

Information to support families during establishment closures in response to COVID-19 (With thanks to the Association of Principal Educational Psychologists in Scotland)

Talking to children about coronavirus

Children will have heard about coronavirus and it is important that they hear the key messages from someone they trust such as yourself. Below are some tips to help you to talk to them.

- Listen to your child's concerns and ensure you acknowledge their worries.
- Focus on answering your child's questions with factual information where you can.
- It is ok to say that you don't know the answer to questions but that you can try and find out for them.
- Remember children learn from your response so try and stay calm when you are answering their questions.
- Try and give practical guidance when you can, e.g. how to wash hands.

(Adapted from British Psychological Society)

Take care of yourself

During this time you may have your own worries and feel stress. This is normal and it is important that you acknowledge your own feelings. Some other tips for self-care are:

- Get out in the fresh air and exercise when you can.
- Focus on practical things you can control, e.g. washing your hands
- Maintain connection with others through calls, texts, internet.
- Build in daily stress release activities.
- If you do stressed and anxious – take time and be kind to yourself.

Ideas for structuring your child's day

Although it may be tempting to forget about routines and structure during this time, it can help children and young people feel safe during periods of uncertainty when there is some structure and routine. Ideas for supporting this include:

- Set times for going to bed and getting up in the morning where possible.
- Build in time for fresh air and exercise.
- Create a variety of activities such as games, art activities, music, play, garden activities and reading.
- Make a daily plan with your child and share them with your child the night before so they know what to expect. Place this somewhere your child can see it.
- Limit their time on electronic devices where possible.
- Respect each other's privacy and give space where you can.
- Take time to review the day's activities to help them get a sense of accomplishment.

Psychological Services

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Helpful Websites

- <https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/what-to-do-if-you-re-anxious-about-coronavirus/>
- Young Scot have many sections available to help. See below for hints and tips if you are worried about Coronavirus <https://young.scot/get-informed/national/tips-on-how-to-deal-with-the-coronavirus-outbreak>
- <https://www.itv.com/news/central/2020-03-17/self-isolation-protecting-your-mental-health-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/>
- <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/#collapse5c8f>
- <https://www.actionforhappiness.org>
- <https://theautismeducator.ie/2020/03/11/corona-virus-social-story/>

COPING CALENDAR: KEEP CALM. STAY WISE. BE KIND

30 actions to look after ourselves and each other as we face this global crisis together. Please use & share 🙌

1 Make a plan to help you keep calm and stay in contact	2 Enjoy washing your hands. Remember all they do for you!	3 Write down ten things you feel grateful for in life and why	4 Stay hydrated, eat healthy food and boost your immune system	5 Get active. Even if you're stuck indoors, move & stretch	6 Contact a neighbour or friend and offer to help them	7 Share what you are feeling and be willing to ask for help
8 Take five minutes to sit still and breathe. Repeat regularly	9 Call a loved one to catch up and really listen to them	10 Get good sleep. No screens before bed or when waking up	11 Notice five things that are beautiful in the world around you	12 Immerse yourself in a new book, TV show or podcast	13 Respond positively to everyone you interact with	14 Play a game that you enjoyed when you were younger
15 Make some progress on a project that matters to you	16 Rediscover your favourite music that really lifts your spirits	17 Learn something new or do something creative	18 Find a fun way to do an extra 15 minutes of physical activity	19 Do three acts of kindness to help others, however small	20 Make time for self-care. Do something kind for yourself	21 Send a letter or message to someone you can't be with
22 Find positive stories in the news and share these with others	23 Have a tech-free day. Stop scrolling and turn off the news	24 Put your worries into perspective and try to let them go	25 Look for the good in others and notice their strengths	26 Take a small step towards an important goal	27 Thank three people you're grateful to and tell them why	28 Make a plan to meet up with others again later in the year
29 Connect with nature. Breathe and notice life continuing	30 Remember that all feelings and situations pass in time	 “ Everything can be taken from us but one thing: the freedom to choose our attitude in any given set of circumstances ” ~ Viktor Frankl				

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www.actionforhappiness.org

Find out more about the Ten Keys to Happier Living, including books, guides, posters and more here: www.actionforhappiness.org/10-keys