

Useful Links...

Some helpful resources relating to maintaining mental well-being in the current circumstances, with concerns about coronavirus:

British Psychological Society guidance:
<https://www.bps.org.uk/news-and-policy/talking-children-about-coronavirus>

Covibook – an interactive resource designed to support and reassure children aged 7 and under, designed to help children explain and draw the emotions that they might be experiencing during the pandemic: <https://www.mindheart.co/descargables>

Mencap (Association for those with a learning disability) - Easy Read guide to Coronavirus: <https://www.mencap.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-03/Information%20about%20Coronavirus%20ER%20SS2.pdf>

National Autistic Society – guidance and helpline for parents', young people and staff: [https://www.autism.org.uk/services/nas-schools/vanguard/news/2020/march/coronavirus-\(covid-19\)-advice.aspx](https://www.autism.org.uk/services/nas-schools/vanguard/news/2020/march/coronavirus-(covid-19)-advice.aspx)

Contact Us

Please get in touch for more information about our services

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Just Psychology CIC

Just Psychology CIC is a social enterprise.

We are a multidisciplinary group of professionals providing services to address the psychological and mental health needs of children, adults and families with particular emphasis on cultural diversity, cultural competence and social justice.



Trafford Sunrise

Supporting children with their emotional health and wellbeing



Coronavirus and Emotional Wellbeing

For parents of children aged 5-12

Firstly, it's really understandable if you and your family are feeling anxious.

Anxiety is a normal response to a perceived threat and uncertainty.

This guide lists some of the things you can do so that worry does not become overwhelming.

When you find the things that work for you build them into your routine as a part of your day.

Signs that your child may be feeling anxious:

Children can react in different ways when they are feeling worried. Younger children can revert to behaving in ways that they did when they were at an earlier developmental stage.

Children can also feel that they are responsible for things that they cannot control so it is helpful to let them know that it is an adult's job to keep them safe.

Your child may also be more likely to seek out close contact with you for reassurance. Try to let them do this as it will be reassuring.

What parents can do to help children and young people to manage their anxiety:

- Communicate clearly about the coronavirus (see below some ways you could put things if it's hard to know what to say). When you are answering their questions, reassure them. It's ok to say you don't know.



- Establish a routine. Your daily routine is likely to have changed quite a bit. It can be helpful to think as a family about building a new routine. Think of ways of including your children's ideas. Routine helps us to manage uncertainty.
- Let children get in touch with friends via text/phone/social media (if they are allowed to use social media)
- Let children know they can talk to you and trusted others
- Be conscious of the conversations that you have about the coronavirus. It can be helpful to show children and young people, by the way you behave, that worries can be managed.



Take opportunities to manage worries together

- Get some fresh air - go for a walk (while maintaining the advised social distance and adhering to Government guidance)
- Have some fun – dancing to music/ cooking/baking/drawing
- Make time to play (play helps children process their feelings)
- Make time to chat – It can be easier to do this while you are doing an activity

Practice some relaxation:

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/healthy-living/preventing-falls/fear-and-anxiety-about-falling/relaxation-techniques>

Try to get a good night's sleep

- Get into a bedtime routine
- Relax before bedtime
- Limit screens at least thirty minutes before bedtime
- Set regular bedtimes
- Try not to let older children nap. If they do, keep it short.
- Make sure they feel safe at night-talk to your child about what would help e.g. a night light
- A quiet, dimly lit room which is not too hot or too cold is best to fall asleep in
- Go outside (keep in mind the Government guidelines). Exposure to natural light helps us to sleep

Try to stay in the present moment

- A free app to help you to practise this (there are exercises for children, young people and adults)
<https://www.smilingmind.com.au/smiling-mind-app>
- Eat healthily (it's ok to have an occasional treat as this can be taking care of yourself too!)
- Connect with loved ones via social media e.g. Facetime/Skype/ Whatsapp/Zoom

There are lots of ideas about how children and young people can look after their well-being here:

<https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/self-care/>

Managing conflict

Being together for longer periods means that it is likely that we will fight with each other (this is normal). Because you feel more worried at this time you are more likely to be:

- Stressed
- Hypervigilant (very aware)
- On edge

This means you may be more likely to react suddenly in situations. Your friends and family are likely to be feeling the same. Being aware of this can help. Before you respond to people asking you things, notice how you are feeling and take a moment to take a few deep breaths.

Your children are likely to be feeling the same way. Here are some tips on avoiding fights:

- Praise the behaviour that you want to see
- Avoid contentious issues
- Pick your battles



Here are some helpful tips on making up:

- Model empathy for each other e.g. 'I can see that's frustrating'
- Here is a video that illustrates empathy: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw>
- Model problem solving

Check if the solution to the conflict is:

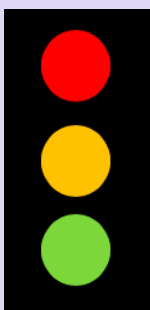
- Is it Fair?
- Is it Safe?
- Is it Possible? (Can we do it?)



Managing conflict

How to support children to have the skills to manage conflict

Tip: Do this when everyone is feeling calm and not when they are fighting or too soon after a fight



When your child is calm teach them to do this. Then they can use it when they are feeling annoyed. We learn best when we are calm.

- Close your eyes.
- Picture a traffic light that is red.
- Take three deep slow belly breaths.
- Then the light turns orange: Think- Do I need an adult's help with this problem?
- If the answer is yes get an adult's help.
- If the answer is no, try to solve the problem yourself. If it doesn't work, walk away

- * In order to help children develop problem solving skills, you can **create a jar of common ways to solve problems** with post-its with them (when everyone is feeling calm).
- * You could also help them to develop problem solving skills by **creating a wheel of solutions for solving fights.**

Prize Wheel

Your children could make a wheel - Here is a video on Youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6XVbVivnif0>

(This is not a video for a wheel of solutions, but it will show you one example of how to make a wheel. We do not endorse the maker of the video in any way.)

When children fight, they could take three deep, slow belly breaths and then spin the wheel to find a solution to their problem



Here are some solutions that they could put on the wheel of solutions:

- Play with someone else or by yourself
- Walk away and cool off
- Talk to a grown up
- Count to ten
- Take a deep breath – Use kind words and a friendly voice
- Talk about it together to work it out
- Write down what you think would help
- Draw what you think would help
- Take turns
- Share

Using child-friendly language to explain the coronavirus



- Coronavirus/COVID19 is a sort of flu
- It can make you feel sick. When people get it, they feel hot and cold and have a cough.
- You can keep safe from coronavirus by washing your hands with soap and hot water

- Wash your hands before you eat or go to the toilet
- Wash your hands if you sneeze or blow your nose or touch your mouth
- Cover your mouth with your elbow if you cough or sneeze
- If you are not feeling well, tell an adult



- Instead of giving a friend a high five or hugging them say 'hi' when you meet them.
- Your school is closed for a while. This will help keep lots of people well.
- Your teachers will let your parents know when you can go back to school
- It is the adults' job to keep you safe.

Taking care of yourself

What can support you to manage your own anxiety?

- Many of the same things that will help your children but also:
- Acknowledge that this is an uncertain time and it is normal to feel worried or stressed
- Try to accept that things don't feel normal
- Be kind to yourself
- Do something you enjoy
- Give yourself a moment to have a cuppa (cup of tea)
- Talk to someone you trust about how you are doing
- Decide how many times a day you need to see the news/follow social media e.g. Check in with the news once in the morning and then once in the evening.

- As there is a lot of fear mongering out there, make sure you are getting your information from sources that are well-known for reliable reporting
e.g. BBC/ Broadsheet Newspapers/World Health Organisation



Do you feel safe at home?

As a parent, importantly, if you find that you are at home with someone (anyone - either a partner or a young person) who is treating you in a way that makes you feel unsafe or threatened or being verbally or physically abusive in any way contact:

Trafford Domestic Abuse Services (TDAS)
(These contact details are accessible during the coronavirus crisis):

<https://www.tdas.org.uk>

07534 066 029

Or

helpline@womensaid.org.uk

<https://chat.womensaid.org.uk>

If you are in immediate danger, contact the police on 999.