**General tips for dealing with the unprecedented school closures**

Stress and anxiety in such unusual situations is normal. Children can pick up on the stress around them and some children can believe that they are responsible for events that are beyond their control – reassure them that is the adult’s job to keep them safe.

Your child’s behaviour may change as they are trying to adapt to new situations, routines and deal uncertainty. It is important to bear in mind that children’s behaviour is their way of communicating what they perhaps are unable to do so in word. They may not understand their emotions and/or they may not have the skills to manage these emotions. We, as adults, need to help them. It will entail extra patience than normal so ensure you take time for yourself and look after yourself.

**Quiet time activity ideas** *(click the links)*

* Audio books – Free online stories for kids (for as long as school closed) [from Audible.](https://stories.audible.com/start-listen)
* [David Walliams audiobooks](https://soundcloud.com/harpercollinspublishers/the-worlds-worst-children-3-3/s-VcYQCOlF2zr)
* Reading/ story time
* Colouring, painting, sewing, knitting, jig saw puzzle, sudoku.
* Lego, playdough, building
* [Relax Kids CALM PACK](https://www.relaxkids.com/calm-pack?fbclid=IwAR0c0yLAnMZNxVIfRzDdMOVBLEHDxC2r0PC1eeegMoCD0V0fsH9ufA3DzVA)
* [Learn & practise breathing exercises](https://copingskillsforkids.com/deep-breathing-exercises-for-kids)
* Create a lucky dip of [Heavy Work Activities](http://mamaot.com/40-heavy-work-activities-kids/) – these can have a calming effect.

Free online **exercise** videos for all the family

*(click on the links)*

* [PE with Joe Wicks](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K6r99N3kXME) *[daily live PE lessons 9a.m – join live or do it after.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K6r99N3kXME)*
* [Free online exercise classes for kids](https://www.theprojectpt.com/)  *live 9a.m lessons from a local social enterprise supporting schools*
* [Cosmic Kids Yoga](https://www.youtube.com/user/CosmicKidsYoga)
* [NHS Fitness Studio Exercise Videos](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/nhs-fitness-studio/)
* [Yoga for uncertain times](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLui6Eyny-Uzy-b0MKzL2EfaTqB0ppgK06&fbclid=IwAR3AtfGYu5O2Gt9B4jf8b7lsoVUnHgUlndN4pjfFIy7H5EaufWYByusa6z8)

**General tips**:

* Children right now need to feel loved, comforted and to feel like everything is going to be OK.
* Having a routine and structure helps children feel secure in uncertain times. Create a daily schedule that is realistic and don’t worry if you deviate from it. Try to incorporate time for play, snack, quite time, time outside and set limited time for electronics.
* Friendships are key to maintaining resilience for children, so help them to maintain these relationships through phone calls, online communication and writing letters.
* Restrict access to rolling news coverage.
* Play is fundamental to the wellbeing and development of children of all ages, and a great way to reduce stress in adults.
* Try to focus on a few days at a time; things are changing rapidly.
* Start a gratitude practice; make time to value the things to be grateful for – start a gratitude diary.

**Other useful links:**

* [Simple social story about Coronavirus](https://www.facebook.com/116941762340407/photos/pcb.521698881864691/521698745198038/?type=3&theater)
* [Why are schools closing – simple video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZIIIPTB2ljs&feature=youtu.be)
* [School Closure Toolkit – visual support](https://qrcgcustomers.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/account4876975/6552095_2.pdf?0.11589340381807767)
* [Coronavirus and your wellbeing](https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/)
* [How families can cope with self-isolation](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-51936286)
* [Young Minds Guidance for older children](https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/what-to-do-if-you-re-anxious-about-coronavirus/)