Family Well-Being Information Pack

Looking after your children & looking after yourself during the COVID-19 outbreak
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Introduction

Families in Buckinghamshire, across the country and around the globe are facing uncertain times due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The situation is constantly changing and rapidly developing, and is impacting on many different aspects of our lives.

We know that this will cause a lot worry and stress for people. Having children and young people at home, often when people are trying to work themselves, adds another layer of pressure. As a result, it is even more important than usual that we consider not only our physical health but also our mental health.

Feeling concerned and anxious is entirely normal when we’re faced with such an unusual situation. Taking care of our mental health and well-being will allow us to be in a better position to support ourselves and others to cope with the challenges we face.

This Family Well-Being Information Pack contains a range of information and a variety of links intended to help you and your family in the current circumstances. In addition, Buckinghamshire Council will endeavour to keep providing updated information through its website, social media and the Local Offer webpages (www.bucksfamilyinfo.org/localoffer).
Looking after Yourself

Taking care of our mental health is something that we can all do; looking after your own well-being means that you’ll be best placed to look after others. Although time is always limited, especially when caring for children, try to plan your days or weeks to include something from each of the following categories:

**BE ACTIVE**
Try to make sure that you and your family get regular exercise every day. YouTube has lots of exercise videos for children and adults. Get children involved in planning their own ‘indoor PE’. If the current government advice permits, try to get outside once a day either into your garden if you have one, or to a place where you can remain a safe distance from others. If you can’t go out, open the windows for some fresh air and take some time to look at the world outside.

**TAKE NOTICE**
Take a break from the news and social media and concentrate on what’s happening in the here and now in your family. Notice and appreciate the small things. Studies have shown that being aware of what is taking place in the present (called ‘mindfulness’) directly enhances your well-being. There are lots of good mindfulness apps to try, but if that’s not for you, just getting into something you enjoy e.g. cooking, drawing etc. and really focussing on it can be just as good.

**CONNECT**
Social connection is one of the most important ways that we can look after our mental well-being. Social distancing is going to make that trickier, but we’re lucky enough to have technology to help us out. Social media is great, but if you can, try to have phone calls or video calls. Arrange to Facetime/Skype a friend for coffee, and telephone relatives more often than usual. Whilst it can be helpful to share worries, try to find other things to talk about too.

**GIVE**
Research tells us that giving back to our community helps people to feel valuable and makes us happier. We might not be able to contribute to our community in our usual way, but many people will still be able to find ways to give back. Lots of community groups are setting up schemes that aim to help vulnerable people at this difficult time. If you want to get involved, check out local social media for ideas. Many of us will not be in a position to offer practical support, but we can still offer mutual support to friends and family by checking in with them regularly.

**KEEP LEARNING**
Learning a new skill or honing an existing one gives us a sense of purpose and achievement. Whilst we’re busy learning, we’re less likely to experience anxious thoughts and worries. Social distancing will bring new challenges, but it could give some of us the time to start a new hobby or learn about an area that we’ve always been interested in.
## Looking after Your Children

For the most part, children will need what they’ve always needed: love, attention and opportunities to learn and play. If children are home for long periods because of school closures or self-isolation, the following tips might be helpful:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tip</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Try and keep to a structure and routine that suits you. Keep bedtime and morning routines close to existing ones to promote a sense of normality that children will find reassuring. Encouraging them to get up and dressed during the week will help maintain some difference between weekdays and weekends.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Keep boundaries firm and make it clear that you expect the same standards of behaviour as usual. Boundaries show that adults are still in control and taking care of children, which helps them to feel safe.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Make sure they get some time to burn off energy every day. Younger children will enjoy household assault courses, discos etc. Older children and teens might respond better to fitness videos.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expect children to do some learning every day. In the long-term schools are likely to provide opportunities for online learning. In the short-term, or as extra activities, there are a wealth of helpful websites, many of which they will be able to access independently. Continuing with their learning helps promote a sense of normality and purpose as well as keeping them up to date for when they are back at school.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find opportunities for them to interact with their friends remotely. For teenagers, contact with their peers is especially important. Technology provides lots of opportunities for older children to connect, chat and game together. However, be wary of giving unsupervised access to platforms that you would not normally allow your child onto, since the internet still poses the same risks as normal.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Balance screen time with other activities. Challenge children to learn new skills that don’t involve screens, for example tying shoe laces, juggling, baking. Older children might want to set their own goals.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give children opportunities to have a say in what will be happening. They may have had a lot of their freedoms and choices removed for a while and may feel powerless or angry. Older children and teenagers will be more able to understand the risks in too much screen time, too little sleep, inactivity etc. They are more likely to ‘buy in’ to new rules and routines if they feel that they have a voice. Family meetings where children and adults problem-solve together can be helpful for this.</td>
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</tbody>
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(https://bristolchildparentsupport.co.uk/ready-family-meetings/)
Example Daily Timetables

Maintaining structure and routine at home is important in supporting your children’s well-being. Below are examples that may be helpful. Remember to intersperse activities with breaks, and don’t forget healthy snacks and drinks!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9am</td>
<td>Get ready for the day</td>
<td>Have breakfast, have a wash, get dressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9am</td>
<td>Activity 1</td>
<td>Online learning from school OR a craft activity (cutting and sticking, painting, baking)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10am</td>
<td>Activity 2</td>
<td>• Online learning from school OR some writing or maths - write a story, count coins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11am</td>
<td>Get active!</td>
<td>Play in the garden, do an exercise video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Lunchtime</td>
<td>Help tidy up, hoover, wash up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1pm</td>
<td>Help about the house</td>
<td>• Do something calm, like reading or colouring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2pm</td>
<td>Quiet time</td>
<td>• Online learning from school OR be creative – makes some music, design an outfit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3pm</td>
<td>Activity 3</td>
<td>Enjoy toys and tech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4pm</td>
<td>Have some free time</td>
<td>Help prepare dinner – help tidy up too!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5pm</td>
<td>Dinner time</td>
<td>Play a game, watch a movie, spend time together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6pm</td>
<td>Family time</td>
<td>• Have a bath, get pyjamas on, read a story</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 45 mins Academic learning
- 45 mins Creative Activities
- 45 mins Exercise
- Have lunch
- Downtime
- 45 mins Academic learning
- 45 mins Help around the house
- Free time
- Have dinner
- Contact family and friends - phone, Facetime, email
- Free time
- Get ready for bed
Sources of Support

General

Samaritans
Call 116 123
https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan/

Mind UK
UK Mental Health Charity with information and an online mutual support community

BBC
https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-51873799
How to protect your mental health

Parenting Pressures

Family Action
Telephone: 0808 802 6666
Text message: 07537 404 282
The FamilyLine service supports people who are dealing with family pressures in a new and innovative way by using a network of volunteers from across the country to support family members over the age of 18 through telephone calls, email, web chat and text message.

Family Lives (previously Parentline)
Call: 0808 800 2222
https://www.familylives.org.uk/how-we-can-help/confidential-helpline/
Family Lives offers a confidential and free helpline service for families, providing emotional support, information, advice and guidance on any aspect of parenting and family life. The helpline service is open 9am-9pm, Monday to Friday and 10am-3pm Saturday and Sunday.

Gingerbread
Single Parent Helpline: 0808 802 0925
gingerbread.org.uk
One Parent Families/Gingerbread is the leading national charity working to help lone parents and their children.

Grandparents Plus
Call: 0300 123 7015
grandparentsplus.org.uk
Grandparents Plus is the only national charity dedicated to supporting kinship carers - grandparents and other relatives raising children who aren’t able to live with their parents.
Promoting Children’s Well-being

Anna Freud Centre
National Centre for Children and Families’ page on how to support young people’s mental health during periods of disruption.

Young Minds
https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/what-to-do-if-you-re-anxious-about-coronavirus
Advice for young people who are feeling anxious about Coronavirus.

World Health Organisation
Helping children cope with stress.

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
https://afsp.org/taking-care-of-your-mental-health-in-the-face-of-uncertainty/?fbclid=IwAR3ScDBfuhV5NKyutAG9JPNm4JnjlOMHxv5w8SR9pBbDDU-8Hhy1QH-L8
Advice for older pupils and adults about looking after their emotional well-being.

Special Educational Needs and the Coronavirus

Special Needs Jungle
Parent-focused ideas about how to support children with anxiety around coronavirus, including an easy-read explanation for children and adults with learning difficulties.

Mencap
https://www.mencap.org.uk/advice-and-support/health/coronavirus
Contains a link to the most up to date version of their “Easy Read” for young people and adults with learning difficulties.

Carol Gray
https://carolgaysocialstories.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Pandemics-and-the-Coronavirus.pdf?fbclid=IwAR23zxNlbEumpw4oKIM7xY3VlKnA25b8Gi53N6YiFleKB9Vx0LQypSPYzzg
A Social Story about pandemics.

The Autism Educator
A Social Story about the coronavirus.
Talking to Children About Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Although it’s tempting to try and protect children from difficult topics, they are more likely to worry when they’re kept in the dark. Most children and teenagers will be aware of what is happening but may not have all the facts they need to understand it.

These tips will help you communicate about Coronavirus with your child:

- Take time to talk and listen. Be clear that you are happy to answer any questions that they have. Be led by your child as they may not be that interested or want to know everything all at once. Try to answer any questions honestly but keep things in context, for example “Sadly, some people do die, but the vast majority of people will recover, and children seem to be only mildly affected”.

- Reassure them that their own risk is very low but that we all need to ‘do our bit’ to look after people who might be very unwell. Underline how helpful they are being by following the rules about hygiene and social distancing. Knowing we’re being altruistic helps us to bear the tough times.

- Give positive messages about everything you are doing as a family to keep yourselves safe. Talk about all the work people around the world are doing to find treatments and a vaccine.

- Keep explanations developmentally appropriate:
  - Young children up to about age 7 will need very simple explanations that relate to their own experiences. Explain that, like other germs, Coronavirus can spread between people and make them ill. But because Coronavirus is a new germ that we don’t know everything about, we need to take more care and so things might be a bit different for a while.
  - Older children will want to know more. They may have heard partial explanations and ‘filled in the gaps’ themselves with their own ideas, so check what they already think they know about it.
  - Teenagers will have a similar capacity to understand what’s going on as adults. They will need calm, factual information and opportunities to talk through their worries and disappointments.

- Give children an opportunity to talk about their feelings. Our instinct might be to ‘make it all better’, but it is normal to feel scared, sad and angry in the face of what’s happening. Tell them that what is happening is not normal but that their feelings are.
Helpful Resources for Talking to Children about Coronavirus

Guides for Talking to Children about Coronavirus

_unicef_

_British Psychological Society_

_Childmind_

_Zero to Three_
https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/3210-tips-for-families-coronavirus
Tips and guidance on supporting preschool children

_National Association of School Psychologists_

Stories about Coronavirus for Children

Visual stories are a useful way of helping children to understand the Coronavirus. Here are some links to some good examples:

_Covibook_
https://www.mindheart.co/descargables
A short book about Coronavirus for children under 7 years.

_ELSA_
https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/coronavirus-story-for-children/
Carol Gray
A Social Story about pandemics.

The Autism Educator
A Social Story about the coronavirus.

NPR
A comic exploring coronavirus to help young people understand.

Information Videos for Children about the Coronavirus

CBeebies
https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/watch/germs-experiment
Video on the importance of washing our hands.

CBBC Newsround
https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/51342366?fbclid=IwAR3CyZq5rzXVoyGCgWjipx6Yqoetuz1tP16y7wMjUR6uwgWyhRmf0aFradas
Dr Chris and Dr Xand explain what’s happening.

Brainpop
https://www.brainpop.com/health/diseasesinjuriesandconditions/coronavirus/
Information video on Coronavirus for primary age children.

World Health Organisation
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mOV1aBVYKGa&feature=youtu.be Information video on Coronavirus for older children/adults (WHO):
Resources for Home Education

It is expected that many schools will be setting their own learning. However, if you need something else to keep your children usefully occupied then this non-exhaustive list might help those affected by school closures due to coronavirus, compiled by home educators:

**Khan Academy**
https://www.khanacademy.org
Especially good for maths and computing for all ages but other subjects at secondary school level. Note this uses the U.S. grade system but it’s mostly common material.

**BBC Learning**
http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/coursesearch/
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 license required except for the content on BBC iPlayer.

**Futurelearn**
https://www.futurelearn.com
Free to access 100s of courses, you only need to pay to upgrade if you want a certificate in your name (own account from age 14+ but younger learners can use a parent account).

**Seneca**
https://www.senecalearning.com
For those at GCSE or A level. Lots of free revision content; requires paid access to higher level material.

**Blockly**
https://blockly.games
Learn computer programming skills – fun and free.

**Scratch**
https://scratch.mit.edu/explore/projects/games/
Creative computer programming.
Ted Ed  
https://ed.ted.com
All sorts of engaging educational videos.

National Geographic Kids  
https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/  
Activities and quizzes for younger kids.

Duolingo  
https://www.duolingo.com  
Learn languages for free; either web-based or app.

Mystery Science  
https://mysteryscience.com  
Free science lessons.

The Kids Should See This  
https://thekidshouldseethis.com  
Wide range of fun educational videos.

Crash Course  
https://thecrashcourse.com  YouTube videos on many subjects.

Crash Course Kids  
https://m.youtube.com/user/crashcoursekids  
As above but for a younger audience.

Crest Awards  
https://www.crestawards.org  
Science awards you can complete from home.

iDEA Awards  
https://idea.org.uk  
Digital enterprise award scheme you can complete online.

Paw Print Badges  
https://www.pawprintbadges.co.uk  
Free challenge packs and other downloads. Many activities can be completed indoors. Badges cost but are optional.

Tinkercad  
https://www.tinkercad.com
All kinds of making.
Prodigy Maths  
https://www.prodigygame.com  
Is in U.S. grades, but good for UK Primary age.

CBeebies Radio  
https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/radio  
Listening activities for the younger ones.

Nature Detectives  
https://naturedetectives.woodlandtrust.org.uk/naturedetectives/  
A lot of these can be done in a garden, or if you can get to a forest location.

Oxford Owl for Home  
https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/  
Lots of free resources for primary aged children.

Big History Project  
https://www.bighistoryproject.com/home  
Aimed at secondary aged students; multi-disciplinary activities.

Geography Games  
Geography gaming!

Blue Peter Badges https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/joinin/about-blue-peter-badges  
If you have a stamp and a nearby post box.

The Artful Parent  
https://www.facebook.com/artfulparent/  
Free art activities.

Red Ted Art  
https://www.redtedart.com  
Easy arts and crafts for little ones.

The Imagination Tree  
https://theimaginationtree.com  
Creative art and craft activities for the very youngest.

Toy Theater  
https://toytheater.com/  
Educational online games.
DK Find Out
https://www.dkfindout.com/uk/?fbclid=IwAR2wJdpSJSeITf4do6aPhff8A3tAknmpaxqZbkgudD49I71ep8-sjXmrac
Activities and quizzes.

Twinkl
https://www.twinkl.co.uk
This is more for printouts, and usually at a fee, but they are offering a month of free access to parents in the event of school closures.

Virtual tours
Virtual tours of some of the world’s best museums.
Support Available for Families in Buckinghamshire

The following services and organisations are either local to Buckinghamshire or have local branches of a wider establishment:

**General Information**

*Family Information Services*
https://www.bucksfamilyinfo.org/kb5/buckinghamshire/fsd/home.page

Easy to access information on services and provisions to assist all families and young people throughout Buckinghamshire.

*Buckinghamshire’s Local Offer*
https://www.bucksfamilyinfo.org/kb5/buckinghamshire/fsd/localoffer.page

Information about what is available in Buckinghamshire for children and young people aged 0 to 25 with special educational needs and disabilities.

**Targeted Support**

*Healthy Minds*
https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/healthyminds/

NHS service offering a range of free, tried and tested NHS psychological therapies that help with, Low Mood, Anxiety, Worry, Stress, Long Term Health Conditions and Employment Support.

*Youth Concern*
http://www.youthconcern.org.uk.fluent5.sites.fluent.ltd.uk/about-us/

Youth Concern is a charity that offers help and support to vulnerable at risk young people aged 13-25 years who are at risk of social exclusion, homelessness, family break down or who are not in education employment or training.

*Women’s Aid*
https://www.aylesburywomensaid.org.uk/freedom-programme/

The Freedom Programme is designed to help women who have experienced domestic violence make sense of and understand what has happened to them, gain self-esteem and
the confidence to improve their lives.
Financial Support

Local Emergency Support
https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/business-and-benefits/apply-for-local-emergency-support/
If you live in Buckinghamshire, you may be able to apply for Local Emergency Support. This is intended to cover urgent short-term emergencies (i.e. no immediate food, no heating or lighting) through the use of food banks, food vouchers, and utility meter top-ups.

Max Card
https://mymaxcard.co.uk/
The Max Card is a discount initiative which has been designed to make days out more affordable for children and young people with special educational needs aged 0-19 years, and their parents or carers.

Respite

Action For Children
https://services.actionforchildren.org.uk/bucks-activity-project/
Bucks Activity Project Provides short breaks and activities services for disabled children aged 0 – 19.

CHAT Respite Care.
https://www.chat-charity.org.uk/
CHAT children’s respite is a registered charity helping Buckinghamshire families with children who have special needs by providing funds for short term respite care free of charge.

Access to Food and Supplies

All areas

Free government food vouchers are provided by the council. This is part of the Emergency Support Scheme. The government will provide up to a few days of free groceries, hot meals, tinned or canned goods, and fresh food too. The help is for families on a low income or benefits, and find more details on Buckinghamshire Emergency Support Scheme.

Fare Share
http://fareshare.org.uk/
Food donations from Tring road Tesco in Aylesbury, Loudwater Tesco, Wycombe and Eden Tesco
Buckinghamshire Disability Service
https://buds.org.uk/if-you-are-in-crisis-and-need-emergency-food/

Transforming Lives for Good – Make Lunch
https://www.tlg.org.uk/

Trussell Trust
Trussell Trust
Provide a minimum of three days’ emergency food and support to people experiencing crisis in the UK. They have several distribution centres in Buckinghamshire, and the locations are below.

- Calvary Parish, Community Suite, Church Of England Primary School, Orchard Paradise, Berryfields, Aylesbury HP18 0WS.
- 71 Broadway, Chesham HP5 1BX
- The King’s Church, Raans Road, Amersham
- St George’s Church is open on Thursdays. The address is White Lion Road, Little Chalfont HP7 9LW.

Aylesbury & The North

Aylesbury Vineyard
https://aylesburyvineyard.church/

Aylesbury Foodbank
https://aylesbury.foodbank.org.uk/

Wendover Free Church
http://www.wendoverfreechurch.org.uk/

Milton Keynes Foodbank
http://mkfoodbank.org.uk/about-the-food-bank/

Buckingham Parish Church
https://www.bpchurch.uk/Groups/149163/Buckingham_Parish_Church/Church_Life/Community/Community.aspx

St Peter & St Paul’s Church, Buckingham
https://www.buckinghamparishchurch.org.uk/Groups/237838/Buckingham_Parish_Church/Church_Life/Community/Buckingham_Food_Bank/Buckingham_Food_Bank.aspx
Provides food for those in need living north of Winslow
Youth Concern
Whitehill Lane, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, HP19 8FL or call 01296 431183. Help young people under the age of 25 with a connection to Buckinghamshire by providing a hot meal as well as shelter and advice.

Chiltern & South Bucks

Kings Church, Amersham
https://kca.church/ or call 01494 431882.
Bags of food, fruits, and more is provided from the church.

Chiltern Foodbanks
http://chiltern.foodbank.org.uk/

Hope Church, Beaconsfield
https://www.hopebeaconsfield.co.uk/Groups/243545/Hope_Community_Drop.aspx

Slough Foodbank
https://slough.foodbank.org.uk/

St George’s Church, Little Chalfont
https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/5924/service-and-events/events-regular/
Provide Thursday lunch

St Michael & All Angels Church, Beaconsfield
Call 07584 637697

Denham One Can food bank
Call 07584 637697

Wycombe

Big Yellow Storage in High Wycombe
Call 07584 637697
A bag of groceries with enough food for 3 days in provided to the low income.

Maidenhead foodbank
https://www.facebook.com/MaidenheadFoodbank/?hc_ref=ARQiEG41PkoWtjYwZoJmwtnQoWQcsqY71D-Ow2bXGNBAcxg6MJgTpdTCZ4IUQY-92Wk
One Can Trust
http://onecantrust.org.uk
One Can Trust has operates a foodbank based in High Wycombe, serving the Wycombe and Marlow area. They work with almost 100 front line agencies who refer people for food aid.

Food Club Friday – Castlefield Children’s Centre
https://www.bucksfamilyinfo.org_kb5_buckinghamshire/fsd/service.page?id=g-jggqtQZ34

Food Club Tuesday – Wycombe Methodist Church
https://www.bucksfamilyinfo.org_kb5_buckinghamshire/fsd/service.page?id=TP1Nr3E_OxYk

Little Marlow Church, Coldmoorholm Lane, Little Marlow
Call 07584 637697
Reference Documents

The World Health Organisation
https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/coping-with-stress.pdf?sfvrsn=9845bc3a_2


Mental Health UK
https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-coronavirus-outbreak

NEF – Five Ways to Wellbeing: The Evidence
https://neweconomics.org/2008/10/five-ways-to-wellbeing-the-evidence

Wang et al. (2020) Mitigate the effects of home confinement on children during the COVID-19 outbreak. The Lancet; Correspondence.
https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)30547-X

National Association of School Psychologists

https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)30460-8

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