



SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD AT HOME

A PACK FOR PARENTS: EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

This document has been created by the East Sussex Educational Psychology Service to provide ideas and printable resources for parents at home.

The package includes ideas and resources on [emotional wellbeing](#)

TOP TIP is HAVE FUN

Don't feel you need to recreate the classroom at home. Take this time to have fun and play with your child – make a den together, get messy with sensory play, make a rocket out of old cereal packets and enjoy!

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Emotional support

Emotional literacy is about being able to **express and regulate emotions** effectively to become emotionally well-balanced. Children who are supported to understand, express and regulate their emotions can better engage with their learning. During these unprecedented times and with the sharp change in routine, it may be that some children (and adults) may feel emotionally dysregulated. **All behaviour is communication**. Take a look at the iceberg; some children may demonstrate behaviours that represent an underlying need.



It's important to look beyond the presenting behaviour and try to unpick what may be the cause. Additionally, it's important to **self-reflect**. How are we feeling today? How might these have an impact on our interactions with our children and what strategies can we use to self-regulate our emotions?

- You may find it useful to explore some of the **digital resources** available to support our wellbeing at <https://czone.eastsussex.gov.uk/media/6151/digital-resources-to-support-mental-health-external.pdf>
- Page 5 is some recommendations by The British Psychology Society, when **talking to your child about coronavirus**.
- **Progressive muscle relaxation** can be used as and when needed or alternatively embedded into your daily schedule. Here's an example of a YouTube video by GoZen <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cDKyRpW-Yuc>
- **Body scans** can also help to alleviate stressful thoughts and stress in the body. Here's an example of a YouTube video by GoZen <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aIC-lo441v4>

- Page 6 offers examples of **activities** that can help with self-regulation of emotions.
- Page 10 and 11 are examples of **feelings scales** that you can use to help your child understand their emotions and develop strategies they can use to support their wellbeing.
- Page 12 is an example of **a resiliency web** that you may use with your child to explore how they are feeling. This could be used to choose a goal for the day and put in place a plan to meet that goal. When setting your goal try to keep these realistic and achievable.
- Page 13 includes a range of **feelings visuals**. You could use these by creating stories and exploring times they may feel the same as the character.
- You can also use approaches that **notice and validate** your child's emotions and support them in being able to identify them for themselves. For example, use approaches such as **emotion coaching** which has the following 5 stages;
 - Become aware of the child's emotion e.g. I notice that they are fidgeting; I wonder if they're feeling worried about going out later?
 - Recognise the emotion as an opportunity for intimacy and teaching, you may wish to wonder aloud with your child such as 'I'm wondering if you're feeling worried because we are going outside later?'
 - Listen empathetically, validating the child's feelings e.g. listen and respond with 'That sounds really tricky.'
 - Help the child find words to label the emotion he/she is having.
 - Set the limits whilst exploring strategies to solve the problem at hand. E.g we can't throw things when we're worried because that might hurt somebody, what else might be helpful? Shall we look at the calming tools together?

Talking about Coronavirus



the british
psychological society
promoting excellence in psychology



ADVICE

Talking to children about Coronavirus

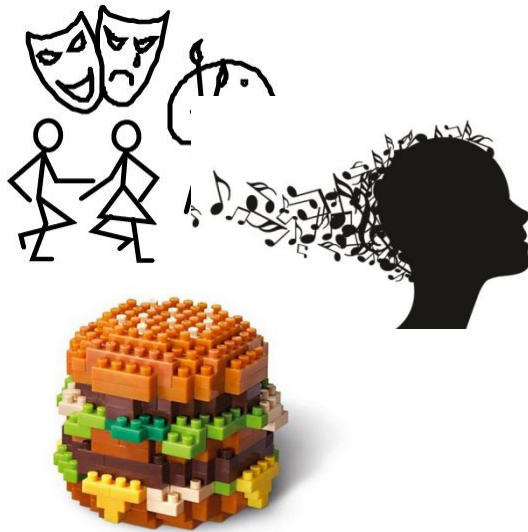
- 1. It is good to talk:** Children will have heard about Coronavirus and likely noticed changes around them (such as people wearing face masks). It is important they feel comfortable talking to you about Coronavirus as you will be the best source of information and reassurance for them. It's also likely they will talk to their friends or other children, which can involve imagination and misinformation. So having the chance to check-in with you is even more helpful.
- 2. Be truthful but remember your child's age:** It is better for children to take an honest and accurate approach – give them factual information, but adjust the amount and detail to fit their age. For example, you might say 'we don't yet have a vaccination for Coronavirus, but doctors are working very hard on it' or 'a lot of people might get sick, but normally it is like a cold or flu and they get better'. Younger children might understand a cartoon or picture better. We also recommend that adults watch news programmes and then filter this information to their child in a developmentally appropriate way.
- 3. Allow children to ask questions:** It is natural that children will have questions, and likely worries, about Coronavirus. Giving them the space to ask these questions and have answers is a good way to alleviate anxiety. Again, try to be honest in your responses – it is ok to say you don't know. At the moment, there are questions we don't have answers to about Coronavirus – you can explain this to your child and add in information about what people are doing to try to answer these questions. Maybe your child has an idea too – let them tell you or draw them.
- 4. Try to manage your own worries:** Uncertainty can make all of us feel anxious or worried. Identify other adults you can talk to about your own worries and questions. What things usually help to make you feel a bit calmer? If you are at home, music, breathing and relaxation techniques, distraction (such as watching something funny), and time with family members or pets can all help. Talk to your children when you feel calm – it will reassure them.
- 5. Give practical guidance:** Remind your child of the most important things they can do to stay healthy – washing their hands and the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' advice for coughs and sneezes. Help your child practise and increase their motivation for keeping going (maybe thinking of a song they want to sing while washing their hands).

Resources

National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) www.nasponline.org

Child Mind Institute Inc. <https://childmind.org>

Calming tools



GET ACTIVE

Doing some physical exercise can help you feel less stressed. Go for a run or walk or play some sports.

BE CREATIVE






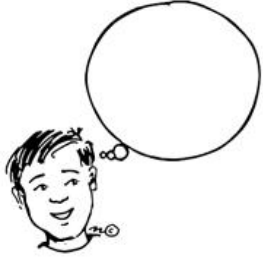






Do an absorbing activity, computer games, reading, listening music, watching some TV, building something or doing some art.

Control your BREATHING

Breathe in for 11 and out for 7 seconds... focus on filling your stomach with air and slowly breathing out. Concentrate on the sensation of breathing and how many breathes you're taking.

Think about a RELAXING PLACE

Think about a relaxing place. Imagine the noises you can hear, the sounds, the smells, what you can feel and taste, who is there and what can you see.

	<p>Hold nice material</p> 	<p>Look at calm videos</p> 
<p>Take some deep breaths</p> 	<p>Count to 10</p> 	<p>Think of something nice</p> 
<p>Talk to an adult</p> 	<p>Talk about your interest, or look at something to do with your interest</p> 	<p>Play with fidget toys</p> 
<p>Listen to some music</p> 	<p>Push your hands together</p> 	<p>Sniff nice smells</p> 

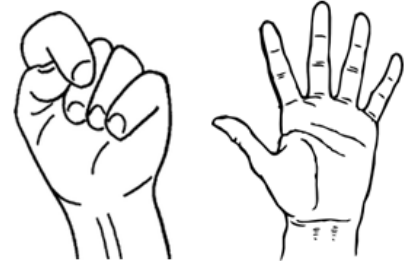
Give yourself a hug



Tuck your legs up and squeeze



Clench hands hard and then relax



Close eyes and remember happy things



Draw



Use your busy book



Wall press ups



Star jumps



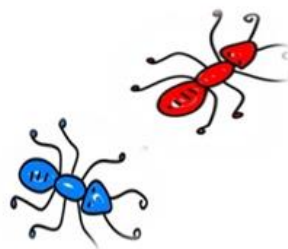
Pull your hands apart



Gently push your head down



Movement break



Run in the playground



Hit a pillow



Use your TIME
OUT card



Run on a spot



Face movements

(open mouth wide, squeeze lips
together)








Do some maths
questions

$$2+6=$$
$$5 \times 2=$$

Chew on your
chewy toy

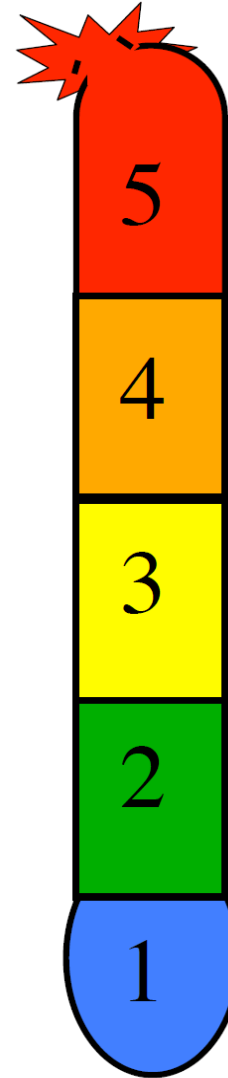
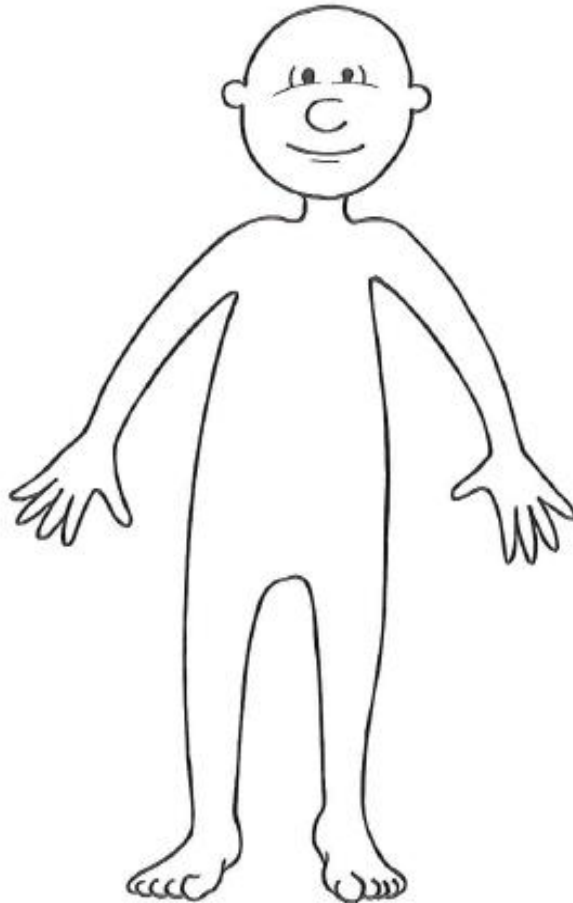


Feelings scales

	How I feel	What I can do
10	 I need some help!	
9		
8	 I'm really upset.	
7		
6	 I've got a problem.	
5		
4	 Things are pretty good.	
3		
2	 Feeling Great!	
1		

Anxiety and My Body

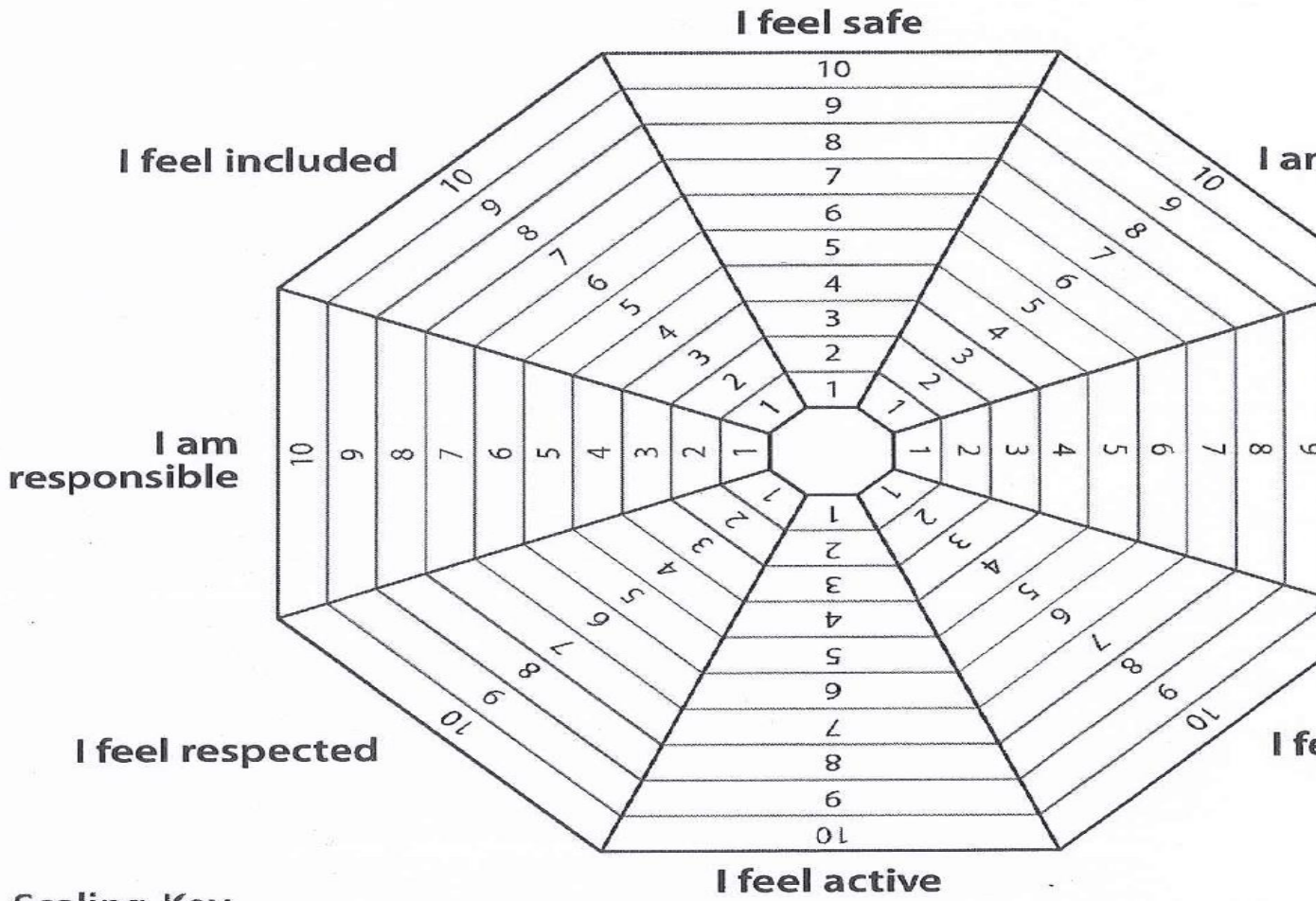
Anxiety causes all sorts of things to happen to our bodies. Using the body picture, draw in all the things that you can think of that happen to your body when you're very worried. Then choose a different color and draw the things that happen to other people when they worry. You may need to ask other people what happens to them to find out.



's Stress Scale

Looks like	Feels Like	"I can"

Resiliency web

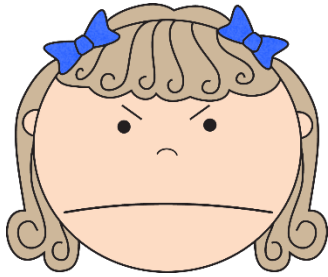


Scaling Key

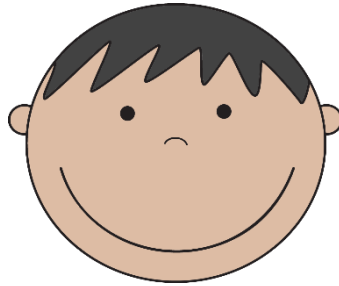
1 = Not at all true of me

10 = Very true of me

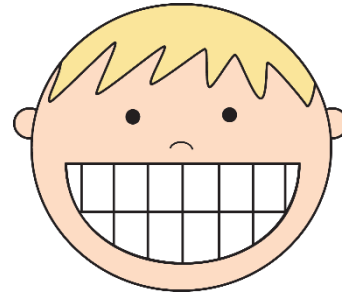
Feelings – visual chart



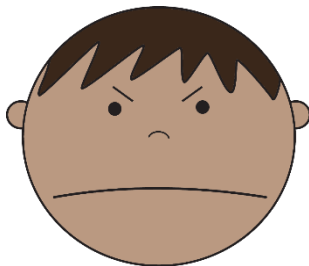
Angry



Happy



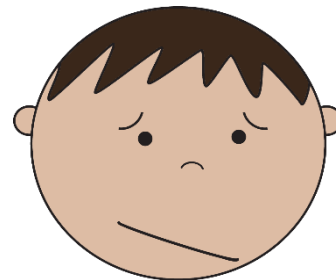
Excited



Frustrated



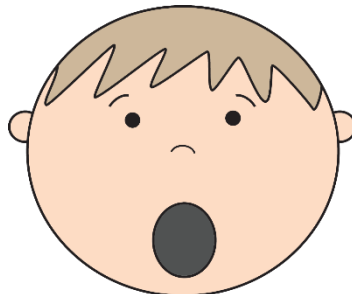
Sad



Disappointed



Nervous



Surprised



Embarrassed

Feedback

We hope this pack has been helpful. We would really value your feedback. Please take a minute to fill in the questions below and send us some feedback so we can continue to support you in ways you feel would be helpful.

Q1. How helpful have you found the parent pack?

Not helpful at all	Not very helpful	A bit helpful	Quite helpful	Very helpful

Q2. What did you find most helpful in the pack?

Q3. Did you feel the resources were accessible and applicable? Y/N

Q4. What do you feel could improve the pack?

Q5. What would you like more of?

Q6. Any other comments?

Q7. What ages are your children? _____

Q8. Do your children have any specific needs? If so, what are they?

Please return the forms via email to EPS@eastsussex.gov.uk or post them to ESCC Educational Psychology Service, Floor 3 St Mark's House, 14 Upperton Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN21 1EP

Thank you and please remember to be kind to yourself

Keep in touch

It's important to keep in touch with friends and family during these challenging times. Many video call platforms have risen to the surface to provide ways in which we can connect with each other.

It's important to **keep in touch with your child's school** to access resources or raise any concerns. Whilst the current circumstances are difficult for schools and parents alike so responses may not be instant, keeping the connection and communication between home and school is pivotal in developing the best support for you and your child.

Here are some helpful organisations:

- **Shout (in partnership with Place2Be)** is free and available 24/7. It is a text crisis service that supports people when they feel they need immediate support. Text CONNECT to 85258, a crisis volunteer will then listen and help you move from crisis to calm. Once you feel calm and safe, and ideally with a plan moving forward, the conversation will end. More information can be found at <https://www.giveusashout.org/about-shout/>
- **The Young Minds Parents Helpline**, which you can call for free on 0808 802 5544 (9.30am-4pm, Monday-Friday, UK). More information can be found at <https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/looking-after-yourself/coronavirus-and-mental-health/>
- **Childline** for children and young people in the UK. This can be accessed by calling 0800 1111, online chat or an email (account set up needed). This service is free and available 24/7. More information can be found at <https://www.childline.org.uk/>.

Please also see the local offer for support and resources available.

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/childrenandfamilies/specialneeds/staying-at-home-tips-and-activities/>

For extra ideas and resources, you may also be interested in

<https://www.autism.org.uk/services/helplines/coronavirus/resources/helpful-resources.aspx>.

Some things work well for one person and not so well for another, therefore it might take some trial and error to find out what works for you and your family.

Remember to be kind to yourself.