Press Release from Buckinghamshire Council

16 April 2020

Good mental health will help you through all of the changes needed because of Coronavirus

We have all had to make significant changes to our normal routines because of Coronavirus. Across Buckinghamshire communities are working to support each other practically and emotionally and it's encouraging to see people looking out for each other's mental health too.

Maintaining good mental health will play a huge part in how we cope during the next weeks and months. It's important to remember that that everyone reacts differently with some taking it in their stride whilst others may feel stressed, anxious, angry or frustrated and with the current need to stay at home, some may feel isolated. Don't forget that this situation is only temporary and we will return to normal eventually.

Having good mental health helps us cope better with change and enjoy our lives so it is more important now than ever. There is lots we can do to look after our mental health from going for a walk, sitting in the garden or listening to some favourite music to picking up an old hobby or learning a new one using online learning, or just connecting with friends and family by phone or letter or online.

A new Mental Health Helpline has been launched by Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust, which runs mental health services in Buckinghamshire, with support from Oxfordshire Mind. The 24/7 helpline will take the pressure off 111 for mental health advice in Buckinghamshire. People can call when they need to find out when and where to get help and to access support from mental health professionals.

The trained mental health advisors will be able to offer on-the-spot advice and make sure people get the care that is right for them. For adults the number is 01865 904997. For children and young people the number is 01865 904998.

When someone is seriously ill or injured, or in an acute confused state, call 999.

Healthy Minds Bucks has updated its website to include a range of short videos and links that will help you look after yourself and your loved ones during this very challenging time. These videos are designed to give you practical ideas on how to manage worries around COVID-19. To view the videos, visit https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/healthyminds/covid/

The NHS Every Mind Matters website also has expert advice and practical tips to help you look after your mental health and wellbeing. Take a look at https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-at-home-tips/.

We know that children can be affected by seeing the constant reports on the television, through social media or by hearing others talking about it and some may also be struggling with not being able to see their friends and maintain their normal routines. It is really important to regularly chat with them about what's happening and how they're feeling.

The Buckinghamshire Family Information Service Family Well-Being Information Pack has lots and lots of great ideas and details of where to go for advice or support to help you look after your children & look after yourself during the COVID-19 outbreak. Take a look here https://search3.openobjects.com/mediamanager/buckinghamshire/fsd/docs/bucks_family_well-being_information_pack.pdf

There are some great ideas to start conversations and to help them feel safe and listened to on the Young Minds website, where you can also find some great advice and vlogs by children and young people about how they are coping with Coronavirus. https://youngminds.org.uk/starting-a-conversation-with-your-child/activities-and-conversation-starters-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/

Gareth Williams, Buckinghamshire Council's Cabinet Member for Health and Culture adds

"I am heartened to see the amazing community spirit that has become evident in recent weeks, with communities in towns and villages all looking out for each other. I must give

credit to the fantastic work being carried out by all of our key workers during this very unsettling time.

"Everyone needs to make sure they are keeping an eye on how they are feeling and take action to ensure they can maintain good mental health. Do make sure you are taking time for yourself whether it's to read, listen to music, bake, learn a new skill, watch a film on TV, go for a walk or do some work in the garden.

"It is really important to check in on friends and family too, we all know how easy it is to say 'I'm fine' when actually you're not. Sometimes a quick text or call is just what's needed to lift your spirits."

Buckinghamshire Council, working with its partners, has created a special Coronavirus section on its website to provide general information and advice on practical support in your community, volunteering, support for businesses and keeping safe, happy and well during these challenging times. Visit www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/coronavirus and find out more.

Notes to Editor

Contact us at communications@buckinghamshire.gov.uk (monitored during office hours). For urgent Out Of Hours enquiries call 07825 430 978

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