

Support for children, young people and school staff during Coronavirus

With children:

Coronavirus for young children – booklet produced by Manuela Molina

<https://www.mindheart.co/descargables>

A message from the author

Dear families and educator all over the world,

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. It is important to point out that this resource does not seek to be a source of scientific information, but rather a tool based on fantasy. My recommendation is to print this material so children can draw on it. Remember that emotions are processed through repetitive play and stories read multiple times. Share COVIBOOK and help ease kiddo's anxiety all over the world.

Video, useful for Y3 – Y7

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

Talking to children:

Some useful information about what to say to children re Covid-19 from Norway, can be adapted

<https://krisepsykologi.no/what-can-we-say-to-children-about-coronavirus/>

Advice for adults talking to children about coronavirus from the British Psychological Society

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

Well-being:

BBC mental wellbeing article, Coronavirus: How to protect your mental health

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-51873799>

Mind guidance Managing our Mental Health and Staying Well during Virus outbreak

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

Blog post from Educational Psychology insight around self-care

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

Advice for parents

Helping children manage in unsettling times

The Coronavirus outbreak has led to a high degree of worry, uncertainty and concern. The issue has been very present in the news, and all adults and children will have some degree of awareness of events so far, and may have had their lives disrupted.

During these times both children and adults can potentially feel anxious and unsure about their safety. Alongside school, parents can help provide opportunities where feelings can be discussed within a safe context, as well as maintaining a sense of normality, routine and calm. Supporting children will enable them to process and manage their feelings and build resilience.

The following suggestions may be helpful:

1. **Reassure children that they are safe:** Children will need to be reassured regularly they are safe, and that adults will faithfully try to keep them safe.
2. **Let children know that it is alright to be upset:** Tell children all feelings are ok, but it is important to still behave in a polite and respectful way to others.
3. **Maintain a normal routine:** Set up a work/leisure/exercise routine for students at home. Make extra time to listen to what your children need to tell you.
4. **Place an emphasis on resilience and strengths:** Focus on the child's skills, in terms of their daily life. Help them see they have many strengths to help them cope if feeling anxious or upset.
5. **Look for opportunities to help others:** Acts of benevolence, charity and humanity help to restore positivity about the world.
6. **Provide opportunities for children to be honest about their feelings:** Sharing worries or feelings of upset with other family members reduces a sense of vulnerability and isolation, raises optimism and self-esteem. Checking in with your children to see if they have any worries can help them start these conversations.
7. **Provide opportunities for physical exercise:** Exercise is valuable in developing natural chemicals in the brain to help us cope with feelings such as shock and worry.
8. **Communicate any concerns with school:** If you have any worries or concerns about your child's emotional behaviour please do let the school know.
9. **Look after yourself:** A time of stress can mean less energy and more potential for illness for you, as well as others. So please take care of yourself.

School is closed

School is closed because of the Coronavirus.

Coronavirus can pass from one person to another.

Coronavirus can pass more in big groups.

It is best to NOT be in a big group.

We have big groups at school.

So school is closed.

I will stay home for many days.

My family and my teachers want me to be safe.

When it is safe, I can be in big groups again.

When it is safe, school will be open again.

Social story from @ZonesofReg – in case of closure



<https://www.epinsight.com> | Twitter - @EPinsight

MANAGING STRESS: SELF-CARE DURING THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

Prioritise

Break up the stress into smaller and more manageable chunks.

- Make "To do" lists - divide items into Must vs Should vs Could.
- Forgive yourself if you don't achieve something - priorities can change quickly.

Focus

Disrupt negative thinking by paying attention to the present moment.

- Look at and listen to the sights and sounds in the garden or driveway.
- Notice how your feet hit the floor when walking from room to room.
- Tune in to the smell and texture of your food as you eat.

Routine

Minimise the impact of stress by maintaining structure and routine.

- Keep doing things which are familiar and meaningful.
- New decorating projects and clear-outs can give you goals to work towards.
- Plan a new meal, start a new book or try different genres for movie nights.

Connect

Maintain support networks to promote belonging, safety and emotional regulation.

- Get in touch with friends or family that you haven't spoken to in a while.
- Use text, email, video chats or letters to check in and share news/gossip.
- Prioritize positive social media and avoid too much news coverage.

Breathe

Take control of your breathing to stifle panic.

Slow and rhythmic breathing in and out.

Consider movement & vocalisations from the Breath-

Body-Mind approach: <https://tinyurl.com/tk4nkq4>

Exercise

Find creative ways of being active when indoors.

- Perform star jumps, lunges, planks and chair/wall push-ups during TV adverts.
- Learn a dance routine from YouTube.
- Schedule toning and bodyweight exercises each day: <https://tinyurl.com/y57d6cf7>

Gratitude

Take more notice of the pleasures in life.

- Thank others for what they do and say more often.
- Get into the habit of listing or reflecting on three good things which you are grateful for each day.

