

# COVID-19 Parent pack

Conwy County Borough Council

Educational Psychology Service



## Looking after yourself: Five ways to wellbeing

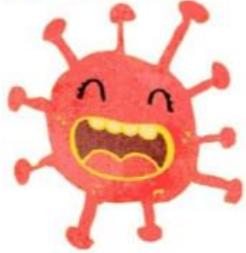
Building small actions into your daily life can make you feel good and feeling good is an important part of being healthy. There are 5 ways to wellbeing (*developed by NEF*) that have been found to make a positive difference to wellbeing. It is important to remember that by looking after our own mental health means we are in a better place to look after our children.



 <p>TALK &amp; LISTEN, BE THERE, FEEL CONNECTED</p>	<p>Social distancing and isolating are making this more difficult for many people now, but connection with others is one of the most important things for mental wellbeing. Wherever possible, try and keep in contact with friends and family via social media, text, video chat, phone calls etc.</p>
 <p>DO WHAT YOU CAN, ENJOY WHAT YOU DO, MOVE YOUR MOOD</p>	<p>As parents and adults are much less able to go outside currently, it is important to try to get as much exercise as you can indoors. There are lots of free resources online such as YouTube workout videos for both adults and children. Get your children involved by planning their own PE lessons at home! Keep your brain active by reading, doing puzzles, or drawing.</p>
 <p>REMEMBER THE SIMPLE THINGS THAT GIVE YOU JOY</p>	<p>The world can be quite scary for many currently, it may be a good idea to take breaks from news and social media occasionally and take notice of what is happening around you and with your family – appreciate the good and small things. There are many great mindfulness resources and apps available to try being in the present moment.</p>
 <p>EMBRACE NEW EXPERIENCES, SEE OPPORTUNITIES, SURPRISE YOURSELF</p>	<p>Learning new skills or improving on existing skills can be beneficial to both occupy the time and reduce anxious thoughts and worries and give a sense of purpose and achievement. YouTube again is a great resource for this, for example learning to crochet, and apps such as Duolingo can help with learning a new language.</p>
 <p>Your time, your words, your presence</p>	<p>Currently we may not be able to contribute to our community in ways we typically do. If you are able to, there may be schemes in the area to help those most vulnerable at this time. Many of us will not be able to offer practical support, but checking in on friends, colleagues, and family can be great mutual support we can provide each other.</p>

# HELLO!

I am a **VIRUS**,  
cousins with the Flu and  
the Common Cold



My name is **Coronavirus**

MANUELA MEX/SHIA - ILLUSTRATIONS  
WWW.ILLUSTRATIONSARTISTS.COM  
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I love to travel...



and to jump  
from hand to  
hand to say Hi

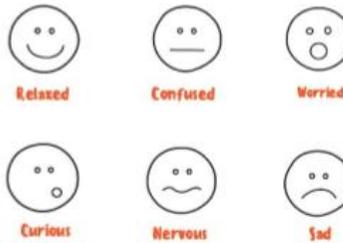
**HIGH FIVE**



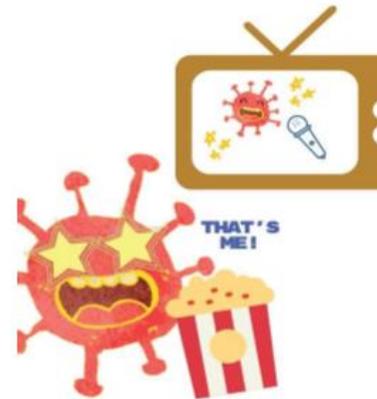
Have you heard about me?

YES  NO

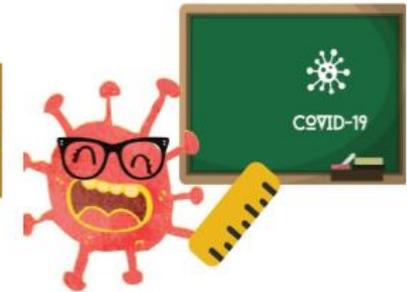
And how do you feel when  
you hear my name?



Sometimes adults get  
worried when they read  
the news or see me on TV



But I am going to explain  
myself...



So you can understand...

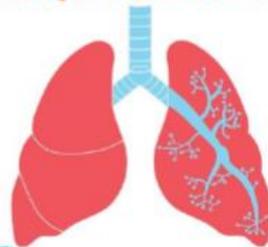
When I come to visit, I bring...



Difficulty breathing



But I don't stay with  
people for long, and almost  
everyone gets better



Just like when you get a  
scrape on your  
knee and it heals

BYE BYE...



Don't worry!

The adults who take care of you:  
\_\_\_\_\_ will keep you safe



And you can help...



1  
By washing your hands  
with soap and water  
while singing a song

You can sing your favorite song,  
the happy birthday song, or the  
alphabet song

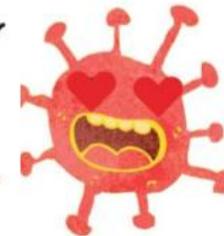


while the doctors work to find a vaccine  
that will allow me to say hi  
without getting you sick.



2  
By using hand sanitizer  
and letting it dry on  
your hands

Without moving them count to 18  
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 1, 2, 3, 10  
Once your hands are dry you can get  
back to playing!!

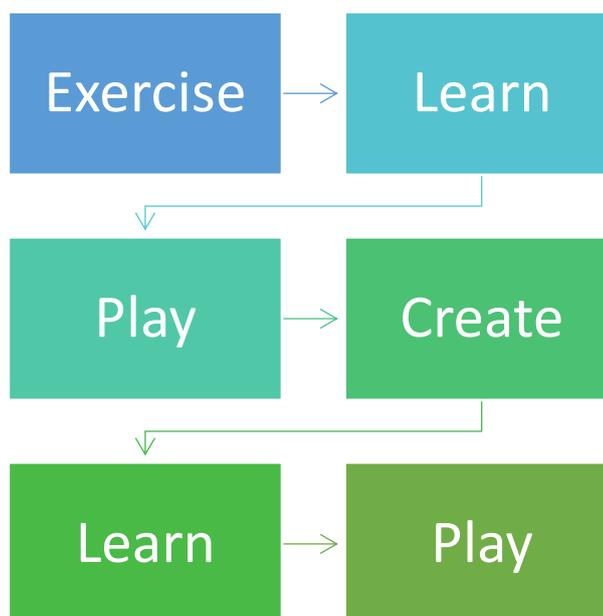
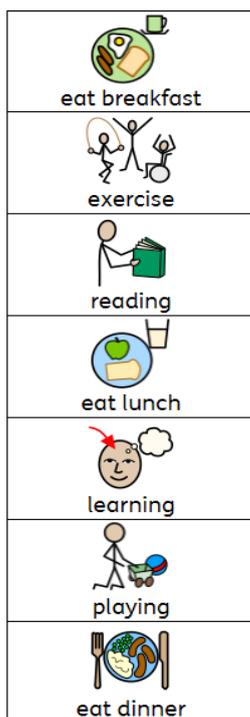


## Example timetables

Keeping a routine can be very helpful but remember that we are currently in a time of increased difficulty and many of us are anxious and stressed - stressed adults cannot effectively teach stressed children. Remember to take some time to relax and enjoy the time with your children, and have a duvet day if needed!

There is no “correct” timetable or routine, and all children are different; a timetable should be more like a guide rather than something strict, and do not worry if you stray from it.

Getting ready for the day	Have breakfast, brush teeth, get dressed, have a wash
9am: Activity 1	Online learning from school or writing/maths
10am: Activity 2	Online learning from school or creative/craft activity
11am: Quiet time	Calming activity such as reading or colouring
12pm: Lunch	
1pm: Help around the house	Hoovering, washing dishes, tidying up
2pm: Get active	Play in the garden, indoor PE lesson
3pm: Activity 3	Online learning from school or humanities subject
4pm: Free time	Enjoy playing with toys and technology!
5pm: Dinner time	
6pm: Family time	Play a game together, watch a film, talk
Getting ready for bed	Have a bath, read a bedtime story, get into pyjamas



Apply realistic times that will suit your child – learning can be 10 minutes or an hour!

## Talking to children about COVID-19

**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).



Source: *British Psychological Society (2020)*



## Isolation guide

Isolation during COVID-19 can be a stressful time for families. The paediatric psychology department of NHS Cardiff & Vale Health Board have developed this guide to help maintain psychological wellbeing. Please refer to NHS and Public Health for physical health advice.

### Prepare

- Let children know what is happening, encouraging them to think of it as an opportunity to have family time and learn new things
- Avoid fake news and social media – only looking to the NHS and Public Health guidelines for advice
- Model and encourage resilience by thinking what you can do rather than what you can't
- Take time to think about what you find difficult to cope with, talk to someone you trust and make a plan for support
- Plan as a family and make a daily timetable of activities
- Get contact numbers for family/friends so you and your children can still talk/whatsapp
- Get what you need for family projects in advance: gardening, arts and crafts, projects, DIY, cooking

### Daily routines

- Stick to daily routines, a time to get up and bedtimes are really important
- Get washed and dressed as normal
- Stick to a daily activity timetable
- Eat regularly and at set meal times
- Get exercise and air – open windows, go into the garden, do exercise videos
- Open curtains and windows to get natural light
- Limit screen time
- Try things from the activity list here, mix up the activities by having busy and active times, followed by quieter sitting activities similar to how the school day is structured

### Activity list

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make a den</li> <li>• Create new things out of old</li> <li>• Do school work</li> <li>• Do some gardening: plant vegetables/flowers to grow in spring</li> <li>• Spring clean</li> <li>• Hold a fashion show</li> <li>• Bake cakes/try a new recipe</li> <li>• Learn something new: a dance, a skill, a song, a language</li> <li>• Read a book</li> <li>• Talk to a friend/family member</li> <li>• Doodle and draw</li> <li>• Put on music and dance</li> <li>• Watch 'Go Noodle,' 'Zen Den,' 'Joe Wicks Workouts' on YouTube</li> <li>• Look at old photos, make an album</li> <li>• Listen to audiobooks/podcasts</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reminisce about nice family memories</li> <li>• DIY – do painting, repairs</li> <li>• Write letters to family/friends</li> <li>• Paint family portraits</li> <li>• Look after pets</li> <li>• Plan and research future adventures</li> <li>• Have a 'children in charge' day where they are the parents and teach you new things</li> <li>• Try new hair styles</li> <li>• Learn a relaxation technique</li> <li>• Learn and practice mindfulness techniques</li> <li>• Play board games</li> <li>• Learn a new card game</li> <li>• Play musical instruments – make your own!</li> <li>• Write a story/play you can act out</li> <li>• Plan and have film nights</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

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## Looking after your children

**For the most part, what you need to provide children has not changed! Children need love, attention, and opportunities to play and learn. However, if children are isolated for long periods of time due to COVID-19 due to social distancing or self-isolation the following tips may be helpful:**

Try and keep to a structure and routine that suits you. Keep bedtime and morning routines close to existing ones to 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.

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. Younger children will enjoy assault courses, discos etc. Older children and teens might respond better to fitness videos.

Expect children to do some learning every day. In the longer-term schools are likely to provide opportunities for online learning. In the short term, or as extra activities there are a wealth of helpful websites, many of which they will be able to access independently. Continuing with their learning helps promote a sense of normality and purpose as well as keeping them up to date for when they are back at school.

Find opportunities for them to interact with their friends remotely. For tweens and teens, contact with their peers is especially important. Technology provides lots of opportunities for older children to connect, chat and game together. But beware of giving unsupervised access to platforms that you would not normally allow your child onto; the internet still poses the same risks as in normal times.

Balance screen time with other activities. Challenge children to learn new skills that don't involve screens e.g. tying shoelaces, juggling, baking. Older children might want to set their own goals.

Give children opportunities to have a say in what will be happening. They may have had a lot of their freedoms and choices removed for a while and may feel powerless or angry. Older children and teenagers will be more able to understand the risks in too much screen time, too little sleep, inactivity etc. They are more likely to 'buy in' to new rules and routines if they feel that they have a voice. Family meetings where children and adults problem-solve together can be helpful for this.

## Calming techniques for children

# 10 WAYS to Calm Down



1. Breathe in and out slowly 10 times.

2. Squeeze a stress ball.

3. Take a break and get a drink of water.

4. Talk to a grown-up.

5. Hug someone.

6. Draw a picture about it.

7. Write about your feelings.

8. Do some stretches.

9. Think of something happy.

10. Read a magazine or book.



## Support information

**Community Advice & Listening Line: mental health helpline**

<http://www.callhelpline.org.uk/>

Freephone 0800 132 737 or text help to 81066

**Young Minds – youth support**

<https://youngminds.org.uk/>

**Kooth – youth support**

<https://www.kooth.com>

**Gingerbread: single parent support**

<https://www.gingerbread.org.uk/>

0808 802 0925

**Samaritans – mental health support**

<https://www.samaritans.org/>

116 123

**Mind – mental health support**

<https://www.mind.org.uk/>

**Childline – youth support**

<https://www.childline.org.uk/>

0800 1111

**Family lives – parenting support**

<https://www.familylives.org.uk/>

0808 800 2222

**Family Action – family support**

<https://www.family-action.org.uk/>

0808 802 6666

07537 404 282 (text)

familyline@family-action.org.uk

**Grandparents plus – kinship support**

<https://www.grandparentsplus.org.uk/>

0300 123 7015

**Learn4MentalHealth – to support mental wellbeing and coping**

<http://learn.4mentalhealth.com/sites/default/files/courses/wb7/index.html>

## Educational resources

<https://learn.khanacademy.org/>

Free educational programme for ages 2-7

<https://www.khanacademy.org/>

Free online classes

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>

Educational content from age 3 to 16+

<https://www.futurelearn.com/>

Free access to hundreds of courses

<https://www.duolingo.com/>

Free website and app to learn languages

<https://thekidshouldseethis.com/>

Interesting educational videos (including a specific set of educational videos on COVID-19 and related hygiene practices)

<https://www.youtube.com/user/crashcourseEducational>

Educational YouTube videos on many topics

<https://www.youtube.com/user/crashcoursekids>

Educational YouTube videos on many topics for younger children

<https://www.conwy.gov.uk/en/Resident/Social-Care-and-Wellbeing/Children-and-families/Conwy-Family-Centres/Family-Centres-Whats-On/assets/documents/Free-apps.pdf>

A list of useful free apps to help support children's learning

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/>

Resources and worksheets to aid home learning

<https://toytheater.com/>

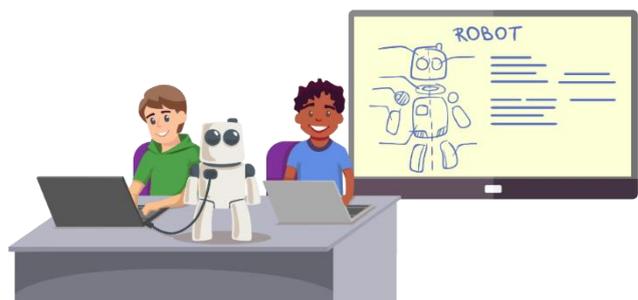
Educational games

<https://www.redtedart.com/>

Arts and crafts ideas for younger children

<https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/#>

Educational games and a free e-book library



## COVID-19 Resources for children

<https://washyourlyrics.com/>

A fun website which allows you to put in a song to wash your hands to for the recommended 20 seconds. A great way to encourage children to wash their hands!

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/51342366?fbclid=IwAR3CyZq5rzXVoyGCgWjpx6YqoetuZ1tP16y7wMjUR6uwgWyhRmf0aFTrAs>

CCBC Newsround video entitled “Coronavirus: Why it might not be as scary as it sounds” to explain what is happening to children

<https://www.mindheart.co/descargables>

COVID-19 Mini book for children (featured in the booklet) available in many languages including Welsh

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

Free activities and resources from ELSA Support relating to supporting the wellbeing of children related to COVID-19 and isolation

## COVID-19 Resources: Additional learning needs

<https://www.mencap.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-03/24th%20March%20Cv19%20UpdateCU.pdf>

Easy to read guidance on the governmental advice for dealing with COVID-19

<https://carolgraysocialstories.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Pandemics-and-the-Coronavirus.pdf>

A social story about COVID-19 and pandemics by Carol Gray

<https://theautismeducator.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/The-Corona-Virus-Free-Printable-Updated-2-The-Autism-Educator-.pdf>

A social story about COVID-19

<https://www.lgfl.net/covid19socialstories>

A collection of social stories related to COVID-19

<https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/sites/default/files/field/attachemnt/Supporting%20Children%20with%20LD%20%26%20ASD%20with%20COVID%20Isolation.pdf>

NHS Cardiff & Vale guidance on supporting children with ASD during COVID-19 isolation

<https://www.autism.org.uk/services/helplines/coronavirus/resources/tips.aspx>

A link to the National Autistic Society’s document of coronavirus tips for people with autism