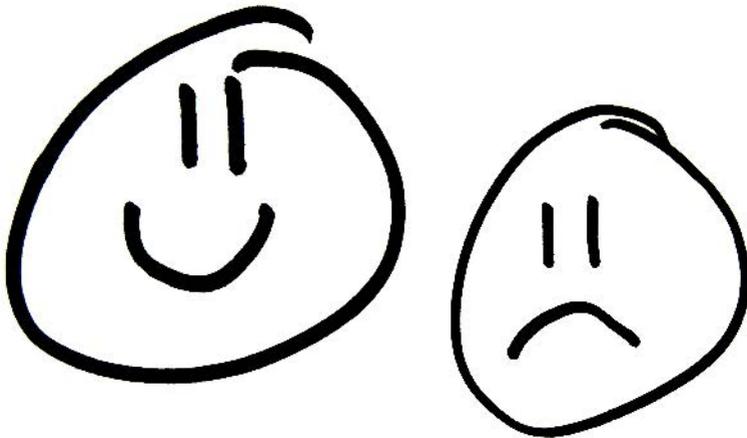


#mindhealthy@home

Looking after your family's emotional wellbeing at home



This booklet has been put together by Liverpool Mental Health Support Teams, and city partners as part of Liverpool's Whole School Approach to Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing.

Over the next few weeks we will all experience extra pressures that will affect how we think and feel. It's important to recognise that all of us have mental health and, just like our physical health, at this time it's important to look after it.

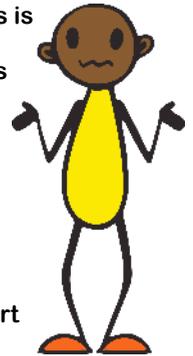
Inside this book are a few tips, activities and useful information to help you to keep yourself and your family emotionally healthy at home.

It's good to talk

We all get anxious and worried - especially during times of uncertainty. Anxiety is a natural way of dealing with the dangers around us and can impact the way we feel both emotionally and physically. For more information about this have a look at www.mind.org.uk

Just like you, young people may be feeling anxious or worried at the moment about all the changes and uncertainty that have arisen as a result of the coronavirus. They may be worried about their loved ones, falling ill themselves, concerned about what they are missing at school and generally missing their friends and family. For those young people in years 11 and 13, the uncertainty around their exams and general ending of their current school career may be causing them to worry.

One way that we are communicating with young people in schools is to ask how they are feeling on a scale from 1-10 (1 being low, worried, angry etc, and 10 being happy, optimistic etc). Using this simple method can help us to see what is normally hidden. If their number is low ask them what's making them feel that way and what would help to improve the situation.



Young Minds has given some useful guidance for talking to support young people and families through this time:

1) Staying connected

Video calls

Phone calls are amazing, and are a great way to stay connected. But seeing someone's face really can make a huge difference on a phone call. It can lift your mood and make you feel less lonely. There are lots of free video calling services you can use, and if you can connect to wifi this will help if you're worried about your data allowance. Don't be shy about going on camera – your loved ones will really appreciate seeing you, even if you're in your pyjamas! You could really brighten someone's day.

2) Find a positive online community

There are lots of positive online communities, where you can make new friends, get inspired and chat about things you care about. You could try searching for groups involved in causes, music or TV shows you are passionate about. But remember to avoid anything that encourages you to do things which are harmful for your physical or mental health. If you're worried by things you're experiencing online, talk to someone you trust.

3) Reach out

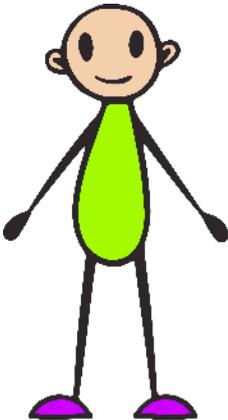
You're probably not the only person feeling worried, bored or frustrated. It's a good time for a catch up, so don't be afraid to make the first move and reach out to someone you haven't heard from in a while. They'll probably be very grateful to hear from you. Send them a message and let them know you care.

4) Staying calm

There are lots of great free apps you can use to guide you through breathing techniques and meditation that can help ease your anxiety and clear your mind of anxious thoughts. We like to use Headspace. Why not also try some yoga as a way to relax and also get some gentle exercise which can boost your mood? There are lots of YouTube videos you can use to suit your ability and level of mobility.

5) Clean up your social media

You might be spending more time than usual scrolling on social media. But have you ever thought about how this could be affecting your mental health? Try unfollowing or muting accounts that make you feel anxious, upset or angry. Find positive accounts like @youngmindsuk that boost your mood and share your interests. For more tips on having a positive time online, visit our page on social media and mental health.



6) Take a break from the news

It can be tempting to constantly check the news during times like this, but if you notice this is having a negative impact on your mental health. Try limiting how often you check the news.

Limit the amount of time spent checking the news by allowing a set time of day to do this. For example, saying "I will allow 30 minutes from 6pm," stops you constantly checking for updates which increases worrying.

7) Read a book

Getting away from screens and reading a book can help you escape for a bit. Why not re-read one of your favourites, or get your friend to recommend one? It might be difficult to get a new book, but you can access lots of books online.

8) Plan your days

Your normal routine might be disrupted and that can be stressful. Take some time to write down how you want to spend your day. Creating and sticking to a new routine will give you a sense of order and normality. Decide on your new routine and make sure you build in time to do things you enjoy. If you live with other people, you could ask them to help you.

9) Feel productive

Make a list of all those things you said you would do but never get round to. It could be sorting out your wardrobe, doing some gardening, fixing things around your living space etc. These tasks can make you feel productive and give you a sense of accomplishment. Tidying your living space can also make you feel calmer and more positive. If you want to take the time off to rest and not be productive, that's also fine too. Listen to your body.

10) Online games you can play with friends

Board games can be a great to spend time with friends or family while giving you something to focus on. You can play a lot of these games online, like Monopoly or Chess, or via apps like Words With Friends 2.

11) Sing in the shower even if you're not a singer- it's super therapeutic!

12) Walk away from tense situations if you can

Being cooped up with other people will naturally be frustrating and might create tension between you and those you live with. You can defuse difficult situations by walking away from arguments until everyone starts to feel calmer. If you and those you live with do not have any coronavirus symptoms, you could go outside for a walk.



13) Create a rota

If you're in a situation where lots of people are fighting over who gets to decide what you watch on TV, who cooks and cleans, or anything else, you might find it helpful to create a rota. This can help you agree a fair system and help avoid arguments.

Get changed in the morning from what you've slept in, even if you change into different pyjamas. Try and get some movement in even if that is through a ten-minute yoga video.

If your living situation is difficult, please don't struggle in silence. Speak to someone you trust. Call a friend or a helpline. If you're worried about being overheard, you could try texting or emailing instead. There are lots of helplines which also offer text and online messenger support.

#Resilient

Young people are going to remember how their family and friends responded during difficult times. They are watching and learning about how to respond to stress and uncertainty. Let's build resilience rather than panic.

Stay APE

While you may be restricted in what you can do over the next few weeks you can still keep things in place to help you to look after your family's wellbeing.

One piece of advice from the Youth Connect 5 training is to plan things into your week to stay APE! Try and plan something each week to allow you to:

1) Feel like you have **A**chieved something

You could use this time to have a good spring clean or create a vegetable garden. We have also put together a few challenges for young people to try and complete at home while schools are closed.

2) Connect with **P**eople

Even though we are being encouraged to keep social distance from people during this time, it's still important that we connect with friends and family. You could plan in daily video chats with your child's friends, grandparents or others.

3) **E**njoy yourself

Try and use this time to play games as a family, do crafts and making sure that you get a daily dose of laughter. Remember to get fresh air and exercise regularly.

Take on a challenge

We have designed some resilience-building challenges for young people to have a go at home. Encourage them to complete one a day.

For more ideas of how to build resilience in children and young people you can visit <https://resilienceframework.co.uk>

Resilience Challenges

The Challenge

Completed



1 Do something kind for your neighbour

2 Choreograph a dance routine and share it with your mates - the goofier the better!

3 Make a healthy meal for your family



4 Phone/video call someone from your family that doesn't live in your house

5 Help out with the household jobs at least 3 times a week

6 Play a game with someone older or younger than you



7 Try and learn another language using the Dulingo app

8 Complete the work sent home for you from school

9 Learn a new skill



10 Draw or write in a diary at least 3 times a week

11 Try a mindfulness exercise from youtube

12 Sing at least once a day for a week

13 Write a list of times when you have been resilient and kept going even when things were hard.

14 Design a poster of yourself 10 years from now or have a go at creating a c.v.

15 Read a book



Competition Time!

Liverpool Learning Partnership will be hosting a competition over March and April. We are asking young people to write a story or poem about how the people of Liverpool bounced back from a difficult time.

Send your entries to wsa@liverpoollearningpartnership.com and make sure to tell us your name and age. We will be tweeting about these stories as they come in. Winning stories and poems will be announced at the end of April. The top 5 entries will win some shopping vouchers (prizes announced when children are back in school). Good luck and get writing!

Advice for parents/carers

It's important to remember to take time to support yourself as well as your children during this time.

We will all be feeling a range of emotions at this time. Some of us are worried about our loved ones, anxious about paying bills or keeping our jobs, we may feel isolated and lonely and many of us are struggling with the uncertainty about what will happen over the next few weeks.

Try to take time to focus on yourself and how you feel. Do something positive like going for a walk, doing some exercise, reading a book or sorting out that cupboard that you've wanted to tackle for ages!

Whilst it is normal to feel worried, if you are starting to feel overwhelmed, it's important to acknowledge your feelings and speak to someone you trust, whether that's a friend, a family member, a teacher or a help-line such as the Samaritans



If you feel that you need support beyond this you can contact Talk Liverpool for further advice.



0151 228 2300 (Mon-Fri 8am-6pm)

talkliverpool@merseycare.nhs.uk

Focus on what's in your control

If you are feeling overwhelmed try to focus on 5 things that you can control. Write them down. For example you can't predict what will happen in a month's time, but you can plan a simple routine for you as a family to follow, plan your meals for the week and stay in touch with loved ones.

If news updates are making you anxious, consider limiting your checking of them to once or twice a day.



I'm worried about my child

If you are worried about your child's emotional wellbeing during this time here are a number of places where you can get advice and support.

We have also set up an online resource for you to look at. Please feel free to share it with your friends via Facebook and other social media platforms. To access it type the following into google search:

<https://wke.lt/w/s/Yd2pPk>



Alternatively you can scan this QR code:

How to get support

For all non-urgent queries concerning mental health and emotional wellbeing you can contact:

- Your GP
- Young Person's Advisory Service

Childline offer online support and can also be contacted by phone.



If your child is 14 or over they can also access an online support service called Kooth: www.kooth.com



If your child is in urgent need of mental health support, or is feeling suicidal you can take them to:

- Your GP
- Call the CAMHS Crisis Care Team 0151 2933577
- Take them to A&E

More service information can be found at <https://www.liverpoolcamhs.com/>

