

WINTER

What's on For Families in Edinburgh

Free or Low-Cost Activities and Support
available during the Holidays 2023/2024



National Museum of Scotland, Phone: 0300 123 6789, www.nms.ac.uk

Open daily 10am – 5pm

Open 26th December 2023 and 1st January 2024, 12pm – 5pm (Closed 25th December 2023)

Family Hubs (Free): Lots of hands-on activities and opportunities to play for children

Family Trails (Free): Pick one of our trails to help guide and inspire your visit to the National Museum of Scotland, choose from dinosaurs, giants, Dr Who, winter, puzzles etc

Sprogmonay Monday 1st January 2024 at 2pm (Free)

Afternoon of free activities including unicorn dance party and sprog rocks.

ASN Curiosity Club Saturday 9th December 2023 at 2pm (£10)

A relaxed version of our *Curiosity Club* for children with additional support needs and their families. Unleash your inner museum detective and explore through games, activities, and an optional gallery visit. There's a range of different topics to choose from, each capturing some of the museums most exciting and child friendly collections and themes.

National Galleries of Scotland, National, Modern One & Two and Portrait

Phone: 0131 624 6200, www.nationalgalleries.org

Open daily 10am – 5pm

Closed 25th & 26th December 2023 and 1st & 2nd January 2024

Art Trails (free): Explore the new Scottish galleries, together, with our Art Stomps (under 5s) and Art Chat (ages 6+) trails.

Art Trollies (free) ASN: Pick up and play! You'll find drawing materials, story books, cosy cushions, ear defenders, sketchbooks, paper and Sensory Bags – to help you make the most of a visit to the galleries!

City Art Centre and Museum of Edinburgh, www.edinburghmuseums.org.uk

Arts & craft space (free): Activity area is packed full of art materials and worksheets relating to our exhibitions. They offer a warm and welcoming space for family groups and stay as long as you like.

City Art Centre - Winter wonderland arts and craft session on 17th December between 2pm – 4pm (free)

Libraries, www.edinburgh.gov.uk/libraryopeninghours

Open Mon – Sat, check websites for local branch hours and activity schedule

Closed 25th and 26th December 2023 and 1st and 2nd January 2024

Dads Rock, Phone: 07807 498 709, www.dadsrock.org.uk

Dads rock offer playgroup sessions (0-5 years), dance sessions (0-8years) and other workshops. More information is available at [Calendar — Dads Rock](#)

Carol Singing - FREE

Sunday 17th December 2023 at 11am-1pm at Asda Leith. This is open to all, adults, children and young people. No experience needed. We'll have come professional musicians on the day to lead the singing.

Film Screenings at the Grassmarket Community Picture House: www.grassmarketfilms.org

The GCPH provides these screenings to its community and supporters free of charge. Wednesdays 6pm-9pm: **13/12** - The Flash (12A), **27/12** – Barbie. **Booking Required**

Christmas Music Performance at IKEA from Penicuik Community Choir

Wednesday 13th December 6.30-8.30pm. Get into the festive spirits by joining in to listen to the performances by Penicuik Community Choir in the customer restaurant entrance. www.ikea.com/gb/en/stores/events/ikea-edinburgh

Penguin Party!

Monday 18th December from 4-5:30pm. Join Craigmillar Library for their Penguin Party. Suitable for Primary aged children to enjoy some dancing, party food, games, crafts and a story from Santa! The party is **free** and there is no need to book.

Santa's Grotto at Ocean Terminal

Santa will be looking forward to meeting everyone at Ocean Terminal from Friday 1st December. Meet Santa and give him your Christmas wish list and receive a gift and grab a picture with the man himself at no extra cost. Cost: £5.50 (only pay for the children)

Relaxed Session (**ASN**) and evening sessions are also available on selected dates. For booking and more information, www.oceanterminal.com

Inch park Christmas market, 0131 664 4710, Inch Park Community Education Centre
225 Gilmerton Road, EH16 5UF

The Christmas market will be held on Saturday 16th December from 11am-5pm. There will be stalls, mulled wine, coffee and cake, kids activities and a raffle/tombola.

Edinburgh South Warm Hub, 227 Gilmerton Rd, EH16 5UD

Stay warm and cosy at Inch park Community Sports Club. Every Friday from 9am-5pm. Access their work from home workspace with use of the FREE Wi-Fi. Children are welcome all day and older children are welcome after school for games and PlayStation. Tea, coffee, juice and snacks available.

Messy Christmas, Contact: Reuben 07867915022

A mix of games, stories and crafts. All ages welcome. Sundays (including 24th December) at 3pm at Gorgie, Dalry Stenhouse (GDS) church, 190-192 Gorgie Road, Eh11 2NX

Kings Church, 104 Gilmore Place, EH3 9PL

Carol Service

Join on Sunday 10th December from 6:30-7:30pm for traditional Christmas carols and the original accounts of the Christmas story.

Messy Church

A special Christmas event for families with younger children. Messy Church on Sunday 10th December from 10:30am-12pm.

Support and Information

Support for Parent and Carers

For information on the support available for Parents and Carers in Edinburgh visit www.edinburgh.gov.uk/supportforfamilies or if you need help to access support contact the Parent and Carer Support team at SupportingParentsandCarers@edinburgh.gov.uk

Parenting Programmes www.edinburgh.gov.uk/supportforfamilies

A range of parenting programmes and courses are available for parents and carers of children aged 0 to 16 years. The courses are free for parents of children living or attending school in Edinburgh.

Solihull Online Courses for Parents <https://inourplace.heiapply.com/online-learning>

The Scottish Government is funding access to online courses for parents and carers. To access these courses for free, families need to use the code TARTAN.

Family and Household Support Christmas Holiday Drop ins/Phone Support

Support and advice from Housing and Family Support staff on benefits, budgeting and debt. Help with tenancies or housing bids.

North West Family & Household Support: Drop in, Thursdays 1pm–4pm at West Pilton Gardens, EH4 4DP. Will be available 28th December 2023 and 4th January 2024

Phone: 0131 529 5014 **Email:** northwest.familyandhouseholdsupport@edinburgh.gov.uk

North East Family & Household Support: Drop in, Wednesdays 10am–1pm at 101 Niddrie Mains Road EH16 4SD. Will be available 27th December 2023 and 3rd January 2024

Phone: 0131 529 7168 **Email:** northeast.familyandhouseholdsupport@edinburgh.gov.uk

South West Family & Household Support: Drop in, Thursdays 1pm – 4pm at 10 Westside Plaza, EH14 2ST. Will be available 28th December 2023 and 4th January 2024

Phone: 0131 469 5150 **Email:** southwest.familyandhouseholdsupport@edinburgh.gov.uk

South East Family & Household Support: Drop in, Thursdays 1pm-4pm at 40 captain's Road, EH17 8QF. Available 21st and 28th December and also on 4th January 2024

Phone: 0131 529 5123 **Email:** southeast.familyandhouseholdsupport@edinburgh.gov.uk

Winter Coat exchange: Coats available to take away **free** of charge. Available outside The Leith Collective in Ocean Terminal and Fort Kinnard

Vocal, Phone: 0131 622 6666 **email:** www.vocal.org.uk

Support for carers. Available 27th & 28th December 2023 from 10am – 4pm, closed out with these times from 22nd December 2023 to 3rd January 2024,

The Junction, Phone: 0131 553 0570, **Email:** www.the-junction.org

The Junction A safe, friendly, confidential service which offers support for young people in Leith and North East Edinburgh aged 12-21. CLOSED 23rd December 2023 – 8th January 2024

Parentline Scotland/ Parent Helpline, Phone:0800 28 22 23, **Email:** www.children1st.org.uk

Children 1st/ Edinburgh Together Free helpline, email and web-chat service offering advice and support for parents and carers Mon-Fri 9am- 9pm Sat and Sun 9am-12 pm. See website for festive hours.

One Parent Families Scotland, Phone: 0808 801 0323, **Email:** www.opfs.org.uk

Information and advice for single parents, open Mon-Fri 9.30am-4.00pm. See website for festive opening hours.

iThrive drop ins

iThrive Welcome team drop ins for people aged 18-64 years of age. They offer support for a variety of factors which may be affecting your mental health. To find information about the drop ins in your area, visit [iThrive | Thrive Welcome Teams \(ithriveedinburgh.org.uk\)](http://ithriveedinburgh.org.uk)

Understanding and Managing Stress & Anxiety Online course with SAMH

Monday 18th December 2023 at 6pm., 90-minute online workshops for parents/carers from the South West of Edinburgh. These are info sessions and parents/carers are not expected to share personal stories. To book visit:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/understanding-and-managing-stress-anxiety-parentcarer-workshop-tickets-748343644987>

Social Care Direct- Children and Families

Social Work Request help or advice about a child or vulnerable adult requiring support due to illness, disability or at risk or harm.

Office hours (8:30am-5pm): 0131 200 2324 and **out of hours** 0800 731 6969

Domestic Abuse Freephone 24 hr Helpline, Phone: 0808 200 247

Support for Women experiencing domestic abuse and their friends and family. Translation facilities available for callers whose first language is not English.

Mindroom, Email: directhelp@mindroom.org Phone: 0131 370 6730 Text: 07990618 231

Family advice and outreach specialists will listen to the difficulties you are experiencing and will support you to work through these challenges. You will be supported, informed and empowered.

Community Food

Foodbanks

Foodbanks are able to provide emergency food for three days to anyone who finds themselves in crisis. Anyone needing help, will need a valid foodbank voucher, this can be accessed through any support worker involved with the family, the local Family and Household Support service, citizens advice, GP surgery, etc. Anyone struggling to access a Foodbank voucher can contact The Scottish Welfare Fund, who will check if they eligible for a crisis grants within 24hours or issue a foodbank voucher. Tel: 0131 529 5299 Email: welfarefundteam@edinburgh.gov.uk Vouchers can be taken to the nearest Foodbank Centre where volunteers give a warm welcome, can offer support and put together a nutritious food parcel. www.edinburghne.foodbank.org.uk/

Foodbanks, community pantrys and community lunches can be found below.

Citywide:

The Edinburgh City Mission, [Foodbank+ : Edinburgh City Mission](#) Phone: 0131 225 9445

The Edinburgh city mission provide foodbank+ in 7 locations across Edinburgh. A referral from a professional is required to use foodbank+.

The Edinburgh City mission are in partnership with the Bethany Trust to support people in crisis. If in need without referral there is a list of drop in services where people can receive some hot soup and a sandwich. [Free Food without a Referral : Edinburgh City Mission](#)

Also, on this webpage you will find locations and times for 'Soul Food'; Offering a free meal, a safe space & a warm welcome.

Empty Kitchens, Full Hearts

Families struggling with accessing food can apply for a meal pack which contains lunch, dinner and a snack for two days for each family member. The meals are delivered cold and can easily be heated in the microwave or on the hob. They are delivered between 1pm and 2pm every Friday. People can also visit Empty Kitchens, Full Hearts at 3-11 West Granton Road, EH5 1HG for some hot soup and a roll, and a chat with volunteers. Open to applications currently.

Apply online at <https://www.emptykitchens.co.uk/> or call 07895347157

Northeast:

Edinburgh Food Project – See website for Christmas and normal opening ours ([Locations - Edinburgh Food Project](#))

The Whitehouse Kitchen, <https://edinburghfoodsocal.org/christmas-dinner-sign-up>

Thursday 21st December at 6pm, run by Edinburgh food social. Pay what you can. Booking required.

Community Lunches at Hibernian FC, Contact: lewis@hibernianfc.org.uk

Community Lunches are open to families and individuals at the Community hub above the Hibernian FC store on Albion Place, EH7 5QG on:

Monday 12:30-2pm

Wednesday 12:30-2:30pm

Friday 12-2pm

Lunch clubs are open to all with additional activity around lunch clubs also including:

Football Memories – 10:30-12pm (every 1st & 3rd Monday of the Month)

Monday Matchday Game Club – 2-3:30pm (2nd & 4th Monday of the Month)

Digital Inclusion – Weekly Wednesdays 10:30-12pm

Community Pantry – Weekly Wednesdays 1-2pm

A free book swap and Clothing bank can also be accessed at all lunches.

The Ripple Project, Email: admin@theripple.org.uk phone:0131 554 0422

Christmas closing times are: Friday 22nd December – Wednesday 3rd January 2024

For residents in the Restalrig area. If you need emergency food during this time, call/text 07398042072

Community Pantry with Cyrenians –You must register to use the pantry. Open Wednesday 10-11am. Contact Michelle at Cyrenians – michelledennis@cyrenians.scot or call: 0131 554 3900

Community freezer – Pre made meals by Cyrenians are stocked in the Ripple's community freezer. Go along at any time and take what you need.

Northwest:

Edinburgh Food Project – See website for Christmas and normal opening ours ([Locations - Edinburgh Food Project](#))

Southeast:

Edinburgh Food Project – See website for Christmas and normal opening ours ([Locations - Edinburgh Food Project](#))

The Trussell Trust – Email: edinburghfoodbank@blythswood.org Phone: 0131 664 9353

Blythswood Care, 47 Southhouse Broadway, EH17 8AS, <http://edinburghse.foodbank.org.uk/>

Southwest:

The Trussell Trust – Email: Edinburgh.Gorgie@salvationarmy.org.uk Phone: 0131 346 2875

Salvation Army, 431 Gorgie Road, EH11 2RB

Winter lunch Club Big Hearts Foundation at the 1874 café (left of the clubstore), Mcleod St, EH11 2NL

In Partnership with Cyrenians, the Wednesday lunch club is open from 12-2pm to anyone living, working, or learning in the Gorgie and Dalry area. No advance booking required.

Financial Advice/Energy Advice

The Advice Shop: 249 High Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1YJ, 0131 200 2360

Chai: 28 Westfield Avenue, Edinburgh, EH11 2QH, 0131 442 2100

Change Works: 0800 870 8800, www.changeworks.org.uk

Fun Activities to do at home

Activities do not need to cost a lot of money (or sometimes any money at all) to be meaningful and memorable. Some of the best memories are made by doing simple things at home or around the community. Enjoying the time, you have together is what is most important. Below are some very low cost or free activities that require no/minimal resources, most of which you will have around the house already. Enjoy!

Art of Nature - Cut out a frame shape from a piece of cardboard/paper/card. Put sticky tape down on one full side of your frame. Go for a walk around the local park, streets or even your garden. Collect leaves, flowers, grass and anything else you find and stick it to your sticky tape to create your 'art of nature'.

Creating Snowflake - All you need is paper and scissors. Add glitter to spruce them up. Cut paper into circles and fold it up. Cut out small shapes from the edges. Open up to find a unique snowflake.

Make a den – using blankets, duvets, cushions off the sofa and any other items you have around the house, create a den in your living room. Extend it a little further and cosy up inside the den for a family movie night altogether.

Winter walk – go for a wintery walk around one of Edinburgh's well-known spots.

Arthur's Seat, Portobello Promenade, Colinton Tunnel, Water of Leith, Calton Hill, Dalkeith Country Park, Figgate Park, The Meadows or Cramond Beach.

Remember you can apply for a free travel card (bus and tram) for children. Pop into your local library for help to apply.

Treasure hunt – Are you ready to find the treasure? Create a list of things to find around the house or spot out on a walk.

Lego challenge – Challenge your imagination. Can you build: a robot, a bus, a Christmas tree, an igloo, Santa's sleigh, or a maze?

Make Paper chains – Cut strips of paper approximately 1cm thick. Glue each end of a strip together to make a ring, slide the next strip through the ring and glue the ends together. Continue until desired length.

Biscuit Decorating – Decorate some delicious biscuits for the whole family to enjoy!

Items needed: Digestives, icing sugar, decoration (sprinkles, chocolate, etc)

Jar of favourite Christmas movies: in a jar add all the family Christmas movie favourites. Take it in turns to pick out a mystery film to enjoy together. Enjoy with a hot chocolate and microwave popcorn.

Minute to win it challenges:

- Sock wash: How many pairs of socks can you throw into the laundry basket in one minute.
- Face the cookie: Place a cookie in the centre of your forehead. Without using your hands, move the cookie down into your mouth. First to get the cookie in their mouth wins!
- Clothes challenge: How many items of clothing can you put on in one minute? You can use socks, pants, scarves, anything!
- Whipped cream challenge: Squirt some cream onto the back of your hand. You have one minute to hit your forearm and catch the cream in your mouth.
- Defying Gravity: Give each player three balloons. They have to keep all three balloons up in the air for a minute.

Make your own Christmas cards! Grab some pens and paper. Fold your paper in half and decorate the front with your favourite festive designs. Friends and family will love the handmade gesture this Christmas!

Party Games Play some traditional party games to some Christmas music. Why not give musical bumps and musical statues a try!

Garden centre Christmas displays Visit the local garden centres to admire the great Christmas displays.

Christmas decoration walk Take a walk around your local community, spotting all of the lights and decorations people have displayed in their windows and gardens. You can count how many snowmen/santas you see or how many stars/snowflakes.

Recipes to try:

Shortbread

Ingredients

- 150g plain flour, plus extra for dusting
- 100g butter, chilled and cubed
- 50g caster sugar, plus 1 tbsp for sprinkling

Method

1. Heat the oven 170C/150C fan/gas 3. Put the flour, butter and sugar into a mixing bowl. Use your hands to combine the ingredients until the mixture looks like breadcrumbs, then squeeze until it comes together as a dough.
2. On a lightly floured surface, use a rolling pin to roll out the dough to ½ cm thick. Cut the dough into fingers and place on a lined baking tray. Use a fork to create imprints, then sprinkle with the remaining caster sugar.
3. Chill the dough in the fridge for 20 mins, then bake for 15-20 mins until golden brown. Remove the shortbread fingers from the oven and leave to cool on the tray for 10 mins.

Vegetable Soup

Ingredients

- 200g chopped vegetables such as onions, celery and carrots
- 300g potatoes, cubed
- 1 tbsp oil
- 700ml stock

Method

1. Fry the vegetables and potatoes in a pan with the oil for a few minutes until beginning to soften.
2. Cover with the stock and simmer for 10-15 mins until the veg is tender. Blend until smooth, then season.