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**SUPPORTING SECONDARY-AGED  
CHILDREN**

DURING THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

27TH MARCH 2020

## TALKING TO YOUNG PEOPLE

- Ask your child what they are hearing via the news and social media, and how they are feeling about it.
- Be led by your child: ask them what they have already heard, so you can discuss their understanding and worries together.
- Be truthful: don't offer false reassurance or pretend that nobody is worried. Be honest with your child about loved ones who might be at higher risk, and explain what you are doing to keep them safe.
- Help your child to use realistic information to make sense of the risks to themselves and their loved ones.
- Help your child to understand collective responsibility: while young people may not be as actively at risk, they play an essential role in following social distancing rules so that the virus does not spread. This is a positive action that's within their control.
- If you don't know how to respond to your child, acknowledge their question and feelings. Tell them you'll come back to their question or worry (and make sure you do!).
- Remember that people react differently to significant events. Some might feel worried, while others feel excited, and others don't feel much at the moment.
- Validate and empathise with your child's worry and disappointment about the upcoming upheaval e.g. to exams, celebrations, holidays etc. "It's totally understandable to feel worried about what will happen. We are all finding the uncertainty really tricky."
- Remember that people react differently to significant events. Some might feel worried, while others feel excited, and others don't feel much at the moment. Reassure young people that different reactions are normal and ok.
- Think about yourself as a model: how much news and social media are you viewing, and how are you responding to it?
- Our young people are paying more attention to us than we think.



## **Resources**

[Article addressing worries about talking to young people](#)

[Advice from the US National Association of School Psychologists](#)



## FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE FEELING VERY WORRIED, HOPELESS OR ANGRY

- It's ok to feel worried, frightened, disappointed, frustrated or low. Validate this, and normalise it by explaining that most people are feeling a similar way at the moment.
- Help your child to connect with others, including you. What can you do together that you would both enjoy? How can your children stay connected to their friends and other adults who are important to them? Help your child to ensure that their conversations are not only about coronavirus.
- Help your child to do things they enjoy: what activities or hobbies are still do-able, in their current situation. What did they enjoy doing when they were younger, which they could revisit? How can you adapt their outdoor activities or interest for indoor enjoyment?
- Help your child to find meaning: what's important to them, in the face of this crisis? How can they make meaning, by working towards their goals; connecting with others; behaving in a kind way; or other values that are important to them.
- Help your child to hold on to the future: what would they like to do and experience when this is over? These might be simple pleasures like hanging out in a coffee shop, or bigger plans like a sleepover with friends.
- Help your child to think about their use of social media and the news. Is it helping or harming them? Do they feel in charge of their usage, or are they constantly checking for updates? Would it help to try to limit their use to certain sites, or certain times of day?
- Help your child to monitor their gaming. Are they playing for so long that they feel detached, or are drifting away from their usual sleeping/waking patterns?
- Help your child to pay attention to their physical needs: sleeping, eating, hydrating, exercising, and treating physical pain are all important elements of reducing our emotional vulnerability.

### Resources

[Young Minds - What to do if you're anxious about Coronavirus](#)

[Young Minds - Looking after your mental health while self isolating.](#)

[Headspace advice](#)

[Video from the Anna Freud Centre for young people](#)



## SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE WITH LEARNING

- Help your child to identify a work space. If space is limited, this might need a bit of creativity!
- Help your young person to plan a structure for their day, including mealtimes, movement breaks, and relaxation.
- Help them to plan what they will do with their technology. Can they keep their phone in another room during focused periods, so they are not scrolling out of habit, or distracted by messages or the news?
- Acknowledge that with the cancellation of exams, some young people might be feeling discouraged or aimless. Others might be feeling relieved and carefree. If your child is finding it hard to focus on traditional school work, are there other interests or skills they are interested in developing? e.g. coding; graphic design; learning a language; starting a podcast?
- Show an interest in what your child has been learning and doing that day.
- Help your child to link up their learning with the real world. How can they apply their knowledge around the home?



## RESOURCES

Collated and freely shared by home educators.

### Khan Academy

Especially good for maths and computing for all ages but other subjects at Secondary level. Note this uses the U.S. grade system but it's mostly common material.

### BBC Learning

This site is old and no longer updated and yet there's so much still available, from language learning to BBC Bitesize for revision. No TV licence required except for content on BBC iPlayer.

### Futurelearn

Free to access 100s of courses, only pay to upgrade if you need a certificate in your name (own account from age 14+ but younger learners can use a parent account).

### Seneca

For those revising at GCSE or A level. Tons of free revision content. Paid access to higher level material.

### Openlearn

Free taster courses aimed at those considering Open University but everyone can access it. Adult level, but some e.g. nature and environment courses could well be of interest to young people.

### Blockly

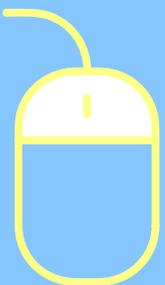
Learn computer programming skills - fun and free.

### Scratch

Creative computer programming

### Ted Ed

All sorts of engaging educational videos



## RESOURCES

### Duolingo

Learn languages for free. Web or app.

### Mystery Science

Free science lessons

### The Kids Should See This

Wide range of cool educational videos

### Crash Course

You Tube videos on many subjects

### Crest Awards

Science awards you can complete from home.

### iDEA Awards

Digital enterprise award scheme you can complete online.

### Tinkercad

All kinds of making.

### British Council

Resources for English language learning

### Big History Project

Aimed at Secondary age. Multi disciplinary activities.

### Geography Games

Geography gaming!

