

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Some great support advice from the Parent Zone and CEOP.

Where can your child get mental health support online during lockdown?

The government has announced a second UK lockdown until at least December 2nd. Even though a decision has been made to keep schools open during this time, parents may still be concerned about the effect it will have on their child's mental health – whether or not they have experienced problems before.

Research from [YoungMinds](#) suggests that 32 per cent of young people with a history of mental health problems felt that the pandemic had made their mental health much worse, and 51 per cent said that it had made it a bit worse.

So how can you continue to support your child's emotional wellbeing during this time of uncertainty?

How much of an effect is COVID-19 having on children and young people's mental health?

The anxiety generated by coronavirus is substantial. One of the leading mental health charities, [Mind](#), has seen an influx in people contacting them regarding the impact of coronavirus and lockdown, while the charity [Beat Eating Disorders](#) has seen a [30 per cent](#) increase in demand for its Helpline services.

Richard Crellin, Policy and Research Manager (Mental Health and Wellbeing) at The Children's Society, says: "For young people, whether already living with mental health conditions or not, it is a very triggering time.

"The news is full of scary statistics and families are feeling the pressure more than ever, so it is entirely understandable that many people are feeling fraught."

What can you do if you are worried your child is struggling with their mental health as a result of COVID-19?

If your child had no pre-existing mental health condition prior to COVID-19, but you are worried about their general emotional wellbeing, there are several places you can find advice:

[Online support from Mind](#)

Mind provides advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. It runs an Infoline which offers information and advice on mental health; you can call on 0300 123 3393, text on 86463 or email at info@mind.org.uk.

It also has a page dedicated to [coronavirus and mental health](#), which includes information for older children and teens who are [worried about coronavirus](#), and advice for how you can [support your teen](#) as the pandemic continues.

[Online support from The Children's Society](#)

The Children's Society works towards directly improving the lives of vulnerable children and young people and has a range of resources that could be helpful during the pandemic.

Crellin says, "Here at The Children's Society we know that a situation like this means young people may need support in new and different ways. We have created the [Covid-19 mental health and wellbeing hub](#) on our website that has detailed information on looking after yourself at this time."

There's also a dedicated [information and support page](#), which includes subjects such as [dealing with loneliness](#).

[Online support from Young Minds](#)

YoungMinds is one of the UK's leading charities fighting for children and young people's mental health. It operates a Parents Helpline on 0808 802 5544, and you can also email using this [contact form](#).

Your child can visit its dedicated [coronavirus and mental health page](#) for advice and signposting, including information on [looking after your mental health whilst self-isolating](#) and [self-care tips](#). YoungMinds also has a [blog](#) where your child can hear from other young people living through the pandemic.

Online support from Emerging Minds

Emerging Minds is a research network that aims to reduce the prevalence of mental health problems in children and young people.

It has a useful [advice sheet](#) for parents and carers on supporting children and young people with worries about coronavirus. Parents and carers also have access to a [webinar series](#) in collaboration with [The Mental Elf](#), which focuses on supporting children and young people's mental health during the pandemic.

Online support from Childline

Childline is a free counselling service for children and young people aged 19 or under.

Your child can call their [helpline](#) on 0800 1111 to speak to a trained counsellor, or they can use its ['1-2-1' chat](#) on their website if they don't feel as though they can talk over the phone. They can also send an email from their 'Childline locker', which Childline endeavours to reply to within 24 hours. They must be [logged into their Childline account](#) in order to use the 1-2-1 chat service, and email.

Childline also offers plenty of other resources, including advice on [distinguishing fake news](#) and what to do if you're [worried about coronavirus](#). Your child also has access to [message boards](#) where they can find support from others, and can use a mood journal to log how they're feeling. You can read Childline's guidance on its message boards [here](#).

Young people can currently speak to a counsellor online or on the phone from from 7:30am – 3:30am, seven days a week.

Online support from The Mix

The Mix is one of the UK's leading support services for young people under 25.

Your child can access useful wellbeing guidance on its website, including [how to support others during the pandemic](#), and [dealing with coronavirus anxiety](#). If you have a young person at university or living away from home, The Mix also has information [tenancy rights](#) and [financial guides](#), to offer a little clarity during this confusing period.

Working together to keep our children safe and happy.

Halina Rooney

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