

## Strategies to consider when returning to school after Covid-19 ... for all adults and all children!

---

**This time of uncertainty brings feelings of anxiety for us all: children, young people and adults. Be compassionate with & try to be kind to yourself first and then others. Take the time to connect with yourself and your colleagues and then the young people. The adults need to be ready in order to effectively support others.**

***Van Der Kolk describes 7 Preconditions for Trauma – let's try to reverse them...***

---

### *Lack of predictability*

Try to stick to routines that occurred before lock down – Revise don't introduce new information just yet; staggered re-introductions and re-introducing the familiar

### *Immobile with fear*

Create a calm, consistent and caring atmosphere to reduce the stress hormones.  
Encourage Moving, Reflecting & Releasing – Joe Wicks each morning! Daily mile, yoga exercises, gentle walks, Mindfulness, Relaxation, journaling

### *Loss of connection*

Start now to reconnect with staff and young people – letters, emails, phone calls, virtual tours of school, the classroom, the staff, use of transitional objects, sharing experiences of COVID-19

### *Feeling ungrounded and spaced out*

Experiment with calming activities – see what helps you and your young people. Find time to talk. Share experiences - have you tried Headspace, MoodKit, Gonoodle.com, Heartmath? Do you have a sensory/calming box with things inside you know you can look at or use to help calm you? Remember your grounding exercises to help stay in the present?

### *Loss of concept of time*

Create structure – a timetable, make it visual! Share a timeline of important events, past and present, discuss what you did and what you plan to do for these events, connect with your feelings

### *Loss of safety*

Create those safe spaces for everyone and model how to use them – use them yourself! Allow a slow & staggered transition to learning small steps, short focussed activities – no big scary changes – for anyone. More hugs – in school in the form of sensory cosy blankets in the safe spaces?

### *Loss of purpose*

Gain a sense of purpose in the activities – why are we doing this? Who will it help & Why? Prepare for Positive Endings / Moving Forward. Have an end goal to help or support yourself or another.

***Acknowledge everyone's feelings along the way - It's OK to feel sad and angry.***

# References and Point of Contact for you..

---

## References

---

*Van Der Kolk, B (2015), The Body Keeps the Score: Mind, Brain and Body in the Transformation of Trauma. Penguin Books: Great Britain*

*Dix, P (2017), When the Adults Change Everything Changes. Independent Thinking Press: Carmarthen*

*Bombèr, L.M (2020) Know Me to Teach Me. Worth Publishing: London*

---

## Some helpful links and resources:

---

<https://touchbase.org.uk/>

<https://www.evidenceforlearning.net/recoverycurriculum/>

<https://beaconhouse.org.uk/?section=welcome-to-beacon-house>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/looking-after-yourself/asking-for-help/>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/talking-about-difficult-topics/? t id=fQNYEPQR-FDN-Q1Av7oz8Q%3d%3d& t uuid=RoEoHv6URT-zK-yqOPBE4g& t q=time+to+talk& t tags=language%3aen%2csiteid%3a7f1b9313-bf5e-4415-abf6-aaf87298c667%2candquerymatch& t hit.id=Nspcc Web Models Pages StandardPage/ b0f610db-c8b2-47b5-87a3-56e8ab0d3676 en-GB& t hit.pos=2>

## Points of Contact

---

*Debbie Murphy – Virtual School Head Teacher –Debbie.murphy@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk*

*Chris Vohora – Virtual School Education Adviser- Christine.vohora@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk*

*Helen Hilditch - Virtual School Education Adviser – Helen.hilditch@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk*

*Lorraine Evans – Virtual School Education Adviser –Lorraine.evans@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk*

*Alison Ismail - Virtual School Education Adviser – Alison.ismail@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk*

*Anke Jones – Person-Centred Therapist – Anke.Jones2@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk*

*Jennifer James – Education Adviser - Jennifer.james@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk*