



As national lockdown is likely to continue for a number of weeks, we want to remind you of the services and support that are available to you that will keep you and your children safe during this time.

Looking after your wellbeing is always important, but with the current circumstances, it has never been more so.

The website <http://dearlife.org.uk/> has been created by health and social care partners across Coventry and Warwickshire to help people find the tools to maintain and improve their wellbeing and the wellbeing of others. It offers a wealth of information about where to get help in a crisis, advice on how to maintain good mental health, how to help others in need and comprehensive signposting to support.

It may be difficult to know if your child is feeling anxious or upset and how they may deal with these feelings so please take opportunities to talk to them, reassure them if you can and show them that support that is available. If you are worried about how your child may be coping and what they may do keep household items like medicine, chemicals and sharp objects out of sight and locked away to avoid any risk of self-harm.

With the current situation, young people are spending a lot more time online. They often use the internet in a completely different way to older generations, so it's hard not to worry about what they may have access to. To keep young people safe online giving you some peace of mind:

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/keeping-child-safe/cyber-safety/1>

Safe in Warwickshire was developed to help people find advice and support on subjects like substance misuse, cyber crime and exploitation. If you are worried about your child, visit

<https://safeinwarwickshire.com/>

Did you know Warwickshire County Council has its own service dedicated to helping families? The Family Information Service provides support and advice for families across Warwickshire:

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/children-families>. If you have specific concerns you can also call the family support line on 01926 412412.

Mental health and wellbeing support in lockdown

A survey following the last period of lockdown and school closures revealed negative effects on people's wellbeing including low mood, increased loneliness, higher alcohol intake and patterns of unhealthy eating amongst residents.

As we enter another period of national lockdown, Warwickshire County Council is using the findings from the COVID-19 impact survey, which asked residents to share the effects of the pandemic on their lives, to inform its response to support mental health.

Findings showed that the wellbeing of most people in our communities had been negatively affected but that the impact on young people and women was greatest. To ensure residents can take steps to protect themselves physically and mentally the council is reminding everyone of the support that is available.

'Take 5' to look after your mental health and wellbeing

January presents challenges for many of us with the dark, winter weather and coupled with a national lockdown, Warwickshire County Council (WCC) wants to remind our residents to Take 5 with advice and tips to help stay mentally and physically well.

WCC's Take 5 campaign highlights the importance of taking some time for yourself each day. Many of us are under increasing pressure, and taking a moment each day for yourself will help to clear your head, help you refocus and also give you some time to 'switch off'.

Based on the 5 ways to wellbeing, each week WCC will issue 5 tips of different ways you can work on your health and wellbeing. The 5 ways to wellbeing include:

- Be active
 - Whether it's a walk, run, home workout or meditation, being active helps you to feel good.
- Connect
 - Building connections can help to improve your wellbeing, whether this is within your local community or taking up a hobby and linking with people who share similar interests.
- Give
 - An act of kindness can help to improve your mood and also help the people around you to feel supported and cared for.
- Keep learning
 - Learning new skills can give you a sense of achievement and confidence, why don't you try something new or rediscover an old interest?
- Take notice
 - Being aware of what is taking place in the present through your sensations, thoughts and feelings can directly enhance wellbeing.

Councillor Les Caborn, portfolio holder for adult social care and health said: "Our physical and mental wellbeing are both extremely important, particularly for helping us to cope with the many challenges of lockdown. Warwickshire County Council is supporting residents to look after their wellbeing through help and advice as part of the Take 5 campaign. We also have a range of services across the county for people who need further support, still ongoing throughout COVID-19."

For more information and advice, visit www.warwickshire.gov.uk/mental-health-wellbeing/five-ways

The county council is also signposting to a range of support services and advice online. In line with the COVID-19 guidance, there are still support services available including, Wellbeing for Warwickshire hubs, Togetherall and Warwickshire Safe Havens. A comprehensive list of the services available can be found on the county council website here: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/mentalhealth>

The pages also offer tips and advice on coping during this uncertain time, including wellbeing suggestions following the five ways to wellbeing; practical advice about how to look after your mental wellbeing while staying at home from [Every Mind Matters](#) and information on what Warwickshire libraries can offer, with suggested e-books for mental health and self-care for young people.

Warwickshire County Councillor Les Caborn, portfolio holder for Adult Social Care and Health, said: "The survey results were a stark reminder of how tough people found life in lockdown and we must be mindful of this as we enter a new period of tight restrictions with the compounded pressure of winter and fatigue.

"Around 2500 people responded to the survey and over half the respondents reported feeling lonely, 1 in 3 people said they were eating more and 20% reported that they were drinking more alcohol and we want to address this.

A high priority for the council is that our residents still have access to mental health services in Warwickshire.

"These are trying times for us all, and it is important now more than ever to find ways to lead healthy, happy and independent lives. It is important to remember that everyone reacts differently to different events – we hope the broad resources we have available will mean we can all find ways to cope in such trying times.

Look after yourselves and your loved ones, be safe and remember: stay home and save lives."

The following local and national mental health support and helplines are also available:

- [NHS Mental Health Crisis service](#): 0300 200 0011, free 24/7 service
- [Rise](#) (for children and young people) call 08081 966798 (select option 2).

RISE is a family of NHS-led services providing emotional wellbeing and mental health services for under 18s in Coventry and Warwickshire. If you are worried about a child's mental wellbeing visit cwrise.com or call 08081 966798 to speak to a qualified mental health professional.

- [Dimensions](#) Tool offers immediate tailored self-help support and signposting to local services.
- [Warwickshire Safe Haven](#): 6-11pm every day; 02477 714554/07970 042270 or email safehaven@cwmind.org.uk
- [Coventry Safe Haven](#): 6-11pm every day; 07921 876065 or email coventryhaven.mhm@nhs.net
- [Chat Health](#) is a free service that enables 11 – 18 year olds across Coventry and Warwickshire to send confidential SMS text messages to School Nurses who will provide impartial advice and support.
- For Warwickshire, text 07507 331 525
- For Coventry, text 07507 331 949
- [Coventry and Warwickshire Improving Access to Psychological Therapies \(IAPT\) service](#), call 024 7667 1090
- [The Samaritans](#) call 116 123
- [YoungMinds](#) Crisis Messenger: text YM to 85258
- [Papyrus Hopeline UK](#) suicide prevention helpline: call 0800 068 4141 or text 07860 039967
- Download [ThinkNinja](#), a free app for children and young people to build resilience, manage their emotional health and to fulfil their potential.