

Coping with coronavirus

strategies for young people

To help this virus to slow down and to protect people who are more vulnerable to it, there have been lots of changes in how we live for a short period of time. This includes staying home and not doing usual activities such as going to school or college or seeing friends.



You may be feeling lots of different emotions including worry, frustration and sadness about the impact coronavirus is having on your life, people you care about and the world in general. It is a strange time and it is ok and normal to feel this way. However, there may also be lots of good things, including more time with your family and new smart phone apps that help you to see and chat to your friends throughout the day.



Ideas for things that you might find helpful:

Talk about how you are feeling



If you have questions or feel worried, you can talk to someone - friends or family - about your thoughts and things you want to know more about. If this is hard you can try writing them down. This can help to deal with them and let them go.

Tips:

- You can make a box to post your worries and questions in. You can pick a question or worry each week to ask your parents or carer about.

Try to create a “new normal” daily routine

Lots of people will be spending a lot more time at home than usual and this can be strange. Having a routine can help.



Tips:

- Try writing out a “new normal” daily routine with what you will do for the day – include learning, fun activities and talking to your friends.
- Include extra fun things that you wouldn't normally be able to do, like having a group chat with friends on a morning when you would usually be at school or college.

**Healthy habits**

Keeping healthy is important to keep you strong.

Tips, do things to look after your health including:

- Eating healthily.
- Sleep. Try to get enough sleep and go to bed and wake up at set times.
- Exercise. Moving your body can also make you feel good – try exercise, dance or yoga videos on YouTube, or go out for a walk.
- Spend time outside. Try to spend some time outside or in the garden if possible. Open the windows to get light and fresh air.

Spend time doing things you don't normally do

It can be fun to do different things and this can be a time to spend doing some things you don't normally have time for or have always wanted to try.

**Tips:**

- You could have a different theme each day: cook a new meal Tuesday, a new card game Thursday.
- You can read, listen to music, learn a new hobby or skill or play games. There are lots of plays, PE sessions and stories read by celebrities on the internet to have a look at.

Help others

Giving help to others can also make us feel good. Remember people like grandparents and relatives who might be missing you and find ways to involve them in things you are doing.



Tips:

- Call or text someone, you can ask others for help with school or college work (ask a relative a tricky Maths question or younger children can have reading time with grandparents or other family members who are not in the home).
- You can show family and friends a meal you've made or an activity you are doing.
- You can help someone with things they can't do themselves or with tasks at home.

Stay connected

Friends and family are really important to keep in touch with - they can make you laugh, talk about things they are up to, give you ideas of activities to do and enable you to feel close to people you enjoy being with.

Tips:

- There are lots of ways to keep in touch with friends and family – you could speak on the phone, video call, play online games together, or watch TV shows together using Skype.

Notice worries

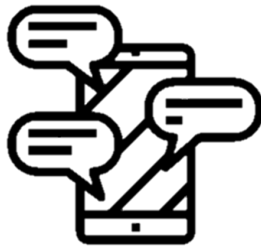
You may find yourself worrying about things that you can not do anything about like the future or what might happen. Try to notice when this is happening and practice changing your focus to the 'here and now' and more helpful or enjoyable things.

**Tips:**

- You can use some of the things we have talked about here - writing down thoughts, mindfulness or relaxation - to help with this. Try to find what works for you and helps you to distract from these thoughts.
- You can also ask other people to help you spot when this is happening and remind you of some of the things you can do to help.

Limit media and social media

It is very easy to read lots about the coronavirus. This can mean you have lots more questions and worries. It is okay to keep up to date and find out things that you want to know but try to limit how much time you spend reading or watching things about coronavirus as this can make you feel more worried, for example, one time per day and from a source you can trust.



Tips:

- If you start to feel worried try to limit how much you talk about coronavirus and talk to friends and family about other things.

If you are worried about coronavirus and your health condition

You or a parent/carer can speak to your medical team for advice or think about what support might be helpful for you.

We also have some online toolkits on topics like worry and sleep.

You can find them here:

<http://www.uhbw.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/support-for-patients/psychological-health-services/resources/>

Find ways to stay calm

Having time to relax can be fun and is important. You can decorate your room with fairy lights and have cuddle time or reading time. You can have relaxation or mindfulness time with parents or carers.

Useful websites

- Try breathing and relaxation exercises or mindfulness as a way to stay calm from these websites:
www.headspace.com
www.moodcafe.co.uk/for-children-and-young-people/relaxation-for-children.aspx
- Try making a self-soothe box with things that help you to relax. Find tips on making a self-soothe box here:
<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/how-to-make-a-self-soothe-box/>
- This website also has lots of ideas for strategies that other young people have found helpful for their wellbeing:
<https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/self-care/>
- You might like the self-care kit from Sheffield Children's Hospital:
<https://www.sheffieldchildrens.nhs.uk/patients-and-parents/coronavirus-resources-for-children-and-families/>