

Supporting the mental health of young people



Thursday May 21st

Today, we focus on the mental health of young people. From the Children's Society, April 2020:

The Covid-19 crisis will have turned many childhoods upside down and for young people who were already struggling, life will seem even more of a challenge.

[Children's well-being has been in decline since 2009](#) and this outbreak will undoubtedly create difficulties for those having to cope with widespread changes to their daily life. Currently [one in eight children aged 5-19 have a diagnosable mental health condition](#). We are concerned that Covid-19 may result in heightened feelings of anxiety and worry and could exacerbate low mood and other mental health conditions.

Worrying times

With schools closed for most, young people are directly experiencing social distancing, high levels of isolation and wider dislocation. They'll also be exposed to endless news stories and social commentaries about the virus.

From our Good Childhood research, we know that [young people worry about society and global issues](#), so we would expect levels of worry to be high during this crisis.

For young people with [anxiety](#), [depression](#), [OCD](#), ADHD and serious physical health conditions, the restrictions caused by Covid-19 will be extremely challenging. Mental health services will struggle to deal with demand as staff have to isolate, appointments have to be rescheduled and waiting times increase. The uncertainty of support will be damaging for many children's well-being.

Home alone

Young people will be spending a lot more time at home with family and carers, and less time with their friends. We know that familial relationships are an important building block in children's well-being.

The impact Covid-19 might have on family members or carers who are older or vulnerable could have significant impact on children's well-being. Plus, being at home and not having the autonomy and choice they're used to could be quite damaging. Similarly, spending less time with friends or being restricted to online socializing can impact children's well-being, especially for those who can't get online, don't feel confident with it, or experience cyberbullying. This [disconnection can increase feelings of loneliness and lower well-being](#).

Money and the future

We know that children growing up in households with problem debt are five times more likely than other children to have low well-being. The consequences of loss of income due to Covid-19 will be significant.

It may also impact how they think about their future, possibly worrying about the consequences for their family.

Supporting children's well-being

We will do everything we can to help mitigate the impact of Covid-19 on children and families.

Our incredible front-line staff are delivering vital care packages and providing urgent advice and support to children that can literally save their lives.

If you wish to donate to our Emergency Lifeline Appeal to help us be there for the most vulnerable young people, please visit <https://donate.childrenssociety.org.uk/page/58174/donate/1?>

The Mental Health Foundation have created an animated video to share the theme of 'kindness', suitable for use with young people. You can find it on youtube at: <https://youtu.be/Qcyc68d6OAK>



A few suggestions for Parents/Teenagers

Take a course with the OLLIE foundation: A fabulous teen mental health charity, the OLLIE offer [online courses to help teenagers](#) understand their own anxiety, and cope with overwhelm during this very difficult time. The schedule is updated weekly.

Free live Personal Training: [live workouts](#) with a personal trainer. A reason for teens to join Facebook if ever there was one.

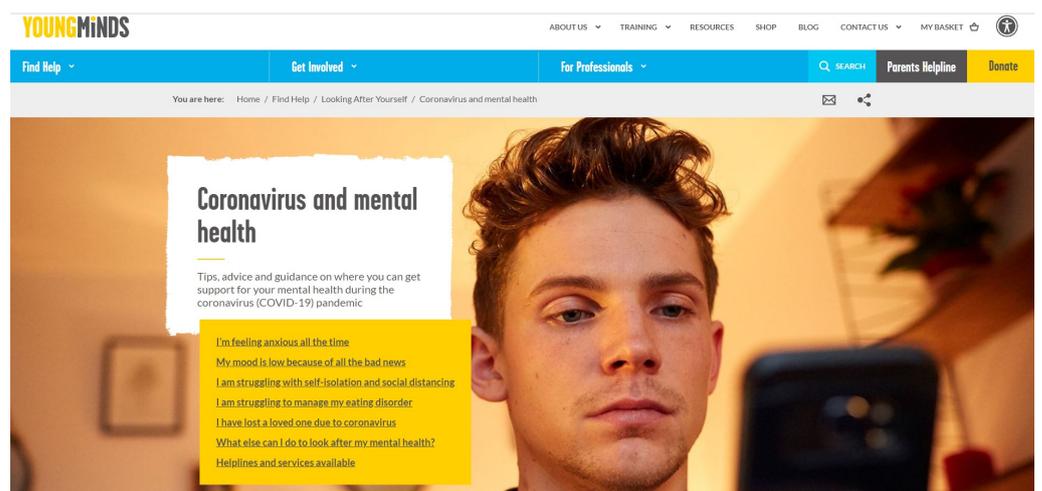
Yoga with Adriene: [Free online course](#), surprisingly engaging to teen girls. Also, to stressed out mums.

Headspace: I know, they're going to roll their eyes, but make them do it. *Pay them if necessary* – I bet by the end of a week of [Headspace](#) meditation they'll enjoy it (although they probably won't admit it to your face). It's seriously good for changing how you think about things, including [coronavirus anxiety](#).

Make a Time Capsule: There's no doubt about it – now is an unprecedented time in their lives and having something tangible to look back at in the future will be both fascinating and iconic. You'll find some tips on how to make a time capsule worthy of the Coronavirus lockdown [here](#). <https://kidsofthewild.co.uk/2020/03/29/make-a-time-capsule-coronavirus-covid-19-kids/>

Youngminds.org.uk is a brilliant website designed for young people, with advice, support, blogs and links.

There are responses to lots of the questions that young people may be asking, and is useful for all young people, whether or not they are particularly vulnerable



The screenshot shows the YoungMinds website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'ABOUT US', 'TRAINING', 'RESOURCES', 'SHOP', 'BLOG', 'CONTACT US', and 'MY BASKET'. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with 'Find Help', 'Get Involved', and 'For Professionals'. A search bar and 'Parents Helpline' button are also visible. The main content area features a large image of a young man's face. Overlaid on the image is a white box with the title 'Coronavirus and mental health' and a subtitle 'Tips, advice and guidance on where you can get support for your mental health during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic'. Below this is a yellow box containing a list of common concerns: 'I'm feeling anxious all the time', 'My mood is low because of all the bad news', 'I am struggling with self-isolation and social distancing', 'I am struggling to manage my eating disorder', 'I have lost a loved one due to coronavirus', 'What else can I do to look after my mental health?', and 'Helplines and services available'.



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