

# **Supporting your loved ones at home**

**Mental wellbeing and first aid toolkit  
for all the family to learn together**

A stylized illustration of two hands, one light blue and one red, reaching towards each other to form a heart shape. The hands are positioned on the left and right sides of the frame, with their fingers pointing towards the center. The background is white, and the hands are rendered in a simple, bold style with no facial features or clothing.

**Kindness  
will keep us  
together**

# Kindness will keep us together

**The British Red Cross believes that little acts of kindness are important, now more than ever, and really do go a long way in times of crisis.**

We have put this toolkit together, with you and your family in mind. The toolkit gives you the practical tools and advice to help look after

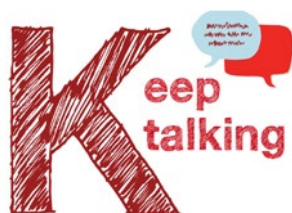
yourself and your family, especially during the coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak. It is crammed full of tips featuring positive mental health and wellbeing for coping in a crisis and family activities on the acts of kindness. There are also basic life-saving skills which you and your family can learn together at home.

Kindness comes in many forms. And lots of simple acts of kindness come together to make a big difference to people in crisis.

**If you are safe and well:**



**If you have to self-isolate:**



**Click here** to read about eight ways you can be kind to your neighbours – and yourself

# Home-schooling children: we're here to help

With the closure of schools following the outbreak of the coronavirus many parents are finding themselves home-schooling their children.

These topical activities will help primary-school children carry out kind acts and think of ways to cope during this unprecedented global health emergency.



## Be kind

Things may feel uncertain right now, but one thing is clear: small acts of kindness can make a difference. There has certainly been an outpouring of kindness across the country and children can play their role too.

Help children learn about the importance of being kind to themselves and encourage them to share their kindness with others. Use our **blank kindness calendar** to record daily acts of kindness.



## Here are some ideas to get started:



write or draw what kindness means to them



write down three things they are grateful for



check in on neighbours in a safe way – put a note through their door



do something helpful for a friend or family member – help lay or clear the table or could they keep their bedroom tidy?



call or write to a relative who might be self-isolating



stay at home, by following the advice you are being kind to others in the community and helping save lives.

Keeping a record of kind acts is a great way to look back at all that's been achieved.

Share stories and drawings from your children on social media, use **#PowerofKindness** and **@BritishRedCross**.



## Practice coping skills

All this uncertainty and change to daily routines may well have an impact on children. Help them to feel calmer with these simple coping strategies.

### Stay calm

Help children be kind to themselves by writing or drawing things they like to do and makes them happy. During this period of social distancing they might have to get a bit more creative. Examples could include caring for a pet, listening or playing music or building a den. Don't forget to give them time to talk about how they're feeling. **Find out more**

### Breathe with colour

Learn breathing techniques to help keep calm if they ever feel worried or upset. Help children think of a colour for relaxed feelings (like the warm golden sun) and one for 'not so good' feelings (like grey, the colour of a rainy day). You may wish to discuss how the colours make them feel and then practice it together - breathing in with the good colour... out with the bad colour. **Find out more**

They could even share their learning with an older sibling or a grandparent over the phone as these skills could benefit everyone.



## Advice for parents

**Most importantly remember to be kind to yourself; this is a difficult time and a huge change for everyone. You're not suddenly going to be an expert teacher overnight. Here are some helpful points:**



If you can, stick to a routine but be mindful that your child is not going to work for hours at a time. Make sure you all get dressed for the day, have lots of breaks and a designated space for working (if possible).



Get creative in the ways you teach things; can you use numeracy examples in cooking or bring a story to life with props from around the house?



Follow their interests, embrace the situation and ask your children what they want to learn.



Add fun things, what do you never have time to do? Use this time to do something exciting that they'll never forget.



Be kind to each other, create a safe space for talking about any feelings.

You can also explore our range of free **online resources** which help children to connect human crisis with human kindness.

# 6 Rs of resilience

The 6Rs of resilience can prepare you and your family so you are better able to bounce back when faced with a difficult situation.



## Responsibility

Take responsibility for your own mental health, wellbeing and resilience.



## Reflection

Reflecting on how you are, what is happening and how you are feeling about things.



## Relaxation

Relaxing in a way that suits you, such as gardening, reading a book and mindfulness practice.



## Relationships

Building supportive relationships with friends and family by phone or online. Know who to turn to or talk to when times are difficult.



## Refuelling

Eating a healthy diet, being conscious of alcohol intake.



## Recreation

Taking regular exercise, and having fun.



# Six facts about loneliness

Loneliness is a complex and usually unpleasant emotional response to isolation. Even before the coronavirus outbreak, one in five\* of us already said we often or always felt lonely. Over the coming months, many of us will experience uncertainty and lots of change. Here are six facts about loneliness to keep in mind as you support yourself and others in isolation.

1

## **Loneliness can affect anyone - but everyone can help**

Loneliness can affect anyone regardless of age or background. Many feel they have no one to rely on or turn to in a crisis.

The current situation highlights how much more we can all do ourselves to stay connected to existing supportive relationships and to show the people around us that they're not alone. This could be as simple as connecting with friends and family over the phone, video call or social media. You can also help by checking in on a self-isolating neighbour by text or posting a note through the letterbox.

## **Being alone will not automatically make you feel lonely**

Loneliness and social isolation are not the same. Loneliness is an unwelcome feeling that happens when there's a mismatch between the quantity and quality of relationships we would like and those that we have.

Social isolation, on the other hand, is a lack of human contact and interaction and, importantly, it isn't always negative. You can feel lonely in a crowded room and equally, totally satisfied being alone.

But, unwanted and prolonged isolation can have a troubling knock-on effect on our attitude towards others. Eventually, it can make us distrust and disengage even when we get the chance to interact. So finding ways to connect – even from your own home – is important.

2

3

## **From phone calls to online bake-offs, you can still connect to people even from your own home**

We're all being asked to stay at home for a period of time, and even longer for those at higher risk. But just because we're no longer able to socialise in person, doesn't mean we must stop socialising altogether. We're lucky enough to live in a digital age and there are a multitude of resources that can help you stay connected to others.

4

### **Our relationships and interactions need to be meaningful and satisfying to truly tackle loneliness**

To really tackle loneliness, we must be satisfied with our relationships and interactions, and quality is key. Simply talking or being with people is not an automatic protection against loneliness – living with others or being in regular contact with people where relationships aren't that meaningful can actually make things worse.

This means that for some of us, constantly connecting with people over messaging apps, video calling or similar platforms will not always be the answer. Create the space to connect in a way that is meaningful to you (remembering this looks different for everyone) - and don't feel bad about creating boundaries.

### **Just talking about feelings of loneliness helps**

Even though so many of us so often feel lonely, too many of us are ashamed to admit it. A Red Cross survey of 1,000 people found that almost 60 per cent of respondents admitted they didn't feel confident talking about loneliness. A third more said they'd never admit to feeling lonely to anyone.

Yet, simply talking about feeling lonely, like so many other emotions, helps. The same survey found that people who reported they wouldn't talk to family and friends about loneliness were more than twice as likely to feel lonely always or often than those who would.

5

### **Looking after ourselves in general, and those around us, can protect against loneliness**

Loneliness is as much about our connection with ourselves as it with others – when we feel good about ourselves, it's easier to connect. Loneliness is often triggered by significant life changes and these changes come with both practical and emotional implications.

- The practical ones are more obvious – being unwell or being low on money will make the situation you are faced with feel even more stressful.
- The emotional consequences however can have an even greater effect as they can knock our sense of identity, and often make us question our role or purpose in life.
- While you're at home, try to do the things that make you feel like you, stay stimulated, and do things you enjoy.

6

And don't forget that you can do things for others - whether formally volunteering, being a thoughtful friend or **supporting your more vulnerable neighbours** through this difficult time. It not only builds your sense of worth and gives you a sense of purpose, but helps protect you against loneliness too.

# Learn first aid skills with your family from home

Basic life-saving skills will still be needed even during the coronavirus outbreak. Our online first aid advice and first aid apps provide clear, easy to follow steps, to help you and your family in a first aid emergency.

## First aid at your fingertips

Support your first aid learning and keep your skills refreshed with the British Red Cross First Aid app and Baby and Child First Aid app.

These essential tools are packed with useful videos, animations and tips, along with first aid quizzes to test your knowledge.

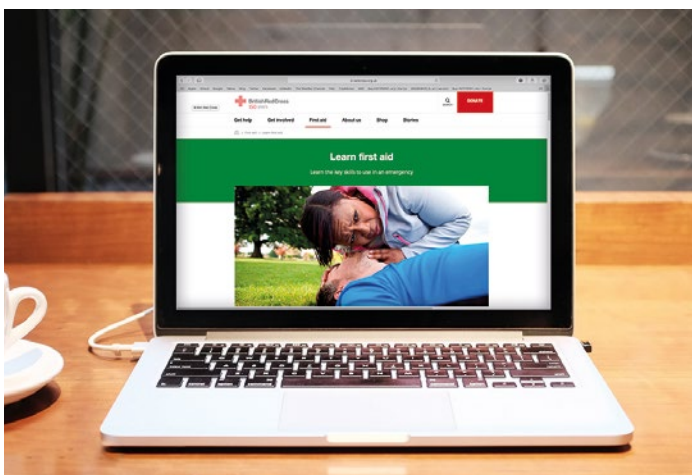
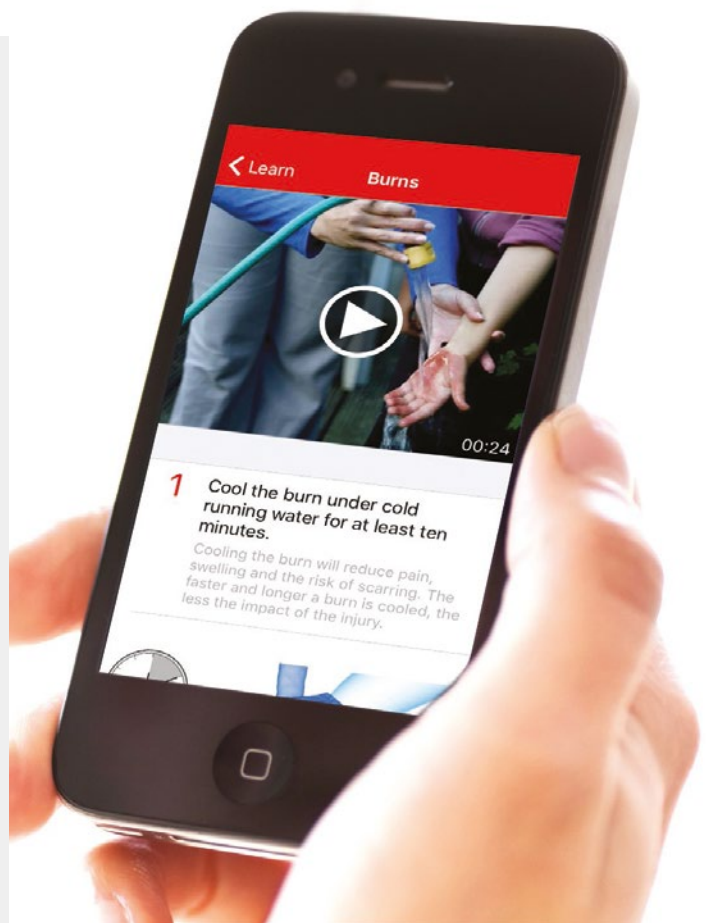
### Download the apps:



[redcross.org.uk/app](https://redcross.org.uk/app)



[redcross.org.uk/babyandchildapp](https://redcross.org.uk/babyandchildapp)



## Learn online

Be confident to help your loved ones in an emergency. Learn simple first aid skills online.

# Learn three first aid skills

Basic life-saving skills will still be needed even during the coronavirus outbreak, by learning first aid if you have an accident at home, you can help your family and potentially alleviate pressure on our busy health services.

## Helping someone who is bleeding heavily



Put pressure on the wound with what ever is available to stop or slow the flow of blood



Call 999\*



Keep pressure on the wound until help arrives



### Key action

Put pressure on the wound

\*If you are able to arrange for safe transport to hospital and they seem well in themselves then do so to reduce the strain on our ambulance services.

## Helping someone who has a burn



1 Cool the burn under cold running water for at least 10 minutes



2 After the burn has been cooled, cover it with cling film or clean plastic bag



### Key action

Cool the burn

Always seek medical advice for a baby or child who has been burned.

## Helping someone who is choking



Hit them firmly on the back to dislodge the object



### Key action

Give back blows

### For babies under one years old

Hold the baby face-down along your thigh with their head lower than their bottom. Hit them firmly between their shoulder blades to clear the blockage.



# **Everyday items you can use for first aid at home**

There are many alternative ways you can provide first aid treatment using everyday items.

## **Burns**

### **Cool the burn with running water...**

...or any cold liquid, such as juice, beer, or milk. The aim is to cool the area as quickly as possible, using whatever cold liquid is available. Remember: it should be cooled for at least ten minutes for the treatment to be effective.



### **Use a clean plastic carrier bag, cling film, sandwich/ freezer bag ...**

...or similar to cover the burn once cooled. These types of items will not stick to the burn and will create a barrier to stop infection. Plastic bags are particularly useful for covering a burned hand or foot.



## **Bleeding heavily**

### **If you don't have dressing pads to put pressure on the wound...**

...use a t-shirt, tea towel or even the person's own hand. All these items can be used to put pressure on the wound and stop or slow down the flow of blood.



## **Head injury**

### **If you don't have an ice pack...**

...use a bag of frozen peas wrapped in a tea towel to cool the affected area.

## **Broken bone**

### **If you don't know what sort of padding to use to support a broken bone...**

...use items of clothing, blankets or simply hold the injured part yourself.



# Test your skills

How much do you know about first aid? Test your knowledge to find out.



**1. If someone is bleeding from a wound, what can you do to help?**

- a. Let the blood drain out.
- b. Put pressure on the wound.
- c. Give them an aspirin.

**2. What is first thing you should do to help someone who has a burn?**

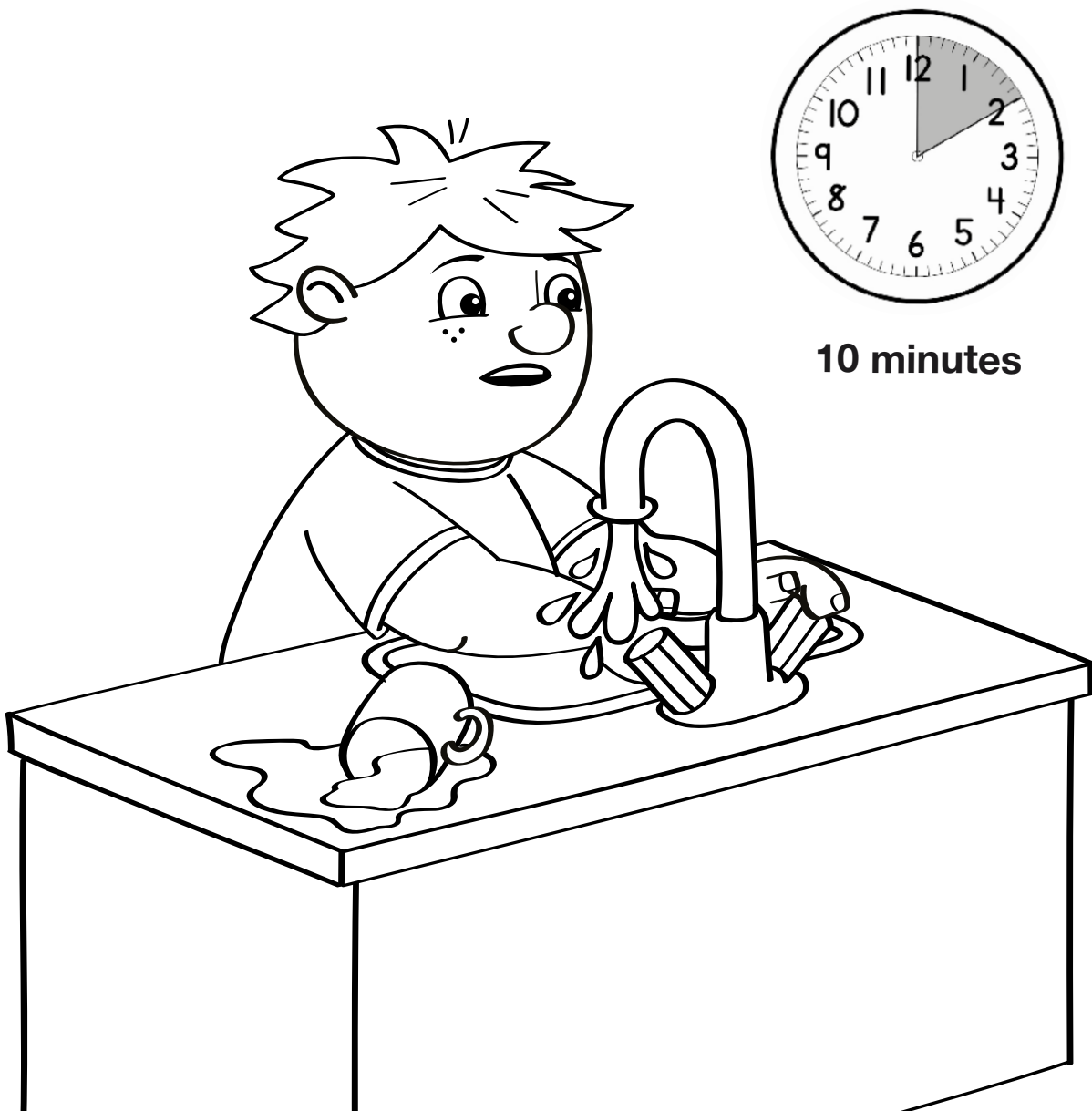
- a. Wrap the burn in cling film or a clean plastic bag.
- b. Wipe the burn with antiseptic wipes.
- c. Cool the burn under cold running water.

**3. What should you do to help someone who is choking?**

- a. Encourage them to breathe through their nose.
- b. Help them drink some water to dislodge the object.
- c. Hit them firmly on their back between the shoulder blades.

# Colour-in poster for your little ones: First aid for a burn

Our downloadable poster can help you remember how to help your baby or child if they have a burn. Invite your little ones to colour it in – then why not stick their handiwork up in the kitchen, near the kettle or hob? That way, you'll be giving the whole family the chance to keep this important first aid skill fresh in case it's ever needed.



# **Kindness will keep us together**

**The power of kindness is needed more than ever as the UK faces a global coronavirus pandemic.**

In these uncertain times, we know one thing for sure kindness is powerful. If you would like to share your kindness, and are healthy, safe and well, we would love to have you on our team of community reserve volunteers. Otherwise, you can also support our work by making a donation.

**Find out more about how to donate or become a community reserve volunteer**

