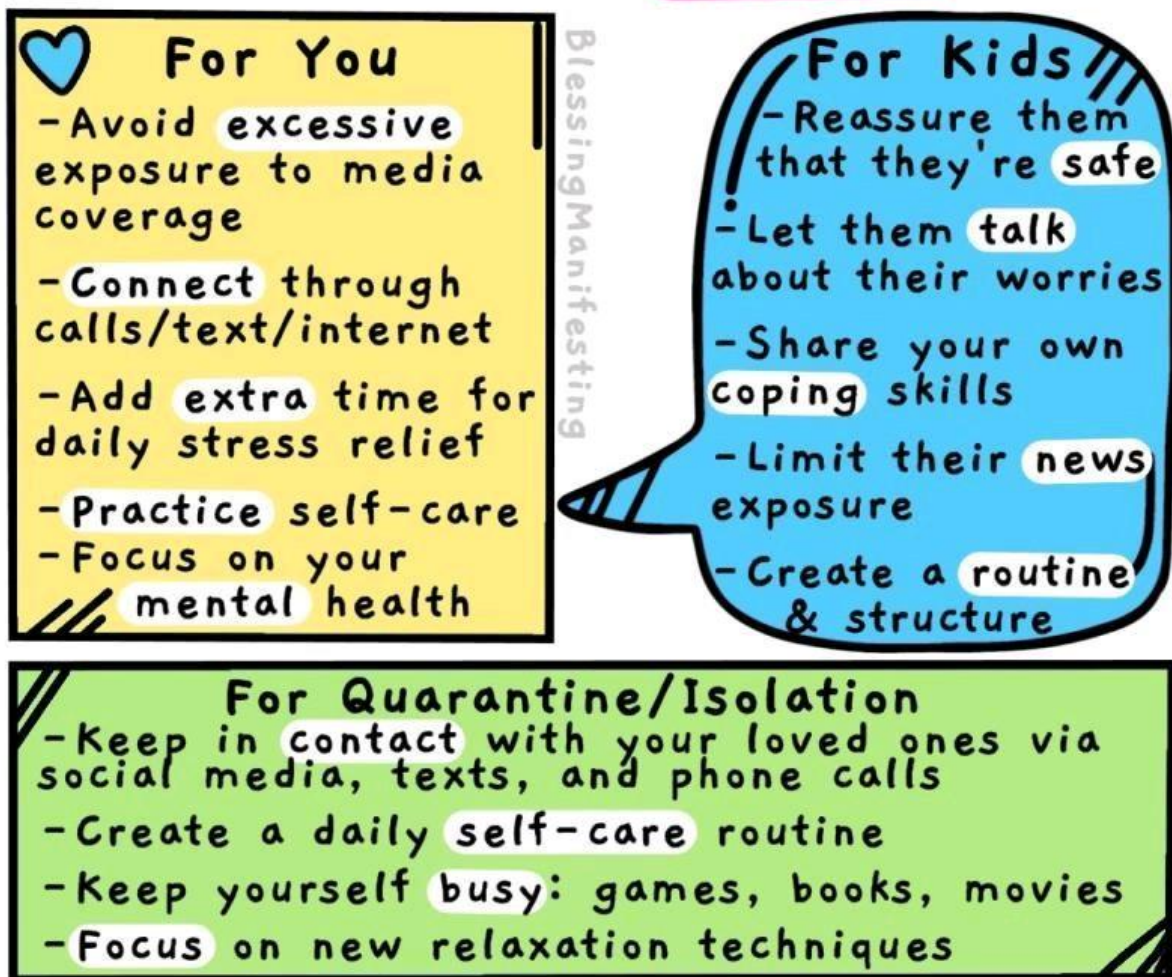


Parent Update 23/03/2020

Dear Parents

I was thinking of ending with this but actually - perhaps it should be the headline today...

MANAGING CORONA VIRUS (COVID-19) ANXIETY



Today's (23rd March) Update. I'm Trying to keep things as brief as possible today as I know there is so much to take in all round at the moment. So this email covers

1. General Points
2. Update on Open Academy Keyworker Childcare (OAKC)
3. Free school meals info
4. Update on the Open Virtual Academy (OVA)
5. Reflection from the trust and Chaplain

Oh and the above poster for our mental health!

1. General update

First today I would like to thank you for heeding the government warnings and where possible not sending in your children. It became clear over the weekend the idea is to reduce social contact as much as possible to fight the virus and you have responded in a great way. In the end less than half a dozen children were in today meaning that I could reduce staffing to a minimum reducing our staff risks too which is so helpful for all.

I must also thank you for the fantastic response we had to our request for information about your work situations. With response covering over 60% of the Academy population, it will help us greatly as / if / when advice begins to change.

2. Open Academy Keyworker Childcare (OAKC)

We will continue to run a skeleton service with minimal staff for the rest of the week and review where we are by Friday. I know we have some couples that are both key workers who have pre-booked their children in when they know they are both on shift and we are happy to support in these circumstances, so do contact us if you are keyworkers in need and feel you will need to use our service, then we can ensure we are prepared.

If you are a key worker with no alternative and need your child to come in to our provision, please could you contact us on 07799715432 ideally between the hours of 9am and 3pm only please so that we can ensure we can keep our staffing to an absolute minimum

Just a few quick reminders...

- Students must come to the academy in full uniform
- There are set routines around lessons, break and lunchtimes
- No mobile phones or music allowed
- All students must wash their hands on arrival, break and lunch
- All students must sign in

3. Free School Meals

Students who qualify for free school meals are able to collect packed lunches from the Academy this week while we wait for further information on other provision for this from the government. Parents will need to book these for the next 4 days by emailing office@open-academy.org.uk and giving us the name of their student/s

4. Open Virtual Academy updates

We are getting some fantastic feedback from parents around the our virtual school efforts. Even national systems like SIMS were tested to breaking point today but as things settle we hope to provide a more consistent and settled service

I am hoping to hold a virtual staff meeting tomorrow night to try to take steps towards greater consistency although the various platforms we use do throw up some issues we will see what we can do

I won't add anymore except to say thank you for supporting your children during these unprecedented times – it is really challenging for all so please do see the advice poster below to help reflect on keeping yourselves going through this challenge!

5. Reflection from the Trust and Chaplain

We had this sent to us last week from the Trust and its wonderful. Please take the time to read, It will encourage you.

Lockdown - Fr. Richard Hendrick, OF

**Yes there is fear.
Yes there is isolation.
Yes there is panic buying.
Yes there is sickness.
Yes there is even death.
But,
They say that in Wuhan after so many years of noise
You can hear the birds again.
They say that after just a few weeks of quiet
The sky is no longer thick with fumes
But blue and grey and clear.
They say that in the streets of Assisi
People are singing to each other
across the empty squares,
keeping their windows open
so that those who are alone
may hear the sounds of family around them.
They say that a hotel in the West of Ireland
Is offering free meals and delivery to the housebound.
Today a young woman I know
is busy spreading fliers with her number
through the neighbourhood
So that the elders may have someone to call on.
Today Churches, Synagogues, Mosques and Temples
are preparing to welcome
and shelter the homeless, the sick, the weary
All over the world people are slowing down and reflecting
All over the world people are looking at their neighbours in a new way All over
the world people are waking up to a new reality
To how big we really are.
To how little control we really have.
To what really matters.
To Love.
So we pray and we remember that
Yes there is fear.
But there does not have to be hate.
Yes there is isolation.**

**But there does not have to be loneliness.
Yes there is panic buying.
But there does not have to be meanness.
Yes there is sickness.
But there does not have to be disease of the soul
Yes there is even death.
But there can always be a rebirth of love.
Wake to the choices you make as to how to live now.
Today, breathe.
Listen, behind the factory noises of your panic The birds are singing again
The sky is clearing,
Spring is coming,
And we are always encompassed by Love. Open the windows of your soul
And though you may not be able
to touch across the empty square,
Sing.**

You all continue to be in my thoughts and prayers. If I can provide support in any way,
please do not hesitate to contact the Academy.
God bless you and yours
Mark

Please do keep looking after yourselves and your families – I hope this communication
helps

Kindest regards

Jon Ford