

TISUK Coronavirus Advice for Practitioners

Trauma Informed Schools UK is aware of the anxiety that children, young people and adults have regarding Coronavirus. We are also anticipating that it is probable that there will be some restrictions on social gatherings and the possibility that schools and colleges may close for an extended period of time.

The national press and social media are rife with speculation about the impact of the disease and the risks to us all. Much of the information being shared is unsubstantiated and is adding to the already high levels of anxiety being felt. We have provided some information for you to share that is scientifically based. We hope this may help to reassure children and young people and maintain a more reasonable perspective about the current health crisis.

As TIS Practitioners you understand the importance of the role adults in school play in the lives of vulnerable children and young people. During a prolonged closure of schools many children and young people will suffer the loss of the daily connection with their EAA. We are encouraging schools to consider how they can safely maintain connectedness with children and help them to remember that they are valued and remain in the hearts and minds of their special adults. There are ideas below that could be used to help prepare children and young people for school closure and ways to stay in touch during that period.

Facts about Coronavirus

1. YOU CANNOT GET THE VIRUS BY PASSING SOMEONE ON THE STREET. TO BE CONSIDERED AT HIGH RISK OF CATCHING THE CORONAVIRUS YOU NEED TO LIVE WITH, OR HAVE DIRECT PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH, SOMEONE INFECTED, BE COUGHED OR SNEEZED ON BY THEM OR BE IN FACE-TO-FACE CONTACT, WITHIN TWO METRES, FOR MORE THAN 15 MINUTES. SO ITS PRETTY HARD TO CATCH!
2. YOU HAVE A 1 IN 75,000 CHANCE OF CATCHING THE VIRUS THERE ABOUT 7.5 BILLION PEOPLE IN THE WORLD. APPROXIMATELY 100,000 PEOPLE HAVE BEEN INFECTED BY THE VIRUS . THAT MEANS THE CURRENT ODDS OF ANYONE IN THE WORLD CONTRACTING THE VIRUS IS APPROXIMATELY 1 IN 75,000. SO THAT'S IS WHY THE VAST MAJORITY OF CHILDREN IN OUR SCHOOLS WILL NOT KNOW ANY ONE PERSONALLY WHO HAS THE VIRUS.
3. WE ALREADY KNOW THE GENE SEQUENCE OF THE VIRUS. THERE ARE ALREADY 80 CLINICAL TRIALS UNDER WAY FOR ANTI-VIRAL TREATMENT. ONE ON MICE AT UCL HAS PROVED SUCCESSFUL
4. DRUGS SUCH AS REMDESIVIR (EBOLA, SARS), CHLOROQUINE (MALARIA), LOPINAVIR AND RITONAVIR (HIV), AND BARICITINIB (RHEUMATOID POLYARTHRITIS) ARE ALL BEING TRIALLED ON PATIENTS WHO HAVE CONTRACTED THE CORONAVIRUS.

Supporting Students During School Closure

Prior to School Closure

Work directly with children / young people mapping out sources of support, strategies and ways of keeping connected. Encourage them to share their worries so that ideas can be shared and plans made together.

Work with children and young people to teach calming strategies to practice while they are not at school. Give pupils copies of these to take home and share with parents. Post these on the website.

Do a Wish My Teacher Knew What I Am Worried About re the virus. These can then be dealt with but may also be shared anonymously via the school website to support other children.

Once closure is confirmed have a transition session with transitional objects that the child /young person can take home to maintain connection with their EAA.

During School Closure

If schools are unable to maintain direct contact with students then sending Postcards home during the disruption will help remind students that they are in your minds.

SKYPE or similar check in session

Pastoral and EAAs keeping in direct contact with children and young people via e learning platforms

A designated email address that is overseen by the DSL and TIS practitioners daily and responded too for vulnerable students

Possibility of text messages /mobile phone contact with designated adults using a school phone

Schools to ensure that students know about the places they can access help and ensure that school websites publish these (e.g local foodbank, helplines etc)

Children and young people to have a diary, note book, sketch pad or other ways of creating a thread that can be picked up on return and used to 'hold in mind manage a newsletter from

Students create a weekly newsletter from home that is overseen by a staff member that keeps them in touch and includes ideas about things to do to keep emotionally and mentally well, news and interesting facts.

Schools may need to consider being clear about the parameters of this contact for example the hours that they are available ,who is contactable and not being available during the actual school holiday period as that is staff time. Schools will also need to have clear guidelines about how to respond to safeguarding matters that may come to light.

