Mental health and wellbeing support available for children and young people in England

Children and young people may be experiencing a variety of feelings in response to the COVID-19 outbreak such as anxiety, stress or low mood. It is important to understand that these are normal responses to an abnormal situation. This document provides detailed information for schools to share with their staff, parents and carers and children and young people themselves.

Useful resources for school staff:

- The Government's **guidance** for schools and colleges on keeping children and young people safe during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.
- **MindEd** - a free educational resource from Health Education England on children and young people's mental health. Now includes a **Coronavirus Staff Resilience Hub** with materials on peer support, stress, fear and trauma and bereavement. Pre-existing, bitesize content includes **death and loss** (for parents and carers), **loss and grief** (for professionals including teachers) and **trauma and coping** (for parents and carers).
- **Good Thinking** digital mental wellbeing resource for London, which breaks down advice for children and young people by specific groups.
- **Rise Above for Schools** - a free website for teachers which hosts a range of mental health lesson plans suitable for Year 6, KS3 & KS4. Content is written by teachers and is accredited by the PSHE Association.
- **Anna Freud Centre** particularly their **Mentally Healthy Schools** resources and their **Schools in Mind** network on supporting young people's mental health during periods of disruption. The Anna Freud Centre also offer Mental Health Awareness Training for school staff.
- **Place 2 Be** on improving children's mental health.
- **The Childhood Bereavement Network** includes **content** specific to COVID-19. The organisation also has a **hub for professionals** supporting bereaved children, with membership currently free until September.
- PHE has an **e-learning module** for Psychological First Aid during emergencies. This is not specific to children and young people, but school staff may still find the core principles of social and emotional wellbeing useful.
- **PHE guidance** on a whole school and college approach to promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.
- If staff are unsure when it is appropriate to refer to a local NHS service, they can view their **local NHS CYMHS website** which will have more information about access and referrals, including phone numbers so you can get in touch directly for detailed advice.

Further resources to signpost to parents and carers:

- **PHE's guidance** on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing
- **Every Mind Matters** includes an online tool and email journey which aims to support everyone to feel more confident in taking action to look after their mental health and

wellbeing. It also includes a section for parents and carers on looking after children and young people during the outbreak.

- NHS England has published **advice** for children and young people who may be feeling overwhelmed, and **advice for parents, guardians and carers** on how to help and support a child or young person with mental ill health.
- The **British Psychological Society's advice** for parents and carers on dealing with school closures and talking to children about COVID-19.
- The Government's **online educational resources** for home education with a section on mental wellbeing.
- Virtual **Oak National Academy** for reception – Year 10 pupils, which offers daily online lessons, a weekly assembly with a pastoral focus and extra-curricular activities to help families maintain a routine at home (intended to complement, not replace, existing schools' online learning offers)**.**
- BBC Education **online learning content**, for reception to Year 10 pupils, to support home learning, with weekly wellbeing tips provided via their social media pages.
- The **Starline** parent helpline for home learning.

Local support offers for schools:

- Most **council websites** have great information about COVID-19 mental wellbeing support, including community and neighbourhood support. This includes more information about children and young people's mental health **local transformation plans** and local **health and wellbeing partnerships**.
- Local **Directors of Public Health** and their teams will be useful points of contact for helping schools to understand and access the range of local sources of support available to help promote and protect the mental health and wellbeing of the school-age population
- Schools should also be aware of their local voluntary and community sector services. For example, the Government-backed **Place 2 Be** programme offers one to one and group counselling with children and young people as well as training to school staff to develop mentally healthy schools.

Support for children and young people:

- There is a large amount of mental health support available for children and young people, detailed in the table below. This ranges from low level emotional support to support for those in crisis.
- Schools are reminded that **NHS children and young people's mental health services (CYPMHS) remain open throughout the COVID-19 outbreak** and they are encouraged to continue referring to their local CYPMHS.

Provider	Support available
Children's Commissioner	A **downloadable guide** for children and young people about the coronavirus, including proactive advice to support mental wellbeing.

PHE	**Rise Above** is a website co-created and produced by young people. It aims to build resilience and support good mental health in young people aged 10 to 16. The content has been adapted to COVID-19 and includes new mental health content based on insights from young people remote schooling.
NHS	**NHS website** NHS.UK mental health information section signposting to Every Mind Matters and a range of helplines hosted by voluntary community organisations.
NHS	**NHS Apps library** helps people find apps and online tools to help manage their health and wellbeing. We are working closely with NHSX to rapidly review apps for children and young people's mental health and make them available via this apps library. For example, **Think Ninja** is an app specifically designed to educate 10-18 year olds about mental health, emotional wellbeing and to provide skills young people can use to build resilience and stay well. It has been adapted to COVID-19 to bring self-help knowledge and skills to children and young people (10-18 years old) who may be experiencing increased anxiety and stress during the crisis.
NHS	**NHS mental health providers,** including children and young people's mental health services (CYPMHS), are **continuing to operate** and many have already transitioned to delivering elements of care digitally to help maintain continuity of care and make best use of resources. For NHS mental health support, children and young people or their parents or carers can contact their GP or refer to NHS 111 online. Local CYPMH services will also have information on access on their websites. Self-referral options are commonly available and many services offer single points of access. This means there is a single set of contact information through which all queries and referrals are channelled through. Find out more about children and young people's mental health services **here.**
NHS	For those in **mental health crisis**, most parts of England have a helpline to access support. You can find out the number to ring for your local area at nhs.uk.
NHS	Children and young people who are caring for someone with a mental illness can self-refer to the **NHS Volunteer Responders** programme using this **link** if they are having issues shopping for food or picking up prescriptions.
Voluntary and Community Sector	Children and young people can access **free confidential support** anytime from **Government-backed voluntary and community sector organisations** by texting **SHOUT to 85258**, calling **Childline on 0800 1111** or **the Mix on 0808 808 4994**. For support with an eating disorder, children and young people can ring **Beat's Youthline on 08088010711**. Children and young people can also find online information on COVID-19 and mental health on the **Young Minds website**.
Schools	**School nurses** continue to have and maintain contact with children and young people, focussing on key public health issues such as mental health and supporting vulnerable groups including young carers. Mental health and wellbeing is also a core part of the new **RSHE curriculum**. Some schools will offer additional support from counsellors, an NHS Mental Health Support Team or a voluntary and community sector organisation such as Place 2 Be.

Local support	Most **council websites** have great information about COVID-19 mental wellbeing support, including community and neighbourhood support.