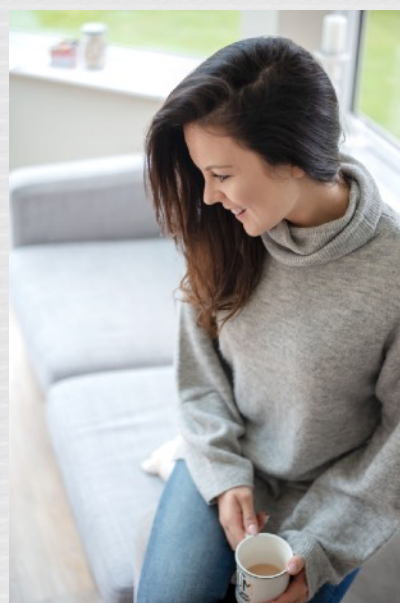
The background is a solid teal color with several decorative swirls made of small white dots. These swirls are located in the top-left, top-center, bottom-left, and bottom-right corners of the page.

# *Supporting your child's wellbeing during lockdown*

*A short guide for parents with quick and easy  
activities*





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### The Time We Spring Cleaned the World

The world it got so busy,  
There were people all around.  
They left their germs behind them;  
In the air and on the ground.

These germs grew bigger and stronger.  
They wanted to come and stay.  
They didn't want to hurt anyone -  
They just really wanted to play.

Sometimes they tried to hold your hand,  
Or tickled your throat or your nose.  
They could make you cough and sneeze  
And make your face as red as a rose.

And so these germs took over.  
They started to make people ill,  
And with every cough we coughed  
More and more germs would spill.

All the queens and kings had a meeting.  
"It's time to clean the world up!" they said.  
And so they had to close lots of fun stuff,  
Just so these germs couldn't spread.

We couldn't go to cinemas  
Or restaurants for our tea.  
There was no football or parties,  
The world got as quiet as can be.





The kids stopped going to school,  
The mums and dads went to work less.  
Then a great, big, giant scrubbing brush  
Cleaned the sky and the sea and the mess!

Dads started teaching the sums,  
Big brothers played with us more,  
Mums were in charge of homework  
And we read and played jigsaws galore!

The whole world was washing their hands  
And building super toilet roll forts!  
Outside was quiet and peaceful,  
Now home was the place for all sports.

So we played in the world that was home  
And our days filled up with fun and love,  
And the germs they grew smaller and smaller  
And the sun watched from up above.

Then one morning the sun woke up early,  
She smiled and stretched her beams wide.  
The world had been fully spring cleaned,  
It was time to go back outside!

We opened our doors oh so slowly  
And breathed in the clean and fresh air.  
We promised that forever and always  
Of this beautiful world we'd take care!

- Author Unknown





# Supporting your child's wellbeing during lockdown

Having two young children of my own I understand the struggles many families are currently facing.

Protecting the mental health of all the family is more important than ever. But how can we best support our children? These little beings have had their worlds turned upside down - no school routine, perhaps over hearing talk of viruses and death, not able to visit family, friends or even the park. They may even be picking up on the stress and anxiety of the adults they live with.

It is difficult for even us adults to get our heads around these uncertain times, so trying to process this as a child may result in sleepless nights, bad dreams, outbursts, irritable behaviour, tears and more.

My hope is that you will find some of these tried and tested tips for wellbeing easy to implement in your daily routines to help build resilience and all round happiness in your household. You never know, some of them may stick with you for many years to come!



*“You can steer yourself any direction you choose.”*

–Dr Seuss



# Supporting your child's wellbeing during lockdown

The following activities can be used across different ages, feel free to pick and choose which ones your child will engage with and most of all, have fun!

- ▶ **It's good to talk** - Think of those coffee dates with your friends, the feeling of therapy and release as you all talk about your current life struggles as well as laughing together. Having plenty of time and space for your children to approach you to talk through their feelings will not only help them get their feelings off their chest but will deepen the bond between you. The key here is not seeming 'too busy' to be approached and allowing lots of casual downtime together without pressure to be or do anything in particular. A problem shared is a problem halved.
- ▶ **Daily Gratitude** - Each morning start the day by thinking of 3 things you are grateful for and give thanks. You can do this as a family activity around the breakfast table or even ask your child to record their 3 things in a gratitude journal. Regular gratitude practise is an effective way of retraining your brain, the more you focus on the good, the more you will see in any situation. It also increases resilience, empathy, compassion and social connection as well as lessening anxiety and depression.
- ▶ **How do you feel today?** - Many primary schools use this before registration at the start of the day to encourage pupils to connect to and open up about their feelings. Create a mood board with a selection of different faces and expressions to represent different feelings: happy, sad, sick, angry. Consider using different colours for the different moods and getting the kids involved in its creation too. It can be used as a more visual aid at any time of the day by simply asking your child which one they are feeling right now.
- ▶ **Pay It Forward**- The saying goes 'you get fuller by feeding others'. What can you do from afar to bring a smile to someone's face? Brainstorm together a list of daily kindness spreading activities to encourage compassion and feelings of accomplishment, contribution and connection. All of this boosts mental health and overall happiness. It could be anything from painting and posting a picture for a friend to walking the neighbour's dog.



# Supporting your child's wellbeing during lockdown

- ▶ **Positive Pants** - A simple yet fun activity. How many positive little drawings and notes (you could use Post-its) can you place around the house as colourful and uplifting little pick me ups? These can be little sayings or doodles to lift your spirits wherever you are. Kids will have great fun creating these and sticking them around the house!
- ▶ **Express yourself** - What creative outlet does your child enjoy? Or if they don't know yet maybe you can try some out together. Creative forms such as dance, art, colouring, model making, lego building, writing, performing arts, making music give a wonderful endorphin release (that feel good hormone) and not to mention a sense of achievement. Help your child find what lights them up and do more of that.
- ▶ **Breathing Blowers** - For this you will need a few craft items, it can be the toilet roll and crepe paper, or straws and ribbons. Here is a YouTube tutorial for you to follow <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o66EMPlmWml> Breathing techniques can really help children become calm again if anxiety is building, they are upset, angry or frustrated. More breathing exercises for children can be found on the Coping Skills for Kids website as well as the very useful breathing shape templates which can aid more visual children when it comes to teaching them breathing techniques <https://copingskillsforkids.com/deep-breathing-exercises-for-kids>
- ▶ **Worry Box** - A recognised cognitive behavioural therapy technique, Worry Boxes/Jars contain worries for the child. The container keeps the worries, so the child can let them go. Like journaling, which is an effective therapy technique, writing or drawing the worry gets it out of the child's mind and into a "vessel" where it is contained. The ability for a child to identify the source of anxiety, detach from it and develop a mental or physical representation to assist them in containing it can be amazingly powerful. It is taking up another space which is no longer within them. You can use an empty shoe box for your child to colour and decorate however they choose and keep this somewhere safe to contain and release their worries.



# Supporting your child's wellbeing during lockdown

- ▶ **Count your Blessings** - Similar to daily gratitude practise this can be used as a game for the whole family. Sitting in a circle take it in turns to count a blessing. How many can you reach? Who can count the most? A simple yet fun way to bring the family together with smiles all round.
- ▶ **Universe in a bottle** - There are so many ways of making this from glow in the dark to anti-gravity galaxies in a jar, there are plenty of tutorials on YouTube and Pinterest. But for a simple one all you need is an empty glass bottle and some glitter! Fill the bottle with water, add your favourite colour glitter and make sure the lid is on tightly. Kids will love shaking their mini universes and watching the glitter swirling around. You can talk to them about how busy and crazy life can be but things will always eventually settle and become clear again. This is a peaceful activity for all ages.
- ▶ **Scrunch up your stress** - Write it down and throw it away. It's as simple as that! Prepare a few little pieces of paper for your child to write a worry down on, scrunch it up and throw it in the bin!
- ▶ **ReFrame Game** - When your child comes to you with a worry or shares their fears with you, at first we must acknowledge and validate these with soothing and reassuring words and love. A next step to this can be playing the reframe game. What's good about this situation? What are all the positives that can come from this? When we retrain our brain to focus on the positives we start to seek it out in any situation thus becoming more resilient as we go through life.
- ▶ **Stick with It** - It can be hard for young children especially to think that this lockdown is forever. To help them understand that there is an end in sight, that our plans are just on hold and not cancelled forever - create a board to post all of the things you want to do as a family for when this is over. If you have magazines or travel brochures you can cut out some pictures or even add photos of people you want to see and spend time with.



# Supporting your child's wellbeing during lockdown

It goes without saying that anything we can do as parents to support and help prevent our child's anxiety at this time is more of a focus now than ever. A good check list for getting some of the proven basics into your daily routine:

- Regular exercise
- Time spent in nature
- Good quality sleep
- Balanced diet
- Limited screen time

And don't forget, you can't pour from an empty cup!

What are you doing to protect your own mental health during this time? Keeping a routine, keeping connected with friends and family virtually, regular exercise and making time for essential self care are just some of the ways you can support yourself.



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- **Visualisation** - This is a powerful technique known the world over for helping with relaxation and wellbeing. Here are two scripts for children of different ages for you to guide them yourself <https://www.themindfulword.org/2012/guided-imagery-scripts-children-anxiety-stress> Alternatively you can find many guided visualisations for children on. You Tube. New Horizon have many meditations and sleep stories on their channel such as this beautiful 'Friendly Whale guided relaxation' [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L\\_-V2mnl6dM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L_-V2mnl6dM)





# Supporting your child's wellbeing during lockdown

Other resources for you:

- ▶ The Headspace app has specialist meditations for children to enjoy.
- ▶ The 'Unworry Book' by Usborne Books is a full interactive toolkit for children in workbook style to get their worries out and feel more relaxed.
- ▶ The '3 Minute Gratitude Journal for kids' can be purchased on Amazon as a fun way for children to record the things they are grateful for.





# Suggested Donation

This e-book is a free resource for all during these unprecedented times. We have however linked with The Movement Centre in Shropshire to support them in their fundraising efforts during the COVID-19 outbreak, if you would like to help us with this worthy cause you can do so below.

The Movement Centre is a UK charity supporting children with movement disabilities to reach their full potential. The charity provides a specialist therapy called Targeted Training that helps children gain increased independence, which can transform their lives. Based in Shropshire, The Movement Centre supports families from across the UK.

The current COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on the charity's ability to raise vital funds, with events and activities cancelled. As a small charity The Movement Centre relies on the kind support of generous donors and fundraisers to enable them to continue to deliver their services. As the only provider of Targeted Training it is essential that the charity continues to receive support at this challenging time. If you would like to make a donation, please click [here](#). Every donation will make a huge difference.

Thank you.

