

Supporting your child's wellbeing

Dear Parents' and Carers',

As we face the impact of COVID on adults and young people I wanted to reach out to let you know that there are many things you can do to support your child and your family.

You may have started to notice signs of increasing anxiety in your child as These might include:

Children aged 3–6 years:

- Regressing to behaviour they've outgrown, such as thumb-sucking or bed-wetting
- Showing greater fear at being separated from you
- Tantrums
- Trouble sleeping

Children aged 7–10 years:

- Expressing sadness, anger or fear
- Sharing false information that they're hearing from their peers or seeing online
- Wanting to talk about coronavirus all the time
- Not wanting to talk about the current situation at all
- Having trouble concentrating

Children aged 11–16:

- Acting out – this might include things like picking fights with you or with siblings or abusing alcohol or drugs
- Becoming afraid to leave the house
- Distancing themselves from their friends and family
- Exhibiting intense emotions but being unable to talk about what they're feeling

We've put together some resources to help you support your child. We hope you find this information helpful.

If you have any concerns about how your child is coping or you need any other support from the school, please let us know by emailing your child's tutor or Head of House or one of our safeguarding officers on jodie.attreed@heartlands.haringey.sch.uk. You can also request help from our Family community liaison worker by completing this [short form](#).

Kind regards,
Heartlands High School





Take care of yourself

It's really important right now to take care of your own physical and mental health. Children are very perceptive, and they react to what they sense from the adults around them.

Here are some things you can do to help keep yourself healthy:

- Connect with others – maintain relationships with people you care about through phone and video calls
- Exercise – take some time every day to move. You could go for a walk or run. You'll also find lots of fitness videos online for everything from yoga to dance. Find something you enjoy and that makes you feel good
- Eat healthy meals – try to keep a well-balanced diet and drink enough water
- Get some sleep – being anxious or worried can have a big impact on your sleep. If you're struggling to get a good night's sleep, try to develop a calming bedtime routine – for example, do 10 minutes of yoga or listen to calming music. There are also apps you can download that provide guided meditation to help you get to sleep more quickly
- Do things you enjoy – now that we're all spending more time at home, we can finally take up that hobby we've always meant to learn. Try baking or gardening or learning to knit. These are also great activities we can share with our children
- Set goals – it's easy to lose track of the days in our current situation, so it can be helpful to set daily and weekly goals to give us a sense of control and purpose. Examples might be setting a goal of walking for half an hour at least 3 times this week or reading a new book
- Connect with the outdoors – depending on where you live, it may not be possible to spend time outside. If you don't have a garden or terrace, you can still open a window to let some fresh air and sunlight in. Put a comfortable chair by the window so you can look outside and get some air as you read a book
- Talk to someone – during this difficult time, sharing with family and friends how you're feeling and what you're doing to cope can be helpful for both you and them. There are also helplines you can call for support – we've included a list at the end of this pack

If your child struggles with higher levels of anxiety

Some children are naturally more anxious, such as those with existing phobias or obsessive-compulsive disorders. The current situation can make those anxieties worse.

- Get them to do activities such as counting, ordering and sorting tasks which can help them calm down
- Encourage them to use relaxation techniques such as controlled breathing
- Look out for obsessive or compulsive behaviours and try to get ahead of them early by challenging unhelpful thoughts and assumptions
- If you're worried about your child's anxiety, **YoungMinds** is a charity dedicated to children's mental health. They've opened a parents'

helpline for confidential, expert advice. You can reach them at **0808 802 5544**

- All students also have 24-hour access to Kooth, an online counselling service which can support them.

Helplines and websites for children and young people

If your child would like to speak with someone confidentially, there are helplines and websites specifically for them.

Organisation	Contact information
<p>Shout Free, confidential support via text, available 24/7</p>	<p>Text SHOUT to 85258 in the UK to text with a trained crisis volunteer who'll provide active listening and collaborative problem-solving</p>
<p>The Mix Free confidential telephone helpline and online service that aims to find young people the best help, whatever the problem</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call 0808 808 4994 for free (11am to 11pm daily) • Access the online community • Email The Mix
<p>ChildLine Confidential telephone counselling service for any child with a problem</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call 0800 1111 any time for free • Have an online chat with a counsellor (9am to midnight daily) • Check out the message boards

Where to turn to for help

It's okay to not be okay. We all need someone to talk to sometimes. If you feel overwhelmed, at risk of abuse or experiencing financial need, there are people you can call on for support:

Mental health

Organisation	Contact information
Mental Health Foundation	<i>Provides information and support for anyone with mental health problems or learning disabilities</i> Website: www.mentalhealth.org.uk
Mind	<i>A mental health charity</i> Phone: 0300 123 3393 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm) Website: www.mind.org.uk
PAPYRUS	<i>Youth suicide prevention society</i> Phone: 0800 068 4141 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 10pm, and 2pm to 10pm on weekends and bank holidays) Website: www.papyrus-uk.org
Samaritans	<i>Confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair</i> Phone: 116 123 (free 24-hour helpline) Website: www.samaritans.org.uk
SANE	<i>Emotional support, information and guidance for people affected by mental illness, their families and carers</i> Website: www.sane.org.uk/support
YoungMinds	<i>A charity dedicated to children's mental health</i> Tel: Parents' helpline 0808 802 5544 (Mon– Fri, 9.30am to 4pm) www.youngminds.org.uk
Cruse Bereavement Care	<i>Support for grief and bereavement</i> Tel: 0808 808 1677 (Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 5pm) www.cruse.org.uk
Mental Health Google Classroom	For all students in all years. Will offer advice and strategies to look after your mental health

Domestic Violence

Organisation	Contact information
NSPCC	<p>Child protection charity T: 0808 800 5000 for adults concerned about a child (24-hour helpline) T: 0800 1111 for children (ChildLine's 24-hour helpline) www.nspcc.org.uk</p>
Refuge	<p>Advice on dealing with domestic violence T: 0808 2000 247 (24-hour helpline) www.refuge.org.uk</p>

Community Support

Organisation	Contact information
<p>Urban youth flex Bruce Grove/ Northumberland Park area</p>	<p>Nigel T: 078521 89357 07914 664189 urbanyouthflex@gmail.com</p>
Felix Project	<p>T: 020 3034 4350 thefelixproject.org/contact-us-coronavirus</p>
Connected Communities	<p>T: 020 8489 4431 (8:30am-6:30pm) E: connectedcommunities@haringey.gov.uk www.haringey.gov.uk/community/connected-communities</p>
Tottenham Food Bank	<p>T: 020 8493 0050 E: info@tottenham.foodbank.org.uk tottenham.foodbank.org.uk</p>