

Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing

During the lockdown we know that children may be struggling with not seeing their friends and not having their normal routine. Here is a little guide with tips and points for you to consider when addressing children's worries.



Actions for February

Firstly, here is a challenge a day for you to complete. The idea behind this calendar is it is full of actions that promote happiness. As a family, see how many you can complete.

ACTION CALENDAR: FRIENDLY FEBRUARY 2021

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
1 Send someone a message to say how much they mean to you	2 Ask a friend how they have been feeling recently	3 Do an act of kindness to make life easier for someone else	4 Organise a virtual 'tea break' with colleagues or friends	5 Show an active interest by asking questions when talking to others	6 Get back in touch with an old friend you've not seen for a while	7 Make an effort to have a friendly chat with a neighbour
8 Share what you're feeling with someone you really trust	9 Thank someone and tell them how they made a difference for you	10 Look for the good in people, even when they frustrate you	11 Send an encouraging note to someone who needs a boost	12 Focus on being kind rather than being right	13 Send a friendly message of support to a local business	14 Tell your loved ones why they are special to you
15 Smile at the people you see and brighten their day	16 Check in on someone who may be struggling and offer to help	17 Respond kindly to everyone you talk to today, including yourself	18 Appreciate the good qualities of someone in your life	19 Share a video or message you find inspiring or helpful	20 Make a plan to connect with others and do something fun	21 Actively listen to what people say, without judging them
22 Give sincere compliments to people you talk to today	23 Be gentle with someone who you feel inclined to criticise	24 Tell a loved one about their strengths that you value most	25 Thank three people you feel grateful to and tell them why	26 Give positive comments to as many people as possible today	27 Call a friend to catch up and really listen to them	28 Make uninterrupted time for your loved ones

"The best way to cheer yourself up is to cheer somebody else up" - Mark Twain

"The only way to have a friend is to be one" - Ralph Waldo Emerson

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

www.actionforhappiness.org

Happier · Kinder · Together

Learn more about this month's theme at www.actionforhappiness.org/friendly-february

Support and Ideas

Self-Care & Mental Health

for Kids

Share your own feelings to encourage self-awareness.

Find social groups that help them feel like they belong.

Set aside time for low-stress or solo activities.

Practice self-care for yourself to set the standard.

Focus on articulating feelings. "I am angry." "I am sad."

Encourage journaling and diaries.

Encourage your child to focus on the moment.

Establish a self-care routine.

Recognize toxic stress events.

Cultivate interests and hobbies.

Blessing Manifesting



Anxiety during Lockdown

8 WAYS A CHILD'S ANXIETY SHOWS UP AS SOMETHING ELSE

1. Anger

The perception of danger, stress or opposition is enough to trigger the fight or flight response leaving your child angry and without a way to communicate why.



4. Chandeliering

Chandeliering is when a seemingly calm person suddenly flies off the handle for no reason. They have pushed hurt and anxiety so deep for so long that a seemingly innocent comment or event suddenly sends them straight through the chandelier.



2. Difficulty Sleeping

In children, having difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep is one of the hallmark characteristics of anxiety.



5. Lack of Focus

Children with anxiety are often so caught up in their own thoughts that they do not pay attention to what is going on around them.

FOCUS

6. Avoidance

Children who are trying to avoid a particular person, place or task often end up experiencing more of whatever it is they are avoiding.



7. Negativity

People with anxiety tend to experience negative thoughts at a much greater intensity than positive ones.

3. Defiance

Unable to communicate what is really going on, it is easy to interpret the child's defiance as a lack of discipline instead of an attempt to control a situation where they feel anxious and helpless.



8. Overplanning

Overplanning and defiance go hand in hand in their root cause. Where anxiety can cause some children to try to take back control through defiant behavior, it can cause others to overplan for situations where planning is minimal or unnecessary.



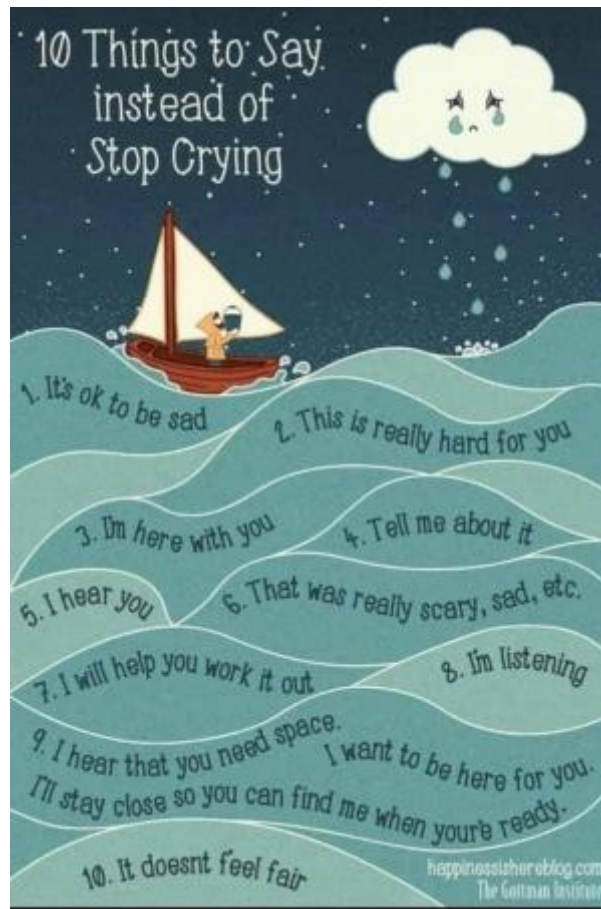
What we can do?

[Depression, anxiety and mental health | NSPCC](#)

[Helping Your Child With Anxiety \(youngminds.org.uk\)](#)

[Anxiety in children - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

Crying is a normal reaction



The Emotional Cup

We all have within our brains the capacity to absorb 'positive' and 'negative' emotions. When our emotional capacity is full of 'negative' emotions further "negative" emotions result in an overflow which is seen in the form of different behaviour. We all need to focus on dealing with the causes which will stop the cup overflowing.

THE EMOTIONAL CUP

Some ways that children deal with having an empty cup:

- Steal from other people's cups
- Misbehave to get your attention and show that they need a refill
- Seem to have bottomless cups, or need constant 'topping off'
- Can't sit still for refills or actively refuse them
- Bounce off the walls when they approach 'empty'
- Think they have to fight or compete for every refill

What fills a child's cup:

- Play
- Friendship
- One-on-one time
- Love and affection
- Connection
- Succeeding
- Doing what they love



What empties a child's cup:

- Stress and strain
- Rejection by peers
- Loneliness and isolation
- Yelling and punishment
- Failing
- Fatigue
- Doing what they hate



My Emotional Cup

How I deal with having an empty cup:

-
-
-



What fills my cup:

-
-
-
-
-
-

What empties my cup:

-
-
-
-
-
-

Eight ways to help children during lockdown

8 WAYS TO HELP CHILDREN STRUGGLING DURING LOCKDOWN

- 1 Know how to spot the signs**
If you notice your child is becoming withdrawn, that there's been a change in sleeping or eating habits, if they seem to lack confidence or get upset, it might be a sign they're struggling.

- 2 Talk to your child**
If you spot signs your child might be struggling, it's important to talk to them. Keep talking and trying to communicate in any way you can - hugging, listening to them, texting them.

- 3 Create structure and routine**
Try introducing a rota or loose timetable that includes fun things you're doing during the week. This can help to create a feeling of stability, which can alleviate anxiety.

- 4 Give children a sense of control through information**
Look online with your children to find useful information and resources that help children feel they have control.


8 WAYS TO HELP CHILDREN STRUGGLING DURING LOCKDOWN

- 5 Keep children learning**
Using fun and creative ways at home to learn alongside continued access to educational opportunities will support your children's development.

- 6 Limit screen time and mix up activities**
As most socialising moves online, it's important to have conversations on how an increase in screen time can have an impact on everyone's mental health and self-esteem.

- 7 Help your child manage stress**
If you spot signs your child might be struggling, it's important to talk to them. Keep talking and trying to communicate in any way you can - hugging, listening to them, texting them, etc.

- 8 Expressing feelings doesn't have to be face-to-face**
Children might find it easier writing their thoughts down, so the whole family could do this and put them in a 'Feelings box' and then talk about their good, sad or difficult feelings at the end of the day.


Let's get active



Children's Mental Health Week

5 Outdoor Activities

Monday



Go outside and close your eyes.
What can you hear?

Tuesday



Stand in an outdoor space.
What is the weather doing?
What does it feel like?
How does it make you feel?

Wednesday



Can you spot any signs of spring?
How many can you find?

Thursday



Watch the clouds.
Look up at the sky in the morning, afternoon and early evening. How has it changed?

Friday



Have fun!
Go for a walk, play a game, run, jump, skip or hop.