

ADVICE FOR PARENTS



About us

We are an NHS team delivering a mental health promotion programme for primary schools.

We work with whole classes - helping children learn about their thoughts, feelings and behaviour and how to look after themselves and their emotional wellbeing.

We wanted to create something fun and interactive for children - to help them think about how important it is to look after ourselves, and others, during these unusual and challenging times. **So welcome to Looking After Ourselves!**

Below is a taster of what to expect in the different sections. Please encourage your child to explore the website and try out some of the activities, challenges and tips.

VISIT WEBSITE



PLAN YOUR DAY



We have included a section on this because familiar routine and structure helps children feel secure – as they know what to expect and prepare for. It’s a good idea to keep it simple – so break the day down into manageable chunks.

It might suit you best to have a couple of activities that will happen about the same time everyday. Don’t make it too much hard work, and don’t worry if it doesn’t always go to plan.



Sometimes things take longer than you might expect! Or if an activity is going really well then you might want to keep going with it for a bit longer than originally planned. What works best for one child might be very different for another.

Important note

Trying to support your child to learn at home can be difficult. Your school may send home resources and online tasks that can help. But don’t feel under pressure to recreate the classroom.

Make sure there is also plenty of time planned in the day to Relax, Play, Eat Well and Be Active. And remember – this is a temporary situation.

EAT WELL & BE ACTIVE



We know that looking after our physical health can really help with looking after our emotional wellbeing – so we have included a section on this.

Try to all eat healthy, well balanced meals and drink enough water. Get your child involved in thinking about menu plans for the week – or create a favourite dish together.



Find time to Be Active - there are lots of exercise videos and apps online for everyone at home to try!

Current advice is that you can leave your house, with members of your household, for 1 form of exercise a day – like a walk or jog. But make sure you keep a safe 2-metre distance from others. And remember there are loads of ways of Being Active indoors as well.



RELAX & SLEEP WELL



Finding time to relax every day is really important – especially if we are feeling worried, low or stressed.

There are lots of different ways to Relax – and we want to encourage children to think about their favourite ways. We’ve included a muscle relaxation exercise that can be done with or without music – at any time. It’s quite nice just before bedtime.



We know that good-quality sleep makes a big difference to how we feel mentally and physically – and that it’s important to get enough. Children aged 7-10 years are thought to need 10-11 hours of sleep each night to be at their best the next day. There are tips for Sleeping Well on the website.

WHAT TO DO ABOUT WORRYING



There is a section with simple tips to help children if they are worrying.

Social media and the news can increase anxiety. So if your child is worrying try to limit how much time they spend looking at it. This advice applies to all of us! It's a good idea to make a time each day to switch off from screens.



Some children may want to know more about the coronavirus outbreak. There are some useful resources to help with this conversation in the links at the end.

STAYING CONNECTED

LEARN

Doing a little bit of reading, writing and maths everyday will help your child maintain and develop their skills. They may be sent work home from school that can structure this.



But children learn in all sorts of ways over and above schoolwork - so there are opportunities everywhere - puzzles, watching films, board games, arts and crafts, baking etc.

PLAY

Making time to do things we enjoy is really important. Playing helps children interact with the world around them and is one of the main ways they learn and develop. There are some suggestions on the website - but really the list is endless.



Watch this video from
Dr Max Davie.



CREATE

As well as being great fun, and taking our mind off worries, this can give children a real sense of achievement and develops concentration and self-confidence. Working on projects helps children make choices, express themselves and problem solve.



TALK

Although we need to keep physically distant from others at the moment, we can still connect with family and friends over the phone and through video call apps.



Sometimes it might be hard for children to know what to talk about if they haven't seen each other for a while - so help them think of ideas for conversation...or think of games they can play together while on the phone... or create a quiz for them to share.

Take time to talk to each other at home. Children often open up when they are in the middle of doing things - or when we are! Use everyday opportunities - mealtime, when playing a game, bedtime - to listen to your child.



Tip

At the end of the day - take it in turns to say...

**One thing that made you happy.
One thing you did to make someone else happy.
And one thing you have learnt today.**

LOOKING AFTER OURSELVES AS PARENTS

The coronavirus outbreak means that life is changing for all of us for a while. It's important, as parents, that we look after ourselves too. There are simple things we can do that help – and all the tips in Looking After Ourselves apply to adults as well as children!

Children quickly pick up when parents are worried – so if you are feeling stressed try and follow some of the tips, and make sure you are making time to...

EAT WELL



BE ACTIVE



RELAX



It's also important to Stay Connected: try and have some fun together at home – play games, film night etc. And connect with friends and family with phone, video calls etc.



Remember everyone responds differently.

We are all trying to adapt to an unusual and challenging situation – so try not to put too much pressure on yourself.

Keep in touch with your child's school – and ask for help if experiencing difficulties at home. There are some useful links below.

USEFUL LINKS

Coronavirus and well-being...

MindUK: Coronavirus and your wellbeing.

VISIT ➞

NHS tips to help if you are worried about coronavirus.
Includes link to useful Apps.

VISIT ➞

Empowering Parents Empowering Communities Parenting
Support during Covid-19 social media pages...

FACEBOOK PAGE ➞

INSTAGRAM PAGE ➞

YOUTUBE PAGE ➞

Supporting children around coronavirus and anxiety...

NHS coronavirus fact sheet for kids.

VISIT ➞

Illustrated book for children about coronavirus.

VISIT ➞

British Psychological Society.

VISIT ➞

Young Minds.

VISIT ➞

World Health Organisation.

VISIT ➞

Government guidance on supporting children.

VISIT ➞

Short story of coronavirus for children under age 7.

VISIT ➞

Educational resources for children...

CBBC news round.

VISIT ➞

BBC Bitesize resources for learning.

VISIT ➞

Educational videos.

VISIT ➞

National Geographic quizzes and activities.

VISIT ➞

Royal Institution - encouraging children to do science at home.

VISIT ➞

Maths based games and lessons.

VISIT ➞

Things to do...

British Library - book-inspired creative activities.

VISIT ➞

Activities, jokes, games and more.

VISIT ➞

Audible - free audiobooks

VISIT ➞

Literacy website - celebrated actors reading children's books.

VISIT ➞

Take a trip to one of the world's top museums with a virtual tour.

VISIT ➞

Virtual tours of zoos and theme parks.

VISIT ➞

Daily PE videos by Joe Wicks.

VISIT ➞

Recipes from Jamie Oliver's YouTube channel.

VISIT ➞

Other useful organisations and helplines...

Family Action: Free helpline for families. Phone: 0808 802 6666.

VISIT ➞

The Samaritans UK helpline – 24/7 helpline 116 123

VISIT ➞

Childline – 0800 1111 available 9am-midnight.
Also has a range of resources available.

VISIT ➞

Mind: UK charity supporting mental health

VISIT ➞

Young Minds Parents Helpline.

VISIT ➞

Shout: 24/7 crisis text chat provided by Shout – text Shout to 85258

VISIT ➞

National Autistic Society.

VISIT ➞