



Adoption Agency – Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Dear Parents,

We understand that the current situation with the Coronavirus (COVID-19) may be causing some additional anxiety for you and for your children. We want you to know that we are here to support you through this time as best we can. We, like you at home, are keeping up to date with the current government advice and rapidly evolving situation. We have plans in place to ensure that services continue wherever this is feasible.

We have taken the decision to cancel all face to face adoption training/Stay and Play sessions until further notice. We are currently exploring how to make some of these sessions available online and we will update you with the details as soon as possible.

Please take a few minutes to follow our Facebook and Twitter accounts and keep an eye on the Trust Website for further updates.

Facebook: [facebook.com/BirminghamChildrensTrust](https://www.facebook.com/BirminghamChildrensTrust)

Twitter: [@BhamChildTrust](https://twitter.com/BhamChildTrust)

Website: <https://www.birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk/adoptionssupportcovid19>

There will be some of you that are approved and awaiting a match. We want you to know that we are continuing to work on your matches using technology and your social worker will keep you updated on the progress of your individual case.

For those of you accessing additional support via the Adoption Support Fund, we have liaised directly with providers and asked that they keep in touch with you about any changes that may take place. In addition your social worker is in contact with your provider and through this communication we aim to continue to support you.

There are certain groups of individuals (providers and families alike) that may fall into one of the Government's Coronavirus 'higher risk' categories e.g. older people, those with chronic health conditions, those who are immune-compromised, those who become unwell.

We have taken the decision to reduce social contact and this is to keep both yourself and our staff safe. You will still receive support but this will be through, telephone, email or WhatsApp.

We would encourage you to begin having some open and honest conversations with your support provider regarding contingency plans, should you (or they) need to reduce face to face sessions for a while. If you have children/young people actively engaging in therapy, it may also be important to discuss with them the possibility that therapy may need to take a break for a little while, or may need to be done in a slightly different way through the coming weeks. Your therapy provider will be able to support you in these conversations.

If a situation arises where your usual provider is unable to offer support, please contact your Adoption Support Social Worker, or Post Adoption Support Duty Line to talk through some possible temporary solutions. Our 2 in-house Psychologists (Dr Marie Kershaw & Dr Jennie



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Gough) will be supporting us through this period, and will be on hand to provide digital consultations / support should the need arise.

Urgent Mental Health Support:

Please remember that the Post Adoption Service cannot provide a mental health crisis response service.

If you do not have an allocated Adoption Support Social Worker, your child is experiencing a mental health crisis, requires urgent support, or you are significantly worried about the risk they may pose to themselves or others, please contact Forward Thinking Birmingham, your GP, or local A&E Department in the first instance:

<https://www.forwardthinkingbirmingham.org.uk/get-help-urgently>

If you have an allocated Social Worker, they can be contacted in the usual way.

We have an **Adoption Support Duty Line** that is available by emailing:

DutyPostAdoptionSupport@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

Monday–Thursday: 9am–5pm

Friday: 9am–4pm

Birmingham Children's Trust Out of Hours Emergency Duty Service: 0121 675 4806

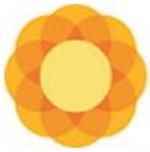
We aim to manage services as best we can through this unprecedented time. We have attached some useful resources to help you talking to your children about COVID-19 and help to keep you safe.

I wish you and your families well during this time and kindly ask in advance for your patience and understanding.

Yours Sincerely

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Guidance for Parents on Talking to Children about Coronavirus

A version of this is available on our website:

https://www.birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk/news/article/51/talking_to_children_and_managing_anxiety_about_coronavirus

We understand that aside from any of the typical adoption related stresses and anxieties that families can sometimes face, the current situation alone may be creating additional stress within families. We have therefore put together a list of resources below that you might find helpful in managing anxiety in relation to Coronavirus, and to help you to talk about Coronavirus with your children and support them through this time.

For Parents / Adults:

**MANAGING CORONA VIRUS
(COVID-19) ANXIETY**

BlessingManifesting

For You

- Avoid excessive exposure to media coverage
- Connect through calls/text/internet
- Add extra time for daily stress relief
- Practice self-care
- Focus on your mental health

For Kids

- Reassure them that they're safe
- Let them talk about their worries
- Share your own coping skills
- Limit their news exposure
- Create a routine & structure

For Quarantine/Isolation

- Keep in contact with your loved ones via social media, texts, and phone calls
- Create a daily self-care routine
- Keep yourself busy: games, books, movies
- Focus on new relaxation techniques

Information from Mind UK about managing your mental health in relation to Coronavirus: <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/#collapse86765>

For Parents Supporting Children / Young People:

Advice for talking to children about Coronavirus from Tanya Bryson – Co-author of 'Whole Brain Child' (with Dan Siegel) - approach very compatible with 'PACE'.



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<https://www.tinabryson.com/news/coronavirus-talking-points-for-parents-amp-teachers-with-the-whole-brain-child-approach>

Social Story from Wicklow Alliance Facebook Page explaining Coronavirus to Young Children and those with ASD: (see paper copy below)

<https://www.facebook.com/triplea.wicklow/photos/pcb.1813040122163437/1813072272160222/?type=3&theater>

Practical Psychological advice for parents supporting children if schools close or if someone in your family is affected by Coronavirus :

<https://medium.com/@siobhancurrie/how-to-respond-to-the-coronavirus-when-it-impacts-your-family->

[ceba63cd4235?fbclid=IwAR1phZEniWaWfWrurKqWlZft3xyDS5quacU2kK9Ky5La2rTUIntH8O-rlq](https://medium.com/@siobhancurrie/how-to-respond-to-the-coronavirus-when-it-impacts-your-family-ceba63cd4235?fbclid=IwAR1phZEniWaWfWrurKqWlZft3xyDS5quacU2kK9Ky5La2rTUIntH8O-rlq)

You Tube video – really good visual for teaching children why it is important to use soap when washing your hands:

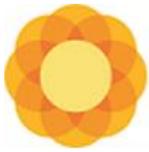
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yn-q4S3GoyU>

CBBC Coronavirus Questions & Answers with Dr Chris & Dr Xand

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/51861089>

Talking to Teens About Coronavirus – Harvard Medical School

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/how-to-talk-to-teens-about-the-new-coronavirus-2020031419192>



Coronavirus - Staying Safe



People are talking about Coronavirus because it is a new type of flu



Just like with all other colds or flu it is important to be healthy



Children and adults are very good at fighting the flu



Just like all colds or flus it can be harder for older people to stay healthy from flu



I can stay healthy by



When preparing food



FREQUENTLY WASH HANDS WITH SOAP



After sneezing or blowing my nose



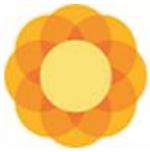
Before eating



After using the bathroom



If they are dirty



I can stay healthy by



Not touching my face, or biting my nails



Trying not to touch outside doors, handles, railings



I can help keep others healthy by



Coughing & sneezing into my elbow



Putting used tissue in the bin



Staying at home if I feel sick

Just like any other cold or flu
Coronavirus will go away in
a couple of months



I do not need to worry about it
but if I am unsure I can talk to my caregivers



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