

# Supporting your child's mental health during the Covid-19 crisis

**John Sharry**

[solutiontalk.ie](https://solutiontalk.ie) for parents  
[parentsplus.ie](https://parentsplus.ie) for professionals

# Supporting your child's mental health



**1** Tune in  
and  
Understand



**2** Cultivate  
your  
Relationship



**3** Focus on  
enjoyment  
and passions



**4** Support  
connections  
and friendships



**5** Build skills  
and  
responsibilities



**6** Create a  
balanced  
family routine



**7** Look after  
your own  
wellbeing

# Different age, Different need

## Preschoolers:

- well-being dependent mainly on parents well-being
- can largely protect them from 'bad news' and stress

## School age:

- impacted by loss of school and social activities
- aware of 'bad news', can worry and stress about Covid

# Cultivate your relationship with your child

## Reduce Stress:

- reduce your own stress and focus on self care
- pause and respond calmly to problems
- create good routines, have a plan

## Increase connection:

- daily play times and fun
- chatting times
- relaxed bedtime and mealtimes

# A good routine during lockdown

- Make a routine around **times** not tasks
- Build the day around **mealtimes**
- Set aside space for **parents**
- Plan daily **fun** times with children
- Include **exercise** and **outdoor** time
- Focus on **short** home-schooling periods

# A sample 'home-schooling' routine

**8am** breakfast and free time

**10am** school time ( Parent spends 30 mins supporting this )

**11am** break and walk outside

**11:30am** creative time ( kids choose from selection of agreed activities)

**1pm** lunch and then walk with parent

**2:30pm** school time

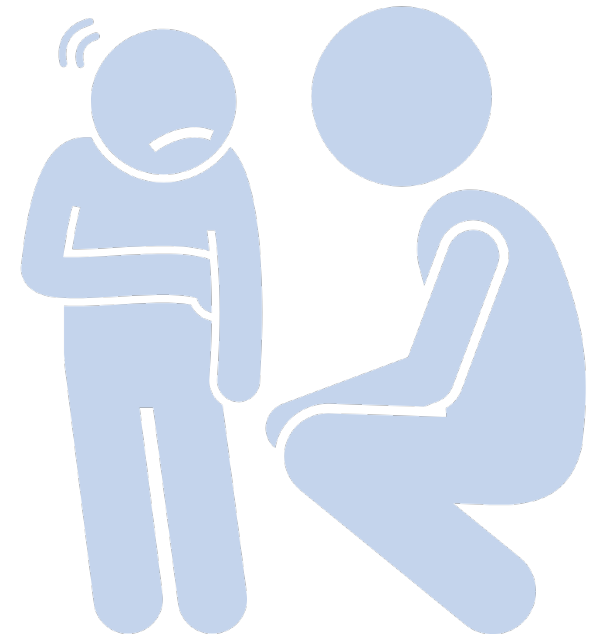
**3:30pm** screen time ( kids choose from agreed games/ TV programmes)

**5:30pm** dinner

**6:30pm** family games

# Talking through worries

- Be Empathic and Listen
- Manage your own worry/ distress
- Focus on child strengths
- Channel worry into positive action
- Focus on small steps
- Help child 'turn off worry'

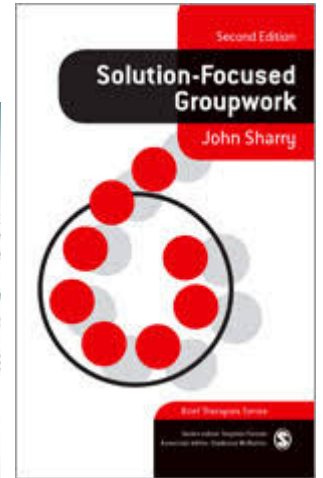
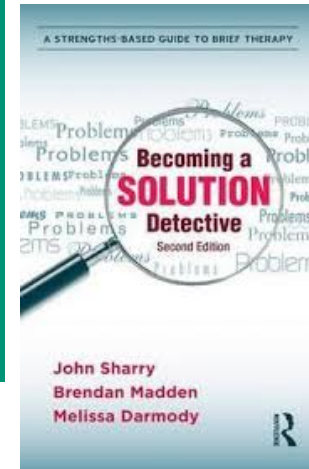
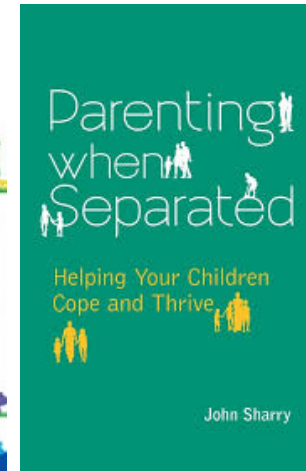
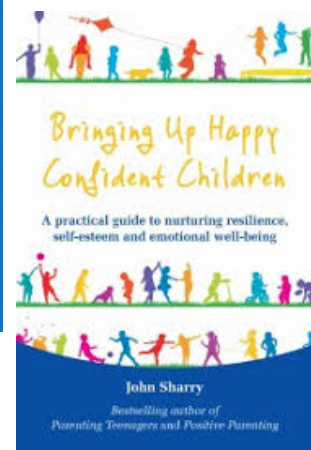
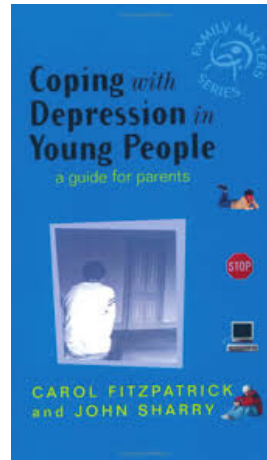
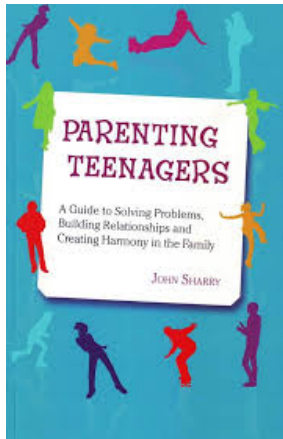
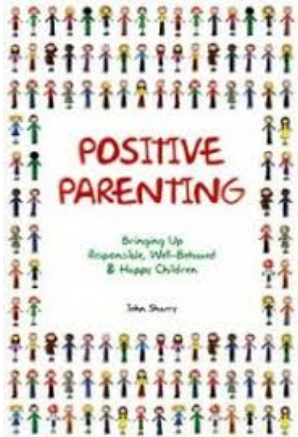


# Managing screentime

- All screen time is **not equal**
- Recognise **positives** of screen time
- Don't focus on reducing screen time but on **encouraging positive activities**
- Schedule screen time in a routine, **as a reward**, after the things you want
- Set good family rules for screens
  1. no screens at mealtimes
  2. max 2 hours recreation screens a day (use a timer)
  3. screen time only after walks/ homework
  4. no screens after bedtime







[solutiontalk.ie](http://solutiontalk.ie)