
Education Setting Staff:

Looking after your mental health and wellbeing – and that of the children and young people you support

May 2020

Suffolk County Council
Psychology & Therapeutic Services (P&TS)



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Thanks to our colleagues across Suffolk as well as several Educational Psychology (EP) Services e.g. Cheshire West and Chester, Wiltshire and Southend for sharing information that we have compiled within this booklet

THINKING ABOUT YOU

There is a lot of uncertainty around the current COVID-19 outbreak, particularly given that the situation is constantly developing and the information about the virus remains incomplete.

The Covid-19 pandemic is an unprecedented situation which is fuelled by uncertainty, resulting in fear and anxiety. This can be overwhelming and can cause strong emotions.

We all react differently to stressful situations. How you will be responding to the pandemic will be dependent upon a variety of factors and we need to be mindful at all times that despite us all being in the same situation, we are all facing different challenges that are personal to each of us. In particular, you may be afraid and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones. You may also be feeling anxious about possible financial implications in the short and longer term.



Some people may experience:

Changes in eating, sleeping and concentration and worrying about your health (thinking any symptom is a sign that you have COVID-19)

It is important to remember that you are having a NORMAL reaction to an ABNORMAL event.

This document is intended to provide you with information, advice and tips to help you look after both your own health and wellbeing and that of the children and young people you support.

One of the ways Suffolk County Council (SCC) staff are supporting educational setting staff is via the 'Supporting Leadership Wellbeing' task group. Leadership in settings have been able to access this service on your behalf via LeadershipWellbeingSupport@suffolk.gov.uk and this has supported them to support their teams (as well as children, young people and their families).

This document has been written by educational & child psychologists with the aim to collate some of the key information that we and SCC colleagues have been sharing as part of this work.

Be kind to yourself

It is important to acknowledge that living in times of stress can have an impact on our short term and longer-term wellbeing. Taking good care of yourself, your friends and your family can help you cope.

Our ability to complete tasks we would previously manage more easily may be limited. We are likely to find it harder to focus our attention for extended periods, we are more likely to forget things and we will find it harder to process information effectively.

When we are living with anxiety for ourselves, our loved ones and the wider community, it is to be expected that we will be expending significant amounts of emotional energy in managing the thoughts and feelings that this will bring.

It is natural that we will find it harder to plan for longer term goals as we are designed to focus on more immediate needs at times of stress and anxiety. We are likely to find that it is harder to manage our emotions and we will find that strong emotions are triggered more easily.

As we turn to social media and news outlets to make sense of what is happening in the world, we are surrounded by images not only of illness and fear but also of people seemingly completing admirable feats: from taking huge risks with their own physical wellbeing when providing key services, to managing to home school children, learn new skills and even complete fabulous DIY projects.

We need to remember that our ability to be resilient in a situation cannot be compared with these snippets of others' lives.

Acknowledge the things you are managing well, focus on what you need to do to stay well and above all be kind to yourself. Further advice and ideas are available via podcast at: <https://kindtoyourmind.org/>

Looking after yourself

Time is precious, especially when looking after children and family, but on the days when you feel like you can move towards taking greater care of your own wellbeing, try to plan to include something from each of the 'Five Ways to Wellbeing' (developed by the New Economics Foundation).



- Take regular breaks from watching, reading or listening to news stories about the pandemic – including limiting social media. Hearing about it repeatedly can be upsetting and fuel anxiety and worry. Remember, not everything you read will be accurate.
- Try to stick to national news broadcasts and information from Public Health England.
- Maintain contacts with others and try to talk with people you trust about your worries and how you are feeling. It is likely that these will be shared worries. Try to avoid exacerbating each other's anxieties by keeping to the facts, as we know them, and being mindful of our tendency get caught up in negative thought patterns.
- Find ways to let off steam- use humour and make effort to notice any positive signs or messages e.g. proactive support and acts of kindness shown by others.
- Separate what is in your control and what is not. Focus on those things you can control – such as keeping good hygiene.

For those in a management position:

- Have a plan – let your staff know that you are thinking and looking ahead, that you are staying well informed so that you can respond to their questions the best you can.
- Worry and fear grow in the absence of information. Keep communication lines open – even if the situation remains unchanged.

- Empathise – Recognise that it's ok to be anxious and share that you know it is stressful
- Reassure as best you can.
- Understand and recognise when stress has become too overwhelming for particular individuals and suggest / signpost to appropriate support.

Responding to COVID-19 can take an emotional toll, especially when dealing with families / children who may be feeling distressed and anxious. It is important that you try to reduce secondary traumatic reactions:

- Acknowledge that a secondary traumatic reaction can impact anyone helping families after a traumatic event.
- Allow time for you and your family to recover from responding to the pandemic.
- Know the signs e.g. fatigue / illness (physical); withdrawal / fear / guilt (emotions); difficulty focusing/ negative thoughts (cognition).
- Seek professional support if you consider that your day to day functioning is being adversely affected.

For more helpful information:



www.annafreud.org has a wealth of resources about supporting young people's mental health during periods of disruption. However, in order to support our children and young people it is vital that we support our staff and these resources from Anna Freud are extremely useful to consider.



Mind's Five Ways to Wellbeing can be found here:

<https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mental-health-at-work/taking-care-of-yourself/five-ways-to-wellbeing/>

NHS resources include a wide range of tools to help you get active.

- [Fitness studio](#) exercise videos
- [Active 10 walking app](#)
- [Couch to 5K](#): week by week
- [Flexibility exercises](#) - these home exercises help to improve mobility
- [Balance exercises](#) - simple home exercises to improve steadiness with walking and moving
- [Strength exercises](#) - home exercises to improve lower limb strength
- [Seated exercises](#) - these exercises from the NHS improve mobility and lower limb strength, which helps with feeling steadier to move onto standing exercises

For further advice: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

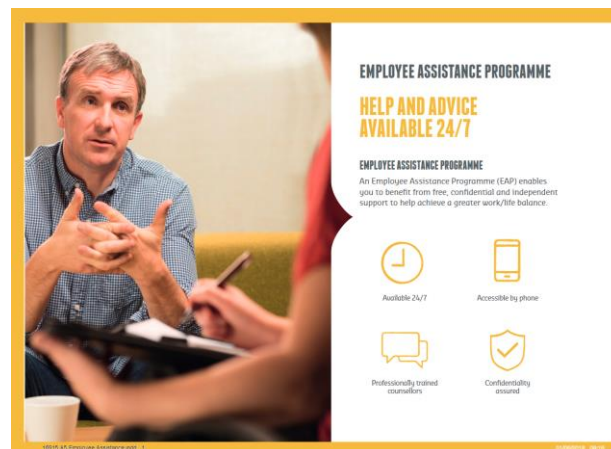
Sport England - how to stay active in and around your home

British Heart Foundation – Ten-minute living room workout or Be active Stair challenge

The Body Coach – daily PE lessons and lots more via YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rz0go1pTda8&feature=youtu.be>

There are also a range of support and resources from programmes such as the **Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)** shown below. See www.schoolschoice.org for a summary of the services that this programme offers.



THINKING ABOUT OTHERS

Looking after your children & young people

Children will need what they have always needed; love, attention and opportunities to learn and play. If children are home for long periods because of social-distancing or self-isolation, the following tips might be helpful:

- Try and keep to a structure and routine that suits you.
- Promote a sense of normality that children will find reassuring. Encouraging them to get up and dressed during the week will help maintain some difference between weekdays and weekends. Well-known routines in everyday life provide security and stability. Routine during unrest can be therapeutic, and changes particularly unsettling for some. If there are changes to routine, consider which children may need some extra help with this.
- Keep boundaries firm and make it clear that you expect the same standards of behaviour as usual. Boundaries show that adults are still in control and taking care of them, which helps children to feel safe.
- Make sure they get some time to burn off energy every day.
- Try to encourage children to do some learning every day. This can be encouraged in a wide range of ways e.g. practical shared activities.
- Find opportunities for them to interact with their friends remotely.
- Balance screen time with other activities.
- Give children opportunities to have a say in what will be happening.
- One way to provide structure is to have a timetable. We have provided an example in the appendices.
- If you find that the day changes spontaneously, that's OK- it's important that we remain kind to ourselves.
- Remember to keep things positive and give children hope. For example, tell children that now many people are working to make this better and that even though it is serious, everyone is doing their best to help people.

The Suffolk Local Offer website has a wealth of resources aimed at supporting children's wellbeing and learning.

https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/advice.page?id=3ACI_0B_Vek

Carers UK have also prepared a guide that you may find useful:

<https://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/health/looking-after-your-health/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-mental-wellbeing>

Additional advice for educational settings has been provided by the government –

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

See the **Suffolk Healthwatch** website for information about coronavirus in Suffolk. Healthwatch shares information about the impact of the virus in Suffolk and how we're working with local people and services throughout the crisis.

<https://healthwatchesuffolk.co.uk/coronavirus/>



Your spotlight on local services
Telephone 01449 703949

The last pages in this pack have many more links to websites with helpful ideas and activities covering a range of topics including supporting children and young people who are experiencing bereavement and loss.

Talking to children & young people about COVID-19

Although it is tempting to try and protect children from difficult topics, they are more likely to worry when they're kept in the dark. Children and teenagers will be aware of what is happening but may not have all the facts they need to understand it.

These tips will help you communicate about Coronavirus with Children and Young People:

- **Take time to talk and listen.** Be clear that you are happy to answer any questions that they have. Be led by the child as they may not be that interested or want to know everything all at once. Try to answer any questions honestly but keep things in context e.g. *"Sadly, some people do die, but the vast majority of people will recover, and children seem to be only mildly affected"*.
- **Reassure** them that their own risk is very low but that we all need to 'do our bit' to look after people who might be very unwell. Underline how helpful they are being by following the rules about hygiene and social-distancing. Knowing we're being altruistic helps us to cope with the tough times.
- **Reassure** Children with underlying health conditions that they are reducing their risk by self-isolating.
- **Demonstrate empathy.** Tell them *"I understand that you feel scared/ sad/ etc and it's ok to feel that way"*. It's helpful if we don't hide our own feelings, when appropriate to share them depending on their nature and the ages and skills of the children.
- **Give positive messages** about everything you are doing as a school and/or family to keep yourselves safe. Talk about all the work people around the world are doing to find treatments and a vaccine.
- Keep **explanations developmentally appropriate**.
- Young children up to about age seven will need **very simple explanations** that relate to their own experiences. Explain that, like other germs, Coronavirus can spread between people and make them ill. But because Coronavirus is a new germ that we don't know everything about, we need to take more care and so things might be a bit different for a while.
- Older **children will want to know more**. They may have heard partial explanations and 'filled in the gaps' themselves with their own ideas, so check what they already think they know about it.
- Teenagers will have a similar capacity to understand what's going on as adults. They will need **calm, factual information** and **opportunities to talk** through their worries and disappointments.
- Give them an opportunity to talk about their feelings. Our instinct might be to 'make it all better', but it is normal to feel scared, sad and angry in the face of what is happening. Tell them that what is happening is not normal but that their feelings are.

Some useful links include:

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

This is an informative animation for older children and young people

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

How to talk to your child about coronavirus, by Unicef:

<https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/how-talk-your-child-about-coronavirus-covid-19>

Child-friendly explanation of Coronavirus for Primary age students:

[https://660919d3-b85b-43c3-a3ad-](https://660919d3-b85b-43c3-a3ad-3de6a9d37099.filesusr.com/ugd/64c685_319c5acf38d34604b537ac9fae37fc80.pdf)

[3de6a9d37099.filesusr.com/ugd/64c685_319c5acf38d34604b537ac9fae37fc80.pdf](https://660919d3-b85b-43c3-a3ad-3de6a9d37099.filesusr.com/ugd/64c685_319c5acf38d34604b537ac9fae37fc80.pdf)

Information video on Coronavirus for Primary age children (KS2), by Brainpop:

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

Information video on Coronavirus for older children/adults, by the World Health Organisation:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mOV1aBVYKGA&feature=youtu.be>

Advice on talking to children about Coronavirus, by British Psychological Society:



ADVICE

Talking to children about Coronavirus

- 1. It is good to talk:** Children will have heard about Coronavirus and likely noticed changes around them (such as people wearing face masks). It is important they feel comfortable talking to you about Coronavirus as you will be the best source of information and reassurance for them. It's also likely they will talk to their friends or other children, which can involve imagination and misinformation. So having the chance to check-in with you is even more helpful.
- 2. Be truthful but remember your child's age:** It is better for children to take an honest and accurate approach – give them factual information, but adjust the amount and detail to fit their age. For example, you might say 'we don't yet have a vaccination for Coronavirus, but doctors are working very hard on it' or 'a lot of people might get sick, but normally it is like a cold or flu and they get better'. Younger children might understand a cartoon or picture better. We also recommend that adults watch news programmes and then filter this information to their child in a developmentally appropriate way.
- 3. Allow children to ask questions:** It is natural that children will have questions, and likely worries, about Coronavirus. Giving them the space to ask these questions and have answers is a good way to alleviate anxiety. Again, try to be honest in your responses – it is ok to say you don't know. At the moment, there are questions we don't have answers to about Coronavirus – you can explain this to your child and add in information about what people are doing to try to answer these questions. Maybe your child has an idea too – let them tell you or draw them.
- 4. Try to manage your own worries:** Uncertainty can make all of us feel anxious or worried. Identify other adults you can talk to about your own worries and questions. What things usually help to make you feel a bit calmer? If you are at home, music, breathing and relaxation techniques, distraction (such as watching something funny), and time with family members or pets can all help. Talk to your children when you feel calm – it will reassure them.
- 5. Give practical guidance:** Remind your child of the most important things they can do to stay healthy – washing their hands and the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' advice for coughs and sneezes. Help your child practise and increase their motivation for keeping going (maybe thinking of a song they want to sing while washing their hands).

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Resources

National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) www.nasponline.org
Child Mind Institute Inc. <https://childmind.org>

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Supporting the mental health of children and young people we work with

UNICEF has produced helpful guidelines for teachers to talk to their pupils about corona virus: <https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/how-teachers-can-talk-children-about-coronavirus-disease-covid-19>

There is a wealth of information and services available. Click on the pictures below to find out more information about supporting CYP and their mental health.



The Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families is a children's charity dedicated to providing training and support for child mental health services. See www.annafreud.org for a wealth of useful material from supporting children in their early years onwards. For example:



Sharing some research and practice supporting the most vulnerable children and young people
<https://www.annafreud.org/media/11322/supporting-the-most-vulnerable-children-and-young-people-interactive-160420.pdf>



Supporting schools and colleges provides advice and guidance for school staff about how to help children and young people manage their mental health and wellbeing during times of disruption to their learning

How to support staff through his difficult period
<https://www.annafreud.org/media/11160/supporting-schools-and-colleges.pdf>

Supporting children & young people currently attending educational settings when others are not



Dan Hughes' P.A.C.E Model is one useful framework when working with CYP in Schools in this very different situation. P.A.C.E is an approach to working with CYP which focuses on four personal qualities (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy), which allows adults to support children to further develop their self-awareness, emotional intelligence and resilience. Over time, and with practice, children will gain tools to better understand and regulate their emotions.

<p>Playfulness</p> <p>An open, ready, calm, relaxed and engaged attitude.</p>	<p>When children laugh and giggle, they become less defensive and more reflective. Playfulness can help keep a situation in perspective. It can also diffuse a difficult or tense situation when a parent or teacher has a touch of playfulness in his or her structure.</p>
<p>Acceptance</p> <p>Unconditionally accepting a child makes them feel secure, safe and loved</p>	<p>Acceptance describes actively communicating to the child that you accept their wishes, feelings, thoughts, urges, motives and perceptions that are underneath the outward behaviour.</p> <p>It is about accepting, without judgment or evaluation, their 'inner life'. A parent or teacher can be very firm in limiting behaviour while at the same time accepting the motives for the behaviour. <i>For example, "I know that you would like to watch that, and it does look fun, but first we will XXX"</i></p>
<p>Curiosity</p> <p>Without judgement so that children become more aware of their inner life.</p>	<p>Using curiosity involves adopting a quiet, accepting tone that conveys a simple desire to understand the child: <i>For example: "What do you think was going on? What do you think that was about?"</i></p>
<p>Empathy</p> <p>A sense of compassion for the child and their feelings</p>	<p>In using empathy, the adult stays with the child emotionally, providing comfort and support. The adult is also communicating strength, love and commitment, with confidence that sharing the child's distress will not be too much. Together they will get through it.</p>

Supporting children & young people remotely

It is difficult to support CYP remotely. We understand that teachers are providing online lessons, work and checks ins. For some CYP it will be difficult to complete this work. Some will need to focus on their physiological and safety needs.



“We all have basic needs that we need to meet before we can move onto higher level needs. Psychologists think of these as the bottom of a pyramid of things we all need. We need to meet these most basic needs, like food, water, sleep and safety, before we can move onto anything else. Safety is one of these most basic needs and essential for good psychological development. COVID-19 is making many children (and adults) feel unsafe.” (BPS, Advice: Talking to children about illness, 23/03/2020).

If you take a moment to consider the bottom rung of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (shown above). We know that meeting these basic needs has been an issue for so many people, especially in this current pandemic. We are also aware that many adults are posting on social media about not being able to sleep very well at present. This could also indicate that they are not going to get beyond the bottom rung anyway – that goes for teachers, parents, professionals and others. Parents are working so hard to get it right for their children at the moment – “good enough is good enough”. For many ‘freedom’ and self-actualisation are impossible at the moment. Some teachers are also reporting that they feeling concerned because they are just dipping in and out of their pupil's lives at present. **Support for staff and families is paramount at this time.**

Children and young people (CYP) may benefit from familiarity and reassurance about what's happening, in what is a very uncertain time for all. If possible, and with the agreement of your Head Teacher/ line Manager, it may be appropriate for you to maintain regular (virtual) contact with certain CYP.

Contact from you shows they are still kept in mind and they still belong to the school community. This may involve:

- Regularly 'checking in with them'.
- Reassuring them that it's 'normal' to feel a range of emotions at this unusual time.
- Reminding them of strategies / tools that they might usually use in school to help manage any difficult feelings.
- Signposting them to useful resources that may help them to understand the current situation and support their own mental health (please see list at the end of this document).
- Linking in with their carers/ parents also to ensure that the above is possible and that the CYP can be supported at home.

Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA)

ELSA is an educational psychology led intervention for promoting the emotional wellbeing of children and young people.

ELSAs are emotional literacy support assistants working in schools. They are generally Teaching Assistants, pastoral support workers, family liaison workers.

The ELSA project is an initiative designed to help schools meet the needs of emotionally vulnerable pupils. Educational psychologists apply psychological knowledge of children's social and emotional development to particular areas of need and work closely with the team of ELSAs across Suffolk.

The training has a national network (www.elsanetwork.org). ELSAs are provided with regular supervision to develop their understanding, skills and practice.



Since the first training in 2016 the Suffolk Psychology & Therapeutic Service Educational Psychologist (EP) Team have trained 161 Suffolk ELSAs in 93 schools. There are currently 111 'active' ELSAs across 71 schools receiving supervision and support from our EPs.

The work of the ELSAs will be vital when supporting children and young people particularly at the time when schools return e.g. helping to support through times of change / transition. We are sharing a regular ELSA bulletin via our Suffolk ELSA network.

ELSAs:

- help children recognise, understand and manage emotions to increase success;
- plan and deliver individual (and small group) support programmes;
- receive training and supervision from educational psychologists;
- plan and deliver programmes of support to children identified within school as likely to benefit from additional help to increase their emotional literacy. Programmes would normally last between half to one term, and occasionally a little longer;

- support children and young people to recognise and manage their emotions, raise their self-esteem, improve peer relationships, recover from significant loss or bereavement, and resolve conflict effectively.

Most of the support is individual and builds on the relationship of trust that is developed between pupil and ELSA. Some skills will be enhanced through small group work, particularly social and friendship skills (although some children will need individual support first).

Please see the ELSA Support site for free resources for teaching staff and parents to help children cope with the current viral outbreak.

<https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/category/free-resources/coronavirus-support/>

We will be in touch about how we hope to enhance our offer to the Suffolk ELSA network during the 'recovery / transition back to school' phase of this pandemic.

Supporting children & young people as they begin to return to education

We need to follow Government Guidelines to keep us physically safe. Once it's agreed that we should return to school, we need to have a strategy to support staff and CYP to settle back into their setting. We need to remember that for some children life without school will have been more positive for them, for others life without school will have been negative.

Remember we have all changed – both adults and children.

It's important that we build in time to reconnect – by introducing 'work' gradually and interspersing it with fun activities that promote a sense of class, year group and school. Take time to build/re-build relationships – remembering that vulnerable children don't always find relationship building easy. Children should be re-assured that it's ok to feel all their own feelings.

Schools could consider introducing 'wobble areas' where children and adults can go when it all gets too much. Further Guidance should be available as the lockdown eases, but meanwhile SEA Inclusion and Safeguarding have produced a useful document:

<https://www.seainclusion.co.uk/post/the-many-problems-of-returning-to-school>

Primary school staff could also explore the Connect PSHE Curriculum, which is currently available free of charge during the lockdown period (usual price £300). The Connect PSHE Wellbeing Curriculum has around 250 detailed lesson plans (all with ppts handouts and resources) for YrR through to Yr6. Everyone has an opening mindfulness activity and brief follow up enquiry. The initial online training, and a sample of lessons and resources, is currently being offered free to support teacher CPD during the global response to COVID19. Schools and educational professionals can sign up here: <https://www.connect-pshe.org/sign-up>



In addition, there is helpful guidance for **school and college staff** from the Anna Freud Centre, please refer to resources within this document.

<https://www.annafreud.org/coronavirus/>

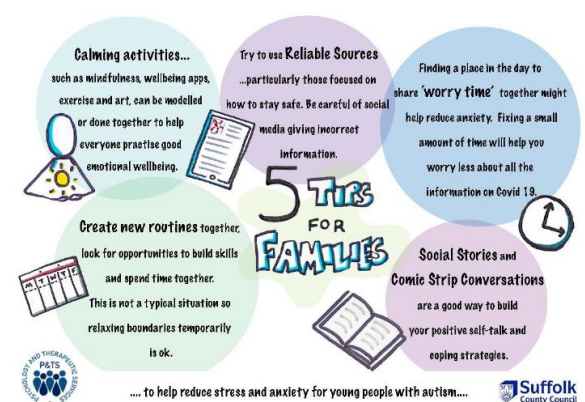
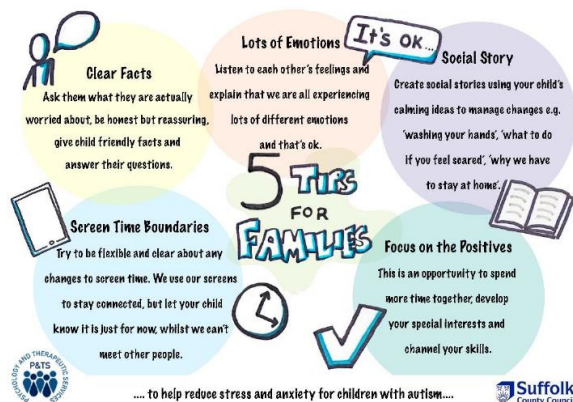
Colleagues across many services and the voluntary sector in Suffolk are working on transition planning and how to support education settings, children, young people and families during this time. Further information to follow.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Resources for children, young people & families

High resolution copies of these resources to support children and young people experiencing stress and anxiety were shared by Suffolk Parent Carer Network. They have been shared in their Family Support Packs

See <https://spcn.org.uk/parent-carer-support/>



Supporting bereavement and loss

There are a wider range of resources available. Some examples are included below:

- **Grief Encounter** by S Gilbert, Simmons Ltd (2004) – a workbook to encourage conversations about loss between adults and children.
- **Muddles, Puddles and Sunshine.** Your activity book when someone has died by Diana Crossley.
- **The Day the Sea Went Out and Never Came Back** by Margot Sunderland, Speechmark (2003) – a therapeutic story.
- **Draw on Your Emotions.** Sunderland, M. and Engleheart, P. (1993) Speechmark Publishing Ltd: Bicester.
- **Badger's parting Gifts** by Susan Varley. Published by Harper Trophy. ISBN 0-00-664317-5
- **Finding Your Own Way to Grieve: A creative activity workbook for kids and teens on the autism spectrum** by Karla Helbert
- **Child Bereavement UK** www.childbereavementuk.org/
- **Winston's Wish** www.winstonswish.org

Coronavirus: How to say goodbye when a funeral isn't possible

www.winstonswish.org/coronavirus-funerals-alternative-goodbyes/

Coronavirus: How schools can support grieving pupils

www.winstonswish.org/coronavirus-schools-support-children-young-people/

Coronavirus: Providing support for bereaved children and young people

www.winstonswish.org/coronavirus-supporting-bereaved-children-and-young-people/

- **Cruse Bereavement Care** www.cruse.org.uk
Hope Again is a website for children and young people by Cruse www.hopeagain.org.uk
- We know from speaking with families that is a worrying time for those who are pregnant or have a baby within the family. **The Lullaby Trust** have put together advice that can be found on their website <https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/support-us/help-keep-babies-safe-during-covid-19/>

- **Reflections on grief and loss by Dr Karen Treisman** - video on YouTube
www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=327&v=n9a79NeUARo&feature=emb_logo
- **Child Bereavement UK** provides information regarding support for children and young people with additional needs specifically:
<https://www.childbereavementuk.org/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=74e7be4a-022a-4400-a398-bd6922440292>
- This link from **Childhood Bereavement UK** is aimed at supporting children and young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder specifically:
<https://www.childbereavementuk.org/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=e99e1f53-01c0-4112-bfa4-e2a58dfb4e24>
- **Childhood Bereavement Network** share a range of resources to support bereaved children and young people. Having to be apart from loved ones when they are so seriously ill that they might die is one of the very worst aspects of the Covid-19 outbreak. This guide for families has ways for children and adults to keep in touch and feel connected, even at a distance.
<http://www.childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk/help-around-a-death/covid-19.aspx>

Is someone you love very ill?

Ideas to help you stay connected when you can't visit

It can be so hard when someone you love is seriously ill and you can't visit them. Even though they are surrounded by people who are caring gently and kindly for them, it can be very tough to be apart from them. Here are some ways that you can feel closer together, and look after yourself. Tick the ones you feel like trying, and keep this as a reminder.

☐ Listen to music that they like or eat their favourite food
 ☐ Write them a letter or card, or draw them a picture and send it by phone
 ☐ Send them something to hug and think of me
 ☐ Make sure I look after myself by exercising, eating well and getting enough sleep

☐ Ask questions about what is happening even if people get upset. I need the facts to understand, and talking about it will help me
 ☐ Share with others if I start to think I am to blame
 ☐ Tell people what helps me feel better and keeps me feeling safe
 ☐ Keep something that reminds me of them with me in my pocket or in a special place
 ☐ Record them a message telling them how much I love them, or things about my day. Make a recording of the sounds of home

☐ Ask for help and support whenever I need it.
 ☐ Stay connected with friends and family even though we have to be apart
 ☐ Find ways of expressing my feelings by writing, drawing, music or exercise
 ☐ Ask for any extra help I might need with school work, especially while schools are closed
 ☐ I'm going to try

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 **NATIONAL CHILDREN'S BUREAU**

Educational activities which in turn support emotional well-being

There are a wide range of activities that could be built into your daily routine at home. It is really important that families have time supporting each other as a family and spending time together. Learning at this time will be different to school-based learning. Instead, learning will happen through experiences and a range of home-based activities.

We were all unprepared for this way of life and that includes schools. Teachers will have done their very best in a short space of time to set work.

Families know their children the best. In order to enjoy different ways of learning, we will be making some suggestions for activities on our [Local Offer](#) Facebook page. Please have a look and do share any ideas with us too...!

Suffolk County Council's Specialist Education Services and Psychology & Therapeutic Services are also available to support you during this time. See the link below for the Service contact details and current service offers.

https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/advice.page?id=3ACI_0B_Vek

The link above will also guide you to a wide range of websites and Apps that contain educational activities, games, crafts and online study resources that can be undertaken at home.

Healthy activities include:

Change4Life Activities for Kids - <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/activities/indoor-activities>

Disney dance-along videos created by This Girl Can are a fun and compact way to exercise - <https://www.thisgirlcan.co.uk/activities/disney-workouts/>

Even Superhero or Harry Potter themed workouts for kids - <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLvuT1Bjs2VSF0Yqahj8VAKBwyYFnLJIDa>

Cosmic Kids Yoga - <https://www.youtube.com/user/CosmicKidsYoga/featured>

Thoughts about structure and routine / timetables



Finding your own Daily Balance



Having structure and routine in our days can help us to feel more in control and cope with uncertainty. Building in time for important things such as exercise, selfcare and things we love to do can help us to ensure we look after ourselves, emotionally and physically.

The things that are important to us are different for everyone, so everyone's daily routine will be unique.

We can choose the template that suits us and will help us to remember to give our day balance. Together we can fill it with the activities we want to do each day.

If it helps:

- add specific time frames to each activity.
- create more activity cards to add the things that you like to do.

Each type of activity time is colour coded to make it easy for us to plan our daily routine, matching the activity colour to the timetable.

Connected Time: choose any activity, as long as we do it together, or give time to help or do things for our community or neighbours.

Active Time: daily exercise is really important as it can release energy and make us feel good.

Learning Time: we need to keep our brains active, it could be work set from school or learning a new skill.

Mindfulness/Calm Time: taking time to notice the world around us, how we feel and doing things that make us feel calm and happy has many benefits on our wellbeing.



For more information about how we could work with you please contact:
IF@suffolk.gov.uk



Daily Routine				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Mindful/Calming	Learning	Active	Learning	Mindful/Calming
Learning	Active	Learning	Active	Active
Active	Together	Mindful/Calming	Together	Learning
Together	Mindful/Calming	Together	Mindful/Calming	Together

Daily Routine				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Active	Active	Active	Active	Active
Learning	Learning	Learning	Learning	Learning
Together	Together	Together	Together	Together
Mindful/Calming	Mindful/Calming	Mindful/Calming	Mindful/Calming	Mindful/Calming



Example timetable

Get ready for the day	Breakfast, wash & dress for the day
9am Activity 1	Craft activity OR learning based activity
Short break	
10.15am Activity 2	Learning based activity OR craft based activity
11am Activity 3	Get active - depending on your situation e.g. play outside, walk, exercise video
12 noon	Lunchtime
1pm	Help around the house and then quiet time e.g. reading, colouring, mindfulness
3pm Activity 4	Craft activity OR learning based activity
4pm Free time	Choose activity depending on your interests / new hobby ...
5pm	Dinner time
Family time	Activity of choice e.g. playing games, watching tv/film, spend time together
Get ready for bed	Have a bath, put pyjamas on and read story

Podcasts and YouTube

- We will be sharing updates re our services on the [Local Offer](#) and our **SCC YouTube channel** <https://www.youtube.com/user/SuffolkCC/featured>
- See the official Southend EP Services' '**Educational Psychology Reach Out**' YouTube channel for a wide range of 30 min videos that will support your knowledge, skills and well-being.
- Dr Karen Treisman
Individual and collective grief and loss in relation to COVID-19
www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=327&v=n9a79NeUARo&feature=emb_logo
COVID- Survival modes and resurfacing past traumas – falling down a memory timehole
www.youtube.com/watch?v=msNO7ZmLXns
- **The Body Coach** – daily PE lessons and lots more via YouTube
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rz0go1pTda8&feature=youtu.be>