



Responding to Covid-19: Mental health and wellbeing resources and support available for children and young people in England.

November 2020

This document aims to provide a helpful summary of key resources and sources of support available to help promote and protect the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people at this challenging time. It also signposts to useful resources specifically around exam stress and anxiety.

Useful mental health & wellbeing 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.
- [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.
- [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).
- [Place 2 Be](#) provides support to help children and young people adapt to being back in the classroom, including [wellbeing activity ideas for schools](#).
- [Good Thinking](#) digital mental wellbeing resource for London, which breaks down advice for children and young people by specific groups.
- [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 has also published guidance on [promoting children and young people's emotional health](#) detailing a whole school and college approach.
- If staff are unsure when it is appropriate to refer to a local NHS service, they can view their **local NHS CYPMHS website** which will have more information about access and referrals, including phone numbers so you can get in touch directly for detailed advice.



Resources for children and young people:

- [Every Mind Matters](#) now has a [Mental Health and Self-care for Young People](#) section with videos with top tips on exercise, sleep and how to take care of yourself on social media.
- [Rise Above](#) provides a broad range of video content for children and young people to support positive mental health and wellbeing, including managing unhelpful thoughts and dealing with change.
- NHS England has published [advice](#) for children and young people who may be feeling overwhelmed.
- [Young Minds](#) is a charity working to improve emotional well-being and mental health amongst children and young people and offers some top tips around managing exam stress.
- [Childline](#) is a service provided by the NSPCC offering confidential advice to children and young people.
- A [downloadable guide](#) for children and young people about the coronavirus has been made available by the Children's Commissioner and includes proactive advice to support mental wellbeing.

Resources for children and young people with learning disabilities:

- Children and young people with learning disabilities can feel a loss of control in times of uncertainty. They may need more support or adapted explanations about the pandemic. See the [easy-read COVID-19 guide to looking after your feelings and your body](#) for ideas.
- For useful tips for talking about feelings, see [Skills for Care advice](#). For further guidance on COVID-19 for those with learning disabilities, including easy read materials, see the [Mencap website](#). BILD (the Learning Disability Professional Senate) have also published a [collection of resources](#) that may be useful to support families and carers of people with learning disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Resources to signpost parents and carers to:

- [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 and how to support children being back at school.
- The Government's guidance on [supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing](#), provides advice for parents and carers on looking after the mental health and wellbeing of children or young people during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.



- NHS England has published [advice for parents, guardians and carers](#) on how to help and support a child or young person with mental ill health.

Useful resources specifically around exam stress and anxiety:

For schools:

- [PHE RHSE Exam Stress Lesson Pack](#) for KS3/KS4 to teach students to identify the signs and symptoms of exam stress and recognise that it can affect young people, before, during and after an exam.
- [Rise Above](#) have some specific Exam Stress videos that students can be signposted to:
 - [Exams People! Exams!](#)
 - [Dealing with Exam Stress](#)
- [Samaritans DEAL](#) is a free resource for teachers and other professionals designed to help develop resilience in young people. This includes a specific lesson plan on [Coping Strategies and Exam Stress](#).

For children and young people:

- [Young Minds](#) is a charity working to improve emotional well-being and mental health amongst children and young people and offers some tips around managing exam stress.
- [Childline](#) is a service provided by the NSPCC offering confidential advice to children and young people. See [Childline's tips for beating exam stress](#).
- [Mind](#) is a charity providing mental health support for anyone experiencing a mental health problem. See [Mind's 14 ways to beat exam stress](#).

For parents and carers:

- [Family Lives](#) is a charity helping parents to deal with the changes that are a constant part of family life. See Family Lives' advice for [supporting your teenager through their exams](#).
- [Relate](#) is a charity offering relationship support. See Relate's advice for [coping with exam stress as a family](#).
- [Teenagers Translated](#) is a website offering information to help parents understand their children during their teenage years. See their advice on [managing exam stress](#).



Mental health support for children and young people:

There is broad range 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.

Provider	Support available
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	<u>NHS website</u> NHS.UK mental health information section signposting to Every Mind Matters and a range of helplines hosted by voluntary community organisations.
NHS	<u>NHS Apps library</u> helps people find apps and online tools to help manage their health and wellbeing. 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.
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 .
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.
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National programmes and initiatives:

- **Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs)**
MHSTs jointly delivered by NHSE/I and DfE provide early intervention on some mental health and emotional wellbeing issues, such as mild to moderate anxiety, as well as helping staff within a school or college setting to provide a 'whole school approach' to mental health and wellbeing. The teams act as a link with local children and young people's mental health services and are supervised by NHS staff.
- **Mental Health Service and Schools/Colleges Link programme**
The [Mental Health Services and Schools and Colleges Link Programme](#) led by the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families and funded by DfE over four years, brings together education and mental health services under Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to forge joint working and ensure long-term collaboration. Under the initiative, every school, college and alternative provision will be trained through a series of workshops to pool their understanding and resources and to draw up long term plans, coordinated by CCGs.
- **Wellbeing for Education Return**
Launched this September, this national DfE/DHSC project involves funding and resources for local authorities to train and support schools and colleges to respond to the wellbeing, resilience and mental health needs of children and young people as a result of Covid-19, and provide ongoing support and advice until the end of March 2021.
- **Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) curriculum**
DfE has published a new training [module](#) on mental wellbeing for teachers, intended as part of a wider implementation support package to support schools deliver lessons as part of the Government's new RSHE curriculum from this September. Schools have flexibility over how they introduce the new curriculum within the first year of compulsory teaching but are being asked to prioritise focus on mental health and wellbeing.