

YOUNG**Mi**ND**S**

Supporting your child;
managing together

Sarah Berman

YoungMinds

We want to see a world where no young person feels alone with their mental health, and gets the support they need, when they need it, no matter what.



The impact of the Coronavirus pandemic

- Our world turned upside down, overnight
- Covid 19 and lockdowns have affected every aspect of our life
- Parents' challenges – juggling work / home life commitments, becoming teachers overnight, little respite
- There are still a lot of unknowns about the virus and how it's going to affect our way of life. We are still living in a time of uncertainty

Back to school

- Don't put pressure on yourself or your child – transition will take time, there might be ups and downs, friendships will have been affected
- Talk – explore how they are feeling and try to find things that will help them
- Seek support if you need it and keep school in the loop; they can't help if they don't know. Feeling safe is crucial to enable both resilience and learning
- Include fun and opportunities for play and reconnection



Positive outcomes of lockdown

- Spending more time with family members - something that "normal" life wouldn't necessarily be able to offer because life was so busy
- For lots of children school can be a really challenging environment and some children may have preferred working from home and not facing pressures of school
- For some children peer-pressure and relationships can be difficult, so some have felt better since they have not had to have so much contact at school

What helps young people?

**Speaking
with friends**

**Exercise
such as
walking or
running**

**Listening to
music**

**Speaking to
family**

**Watching TV or
films**

Having a routine

It's somewhere child belongs

A place to make friends & mix with others

Focus on good times and places

Belonging

The more healthy relationships the better

Predict a good experience of someone or something new

Get together people they can rely on

Nurture relationships

Highlighting
achievements

Engaging mentors

Helping everyone to
organise themselves

Learning

Mapping out a life or
career plan

Making school life
work as well as
possible

Developing life skills

Understand
boundaries

Lean on others
when necessary

Be brave

Foster interests

Have a laugh

Coping

Calming down
and self-
soothing

Remember that
tomorrow is
another day

Problem solving

Foster talent

Take
responsibility

Core self

Understand
others

Instill a sense
of hope

Understand
self

Anxiety

Anxiety is a normal and natural reaction, and is something that we all experience.

1. Talk to them about what is going on. Find out how they are feeling or what they are thinking, and let them know it's okay to feel worried
2. Encourage them to think about the things they can do to make them feel safer and less worried
3. Reassure them that this will pass, you're there for them, and you will get through this together
4. Spend quality time doing an activity that your child enjoys – this will help to reassure them and open up
5. Keep your routines as regular as possible, so that your child feels safe

Low mood

We all feel happy and sad at different times. Feeling sad can be a natural and normal response to what is happening in our lives.

1. Trust your gut feeling – you know when something's just not right
2. Talk to your child about the changes in them you've noticed and voice your concerns in a caring and non-judgmental way. Think about what might be troubling them and how they might be feeling
3. Avoid asking too many questions, trying to give solutions, dismissing them or glossing over their pain and sadness. Just listen and empathise
4. If nothing is helping and the symptoms are worsening, seek help

Challenging behaviour

- All behaviour is way of communication
- Try to understand what your child's behaviour means for them
- Could they be struggling with something they are unable to articulate?
- Find way to open-up communication with them
- If you notice they are becoming upset, angry, worried – acknowledge their feelings
- Anger fuels anger – always leave them to calm down before engaging in another conversation about what happened

Talking to your child about their emotional well-being

- Try not to put too much pressure on yourself to 'get it right'. You're doing your best and may make mistakes
- Sometimes having smaller conversations and revisiting the topic is better than having one big conversation
- Try not to make all your conversations about their feelings or behaviour, have other chats too
- Use different channels – e.g. texts or notes
- Talk while out and about (walking / in the car)

Conversation starters

- Use open questions; rather than “how are you?”, ask “what was the best and worst bit of your day?”
- Is there anything you want to talk about?
- What can I do to help?
- What makes you feel calm?
- Would it be helpful if we planned each day together?
- Where is a place you feel safe?



YoungMinds #Take20

- I love you, nothing can ever change that
 - You can talk to me, I'm here for you
 - If you need to talk to someone else, that's okay too
 - If you talk to me about what is worrying you, I can do my best to help
 - Even if I don't understand, know that I want to
 - We're going to get through this together
- How are you feeling?
 - What do you want to talk about?
 - What was the best and worst bit of your day?
 - If you could start today again, what would you do differently?
 - What did you do today that you are most proud of?

“ Even if I don't understand, know that I want to ”

“ What was the best and worst bit of your day? ”

“ If your life was a movie which one would it be? ”

“ What was the biggest problem you had today? ”

#Take20

20 activities for 20 minutes

Need some inspiration? Here's a list of activities you could do in twenty minutes with your child.

Cooking together

Ball games

Take a walk

Put on your dancing shoes

Plant some seeds / gardening

Top tips from other parents on how to take care of yourself:

- Self care is really important
- Make space for yourself if you can
- Be kind to yourself
- Stay connected with the people you trust and don't be afraid to seek support
- Just like young people, parents and carers should contact helplines and get support if they are struggling

<https://youngminds.org.uk/media/3762/coronavirus-parent-to-parent-advice-guide.pdf>

More from YoungMinds...

Check out more of our **mental health training** courses:
youngminds.org.uk/training

Join our **360° Schools' Community**
for free schools resources:
youngminds.org.uk/360schools

	Introduction to Children and Young People's Mental Health Help promote children and young people's mental health and wellbeing	London Wednesday 1st	See Details >
	Building Resilience Training Learn how to build resilience in young people and the systems around them	London Tuesday 21st	See Details >
	Participation in Young People's Mental Health Training Understand how participation can improve mental health services for children and young people, and plan your own participation offer.	London Thursday 23rd	See Details >
	Trauma and Mental Health Training Learn the impact of adverse life experiences on children's wellbeing and how to support them	London Tuesday 28th	See Details >



Evaluation Form

<https://www.surveygizmo.eu/s3/90270040/YoungMinds-Post-course-Evaluation-Form>

