



KS3 Mental Health - Guidance for Parents

Using your parental judgement, taking into consideration the working environment, your child's ability or time you have to complete the activities with your child, you can decide if you keep the activities as full day projects, or smaller bitesize chunks to enjoy over a longer period of time. This document has been designed to aid parents and families to work together to encourage academic and educational involvement throughout this difficult time.

- 1) **Write a list of sensible ground rules to be used when discussing sensitive issues such as mental health, emotional wellbeing and personal issues. (10 minutes)**

This is a great opportunity to discuss empathetic understanding with your child. Encourage conversation to occur about why people may be sensitive to topics such as mental health.

- 2) **Using a horizontal line, write all the activities, people or other factors and influences that make you feel happy or sad. (15 minutes)**

This activity could be used as a whole family exercise. You could work together using small, scrap pieces of paper or post-it notes (this could also be done on a washing line if it's time to get some fresh air). This will encourage confidence when discussing in front of family and allows time to get to know each other even better.

- 3) **The World Health Organisation (WHO) define Mental Health as "not just the absence of mental disorder. It is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community."**

Do you think this definition is suitable? Why do you think this? Does anything need to be added to this definition? Is it clear and concise enough? (5 minutes)

Have a discussion with your child about mental health. Question: do different definitions vary? What are the opinions within the household? In which ways can you support each other as a family to ease strain on one another's mental health?

- 4) **Read the following statement from Boris Johnson: "People may only leave home to exercise once a day, to travel to and from work where "absolutely necessary", to shop for essential items, and to fulfil any medical or care needs. Shops selling non-essential goods have been told to shut and gatherings in public of more than two people who do not live together will be prohibited." Boris Johnson, 23rd March 2020.**



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Create a 'Steps to Wellbeing' poster or leaflet based on the current information released by Boris Johnson regarding the situation of Coronavirus within the UK. Promote Steps to Wellbeing regardless of the difficult situation we are all currently facing. (1 hour)

As a family, watch the news related to COVID-19 as a conversation point. Use discussion and debate skills to improve knowledge and language in relation to English, politics and economics. Discuss what the steps to wellbeing could be and how this could be tackled together as a family.

- 5) **Using LEGS (below) which shows the basic steps to follow when supporting anyone who might have a mental health problem, write a scenario where someone is suffering from depression from a current situation. Write how you would respond using LEGS. (20-30 minutes)**

L – Listen to them, ask questions but try not to criticise or judge

E – Encourage them to talk to an adult who they trust

G – Give them information about support services

S – Suggest doing things together that they enjoy doing

Encourage your child to explain what LEGS means to the members of the family. Ask your child to discuss the scenarios with you and explain what might be happening when someone is suffering with depression. You could use this again as a family activity, all write what you think might happen and compare this against each other's predictions.

- 6) **Think of an activity that you like to do which you think boosts your own personal mental health? Create a promotional activity to encourage people, who might be worried about current issues within the UK to get involved with your activity. This could be an activity that could be completed indoors or in your home surroundings due to the current situation such as yoga, gardening, etc. This could be done in the form of a presentation, video, vlog, blog, etc. (2 hours +)**

As a family, you will more than likely be spending more time partaking in activities together with the current restrictions due to COVID-19. As a conversation point, discuss what the steps to wellbeing could be and how this could be tackled together as a family. This task could be completed as a family and shared on social media.



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- 7) Carry our research with your child and answer the questions below: (1 hour +)
 - a. What mental health problems can young people experience?
 - b. What are the signs and symptoms of these?
 - c. Where can young people go and get help?
 - d. What could young people do to help themselves recover or avoid the problem in the future?

- 8) Choose or research a celebrity that has suffered from depression but has recovered. Using LEGS, write down the areas of support you would offer your chosen celebrity. (15-30 minutes)

Encourage your child to explain what LEGS means to the members of the family. Ask your child to discuss the scenarios with you and explain what might be happening when someone is suffering with depression. You could use this again as a family activity, all write what you think might happen and compare this against each other's predictions.

- 9) Research what support is available in your local area. Create a support network mind map that summarises these links. (30 mins)

This could be a family activity. Draw or write your family name in the middle of a large sheet of paper. Show the support network around your family and look at where it could be extended.

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