

Dear families,

Working at home can be a stressful time during this pandemic, whilst also ensuring to meet your children's physical and emotional needs. It is important to acknowledge that there is no simple solution for this but we must remember that this is not normal circumstances and we are all doing the best that we can! Here are some ways that could help you and your family to release some of those stresses:

- **Create a safe working place.** This consistency and familiarity will help children to associate that space as time when you need to work. This will support children's understanding of what is happening now and next within their daily lives.
- **Create a loose routine for your daily lives.** This could be a collaborative experience as a family. Encourage children to talk about how they would like their day to look like and talk about what is essential as a family. For instance, creating visual prompts or planning activities of interest.
- **Plan one special thing to do as a family a day.** This will reassure children and you as a parent/guardian that there will be something to look forward to. This may be having a picnic together, baking or carrying out a craft activity as a family. This one-to-one time will be beneficial for both yours and your children's positive sense of self-worth. It also builds on children's social communication skills as they confidently build on their language to negotiate and share ideas collaboratively.
- **Make a sign together as a family.** This sign can be a great collaborative experience where the family can talk about the purpose of the sign and how it lets others know when family members need quiet time or time to do things independently. This can be an opportunity for children to make more signs for you as you work. This will help them with their fine motor control when using creative tools, such as scissors and pens to create marks with a purpose in mind.
- **Remember to set small goals each day!** Take time for regular breaks and know that it is okay to be flexible. This could include going on a family walk or doing a physical activity. This will be a great opportunity for building on your self-regulation as well as the rest of the family's. Physical activity allows families to disconnect from the outside world. It also allows us to release chemicals in our brain when we exercise and this positively creates feelings of pleasure, determination and energy.

Hope Education has some useful information about this via the link https://www.hope-education.co.uk/blog/smarter-wellbeing/national-workouts-wellbeing-week-it-s-time-to-make-time/?eid=AT85386860082347692333496363616&utm_campaign=EY%20Newsletter%20March%20

[Recruitment%20200331&utm_source=emailCampaign&utm_content=&utm_medium=email&eid={~MailId~}](#)

- Encourage children to carry out their own office or work role-play alongside you as you work. Role-play is an essential tool for children to problem-solve and make sense of their daily lives as well as their families. These resources could include paper, pens, note pads, old phones or an old keyboard.
- Encourage children to explore open-ended resources, such as a box. This will help children to build on their own imagination of all the possibilities of what a box could represent.
- Children may like to make their own fort with pillows and pieces of cloth during this time. Den making is a good way for children to have time and space to develop on their own independent space that is unique to them.
- Make a safe cosy space or box where children can access a group of items, which reflects on their interest or will make them feel secure during this time. Child Line has some good strategies to support you with managing feelings at this time.
<https://www.childline.org.uk/toolbox/calm-zone/>
- Visuals of emotions and cosy spaces are important ways that can support your child to build on their understanding of how they are feeling and why they may feel this way in different situations. Naming how you and your children may feel gives everyone the opportunity to explore those feelings safely by problem-solving together ways to overcome those feelings confidently.
- Have time as a family to reflect on your daily lives. Talk about what you liked about today's activities or what you think may make the day better.

We hope these ideas will support you, whilst reducing the worries that may occur during this time. If you feel that you may need some more help during this time, please let us know! Remember you are not alone and that we are always happy to provide you with the best support that we can! We hope that you continue to stay safe and enrich on those valuable moments that you have as a family.

Best Wishes,

Shannon

Yellow class teacher