



New Year, New Me!

2021 Challenge Pack

Join us, make a change and make
2021 the year you Sparkle!

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helping special children shine

New Year, New Me!!

2020 is now behind us, Christmas feels like a distant memory, and we're beginning to think about our New Year challenges, changes and resolutions.



Whilst we're still living in a world of restrictions, it is hard for us to make many plans. But we can take steps towards a healthy, happy and fresh new 2021.

Give something up, start something new....

Are you thinking about giving something up, like chocolate, cake or alcohol? Or maybe you're thinking about trying something new, like running, taking up a new hobby, or even increasing the number of steps you walk each day?

Whatever it is you do, do it with us!

Whatever it is that you'd like to do, we'd love to share your journey, and we would really love you to add in a fundraising element to your new plans to help raise money to support our work.



It doesn't have to be a lot, just an odd donation here and there soon adds up. Whether you gather up and donate your spare change, or ask for donations online - every penny counts and helps us make a difference!

You can make a difference, not only to yourself, but to our Sparkle families too!

It's easy to take steps towards the new you, whilst also making a difference to others. We have some ideas later in the pack on things to do, or things to ditch. You can also read a story from Sarah, Sparkle's very own Family Liaison Officer, on her fitness journey, as well as top tips for keeping on track with your goals from Newport Live's Health, Fitness & Wellbeing Manager.

By fundraising for us you will be making a difference to the lives of the hundreds of children and young people, and their families who access our services each week. Whether you choose to raise a little, or raise a lot - every penny really does count!

Or, if the new year challenge for you is about volunteering, why not volunteer for us? We're always looking for people to help with the work we do and we have lots of opportunities to join us. You can find out more about our volunteer roles on our website **sparkleappeal.org/volunteer**.



Our guiding principle

The guiding principle for Sparkle is to ensure that children and young people with disabilities and/or developmental difficulties, and their families, are fully supported and able to participate in valued childhood experiences, with access to the same range of opportunities, life experiences, activities and community services as any other child and their family.

How your support helps

Your support allows us to continue helping the hundreds of children and families who use the Serennu Children's Centre in Rogerstone, Nevill Hall Children's Centre in Abergavenny and Caerphilly Children's Centre every week. Life isn't always easy for some of these children or their families, but Sparkle helps by making sure they get the support and care they need.

How your money helps...

Whatever you raise will help Sparkle make a huge difference to the families that need our support. Here's how your fundraising can help...

£10 could pay for a child to attend an hour of activities with a play worker, where they could make friends for the first time.

£25 could pay for lifeguards to support two families to enjoy a 30 minute family swim session in a warm water pool.

£50 could pay for five young people to gain essential life skills by attending an Independent Living Skills session.

£250 could pay for twelve children to attend a specialist music and drama session.

£500 could pay for play workers to support children and young people accessing our Continuing Care Club for complex health needs.

£1000 could pay for an entire week of stay and play sessions for our Little Stars (children age 0-4 years old).



Did you know?

The Serennu Children's Centre was built in 2011 and more than 300 children with a disability and / or developmental difficulty visit each week.

We have to raise more than £600,000 every year to fund the vital services that help these special children through our children's centres and outreach services.

This is only possible thanks to the generosity and donations of the general public and local businesses, which is why we need your help.



Let's begin!

Getting started in 5 simple steps...



1

Decide on your 2021 Challenge

Lets start by deciding what you'd like to do. It could be something as simple as taking the stairs instead of the lift, increasing the steps you do each day, starting a Couch to 5k training plan, signing up for that 10k run, or something more challenging like a marathon or even a sky dive. We have lots of ideas and inspiration on the next page.

2

Decide your target, set up your fundraising page...

Aim high or keep it low, it really doesn't matter. Whether you raise £5 or £500, every penny will make a huge difference to us and the children and young people we support. It's easy to set up an online fundraising page by going to [JustGiving.com](https://www.justgiving.com) and clicking on Start Fundraising.

3

Tell your story, spread the word.

Social media is a great way to tell your story and share your Just Giving or online fundraising page. The more people you tell, the more money and support you will generate. You're also more likely to keep yourself on track with your new goals. You may even inspire someone else to do the same. Take photos, share videos of your progress, and don't forget to tag us in.



4

Begin your challenge

Begin your challenge! Whether it's stopping or starting something, track how you're getting on and remember to share your progress to help keep those donations coming in!



5

Say thank you!

Once your challenge is complete, you can give yourself a BIG pat on the back. It's amazing when you have completed a challenge you set yourself, whether it's big or small! Don't forget to say thank you to all those people who supported you on your journey. Social media is a great way of keeping people updated and a thank you post can generate even more donations!

You can follow us on social media:



@sparkleappealofficial

@sparkleappeal



@sparkleappealofficial



@sparkle-appeal

Do or ditch?

What will you do? Or what will you ditch? Here are some ideas to get you thinking...

Things to do...



Up your daily steps - get yourself up and walking, in the house or out and about. Walking every day has many health benefits including boosting energy, clearing your mind, managing your weight, and it is great for relaxation. You can find lots of information about walking on the NHS website here [nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/walking-for-health/](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/walking-for-health/)

Start running - the Couch to 5k is a great way to begin your running journey. We have an inspirational story on the next page about our very own Sparkle Family Liaison Officer, Sarah who began her running journey with a C25K!

Start baking - you'll never get it more fresh than straight from your own oven. Cooking at home gives you more control over what goes into your food. When we're able to, you could even ask for donations for your creations to help raise vital funds for Sparkle!



Volunteering - for some people volunteering offers the chance to give something back to the community or to make a difference to the people around them. For others it provides an opportunity to develop new skills, or build on existing experience and knowledge. Regardless of the motivation, what unites them all is that they find it both challenging and rewarding.

We're always looking for a helping hand. You can find a list of Sparkle volunteering opportunities at [Sparkle.org.uk/volunteer](https://sparkle.org.uk/volunteer)

Things to ditch...

Smoking - did you know that within 2 to 12 weeks of stopping smoking, your blood circulation improves? This makes all physical activity, including walking and running, much easier. The NHS website contains lots of guidance and information to help you quit smoking! Think of all the money you'll save - why not donate some of it to Sparkle?!

Social Media - Some of us spend a lot of time scrolling the social media sites, and whilst it can help us feel connected, it can also leave us feeling lonely. Why not try ditching the technology, or even just start by limiting the time you spend on social media. You could fine yourself £1 every time you are tempted to scroll the sites and donate the money from your fines to Sparkle!

Chocolate, sweets and fizzy drinks - give up the snack pack, ditch the chocolate, sweets and fizzy drinks and donate the money you would have spent on your sweet treats!!



"I decided to help my own physical and mental wellbeing by following the Couch to 5k"

Sarah is one of our Family Liaison Officers here at Sparkle. She started her running journey at the end of 2020 after she was inspired by her sister to start the Couch to 5k. Sarah is mum to Phoebe 11 and Morgan 2, and fits her running in around her work and family life.

"In 2008 I was diagnosed with Poly-cystic ovarian syndrome, something that many women suffer from but it effects them in different ways. For me, my weight and appearance were my demons and made the biggest impact on me. I was a size 24/26 and had a lot of facial hair due to the increased testosterone in my body. So I made the decision back then to make changes to my lifestyle.



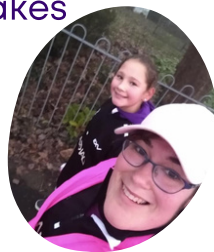
I found a love of swimming and started losing weight, which massively helped my mental health. It doesn't matter what shape or size you are, or what you look like, it's a personal journey. Making myself feel better made people around me feel better.

Fast forward to 2020 and I am now a mum of two and have a very supportive husband. 2020 was another very challenging year for me, as it was for everyone. So I decided to go back to what helped me last time and I began to make changes. After I got myself a job I absolutely love at Sparkle, I decided to work on my own physical and mental wellbeing by following the Couch to 5K.

My sister started the C25K at the end of last year, which really inspired me to give it a go. When I first began, running for 6 minutes was a massive achievement for me, and now I am able to run for 25 minutes, something I thought I would never be able to do.

The C25k programme is a great way to start running. You start off slowly and go at your own pace. If I have found a week particularly hard, I just repeat it before moving on to the next week. I am taking it at my own pace and it's working for me. I feel so much better and have lots more energy!

I like to go running first thing in the morning, when everyone is still in bed. That way, I can fit it in before everyone wakes, and before work and family life takes over. My daughter Phoebe likes to keep fit, usually through Rugby and Swimming, but she can't do that right now, so she sometimes joins me for a run on the weekend. Getting her out in the fresh air gets me out too!"



"Doing something new for yourself is a great way to raise money for Sparkle, just asking your friends and family for a donation every time you hit a new goal will help make a massive difference to the people we support. Every penny you raise will help us, and every goal you achieve will make you feel amazing! Remember, the only race you have to run is for yourself! Go at your own pace and your own time, make it work for you.

You got this!"



Top tips to keep on track

We spoke to **Newport Live's Health, Fitness and Wellbeing Manager, Bryony Gurmin** who gave us her top tips for keeping on track with your goals....



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Inspiring people to be happier and healthier

Set achievable goals

It's been a tricky time for many. But your Health is Wealth! Try to stay active and keep a good balance of nutrition and exercise as often as you can - set yourself achievable goals.

Small steps

It's the small long term changes that make a big difference to keep you on track long term. Try to document your journey to see how far you have come - this will help keep you motivated. This could be a video blog, before and after photos or keeping a journal



Join forces

Getting the rest of your household involved gives you an excellent opportunity to hold each other accountable, challenge each other to reach bigger and better accomplishments, and provide mutual support! Or you could sign up for a team challenge and get your team mates to join in virtually.

It's your journey!

Remember to always go at your own pace and do get advice from a health professional first if you have any underlying health conditions!

How to get your money to us...

Once all the hard earned money is collected in, you'll want to send it in to us. There are a few different ways you can pay in:

Online via our website:
sparkleappeal.org/donate

By calling: 01633 748092 and paying over the phone

By sending a cheque to:
Sparkle (SouthWales) Ltd.
Serennu CHildren's Centre
Cwrt Camlas
Newport
NP10 0LY

By bank transfer:
Account name: Sparkle (South Wales) Ltd.
Sortcode: 40-16-15
Account number: 34250974

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