

# MANAGING ISOLATION

## KEEPING A ROUTINE FOR CHILDREN

### SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS OF PRIMARY AGED CHILDREN

1

**Uncertainty and illness can be a worrying time for everyone. Try to take it one day at a time!**

- Being honest with your children if they have questions about the virus and current situation can help. There are lots of child-friendly explanations that can help with this (BBC newsround has a good video).
- It might also be helpful to set aside allocated corona 'worry time' every day/ few days for your children; this can be very containing – for all of us!
- Limiting the time they spend reading or watching the news can be helpful to reduce anxiety.
- Breathing , mindfulness or relaxation can help – some good apps to help are: Headspace and Calm.

2

**Most importantly – try and keep a structure for you and the children.**

- Where possible keep your usual limits and boundaries, even though its much harder to implement when you are all together 24/7. Routine is important for children (and adults!) when other things are changing.
- Make sure children are up before school would usually start. It's helpful if everyone gets changes out of their PJ's and doesn't stay in bed. Try to keep bedtimes similar too!
- If you have the space, try and set a side a table/ space for learning or working
- Try and keep to the school timetable as much as possible and draw this out for the children to follow:
  - When are they used to having breakfast? Snack? Lunch? When is playtime/ breaks?
  - Break the day into small chunks much like school does with subjects.
  - If they don't have set learning you can still break the day into chunks (like lessons) but do other tasks, e.g. reading time, dance class online, craft/drawing
  - Make sure that you and child schedule in play time in the new routine
- School might have sent work home remember this doesn't all need to be completed in 1 day. Think about what's realistic and space it out over the coming weeks.

COVID-19 DAILY SCHEDULE

Before 9:00am	Wake up
9:00-10:00	Morning walk
10:00-11:00	Academic time
11:00-12:00	Creative time
12:00	Lunch
12:30PM	Chore time
1:00-2:00	Quiet time
2:30-4:00	Academic time
4:00-5:00	Afternoon fresh air
5:00-6:00	Dinner
6:00-8:00	Free TV time
9:00	Bedtime

3

**Encourage your children to take breaks from screens and have movement breaks**

- If you can (and the government advice allows it) try to take them outside for a walk or run around
- Fresh air and exercise is important to keep everyone's mood lifted.
- There are lots of apps to help indoor exercise for kids (and adults!) some of these are 10 minute shake up games ([www.nhs.uk/10-minute-shake-up/shake-ups](http://www.nhs.uk/10-minute-shake-up/shake-ups)); Super stretch kids; GoNoodle; 7 minute workouts for kids.

4

**The whole family will benefit from staying connected to others**

- Social isolation means no play dates or days out. That means we all need to think creatively about how to keep younger children connected with their friends and family.
- Maybe schedule in video calls with their friends or other family members.
- However, it may also be useful (if you have the space) to allow some quiet/ alone time for kids and parents!

5

**Children like to have purpose and feel like they are helping others**

- If they are old enough think about ways your children could 'help out' while they are off school.
- Could they help with shopping if they are old enough (and government advice permits it), help out with some basic chores, write letters to their grandparents or other people that may be isolated.

BUT... if this doesn't happen, that's ok too. Just do what you can to manage as a family at this difficult time, and look after yourselves too!