

# Information and Support for parents and families

This resource has been put together because we recognise that whilst the current situation regarding Covid-19 has brought about a lot of changes which have caused difficulties and challenges for everyone in society, having children at home brings about additional challenges which can increase pressures on parents and families. We hope that the information contained within this booklet helps to answer some questions you might have during this time, as well as provide some fun and distraction to events going on outside of your home. We have also included contact details for various services which might be of use to you and your family should you need them. If there is anything which you would like to see added to this booklet, then please feel free to contact us and we will try to have it included.

Thanks David Croft RES Team [david.croft@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:david.croft@leeds.gov.uk)



## **Looking after your emotional health and wellbeing**

This is a time when feelings of stress and anxiety are understandably higher than they might be on an ordinary day and it is important to remember that these feelings are normal and that you are not alone in feeling them.

The BBC has put together a great resource on how to manage stress and anxiety during this challenging and uncertain time which can be found here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-51873799> and includes the following advice:

- try to limit the amount of news you watch and read and only use trusted sources such as the NHS or government websites.
- Try to take a rest from social media and mute subjects that you feel are causing more anxiety.
- Keep in touch with people and along with developing some routine, set aside some time to contact friends and family

The following links and information provided by Leeds Educational Psychology Service:

**Smiling Mind** is a great mindfulness app/website for the whole family (Age 7+). Many children use Smiling Mind in class as a way to help calm and focus their brains and bodies <https://www.smilingmind.com.au/>

[Government guidance on mental health and wellbeing](#)

[Mind Guidance – Coronavirus and your wellbeing](#)

[Every Mind Matters – Coronavirus and mental wellbeing](#)

[Guidance from the Samaritans](#)

[MindWell – Mental health information for Leeds](#)

[Relate's](#) website has a number of resources for you and your relationships with others [here](#) including a helpful section on arguments

The [Family Rights Group](#) have put together information for families that have a child in the care system which can be found [here](#).



Caring Dads in Leeds have put together some resources for dads looking at safe behaviours, the links for which can be found below but also on their [YouTube](#) and [Twitter](#) pages:

Caring Dads Quick Clips Introduction - <https://youtu.be/WQ8U1ytQYTM>

Time Out - <https://youtu.be/FFLGXyxOvw0>

Calming Exercises 1 - <https://youtu.be/PXh4s6reZbU>

Calming Exercises 2 - [https://youtu.be/E1\\_ENI\\_33o0](https://youtu.be/E1_ENI_33o0)

Children and DV - <https://youtu.be/ZCXTVhV41Is>

Emotions - <https://youtu.be/71NFP643lr0>

Importance of Play - <https://youtu.be/5O2dL3UKD1U>

Self-Talk - <https://youtu.be/zrEN97JwWAo>



### Tips for managing behaviour

UNICEF have suggested creating new routines given that our usual routines around school and work have significantly changed. Try to get up, wash, get dressed and eat breakfast as normal and perhaps go for your walk or exercise before starting the day, this way you might feel like you are close to your normal routines of doing the school run or going to work.

They have also provided some [tips for parenting](#) which you might find useful, things such as building some one on one time with each of your children. This doesn't have to be a long time, as long as you feel appropriate, and can be something your child looks forward to on a daily basis. Trying to keep positive and provide positive instructions, giving lots of praise when they get it right. There are tips for responding to bad behaviour, managing your own stress levels, and talking with your children about COVID-19.

### Tips for Managing anger

**It is important to let anger out in ways that will not hurt people or things. OK ways are:**

Saying "I am angry because..."

Punching a ball or pillow.

Yelling into a pillow or in the shower.

Stamp your feet or clap your hands.

Writing an angry letter and tearing it up when you are done.

Writing in a book/diary

Scribbling with a red crayon on an old newspaper (hard!) scrunching it into a ball and throw it at a wall or bin.

Going for a walk.

Going to your bedroom.

There are other ways of managing anger. Can you think of any?



### **Managing conflict:**

#### **DO**

- 1: Take a step back and take a deep breath before going any further, continue to take deep breaths as you talk to your child
- 2: Check your voice levels – speak softly
- 3: Check the pace of your speech, make sure you are being understood
- 4: Make eye contact, look at your child directly
- 5: Sit/stand so you are eye level with your child

6: Check your body language. Appear non- threatening. Use a relaxed posture

7: Take your time to think about what your child is saying before you respond

7: Listen to what your child is saying. Don't interrupt, let them have their say

8: Tell your child how you feel and what it is you are asking of them

9: Give each other space and time to calm down before talking. Choose your battles.

#### **DON'T**

1: Don't jump into an argument when you're too heated to communicate calmly or rationally

2: Don't Shout or raise your voice

3: Don't talk too fast. You want to be able to think about what you are saying before you say it. And you want your child to be able to understand you

4: Don't continuously look down or away from your child; this is non - assertive behaviour

5: Don't Hover above or sit below your child – this sends a message of inequality

6: Don't Point your finger at your child, or ball your fists

7: Don't get in your child's face or use body language that is in anyway intimidating or threatening

8: Don't Interrupt or react defensively to what you think your child is saying without taking the time to really hear what they are saying to you

9: Don't blame your child for everything without recognising their feelings

10: Don't use words like always or never

11: Use you messages. Telling your child what is wrong with them instead of what is bothering you

12: Don't bring up all the other problems you have had with your child in the past. Throw the past in your child's face



### **Things to do online**

Though your kids might not thank you, there is a full list of free online daily classes for kids at [skintdad.co.uk](http://skintdad.co.uk) and for older children there are free revision resources for 11+, GCSE and A-Level students at [eparenting.co.uk](http://eparenting.co.uk) along with a whole range of fun activities and resources to keep them occupied.

Similarly, Scholastic have made a range of home learning packs for all ages available for free [here](#)

At 9am each day, Joe Wicks is offering a free PE session on [Youtube](#) on his [Youtube channel](#)



### **Things to do offline**

Contact child's school to arrange for school work

Make meal times fun by having an indoor picnic with your child/children. "Put a blanket on the floor"

Play I spy with your child/children

Play board games/cards with your child/children

Have a movie night/day together. Let the children chose a DVD to watch, taking turns to choose.

Have a toy hunt. "Hide various toys around the house and get your children to go and find them"

Use your recycling stuff to build models using cellotape or PVA glue

If you have a garden use this space. Get the children involves in tidying up the garden. Play garden skittles – use toys as objects to knock over with a football or similar ball, encourage the children to roll the ball instead of throwing.

See how much wildlife you have in your garden – write a list for the children to search. Example: Woodlice, mouse, spider, bird, toad, frog, squirrel, bee, wasp, worms, centipede. Can you think of anymore?



[Coronavirus – LCC help for businesses](#)

[Gambling help](#)

[Drug and Alcohol help](#)

[Financial help](#)

[Self Injury Support](#) - Website/text/phone service for girls and women wanting information or support around self-harm. Services are open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 7pm - 9.30pm. Phone – 0808 800 8088 - currently suspended due to Coronavirus. Text 07537 432444

**Samaritans:** 116 123 - Email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org) - Confidential, 24 hour helpline if you are feeling depressed, desperate or need to talk.



### **Support for young people**

Online support for young people promoting resilience and wellbeing at [kooth.com](http://kooth.com)

Kooth also have a helpline for 13-18 year-olds living in the Leeds area offering up to an hour of support either by phone or online chat. **Call - 0808 800 1212** – if we can't pick up, leave a message and they'll call you back, alternatively you can **Text - 0771 566 1559**

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[Self-Harm](#) - Information and advice for young people. They run a 6 week counsellor supported online course called Alumnia for 14-19 year olds.

[The Mix](#) - 0808 804 4994 - Free information and support for under 25s in the UK. Get advice about sex, relationships, drugs, mental health, money & jobs. Also offers 1-2-1 chat and a crisis messenger.

If you would like to download a workbook to complete with your child to help them understand what is happening right now, you can here - [www.mindheart.co/descargables](http://www.mindheart.co/descargables)

[MindMate – Mental Health support for young people in Leeds](#)

[Childline](#) - 0800 11 11 - A free and confidential helpline.

**Samaritans:** 116 123 - Email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

Confidential, 24 hour helpline if you are feeling depressed, desperate or need to talk.

[ThinkUknow](#) - Online safety information for children aged 4 upwards

The following websites have been provided by Leeds Educational Psychology Service and provide information on how to talk to children about what is happening in the world right now. General points to bear in mind are not avoiding talking about Coronavirus as they will likely have heard about it, try not to provide too much information but invite your child to ask questions or tell you what they have heard. Reassure them and remind them of what you are doing to keep each other safe and if you are feeling anxious yourself, perhaps wait for a time when you are feeling calmer to talk.

**ChildMind: Talking to Children**

<https://childmind.org/article/talking-to-kids-about-the-coronavirus/>

**British Psychological Society: Talking to Children about Coronavirus**

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

**CBBC: Video and Questions**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/51861089>

**Young Minds: Feeling Anxious about Coronavirus**

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

**Talking about world trauma with kids**

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

This is a great website for parents/carers containing the latest psychological news and research <https://www.heysigmund.com/anxiety-in-children-after-world-trauma/>

*The information contained within this booklet has been borrowed from multiple sources, links to which have been provided or referenced.*

