

## HEADMASTER'S WELCOME

Christmas is upon us at School, with Christmas Jumper Day today and preparations in full swing for our Community Christmas Concerts this weekend and Christmas services next week. On Friday last week we held a fabulous Sixth Form Christmas Dinner, with sumptuous food and terrific entertainment from the Sixth Form band, 3 Down. It was lovely to see the students enjoying each others' company and having such a great night out together.

Last Sunday, a group of staff and pupils, and their families, joined members of the Choral Society and other friends of the School to deliver a magical Memento event here at School for those in our community living with dementia, before transforming into the town's Singing Christmas Tree for the annual switch-on of the Christmas lights on the High Street. It was a wonderful afternoon, placing us right at the heart of our local community. Thank you to Mike McGrother, our Music Partnerships Coordinator, for orchestrating the whole thing, alongside Mr Williams and Mr McIntyre, and to all participants. See below for photographs and a report.

In another community-minded activity, Mr Thompson thanks those Fifth Year pupils who have contributed to the Silent Santa Appeal, which will bring joy to the children and families who receive the contributions. Dylan's beautiful painting in the Artists' Corner is wonderful, and there are reports of trips, debates, societies and more to explore.

Our pupils have been committing themselves wholeheartedly on the sports pitches, with national finals in indoor hockey this week, alongside some terrific rugby results against Barnard Castle and cup matches in hockey and netball. Well done to all involved.

Dr Huw Williams



## *Alumni Christmas Drinks*

Dec  
**14**

Join us in the Princess Alexandra Auditorium Lounge Bar for drinks on Saturday, 14th December from 7:30pm until 10:30pm.

Register at [yarmalumni.org](http://yarmalumni.org)

Spread the word among former pupils to join us on Saturday December 14th!

## EXPLORING THE PHENOMENON OF POLITICAL POPULISM

Last Friday there was an enthusiastic turnout of Sixth Form students in the Friarage Theatre to listen to Professor Daphne Halikiopoulou, Chair in Comparative Politics, from the University of York. Our guest's area of specialism is far right populism within Europe, and Daphne has spoken widely at conferences and to international media about this rising trend in continental politics. Arguably, as with the Brexit debate, populism and the politics of the far right, can become all too easily over-simplified, be that in our thinking or through media representations. Daphne shared with us her considerable breadth and depth of research on the topic, and was able to illustrate some considerable contrasts across the

landscape of Europe. Of particular note were her graphic representations of those demographics that would be 'most typical' and 'least typical' supporters of far right popular, and here the contrast became most clear when comparing the likes of Latvia with Sweden with France with Italy. There were few similarities in terms of age, religious disposition, rural vs urban, etc. The development of success and growth was also explored, Daphne detailing the extent to which far right populist parties are not only in existence in almost all European countries, but the manner in which they are increasingly part of the mainstream, and even part of elected government. It was a truly thought-provoking session and we

are sincerely grateful to Professor Halikiopoulou for her time and thoughts.

Mr S Edwards



## THE SOUND OF MONEY

In the same week when the much anticipated cinematic release "Wicked" broke multiple records in its first weekend with \$164 million in ticket sales, surpassing its rival "Gladiator 2" and breaking the record for the biggest opening weekend for a film based on a Broadway adaptation, Gabriel Swati opened the eyes and ears of EconBus Soc to the Economic implications of the Music and Film industry.

Examining the revenue streams from LP, cassette and CD sales as well as

streaming, and referencing the gains from merchandise and concerts from the likes of Taylor Swift, it was evident that the financial implications of this entertainment industry can not be dismissed. Even though we may think that Netflix, Prime and Sky have irreversibly damaged the demand for cinema, it may instead be the case that the cinematic experience has had to adapt. Who else reading this is already eagerly awaiting the release of "Wicked Part 2" in 2025?

We are really grateful to Gabriel for

such a well researched and interesting presentation.

Miss C Rhodes



*Click here for tickets!*



# COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CONCERT

IN THE PAA

**SATURDAY, 7TH DECEMBER, 6:30PM**

**SUNDAY, 8TH DECEMBER, 2:00PM**

*Yarm School's annual festive favourite - don't miss it!*

**TICKETS £6 - [WWW.THEPAAONLINE.ORG](http://WWW.THEPAAONLINE.ORG) - 01642 792587**



## RENEWING YARM'S VIADUCT

Last Tuesday, students from the First Year to Upper Sixth were treated to an enlightening and captivating Enrichment Lecture titled "Renewing Yarm's Viaduct: Engineering Conundrum & Surprise Archaeological Treasure Trove". The session was delivered by a team of Degree Apprenticeship engineers from Amco-Giffen, who are currently undertaking vital restoration work on Yarm's Grade-II listed viaduct. The viaduct, constructed in 1852 using an impressive 8.5 million bricks and a modest budget of £40,000, remains a cornerstone of Yarm's infrastructure. However, restoring and future-proofing this historic structure has presented a fascinating mix of engineering challenges and unexpected discoveries.

The engineers detailed the hurdles of reinforcing the viaduct's foundations, which are a mere 40cm deep and rest on wooden sleepers. Cutting-edge technologies were showcased, including innovative methods to minimise disruption caused by piling near residential

areas. The talk also explored the economic and social contrasts of the viaduct's initial construction era, when workers earned just £1 per day, compared to the current project's £8 million cost. A highlight of the project has been the discovery of 17th-century building foundations and pottery near Hope House, unearthing a new layer of Yarm's history. This unexpected archaeological treasure trove added a fresh dimension to the lecture, sparking interest from budding historians as well as those focused on engineering and project management careers.

The Amco-Giffen team also addressed pathways into the engineering profession, with a particular focus on encouraging girls to pursue careers in this field. This segment of the talk inspired excellent questions from

the audience, many of whom are keen to explore their own career prospects. A site visit with the Amco-Giffen team is already on the horizon for several interested students.

We invite parents and friends of the school who are engaged in fascinating careers to consider sharing their expertise with our students through an Enrichment Lecture. If you have a topic that could inspire academic curiosity and provide valuable insights, we would love to hear from you. Please contact Mr Alexander - the Enrichment Lecture co-ordinator - at [jia@yarmschool.org](mailto:jia@yarmschool.org) to discuss opportunities.

Mr J Alexander



## FAME - LIFE AFTER YARM AND WORDS OF WISDOM

Last week we were delighted to welcome back another successful FAME former pupil. Rachel Bradley studied Business at Northumbria after A Level Economics at Yarm. A year at Nissan as part of her degree made her evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of working in a corporate setting, and encouraged her to seek different opportunities.

After joining Hellens Residential as a Business Development Management she made the most of every opportunity and is now a CIMA qualified accountant and a Group Finance Manager in charge of the management accounts for 14 companies, and counting.

Rachel candidly explained the benefits of working hard and showing commitment. She contrasted working for an SME, with working for a large corporation. In her words the benefits of the former include

- Exposure to lots of situations.
- Not being constrained by processes.
- Direct link to the owners / managers of the company.

- Faster progression and growth
- Develop in areas you hadn't considered.
- Unlimited opportunities for growth.
- Flexibility.
- More visibility – seeing how your role makes a difference. Direct impact.
- No two days are the same.
- Training on the job.
- Ideas welcomed and encouraged.
- Greater responsibility and accountability!

Whilst she also reflected on her own experiences and shared with the audience what she wished she had known at the age of 16/17, which included,

- University is not the only option.
- Not knowing what you want to do is OK, just try to keep moving forward.
- Try as many jobs / careers as you can. Don't be afraid to start over or admit something isn't for you.
- Speak to everyone and anyone – you never know where the next opportunity is going to come from.



- Hard work does pay off and does get noticed.
- Money is important but so is a work-life balance!
- Maintain a hobby.
- Take every opportunity you get.
- Save for your future.

And

- Criticism is only a negative if you take it that way – seek it out; it will only serve you positively in the long run!

It was lovely to catch up with Rachel and to hear her trajectory, thoughts and suggestions and we look forward to following her future career successes.

Miss C Rhodes

## INTER HOUSE DEBATE

Friday 22nd November saw the first round of our Inter House Debating competition, where Aidan and Bede proposed that they welcomed the advent of human genome editing on embryos, with Cuthbert and Oswald opposing. The debate was one of the closest we have seen, and the judging panel genuinely struggled to differentiate between the arguments. However, in the end Aidan and Bede emerged victorious, and they will be advancing to the next round.

Mr A Bridges



## OUTDOOR EDUCATION: A WEEKEND IN THE DALES

Over the weekend, twenty First and Second Year pupils took part in an Outdoor Education residential to Gearstones Lodge in the Yorkshire Dales for two days of hiking and caving.

After setting off after school on Friday, we arrived and unloaded the trailer and settled into our rooms. An evening meal of pasta bolognese, garlic bread and cake and custard set us up for an active weekend and we split into our activity groups for the weekend.

Starting early on Saturday morning, we tucked into our hearty breakfast of porridge, bacon, eggs and beans before packing our bags for the day. The boys were heading up Whernside on their hike, whilst the girls were getting kitted up in caving suits for their day exploring underground. With warmer weather than forecast, the boys easily ascended one of the Yorkshire Three Peaks and completed their circuit in good time. The cavers had an exciting



and wet time exploring the caves of Yordas in Kingsdale, followed by Runscar and Thistle by Ribbleshead viaduct.

Returning to the bunkhouse for hot chocolate and biscuits, there was an opportunity to enjoy the Lodge's games room before a good evening meal of bangers, mash and beans or veg.

An earlier bedtime on Saturday evening as we were getting up even earlier on Sunday! Girls swapped to hiking and boys went underground in the caves. Both groups motored through their respective activities, with much less rain than we were expecting.

Being enthusiastic and organised was a definite theme of the weekend and I commend all the pupils for being up for all activities (including mopping and cleaning toilets!) and being in the right place at the right time with the correct equipment. This contributed greatly to a very smooth and enjoyable weekend for all.

My thanks to Mr Daker, Mr Tomlinson, Miss Street and Mr Tucker for accompanying the trip and throwing themselves into the cooking and activities. I'd also like to thank our instructor Graham for his caving knowledge and guidance.

Mr A Mathers



## TRIP TO WATCH *THE DUCHESS OF MALFI* IN LONDON

Last Thursday, some Sixth Form English students traversed the long journey from possibly the coldest place anywhere in the world at 8:45am, Darlington Station, to Kings Cross in London. After a thankfully undisturbed and straightforward journey, we emerged from the train and got ready to face the biting cold and ever busy streets of the capital. After finding our way via tube to Trafalgar Square, under the watchful gaze of the Hero of the Nile, and a quick replenishment in the form of a grilled chicken ramen from Wagamama, we made our way to the object of our visit – a modern adaptation of perhaps the best known of John Webster’s plays, his seminal 1614 work *The Duchess of Malfi*, starring Jodie Whittaker of *Broadchurch* and *Doctor Who* fame. Upon reaching the Trafalgar Theatre right in the heart of London’s Theatreland, we took our seats in the stalls under the dim lights.

When the lights went up, they revealed a startlingly brutalist set – like something out of the Bauhaus revolution. It set the tone for a grim, gritty retelling of a story: a production which managed to cut through the frills of Jacobean high society, while still retaining the charm, humour, and principally the incredible gore for which Webster is known.

The production updated Webster’s original. The disturbing torture scenes, for instance, were created

with an incredible soundscape of sharp buzzers and a harrowing video of a man and child being gunned down with machine-gun fire: visceral and almost obscene in its raw gore. Be it the graphic imagery in the actors’ prose – bringing to life the madness and lycanthropia of one of the central characters - or the amorality of a supposedly pious Cardinal at the heart of the play’s debauchery, the play was taken in a bold new direction. The play was adapted for a contemporary audience with artistic liberty, removing almost all references to 17th century Italian nobility in favour of a more realistic familial setup, and adding vast quantities of blood. It oozed from almost every figure on stage all through the second half of a production that was exceptionally entertaining and provided food for thought, both for the Lower Sixth class who’ve already read the 1614 original in its entirety, and for the Upper Sixth who are in the process of doing so.

As A Level English students, the production provided us with some very useful ammunition for discussing stagecraft, both within essay writing, and also more broadly. The adaptation offered a new reading of the original, lending it a salience and a currency in the modern context, most notably giving redemption and absolution to a repenting murderer, rather than the soul-crushingly bleak fate which awaits him in Webster’s original. Within the A Level, much time is spent thinking about how other critics and



directors have interpreted Webster’s play, and seeing Zinnie Harris’ production has definitely been helpful in giving an alternative reading, exploring new themes and staging it in new and creative ways, dragging forth a play critical of the court of James I into a whole new context, exploring the depths to which humanity can sink in 21st century Britain.

Overall, we all felt seeing a modern day production was not only very useful, but also really enjoyable, lending a new perspective on one of the best known literary works of the 17th century. From our trip to see the production we have gained a new interpretation of Webster’s work, acquired new material to aid and improve essays, and learned the perils of the tube in central London rush hour traffic. It was all round a thoroughly enjoyable and well-worth-it visit.

Adam Elliott, Lower Sixth

## SILENT SANTA APPEAL

A huge thank you to Fifth Year pupils and their families who have supported the 'Silent Santa Appeal' this year. The collection was organised by Cuthbert House Fifth Year and they collected over forty shoe boxes and gift bags of toys and other gifts that will be distributed to underprivileged children across the Darlington area this Christmas.

A spokesperson for the appeal said: "You will not receive a 'thank you',



and you will not be there to see a smile of delight when the child opens your gift, but we know you will feel that sense of contentment knowing that you have contributed

to the happiness of a child at this most important time of the year."

Happy Christmas from Cuthbert Fifth Year!

Mr S Thompson

## ARTISTS' CORNER



This is the painting that I produced this weekend using oil paints. It is a painting of a winter landscape, featuring snow and two large birch trees. I used an array of equipment that include a Filbert brush, a fan brush, a pallet knife and a flat wash brush. I am particularly proud of this art piece.

Dylan Bowers, Second Year

## WORKING UP A HUNGER AND A THIRST

Our Yarm Apprentice teams led by Freya and Pippa are working hard devising their menu items and undertaking market research for their Hobo set task.

Miss C Rhodes





## SIXTH FORM CHRISTMAS DINNER

Not only was it not Christmas but not even Advent last Friday evening but that did not get in the way of the massed ranks of Yarm School Sixth Form ushering in the festive season in style with the traditional Sixth Form Christmas Dinner.

With the Sixth Form at Yarm more popular than ever it was with some trepidation that I approached the Sodexo team some weeks ago and inquired whether we could manage dinner for 260. I feared the same sharp intake of breath that my mechanic makes when asked to get my car through its MOT but no - our superb catering team hardly blinked and, with the help of our always excellent estates staff and some

spectacular space management from Mr Vardy the PAA was transformed into the sea of white linen that was the perfect venue for our festivities. The morning unfolded with a team of volunteers, under the guidance of Miss Gamble who donated some of their study time to make short work of setting tables and arranging the decorations.

By seven o'clock the students were into their glad rags and assembling for festive drinks and photos in the Atrium before sitting down to the delicious meal prepared by Mr Matthewman and his team. The night was rounded off with a superb festive set from Three Down and friends who brought to life the

Christmas tunes we all love. We are spoiled to have such musical talent amongst us. In the words of James, channelling the great Neville Holder: "liiiiiiiiit's Chriiiiiiiistmaaaaaaas" - and so it is. Thank you to everyone involved in organising and delivering the event: our Sodexo colleagues, Yarm School Estates team, Mr Bromyard for technical support, Mr Sharp for photography, the student helpers, musicians, my staff colleagues for supporting the event and, of course, a special thank you to Miss Gamble for masterminding proceedings.

A very Merry Christmas to you all.

Dr A Goodall



## YARM TRIUMPHS IN ROUND ONE OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION DEBATE



This week, Yarm School hosted the first round of the English-Speaking Union Debate Competition 2024/25, welcoming Queen Mary's School and Hermitage Academy to the event. The evening opened with a heated debate on the motion: "This house believes that we should ban the use of facial recognition in public spaces." Queen Mary's delivered a compelling argument, highlighting concerns about systemic racism, human rights violations, and GDPR breaches, which secured their victory in the opening round.

Yarm's team faced a swing team, comprising of students from Hermitage and Queen Mary's, debating the motion: "This house believes that we should have a four-day school week." Eleanor Madden, Gabriel Swati and Sophie Jewitt represented Yarm School as the Proposition.

Eleanor delivered a strong opening speech, exploring how - perhaps

surprisingly - a shorter school week could actually yield economic benefits. She then went on to explain how slightly lengthening school days could preserve curriculum coverage and still allow crucial time for socialisation and personal development at school. She also addressed the teacher retention crisis with sensitivity, proposing that a four-day week might alleviate workload pressures.

Gabriel followed, focusing firstly on the educational aspects, explaining how a four-day week could boost the wellbeing of students, allowing for an improved ability and willingness to learn. He then delivered a persuasive case about how a four-day school week would improve attendance nationally - a currently large issue. Finally, he addressed how a three-day break between school weeks would allow more time for excursions and short trips which are proven to have positive effects on physical health.

The judges were thorough, challenging Sophie on the impact of reduced school days on vulnerable students and referencing international examples. Sophie's measured, research-backed responses showcased her maturity and eloquence. She delivered convincing responses to both audience and judge's questions, keeping Yarm on the path to victory.

In the end, Yarm's team triumphed. The judges praised their engaging, emotive delivery, strong research, and effective signposting. With minimal reliance on notes and excellent eye contact, the team set a high standard for the competition.

Congratulations to our students for their professionalism, teamwork, and victory! We look forward to seeing them progress in the next round.

Gabriel Swati, Upper Sixth

## CHRISTMAS MEMENTO AND YARM HIGH STREET LIGHTS SWITCH-ON

The festive spirit flourished here in Yarm last weekend, as our wonderful community gathered for an afternoon of Christmas music.

First was Memento, our popular dementia-friendly singalong. It's a privilege to host this event and see the joy it brings, as music and connection work their magic on guests of all ages. Led by the amazing Mike McGrother, our Community Music Partnership Co-ordinator, the audience enjoyed sharing special memories, singing along to carols and

Christmas favourites, and chatting over minced pies and mulled wine.

Next, we joined the town's High Street Christmas Lights Switch On! This was a fantastic event organised by Yarm Town Council working together with us, and in partnership with Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.

A one-off choir of pupils, parents, staff, friends and members of our community gathered under Mike's expertise and enthusiasm to lead the

huge crowd in festive song ... in the shape of a Singing Christmas Tree!

Musician Andrew Johnson, of The Southmartins, was in position at the top of the tree, leading the vocals for a beautiful rendition of Caravan of Love. After the excitement of the big switch-on, the crowd joined in with great spirit for Christmas songs and heartfelt carols.

It was a truly joyous afternoon of togetherness and song: a magical, musical start to December!



### PAA Gift Vouchers - Now Available!

Stuck for a special gift idea?

Share the magic of theatre this Christmas with a PAA voucher you can use to see everything from fantastic music, moving live theatre, NT screenings and more!

Buy online at: [bit.ly/paa-voucher](https://bit.ly/paa-voucher)



## MED DEN SOC: VEGETARIANS VS NON-VEGETARIANS

Last week, three members of the Lower Sixth – Pippa Bashford, Amirah Mohammed, and Muskaan Assudani – delivered a thought-provoking presentation on the topic "Vegetarians vs. Non-Vegetarians" in our popular Med Den Society. They explored the ethical, health, and environmental implications of both diets and ended with their opinion on which is better.

Their presentation began with Muskaan, who discussed the health benefits and risks of both diets. She highlighted how a vegetarian diet can reduce the risk of heart disease, promote better weight management, and improve kidney function due to its focus on plant-based foods. However, she emphasized the importance of balance, noting that vegetarians need to ensure they get adequate iron, protein, and vitamin B12. She also addressed the various health risks associated with a non-vegetarian diet as well as benefits.

Pippa mentioned the impact of having either diet on the NHS, discussing how the growing trend of vegetarianism could potentially reduce the burden on the NHS by



lowering the incidence of chronic diseases like heart disease, diabetes, and obesity, which are often linked to poor dietary habits. She also highlighted how promoting plant-based diets might lead to long-term cost savings for the healthcare system.

Amirah talked about the cultural and ethical factors that influence people's dietary choices. She pointed out that for many, vegetarianism is not only about health but also about animal welfare and reducing harm to living creatures. She explored how different cultures and religions view the consumption of animals, noting that vegetarianism is deeply rooted in some traditions.

In conclusion, Pippa, Amirah, and Muskaan emphasized the importance of balance in both vegetarian and non-vegetarian diets. They stressed that each diet has health benefits and risks, and the key is to address any nutritional deficiencies. By being mindful of nutrients like iron, protein, and vitamin B12, individuals can make informed choices for a healthy, sustainable lifestyle.

Join us for our next session on Thursday at 1:00pm. See you there!

Naeha Rajaram, Upper Sixth

## SPORT WEEK AHEAD

The weeks ahead are now available online. You can [view them here](#).

## TOTALLY TINA

Returning to Yarm in 2025, come and shake a tail feather with the UK's supreme Tina – Justine Riddoch – and her talented cast.

This breathtaking recreation of a live Tina Turner concert celebrates the Queen of Rock 'n' Roll's incredible songbook. Justine's got the looks, she's got the moves, she's definitely got those legs, but most of all, she's got THE voice. Join an army of loyal fans for a truly authentic, fun-packed musical spectacular!

**Saturday 1st March, 7.30pm**

[Book Online Here](#)



## BEN FOGLE - WILD

Ben Fogle's theatre show WILD brings to life on stage, stories and tales of hope, possibility, and positivity.

In this brand-new show full of hope, simplicity, and harmony, WILD is a hair-raising, uplifting and wildly entertaining show that tells the extraordinary true stories of Ben's amazing encounters with people and animals, and how they changed his life... and the discovery of helping you find your Ocean of Possibility.

**Thursday 6th March, 7.30pm**

[Book Online Here](#)



## JANIS JOPLIN THE MUSICAL - LIVE STREAM

This multi award-winning show captured recently at the Sadler's Wells Peacock Theatre is an extraordinary musical journey paying homage to Janis Joplin and her biggest musical influences. Like a comet that burns far too brightly to last, Janis Joplin exploded onto the music scene in 1967 and, almost overnight, became the queen of rock & roll.

**Thursday 13th March, 7pm and Sunday 16th March, 2pm**

[Book Online Here](#)



# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING APPS

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

When looking at options for supporting a child's mental health, the sheer volume can be overwhelming. There are many wellbeing apps available, but unfortunately not all are trustworthy. It's important to evaluate which resources are suitable, reliable and effective. This guide lets you know what to consider before installing such an app, to determine just how useful it's going to be.

### QUALITY & RELIABILITY

Mental health apps can be a useful starting point when looking for wellbeing advice and strategies and can be a useful extension to the in-person services available. However, they aren't a substitute. Information on the quality of some of these apps is scarce. They may look cute and child-friendly, but have they been designed by a mental health professional? Furthermore, do they have research to back up their content?

### PLACE RESPONSIBILITY ON CHILDREN

Some apps add the words 'kids' or 'children' to their title or use cartoon icons to make them more appealing to young people. When signing up for some of these apps, some will speak to the parent directly, saying something along the lines of "Your child is good to go. Let them take it from here". It's important to remain involved in the child's mental health journey, so regular check-ins are recommended.

### DISREGARDING APPROPRIATE SUPPORT

Young people who feel anxious and have trouble sleeping may download a mindfulness app to help. While this is a good strategy initially, it's not addressing the root of the problem. A child could simply try managing these symptoms themselves (as opposed to speaking out and seeking professional help), which could potentially worsen their anxiety in the long run.

### LACK OF PERSONALISATION

Mental health or wellbeing apps are useful tools for the short term, teaching users several helpful habits to manage their condition – such as keeping an illness diary, improving nutrition and practising mindfulness exercises. As every person is unique – and children especially will grow and develop in different ways – these apps struggle to tailor themselves to users' individual needs. For example, many apps don't distinguish between the ages of users and can offer extremely generic advice.

### DATA SECURITY

As with any other app – not just those for mental health and wellbeing – it's wise to check out the privacy policy before downloading it. Some of these applications may share data with third parties for numerous reasons (such as targeted advertisements), and if a user is sharing personal and sensitive information within the app, they probably don't want it ending up elsewhere without their consent.

### IN-APP PURCHASES

Many apps will provide their most basic features for free but will require you to pay for other aspects – such as a more tailored experience or access to additional resources. This could be a one-off fee or a regular subscription. Consider whether this is actually required. Is it benefiting the child, or could they receive the same support from a medical professional?

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### CHECK THE CREDIBILITY OF THE APP

Before you download a mental health and wellbeing app, investigate the developers. Have they consulted with qualified mental health professionals to create their resource? Also check whether the app is affiliated with any government or mental health organisations, as these are solid indicators of legitimacy. Reviews can also be a useful signpost to the app's quality. There are many good apps out there, but there are just as many that miss the mark.

### SEEK PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

Trusted mental health and wellbeing apps designed by qualified, reputable organisations can be used alongside the personalised advice and support of fully trained professionals. These apps should never be considered a substitute for counselling or other tailored medical help. If you have real concerns about a child's mental wellbeing, you should seek appropriate advice from a suitable source, such as their GP – or Childline, who can be contacted by calling 0800 1111.

### READ THE PRIVACY POLICY

Look into the app's terms of service – especially its privacy policy. Do so by yourself first, then go over it with the child who is considering using the app, to ensure they know what data will be collected and how exactly it will be used. Use all of this information to make an educated decision on whether or not to download that particular app.

### ENCOURAGE OPEN COMMUNICATION

Mental health and wellbeing apps can be useful for writing down feelings, tracking your own health and other such activities. These can help if the problem is short-term and temporary – such as a child getting stressed about approaching exams – or if you're currently waiting for professional support. Nonetheless, it is important that children aren't solely reliant on the app and have a safe space to talk about their feelings and experiences in the real world.

### Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



The National College®

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/mental-health-apps>

This is a key week for disability awareness across the globe, with the UN's International Day of Persons with Disability on December 3rd, and UK Disability History Month running until mid-December.

**At Tooled Up we have a whole host of resources on disability, just a few of which are highlighted in this email.**

**Self advocacy** is an important skill to encourage in young people with disabilities. In this [webinar](#), educational psychologist Miranda Eodanable, discusses self-advocacy when it comes to empowering young people living with a disability, from childhood into adulthood. She also shares research into how identity is formed in relation to disability.

In this [webinar](#) on talking to children about **cerebral palsy**, you can see a sensitive and meaningful conversation in action, which you can use as a model for your own dialogues at home.

If you have a **younger disabled child** or family member, this [book list](#) featuring characters with "diffabilities" includes titles which celebrate inclusion and help to normalise talking about difference.

We spoke to adventurer Darren Edwards in this inspiring [webinar](#) about his astonishing battle with his own physical challenges. Darren was paralysed from the waist down in a climbing accident in 2016, but has pursued his love of extreme travel and adventure ever since.

**Whatever the age or disability, it's important to keep our children active.** We chose our list of [100 Sports for Children and Teens](#) to be as inclusive as possible. From badminton to wheelchair rugby, there's a sport that everyone can try!

Don't forget to follow us on social media to stay up-to-date with all of our latest updates and resources. Find us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).





Developing Self-Advocacy



Talking To Young Children  
About Cerebral Palsy



Books About "Diffabilities"



Adventurer Darren Edwards



100 Sports For Children And  
Teens

Don't forget to follow us on social media to stay up-to-date with all of our latest updates and resources. Find us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

