

*Mental Health Awareness*

*Advice for  
Parents*



# 8 WAYS TO HELP CHILDREN STRUGGLING DURING LOCKDOWN

1



## Know how to spot the signs

If you notice your child is becoming withdrawn, that there's been a change in sleeping or eating habits, if they seem to lack confidence or get upset, it might be a sign they're struggling.



2

## Talk to your child

If you spot signs your child might be struggling, it's important to talk to them. Keep talking and trying to communicate in any way you can - hugging, listening to them, texting them.



3

## Create structure and routine

Try introducing a rota or loose timetable that includes fun things you're doing during the week. This can help to create a feeling of stability, which can alleviate anxiety.



4

## Give children a sense of control through information

Look online with your children to find useful information and resources that help children feel they have control.



# 8 WAYS TO HELP CHILDREN STRUGGLING DURING LOCKDOWN

5

## Keep children learning



Using fun and creative ways at home to learn alongside continued access to educational opportunities will support your children's development.



6

## Limit screen time and mix up activities



As most socialising moves 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.



7

## Help your child manage stress



If you spot signs your child might be struggling, it's important to talk to them. Keep talking and trying to communicate in any way you can - hugging, listening to them, texting them, etc.



8

## Expressing feelings doesn't have to be face-to-face



Children might find it easier writing their thoughts down, so the whole family could do this and put them in a 'feelings box' and then talk about their good, sad or difficult feelings at the end of the day.



# THE EMOTIONAL CUP

**Some ways that children deal with having an empty cup:**

- Steal from other people's cups
- Misbehave to get your attention and show that they need a refill
- Seem to have bottomless cups, or need constant 'topping off'
- Can't sit still for refills or actively refuse them
- Bounce off the walls when they approach 'empty'
- Think they have to fight or compete for every refill

**What fills a child's cup:**

- Play
- Friendship
- One-on-one time
- Love and affection
- Connection
- Succeeding
- Doing what they love



**What empties a child's cup:**

- Stress and strain
- Rejection by peers
- Loneliness and isolation
- Yelling and punishment
- Failing
- Fatigue
- Doing what they hate



# THE EMOTIONAL CUP

Possible emotions that can fill your cup:

## Positive emotions:

Calm  
Creative  
Cheerful  
Delighted  
Energetic  
Ecstatic  
Elated  
Excited  
Fortunate  
Free  
Grateful  
Happy  
Inspired  
Joyous  
Kind  
Loving  
Peaceful



## Negative emotions:

Afraid  
Angry  
Anxious  
Ashamed  
Contested  
Confused  
Depressed  
Disappointed  
Disgusted  
Embarrassed  
Frustrated  
Guilty  
Helpless  
Hurt  
Insecure  
Jealous  
Misunderstood





# 10 THINGS TO SAY INSTEAD OF 'STOP CRYING'

1. IT'S OK IF YOU'RE SAD
2. I KNOW THIS IS HARD
3. I AM HERE FOR YOU IF YOU NEED ME
4. TELL ME WHAT IS MAKING YOU FEEL SAD
5. I SEE YOU AND I HEAR YOU
6. I AM LISTENING TO YOU
7. I AM HERE TO HELP YOU WORK THIS PROBLEM OUT
8. I WILL STAY CLOSE SO YOU CAN FIND ME IF YOU NEED ME
9. THAT WAS A HARD SITUATION
10. TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED

# THE STRESS RELIEF GIRAFFE



OUT OF  
CONTROL

SCARED OF  
LOSING  
CONTROL

NERVOUS

UNSURE

CALM

## WHAT YOUR CHILD CAN DO:

- Calm breathing exercises
- Use visualisation meditation techniques
- Body tightening exercises (progressive muscle relaxation)
- Sigh to become fully present in the moment
- Practice music therapy
- Change location / surroundings
- Use a stress ball / fidget toy
- Give themselves a 10-second hug to boost their mood
- Colour, draw, write, craft, etc.
- Practice positive self-talk / words of affirmation
- Exercise
- Go outside
- Play
- Hydrate with water

# Anxiety presents itself in many different ways...

The desire to control people and events



Difficulty getting to sleep



Feeling agitated or angry



Defiance and other challenging behaviors



Having high expectations for self, including school work & sports



Avoiding activities or events (including school)

Pain like stomachaches and headaches



Struggling to pay attention and focus



Intolerance of uncertainty



Crying and difficulty managing emotions



Over-planning for situations and events



Feeling worried about situations or events



# 7 FREE COUNSELLING AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES AVAILABLE IN THE UK AND IRELAND

1

## THE NHS URGENT MENTAL HEALTH HELPLINE

The NHS Urgent Mental Health Helpline service is a short, online quiz that helps you find the best mental health support in your area.

Website - <https://tinyurl.com/y9s4cwhq>

2

## EVERY MIND MATTERS

Every Mind Matters is the NHS's mental health initiative, which offers long-term support to those who need it.

Website - <https://tinyurl.com/s8yccu3>

3

## MIND OUT

A mental health service designed to specifically support members of the LGBTQ+ community.

Website - <https://tinyurl.com/y92dya18>

4

## SAMARITANS

Samaritans is one of the leading mental health services in the UK for people requiring advice.

Website - <https://tinyurl.com/yde5rzhd>

5

## MIND INFOLINE

Mind is an online and telephone resource that doesn't offer counselling but rather provides a safe space to anonymously discuss your mental health concerns.

Website - <https://tinyurl.com/yycf5vpw>

6

## THE MIX

A free mental health service for people under 25 years old. The Mix offers a range of short-term support options for getting help without ever leaving your home.

Website - <https://tinyurl.com/yd76pwb2>

7

## VICTIM SUPPORT

Victim Support is a free service for children, young people, and their parents to help support children who've been affected by crime.

Website - <https://tinyurl.com/y75rz6ej>