



Coronavirus Family Guide

Information Sheet No.7

Helping you to navigate challenging times

Helping to deal with anxiety (for everyone!)

Filter your information intake

Give yourself things to look forward to

Keep active - physically and mentally

Take time to fully relax

Feeling anxious at a time like this is a completely normal human response. The majority of people will have felt increasingly worried about coronavirus and the potential impact on their lives or the lives of those around them. It is important that we are aware of our own levels of anxiety and take steps to try and manage this.

Here are some ideas to try and help ease some of the anxiety in relation to coronavirus.

Plan ahead

In such an unprecedented situation like this, it is very easy to catastrophise. Rather than focusing on a generalised concern, for example "I'm worried about coronavirus", try thinking about exactly what it is that is worrying you most.

If you can pin point specific concerns then you can begin to rationalise them. The majority of things we worry about never come to pass - so try to think of how likely it is that your concern will happen.

If you feel it is likely to occur, then try to think of a "Plan A" that will decrease the likelihood of it happening, and a "Plan B" of what you can do if it comes to fruition. Just by having a plan we can start to feel more in control, even if we don't end up needing it.

Write things down

It is likely that we are thinking about many different aspects of our lives at this time and keeping them all in our head takes up a lot of space and processing energy! By writing things down it can help us to stop juggling lots of different thoughts, and also help us to prioritise tasks.

You could make a note of anything, from a list of your worries to names of friends and family members we want to touch base with. Using things such as timetables or to do lists can keep us organised, particularly as all of our usual daily routines have changed. This can be recorded in any way you like, but the more thoughts you can externalise the less head space it takes up!

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Keep active - physically and mentally

Following the Government guidance to stay at home can make keeping active a little harder - particularly if you don't have much space in your house. Our children are used to having set break times during the day to burn energy and it is important for all of the family to get some movement into their day. This can be adjusted to take age and any physical needs into consideration.

There are lots of resources online about getting active but it could be as simple as putting on some music and having 5 minutes of dancing about.

Trying to keep our brains active is also important. Incorporating creative or problem solving activities into our day or learning a new skill can help to get our brains fired up.

Give yourself things to look forward to

With the situation at present many of us have had to cancel exciting trips and events. As we do not know how long this will last for we are unable to make any concrete future plans - but that does not mean we can't find things to look forward to. This might be little treats during our day - like stopping for a cup of tea, having that tasty treat you have managed to keep hidden from the rest of the family - or thinking about where you want to go to on holiday next year.



One parent suggested making a bucket list of all the things the family want to do when things have returned to normal. This could be a small thing such as having an ice cream from the ice cream van. You could also include the family members you are missing such as a sleepover at Nan and Grandad's, or it could be a big exciting trip.

Take time to fully relax

We all have different ways to relax and what works for one person may not work for someone else. The aim of relaxing is to feel at ease and in the moment. Whilst some people achieve this through practicing meditation or mindfulness techniques others may get lost in an activity.

People often relax by doing activities such as reading, colouring, creating something, completing a puzzle or playing a game. It may also be a break to fulfil a sensory need or to simply daydream.



Filter your information intake

For many of us the internet is currently our main way of keeping connected - not only to friends and family but also to current events. It is important to remember that not everything you see online is factual - from fake news stories to social media posts showing that homeschooling "is a breeze".

Try to take things with a pinch of salt and check the information source before sharing a post. Unfollow or "hide updates" from social media accounts that make you feel negative and try finding some that share uplifting or funny posts.



Further information

NHS - <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-anxiety-tips/>

Government - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/876989/Easy_read_looking_after_your_feelings_and_body.pdf

Mind - <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/>

Young Minds - <https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/what-to-do-if-you-re-anxious-about-coronavirus/>

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) - <https://www.bacp.co.uk/news/news-from-bacp/2020/28-february-coronavirus-anxiety-how-to-cope-if-you-re-feeling-anxious-about-the-outbreak/>

Anxiety UK - <https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/coronavirus-support-resources/>

The Mix - <https://www.themix.org.uk/mental-health/anxiety-ocd-and-phobias/how-to-deal-with-coronavirus-anxiety-35761.html>

NHS One You - <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/>



Information on supporting individuals on the autism spectrum

National Autistic Society- <https://www.autism.org.uk/services/helplines/coronavirus/resources/tips.aspx>

Purple Ella - perspective from an autistic adult and parent - <https://youtu.be/ilpvdMVnfGs>

Dr Tony Attwood - <https://youtu.be/P-7TktEAHIQ> or http://www.autismhangout.com/uploads/9/8/1/6/98165702/dr_tony_attwood_on_covid_19.pdf (summary sheet)

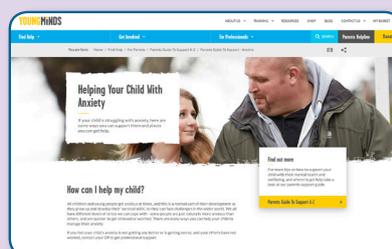
Information on supporting individuals with OCD

OCDUK - <https://www.ocduk.org/ocd-and-coronavirus-resources/>

Young Minds - <https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/tips-for-coping-with-ocd-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>

BBC News - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-51909368/coronavirus-how-to-manage-anxiety-and-ocd-during-the-pandemic>

OCD Action - <https://www.ocdaction.org.uk/i-need-information-support>



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Resources and Activities

Anxiety UK Free Resources - <https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/product-category/free-resources/>

NHS Relaxation Techniques (Audio Files) - <https://www.cntw.nhs.uk/resource-library/relaxation-techniques/>

Mental Health Foundation Podcasts - <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/podcasts-and-videos/podcasts-for-your-wellbeing>

NHS One You - **Recommended Apps** - <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/apps/>

The Reading Well - Mental Health Book Recommendations - children, young people and adult book lists - <https://reading-well.org.uk/>

OCD - Young Person's Self Help Guide - <https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Obsessive-Compulsive-Disorder-A-young-persons-self-help-guide.pdf>

Child Mind Institute - Mindfulness - <https://childmind.org/article/how-mindfulness-can-help-during-covid-19/>

Young Minds - **Parent's Guide to Anxiety**- <https://youngminds.org.uk/media/3673/anxiety-updated-dec-2019.pdf>

Pink Monkey's Yoga Adventures - <https://app.namastream.com/#/victoria-yoga/product/7699>

NHS Every Mind Matters - Introduction to Mindful Breathing - <https://youtu.be/wfDTp2GogaQ>

Cosmic Kids Yoga - Yoga, Mindfulness and Meditation for children - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC5ulZ2K0ZZeQDQo Gsi qb0>

New Horizon - Kids Meditation - <https://www.newhorizonholisticcentre.co.uk/kids-meditation.html>

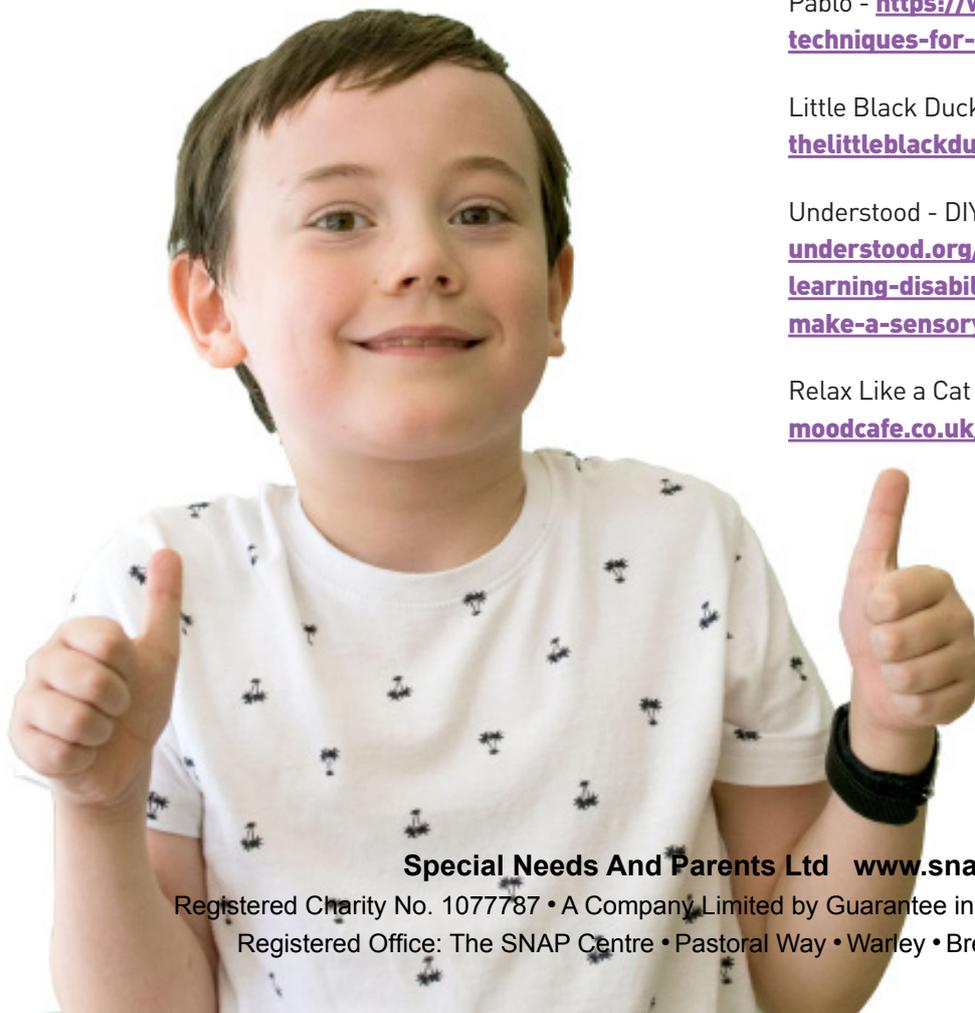
Stop, Breathe & Think - App - for Adults & Children - including Coronavirus calming activities for adults - <https://www.stopbreathethink.com/>

CBeebies - Helping Young Children Feel Calm with Pablo - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/joinin/seven-techniques-for-helping-kids-keep-calm>

Little Black Duck - Be In the Moment Poster - <https://www.thelittleblackduck.com.au/product/be-in-the-moment/>

Understood - DIY Sensory Bottle - <https://www.understood.org/en/learning-thinking-differences/child-learning-disabilities/sensory-processing-issues/how-to-make-a-sensory-bottle>

Relax Like a Cat - Relaxation Story - <https://www.moodcafe.co.uk/media/26930/Relaxleaflet.pdf>



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