



Teacher's booklet

THE **Big** ACTIVE  
Barnardos



Do good. Feel good.  
[Barnardos.ie/bigactive](http://Barnardos.ie/bigactive)

The Barnardos Big Active is a schools-focused initiative launched with the kind support of ALDI. This fundraising initiative aims to get children active all over the country while taking a holistic approach to supporting their wellbeing.

It promotes three different kinds of activities: physical challenges that take care of your body, mindfulness exercises to look after your mental wellbeing and activities that promote the importance of charity. We call those **'Body'**, **'Mind'** and **'Heart'**. All three components can be implemented in your classroom as part of weekly activities and learning objectives, which will support students throughout the school year.

The key activity encourages students to get active through physical activities and this can be implemented as part of your school's P.E. programme. These activities then culminate in a month-long physical challenge for the entire class or school where, as individuals or as a group, students can help to raise money to support Barnardos' core work through sponsorship. This takes place in what we call your Big Active Month, which can be just before you break for summer holidays.

To help your class or school track progress, we have included a helpful Big Active wall planner in the pack you received. Now it's up to you and your class to decide the challenge you would like to complete – it can be anything that will get your body moving!

Big Active is also designed to help students to be resilient in dealing

with anxiety and to take care of their mental wellbeing. We have provided you with exercises to try with your class – exercises such as muscle relaxation, breathing and positive self-talk - all specifically designed to reduce anxiety, stress and worry in their daily lives. This is to support the **Mind**.

By taking part in this uplifting campaign your students will learn to observe the effect that exercise has on their mental and physical health. They will also learn how giving back to their community can be just as rewarding for them as for others, why giving to charity feels great and how to do it in an informed way.

Participating students are encouraged to donate €2 to Barnardos or you have the option to raise money for our core work with vulnerable families and children through a class-sponsored challenge. This is a wonderful way to introduce children to the positive activity of fundraising and the importance of charity - which supports the **Heart**.

Barnardos Big Active supports objectives and learning traditionally included in CSPE, PE, and SPHE. It can incrementally develop the learning outcomes from these subjects, or can stand alone as a wellbeing component that you can adopt to enhance your students' learning experiences.

*The Barnardos Big Active  
makes doing good  
feel good.*



### Class evaluation.

A pre and post evaluation of your class will help to establish where students are as they start their Big Active month, and where they feel they are after their month long activities. You will find sample evaluation questions on [Barnardos.ie/bigactive](https://www.barnardos.ie/bigactive).

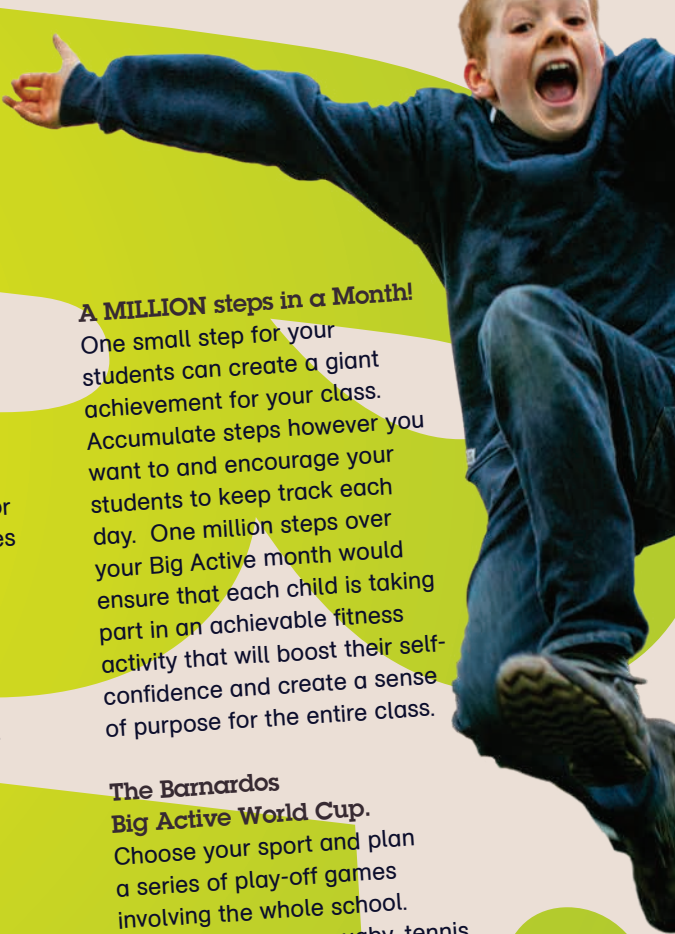
For more information,  
resources and to view our  
teacher training video, go to:

**[Barnardos.ie/bigactive](https://www.barnardos.ie/bigactive)**

# body

Regular exercise doesn't just keep you fit, it makes you feel happier too. We want your class to get active and prepare for your **Big Active Month** where collectively you complete a month long challenge. To help you keep track of your progress over that month we have provided a helpful Barnardos Big Active wall planner. Here are some ideas to get you started:





**Complete a Marathon in a Month!** Get every student to complete a total of 26.2 miles in your Big Active month. You can accumulate your miles in whatever way you want to – cover one mile on most days, or do three miles a couple of times a week. It's up to you!

**Greet the Morning Sun Salutations.** Yoga brings an enormous sense of wellbeing to children and is suited to all physical abilities. As well as stretching and strengthening their bodies, yoga can help boost self-esteem and confidence. Start each day with a yoga session – you could swap out the names of traditional poses for fun animal or nature themed ones each week! Set a target of 200 minutes over your Big Active month and break it down into achievable steps.

**Or you can do it your way.** Create your own physical activity, designed to challenge your students. Ensure that the whole class can participate and set a specific measurable goal you can work towards as a team over the month. Skipathon, Jumping Jackathon or a Danceathon event, it's up to you. Anything that will get bodies moving and the blood pumping!

**A MILLION steps in a Month!** One small step for your students can create a giant achievement for your class. Accumulate steps however you want to and encourage your students to keep track each day. One million steps over your Big Active month would ensure that each child is taking part in an achievable fitness activity that will boost their self-confidence and create a sense of purpose for the entire class.

**The Barnardos Big Active World Cup.** Choose your sport and plan a series of play-off games involving the whole school. Whether its soccer, rugby, tennis or hockey each school year can get involved in this thrilling event which will culminate at the end of the month.



# mind

Your Big Active pack includes a journal for each student in your class which is designed to give them time to reflect on their feelings and explore the connection between their mind, body and heart. Encourage your students to spend 5 to 10 minutes per day recording their thoughts and completing some exercises in their personal journal. These exercises have been designed to help them track their feelings and mood over your Big Active month. If they fill their journal, they can complete exercises on a blank piece of paper.

You may wish to incorporate some of these activities into your own classroom setting to encourage open group discussions.

# heart

Helping others and giving to charity does your heart good. You can give to charity in many different ways. You can donate time to volunteering, donate old clothes to charity shops, donate to a food bank or you can raise money through taking on challenges like "The Barnardos Big Active".

Giving to others can mean a small gesture like holding a door open for someone or a large gesture like raising funds for a good cause. Both gestures make you feel good and create a feeling of warmth and wellbeing that spreads from you to your community.

As part of the **Barnardos Big Active**, we would like you to raise funds for our work with vulnerable children and their families, but during your Big Active month we also want you to become more informed about charitable giving. It is important to do your research on any charity before giving them your hard-earned money.

You could ask students to research different types of charities and to then present their findings to each other. This will provoke discussion around the importance of charity in our communities.

Ask students to do some research about Barnardos specifically. This will make the learning relevant and assist them in contextualising the work that Barnardos do. Here are some questions to get them started:

- Is the charity registered with the charity regulator and do they display their registration number?
- Where does the money they raise go? Do your research and check out the charities annual report. This is where all the information will be about how and where they spend their money and your donation. This can usually be found on their website but you'll also find ours on [www.barnardos.ie](http://www.barnardos.ie)
- What impact has the charity had? What did they achieve in the previous year? How did they help the cause or issues they are working on?
- How are they helping? You can often find stories about the help they give by following their social media accounts.
- How will they keep in touch with you to tell you about the impact of your donation?



Because  
childhood lasts  
a lifetime

At Barnardos, our mission is to transform the lives of vulnerable children affected by adverse childhood experiences. We support children and families who have suffered abuse, neglect, separation, bereavement and addiction. We provide children with warm, nutritious meals in our breakfast and after school clubs. We offer a safe environment to play and learn in, and we work closely with families, rebuilding relationships that have been broken.

Barnardos is one of Ireland's leading children's charities. Last year alone, we worked with 16,800 children and families across Ireland, but there are many more that need our support. With your help, we can do even more.







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