



It's okay not to feel okay...

We're extremely grateful for all the support you've shown us as we've adapted to these new circumstances, and we want to reassure you that we're still here to support your child and your family in whatever way we can.

Supporting your child's wellbeing and positive mental health

You might be noticing signs of increasing anxiety in your child as they're spending more time indoors and outside of their normal routines. These might include, but are not limited to:

Ages 3-6 years: Regressing to behaviour they've outgrown, such as thumb-sucking or bedwetting, showing greater fear at being separated from you, tantrums, trouble sleeping.

Ages 7-10 years: Expressing sadness, anger or fear, sharing false information that they're hearing from their peers or seeing online, wanting to talk about coronavirus all the time, or not wanting to talk about the current situation at all, having trouble concentrating.

Preteen and teenagers: Angry, disruptive behaviour – this might include things like picking fights with you or with siblings, becoming afraid to leave the house, distancing themselves from their friends and family, exhibiting intense emotions but being unable to talk about what they're feeling.

What you can do to help your children:

- Maintain familiar routines as much as possible, or create new ones, especially if you must stay at home.
- Discuss the new coronavirus with your children in an honest way, using age-appropriate language. (you may like to download a new book "My Hero is you" which helps young children understand Covid19 virus at <https://youtu.be/8mBWE--T9yQ> or download the book with illustrations to read to your child yourself at <https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/my-hero-you>
- Support your children with at-home learning and make sure time is set aside for play.
- Help children find positive ways to express feelings such as fear and sadness. Sometimes engaging in a creative activity, such as playing or drawing, can help you with this process.
- Help children stay in contact with friends and family members through telephone and online channels.
- Make sure that your children have time away from screens every day and spend time doing off-line activities together. Do something creative: draw a picture, write a poem, build something. Bake a cake. Sing or dance, or play in your garden, if you have one.
- Try and ensure that your children do not spend significantly more time than usual on video games.
- Parents supporting SEND children during closure can access additional support services via Access to Education Birmingham SEN support services website <https://acesstoeducation.birmingham.gov.uk/parents/>
- Also resources to support with planning for returning to school, including social stories, and feelings charts can be found at: <https://acesstoeducation.birmingham.gov.uk/transition-support-for-return-to-primary-settings-post-covid-19/>
- Childline 24/7 helpline 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk
- NSPCC 24/7 helpline 0808 800 5000 www.nspcc.org.uk



If you have any concerns about how your child is coping or you need any other support from the school, please let us know by contacting school staff or Lucy Williams Head Teacher.

Fairway Pastoral Newsletter June 2020

Taking time to care for yourself:

Take a look at the Red Cross website www.redcross.org.uk which has some excellent tip and ideas on how you can help yourself and others who are struggling at the moment. They suggest we all take a C.A.L.M.E.R approach to stress and anxiety, as follows:

Consider your own needs and those closest to you. Be prepared that your own resilience will fluctuate day to day.

Acknowledge the source of stress and how this affects you. This may be spending too much time watching the news, too many messages forwarded to you etc. Turn off the TV and mute the app. Gather your information from trusted sources like World Health Organisation or NHS website.

Listen to how you are feeling physically and mentally – all being under one roof can make us frustrated and angry. This is normal so don't be too hard on yourself!

Manage ways to manage your stress and regain control. If you're working from home take breaks and set yourself a time to stop work and give yourself time to enjoy the rest of your day or evening. Turn off work devices.

Enable – what strategies have helped you in the past? Doing what you enjoy and find relaxing will help you keep a sense of normality and keep things in perspective. Take regular exercise.

Resource – Is input from friends and family important to you? Make sure to take time to call them or arrange a "Zoom" video call. Do you need some space alone to relax? Try running a warm bath or shower and then taking half an hour to relax and enjoy the privacy. Different people will need different resources but the key here is taking the time to discover what works for you

If you are experiencing worries, anxiety or your mental health is suffering, it's very important that you get the help and support that you need too. Keep in touch with people who care for you and know who you can contact for support if your mental health declines.

We have some useful self-help guides/leaflets available for you to access online. The guides are available for you to read online. The self-help guides can be accessed at www.bsmhft.nhs.uk or www.hacw.nhs.uk Simply visit their websites and select 'Self Help Guides':

Other help can be found at:

Samaritans 116 123 (24 hour helpline) www.samaritans.org.uk

Rethink Mental Illness 0300 5000 927 www.rethink.org

Mental Health Foundation www.mentalhealth.org.uk

MIND 0300 123 3393 or text 86463 www.mind.org.uk

Anxiety UK 08444 775 774 www.anxietyuk.org.uk

There is lots of helpful advice and tips at NHS Every Mind Matters <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-at-home-tips/>

Red Cross Free Coronavirus support line 0800 196 3651

And finally, be kind...

No one has been unaffected by Coronavirus crisis, whether it be your loved ones, friends, keyworkers, those working from home, those furloughed or those who are struggling to cope with overwhelming anxiety, we all need an understanding ear from time to time. Remember while the virus keeps us apart- kindness and compassion keep us together!



Coping with stress during the 2019-nCoV outbreak



It is normal to feel sad, stressed, confused, scared or angry during a crisis.

Talking to people you trust can help. Contact your friends and family.

If you must stay at home, maintain a healthy lifestyle - including proper diet, sleep, exercise and social contacts with loved ones at home and by email and phone with other family and friends.



Don't use smoking, alcohol or other drugs to deal with your emotions.

If you feel overwhelmed, talk to a health worker or counsellor. Have a plan, where to go to and how to seek help for physical and mental health needs if required.

Get the facts. Gather information that will help you accurately determine your risk so that you can take reasonable precautions. Find a credible source you can trust such as WHO website or, a local or state public health agency.



Limit worry and agitation by lessening the time you and your family spend watching or listening to media coverage that you perceive as upsetting.

Draw on skills you have used in the past that have helped you to manage previous life's adversities and use those skills to help you manage your emotions during the challenging time of this outbreak.

