

Dear colleagues,

All organisations are working tirelessly to manage the continuously changing and developing situation of Covid-19; In light of this, we wanted to share with you some helpful links that focus on how we can all look after our mental health and emotional wellbeing during this time. We are aware that you have already been provided with significant medical and practical advice on how to manage the virus pandemic within your setting and therefore are focusing here on looking after mental health and emotional wellbeing.

First though – we would like to thank all school based professionals for all the hard work that you are currently doing to support the children and young people who attend your schools, and the wider school community. Due to the unprecedented nature of this situation, there are many unanswered questions, and lots of media attention, which can lead to anxiety and stress among children, young people, parents/ carers and colleagues, and we thank you for the role you play in managing their anxieties, while keeping schools going.

We hope that you will find the following information about how to look after our mental health and emotional wellbeing helpful not only in supporting the children, young people and families you are working with, but also for yourself, your colleagues, friends and families alike. Please share the links with parents or any colleagues you think would benefit from having this information.

1. *Young Minds* have published great resources and ideas about things adults and young people can do to manage any stress and anxiety they may experience in relation to coronavirus: <https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/what-to-do-if-you-re-anxious-about-coronavirus/>
They also have a mental health advice line available for parents operating between 09:30am-4pm, Monday- Friday: 0808 802 5544
2. The following *Young Minds* link addresses how to look after your mental health when self-isolating: <https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/looking-after-your-mental-health-while-self-isolating/>
3. Centers for Disease Control and prevention provide some helpful messages on how to talk to children about Coronavirus: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/talking-with-children.html>
4. *Every Mind Matters* provides general information about looking after your mental health which would be relevant during this challenging time as much as at any other time and provides top tips to improve emotional wellbeing: <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/>
5. *Mind* website provides useful information about how to cope if people feel anxious about coronavirus, how to manage staying well at home if being asked to self-isolate and taking care of your mental health and wellbeing among other tips and advice: <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/>

6. *Education Support* website is dedicated to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of education staff in schools, colleges and universities. It contains free information including a free 24/7 helpline – 08000 562 561: <https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/>
It also has financial advice information for supply teachers:
<https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/helping-you/information-supply-teachers-contractors-coronavirus>
7. *Mind Hertfordshire Network* provides a crisis helpline for anyone experiencing mental health distress or requiring emotional support and signposting. Professionals, family/ friends can call on someone's behalf with the individual's consent.
Crisis Helpline number: 01923 256 391 or visit <https://www.hertsmindnetwork.org/>
8. The Anna Freud Centre 'Schools in Mind' have worked closely with settings to help promote whole-school and college approaches to wellbeing. They are conscious that the Coronavirus is creating increased pressure and additional workload for school and college staff at an already busy time of the school year. Therefore, they have produced this following document which they hope will give some guidance about how to maintain children's wellbeing at a time of uncertainty. You can access it here:
<https://www.annafreud.org/media/11160/supporting-schools-and-colleges.pdf>

They have also developed three videos which will hopefully be helpful to share as follows:
 - Video for schools staff: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SjSh5SYWFqM&feature=youtu.be>
 - Video for parents: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZnANLAcPRZ4&feature=youtu.be>
 - Video for children and young people: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ME5IZn4-BAk&feature=youtu.be>
9. Addressing social stigma associated with Covid-19 published by the WHO and UNICEF:
https://www.epi-win.com/sites/epiwin/files/content/attachments/2020-02-24/COVID19%20Stigma%20Guide%2024022020_1.pdf

We will be providing a weekly update via the Healthy Young Minds in Herts website where the information above will also be shared: <https://healthyyoungmindsinherts.org.uk/schools/how-look-after-your-mental-health-and-emotional-wellbeing-during-covid-19-outbreak>

We will also ensure there is helpful safe advice around managing self-care. There will also be a webpage for young people and families, focussed on how to cope during periods of self-isolation, appearing very soon on www.justtalkherts.org

Stay well. Stay safe. Thank you for all that you do.

Breda O'Neill – Strategic Leads for Mental Health in Schools - East & North Herts CCG

Yael Leinman – Strategic Leads for Mental Health in Schools - Herts Valleys CCG

Jen Beer - Health Improvement Lead. Children and Young People - Public Health

Melanie Flay - Principal Educational Psychologist (West)/Strategic Lead – ISL – Children's Services

