

IIMHL & IIDL Leadership Briefing XVIII

COVID-19: Update on Child and Youth Resources

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Introduction

The following resources, reports and children's books are from a variety of IIMHL countries, namely Australia, England, Aotearoa/New Zealand, Scotland and the US. They show the wide range of resources available for children.

Australia: Mental health 'most important' thing for children during COVID-19

GP News May 2020

Actively screening all children is vital for their mental wellbeing during and after the pandemic, according to a child health expert.

Dr James Best believes that if the impact of the pandemic on children's mental health is not addressed, it could develop into longer-term concerns.

Director of the national positive parenting network Triple P, Carol Markie-Dadds, called the upheaval and stress Australian children and families are experiencing from the pandemic 'unparalleled'. Public health measures have already challenged families, but the surrounding economic crisis is set to challenge them even further,' she said. 'We have acted early and decisively to address the physical health threat of COVID-19, now is the time to act ... to build resilience in our children, families and communities, to navigate through the compounded crises caused by COVID-19,' she said. This post finished with several resources for children.

<https://www1.racgp.org.au/newsgp/clinical/mental-health-most-important-thing-for-children-du>

Scottish Government: Supporting Vulnerable Children and Young People Data Intelligence Report

April 2020

This report provides a commentary about the impact of the Covid-19 outbreak on vulnerable children and families in Scotland in the initial weeks of the 'lockdown', and on the way that services are adapting and responding to the crisis. It has been compiled through intelligence from various sources, that are referenced at the end of the report.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/supporting-vulnerable-children-young-people-data-intelligence-report/>

Scotland: Parent Club

This website has advice for parents on looking after themselves and their children.

<https://www.parentclub.scot/articles/mental-health-advice-parents-during-coronavirus>

England: Coronavirus and children and young people's mental health

Anna Freud Centre June 2020

In our new Emerging Evidence series, we searched for evidence published during the pandemic from around the world, to help us begin to answer three questions:

1. What are the key mental health challenges for children and young people during the coronavirus pandemic?
2. Are there any particularly vulnerable groups?
3. What might help children and young people to manage these challenges?

<https://www.annafreud.org/coronavirus-support/our-research/>

Public Health England: Helping Children and young people cope with stress

June 2020

How children and young people of different ages may react

All children and young people are different, but there are some common ways in which different age groups may react to a situation like the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Understanding these may help you to support your family. The common reactions to distress will fade over time for most children and young people, though could return if they see or hear reminders of what happened.

For infants to 2-year olds

Infants may become more easily distressed. They may cry more than usual or want to be held and cuddled more.

For 3 to 6-year olds

Preschool and nursery children may return to behaviours they have outgrown. For example, toileting accidents, bed-wetting, or being frightened about being separated from their parents or carers. They may also have tantrums or difficulty sleeping.

For 7 to 10-year olds

Older children may feel sad, angry, or afraid. Peers may share false information but parents or carers can correct the misinformation. Older children may focus on details

of the situation and want to talk about it all the time, or not want to talk about it at all. They may have trouble concentrating.

<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>

Aotearoa/New Zealand: COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Resources & Information for the Workforce and for Whānau

Werry Workforce Whāraurau June 2020

“Infectious disease outbreaks, like the current Coronavirus (COVID-19), can be scary and can affect our mental health. While it is important to stay informed, there are also many things we can do to support and manage our wellbeing during such times.

Below are a number of resources that include some tips we hope will help you, your friends and your family to look after your mental health at a time when there is much discussion of potential threats to our physical health”.

This organisation is the national workforce agency for staff of child and youth mental health and addiction services. It has a range of resources for children, youth and parents on this webpage. Staff resources and training are on other pages.

<https://werryworkforce.org/professionals/publications-and-resources/covid-19-coronavirus-resources-information-workforce-and#covid-19%20resources%20for%20chdn%20family%20whanau>

US: “Supporting the Emotional Needs of Youth During COVID-19”

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

This is a NAMI “Ask the Expert Webinar”. Dr Meghan Walls, a paediatric psychologist, provides an overview of the kinds of emotional reactions we can expect from children and youth during the COVID-19 pandemic. Also covered will be recommendations for how parents, teachers and other caregivers can provide emotional support and reassurance to help navigate this challenging time.

Watch the replay:

<https://nami.adobeconnect.com/pya66kpn5niw/?proto=true>

Read the transcript:

<https://www.nami.org/getattachment/Blogs/NAMI-s-Ask-the-Expert/2020/NAMI-s-Ask-the-Expert-Webinar-Supporting-the-Emoti/NAMI-AtE-04-23-2020-TRANSCRIPT.pdf?lang=en-US>

Canada: About Kids Health

The hospital for sick children June 2020

This hub includes resources on COVID-19 and how to help you cope. There are resources on how to support your child's mental health and general wellbeing through physical activity, sleep, nutrition and learning. Also included are videos and audio meditations to help you cope with stressful thoughts and experiences that occur throughout your day.

This website has a video for children explaining the coronavirus: *“Dr Ronni's chat with Dr Cheddar”*. Dr Cheddar is a mouse.

<https://youtu.be/fBkA2ZTUnyl>

Books on COVID-19 for children 6 to 11 years of age

“Putiputi and Puddy learn about the coronavirus”

This book is from Aotearoa/New Zealand. The authors are Janet Peters (IIMHL Liaison for Aotearoa) and Dr Paul Hirini Clinical Psychologist and he belongs to the Ngā Huia ki Poroutāwhao, Muaūpoko, Ngāti Ruakawa ki te Tonga and Ngāi Tūhoe Iwi.

The book tells the story of a young girl Putiputi who has a cat Puddy. Putiputi 's parents explain about the coronavirus but she feels worried and asks her three neighbours about it. Finally she understands and feels happy.

https://worryworkforce.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Parenting/Putiputi%20%26%20Puddy_Covid-19_Janet-Peters.pdf

“Children's guide to coronavirus”

Children's Commissioner England March 2020

Children and young people want to feel assured that their parents and carers can keep them safe. One of the best ways to achieve this is by talking openly about what is happening and providing honest answers to any questions they have. Explain what is being done to keep them and their loved ones safe, including any actions they can take to help, such as washing their hands more often than usual. Use words and explanations that they can understand. There are resources available to help you do this, including this Children's Commissioner's book.

<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/cco-childrens-guide-to-coronavirus.pdf>

“My Hero is You, How kids can fight COVID-19”

Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Setting

This book is on the World Health Organisation website and is a unique collaboration of United Nations agencies, national and international nongovernmental organizations and international agencies providing mental health and psychosocial support in emergency setting.

<https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/09-04-2020-children-s-story-book-released-to-help-children-and-young-people-cope-with-covid-19>