

Learner **NEWS**

**Hello, welcome to
the December
edition of our
learner newsletter.**

It's Christmas!

In this issue

Did you know?

**Help and support over
Christmas**

Drink Spiking

**What's going on in
December?**

**Share your
thoughts
and ideas
for 2024!**





Food Banks

Food banks are community organisations that can help if you can't afford the food you need.

You'll usually need to get a referral to a food bank before you can use it. This includes all food banks run by the Trussell Trust.

You can get a referral for yourself and any family members you live with - including your partner.

You might be able to use some food banks without a referral - for example, if it's run by a church. Contact your local food bank to see if you need a referral.

You can ask Citizens Advice to refer you to a food bank. They'll usually make an appointment for you to discuss your situation with an adviser first.

If you can't go to Citizens Advice



You can ask for a referral from another organisation - for example your GP, housing association or social worker.

Your local council might be able to tell you how to get a referral to a food bank. You can find your local council's contact details on GOV.UK.

You can find your local food bank here <https://www.trusselltrust.org/get-help/find-a-foodbank/>



Paying it forward

Christmas is the season of giving - but not all gifts have to cost money - why not consider joining the one million Brits who volunteer over the festive season - and help to show the true spirit of Christmas.

SMALL ACTS, WHEN MULTIPLIED BY MILLIONS OF PEOPLE, CAN TRANSFORM THE WORLD.

- HOWARD ZINN

Food Bank

These help people in crisis to get food they need along with providing compassionate and practical support.

You can find volunteer opportunities or different ways to help here

<https://www.trusselltrust.org/get-involved/>

Help those faced with domestic and sexual violence

It's a sad fact that more women and men face violence and abuse of some sort over the festive period.

You can find ways to help here

<https://www.womensaid.org.uk/get-involved/>

<https://www.mensaid.ie/get-involved/>

Tackle loneliness on Christmas Day - Help out at a lunch or help to get people there

14 million older people in the UK suffer from loneliness and 200,000 older people will spend Christmas Day alone.

Find out how you could help here

<https://www.reengage.org.uk/volunteer/map/>



It's Christmas!

Christmas is a Christian holy day that marks the birth of Jesus Christ.

Christmas is celebrated on December 25 (7th January for Orthodox Christians).

Billions of people around the world celebrate Christmas and while many celebrate the holiday to honor Jesus's birth, it has also become a worldwide cultural holiday and is often celebrated by non-Christians alike.



The Christmas Tree

Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's consort, is usually credited with having introduced the Christmas tree into England in 1840. However, it was actually 'good Queen Charlotte', the German wife of George III, who set up the first known tree at Queen's Lodge, Windsor, in December 1800.

Christmas trees became very popular with the upper classes, specially for children's gatherings. Any handy evergreen tree might be uprooted for the purpose and they were usually candle-lit, decorated with trinkets and surrounded by piles of presents.

In December 1840, Prince Albert imported several spruce firs from his native Coburg, in Germany, to serve as Christmas trees. But it was not until a few years later, when periodicals such as the Illustrated London News and The Graphic began to depict and describe the royal Christmas trees every year, that the custom of setting up such trees in homes really caught on amongst the general public in England.

By 1860 Christmas trees were very popular with the middle classes. They would have had a Christmas tree in their parlour or hall, covered with candles, sweets, fruit, homemade decorations and small gifts.

Real Christmas trees were still the norm in the early 20th century, but the first bristle-style artificial tree was made by Addis Housewares Company in 1930.

Since 1947, every year Norway has given a large Christmas tree to Great Britain which is displayed in Trafalgar Square, London. During the Second World War, the Norwegian king and government fled to London when their country was occupied. The tree, therefore, is given as a token of gratitude to the people of London for their assistance. This annual tradition shows the great symbolic importance of Christmas trees in Britain today. (EnglishHeritage.org.uk)



Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

Around three quarters of a million people are thought to be living with severe, life impacting and debilitating OCD here in the UK.



OCD – it's more than you think

What is OCD?

OCD is a mental health condition where a person has obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviours. OCD can affect men, women and children. People can start having symptoms from as early as 6 years old, but it often begins around puberty and early adulthood. OCD can be distressing and significantly interfere with your life, but treatment can help you keep it under control.

If you have OCD, you'll usually experience frequent obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviours.

- An obsession is an unwanted and unpleasant thought, image or urge that repeatedly enters your mind, causing feelings of anxiety, disgust or unease.
- A compulsion is a repetitive behaviour or mental act that you feel you need to do to temporarily relieve the unpleasant feelings brought on by the obsessive thought.

Women can sometimes have OCD during pregnancy or after their baby is born. Obsessions may include worrying about harming the baby or not sterilising feeding bottles properly.

Compulsions could be things such as repeatedly checking the baby is breathing, and intrusive, unwanted and unpleasant thoughts, images or urges. These can cause anxiety and lead to repetitive behaviours (NHS)



Did you know?

...Christmas edition

The bestselling Christmas single ever is Bing Crosby's White Christmas, shifting over 50 million copies worldwide since 1942.



According to tradition, you should eat one mince pie on each of the 12 days of Christmas to bring good luck.



US scientists calculated that Santa would have to visit 822 homes a second to deliver all the world's presents on Christmas Eve, travelling at 650 miles a second.



The Royal Mail estimates that it delivers 150 million cards during the Christmas period. On average, each person in the UK sends and receives 17 Christmas cards.



It is estimated that 150 million crackers are pulled in the UK alone each Christmas.

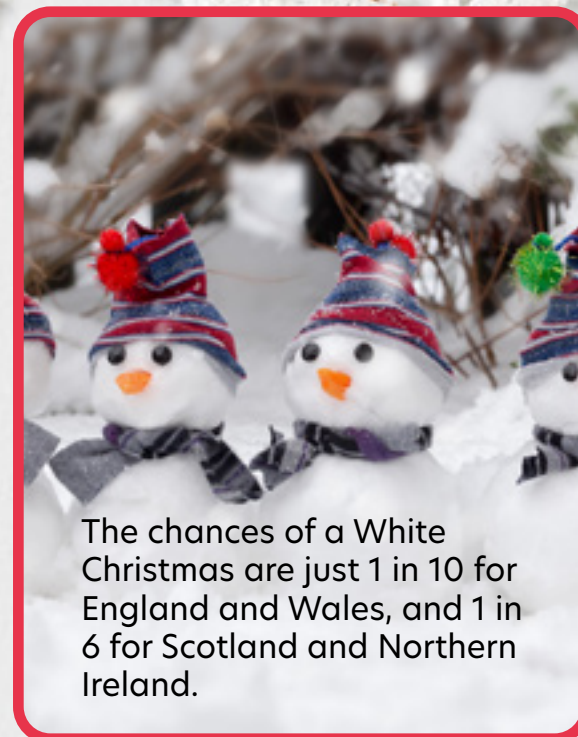


In the UK, natural Christmas trees outsell artificial Christmas trees by a ratio of 3:1.

Christmas pudding was originally made with meat, not fruit. The first recipe for Christmas pudding dates back to the 16th century, and it was called plum pudding.



The chances of a White Christmas are just 1 in 10 for England and Wales, and 1 in 6 for Scotland and Northern Ireland.



In Britain, the best-selling festive single is Band Aids 1984 track, Do They Know It's Christmas, which sold 3.5 million copies.

Wham! Is next in the same year with Last Christmas selling 1.4 million copies.



The tradition of putting tangerines in stockings comes from 12th-century French nuns who left socks full of fruit, nuts and tangerines at the houses of the poor.



Read the journey of our very own Development Coach

Laura Barlow

My journey into childcare started back in 2006 when I started at college with my Cache cert level 2, Where I would be at college 3 days a week and 2 days in placement, this is where I learned all about how to support babies and young children from both a practical and theory basis. I originally started this course because I wanted to be a Childcare Rep abroad, so my plan was to do level 2 and level 3 at college and then when I turn 18 as this is the age restriction for being a childcare rep abroad then apply. What you need to know About me is I love travelling and seeing new sights, sounds, people etc.

Best laid plans and all that! I completed my childcare course level 2 at this point and decided I didn't want to complete another year at college, which then changed my plan slightly, I went then and worked in a nursery for a year as a level 2 working within the toddler room, supporting them and the setting and still at that point I knew I needed to travel my passion has always been both travel and tourism and childcare, The setting offered me an apprenticeship, but I had already applied to be cabin crew yes not on the plan at all but after all the investigating I needed to get this bug of travelling out of my system. So, I was Cabin crew for the season out of Gatwick I LOVED IT! I gained so many new experiences, customer service, working as a team and Sales and seeing the sights and sounds of the world I then got offered another contract for the airline I was working with but at that point, I didn't not want to be based down in Gatwick, as my family were all in the east midlands, so I

decided at the end of that season I would move back up to the midlands and This is where I joined Alton towers with my new found Sales and customer services skills, As you can tell I am also very good at communicating, here I found a true interest in sales and building teams as I was a customer service manager, supporting training the new hosts for the season this is where I found my love of teaching and training. The season soon ended and at this point Back in the midlands I knew I needed job security and I knew I needed to use the new skills I had gained in customer service, management and sales and put them to good use, so I went back into retail, and I climb the career path within makeup and sales, which was great I learned so many more new skills and supported opening more new businesses, but I was missing travel so with the skills armed, I then went and managed at Thomas cook managing stores in chesterfield and training new people up is something that really grew, and I was and am very passionate about, This is where in 2015 I had my little girl, and I took a step back to look at what I really wanted to do now that I had my own family, I wanted to be able to provide and also be there for my little girl, so during maternity leave, I decided that right I'm going to be a teaching assistant yes got my level 3 TA qualification, I did the qualification passed with flying colours to then go into a nursery with my little girl in tow, I worked for another nursery chain for a year before, I moved house and a completely new part of the east midlands for me and then in 2017 I started my role with busy bees Heatherton where I started as a relief to building my career within a company



**“
There is not just one way to hit your end goal!**

who has the people at the Centre, This is where I completed my Early years level 3, I also then spoke with my line manager at the time about my passion for training and supporting people, this is also where I did my Cava (assessing award) and AET (teaching award), passed all 3 with flying colors, then after working my way up on the nursery side of Busy bees and having another little girl I then decided its time to put my new skills again into practice, and then enquired about the role I am currently in after showing determination and true passion for the role I got the role of development coach and I LOVE IT, I support learners with TA qualifications, early years qualifications and can teach others too eg management, customer service etc, I travel, train and meet new faces every day this is where I was meant to be. I've now been working for Busy Bees for 6 years, and I can honestly say no two days are the same, but this is something I truly love, and I also get to support my little girls too.

My message to you would be that you can plan for your future but don't be disheartened if, along the way, you take a different route because you never know; you might find what you are destined for is a totally different destination to the one you had planned and love it even more! Also, there is not just one way to hit your end goal as you can see by my many detours.

You can find out more about becoming a development coach here
<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/job-profiles/qcf-assessor>

Have you ever wondered what next?

Help and Support during Christmas

Whilst Christmas can be merry and bright for many, it can also be a testing time mentally, emotionally, physically and financially for others. Its ok if you aren't feeling full of joy over the festive season. There is help and support out there.

<https://mentalhealth-uk.org/christmas-and-your-mental-health/>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/christmas-and-mental-health/useful-contacts/>

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/support-christmas/>

<https://www.stepchange.org/christmas-festive-season.aspx>

<https://nationaldebtline.org/christmas-tips/>

Remember - not all gifts have to cost money, you could offer your help such as offering to babysit for a few hours, or offering to clean or running some errands.

Maybe consider the best gift of all - the gift of your time for those you love, maybe this year around the tree your presence will be more valued than your presents.



Money Saving Tips for Christmas

Pressure to please loved ones and to give children the perfect Christmas tops the list of reasons people overspend during the festive season.

It might help to remember that many people will be struggling this Christmas. If you're spending too much on presents for loved ones, they might feel the pressure to spend the same amount on you, even if they can't afford to.

Budget

Plan what you can afford to spend and try to avoid racking up debt, and avoid things like buy now pay later. Change up loose coins, save loose coins in a jar when it is full visit your local supermarket (most have change machines) and swap it for notes, you may be surprised how much loose change you have lying around

Food Shop

It may be tempting to buy masses of food during the festive period - but consider is it really needed and will it get eaten. Consider swapping a turkey for chicken, chicken will be cheaper and can still be a hit!

For more money saving ideas visit

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/shopping/christmas-savings>

Consider banning unnecessary gift buying

Don't feel pressured into buying gifts for everyone.

Watch The below video from Martin Lewis on the unnecessary present pact

https://youtu.be/KIXFSnNe_wQ?si=_G9uxTADKiesxCKK

Check out charity and pre loved sites

You can save ££££'s by shopping pre-loved, check out your local charity shops or pre loved selling sites for bargains at lower prices

Secret Santa

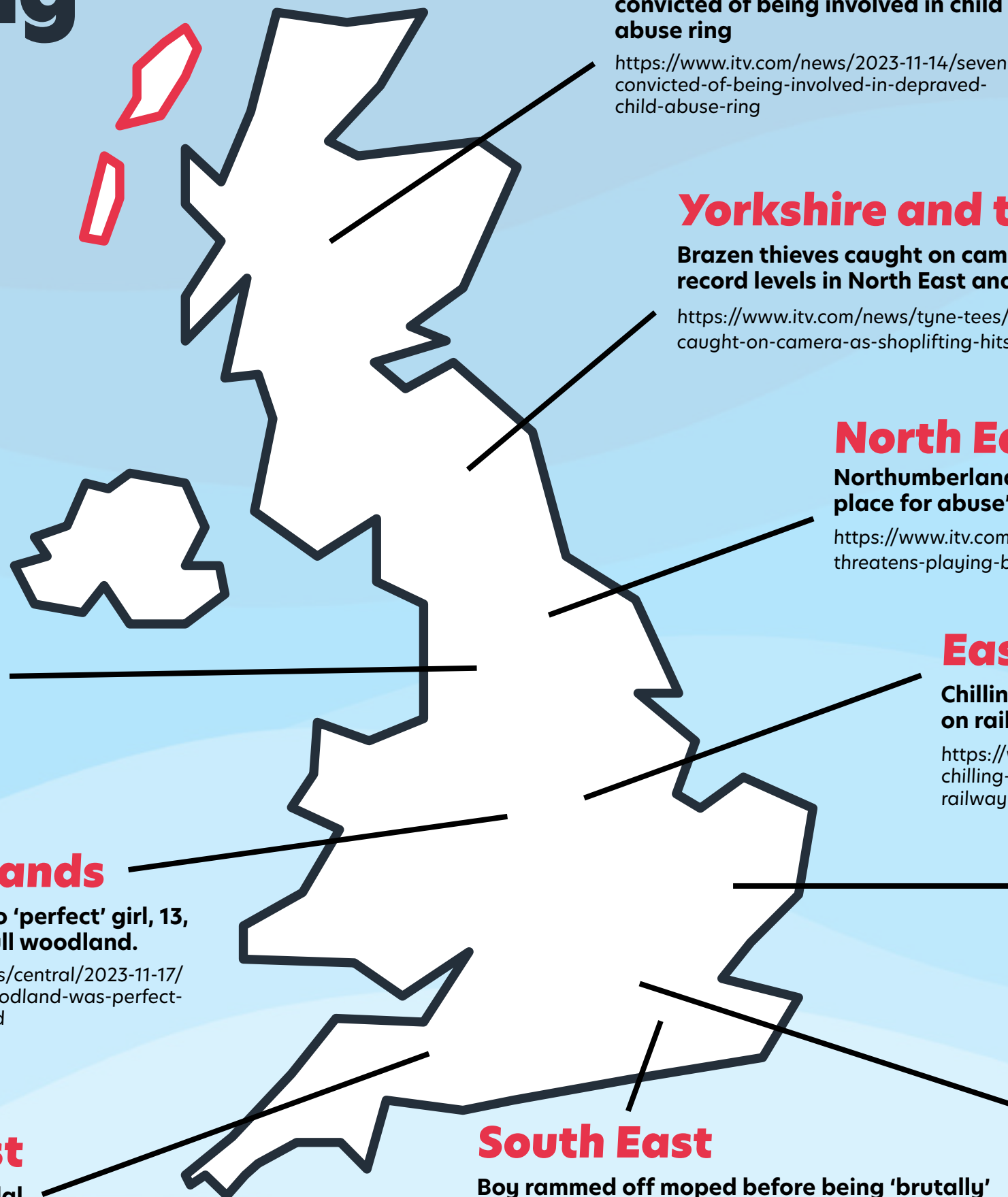
Secret Santa can be a great way of saving money on gifts if you have a group of family or friends you need to buy gifts for. Each member of the group is randomly assigned a person to buy a gift for. You can also set a maximum budget that all members agree on.

Shop around

shop around keep your eyes peeled for discounts and deals. If you are after something specific - scour the internet for the best price - also consider going through cash back websites.

Safeguarding

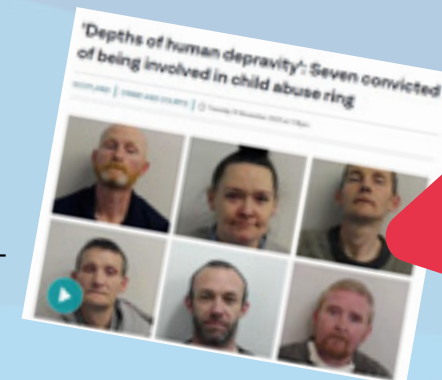
What's happening in your area?



Scotland

'Depths of human depravity': Seven convicted of being involved in child abuse ring

<https://www.itv.com/news/2023-11-14/seven-convicted-of-being-involved-in-depraved-child-abuse-ring>



Yorkshire and the Humber

Brazen thieves caught on camera as shoplifting hits record levels in North East and North Yorkshire

<https://www.itv.com/news/tyne-tees/2023-11-17/brazen-thieves-caught-on-camera-as-shoplifting-hits-record-levels>

North East

Northumberland Football League tells parents 'no place for abuse' on sidelines at youth matches

<https://www.itv.com/news/tyne-tees/2023-11-14/youth-league-threatens-playing-ban-over-sideline-parents-abuse>

North West

'Merseyside Police 'working to understand how machine guns are entering country'

<https://www.itv.com/news/granada/2023-11-10/police-working-to-understand-how-machine-guns-are-entering-country>

East Midlands

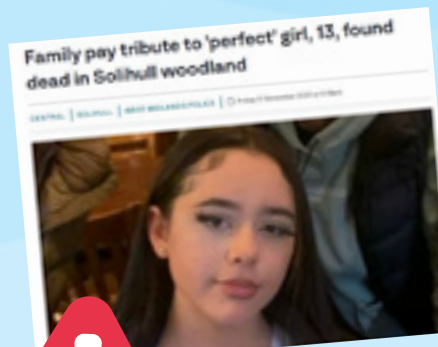
Chilling footage shows children playing on railway lines in Nottinghamshire

<https://www.itv.com/news/central/2023-10-25/chilling-footage-shows-children-playing-on-railway-lines-in-nottinghamshire>

West Midlands

Family pay tribute to 'perfect' girl, 13, found dead in Solihull woodland.

<https://www.itv.com/news/central/2023-11-17/girl-13-found-dead-in-woodland-was-perfect-girl-in-an-imperfect-world>



East of England

Police knife crime crackdown backed by family of victim

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-norfolk-67430233lincolnshire-67196067>

South West

John Humphreys: Sex abuse scandal sparks child safeguarding review

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-devon-66173251>

South East

Boy rammed off moped before being 'brutally' stabbed south-east London, court hears

<https://www.itv.com/news/london/2023-11-09/boy-rammed-off-moped-before-being-brutally-stabbed-court-hears>

London

Teenager arrested on suspicion of terror offences in North London

<https://www.itv.com/news/london/2023-11-17/north-london-teenager-arrested-on-suspicion-of-terror-offences>

We hope you all have an amazing time over the Festive period - but we also want you to stay safe and remain vigilant.

Staying Safe during the festive period

Drink Spiking

What are date-rape drugs?

Rohypnol (or Roofie) and Gamma Hydroxybutyrate (GHB) are the most commonly known 'date-rape' drugs. Both drugs can be used to commit physical and sexual assaults as they can sedate or incapacitate a victim, making them more vulnerable to attack.

If your drink has been spiked with a date rape drug it's unlikely that you will see, smell or taste any difference, no matter what type of drink you are having. Most date rape drugs take effect within 15-30 minutes and symptoms usually last for several hours.

The effects of drink spiking vary depending on what you've been spiked with. Your symptoms could include:

- Lowered inhibitions
- Loss of balance
- Feeling sleepy
- Visual problems
- Confusion
- Nausea.

The symptoms will depend on lots of factors such as the substance or mix of substances used (including the dose), your size and weight, and how much alcohol you have already consumed.

(drinkaware.co.uk)



How to help a friend who you think has been spiked

If you think a friend has had their drink spiked, and they are showing any of the symptoms described above there are a few things you can do to help:

- Tell a bar manager/bouncer or staff member
- Stay with them and talk to them
- Call an ambulance if their condition deteriorates
- Don't let them go home alone
- Don't let them leave with someone you don't know
- Don't let them drink more alcohol - this could lead to more serious problems
- Report the incident by calling 999 or 101

If you, or someone you know, have been affected by crime, including sexual harassment or any sort of sexual harm, help and support is available. Victim Support is an independent charity for victims and witnesses of crime. They offer free, confidential help to anyone who's been affected by sexual harassment. Call 08 08 16 89 111 or go to Victim Support's website.

<https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/>

What to do if you think you've been assaulted

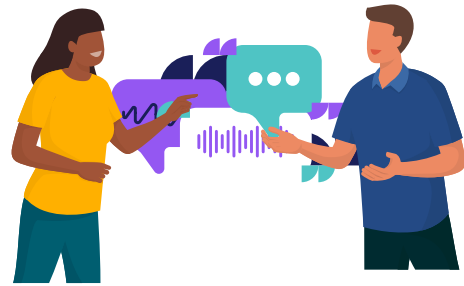
One of the effects of date rape drugs can be amnesia, or loss of memory. That means it's possible that you won't be sure if you've been assaulted. But if you suspect you've been physically or sexually assaulted it's important to tell someone. Try to confide in someone you trust like a friend or family member.

You can go to the police or hospital accident and emergency department. If you don't feel able to do that right away, there are Rape Crisis charity helplines you can call for support and advice.

Staying safe when out and about

- Always keep your bag closed properly and close to your body
- Keep an eye on your Christmas shopping when stopping for food or coffee
- Park in well lit, busy car parks
- Stay alert when you are in busy shopping areas, look out for and report suspicious looking people and unattended bags/packages
- Never accept food/drink from a stranger - Even be cautious of people you think you may know and if they offer to buy you a drink - go to the bar with them
- If you leave a club or party early, try and convince a friend to come with you, even if they just escort you to a taxi - don't be tempted to walk home alone
- If you do find yourself alone, store your keys, phone and some money in your pocket. That way if anyone asks you for your bag - it will be easier to hand it over and get away
- If someone you don't know well asks you to go home with them, think about it carefully. If you do find yourself going to another party or to someone's house, message people and tell them you are going - send the address if you can
- Know your limits when it comes to alcohol. Try to alternate alcoholic and soft drinks, If you can feel yourself becoming very drunk - Stop!

Teaching and Learning sessions



Learner Forums

Have you joined the learner forum relevant to you? We want to create a safe community for you to reflect on learning, interact with other learners - please speak to your DC for further information!

Residential

Tuesday 4th December

Safeguarding
10.00 - 12.00

Wednesday 5th December

Dynamics of a Team
10.00 - 12.00

Wednesday 13th December

Equality and Communication
10.00 - 12.00

Tuesday 19th December

Professional Development 10.00 - 12.00

Wednesday 20th December

Legislation and Guidance 10.00 - 12.00

Early Years

Friday 1st December

Health wellbeing and Resilience
13.30 - 15.00

Monday 4th December

Leading an Early Years Setting
09.30 - 11.30

Working in Partnership with Others
09.30 - 11.30

Development Assessment Play & Pedagogy
09.30 - 11.30

Tuesday 5th December

Equality Diversity and Inclusion
10.00 - 12.00

Health and Safety
2.00 - 4.00

Thursday 6th December

Reflective Practitioner
10.30 - 12.30

Monday 11th December

Development, Assessment Play and Pedagogy
09.30 - 11.30

Wednesday 13th December

Health wellbeing and Resilience
09.30 - 11.00

Equality Diversity and Inclusion
10.00 - 11.30

Thursday 14th December

Health and Safety
09.30 - 11.30

Friday 15th December

Working in Partnership with Others
09.30 - 11.00

Monday 18th December

Safeguarding
09.30 - 11.30

Wednesday 20th December

Safeguarding
10.00 - 12.00

Teaching Assistant

Friday 4th December

Theme 4: Health and Safety
09.30 - 11.30

Wednesday 5th December

Theme 7: Reflective Practitioner
09.30 - 11.30

Tuesday 11th December

Theme 6: Working in Partnership with Others
09.30 - 10.30

Tuesday 18th December

Theme 2: Pupils Learning and Development including needs and key stages 15.00 - 17.00

Management

Friday 21st December

Performance Management
10.00 - 12.00

Things going on during December...



The Great Christmas Pudding Race - London Saturday 10th December

The great Christmas Pudding Race is a fun run event where tams race around the iconic Covent Garden Piazza in fancy dress outfits, completing a festival obstacle course whilst Carefully balancing a Christmas Pudding on a tray. This event is on behalf of Cancer Research UK.

<https://xmaspuddingrace.org.uk/>



Edinburgh's Hogmanay Festival 20th December - 1st January

Hogmanay is generally regarded as the most important Scottish holiday. Edinburgh's Hogmanay Festival

Dates back to 1993 and has evolved to become one of the greatest celebrations of NYE in the world.

<https://www.edinburghfestivalcity.com/>



Christmas at Dunham Massey - Greater Manchester - 17th Nov - 31st December

Head up to the illuminated festive trail that winds through the gardens and deer park of Dunham Massey. Wrap up warm, walk underneath tree canopies drenched in colour, past Giant baubles, snowflakes and glittering deer and through a crystal and fire garden aglow with flickering flames

<https://www.visitengland.com/Christmas-events-things-to-do-2023>



Blackpool Illuminations - throughout December

Immerse yourself in the world-famous illuminations that shine each year in Blackpool, along the six miles of beachfront promenade. The greatest Free light show that has been around for more than a century. You can choose to walk, drive or take an illuminated double decker heritage tram.

<https://www.visitengland.com/Christmas-events-things-to-do-2023>



Busy Bees.

Education and Training

We would like to wish everyone a safe and healthy Happy New Year - and Happy Hogmanay

