

Dear Parent(s) & Carer(s),

Across the past few weeks our family and working lives have changed. Much is now different for us all, but hopefully only for a while. Adjustment takes time, so be mindful of how you're feeling. Remember, it is normal to move between feeling powerless and then motivated, feeling blue and with energy. However difficult and different your life may seem just now; we hope you can remember that and pay attention to how some things might remain the same.

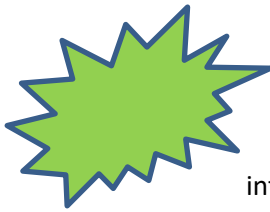
TIP: Try listing some of the things which remain the same for you and your family.

Our hope is this leaflet can offer some practical advice, comfort, and support in this time of change. In taking steps to look after ourselves we step into our 'power' to change what we can, in any way we can, one step at a time, with no judgement.

Below you will find some top tips, things you can do now. Then we have included some further resources and signposting for you to access.

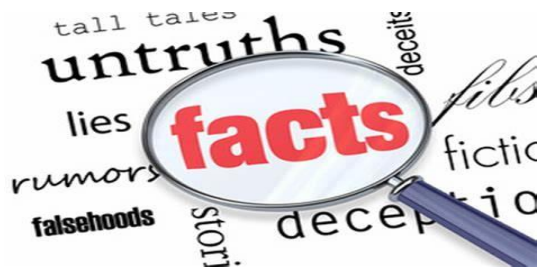
Top tips

- **Anxiety** is necessary and important emotion. It does not necessarily mean you have a mental illness. Time may feel tough times, remember to be kind to yourself, reach out online, you are doing the best you can do. NB: Even as a parent, talk with a health professional if this starts to get out of control
- **Facts vs Myths.** Only visit reputable sources of information, like the BBC, NHS, WHO, to get facts and limit social media 'facts'. This may cause you unnecessary worry.
- **Wearing many Hats.** At home the pressure to be a teacher, parent, carer, cleaner and entertainer, among others, may add to your anxiety. Please remember there is no such thing as a 'perfect parent' and that a 'good enough parent' most of the time, is better. Creating routine and structure at home will help you and your family. You can achieve this in small ways.
- **Talking about emotions is important.** Talking to your children about emotions such as sadness, grief, anger, loss, etc. is all important. It helps to stop their emotions from being bottled up and causing them distress later down the line. It is normal to feel lots of emotions, sometimes all in one day or at the same time. Emotions exist to tell us something. Treat them like information or think of them as the smoke detectors of your body, sensing what needs to be spoken about and/or done. There are lots of games and activities you can do with your child, check out the links over the page.
- **Lastly, 'Wellbeing'.** Take a deep breath, we will get through this together. Looking after your wellbeing can help reduce anxiety. Taking care of yourself in small ways can help you to care for others. These can be small things, taking that is a bubble bath, 5 mins deep breathing (in the bathroom on your own), or a 10 min to flick through your favourite magazine. By doing so, you can show your family, that looking after their selves is important too!



Facts vs Myths

- There is extensive information available about coronavirus, but some is more fact-based and helpful than others. You can find up to date NHS advice at- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>



- Make sure your aware of the up-to-date facts. Lots of myths get posted online and misinformation can cause you to worry unnecessarily. Look at the BBC for more information - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-51386894>
- The WHO are a world leading health organisation. They offer up to date facts, based in science. Their website also has a myth busting section, including a FREE WhatsApp chat function for people to get up to fate information and facts from! All the information is available on their website! <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/myth-busters>
- This is a great article on the many difficult conversations which may be happening in your home! <https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/how-talk-your-child-about-coronavirus-covid-19>
- [Youtube animation-“ Coronavirus explained for kids”](#) - A useful way to explain to children about coronavirus, in a fun way!
- Young Minds is a leading children’s mental health charity. The following link provides a useful article to help and support your family https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/talking-to-your-child-about-coronavirus/?dm_i=43MR,SZ24,RDZF,3HKE5,1

Managing Worry

- This following hyperlink offers a "[Guide to living with worry and anxiety amidst global uncertainty](#)". Simply, click on this link or search for this online, and it will take you to a PDF packed full of helpful information and advice if worries seem overwhelming at the minute! It is normal to worry; in fact some worries are necessary. It is when they start to negatively impact on our day to day life they can cause trouble! Well worth a look!



- <https://copingskillsforkids.com/calming-anxiety-> Some lovely ideas for helping children who are struggling with anxiety.
- This social emotional card game, The Game of Feelings, is a super handy tool for exploring feelings and emotions with children aged 8 to 12 years- <https://childhood101.com/helping-children-manage-big-emotions-our-emotions-card-game-printable/>
- Grounding has been shown to reduce anxiety, and here are six Different Types of Grounding Exercises for Anxiety & Intense Emotions- <http://www.tothegrowlery.com/blog/2017/4/18/six-different-types-of-grounding-exercises-for-anxiety-intense-emotions>
- You can make speaking about emotions fun, using a card game such as on <https://childhood101.com/which-emotion-am-i-exploring-emotions-guessing-game/>
- <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/coping-with-coronavirus-anxiety-2020031219183-> Harvard, a leading world university has some good advice about the Coronavirus.
- There are some useful smart phone/iPad/Tablet apps to use with your children. Try looking at these ones first: 'Whats Up', 'Clear Fear' and 'Worry Time', they are all designed to support young people's anxieties!

Looking After Your Well-being

- Please read https://emergingminds.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/COVID19_advice-for-parents-and-carers_20.3_.pdf, for advice for you and your family. Keeping some routine and structure is important, especially when feeling uncertain.
- https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/?dm_i=43MR,SZ24,RDZF,3HKEA,1 – MIND is a leading mental health charity and have some useful advice for your own emotional well-being.
- The NHS Five Ways to Wellbeing is an evidenced based model, which looks at 5 basic ways we can all engage in to improve our wellbeing <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve-mental-wellbeing/>. Please note, that due to current restrictions, some ideas may not be able to be used, such as meeting friends, but this could be done online, via telephone and/or using video calls.



- Eating a healthy balanced diet, can affect mental health, as well as physical health, and the <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/> can offer advice around eating well.
- This is a NHS guide, as lack of sleep may be an issue at this time, with many worries being on our mind. Sleep affects mental and physical health, and so this guide can offer some useful tips to empower you to make some positive sleep habits for you and your family. <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/how-to-get-to-sleep/>
- The NHS also have a list of things to do: <https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/category/mental-health/>

What you can do at home

- Would you like some further support regarding supporting your parenting? No problem, Solihull Approach has a free online course for parents of children aged 6 months to 19 years, and includes modules such as 'tuning/understanding into how your child feels' <https://solihullapproachparenting.com/online-course-for-parents/> use the code "APPLEJACKS" for free access if you live in Solihull , otherwise the courses are £39.
- <https://www.british-sign.co.uk/shop/product/introducing-british-sign-language-enrolment-2020/> – This is a free course being offered, aimed at helping to educate your child(ren) and also help others too! Win win!!
- Routine and structure are your friends, get up, get dressed, brush teeth, as normal, and explain to children, what will happen each day, set a timetable. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-51959957> has some great tips!
- Free maths lessons online via [mathsfactor.com](https://www.mathsfactor.com) (usually £2 a week), hosted by Carol Vorderman.
- Social stories are also a great way to help children process their emotions and to explain around coronavirus. The author states, "I have created this short book to support and reassure our children, under the age of 7, regarding the COVID-19. This book is an invitation for families to discuss the full range of emotions arising from the current situation". <https://www.mindheart.co/descargables> - take a look!



SIX WAYS TO PRACTICE GROUNDING

with anxiety + intense emotions



body

lay on the ground,
press your toes into
the floor, squeeze
playdough



5 senses

wear your favorite
sweatshirt, use
essential oils,
make a cup of tea



self- soothe

take a shower or
bath, find a
grounding object,
light a candle



observe

describe an object
in detail: color,
texture, shadow,
light, shapes



breathe

practice 4-7-8
breathing: inhale
to 4, hold for 7,
exhale to 8



distract

find all the square
or green objects in
the room, count by
7s, say the date

 THE GROWLERY