

A stylized logo for St Aloysius. It features a golden crane hook at the top, with a vertical tower and a red cross. The letters 'A', 'L', 'O', 'Y', 'S', 'I', 'U', 'S' are arranged in a way that the crane hook is positioned above the 'S', and the red cross is positioned above the 'I'.

Aloysius

Two schools,
one community.

Looking after your family's mental health

With schools closing and many adults working from home, families are going to be cooped up. It's easy to get cabin fever when children who are used to running around the playground and hanging out with friends are stuck indoors with their parents. Here are our tips for keeping everyone's spirits up as much as possible as we self-isolate.

Exercise

It's suddenly much harder to move around, but it's important to stay physically active, not just for your body, but for your mental health, too.

Go outdoors - If you are lucky enough to have a garden or yard, spend time there, maybe doing some exercise or tidying. Follow current guidelines about leaving the house for exercise.

Home-made gym – the [NHS website](#) has lots of ideas for exercises that need no more equipment than a chair, a pillow or a sofa.

Yoga – one of the few forms of exercise that requires almost no space. There are hundreds of free online yoga tutorials on YouTube. [Yoga with Adrienne](#) is the most popular series. Parent Zone's resident yogi strongly recommends [Cole Chance](#). Cosmic Yoga is a fantastic site for your children.

Dancing – all you need is some good music. Get the kids to show you their best moves.

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Routine

Mental health experts agree that it's important to maintain a routine in the days of isolation, or everything can blur into sameness. Mark out different parts of the day for different activities. Agree a schedule with your kids, so they know when it's time to do some gaming, when they need to move about, when they need to make food or be helpful, when they need to sleep.

Eat and stay hydrated

Try to eat a balanced diet. Get children involved in planning meals and in helping to prepare them. Make sure everyone drinks lots of water, too.

Sleep

This is related to exercise – we all tend to sleep better if we've been physically active. So try to fit some exercise into every day. Try some evening yoga to calm you down. And now is definitely the time to enforce a no-screens-before-bed rule.

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Be Information aware

News constantly can be overwhelming and disorientating - limit yourself to a couple of times a day.

Consider where you're getting your information from. Is it actually helpful? [The NHS website](#), [the UK government's information](#), and the [WHO](#) are all good places to start

Be kind to yourself and have fun

The coronavirus pandemic is like nothing we have ever known – but it doesn't all have to be bad.

Give yourself treats; pamper yourself. If you love box sets, settle yourself in for a couple. If you like jigsaw puzzles but you're usually too busy, use the time you'd normally spend on your commute to amuse yourself. Play games with your kids that you haven't played since you were a child. Or take the opportunity to play one of their favourites – maybe you'll discover a love of Minecraft or Fortnite. We don't give ourselves permission to play enough, as adults, so now is the perfect time to rediscover play, with your children.

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Do something creative

Whether it's drawing, writing, playing music, knitting, or building a bus out of cardboard boxes, you can lose yourself in creative activity. Learn something new, perhaps with your children.

Work with your kids on whatever they're learning – and don't forget all the useful life-skills that aren't covered by the curriculum. Encourage them to make their own sandwiches, fold their clothes, complete some household tasks.

Connect

This is probably the most important thing of all. Human beings are profoundly social and this pandemic is requiring us to stop socialising. Just because we're not in the same physical space as other people, though, it doesn't mean we can't be with them in other ways. Take time to keep in touch.

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If you're anxious

Try everything above and if none of that works, do something you can control. Write down what you're worried about – in a diary, say – and put it away.

Practise meditation (lots of courses online) and deep breathing.

On the internet you'll find lots of ideas to support positive emotional health as well as signposting to external services where necessary.

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Reassuring children

Encourage children to express their feelings. If they feel anxious, they should be able to say so.

Provide them with information. Be honest, but be sure to emphasise the positive: they are not likely to die, more people have recovered from the virus than have passed away.

If they are in a high-risk group, keep them socially isolated and assure them that you are doing everything to protect them and that if you follow the rules together, there is no reason for them to be infected.

Help support their mental health, browse some of the sites and resources recommended for children on our webpage.

And of course, remember that children may need extra love and attention. Keep them close!

Source: <https://parentinfo.org/article/how-to-look-after-your-family-s-mental-health-when-you-re-stuck-indoors>



Useful Websites



- www.youngminds.org.uk
- www.familylives.org.uk
- www.minded.org.uk
- www.childline.org.uk
- www.nspcc.org.uk
- www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- www.relaxkids.com
- www.getselfhelp.co.uk
- www.understandingchildhood.net
- <http://www.littleparachutes.com/>
- <http://www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk/mildmoderate/Anxiety.asp>
- <https://www.anxietybc.com/resources/mindsh>