



Safeguarding Newsletter:

Home Schooling & Mental Health

UNDERSTANDING THE CURRENT SITUATION:

COVID-19 has changed our homes and the way we work and live. While most children have now been able to return to their schools, there are some incidents of schools having to close to contain the spread of the virus. More may have to do so in the future.

Along with the general stresses of working differently, managing to keep your children healthy, entertained and up-to-date with schoolwork while they are at home can be a lot of added pressure.

<https://www.mentalhealthatwork.org.uk/resource/balancing-home-schooling-and-working>

What you need to know

What is outlined here is the ideal. Whilst there are some great suggestions and ideas here, real life will inevitably get in the way and life is not an ideal, picture perfect thing. Be forgiving of yourself and of your children. You are all coping in unusual times.

You do NOT have to do everything. You are essentially taking on another full-time role, one for which you have not studied, prepared or expected.

Talk to your line manager to ensure they are aware that you have school aged children.

Be gentle; with yourself as well as your child(ren). You are all new to this. It is a strange time, and you will both have concerns and worries; good days and bad.

Own your emotions – it's okay to tell your children that you are upset, angry, confused or finding it tricky. It may help them to be able to talk about what their emotions are too.

Create structure... – Both you and your children will benefit from some sort of timetable to your day, and it will be helpful to you all to share that.

...But, be flexible – you don't have to create a full, inspirational and learning focussed 9-3pm day.

Take breaks – Your children would have breaks at school, let them have them now.

Expect the unexpected – things are not going to go to plan. You (all) will have good days and bad days. Roll with them. File them under 'done' and move on tomorrow.

Productivity – your productivity will not be the same as it may usually be. Remember that this is not normal 'working from home'. Even those of us who are well practiced at working from home will struggle to maintain focus and productivity.

To read the full guidance published by the NHS please follow this link: <https://people.nhs.uk/guides/resources-for-balancing-home-schooling-and-working/>

BBC News Online

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-55707322>

Parents' stress and depression 'rise during lockdowns'

Levels of stress, depression and anxiety among parents and carers have increased with the pressures of the lockdowns, suggests research from the University of Oxford.

Issues include difficulty relaxing, feeling hopeless and being irritable.

Many parents, especially those of secondary-age pupils, say they are worried about their children's futures.

The government has said it is aware how challenging it is for parents to support children with home learning.

The research, based on responses from 6,246 parents and carers between mid-March and the end of December 2020, found problems including:

- difficulty relaxing
- being easily upset or agitated
- feeling hopeless
- lacking interest and pleasure
- feeling fearful and worried
- being more irritable, over-reactive and impatient





Safer Internet Day 2021 Top Tips for Parents and Carers

During the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, people are relying even more on online technology.

Due to lockdowns and high-level restrictions, children are spending more time at home and may not be able to see friends and family in person. This makes keeping in touch online extra important.

Many children are spending more time online – and expanding the ways they use the internet. They may join online communities or start using new video-calling platforms.

Children who receive support from services may go online to contact social workers, counsellors and others in their support network.

While all this can bring benefits to children's mental health and wellbeing, children can be exposed to risk online.

Safer Internet Day 2021 is being celebrated around the world on Tuesday 9th February 2021.

The global theme is 'together for a better internet' and this year in the UK we are putting the focus on how young people can tell fact from fiction, and work together to create an internet we trust.

Everyone has their part to play in making the internet a better place, including you!

- * **Talk together** - *Communication is the key to identifying online misinformation....*
- * **Set an example** - *Show your child how you question and evaluate online content....*
- * **Think before you share** - *Fact-check and reflect before sharing content, posts or pictures....*
- * **Check in with your child** - *How does misleading information they see online make them feel?*
- * **Seek help and support** - *Ask other parents how they address misleading online content....*

To read the full article please go to: www.saferinternet.org.uk



Help and Advice

kooth

Kooth is a free online service offering emotional and mental health support for children and young people

www.kooth.com

1 in 5 children and young people suffer from mental health illness in any given year. At Kooth, we believe every young person has the right to thrive and to access high quality mental health care.

Kooth.com is commissioned by the NHS, Local Authorities, charities and businesses to provide anonymous and personalised mental health support for Children and Young People. With over 4000 logins per day, we provide end to end support whatever the need.



Young people told us what they wanted to see the Government think about to help people stay well through lockdown.

Here's what one young person said.

"I think lots of people are going to struggle after lockdown and aren't going to be able to access the help they need. Most people aren't under the care of a welfare service and won't be able to access support because of that. The government could release self-help to do with talking about lockdown and how it was for you. Actually most people don't necessarily want therapy, they want activities, positive things they can do and enjoy."

Please contact Alison Hill, District Safeguarding Officer for more help and guidance by calling 07483 362 735 or via email at safeguarding@sheffieldmethodist.org