



# Bolton Parent Carers & Bolton Information Advisory Service

## *Working together for Bolton's SEND families*

Joint Bulletin 6 - 24th April 2020

Lots of information for Bolton's SEND families this week as we enter week five of social distancing measures. Its been a lovely week of sun and warmth! We hope you've managed to get outdoors in your gardens or on daily exercise a little bit.

We have hosted our first two live 'webinars' on early years to primary school transition. These went really well, and were well attended. We may add some more to the calendar if we get some demand for them. Drop us an email if there's something you think we could cover.

At the end of the bulletin is our **new weekly newsletter from the Educational Psychology Service.**

### Bolton IAS Contact Details

[www.iasbolton.com](http://www.iasbolton.com)

Email: [iasoutofhours@outlook.com](mailto:iasoutofhours@outlook.com)

Text: 07467 943495

### Bolton Parent Carers Contact Details

[www.boltonparents.org.uk](http://www.boltonparents.org.uk)

Email: [info@boltonparents.org.uk](mailto:info@boltonparents.org.uk)



### Direct Payments Guidance

We have had several contacts about what families *can* and *can't* do with their direct payment, particularly, if they would normally use this to employ a PA to help deliver care and support. The general message is that any changes to your caring needs should always be discussed with the social care team supporting you. However, a guide has been issued this week, which helps answer some of these questions, in particular around;

- Furloughing or paying PA's
- Using family members to deliver care
- Contingency planning for staff sickness
- Sick pay for PA's
- Using funding for other expenses incurred by COVID-19

You can find the guidance and FAQ's here-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-people-receiving-direct-payments>



## Free laptops and internet access for certain groups of children

You may have heard that the government have released information about their intention to provide free laptops and internet access to 'disadvantaged' students, to allow them to continue their studies. This currently includes;

- Digital devices for some disadvantaged Year 10 pupils, care leavers and school children with social workers who do not already have them
- 4G dongles for some disadvantaged Year 10 pupils, care leavers and children in secondary school with social workers who do not have internet access

### How will they be given out?

Local authorities, trusts and other relevant organisations overseeing schools will be given guidance on how to place online orders for devices for eligible pupils. Schools, parents and pupils will not be able to order the devices themselves.

Digital devices for care leavers and children with social workers will be given to local authorities who will manage distribution to children and young people. Schools may be asked to help manage distribution where appropriate.



## Home Schooling

We have had lots of parents get in touch about how they are (or are not!) managing home schooling.

Legally, there is no 'duty' on you to be providing an education whilst our children are at home. Schools should continue to provide resources and online learning to enable this, and this may make you feel like you must complete it all, and try and implement a schooling routine at home.

We know, as do the schools, and the government, that you are trying to juggle parenting with being a stand in teacher, maybe working at home too, and trying to keep a house going. That's a huge ask!!! Whilst we all want to try and keep our children up to speed, and ensure they don't regress or get behind, please be mindful, that when schools do return, the fact our children have been off for so long, will have to be factored in to what is delivered to them when they get back to the classroom. All children will have to be considered, irrespective of need. We are not saying not to bother, we are saying be kind to yourself, pick your battles, and do what is doable for you. Some children simply cannot engage in learning very easily, some will refuse- don't make life harder. Do what you can. There are lots of resources now to make learning more accessible and fun. For those who struggle to get online, learning any new skill is an achievement- cooking, gardening, learning household chores all count!

The government have a dedicated page now for learning and resources for parents. This also includes SEND learning and educational games. It can be found here-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-online-education-resources/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-online-education-resources-for-home-education#send-apps-and-games> Also, check out BBC bitesize in our 'other updates' section at the end for more information on daily lessons at home!



## **Bolton Council** Update from Bolton Council Educational Psychology service (EPs)

A reminder that the **Educational Psychologists Helpline** for families is now live. You can call them to discuss, for example, any concerns or questions you may have about your child and their education, or any matters regarding supporting them, meeting need, helping with emotional health in children.

The Helpline numbers may need to change week commencing 4th May- so please do check back after this time for updated numbers-

Until Friday 31st April:

Monday afternoon; 1.00pm - 5.00pm – 07768353621

Wednesday morning; 9.00am - 12.30pm – 07580036439

Friday morning; 9.00am - 12.30pm – 07789031347



## Reminder on support available to you now

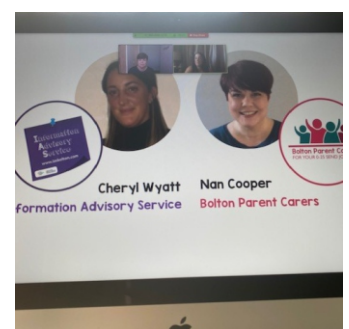
Both the IAS and BPC websites have a wide range of resources and information to keep you up to date and busy throughout this time. You can find us at [www.iasbolton.com](http://www.iasbolton.com) and [www.boltonparents.org.uk](http://www.boltonparents.org.uk)

IAS and BPC are holding coffee mornings by Zoom. Each one is usually hosted by Frankie from Bolton Parent Carers. These are every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, from 11.30am until 12.30pm. For more information visit [www.boltonparents.org.uk/join-in](http://www.boltonparents.org.uk/join-in)

Our IAS 'natter and listen' service is still here for anyone who needs it- whether you just need some adult conversation, need to let off some steam, want some advice or reassurance, or just someone to call a friend to talk about your day, we are here. Simply text 07467943495 and we will arrange a call back for you whenever you want to talk. Cheryl, Nan, Mike and Karen are happy to help wherever we can.

We have run our first online workshops this week as a webinar. We are hoping to offer more of these in coming weeks. When you join a webinar, you can see our presentation and see us, but we can't see or hear you! You can use functions on the session - Q&A and Chat to communicate to us.

The usual IAS service- although we are all working from home, we can continue to offer telephone and email support, advice and guidance for anything SEND related- whether you've got EHC forms to complete, want to know about anything education, health or social care related, or to chat through your concerns for when the schools go back, get in touch using our 24 hour email address- [iasoutofhours@outlook.com](mailto:iasoutofhours@outlook.com) and we will call you back.





## Other updates



Heaton Fold Garden Centre launches home delivery- Green-fingered Bolton residents can stock up on supplies from the comfort of their own home thanks to a new service being offered by Heaton Fold Garden Centre. Customers will be able to place orders for summer bedding plants for beds, pots or hanging baskets, perennials, shrubs, soil, compost and much more at good value prices. Orders can be made by phone or email only and a friendly team of staff will be on standby to talk customers through the items available and arrange a suitable delivery slot Monday to Friday. Perfect for those children who learn through getting grubby and spending time outside in the garden! Visit <https://www.bolton.gov.uk/news/article/727/heaton-fold-garden-centre-launches-home-delivery>



Need social care help? Our dedicated social care staff are here to help whenever you need them. If you have a health problem, including any medical, psychological or emotional condition and you are struggling with everyday activities, or if you are concerned for a relative or someone you care for, then please contact us on 01204 337860.



Children and young people at risk- Children and young people are now spending significantly more time at home, potentially placing them at increased risk of harm. If a child is experiencing abuse, there aren't as many opportunities for others to spot the signs, or for them to access support, in turn increasing their vulnerability. If you have concerns regarding child exploitation, please get in touch using our online reporting services, call 101 or via LiveChat. If you or someone you know is in immediate danger, dial 999. Alternatively call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111. If you're concerned that a young person is at risk but don't want to go directly to the police, you can call the @NSPCC Helpline on 0808 8005000, and ChildLine is available to young people 24/7 on 0800 1111.



The BBC has launched its new home learning tool, BBC Bitesize Daily- Created in collaboration with 200 teachers and a host famous faces, BBC Bitesize Daily aims to teach the nation's children using the UK's national curriculum. It offers 14 weeks of free learning for children from Year 1 up to Year 10, with three new lessons every weekday with videos, activities and more. You can find it here <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>



If you are struggling because you need to stay at home and have no family or friends to support you, with shopping or other help, help is available through the council's Response Hub, which has been set up by the council and partners. Bolton Council website has updated their homepage with all necessary links for residents during this time - whether it's bin collections, finance, health all the links are in the homepage [www.bolton.gov.uk](http://www.bolton.gov.uk)



### Need support?

Our COVID 19 community response line is now open offering vital help to people who need food or essential items

**01204 337221**

8.30am - 5.30pm Mon - Fri and Sat 9am - 1.30pm

## Seeking Medical Attention for Children

Health services continue to urge parents and carers to access health support for their children when they are unwell.

Here is a fantastic tool to help you determine what you need to do, and where you need to go, if your child becomes unwell in this time.

## Advice for parents during coronavirus

Whilst coronavirus is infectious to children it is rarely serious. If your child is unwell it is likely to be a non-coronavirus illness, rather than coronavirus itself.

Whilst it is extremely important to follow Government advice to stay at home during this period, it can be confusing to know what to do when your child is unwell or injured. Remember that NHS 111, GPs and hospitals are still providing the same safe care that they have always done. Here is some advice to help:

 <p><b>RED</b></p>	<p><b>If your child has any of the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Becomes pale, mottled and feels abnormally cold to the touch</li> <li>Has pauses in their breathing (apnoeas), has an irregular breathing pattern or starts <b>grunting</b></li> <li>Severe difficulty in breathing becoming agitated or unresponsive</li> <li>Is going blue round the lips</li> <li>Has a fit/seizure</li> <li>Becomes extremely distressed (crying inconsolably despite distraction), confused, very lethargic (difficult to wake) or unresponsive</li> <li>Develops a rash that does not disappear with pressure (the 'Glass test')</li> <li>Has testicular pain, especially in teenage boys</li> </ul>	<p><b>You need urgent help:</b></p> <p>Go to the nearest A&amp;E department or phone 999</p>
 <p><b>AMBER</b></p>	<p><b>If your child has any of the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is finding it hard to breathe including drawing in of the muscles below their lower ribs, at their neck or between their ribs (<b>recession</b>) or <b>head bobbing</b></li> <li>Seems dehydrated (dry mouth, sunken eyes, no tears, drowsy or passing less urine than usual)</li> <li>Is becoming drowsy (excessively sleepy) or irritable (unable to settle them with toys, TV, food or picking up) - especially if they remain drowsy or irritable despite their fever coming down</li> <li>Has extreme shivering or complains of muscle pain</li> <li>Babies under 3 months of age with a temperature above 38°C / 100.4°F</li> <li>Infants 3-6 months of age with a temperature above 39°C / 102.2°F</li> <li>For all infants and children with a fever above 38°C for more than 5 days.</li> <li>Is getting worse or if you are worried</li> <li>Has persistent vomiting and/or persistent severe abdominal pain</li> <li>Has blood in their poo or wee</li> <li>Any limb injury causing reduced movement, persistent pain or head injury causing persistent crying or drowsiness</li> </ul>	<p><b>You need to contact a doctor or nurse today.</b></p> <p>Please ring your GP surgery or call NHS 111 - dial 111</p> <p>The NHS is working for you. However, we recognise during the current coronavirus crisis at peak times, access to a health care professional may be delayed. If symptoms persist for 4 hours or more and you have not been able to speak to either a GP or 111, then take your child to the nearest A&amp;E</p>
 <p><b>GREEN</b></p>	<p><b>If none of the above features are present</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can continue to provide your child care at home. Information is also available on NHS Choices</li> <li>Additional <b>advice</b> is available to families for coping with crying of well babies </li> <li>Additional <b>advice</b> is available for children with complex health needs and disabilities.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Self care</b></p> <p>Continue providing your child's care at home. If you are still concerned about your child, call NHS 111 - dial 111</p>



## Ideas & Resources for Little Ones...

The Start Well EY SEND team have worked with a range of partners and collated some resources which might help parents and carers at home during the COVID-19 pandemic with young children who have SEND. We hope that they can be used to support and offer ideas at this very challenging time.

For FAQs by parents of young children with SEND, answered by StartWell, includes what is happening with EHC Needs Assessments, concerns about behaviour and resources to help. Click here - <https://tinyurl.com/yb8v2caj>

Corona Social Story. This Social Story can be used with young children and those with Special Educational Needs to talk about the Corona Virus and it's effect on our lives during the pandemic. <https://tinyurl.com/yaobg8ea>

Corona Support This is a printable to support young children and those with Special Educational Needs with remembering the key principles of staying safe during the COVID-19 Pandemic. <https://tinyurl.com/ybsq4or5>

Click on this link to explore more resources including Home Learning Support and Strategies to support behaviour <https://tinyurl.com/yacpvsro>

## WellChild

WellChild is the national UK children's charity making it possible for children and young people with **exceptional health needs** to be cared for at home instead of hospital, wherever possible. In response to some families requests for support during the pandemic, WellChild are offering families support with the following;



In response to families requests for help with getting access to some vital services and supplies;

- Access to food delivery service
- Prescription collection
- Delivery of Personal Protective Equipment for your care team (including handwash, alcohol gel, gloves, aprons, surgical masks and eye protection)
- Scrub style uniforms for care staff

Families can refer themselves for support using the form here-

<https://www.wellchild.org.uk/coronavirus/direct-response/>



We will be back in touch next Friday with a weekly update. If you would prefer not to receive this, please just let us know. In the meantime, please do make use of the joint IAS/BPC support package mentioned.

Stay well and look after each other, and most importantly, please stay at home.

Cheryl and the IAS team, and Nan and BPC



## Looking after yourselves and others

Everybody has their own ways of coping in difficult times and all of us can learn additional ways to face challenges.

Below we describe some of the different ways children (and adults) cope. We offer simple ways parents can help their children to develop these skills during lockdown.

Families already have a lot to do, but you may want to pick a few suggestions and try them out for a week. If they do not work, do not worry, just try something else out the following week.

### Belief

We can use belief systems and values to cope with challenges, e.g. by trust in a higher power or by helping those most in need. Belief systems are not just about religious beliefs. Many families of no faith will believe 'we should stay at home to stay safe, protect the vulnerable and help the NHS. Ways to help your child could include:

- Talking with your children about their beliefs and values (or your values) and reasons for the current lockdown
- If they want to help others, perhaps working with them to raise awareness of an issue on social media or by getting them to call a lonely family friend
- Connecting them with their faith community via trusted virtual platforms, if appropriate

### Affect (Emotions)

Expressing feelings can be a way to cope:, feeling bored or frustrated, laughing, crying or expressing a range of emotions. You can help your child by:

- Telling them it is OK and normal to feel the way that they are feeling
- Asking them how they are feeling, from time to time (**see Box 1**) letting them know you are there for them and listening.
- Modelling calm and helpful expression of feelings and how to deal with them. e.g. 'I feel frustrated, I'm going to breathe deeply'
- Having fun every day: watch funny YouTube clips together or have a 'dance off'

### Box 1: Talking about our feelings without dwelling on negatives

Parents comfort and help their children when they are feeling bad, and this helps their emotional development. However, at other times you may want to support your child's emotional development without dwelling on negative emotions. Here are some questions you can ask instead:

*In the last week when did you feel most happy? What makes you feel calm?  
Tell me what you want to do in the future? Tell me where in the house you feel most relaxed? Can you think of anything fun we can do at home? What have you enjoyed about today?*

## Social

Some people cope by interacting with and seeking help from other people. Families are central to this; however, children and especially older children, benefit from the social support of peers. You could help your child by:

- Encouraging your child to connect with family and friends using social media platforms. Set this up for younger children (**see Box 2**)
- Tell your child that it is OK to seek help when they are struggling
- Model seeking help when it is needed (e.g. asking for help with tidying or asking a neighbour to help you get some essentials, if needed)
- Spend time with each other every day, for example, eat meals together or play a game

## Box 2: Online Media & Safety

Monitor children's online interactions and media exposure and teach children online/media safety.

Limit (but do not fully eliminate) the amount of time children (and adults) see media coverage of Covid-19. Encourage children to talk about anything that has worried them in media. Give age appropriate and honest answers; avoid too much detail.

For child safety online guidance go to: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-safety-online-a-practical-guide-for-parents-and-carers/child-safety-online-a-practical-guide-for-parents-and-carers-whose-children-are-using-social-media>

## Imagination

People, including adults can use their imagination to cope with difficulties. You can help your child by:

- Reading or telling stories about overcoming challenges
- Listening to or making music
- Art projects (which could include draw how I feel)
- Making up and acting out a play
- Encouraging play as distraction and as a way of dealing with feelings
- Giving your child free time to play each day
- Creating a space free of electronics or structured games
- Joining their play some of the time, but also letting them play alone
- Modelling imaginative play, for example, for younger children, using toy dolls as props, act out a scenario of how the dolls are dealing with feeling bored or feeling frustrated
- Ask your child to tell you what they are looking forward to doing when this is all over



## Cognitive (Thinking)

Some people want to understand the issue and think about how they can overcome difficulties or they keep learning other things to distract themselves. You can help your child by:

- Giving them age appropriate, clear and honest answers
- Teaching them how to distinguish between reliable news and fake news (a great skill for life)
- Explaining social distancing rules, e.g. why to wash hands regularly
- Explaining your own coping strategies
- Doing some online research and learning about stress reduction strategies together

## Physiological

Using our bodies and looking after them is another way to cope with stressful situations. Some of the ways to help our children include:

- Follow an exercise routine every day, there are lots of free online exercise videos
- Taking a daily walk with children (Listen to your child carefully at this time as they might be more willing and able to talk whilst walking)
- Teaching deep breathing techniques (e.g. 'take 10 deep breaths' or 'blow out 100 imaginary candles')
- Eating as healthily as possible
- Drinking lots of water
- Encouraging good sleeping habits (see links via Box 3)

*The ideas outlined above are based on the work of Professor Lahad.*

## Box 3: Seek help if needed, do not delay

For mental or physical health emergencies please call 999. For other concerns please follow the most up to date government guidance which can be found at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

For further information on supporting children's mental health please go to <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

Having a routine generally helps with coping. Try to plan in things for yourself and your child that you know you will enjoy, that make you feel you have achieved something and that link you with others or with each other. Draw on the above approaches to behavioural activation.

The Educational Psychology Service can help with additional information, references and suggestions. Please contact our service or speak to your school SENCo.