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Dear Parent/Carer,

Please see information below from the government regarding keeping safe during this third national lockdown.

This guidance brings together sources of information about the main risks children may be particularly vulnerable to during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and signposts you to help and support available.

The essential measures to control coronavirus can potentially increase risks to children and this can cause concern for parents and carers. **If you are suffering from financial hardship, DLC has a range of supporting mechanisms including food parcels and access to supporting agencies.**

For additional support, advice and information during this period visit the [See, Hear, Respond service](#) or call on 0800 157 7015.

This includes online and face-to-face support for children and families, help for children at risk of harm outside of the home, and support to help vulnerable children successfully return to school.

Protect children from domestic abuse

The government's stay at home instruction does not apply if a person needs to leave their home as a result of domestic abuse. Refuges have remained open throughout the lockdown period to provide safe accommodation for victims and their children.

Domestic abuse can have devastating consequences for children, and can have lifelong impacts on their mental and physical health and behaviour into adulthood.

Domestic abuse occurs between those who are, or have been, in relationships. It can also occur between family members, such as between teenagers and parents (known as [adolescent to parent violence and abuse \(APVA\)](#)).

Find out [how to recognise and spot the signs of domestic abuse](#).

If you or someone you know is a victim of domestic abuse:

- see [domestic abuse: how to get help](#) which includes [specific advice on how to get help for children and young people](#)



- call the NSPCC helpline for advice and support if you have concerns about a child on 0808 800 5000, as well as the National Domestic Abuse helpline on 0808 2000 247

If you are in immediate danger, call 999 and ask for the police. If you are unable to talk on the phone, listen to the questions from the operator and respond by coughing or tapping the handset if you can. Follow the instructions depending on whether you are calling from a mobile or a landline.

For help with parental conflict and relationship abuse:

- [Co-Parent Hub](#) - information for separated parents and advice to help you and your ex-partner to be good co-parents.

Teenage relationship abuse

Teenagers can experience abuse in their own relationships, even if they aren't living with the abuser:

- [NSPCC's 'Coronavirus and keeping safe from abuse'](#) - common signs of teenage relationship abuse if you are concerned about a young person's relationship
- [Parent Info](#) - advice, tips, and key signs to spot for parents on [talking to teenagers about consent](#) and [spotting abuse in teenage relationships](#)
- [NSPCC](#) - helpful information for parents and carers on how to talk to your child about sex and consent
- [Childline](#) - interactive activities for children and signposts to support available

Child sexual abuse and exploitation

Call 999 and ask for the police if your child has been a victim of child sexual abuse – online or offline – and you believe they are in immediate danger.

Sexual abuse can happen anywhere – and it can happen in person or online. It's never a child's fault they were sexually abused – it's important to make sure children know this.

These are resources that can help:

- [Together, we can tackle child abuse](#) – how to recognise child abuse, and how to report it
- report to the [National Crime Agency-CEOP](#) (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) if you are concerned that your child has been a victim, or is at risk of becoming a victim, of online sexual abuse, or you are worried about the way someone has been communicating with your child online
- contact the [NSPCC helpline](#) 0808 800 5000 for support and advice if you have any concerns about your own or another child's safety
- [Stop It Now!](#) - information and advice on concerns about someone's behaviour, including children who may be displaying concerning sexual behaviour
- [Talk Pants Guide for Parents](#) – how to have age-appropriate conversations to help protect children from sexual abuse using simple, child-friendly language and give children the confidence and knowledge to stay safe
- [Coronavirus: support for parents and carers to keep children safe online](#) - resources to help keep children safe from different risks online, including child sexual abuse and 'sexting', and where to go to receive support and advice

Crime, Criminal Exploitation and County Lines, violence and gangs

Call the police on 999 if you feel that your child is in immediate danger. You can report concerns to the police on their non-emergency number, 101.



Children and young people involved with gangs, county lines and criminal exploitation need help and support. They might be involved in violence, be pressured into doing things like stealing, carrying drugs or weapons or be abused, exploited and put into dangerous situations.

- [NSPCC's 'Criminal exploitation and gangs'](#) - if you have concerns that your child is being criminally exploited, involved in gangs or county lines, as well as more information on what these terms mean - phone 0808 800 500 or email help@nspcc.org.uk
- [Children's Society resources on criminal exploitation and county lines](#) - for parents who are concerned their child may be being criminally exploited or involved in county lines
- [Parent Info](#) - information for parents about [knife crime and gang involvement](#)

If your child is missing from home;

Contact [Missing People SafeCall service](#) - or you have concerns about them being involved in gangs, drugs dealing or county lines exploitation.

SafeCall provides confidential and one-to-one support to children, but they also offer advice and guidance to parents and carers who are concerned and need support.

To speak to someone urgently, contact [Missing People's](#) free, 24/7 confidential helpline. Phone or text: 116 000 Email: 116000@missingpeople.org.uk

Report online material promoting terrorism or extremism

You can [report terrorist content you find online](#). More information about what to report and what happens when you make a report can be found on the [Action Counters Terrorism campaign](#).

Online child safety

It is important for children and teenagers to stay safe online, especially as they will be spending more time online than usual. Parents and carers may be particularly concerned about the safety of their children online.

- [advice for parents and carers on how to help children stay safe online](#) - how to make use of parental controls, how to have conversations with your child about staying safe online, and how children can stay safe and healthy during a time when they may be spending more time on their devices than usual
- [Childnet's guidance for parents and carers](#) – how to begin a conversation about online safety, as well as [guidance on keeping under-fives safe online](#)
- [Internet Matters](#) - expert age-specific advice to prepare and protect your child from a range of online issues, including: sexting, self harm, screen time, radicalisation, pornography, online reputation, online grooming, inappropriate content, identity theft, and cyberbullying
- [more support on specific harms children may experience online during COVID-19](#) including guidance and support to prevent and address these harms
- [online safety at home activity packs](#) – CEOP's simple 15 minute activities suitable for children aged 4-14+ can be done at home and focus on topics including image sharing, live streaming and watching videos on the web.

Mental health

If you are worried that someone you know is suicidal, including your child, Samaritans provides [advice on how you can support others](#).



Call [Young Minds' free Parents Helpline](#) on 0808 802 5544 for confidential, expert advice, if you have urgent concerns about your child's mental health and wellbeing.

This may be a difficult time for children and young people. Some may be struggling now, while others may be affected later.

During this time, it's important that you take care of your own and your family's mental health – there are lots of things you can do, and support is available if you need it.

- [Action for Children](#) - helps parents to spot the signs of poor mental health in their child and explains what to do to help
- [NSPCC](#) - a range of advice on how to support your child if you are concerned that they may be struggling with their mental health or be anxious about coronavirus
- [Public Health England advice](#) - helps adults with caring responsibilities look after the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people, including those with additional needs and disabilities
- [Young Minds](#) - tips, advice and where to get support for your child's mental health - parents can also access activity ideas for use during isolation
- [Every Mind Matters](#) – simple and practical advice to support your mental health and wellbeing, including advice on looking after children and young people.
- [NHS England has published advice for parents, guardians and carers](#) on how to help and support a child or young person.

If you wish to discuss or access any of the support above please contact Jayne Lewis (j.lewis@dlc.dorset.sch.uk) or Lucy Murray (l.murray@dlc.dorset.sch.uk)

Yours Sincerely,

Phil Midworth

Phil Midworth
Headteacher

