

Transitioning from lockdown to a new normal

A guide for 14+ year olds

Life during the coronavirus pandemic has been different for everyone. For some young people, this change has been small, but others might feel like their lives have been turned upside down.

This leaflet will give you some ideas of activities you can do to help prepare yourself for the changes that are coming.

Wake me up when coronavirus is over...

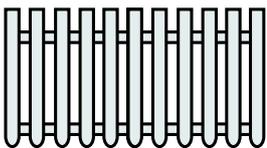
I hate Mondays!

KEEP CALM AND...

I'm going to school, I can't KEEP CALM!

What is normal?

Whatever you are feeling is normal. It's okay if...



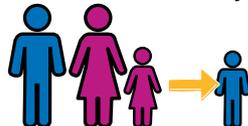
You had **issues** around school before lockdown began



you're **happy** spending lots of time at home



Not going to school has **reduced** your stress and anxiety



You can't wait to **get away** from your family



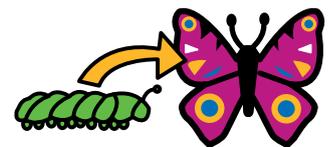
not going to school has **increased** your stress and anxiety



you want to curl up at **home** and never leave

Changes

You might not want to change how you're feeling right now, or you might really want to get rid of some of your feelings. The way life is right now cannot continue forever, so no matter how you're feeling right now, it's important to prepare yourself for the changes that are coming.



Be aware that changing things in your life will affect your mood and behaviour. Sometimes this will have a **POSITIVE** impact, and other times these changes can make you feel **WORSE**.

But please remember, these feelings won't last forever, no matter if they are good or bad feelings.

More information

[Going back to school](#)

[Practice self care](#)

[Tips to be happier](#)

[How do I feel?](#)

[Beyond control](#)

[Problems concentrating](#)

[Building self confidence](#)

[Building positive self talk](#)

[Overcoming procrastination](#)

[Know before you go to university](#)

[Losing someone you love](#)

If you try lots of ways to make yourself feel better, but you still feel unhappy after three weeks, you need some extra help.

[Mental health](#)

[Guide to anxiety](#)

[Tackling anxiety](#)

[About depression](#)

[childline.org.uk](https://www.childline.org.uk) (all ages)

[turning point](#) (aged 16+)

Call Childline on 0800 1111

With **all of us** in mind.

Let's get prepared!

Managing expectations

Take a moment to think about these questions:



What, if anything, do you enjoy about life during lockdown?



What, if anything, do you dislike about life during lockdown?



What can you control? Make two lists of things you can and can't control.



What do you think will be the most difficult change to your life as lockdown is lifted?



Will this be the same for the other members of your household?

Help yourself!

Get into a school routine before school starts. This means...



SLEEP (not all day though!)

You need about 9 hours on average. Be strict with yourself - social media or video games are not valid excuses for staying up late. [Try these relaxation ideas if you have trouble sleeping.](#)



EAT

Sugary drinks and fast food might taste good, but they are disastrous for your emotions. Plan your meals for the first week and make sure they contain some fruit and vegetables.



FAMILIARISE

Expose yourself to any new place you will need to go once school starts. Make the journey to school at the time you would normally get up even if you can't go inside yet.

See if your school has a virtual tour or paper map available. If you can, draw your own and note down where you will have class, eat lunch and spend break time.

If you are feeling nervous, get in touch with your teacher to let them know before the first day.



PLAN

Write out your schedule for the first week of school on a big piece of paper so it is clear for you to see. It might help to write a list of things you need and the time you will do homework and relax. If you think you have forgotten things you learnt or can't remember how to do something, write them down and tell your teacher on your first day.



TALK

Trust us - it helps! Problems and worries can seem humongous when they're inside our heads, but often they seem smaller when we've said them out loud. Share these feelings with a trusted adult. If you feel like you need someone to talk to, there are [helplines](#) available.

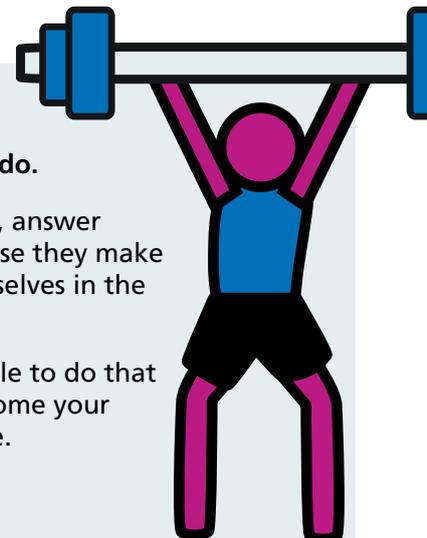
Building resilience

It can seem completely nonsensical to make ourselves do something we don't like to do.

All those things that you are required to do by school (take a test, give a presentation, answer questions) are there because they make us **stronger**. They build our **self-esteem** because they make us realise we can accomplish even difficult things. They make us **feel better** about ourselves in the long run.

Avoiding things we don't like makes us feel more helpless and it seems more impossible to do that thing. Doing things that make you nervous is **healthy** and it is the **ONLY** way to overcome your dislike of something. Being resilient means we can cope with the difficult things in life.

Take a look at the next page for ways to **manage your anxiety**.



What do I do if I feel anxious?



- Take a look at what is causing these feelings. Write down the worst possible scenario of your first day and then the best possible one. How likely to happen are these things? Most likely, your day will actually fall somewhere in between; there will be some good things and also some not so good things that happen.
- Are there steps you can take to make sure that more things on the 'best scenario' list take place? If you can't think of anything, you could ask a friend or a trusted adult for advice.

Everyone experiences anxiety at some point. Sometimes it's possible for us to help ourselves by trying new techniques, but other times you may need more help. Speak to an adult you trust if nothing seems to be helping

Reasons you might feel anxious and what to do



What others think of you

Our self-image is affected by how we think our peers view us. It might be that you don't have very high self-esteem or a strong self-image if you are really worried about what your peers think of you. Click [here](#) to try an activity to boost your self-esteem.



You're behind in your school work

It's incredibly hard to self-teach or try and learn as much as you normally would without a teacher present. Make a list of the subjects and topics you feel like you don't understand. Try to rate them in order of the ones you need most help with (#1) to the ones you need least help with (#10). Make sure you tell the teacher of each subject or your form tutor that you want extra help. Make sure you also dedicate an hour a day to revising or learning about those items on your list.



You're not sure what to expect

Your school day is going to be different. You might have to sit in a different place, only socialise with certain students and only be allowed in certain places in the school. Remember that this is the same for everyone; nobody really knows what they are doing on the first day back. Your school will be giving you information as to how things are changing - make sure you read this information and ask any questions you have before the first day.



You're worried about you or your family getting ill

The government are only allowing you to go back to school because they have agreed with schools a safe way to do this. Keeping absolutely everyone safe is [not in your control](#), no matter how much you worry. All you can do is wash your hands regularly with soap and follow the rules school have put in place.

Ways to calm yourself

- Breathe! Try a [breathing exercise](#).
- Close your eyes and [visualise](#) the best possible scenario of your day.
- [Question your thoughts](#) - fears can be brought on by thoughts that are not true. Are yours true?
- Do as much as you can to prepare - [don't put it off](#) as this will only make it worse.
- Use methods to distract yourself - listen to music, do some exercise or try a [mindfulness exercise](#).