

JANUARY 2021

FREE

# ni4kids

MAGAZINE

NI  
SCIENCE  
FESTIVAL

LET YOUR MIND WONDER  
17-22 FEBRUARY 2022

# NI SCIENCE FESTIVAL

17-27 FEBRUARY 2022

## EVENTS FOR KIDS & PARENTS

### ONGOING EVENTS

#### Marine Litter in the Sea Around Us

Explore and learn more about the impact of marine litter and plastic pollution in our seas in an updated Sea Around Us display. *Ulster Museum, Belfast*  
10am - 4pm (Closed Mondays)

#### STEM #Unfiltered Photography Competition

**2021** Photographs are a powerful way to share the ways that science and technology play key roles in daily life. Join us to marvel at their pictures and be inspired by the science all around you!  
*2 Royal Avenue, Belfast* | 10am - 4pm

#### Films @ NISF

We have curated an exciting programme of films over the 11 days of the Festival all across NI!  
*Various - check the website for details*

### THURSDAY 17 FEBRUARY

#### BODY: an immersive night-time installation

*running until Sun 20 Feb*  
Meet BODY, a new immersive outdoor installation exploring human biology through light, sound and fire. Inspired by anatomical science, BODY is an outdoor immersive journey through six different zones, mixing human biology with light, special effects, sound and fire. *Botanic Gardens, Belfast*  
*Various times 5.00pm - 8.30pm*

#### Family Kick Sampling Session

This activity is interactive and there will be a chance for children (or big kids) to get into the river and try out a kick sampling session as well as identify the species that they find. *Orangefield Park, Belfast* | 10am, 11am & 12pm

#### Climate Emergency Department

Imagine the year is 2035, and our doctors of tomorrow are working a busy shift in the Royal Victoria Hospital. Rising global temperatures and erratic weather events have introduced a new range of challenges for our doctors to overcome to treat their patients.  
*QUB Medical Biology Centre, Belfast* | 1pm

#### Data Drawing: Turn into a data monster!

What unique 'data monster' is lurking inside you, ready to play? Participants make and decorate 'monsters' from craft materials whose designs are based on their answers to fun questions (aka the 'data').  
*Crescent Arts Centre, Belfast* | 2pm

### FRIDAY 18 FEBRUARY

#### Eastside Scientists

Join in our family learning workshop where parents and children will take part in hands on science experiments, making chemistry fun and interactive for all the family. *Carew Family Centre, Belfast* | 11am

#### Stuff! With Maddie Moate

running until Sat 19 Feb  
Join popular children's TV presenter and YouTuber Maddie Moate as she brings a selection of stories from her debut book Stuff! to life on stage!  
*The MAC, Belfast* | 11am & 2pm

#### Hands-on STEM fun with Science Starz

*running until Sat 19 Feb*  
Do you want to learn what it's like to be a REAL scientist or engineer? Join Science Starz in exploring STEM by taking part in their hands-on interactive workshop! *NI Libraries - Ardoyne Library, Suffolk Library, Ballyhackamore & Dundonald* | 11am & 2pm

#### Cosmic Tales

Join in a mesmerising interactive session that reveals the wonders of the Cosmos and the far reaches of Outer Space.  
*Armagh Planetarium* | 11am & 2pm

#### The Snail and the Whale - Screening & Workshop

Watch Snail and Whale on their amazing journey! Followed by Science Starz talk: 'Learn some interesting facts about snails and slugs'  
*Lisburn City Library* | 3pm

#### Big Cats: The (Natural) History Of A Fascination

Big cat conservationist Dr Jonny Hanson presents an interactive exploration of the science of big cats, their conservation and our fascination with them.  
*Crescent Arts Centre, Belfast* | 6pm

#### Dark Skies at Lough Navar

Join amateur astronomer Terry Moseley of the Irish Astronomical Association on a Dark Sky Safari in the pristine dark skies of Lough Navar  
*Lough Navar, Enniskillen* | 7.30pm

### SATURDAY 19 FEBRUARY

#### More Than Just Artefacts Highlighting Archaeology at QUB

*running until Sun 20 Feb*  
The PhD students of QUB exhibit tables in two rooms on osteology and osteopathologies, zooarchaeology, artefacts, and 3D modelling.  
*Archaeology and Palaeoecology Building, Belfast* | 9am - 1pm

#### NI Sustainability Fair

Our 2022 NI Sustainability Fair is the beginning of a new long-term project designed to explore what we must do to meet the challenges of climate change.  
*Playhouse, Derry* | 10am - 4pm

#### Dynamic Dye-tracing at the Marble Arch Caves

Join the Geological Survey of Northern Ireland and Caves Team to hear about the hydrology of the caves whilst watching the Shru Croppa River turn an astonishing luminous shade of green!  
*Marble Arch Caves Visitor Centre, Enniskillen* | 10am & 1pm

#### Dúchas agus Dúlra: The Folklore of our Forests

*running until Sun 20 Feb*  
Discover how Irish placenames and folklore have shaped our understanding of local flora and fauna - from faeries and fungi to banshees and bogs.  
*Colin Glen Forest, Belfast* | 10am

#### QUB Astronomy Days

*running until Sun 20 Feb*  
Come and visit the astronomers from Queen's University Belfast. Younger scientists can enter the colouring competition or test their theories with the playdough Solar system! You'll see how the Northern Lights are formed, and how telescopes work. There will be short talks throughout the day to find out what discoveries the astronomers are working on. If the skies are clear, people will be able to safely view the surface of our star - the Sun - using special telescopes. Chat to the astronomers, and find out what they are finding out!  
*Great Hall, QUB* | 10am - 3pm

#### Take a Walk on the Wild Side

Join Belfast Zoo on a walking tour of the zoo and listen to keepers, curators and education staff enthuse about our animals and discover the conservation efforts being made to preserve these fantastic animals.  
*Belfast Zoo* | 10.15am

#### Queen's Biology Showcase

Come and meet scientists from Queen's School of Biological Sciences who explore the natural world and how we can better take care of it.  
*School of Biological Sciences, QUB* | 10.30am

#### The Wonderful World of Honeybees

Lead by Hillsborough Castle's beekeeper Gwen Earnshaw, children will learn about the wonderful world of honeybees, their role as pollinators and how they make honey and waxcomb.  
*Hillsborough Castle*  
10.30am, 11.30am 1pm, 2pm & 3pm

*Continued on back page*

JANUARY 2022

FREE

# ni4kids

MAGAZINE

## AT THE ♥ OF FAMILY LIFE

### • QUIZZICAL CHILDREN?

Find out how to answer those difficult questions

### • FACING A CHILDCARE COST CONUNDRUM?

What financial support is out there

### • TURN YOUR RESOLUTIONS INTO HABITS

Make them work for you

# WIN

SING 2 GOODIES

AN OVERNIGHT STAY AT  
WYNDHAM BY RAMADA

A NEW OLLIE SPARKS BOOK

# CONSIDERING FOSTERING?



**AVERY BOWSER, FOSTERING SERVICES MANAGER AT ACTION FOR CHILDREN, DISCUSSES HOW TO KNOW IF IT'S THE RIGHT TIME TO START YOUR FOSTERING JOURNEY.**

**Fostering is a big commitment and not a decision that you should take lightly. Here are some steps you can take to find out if fostering is right for you.**

## TALK

Discuss it with your family and friends. Ask their honest opinion whether they think you have the skills to be a foster carer. Things to consider: are you empathetic, caring, resilient and patient? If you know anyone who fosters, ask them about the day to day realities of fostering.

## START READING

There are a lot of resources out there that will give an insight into fostering. The Action for Children website features informative blogs, and real life stories from foster carers. Visit [actionforchildren.org.uk](http://actionforchildren.org.uk)

## DO RESEARCH

If you want to know more about fostering or explore the criteria, our fostering team can send you our information pack. This gives an overview of fostering, the application process, and the types of fostering we offer. They will be happy to chat through any questions you may have - no question is too small.

## CONSIDER YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES

If you have had a major change in circumstances in the last year, such as bereavement, job loss or relationship break up, now might not be the best time to foster. The application process can be time intensive and go into a lot of depth. We want you to be able to commit, but we don't want you to feel overwhelmed.

## BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF

Honesty is at the core of fostering. Are you ready to invite someone into your family and your life? How is your general health, fitness and wellness? Do you have other commitments or stressors? Any children who live with you need to be your priority.

Fostering is not easy. But, watching a young person thrive in a safe and loving home is a special and rewarding experience. If you are in a position to invite a child into your life, we would love to hear from you. You need to be over 21 years old, have a spare room and have a lot of love to give.

**To find out more call:  
028 9046 0500 or visit:  
[actionforchildren.org.uk/fostering](http://actionforchildren.org.uk/fostering)**

# Room for more

## Start your fostering journey with us



Contact our friendly Fostering Team today:  
**028 9046 0500** [fostercareni@actionforchildren.org.uk](mailto:fostercareni@actionforchildren.org.uk)  
[actionforchildren.org.uk/fostering](http://actionforchildren.org.uk/fostering) @AFCNIFostercare

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- CIPR Winner Magazine of the Year 2013
- CIPR Finalist Magazine of the Year 2014
- CIPR Finalist Media Platform of the Year 2014
- CIPR Finalist Magazine of the Year 2015
- CIPR Finalist Magazine of the Year 2016
- Shortlisted - Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards 2018

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The Professional Publishers Association Member

ni4kids January 2022



A new year means a new start for many of us and at Ni4kids it brings a new editor! I'm very pleased to introduce myself to you all. My name is Caroline and I'm excited to be at the helm of the magazine. I'm the mum of an excitable one-year-old girl who is keeping her daddy and me on our toes, especially as she has just taken off walking on her own!

If it's hard not to feel a sense of deja vu however, as the impact

## EDITOR'S LETTER

of Covid remains prevalent, but we are here to provide you with some positivity and relief as we embark on this new year. Thankfully more events are starting to take place again, giving all of us something to look forward to and keep the little ones busy.

Our trusty WOW guide (pg 16) has a full list of events and activities for all the family to enjoy and make sure to check out all the details of the NI Science Festival, which is guaranteed to keep the whole family entertained.

If the cold weather means you prefer to stay busy indoors, why not try out some of the

tasty recipes in Family Food (pg 13) and there are some great reading tips and books to devour in our Reading Corner. Make sure to pop the kettle on and enjoy a Coffee and Catch-Up with local entrepreneur, Caroline O'Neill, better known as Digg Mama. She tells us about making the move from retail to encouraging small businesses to 'Digg for Success'.

It may be a brand new year, but we hope you find comfort in the familiar with your favourite magazine. Enjoy x

*Caroline*  
Email me at editor@ni4kids.com

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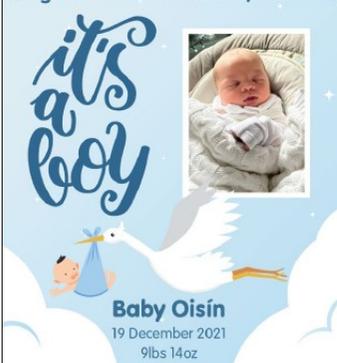
Chat online: [www.ci-ni.org.uk](http://www.ci-ni.org.uk)

Email: [parentline@ci-ni.org.uk](mailto:parentline@ci-ni.org.uk)

Open 6 days a week:

Mon-Thur 9am-9pm | Fri 9am-5pm, Sat 9am-1pm

Congratulations to our Editor, Elizabeth!



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# JANUARY SALE

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National Trust

# Winter Adventures in nature



What better way to welcome the New Year than with a visit to the National Trust. Get active in winter wonderlands by planning fun-filled play days near you. **Don't forget to wrap up warm, it's cold outside!**

## Natural play

Log beams, rope swings and zip wires in the woods - family days out are a walk in the park with these action-packed play parks. Climb magical dragons and hide in willow huts at a natural play space near you.

### Derrymore

Wander into the woods at Derrymore estate and you're in for a big surprise. Let little legs run off some steam in the brand new natural play area. Speed down the slide, sail across the rope bridge and wobble along the log beams.

### Rowallane Garden

With fallen trees reimagined as climbing frames, activity dens built from branches and stepping stones inventively fashioned from tree stumps, let your imagination run wild at Rowallane Garden. With intricate chainsaw sculptures of exotic animals like crocodiles, buffalos and turtles, meet new friends like Ponya, a Red Panda from the Himalayas.

### Mount Stewart

Make a bee line for the Magic Ink Pot at Mount Stewart. This natural play area is named after a book unique to the County Down estate and is themed around the journeys, adventures and creatures shared within its pages. Clamber and climb across its colourful characters.



## Top things to do

Looking for **Winter Adventures** near you? Here's a bucket list of challenges.

### Learn about trees and explore on two wheels, Florence Court

See one of the most important trees in Ireland when you visit Florence Court and learn about the Yew Tree.

You'll have twice the fun when you explore on two wheels with the bike hire from the Visitor Centre.



### Spot snowdrops, Castle Ward

Let pockets of snowdrops provide the perfect pick-me-up as the first flower of the year brightens your winter. This hardy little bloom thrives in frosty ground and provides a reassuring sign spring isn't far away.

Wander near a swathe of white magic on a family day out at Castle Ward.



### Make a New Year wish, Giant's Causeway

If you thought the Giant's Causeway couldn't get any more magical, take a seat in the famous Wishing Chair. An essential stop on a visit to the World Heritage Site, the chair is a natural throne formed from a perfectly arranged set of columns.

Some years ago only ladies were permitted to sit in the Wishing Chair. Today it's open to everyone. So take a seat, your majesty!

To learn more about the myth and magic behind the world-famous sight, book the Visitor Experience online in advance at [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/giants-causeway](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/giants-causeway)



## Winter wildlife



*Sssh, walk quietly and softly as there's a wealth of wildlife just waiting to be discovered.*

### Red Squirrels, Crom

With their tufted ears, russet coloured fur and bushy tails, the beautiful red squirrel is a rare sight - but not at Crom. Red Squirrel are a key species and play a vital part in regenerating woodlands, burying nuts and seeds which grow into new trees. Red squirrels are shy characters so if you're keen to spot one, plan an early morning or late afternoon visit. You can book a stay in the family-friendly accommodation which includes cottages, camping and glamping options.



### Seals, Castle Ward

Even though a walk along the Lough Shore trail might be a tad brisk at this time of year, cocooned in your coat, it's a great time to spot the resident seals. Gain a rosy-cheek glow as you catch a glimpse of grey seals basking in the winter sun on Strangford Lough. Whilst they might look clumsy on land, you should see these creatures underwater. The Lough is a favourite spot for the seals to haul out with large groups known as rookeries.

### Kingfishers, The Argory

With their unmistakable bright blue and orange plumage, kingfishers always excite those lucky enough to spot one. This famously colourful bird of rivers and streams is surprisingly small, only about 18cm long with a long straight bill. They sit quietly on low hanging branches over the water diving in to catch small fish. While they are one of our most distinctive birds, getting a close view is not easy as they are notoriously shy. One of the best places to spot them is at The Argory. Pack the binoculars and take a stroll down to the River Blackwater where there is usually at least one pair nesting somewhere on the riverbank. Afterwards, kids can claim their bird spotting sticker for achieving this goal from our list of 50 things to do before you're 11¾.



Search 'National Trust NI' to plan a fun family day out this winter.

# WET WEATHER WONDERS

Stay cosy and dry, whatever the weather!



1. Kids Light up Wellies blue, £17.99, Town & Country 2. Rocket Print Umbrella, £10, V by Very.co.uk 3. Kids Star Fisherman Jacket, £18, M&S 4. Dino Snowsuit, £26.99, M&Co 5. Kids Puddle Trousers Yellow, £18, M&S 6. Waterproof suit all-in-one, £27.50, hippychick.com 7. Peppa Pig Pobble Waterproof Puddle Suit, £19.95, Regatta 8. Disney Princess Wellies, £16.99, Shoe Zone

## An Ghaelscolaíocht Irish-medium Education (IME)

Current Irish-medium Provision

Over **7,000** pupils are now part of a vibrant Irish language community that fosters cultural understanding, acceptance and belonging.

**43** Pre-schools **35** Primary Schools  
**5** Post-primary Schools

### Advantages of Irish-medium Education?

- THEY GAIN ENHANCED COMMUNICATION AND COMPREHENSION SKILLS
- THEY ARE ABLE TO LEARN MORE LANGUAGES WITH GREATER EASE
- THEY BECOME PART OF A VIBRANT AND DIVERSE IRISH LANGUAGE COMMUNITY
- PUPILS BECOME BILINGUAL AND PROFICIENT IN TWO LANGUAGES, BOTH SOCIALLY AND ACADEMICALLY
- THEY HAVE ACCESS TO ADDITIONAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
- THEY ENJOY IMPROVED SELF-ESTEEM AND A STRONG SENSE OF IDENTITY
- THEY HAVE A GREATER ACCEPTANCE OF OTHER CULTURES

**IRISH-MEDIUM EDUCATION - IMMERSIVE...INCLUSIVE...INSPIRING**

Did you know that Irish-medium education is currently the fastest growing education sector? Why not give your child the gift of bilingualism this Christmas? With availability in every county, and over 7,000 children already being educated through Irish, find your nearest Irish-medium school today!

For more information call 028 9032 1475

oig@comhairle.org Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta @ComhairleNaGS @comhairlenags www.comhairle.org

## FEBRUARY HALF TERM

# puddle jumping championships

NORTHERN IRELAND

at Castle Espie Wetland Centre  
Fri 18 to Sun 20 Feb 2022

#wwtpuddlejumping  
Search WWT Castle Espie

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# EVERYBODY'S Talking About

NEWS | PRODUCTS | PEOPLE | PLACES

**59.7%**

of children participate in formal early childhood education and care services in Reykjavik in Iceland

## KIDS' HOMEWORK IGNITES PASSION AMONG PARENTS

The Raspberry Pi Foundation has conducted research that reveals after over a year of pandemic affected-education, including home-schooling and lockdown, children's homework is igniting a passion to learn more about science, coding and technology among their parents. But they worry about their own knowledge gaps when they help their children with homework.

- Over half of parents (52%) regularly help their children with their science and maths homework.
- Nearly 3 in 5 (58%) wished they had a greater knowledge of STEM from school, with 62% of parents interested in learning how to code.
- 2 in 5 parents (39%) say they do not know how to encourage their children to follow a career in science and technology.
- 51% of parents wish that they had paid more attention in their own science classes at school.
- 72% would encourage their child to follow a career in science if it was their dream, and two thirds of parents (66%) fuel their kids' interest in science by taking them to museums, discovery centres and planetariums.

Nearly two-thirds of parents (65%) say that they want to know more about what their children learn at school. In fact, over half (51%) of parents wish that they had paid more attention in their own science classes at school (well above the UK average of 40%).



## What does Veganuary have to do with education?

A survey published by Primary First showed that 73% of vegan pupils had been teased for their vegan beliefs at school - 16% of these pupils were teased by teachers and 12% by other school staff. 42% of respondents said they had been bullied because of their vegan beliefs - 13% of them were bullied by teachers and 12% were bullied by other staff. Ethical veganism is a protected belief under the Equality Act 2010. It is the responsible body of the school that is liable for any breaches of the Equality Act. Urgent work is required to include ethical veganism explicitly in the anti-bullying training provided both the school staff and to pupils. Every school will have an environmental group now, but most schools are ignoring the single biggest change they are likely to be able to make to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and reverse the nature crisis. We have only a few years to make the scale of carbon savings required to give our pupils a 50% chance of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees. Our pupils cannot be educated now to solve the crisis in the future. Schools need to act now to give their pupils a chance in the future. UNICEF have declared the climate crisis as a child rights crisis. Veganuary is a great way for schools to start to engage with immediate child protection issues in their schools and protecting the future of all children around the globe.

Ruth Jenkins is the Programme Co-ordinator of Vegan-Inclusive Education  
<https://vieducation.co.uk/>



## IRISH-MEDIUM EDUCATION

Give your child the gift of bilingualism!

Did you know that Irish-medium education is currently the fastest growing education sector? With availability in every county, and over 7,000 children already being educated through Irish, you can find your nearest Irish-medium Pre-School, Primary School or Secondary School today! Irish-medium schools provide children with the distinct advantage of acquiring a second language, whilst delivering the highest standards of English language learning as a core school subject. The benefits of bilingualism are open to everyone, from all backgrounds and beliefs, with the majority of Irish-Medium schools being independent, multi-denominational or non-denominational. Most people who send their children to Irish-medium schools don't speak Irish, so there's no need to worry about a language barrier! Irish-medium teachers are experienced in supporting all parents and guardians regardless of their level of Irish.

Join the conversation online at #GiftOfIrish



# WIN A COPY OF OLLIE SPARK AND THE ACCIDENTAL ADVENTURE!

*Ollie Spark and the Accidental Adventure* is perfect for young readers who like mystery, adventure and inventions!

Written by award-winning author Gillian Cross and illustrated throughout by Alan Snow, this new series follows Ollie, who accidentally stows away on his aunt's road trip and ends up in a mysterious city and embroiled in a spy mystery.

This is a brilliantly illustrated, fun adventure by the acclaimed author of *The Demon Headmaster* about Ollie, who ends up investigating his aunt's strange disappearance.

We have five copies of *Ollie Spark and the Accidental Adventure* to give away, so to be in with a chance to win, simply visit [ni4kids.com/competitions](https://ni4kids.com/competitions) and answer this question!

**Whose road trip does Ollie end up being a part of?**

*Ollie Spark and the Accidental Adventure* is out now in paperback, published by David Fickling Books.

T&Cs: The closing date for this competition is Friday, 18 February 2022. No cash alternative. Editor's decision is final.

Usual Ni4kids' T&Cs apply. Visit [ni4kids.com/competitions](https://ni4kids.com/competitions) for details.



# Bringing maternal anger into the light



It's a part of parenting that is not often addressed – how to deal with tempers flaring when facing challenges with our children. Many mothers feel maternal rage, but no-one likes to talk about it. Mums aren't supposed to get angry and when they do, they often feel ashamed - it goes against our notions of what motherhood should look like: immaculate houses and smiles all round. Yet, all mums, no doubt, have experienced moments of rage. Rage at their children. Rage at their partners. Rage at the world that leaves them overwhelmed, unsupported and tired. A new book *Angry Mother*

*Assertive Mother* seeks to help mothers navigate the explosive yet very normal and largely unspoken feelings of maternal rage.

Psychotherapist and mother of two, *Cristalle Hayes* says her book offers practical tips to turn anger into compassion and self-care.

Maternal anger is a complex, taboo and confrontational subject to discuss. Mothers don't want to be perceived or judged as angry or in a rage.

Many of the mothers that I spoke to want to appear in control, happy and enjoying motherhood. Not just appear to be, but to actually be ports of calm and nurture, loving and protective figures. What happens when a mother does get frustrated and angry? What happens when motherhood taps into our shadow side where rage lurks? What happens if this anger isn't brought into the light? The danger is that unreflected anger can become dangerous and harmful. Maternal anger takes many forms. Maternal anger may take the form of shouting and swearing, throwing something, pushing, hitting, or emotional,

sexual or physical abuse.

Maternal anger can also look like constant or occasional humiliation with unkind words or dirty looks – an inability to see the child's perspective and only see their own. Maternal anger can also look like withholding kindness and care. Anger can look like neglect. Anger can look like a silent treatment. When a



mother is angry, they may handle their child a little bit too roughly, throwing their baby into the cot or grabbing their toddler's arm with too much strength so it hurts them. Maternal anger can look like shouting at your toddler for behaving like a toddler and not like an adult. Maternal anger may not be directed at the child, but expressed on social media or to friends and family members (hurtful if the child ever sees or hears this). All these expressions of maternal rage can be painful and harmful to your child. Physical assault and abuse against your child is illegal. If you recognise yourself in this behaviour, I hope my

“MOTHERS OFTEN COME FROM A PLACE OF LACK: A LACK OF SLEEP, A LACK OF TIME, A LACK OF SELF-CARE.”

book can help you move towards maternal anger, which is expressed directly but with safety, care and respect. *If you feel your anger is becoming harmful, please reach out for further support from a therapist or health worker.*

Maternal anger doesn't have to be, and isn't always, destructive and harmful. Mothers can express maternal anger in an assertive and contained way. The message behind anger can be communicated with intention and purpose.

**ANGRY MOTHER**  
*Assertive Mother*

From maternal anger to radical repair



# GET 'RED'Y FOR THE RETURN OF THE RED DRESS FUN RUN



**Julie McAllister, from Carrickfergus, is marking an unusual anniversary this year, but an extremely important one — the 10-year anniversary since she survived a major heart attack, aged just 39.**

This year, Julie will be marking the special occasion by taking part in Northern Ireland Chest Heart and Stroke's Red Dress Fun Run 2022, supported by MACE. This will be her fifth time taking on the 5K run or walk event, which aims to raise funds and awareness for heart disease. Julie says, "The day I had my heart attack was a normal Saturday. I went along to a Tae Bo class, and about 15 minutes in while we were warming up, I suddenly felt sick. I had never felt a sickness like it. I went out of the class and called my husband, Derek. I told him I was feeling unwell and asked could he come and collect me. I knew immediately what was happening and when he arrived I told him I thought I was having a heart attack and that he needed to call 999." The mum of four kissed goodbye to her family before being wheeled in for emergency triple bypass surgery, convinced she might never see them again. Coming out the other side, she learned the true importance of looking after your heart health.

"I exercise regularly but have been advised not to take my heart rate too high. I walk three to five miles, five days a week, and I go to the gym for one hour three times per week. The cardiac rehab taught me how important it is to keep my heart muscle strong through exercise," explains Julie. "I ran my first Red Dress Run in 2017 on the fifth anniversary of surviving my major heart attack. Since then, I've been running every year for the charity and on February 27th, I will be donning my red dress for the fifth time and stepping out to raise awareness and much-needed funds, so that NI Chest Heart & Stroke can continue to help rebuild healthy local hearts, just like they've done for me." The event went virtual last year due to COVID-19 restrictions, with hundreds of participants taking part in their local area across Northern Ireland and beyond. This year, the event returns to its home venue of Stormont Estate, however the virtual element remains with the charity encouraging participants who can't make it to the main event to complete 5K their way anytime during the month of February. The charity is also inviting primary school pupils to have a laugh while they raise some cash for heart illness by hosting their own fun run at school on any day this February. Every school that takes part will receive a certificate of thanks to show how much they raised and there are some fantastic prizes up for grabs too.

**Find out more at [www.nichs.org.uk/PSRedDressFunRun](http://www.nichs.org.uk/PSRedDressFunRun)**

NI Chest Heart and Stroke's charity partner MACE are supporting the event. Diane Anthony from MACE said, "We're backing NICHs's call for people to dress up in red and wear their heart on their sleeve at this year's event. Whether you're taking part in memory of someone you have lost to heart disease, celebrating someone who is living with a heart condition, or to prevent heart disease happening to someone in the future - sign up and join us to support this worthy cause!"

If you've been inspired by Julie's story, then why not step up to the challenge and come run, walk, dance, skip or wheel 5K (just do it your way) with NICHs on Sunday 27th February? Everyone is welcome - even the family pooch!

**Entry: Early Bird Rate of £10 available until 31/01/22. Under 18s FREE**

(Virtual event registration £5). Fundraising pack with event running T-shirt. Raise a minimum of £50 sponsorship (£100 per family) and receive a Red Dress Fun Run medal!

Sign up now at [www.nichs.org.uk/RedDressRun](http://www.nichs.org.uk/RedDressRun) or Tel: 028 9032 0184

You can also follow the fun at #REDDRESSFUNRUN

Northern Ireland Chest Heart & Stroke

The most HEARTWARMING event of the year!



# Red <sup>FUN</sup> Dress Run

**Sunday 27th February 2022**

**Live at Stormont Estate**

Or do **5K your way** anytime in February

**Sign up now at**

[nichs.org.uk/RedDressRun](http://nichs.org.uk/RedDressRun)

Supported by

**MACE**

Chest Heart & Stroke **75** YEARS ON YOUR SIDE

Charity Reg No. NIC103593

# Family Support

For many working families, childcare costs are a huge consideration when trying to decide whether to use creches and childminders or to avail of the kind offers from family members to mind your children. In the first of our new Family Support features, we take a look at what options are out there for financial support.

## Help with Childcare Costs – Financial Support For Working Parents

Most working families in Northern Ireland will be entitled to financial support with their registered childcare costs, although there are some exceptions. You can use it to pay for childcare including childminders, nurseries and nannies, play schemes, before and after school clubs, and holiday clubs.

The most common criteria to qualify may specify:

- working a minimum number of hours
- children not to be over a certain age
- household income not to exceed a certain amount (you or your partner earn more than £100,000 per annum)
- childcare provider must be registered or approved. Family Support NI is the public childcare register of all Childcare Providers registered or approved with Health & Social Services within Northern Ireland.

## How It Works

**Tax-Free Childcare** is a government scheme available to working parents with children under 12 years old, or under 17 years old if the child has a disability. The scheme pays 20% of eligible childcare costs, with parents paying 80%. Eligible parents can get help of up to £2,000 per child per year, or £4,000 per disabled child per year, to spend on qualifying childcare.

**Working Tax Credit** is money provided to boost the income of working people who are on a low income and for eligible claimants can include an element towards your registered childcare costs. For new claimants this has now been replaced by Universal Credit

**Childcare Vouchers** are a scheme run through an employer's payroll aimed at helping working parents with the cost of childcare. Parents 'sacrifice' part of their salary into the Childcare Voucher account and, as a result, save on their tax and National Insurance. (This scheme was closed to new entrants on 4th October 2018, however, those already signed up prior to that date can continue to use it).

**Universal Credit** is a single monthly payment for people in or out of work, which merges together some of the old benefits and tax credits. Universal Credit has replaced income-based Job Seeker's Allowance, Income-related Employment Support Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit, Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit. If you are working, your Universal Credit payment can include an amount to help with the cost of childcare, equivalent to 85% of your registered childcare costs. Universal Credit is means tested, therefore the amount you receive each month will depend on various factors including income, savings, outgoings on childcare and rent, number of children and if there are any disabilities in the household.

## Which option is best for me ?

The amount of financial support you may be entitled to receive on each of those schemes will depend on your circumstances and it can be complicated working out what is best for you so you should seek help to work out what is most beneficial for your family.

- Employers For Childcare Family Benefits Advice Service - provides free, confidential and impartial advice setting out your best options for support, and what is the best choice for your family. The Advisors are available on Freephone 0800 028 3008 Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm, or by emailing [hello@employersforchildcare.org](mailto:hello@employersforchildcare.org).
- Childcare Choices - this is the government website that shows the different types of help there are available towards your childcare costs (not all available in Northern Ireland).
- Financial help if you have children - a list of all the different benefits you may be able to claim depending on your circumstances
- Childcare Costs Calculator - an online calculator which will work out how much money you could get towards registered or approved childcare

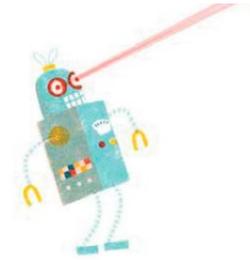
It is important to use registered Childcare listed on Family Support NI because Government agencies (eg HMRC/DSD) use this website to VERIFY that a Childcare Provider is REGISTERED to facilitate payments.

# CURIOUS KIDS?

Children like to ask some big questions, but we don't always have the answers! Now you can help satisfy their curiosity with 'Everything Under the Sun', which features 366 questions from children around the world. Ideal for 4 to 11-year-olds, the book will help you find out why you taste things differently when you have a cold and you can learn about everything from how astronauts see in the dark to what the biggest dinosaur was.

## HOW HOT ARE LASERS?

Laser beams are made out of tiny amounts of light called photons, and they have no temperature at all! But they do cause things they hit to heat up a lot. In 2012, scientists zapped a piece of metal with the world's most powerful laser, and the piece of aluminium heated up to 2,000,000°C! For a moment, it was the hottest temperature on Earth.



## WHY DO PEOPLE BLINK?

We blink to clean our eyes – like taking a car to a car wash, only quicker! It takes about a tenth of a second to blink, and we do it all day without thinking about it. Your eyelids spread oil and mucus over your eyeballs each time you blink, so your eyes don't dry out in the air. Blinking also clears away any dust in your eyes and protects them in bright light.



## WHAT IS THE BIGGEST ANIMAL EVER?

The blue whale is the largest animal that has ever lived on our planet. It weighs the same as 28 African bush elephants and is almost double the weight of the heaviest dinosaurs! By the time a blue whale is an adult, its heart is almost the same size as a motorcycle, and you could fit a human head inside the blood vessel leading to its heart!



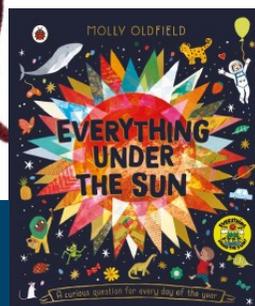
## HOW DO PENGUINS POOP?

Penguins don't like to poop in their nests, so some penguins, like the Adélie and chinstrap penguins, stand on the edge of their nests and projectile poop. They can shoot their poo around 40 centimetres away!



## IF YOU LET GO OF A HELIUM BALLOON, WOULD IT GO ALL THE WAY INTO SPACE THROUGH THE ATMOSPHERE?

Sadly not. It would burst around 6.2 miles above the Earth. As the balloon rises, the helium gas inside it expands, and the air pressure outside goes down. This makes it go *pop!*



familysupport NI.gov.uk

Helping You Find the Services You Need

Edited excerpt from *Everything Under the Sun* by Molly Oldfield (HB £25) published by Ladybird September 2021. Also available in audiobook.

# LETTUCE CELEBRATE!

Kick off the new year with these exciting vegan recipes to tempt your tastebuds

Vegan cooking can seem a little overwhelming when it's something you haven't tried before. But with Omari McQueen's second cookbook, *Vegan Family Cookbook* you will be able to learn how to eat more sustainably and enjoy some tasty treats along the way. Cooking together as a family is fun. It is great to get children involved in the process and make meals exciting for them and be proud of what they've achieved. So grab your aprons and cooking utensils and get cooking!

## FRIED MAC 'N' CHEESE SPICY NUGGETS

### MEDIUM SPICE

Makes 25-30 nuggets, prep 1 hour + freezing, cook 45 minutes

### YOU WILL NEED:

130g mini macaroni, 200ml vegan sour cream, 230g shredded vegan cheddar cheese, 1 tablespoon parsley, 1 teaspoon basil, 1 tablespoon paprika, 1 teaspoon garlic powder, 1 teaspoon salt, 1 teaspoon black pepper, 1 teaspoon jerk marinade, 1 teaspoon chilli flakes

### FOR THE ITALIAN STYLE DRESSING:

400ml coconut milk, 130g plain flour, 250g breadcrumbs

1: Cook the macaroni according to the instructions on the packet and ask an adult to help you drain and then set aside. In a separate saucepan add the sour cream, cheddar, parsley, basil, paprika, garlic powder, salt, black pepper, chilli flakes and mix well on low to medium heat until all ingredients are melted and combined together. Pour the cheese mix in with the cooked macaroni, stirring everything together. Let it cool down to room temperature.

2: Place the macaroni mixture into large ice cube moulds & freeze for at least 2 hrs.

3: Add the coconut milk to a bowl with the flour and stir well to form the batter. Place the breadcrumbs into a separate bowl.

4: Remove the frozen mac and cheese nuggets from the moulds and one by one dip them in the batter, then coat with breadcrumbs and place them onto a baking tray, repeat until you've coated them all.

5: Ask an adult to heat your deep fat fryer or a pot full of vegetable oil to 180°C. Carefully place 5 or 6 mac and cheese nuggets into the fryer and cook for 3-4 minutes until golden on all sides. Once cooked, remove them from the fryer and onto a tray lined with kitchen paper to drain the excess oil. Repeat until all nuggets are done.

6: Let them cool a little and then tuck in!



## ICE CREAM SANDWICH

Makes 12 cookies or 6 sandwiches

Prep 1 hour, cook time 10 minutes

### YOU WILL NEED:

#### COOKIES:

100g white sugar, 150g brown sugar, 1 teaspoon salt, 120ml coconut oil, 60ml almond milk, 1 teaspoon vanilla extract, 200g plain flour, 1/2 teaspoon baking soda 170g vegan mini chocolate chips

#### ICE CREAM:

240ml almond milk, 80ml maple syrup, 4 frozen ripe bananas, 1 teaspoon vanilla extract, 170g vegan mini chocolate chips

1: Make the ice cream by adding the almond milk to a blender/food processor along with the maple syrup, vanilla extract and frozen bananas and blend until smooth. Add the vegan chocolate chips and mix in with a spatula. Transfer the ice cream into a Tupperware container and freeze for 5 hours or overnight if you have time.

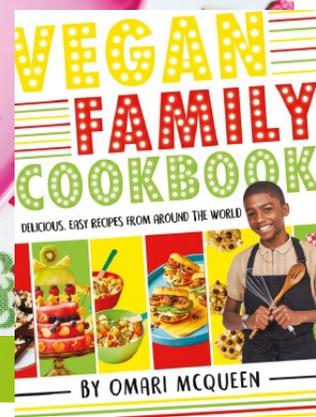
2: To make the cookies, first preheat the oven to 170°C. Put the white sugar into a large bowl along with the brown sugar, salt, soft coconut oil, almond milk and vanilla extract and mix well.

3: Sieve the plain flour and baking soda into the bowl and stir until you get a cookie dough consistency. Add the vegan mini chocolate chips and mix in well, then cover with cling film and chill for 30 minutes.

4: Using an ice cream scoop, scoop 12 cookies from the dough onto a tray lined with baking paper, bake for 10 minutes.

5: Once ready leave them to cool on the baking tray as they will still be soft.

6: Scoop out a good amount of ice cream & place it in the centre of one cookie, then place another cookie on top to make a sandwich. Tuck in and enjoy!



# THIS ISSUE WE ARE LOVING...

## SUITABLE FOR VEGANS - FAB FOR EVERYONE

The new Rimmel London Kind & Free product range is their first clean makeup that works, with no compromises. It's 100% vegan and kind to animals, free from fragrance, mineral oils and animal derived ingredients. Pictured is the Moisturising Skin Tint, was £9.49, now only £7.12. Available now at **Gordons Chemists** with an exclusive 25% off introductory offer. Available in selected stores and online!



## HYGIENE AND HYDRATION FOR YOUR HANDS

Ovelle Hand Hygiene Essentials from Gardiner Family Apothecary offers antibacterial cleansing, protection and hydration for your hands. Each Essentials kit (£17.95) contains Hygienic Hand Wash with coconut botanicals and vitamin E, Advanced Hand Sanitiser Gel with 70% alcohol, infused with glycerine and aloe vera, and Hydrating Hand Cream, a blend of coconut botanicals and emollient moisturisers. Available at [gardinerfamilyapothecary.com](http://gardinerfamilyapothecary.com)



## PRIMED FOR PERFECTION

This skin perfecting primer from the NOTE range is ideal for oily and combination skin. It creates a filter-like effect on the skin, making it look airbrushed and reduces the sign of pores. It mattifies the skin so your makeup will last all day and all night. £9.95, available at [notecosmetics.co.uk](http://notecosmetics.co.uk)



## TAKE CARE OF MAN'S BEST FRIEND

The Bulldog Beard Care Kit Original contains aloe vera, camelina oils and green tea, to help take care of your skin and beard. All Bulldog Skincare products are free from artificial colours, synthetic fragrances or ingredients from animal sources. This pack contains: Original Beard Oil 30ml Original Beard Shampoo & Conditioner 200ml Beard Comb. It's £14.99 from [very.co.uk](http://very.co.uk)



## HEALTH UPDATE

### Six harmful skin habits for eczema sufferers



January is the time eczema sufferers battle with most, due to weather temperatures and common triggers that can cause skin flare ups. Regardless of eczema type, here are six habits to avoid from Dermoi's Chief Scientific Officer, Eve Casha, MSc.

#### 1. TAKING HOT SHOWERS

During showers, exposure to hot water temperatures can increase in skin barrier damage. This is because the outer layer of the skin, the skin barrier, is composed of dead skin cells surrounded by a lipid matrix. Hot water interferes with these lipids and compromises the skin barrier function. During eczema flare ups, the skin is already in a compromised state with an impaired skin barrier, dryness, and inflammation. Try to reduce water temperature when in the shower, washing hands, or washing your face to protect your skin as much as possible.

#### 2. USING WATER-BASED MOISTURISERS

(including hyaluronic acid)

The skin is naturally structured to bind and store water molecules however, depending on skin health, this water can easily be lost through the epidermis. Humectants are ingredients that bind water and draw them into the skin. With eczema, transepidermal water loss is high, so preventing additional dehydration with gentle oil-based hydrators (those containing occlusive agents) will provide much greater benefit.

#### 3. FREQUENT CLEANSING

Skin cleansers are essential in any skincare regime. They function to remove unwanted materials such as dirt, sweat, sebum and other oils from the skin. During eczema flare ups, over cleansing or using aggressive cleansers has been linked with worsening of the condition. Avoid all cleansers that give immediate tightness or dryness, or those that have high foam. Reduce cleansing frequency and reach for an emollient, oil-based cleanser followed by a rich hydrator.

#### 4. REACHING FOR NATURAL SKINCARE

While there is a myth that natural remedies are always the 'better' solution, this is not the case when it comes to skincare. Many natural extracts contain active compounds that can strip the skin barrier or exacerbate inflammation. All skincare products, natural or synthetic, are comprised of chemical substances, and many synthetic products are specifically formulated to reduce irritation on the skin. Reach for simple and gentle formulation irrespective of their origin.

#### 5. IGNORING THE STRESS ELEMENT

While there are many factors that contribute to the development of eczema, stress (both mental and physical) plays a role in the condition. During periods of stress the epidermal skin barrier is impaired as stress influences skin cell shedding as well as skin cell cohesion. Introducing mindful and lifestyle practices to reduce mental stress or changing lifestyle factors such as diet, alcohol consumption, smoking, or investing in nutraceutical skin care can help to calm eczema and reduce flare ups.

#### 6. OVERDOING IT WITH ACTIVE INGREDIENTS

Introducing new active ingredients into any skincare regime takes time. Whether it's the anti-aging hero ingredient vitamin A (retinoids) that is known to cause initial irritation, or other actives such as vitamin C, growth factors, peptides, or exfoliating acids, the skin may need time to adjust. If skin is particularly sensitive or prone to eczema flare ups, the focus should remain on calming inflammation and protecting and healing the skin. A simple skin regime comprised of adequate cleansing, moisturisation, and broad spectrum UV protection is sufficient.

# ASK THE PHARMACIST



Richard Dunn is a community pharmacist with Gordons Chemists.



## Sore throat

**Most people have a sore throat at least two or three times every year.**

A sore throat often marks the start of a viral infection such as cold or flu, and can also be associated with COVID-19 infection. Although in around 10% of cases in adults and 30% in children the infection can be caused by bacteria called Streptococcus. Smoking can be another common cause. Soreness in the throat is often accompanied by other symptoms of infection such as a hoarse voice, mild cough, fever, headache, feel sick, feel tired, and the glands in your neck may swell. It may be painful to swallow. The soreness typically gets worse over 2-3 days and then gradually goes away within a week. Simple treatments that you can buy can ease symptoms until the sore throat goes. Usually, you would only need to see a doctor if symptoms are severe, unusual, or if they do not improve after a week. Antibiotics are not usually required as most throat and tonsil infections are caused by viruses. Antibiotics kill bacteria, but do not kill viruses. Your immune system usually clears these infections within a few days whether caused by a virus or bacteria. An antibiotic may be advised if the infection is severe, if it is not easing after a few days, or if your immune system is not working properly. Tonsillitis is an infection of the tonsils at the back of the mouth. Symptoms are similar to a sore throat, but are often more severe and can include fever and a general feeling that you are unwell. You may be able to see some pus which looks

like white spots on the enlarged red tonsils. Treatments for sore throat and tonsillitis include simple painkillers. Paracetamol or ibuprofen will ease pain, headache, and fever. To keep symptoms to a minimum it is best to take a dose at regular intervals. Take paracetamol four times a day or ibuprofen three times a day until symptoms ease, as advised by your pharmacist. Some people with certain conditions may not be able to take ibuprofen, so seek advice when needed. A large range of gargles, lozenges, and sprays are also available to buy at pharmacies and these should help to soothe a sore throat. Many of these contain an antiseptic and/or an anaesthetic agent - these include Strepisils® and Tyrozets® sore throat lozenges, Covonia®, Ultra Chloraseptic® and AAA® sore throat sprays. Difflam spray® has analgesic and anti-inflammatory properties which many find helpful. Seek urgent medical attention if you develop difficulty in breathing, difficulty swallowing saliva, difficulty opening your mouth, severe pain or a persistent high temperature. Otherwise, seek advice from your pharmacist who will advise on the best over-the-counter product depending on age and symptoms. Worth reminding that in the current climate that you should perform a COVID-19 lateral flow test if you also display one of the three main symptoms of infection of fever, continuous cough or loss or change to your sense of smell or taste.

Gordons Chemists is the largest independently owned retail pharmacy chain in Northern Ireland. Established in 1980, Gordons Chemists now has over 60 pharmacies on the high street and in shopping centres across Northern Ireland and Scotland. Products described are available at most pharmacies and Gordons Chemist does not endorse any individual product. Always consult your pharmacist in relation to your individual symptoms.

## NEW ARRIVALS



**Baby feeding pillow in Animals print (£39.95)** from Hippy Chick has an innovative ergonomic design. The pillow places baby at the ideal height for breastfeeding, helps remove tension and pressure from the parent whilst feeding to ensure smooth flow of milk and has a removable machine-washable cover. The pillow can also provide support from pregnancy back ache, can be placed between knees and ankles to relieve tension or be placed beneath a growing bump to offer relief. Available at [hippychick.co.uk](http://hippychick.co.uk)



**The New Baby Pack (£10.49)** from Baby Nails contains everything you need to look after the teeniest fingernails! Baby Nails is an award winning wearable baby nail file, invented by Rebecca Saker who struggled to care for her newborn son's nails. Simply stick a snap-off nail file to the Thumble® and use just your thumb to file, keeping both hands free to care for baby. Pack contains a Thumble®, 15 x New Baby snap-off nail files and a drawstring pouch. Available at [baby-nails.co.uk](http://baby-nails.co.uk)



**The Shnuggle Moonlight (£29.95)** offers a choice of three perfectly soft, baby-safe brightness glows to feed, comfort and change baby through the night, anywhere in your home. A little nudge will activate Moonlight at the lowest brightness setting when baby awakens. Select from three brightness levels to find the perfect light, creating a calming environment which reduces stimulation and helps to promote sleep for baby. The room temperature sensing dock ensures your room is kept at a safe temperature for baby. Available at [shnuggle.com](http://shnuggle.com)



Created in collaboration with Penny Broderick, founder of the UK Cloth Nappy Network, Cheeky Doodoo is a range of nappies and wraps. This Reusable Nappy Starter Bundle (current promo price £39.95) includes: 1 wrap, 3 charcoal coloured bamboo nappies, 3 boosters, 10 pack fleece line. Nappies are available in charcoal as the makers believe one of the most soiled things you will ever wash shouldn't be white! The dye is formaldehyde free and certified safe to use. The nappies are super slim and yet super absorbent and easy to use. Available at [cheekywipes.com](http://cheekywipes.com)



**The Rockit portable baby rocker (£39.99)** fits any pram or pushchair. Its gentle rocking motion soothes babies to sleep or keeps them asleep when the buggy stops moving. Enjoy a coffee with friends or play with an older child whilst your little one is happily asleep by your side. Rockit is easy to fit via the clever universal bracket included in the box. Available at [rockitrocker.com](http://rockitrocker.com)



**Hubble's Nursery Pal Link smart video baby monitor (£130.00)** features a portable large 5" colour screen Parent Unit. The camera has infrared night vision, so you can see your baby with clarity at night. Digital Pan Tilt & Zoom camera helps monitor the complete nursery. Download the Hubble App to see, hear and speak to your baby from anywhere with sound, motion and temperature notifications sent to your smart device. Available at [argos.co.uk](http://argos.co.uk)

# 2022 READING RESOLUTIONS

The New Year is the perfect time to get your children 'reading fit'. Follow Reading Chest's resolutions to help children learn to read and inspire a love of reading.



1. Read to children as often as possible. Don't stop reading to children just because they can read independently. Reading to children opens up a world of books that they might not choose to read or be able to read themselves, really helping to maintain struggling readers' interest in books.

2. Listen to children read every day. Just 10 minutes a day will make a huge difference. Ensure you have access to good quality, inspiring books. Children will lose interest if books are too challenging and won't make as much progress if too easy.

3. Make time to enjoy reading yourself. The impact of parents' reading has a huge positive impact on children's reading. If children never see their parents reading, they are much less likely to pick up a book themselves.

For more reading advice and access to a huge range of banded reading books, visit [ReadingChest.co.uk](http://ReadingChest.co.uk), the children's book rental service. Use the discount code NI4K to get £5 off 1st month's membership.



## The Reading Corner

See in the new year with a new book...

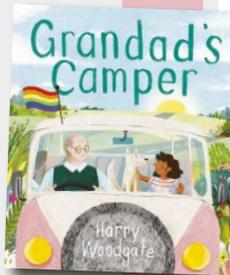
AGE 4+

### Grandad's Camper

Written and illustrated by Harry Woodgate

PB, £7.99, published by Andersen Press Ltd

Celebrate love in all its forms, as Grandad tells his granddaughter about the adventures he used to have with Gramps. A long time ago, Grandad and Gramps spent many happy days travelling the world together in a camper van. But now Gramps isn't around any more, Grandad doesn't feel much like having adventures. As she listens to his wonderful stories, Grandad's granddaughter has an idea to cheer him up.



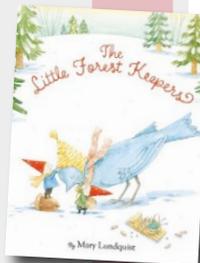
AGE 4+

### The Little Forest Keepers

Written and illustrated by Mary Lundquist

HB, £12.99, published by HarperCollins Publishers Inc

A winter wonderland of a picture book about being kind to friends and strangers alike. Ash and Pudd take care of everyone in the woods, from their furry and feathered friends to the shivering trees. But then one day, a strange new creature appears in the forest. Could it be a new friend? This story about kindness and generosity is as cosy and sweet as a mug of hot chocolate on a chilly day.



AGE 6+

### The Homesick Kitten

By Holly Webb, illustrated by Sophy Williams

PB, £5.99, published by Little Tiger Press Group

Harper loves spending time with her gorgeous new kitten, Sammy. He likes sitting in the window, exploring their flat and playing in the garden. But then Harper and her family have to move in with her gran after she has a bad fall, and everything changes. Sammy doesn't feel at home at Gran's house. He misses the smells and sounds of the flat, his real home. So when he spots an opportunity to go back, he takes it. But Sammy soon discovers home is more than just a building, it's where your family are.



AGE 7+

### Leonora Bolt: Secret Inventor

By Lucy Brandt, illustrated by Gladys Jose

PB, £6.99, published by Penguin Books Ltd

Leonora Bolt spends her days creating incredible inventions in her TOP SECRET laboratory, under the watchful eye of her terrifying uncle. Everything changes when a strange boy washes up on an inflatable lobster and reveals Uncle Luther has been stealing and selling her inventions! Leonora must embark on an unforgettable journey that will test her brainpower to its limits. With the help of an otter with a special skill, a questionable cook and a singing sea captain, can Leonora dream up an invention to defeat her evil uncle?



## Winter Skate

It's time for the whole family to get their skates on, as Winter Skate is back at the SSE Arena! Running on selected dates across January, Winter Skate gives families across NI the opportunity to skate at the home



of the Belfast Giants. Tickets are priced at £7 per person for standard skate sessions, including skate hire; £25 for a family of four or £30 for a family of five. Time slots vary depending on the date.

Capacity is strictly limited and there are no walk-ins permitted, so visit [ssearenabelfast.com/whats-on/winter-skate-2021](http://ssearenabelfast.com/whats-on/winter-skate-2021) to check available dates and times and book your tickets.

## iPad Lego Animation Classes

Take a journey into the wonderful world of iPad Animation with these mini animation master classes, facilitated by The Can Do Academy, who specialise in fun tech workshops for children. Your kids will learn how to make a complete animated film on an iPad to show family and friends! Participants must



be able to attend both sessions. 7-10 Years: 10am-12pm, Saturday 5 February 2022 & 10am-12pm, Saturday 12 February 2022.

11-17 Years: 1-3pm, Saturday 5 February 2022 & 1-3pm, Saturday 12 February 2022

Tickets available at [www.eventbrite.co.uk](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk)

**BELFAST  
CHILDREN'S  
FESTIVAL  
4-13 MARCH 2022**

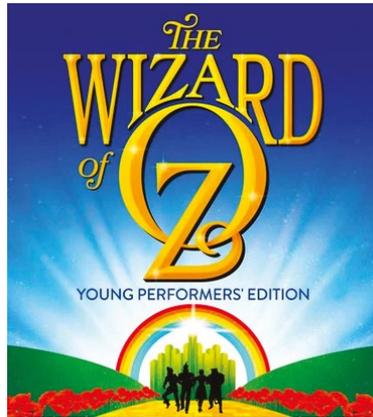


## Please remember

Circumstances could change on a daily basis, therefore please check with the venue directly before setting off on your journey.

## Wizard of Oz

Since November the young members of the Home Spun Musical Theatre Group have been busy rehearsing one of the most popular musicals, the Wizard of Oz. Follow the Yellow Brick Road with Dorothy and Toto to meet a Scarecrow who wants a brain, a Tin Man seeking a heart and a Cowardly Lion who wants to gain courage. A timeless tale for the whole family. The show runs from 15 to 20 February. Book your ticket at [theatreatthemill.ticketsonline.com/shows](http://theatreatthemill.ticketsonline.com/shows)



## Explore Opera: 8 - 12 year olds



Does your child love singing and acting? They can take the first step into opera with Ulster Touring Opera's exciting Explore Opera Workshops. Working with a professional director, singer and pianist, your child will discover how opera brings acting and singing together to create amazing characters and worlds. They'll even bring a famous chorus to life whilst making new friends and sparking a life-long love of opera. The

workshop is at The Strule Arts Centre on 15 January, and The Ardhoven on 29 January. Tickets are £10 per child, with booking at [struleartscentre.co.uk/show/explore-opera-workshop-for-8-12yr-olds](http://struleartscentre.co.uk/show/explore-opera-workshop-for-8-12yr-olds) and [ardhoven.com/show/explore-opera-workshop-for-8-12-yr-olds](http://ardhoven.com/show/explore-opera-workshop-for-8-12-yr-olds)

NORTHERN IRELAND'S BIGGEST ARTS FESTIVAL FOR CHILDREN

WWW.YOUNGATART.CO.UK



# MOVIES



### Encanto *Cert PG Out Now*

The Madrigals are an extraordinary family who live hidden in the mountains of Colombia in a charmed place called the Encanto. The magic of the Encanto has blessed every child in the family with a unique gift - every child except Mirabel. However, she soon may be the Madrigals last hope when she discovers that the magic surrounding the Encanto is now in danger.



### Clifford The Big Red Dog *Cert U Out Now*

When Emily Elizabeth meets a magical animal rescuer who gives her a little red puppy, she never anticipated waking up to find a giant, 10-foot hound in her small New York City apartment. With her single mother away on business, Emily and her fun but impulsive uncle set out on an adventure that takes a bite out of the Big Apple.



### West Side Story *Cert 12A Out Now*

Stephen Spielberg's first foray into directing a musical, this film is a remake of playwright Arthur Laurent's tale of forbidden love between rival gangs, the Jets and the Sharks, in 1957 New York. Inspired by William Shakespeare's play Romeo and Juliet, the 1961 film adaptation won ten Oscars and featured music by Leonard Bernstein and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim. Spielberg's reboot is said to stay true to the beloved 1950s stage production.

# WIN AN OVERNIGHT STAY AT WYNDHAM BY RAMADA

**BELFAST CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL IS BACK, LIVE AND IN PERSON FROM 4-13 MARCH 2022.**

BCF22 will be packed with GIANT-sized, fun-filled performances, events and experiences for all the family. And we also have included a digital programme of performances to enjoy at home!

To celebrate, we're offering one lucky family the chance to win an overnight stay at Wyndham by Ramada Belfast City Centre on the first weekend of Belfast Children's Festival, including dinner, bed and breakfast and a family ticket to see Birdboy at the Lyric Theatre.

**A FAMILY OF FOUR WILL WIN:**

- A family room in Wyndham by Ramada Belfast City Centre (max 2 adults and 2 kids - up to 12 years)
- Dinner for four in the hotel's SQ Bar & Grill Restaurant
- A family ticket to see Birdboy at the Lyric Theatre, Belfast.



## BIRDBOY

Once there was a boy who wished he was a bird. He wished he could just fly away and be free of all his worries. Birdboy is a trip inside his head. In his whirring mind, thoughts, worries, fantasies all compete for space in a world where fitting in is hard to do. Suitable for age 8+. So to be in with a chance to win, simply visit [ni4kids.com/competitions](http://ni4kids.com/competitions) and answer this question!

**Q: WHAT DOES BIRDBOY WANT TO BE FREE OF?**

T&Cs: The closing date for this competition is Friday 18 February 2022. No cash alternative. Editor's decision is final. Usual Ni4kids' T&Cs apply. Visit [ni4kids.com/competitions](http://ni4kids.com/competitions) for details.

# WIN A BUNDLE OF SING 2 GOODIES!

The new chapter in Illumination's smash animated franchise returns with big dreams and spectacular hit songs as can-do koala, Buster Moon and his all-star cast of animal performers prepare to launch their most dazzling stage extravaganza yet...all in the glittering entertainment capital of the world. There's just one hitch: they first have to persuade the world's most reclusive rock star - played by global music icon Bono, in his animated film debut - to join them.

Buster (Oscar® winner Matthew McConaughey) has turned the New Moon Theatre into a local hit, but Buster has his eyes on a bigger prize: debuting a new show at the Crystal Tower Theatre in glamorous Redshore City.

But with no connections, Buster and his cast - including harried mother pig Rosita (Oscar® winner Reese Witherspoon), rocker porcupine Ash (Scarlett Johansson), earnest gorilla Johnny (Taron Egerton), shy elephant Meena (Tori Kelly) and, of course, porcine provocateur Gunter (Nick Kroll) - have to sneak their way into the world-famous Crystal Entertainment offices, run by ruthless mogul wolf Jimmy Crystal (Emmy® winner Bobby Cannavale).

Sing 2 is in cinemas 28 January 2022.

We have one bundle of goodies including a sticker sheet, keychain, Buster head band, hair bands, pencil case, glitter water bottle and journal to give away, so to be in with a chance to win, simply visit [ni4kids.com/competitions](http://ni4kids.com/competitions) and answer this question!

**Q) What kind of animal is Buster Moon?**

**A) Giraffe B) Koala C) Lion**



T&Cs: The closing date for this competition is Friday 18 February 2022. No cash alternative. Editor's decision is final. Usual Ni4kids' T&Cs apply. Visit [ni4kids.com/competitions](http://ni4kids.com/competitions) for details.



## NI Science Festival

The favourite festival for curious kids, the NI Science Festival makes its welcome return on 17 February, running until 27 February. On day one you can check out BODY:

an immersive outdoor installation exploring human biology through light, sound and fire. Using cutting-edge technology to create a deeper understanding of the science of the human form, BODY has been designed to inspire young and curious minds and offers a range of options for educational engagement in STEM subjects. This is an outdoor, nighttime event for all ages. 18 February sees the first of TV presenter and YouTuber Maddie Moate's shows at The MAC. Stuff! shares extraordinary tales of the ways people across history have made, used and re-used the stuff around them. For times, dates and tickets, visit [nisciencefestival.com/events](http://nisciencefestival.com/events)



## Adventures on Old MacDonald's Farm

Join us down on Old MacDonald's Farm for fun, songs and excitement. Friendly Scarecrow is enjoying his first day on Old MacDonald's Farm and loves meeting all of the colourful characters that live there. When a mystery unfolds on the farm, can you help Scarecrow find out what's going on? With an original script and brand new songs written for this production, along with many singalong favourites, this professionally produced show is a thrill for younger children. Aged 1 - 7 years. Alley Theatre, tickets: [alley-theatre.com/whats-on](http://alley-theatre.com/whats-on)





# NEW YEAR, NEW PLANS!

As we welcome 2022, new year resolutions and vows of self-improvement are bountiful, but why don't you try something different this year and instead of plans of diet, exercise, etc., throw this energy in to making plans for some family holidays and cultured city breaks for the year ahead! Travel and adventure feed the soul, and let's be honest, this is a much more fun new year plan – and is a resolution that you may actually stick to!



January may be a long month in terms of having money to spare after all the festive celebrations, but fret not, as local travel agent, Travel Solutions, are providing some fantastic offers on two and three night city breaks from City of Derry Airport. to the fun-filled cities of London, Liverpool, Glasgow and Edinburgh. Prices start from just £249pp (based on two people sharing) and includes return flights with Loganair, airport taxes and security charges, 3\* hotel accommodation, 15kg hold baggage, 6kg hand luggage and complimentary in-flight refreshments!

Travel to Manchester is also available from City of Derry Airport as Ryanair has recently returned to the North West! Flights to Manchester are operating three days per week and fares start from just £11.99pp one way. You can book now via the airport website: [www.cityofderryairport.com](http://www.cityofderryairport.com)

Shopping weekends (best take advantage of those January sales!), glamorous theatre nights, cosy dinners and drinks over a crackling fire, action-packed football fun - there is an endless list of memories to be made on a short break in the UK's top cities!

City of Derry Airport also has some fabulous summer package holidays for Majorca and the Algarve available for 2022. The flights, operated by Albastar, will commence on a weekly basis from 29th June 2022, and packages are available for couples, families and groups, with 3\* and 4\* accommodation offerings to suit all tastes and budgets.

Prices start from just £499p and include airport and security taxes as well as 20kg checked in luggage per person, not forgetting that FREE child places are available for ages 2-11! A booking deposit of just £50pp is required and you can book via your local travel agent or by contacting Travel Solutions on 028 9045 5030 or [www.travel-solutions.co.uk](http://www.travel-solutions.co.uk).

The beauty of travelling from City of Derry Airport is the stress-free experience, with passenger health and safety at the heart of all operations, cost-effective car-parking and convenient transport links. You can start your journey in style by pre-booking into the airports Amelia Earhart Lounge where you will be assisted with refreshments and entertainment in a relaxed space whilst enjoying fantastic views of the airfield and surrounding area.

For more information on the new year short breaks and summer package holidays available from City of Derry Airport, visit [www.cityofderryairport.com](http://www.cityofderryairport.com)



**Available to book with your local Travel Agent**

[www.travel-solutions.co.uk](http://www.travel-solutions.co.uk)

028 9045 5030 



# COFFEE & CATCH-UP

*Caroline O'Neill is the founder of digital marketing and business coaching brand Digg for Success. Caroline moved into digital after 15 years running DIGG Childrenswear. She co-founded the NI Social Media Awards, and established the Digg Deep for Kids campaign, which raises tens of thousands of pounds every year for NI families in need. Caroline's Digg Mama social channels have an audience of over 150,000. She is married to Gerard, and they have three children, Pearce, Darragh and Tess who star in many of her online videos.*

INTERVIEW BY HEATHER MCGARRIGLE

## Describe yourself in five words.

Loyal, hardworking, determined, passionate and caring.

## As a parent, how do you balance family life with being a successful entrepreneur?

I have to admit there are times it is not easy. I have had many occasions where I have had "mum guilt" where I feel like I have missed out on doing something with my children because of work. However I have found this new way of dealing with that, which has helped me so much. I now talk to my kids about everything that is going on, explaining to them every part of my work and why it's so important and why I do what I do.

So in my retail business I had to learn fast. I was plunged into this new online world and knew nothing about it. I had to train myself on all things digital and embrace the new way of doing things. I found the social media side of things easy as I'm a very social person but there is so much more to selling online than just social media. When I closed my retail store I had a passion for helping other businesses achieve success online. I found myself inundated with requests for help and that's how my coaching business Digg For Success grew into what it is today.



I'm very lucky that I can involve them in some of my campaigns which they love and this has eased the guilt for sure. However I make them aware every day that all parents work as hard as they can for their kids and that's just life but when we do spend time together those are the special moments we will treasure forever.

## Can you tell us how you pivoted from retail into business coaching and digital media?

## What do you think will be the main trends on social this year?

Video is always the most powerful tool for story telling and that certainly won't change in 2022. A lot of focus will be put on building communities. If a brand or a business can step outside the selling mindset and start to build a community or tribe of people who follow them and support them in all that they do then this can have huge benefits for businesses. Also

working with the right influencers will continue to be a powerful way to reach a new audience and build brand awareness.

## A lot of parents worry about the effects of social media on their kids as they grow up in our digital world. Would you have any advice for families about staying safe online and having a healthy relationship with social media?

I am a firm advocate for always talking to your children about social media and the positive and negative effects it can have on the lives of others. I advise parents to take an interest in their children's activities online and be aware of what apps and websites they use. Parents can find all the information they need on: [www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/)

## It's been another amazing year for your Digg Deep for Kids campaign, congratulations! Can you tell us a bit about how this project came about and why you think it is so successful?

I have always been passionate about making a difference in the lives of others no matter how small the gesture. Digg Deep for Kids is a campaign founded by me which helps support charities and the campaign has grown significantly over the past few years. A lot of this has been because of my increased social media following. The supportive community which I have around me has made such



a huge impact for these charities every year. The campaign is so successful as we use social media to showcase the campaign's journey. People can see their money turned into essentials right before their eyes. The money is also spent locally amongst our business community so this gains huge support for the campaign as well. Influencers also lend their support to spend the money and this in turn allows the money to be stretched much further. This year we raised £172,000 and were able to secure almost half a million pounds worth of essentials for the charities. I am incredibly proud of Digg Deep For Kids and the impact it makes for people in our community. "We can and we will, make a difference."

## Finally, do you have any plans for 2022 you can share with us?

I am so excited for the year ahead. I plan to speak to some amazing people on The Digg Podcast. I am launching some very exciting collaborations with the most fantastic businesses and brands. I plan to relaunch the Digg Social Academy which helps educate small businesses on all things social media. We are also planning the most amazing comeback for The Northern Ireland Social Media Awards 2022. It's going to be a busy but exciting year.

Caroline is on Facebook and Instagram as @diggmama and @diggforsuccess, and can be found online at [diggmama.com](http://diggmama.com), [diggforsuccess.com](http://diggforsuccess.com) and [diggdeepforkids.com](http://diggdeepforkids.com)

"I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN PASSIONATE ABOUT MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF OTHERS."

# GET INTO THE HABIT

**Did you know that 14 January 2022 was Quitter's Day? The second Friday of the first month is thought to be the day most people give up on New Year's resolutions. Whether or not you believe in 'new year, new me', sticking to good habits can make our lives better.**

The brain accounts for about 2% of the weight of the human body, yet uses around 20% of its energy. To use that energy efficiently, our brains recognise things that we do regularly and make them habitual.

If you're trying to pick up an abandoned resolution, or simply want to make life a bit easier, this is our guide to help your family get into better habits.

## HABIT STACKING

One of the best ways to make positive behaviour changes is to use your existing habits. Most habits begin with a trigger which prompts you to do the habit, followed by the action itself, and then a reward or a desirable result. By stacking a desired habit onto an existing habit, we can use the existing habit as a trigger to do the new habit. For example, you brush your teeth every morning. If you wanted to start a new habit of exercising every morning, you could 'stack' that on to the habit of brushing your teeth. Initially this takes conscious effort, but soon your brain will associate brushing your teeth with exercising, making it a habit. This approach can be very effective with kids, whose brains are much more 'plastic' than ours, meaning they can learn new things more quickly and easily.



## REWARDS

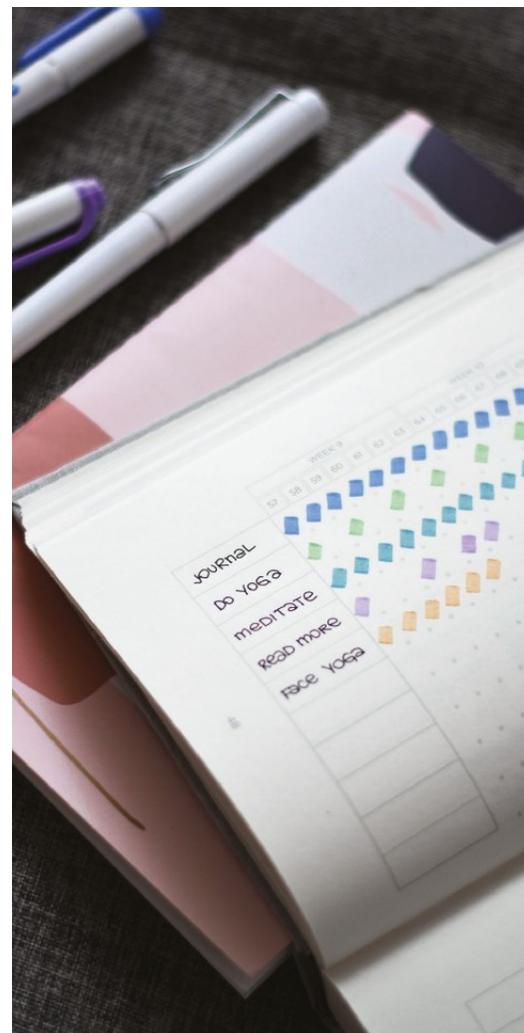
Many of the things we do each day have intrinsic value - we do them simply because we enjoy them. Other things we do regularly can be difficult, boring, or even unpleasant to do. However we do them (or at least we want to!) because they lead to a reward or a positive outcome. These things have extrinsic value to us - we're doing it for the pay off rather than enjoyment in the moment. Using rewards to motivate habits is effective for adults and kids alike. For yourself, try rewards which make the habit more enjoyable, e.g. if you run three times a week for at least a month, you can treat yourself to new running shoes. For children, avoid making rewards materialistic. Try positive behaviour - maybe make up your own silly secret handshake to reward them for doing their homework in good time. Or use family experiences as rewards; take them to the cinema and let them pick the film and the snacks.

## MAKE BAD HABITS HARDER AND GOOD HABITS EASIER

Reducing the friction between ourselves and a good habit is highly effective. If you want to do yoga first thing in the morning, unroll your mat and set out your yoga clothes the night before. To reduce time playing computer games, pack the console away after each use, rather than leaving it connected to the TV and ready to go at the touch of a button.

## TRACK YOUR PROGRESS

Habit trackers work just as well for adults as they do for children! Drawing out weekly or monthly charts and marking off each day that you do your habits can be highly motivating. It reminds us of our progress and gamifies the good habit - once you tick off three or four days, you'll find you're motivated not to break the chain. We know from our own childhoods how motivating a star sticker reward chart can be, whether it's at home for good behaviour or in school for good work or effort. Why not roll out star charts for the whole family? If the kids can get a gold star for tidying their bedroom, you can definitely get one for swapping your chips for salad at lunch.



# NI SCIENCE FESTIVAL

17-27 FEBRUARY 2022

## EVENTS FOR KIDS & PARENTS

### Meet NI's most endangered species: celebrating the flapper skate.

Join Ulster Wildlife to learn all about this species, the work the Sea Deep project is taking to conserve the flapper skate and how you can help safeguard this species in our waters. *Ulster Museum, Belfast | 11am - 4pm*

### Lough, Land and Sky

Find out what lives in and around our beautiful Lough Erne with pond dipping, plant and bird identification at Castle Caldwell Forest. *Castle Caldwell, Enniskillen | 11am & 1.30pm*

### Eco Workshop with Woody

Join Woody for a special Eco Workshop in Orangefield Park. Go exploring through the park on a special scavenger hunt, make your own bird feeders and learn more about the wildlife living in the park. *Orangefield Park, Belfast | 11am*

### Shark and skate egg case hunt!

Search the shoreline for the egg cases of sharks, skates and rays and help with efforts to protect these endangered creatures as part of Ulster Wildlife's Sea Deep project. *Benone Beach, Limavady | 1.30pm*

## SUNDAY 20 FEBRUARY

### Paddle With a Purpose

Paddle with a purpose and do your bit for the environment! *Green Boat Shed, Killinchy | 10am*

### Unloved 'plants': Mosses, liverworts and lichens

Join natural sciences curator Mike Simms for a leisurely guided tour of some of the natural sites at the Ulster Folk Museum to examine close-up some of the 'lower plants' that are so often overlooked. *Ulster Folk Museum, Cultra | 1pm*

### Lego Cartography – Map the World!

Everyone loves Lego and we love maps! Help us create a Lego map of the world! Using a Lego World Map set we will create a custom map showing important environmental and climate change data sourced from world climate observations and scientific research. *Geography Building, Belfast | 1pm*

### Ancestors: A Prehistory of Britain in Seven Burials with Alice Roberts

We often think of Britain springing from nowhere with the arrival of the Romans. But in this talk, anthropologist, broadcaster and academic Professor Alice Roberts explores what we can learn about the very earliest Britons, from burial sites and by using new technology to analyse ancient DNA. *Whitla Hall, Belfast | 3.30pm*

## MONDAY 21 FEBRUARY

### Amma CreateLab: Design your own Merch

Learn how to turn plain boring everyday household items into unique merchandise to take home to show off to your family or to give to your rapidly growing fanbase! *Amma Centre, Armagh | 10am, 1pm & 4pm*

### Made in Armagh

*running until Fri 25 Feb*  
The Armagh Observatory and Planetarium have been busy making their own digital theatre shows and now they want to show them off to you! *Armagh Planetarium | 3pm*

## TUESDAY 22 FEBRUARY

### Star Tracker Online

Join the Armagh Observatory and Planetarium for an online stargazing session where you will find out more about how human activity has changed the night skies. *Online | 7pm*

## THURSDAY 24 FEBRUARY

### Take a Walk on the Wild Side

Join Belfast Zoo on a walking tour of the zoo and listen to keepers, curators and education staff enthuse about our animals and discover the conservation efforts being made to preserve these fantastic animals. *Belfast Zoo | 10.15am*

### Paddle With a Purpose

Paddle with a purpose and do your bit for the environment! *Green Boat Shed, Killinchy | 10am*

## SATURDAY 26 FEBRUARY

### Not just Archaeology: Palaeoecology at Queen's

*running until Sun 27 Feb*  
Palaeoecology is the study of the environment of the past. We will be showing multiple ways in which we can learn about the environment of the past, such as pollen records, and using peat and sediments as a source for information on the past. *Archaeology and Palaeoecology Building, Belfast | 9am - 1pm*

### NI Sustainability Fair

Our 2022 NI Sustainability Fair is the beginning of a new long-term project designed to explore what we must do to meet the challenges of climate change. *2 Royal Avenue, Belfast | 10am - 4pm*

### Amma CreateLab: Toy Photography

Ever wondered what your toys get up to when your back is turned? Participants of this photography workshop will take their favourite toys into the world of the living through the art of photography. *Amma Centre, Armagh | 10.30am*

### The Climate Change Show with Scientific Sue

*running until Sun 27 Feb*  
This is a fun-filled show full of exciting experiments all to do with Climate Change. *Armagh Planetarium | 10.45am*

### Fartology - Astronaut Live!

The Most Outrageous Science Show in the World! *The MAC, Belfast | 12pm & 3pm*

### The Secret Life of Flies - Dr Erica McAlister

Combining her deep knowledge and love of flies with a wonderful knack for storytelling, Dr Erica McAlister will have you amazed and captivated by the secret life of flies. *Crescent Arts Centre, Belfast | 3pm*

## SUNDAY 27 FEBRUARY

### It's A Wrap - An Evening with Doug Allan

Closing the 2022 NI Science Festival, Doug Allan looks back over his successes and setbacks during 35 years of natural history film making. Part retrospective, the show is also Doug's perspective on climate change and its impacts on the world's wild places. What change of emphasis and direction should we now be incorporating in wildlife films? *Whitla Hall, Belfast | 5.00pm*

**11 DAYS.  
200+EVENTS  
INFINITE IDEAS.  
LET YOUR  
MIND WONDER.**

For full details of events, pricing, venues and suitability visit [nisciencefestival.com](http://nisciencefestival.com)



**NI  
SCIENCE  
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