

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School



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Dear Parents & Carers,

We hope that you and your family members are well. In order to support you to protect the mental health of your child and your family we would like to take this opportunity to share some support information and useful hints/tips.

Hints and Tips	
Work at home	It won't be possible to replicate a full school timetable for a variety of reasons. If your child is struggling to keep up with the volume of work set or is finding it hard to engage with schoolwork at home please do not worry about this and just do the best you can.
Stress and anxiety	Stress and anxiety are normal responses to this unpredictable situation. Young people may show an increase in stress without being able to say why. Keep them updated on the coronavirus so that they do not have to 'wonder' but be mindful of how you discuss it so that it is not fear inducing. Reduce access to rolling news so that they can switch off and provide lots of reassurance.
Maintaining friendships	Friendships are a key resiliency factor for young people. Help them to maintain some contact with their friends via telephone or some other form of media such as WhatsApp. It is important to be mindful of the risks of social media and monitor this use. E Safety support for parents can be found at www.thinkuknow.co.uk/ or www.internetmatters.org/
Routine	A consistent routine/predictable plan helps young people to feel secure about the plans for the day. It is often useful to involve children in creating this routine, so that they feel part of the plan, rather than having a plan imposed on them. You could display a routine using a timeline, or maybe pictures and visuals. It is important to encourage children to develop independence by referring to their own routine/plan. I have included a toolkit that can be used to support routine, but young people often enjoy making their own more suitable versions if necessary.



	*The search term, Printable Visual Timetables, when typed into google, allows you to access a range of different visual timetable resources that you/they may find useful.
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Life skills

Life skills are an important part of a child’s development and may also help to build a child’s self-esteem and promote their well-being. This time at home could provide a great opportunity for your child to spend time with family members, sharing the workload and learning valuable life skills. The following is a list of suggestions; it is useful to note that almost any activity that you engage in with your children can incorporate life skills work.

Life Skill	Activity
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lots of conversations • Reminding them to take turns • Reminding them to listen to another person’s contribution and responding directly about that
Decision Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create their own visual timetable that includes all the essential elements of the day
Creative Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storytelling • Art and crafts • Summarising • Compare and contrast conversations • Maths word problems
Problem Solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be done at any time when there is a task or chore that needs to be thought through. Simply talking through the process of defining a problem, analysing the cause and evaluating the solution will give the young person a system or process that they know they are able to use.
Coping with Stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relaxation techniques, exercise PE with Joe (Daily at 9:00am on You Tube) • Keep Active tips www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/10minute-workouts/
Cooking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting parents to prepare meals • Understanding what makes a healthy menu • Creating meals from basic store cupboard ingredients
Shopping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing shopping lists • Online shopping • Costing • Budgeting
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of calendar/schedule • Planning menu for the week
Housekeeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning rota • Helping with laundry









Advice and information

Below is a list of websites and apps that you can access to help support you and your family's emotional well-being during this very difficult time.

General advice	
	https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-anxiety-tips/?WT.tsrc=Paid_Social&WT.mc_id=CoronaWorries2
	https://www.rise-ne.co.uk/
	https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/
	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing
Advice for supporting children and young people	
	https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/coronavirus-information-and-support
	https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/for-children-and-young-people/coronavirus/coronavirus-and-your-well-being/
	https://www.annafreud.org/coronavirus-support/












	https://youngminds.org.uk/about-us/media-centre/press-releases/youngminds-publishes-advice-for-young-people-and-parents-on-mental-health-impact-of-coronavirus/
	https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/coronavirus-advice-support-children-families-parents/
	https://www.place2be.org.uk/about-us/news-and-blogs/2020/march/coronavirus-information-for-children/
Apps	
	<p>App for Mindfulness and Meditation. (Available on iOS, Android & Web). They have free resources for both adults and children available here: https://www.calm.com/blog/take-a-deep-breath</p> <p>https://www.calm.com/</p>
	<p>A meditation app that acts as a personal guide to health and happiness.</p> <p>https://www.headspace.com/covid-19</p>
	<p>https://www.worriots.com/</p>



The NHS also recommends the following apps, links to which can be found here:

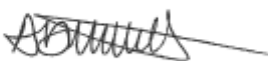
<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/apps/>

 <p>CALM HARM An app designed to help people resist or manage the urge to self-harm. It's private and password-protected.</p> <p>Download on the App Store GET IT ON Google Play</p>	 <p>CATCH IT Learn to look at problems differently, turn negative thoughts into positive ones and improve your mental wellbeing.</p> <p>Download on the App Store GET IT ON Google Play</p>
 <p>COVE Create music to help express complex feelings. Cove is a personal musical journal to help you with your mental health.</p> <p>Download on the App Store</p>	 <p>DISTRACT Get quick, easy and discreet access to information and advice about self-harm and suicidal thoughts.</p> <p>Download on the App Store GET IT ON Google Play</p>
 <p>EQUOD: EMOTIONAL FITNESS GAME Use adventure games designed by psychologists to increase your emotional fitness and learn new psychological skills.</p> <p>Download on the App Store GET IT ON Google Play</p>	 <p>FEELING GOOD Improve your thoughts, feelings, self-esteem and self-confidence using the principles of cognitive behavioural therapy.</p> <p>Download on the App Store GET IT ON Google Play</p>
 <p>MY POSSIBLE SELF Pick from 10 modules to learn how to manage fear, anxiety and stress, and take control of your thoughts, feelings and behaviour.</p> <p>Download on the App Store GET IT ON Google Play</p>	 <p>STRESS & ANXIETY COMPANION Guided breathing exercises, relaxing music and games made to help calm the mind, and handle stress and anxiety on the go.</p> <p>Download on the App Store GET IT ON Google Play</p>
 <p>STUDENT HEALTH APP Access more than 900 pages of reliable, regularly updated health information created for university students by NHS doctors.</p> <p>Download on the App Store GET IT ON Google Play</p>	

Please note that if you are worried about a child and you think they are in immediate danger or at risk of severe harm, call 999.

Thank you for your continued support throughout this pandemic.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs A. D. Thorpe
Headteacher

