



PARENT AND CARERS GUIDE POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING (CHILD & YOUTH)

**Produced by South Health
Improvement Team**

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Updated on 31st March 2020

1. INTRODUCTION

This Guide for Parents and Carers brings together information and practical advice that we think you will find helpful when supporting your child/young person to manage life's challenges, especially in these unprecedented times. It includes information about mental health and wellbeing, how it can affect us, and how to develop resilience. It also looks at ways of developing strategies with your children and young people to help them manage and feel a bit better. There is also information about relevant local services and supports in Glasgow that can help support.

2. HAVE THE CONVERSATION AND OFFER RESSAURANCE

Talking with children and young people about COVID-19 can be very difficult, but it's important to give children and young people an opportunity to express how they are feeling around this and ask any questions they may have. It's important that you speak to your children/young person calmly and if they are not ready to talk give them space. During this time offloading their worries and offering reassurance may be enough. However, if they are looking for your help and advice to cope with the situation remember to try to be optimistic.

3. IMPORTANCE OF PROVIDING ACCURATE INFORMATION

There is so much information on social media and the news regarding COVID-19. It is important that young people do not become overwhelmed, therefore it would be helpful to monitor their use of social media and offer only factual information.

NB: Please ensure the amount of information and detail is adjusted to match their age / stage

NHS Inform

The NHS website provides updated and accurate information:

www.nhsinform.scot/coronavirus

There are many other translations on the website including audio:

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/translations/languages/british-sign-language-bsl/illnesses-and-conditions/coronavirus-covid-19>

Young Scot COVID-19 Website:

A website dedicated to information and support relating to COVID 19. This will be continually updated and links added to trustworthy information.

<https://young.scot/campaigns/national/coronavirus>

4. FOLLOWING A ROUTINE

With schools now closed and more people working from home maintaining a routine will be difficult but try to keep the normal family routine as much as you can. Try to keep normal waking hours and encourage children and young people to get dressed each day. Try to structure the weekdays around the school day. Try to set up a clear working area for children and young people to complete the work sent to them by their school.

5. TIPS FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

READING

Find a book you enjoy and read for at least 6 minutes each day, or, listen to a talking book.

Since libraries are closed, check out your online library e.g. Glasgow Life.

www.glasgowlife.org.uk/libraries/online-library

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Check foodbank pages and websites and community led helping initiatives.

See useful links below:

www.facebook.com/groups/glasgowmutualaid/about

<https://coronavirus.scvo.org>

RELAXATION

Make time every day to do something to relax. Here is a link to a 3 min relaxation video:

www.cope-scotland.org/index.php/videos/video/relaxation-in-just-3-minutes

Or for some online yoga and relaxation visit:

www.facebook.com/annesyogah/eart

BE CREATIVE

Find something which helps you get distracted from negative or anxious thoughts e.g. playing a game. Mindful colouring in can be very good for helping to switch off for a few minutes.

Mind and Draw will shortly be starting some online creative ideas classes. Visit:

www.facebook.com/mindanddraw

for more information.

EAT HEALTHY / STAY HYDRATED

Make sure to drink enough water and eat regularly. Try and include fruit and veg every day in your diet. If fresh is hard to find then tinned or frozen is good for you too.

MUSIC

Listen to music which you find uplifting and make your own playlist to inspire you. Have a look at this work by See Me and Young People for inspiration:

<https://www.seemescotland.org/young-people/resources/campaigns/>

Soothing songs:

<https://www.theguardian.com/music/2020/mar/17/from-aphex-twin-to-al-green-the-most-soothing-songs-to-self-isolate-with>

Dance:

Step by Step virtual online classes for salsa, cha cha or waltz:

<https://www.facebook.com/StepByStepDanceOnline>

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

This is even more important when we are staying at home and only out for exercise once a day. We still need to find ways to be active. Find something which works for you, such as having a wee dance to your favourite song!

Free online fitness class with Joe Wicks:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rz0go1pTda8>

BE KIND TO YOURSELF

We know times are challenging and uncertain just now, however, we need to make time for our own wellbeing, or we may feel even more exhausted and overwhelmed. Doing something that is kind to you, even for a few minutes a day, can make a difference.

Be realistic about what you can achieve each day. We are all doing the best that we can in very difficult circumstances!!

6. ONE GOOD ADULT

We know that the presence of 'One Good Adult' (OGA) in a child/ young person's life has a positive influence on their mental health. Children and young people with support of OGA are more connected to others, more self-confident, future looking and better able to cope with difficulties.

DO

- Listen
- Ask direct questions
- Comment on what you see
- Be aware of body language
- Look for windows of opportunity
- Ask how you can be of help
- Encourage help seeking

DON'T

- Judge
- Overreact
- Avoid the issue
- Dismiss their concerns
- Talk just about problems
- Rush to solve the problem
- Say they're wrong to feel a certain way
- Use clichés

6.1 SUPPORTING A YOUNG CHILD'S MENTAL WELLBEING

- **Play!** Even if just for short bursts throughout the week. Make the time, let them make the decisions (within reason!) and follow their lead.
- Use basic language, comment on and describe what your child is doing and ask open ended questions that can't be answered yes or no, such as 'What are you going to do next?'
- Use language to help your child identify their feelings during experiences. This may involve making links between what they are feeling and what they are doing, for example 'You are smiling, do you feel happy when we colour together?'
- Show them how to recover. If your child is very upset, give them a big cuddle, and sit with them until they are calm. Then you can then talk things through.

6.2 SUPPORTING AN OLDER CHILD / TEENAGERS MENTAL WELLBEING

- Listen without feeling you should give advice or a solution. Try to avoid judgement.
- Validate the feelings that your child describes or shows, for example, 'I can see you are feeling really stressed right now because of all that is happening. Is that right?'
- Comment on what you hear and see and restate it, for example, 'So you are saying you are feeling a bit fed up at the moment?'
- Look and listen out for exceptions, times when your child mentions that things are going better or when they appear to be enjoying an activity.
- Encourage your child to notice and focus on these 'exceptions' and do more of the things that make them feel better.
- Help your child to develop their own coping strategies by building on things they are doing already, for example, 'You said that you feel better when you talk to your friend on face time and when you take the dog for a walk. Could you arrange to do that?'
- Ask how you can help, for example, 'Is there anything I can do to take a little bit of the anxiety away?'
- Encourage your child to ask for help if needed, for example, 'Could you speak to your sister about it too? She went through something similar' or 'Could you speak to a friend or someone else in school to see if they can help you find other ways to make things a little easier right now?'
- Pay attention. Turn off the tv, put the phones away, and create a calm, quiet environment when you can.

7. SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

STRESS:

Stress is a perfectly normal response to events around us. Our ability to act impulsively and immediately is actually very important. A certain amount of stress can help us to be more alert and focused. However, too much stress, or constantly being anxious, is unhealthy for our lives and relationships. We can begin to feel a lack of control in our life, resulting in low mood, feeling less resilient, and having poorer mental wellbeing.

There are strategies that you can use to help your child to improve their mental wellbeing and resilience. There are physical strategies, such as relaxation, healthy eating, setting a good sleep routine, and exercising regularly, and there are talking strategies.

One of the best short term solutions to a stressful event is a relaxation exercise. These can quickly slow your heart beat and help calm you down. Good relaxation techniques include Breathing Exercises, Muscle Relaxation, Visualisation or Guided Imagery.

Apps for tablet or smartphone:

- Stop, breathe and think
- Mindshift
- Relax Lite
- Calm
- Clips

Links to help children and young people cope with anxiety:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dWeB_xzIUpc

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mb0g-z9g8eQ>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pvM_TtQi9DU

8. RESILIENCE

Resilience is a key factor in protecting and promoting good mental health and is defined as an individual's ability to successfully adapt to life tasks in the face of social disadvantage or highly adverse conditions.

Adversity and stress can come in the shape of family or relationship problems, health problems, or school and financial worries, among others. Resilience is one's ability to bounce back from a negative experience with competent functioning.

USEFUL RESOURCES:

Quarriers: Let's Talk About Mental Health

<https://quarriers.org.uk/how-we-help/children-families/letstalk-about-mental-health>

www.seemescotland.org

(Resilience toolkit available to download)

ONLINE TRAINING

e-learning module:

www.northlanmindset.org.uk

9. DEPRESSION

Feeling sad or fed up is a normal reaction to experiences that are difficult or stressful. Sometimes these feelings of sadness can go on for some time and can start to interfere with everyday life.

Anybody can suffer from depression and it happens to people of all ages, races, income levels and educational levels. Teenage girls are twice as likely as teenage boys to be depressed.

There is no specific cause for depression. It can be caused by a mixture of things, rather than any one thing alone. Depression may be triggered by stressful life events like bullying at school, parental separation or divorce, bereavement or conflicts with family members or friends.

USEFUL WEBSITE

Useful website for young people, parents and professionals
www.ayemind.com

USEFUL CURRICULAR / TEACHING RESOURCE:

Positive Mental Attitudes
Download from www.mindreel.org.uk

10. LOSS AND GRIEF

Change, loss and grief are universal human experiences. Most people grieve when they lose something or someone important to them.

The way grief affects young people depends on lots of things, including what kind of loss they have suffered, their upbringing, their beliefs or religion, their age, their relationships, and their physical and mental health.

There may be a time in a young person's life when they need some support to come to terms with a loss or bereavement. Knowing what to say or where to signpost onto services can really help.

USEFUL WEBSITE

Useful website for young people, parents and professionals
www.childbereavementuk.org

RECOMMENDED TRAINING:

e-learning module:
www.northlanmindset.org.uk

11. MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING SERVICES AND SUPPORTS FOR FAMILIES

Service	Contact Details	Support
Youth Health Service	All YHS venues are now temporarily closed and telephone only support will be available. 0141 451 2727	The Youth Health Service offers support to Young People aged 12-19 living in Glasgow facing a range of health issues. Young People can speak with a nurse, doctor, counsellor or youth worker.
Lifelink	All Lifelink venues are now temporarily closed and telephone and video support will be available. 0141 552 4434 www.lifelink.org.uk	Lifelink Offer 1 to 1 counselling, mentoring, personal development, group work for YP aged 11 upwards. Referrals taken from anyone, including self-referral. Lines open
Youth Community Support Agency	Telephone number for referrals: 07842 792 843 Email address: enquires@ycsa.org.uk	Offering telephone support and counselling to existing clients and their parents/ carers. Will also take referrals for new clients as long as they fit the criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aged 10 – 25 • BME background More information available on their website:

		www.ycsa.org.uk
SE Glasgow Carers Centre	0141 423 0728 Email address: Dixon.carers@btconnect.com	Offering emotional support for existing carers and young carers via telephone. Will also take referrals for new clients. Self-referral available. Further information and referral forms available at: www.yoursupportglasgow.org
SW Glasgow Carers Centre	0141 882 4712 Email address: southwestcarers@gamh.org.uk	Offering emotional support for existing carers and young carers via telephone. Will also take referrals for new clients. Self-referral available. Access to online training resources and funding for supporting carers. Further information and referral forms available at: www.yoursupportglasgow.org
GAMH	0141 425 4850 Email address: spwsouth@gamh.org.uk	All face to face support suspended, except for most vulnerable in their Self Directed Support Service. All other clients being supported via telephone. Unfortunately, they are not taking any new referrals at the moment. More information on range of services usually available at: www.gamh.org.uk
Home Start South Glasgow	0141 570 8735 and 07745 608 788. Email address: theteam@homestartglasgowsouth.org.uk	Open to new referrals on a case by case basis. Offering phone support to existing clients (individual and group based) including telephone calls, video calls, WhatsApp groups. Providing video advice via their Facebook and Twitter pages (accessible to everyone) on various topics, such a cooking. https://m.facebook.com/HomeStartGS More information available at: WWW.homestartglasgowsouth.org.uk
Richmond's Hope	0141 230 6123 Email address: glasgow@richmondshope.org.uk	Offering telephone support for existing clients. Will take new referrals but may put counselling on hold until they can do face to face. Phonenumber is open for general advice and support around bereavement.
Prince & Princess of Wales Hospice	0141 429 5599	Family support service supporting clients with telephone counselling. Will take new referrals via telephone if young person is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under 21 • Living in catchment area (Glasgow South and parts of East Ren)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family/ friend of someone with a life limiting illness.
South CAMHS	0141 201 5031	Open but running as an emergency service. Will take new referrals if deemed an emergency by duty officer. Supporting existing clients via telephone. Usual referral methods apply e.g GP, SW. No self-referrals.
NHS Living Life	0800 328 9655	Free telephone-based service for people feeling low, anxious or stressed (16+). Self-help coaches and therapists, offering appointment based telephone support. Mon – Friday 1pm -9pm
Breathing Space	0800 838 587	Free telephone-based service for people feeling low, anxious or stressed (16+). Mon – Thurs 6pm – 2am Friday 6pm – Monday 6am
CHILD LINE	0800 11 11	Offer free and confidential support on the phone, online and from other YP on message boards.
Anxiety UK	03444 775774	During the coronavirus pandemic, Anxiety UK will be extending their helpline hours to provide additional support in the evenings until 10pm and over the weekend between 10am -8pm so that they can offer support to as many people as possible who need our help. Also specific advice and support available around corona pandemic here: https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/coronanxiety-support-resources
Samaritans	116 123	Anyone any age can contact. Free and confidential support. 24 hours
Parentline	08000 28 22 33	Parentline for calm, practical, advice; emotional support; space to talk. Mon – Friday 9am-9pm Sat-Sun 9am – 12 noon www.children1st.org.uk/parentline

NSPCC	0808 800 5000	<p>If you're worried about a child or young person, you can contact the NSPCC helpline for support and advice for free on a range of topics.</p> <p>https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/childrens-mental-health/depression-anxiety-mental-health/</p>
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12. ONLINE DIGITAL SUPPORT

Big White Wall is funded by Glasgow City Council Education Services and provides a supportive, online community to give help when young people are feeling down. Trained professionals are available 24/7, and there's a choice of safe therapeutic services, including on-line self-help courses.

If you live in Glasgow and are 16-18 years you can simply go to www.bigwhitewall.com and enter your postcode to join.

Aye Mind is a resource developed by young people for young people to make better use of the internet to improve mental health. Digital resource including training, apps and resources on mental health.

<https://www.ayemind.com>

The Healthier Minds website provides information and advice to parents and professionals about ways to support children and young people's wellbeing. There is also information about supporting your child and keeping them safe online.

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/er/healthierminds>

The **NHS website** contains links to many mental health helplines, and also includes information on your wellbeing, reducing stress and children and teen mental health:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mental-health-helplines>

Information about **anxiety in children and young people.**

<https://www.handsonscotland.co.uk/anxiety>

Other useful websites / contacts that you can use to support your mental wellbeing:

- **Pregnant and new parents:** www.parentclub.scot
- Children and Young People: www.youngminds.org.uk
- **Mental Wellbeing and COVID-19 – Scottish Association Mental Health** – www.samh.org.uk
- How to look after your mental health – www.mentalhealth.org.uk
- **Parent helpline 0808 802 5544**