

Resources for schools, parents and carers to support the mental well-being of children and young people during the coronavirus pandemic and school shutdown.

22nd March 2020

Schools, colleges and preschools play a vital role in supporting the mental well-being of children and young people in normal times. They provide structure and security and have oversight of young people's emotional needs.

During the coronavirus pandemic schools have been asked to shut down for most pupils to reduce the spread of the virus. Their closure is a 'double blow' to the work of schools supporting the mental well-being of children and young people. Firstly, many families and young people will be deeply anxious about the coronavirus pandemic itself-which we would regard as a 'critical incident' needing mental health support. Secondly, children and young people will no longer be in their school or setting to receive the support they would typically receive when our communities face a critical incident.

Schools and other settings may be able to find alternative ways to support young people's anxiety and mental health while they are self-isolating, through phone calls, letters home, websites and social media. Some schools also have access to online learning platforms.

This document contains many resources that can be used to support children and families during the school closure. The focus is on supporting children's mental health. For younger children, the resources offered are a simple explanations about coronavirus as well as practical things to do during school or preschool closure. For older children and young people, we have included more resources to support mental health and well-being. We have also included resources to support the well-being of school staff and parents during the school closure.

It is hoped that schools can distribute this document, or individual resources, to parents either by email or on the online learning platforms but it could also be sent directly to parents or young people, or the resources printed out and sent as a 'hard copy'.

We have also tried to divide these resources into age ranges. Because this is quite an extensive list, we have also tried to identify how a resource may be used and say what type of resource it is (website, document, app). Before using a resource, you should check to see if it is age-appropriate and in line with the guidance given by the NHS, which may change over the course of the pandemic.

Early years/foundation stage

Social story PDF. From ELSA support. An excellent resource for younger children, or those with additional needs, about coronavirus using a social stories format. It will

help young people or those with additional needs to understand the troubling situation.

<https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Childrens-story-about-coronavirus.pdf#>

YouTube video. A Dr Panda video, originating from China, explaining viruses and protective measures, it discusses handwashing and social distancing aimed at 3-8-year-olds. Warning: it emphasises face mask-wearing when out, which is not current guidance from the NHS, otherwise content is suitable for the UK.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PKUICIFE45M>

Webpage. A webpage from the Early Years' Alliance aimed at early years practitioners, giving practical advice around coronavirus and nursery closure.

<https://www.eyalliance.org.uk/coronavirus-info-for-nurseries>

Downloadable Resource. Twinkl has advice for schools and early years settings as well as home learning packs for the EYFS. Many free resources can be downloaded; however, some resources are linked to a subscription, which costs about £6 a month. Twinkl is allowing free downloads for many of their coronavirus related products, including home learning packs. You will need to set up an account which is free to do.

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resources/home-early-years/early-years-class-management/school-closure-home-learning-classroom-management-eyfs-early-years>

Downloadable Resource Twinkl has also completed an interactive timetable for three and four-year-olds when at home during preschool closures.

https://www.twinkl.com/resource/home-learning-plan-for-ages-3-4-t-p-775?sign_in=1

Book. *Wemberly Worried* by Kevin Henks. A book aimed at 4-8-year-olds about anxiety and worry, beautifully illustrated. Available from libraries or Amazon (£5.39 new)

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Wemberly-Worried-Kevin-Henkes/dp/0061857769>

Book. *The Colour Monster* by Anna Llenas. A book aimed at 4 to 8-year-olds, which can be used to explore young children's feelings. A pop-up version and a colour monster activity book are also available. From libraries or Amazon (£5.35 new)

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Anna-Llenas/e/B00OA36KZC/ref=dp_byline_cont_book_1

Book. *Yoga babies* by Ferne Cotton (yes, that one!). A book aimed at 3 to 6-year-olds developing mindfulness practices for very young children. Great fun. Available from libraries or Amazon (£3.99 new)

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Yoga-Babies-Fearne-Cotton/dp/1783446595/>

Book. *Little Boat* by Taro Gomi. A book aimed at the under threes. A little boat must stay calm even when the seas are choppy. A positive message to encourage

confidence. By the same author is *Little Truck*, a book to promote independence. Available from libraries or Amazon (£5.39)

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Little-Boat-Taro-Gomi/dp/1452163014/>

Key stage 1

Poster. A poster that can be printed out about handwashing. Young children need to have a sense of control over the virus. Handwashing, not only promotes defence against the infection but also enhances children's mental well-being.

<https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/ELEPHANT-HAND-WASHING-2.pdf>

Social Story PDF. A social story for slightly older children, which was designed for children with autism, you will need to register on the website, which is free to do.

<https://littlepuddins.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/The-Corona-Virus-Free-Printable-Updated-2-The-Autism-Educator-.pdf>

YouTube Video. A video explaining coronavirus for children in Key Stage 1, the emphasis is on information and personal hygiene:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=31&v=OPsY-JLqaXM&feature=emb_logo

Downloadable Resource. As mentioned above, Twinkl has produced a range of home learning pack for when schools are closed, and this pack is aimed at children in year two and also contains useful advice for parents on how to deliver the lesson material.

<https://www.twinkl.com/resource/year-2-school-closure-home-learning-resource-pack-t-e-2549911>

Book. *I Am Peace (A Book Of Mindfulness)* by Susan Verde and Peter Reynolds. A book aimed at 6-8-year-olds, but an excellent read for adults as well. It uses practical mindfulness tools to deal with worry and anxiety. Available from libraries and Amazon (£7.53 new hardcover)

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/I-Am-Peace-Book-Mindfulness/dp/141972701X/>

Podcast. Peace Out, Short stories that help children calm down and relax.

<https://bedtime.fm/peaceout>

Webpage. Jigsaw's are sharing this link which provide the stories (audio files) and the Calm Me times (audio files) from two of the sessions. These stories align with the Jigsaw PSHE Dreams and Goals and Healthy Me Puzzles and are suitable for children aged 5+.

<https://families.jigsawpshe.com/stuck-at-home/> Password: home

Key stage 2

YouTube Video. Brain Pop Video. This is an excellent clip for primary aged children, explaining the virus and how to stay healthy.

<https://www.brainpop.com/health/diseasesinjuriesandconditions/coronavirus/>

Downloadable Resource. Two free Twinkl resources, the first is a daily news PowerPoint explaining school closure around the coronavirus and looks at children's emotional reaction to this. The second is a PowerPoint to support children in key stage 2 who may be upset and anxious about content in the news

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/uks2-what-is-coronavirus-daily-news-powerpoint-with-teacher-guidance-t-wn-1112>

<https://www.twinkl.com/resource/t2-p-288-what-to-do-if-you-are-upset-by-the-news-powerpoint>

App. Chill Panda is an app that helps children learn to relax and manage their worries. The app suggests simple tasks to suit your state of mind, such as breathing techniques and light exercise.

It can be downloaded from the App Store for free

<https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/chill-panda-calm-your-mind/id1184256407>

or from Google play

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.onteca.panda&hl=en_GB

Book. *Potter's Boy* by Tony Milton. Book aimed at 9 to 12-year-olds a story of a boy who wants to be a warrior but has an underlying theme of mindfulness. Available from libraries or Amazon (£4)

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Potters-Boy-Tony-Mitton/dp/1910989347/>

Key stage 3 and 4

Webpage. The Young Minds webpage, designed for young people to access, aimed specifically at those young people who may be anxious about coronavirus. There is good interactive content; there is a link to further information about looking after your mental health while self-isolating

<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/what-to-do-if-you-re-anxious-about-coronavirus/>

YouTube Video. From the popular Youtuber 'Its ok to be smart'. A good video for teens explaining the need for social isolation focused on the science of epidemiology

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fgBla7RepXU&t=337s>

Webpage. A webpage aimed at teens, from Teen Vogue, which addresses anxiety and gives advice about reducing worry and anxiety.

<https://www.teenvogue.com/story/coronavirus-anxiety>

Website. Teentips is an American website aimed at supporting parents of teenagers. This page focuses on supporting teens during a school closure caused by coronavirus:

<https://www.teentips.co.uk/news/schools-out-helping-stressed-parents-through-a-potential-school-shutdown-due-to-coronavirus/>

Downloadable Resource. Twinkl have produced a free Key Stage 3 school closure home learning resource pack for the coronavirus crisis. As well as Maths, English and Science activities there are also several well-being activities including mindfulness and some cognitive therapy approaches

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/ks3-school-closure-home-learning-resource-pack-t-p-772>

App. Self-help for Anxiety Management (SAM) is an app developed by the University of the West of England (UWE) for young people experiencing anxiety. It provides a symptom tracker, educational articles and external links as well as relaxation techniques and additional coping skills and practice for managing anxiety.

It can be downloaded from the Apple store:

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/self-help-for-anxiety-management/id666767947>

or Google play

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.uwe.myoxygen&hl=en>

App. Meetwo is an app, recommended by the NHS, that provides a safe and secure forum for teenagers wanting to discuss any issues affecting their lives. Young people can get anonymous advice from experts or other teenagers.

Apple Store download

<https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/meetwo/id1192707038>

Google Play download

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.engagecraft.meetwo&hl=en_GB

Webpage. From YR media. Podcasts videos and more, with a strong mental health content. Journalism by teens for teens including the fabulous *Adult-ish* pod cast. Some material here is only suitable for older teens and should be used with caution.

<https://yr.media/>

For schools

PDF Document. Teacher and support staff's well-being is essential when we expect the team to continue to work through the crisis and look after children and young people's mental health needs. Young minds have produced a PDF document to support teachers' well-being:

<https://youngminds.org.uk/resources/school-resources/wellbeing-tips-for-school-staff/>

PDF Document. Information from Hong Kong MIND, with advice to adults on how to maintain your mental well-being during the coronavirus outbreak. A PDF booklet

<https://www.mind.org.hk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/ResponseCoronavirusENG6.2.2020-.pdf>

Webpage. an excellent blog post from educational psychologist Chris Moore about managing stress and self-care during the coronavirus crisis

<https://www.epinsight.com/post/managing-stress-self-care-during-the-coronavirus-crisis>

App. *A Mind Of My Own* is a company that produce a variety of apps to support young people, especially for those with a social worker. It can be useful in gaining young people's views.

<https://mindofmyown.org.uk/our-apps/for-young-people/>

PDF Document. The British Psychological Society (bps) has produced a range of ideas for both schools and parents

<https://www.bps.org.uk/sites/www.bps.org.uk/files/Policy/Policy%20-%20Files/Coronavirus%20and%20UK%20schools%20closures%20-%20support%20and%20advice.pdf>

Website. An American website has a handy PDF download with tips for social distancing quarantine and isolation during an infectious disease outbreak:

<https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/sma14-4894.pdf>

For Parents

Website. A BBC news page with advice for parents with some useful information about supporting children's mental health

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-51959957>

Website. 3P Psychologies is website from America which advises how parents can support and survive children while self-isolating. Several fun projects, as well as sound advice about children's anxiety:

<https://3pppsychologies.com/2020/03/13/resources-48-covid-19-survival-tips-for-parents-10-activities-for-home/>

Website. Young Minds have also produced resources for parents that support children's anxiety around Covid 19

<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/talking-to-your-child-about-coronavirus/>

Website. Another American website, the Centre for Disease Control and Protection, has an excellent webpage on managing anxiety and stress with some specific advice for parents of children who may be experiencing stress.

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fabout%2F coping.html

PDF Document. The British Psychological Society have produced advice for parents about how to talk to children around coronavirus

<https://www.bps.org.uk/sites/www.bps.org.uk/files/Policy/Policy%20-%20Files/Coronavirus%20and%20UK%20schools%20closures%20-%20support%20and%20advice.pdf>

Website. From Hey Sigmund! This is an excellent website for parents/carers containing the latest psychological news and research. The following two pages focus on understanding children's anxiety around traumatic events and a guide to parents about how developing children experience anxiety and fear.

<https://www.heysigmund.com/anxiety-in-children-after-world-trauma/>

<https://www.heysigmund.com/age-by-age-guide-to-fears>

Website. Talking about world trauma with kids- another great article from Hey Sigmund!

<https://www.heysigmund.com/how-to-talk-to-kids-and-teens-about-world-trauma/>

Website. The Royal College of psychiatry has an excellent web page for parents and carers on childhood anxiety

<https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mental-health/parents-and-young-people/information-for-parents-and-carers/worries-and-anxieties---helping-children-to-cope-for-parents-and-carers>

This is a first attempt to produce resources to be shared in our community. We intend to update this weekly. If you have come across a good resource to support

children's mental health that can be shared with our schools, preschools and colleges and sixth forms please send to;

KSaunders2@Swindon.gov.uk