

Looking After Our Wellbeing:

A grab pack for children studying at home during the Covid-19 response

Psychology and Wellbeing Service

May 2020

We are all facing a lot of change in our lives at the moment and some of that change might have made you feel a little worried or anxious. If this is how you feel then the good news is this is completely normal.

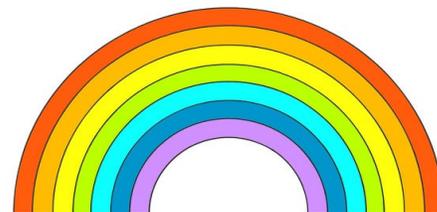
The Coronavirus has introduced us all to a new situation that has never happened to so many people all at once and we are all working hard to think about the changes we have to make, and how we keep going with the important things in our lives, like our school work, feeling safe and staying close to our family and friends.

This grab pack gives you some ideas on how to help yourself with your school work when working at home and some things you could think about doing to look after the way you feel, and stay happy and positive.

Ways to help you focus on school work

Being at home instead of school might make it harder to focus and it can feel a little strange concentrating on school work in a different way to homework! Everyone has to work from home at the moment so we are all sharing ideas on how we can make this easy for ourselves. Below are some tips you might want to try and share with others...good luck!

1. Follow a routine, including a time to start, break and finish your learning day. Think of the pattern you follow at school and try to copy the parts of the day that are easy for you to do at home e.g. It may be helpful to have a visual timetable to remind yourself what you need to be doing at what time. It might also be helpful to have a clock or timer that tells you when it's time to have your break.
2. Find a nice quiet place to work and make this your daily work space. A space that does not have distractions, such as the TV, gaming devices, other family members talking. It's even better if you have the space at home to leave your work things there and to not use this space when relaxing.
3. Remember to eat breakfast, always have a glass of water with you, and eat regular healthy snacks, this can help control blood sugar and help you to keep focus.



We are all considering the changes we need to make to keep ourselves and our families safe. Check out our range of wellbeing grab packs online, offering helpful tips on a range of subjects including the importance of sleep, staying focussed with ADHD, Mindfulness and many more.

In this grab pack:

- Ways to help you focus on school work
- Your mood
- Staying positive
- Wellbeing
- Useful websites

4. Think about learning bursts! Breaking tasks down into manageable chunks can help you focus on the goal. Focus for 15-30 minutes then take a quick brain break for 5 minutes or so e.g. fetch a drink of water, plan the next step in your task, do a quick activity that you enjoy.
5. Get organised. Make sure you have the right tools to do the job e.g. pen, ruler, protractor etc. If you have adult support then use this to make sure you've understood what to do and to help you get started on a task. Try to plan your answers to a task to keep you on track.
6. Talk to your parent/carers about a reward system where you achieve a reward when school work is completed. Agree on tasks and goals for the day. Rewards can be special time with a parent/carer or screen time, for example.

Your mood

Talking about our thoughts and feelings is always important. Feeling anxious or worried about things is completely normal and healthy as these are the feelings that keep us safe, but it's really important to keep your feelings balanced with positive thoughts.

It's a good idea to think about the things you do to look after yourself eg. your health, your feelings and staying safe. This is known as looking after your wellbeing.

You might enjoy keeping a mood journal. This is like keeping a regular diary and helps you think about your feelings throughout your day so you can learn about the things that have gone really well, that you want to do more of to lift your mood, and think about why sometimes things have made you feel worried or sad. If this sounds like something you would like to try then here are a few suggestions to get you started.

Mood Journal

Getting your 'inside voice' onto paper can help you feel more in control of your feelings. Some young people feel that seeing their thoughts on paper, makes them far less scary and helps the feelings go away (see youngminds.org.uk for more info).



Gratitude Journal

The word gratitude is another way of saying the things we are grateful for so a gratitude journal is simply a diary that keeps track of these, even the little things. Being grateful for things helps us to feel happy and positive and makes us better at managing times when things haven't gone the way we wanted them to.

Why don't you try writing down the things you are grateful for and keep adding to your list every day. You could even create a gratitude jar and get your family to add something new every day.



C

Can you draw or write down things that make you feel calm?

For example, a happy place, your favourite hobby.

A

Are you feeling worried or upset?

It's okay if you do and it's good to tell others how you feel.

L

Listen to the thoughts in your head and how your body feels.

M

Make a list of things you enjoy doing to help yourself feel better.

E

Everyone feels worried sometimes.

When you've felt worried before, what helped you feel better then?

R

Remember to keep talking to an adult at home about how you're feeling.

BritishRedCross

Growth mindset

If you believe you can get better at something by working hard and not giving up then you have a positive growth mindset. By keeping a journal and tracking your mood you can improve your self-esteem and increase your resilience (not giving up when faced with a challenge).

See below for examples of what you might include in a journal to keep your growth mindset going strong:

1. A quote of the day to help you be positive and strong!
2. Top 3 things you are grateful for today.
3. Reflect on your day, what did you do and how did you feel? Why not put an emoji of the day to reflect your mood? Think about what activity or conversation made you feel the way you did and make a note of it.
4. Make a small checklist of 1 or 2 tasks you want to achieve and tick them as you complete them.
5. Think about a challenge and how you overcame it, or how you could approach it next time?
6. Get your family involved and talk through your day with a parent/ carer.

Staying positive

Thinking about your mood isn't the only way you can look after your wellbeing:

Try to think about the 5 ways to wellbeing and plan what you're going to do look after yourself. This might include talking to friends (Connect), doing some exercise (Be Active), trying some Mindfulness (Take Notice), learning something new (Keep Learning) or doing something nice for someone else (Give).

Here are some ideas to get your started:



Connect



Be active



Take notice



Keep learning



Give

Connect

- Play board games
- Read together
- Watch a film
- FaceTime a friend
- Have a joke telling “half hour” - Try to make each other laugh!

Be Active

- Play ‘keepy-uppy’ or tennis with balloons
- Draw a hopscotch grid on the pavement or patio and play hopscotch
- When out for your daily walk complete scavenger hunts - can be adapted for all ages/environments and can be done inside if necessary
- Grow plants or cress

Take Notice

- Make a memory bracelet with either pasta (which you can colour or paint) or use string or elastic and beads. Different colours for different things about school/ socially ie: which teachers are your favourites/ which subject do you most enjoy/ who are your friends/ a happy memory/ best trip etc. Journaling/drawing about your feelings and talk about it with someone.
- Draw ‘this is how I feel today’ use any colour - can be squiggles and not a picture of anything in particular- find someone to talk about your picture with.
- Map of my Heart - draw a heart shape and fill it with all the people/ things that you love or that are important to you.

Keep Learning

- Why not try some Mindful colouring or actually learning some new mindfulness exercises? You can find a lot of ideas online and this can help you look after your feelings.
- Look online and learn how to speak a new language, perhaps to help you know what to order the next time you go on holidays.

Also make sure you

Sleep Well e.g. Have a relaxing bath before bed. Read or be read to or listen to a story on a CD.

Eat well and drink well e.g. Cook with parents/carers. Try to make your own lunch if you can. Think about eating your 5 a day. Make sure you have plenty of water to drink which can also help you focus better.

Take a break/ relax and chill when you’ve finished your school work e.g. Blow bubbles, Play-doh/ putty/ slime/ clay play. Get a cardboard box and pens - decorate it and eat your snack in it.

Useful websites

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/> (for free resources to help you develop your visual timetable).

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/51204456> (For information for children on Covid-19 which can help answer questions your child may have).

<https://carolgraysocialstories.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Pandemics-and-the-Coronavirus.pdf> (Carol Gray, the creator of Social Stories, has produced a Social Story about coronavirus and pandemics).

Look out for our other grab pack which gives online resources and ideas on all sorts of useful things when you are staying at home.

NATURE SCAVENGER HUNT

SEE HOW MANY ITEMS YOU CAN FIND ON THE LIST.
LOOK HIGH AND LOW SO NOTHING IS MISSED!

CAN YOU FIND ME?

- Rock
- Leaf
- Pine Cone
- Wild Flower
- Bark
- Piece of Litter
- Stick
- 3 Leaf Clover
- Green Grass
- Feather
- Berry

TOUCH

- something Soft
- something Smooth
- something Rough

SHAPES

- something Circle
- something Square
- something Triangle

COLORS

- something Green
- something Brown
- something Red

TOTAL POINTS _____

Give

- Paint/ draw/ colour a picture for someone in your house or send to someone who is important to you.
- Random Acts of Kindness Challenge. This can be downloaded from www.elsa-support.co.uk
- Paint/ colour on a stone and give it to an important person in your life or leave them outside for people to look at or find. Why not challenge the rest of your friends or family to do the same!!
- Why not try following a kindness calendar like the one below? You can find more like this one at https://www.actionforhappiness.org/media/875756/may_2020.pdf



ACTION CALENDAR: MEANINGFUL MAY 2020

MONDAY **TUESDAY** **WEDNESDAY** **THURSDAY** **FRIDAY** **SATURDAY** **SUNDAY**

"Start Where You Are. Use What You Have. Do What You Can" ~ Arthur Ashe

4 Focus on what you can do rather than what you can't do	5 Send friends a photo of a time you all enjoyed together	6 Take a step towards one of your life goals, however small	7 Let someone you love know how much they mean to you	1 Take a minute to remember what really matters to you and why	2 Do something meaningful for someone you really care about	3 Reconnect with nature today, even if you're stuck indoors
11 What are your most important values? Use them today	12 Be grateful for the little things, even in difficult times	13 Today do something to care for the natural world	14 Show your gratitude to people who are helping to make things better	8 Set yourself a kindness mission. Give your time to help others	9 Look out for positive news and reasons to be cheerful today	10 Tell someone about why your favourite music means a lot to you
18 Hand-write a note to someone you love and send them a photo of it	19 Find a way to craft what you are doing to give it more meaning	20 Reflect on what makes you feel really valued and appreciated	21 Share photos of 3 things you find meaningful or memorable	15 Find out about the values and traditions of another culture	16 Look around you and notice five things you find meaningful	17 Take a positive action to help in your local community
25 Give your time to help a project or charity you care about	26 Recall three things you've done that you are really proud of	27 Today link your decisions and choices to your purpose in life	28 Tell someone about an event in your life that was really meaningful	22 Ask a loved one or colleague what matters most to them and why	23 Share an inspiring quote with others to give them a boost	24 Do something special today and revisit it in your memory tonight
				29 Think about how your actions make a difference for others	30 Find three good reasons to be hopeful about the future	31 Look up at the sky. Remember we are all part of something bigger

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

www.actionforhappiness.org

31 actions to look after ourselves and each other as we face this global crisis together

Keep Calm · Stay Wise · Be Kind

Use the checklist below to think about what you already do and what you might like to do. You might also want to do a family checklist and use the initials of each family member to record everyone's goals.

Playing computer games		Jigsaws		Gardening / houseplants	
Lego / model building		Watching TV or YouTube		Cooking / baking	
Using the internet / emailing		Playing chess / other Board games		Doing puzzles (e.g. crosswords, Sudoku)	
Playing cards		Collecting		Watch a funny video	
Listening to music		Listening to the radio or podcast		Other play...	
Exercising at home / aerobics / circuits		Walking		Jogging	
Cycling		Dancing		Yoga / Pilates	
Wii Fit / Xbox Kinect		Rhythm – bouncing / skipping		Cleaning / sorting	
Meditation / mindfulness		Massage / beauty treatments (e.g. nails)		Relaxation techniques	
Soak in a bath		Savour a meal		Stretching / tai chi / qi gong	
Sewing / knitting / crochet		Writing stories / poetry		Singing	
Playing a musical instrument		Painting / drawing / chalking		Photography	
Colouring		Origami		Clay / Play-do / slime	
Scrapbooking		Pebble painting		Hama beads	
Decorating / DIY		Restoring / upcycling		Other crafts	
Reading a book or magazine		Writing in a diary		Learning a foreign language	
Start a blog		Research topic online		Set a goal	
Make a to do list		Read inspirational quotes		Do schoolwork	
Make a gratitude list		Read a joke book		Audio book	
Social media		Caring for a pet		Caring for family member	
Writing letters / emails		Dog walking		Call a friend or FaceTime	
Religious practice		Helping out around the house		Do something kind	
Other...		Other...		Other...	

Another resource to identify and explore activity ideas can be found at <https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/self-care/>