

The Oak-Tree Group of Schools

**Mental Health and Wellbeing
during Coronavirus:**

A Guide for Teachers



Braeside

Coopersale Hall

Normanhurst

Oaklands

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Mental Health and Wellbeing During Coronavirus

We recognise the challenges of working with children and young people through the Coronavirus pandemic, and also the impact that Coronavirus is having on the mental health and wellbeing of pupils and staff.

We are very grateful for the commitment, dedication and hard work of staff throughout this time, whereby you have continued to put the children first and to ensure they have continued to flourish.

We are mindful that Coronavirus has been a challenge for us all, and recognise that some information about how to support mental health and wellbeing might be helpful for members of staff.

The aim of this booklet is to provide details about where to go for information, support and training to support positive mental health and wellbeing. Whilst the booklet is relevant for your work with pupils and their families, importantly it is also for you as individuals who are navigating these uncertain times and may need some support for yourselves.

We are also producing booklets for older pupils and for parents. We want to ensure, as far as we can, that all members of our school community are well-resourced and supported through the current challenges and the hope is that this booklet will contribute to that aim.



Useful Websites about Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing

There are many resources which have been produced online to support wellbeing for children and families during this time:

- [Mind advice and support](#) - Coronavirus and your wellbeing
- [Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families](#) - Supporting young people's mental health
- [Young Minds](#) - Talking to your child about Coronavirus
- [Family Lives](#) - Parenting and family support
- [Young Minds](#) - Parents helpline

Top Tips for Working with Children and Young People

The MHFA Action Plan: ALGEE



- **Approach** the young person, assess and **assist** with any crisis.
- **Listen and communicate** non-judgementally.
- Give **support** and information.
- **Encourage** the young person to get appropriate professional help.
- **Encourage** other supports.

ALGEE can also be applied to friends and family of the person.

Encouraging your Child, or Someone in Your Family, to Talk About Their Feelings



Talking Tips



Keep the chat positive and supportive, exploring the issues and how you may be able to help.



Keep your body language open and non-confrontational.



Be empathetic and take them seriously.



Do not offer glib advice such as "pull yourself together" or "cheer up".



Take into account cultural differences in communication styles e.g how much eye contact is appropriate.



Useful Questions to Ask

How are you feeling at the moment?

Who do you feel you can go to for support?

Is there anything we can do to help?

How long have you felt like this - is it an ongoing issue?

Are there any work related factors which are contributing to how you are feeling?

Emotional Wellbeing in Self-isolation for Children, Young People and Parents

Top tips for staying emotionally healthy during self-isolation:



Stick to a active daily routine

(e.g. creating your own daily programme including three meals a day, activity time slots, self-care opportunities and bedtime routine)



Do light activity - stretch and home workouts

(e.g. yoga, dance, spring cleaning the house)



Keep up hobbies that keep you moving

(e.g. baking, reading, writing, making music, gardening etc)



Keep connected to others

(e.g. phones, email, skype, websites, helplines & online counselling)

Engage in creative activities

(e.g. art, scrap book making, junk modelling, restoring furniture, create music, redecorating)



Keep an active mind

(e.g. learning a new skill, research, brain training games, home learning using such free websites)

Try meditation and relaxation

(e.g. Apps and free YouTube videos such as headspace)

Hot desk at home with planned short brain breaks

(Try to work in the same place every day and pack away when done.)

Plan meals in advance



Do things you enjoy doing

(e.g. watch a boxset, paint your nails, listen to podcasts, reading etc)

Keeping hydrated

(Make sure you are drinking water throughout the day.)

Self-care opportunities

(Self-care is any activity that we do deliberately in order to take care of our mental, emotional, and physical health. Although it's a simple concept in theory, it's something we very often overlook. Good self-care is key to improved mood and reduced anxiety)



PSHE Resources to use in School

Jigsaw has created Coronavirus support resources, as well as the PSHE Association and other charities. These links may be helpful:

PSHE Association Coronavirus Hub

<https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/content/coronavirus-hub>

Children's Guide to Coronavirus

This is a useful child-friendly PowerPoint about Coronavirus, with a video and activities. It is a helpful resource to use with children.

<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/cco-childrens-guide-to-coronavirus.pdf>

Helping Children Deal with Bereavement

The following websites are helpful for children who are grieving the loss of a loved one.



The Good Grief Recovery Method

Resources for schools for helping children with loss:
<https://www.griefrecoverymethod.co.uk/schools/>



Child Bereavement UK

<https://www.childbereavementuk.org/>
this is a well-established charity working to provide support for children who are bereaved. It has a dedicated area for Coronavirus:
<https://www.childbereavementuk.org/pages/category/coronavirus>



Help for Families and Advice for Staff if Pupils are Suffering from Mental Illness

Minded for Families

A website to support parents and carers concerned about the mental health of their children or teenagers. It has information and advice to help you support your children and look after yourself.

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

Every Mind Matters

This is an NHS website that focuses on helping people look after their mental health. It has a section that relates to Coronavirus and it has sections for adults, parents and also for teenagers.

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/>

Government Guidance on the Mental Health and Wellbeing aspects of Coronavirus

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-the-public-on-the-mental-health-and-wellbeing-aspects-of-coronavirus-covid-19>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak> - this guidance is aimed for parents and carers of children and young people.

Barnardo's

This charity has a number of helpful resources for families, children and young people and professionals:

<https://www.barnardos.org.uk/support-hub/emotional-wellbeing>

New Support for Families Living in Essex

In the summer, Essex launched a new range of services to give young people and their families a little extra help during the coronavirus pandemic.

Family Innovation Fund-Xtra services are provided by the voluntary sector and community partners and provide early support across key areas including understanding coronavirus; managing and coping with change; separation and loss; managing and coping with anxiety; healthy family relationships and staying active.

Wilderness Foundation

Offers counselling and therapeutic support, and may bring nature, art and other creative tools into sessions. Appointments are available 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. Evenings and weekends by appointment.

Contact 0300 1233073 or info@wildernessfoundation.org.uk

Renew Counselling

An experienced and accredited counselling service for all ages. Appointments are available Monday to Friday 10am to 5pm and Monday to Thursday 5pm to 8pm. Saturdays by appointment.

Contact 01245 359353 or hilary@renew-us.org

Open Door

Offers coaching, counselling and mediation. Appointments are available Monday to Thursday 9am to 7pm, Friday 9am to 5pm. Saturday and Sunday by appointment.

Contact 01375 390040 or Fifxtra@opendoorservices.org

YMCA

Can help families identify beneficial strategies and solutions for their needs in individual, group or family sessions. Appointments are available Monday to Friday and Saturdays by agreement.

Contact 01245 355677 or sarah.daniels@ymcachelmsford.org.uk

Evolve Intervention

Provide early intervention for children and young people through mentoring, coaching, group work and tuition. Appointments are available Monday to Friday 9am to 6pm, with some availability between 6pm to 8pm and on Saturdays 10am to 4pm.

Contact us on 01245 526069 or info@evolve-intervention.com

For families with family members suffering from suicidal thoughts, the following websites provide information and support:

- <https://www.papyrus-uk.org/> (prevention of young suicide)
- <https://uksobs.org/> (survivors of bereavement by suicide)
- <https://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Suicide/Documents/Help%20is%20at%20Hand.pdf> (NHS publication)

Websites aimed at Teachers and Adults Working in Schools

- [Education Support](#) - Teacher helpline and counselling service
- Training Powerpoints with audio:

[Children and Young People](#)

[Staff Wellbeing](#)

[Powerpoints and supporting documents for training](#) - zip folder of PowerPoints and useful documents for you to use

- [Recovery and Returning to Educational Settings](#) - video and audio PowerPoint
- [Recovery and Returning to School paper](#)
- [Recovery and Returning to School paper](#) (abridged version)

Staff Training Options

We aim to train a group of about twenty members of staff across the Group, 4-5 people in each school, to become Mental Health First Aid Champions, in the near future. Details about this will follow shortly. In addition, there are a number of very good online courses that staff may wish to explore.

<https://www.familylinks.org.uk/online-course-schools>

Free one hour certificated online course combining knowledge and understanding on emotional and mental health in school with practical tools and the opportunity to reflect.

<https://www.ihasco.co.uk/courses/detail/mental-health-in-education-training>

£25 certificated online course covering: mental health in education, mental health problems, a wellbeing toolkit and how to access external help. Geared for teachers to understand their own mental health and wellbeing and to support their pupils.

<https://www.servicesforeducation.co.uk/our-offer/managing-anxiety/#>

This is an online course with five modules last four hours and costs £50. It is designed to help staff working with or supporting children in the classroom to create the optimum learning environment for pupils and to work form the recognition of the importance of an emotionally safe classroom.

<https://www.newbycore.co.uk/mental-health-first-aid>

Newbycore offers mental heal first aid training at Level 1: ½ a day (£89), Level 2: 1 day (£99) and Level 3: 2 days (£125). They are being offered via Zoom currently, as well as in person.

<https://www.myeducare.com/shop/product/mental-health-awareness>

This is a £30 course on mental health awareness training, including self-harm, low mood, anxiety and depression.

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/youth-mental-health>

This course on Youth Mental Health and Helping Young People with Anxiety is offered online and was developed by the University of East Anglia. The course has a free version were you can access all the materials and go through the programme; there is also a certificated version costing £52. It is aimed at teachers and professionals without specialist training in this area.

https://www.relias.co.uk/hubfs/ZSA-FullTraining-10012020/story_html5.html

This is a certificated free online suicide awareness training course produced by the Zero Suicide Alliance.

Support for Staff

The Senior Leadership Teams and the staff at Head Office are available to support staff if you have concerns. Sharon Hewitt, Claire Osborn and the Heads are all trained in mental health and wellbeing support.

Please do talk to one of us if you need to, or if a conversation about some of the material in this booklet would be helpful, so that we can work together to help you to overcome the mental health and wellbeing challenges caused by Coronavirus.



