
Old Church C.E. (C) Primary School
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April 2nd 2020

Dear Parents

Daily Update

Well we are nearing the end of Week 2. I thought I would try and give you some helpful hints below on support your child's mental health during this difficult time,

Some key points to consider to help you support your children:

➤ **Listen and acknowledge.**

- Look out for any changes in their behaviour.
- Children may feel less anxious if they are able to express and communicate their feelings.
- Listen to them, acknowledge their concerns, and give them extra love and attention if they need it.
- You could always set up a worry box where they can post you drawings/ letters about their worries. Read it and then throw the worry away in the bin.
- Get them to draw a face with how they are feeling- this is easier than having to put it into words.

➤ **Provide clear information about the situation:**

- All children and young people want to feel that their parents and caregivers can keep them safe.
- Provide honest answers to any questions they have- keep it simple.
- Explain what is being done to keep them and their loved ones safe, such as washing their hands regularly.

➤ **Be aware of your own reactions:**

- It is important to manage your own emotions and remain calm, listen to and acknowledge children and young people's concerns.
- Speak kindly to them, and answer any questions they have honestly.
- Children are very astute and many will just want to look after you.

➤ **Connect regularly:**

- Make sure you still have regular and frequent contact via the phone or video calls with them if you live away.

- Contact with relations/ friends is important over the phone/ Skype/ Facetime etc. (Please make sure that you monitor this.)
- Also keeping the links with school is important. We probably spend as much time with your children as you do and all of a sudden this has been taken away from them. Send us emails, blogs etc. We are there for you.

➤ **Create a new routine:**

- Make a plan for the day or week that includes time for learning, playing and relaxing; be active for 60 minutes a day; keep to bedtimes etc.

➤ **Limit exposure to media and talk about what they have seen and heard:**

- Try to avoid turning the television off or closing web pages when children come into the room. This can raise their interest to find out what is going on - and their imagination can take over.
- Try to answer their questions and reassure them in an age-appropriate manner, avoiding too much detail.

➤ **Don't worry**

- Children of different ages may respond for example: they may return to behaviours they have outgrown: toileting accidents, bed-wetting etc.
- You are not expected to get everything right. You have now become a teacher overnight. We have trained for years to do this. (Although, this was never part of our training!)

Please remember to:

- Give yourself praise- you are doing a fantastic job
- Give yourself time off and take 'you time.' You can probably see now why we have such long holidays!

Keep safe and THANK YOU for all that you are doing.

Davina Clacy