thought our last edition was a hit, wait until you dive into this one. The response to our previous edition was nothing short of spectacular. Hundreds of you joined us, spending hours soaking up every page—proving just how vital a platform like KinToa is for our community.

With the UK school summer holidays looming, we know this can be a challenging time for many. That's why this edition is chock-full of what you loved: genuine stories, practical tips, and those precious moments of joy that make the everyday a little brighter.

This edition is shorter, it's the summer holidays, we have a new government and those 5 minute breaks won't be as frequent as they used to be.

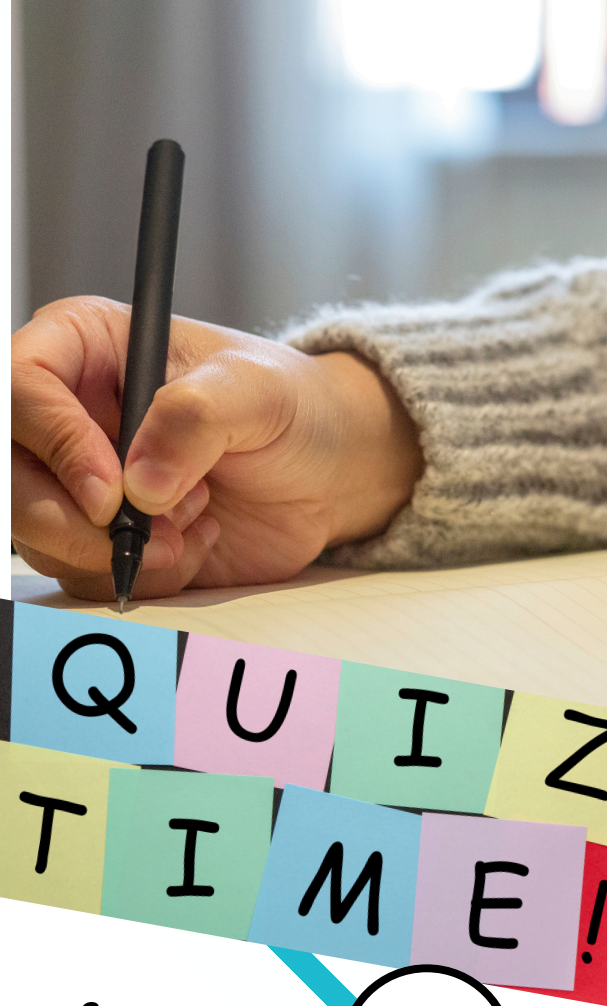
In all honesty, I've also been juggling my editor duties with my role as a festival organiser for the last two months. [Festability](#) took place on 15th June at Quex Park in Kent. Despite the best endeavours of the weather (think "four seasons in one day") a great day was had by all, and the feedback is amazing. We've even been approached to host Festability in other areas across the country. Watch this space.

Thank you for embracing KinToa, for sharing your journey, and for proving, edition after edition, that together, we're unstoppable.

WARM  
REGARDS,  
*Debs  
Aspland*



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SUPPORT  
EMPOWERMENT  
NOURISHMENT  
DISCOVERY

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# Mastering Appointments



Navigating the world of appointments and meetings as a SEND parent carer can feel like a never-ending task. With a bit of preparation and some strategic hacks, you can manage these appointments more smoothly and effectively. Here's a comprehensive guide to help you master your meetings before, during, and after.

## **Before the Meeting:**

Preparation is key to ensuring your meeting goes smoothly. Here are some essential steps to take before you head out:

- **Know the Location:** Confirm where the meeting is taking place. Do you know how to get there? Make sure you have the directions and allow extra time for any unforeseen delays.
- **Parking and Transport:** Do you need change for the car park? Is there enough petrol in the car? If you're taking public transport, do you know which bus to catch and the timetable?

- **Childcare Arrangements:** If you need childcare for other children, ensure you've organised it in advance. Double-check with the person who will be childminding to make sure they remember.
- **Meeting Details:** Who is the meeting with? Have you seen this person before? If so, do you have a copy of the last report? Knowing who will be at the meeting and understanding their roles can help you feel more prepared.
- **Purpose of the Meeting:** Understand the purpose of the meeting. Prepare any notes you need to take, such as examples of behaviour or medication issues. Ensure these notes are in your bag before you leave.
- **Questions and Concerns:** Write down any questions you want answers to. Having these written down ensures you won't forget anything important.
- **Reward Yourself:** Plan a small reward for yourself after the meeting. Whether it's a favourite snack, a relaxing activity, or a bit of downtime, having something to look forward to can help you stay motivated.

REFER BACK TO OUR PREVIOUS ARTICLE ON BULLET JOURNALING FOR PARENT CARERS IN EDITION 2. USING A BULLET JOURNAL CAN HELP YOU KEEP TRACK OF IMPORTANT DATES, QUESTIONS, AND NOTES. IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY, CHECK OUT LIFE ASPLAND'S DOWNLOADS TO HELP YOU STAY ORGANISED

# Appointments

## . . . Continued

### During the Meeting

Once you're in the meeting, these tips will help you stay organised and ensure you get the most out of the discussion:

- **Introductions:** Don't hesitate to ask everyone to introduce themselves and explain their roles if you don't already know.
- **Questions and Timing:** Let them know you have questions and ask when it would be appropriate to address them. Ensure they give you time to ask.
- **Follow-Up on Previous Meetings:** If you've seen them before and have a report, check on the progress of any actions they promised to take.
- **Present Your Notes:** Share any notes you've brought, such as examples of behaviour or medication issues.
- **Personalise the Discussion:** Bring a photo of your child and place it on the table. This can serve as a powerful reminder to everyone that they are discussing a real person.
- **Clarifications:** Don't be afraid to ask them to repeat themselves or explain something you don't understand.
- **Take Notes:** Make notes of key points, especially if someone promises to take an action. Ask for specific timelines and if they can inform you once the action is completed.

*If you're not sure what someone at the meeting does, ask them why you would need to contact them. It helps define their role.*



**Having questions ready before the appointment helps you to feel more in control.**

### After the Meeting

The work doesn't end when the meeting does. Here's how to stay on top of the follow-up:

- **Organise Your Notes:** As soon as possible after the meeting, organise your notes. It's easy to forget details or misinterpret scribbles if you wait too long.
- **Action Items:** Make a clear list of who said they would do what and by when. This helps you keep track of follow-up actions.
- **Follow-Up Reminders:** If someone promised to do something, make a note to chase it up if you haven't heard back by the agreed time.
- **Future Appointments:** If another appointment is needed in six months or a year, set a reminder to follow up a month before if you haven't heard anything. Also, make a note to prepare any necessary reports or documents for the next meeting.

By following these tips, you can approach each appointment with confidence and clarity, making the process smoother for you and your child. Mastering the appointment process is a key part of managing the SEND journey, one step at a time.



# What's your summer holiday parenting style?

Summer holidays can be a whirlwind of activities, plans, and moments of relaxation. As a SEND parent carer, how you navigate this season reflects your unique style and approach. Take our fun quiz to discover what kind of superpower you wield during the summer holidays



## 1. Summer is here! Your first thought is:

- A. Time to plan the ultimate holiday calendar with activities every day!
- B. We'll pick a few key events and take it easy in between.
- C. Let's find a couple of local, low-key activities.
- D. Stay home and see where the day takes us.

## 2. When it comes to outings, you:

- A. Have a list of events, tickets booked, and a detailed itinerary.
- B. Select a few fun outings but leave some room for spontaneous plans.
- C. Opt for simple, nearby activities that don't require much prep.
- D. Prefer to stay home or visit the local park when the mood strikes.

## 3. Packing for a day out involves:

- A. A well-prepared backpack with everything from snacks to first aid.
- B. Essentials plus a couple of comfort items.
- C. Just the basics - we're keeping it simple.
- D. Maybe a bottle of water and some snacks if we remember.

## 4. On a rainy day, you:

- A. Have a backup indoor activity planned and ready to go.
- B. Look for a fun indoor event or plan some crafts at home.
- C. Enjoy a relaxed day with a movie or some quiet play.
- D. Embrace the downtime and see where the day takes us.

## 5. Your approach to summer holiday meals is:

- A. Meal plan with themed days and fun, healthy recipes.
- B. Plan some meals, but leave room for takeaways or spontaneous choices.
- C. Keep it simple with easy, familiar favourites.
- D. Whatever's in the fridge - we'll figure it out!

## 6. When you see other families' holiday posts on social media, you:

- A. Compare your plans and worry if you're doing enough.
- B. Feel a twinge of comparison but quickly refocus on your own plans.
- C. Glance at them and feel fine about your simpler approach.
- D. Scroll past without any concern, content with your own way of doing things.

A

B

C

D

THERE'S NO ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL APPROACH TO SUMMER HOLIDAYS. EMBRACE YOUR UNIQUE STYLE AND MAKE THE MOST OF EVERY MOMENT!

### 7. How often do you worry about what others think of your holiday plans?

- A. Often - you want to make sure you're making the most of summer.
- B. Sometimes - you care a little but mostly focus on what works for your family.
- C. Rarely - you're confident in your simple, stress-free approach.
- D. Never - you couldn't care less what others think.

### 8. When planning for the summer holidays, your main goal is:

- A. To create unforgettable experiences and memories.
- B. To find a good balance between fun activities and relaxation.
- C. To ensure everything is easy and manageable for everyone.
- D. To keep stress low and go with the flow.

Now tally your answers 

A	B	C	D
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REMEMBER, THERE'S NO ONE RIGHT WAY TO BE A PARENT CARER DURING THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS. WHETHER YOU'RE AN ACTIVITY AFICIONADO, A BALANCED ADVENTURER, A LOCAL EXPLORER, OR A LAID-BACK LOUNGER, WHAT MATTERS MOST IS FINDING WHAT WORKS BEST FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY. LET'S CELEBRATE AND SUPPORT EACH OTHER'S UNIQUE APPROACHES AND ENJOY THE SUMMER OUR WAY!

### Mostly A's: The Activity Aficionado

You're all about making the most of summer! Your superpower is planning and organisation, ensuring every day is packed with fun and adventure. Just remember to leave some time for relaxation!

### Mostly B's: The Balanced Adventurer

You strike a great balance between activity and downtime. You enjoy planning a few key events but also appreciate the beauty of a relaxed day. Your flexibility helps keep summer enjoyable for everyone.

### Mostly C's: The Local Explorer

You prefer to keep things simple and close to home. Your summer is filled with low-key, stress-free activities that keep everyone happy without the need for extensive planning.

### Mostly D's: The Laid-Back Lounger

You embrace the slow pace of summer, letting each day unfold naturally. Your relaxed approach helps keep stress at bay and allows for plenty of spontaneous fun. Your family enjoys the calm and easy-going vibe you create.



# Not sure where to start with a BuJo?

As a mum to three incredible young adults with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), Debs, our editor in chief knows that sometimes, love isn't the only thing you need. You also need a solid plan. That's why she created Life AsPland - a comprehensive range of organisers and template downloads designed from the ground up for SEND families.

- Tailored to SEND Families
- Save Time and Reduce Stress
- Empowerment Through Organisation

Life AsPland was born out of necessity, love, and the gritty reality of SEND parenting. Take the first step towards a more organized, less stressful life. Discover how Life AsPland can transform your SEND parenting experience today.



*Debs Aspland*



**FIND OUT MORE AT: [LIFEASPLAND](http://LIFEASPLAND)**

# 100 “me” moments

7 During the summer holidays, it's a challenge to find ways to recharge your battery or take a breath. To make it easier, we've come up with 100 5 minute ideas to help you survive the holidays.

1. Take a deep breath: Step outside and take a few deep breaths to reset.
2. Text a friend: Send a quick message to a supportive friend.
3. FB group: Visit a Facebook group for parent carers and share or read posts.
4. Mindfulness: Practise five minutes of mindfulness or meditation.
5. Stretch: Do a few simple stretches to release tension.
6. Music break: Listen to your favourite song and dance around the room.
7. Coffee/Tea: Make yourself a cup of coffee or tea and enjoy it quietly.
8. Journal: Write a few thoughts or feelings in a journal.
9. Gratitude: List three things you're grateful for today.
10. Don't compare: Remind yourself not to compare your reality to someone's Instagram.
11. Laugh: Watch a funny video or read a joke to lighten your mood.
12. Snack: Have a healthy snack to boost your energy.
13. Bathroom break: Hide in the bathroom for a few moments to breathe and regroup.
14. Hug: Give your child or yourself a big, comforting hug.
15. Quick tidy: Spend five minutes tidying up one small area.
16. Hydrate: Drink a glass of water to stay hydrated.
17. Plan: Jot down a quick plan or to-do list for the day.
18. Visualisation: Close your eyes and visualise a calming place or scenario.
19. Read: Read a page or two of a book you enjoy.
20. Affirmations: Repeat positive affirmations to yourself.
21. Walk: Take a quick walk around the block.
22. Photos: Look through happy photos on your phone.
23. Create: Draw or doodle something simple.
24. Breathe: Focus on slow, deep breathing for five minutes.
25. Pets: Spend a few minutes playing with or petting a pet.
26. Sunshine: Stand in the sun for a moment and soak up some rays.
27. Snapshot: Take a new photo of something that makes you happy.
28. Organise: Organise a small area, like your handbag or a drawer.
29. Phone call: Call someone who always makes you feel better.
30. Mindful eating: Eat a piece of chocolate or fruit mindfully, savouring each bite.
31. Positive notes: Write a positive note and stick it somewhere visible.
32. Nature: Spend a few minutes observing nature, even if it's just out the window.



# “Me” moments cont/d

*Surviving the holidays also includes looking out for yourself.*

33. Forgive: Forgive yourself for any perceived shortcomings today.
34. Essential oils: Use an essential oil diffuser or sniff a calming scent.
35. Art: Colour a picture or work on a simple art project.
36. Blog: Read a blog post that inspires or comforts you.
37. Say no: Practise saying no to one extra task or request.
38. Silly face: Make silly faces in the mirror with your child.
39. Daydream: Spend a few minutes daydreaming about something pleasant.
40. Inspirational quote: Read an inspirational quote.
41. Photo album: Flip through an old photo album.
42. Draw: Sketch something simple.
43. Puzzle: Work on a jigsaw puzzle.
44. Make a list: Write down a list of things you love about your child.
45. Yoga: Do a quick yoga routine.
46. Mirror pep talk: Give yourself a pep talk in the mirror.
47. Charity: Make a small online donation to a cause you care about.
48. Sing: Sing your favourite song out loud.
49. Thank-you note: Send a thank-you note to someone who has helped you recently.
50. Positive feedback: Write down positive feedback you've received.
51. Water plants: Water your houseplants.
52. Plan a fun day: Plan a fun outing for a future day.
53. Grocery list: Update your grocery list.
54. Declutter: Declutter a small area like a drawer or a shelf.
55. Cook: Try a new, simple recipe for a quick snack.
56. Colour: Use an adult colouring book to relax.

57. Yawn: Allow yourself to yawn and stretch, relieving tension.
58. Organise emails: Delete or archive old emails.
59. Change scenery: Move to a different room for a change of scenery.
60. Inspirational video: Watch a short inspirational video.
61. Gratitude jar: Add a note to a gratitude jar.
62. Meditation app: Try a new meditation app.



63. Reflect: Spend a few minutes reflecting on a positive experience.
64. Cookbook: Browse a cookbook for new recipe ideas.
65. Mirror exercise: Smile at yourself in the mirror.
66. Personal goal: Write down a small personal goal for the week.
67. Scavenger hunt: Create a quick scavenger hunt for your child.
68. Window shopping: Do some online window shopping.
69. Draw with your child: Spend a few minutes drawing with your child.
70. Sing with your child: Sing a song with your child.

# “Me” Moments



71. Learn a new word: Spend a few minutes learning a new word and its meaning.
72. Healthy snack: Prepare a healthy snack for yourself.
73. Nature walk: Go for a short nature walk in your garden or nearby.
74. Plan a date: Plan a future date night with your partner.
75. Take a selfie: Take a fun selfie with your child.
76. Try a new app: Download and explore a new app.
77. Tidy up toys: Spend a few minutes tidying up toys.
78. Quick read: Read a short story or article.
79. Garden: Spend a few minutes tending to your garden.
80. Mindfulness app: Use a mindfulness app for a quick session.
81. Cookbook: Flip through a cookbook for recipe ideas.
82. Affection: Spend a moment showing affection to your child or pet.
83. Savour a treat: Enjoy a small treat slowly and mindfully.
84. Write a list: Make a list of things that make you happy.
85. Family photos: Look through family photos and reminisce.
86. Organise your desk: Spend a few minutes tidying your desk or workspace.
87. Plan a treat: Plan a small treat for yourself later in the week.
88. Organise files: Sort through and organise your digital files.
89. Breathing exercise: Do a five-minute deep breathing exercise.
90. Listen to nature: Open a window and listen to the sounds of nature.
91. Positive self-talk: Spend a few minutes engaging in positive self-talk.
92. Plan a project: Spend a few minutes planning a small project or craft.
93. Write a story: Write a short story or creative piece.
94. Stretch routine: Follow a short stretching routine to relax your muscles.
95. Learn a fact: Look up and learn an interesting fact.
96. Plant care: Take care of your plants or start a new one.
97. Read a KinToa article: Take a moment to read an article from KinToa.
98. Reflect on achievements: Reflect on your achievements as a parent carer.
99. Pet photos: Look at funny or cute pet photos online.
100. Organise a small space: Spend five minutes organising a small space in your home.

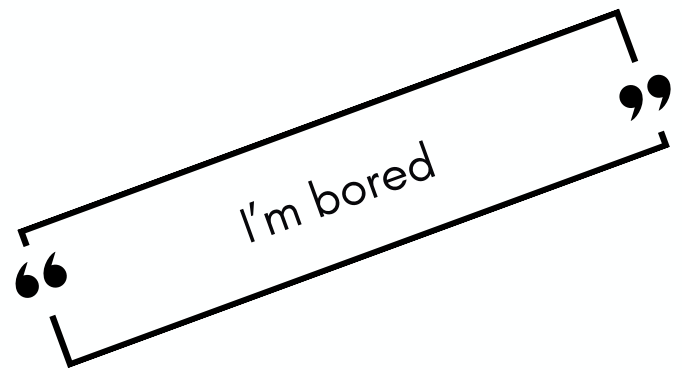


# Summer Holiday Bingo

In the holidays, we all hear phrases from our children or we say phrases (or sometimes think them).

We wanted to show you are not alone and so we're sharing the top 40 phrases to expect to hear, say or think during the holidays.

1. "I'm bored!"
2. "I don't want to go!"
3. "Are we there yet?"
4. "Can I have a treat?"
5. "Can we go to the park?"
6. "I don't like this food!"
7. "Can I have more screen time?"
8. "Why can't we do something fun?"
9. "Can we stay up late tonight?"
10. "I'm hot!"
11. "Why do I have to go?"
12. "When is dinner?"
13. "Is it time to go home yet?"
14. "I need a break!"
15. "What's for lunch?"
16. "Can you play with me?"
17. "Do we have to do this?"
18. "Can I have a snack?"
19. "How much longer?"
20. "Do I have to share?"



21. "Can we go now?"
22. "I'm tired!"
23. "This is boring!"
24. "Can we have a sleepover?"
25. "Why can't we stay longer?"
26. "I don't like that!"
27. "When are we leaving?"
28. "Can we do something else?"
29. "I'm not hungry!"
30. "Can we get ice cream?"
31. "Please, just five minutes of peace..."
32. "Where did I put my coffee?"
33. "Why is this so hard?"
34. "If I hear 'I'm bored' one more time..."
35. "Can it be bedtime already?"
36. "I need a holiday after this holiday"
37. "Why do I bother cleaning?"
38. "Let's just survive today"
39. "Did I already say no to this?"
40. "I swear, they never stop!"



*Remember*

**“Social media shows the good moments, but life is made up of all the moments. Don’t let curated images make you forget the full picture.”**



# Summer Swear Challenge

Keep track of how many times you swear between 12-1pm each day during the summer holidays. At the end of the day, tally up your total and see where you land on our fun scale!

## 1. 0-10 swears: You are an Angel

Congratulations! Your patience and calm demeanor are truly admirable. You handle the chaos of summer holidays with grace and serenity.

## 2. 11-50 swears: Zen Master in Training

Well done! You have a good handle on things, but even the best of us slip sometimes. Keep up the good work and continue practicing your mindfulness techniques.

## 3. 51-100 swears: Human After All

It's clear that the summer holidays bring their fair share of challenges. You're doing great managing the ups and downs, and a few swears are just part of the process.

## 4. 101-250 swears: Stressed but Coping

The summer holidays can be tough, and it's understandable that frustrations arise. Remember to take deep breaths and find those small moments of peace whenever you can.

## 5. 251+ swears: Summer Survivor

You're in the thick of it, and it shows! The summer holidays are testing your limits, but you're surviving one day at a time. Don't forget to give yourself a break - you're doing your best!

No matter where you land on the scale, you're doing an amazing job navigating the summer holidays as a SEND parent carer. Keep it up!



## The Surprising Benefits of Swearing

Swearing often gets a bad rap, but recent research suggests that letting out a few choice words can actually be beneficial in several ways. Here's a quick look at why swearing might be good for you:

Swearing can be a great way to release pent-up stress and frustration. It provides a verbal outlet for emotions, helping to diffuse anger and tension. Letting out a string of expletives in a safe environment can act as a pressure valve, preventing stress from building up to harmful levels.

Using swear words can actually engage different parts of the brain, particularly those involved in emotion and language. This engagement can enhance cognitive function and mental agility, as it involves quick thinking and a rich understanding of language.

Swearing can help build emotional resilience by providing a means to cope with difficult situations. It acts as a form of emotional release, allowing individuals to process and move past negative experiences more quickly.

While it's important to use swearing judiciously and be mindful of the context and audience, there's no denying that it has its benefits.

And remember, you are only human! Don't be so hard on yourself if you let the odd profanity slip out



# Garden Activities for the holidays

**In the summer holidays, getting outside in the garden can be a great way to break up the day. For many of us, we become quite isolated in the holiday so getting outside in any way is good for us.**

## Essential Summer Gardening Tasks

1. Watering
  - Timing: Water your plants early in the morning or late in the evening to minimise evaporation.
  - Method: Use a soaker hose or drip irrigation system to deliver water directly to the roots. This conserves water and ensures deep watering.
  - Frequency: Check the soil moisture regularly. Established plants generally need about an inch of water per week.
2. Weeding
  - Regular Maintenance: Weeds compete with your plants for nutrients, water, and light. Regular weeding prevents them from taking over your garden.
  - Mulching: Apply a layer of mulch around your plants to suppress weed growth and retain soil moisture.
3. Deadheading Flowers
  - Promote Blooms: Remove spent flowers to encourage new blooms and prevent plants from using energy to produce seeds.
  - Tools: Use clean, sharp scissors or pruners to make clean cuts just above the next set of leaves.
4. Harvesting Vegetables
  - Timing: Harvest vegetables regularly to encourage continuous production. Pick them at their peak ripeness for the best flavour and nutritional value.

## Create a Sensory Garden

1. Sight
  - Colourful Plants: Choose a variety of colourful flowers and plants. Sunflowers, marigolds, and nasturtiums are bright and cheerful options.
2. Smell
  - Fragrant Plants: Plant aromatic herbs and flowers such as lavender, mint, rosemary, and roses. Their scents can be soothing and stimulating.
3. Touch
  - Textured Plants: Incorporate plants with a variety of textures. Lamb's ear has soft, fuzzy leaves, while sedum offers a smooth, rubbery feel.
4. Sound
  - Wind Chimes: Hang wind chimes or bells to create gentle, soothing sounds.
  - Water Features: Install a small fountain or water feature to provide the calming sound of flowing water.
5. Taste
  - Edible Plants: Plant herbs and vegetables that children can taste and enjoy. Cherry tomatoes, strawberries, and basil are fun and easy to grow.



# How to start a social business

and start making a difference



NADINE HONEYBONE

**Y**ou've been thinking of starting a social business, a charity, social enterprise or something to help others in your situation. But you're not sure where to start or whether you can actually do it.

You know what needs changing. You know what help others need. You've been doing what you can to help but know more needs to be done, and those you want to help deserve more.

So where to start? So many thoughts and ideas keep coming and you get so excited for the difference you know you can make. You can just see the results in your mind already, how others' lives are changing for the better, and feel the pride of knowing you helped create that.

To start though can feel overwhelming. Whether you have some experience in organising and managing things or none at all, when you're not sure how to go about creating the structure you need, dealing with various authorities or finding people to help, it can sometimes stop you in your tracks right there.

I've been there too.

In 2010 I wanted to help other parents with children on the autistic spectrum get the help they need. My son was diagnosed at 2 years old, and I was told there was nothing out there to help and that I would have to find things out for myself. I began to speak with other parents and professionals and soon my spreadsheet of resources and people to help was growing by the day.

I wanted so much to share this with other parents being told the same thing, so I started The Autism Directory and registered it as a charity in 2011. It is now the biggest niche directory in the UK for this community and the second in the world. Over 32,000 listings of resources and it creates employment opportunities for the team of autistic adults that run it. The charity has now grown into what is now Autistic Minds UK.



When I had the idea for the directory and wanted to run it as a social business, I had no idea where to start. I did have a business background, but this was a whole new area for me to learn and make a lot of mistakes with. Thankfully my ability to learn as I blunder through things is an asset.

**“ Now the biggest niche directory in the UK ”**

# Starting a social business

**W**hy the world needs more people like you

What I would love more than anything now is to see more charities, enterprises and social businesses in general get going. The need for this is just increasing all the time as the gap between what the government and other statutory bodies should be providing and what they are not, is widening at an alarming rate. The cost of living is making things hard for everyone, and budget cuts everywhere just means that more and more people that really need the help are being left to struggle.

The increase in food banks in the UK over the past few years is alarming, particularly for the sixth wealthiest nation in the world. There are far more food banks than McDonalds now. Whilst this shouldn't be the case, the need is there and the gap is being met by many charities, groups and third sector organisations across the country.



It's not just about the cost of living, although this makes everything harder for people. More and more social organisations are being created to help with a wide range of support needs across many different sectors of society. Yet, it's a really tough time for charities and the like right now with the pressure of finding the funding to deliver all the services they want and need to provide.

But when has a difficult time stopped people from doing what needs to be done? Well, maybe a lot of times but it need not stop you from creating that vision you have to do something. Just starting and taking the first steps is the greatest achievement, and from there the journey unfolds.

**Y**ou don't need to know everything to get started

You do not need to know how to do it all when you start. You just need to know the next few steps, and allow yourself to mess it up too if that's what happens. You don't have to be able to see the whole ladder to take the first step. One step leads to another, and just by moving forward with some guidance it becomes a lot easier.

So what is the first step? On the ladder analogy, the first step is to ensure the ladder is leaning against the right wall. What I mean by that is you need to get clear on what it is you want to do, who for and for what reason.

# Social business know how

Some questions to help that thought process

## Who is it for?

Describe the beneficiaries that you want to help. Who or what are they and what do they have in common? If we are thinking about people, can you identify them by age, gender, diagnosis, ethnicity, neurodiversity or what is it that defines them as the people you want to help? If it's not people specifically, what is it that describes who or what benefits in detail so that it/they are distinguishable?

## What do they need?

What is the help it/they need? Describe the point A - the situation now. What's happening and what is the impact of that? Then describe point B - the desired outcome. What will be different and the impact that will have?

How do you know this is what is needed? What tells you that this is the best way to help this situation? What sources of information do you have that supports this idea?

## What services will you provide?

What ideas do you have to get from Point A to Point B? At this time the 'how' isn't that important as that will come in time, however the clarity on what the change looks like, is.

Is there an urgency to this? If so, what are the timescales you are working towards to get change, or progress towards change, done?

What is included in this, and what is excluded? Describe the scope of the work, maybe by geographical boundaries or any other measurement that will provide clarity of what's in and what's outside of this work.

The world needs more people doing things to make a whole load of stuff better for everyone and everything. When you have that passion to make a difference, it's just about getting it done and finding help along the way. Then, you get to leave a legacy and feel so very proud about the difference you made.

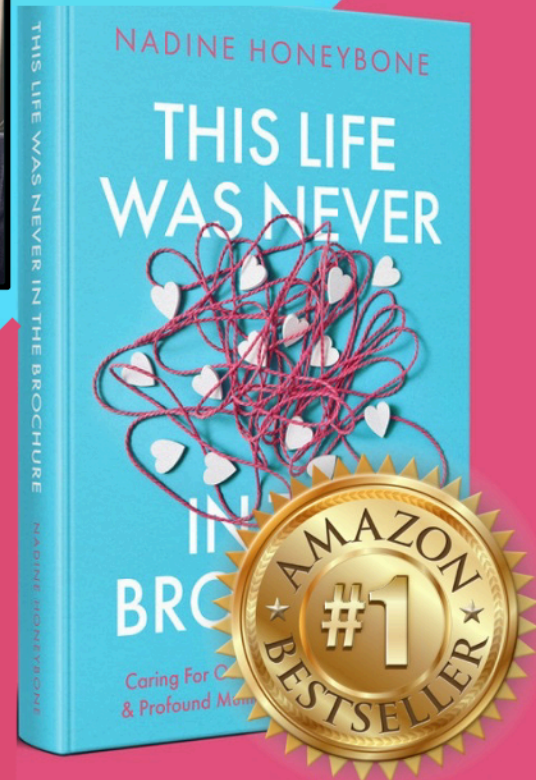
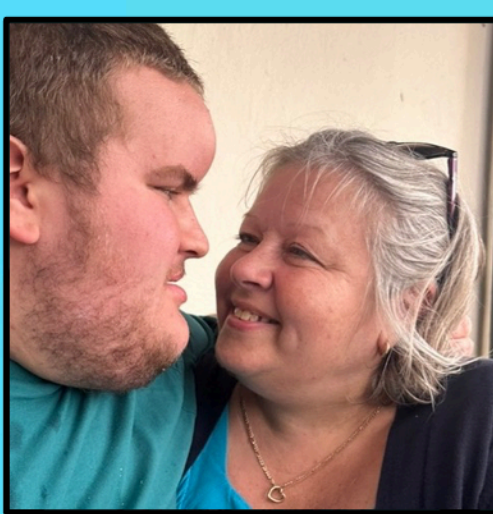
Having clarity on all those questions will be the most important thing you can have when you start.

To help, you can book 15 minutes with me to chat through the answers to these questions for your idea. I can provide you with some insight and advice. You can book this free 15-minute chat [here](https://calendly.com/nadine-designsonlife/15min).

Let's get started. Let's bring your idea to life.



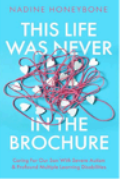
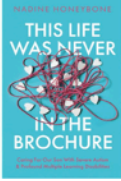
In the meantime, you can find me on FB. Just search for my name or my page '[This Life Was Never In The Brochure](#)'. The book, which went Bestseller on Amazon last September, is also available on Amazon as a paperback or Kindle edition.



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# Summer Decluttering- getting ready for September

Summer is the perfect time to declutter and organise your home, preparing for a fresh start as the new school year approaches. A tidy, organised space can reduce stress, increase productivity, and create a more peaceful environment for both parents and children.

Here are some practical tips and a six-week plan to help you declutter your home in manageable steps.

## Tips for Decluttering and Organising Different Areas of the Home

### 1. Start Small

Focus on one area or room at a time to avoid feeling overwhelmed. Break larger tasks into smaller, manageable steps.

### 2. Sort and Categorise

Sort items into categories: keep, donate, recycle, and toss. Be honest about what you really need and use.

### 3. Use Storage Solutions

Invest in storage solutions like bins, baskets, and shelves to keep items organised. Label containers for easy identification.

### 4. Create a System

Establish a system for maintaining organisation. Regularly review and declutter to prevent accumulation of unnecessary items.

### 5. Involve the Family

Involve your children in the decluttering process. Teach them the importance of organisation and let them help with age-appropriate tasks.

## Benefits of a Tidy, Organised Space

- **Reduced Stress:** A clutter-free environment can help reduce stress and anxiety, making it easier to relax and focus.
- **Increased Productivity:** An organised space allows you to find items quickly and easily, increasing efficiency and productivity.
- **Improved Well-Being:** A clean and tidy home can improve overall well-being and create a more positive atmosphere.

Here is a list of areas you could consider, if you feel brave go for two a week but let's be real and think about which of these areas would be easiest to do with everyone home. If you achieve one drawer only throughout the summer, you can still consider this a win!

### 1. Entryway

- Sort through shoes, coats, and bags. Donate or discard items that are no longer used.
- Create a designated spot for keys, mail, and other essentials to reduce clutter.

### 2. Kitchen

- Go through pantry items and discard expired foods.
- Organise kitchen cabinets and drawers. Group similar items together and use bins to keep things tidy.

### 3. Living Room

- Sort through books, magazines, and DVDs. Donate or recycle items you no longer need.
- Organise electronics and cords. Use cable organisers to keep them neat and tangle-free.

1.

# Summer Decluttering- getting ready for September

## 4. Dining Area

- Clear off the dining table and any surfaces. Find a home for items that don't belong.
- Sort through table linens and dining accessories. Keep only what you use regularly.

## 5. Master Bedroom

- Sort through clothes and accessories. Donate or discard items that no longer fit or are out of style.
- Organise the closet and drawers. Use dividers and bins to keep items sorted.

## 6. Children's Bedrooms

- Involve your children, in any way you can, in sorting through toys, books, and clothes. Donate items they no longer use.
- Create designated storage areas for toys and school supplies. Label bins and shelves for easy access.

## 7. Main Bathroom

- Discard expired toiletries and medications. Organise remaining items in bins or baskets.
- Clear out under-sink cabinets and drawers. Group similar items together for easy access.

## 8. En-suite or Guest Loo

- Tidy up guest toiletries and clear out any cabinets.
- Organise cleaning supplies

## 9. Home Office

- Sort through paperwork and files. Shred documents you no longer need and file important papers.
- Organise desk drawers and office supplies. Keep only what you use regularly.

## 10. Craft Area

- Sort through craft supplies and materials. Donate or discard items you no longer need.
- Organise supplies in bins and containers. Label everything for easy identification.

## 11. Garage

- Sort through tools, sports equipment, and outdoor items. Donate or discard items you no longer use.
- Create designated zones for different types of items. Use shelving units and hooks for organisation.

## 12. Storage Areas

- Go through storage bins and boxes. Discard or donate items you no longer need.
- Organise seasonal items and decorations. Label bins for easy access in the future.

## Routines

- One-In, One-Out Rule: For every new item you bring into your home, donate or discard one item.
- Daily Declutter: Spend 5-10 minutes each day decluttering a small space, like a drawer or a shelf. Set a timer to help.
- Weekend Purge: Dedicate one weekend each month to tackle a larger decluttering project.





# 15 Rewards to Look Forward to in September

- 1. Quiet Mornings:** Enjoy your mornings with a hot cup of coffee or tea in peace without the rush of summer activities.
- 2. Lunch with Friends:** Schedule a lunch date with friends you haven't seen in a while. Catch up and enjoy adult conversation.
- 3. Pamper Session:** Have a pampering session at home with a long bath, face masks, and your favourite skincare routine.
- 4. Reading Time:** Dive into a book you've been wanting to read. Create a cosy reading nook and enjoy uninterrupted reading time.
- 5. Reclaim Your Space:** Take some time to declutter and organise your home. Create a serene and orderly environment that brings you joy.
- 6. Exercise Routine:** Re-establish or start a new exercise routine. Join a yoga class, hit the gym, or enjoy outdoor walks.
- 7. Personal Hobbies:** Rediscover a hobby you love or start a new one. Whether it's painting, knitting, or gardening, indulge in something you enjoy.
- 8. Cooking/Baking:** Experiment with new recipes or bake your favourite treats. Enjoy the process and the delicious results.
- 9. Cultural Outing:** Visit a museum, art gallery, or attend a local theatre performance. Immerse yourself in culture and creativity.
- 10. Write the First Chapter:** Start writing the first chapter of that book you've always wanted to write. Take the first step towards your dream.



- 11. Back to nature:** Take leisurely walks in a nearby park or nature reserve. Or just sit in your garden. Enjoy the peace and beauty of the changing season.
- 12. Digital Detox:** Have a day free from screens and social media. Focus on offline activities that relax and rejuvenate you.
- 13. Journaling:** Spend time journaling. Reflect on the summer, set new goals, and express your thoughts and feelings.
- 14. Shopping Trip:** Treat yourself to a shopping trip. Buy something special for yourself, like new clothes, a book, or some lovely stationery such as a new notebook or pen.
- 15. Volunteer Work from Home:** Contact local charities to see if there are volunteer opportunities you can do from home. This can also boost your CV if you plan to return to work.

These rewards are designed to be both enjoyable and accessible, helping you make the most of the peace and personal time that September brings once the kids are back to school. Enjoy these well-deserved moments and take time to care for yourself!

# Capturing the sunset and sunrise

Some of our children don't sleep much so if you are going to be up at the crack of dawn, or still awake as the sun goes down, how about some tips on taking great photos. Sunsets and sunrises are among the most breathtaking natural phenomena to capture on camera. Whether you're using a smartphone or a camera, these moments can make for stunning photographs. Here are some tips to help you capture the beauty of these fleeting moments, along with ideas for involving your child in the process.



## 1. Use the Right Settings

- **Smartphones:** Most modern smartphones have excellent cameras. Use the HDR (High Dynamic Range) mode to balance the bright and dark areas of your photo. Adjust the exposure by tapping on the screen and sliding your finger up or down.
- **Cameras:** If you're using a DSLR or mirrorless camera, set it to aperture priority mode (A or Av). Choose a small aperture (high f-number) like f/11 or f/16 to keep most of the scene in focus. Use a tripod to avoid camera shake.

## 2. Focus and Exposure

- **Manual Focus:** If your camera allows, use manual focus to ensure your photo is sharp. Focus on an object in the foreground to add depth.
- **Exposure:** Underexpose slightly to bring out the rich colours of the sky. Adjust the exposure compensation to -1 or -2 stops.

## 3. Composition

- **Rule of Thirds:** Use the rule of thirds to compose your shot. Place the horizon on the lower or upper third line of the frame, rather than in the centre.
- **Foreground Interest:** Include elements like trees, rocks, or buildings in the foreground to add interest and depth to your photo.

## 4. Timing

- **Golden Hour:** The best time to capture sunsets and sunrises is during the golden hour, which is roughly an hour after sunrise and an hour before sunset. The light is soft and warm, creating beautiful hues in the sky.
- **Blue Hour:** The blue hour, which occurs just before sunrise and just after sunset, can also provide stunning photo opportunities with a cooler, more ethereal light.

## 5. Use Filters and Apps

- **Polarising Filter:** A polarising filter can help reduce glare and enhance the colours of the sky.
- **Editing Apps:** Use photo editing apps like Snapseed, Lightroom, or VSCO to enhance your photos. Adjust the contrast, saturation, and sharpness to make the colours pop.

## Best Times and Locations for Capturing Sunsets and Sunrises

### 1. Weather

- **Check the Weather:** Clear or partly cloudy skies tend to create the best conditions for dramatic sunsets and sunrises. Check the weather forecast to plan your shoot.
- **Arrive Early:** Arrive at your chosen location at least 30 minutes before sunrise or sunset to set up and find the best spot.

# Capturing the sunset and sunrise

## 2. Locations

- **High Points:** Elevated locations like hills, mountains, or tall buildings offer expansive views of the horizon.
- **Water Bodies:** Lakes, rivers, and beaches can provide stunning reflections of the sky, adding to the beauty of your photos.
- **Open Fields:** Wide open fields without obstructions can give you a clear view of the sky and horizon.



## Involving Your Child in the Photography Process

### 1. Explain the Basics

- **Simple Instructions:** Explain basic photography concepts like composition, focus, and lighting in simple terms. Show them how to use the camera or smartphone.
- **Encourage Creativity:** Let your child experiment with different angles and perspectives. Encourage them to be creative and have fun.

### 2. Make It a Learning Experience

- **Discuss Nature:** Use the opportunity to teach your child about the natural world. Talk about why the sky changes colours and the importance of sunrise and sunset in different cultures.
- **Science and Art:** Combine science and art by explaining how light works and how photographers capture beauty in nature.

### 3. Include Them in Planning

- **Location Scouting:** Involve your child in choosing the location. Let them suggest places they think would be great for photos.
- **Timing:** Teach them about the golden hour and why it's the best time for photography. Let them help plan the timing of the shoot.

### 4. Review Photos Together

- **Feedback:** After the shoot, review the photos together. Discuss what worked well and what could be improved. Praise their efforts and creativity.
- **Editing:** Show them basic editing techniques using apps or software. Let them make adjustments to their own photos to see how changes affect the final image.

By following these tips and involving your child in the process, you can create beautiful memories and stunning photos of sunsets and sunrises. Photography can be a rewarding and educational hobby that you and your child can enjoy together. Happy shooting!



Find Out More: ↘

W

## The Nurturing Advocacy Programme



# THE Nurturing ADVOCACY PROGRAMME



## THE Nurturing ADVOCACY PROGRAMME

- ☆ Disability Rights
- ☆ The Advocacy Basics
- ☆ Nurturing Understanding
- ☆ Nurturing Acceptance
- ☆ Nurturing Advocacy Plan (NAP)
- ☆ Reasonable Adjustment Journey
- ☆ Unreasonable, Reasonable Adjustments
- ☆ 'But No One Believes Me' & 'What Next?'
- ☆ Transitions
- ☆ Imposter Syndrome
- ☆ Supporting Anxiety
- ☆ Calm, Connection & Co-Regulation
- ☆ Introduction to 'The Spoon Theory'
- ☆ Jodie's Top Tips
- ☆ 'How can I Help?'
- ☆ Advocacy Planners Support
- ☆ Self Advocacy, Advocacy



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# Black RAINBOW

“Filled with warmth and humour, and frequently emotional and eye-opening, *Black Rainbow* is ultimately an uplifting story of redemption, self-discovery, finding personal freedom and discovering your own truth.”

**Rebecca Huseyin**  
*A Boy Less Ordinary*



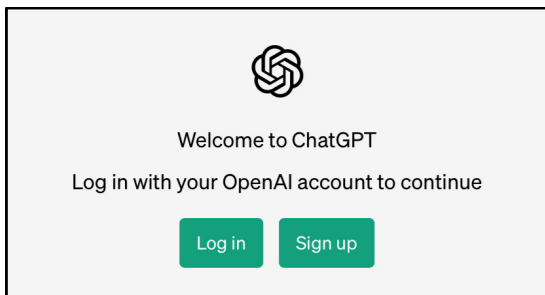
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# ChatGPT - A Powerful Tool for Parent Carers

This month, we are just going to look at ideas how ChatGPT can be used through the holidays to make your life a little bit easier. We'll get back to our Support Empowerment Nourishment Discovery once everyone is back at school or your routine is getting back to normal. Even those who home school will see challenges in the summer holiday time because some of your usual events won't be on.

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This column is about empowering you to harness technology for the betterment of your family's life. Each piece of advice, every suggestion, and all creative ideas are shared with the intention of supporting your incredible role as a parent carer.

## A few prompts to try

We asked ChatGPT to provide us with some prompts parent carers could use in the summer holidays.

The joy of ChatGPT is once you get your first response, you can ask it to change things to suit you. For example, if I asked it to give me ideas on fun activities in the garden, I can get the response but then give more detail (eg my child is blind) and it will rewrite it to include that information. You can do this numerous times until you are satisfied with the result..

## Activity Planning

Idea: Need ideas to keep your children busy and entertained? ChatGPT can suggest a variety of fun and educational activities tailored to your child's interests and needs.

Prompts:

- "Can you suggest some fun and educational activities for my 8-year-old who loves science?"
- "What are some indoor activities for a rainy day that my children can enjoy?"
- "Help me plan a week's worth of outdoor activities that are suitable for children with SEND."

## Craft and DIY Projects

Idea: Get creative with some craft and DIY projects that are easy to do at home. ChatGPT can provide step-by-step instructions for a range of activities.

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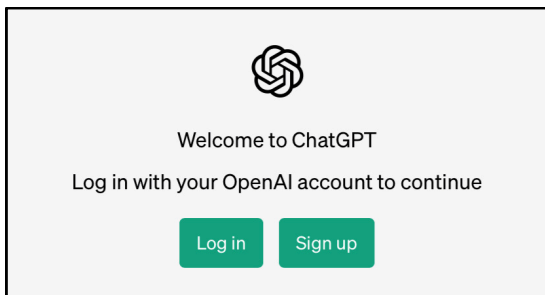
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# Back to School

Getting Your SEND Child Ready to Go Back to School: A Tiered Prep Countdown

The transition back to school can be a challenging time for SEND children and their families. With a bit of planning and preparation, you can help make this transition smoother and more manageable. Here's a tiered approach with a two and four-week countdown to get your child ready, based on their individual needs.

## Tier 1: Essential Preparations (For Everyone)

4 Weeks Before School Starts:

- 1. Start Gradually Adjusting Routines: Begin shifting bedtimes and wake-up times to match the school schedule. This helps your child adapt to the new routine gradually.
- 2. Talk About School: Start conversations about going back to school. Discuss positive aspects and what they're looking forward to.
- 3. Review Last Year: Look at photos or schoolwork from last year to help remind your child of the school environment and experiences.

2 Weeks Before School Starts:

- 1. Create a Visual Schedule: Use a visual timetable to map out the school routine. Include morning routines, school hours, and after-school activities.
- 2. Practice the School Routine: Do a few trial runs of the school routine. Wake up, get dressed, and have breakfast as if it were a school day.
- 3. Gather Supplies: Make a list of school supplies and involve your child in shopping. Let them choose their backpack, lunchbox, and other items.

## Tier 2: Additional Preparations (For Children Needing More Support)

4 Weeks Before School Starts:

- 1. Create a One-Page Profile: This profile can include your child's strengths, interests, needs, and successful support strategies. Share this with teachers when school starts.
- 2. Social Stories: Develop or review social stories about school. Include stories about meeting new teachers, making friends, and following school rules.
- 3. Establish a Calm-Down Area: Set up a designated area at home where your child can go to relax and decompress. Practice using this space.

2 Weeks Before School Starts:

- 1. Prepare for Transport: If your child uses home to school transport, discuss what to expect even if you don't yet know the details. Explain how the process works and what they might experience.
- 2. Practice Communication: Role-play different school scenarios. Practice asking for help, expressing needs, and interacting with peers.
- 3. Review Safety Plans: Go over safety plans and procedures with your child. Discuss what to do in different situations, such as fire drills or if they feel unwell.





# Back to School

## Tier 3: Intensive Preparations (For Children Requiring Maximum Support)

### 4 Weeks Before School Starts:

- 1. Therapies and Support Services: Coordinate with therapists and support services to discuss strategies and goals for the new school year.
- 2. Daily Transitions: Start incorporating small daily transitions to help your child adapt. Move from one activity to another with clear signals and support.
- 3. Use Visual Aids: Implement visual aids like picture schedules and timers to help your child understand the passage of time and what's next.

### 2 Weeks Before School Starts:

- 1. Practice School Skills: Engage in activities that mimic school tasks, such as sitting at a desk, following instructions, and completing simple assignments.
- 2. Create a Comfort Kit: Put together a small kit for your child to take to school. Include items that provide comfort and reduce anxiety, like a favourite toy or stress ball.
- 3. Monitor Changes: Pay close attention to any behavioural or emotional changes. Adjust the preparation strategies as needed and seek support if necessary.



## Final Week: Countdown to School

### 1 Week Before School Starts:

- 1. Finalise the Routine: Ensure that the school routine is firmly established. Stick to consistent wake-up, meal, and bedtime schedules.
- 2. Prepare Clothes: Lay out school clothes for the first week. Let your child help choose their outfits to give them a sense of control.
- 3. Pack the Backpack: Pack the school backpack with all necessary supplies. Double-check that everything is ready to go.
- 4. Confirm Transport: If possible, confirm details about home to school transport. Prepare your child for any new information about their driver or taxi company.

### Night Before School:

- 1. Review the Schedule: Go over the visual schedule for the next day. Remind your child of what to expect.
- 2. Calm Bedtime Routine: Follow a calming bedtime routine to help your child relax and sleep well.
- 3. Positive Reinforcement: Use positive reinforcement to build excitement. Praise your child for their bravery and remind them of the fun aspects of school.

**The First Day: Expect the Unexpected**  
Despite all your careful planning and preparation, things might still go wrong on the first day back—that's just life. Don't feel too bad if you can't foresee every possible issue. You're not Mystic Meg! Remember, the important thing is that you've done your best to prepare your child. Tomorrow is another day, and each step is progress.



Summer is the perfect time to fire up the grill and enjoy delicious BBQ meals with family and friends. Whether you're catering to picky eaters, accommodating dietary needs, or looking to impress with gourmet dishes, we've got you covered. Here are some BBQ ideas that will satisfy everyone, along with tips for fun BBQ activities to make your gatherings memorable.

### Simple and Classic BBQ Recipes

#### 1. Burgers and Hot Dogs

- **Classic Burgers:** Prepare classic beef burgers with all the fixings. Offer a variety of toppings such as cheese, lettuce, tomatoes, pickles, onions, and condiments.
- **Hot Dogs:** Grill hot dogs and serve with buns and a range of toppings like mustard, ketchup, relish, and onions.

#### 2. Grilled Chicken Skewers

- **Basic Recipe:** Marinate chicken pieces in a simple mix of olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, salt, and pepper. Skewer and grill until cooked through.
- **Toppings:** Serve with a side of BBQ sauce or a yogurt-based dipping sauce.

#### 3. Corn on the Cob

- **Grilling:** Brush corn with butter and sprinkle with salt before grilling. Rotate frequently until charred and tender.
- **Toppings:** Offer different toppings like grated cheese, lime juice, and chili powder for extra flavour.

### Adventurous BBQ Recipes

#### 1. Gourmet Burgers

- **Variations:** Experiment with lamb, turkey, or veggie burgers. Add gourmet toppings like caramelised onions, blue cheese, avocado, or specialty sauces.
- **Buns:** Offer a variety of buns such as brioche, pretzel, or whole grain.

#### 2. Grilled Seafood

- **Prawn Skewers:** Marinate prawn in a mix of garlic, lemon, and herbs. Skewer and grill for a quick and tasty option.
- **Salmon Fillets:** Grill salmon with a honey and soy glaze. Serve with a sprinkle of sesame seeds and green onions.

#### 3. Stuffed Peppers

- **Recipe:** Hollow out bell peppers and stuff with a mix of quinoa, black beans, corn, and cheese. Grill until the peppers are tender and the filling is hot.
- **Toppings:** Garnish with fresh herbs and a squeeze of lime.





**Are you a Parent Carer dreaming of launching your own business? Or do you have a business you are trying to grow?**

**Do you work from home and feel isolated but find it hard to find other parent carers who are trying to do the same thing?**

DO YOU WANT TO TURN YOUR PASSION INTO PROFIT, WHILST JUGGLING WITH THE CHALLENGES OF PARENT CARER LIFE?

SPACE (Society of Parent And Carer Entrepreneurs) can help you with a supportive community of fellow parent carer entrepreneurs, resources, and training.

*Debs Aspland*

**Find out about the membership HERE: @lifeaspland**

If you are overwhelmed with everything you need to know as a parent carer, or you are not sure where to go to ask a question, or perhaps you just want to have a chat with someone who gets it.

There is a new discord server called SendVille. Within SendVille, you will find Chill Out Club, Education Estate, Social Street, Health Hut, Resource Ranch, Finance Quarter and more. Think of each area as a house within a village.

In each house are rooms to visit, helping you to find the right place to ask your question or share your wisdom. It's new, so joining now means you also help it grow into what you need.

*SendVille*



Navigating Life  
with SEND

T O G E T H E R

**Join SENDVille now!**

**Discord is super easy to use and it's FREE**

# 6 weeks of ideas for things to do

During the holidays, it can be a real challenge to come up with something to do every day to keep things fresh and interesting. Six weeks indoors, seeing no one can be so isolating. We're here to help with 42 ideas, one a day for six weeks.

## Week 1: Ease Into Summer

### Day 1: Nature Walk

- Take a stroll in a local park or nature reserve. Collect interesting leaves, stones, and sticks for future crafts.

### Day 2: Garden Sensory Hunt

- Set up a sensory scavenger hunt in your garden or a local green space. Find items that are soft, rough, fragrant, or colourful.

### Day 3: Library Visit

- Visit the local library and pick out some books. Many libraries also offer free summer activities for children.

### Day 4: Craft Day

- Use collected nature items to make simple crafts. Create leaf rubbings, paint stones, or make a nature collage.

### Day 5: Home Movie Day

- Have a cosy movie day at home with your favourite family films. Make popcorn and create a cinema-like atmosphere.

### Day 6: Cooking Together

- Make simple recipes together, like homemade pizzas or sandwiches. Let your child choose their toppings.

### Day 7: Rest Day

- Relax at home with free play. Enjoy a low-key day to recharge.



## Week 2: Fun and Learning

### Day 8: Sensory Garden

- Work on creating a sensory garden or area in your garden with different textures, scents, and colours.

### Day 9: Educational Games

- Play educational board games or card games that promote learning and fun.

### Day 10: Local Museum

- Visit a local museum or gallery. Many offer free or discounted entry for children.

### Day 11: Art Day

- Spend the day painting, drawing, or crafting. Try finger painting or making your own playdough.

### Day 12: DIY Science Experiments

- Conduct simple science experiments at home, like baking soda and vinegar volcanoes or making slime.

### Day 13: Picnic in the Park

- Pack a simple picnic and enjoy it at a nearby park. Bring a frisbee or ball for some outdoor play.

### Day 14: Storytelling Day

- Read stories together or make up your own. Create a cosy reading nook with blankets and cushions.

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## Week 3: Exploring and Creating

### Day 15: Beach or Lake Day

- If you're near a beach or lake, spend the day playing in the sand and water. Collect shells or pebbles.

### Day 16: Craft from Recycled Materials

- Use recycled materials like cardboard boxes, bottles, and paper to create imaginative crafts.

### Day 17: Local Farm Visit

- Visit a local farm to see and interact with animals. Many farms offer low-cost entry.

### Day 18: Music and Dance

- Have a music and dance party at home. Play instruments, sing songs, and dance around the living room.

### Day 19: Garden Games

- Set up simple games in the garden like a mini obstacle course, scavenger hunt, or water play.

### Day 20: Baking Day

- Bake cookies, cakes, or simple treats together. Let your child help with mixing and decorating.

### Day 21: Planning for School

- Start gathering school supplies. Let your child help choose their backpack, lunchbox, and stationery.



## Week 4: Adventures and Preparation

### Day 22: Zoo or Wildlife Park

- Visit a zoo or wildlife park if budget allows. Look for discounts or free days.

### Day 23: DIY Obstacle Course

- Create an obstacle course in your garden or living room using household items.

### Day 24: Park Day

- Spend the day at a local playground or park. Bring a picnic and some toys for a fun day out.

### Day 25: Indoor Fort Building

- Build an indoor fort using blankets, pillows, and furniture. Spend the day playing inside the fort.

### Day 26: Outdoor Art

- Use chalk to draw on pavements or paint with water on fences. Create a large outdoor art project.

### Day 27: Home Spa Day

- Have a relaxing spa day at home with face masks, foot baths, and nail painting.

### Day 28: Review School Routine

- Begin discussing and practising the school routine. Use a visual schedule to map out the day.

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## Week 5: Learning and Fun

### Day 29: Botanical Garden

- Visit a local botanical garden. Explore different plants and enjoy a peaceful day out.

### Day 30: Cooking Together

- Try making a new recipe together. Let your child help with simple tasks like mixing and measuring.

### Day 31: Bird Watching

- Spend the day bird watching in your garden or a local park. Identify different birds and their songs.

### Day 32: Puzzle Day

- Spend the day doing puzzles together. Choose different types and difficulty levels to keep it interesting.

### Day 33: Outdoor Exploration

- Go on a bug hunt or nature exploration. Bring a magnifying glass and a notebook to document your findings.

### Day 34: Create a One-Page Profile

- Work on creating a one-page profile of your child to share with their new teacher. Include strengths, interests, and support strategies.

### Day 35: Board Games

- Have a board game marathon with family favourites. Include games that are suitable for your child's age and abilities.



## Week 6: Wrapping Up and Getting Ready

### Day 36: Local Attraction Visit

- Visit a local attraction such as a castle, historical site, or nature reserve. Look for free or discounted entry days.

### Day 37: Mindfulness and Relaxation

- Practise mindfulness and relaxation techniques together. Use guided meditations or simple breathing exercises.

### Day 38: Packing for School

- Start packing the school bag with supplies, lunchboxes, and any comfort items your child may need.

### Day 39: Family Scrapbook

- Create a scrapbook of the summer holidays. Include photos, drawings, and mementos from your adventures.

### Day 40: Free Play Day

- Allow for unstructured free play. Let your child choose their activities and enjoy a relaxed day at home.

### Day 41: Uniform Prep

- Prepare school uniforms. Ensure everything is clean, fits well, and is ready for the first day.

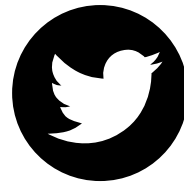
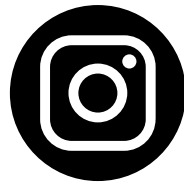
### Day 42: Family Time

- Spend the last day enjoying quality family time. Reflect on the summer and talk about the upcoming school year.

THESE DAILY SUGGESTIONS SHOULD HOPEFULLY PROVIDE A VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES THAT ARE BUDGET-FRIENDLY AND ENJOYABLE. NOT ALL WILL SUIT YOU BUT HOPEFULLY A FEW WILL HELP



*Because nothing is typical!*



*Debs  
Aspland*

## EDITOR IN CHIEF

Debs is a mum to three amazing, challenging, loveable teenagers, each with a variety of special educational needs and disability labels attached.

Over the years, Debs has spent hours trying to juggle the chaos that comes from having to use a system that doesn't actually work, unless you shout loudly and constantly. Even then, there are no guarantees.

She has turned up late for meetings, a month early for some and even, on one occasion, to the wrong building.

She has set up support groups, forums, online support, accessible music festivals, award events and much more.

### **Her biggest passion?**

Making life that bit easier for other parent carers.

Oh, and stationery. She has a real passion for stationery (and cake)! She really loves cake.

### **Her biggest fear?**

One day, her husband will find out that some other partners enjoy cleaning and doing housework.

### **The Dream?**

KinToa envisions a world where every SEND parent carer feels empowered, connected, and fully supported in their pivotal role

This will give them more time to do the things they want to do, rather than just doing the things they need to do. And if that involves cake, they know who to call.

# KINTOA

Strength of Family, Courage of Warriors

September/October 2024

