

Scottish Families

Bringing happy news while we **#StayInTheHoose!**

SPRING

April 2020
info@sfad.org.uk
www.sfad.org.uk

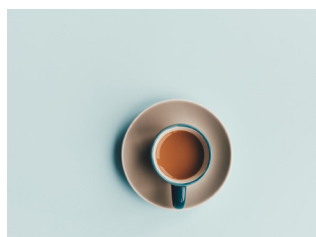
Helpline:
08080 10 10 11
helpline@sfad.org.uk



Staying in the Hoose

Find out what different things the team have been doing to keep busy and to enjoy being in the house.

Pages 4-8



Wellbeing Packs

Whilst we all #StayInTheHoose, our team have been out delivering wellbeing packs to families.

Pages 16-17



Anonymous Pen Pals

We have started a letter writing project so that families can share messages of support.

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Staying Connected with #TeamSFAD

We are hearing a lot right now about how important it is to stay connected. Whether that's going online and using all the tools available to us, or simply phoning each other up to have a chat. As a team, we have been keeping in touch with each other by phone, text and using Zoom. Although we're not in the office together, we can still catch-up every day and talk to each other to make sure we are still delivering the best support to families.

Read on to find out what everyone in #TeamSFAD has been doing to stay connected during this time.

Pages 10-13

Spring

Even though we are now all at home, #TeamSFAD have still been working away delivering support to families. We weren't sure whether or not to release our Spring newsletter just now, but we thought with this being our current normal it made sense to continue our newsletters as usual. We wanted to make this newsletter all about Happy News and looking after yourself because right now we are all swamped with gloomy news and need a positive push.

In this newsletter you can hear all about what activities our team are doing from home and how they are staying connected with their family and friends. We also have a lot of information about the activities we are currently doing whilst we stay at home including our virtual choir, our anonymous pen pal project, our art project Together in the Distance, and how you can raise money for us by doing some #StayInTheHoose fundraising.

Our support services are still open and you can get in touch with us on 08080 10 10 11, helpline@sfad.org.uk or webchat over on our website www.sfad.org.uk.

Stay safe, stay happy and stay connected.

'You don't always have to do stuff. Or achieve stuff. You don't have to spend your time wisely and productively. You don't have to be doing Tai Chi and DIY and artisan bread-making. Sometimes you can just be and feel things and get through and survive and that is more than enough.'
– Matt Haig

To keep up to date with all of our latest news make sure to follow our social media channels (Twitter [@ScotFamADrugs](https://twitter.com/ScotFamADrugs), Facebook [@ScottishFamiliesAffectedByDrugs](https://www.facebook.com/ScottishFamiliesAffectedByDrugs), and Instagram [@ScotFamADrugs](https://www.instagram.com/ScotFamADrugs)).

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Mailing List

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Sign-up here: <http://eepurl.com/c9oCYb>

A word from Justina

I'm rarely lost for words, but it's hard to know where to start with this one. It is just as well I am not a gambling woman, because I have just checked back to see what I wrote a mere three months ago in our Winter newsletter. I said, "January is a good time to ... be full of hope and optimism that change is within our reach, and good times lie ahead." Well 'change' was certainly coming, but not in the way I was thinking, that's for sure. And not many people would describe the current COVID-19 lockdown as 'good times'.

I have been overwhelmed at how quickly and seamlessly #TeamSFAD have responded to everything which has been thrown at them over the past six weeks. They have shown extreme innovation and creativity in continuing to deliver our existing virtual services, adapting face-to-face support, and developing loads of new approaches and helpful information to reach and support families. And of course, they have continued to demonstrate their passion and commitment to keeping families at the heart of everything we do. I am aware that like everyone else in Scotland, Scottish Families staff are juggling home working with childcare, caring for others, community volunteering, concern for wider family and friends, and trying to work out what on earth is going to happen next. So, a massive thank you to all of them for an incredible job in the most trying of circumstances.

Of course, a typical #TeamSFAD response to adversity is to laugh (and occasionally sing) your way out of it, and I have enjoyed all of our virtual team tea breaks on Zoom. These include an increasingly escapist 'question of the day' picked by whoever is chairing (we have enjoyed 'Who would play you in a film about this situation?' and the Tiger-King-inspired 'What exotic pet would you like', and have 'What is your weirdest dream?' coming up ...). And like the rest of the Twitter nation, my family and I have very much enjoyed a legendary 40 days of fancy dress karaoke from the multi-talented @SuzanneSFAD, although I am slightly alarmed at the range of disguises that woman keeps in her loft!

So each Thursday at 8pm while we join our neighbours for #ClapForCarers (an increasingly noisy event as we have started a competitive percussion stand-off with our neighbour opposite), we are also clapping (as pictured) to recognise and applaud the outstanding job that the Scottish Families staff are doing at this time.

We know things are incredibly difficult for the families we support just now. Every day we are hearing harrowing stories about life in lockdown from family members, where it feels like there is no hiding place at all from the harm of addiction. Our Helpline has also been swamped with calls from people concerned about their own substance use, and who are trying in vain to contact their local statutory alcohol and drug services, but phones are ringing out, key workers are not available, and premises are locked up. We warmly welcome the recent issue of a [very strongly worded letter](#) from the Minister for Public Health, Joe Fitzpatrick, and Interim Chief Medical Officer, Gregor Smith, to NHS Boards, Health and Social Care Partnerships and others clearly stating that alcohol and drug services are "essential services, not elective services", and recommending that "pre-COVID-19 service levels be maintained for this at-risk group". Indeed!

Through all of this, there are some glimmers of light, and this provides the theme for this newsletter. I am enjoying being instructed by the government to go out for daily exercise as part of our #StayInTheHoose regime, and the constant sunshine has been amazing. I am lucky enough to live near the beach, so we even managed a wee paddle as we walked last week (not the Caribbean, just saying, but nice all the same). And each Sunday at noon we are staying connected with the wider family through our Famalam Zoom chats ('Zoomalam'?) which is always entertaining.

Finally, please remember all of our services are still operating through the coronavirus outbreak, so you can reach us in all the usual ways. Keep well and keep in touch!

#StayInTheHoose with #TeamSFAD

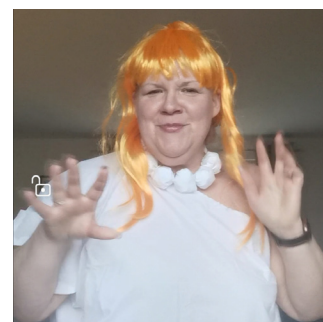
Things are a bit different right now as #TeamSFAD are all at home and adjusting to continue working and supporting families. We have a daily catch-up together through Zoom and whoever is chairing the meeting is to come prepared with a daily question for everyone! Through this we have found that the team have been doing different things to keep busy and to enjoy being in the house. Read on to find out what everyone in our team has been doing as they #StayInTheHoose!



Sooze

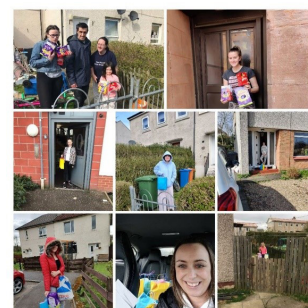
I'm quite enjoying the #StayInTheHoose limits. I'm totally set up with a desk and everything I could need in a wee alcove in my hall. It's perfect. It keeps me out the living room so I'm not watching TV (or listening to the dreadful news), I'm not in the bedroom and tempted to lie down. The bonus is I'm right next to the kitchen and at a slight stretch (which I consider exercise) I can reach the fridge! What is not to love?

I think in the negative times we need to have a giggle. Anybody knows me will know I love a good laugh normally at my expense. On Day 1 of our home working measures, I sang a wee song for the team and recorded this for social media. This started as a laugh, but it seems to have grown arms and legs and I'm getting inundated with requests! I just finished up with Day 40 - check out my social media @SuzanneSFAD



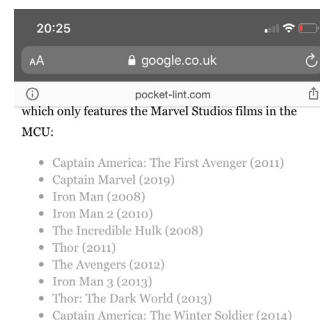
Pam

I work in the Routes Team, working with young people aged 12-26 years old. Every week I am creating new and fun activities for the young people. So, I'm thinking to myself being in the house with two kids aged 9 and 12 would be a breeze, I have endless lists of activities. Week one down and I'm all out! Home schooling is fading away and every time I go on a work call my son decides the only home schooling he is doing is 'PE' i.e. kicking a football round the garden. A different tact was needed and a new way of home schooling that worked. I found a new way of doing his maths and English schoolwork was to run around the garden with him kicking a football shouting out his spelling words and all his maths sums. My son loves this, I can video us completing his work tasks and upload to his journal. Not only is he now doing his schoolwork, I'm burning off the 100 Easter eggs I have eaten!



Martha

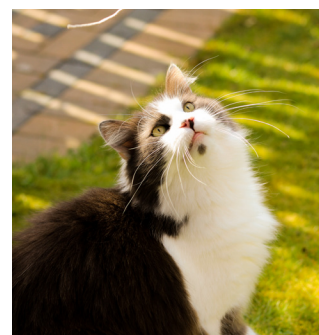
My sister has never seen any of the Marvel films (which I am a big fan of) so we decided at the start of the year that we would watch them all together in chronological order of when they happened rather than when they were made. We had only managed to get through two of these films since January. She is staying at my house during lockdown, so we are making the most of this time to work through them. Next up for us is Iron Man 3! For me, watching films is great for some much-needed escapism. Getting some downtime and a chance to switch off for a while helps me to recharge.



Rebecca

I've always loved listening to music wherever I go. Whether it's through the radio in the car, when I'm on the train, whilst I'm working away in the office, or when I'm just sitting in the house. It's my way of relaxing and coping with everything. So, whilst I'm in the house, all me and my fiancé have done is blare music and enjoy dancing about together! When I was younger, I went through the classy emo/goth phase and even though the dyed red hair and black clothes are gone, the music never left! We've been listening to way too much Pearl Jam and Alice in Chains, but it's been brilliant and we're loving it.

My main hobby is photography so I've been taking the camera out in the back garden and taking pictures of all the little flowers and things I can find to keep my skills up. I've recently found a new model, the neighbour's cat Misty. She's a long-haired cat and is way too pretty for her own good.



John

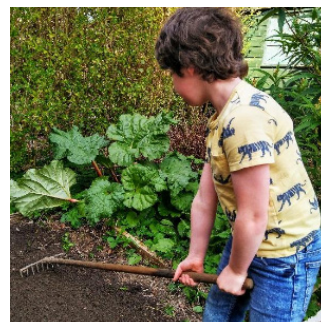
It's been a mixed experience for me learning to stay at home and finding new ways to keep busy (besides work) given that I'm always out and about. I'm conscious of how lucky I am to be in this position with so many key workers still out there every day keeping essential lifelines going, particularly for the most vulnerable. I am extremely grateful for this and have been doing my bit by staying at home to keep others safe.

So, what have I been doing? I've been reconnecting with all the things I love and always say I don't have the time or energy to do like playing music, baking (cakes, bread, you name it), being creative with art by painting and taking the time to work on the garden – I even tried making face masks! Nature is my ultimate happy place, I've been spending lots of time in the garden have built raised beds, assembled a beehive, and planted loads of seeds.



Susie

As a parent I would have to say I'm going with the flow while at home. Being present to the slower pace and rather than fighting it, just letting go and appreciating it. Our littlest is 3 years old and although she is just at the point in her development where she is severely testing our limits at times, wrestling with us to be independent and everything, we are also getting a front row seat to all of her development. I keep reminding myself not to take this for granted. Our older boy will be 8 in a few weeks and again plenty of testing behaviour but I've said yes to his requests to play and read and create and play football more than I probably ever have and making this time for him and I has kept us both well.

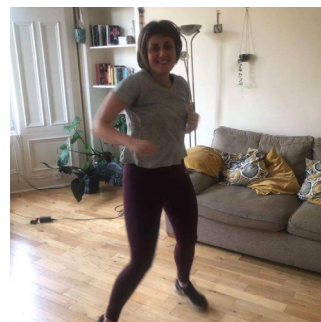


Dressing up seems to be a theme for us and they've each created their own soundtrack of favourite songs so these two things combined leads to some great dance parties in the living room.

Ash

I'd been looking for some ways to get exercise at home when I remembered a friend who had introduced me to 'Punk Rock Aerobics' some years ago. Even though you'll usually find me listening to mellowed out folk music whilst sipping herbal teas, it turns out punk still isn't dead and makes for a pretty good home workout routine for the whole family!

After falling down the internet wormhole, I discovered that punk has also infiltrated Zumba workouts, I've never been drawn to the world of Zumba myself, but Avril Lavigne Zumba took me there!



Work your way through the Punk Zumba [playlist here](#)

Claire

Over the past few weeks of being stuck in the house, I've been baking and, unfortunately, eating! I never usually have time to bake with my children (I say 'children' like they are playing around my ankles, they are teenagers who tower over, and ridicule me, constantly).

It would normally be a battle to get them to bake with their very uncool mum so there are some silver linings to this lockdown. So far we've made a Victoria Sandwich, chocolate cake, apple crumble and toffee cake (my personal favourite).

I have been living in leggings for the past few weeks and, although I can't wait for the lockdown to end, I am not looking forward to trying to squeeze into anything without an elasticated waist after scoffing all these cakes!



Lynne

I want to take this time to give you a friendly reminder to take care of yourself! Don't be like this Lynne and be productive in the garden without sunscreen or keep active and forget to switch the heating off. Don't always cook meals and not order takeaway as it may result in an oven burn to your right elbow. Going outside for daily exercise also resulted in this Lynne falling over and grazing her legs and hands.

Be like this Lynne (right) and pass your time safely! Stay indoors because there's no UV rays or gravel to cause sunburn and grazes! Also order a takeaway every now and again and you won't burn your right elbow. Enjoy some therapeutic colouring books, get puzzling with Sudoku, make your own face mask and enjoy a relaxing bubble bath! (Our love goes out to Lynne who managed to cause harm to herself cooking and going outside!)



Sarah

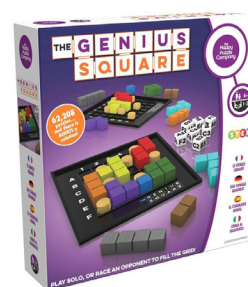
One activity I have been enjoying during lockdown is feeding the birds with my son, who is nearly 18 months old. We have set up three bird feeders in the garden and he loves to sit and watch the birds. We have moved his highchair to face the window and they provide his dinner entertainment. Not knowing a lot about ornithology, I bought a poster of garden birds so we could name the different species together; some toddlers know about cows and sheep, my boy knows about jackdaws and blackbirds. We are really limited in getting him out into the world at the moment so this is a small way he can get involved with nature while we are all at home.



Scott

As time goes on, I suppose I am getting used to staying at home, but I do need to get out for a walk every day for my daily exercise. I've also been considering getting my bike out of the shed and maybe if the weather stays good, I'll get it out and go for a cycle.

I have taken the time to find out what's on catch-up on television, watching some dramas I'd missed and rediscovering board games in the cupboard has been great. Two worth highlighting are The Genius Square and Ticket to Ride Europe. I'm sure we all have board games tucked away in the house – I recommend looking them out, shutting off the computer screen or TV, and letting yourself (and those in lockdown with you) have an old school board game night!



Carly

I have always enjoyed cooking and baking, but sometimes it is difficult to spend as much time as I'd like in the kitchen. Since going into lockdown I have had a lot more free time, and I have enjoyed being able to live life at a slower pace for a while. I have been spending some of my free time in the kitchen, trying new recipes. I find I can be tempted to want to eat junk food when I am feeling down, so by cooking home-made meals, it's easier to make sure I am eating a well-balanced diet. That's not to say I don't treat myself, I have been doing plenty of baking too! My dog, Oscar, turned 3 this month, so I also made him a doggie friendly birthday cake (right).



Justina

I am enjoying being instructed by the government to go out for daily exercise as part of our #StayInTheHoose regime, and the constant sunshine has been amazing. I am lucky enough to live near the beach so we even managed a wee paddle as we walked last week (not the Caribbean, just saying, but nice all the same). And each Sunday at noon we are staying connected with the wider family through our Famalam Zoom chats ('Zoomalam'?) which is always entertaining.



#StayInTheHoose with Gill

I am mum to two very energetic chatty girls, Ruby aged 8 and Daisy aged 5 and a half (can't forget the half). The last few days of the Scottish schools being open were filled with mixed feelings. Should I send my kids to school? Have they been in contact with Covid-19? Could they transmit this to someone else? How will I entertain my kids at home for the foreseeable?

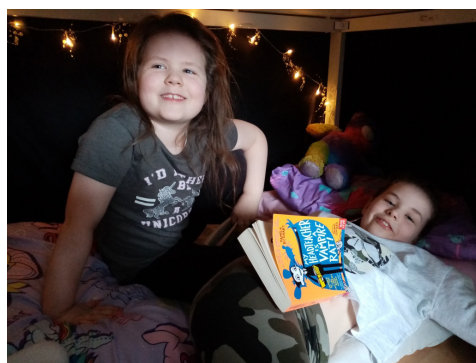
Through supporting families, I find myself encouraging people to focus on what they can control and trying not to pack too much into one day. Sometimes it can be hard to take on your own advice. Do as I say not as I do springs to mind.

For me being at home with two kids and a furloughed husband I decided from the start that I am not home schooling my children. Home school is a choice and the reality are that parents who choose to do so educate their children in a different way to a school environment. This includes outdoor learning, bringing maths into everyday situations and using the child's environment to make lessons around the curriculum. I take my hat off to parents who make this choice.

I, like many, have chosen to send my children to school. A school that they have both grown to love with friendly teachers who both care for and discipline them. Teachers who spend hours perfecting lesson plans and have academic training in how to teach a 5-year-old how to read, or how to teach fractions to an 8-year-old.

Leaving school suddenly on the 18th March, my 5-year-old could read a lot of sounds and muddle her way through some books. My 8 year old loves reading and is great at maths but her handwriting is another story. Growing up I enjoyed school and did not bad however, I am not a teacher. So for now we are choosing to sustain what they know and anything else is a bonus. We will use the worksheets sent home by school and read stories and ask questions. There are lots of opportunities while cooking at home to talk about maths as well. Looking for shapes in the home and outside when we go on our now daily walk.

We keep hearing that right now is an unprecedented time, meaning never done or



known before. The life that our children know has changed and this situation is new for us all.

If the school has sent home work that you don't understand or find it difficult to explain to your child it's OK. If you don't have Wi-Fi to access all of the free learning sites, it's OK. If you feel guilty for wishing that your kids were at school it's OK.

Sometimes a whole day can feel like a long time to keep the kids entertained and breaking the day up into more manageable chunks can help. Writing a list of things they like to do inside can help when they say they are bored, because let's face it sometimes we draw a blank as well with what they can do. Setting aside some time for homework and thinking of ways that they can learn practical skills at home as well. Some ideas from our list are Lego, den building, colouring in, board games, painting nails and making up dances.

The Scottish Government Parent Club website (www.paretnclub.scot) gives ideas for learning and having a bit of structure to the day. The website also gives useful resources that can be accessed and advises that the best seems to be BBC Bitesize. From experience of figuring out what to do after the Easter Holidays I can say that Bitesize seems helpful with daily lessons that aren't very long.

Although our kids spend 30 hours a week in school much of this time is taken up by revising what they already know, learning to be responsible citizens, building friendships and physical exercise. I will continue for as long as this is our new normal to be aware of the challenges that my children face due to this unprecedented time. Sometimes that might mean more screen time and sometimes I might be on top from with a great idea.

Staying Connected with #TeamSFAD

We are hearing a lot right now about how important it is to stay connected. Whether that's going online and using all the tools available to us, or simply phoning each other up to have a chat. As a team, we have been keeping in touch with each other by phone, text and using Zoom. Although we're not in the office together, we can still catch-up every day and talk to each other to make sure we are still delivering the best support to families.

Read on to find out what everyone in #TeamSFAD has been doing to stay connected during this time.



Sooze

I keep in touch with my friends and family through text and WhatsApp. There have been a lot of Facebook group video chats going down, playing all the games like 'catch the burgers' which makes your face fatter (well that's the excuse I am using anyway).

Every now and again I hear a wee knock at the door and a neighbour will have left me a wee something and ran away. My lovely neighbour left me beautiful flowers as she waved from afar. As kids in the street we used to play 'Ring A Bang Skoosh' where we rang doorbells or knocked doors and ran away. We're doing this again as adults but kinder as we leave a wee cake behind as we're sprinting away.

I'm just getting through this with cake, good banter and kindness. I may not get out my house as I think I've eaten myself out my pyjamas!



Pam

At Routes we have still been super busy. Working with tech savvy young people, I'm trying to keep up to date with all the different ways we can connect with each other. I've started lots of small WhatsApp groups, where we send each other funny motivational memes, pictures, and group video calls to stay in touch.

We have been working with Esme from the Dance Academy to do weekly fun fitness classes via Zoom incorporating a few TikTok moves! For young people struggling with staying home and missing their daily routines, I have been completing mindfulness sessions via Zoom promoting ways to look after their mental wellbeing.

Claire and I have been out and about delivering Easter eggs and wellbeing packs containing activities to help with boredom for young people and their families.



Martha

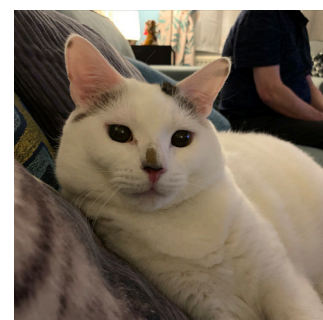
I think my world has shifted to onscreen. Working from home, socialising and entertainment has all shifted largely to computer, phone or anything screen based! So, while I think it is important to switch off the screens sometimes and allow yourself some time to focus on other things, I think the options there are for staying connected are amazing. Between Zoom, Skype, FaceTime, and House Party we are well catered for. Finding a happy medium where you can connect with the people you love while not staring at a screen can be tough. My family used to play Yahtzee a lot when I lived at home and when I visit. So last week my family played a game of Yahtzee together via FaceTime. It was lovely as it just felt like they were with us. We were not just staring at the screen, but we could bring my parents from Aberdeenshire to our flat! Not so lovely when I lost the game and my mum made her thoughts on my loss abundantly clear.



Rebecca

I have been keeping in touch with my dad, auntie, brother, and cats mainly through phone and texting. Sometimes I'll ask my brother to FaceTime so I can see the family cats Oliver and Maisy and say hi to them. As soon as they hear my voice, they are running around my dad's living room trying to find out where I am but thankfully, they have now learned I am in the little phone screen!

My dad is 71 so he is to stay indoors whilst all this is happening, and I have been doing what I can for him so he's set-up for everything online. I gave him my old iPhone a few months ago so he can message us on WhatsApp and FaceTime. I have also been keeping in touch with my best friends through WhatsApp and Zoom. We usually have a weekly 2-hour chat through Zoom and bring our tea and cake which is great because it is like the usual meetups we have at Starbucks, but we are in our pyjamas instead!

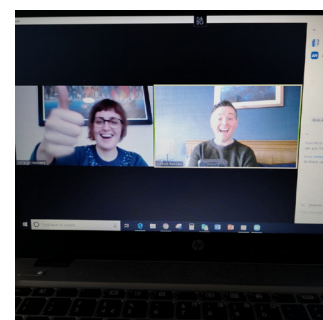


John

In an unexpected way, I feel this situation has made me more mindful of the connections I have in my life and made me realise how important these relationships and bonds are to me.

One of the first things I did when things started to get a little bit scary was to create a WhatsApp group for my immediate family which has now taken on the optimistic group name 'Coronasurvivors Club'. It's full of weird and wacky conversations, memes, daily check-ins, and some borderline inappropriate links thanks to my brother who likes to take things too far every time!

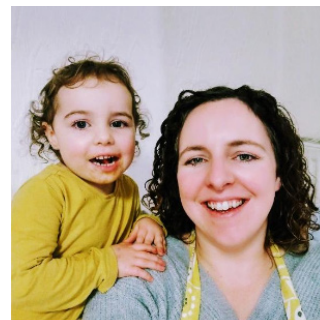
It all feels like we're learning to find our way to bond and feel connected in an entirely different approach. I'm embracing it and learning each day and I'm grateful for the reality check wrapped up in a global crisis.



Susie

Anyone else finding online social interaction both a lifeline and tiring? It's likely that the sheer volume of video calls, whether for work or socially, is tiring for most of us. I think it's the unusual sustained self-feedback of watching yourself in a call! An article I read described how subconsciously this can cause an internal monologue of observations about your appearance and mannerisms that can cause the call to feel more tiring. I have switched some of my calls to regular phone now to help counter this a bit!

I think the other important thing I have learned is that staying connected to our friends and family is important when we're physically separated, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't feel free to say no to calls and take some time to recuperate at the end of the day. I normally need some time at the end of the day on my own to watch the next few episodes in whatever boxset I am following!



Ash

In this strange time of physical distance, we've got video calls coming out our ears and we're learning how to use new technologies at speed. But what if we turned our mind to the retro phone call?

When I worked as a social worker/counsellor I developed an appreciation for communicating by phone that really surprised me. By tuning in to the quality and tone of someone's voice, their verbal expressions and the silence in conversations, I was able to notice subtleties in verbal communication that were less obvious to me when face-to-face. I found myself having rich, connected and joyful conversations with people despite the limitations of phone contact. It's been nice to get back in to phone calls again – it helps me to bridge the gap between physical distance and connection. If you're finding yourself fatigued by video calls, I'd challenge you to pick up the phone, remove distractions where possible and really listen.



Claire

One of the most popular groups we held with our Routes young people last year was a make-up demonstration by a brilliant make-up artist, Gemma Philips. We got in touch with Gemma when the lockdown was announced to see what she thought about doing an online weekly Zoom make-up class for us.

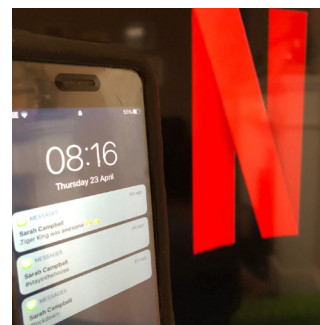
It's been really popular. Each week the young people choose a different topic which they would like Gemma to guide them through.

We buy inexpensive products for all the young people, drop them at their door, have a little (social distance) chat and Gemma uses the exact product the following week in the class. It's been a lovely way for the Routes young people to stay connected. As well as learning a new skill, the product they receive each week provides them with a much needed boost during these difficult weeks.



Sarah

We are the same as a lot of families and have been using WhatsApp, Facebook messenger, zoom, house party, 'humorous' memes and all the usual apps to keep in touch. It is nice connecting with family but contact through technology does have its downsides. It can be tricky to keep the flow of conversation going, people get cut off and someone always has their microphone turned off. However, my sister and I have been watching TV together apart and it has been one of my favourite things to do in isolation. At a prearranged time, we both hit play on a cheesy show (so cheesy that I will never confess which one!) and text our comments back and forth over the course of the episode. We don't get to see each other very often, even outwith lockdown, so it is nice to connect every week. And nice to get a break from video calls!



Scott

I have been introduced to Zoom to let us all stay connected at work – it's great from the perspective you can still have meetings and see each other, but it can be off-putting as you also see yourself on the screen! Home working can sometimes feel like lone working, so seeing and talking to colleagues keeps us connected and lets the fun side of work continue too. On a wider staying connected note, I'm getting to know the neighbours better (social distant across the garden fence) as previously when working I rarely saw anybody. I'm understanding it can be important to them to have a friendly chat, especially if they are living alone, and offers of getting shopping have also been taken up and appreciated.

Having had a family member in hospital during this time has been difficult as there is no visiting and having to rely on phone contact has also been challenging with their limited dexterity with their hands, they can struggle to use a mobile phone. Technology to stay connected is great but only when people are able to use it. Looking forward to the time when we are all able to see and talk to each in person again.



Carly

Since the Covid-19 lockdown, I have become increasingly more grateful for having access to technology. I imagine what it must have been like for families during war times, when they had to rely on writing letters to one another. Although I miss physically seeing friends and family, I think I have been better at keeping in touch with everyone during lockdown. Each Wednesday evening, I take part in a quiz night with my extended family.

One of my friends was due to get married this year, but the wedding has been postponed until 2021. One of the bridesmaid's had a lovely idea to hopefully lift the bride and groom's spirits. She set up a WhatsApp group for all the wedding guests, and has asked everyone to film a short video with a message for the bride and groom. She will then collate them all into one video, and send it to them on the day they were originally scheduled to get married.



Together in the Distance

Many parents, children and individuals are being creative to keep themselves busy whilst we #StayInTheHoose. Drawing can be a great way to relax and spend quality time with each other. We want to celebrate this and make the most of what people are doing to connect through art. We would like people across Scotland to send us a drawing of themselves that we can feature in a collective art project.

What do I do?

Draw yourself in any format with any materials or whatever you like/have in the house – you can use pencils, felt-tip pens, chalk or whatever you have at hand. All we ask is for you to be as creative, colourful and fun with your characters as possible.

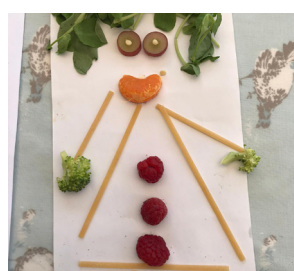


What happens next?

When we have everyone's pictures, they will be arranged into a series of art works, paintings and collages. We will share these online and, beyond the current circumstances, they will be launched as an exhibition and celebration of communities. Everyone participating (and featured in the paintings) will be invited to join us at the exhibition to try and find themselves in the artwork.

Step by step

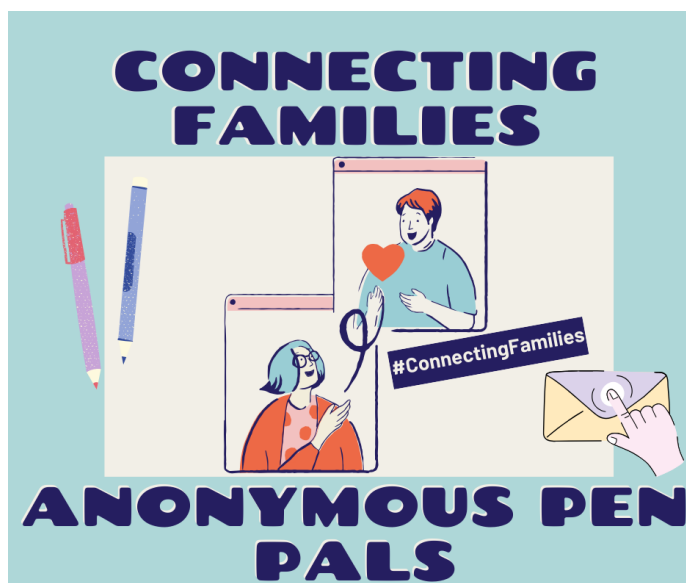
1. Draw yourself (as a full person!)
2. Send us a photo of your drawing to either communities@sfad.org.uk or text to 07444413866
3. Tell us your name, age and location (if you want to be named) – we want people to be credited for their art, but you can send anonymously if you prefer
4. Optional – if you don't want to draw you can still take part by sharing a short story or example of kindness and connection that you have seen/experienced or carried out during this challenging time
5. Please have your drawings to us no later than **15th May 2020**



Anonymous Pen Pals

As we get used to a new routine while we #StayInTheHoose, we are learning new ways to connect with each other. But being indoors all the time is having an impact on some of the families we support. Families are meeting new challenges every day and are doing what they can to look after themselves and to keep their loved ones safe.

We have started a letter writing project so that families can share messages of support with each other through this difficult time. If you write a letter for someone, you will receive a letter of support and encouragement via email in return from another family member. Both the letters you send and receive are anonymous.



No one should feel alone right now (including you!) and a little letter from someone in a similar situation can give someone a much-needed boost in what is a very difficult time. Your letter will mean a lot to someone else and we hope you'll take something from the letter you receive in return.

Here are some snippets from letters that we have received already:

'...We all know that living at close quarters with other family members can really test our patience. There is always the option available to us all to reach out to some of the National helplines, talking with someone when the situation is becoming too difficult is a really helpful way to deal with these things. Across the country so many of us are in the same boat. It is ok to say things are difficult for you during this.'

'We will both remember these times as a time when showing love and human kindness was seen as a strength and not a weakness. Things will get better, we will get through this, you are not alone.'

'Continue to be the strong, loving, brave human that you are and know that what you are facing right now does not define you. You may be someone whose life has been affected by drugs and alcohol, but you are so much more than that. Stay amazing x'

Letter submissions will close on Monday the 18th of May

Write your letter here - <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/anonpenpals>

#StayInTheHoose Wellbeing Packs

Looking after the Routes kids

When everyone was told by the government to stay indoors, our team were coming up with ways to keep the people we support safe and well.

We came up with #StayInTheHoose wellbeing packs. They started when Pam and Claire from the team said they had made wellbeing packs for the young people they support in our group Routes. The packs included colouring books and pencils, a selection of toiletries and pamper products, food, games, and a wellbeing journal. The packs were to encourage the young people to stay indoors and to look after themselves. So far 100 wellbeing packs have been delivered to the young people we supported (they have received 2 already and we deliver them fortnightly!)

For Easter, we kindly received 120 donated Easter eggs from Tesco, the East Dunbartonshire foodbank and some of Claire's neighbours which were included in the wellbeing packs. Claire and Pam also took the time to personalise the wellbeing packs for the young people e.g. one of the kids absolutely loves unicorns and got some unicorn-themed items! Some are huge fans of Jaffa Cakes, so they got a few packs of them too.

'Pam, me and my mum can't thank you and Claire enough. I cried at all that stuff so nice of you' (Amy)

'Thanks so much for all my gifts and for dropping them off. I am so bored, so it was good to chat to you even if it was from miles away.' (Carly)



Wellbeing adventures in East Dunbartonshire

Colin from our team had himself a big adventure of touring East Dunbartonshire on the 22nd April, delivering wellbeing packs to family members.

The packs had a selection of mindfulness materials including a book called 'Mindfulness made Simple', colouring books and pens, some chocolates and sweets, tea bags, some toiletries like bath foam and a pack of tissues.

Colin said the biggest part of his adventure was discovering what talent and capabilities

he has as a navigator and his partner Susan's limitations on her patience with these new talents and capabilities! Susan soon found out our lovely Colin isn't the best navigator, but that's okay. Colin says it added to the adventure even though they got lost on numerous occasions, they did get to all the family members and made it home safely. Karen who received one of the wellbeing packs later WhatsApp'd Colin saying, *'it's such a wonderful goody bag, thank you SFAD.'*

Colin also received some more texts later that night saying, *'looking forward to do the colouring book when I've finished uni. Have been using mindfulness meditation for sleep*

so will make use of the book. Thanks Colin, nice wee surprise.'

'Hi Colin, thanks for the goody bag, much

appreciated!'

Karen and Maggie below were very happy with their wellbeing packs!



Wellbeing adventures in Aberdeenshire

Carly from our team wanted to try and put a smile on family member's faces with her wellbeing packs, and provide them with things to keep them entertained during lockdown. Rather than focusing on essentials like food and toiletries, Carly wanted to include items that they wouldn't necessarily think to buy for themselves.

In the wellbeing packs, Carly included a lavender sleep spray which is designed to give a good night's sleep – some family members said they were struggling to sleep during lockdown. Sleep is important for our wellbeing, but the change in routine combined with the added anxieties was leaving many people tired and sluggish.

Staying on the theme of self-care, the packs also had a bath bomb, candle and face mask to encourage family members to put some time aside to pamper themselves. Many people have some more free time during lockdown, so Carly wanted to try and give things to help pass the time more easily.

Some family members also received a book to read, and some received adult colouring books and pencils. One of the books was called 'The Little Book of Mindfulness' which has some simple steps for people to reduce anxiety and find calm in their day.

Every pack also had some kind of puzzle or game. For family members living on their own, Carly included a metal wire puzzle. For families, they received a retro game e.g. Tiddly Winks. For families with young kids, the pack had some activities for children too like books, craft activity books, art supplies, play dough, etc.

Lastly there was some sweet treats in each of the packs. Whilst we encourage a healthy diet during lockdown, it's important to give ourselves treats from time to time.

Overall, the feedback from the wellbeing packs in Aberdeenshire have been positive. One family member said that if they had walked into a shop, they would never have thought to buy the items in the pack, but it was just what they needed.



#StayInTheHoose Fundraising!

We can't ask you to run, walk or zip slide to raise money for us at this time, but we are still carrying out our work across Scotland and, as always, your support makes a big difference to everything we do. Did you know that there are lots of fun things you can do at home that can also help raise cash for Scottish Families?

Check out some of our easy fundraising ideas below! It doesn't matter how much you raise, as a small charity every penny raised really does make a huge difference.

We hope our ideas will give you something fun to focus on while you #StayInTheHoose.



So how are we helping families right now?

- We are providing one-to-one online support online or over the phone
- Our helpline and website provide up to date information for families in a time of confusion
- We are sending wellbeing packs to isolated families
- We continue to support young people in East and West Dunbartonshire
- We are providing bereavement support remotely
- We are hosting online group meet-ups to encourage family members to stay connected
- We are creating fun ways to come together, such as our pen pal scheme and virtual choir



Don't say the 'C' word jar

Set up a 'swear jar' in your house and every time someone in the house says 'coronavirus' or 'Covid19' put some loose change in the jar. All those pennies will soon add up and can be donated to us through your local bank when it is safe to do so.

Birthday Fundraisers

If your birthday is coming up, you can set up a birthday fundraiser for Scottish Families on Facebook and ask people to donate as a gift.



Don't Stop Dancing Challenge

Get yourself an awesome playlist and take on a don't stop dancing challenge! Livestream yourself and your family as you dance for as long as you can and ask people to donate to keep you going. Amazing exercise and brilliant fun for kids too.

Gaming Marathon

If you're into gaming why not have a gaming marathon? If you're on Twitch find Scottish Families on Tiltify and start raising money for us by playing your favourite game and asking your viewers to donate. If you have little kids, you could have a board game marathon with them and ask people to sponsor per game completed.



During this time of physical distancing, donating online is the simplest, safest way to fundraise. Here's how to get your donations to us:

1. Make a safe, secure donation through JustGiving here <https://www.justgiving.com/sfad> and click the purple donation button.
2. Whether you are hosting a movie marathon or dancing all night, you will need a fundraising page to collect donations go to <https://www.justgiving.com/sfad> and click the orange fundraise for us button. It is simple to set up and all donations made to your page go directly to us.
3. If you fancy setting up a birthday fundraiser through Facebook simply click <https://www.facebook.com/fund/Scottish-FamiliesAffectedByDrugs/> and follow the instructions

It doesn't matter how much you raise, as a small charity every penny raised really does make a difference so thank you!

Breathing Exercises with Colin

Our Family Support Development Officer for East Dunbartonshire Colin has recently taken the Mindfulness, Wellbeing and Peak Performance MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) with a few family members. The course is full of information and exercises on mindfulness and meditation to help with anxiety and stressful situations. Colin has kindly shared some of the exercises from the course so that you can practice them at home.

Coping with Anxiety

Day to day life can be stressful enough, but at this moment in time there is a chance some of us will experience stress at a whole new level. There are a few simple relaxation exercises which can hopefully help you get some control back into how you are feeling, thinking, and behaving.

When you are feeling anxious, you might notice that your heart rate and breathing get a bit faster. You may also begin to sweat and feel dizzy or lightheaded. When you are anxious, getting your breathing under control can relax both your body and mind.

To get your breathing under control when you are anxious, follow these steps:

1. Sit in a quiet and comfortable place. Put one of your hands on your chest and the other on your stomach. Your stomach should move more than your chest when you breathe in deeply.
2. Take a slow and regular breath in through your nose. Watch and sense your hands as you breathe in. The hand on your chest should remain still while the hand on your stomach will move slightly.
3. Breathe out through your mouth slowly.

4. Repeat this process at least 10 times or until you begin to feel your anxiety lessen. If this exercise works for you then it may be an idea to write it out on a card and have it on you just until you can remember the steps yourself.

'The Comma' Mindfulness Meditation

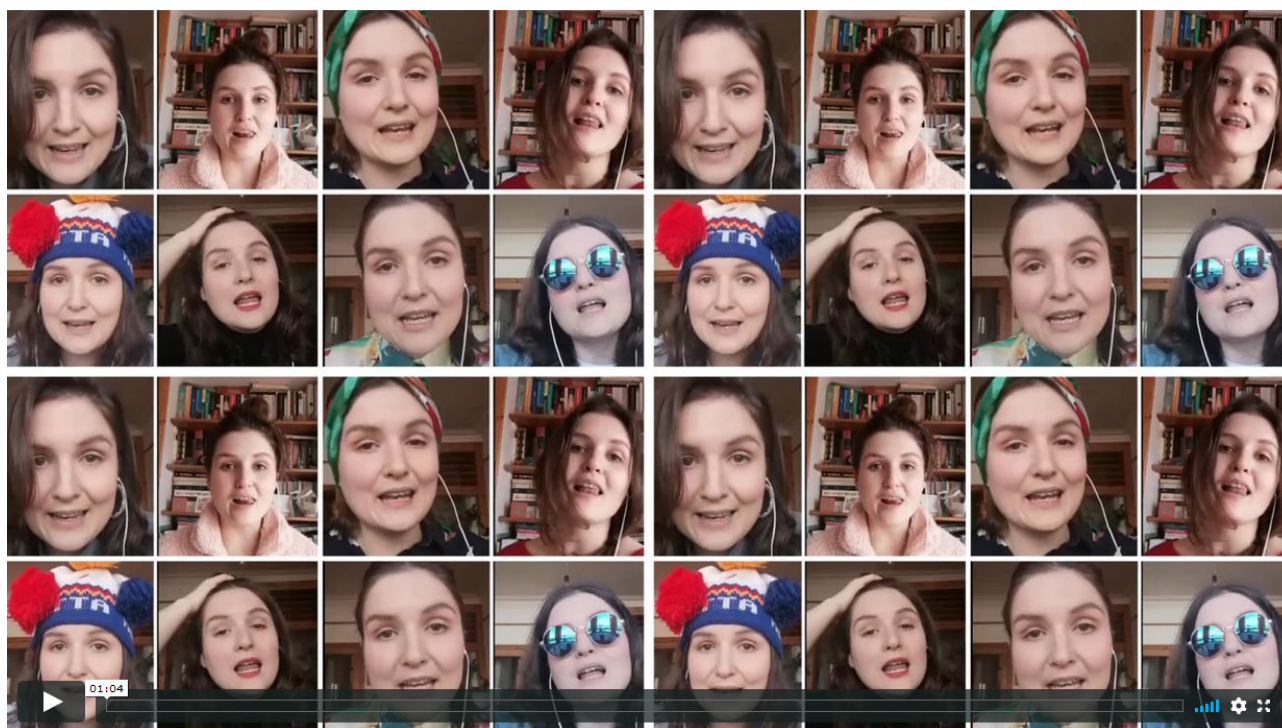
Another way of coping with things over and above what we normally must cope with is through meditation, and in this case Mindfulness Meditation. The one Colin has chosen for us is so simple and easy and only takes two minutes. 'The Comma' helps you focus on the moment and you. Colin has shared the audio and transcript from his course [here](#).

'Now, just with the body balanced in the chair and the eyes gently closed, just simply hold the body in awareness for this moment. Just aware of what the body is feeling, just present. Noticing the entry and exit of the breath. Not having to interfere with it, but just simply feeling it. And if you're happy to, just simply drawing in a deep breath and letting it out slowly and gently. And another breath in and out slowly and gently. Now just letting the breathing find its own rhythm. If thoughts or feelings are arising, then just noticing them, not having to suppress them, just observing them but preferring to let the attention rest with the breathing. So, when you're ready, allowing the eyes to gently open and then mindfully move into whatever activities await you.'

This may take some practice and don't worry if you wander off into other thoughts and ideas. Just bring yourself back to your breathing and relax. Don't try too hard.

If you use any of these breathing exercises and they help you, let us know over on our social media.

Our first virtual choir - Voices Together



In a time of increased physical distance, we thought it was important to find ways to come together and connect. And what better way to connect than by belting out an absolute tune? In a show of support for each other and for families we started our very first virtual choir – Voices Together.

Our song is 'You Gotta Be' by Des'ree. We chose this song because it speaks to hope, to overcoming adversity and to love. In Community Reinforcement and Family Training (CRAFT) we often use the phrase 'your love has power' and we think this song speaks to that perfectly. When we first put out the call to singers, we weren't sure what to expect but within a week we had over 50 people from across Scotland signed up to sing together. Our extra talented choir leader Emilie Boyd arranged the song into three parts for singers to learn. Each singer then sent in a video of themselves singing their part which is currently being compiled into a video, to be launched soon. Who would've thought Scottish Families would have their own music video?!

Singing is a fun, expressive and connecting activity that's not just reserved for people who can belt out a tune at karaoke like a natural born star. Voices Together is about celebrating all voices and sending the message that singing is for everybody. Singing has positive benefits for our mental health and emotional wellbeing – it helps us to express ourselves, feel grounded, connect with our bodies and breath and have fun.

By bringing everyone together we are sending a message of support to families and friends across Scotland.

Watch this space for announcements about the launch of our upcoming choir video. We hope it will bring you as much joy and warmth as we had putting it all together.



Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs

Main Office: Edward House, 199 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, G2 3EX

Helpline: 08080 10 10 11

helpline@sfad.org.uk

webchat available at: www.sfad.org.uk

Twitter: @ScotFamADrugs

Facebook: @ScottishFamiliesAffectedByDrugs

Instagram: @ScotFamADrugs

General enquiries: 0141 465 7523

email: info@sfad.org.uk

website: www.sfad.org.uk



**Scottish
Families**

Affected by Alcohol & Drugs

Registered Scottish charity: SC034737