

# Children's Outside Guide

**A Salvation Army guide  
to children's outdoor activities**



# Contents

- 3 Introduction
- 4 Garden scavenger hunt
- 5 Growing cress
- 6 Awaken your senses
- 7 Starfish mentoring programme
- 8 Draw your favourite outdoor space
- 9 Cloud spotting
- 10 Summer holiday club
- 11 Apple flapjack recipe
- 12 Create your own flower vase
- 13 Hadleigh Farm camping
- 14 Nature crown
- 15 Helping families in need
- 16 Colouring page
- 17 Word search
- 18 Find out more about The Salvation Army





Dear parents and carers,

Thank you for downloading our Children's Outside Guide! We can't wait to share our resources with you, from an outdoor scavenger hunt, guidance on how to grow cress, fun nature facts and so much more.

The aim of our guide is to help more parents, grandparents, carers and teachers to get children outside and spend more time in nature. Care for creation is one of The Salvation Army's mission priorities and spending time outdoors helps us to appreciate why that is so important. While most of the activities are intended for outside, there are also some indoor activities for rainy days. With this in mind, all activities have been created with adult supervision in mind.

If you're fortunate to have a garden then you can do the activities there. Alternatively you can head to your local park, green space or forest.

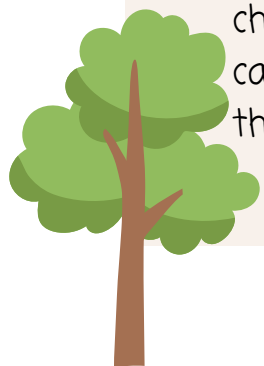
The inspiration for the guide came from The Salvation Army's children's projects which are run at our churches and centres across the UK. The projects are run year-round both outside in nature and in our centres. They include lunch clubs in school holidays, school clubs, summer camps, toddler groups, mentoring sessions and many others.

We hope you enjoy hearing about our projects and find the guide valuable.

Best wishes,

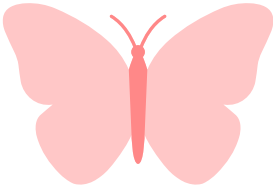



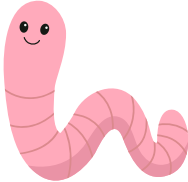

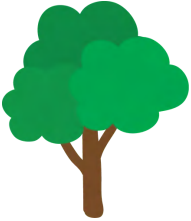




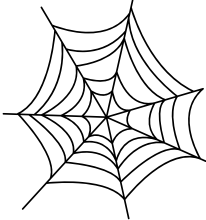
The Salvation Army Team

P.S. We would like to take this opportunity to remind you to tell children and young people not to touch bees and wasps, and to be careful of brambles, stinging nettles and other potentially harmful things found outside.



# Garden scavenger hunt

Can you find all of the items below in your garden or local green space? Bring a pencil or pen outside with you and see how many you can find!






 Butterfly	 Feather	 Bee
 Bird	 Worm	 Acorn
 Tree	 Flower	 Leaf
 Ladybird	 Grass	 Spider web

Talk to a grown-up about what you found. You can even tell them what your favourite one was. Maybe you found something that wasn't on the chart but that you found even more interesting!

# Growing cress

Did you know that growing vegetables at home is really easy? In just a couple of days you will start to see small shoots! One of the easiest (and tastiest) vegetables to grow is cress.

## What you will need:

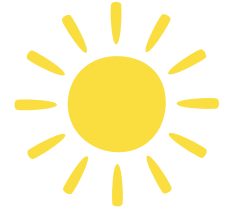
-  Egg carton or recycled vegetable tray
-  Soil (from the shops or garden)
-  Pencil
-  Seeds
-  Spray bottle or jug



1. Fill your egg carton or plastic tray with soil
2. Sprinkle the seeds on the surface of the soil so they're close but not touching
3. Use a spray bottle or a measuring jug to lightly water the seeds in - be careful not to over water them and only water them when the soil is dry
4. Place a clear container on top. Fruit and veg punnets or plastic Tupperware work well
5. Watch them grow and when they're 5cm tall ask an adult to help you cut the cress down to the soil level
6. Add to your egg mayonnaise or chickpea crunch sandwiches!

By giving a gift today you could help us provide support to individuals and families turning to us for help. To make a donation and help someone today visit [salvationarmy.org.uk?form=outsideguide](https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk?form=outsideguide)

# Awaken your senses



One way to make the most of your green surroundings is by stopping and taking a deep breath. Try going to a green space with an adult and try the activity below.

## **Listen**

Close your eyes. What can you hear? Can you hear the rustle of the leaves in the trees? Are there any birds singing?

## **See**

Now open your eyes. What can you see? Can you see any flowers? Are there any insects around you? What colours are the leaves on the trees and bushes? How many colours can you see?

## **Feel**

You can do this activity with your eyes open or closed. If you're sat down, can you feel the grass underneath your hands or feet? Does it feel soft? If there are leaves on the ground, pick one up. What does it feel like? If there's a stone nearby, pick it up. Does it feel smooth or rough?

Take a moment to write down what you can hear, see and feel.

Sometimes the day can be very busy so it's good to take a moment to be grateful for the amazing creation all around us.



Did you know a worm can eat its own weight in soil in one day!



# Starfish mentoring programme



One example of how The Salvation Army supports children in our communities is through our Starfish programme. Starfish is a Salvation Army mentoring programme where trained adults provide one-to-one mentoring for young people aged 9-16 who need additional support in areas such as home life, school life, physical and emotional health. The programme particularly focuses on boosting emotional health and wellbeing, personal development, and life skills.



The Salvation Army in Boston runs the Starfish programme and the mentors work with their local primary school to mentor pupils. Starfish Co-ordinator in Boston, Sarah Robinson told us:

"The relationship we are creating is one of a 'challenging friend'. Someone who will be a friend to you, but who will also allow you to grow. The challenge part is very important, and we need to build trust and work with children to set goals in order for that to happen."

Sarah also told us about the story of one boy who took part in the mentoring scheme.

"[His] mum had mental health issues that were impacting him and when we started mentoring him, he was depressed and found it difficult to engage. Mentoring made a big difference in his life. At first, he was unhappy with his body image but as a result of mentoring he joined a football club outside of school and stepped out of his comfort zone.

When we came to the end of the mentoring, he said he was ready to finish because he felt 'confident and improved'. He enjoyed talking, expressing himself and his healthier lifestyle improved his sleep patterns."

# Draw your favourite outdoor space

When you think of your favourite outdoor place where do you think of? Is it your garden, a local park, the forest, or your school playground?

Now take a moment to think about why it's your favourite place. Is it somewhere you go with your family and friends, can you play on the swings there, or is it because you can hear the birds singing?

## What you will need:

- A piece of paper
- A pencil, colouring pencils or paints and paintbrushes

This activity can be done outside if the weather is dry or inside if it's a rainy day. Thinking of your favourite place, can you draw it on your paper? Be as creative as you can. The things you draw don't have to appear just as you see them. So if you like, the flowers can even be in the sky with the clouds, and the airplane on the grass!

Grass

Ants

Leaves

Worm

Feather

Ladybird

Spider

Rocks

Flowers

Cloud

Trees

Did you know, plants need three things to grow: light, water and soil

Rainbow





# Cloud spotting

This activity will need to be done on a dry day when the sky is blue, there is some sunshine and lots of clouds in the sky.

## What you will need:

- A big blanket
- A pencil and colouring pencils
- A few sheets of paper
- Sunglasses if it's a very sunny day

Head outside to a green space. This could be your garden, a park, a forest or any other green space. Get a blanket that is big enough to lie down on and put it down on a grassy area away from trees.

Now lie down on your back and look up at the sky. Don't forget to wear your sunglasses if it's too bright to look at the sky!

Now think about these questions:

- What shapes can you see?
- Do they look like any animals or objects?
- Are the clouds moving quickly or slowly?
- Which way are the clouds moving?

Fun fact: some caterpillars have 12 eyes!



When you've found a few shapes, try drawing them on your paper. If you're feeling creative you can add extra detail to the outlines or colour them in.

By giving a gift today you could help us provide support to individuals and families turning to us for help. To make a donation and help someone today, visit [salvationarmy.org.uk?form=outsideguide](https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk?form=outsideguide)

# Summer holiday club



Glasgow City Centre Salvation Army in Anderston is situated in one of the most deprived areas of Scotland. The community church is located between two primary schools and provides a range of support to families and children throughout the year.

Again this summer, the centre will be running a six-week holiday club for up to 60 primary-age children. The club will take place every weekday afternoon, providing children with a healthy cooked meal and a range of activities to take part in. Sarah\*, a single mum of two, says the summer club has been invaluable and provides a few hours' respite each day during the holidays to spend with her young toddler. She told us:



"The Salvation Army summer club has been amazing for us. My daughter has been going for the last couple of years and loves it. She gets to make new friends and enjoy all the outdoor activities they put on.

"The summer club also helps with childcare costs. I'm on the minimum wage and money is really tight at the moment so I would have to have my daughter at home all the time. The support from The Salvation Army means I'm not worrying about how my oldest child's days will be filled this summer, about where the money for activities will come from, and how I'll cope with providing more meals during the day."







Sarah's daughter, Grace\* said:

"I can't wait for the summer. We get to enjoy some arts and crafts, and indoor and outdoor games. On Friday afternoon we get to watch a movie and do puzzles. The best part last year was the big barbecue we had at the end of the club and then The Salvation Army people gave out goody bags of stuff for going back to school."

# Apple flapjack recipe

This activity is great for a rainy day! For this activity you will need an adult to help you turn the oven on and take the tray in and out of the oven.

## Ingredients:

-  200g porridge oats
-  50g butter (or dairy-free block version to make it vegan)
-  50g sugar
-  3 tablespoons of golden syrup
-  1 teaspoon of cinnamon (optional)
-  2 cooking apples



1. Ask an adult to preheat oven to gas mark 6 or 200° centigrade / 180° fan
2. Line a square or circle baking tin with greaseproof paper leaving enough to enable you to be able to lift the flapjacks from the tray when ready
3. Grate the apple. If you prefer you can peel the apple first
4. Weigh the butter and sugar then add to a saucepan along with the golden syrup and cinnamon
5. Once the butter has melted, take the pan off the heat and add the oats and grated apple to the mixture and stir until all of the ingredients are combined
6. Pour the mixture into the tray, spreading the mixture to the edges and flatten
7. Ask an adult to place the tin in the oven and cook for about 20-30 minutes checking occasionally
8. When ready, ask an adult to take it out of the oven and get them to slice it into squares whilst hot and allow to cool before eating.




Could you volunteer your time to support people in your community?  
Visit our website to view current volunteering opportunities  
[salvationarmy.org.uk/volunteer](https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/volunteer)

# Create your own flower vase



For this activity you will need an adult to help you make holes in the card.

## What you will need:

-  Piece of cardboard (a cereal box will work perfectly)
-  Marker pen
-  Pencil or sharp object

1. On your piece of cardboard draw the outline of a jug or vase
2. For this step make sure you ask an adult. Poke holes with a pencil or sharp object above the vase with one cm or more between holes - make sure the holes are big enough to poke the flower stems through
3. Take the card out with you on a walk and as you see daisies and buttercups pick them, but make sure you keep the stem as long as possible! Carefully poke the stems through the holes in the cardboard and it will look like you have a vase full of flowers!

Make sure you ask an adult before you pick flowers in your garden or someone else's garden.



Fun fact: some lizards can detach their tail to escape from a predator



# Hadleigh Farm camping



Every summer in Hadleigh, Essex, The Salvation Army hosts two family camp residentials where they invite families, up to 80 people, to attend. The camp runs for four days and three nights and provides a safe space and helps foster a sense of community for people living in London and the East of England.

The camp runs exciting outdoor activities for the families including: kayaking, cycling on the on-site Olympic mountain bike track, experiencing being a farmer for a day, and going on a tour of the training centre. The camp is open to families who live in the local area and have previously been supported by The Salvation Army, whether they've accessed services, such as our foodbank, or attended our children's clubs.



To ensure the programme is accessible to all, the places are subsidised and the stay costs just £50 for an adult and £30 for a child to stay. This includes all activities, food, and a pre-pitched tent. The cost of around one third of the places are completely sponsored by The Salvation Army to enable families on lower incomes to have a family break with lots of fun activities.

Rebecca, a mother of two who attended the camp with her children, told us:





"The Family Camp at Hadleigh Farm has given me a safe space for me and my family. I've really enjoyed being with my boys and not had to worry about anything. Everyone cares and the team are great!"

Plan your visit to Hadleigh Farm today! Enjoy a fantastic day out with your family and meet our rare breed animals. For more information, visit our website at [salvationarmy.org.uk/hadleighfarm](https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/hadleighfarm)

# Nature crown

For this activity you will need an adult to help you measure and cut the card.

## What you will need:

-  Card or thick paper
-  Scissors
-  Glue stick, stapler or tape
-  Coloured pencils/pens



Before taking part in this activity we would encourage you to think about how you can look after nature so that not only you can enjoy it, but also everyone around you.

1. Start by asking an adult to cut a strip of cardboard 3 inches wide. You can use cardboard from an old cereal box, card or strong paper
2. Ask an adult to measure your head using a piece of string and add 2 inches to the length. Use the string to measure the length of card needed and ask an adult to cut to size
3. Tape or glue the ends of the card together, overlapping them by 2 inches to form a circle that fits on your head
4. Go on a nature walk around your garden or green space and collect items like leaves, flowers, and twigs to decorate your crown. Try and use items that you don't need to pick
5. Lay out your nature finds on a table and use your glue or tape to attach them to your crown
6. When the glue has dried you can wear your beautiful nature crown!



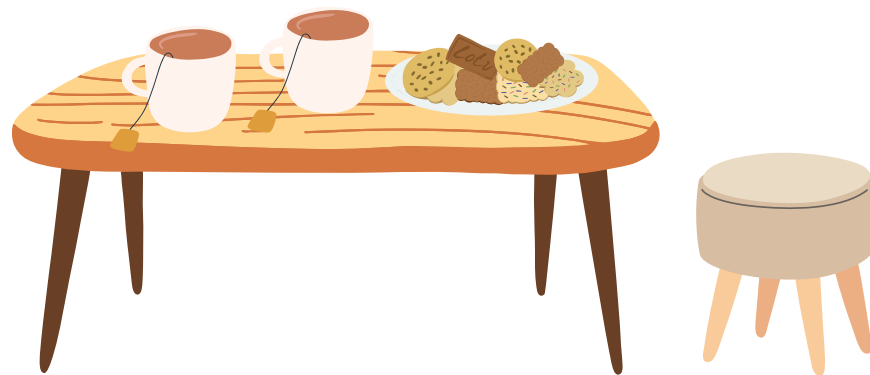


# Helping families in need

The Salvation Army is dedicated to helping people and families in communities across the UK, regardless of their background or circumstances. At the Salvation Army centre in Blackburn we helped Jennifer\*, a single parent of two children who are seven and ten years old. Jennifer told us that because she can't find a job with flexible working hours to allow her to care for her children, she has to rely on Universal Credit to pay her bills. She told us:

"My Universal Credit payments used to be enough, I would budget and make the payments stretch where I could, but I can't any more, not recently, and I have struggled a bit to keep on top of things, I've even had to use a food bank on occasion which hasn't felt very good, to be in that position.

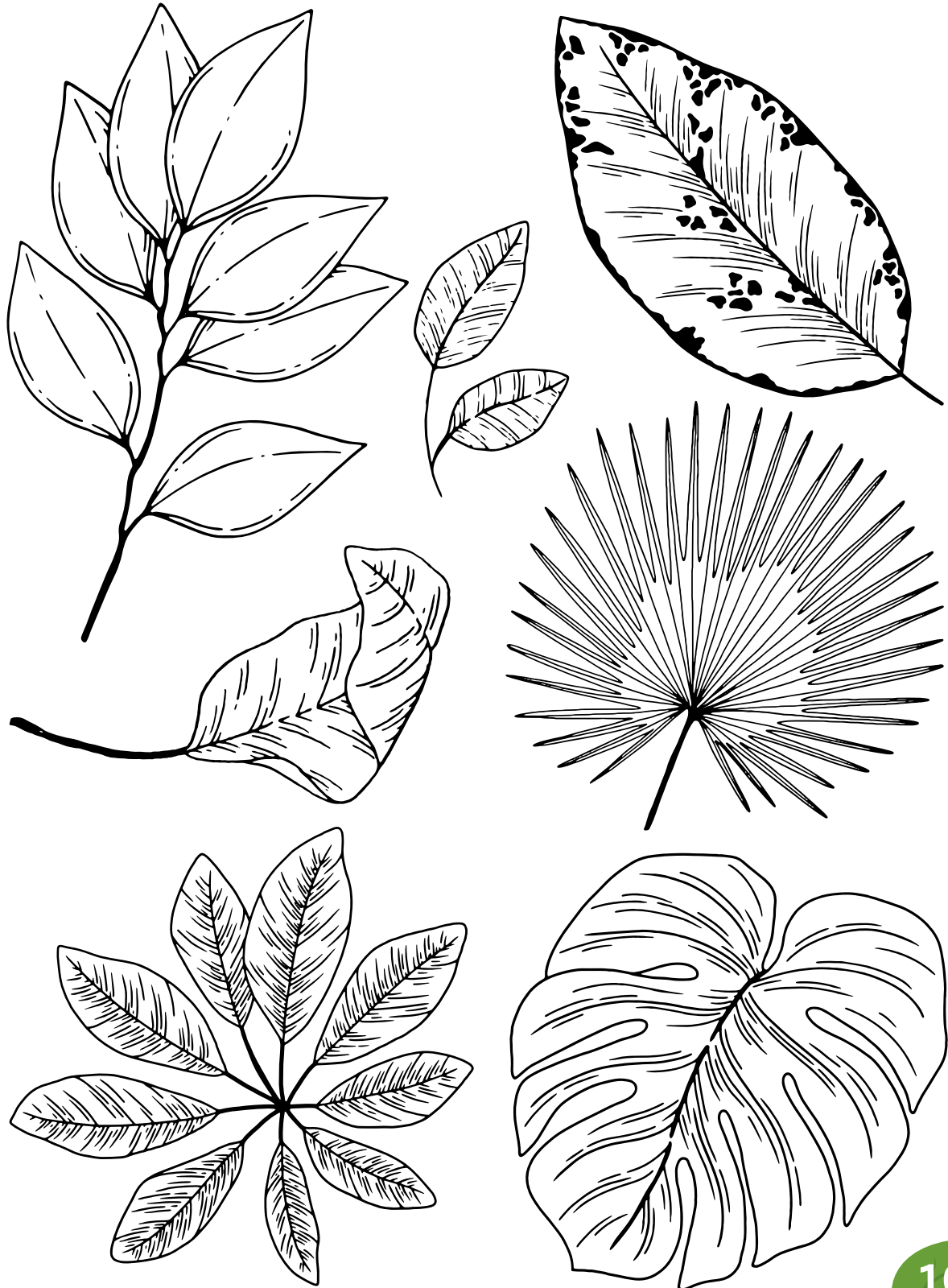
"The option of the [Salvation Army] after-school club is brilliant as it is a safe space for us as a family to go. I suffer with depression and anxiety and the whole cost-of-living crisis makes everything worse. The after-school club is also a bit of a social activity for me too, which is important. It gets me out of the house which is what I need.



"I'm just so grateful to The Salvation Army, for everything. Everyone is so nice, and you're always made to feel welcome. It's like one big family who are approachable with no judgement. It's a big relief to have such a support and I will forever be thankful. And where I can I like to volunteer, just to give something back, to show how grateful I am for their support."

By giving a gift today you could help us provide support to individuals and families turning to us for help. To make a donation and help someone today, visit [salvationarmy.org.uk?form=outsideguide](https://salvationarmy.org.uk?form=outsideguide)

# Colouring page





# Word search



D	M	L	D	I	G	T	H	G	Z	I	E
E	C	H	A	P	P	U	Z	K	G	S	G
E	M	I	W	H	O	I	S	E	O	Q	N
R	A	A	N	W	O	R	F	S	H	U	B
D	H	R	A	Z	A	O	P	N	E	I	A
C	W	E	F	O	X	L	B	D	G	R	D
M	O	U	S	E	D	T	O	R	D	R	G
F	U	V	O	H	D	T	W	A	E	E	E
R	A	B	B	I	T	R	L	E	H	L	R
B	I	R	D	R	E	V	A	E	B	I	H

BADGER  
OWL

RABBIT  
FOX

DEER  
MOUSE

HEDGEHOG  
SQUIRREL

BIRD  
BEAVER

# Find out more about The Salvation Army

We hope you've enjoyed reading our Children's Outside Guide and hope you have found it useful in getting the young people in your life outside. If you have then we would love to hear all about it! To let us know your thoughts please email us at [digitalfundraising@salvationarmy.org.uk](mailto:digitalfundraising@salvationarmy.org.uk)

To learn more about The Salvation Army's latest work and how we help vulnerable people in communities across the UK, just head to our website at [www.salvationarmy.org.uk](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk)

Follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter using the handle @salvationarmyuk to share your creations with us and don't forget to use the hashtag **#childrensoutsideguide**



If you need support from The Salvation Army, please visit our website where you can find your local Salvation Army church and community centre who will be able to assist you.

Alternatively, you can call us on 0207 367 4500 or visit [salvationarmy.org.uk](http://salvationarmy.org.uk)

