COVID-19 Resource Pack

For Parents

Early Intervention

NHS Grampian

Please feel free to print out pages

This pack was created by the Early Intervention team in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) in NHS Grampian

CAMHS
Mental Health Matters. Let's Care Together

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What is COVID-19?

COVID-19, also known as coronavirus, is an illness that affects the lungs and airways.

You might be worried about how this could affect your life. For example, you may have been asked to stay at home or avoid other people.

This information is to help you cope if you or your child are:

- x Feeling worried or anxious about COVID-19.
- x Staying at home or avoiding public places as part of **social distancing.**
- x Having to **self-isolate.**

Lots of people are feeling more anxious than usual during these uncertain times:

This is a perfectly normal response

COVID-19 and the media

The media is reporting heavily on COVID-19 and this has caused many people to feel more anxious than usual.

While it is important we keep up-to-date on the most effective ways to keep ourselves safe, it is not always helpful to read every single news article.

Statistics can often sound scary- especially when they are updated multiple times a day. If you or your child are experiencing anxiety as result of the media coverage on COVID-19, it might not be helpful for you to you to keep watching live news, use social media, or to have news updates appearing on your devices.

You can instead limit your exposure to the new information by reading only one reliable COVID-19 update per day **(for example: www.nhs.uk or www.gov.uk).**

Most importantly, make sure your child only has access to age-appropriate information.

Should I talk to my child about COVID-19?

Short answer: YES! Children already know DERXW FRURQDYLUXV VR GRQ¶W them.

IW LV LPSRUWDQW WR EH WUXWKIXO EXW UHPHPEHU \RXU F information, just adjust the amount of information and the level of detail you go into.

Allow children to ask questions: It is natural that children will have questions and worries about coronavirus. Giving them the chance to ask these questions is a good way to ease their worries. , W ¶ RN LI \RX GRQ¶W KDs, just say O, WKH DQVZHU EXW , DP KHUH WI

Reassure them, for example, you might say µZH GRQ¶W \HW vaccination for coronavirus, but doctors are working very hard on LWR¶U µD ORW RI SH get sick, but for most people it is like a cold or flu and t KH\ JHW EHW

Some of the changes, like people wearing face masks or empty supermarket shelves, can be scary for children. They are likely to need to talk to someone they trust to help them understand why these things are happening.

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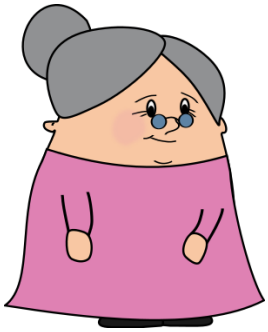
Having difficult conversations with children

It can be hard for families with older relatives, those in high risk groups, and families who usually receive supported from services.

If there are going to big life changes, explain these to children using a calm tone of voice. For example, if their granny, we're moving, explain that it is a good thing that granny is self-isolating to keep herself safe and they can keep in touch on the phone or using Skype.



Take each moment as it comes and support one another as best as you can

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Tips for managing coronavirus anxiety

30 activities to do at home

Get creative:

1. Draw a character from your favourite book
2. Make bubbles with washing up liquid
3. Make a castle out of paper cups
4. Paint like your favourite artist
5. Do some mindful colouring

Get techy:

- x Video yourself telling a story to share with a friend
- x Watch your all-time favourite movie
- x Watch some funny videos on YouTube together
- x Facetime hide and seek
- x Listen to an audio book

Be a scientist:

- x Cornflower and water experiment
- x Make a straw rocket
- x Make a playdough coronavirus
- x Put water and baking soda in a balloon

Get physical:

1. Create your own dance routine
2. Do child-friendly yoga (YouTube has lots of videos!)
3. Play ³ ide and seek ´
4. Play ³ 7 Kfloor is lava ´
5. Play ³ 6 O H H S L Q J O R J V ´

Use your words:

1. : U L W H D S R H P D E R X W feeling
2. Write a short story about your experiences
3. Read your favourite book
4. Write a rap
5. Try and learn a new language

Have an indoor adventure:

1. Design a treasure hunt inside your house
2. Design and make a fairy door for your house
3. Design your own board game
4. Create a mini-golf course inside your house
5. Create a fort

Creating a consistent routine

Schools have been shut and you may be practicing social distancing or self-isolating. This means your child might be spending a lot more time at home that usual.

Along with all of the other changes COVID-19 has brought, your child may have lost their daily familiar routine. For some children this can make them feel more worried than usual. Parents can support their child by making a schedule- M X V W O L N H W K H \ ¶ G school. Try using the blank timetable on the following page to design your own personal routine.

However, this may not work for all children. You will need to consider the needs of your child. If they respond well to routine this might be useful, but you should always consider the unique needs of your child first.

It is also important to note, that COVID-19 has produced some very unusual circumstances therefore any schedules are just a guide and should remain flexible.

	9.00 - 9.30		9.30 - 10.15	Break	10.30 - 11.15		11.30 - 12.15	Lunch	1.15 - 2.00		2.15 - 3.00
Monday				Break				Lunch			
Tuesday				Break				Lunch			
Wednesday				Break				Lunch			
Thursday				Break				Lunch			
Friday				Break				Lunch			

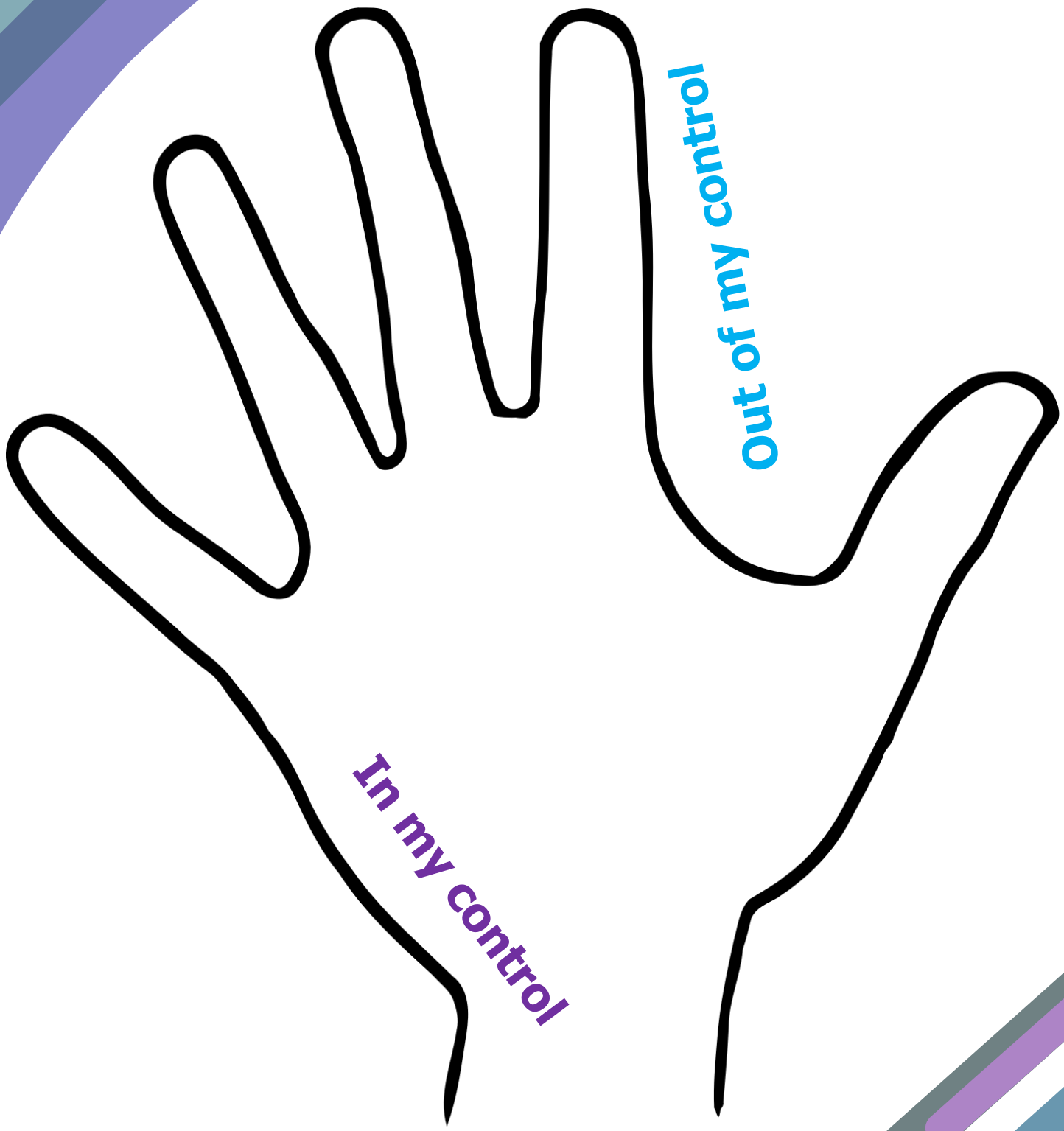
Things we can control

8 Q G H U V W D Q G L Q J Z K D W Z H Find Out When we focus on things we cannot control we may feel worried and overwhelmed. If we focus on that we can control this can help us feel calmer and less anxious.

Here is a quick activity to help us think about the things we can and cannot control in regards to COVID-19.

A blank form is provided on the next page if you would like to do this exercise with your child.

What can I control?

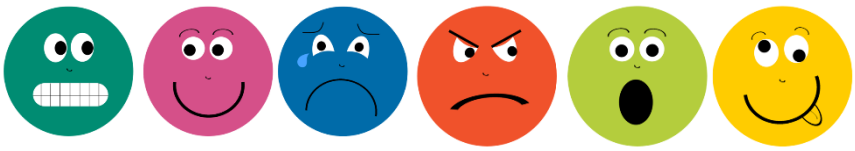


Emotion coaching

It may be that your child has some worries about COVID-19 (or in general!) that you cannot reassure them about. At times like this, emotion coaching is a really useful way to support your child to handle and tolerate all the uncertainty.

This may feel uncomfortable to start with, but it is worth the effort. When children have their feelings acknowledged, they feel safer and this is especially important in these strange times.

Emotion coaching teaches children the important life skill of emotion regulation, not only will this help them in the present, it will also prepare them to handle challenges they will face later in their lives.



Research shows that children who learn about their feelings and emotions have these advantages:

- **Feel calmer and learn to self-regulate.**
- **Get sick less often.**
- **Stronger relationships with other people.**

The 5 steps of emotion coaching

1. Be Aware:

a. To support your child with emotion coaching, you need to start observing, listening and learning how your child expresses different feelings and emotions.
b. Watch for changes in their facial expression, body language, posture, and tone of voice.
c. Set a good example by talking about feelings and emotions in order to help children build a vocabulary of different feelings.
d. Encourage children to talk about their feelings and emotions.

2. Connect with your child:

a. You can use emotional moments as opportunities to connect with your child
b. Allow your child to have their feelings without dismissing, disapproving or avoiding.
c. All feelings are **okay**, but not all behaviour is okay.

3. Listen and tune-in to your child:

a. Your child will feel more secure when they are allowed to express their feelings.
b. Take time to stop, breathe and get curious.
c. Tune-in to what their behaviour is telling you.
d. Take 5 long slow breaths to help you feel calm.
e. Check what's going on for you. Has it touched a nerve for you? Has it made you feel frustrated? Angry? Scared? Helpless?

4. 1DPH \RXU FKLOG¶V IHHOLQJV RXW ORX
   a. Your child will feel more secure when their feelings are heard.
   b. Naming emotions helps to soothe and regulate \RXU FKLOG¶V brain.
   c. Ask, rather than telling, them how they are feeling. ,I WKH\¶UH not sure, offer suggestions for them to consider.

5. **Set limits and problem solve together:**
   a. You can allow DOO RI \RXU feelings while still setting clear limits on behaviour.
   b. Corrections should only when feelings have been acknowledged and when everyone is calm.
   c. Where possible involve your child in problem solving, especially as they get older.
   d. Think ahead about tricky and potentially overwhelming situations and be prepared to help the child through them.

3 , ¶P WKLQNLQJ **be feeling really upset because** \RX FDQ¶W VHH \RXU IULHQGV EXW LW¶V QRW RND\ WR **have a think about some different ways of** VWD\LQJ LQ WRXFK ZLWK \RXU I

Emotion coaching wheel

Relaxed breathing for children

1. Find a quiet place free of distractions. Lie on the floor or sit in a chair. Rest your hands in your lap or on the arms of the chair.

2. We are going to practice breathing slowly in for three and out for three. Imagine your breath is like a wave, slowly rushing in to your body, then slowly running out of your body 1……2…….3…….1……2…..3……

3. As you breathe in feel air fill your lungs and then when they are full of air slowly push the air back out until there is no air left.

4. Now focus on where you are breathing. Place one hand on your upper chest and the other hand on your stomach. I want you to breathe in through your nose and down into your stomach. You should feel the hand on your stomach move out whilst the hand on your chest stays still. Now practice breathing down in to your stomach, feeling your hand move out as your stomach fills with air, then as your breathe out feel your hand fall.

5. When you have practiced breathing like this you can take your hand away and continue to breathe down into your stomach.

6. Continue this pattern of rhythmic breathing for five to ten minutes.

Progressive muscle relaxation for children

Begin by finding a comfortable position sitting, standing, or lying down. You can change positions any time during the progressive muscle relaxation exercises to make yourself more comfortable as needed.

Start with the muscles in your legs. Tighten all the muscles of your legs. Tense the muscles further. Hold onto this tension. Feel how tight and tense the muscles in your legs are right now. Squeeze the muscles harder, tighter... Continue to hold this tension. Feel the muscles wanting to give up this tension. Hold it for a few moments more.... and now relax. Let all the tension go. Feel the muscles in your legs going limp, loose, and relaxed. Notice how relaxed the muscles feel now. Feel the difference between tension and relaxation. Enjoy the pleasant feeling of relaxation in your legs.

Now focus on the muscles in your arms. Tighten your shoulders, upper arms, lower arms, and hands. Squeeze your hands into tight fists. Tense the muscles in your arms and hands as tightly as you can. Squeeze harder.... harder..... hold the tension in your arms, shoulders, and hands. Feel the tension in these muscles. Hold it for a few moments more.... and now release. Let the muscles of your shoulders, arms, and hands relax and go limp. Feel the relaxation as your shoulders lower into a comfortable position and your hands relax at your sides. Allow the muscles in your arms to relax completely.

Progressive muscle relaxation

F R Q W L Q X H G «

Focus again on your breathing. Slow, even, regular breaths. Breathe in relaxation.... and breathe out tension..... in relaxation....and out tension.... Continue to breathe slowly and rhythmically.

Now focus on the muscles of your buttocks. Tighten these muscles as much as you can. Hold this tension..... and then release. Relax your muscles.

Tighten the muscles of your back now. Feel your back tightening, pulling your shoulders back and tensing the muscles along your spine. Arch your back slightly as you tighten these muscles. Hold.... and relax. Let all the tension go. Feel your back comfortably relaxing into an easy and natural posture.

Turn your attention now to the muscles of your chest and stomach. Tighten and tense these muscles. Tighten them further...hold this tension.... and release. Relax the muscles of your trunk.

Finally, tighten the muscles of your face. Scrunch your eyes shut tightly, wrinkle your nose, and tighten your cheeks and chin. Hold this tension in your face.... and relax. Release all the tension. Feel how relaxed your face is.

Notice all of the muscles in your body.... notice how relaxed your muscles feel. Allow any last bits of tension to drain away. Enjoy the relaxation you are experiencing. Notice your calm breathing.... your relaxed muscles.... Enjoy the relaxation for a few moments....

When you are ready to return to your usual level of alertness and awareness, slowly begin to re-awaken your body. Wiggle your toes and fingers. Swing your arms gently. Shrug your shoulders. Stretch if you like.

You may now end this progressive muscle relaxation exercise feeling calm

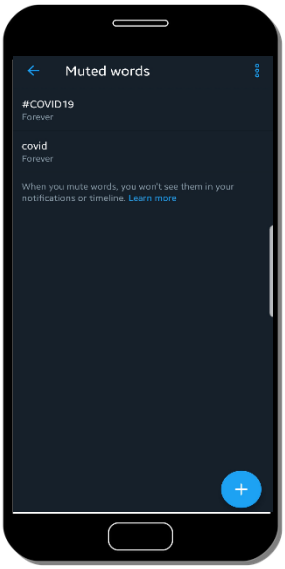
Muting unhelpful words on twitter

Twitter has an option to mute certain words, phrases or hashtags to stop them from appearing on your news feed.

IPHONE (APP)

1. Go to your Notifications tab.
2. Tap the gear icon.
3. 7 D S ³ 0 X W H G ´ Z R U G V
4. 7 D S ³ $ G G P X W H G R U S K U D V H
5. Type in the word or hashtag you'd like to mute (for example: #COVID-19).

Alternatively, long press the word as it appears on a tweet D Q G S U H V V ³ 0 X W H ´



ANDROID (APP)

1. Go to your Notifications tab.
2. Tap the gear icon.
3. 7 D S ³ 0 X W H G ´ Z R U G V
4. 7 D S ³ $ G G P X W H G R U S K U
5. Type in the word or hashtag you'd like to mute.

Muting unhelpful words on

IPHONE AND ANDROID (APP)

8 Q I R U W X Q D W H O \ \ R X F D Q ¶ W P X W H
can mute pages or people if they are sharing/posting
F R Q W H Q W \ R X G R Q ¶ W Z D Q W W R V

1. Click on the three dots at the top right of the post you do not wish to see
2. 3 U H V V ³ 6 Q R R] H I R U G D \ V ´
3. $ O W H U Q D W L Y H O \ \ R X F D Q ³ + L

You can also prioritise whose posts you see:

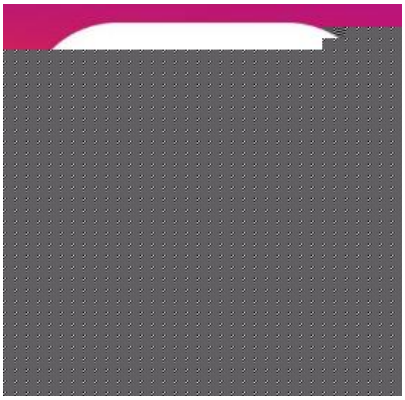
1. Go onto your menu ±This is usually the three lines at the top right on the Facebook app
2. 6 F U R O O G R Z Q W R ³ 6 H W W L Q J V
3. 3 U H V V ³ 6 H W W L Q J V ´
4. 6 F U R O O G R Z Q W R W K H K H D G L
   D Q G F K R R V H ³ 1 H Z V) H H G S U H I
5. Press ³ 3 U L R U L W L V H 6 H H) L U V W ´
6. Choose who you want to see at the top of your News Feed
7. 3 U H V V ³ ' R Q H ´ D W W K H W R S U L

Under your News Feed Settings you can also see who you have hidden posts from, or unfollowed.

Muting unhelpful words on Instagram

Instagram has an option to mute comments that other users leave on your posts that contain words and phrases that you do not wish to see. Follow the steps below and Instagram will automatically delete comments on your posts that contain them.

1. Go to your profile
2. Click on the hamburger (the three lines at the top right) of the screen
3. & O L F N R Q µ 6 H W W L Q J V ¶
4. & O L F N R Q µ 3 U L Y D F \ ¶
5. & O L F N R Q µ & R P P H Q W V ¶
6. & O L F N R Q µ 0 D Q X D O I L O W H U
7. The manual filter bar will turn from grey to E O X H W K H Q L Q W K H V S D F H V H S D U D W H G E \ F R P P D V « ¶ W phrases that you do wish not to see, separating each word or phrase using a comma.



Unfortunately, Instagram does not allow you to block posts or comments left on other X V H U V ¶ S R V W V W K D W F R Q W D L Q Z R U G V S K U D V H V R experiencing distress as a result of content on Instagram it is advisable that you cut down on the time you spend on Instagram. Choose social media sites that do allow you to filter out content you do not wish to see (such as Twitter) and avoid the µ H [S O R U H ¶ I H D W X U H W K D W U H F R P P H Q G V F R Q W H Q W