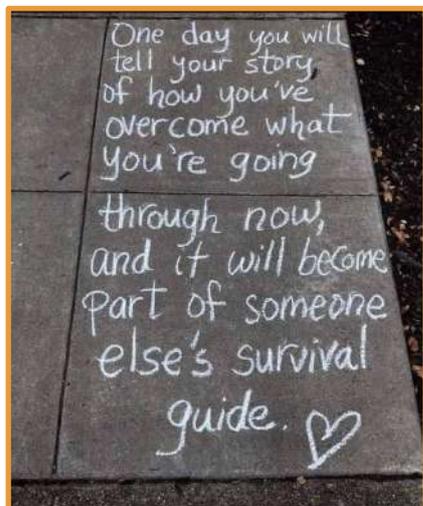


NEWSLetter



This is our 7th and final **NEWSLetter** before the end of term.

We would like to thank each and every one of you who have read our **NEWSLetter**, and special thanks to those who have contributed stories and pictures and to those who have provided us with valuable feedback for moving forward from here. We feel you have all given so much to us and we thank you for being alongside us during this very uncertain time in our lives.

When we think back to three months ago and the announcement that schools were closing and we were going into lockdown, many of us may have wondered how we would cope. We have all been on a journey together but how we have experienced this will be very individual to each of us and our families. We hope that over the last three months, you have found some of the content of our **NEWSLetters** and links to other sources of support through our website and social media helpful.

We are still in a period of great uncertainty but with the recent announcement yesterday (23.06.20) by John Swinney, Education Minister, the current plans are that schools will return full time in August (subject to continued progress in the fight against COVID-19). This **NEWSLetter** has articles that may be helpful through this further period of uncertainty and change.

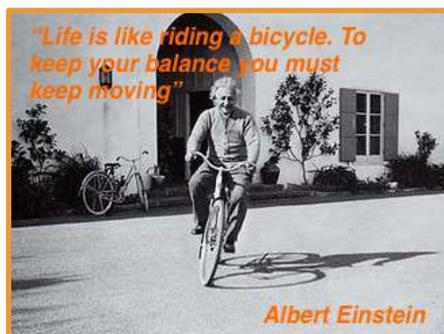
NEWSolutions will be continuing to work in partnership with some schools in Angus. We are available through our partner schools to offer support to pupils, parents and staff. If you feel that you or your child would benefit from support then please speak with your Head Teacher in Primary School or your child's Pupil Care & Support (PCS) Teacher at Secondary in the first instance. If we do not work within the school your child attends but you would like some general advice or to be signposted to support, then you can contact us at: <https://www.new-solutions.co.uk/contact-us/>

We wish all our readers and their families a safe and healthy holiday period. We hope that you can enjoy the added benefits of connecting more with loved ones and nature as lockdown is gradually eased.

And for anyone who may be feeling worried or anxious about the continued change and uncertainty, remember it is okay to feel like this. Reach out, connect with others and seek support if you need it. There is a lovely quote by Brené Brown –

"We don't have to do it all alone. We were never meant to"

Thank you again, from all at **NEWSolutions**



If you have any ideas for future **NEWSLetters** or if you have any comments or feedback, please email Pauline at pauline@new-solutions.co.uk

This is our final **NEWSLetter** this term. Each issue we have been absolutely delighted to share the stories, experiences and photos from our young readers of their time during lockdown. This week we are sharing some brilliant activity ideas from **Evie, Archie, Max and Thea** from **Rosemount Primary School**. Thank you so much for sharing your activities; we have included some instructions for any readers who might want to give them a try. I know that when some of the **NEWSolutions** team are at the beach or near a river over the holidays, they will be keeping an eye out for sea glass to do some pictures at home. Thank you for sparking our creativity.

Sea Glass Finding & Art



L. – Searching at the beach for some sea glass.

R. – This is some of the sea glass we found.



Some pictures of our sea glass art.



If you visit the beach over the holidays, keep an eye out for sea glass and some little twigs. You can turn these treasured into some really cool sea glass art like Evie, Archie, Max and Thea have.

To find out more about sea glass, go to this blog – ‘How to make sea glass art in 5 easy steps:

<https://www.heatherfegan.ca/blog/how-to-make-sea-glass-art>

Salt Dough Ornaments



Here we are making our salt dough ornaments. You can also use any leaves you might have collected to make leaf imprints.

Making salt dough is a great activity for the kids that only involves a few ingredients; you may already have these in the house.

What you need:

- Plain flour
- Table salt
- Water

The internet is full of instructions and ideas for salt dough. You can follow this recipe to make your salt dough:

<http://fourcheekymonkeys.com/play-love-learn/salt-dough-sculptures/>

You can get as creative as you like and mould your own shapes or use cutters before baking them in the oven.

Once cool, the creations can be painted. Acrylic paints work well.



Leaf Rubbing



Leaf rubbing is a great activity that brings nature home. Collect leaves when out walking, in the garden or at the park.

What you need:

- Paper (thin works best),
- crayons or oil pastels,
- leaves (different shapes and sizes)

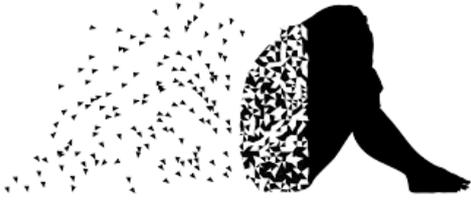
Lay a leaf on a flat surface, with its bottom side facing up.

Place a sheet of paper over the top.

Gently rub the side of a crayon or oil pastel over the whole of the leaf area. You should now have a crayon or oil pastel leaf.

Add as many leaves to your picture as you'd like; overlap them or use different shaped leaves.

You can also use the leaves in the salt dough activity too.



'Be Mindful of how Children are Coping'

In an article in the Press & Journal on Saturday 20th June, Lisa Salmon speaks to experts about signs that children's mental health may be suffering during lockdown, and what steps parents can take to help them back onto an even keel.

It makes the poignant point, that many parents will be worried about their child's risk of catching coronavirus, but experts have warned that they need to have their children's mental health post lockdown on their mind too.

It makes the point, as we start to emerge from the pandemic, some children and young people may find it hard to adjust after being in isolation or coming to terms with a lot more uncertainty about the future.

It is not just experts worried about the impact of the pandemic on children's mental health – a study of parents and carers by YoungMinds found that 67% were concerned about the long-term impact of coronavirus on their children's mental health.

Tom Madders, YoungMinds Director of Campaigns speaks of the difficulties young people have had adjusting to the changes. Reasons cited includes missing friends, difficulty adapting to lack of school structure and loss of coping strategies and sources of support. With schools closed and GP surgeries harder to access, fewer young people are being referred for mental health support. With further change and uncertainty post-lockdown, the article highlights the difficulties young people may have re-adjusting.

According to YoungMinds there are ten signs we may observe in a child or young person that may indicate their mental health has been affected by the pandemic.

Persistent changes in mood or behaviour

Keep an eye out for your child persistently exhibiting different moods or behaviours. Try keeping your family routine as consistent as possible, children really benefit from stability of routine when they are struggling with their feelings or emotions.

Withdrawal

Children struggling with their mental health may find it difficult to communicate. Try to open conversations about what they are involved in and what interests them.

Joylessness

Young people may find no joy or contentment in things they usually enjoy.

Poor Sleep

There may be changes in your children's sleeping and eating habits

Lack of focus

Children and young people may be finding it hard to concentrate

Lack of interest

They may have no interest in schoolwork or play, or spending time with other people.

Boredom

They may complain of feeling bored or lonely, even when they have friends. Try to talk to your child and dedicate some quality time that you can spend together and do something they enjoy. This is a great way to help your child open up for you to reassure them that you are always there.

Irritability

They may be more irritable and moody than normal.

Sadness

Children may be tearful, or simply look sad or withdrawn.

Lack of confidence

They may have less self-belief than normal.

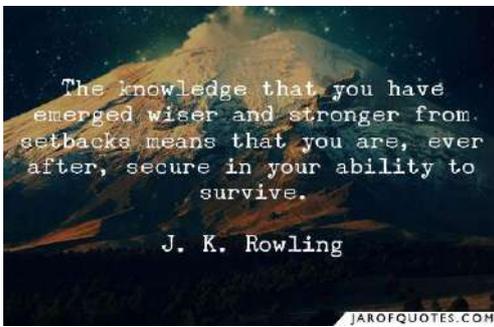
It is recommended for parents 'to be part of the solution'. Young Minds puts forward that there are many things you can do to support your child, like helping them plan, problem solve or develop hope for the future.

To find out more go to YoungMinds at <https://youngminds.org.uk>. They also have a Parents Helpline: 0808 802 5544

We have more links to helpful advice, information and apps for parents, young people and children on our website:

<https://www.new-solutions.co.uk/training-support/helpful-information/>

Adapting to Another 'New Normal' Post-Lockdown



If we rewind three months, many of us felt anxious about how we would manage and adjust to the 'new normal' to keep ourselves, our family and others safe. For most of us, it was inconceivable that our lives could change so dramatically and the different demands and stresses of lockdown may have felt overwhelming, and at times impossible.

Although we must not underestimate the additional difficulties that some have experienced and the impact this has had, many of us may have adapted to the 'new normal'. Although many of us may have initially felt overwhelmed or paralysed by the fear and uncertainty of COVID-19, we may now be in a position where we have adjusted, adapted and feel even comfortable with our 'new normal'.

However, with the slow easing of lockdown measures, change is happening again. For some of us, this may feel like a time to celebrate; we might be looking forward to taking the first steps back to a sense of post-lockdown normality. Conversely, some of us may be feeling worried, stressed or anxious about what life will be like and whether we will be able to readjust to another 'new' way of life.

After spending the last three months being told to limit our time outdoors and physically distance from loved ones, we have been asked to consider a future where we will return to work and our children to school. It's okay and a normal response to be feeling anxious or apprehensive; it is going to take time to get used to these changes. On this page, we have some tips and strategies you might find helpful during this time.

And remember, just like when lockdown was declared, we adapted and adjusted. We will again; it is human nature.

Think about the things you can control

Lockdown measures has limited our choices in life but there are things we can control. It might help to list the things you can control and those factors that are out with your control; this can give a real sense of perspective.



Find your calm

If you are noticing feelings of anxiety, remember this is normal in times of uncertainty and change. This is an extra-ordinary time in our lives and it is important we continue to look after our bodies and our mind. Try activities and strategies that can help you feel calm and reduce your anxiety.

Take time to reflect on the positive changes in your life

With any change, this can be a time of opportunity and gain. Take some time to reflect on the opportunities, personal gains and the experiences in lockdown that you have enjoyed and would like to keep. Make a plan for how to integrate them into your life post-lockdown. For example, if you have benefitted from having more family time, make a plan to ensure this is prioritised. If you need to, schedule this into your week.

Establish being outside as part of your routine

If you haven't been out and about much, get into a routine of leaving the house, even if for just a short time. Start getting used to the sensations of being outside again. Your body and mind will thank you for it. Start small and build up your time in ways that are manageable to you.

Give yourself time

For many of us, our pace of life may have slowed down during lockdown. Take time to adjust to the current changes that are happening and resist the urge to rush back to the faster pace of life and routines you had before. If you are feeling anxious about returning to work when it reopens, speak to your manager about how you are feeling and together come up with a plan that will support you.

Deal with each worry separately

Having lots of different worries can feel overwhelming. Write a list of the different worries you might have and make a plan for managing each one separately. For instance you might have worries about work, children returning to school and going out shopping. Planning how to deal with each of these worries might give you more sense of control, feel more manageable and reduce how overwhelming this might feel.



Tomato Plant Journey

Back in the 4th edition we shared our partnership with Forfar Open Garden and we shared pictures of some of our tomato plants as they started their journey to new homes.

Gail, one of our colleagues has been growing a few of the tomato plants and they seem to be benefitting from the recent weather.



At start of their journey, in Forfar

Arriving at Gails



Look how they've grown!



Hopefully not long now until tomatoes are ready.

Some Helpful Resources

Autism Little Learners has some fantastic social stories for children related to COVID-19. This includes a social story about wearing masks, getting a haircut and coronavirus testing. Go to:

<https://www.autismlittlelearners.com/search/label/COVID-19>



WWF and the **Mental Health Foundation** have come together to produce **Thriving with Nature**. They want you to thrive and for nature to thrive around you and believe the two are mutually supportive.

From forests and rivers, to parks and gardens, to window boxes or even house plants, we can find nature wherever we are. Interacting with nature can be not just enjoyable, but also beneficial to our mental health and wellbeing. **62%** of adults feeling stressed due to COVID-19 reported going for a walk helped them. **47%** of adults also reported being able to visit green spaces helped them cope.

To access the **Thriving with Nature** guidebook and lots of nature based activities to boost your mental health and wellbeing, go to:

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/campaigns/thriving-with-nature/guide>



Preparing Your Child for Life Post-Lockdown ⁶



For the last three months, the majority of children will have spent every waking moment at home, with their families. Now with lockdown slowly easing, we are beginning to look to next term and our children being back in school. Although we aren't sure exactly what this will look like, life and school for our children will be considerably different post-lockdown.

Many children will adapt again to the changes that easing of lockdown will bring. However, for some, there will be worries and anxieties about the changes and being away from their families.

We have put together some tips and ideas of how to support your child through this time.

Calm Breathing

Teach your child breathing techniques to help calm anxieties they may have. If a child can learn to use calm breathing when anxious, they learn they have the inner resources to manage their own anxieties and take back control. We had an article in our second NEWSLetter that may be useful 'Helping Children Manage Big Feelings'. Go to the NEWSLetter section at:

<https://www.new-solutions.co.uk/training-support/helpful-information/>

Also check out deep breathing exercises by Coping Skills for Kids, at:

<https://copingskillsforkids.com/deep-breathing-exercises-for-kids>



Hug Button



A fantastic idea for children who may feel anxious about being away from parents/ loved ones. Draw a heart on you and your child's palm and charge it up before a separation by holding hands. If you or your child feels sad through the day, press the heart to receive a virtual hug. (With all the handwashing, you might also need one on another area like an arm in case it washes off).

Original idea by Louise Mallett @ <https://the-motherload.co.uk/the-hug-button/>

Explain the changes but emphasise the things that will be familiar

Have an open discussion with your child. Explain to them that there will be changes and as much as you can, let them know what these will be. Reassure your child that there are some things that will still be the same; like the food at lunchtime, travel to school and familiar adults around school. This will help your child know what to expect and offer reassurance and a sense of security.

Re-Establish Routine

Children thrive on routine and in such uncertain times, routine can convey a sense of safety and security to children. If routines have drifted, gradually re-establish routine back into family life. Keep any new routines consistent as this helps children to readjust. If sleep and bedtimes are difficult, see our article in NEWSLetter 6 on sleep. Go to:

<https://www.new-solutions.co.uk/training-support/helpful-information/>

Communicate Calm

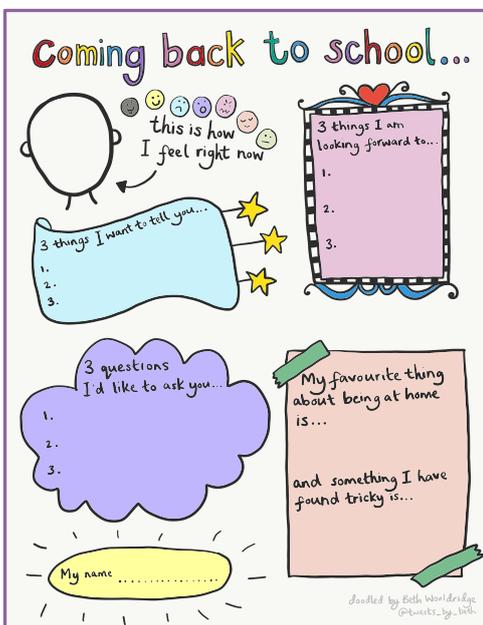
Although you may have your worries and anxieties about school returning, try to communicate calm to your child. If your child thinks you are anxious, they might worry too. Be mindful of the things you say and what your child might overhear, the tone of your voice and your body language.

Imagery

Empower your child with knowledge of the potential power of imagery to survive and thrive in stressful times.



Go to page 7 to learn more.



This visual by Beth Wooldridge @tweets_by_beth would be a great activity to do with your child/ren to get an understanding of how they are feeling about going back to school. It might help your child to communicate if they have any worries or concerns. If you would like a PDF version of this to print, please email me at pauline@new-solutions.co.uk and we'll get it sent to you.

Using Imagery to Help Bring Some Balance Into Our Lives



If you would like to read more about the calming power of imagery for adults and children, then these two websites would be worth checking out –

Compassionate Mind Foundation:
<https://www.compassionatemind.co.uk>

Dr Reznick's Imagery for Kids:
<https://www.imageryforkids.com>

You may also find the following Apps useful;

- Breathe2Relax
- Calm
- Headspace
- Breathe
- iBreathe

Life just now can be very uncertain and stressful. Both adults and children are facing many threats and unknowns which can result in stress responses in our bodies; this can be a typical reaction in difficult times. To help ourselves, it can be beneficial to find ways to slow down, feel soothed and restful so that we can bring some balance into our lives as best as we can.

The use of calming place imagery can be a straightforward (but not always easy) way to stimulate parts of our brain which help us feel soothed. It can be helpful for children and adults alike, but it can take some practice and gradual build-up (a bit like physical exercise). A calming/special place is very individual and can provide a private sanctuary where a person feels safe, unjudged, loved, accepted, and appreciated. These are places in our inner worlds where we can feel relaxed which can help us work out problems and take a break from the stresses in our lives. As we get older, the busy-ness of life sometimes gets in the way of us being in the moment; this is something that children do all the time in their make-believe play, imaginations, and daydreaming. Some people's special calming place will be a real location they have been to or seen in pictures, but for others it will be an imaginary place.

Many authors suggest beginning by finding a comfortable posture, with a wee smile on your face and then establishing soothing rhythm breathing; these are deep belly breaths (sometimes called balloon breaths, or smelling a flower/blowing out a candle breathing) where you slowly and steadily breathe in through your nose for a few seconds and then slowly release the breath through your mouth. The idea is to slow the breathing down to really expand and fill the lungs before releasing the breath (some people start with breathing in for 4 or 5 seconds and then releasing for the same time – you will find a ratio that feels comfortable for you). There are apps for smartphones and tablets which can help you to practise this breathing (we have listed some). It is often a good idea for adults to feel comfortable with this type of breathing before introducing it to a child.

The next step is to help a child find a place that is special and calming for them. It is important not to talk about your own special place at first to allow the child to find their own unique place (they might copy your suggestions if you talk about your own). Instead, you can guide them to use all their senses to find their own place by asking what they notice – are they in an indoor or outdoor space? If they are happy to share, try to let one answer guide your next question: what can they see, what do they hear, and what they can touch, taste and smell? As this is practised, you might find a child will require less prompting and coaching and will be able to respond to a lead-in phrase like: 'Take some time to go to your special place'.

Once a child has found their own special place and feels comfortable to share these, you can share your special place too.... it's lovely to see where our imaginations can take us. Sometimes children will enjoy making a picture to show their special place or they might like to write about it.

This is a useful tool to help a child remember what it feels like to be calm; once they have found that inner calm, they are more likely to feel it on the outside and be more ready to deal with challenges and changes.

Some Great Visuals

AMY SALTZMAN'S
MINDFULNESS FOR KIDS
www.stillquietplace.com

MINDFULNESS IS PAGING ATTENTION HERE AND NOW, WITH KINDNESS AND CURIOSITY, AND THEN CHOOSING YOUR BEHAVIOR. AMY SALTZMAN

S IS FOR STOP... WHEN YOU ARE FACED WITH A DIFFICULTY, STOP

T IS FOR TAKE A BREATH... USUALLY TAKING A FEW SLOW DEEP BREATHS RELAXES THE MIND.

A IS FOR ACCEPT... ACCEPT THAT YOU'RE HAVING DIFFICULTY

R IS FOR RESTAINT... WHEN YOU ARE READY YOU CAN TAKE ACTION OR MOVE ON TO SOMETHING ELSE

AGES 8-11

A IS FOR ATTENTION... SOMETIMES IT HELPS TO STOP AND PAY ATTENTION TO OUR BREATH

B IS FOR BREATHE... USUALLY WHEN WE PAY ATTENTION TO ONE SENSE IT IS EASIER TO FEEL CALM

C IS FOR CHOOSE... WE CAN MAKE A CHOICE THAT IS KIND FOR US AND KIND TO OTHERS

AGES 5-7

P IS FOR PAUSE... PAUSE WHEN YOU REALIZE THAT THINGS ARE DIFFICULT

E IS FOR EXHALE... KEEP BREATHING SLOW, DEEP BREATHS

A IS FOR ACCEPT... ACCEPT THAT THE SITUATION IS WHAT IT IS

C IS FOR CHOOSE... MAKE A CHOICE THAT IS KIND TO YOURSELF AND KIND TO OTHERS

E IS FOR EMPATHY... WHEN YOU ARE READY EMPATHY WITH THE SITUATION & PEOPLE INVOLVED

AGES 12-18

A visual by Amy Saltzman from www.stillquietplace.com with some mindfulness techniques for kids across the age ranges. This might be helpful to some children in finding calm and helping them to find ways to manage strong feelings.

GET YOUR DAILY D.O.S.E. OF HAPPINESS

How to get your daily DOSE of happiness chemicals

1 What are the Happiness Chemicals?

- DOPAMINE**
 - Enables motivation, learning and pleasure
 - Gives you determination to accomplish goals, desires and needs
- OXYTOCIN**
 - Gives feeling of trust, motivates you to build and sustain relationships
 - Known as "Cuddle or Love Hormone", plays a role in bonding
- SEROTONIN**
 - Feeling significant or important among peers
 - Calm form of accepting yourself with the people around you
- ENDORPHIN**
 - Releases a brief euphoria to mask physical pain
 - Response to pain and stress to alleviate anxiety and depression

2 How Deficiency Affects You

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> procrastination low self-esteem lack of motivation low energy or fatigue inability to focus feeling anxious feeling hopeless mood swings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> feeling lonely stressed lack of motivation low energy or fatigue disconnect of relationships feeling anxious feeling nervous obsession/compulsion insomnia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> low self-esteem overly sensitive anxiety/panic attacks mood swings feeling hopeless social phobia obsession/compulsion insomnia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> anxiety depression mood swings aches and pains insomnia impulsive behaviour
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3 How to Increase Happiness Levels

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> meditate daily to-do list long term goals food rich in L-Tyrosine exercise regularly create something writing, music or art 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> physical touch socializing massage acupuncture listening to music exercise cold shower meditate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> exercise cold showers sunlight massage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> laughter/crying creating music/art eat dark chocolate eat spicy foods exercise/stretching massage meditate
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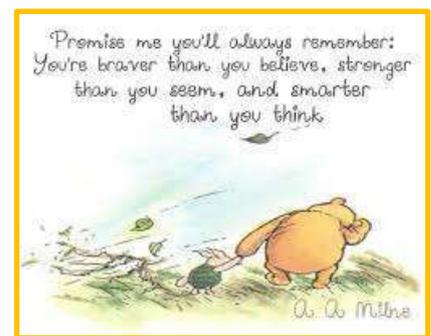
20 THINGS YOU CAN DO AND SAY TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD'S MENTAL HEALTH

@BELIEVEPHQ

There are many things we can do to support our child or young person's mental health. This visual from Believe Perform has some great examples of the things we can do and say.

Find out how to get your daily dose of the happiness chemicals. Learn how Dopamine, Oxytocin, Serotonin and Endorphin can affect your body and how you can naturally increase levels to improve your over mental health.

To read more about how to improve your happiness chemicals go to: <https://www.bananatreeog.com>



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