Nottingham City Educational Psychology Service

Information for Parents during the Coronavirus outbreak

We know there remains a lot of uncertainty around the COVID-19 outbreak, particularly given that the situation is constantly developing and so much of our normal everyday life has changed.

It is normal to feel worried, stressed and anxious when we are faced with uncertain situations, which mean we have to change what we all do. Taking care of our mental health will help us all be healthier and better equipped to cope with the situation we're having to face. This document provides some information to support you in doing this.

Taking care of your own wellbeing

In order to help your children to feel safe and manage any of their anxieties, the first step is to take care of your own wellbeing. Whether it's ensuring you have some time to relax or asking others for help when you need it, you must take care of yourself. The following organisations offer support:

https://www.family-action.org.uk   —   https://www.mind.org.uk   —   https://www.familylives.org.uk

Taking care of your children's wellbeing

During this difficult time, it is important that we help our children recognise and talk about the anxieties they may be having about the current situation. Sharing their concerns with a calm and supportive adult will help them and hopefully reduce their feelings of anxiety. This can be done by creating a safe space in which our children feel they can talk about any worries and ask questions, supporting communication with family and friends, and setting up positive routines, including time for play and exercise. You can also try doing the daily wellbeing activity (https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/wellbeing-week-daily-resources/?fbclid=IwAR0uVdDVh1zAbMFGh_-B7_OaWEhpq2qL2wEC_TPUCOL8l36I4Y0iY6gVnfs). The links below offer further advice and support.

www.keep-your-head.com   www.kooth.com   www.youngminds.org.uk   https://www.who.int

Talking to children about coronavirus

It's important that we talk to our children about what is happening, answering any questions they may have and addressing any 'untruths' they have heard. When doing this you should try to use language (and, if it would be helpful, pictures) that your children can understand. The links to the right provide some useful tools and tips to support you in talking about the coronavirus with your children.

0-3years: https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/3210-tips-for-families-coronavirus

7-14 years: https://carolgraysocialstories.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Pandemics-and-the-Coronavirus.pdf

All ages: https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/how-talk-your-child-about-coronavirus-covid-19

Setting up positive routines for the day

A positive routine is one that works for you and your family. You know your children best and you should do what you think works for them. Please don't worry if you can't keep the routine up and please don't keep trying to put a routine in place if it's becoming stressful. Also, remember to keep a balance between active (if possible outdoor) activities, nice family activities (e.g. board games), and learning activities.

Some ideas for learning activities:
BBC Learning:
http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/coursesearch/
Learn computer programming skills:
https://blockly.games