Parent / Carer

Covid19 Advice sheet

During these strange times, taking care of your mind as well as your body has never been so is important while staying at home because of coronavirus (COVID-19).

You may feel bored, frustrated or lonely. You may also be low, worried or anxious, or concerned about your finances, your health or those close to you.

It's important to remember that it is OK to feel this way and that everyone reacts differently. Remember, this situation is temporary and, for most of us, these feelings will pass. Staying at home may be difficult, but you are helping to protect yourself and others by doing it.

Finding ways to be productive can be difficult when you are feeling "fed up" but being pro-active can really boost your mood. So during this time make sure you try to………

- **Give yourself a goal** each day (mow the lawn, read a book, bake, clear out drawers etc)

- **Stay connected to others** - Maintaining healthy relationships with people you trust is important for your mental wellbeing. Think about how you can stay in touch with friends and family while you are all staying at home – by phone, messaging, video calls or social media – whether it's people you usually see often, or connecting with old friends. Lots of people are finding the current situation difficult, so staying in touch could help them too.

- **Talk about your worries** - It's normal to feel a bit worried, scared or helpless about the current situation. Remember: it is OK to share your concerns with others you trust – and doing so may help them too. If you cannot speak to someone you know or if doing so has not helped, there are plenty of helplines you can try instead

- **Look after your body** - Our physical health has a big impact on how we feel. At times like these, it can be easy to fall into unhealthy patterns of behaviour that end up making you feel worse. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, drink enough water and exercise regularly. Avoid smoking or drugs, and try not to drink too much alcohol. You can leave your house, alone or with members of your household, for 1 form of exercise a day – like a walk, run or bike ride. But make you keep a safe 2-metre distance from others.

- **Stay on top of negative feelings -** Concern about the coronavirus outbreak is perfectly normal. However, some people may experience intense anxiety that can affect their day-to-day life. Try to focus on the things you can control, such as how you act, who you speak to and where you get information from. It's fine to acknowledge that some things are outside of your control.

- **Carry on doing things you enjoy -** If we are feeling worried, anxious, lonely or low, we may stop doing things we usually enjoy. Make an effort to focus on your favourite hobby if it is something you can still do at home. If not, picking something new to learn at home might help. There are lots of free tutorials and courses online, and people are coming up with inventive ways to do things, like hosting online pub quizzes and music concerts.

MORE IMPORTANTLY:

- **Take time to relax -** This can help with difficult emotions and worries, and improve our wellbeing. Relaxation techniques can also help deal with feelings of anxiety.
- **Look after your sleep -** Good-quality sleep makes a big difference to how we feel, so it's important to get enough. Try to maintain your regular sleeping pattern and stick to good sleep practices.
- **Keep your mind active -** Read, write, play games, do crosswords, complete sudoku puzzles, finish jigsaws, or try drawing and painting. Whatever it is, find something that works for you.

Remember, this is only temporary and things will go back to normal. We are here to support you any way we can and we look forward to seeing you all again soon.

Take care