

Coping with anxiety during unsettling times: *Advice from a Clinical Psychologist*



Advice from Dr Helen Care

How to be okay when schools are closed





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We spoke with Dr Helen Care (Clinical Psychologist) and she shares some advice for students and teens when schools are closed.

Read on for more details about what Dr Care has to say about coping at this time.

It is completely normal to experience a whole range of emotions. These may be new emotions that you have never felt before or might intensify existing feelings that you may have already had. These emotions may include loneliness, anxiety, panic, anger, and many more. The news that exams are cancelled might be a relief to some, but almost everyone is bound to be feeling weird, confused or just uncertain with everything at the moment. It is extremely important to know that you are not alone and there is help out there for you should you need to seek further support.



If you feel that you or someone you know (be they a parent, child, teacher or young person) are at risk of causing harm to themselves or others, then it is important to seek immediate professional help.

Seek an emergency GP appointment or call 999 if you or someone you know is at immediate risk.



Some other great sources of information and guidance on **worry, anxiety** and **youth mental health** are:

- [British Psychological Society](#)
- [Childline](#)
- [Anna Freud Centre](#)
- [Young Minds](#)
- [The Mix](#)
- [Samaritans](#)



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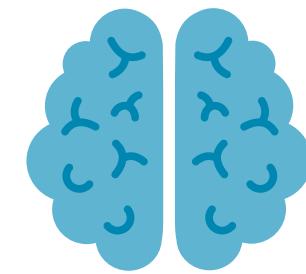
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Here are a few things you can be doing to cope with uncertainty and take care of your wellbeing:

1 **Keep active** – in any way you can. Go for a walk or a run, or join online activities, exercise classes and fitness challenges popping up all over the place that you can do at home, so find something you might enjoy and have a go!



2 The normal signals that tell your body and brain that things are alright with the world and keep you healthy are going to be slightly harder to come by at the moment. Be a bit creative though, and you can still get them: **daylight, exercise, food, sleep, social interactions (with family/people you live with or virtually through video calls with friends/family) and positive attention from ourselves and others.** Try to maximise these things to create a sense of normality and reduce feelings of uncertainty and isolation.



3 **Keep your brain active.** You have been gearing up to exams for at least the last few years and now your brains are ready to go! Make sure to keep them busy and learning. All the knowledge you have now might still be useful to you, even if you don't have to sit an exam in it, so don't let it slip away.



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Keep learning – learn something new. Whatever it is, set yourself challenges and have a go. This is a golden opportunity to do things you might not have had a chance to do otherwise. You know that skill you have always wanted to learn but never got around to? Or that thing you feel curious about and want to know more? Now is the time to get stuck in and find out more! Try out a language learning app, learn to cook, learn to code, there are so many to choose from. There are lots of great opportunities to learn new things via the internet, so have a search for something that interests you and get stuck in.



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Remember this will end. Life will continue, and there will be an end to these unsettling times. You won't be at a huge disadvantage to other people your age, because this has happened to everyone. But you do want to be ready for when life carries on.

Explore more free mental health and wellbeing support at the **Wellbeing Zone** ➤