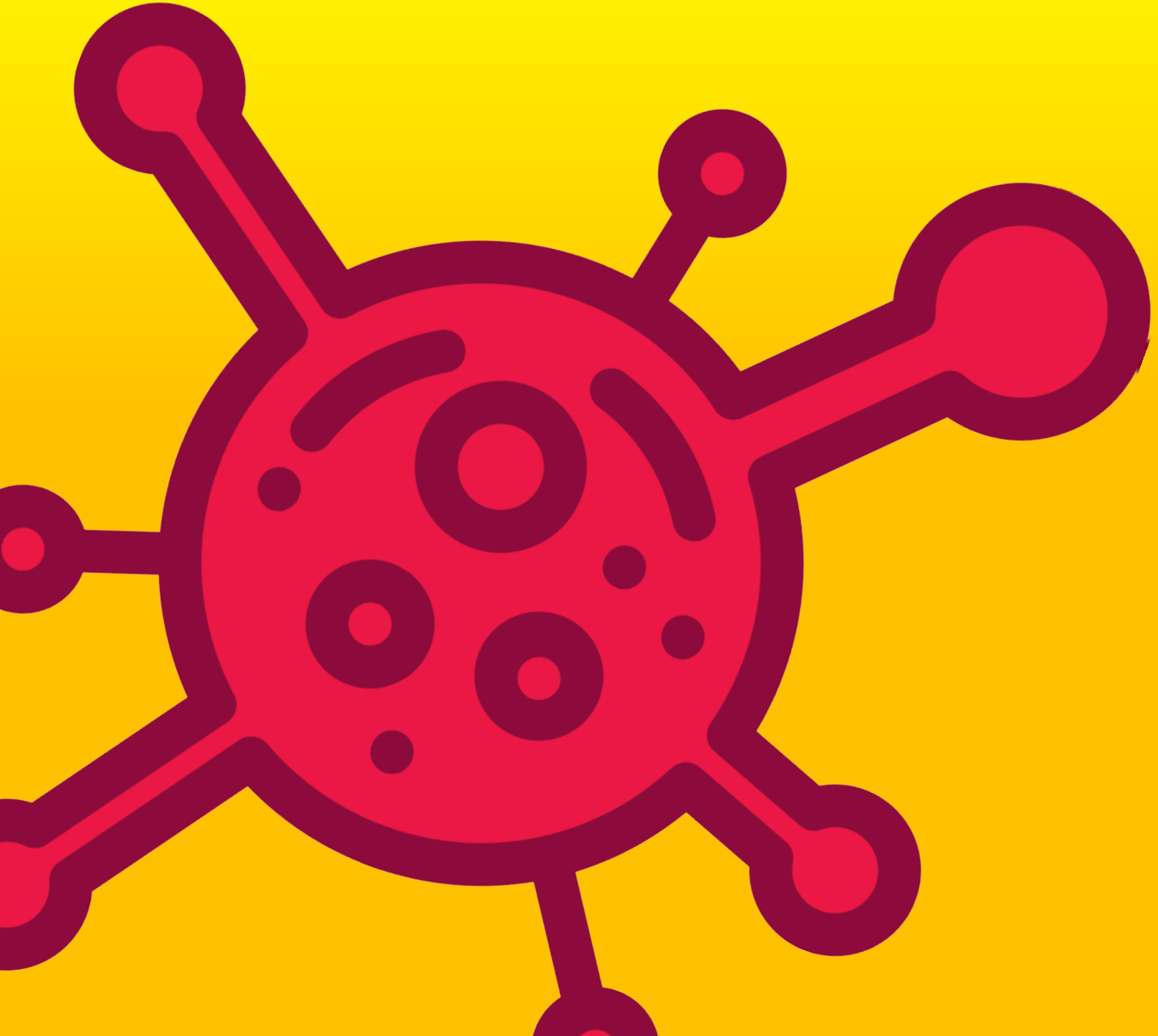


Children's guide to coronavirus

Children's Commissioner

Your guide to coronavirus

There have been big changes in our lives because of coronavirus.

Schools have closed and we have to stay at home.

So, coronavirus is probably making your life feel really different right now.

All these changes might make you feel scared or worried. That's OK. It's totally normal to feel like this.

We are going to:

Answer your questions about coronavirus
Tell you how to stay safe and protect other people
Help you make the best of your time at home

Why do I feel worried?

Lots of children are telling us they are scared and worried about coronavirus. We understand this.

When we feel scared, it's our body's way of telling us we need to take extra care to protect ourselves. And there are some important things we all need to do to stay safe, like wash our hands and stay at home.

Feeling worried is one way our bodies remind us to do these things.
So being worried is normal! But there's no need to worry too much.
We want to help you understand what's going on and how you can do your bit to help.

But we also want you to know that this won't last forever.
And while we are at home keeping each other safe, we can still enjoy life and do fun things – it's time to be creative!

What is coronavirus?

Coronavirus is an illness that affects people's breathing and lungs. It can be spread from person to person by coughing or by touching surfaces or areas of skin that have been contaminated by the virus.

What happens if I get coronavirus?

Children who get corona virus will usually only get a little ill, like a regular cold. Many don't get it at all.

The same goes for mum and dad, if they get it. Grown-ups with healthy bodies are not likely to become very ill.

But coronavirus can be dangerous to people who already have serious diseases. It can also be dangerous to those who are elderly.

That is why we must do everything we can to protect them from getting it, and this includes closing schools.

How do you know if you have it?

If you get coronavirus you may feel unwell and your body will have some or all of these symptoms

High temperature

Coughing

Breathing difficulties

How do we stop coronavirus from spreading?

The government is telling us that we need to:

Stay at home

At the moment we are being told to stay at home.

We are not allowed to hang out in groups and we can only leave the house for exercise and “essential” things like food or getting medicine.
We have to stay at home to stop the disease spreading.

We understand that this means you can’t play with your friends. Or maybe your birthday party or a football match you were looking forward to was cancelled.
This is upsetting. But...

We can’t change the fact that we’re going to be stuck indoors for a while.
So... we need to get creative to find other ways to hang out with friends online.
We will give you some ideas later on about how you can cope with staying at home.

How do we stop coronavirus from spreading?

Wash your hands

We all need to wash our hands often.
Click the video below which shows you how to wash your hands properly.

Where do I put my worry?

Feeling worried is normal. Don’t bottle up your feelings. Talk to an adult you trust about how you feel.

Worry buster!

If you find it hard to talk to an adult, you could fill out our worry buster.

Print the next page

Write down or draw all your worries about coronavirus.

Show it to a trusted adult and ask them to talk to you about each of your worries.

Worry buster!

I'm worried about...

Being safe at home

Most children are safe at home. But we know that some of you aren't. If your school has closed and you are not feeling safe at home, here are some people to call.

childline.org.uk
0800 1111

In an emergency, always call the police on 999

Keeping busy now life has changed

Life is really different right now because of coronavirus. Some of these changes are difficult and upsetting.

You might be

Feeling bored or lonely.

Sad that you missed your last day of school.

Worried about exams and school work.

Missing your friends.

Worried about mum and dad's jobs.

Sad you can't see grandma and granddad or worried that they may become seriously ill.

Unable to see your boyfriend or girlfriend.

So, there are lots of bad things about this virus and we need to take care and look after ourselves.

But it's important we don't spend all of our time worrying about it. Because it won't last for ever.

When we look back on this time we might find we have learned some really interesting things about ourselves and each other.

We can't change this situation. But we can find new and different ways to enjoy life and stay happy.

So... it's time to get creative

Here are some tips on how to keep happy and busy while you're stuck inside

Be kind

This is a difficult time for everyone. So if your little brother or sister is getting on your nerves, before arguing, see if you can understand how they're feeling – and maybe help them!

Look after each other

We all might feel a bit worried or lonely along the way, it's good to take care of each other, and sometimes helping someone else, makes you both feel better!

Don't worry too much

This won't last forever, and even when times are tough, everyday can have something amazing up its sleeve.

Organise your day

The school bell might not ring in your house but you still need a plan. Make time for school work, but also for relaxing.

So... it's time to get creative

Talk about how you feel

Don't believe everything you hear from friends
Get your information from a trusted place.

Stay in touch with your friends and family online
If you can't see grandma and grandad at the moment, stay in touch with them on Facetime or Skype.

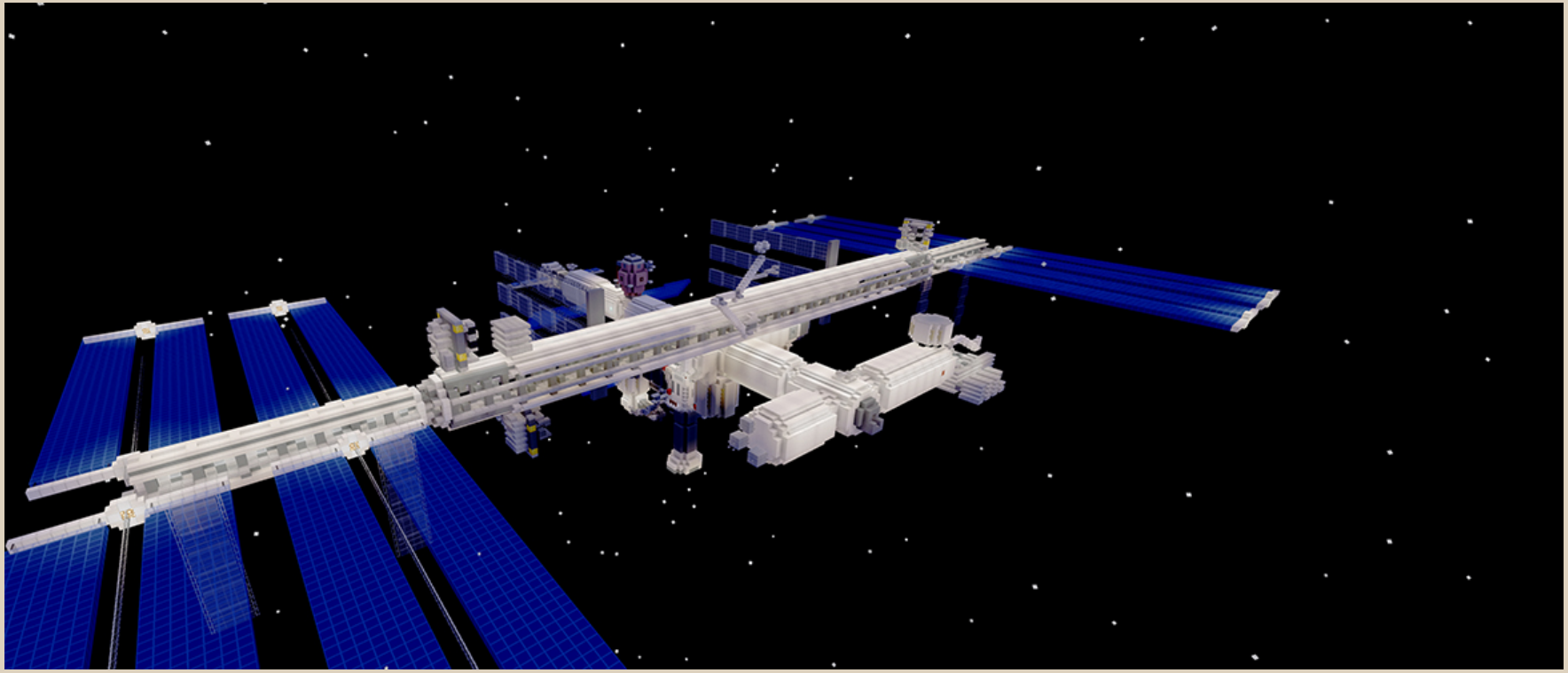
And if you're missing your friends, arrange a Google Hangouts / Zoom at the same time everyday.

Try and find the opportunities in this situation
It feels a strange time, but you might be surprised at what you can achieve.

What to do

You have probably heard of Joe Wicks and his PE classes – they're amazing. There's loads of stuff on offer.

From celebrities reading stories to art classes on Insta – and until 30th June, Minecraft has some free content!



Here’s a selection of stuff you can get up to while at home

Become a DJ!

Become a DJ from your phone with these free DJ apps

Keep active

PE with Joe Wicks
There's no need for any equipment with Joe’s lessons designed to be done in living rooms using only bodyweight. Joe’s sessions will provide relief for parents who are indoors with children all day while they're off school.

Taking to Instagram last week, Joe said: "It's called PE with Joe. It's a workout specifically designed for children because when the schools are closed there is no PE. "Don't worry I've got you, I'm going to take this over and get your children moving and feeling energised, positive, optimistic"

Here's a selection of stuff you can get up to while at home

Audio books

Audible has made many books available for free including books by David Walliams.

Start a film club

Watch movies with your friends on Google Hangouts / Zoom. Pick a different film each week - you could even start a vlog of your reviews.

There's also Netflix Party, which you can use to watch Netflix shows at the same time as your friends.

Art class

Learn to draw with Rob on YouTube.

Become a tech genius!

Check out Geek Gurl Diaries for all stuff tech.

Here's a selection of stuff you can get up to while at home

See the universe!

Explore the world with a virtual tour of the Great Wall of China .

Or, go to another world and experience a virtual tour of Mars!

Learn a new language

Rosetta Stone are offering three months free to learn a new language.

Become a quiz master

Make up a quiz and invite your friends to a Zoom / Hangouts to play. Something simple like Survey Monkey will do.

Write a short story

Want to be the next David Walliams or JK Rowling. All you need is a pen and paper!

Here's a selection of stuff you can get up to while at home

Become a rock star!

Learn an instrument - and if you don't have one, download a free piano app on your phone.

Retro games night

Have a dig through your cupboards and find some old board games – and challenge your family to a games night!

Children's COMMISSIONER

For more information, check out our website

childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/coronavirus

Information correct as of 27 March 2020