

## Carlisle Eden Mind Help for Parents supporting young people during the Coronavirus

We're currently experiencing uncertain and rapidly changing times. We don't know how the coronavirus situation will impact on children and young people's mental health, but there is a risk that their experience and the concerns they feel may make them – and us as parents and carers – feel deeply anxious.

This is especially true for children who may already have underlying issues. We want to help everyone to do all we can to prevent this from happening, or to minimise it.

At Carlisle Eden Mind, we've created this newsletter to help provide clear, simple and trusted information to all those who are supporting children and young people, including young people themselves.



### Talking to your child about coronavirus

As a parent or carer, it's important to talk to young people honestly but calmly about what is happening, and to not ignore or shield them from what is going on in the world. It's helpful to first gauge their level of understanding or interest to decide what level of detail you need to go into when explaining what is going on. It's important to respond to their questions and concerns, so that anxieties don't build up or become too much to manage. It can be challenging to get a balance between ensuring they are informed and not over sharing which will only increase their concerns.

Below are 10 Top Tips from Young Minds Parents helpline to help you talk to your child -

**Try not to shield** your child from the news, as it's likely they will find out somehow from school, being online or from friends.

**Talk to your child** about what is going on. You could start by asking them what they have heard.

**Try to answer their questions** and reassure them in an age appropriate manner.

Remember, you do not need to know all the answers, but talking can help them feel calm.

**Reassure your child** that it is unlikely they will get seriously ill, and if they do fall ill you will look after them. Your child might be concerned about who will look after you if you catch the virus. Let them know the kind of support you have as an adult so that they don't feel they need to worry about you.

**Give some practical tips** to your child about how they can look after themselves. For example, show them how to wash their hands properly, and remind them when they should be doing it.

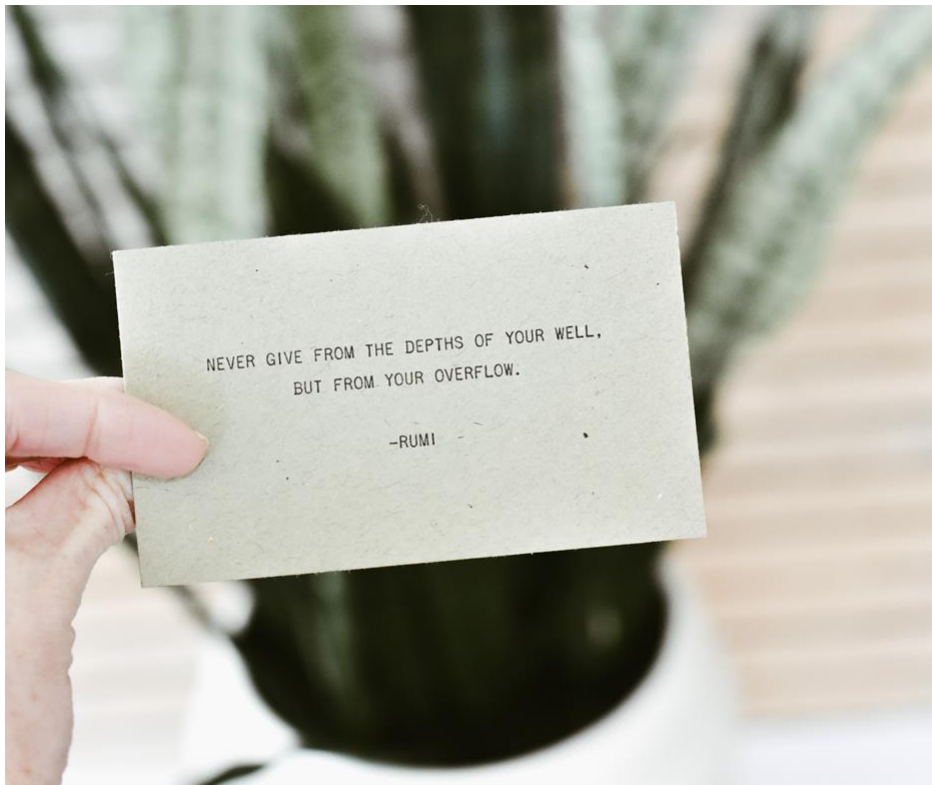
**Keep as many regular routines** as possible, so that your child feels safe and that things are stable.

**Spend time doing a positive activity** with your child (e.g. reading, playing, painting, cooking) to help reassure them and reduce their anxiety. This is also a great way of providing a space for them to talk through their concerns, without having a 'big chat'. For activity ideas, visit our 'Starting a conversation with your child' guide.

**Encourage your child to think** about the things they can do to make them feel safer and less worried.

**Be aware that your child may** want more close contact with you at this time and feel anxious about separation. Try to provide this support whenever possible.

**Remember to look after yourself too.** If you yourself are feeling worried, or anxious about coronavirus, talk to someone you trust who can listen and support you.



## Me before You - Self-care

This time is unsettling for us all, therefore it is essential to take care of yourself. This will help us to try to stabilise our own emotions, worries and wellbeing which can enable us to support and care for our children. With extra pressures of health worries, child care, home schooling, work or finances we need to take care of ourselves as a priority. This may feel like the last thing on your mind right now but it is essential for our whole family's wellbeing.

At this time, we can take advantage of being together, but also make sure you have time on your own, even if it's just 10 minutes in the shower!

**Self-care is vital as a parent/carer and has to come first** - We have to start with self-care, which may feel like a luxury or a joke, especially at this time as a parent/carer, with so many other priorities. But this is not selfish this is a priority if you want to promote positive emotional wellbeing to your child.

**Model good habits** - Young people often learn from copying what they see around them. If you are taking care of your own mental health, it's easier for them to see what good habits look like.

**Take Time for yourself** - In reality, this may not feel possible but even if it's 10 minutes to walk the dog, listen to some music, watch your favourite program or read a chapter of your book it can really make a difference.

**Don't be too hard on yourself** - If your child is having problems, don't be too hard on yourself or blame yourself. Parenting is challenging and we often feel the brunt of our child's emotions.

Take a look at our [Five Ways of Wellbeing](#) as a guide to day-to-day things we can do to care for our own mental and emotional wellbeing. Just like showering or brushing our

teeth, each day we should have routines in place that support our emotional self-care. What are yours?

Visit [cemind.org](https://cemind.org) or [Click here](#) to watch a video for some top relaxation tips.

## Self-care is about the things we can do to look after our own mental health

On [My mind by Anna Freud](#) has a great resource with many self care ideas for both you and your child to try. Many can be done at home - maybe try to pick one a day like a self-care advent calendar.

See the link below or follow the link by clicking the image to the right <https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/self-care/>



## What is mental health?

Everyone has mental health - it includes our emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing. It affects how we think, feel, and act. At this time every one of us will feel changes in our mental health and wellbeing and this is understandable, given all the uncertainty.

It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.

Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through to adulthood.

Here is [clip](#) that explains a little more about mental health and how we can come together to support each other.



## Younger Child friendly explanation of Covid-19

[Click the image](#) to the right for a Child friendly explanation of COVID-19.

This may help you to explain about COVID-19 to younger children and help you understand how they are feeling.



[Listen - Take time to listen](#)

Take time to listen to your child's concerns, these could be concerns we have ourselves or different from the experience of a young person.

Children and young people, often feel overwhelmed by a complex and changing situations, especially when they may feel it isn't being clearly explained for their perspective.

Some of their worries might seem trivial (in comparison to your own) but the change to routine itself, not being able to play out or meet friends are all things that may unsettle them.

Young people will have concerns for the health of you and/or an elderly grandparent/relative. This is understandable and they may need reassurance around what practical steps are being taken to keep people healthy.

**Check in and ask** - what exactly is on their mind?

**Listen** - to their concerns and don't belittle or dismiss them

**Find reliable balanced information** - click the image and look at the **BBC**

**Newsround** site together to find young person friendly information and up- to-date news. But be aware of limiting this so it does not become too much.



## Chill Panda App

Learn to relax, manage your worries and improve your wellbeing with **Chill Panda**. The app measures your heart rate and suggests tasks to suit your state of mind. Tasks include simple breathing techniques and light exercises to take your mind off your worries.

**Who is it suitable for?**

Chill Panda is for children and adults who want to learn how to manage stress and worry and feel better.

**How do I access it?**

Chill Panda is free to download from the App Store and Google Play. The app works with mobile devices that have a camera.



## Top tips for how you can support your child's mental health

### Day to day

Our everyday habits are important to our mental health, just as they are to our physical health.

Here are a few suggestions to help your child develop good habits.

### 5 Ways to Wellbeing

**Click here** or on the image and follow the link for more information on 5 Ways to Wellbeing for young people.

Are there things you can encourage them to do, or do together, each day?

Nutrition - Balance – School work Vs Social - Sleep 8hrs - Physical Activity

**Talk openly about mental health** Talk openly about, e.g. staying connected with others, especially at this time or being physically active in order to take care of our minds.

**Share your techniques of self-care.** Model good habits Young people often learn from copying what they see around them. If you are taking care of your own mental health, it's easier for them to see what good habits look like.

### Think about phone usage – both theirs and yours

We don't fully understand the impact of social media on our mental health but screen time often takes time away from more healthy activities and can impact on our sleep, which is important to our mental health. We're also more likely to listen to one another if we're not distracted by technology.





## When times get tricky- Be Helpfully Nosey

**Talk to your child:** Even young children can understand about feelings and behaviour if you give them a chance to talk about it. Take it gently and give them examples of what you mean and why you are concerned.

**Ask open questions:** This will help to extend the conversation  
“What has been helpful today?”

**Some ways to start a conversation about feelings might be:**

“How are you feeling at the moment?”

“You don’t seem your usual self. Do you want to talk about it?”

“Do you fancy a chat?”

“I’m happy to listen if you need a chat.”

If they find it too hard to open up to you don’t take this personally point them in the direction of another trusted adult e.g. one of your friends, Auntie or Uncle, older sibling.

**Use activities** – as it can be less confrontational to use these times to have conversations about how they are doing.

Talking whilst doing something together, side-by-side, such as cooking, washing up or on your daily exercise can help them share their feelings more easily than a face-to-face conversation. See the link below for creative ideas.

**Click here** to watch a video from young people and what they think you as a parent/carer can do to help.

## Get creative and chill out

**Click here** for some great creative ideas from Mind Your Way. There are lots of creative ideas to support positive mental wellbeing from journaling to happy music playlists.

Being creative can help focus our racing mind on the task in hand.





MindEd is a free learning resource about the mental health of children, young people and older adults. MindEd is written by a team of specialists and parents working together and offers advice and information. You do not have to register to use this resource.

A yellow rectangular graphic with a wavy bottom edge. At the top right is the 'mind' logo (a stylized brain) and 'MindLine Cumbria' text. Below this, the text reads: 'We're here to help', '0300 561 0000', '12pm - 9pm Mon - Fri', and '5pm - 9pm Sat'. At the bottom, there are four columns: 'Call' with '0300 561 0000', 'Text' with 'MIND to 81066', 'Webchat' with 'mindlinecumbria.org', and 'Email' with 'info@mindlinecumbria.org'.

## Do you need to talk? Feeling alone or in crisis?

We offer information, support and guidance about mental health issues over the telephone, via text or email.

MindLine Cumbria is open 12pm - 11pm Mon - Fri and 5pm - 11pm Sat - Sun

Call [MindLine Cumbria](tel:03005610000) on 0300 561 0000

Text 'Mind' and your question to 81066

Webchat at [www.mindlinecumbria.org](http://www.mindlinecumbria.org)

Email [info@mindlinecumbria.org](mailto:info@mindlinecumbria.org)

We want to take time to listen to you and to understand your situation. We believe no one should have to face a mental health problem alone.

We offer a broad range of information for people experiencing mental health problems and for friends, family and carers.

## Worried about suicide?

At Carlisle Eden Mind suicide prevention features in all our work and we offer free suicide awareness training at this time our training program is frozen but as soon as it is safe to do so we will be delivering again - [Click here](#) for more information.

We understand talking about suicide can feel like a difficult thing to do – for the person who is suicidal and for anyone who may be concerned about them.

If you are concerned that your child may be feeling suicidal it is important to talk to them. Lots of people worry that asking and talking about suicide will make suicide more likely to happen, but this isn't the case and can be the first step to someone getting help and finding ways to keep themselves safe.

You can find more help, information, signs to look out for and examples of how to start a conversation about suicide at [Papyrus](#) - [Click here](#)

Also their dedicated [HOPELINEUK](#) is a confidential support and advice service for: Children and Young People under the age of 35 who are experiencing thoughts of suicide  
Anyone concerned that a young person could be thinking about suicide



# YOUNGMINDS

## Need information, support, or advice?

Young Minds has some excellent resources for young people who are and were already experiencing existing mental health issues. please follow the link to get more information and advice. For example

**'Tips for coping with OCD during the coronavirus pandemic'**

**Parent Line** Young Minds also offers a free confidential parent/carer helpline for any adult who would like information, support, or advice about the emotional problems, behaviour, or mental health of a young person up to the age of 25.

Call 0808 802 5544 Mon-Fri 9am-4pm (free for mobiles & landlines).

Or click on the Young Minds logo above and follow the link.



## A message of thanks from Carlisle Eden Mind

"Now is such a difficult and uncertain time, staying healthy is our main priority for the foreseeable future. Physical health is key now, however we cannot ignore the effects to our mental wellbeing.

There are lots of things we can do to maintain our mental wellbeing, whether we are in isolation or reducing contact.

Please see our website for more guidance about looking after mental wellbeing [www.cemind.org](http://www.cemind.org)

Like in many crises, people pull together and we have seen much of this. We are working our hardest to adapt to the current situation and keep all of our services open, albeit using different methods of communication, and we couldn't do this without the continued support we receive.

I would like to say a huge thank you to all of you using our services, for your understanding and willingness for change; to our funders and stakeholders who are allowing us to make changes as appropriate to enable our much needed services to continue; to our sponsors and donees, some who have astounded us with their generosity to enable us to manage through this period; and last, but by no means least, our staff who have been understanding, helpful and willing to do whatever is necessary to allow our services to continue for those who need it most, now, and in the future. Thank you."

**Tara Quinn CEO.**

• Local information about COVID-19 is available from Cumbria County Council's website: <https://cumbria.gov.uk/coronavirus/>

- Carlisle Eden Mind and COVID-19, you can read updates here <http://www.cemind.org/news/2020/3/carlisle-eden-mind-and-coronavirus.aspx> about our service delivery changes
- Mindline Cumbria is here for you we are available from 12pm to 11pm Mon - Fri and 5pm to 11pm Sat - Sun Call 0300 561 0000 Text 'Mind' to 81066, Text 'Mind' followed by your question Webchat visit [www.mindlinecumbria.org](http://www.mindlinecumbria.org)

## Supporting our work

We rely on donations, fundraising and grants to continue running our services, while we know its a difficult time in society if you can spare anything to help us continue running our services we would be extremely grateful. You can donate to Carlisle Eden Mind here [bit.ly/3cQ414W](https://bit.ly/3cQ414W)



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