

Welcome to our Parent Safeguarding Newsletter Issue 4

We currently find ourselves in a very challenging time with lots of uncertainty. This will be having an impact on everyone young and old.

This update aims to provide you with some resources to help both you and your children during this challenging time.

With online learning becoming more commonplace we have also included some information on how you can safeguard your children.

We are committed to working with all our parents and students, to actively promote the safeguarding and welfare of all our students.

If you have any concerns about your child then please do not hesitate to contact us.

SAFEGUARDING TEAM

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TALKING TO A CHILD WORRIED ABOUT CORONAVIRUS

Source: NSPCC

The NSPCC has created a new webpage with information and advice for parents or carers who are worried a child or young person may be struggling with their mental health or has anxiety about Coronavirus.



TALKING ABOUT FEELINGS AND WORRIES

Encourage your child to talk to you or another trusted adult about how they're feeling. We've got tips on how and where to have difficult conversations. Remember, this doesn't always have to be face-to-face – they might find it easier writing their thoughts down. You could create a 'feelings box' where you all put good, sad or difficult feelings in and then talk about them at the end of the day.

For younger children, play can be a great way to help them talk about their worries or give them a good distraction when they're upset. But not being able to play with their friends can be hard. Set aside time to play together and have fun.

You might notice some changes in your children's behaviour. Younger children may start thumb sucking or bedwetting and older children may have mood swings and be irritable. You might also notice changes in appetite or sleep patterns. These can be ways your child is experiencing stress. It takes time to adjust to the new "normal" and children may need lots of support and reassurance to help them through it.

Your child might have a very real fear of the people they love and care for dying or getting seriously ill. It can be difficult but it's okay to have conversations about death. **Marie Curie** has advice on talking to children about death and **Childline** has advice for young people when someone dies.

Some young people might be anxious about if there will be enough food. Have conversations about how what they might see in the news or online isn't always the same as what's happening. Involve them in food shopping and be mindful of conversations you might have with other adults about frustrations buying food.

For children with eating disorders, worries about food can be really challenging. Talk to them about their worries and speak to **Beat**, the eating disorder charity, if you need advice. Read their advice on eating disorders and coronavirus (COVID-19) for up-to-date information and support.

Rolling news and social media can cause a lot of anxiety. Remind children of the facts and explain what false or sensationalised information is. It's important to allow your children to ask questions about the things they see online. And if you don't know the answer, letting them know that some things aren't certain or known yet is okay.

KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS AND BALANCING SCREEN TIMES

It's important to understand the huge impact of missing family, friends and schoolmates can have on children of all ages. Let your child express these emotions and don't minimise their feelings.

Finding ways to have social interactions can be tricky, especially if you're worried about screen-time, but it's possible to find the right balance with using smartphones and webcams to keep in touch. Talk together about how you can all manage your screen-time as a family. The benefits of alleviating anxiety by staying connected to friends and family cannot be underestimated.

With most socialising moving online, it's important to have conversations on how an increase in screen-time can have an impact on everyone's mental health and self-esteem. It's okay to let your children know that the way they might feel is a normal response to an abnormal situation.



TRY TO CREATE STRUCTURE AND ROUTINE

It's normal for a lack of routine and structure to make children and young people feel anxious and upset. It can be challenging to find a routine that works for everyone, especially if you're juggling working from home with taking care of children with different needs.

A rota or timetable, even a loose one, can help alleviate anxiety. Structure can help children see what's happening next in the day, look forward to rest of the week and differentiate between weekdays and weekends.

Finding practical things to do to alleviate anxiety and worries can feel tricky when you're mostly indoors. Some things you can try are yoga, mindfulness, puzzle games, crafting projects, cooking, exercise classes and growing plants from seeds.

HELP GIVE CHILDREN A SENSE OF CONTROL

Uncertainty about the future, like exam results and when they'll be allowed to go out, can be stressful. While there's no right answer, there are lots of free online tools and resources that can help children work through their worries. Have a look online together to find ones that work best for your child and help them feel like they have control.

Let your children read advice and information that's tailored to them. **Childline** have advice on coronavirus and lots of tools to help alleviate anxiety. **Young Minds** have advice for young people on looking after your mental health while self-isolating.

Share **Childline's** Calm zone, a unique space for children and young people filled with breathing exercises, activities, games and videos to help let go of stress.

REMAIN VIGILANT TO COVID-19 SCAMS



The Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in a period of social isolation and it is clear criminals are taking advantage of that to exploit the public particularly those who are vulnerable.

There have been reports of people purchasing face masks online which either don't exist or are faulty, people are being encouraged to click on fake GOV.UK websites, texts and emails, doorstep crime and being asked to donate to charities.

Forces across the country and Action Fraud UK are working hard to minimise opportunities for these scams but we need your help to pass this message on to your family and friends.

Who are potential victims?

- Individuals with cognitive difficulties such as Dementia and Learning Disabilities
- Individuals who are Physically Disabled
- Victims are often vulnerable/lonely/socially isolated/bereaved
- When there is physical evidence of neglect/Care and Support needs – neglected properties/ramps/rails

The Government has issued advice to help prevent these scams and are encouraging people to Stop, Challenge and Protect themselves.

Stop - take a moment to stop and think before parting with your money or information.

Challenge - could it be fake? It's ok to reject, refuse or ignore requests. Only criminals will try to rush or panic you.

Protect - if you think you've fallen for a scam, contact your bank immediately and report it to Action Fraud.

If you or someone you know is a victim of fraud, report it to **Action Fraud** either online or at www.actionfraud.police.uk or call 0300 123 2040.

TRADING STANDARDS

Please feel free to contact Trading Standards:

- With any intelligence about rogue traders
- To require assistance helping a vulnerable consumer
- If you want to discuss how Trading Standards could be involved

Leicestershire County Residents

tradingstandards@leics.gov.uk Duty Officer: 0116 305 8000

Leicester City Residents

trading.standards@leicester.gov.uk Duty Officer: 0116 454 3200

Rutland Residents

trading.standards@peterborough.gov.uk Duty Officer: 01733 453542

DOMESTIC ABUSE

Where to get help during the COVID-19 pandemic

The impact of Coronavirus may put a further strain on relationships in particular where individuals are asked to “social distance” or “self-isolate”.

We know that this is a difficult and worrying time for everyone – but particularly so for adults and children living with domestic abuse, and the professionals working hard to support them.

As always, if you or someone else is in immediate danger please call 999 and ask for the police.

Silent calls will work if you are not safe to speak – use the Silent Solution system and call 999 and then press 55 or have a code word / sign for if you are in danger – set this up for family and friends to let them know by Text / Facetime / Skype.

For further advice and support please use following the links:

- UAVA (United Against Violence and Abuse) - 0808 802 0028 www.uava.org.uk
- National Domestic Abuse Helpline - 0808 2000 247 (freephone 24hrs)
- REFUGE - www.refuge.org.uk

MANKIND INITIATIVE SUPPORT TO MALE VICTIMS WEBSITE

www.mankind.org.uk

The aim of this site is to ensure all male victims of domestic abuse (and their children) are supported to enable them to escape from the situation they are in.

The charity undertakes a number of core activities:

- Provides a helpline which is manned by a trained team who provide practical information, signposting and emotional support on all aspects of domestic abuse.
- Provide support services and information to statutory agencies, professional organisations and the voluntary sector.
- Give a voice to male victims (and their children) to raise the public profile of their plight and to call for adequate services and recognition at national and local level.

NATIONAL ONLINE SUPPORT

You can access a wide range of help, support and guidance from any of the approved sites listed below

www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/

www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/make-a-donation/kids-in-real-life/

www.childline.org.uk/

www.kooth.com/

www.act.childrenssociety.org.uk/

www.themix.org.uk/



Advice for Parents and Carers during COVID 19

www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/coronavirus-advice-support-children-families-parents/

YOUNGMINDS fighting for young people's mental health

Young minds have produced some brilliant resources for both parents/carers and students including:

- Supporting your child if they're feeling worried
- Supporting your family's wellbeing during isolation
- How can I access mental health support and treatment for my child during the coronavirus pandemic?
- What do I do if my child won't stay home?

To find more information and support a link to their resources is below:

www.youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/supporting-your-child-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic



Working Families is the UK's leading work-life balance organisation. They help children, working parents and carers and their employers find a better balance between responsibilities at home and work. The charity Working Families has provided a range of advice around employment and financial issues caused by Covid-19.

Their website link is below:

www.workingfamilies.org.uk



For many people, Zoom has suddenly become an essential way to keep in touch with family and friends.

However, there are some simple things you can do to make sure there are appropriate levels of security;

- Use a new meeting room each time (ie. Don't use the personal meeting ID)
- Don't allow attendees to join before the host
- Mute attendees on joining
- Turn screen sharing off
- Set up a 'waiting room'
- Lock your meeting room after you have started
- Do not publicise your meeting's link on social media.

NSPCC

The NSPCC (The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children) is a charity campaigning and working in child protection in the United Kingdom and the Channel Islands.

Their website has lots of advice and support for parents and carers.

www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/coronavirus-advice-support-children-families-parents/



The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service is a non-departmental public body in England set up to promote the welfare of children and families involved in family court.

CAFCASS has developed some guidance to support parents who co-parent during this challenging time.

Their website can be accessed by following the below link:

www.cafcass.gov.uk/grown-ups/parents-and-carers/covid-19-guidance-for-children-and-families