COVID-19 Self-isolation Advice for Families

Self-isolation is when you do not leave your home because you have, or might have coronavirus (COVID-19). It is very important that anyone who has the virus, or might have been exposed to it, restricts the number of people they come into contact with for 10 days. This is the most effective way of preventing the coronavirus from spreading.

If you test positive for Coronavirus or have been identified as a contact by NHS Test and Trace, you must now self-isolate by law.

Who needs to self-isolate?

You will need to self-isolate for 10 days if:

- You have tested positive for coronavirus or have symptoms and are awaiting a test result
- Someone you live with has symptoms or tested positive
- Someone in your support bubble has symptoms or tested positive
- You've been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace

Find out more online:
www.worcestershire.gov.uk/coronavirus

worcestershire county council

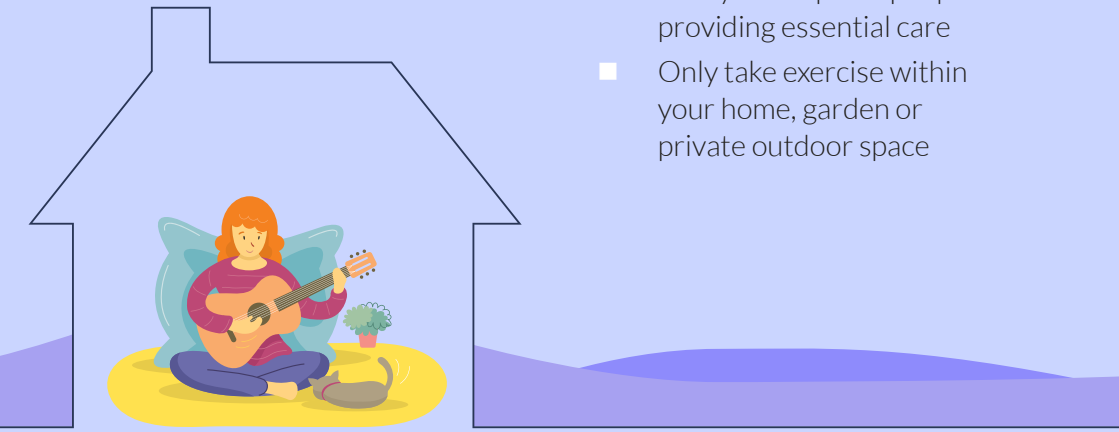
How do I self-isolate?

Day											
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Day: 11
Symptoms start or test date (if no symptoms)											Resume normal activities following COVID-19 guidance.
← Self-isolation →											

Your isolation period includes the day your symptoms started (or the day your test was taken if you do not have symptoms), and the next 10 full days.

If you have tested positive for COVID-19 or have been told to self-isolate, you must:

- Go home and stay home
- Not leave your home, unless for urgent medical reasons or you are at serious risk of harm
- Stay away from those you live with
- Not go to work or school or public places
- Not go out to get food and medicine – order it online, by phone, ask a friend or contact Here2Help
- Not use taxis or public transport
- Not have visitors in your home, including friends and family – except for people providing essential care
- Only take exercise within your home, garden or private outdoor space



Talking to your child about coronavirus

Children might not fully understand self-isolation and they will probably have mixed feelings about the experience. Children will cope better if they have accurate, age-appropriate information about coronavirus, social distancing and self-isolation.

1. Make time to talk about coronavirus, physical distancing and self-isolation
Find an appropriate time to sit down and talk to your child. Give them you full attention and answer any questions they may have.

2. Use a calm and reassuring tone
Always be calm when talking to your child and reassure them to make them feel safe.

3. What does your child already know about social distancing?
Always start by asking your child what they know about the situation. You may be surprised by how much they already know. Correct any misinformation and answer any questions they may have.

4. Use age-appropriate language
Use facts and positive language to reassure your child that the situation won't last forever and remind them of what they can do to help e.g. washing hands regularly and social distancing.

5. Encourage your child to talk about their feelings
Listen to your child's feelings and concerns. Let them know their feelings are normal and they can speak to you at any time.

Helpful Resources:

Coronavirus Fact Sheet for Children

**British Psychological Society:
Advice Talking to children about Coronavirus**

**Explaining Coronavirus to Children:
Animation & Story Book**

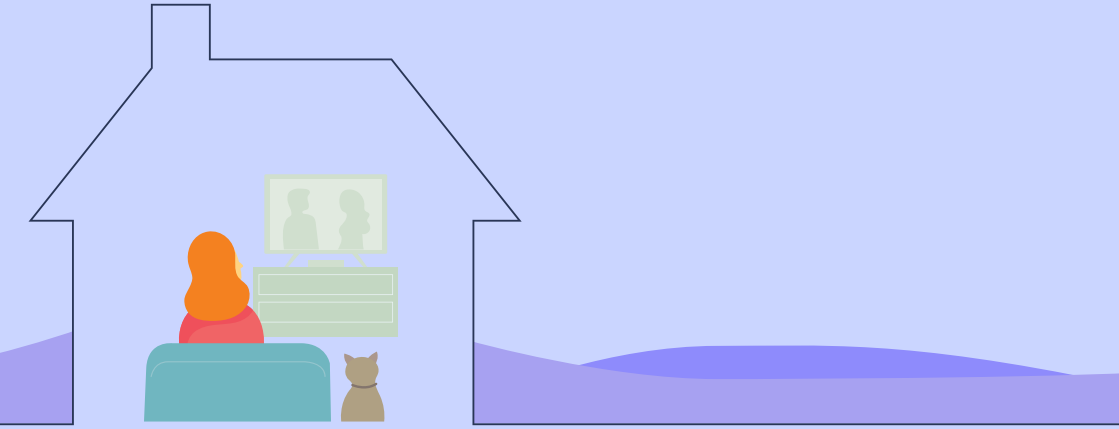
**Information to help answer
children's questions**

How do I protect my family at home?

Stay as far away from other members of your household as possible, especially if they are clinically extremely vulnerable.

If you are self-isolating, reduce the chances of spreading the infection to people you live with:

- Stay on your own in one room as much as possible and keep the door closed
- Keep indoor areas well-ventilated with fresh air, especially shared living areas
- Avoid using shared spaces (such as the kitchen) at the same time as other people - eat your meals in your room
- Avoid sharing household items such as dishes, drinking glasses, towels, bedding or other household items - after using these items wash them thoroughly with soap and water
- Use a separate bathroom - or use the bathroom after everyone else and clean it each time you use it, for example, by wiping the surfaces you've touched using standard household cleaning products.



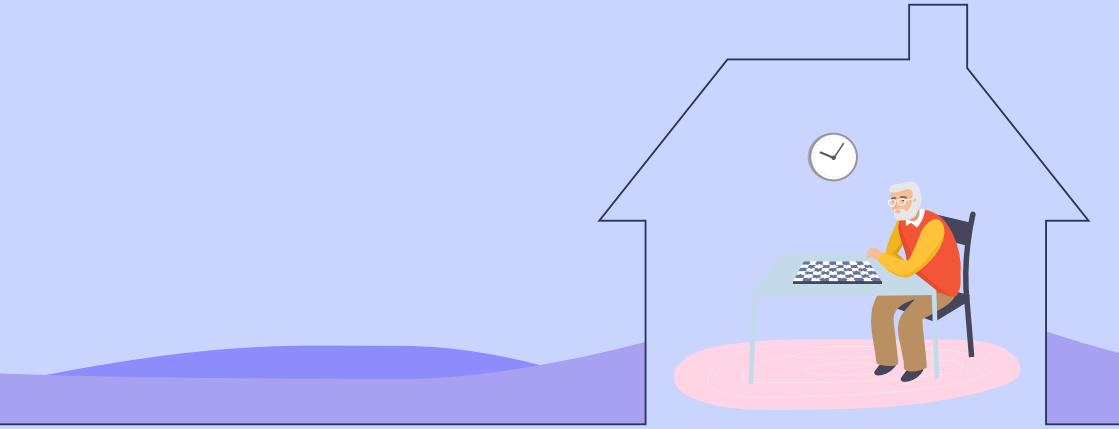
How to reduce the spread of infection in your home

DO:

- Wash your hands as often as possible with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds
- Use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- Put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
- Clean objects and surfaces you touch often (such as door handles, kettles and phones) using your regular cleaning products
- Consider wearing a face covering when in shared spaces
- Keep windows open as much as possible

DON'T:

- Share towels, including hand towels and tea towels
- Have any visitors to your home – except for people giving essential care



Looking after a child with coronavirus

- If your child feels unwell, you can give them infant paracetamol (follow dosage instructions on the medication)
- Ensure your child does not become dehydrated (especially if they have a fever, diarrhoea or vomiting) as this can make the illness worse and take them longer to recover. Encourage with lots of drinks and small frequent amounts of nourishing foods, as tolerated.
- Help your child get rest and plenty of sleep
- If possible, isolate the ill child and one parent to a room (if your house and family situation permit this) as this would limit potential exposure to only one parent allowing the other to look after any other children.
- If you are unable to manage at home, you can also get in touch with your GP by phone.
- You can find more information on the **NHS website**

What to do if your coronavirus symptoms get worse:

Most people with COVID-19 will experience a mild illness. Seek prompt medical attention if your illness or the illness of someone in your household is worsening. It's important to get medical help if your symptoms get worse.

Urgent advice - use the NHS 111 online coronavirus service or call 111 if:

- you feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home
- you feel breathless and it's getting worse
- your symptoms get worse and you're not sure what to do

If there is a medical emergency call 999 and inform the operator you may have coronavirus.

If you live with someone at higher risk from coronavirus

It's important to try to avoid spreading the infection to anyone who is at higher risk from coronavirus.

If you live with someone at higher risk, try to arrange for them to stay with friends or family while you're self-isolating.

If you have to stay at home together, try to keep 2 metres (3 steps) away from each other. If possible, try not to share a bed.

Help & Support whilst self-isolating

Here2Help is a community action response to Coronavirus (COVID-19). The service provides a central location for anyone who is unable to seek help from family, friends and neighbours. Here2Help can:

- Help with everyday tasks, like collecting shopping or medicines
- Link you to the relevant service if you are eligible to get sick pay or other types of financial support if you're not able to work
- Support you if you are feeling lonely, stressed or worried

We have received many kind offers of help and support from individuals, groups and businesses across Worcestershire during the pandemic. The Here2Help advisors can help connect you to these organisations or volunteers to help you.

Contact our Here2Help service if you require support

Visit: **www.worcestershire.gov.uk/here2help**
or call: **01905 768053** then press option 3.

The Here2Help opening hours are Monday to Thursday 9.00am to 5.00pm and Friday 9.00am to 4.30pm.

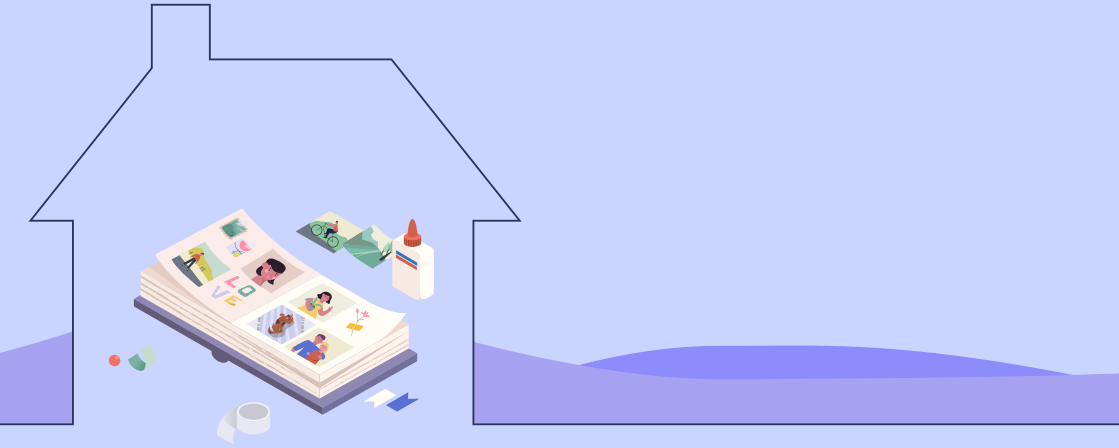
HERE 2 HELP WORCESTERSHIRE

Self-Isolation Tips

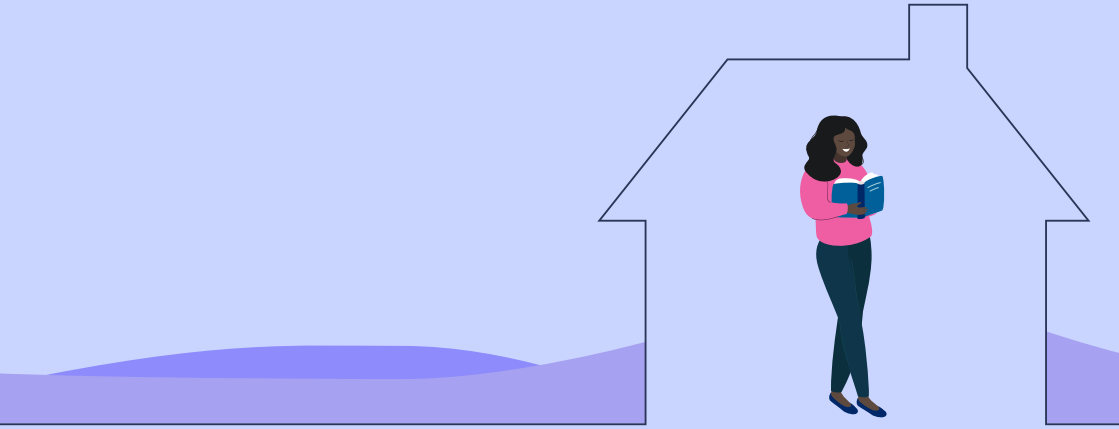
This can be a difficult period, but it is important to self-isolate and follow the guidelines in order to keep your friends, family and community safe.

Ideas:

- Create a countdown of your 10-day isolation period and mark off every day successfully completed with your children
- Plan ahead and think about what you will need to be able to stay at home for the full duration
- Ask your employer, friends and family for help to access the things you will need while staying at home
- Set a goal or activity for each day to keep you motivated
- Ask you children about new activities they would like to try
- Make sure you have plenty of healthy food and drinks available
- Have plenty of books, magazines and other activities to keep you busy
- Stay connected with friends and family via phone calls, texting and video calls
- Try to maintain a regular routine as much as possible



- Stay active by completing a home workout active even small amounts of exercise will do wonders for your emotional wellbeing
- Engage in your hobbies - Worcestershire Libraries are hosting a series of **free online bubbles** providing opportunities for people to meet safely online with like-minded others and discuss a topic of interest from board games, photography and children's books
- Try not to think about what you can't do – focus on what you can do, like nurturing your interests and relationships and focusing on self-care
- It's important to try and stay positive - find some light relief and sources of laughter where you can
- Ask for help if you need it – we're all in this together
- Read, write, play games, do crossword puzzles, sudokus, jigsaws, drawing or painting, find something that works for you.
- Learning something new is a great way to stimulate the brain and tune out any anxious thoughts



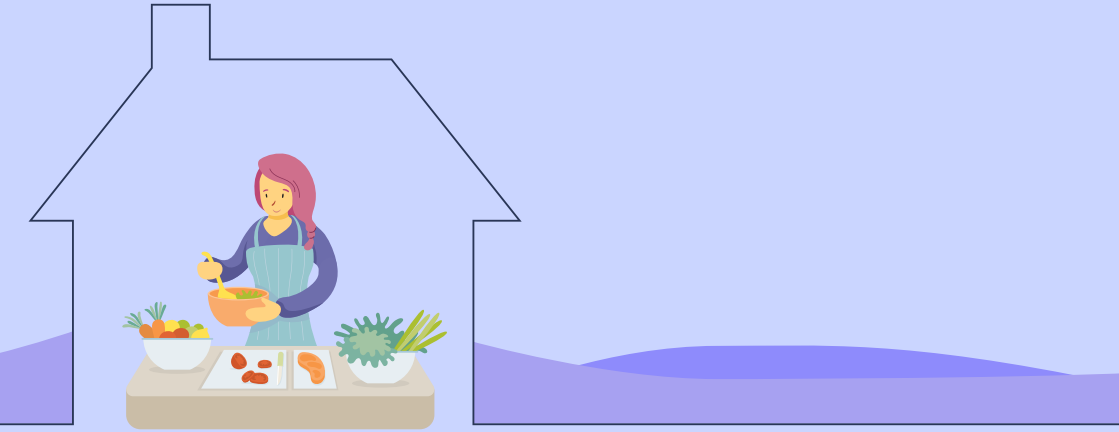
Helpful Resources

Entertainment

- Pretend you're at the cinema, watch films with the **viral film festival**
- **YouTube Spotlight** has an array of world-renowned plays, famous sporting events and amazing concerts available
- **Royal Museums Greenwich** offers a desert island guide to self-isolation and you can build your own solar system in a box
- **Natural history museum** has a range of online exhibits
- The **Science Museum** has lots of interesting learning resources
- Edinburgh Zoo's **panda cam**, **tiger cam** and **koala cam**
- There are many tutorials on **Youtube** where you can learn: a new language, how to juggle and even how to survive a shark attack

Keeping Active

- Joe Wicks "The Body Coach" has a range of **workouts you can do in your home**
- **Change4Life** has a variety of fun exercise ideas



Education

- From Monday 11 January, CBBC will offer three hours of primary school programming from 9am, and BBC Two will air content to support pupils studying for their GCSEs
- **Bitesize** - daily content from the BBC to support learning at home from primary to secondary and post-16
- **BBC Teach** - has thousands of free curriculum-mapped videos, arranged by age-group and subject.
- Schools may also be setting work for students or providing online lessons
- The Department for Education has a helpline to offer guidance for anyone with education related questions. Call **0800 046 8687** from 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday) and 10am to 4pm (Saturday and Sunday).
- **My Tutor** - useful tips and ideas for parents teaching their children from home

Metal Wellbeing

- **Action for Children** includes resources and information for young people experiences mental health problems
- **Every Mind Matters** includes a section for parents and carers on looking after children and young people during the outbreak
- **Young Minds** supports young people with their mental health
- **Kooth** an emotional well-being platform for children and young people, if required the service is also able to offer online counselling
- **Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust Wellbeing Support Guide** for children, young people and families

Children & Families FAQ's

What financial support are my family and I entitled to?

You may be entitled to a one-off payment of £500 through the NHS Test and Trace Support Payment scheme if you are required to stay at home and self-isolate. Visit your local authority's website for more information or call Here2Help for more information.

Can I still get free school meals for my children if they can't attend school due to coronavirus?

Yes - please contact Here2Help Worcestershire on our website or call 01905 768053.

I'm struggling to pay my bills and afford food – what other help is available?

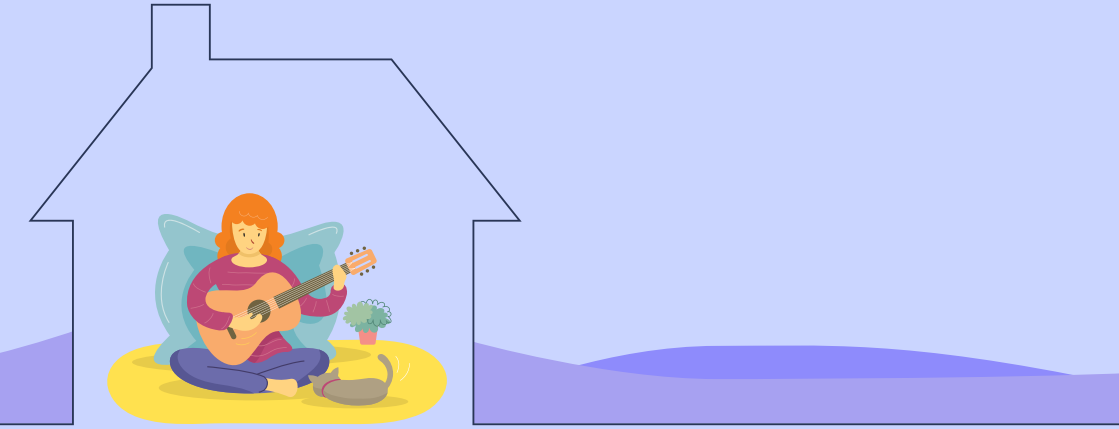
Contact Here2Help for more information on what support is available to you.

How can I reinforce the importance of social distancing to my teenager?

It can be particularly hard for teenagers to socially distance at a time when they are becoming more independent. Teenagers often feel invincible and so can also feel immune from the virus. Make sure that your child is fully informed about why it is still important to abide by the rules. Remind them that these instructions are for their safety, as well as for yours and the people around them. Offer them reassurance that this is temporary and that they can cope until it ends.

Can I still apply for Healthy Start vouchers?

If you would like more information on any of the above services; our parenting groups, childcare or free vitamins or vouchers, please visit our **website** or contact your **local Family Hub** where a Starting Well team member will be able to help you.



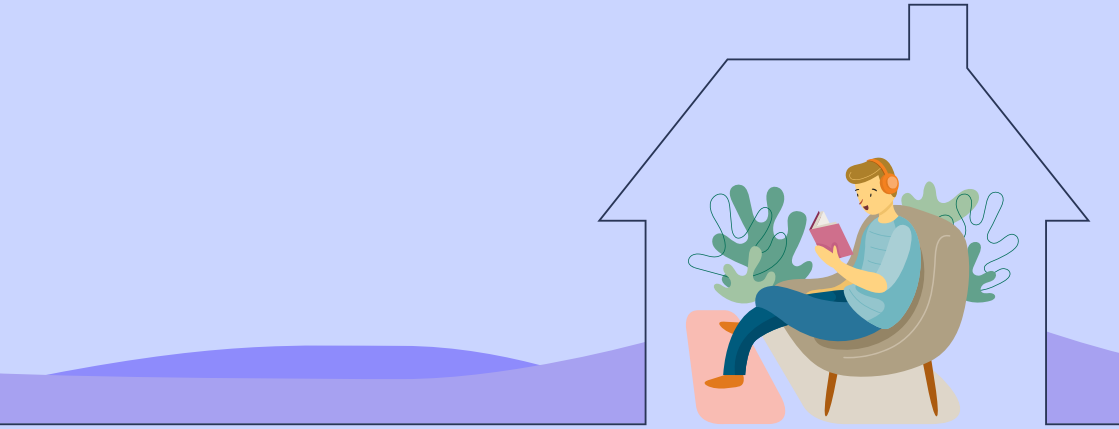
Home schooling and Working from Home

Home schooling

- Children need routine. Create a schedule with your child and make a commitment to stick with it.
- Discuss your family's schedule and identify the best times for learning, as well as family-oriented physical activity.
- Try to find a space where you live that's free of distractions, noise, and clutter for learning and doing homework. This could be a quiet, well-lit place in your dining room or a corner of your home that could fit a small table, if available.
- Identify opportunities for your child to connect with peers and be social virtually.

Change and Challenging Behavior

- Watch for and anticipate behaviour changes in your child (e.g. excessive crying or irritation, excessive worry or sadness, unhealthy eating or sleeping habits, difficulty concentrating), which may be signs of your child struggling with stress and anxiety.
- Talk with your child about how their feeling, worries and concerns. Find out how your child is feeling and communicate that what they may be feeling is normal.
- For more advice and support check out the **county council website** for more information.



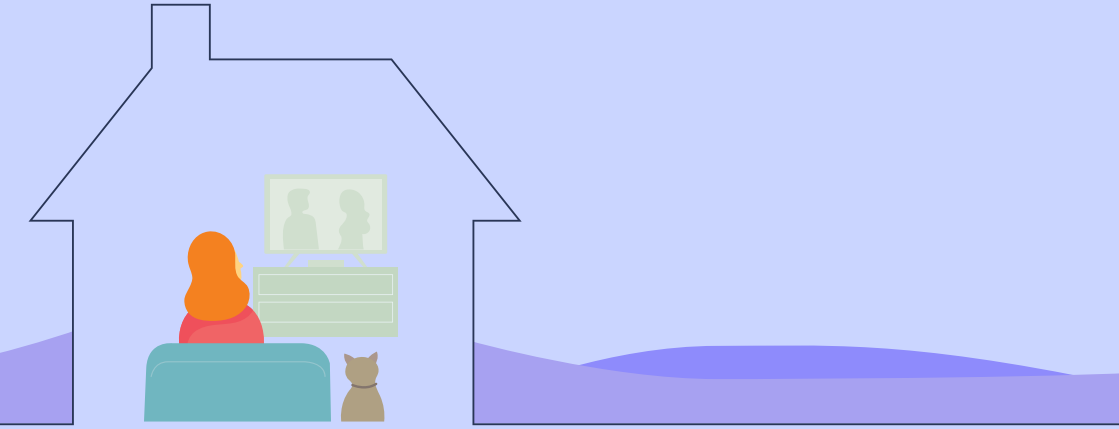
Working from Home

- Speak to your employer about flexibility and if it's possible to work different hours or any possible adjustments you may need to make to your work schedule in order to watch your children.
- Find a suitable place to work while being close to your children to supervise them. Having a set workspace helps all the family to know you're working.
- Take regular breaks to rest and relax. Whilst it's important to have routine and structure, be prepared to adapt and be flexible to suit your family needs.
- Try to stick to a routine or schedule. This will help everyone stay occupied.
- Let your children make some choices and choose activities. This helps them build independence and allows you to get more unbroken time for work.

Family Learning Courses

There are a variety of courses available to help you with your mental health, home-schooling and supporting children with SEND.

Click here to find out more or call 01905 728537.



Self-Isolation FAQ's

Why is self-isolating important?

Self-isolating will reduce the chance of a further wave of coronavirus in the UK and help prevent family, friends and the community from contracting coronavirus, as well as helping to protect the NHS.

I can't afford to leave work, what do I do?

You may be entitled to a one-off payment of £500 through the NHS Test and Trace Support Payment scheme if you are required to stay at home and self-isolate. Visit your local authority's website for more information or call Here2Help.

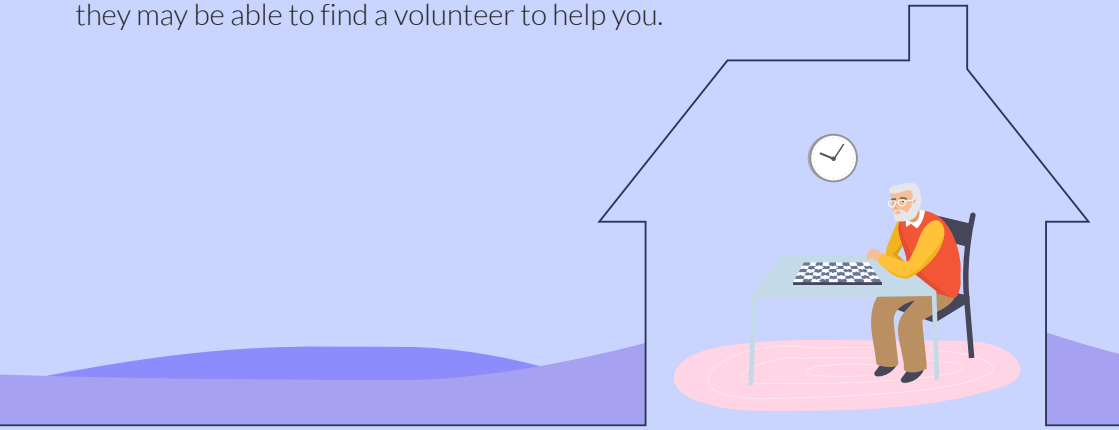
I'm finding it difficult to isolate from my family?

It may be difficult for some people to separate themselves from others in their household. Not all these measures will be possible if you are living with children or have caring responsibilities but follow this guidance to the best of your ability in these circumstances.

If I am self-isolating how do I look after my pets e.g. dogs/horses?

Ask a friend or family member to take care of your animals e.g. walk your dog, feed/exercise your horses. They will need to know in advance that you are self-isolating, so they can take the proper precautions to keep everyone safe. Keep the handover as brief as possible, it's important to maintain a minimum two-meter distance at all times. Make sure you both wash your hands before and after handling the animals.

If you don't have any local friends or family to help, contact Here2Help and they may be able to find a volunteer to help you.



Are the self-isolation periods optional?

Absolutely not. If you have been asked to self-isolate you must follow this advice as it is the law. The police can fine £1,000 for breaches, and that could rise to £10,000 for multiple breaches. You must complete all 10 days of the isolation even if you feel well, as you can still spread coronavirus to others.

Can I leave my house to exercise or walk my dog on my own when it's quiet?

Sorry, no. You must not leave your house at all during your isolation period. You can only exercise in your home (including a private garden).

I thought close contacts had to self-isolate for 14 days?

This was the case, but new guidance came into effect on the 14th December 2020 which changed it to 10 days. Your close contacts will be contacted by NHS Test & trace and advised to isolate.

I'm currently self-isolating, am I allowed into my garden?

If you have a garden or outdoor space where you live, you can use that to go outside while you self-isolate. You should take extra care to stay at least 2 meters (6 feet, or 3 steps) away from other people who might pass by or look into your garden - for example, people walking on the street or neighbors in their own garden.

I need urgent help for my mental health and well-being.

It is quite common to feel worried, scared or helpless at the moment. This is a difficult time for everyone. It is OK to share your fears with others you trust - doing so could help them too.

If you are feeling anxious try to focus upon what you can control, including where you get information from and what you can do to make yourself feel better prepared.

The Urgent Crisis Team helpline is available 24 hours a day 365 day a year.

Telephone: 01905 681915

I'm feeling lonely and isolated and I don't have the internet.

Call the Here2Help service (01905 768053) who will connect you with a local service to help you such as the PLUS service

People Like Us (PLUS) is a service that works across Worcestershire to support adults of all ages who are experiencing loneliness or isolation. Telephone: 01905 27525 or 0748 5312463

For children and young people the Worcestershire Reach4Wellbeing promotes and supports emotional wellbeing for children and young people aged 5 to 19 years old. Visit: **www.hacw.nhs.uk/reach4wellbeing**

When do I stop isolating?

You can stop self-isolating after 10 days if either: you do not have any symptoms, OR you just have a cough or changes to your sense of smell or taste – these can last for weeks after the infection has gone.

If you are self-isolating because a member of your household has tested positive and you develop symptoms during this period, your 10 day isolation period restarts from the first day you had symptoms.

Keep self-isolating if you have any of these symptoms after 10 days:

- a high temperature or feeling hot and shivery
- a runny nose or sneezing
- feeling or being sick
- diarrhoea

Only stop self-isolating when these symptoms have gone.
If you have diarrhoea or you're being sick, stay at home until 48 hours after they've stopped.

PLEASE STAY AT HOME AND STOP THE VIRUS SPREADING, THANK YOU

More information about self-isolation guidance is available online on: **GOV.UK**

Or visit: **www.worcestershire.gov.uk/coronaviru**s

Version 1: Information correct as of January 2021.

For live and up to date information visit: **www.gov.uk/coronavirus**

Find out more online:
www.worcestershire.gov.uk/coronavirus

worcestershire county council