School holidays

Your 6 Ways to Wellbeing

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The summer holidays can be a mix of joy, stress, and exhaustion. When routines shift, childcare becomes a juggle, and days feel long (and sometimes expensive), it's easy to feel overwhelmed.

Inspired by the West Lothian 6 Ways to Wellbeing, this guide offers gentle, practical ideas to help you look after your own wellbeing during this time—because your needs matter too.
By taking small steps to care for yourself, you'll feel more balanced and better able to support your family through the highs and lows of the holidays.

You can explore the Six Ways in any order - there's no right or wrong place to start. Take your time, and choose the areas that feel most relevant to you right now. Here, we've included some simple ideas and suggestions to help you build the Six Ways into your everyday life.

Read on to find out more and try them out for yourself.

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Your Wellbeing Traffic Lights

For each of the 6 Ways to Wellbeing, think about how you feel right now. Then choose a colour below:

Red		**This is an area I find difficult or I'm not doing much of at the moment.**
Amber		**I'm doing some things in this area, but there's room for improvement.**
Green		**I feel confident and positive in this area.**

Focus first on Red or Amber areas. Small steps-like checking in with a friend or taking a short walk-can grow into something meaningful over time.

There's no right or wrong answer. This is just a tool to help you reflect and take positive steps for your wellbeing.

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Your Wellbeing Traffic Lights

Feeling in control of money reduces stress. This could mean making a budget, getting advice, or taking small steps to plan ahead.

Paying attention to what's around us helps us feel present. You might notice nature, savour a meal, or pause to breathe.

Building strong relationships helps us feel supported. This could mean spending time with family, friends, or joining a group.

Learning new things keeps our minds active and builds confidence. Try a new hobby, recipe, or skill.

Moving our bodies boosts mood and energy. It doesn't have to be sport - it could be walking, dancing, or stretching.

Helping others gives us purpose and joy. You could volunteer, offer your time, or do something kind for a neighbour.

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Financial wellbeing

The school holidays can feel challenging but support is available and you are not alone.

School holidays can place extra pressure on families, especially when childcare, food costs, and limited time off do not match the long break from school. If this time of year feels challenging, support is available and you are not alone.

Financial Wellbeing

- Look into local holiday clubs, council programmes, or community groups that offer low cost or subsidised childcare.
- Explore funded summer activities that may include free meals for children.
- Check what support is available through foodbanks, community pantries, or holiday food programmes if rising food costs are causing pressure.
- Contact Citizens Advice West Lothian or The Advice Shop if you want help understanding your financial options.
- Plan ahead where possible and choose activities that fit within your limits, such as parks, libraries, museums, crafts at home, or free community events.
- Be honest with yourself and your children about what is manageable. It is completely okay to say that something is not possible right now.

Financial wellbeing worksheet

Reminder

You do not need to face the summer alone. Practical support is available and small steps can help make this time feel more manageable.

Use this space to think about ways to feel more in control of your money and reduce stress.

- If you could plan one simple, low cost activity that feels enjoyable and realistic, what would it be and why
- What expenses cause you the most stress and how could you manage them?

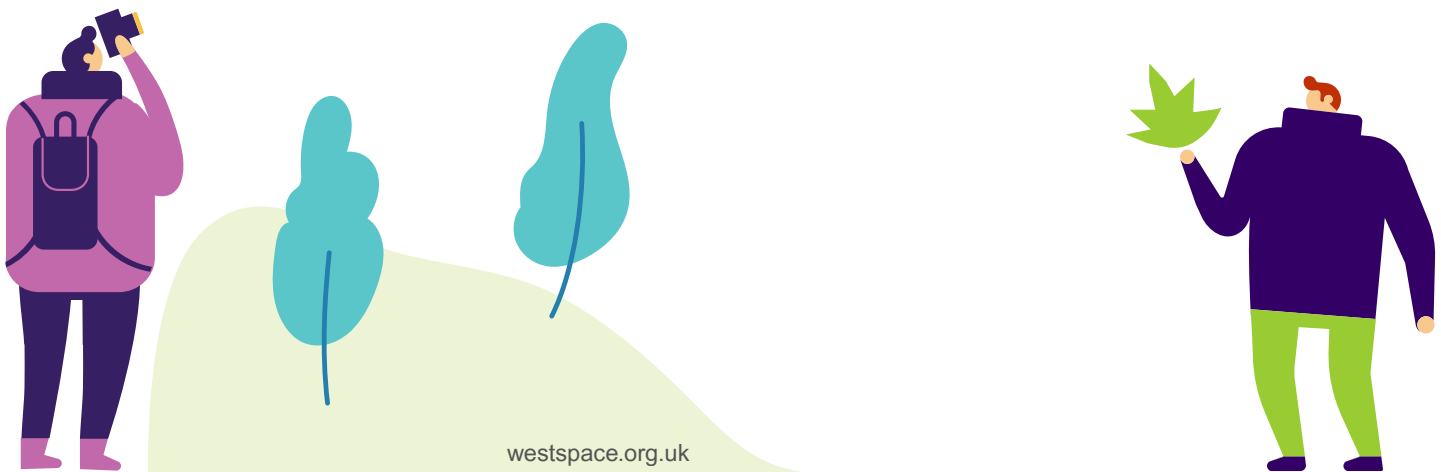
Take notice

Notice the small joys in everyday family chaos.

School holidays can be noisy, busy and demanding, especially when routines shift and responsibilities increase. It can be hard to stay connected to your own feelings when you are juggling childcare, work and daily pressures. Taking notice of small moments can help you feel more grounded and steady.

Take Notice

- Pause before reacting when things feel chaotic. A slow breath can help you respond more calmly.
- Notice small moments of joy, such as a funny comment from a child, a quiet minute in the kitchen, or the feel of warm light through the window.
- Check in with how you are really feeling. Ask yourself if you need rest, space, food, support or a moment to regroup.
- Create short, quiet rituals such as a few minutes outside, listening to birds, stretching, or reading a page of a book.
- Use a diary, notebook or phone note to record feelings or moments that bring calm. Noticing what feels good, what feels difficult and what you need is a form of self care.



Take notice worksheet

Reminder

You deserve moments of calm and care, even during busy school holidays. Small pauses can make a real difference.

Use this space to explore ways to be more mindful and aware of the present moment.

- What small moment today made you feel calm or happy?
- How does pausing and noticing your feelings change your day?

Connect

Make time for simple moments together - they matter most.

Summer can be isolating when usual routines and school connections pause. Reaching out to others and maintaining social contact can reduce stress and make you feel less alone. Connection can be casual and flexible.

Ways to Connect

- Reach out to another parent for a walk, chat, or a shared playdate. Simple moments count.
- Join a free or low-cost local event. Community centres, libraries, and parks often run family activities.
- Take five minutes to message a friend or family member just to say hello.
- Check in with your partner or a trusted adult about how you are feeling. Honest conversations create support for everyone.
- Swap ideas with other parents about activities, tips, or coping strategies.

Connect worksheet

Reminder

You do not have to do it all alone. Connection, even in small ways, helps you feel more grounded and less isolated.

Use the space below to explore ways you can connect with others. Think about what works for you and add your own ideas.

- Who could you reach out to this week for a small connection?
- How do you usually feel after talking to someone you trust?
- What kind of social support feels most helpful for you during the summer?

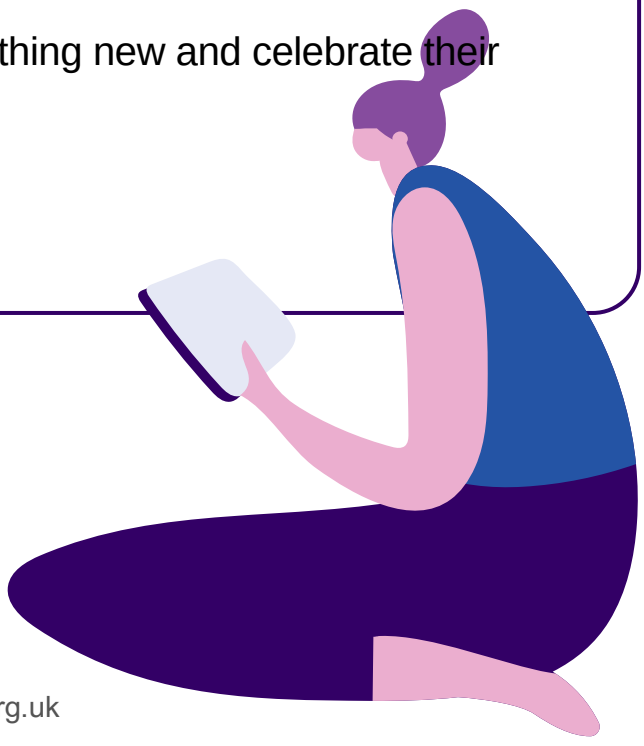
Keep learning

Try something new together - learning can be fun and free.

Summer can feel repetitive, but it is also an opportunity to learn. Learning new things builds confidence, keeps your brain engaged, and can be fun for your children too. It can be practical or playful, for you or your kids.

Keep Learning

- Try free or inexpensive crafts, baking, or simple science experiments together.
- Pick up a small new skill just for yourself, like a new recipe, a bit of DIY, or a short online course.
- Read, listen to a podcast, or watch a short tutorial while your children play.
- Keep a summer journal of small successes or observations.
- Encourage your child to try something new and celebrate their efforts.



Keep learning worksheet

Reminder

Learning does not have to be formal. Following your interests, exploring something new, or noticing your personal growth all count.

Use this space to think about ways to try new things and keep your mind active.

- What is one new thing you could try this week with or without your children?
- What skills or knowledge would you like to explore this summer?

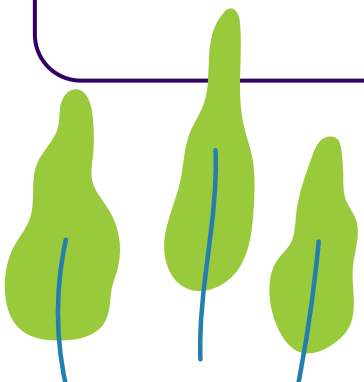
Be active

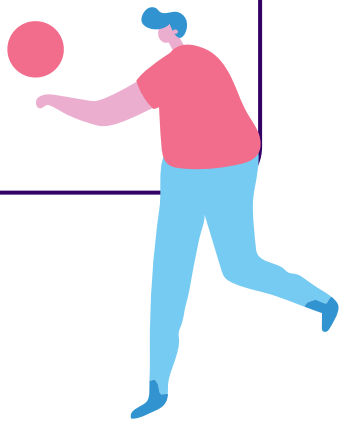
Get outside, move, and play - it's good for everyone's mood.

Kids need to move, and so do parents. Gentle activity can boost mood, reduce stress, and improve energy. Movement does not need to be intense or structured. Enjoying it together makes it more fun and sustainable.

Be Active

- Take a walk with your child to the park, shop, or just around the block. Ten minutes outside can lift everyone's mood.
- Move at home. Play music and dance, or stretch while your child plays nearby.
- Explore local green spaces such as woods, lochs, or playgrounds. West Lothian has many family-friendly spots.
- Join in with your child's activities, including games, skipping, or silly races.
- Use a small piece of outdoor time to combine movement and mindfulness, like noticing birds, clouds, or nature while walking.





Be active worksheet

Reminder

Movement does not need to be big or planned. You do not have to exercise, you just have to move in ways that feel good and fit your life.

Use this space to think about ways you can move more and stay active.

- How can you add a small bit of activity into your daily routine?
- What is your child's favourite way to be active and how can you join in?

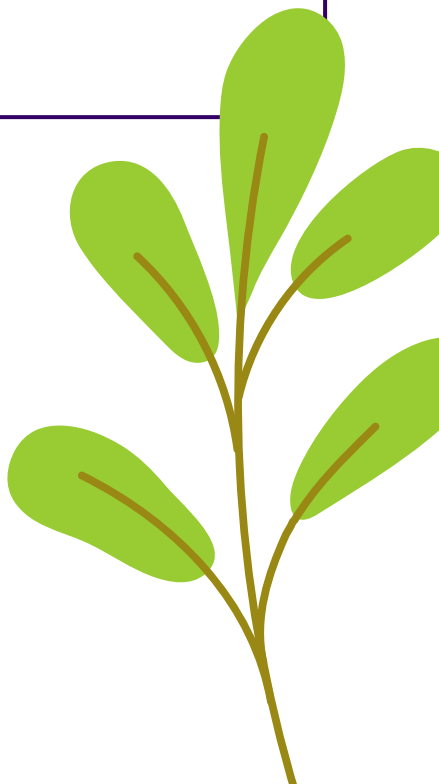
Give

Kindness and patience count - especially when things feel busy.

The school holidays are full of giving to your children and family, but giving does not mean depleting yourself. Small acts of kindness, both to others and yourself, can make a big difference.

Give

- Share a snack, a smile, or a compliment, especially when patience is low.
- Help your child do something kind for someone else, such as a thank-you card or a shared toy.
- Speak kindly to yourself: “I am doing my best” or “It is okay to feel tired.”
- Swap childcare with a trusted friend to give each of you a break.
- Celebrate small wins with your children to reinforce positivity.



Give worksheet

Reminder

You are already giving so much. Kindness does not have to mean doing more. Being gentle with yourself counts too.

Use this space to explore ways you can help or support others.

- How did you show kindness to yourself or someone else today?
- What small act of generosity could you do this week that would feel manageable?
- How does giving support your own wellbeing as well as your child's?

The 6 Ways to Wellbeing

Final Thoughts

The school holidays do not have to be perfect. What matters most is that you and your family feel safe, supported, and connected. Small, kind steps each day, for yourself and your loved ones, can make the season feel lighter and more manageable.

And don't keep it to yourself! Share this guide with friends, family, or neighbours. We all face challenges, and sometimes just knowing someone else is trying too can be incredibly reassuring. When we support each other, we build stronger, more compassionate communities - and that's good for everyone's wellbeing.

For more ideas, local resources, and community support, visit:

Your thoughts...

This space is yours. Use it to jot down ideas, reflections, or anything that comes to mind as you explore the Six Ways to Wellbeing.

There's no right or wrong way to do it. It's simply a space to pause, reflect, and capture whatever feels helpful in the moment.

Your thoughts...

Stay in touch

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