

of water, some movement breaks. Family learning can be rich as we can all learn together and share understanding, problem-solving and information.

- **Cooking Together** – Cooking is great as it also includes literacy and numeracy tasks such as reading recipe or counting and measuring ingredients. Involving children in cooking can be fun and full of joy as they are involved in producing a tangible product at the end. You can also ask the children to finish off the cookies, cake, etc. by decorating them, lots of time can be spent on this.
- **Puzzle, Lego, Visual-Spatial Activities** – These activities tend to be calming as the brain focuses on putting things together rather than verbal or emotional demanding tasks. Offering these activities in the house will be of benefit to everyone as it will help all involved to be grounded and calm. You can leave a puzzle out of the kitchen table, put a table cloth over it and take it off when you are wanting to complete the puzzle. Lego is great activity to do together.
- **Setting Up a Fun Project** – It is important to vary activities, like a carousel. We start with one and move on to the next. When activities are designed to promote different areas of development, children will find this more engaging than if it is tapping in the same type of skills so it is important to also have something creative, a fun project you will enjoy doing together.
- **Exercising** – Don't forget to move and for the full family to move. You can set up some an obstacle course in the garden for example. This can be done using household items like a skipping rope, bottles, a ball. Like do 10 jumps, 10 skips, 10 hoops in the basketball hoop, knock 3 bottles down, etc. You can set up a challenge and time them. Children can invent it, but will also need support to think about it. Fine motor skills gym trails can also be helpful such as having lots of different activities promoting finger movement like threading, developing pincer grip activities. Walking the dog, playing with an animal can also be part of the routine.

## **Supporting children during times of worry**

### **Information and guidance for schools and parents/carers**

#### **19th March 2020**





**WARRINGTON**  
Borough Council

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Information about Coronavirus for parents, carers and professionals

**During your child's time away from school:**

- Setting Up a Family Meeting – calling a family meeting is important to set ground rules and expectations for the duration of this situation. Ask all to participate and look into what is their understanding of the situation, what this means and why are we doing this...it will give everyone a sense of purpose and meaning. Validate emotions as children may feel like things are not fair. Write together a poster with ground rules, decide on the ground rules together, like how many hours of devices and games for example, chores, cooking and ask everyone's contribution to family household. Why not take this opportunity to reorganise drawers, desks, cupboards and do a clear out! or even redecorate a room, providing you have everything you need.
- Setting Up a Schedule – Having a calendar or a schedule outlining different activities will help create a routine and establish predictability. It can be done visually using colour coded signs. Although not necessarily needing to be equally disperse across the day, deciding on a schedule together will help family functioning.
- Deciding on Different Activities – When discussing different activities, it is important to ensure that all family members' needs are met. For younger children, this may need play and unstructured times, as for older children, it may mean learning online with structured educational activities set by the school.

**Five suggested activities to complete at home:**

- Setting Up a Learning Place in the house– It is important that children feel they have an allocated space in the house where they can concentrate and focus on learning. It does not have to be a big space and can even be a shared space. It is more about how we use this space and what we do when we are learning. Setting up some ground rules for this will also be helpful. With a schedule, allocate time to learning in short and fruitful bursts, it is more about the quality and the positive experience of learning rather the quantity and speed at which we do these learning tasks. When you are noticing that learning is no longer fruitful, have a short break, a snack, a glass

## Information about Coronavirus for parents, carers and professionals

### **UK Government**

In the first instance, the UK Government Covid-19 pages are frequently and rapidly updated with advice and guidance in line with advice from Public Health England. There is specific guidance for educational settings and guidance for employers, employees and businesses.

### **World Health Organisation: Covid-19 and Mental Health**

The WHO has recently published considerations to support mental health and wellbeing during the Coronavirus outbreak. This guidance has specific recommendations for health care workers, caretakers of children, caretakers of older adults and people in isolation.

### **Division of Educational and Child Psychology (DECP)**

The British Psychological Society says it is vital to talk openly to children and reassure them about the changes they are seeing around them due to Coronavirus. The advice stresses that it is important to be truthful, but remember your child's age. Give them factual information, but adjust the amount and detail fit for their age. Other advice from the BPS' Division of Educational and Child Psychology:

- Allowing children to ask questions. Giving them a space to ask questions and have answers is a good way to ease anxiety.
- Younger children might understand a cartoon or picture better than a verbal explanation.
- It is ok to say you don't know, at the moment we don't have all the answers.
- Try to manage your own worries. This can be through talking your worries through with another adult; listening to music; breathing and relaxation techniques; distraction; and time with the family.
- Give practical guidance: remind your child of what they can do to stay healthy.

### **Mind**

Mind has a page providing general advice for everyone about maintaining wellbeing. The page has two distinct sections: Plan for staying at home or indoors; Taking care of our mental health and wellbeing.

## **Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

There is a lot of information across the internet about how to talk to or support children and young people who might have questions or worries about Coronavirus. This short booklet aims to gather together some selected resources in one place to support children in the Warrington area.

### Information about Coronavirus specifically for children

#### **BBC Newsround** (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround>)

The BBC Newsround site has a comprehensive section on the Coronavirus with text and video guidance focusing on tips if a child is worried, how to wash your hands, and what self-isolation means.

#### **YoungMinds UK** (<https://youngminds.org.uk>)

The YoungMinds UK advice on what to do if you're anxious about Coronavirus might be more useful for teens and young adults. The main focus is on a self-care and they provide further information about how young people can look after their mental health if self isolating.

#### **Mencap easy read** (<https://www.mencap.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-03/Information%20about%20Coronavirus%20ER%20SS2.pdf>)

Mencap have produced an easy read information sheet about Coronavirus. This would be particularly useful for children, young people or adults whose understanding is improved with visuals and information given in bitesize chunks.

#### **Carol Gray Coronavirus social story** (<https://carolgraysocialstories.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Pandemics-and-the-Coronavirus.pdf>)

Carol Gray has produced a social story about the Coronavirus and pandemics. The social story uses large print pictures and contextual information. It is a very factual, child-friendly explanation for children.

#### **MindHeart Covibook** (<https://www.mindheart.co/descargables>)

The MindHeart information and activity book about Coronavirus can support in opening up a conversation about children's concerns. The book is available in 18 languages and it encourages children to label their feelings and offers specific advice on things they can do to stay healthy.

## Relaxation Techniques for children and young people

### **Cosmic Yoga** (<https://www.cosmickids.com/>)

Healthy screen time for 21st century kids! More than a million kids do yoga, mindfulness and relaxation with Jamie on the Cosmic Kids YouTube Channel. Parents and teachers report significant improvements in self-regulation, focus and empathy. Cosmic Yoga can be accessed via YouTube or through the app, which currently has a two weeks free trial available.

### **Smiling Minds App** (<https://www.smilingmind.com.au/>)

An Australian, not-for-profit, mindfulness and meditation app for children. The app has been downloaded across the globe and is evidence based. The app provides free programmes for child and adults.

### **Headspace for kids** (<https://www.headspace.com/meditation/kids>)

We want children to be healthy and happy, not just now but for the rest of their lives. And teaching them about meditation early would help them to do just that. Headspace for kids is free for the first two weeks.

### **Puppy Mind by Andrew Jordan Nance**

A book about teaching children how to train their wandering minds. There is a YouTube reading of the story if you do not have access to the book.

### **Stop, breathe and think** (<https://www.stopbreathethink.com/kids/>)

Help kids discover their superpowers of quiet, focus and peaceful sleep with the easy-to-use app.

### **Meditation Capsules: A Mindfulness Programme for Children**

Just as space capsules allow for exploration and discovery in outer space, "meditation capsules" allow for discovery in inner space! Simple strategies for learning to meditate represent self-care capsules that help children develop and maintain a healthy, happy mind.

### **Thriving Adolescent website** (<https://thrivingadolescent.com/>)

A website created by two psychologists, with resources available for children and adolescents. The resources include audio clips, video clips, books and downloads.

## Resources and apps for learning at home



- Maths Genie: <https://www.mathsgenie.co.uk/gcse.html>
- Literacy Shed: <https://www.literacyshed.com/home.html>
- Word eBook Online (a collection of over 3,000 ebooks and audiobooks. A link is available via the Facebook page "Unique Classrooms.")
- PhonicsPlay: <https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/>
- BBC Bitesize: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>
- Twinkl Resources (CVDTWINKLHELPS—access code): <https://www.twinkl.co.uk/>
- Reading Eggs: <https://readingeggs.co.uk/>
- Primary Stars: <https://primarystarseducation.co.uk/>
- Primary resources: <http://www.primaryresources.co.uk/>
- Maths Shed: <https://www.mathshed.com/>
- White Rose Maths: <https://whiterosemaths.com/>
- Maths Whizz: <https://www.whizz.com/>
- Teach your monster to read: <https://www.teachyourmonstertoread.com/>