

PARENTING NEWSLETTER

FOCUS: MENTAL HEALTH

ISSUE THREE
PETERBOROUGH
CITY COUNCIL

This week we wanted to pay particular attention to the mental health and wellbeing of parents. It can be challenging being a parent at the best of times but perhaps now more than ever.

Firstly, we will look at '6 Ways to take Timeout' for those pressure moments when you are stressed or overwhelmed as a parent, this looks a six tried and tested techniques from one of Dr. Carolyn Webster Stratton's The Incredible Years books. These tips will allow you to experiment and practice releasing tension and anger and gain more self-control when you need it most.

Later we will provide some useful resources from the local 'Now we're Talking' campaign, as well as from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership Board.

We also include a timetable of virtual youth club activities for May from Youth Inspired for Children aged 12+.

Be sure to check out our interesting and fun family activity; create your own 2020 time capsule! Details can be found on the last page of this newsletter.



6 WAYS TO TAKE A TIMEOUT

1: Timeout for a Breather

Breathing deeply and slowly can relieve distress. It helps shed tension, slows the heart rate, relaxes muscles, reduces blood pressure and calms the mind. If you can find a quiet space for a few minutes (if not try to use the technique to breathe through whatever you may be doing at the time).

> Become aware of your breathing > As you breathe in/out, slow down your breathing > As you slow your breathing down, slowly count as far as you are able to from 1-10 until you are out of breath > Visualise that you are calm and in control > Remind yourself you are doing a good job > Repeat until you relax.

2: Timeout to Relax Your Body

Daily life as a parent can leave you feeling exhausted sometimes. Be extra mindful of this at the moment as the added strain of the pandemic (having kids at home more than usual and perhaps juggling working from home and normal household chores) is likely to be causing you more stress.

> Keep routines as normal as possible e.g. eat and sleep enough. Spend a little time on your own each day and perhaps do something active like go for a walk (without partner other family or children).

> Practice mindfulness: close your eyes and visualise your muscles relaxing and releasing tension. As you breathe tense your right arm and fist as tightly as you can. Hold for a count of 4, then relax fully as you exhale. Repeat for your left arm and fist, buttocks, right leg and foot, left leg and foot, face and jaw. At the end tense whole body and then relax.

3: Timeout for Visualizing and Imagining

A third way is to take a timeout is to visualize or imagine a calming scene. This one may be harder to do in the middle of a child's tantrum, but when you experience something stressful try to do it minutes afterwards (even during a trip to the bathroom). > Visualisations can make your thought processes coordinate smoothly and can be surprisingly productive. This is personal and there is no right or wrong way to practice this. Some ideas include imagining a beautiful blue sky with fluffy clouds, a paradise beach, clean house :) or quiet library.

4: Timeout to Control Anger

All parents find that they occasionally lose control of their anger when things become stressful; remember this is NORMAL. It therefore is very important to establish a timeout procedure for yourself just like you would for one of your children.



> Establish a signal that should be neutral like making a T for Timeout and use this when you feel yourself losing your temper. Then employ ways 1, 2, 3 as listed above. Your procedure for your own timeout should be explained to the whole family so that they know what to expect e.g. the time it will last, and of course your whereabouts.

5. Manage your Expectations of Yourself

Remember that thought-stopping and refuting negative thoughts are also ways to manage stress.

> Tell yourself that it is normal and when you experiencing anger or stress when parenting tell yourself that it is to be expected that you feel most tense directly after something stressful happens. > Tell yourself it will pass and to breath and try to relax your body. > Think about things as temporary, no matter how tense a situation gets, it will pass. > Turn to thoughts that focus on coping and finding solutions rather than negative thoughts and blaming others.

6. Organise Your Time and Your Family Routine

Finally organise your time and your routine to allow time for play, work, household jobs, exercise, relaxation and your all important timeouts. This may seem easier said than done (especially right now), and you may not be able to stick to it 100% of the time but some structure is better than none. Having a routine will allow for personal time for both adults and children in the family and this is one of the most effective ways to reduce stress in a family environment. If children are occupied and not bored they are easier to manage. (Please see Issues 1 and 2 for lots more ideas to keep them busy).

Recap

> Take time to breath and be mindful of relaxing your body when you feel tense > Stay positive and replace negativity with self-encouraging statements > Visualize some marvellous place to help calm down > In a conflict take timeout and mark this with pre agreed signal > Remember conflicts aren't permanent > Organise routines for you and family so that overall your home experience is less stressful for all of you.

'NOW WE'RE TALKING'

The 'Now We're Talking' campaign is a wellbeing campaign aiming to help people maintain their mental health and independence during the 'Stay at Home' period of the coronavirus outbreak.

During this time, when routines are likely to have changed dramatically, household businesses and finances are under pressure and people may feel increasingly isolated and lonely, anxiety and stress are likely to be increasing. So, now more than ever it's important that we keep talking.

We wanted to include the campaign in the newsletter as it is full of wonderful resources and fits in well with our focus this week. Whilst these resources will be useful for parents please also be aware that there are several resources through this campaign for children and young people.



The campaign, led by the local authority, NHS and third sector. To access for more information and links to increased mental health support please visit keep-your-head.com/now or use the #nowweretalking on Twitter and Instagram.

CPFT have worked hard putting together a guide of extremely helpful resources for children, parents and carers. We have selected the most relevant to the theme of this week's newsletter from activities to increased overall wellbeing and specific mental health support. Please find these below:



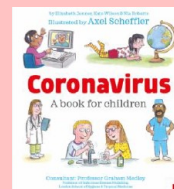
A selection of activities for children: <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/activities/indoor-activities>

Here are a selection of books that are written about Coronavirus, to help children at this time. You can read them online by following the links or print them off and read them: "Dave the dog is worried about coronavirus" – a Nurse Dotty book <https://nursedottybooks.files.wordpress.com/2020/03/dave-the-dog-coronavirus-1-1.pdf>



'Coronavirus' a book illustrated by Gruffalo illustrator Alex Scheffler

<https://nosycrow.com/blog/released-today-free-information-book-explaining-coronavirus-children-illustrated-gruffalo-illustrator-axel-scheffler/>



Websites supporting Children's Autism and Disabilities:

www.autism.org.uk/about/behaviour/anxiety.aspx

<https://contact.org.uk/advice-and-support/coronavirus-information-for-families-with-disabled-children/>

Mental health services for children, young people and adults:



Keep Your Head brings together reliable information on mental health and wellbeing for children, young people and adults across Cambridgeshire & Peterborough. <https://www.keep-your-head.com/>

Anxiety around coronavirus for children: <https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/what-to-do-if-you-re-anxious-about-coronavirus/>



Anxiety UK has solid resources for adults and children. Link below for children and Coronavirus but there is lots on adult anxiety. <https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/blog/how-to-talk-to-children-about-covid-19/>

Guidance from the Government and NHS on mental health support for adults, children and young people.

<https://www.cambridgeshireandpeterboroughccg.nhs.uk/your-health-and-services/mental-health-services/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/>

YOUTH INSPIRED

Youth inspired is a Lottery Funded project founded by PCVS and supported by the DCMS. They have adapted their Youth club to run online though Zoom. The timetable for May has lots of exciting and engaging activities for young people 12+ who live in Peterborough to take part in. To join sessions please contact Youth Inspired at the link to the right.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Poetry With Charley Genever 1-2pm You will need: Pen & Paper	Collage With Clare from Paisley Art 1-2pm You will need: Pen & Paper Glue & Scissors Scrap Paper/card Youth Panel Young Commissioners Panel Contact for details 	Phone Photography With Danny Ackerley 1-2pm You will need: Pen & Paper Phone	Street Art With Korp 1-2pm You will need: Black Marker Pen & Paper Youth Club With Youth Inspired 3:30pm	Body Positivity With Ellie Sandall 1-2pm You will need: Coloured Pen/Pencils & Paper Glue & Scissors Scrap Paper/card Wellbeing With Kirsty from YPCS 3-4pm You will need: Coloured Pen/Pencils & Paper Glue & Scissors Scrap Paper/card	Q Group LGBT Youth Club Email for info EVERY DAY Little Miracles zoom SEND Youth Club Contact for details

All sessions are FREE and available for young people aged 12+ who live in **Peterborough, UK**

Contact Youth Inspired to join:
youthinspired@pcvs.co.uk



COMMUNITY FUND



PCVS



Department for Digital, Culture Media & Sport

What's on...

May
4th - 29th

FREE: 4 WEEK
ONLINE 'LIVE'
ZOOM SESSIONS
YOUTH INSPIRED

TIME CAPSULE FAMILY ACTIVITY

Lockdown is a testing time for families. As we all know all too well.

Many parents are now juggling home working with home schooling, while others are going out to fulfil their vital roles as key workers, with the added health worries that brings.

One mum, Natalie Long, a graphic designer who is originally from Portsmouth but now lives in Canada with her husband and children wanted to document this unique time we are living in and created a time capsule workbook for families to complete.

Time capsules have been found in Britain as early as 1874 and have included photos and letters, describing daily events happening that year. 'We are all living through history and something I have said I wanted to do from the beginning is make a keepsake of this moment for us to look back on,'

We felt it fitting to include in this newsletter as a cathartic and meaningful exercise for you to enjoy completing as a parent with your children. We include a link to her workbook in the blue box above, and have provided some tips below on how to put this together with some other bits to make a complete capsule!

Tips for creating a Time Capsule using Natalie's workbook

While everyone will make theirs differently depending on what they think is important, these are some of the basics that you should do to create your time capsule.

To bury or not to bury

This is up to you-capsules are normally buried but at the moment this could only be done if you have a garden. It would be just as wonderful to have the capsule as a family keepsake to look at in years to come. Tuck it away in the back of a drawer or under the stairs and find again one day in the future.

Choose your box

This will depend on whether you are burying your box. If you are not burying you could decorate a cardboard box or shoebox (fits A4 pages well). If you are burying your box you will need to make sure it is sturdy and won't rot or fall apart over time, especially if burying in garden. If you are burying your time capsule in your garden, make sure you dig a hole that's four feet deep or more. It also needs to be recognisable as something valuable whoever may find it so make sure to mark the top that will face up well with text. (you could even include your family surname). Do not use cardboard if burying, it will become a soggy mess quickly! For a wooden box, to make your own is really easy. Using spare wood that you might have around your home and wood glue which you can [buy online](#), create box that's 25.5 cms wide and 12.7 cms high. This will give you plenty of space to make sure you can fit all of your important objects in it. Scientists say that burying plastic isn't good for the environment because it doesn't decompose well, but that's what makes it a perfect material for your time capsule. Plastic such as Tupperware can last for up to 1000 years when it's buried in the ground, so have a rifle through your kitchen cupboards and find a box that you're not using.

Contents

Once you have selected your box, you can complete Natalie's wonderful workbook to go inside. As well as this you could include photographs of your family, diary extracts, drawings, a newspaper (if you can safely buy one), small toys (like Lego bricks), a favourite food wrapper (e.g. chocolate bar wrapper) and anything else you fancy.

We wish you all the best with your capsule - happy making! :)



Download here:

[https://
letsembark.ca/time-](https://letsembark.ca/time-)

