



Wellbeing Advice for Students During the School Closure

All of us are now adapting our normal routines and staying at home in order to help prevent the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19). For teenagers (and parents and carers) this can present particular challenges. We are all different and respond to uncertainty in different ways. When things feel out of our control, it is normal for us to experience feelings of worry, anxiety or fear.

This advice is adapted from that given by Paula Nagel, Principal Educational Psychologist at Place2Be, a national charity that supports mental health in young people. It suggests some ways that you can look after your mental health and wellbeing at this unsettling time.

Stay on Schedule:

Just because you are not at school, it doesn't have to mean the end of routine. As much as we like to think a break in routine can be good for us, it can sometimes add to our stress and uncertainty. Having some structure to the day can help you feel more secure. Try having a weekday routine in place and keep some familiar routines going to help you access the work provided by your teachers. Routines don't need to be rigid and don't think you have to replicate the exact school day, but perhaps try making a list of the activities you'd like to do each day. If you don't manage to achieve them all, then simply add them on to the next day's tasks. Don't give yourself too much to do, however, as this can add further stress in these unusual times.

Plan in time for lots of different activities and hobbies, for example, being creative; draw, play/listen to music, cook, read, dance.

It can be easy when spending long periods at home to get stuck behind a screen, but this can be damaging to our mental health. Whilst some screen time during the day is fine, and a useful way to stay in social contact, try including it in your plan for the day and be vigilant of overuse.

Remember to make time for breaks too - playing can be a great stress reliever for us all!

Stay Active:

Staying physically active is a key part of looking after our mental wellbeing. Fresh air and being outdoors can do wonders for our mental wellbeing so if you can, try to schedule in some time outside in the garden, like a school break time. Kick a ball around, dance, follow an exercise video online.

Stay in Touch:

When at home for a long period of time, it's important that you find time to stay in touch with your friends. Use online platforms but if possible, try not to rely solely on social media to stay in touch with family and friends; make time for telephone catch-ups too.

Finally, it's natural to want to keep up to date about what is happening and what we can do to stay safe, but try to limit the amount you are exposed to social media, and make sure you only look at reliable news sources, such as the BBC.

While school is closed, you can still contact the pastoral team at pastoral@qehs.net. This email account will be monitored during the school's usual opening hours and we will aim to respond to you as soon as possible.

This video might be useful in understanding your feelings during this uncertain time:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BmvNCdpHUYM>

Stay safe. We really look forward to seeing you back at school when we're back open.

The QEHS Pastoral Team.

Other places to look for advice:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/support>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/feelings-and-symptoms/>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/>

If you're worried about something, talk to an adult that you trust as soon as possible. This could be someone in your family, like your mum, dad or carer. If you are not sure who to talk to you could:

- Contact the Chat Health service, linked to the Northumbria NHS school nurse team, on **07507 332 258**
- Call Childline on **0800 1111**
- Text **CONNECT** to **85258** to contact Shout (in partnership with Place2Be).

For all of these services you can talk or text for free any time.