



Greenhills Primary School in conjunction with Barnardos helping to support families through Covid 19.

This can be an anxious time for families and it is important we take care of our loved ones and support their needs. Our anxiety levels may be high now but the following information can help you cope with everyday life.

Barnardo's use a model called Five to Thrive, which explores approaches that we can all take to encourage healthy brain development and attachment. There are five building blocks; **Respond**, **Cuddle/Engage**, **Relax**, **Play** and **Talk**.

Having started or returned to nursery or school 6 weeks ago, we are being met with very uncertain times once again. The most important thing to remember is that it is normal to feel a whole range of emotions during these extraordinary times. Hearing and reading about the rise in cases can cause an overwhelming sense of stress and anxiety. This is not a sign of you not coping! It is important that you look after your children's emotional well-being as well as your own and take control of your individual situation where possible.

What can be done to support your child(ren).... And yourself?!

Respond:

- Giving your children time and space to talk without putting pressure on them. Incidental chats during other activities can sometimes be the best and most natural way of ascertaining your child's feelings/worries on a topic. Depending on your child's age, eye contact and coming down to their level can help. Older children may prefer side by side. Keeping your tone and voice calm and soothing makes for a more comfortable experience.
- Hearing what your child is saying without immediately offering opinions or advice.
- Responding relevantly lets your child see they are being heard, they are important and their feelings/opinions matter.
- Letting your child know that their feelings are normal and school staff are sensitive to this.
- Being open and honest in response to your child. It is ok if you do not know the answer.

Engage

- Soothing a child through a cuddle, sitting close, fist pump, high five are all different ways to connect and let them feel safe. You know your child best and therefore can choose the right type of engagement. Studies have shown that a minimum of 8 "engagements" during a day help a child to feel connected to parent/care giver

Relax

- In order for your child to feel relaxed, the atmosphere and the people in your home need to give off a relaxed vibe. Make time for yourself to ensure you can be the best possible version of you.



Play

- Observe the interests of your child and start from there. Enjoy 1:1 time, factor in family time (movie, board game) it will strengthen the relationships, perhaps help you see things from a different perspective and increase happiness. Children may feel more comfortable exploring their feelings through characters and play experiences.

Talk

- Keep interactions flowing. Grab opportunities throughout the day to check-in with your child and let them know you are always there without overwhelming them. They may prefer to write down questions/thoughts/ideas to be led by the adult. Children will become more comfortable and confident talking when it becomes the norm.
- Let your child talk about their worries and remind them that their feelings are valid and normal. Talk about what is causing them concern and what they can do (maybe with your help) to make it seem more manageable or safer. Finding solutions/strategies to alleviate concerns or worries may be helpful for your child. They may enjoy rating the feeling before and then once the change is made.

Independence skills

80% of your child's health and wellbeing happens outside of the school gates; in the family environment, so encouraging, practising and reinforcing the importance of independent skills with your child is vital. There is no greater sense of achievement for your child AND you then when a skill is mastered! By focusing on skills such as using cutlery, putting on/taking off clothing and zipping up jackets and tying shoe laces, your child will not need the close contact support from an adult which will in turn minimise the potential spread of the virus.

Within school

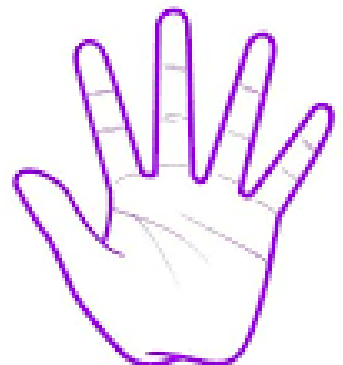
Reassure your child that Mrs Johnston and the rest of the school staff at Greenhills Primary School, along with South Lanarkshire Council and NHS Lanarkshire are putting suitable and frequently revised measures in place to minimise the spread of Coronavirus. Greenhills Primary is a school that invests in the health and wellbeing of its community and wants the school to be a safe space for all in attendance.

Take 5 – Breathing Exercise

This exercise is a wonderful way to reduce and maybe even switch off the stress response. It aims to bring the body back into balance, slowing and deepening the breath and slowing down the heart rate. It requires focus and provides sensory feedback to our brains.

Take 5 Breathing is simple, enjoyable, free, and you can use it anywhere, anytime!

1. Stretch your hand out like a star
2. Use pointing finger on your other hand to slowly trace
3. As you slide up your finger – breathe in,
as you slide down the other side – breathe out
4. Keep doing this until you have traced your full hand.





Create your own resilience ladder

The resilience ladder is used to chunk down aims and goals into smaller, more manageable steps. This activity shows children how to process and cope with setbacks. It helps us develop resilience and a growth mindset.

Source: <https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/resources/resilience-ladder/?searchTerm=resilience%20ladder>

You may want to think about how you will keep safe in school

Steps to my goal Keeping safe

YOU DID IT!

Final stage: I will...
Enjoy my day in school remembering 2 metre distancing, washing my hands, remaining in my class bubble and having fun learning. **The final hurdle**

I just have to...
Allow time for breakfast and leave enough time to arrive at school receiving a warm welcome just before the bell rings. **Nearly there**

Now I need to...
Prepare myself for school, organise my schoolbag, have a good nights sleep, **Keep it up**

Do you need to go back and practise anything again?
Check steps 1, 2 and 3 again? **Take a break!**

Next step is...
Make sure I have everything I need for school (bag, snack, water bottle, lunch, homework and reading book) **Getting stuck in**

Then I will...
Remind myself to keep a 2 metre distance from adults, remaining in my class bubble and washing my hands frequently. **Off you go!**

The first step in my journey is to...
Talk with someone that I trust about any concerns or worries I have about feeling safe. **Getting started**

Steps to my goal

YOU DID IT!

Final stage: I will... **The final hurdle**

I just have to... **Nearly there**

Now I need to... **Keep it up**

Do you need to go back and practise anything again? **Take a break!**

Next step is... **Getting stuck in**

Then I will... **Off you go!**

The first step in my journey is to... **Getting started**

Parents/carers, you too may benefit from the following website, which takes you through your feelings and helps you cope.

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/mental-health/mental-health-self-help-guides/anxiety-self-help-guide>

