

Mental health and wellbeing guidance for parents and children

Here are five things you can do to support your child:

1. Talk to them about what's going on. Find out how they're feeling and what they're thinking about, let them know it's okay to feel scared or unsure, and 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 things through can help them feel calmer. The Mental Health Foundation has some [useful information about talking to children about scary news](#).
2. Help them to reflect on how they're feeling and encourage them to think about the things they can do to make them feel safer and less worried.
3. Reassure them that this will pass, you're there for them, and you will get through this together.
4. Spend time doing a positive activity with your child (such as reading, playing, painting or 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'.
5. Keep as many regular routines as possible, so that your child feels safe and that things are stable.

Other useful websites are:

General health advice for families from Dorset: <https://www.dorsethealthcare.nhs.uk/coronavirus-1/health-advice-families> with further links to local services and excellent resources around parenting and concerns about sleep and behaviour

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/supporting-your-child-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>

<https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/coronavirus-information-and-support>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/coronavirus-advice-support-children-families-parents/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/looking-after-children-and-young-people-during-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/>