



Managing Educating at Home in Lockdown

Information for Parents and Carers

INTRODUCTION

These are absolutely unprecedented times. No-one knows what the 'right' way to act, or be, or cope is. As long as you are trying your best, that is all that can be asked of you.

We understand that working, and parenting during this pandemic, and particularly during this lockdown will be causing challenges in your family home, and especially in relation to educating children in the home. We understand that there may be anxieties and worries, or tempers being shown. We understand that you are being asked to wear many hats and hold many roles, but there is support available if you need it.

This booklet will help to support you with some common issues parents in Salford have told us they are facing, and some strategies and suggestions of ways to work through them. This includes looking after your own wellbeing and supporting children's emotions and wellbeing; practical ways to support children with their school work; links to other agencies and websites that may be of use to you; and if it all feels completely impossible, there is also guidance about applying for furlough, or flexible furlough, for childcare reasons.

HOW CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT AGES MAY REACT

All children and young people are different, but there are some common ways in which different age groups may react to a situation like the COVID-19 pandemic. The common reactions to distress will fade over time for most children and young people, though could return if they see or hear reminders of what happened. Understanding these may help you to support your family.

For infants to 2-year-olds

Infants may become more easily distressed. They may cry more than usual or want to be held and cuddled more.

For 3- to 6-year-olds

Preschool and nursery children may return to behaviours they have outgrown, such as toileting accidents, bed-wetting, or being frightened about being separated from their parents or carers. They may also have tantrums or difficulty sleeping.

For 7- to 10-year-olds

Older children may feel sad, angry, or afraid. Peers may share false information but parents or carers can correct the misinformation. Older children may focus on details of the situation and want to talk about it all the time, or not want to talk about it at all. They may have trouble concentrating.

For preteens and teenagers

Some preteens and teenagers respond to worrying situations by acting out. Others may become afraid to leave the home and may cut back on how much time they connect with their friends. They can feel overwhelmed by their intense emotions and feel unable to talk about them. Their emotions may lead to increased arguing and even fighting with siblings, parents, carers or other adults. They may have concerns about how the school closures and exam cancellations will affect them.

PRACTICAL IDEAS TO SUPPORT YOURS AND YOUR CHILD'S WELLBEING

**Be
Realistic**

**Recognise
what's
on your
mind**

**Be curious
and
listen**

**Create
some
ground
rules**

**Be kind
to yourself**

**Contact Other
Parents and
Help Each Other**

**Establish
some
routines**

**Be honest
and
say sorry**

**Find key
points of
connection
in the day**

PRACTICAL IDEAS TO SUPPORT YOURS AND YOUR CHILD'S WELLBEING

Be realistic and kind to yourself—Things won't always go to plan. Some days will run like clockwork while others will end with you feeling like you have completed a marathon and you still have endless washing up, tidying and homework to help with etc etc ... Be kind to yourself and don't give yourself a hard time. You will have ups and downs but if you've done the best you can that's the best you can do for your family.

Recognise what's on your mind—Take some time during the day to do a 'mind check'. Recognise in yourself how you are feeling and ask the same of others. Accept the feeling, be kind to yourself and don't blame others for it. Try to be aware that children will sense a change in your mood. For very young children re-assure them through your actions and the affection you show towards them. For older children talking to your child and explaining that we all have ups and downs in our emotions and this is normal, will also help them regulate and normalise their own emotions.

Be curious and listen—Take some time to listen to each others concerns. Children may feel anxious and overwhelmed by the complex and ongoing situation that is affecting their home, family, school and social life. Pay close attention to their individual worries and don't trivialise them. Younger children who can't articulate their feelings into words often display their thoughts/emotions through role-play or painting/drawing pictures. Allow them to do this and be curious and interested. Sometimes children find it easier to talk whilst doing a shared activity e.g. baking a cake, gardening, going for a walk...

Be honest and say sorry—We aren't always going to get things right. Family life includes misunderstandings and disagreements. If possible work through these together and try to sort things out as soon as possible so tension doesn't mount and fester. As parents, if misunderstandings are of our own cause be open and honest and say sorry. This in turn promotes your own and your children's well being and models that we can all make mistakes.

Create some Rules and Establish some Routine—Try creating achievable timetables with manageable goals as often our wellbeing is supported by a daily routine and structure being present.

All families have their own rules, but developing these as a family, specific to being in lockdown, will help reinforce boundaries and give your children clarity on expectations. Working them out together and including all your children in this, will make the rules feel owned by them and therefore fairer.

Key points of connection, throughout the day—It can be challenging to find a routine that works for everyone, especially if you are working from home and taking care of children with different needs. Try to establish key points throughout the day. **Breakfast**—talk through the day ahead, what are the lessons? What books do they need to have ready? Is any equipment needed? Are there any lessons that they are worried about/ need help with? **Lunchtime**—eat properly, quick chat about the lessons your child has had, share good news, are there any problems/ questions they need support with from you or a teacher? **After school**—quick chat about the afternoons lessons, is there any work to be carried over? This is sometimes inevitable, if the lessons run over or your child hasn't had chance to finish the work before the next lesson, remember this is nobody's fault. **Evening**—allow your child time to relax, play games, watch a film/TV, speak to a friend etc. If possible, have a quick look at the next days lessons together. Children like to see a now and next, trying these small things helps to form a routine and will make the day look predictable, easing anxiety. For very young children try using pictures to help them visualise their day. This structure can help children build up a picture of their week, look forward to the day and differentiate between weekdays and weekends.

Contact other parents and help each other—We are all finding a way of living through a Pandemic and it is hard. Reach out to friends, family or professionals and work through your struggles together. You are certainly not alone. Children are missing their family, friends and classmates. Let them express their emotions, look to arrange regular phone calls/video calls to friends and family and allow them the down-time they need after a busy day/ week of schooling. There are lots of resources/online groups that are really supportive and have some great ideas for new activities.

OTHER AGENCIES WHO CAN HELP

Locally Spirit of Salford

Spirit of Salford Helpline has been set up for you to get help, support and advice on lots of different issues that you might be facing at the moment.

Tel: **0800 952 1000** www.salford.gov.uk/spiritofsalford

EWS Service

Salford City Council, Educational Welfare Service
2nd Floor Unity House, Chorley Road, Swinton, M27 5AW
EWS@salford.gov.uk www.salford.gov.uk/education-welfare

SIASS

SIASS offer information, advice and support to children, young people and parents about special educational needs and disability.

Tel: **0161 778 0343/0349**

siass@salford.gov.uk www.salford.gov.uk/special-educational-needs

Salford Family Partnership (Early Help)

Salford Family Partnership is a universal and targeted early help offer for children, young people and families in Salford.

See website for contact detail relevant to your area

<https://www.salford.gov.uk/council-buildings-and-venues/childrens-centres/>

42nd Street

Supporting young people with their emotional wellbeing and mental health.

If you're aged 12 to 25 and you're struggling, they can help.

<https://www.42ndstreet.org.uk/>

Wuu2

A website for young people in Salford aged 11-19 with activities, events, news and videos

<https://www.wuu2.info/>

OTHER WEBSITES FOR SUPPORT

GOV UK Website

Central resource for Supporting your children's remote education during coronavirus (COVID-19) including families of children and young people with SEND.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/supporting-your-childrens-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

Education Endowment Fund

Support and advice for parents and teachers around helping learning of children

[educationendowmentfoundation.org](https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org)

Parent Club

Variety of Coronavirus support sections including learning at home, family and FAQs etc (General advice is universal, but Coronavirus legislation/guidance is specific to Scotland)

www.parentclub.scot/topics/coronavirus

Mind Charity (Mental Health)

Phone **0300 123 3393** www.mind.org.uk

Childline

Childline comforts, advises and protects children 24 hours a day and offers free confidential counselling.

Phone **0800 1111** (24 hours) www.childline.org

YoungMinds

YoungMinds is the UK's leading charity championing the wellbeing and mental health of young people www.youngminds.org.uk

The Mix

The Mix provides information, support and listening for people under 25.

Phone **0808 808 4994** (24 hours) www.themix.org.uk

Barnardo's

Support around how to respond to what you see and hear in your children at home during the pandemic

www.barnardos.org

Child Bereavement UK

Support for children and young people (up to age 25), parents, and families, to rebuild their lives when a child grieves or when a child dies.

www.childbereavementuk.org

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

REQUESTING FURLOUGH FOR CHILDCARE REASONS



You can be **furloughed** for childcare reasons and the guidance states that this can be done to deal with school closures. It is not a legal right and it is at your employer's discretion.

If you can share childcare and home-schooling with another parent, then you can request to be **furloughed flexibly**. The minimum claim period is seven days, so it's also possible in two-parent families for you to alternate your furlough (one week on, one week off).

WORKING FAMILIES is the UK's work-life balance charity. Their mission is to remove the barriers that people with caring responsibilities face in the workplace.

Here is their page about furlough for childcare reasons.

It includes useful information and guidance, and template letters for you to use:

<https://workingfamilies.org.uk/articles/coronavirus-furlough/>