

Back to School and Coronavirus

Covid-19 (coronavirus) related worries

We are currently in very uncertain times. All of us are worried about Covid, our health, the health of our loved ones, jobs, money and lots of other understandable worries. Many of the characteristics and behaviours seen in ASD and similar difficulties are coping mechanisms for anxiety. It is no surprise that many of these behaviours and difficulties may become more apparent or intrusive during this time when we are all more anxious. Children and young people may express their anxiety through a variety of different ways including their behaviours, increased sensory issues, poorer sleep, or they may be able to tell you they have worries about Covid. There are lots of online resources to help you to have conversations with your child about Covid and ways to help support them and help contain some of their anxieties during the pandemic and different situations that arise from it.

<https://www.sheffieldchildrens.nhs.uk/patients-and-parents/coronavirus-resources-for-children-and-families/>

<https://contact.org.uk/advice-and-support/covid-19/coping-at-home/>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/looking-after-yourself/coronavirus-and-mental-health/>

<https://www.autism.org.uk/services/helplines/coronavirus/resources/helpful-resources.aspx>

Getting back to school

It is completely understandable if your child/young person or you are worried about them going back to school in September. We know you may be concerned about your child catching Covid and it is OK to be anxious about this. It is important to remember that children are at low risk of becoming seriously ill from the virus. Anxiety is contagious and your child will take their cues from you. If you talk to them in a positive and relaxed way about them going back to school (even if you may not completely feel this way), your child is more likely to be able to think of the positive things about going back to school and be less anxious about it.

The Ryegate psychologists have devised some tips for helping prepare your child/young person for going back to school:

<https://www.learnsheffield.co.uk/Downloads/Emotional-Health-and-Wellbeing/Sheffield%20SEND%20Parent%20guide%20for%20supporting%20children%20to%20return%20to%20school.pdf>

<https://learnsheffield.co.uk/Downloads/Emotional-Health-and-Wellbeing/Sheffield%20Parent%20guide%20for%20supporting%20children%20to%20return%20to%20school.pdf>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/what-to-do-if-your-child-is-anxious-about-going-back-to-school/>

<https://senresourcesblog.files.wordpress.com/2020/05/going-back-to-school-1.pdf>

<https://www.autism.org.uk/services/helplines/coronavirus/updates/education-and-school/back-to-school-guide.aspx>