think Ninja AND THE VIRUS

BY

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#CORONAVIRUS

As the country is working to contain the coronavirus (Covid-19), there are children and young people across the country that are working to contain their anxiety or low mood, and maintain their mental health and wellbeing during the crisis.

The coronavirus pandemic has been particularly impactful for children and young people. Though the physical impacts may be minimal, they are being significantly impacted by school closures and a subsequent change in routine, as well as isolation from friends (including important social opportunities such as attending youth clubs, sport events and other activities they may regularly enjoy).

They may also be coping with anxious family members who have health or employment concerns, or spending an increased amount of time within a difficult family dynamic.

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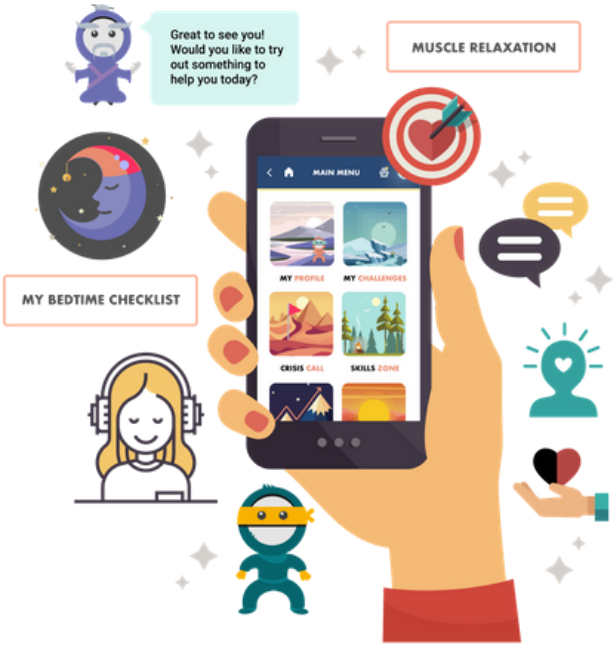
COPING STRATEGIES

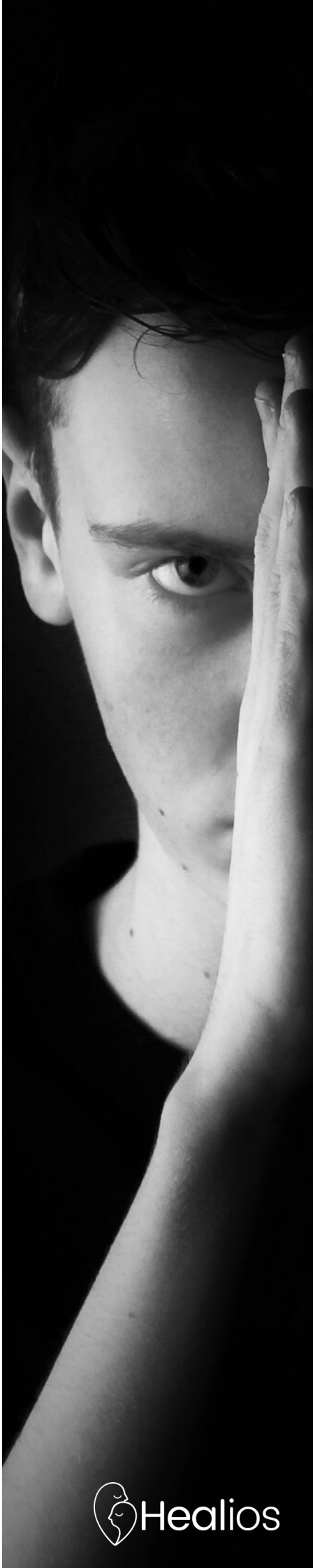
Often uncertainty and a sense of threat cause us to experience an increase in anxiety and stress, and the symptoms of this can be a challenge to manage. Self-isolation adds further psychological challenges, as usual coping strategies including exercise, contact with others and maintaining routine are limited or disrupted. This can lead to anxious reactions including unhelpful coping behaviours (hand washing, and checking the news and social media too frequently), feeling emotionally overwhelmed, and catastrophising about the future.

Support and a sense of consistency is really important, as children and young people are facing time alone and may feel isolated and uncertain. Healios already successfully supports children, young people and their families in their own homes remotely, and we continue to do so with a range of psychological interventions.

We understand the value of continuity, safe spaces and supportive interaction – even at a distance.

Alongside our existing services, we have also actively responded to the Covid-19 crisis using and developing the resources we have.





FREELY AVAILABLE

This week our ThinkNinja app (already available through some NHS trusts), has been made universally and freely available to children and young people (aged between 10 and 18) for the duration of the crisis. The app has been developed using evidence based cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) concepts and skills, navigated and explained by a digital avatar called 'WiseNinja'.

A new coronavirus section of the app offers focused support on virus-specific issues young people may be experiencing, directing them to existing content to help manage and understand their feelings.

NEW CONTENT

Through new ThinkNinja content, we have addressed important issues that young people are facing including specific support in coping with isolation, dealing with health concerns and facing fears related to the virus. It includes ideas, tips and challenges, and links to skills and videos. The app supports and enables young people to cope with a range of emotions and challenging thoughts, with the aim of adapting to the unique situation that they currently find themselves in.

The ThinkNinja app can be freely downloaded through Apple and Android app stores. There is a coronavirus banner on the home screen, taking the young person directly to Covid-19 specific content. It can also be accessed through interaction with the WiseNinja and selecting the ‘I’m worried about the virus’ option.

ThinkNinja is available 24/7, providing an additional and easy way to access a support tool for children and young people, critical at a time when accessing school wellbeing services and local NHS services is more challenging.

CONNECTING PEOPLE

For more information and to download ThinkNinja see below:

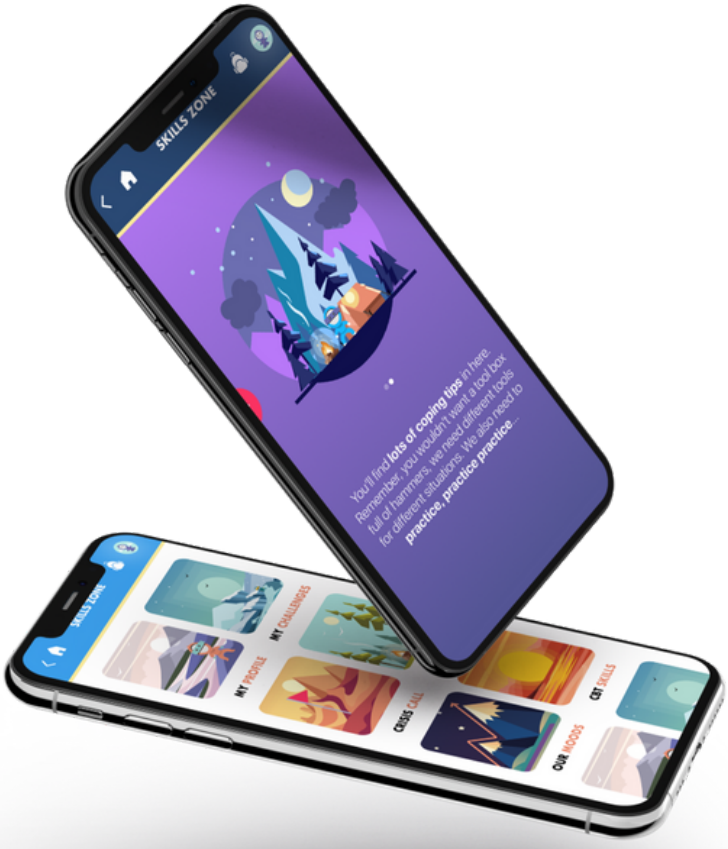
Website: https://www.healios.org.uk/services/thinkninja1

Download on the App Store

Apple App Store:
https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/thinkninja/id1425884328

GET IT ON Google Play

Google Play:
https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.thinkninja



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