

# Wellbeing advice for children and young people



We know that for many children and young people across York, the recent announcements made by the Prime Minister and the idea of staying in and around your home for a long time can be worrying and confusing. This will mean that our hobbies and normal daily activities will look different. Keeping our minds and our bodies healthy is really important as we all get used to new ways of doing things.

It is normal to feel worried, stressed or anxious when we are uncertain about the future, but the quicker we learn how to keep our minds and bodies healthy, the better we will feel as things in our life change.

Now is the best time to think of some ideas, tips and good habits which can help us all cope really well with the changes taking place in our lives and share them with your friends.

## A new routine

Everyone's daily routine will look different for the next few months. Whilst our situations will change, many of us still want very similar things – to feel healthy, to feel connected to friends and to feel like we have a purpose. There are lots of things you can do at home to still achieve all these things.

Try and fit **at least one activity** from each of the below key topics every day:

- Be active
- Avoid too much information
- Stay connected to people
- Learn something new
- Help others

With the help of some great website and useful technology which you may have at home, use the ideas below to help keep your mind and body healthy whilst staying at home...

## Be Active

As well as getting over eight hours sleep and eating healthy foods, getting active every day is great for helping us all feel energised, healthy and can improve our mood. Because you may not be walking to school or doing the regular activities that you would normally do, it is important to try and find other ways to raise your heart rate, stretch your muscles and get moving.

There are lots of ideas online to keep your body healthy and active whilst you are at home, here are some suggested places to start:

- [Nuffield Health – Children's Home Exercise Video](#)
- [NHS 10-minute home workouts](#)
- [This Girl Can – Home exercise](#)



## Avoid too much information

Too much information can leave us feeling worried and overwhelmed. It is important to notice when you're reading too much about COVID-19 or feeling worried. Whilst it is important to stay up to date with [official advice from the government](#), make sure you take a break from the news and social media. Do this as often as you need to - but maybe start with an internet and screen free hour in the morning, at lunchtime and in the evening.

Studies have shown that being aware of what is happening around you in the here and now (at home, in the garden or on a short walk) helps us feel well and can improve our mood. One example of this is called 'mindfulness'; this is when you sit quietly, breathe deeply and calm down. There are plenty of websites and apps to help you do this. If that doesn't sound like fun, just doing something you enjoy can have a similar effect - like cooking, drawing, jigsaws, reading or watching a film.

There are plenty of ideas and support online to help young people maintain good mental health, here are some recommendations:

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

[Keep Your Head website](#)

## Stay connected with people

Feeling connected to friends and family is one of the most important ways that we keep our minds healthy and feel good. However, as we stay at home to slow down the spread of COVID-19 (coronavirus) we will not be able to see friends or family, who do not live with us, face-to-face for a while. Having regular phone calls, video calls or messaging people we know can be a great way of staying in touch. You can even get inventive and perhaps watch the same TV programme or play a game whilst video calling or messaging.

## Learn something new

Staying at home will give many of us more time to start a new hobby or learn more about something we've always been interested in. Learning a new skill or working on an existing one gives us a sense of purpose and achievement. Whilst we're busy learning, we're also less likely to experience anxious thoughts and worries.

Why not get better at a musical instrument you own, write a short story, learn a new language by using a daily app or practise how many press ups you can do!

## Help others

How can your time be spent helping people you know? Helping others can help us think less about our own worries and concerns, which can help us maintain good mental health. Some examples are:

- helping your family keep the house tidy, as you will all be indoors a lot more;
- a regular phone call with any older family members who may not be able to see any people face-to-face for a couple of months;

It's important that anything we do to help others is done safely, as we don't want to make a situation worse by not taking important steps to help stop the spread of COVID-19.

Make sure you're up to date on the government's latest advice on social interactions (visit [nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus))