



TRANSITION PACKAGE (COVID-19)

BOOKLET 3rd Edition – Early Help and Young Adults

OSSME - Outreach for Mainstream Education, Early Help and Employment
AUTISM INITIATIVES | PETERSFIELD, SEFTON HOUSE, L30 4XR
ossme@autisminitiatives.org



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ABOUT OSSME

As part of Autism Initiatives (1972), OSSME first started as Outreach Services Supporting Mainstream Education, hence its name, however it has developed to provide a range of services around children, education and support for parents.

OSSME provides specialist training and advice in all educational settings (Early Years, Primary, Secondary, Colleges, Universities and Businesses) for staff, families and professionals across the North West, with the aim of promoting and enabling inclusion for children and young people who have autism and co-existing conditions.

We work with those who have a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Condition, are waiting for an assessment following referral to the Autism Spectrum Pathway, or are experiencing social and communication difficulties.

OSSME believes in a person-centred approach; working collaboratively with families, school/college staff and other involved agencies to ensure a cohesive and proactive service.

OSSME offers a wide range of services such as therapeutic and teaching sessions, initial needs assessment, training packages (school/college inset training, professional conferences, initial teacher training, community organisations...) family, workplace and community support (workshops, coffee evening, 1:1 sessions...). Most of our services can be provided remotely. Find more information about us here <https://autisminitiatives.org/ossme> OSSME can also be contact on ossme@autisminitiatives.org

For more information and free resources, find OSSME on Facebook [@OSSMEAI](#), Twitter [@OSSME_AI](#) and Instagram [@ossme_ai](#)

INTRODUCTION

Why have we decided to launch a third edition of our popular OSSME Transition booklet back to school (COVID-19)? Following the release of our 1st edition aimed to Primary schools and our 2nd edition aimed to Early Years, we decided to publish a 3rd edition focused on Early Help and Young adults, meaning, we have developed 3 different editions in a very limited space of time. The 3 editions are aimed at different people based on their age and needs, covering from 3 to approximately 25 years old.

Find below some of the feedback we have received from our previous editions:

School Representative	<i>Thank you for your very helpful resources.</i>
School Deputy Head and SENDCO	<i>Thank you for the booklet, it is fab.</i>
Council SEN Advisory Team Leader	<i>Thank you for this truly amazing free resource!!!</i>
CAMHS	<i>This looks great.</i>
School Representative	<i>Thank you for the booklet which is most helpful.</i>

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ABOUT ME



You will be going back to school/college at some point in the future. So that you are prepared to go back to school/college and do not find it too hard, we wanted to help you.

Academically, you may or may not be doing great. It is ok if you are not, your teacher will understand. Socially, you may feel that you have lost touch with your friends. This book will help you.

We are going to discuss some questions together. The questions are in this booklet.

To start, why you don't tell me about who you are and what you like doing:

PERSONAL INFORMATION	
Full Name:	_____ Age: _____
School/college:	_____
OSSME staff who supports you:	_____
Who do you live with:	_____
How do you travel to school/college:	_____
Date you started this booklet:	_____
Date you completed this booklet:	_____

Secondly, tell me what lockdown feels for you right now. **Pick a picture:**



Not sure



Worried



Happy



Sad

You can write down / draw any other feeling here:

QUESTIONS WE ARE GOING TO HELP YOU WITH

1. WHAT WAS HAPPENING IN SCHOOL/COLLEGE AND HOME BEFORE SCHOOL/COLLEGE CLOSED?
2. WHY DID SCHOOL/COLLEGE CLOSE AND CHANGE?
3. HOW DID YOUR LIFE CHANGE BECAUSE OF COVID-19?
4. WHAT DID CHANGE FEEL LIKE FOR YOU?
5. HOW WILL WE GET BACK TO WHAT IT WAS LIKE BEFORE COVID-19?
6. WHAT WILL SCHOOL/COLLEGE LOOK LIKE WHEN WE RETURN?

QUESTION 1. WHAT WAS HAPPENING IN SCHOOL/ COLLEGE AND HOME BEFORE LOCKDOWN?



Schools/colleges have been closed now for many weeks because of COVID-19. This means you have been learning in a different way and doing many things in a different way such as, not going to school/college and doing your homework at home instead or only going to school/college on certain days. You may have forgotten what you did do before school/college closed because of COVID-19.

Before your school/college closed because of COVID-19, you went to school/college each day. This meant that you:

- Got up at the same time each day and went to bed at the same time each night.
- Had a routine at home.
- The people who looked after you, at home, went to work each day.
- Your brother or sister, or both, went to school/college too.
- Had your breakfast each morning at the same time.
- Cleaned your teeth.
- Washed and got dressed (possibly in your school uniform if you have one).
- May have gone to breakfast club.
- Took your packed lunch to school/college or had school/college dinners.
- Travelled to school/college in the car/bus/taxi or walked.
- Met friends in school/college. Sat next to other students in your class too. Sometimes you may have sat alone.
- Said hello to your teachers.
- Were able to speak or to play some games with your friends at break and lunch time.
- Came home after school/college and had snacks, went to clubs, such as swimming club, youth club, visited grandparents, the park or did something else your enjoyed.

Other things I did before COVID-19 were:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____



Before my school/college closed because of COVID-19, there were some things I may have been looking forward to or not looking forward to:

- School/college trip ☺ ☐ - ☹ ☐ *(Which one are you?)*
- School/college fair ☺ ☐ - ☹ ☐ *(Which one are you?)*
- Easter parade ☺ ☐ - ☹ ☐ *(Which one are you?)*
- School/college disco ☺ ☐ - ☹ ☐ *(Which one are you?)*
- Afterschool/college clubs ☺ ☐ - ☹ ☐ *(Which one are you?)*
- Other: _____ ☺ ☐ - ☹ ☐ *(Which one are you?)*

What was I looking forward to?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____



Before your school/college closed because of COVID-19 in March 2020, you could go and speak to your teacher if you did not understand your work or if you had any worries. However, this has now changed since lockdown began.

When I heard people talk about COVID-19 before school/college closed I felt:

- Scared? ☐
- Frightened? ☐
- Did not understand? ☐
- Did not care? ☐
- Other? _____

If you felt scared or frightened, lots of people felt this too so you were not alone in how you felt. This was because we did not know what COVID-19 would be like or how sick it could make us. So the government decided to close school/colleges until we had more answers about what COVID-19 looked like, so we could be safe and not so scared or frightened.

QUESTION 2. WHY DID SCHOOL/COLLEGE CLOSE AND CHANGE?

To keep us safe until scientists could find out more about COVID-19, the government thought it was a good idea to close school/colleges. This meant a lot of change would happen. The things that you did before school/colleges closed because of COVID-19 may have changed a lot and it can be confusing. Other people probably feel similar at you.

Watch [here](#) a *video with more scientific understanding for teens about covid-19*

You may have heard others or if you have listened to the news, talk about places that have closed for a while such as: school/colleges, shops, museums, restaurants and many other places. This is to keep us safe from COVID-19.

COVID-19 is a virus that can make you feel unwell, a bit like having a cold or the flu. Coronavirus can give you:



A fever



A cough



Feel tired

If you do have a fever, a cough or feel tired, it does not mean you definitely have COVID-19. It can mean that you have a common cold that we can get every year. Only the doctor can tell you if you have had or have COVID-19. They can tell you if you have had or have COVID-19 by giving you a test. If you have a temperature, a cough or are tired for more than 7 days and it is getting worse, you can ask someone to call the hospital and the doctor may test you. If you do have COVID-19, the doctor will tell you how to look after yourself so that you can get better.

Watch [here](#) this video of a *19 years old Canadian man who recovered from covid-19*.

Scientists tell us that the COVID-19 virus jumps from one person to another when they are standing close to each other.

In order to keep everybody safe, very clever scientists have decided that we should keep a 2 metre distance from other people for a little while so that COVID-19 can't spread from one person to another and to let the people who are unwell to get better.

Scientists and doctors will make sure it is safe for you before you go back to school/college. When the scientist tell you that it is safe to go back to school/college, they will give us rules to follow to keep us safe. Once back in school/college you will be able to see all the teachers and your friends again and there may be other rules to follow that the teacher will tell you about.



Do you need a break? Yes - No

Short breaks can help you focus better on your work here.

You could always rest now, come back and carry on later



QUESTION 3. HOW DID YOUR LIFE CHANGE?

Before school/college closed because of COVID-19, most people already heard about coronavirus on TV, radio or internet. This could have made you feel either confused, worried, not bothered, OK... It is different for everyone.

Maybe your sleeping pattern has changed and you are finding it harder to sleep now. Watch this [video with some tips which might help you to sleep better](#) [here](#).

CHANGE ABOUT STAYING AT HOME

Since we had to stay at home, the house got noisier and most of the family were at home all together because they could not go to work or school/college either.

This was because of COVID-19. Maybe you were not able to go out to the shops as much as you used to.



Some of the things I missed were:

- Shopping
- Going to the park
- Visiting friends
- Other: _____

Sometimes you might miss them or maybe you have got used to not going to the places now!

If you miss some things you used to do, it can mean that you are looking forward to do the things you used to enjoy doing 😊

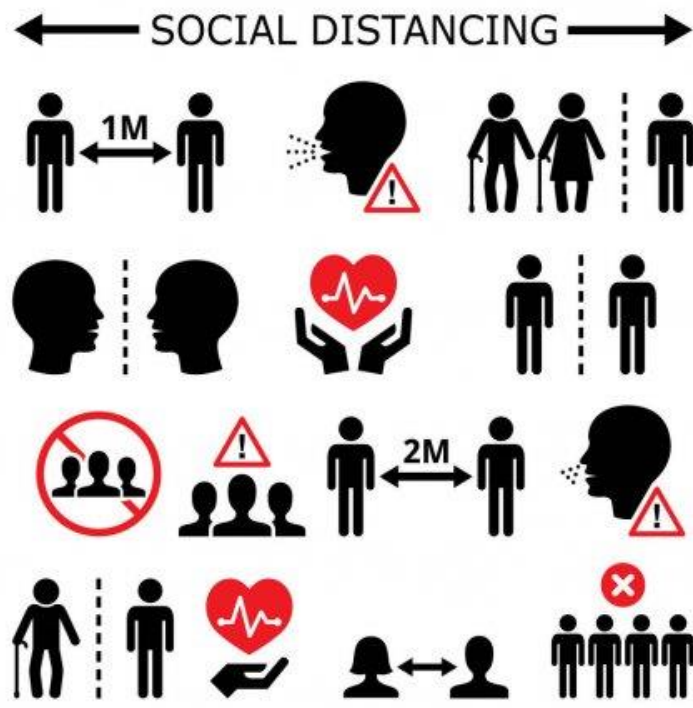
However, there may be other things you do not look forward to doing again. 😞

Some of the things you are not looking forward to doing again means that you will probably need help with those things.

Some of the things I may not be looking forward to doing again are:

- Seeing classmates again
- Doing school/college work
- Leaving the house safely
- Travelling to school/college
- Having time for yourself
- Eating lunch in school/college with your friends
- Using the bathroom in school/college
- The noise in school/college
- The smells in school/college
- Other _____

CHANGE ABOUT COMMUNICATING TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS



Since the lockdown began, you were not able to visit your family or friends, however, you could still contact them.

I contacted them via:

- Video-call
- Phone-call
- Text
- Other: _____

This form of communication was different and a change. When you go back to school/college you can still use some of the communication tools you used to talk to your family and friends.

I would like to keep communicating with my family and friends when we go back to school/college through:

- WhatsApp Yes - No
- Video-call Yes - No
- Skype Yes - No
- Phone call Yes - No
- Text Yes - No
- Writing letters Yes - No

CHANGES IN LEARNING – WE HAD TO LEARN AT HOME



Since my school/college was closed because of COVID-19, **my teachers have:**

- Emailed my homework
- Posted my homework
- Given work to the person who looks after me so that they can help me.

Some people find it easy to complete work sent to them, others don't.

I found the homework my teacher sent to me:

- Easy to do and I sent my work back to the teacher when it was completed
- Not easy to do and I did not send my work back to the teacher because it was not completed
- I did not want to do my work at home

ANSWERS.....

1. If you found your school/college work easy to do and you sent your work back to the teacher when it was completed then that is amazing and your teacher will appreciate your effort.
2. If you did not find the homework easy to do and you did not send your work back to the teacher because it was not completed, that is ok too. The teachers understand how hard it can be to do work at home.
3. If you did not want to do your work at home that is ok too. We might be able to explain this to your teacher. You might find ways to catch up without you having to do extra homework when you go back to school/college. You may have spent more time on games instead and that's okay as well. This could have been your way to cope with the situation.

If you begin to have the same rest breaks you did at school/college when you are home, eat only when you are not working and ask others for help with your school/college work, only when you need it, this can prepare you for going back to school/college.

QUESTION 4. WHAT DID CHANGE FEEL LIKE?

The new COVID-19 that was going around might have caused you to be worried, sad, and afraid or you may have felt ok or happy. *You could read about [Living with Worry & Anxiety amidst global uncertainty](#) more by clicking [here](#) or read about our OSSME resource called [Self-Anxiety talk here](#).*

COVID-19 may have changed how you think and feel about what you used to do.

The lockdown can stir up all sorts of feelings, lift fear, anxiety or stress. Constant or high levels of stress can negatively affect our mental and physical health. Watch [here](#) *this video to understand more about dealing with anxiety and mental health during a pandemic.*

You could also find work on our [OSSME resources](#) to improve understanding of self by listing your [anxiety triggers here](#) and your [anxiety strategies here](#).

When a scary thing happens, our body is clever and makes us ready to cope with what is going on - this is called the survival response. Survival means we try and keep on going.

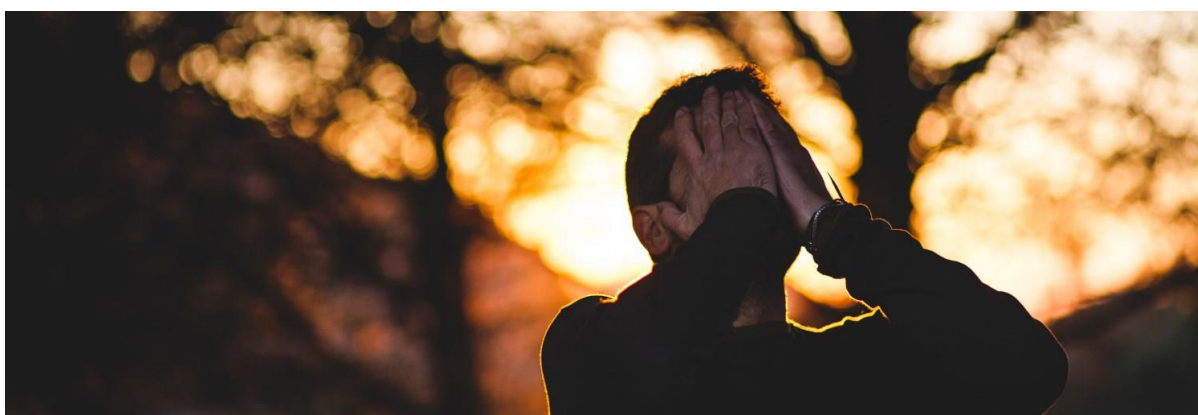
Survival response can make us react in lots of ways. **During lockdown, I felt...**

- Sad
- Worried
- Angry
- Scared about the future
- Like I wanted to hide away like it isn't really happening
- Like I wanted to protect people by telling them not to go out
- Like it was funny and made jokes about it
- I ignored it because I did not care about it

You may feel things that are not on this list and that is okay too, we all react in our own way and there is no right or wrong way to react when we think about, read or hear of COVID-19.

Watch [here](#) a *video where others teenagers explain what quarantine during COVID-19 feels like*.

Some people find themselves overwhelmed with emotions so much that they can begin to engage in *self destructive behaviours*. If you or anyone you know finds themselves in this position, please find this *guide here* as a starting point to help you understand why you might be doing this and what you can do to help



You might have felt one or more of these things above. The more you have heard, read or thought about COVID-19, may have meant you keep changing your mind about what you think that is making you confused. Lots of other people feel the same. So they decide to stop thinking about it for a bit and do something they enjoy doing such as watch their favourite film, listen to their favourite song, play on their favourite computer game or toy. Doing something you like when you get confused or worried can stop you worrying for a little bit.

Then you can tell the person who looks after you, or teacher, that you feel confused and ask them to help you work things out so you are less confused or worried.

Find [here](#) our activity called *Things to do while at home self-isolating*.

DURING THE TIME OF COVID-19 WE HAVE HAD TO DO CERTAIN THINGS SUCH AS:

WASHING HANDS



This is helpful so that you don't spread the virus to anyone else but washing your hands too much may hurt your hands. So you only wash your hands when you need to, such as when you have been outside and come back inside the house, when you have been to the toilet, if you touch something that lots of other people touch, such as the shopping, parcels, etc.

However, it is ok to touch the same things as your family as you are all living in the same house and sharing many different items. As you live with your family, you know that you are all washing your hands.

Listen [here](#) to this popular *Hand Washing song*.

Whilst outdoors, you don't know if everyone else is washing their hands as much as you so instead of being afraid of this you can use hand gel when you are out or try not to touch your face with your hands until you can wash them. This can keep you safe.



You can also find the *Gerbusters poster* [here](#)

WATCHING OR READING THE NEWS

It's good to know what is happening in the news but watching or reading the news too much can make you feel worse. This is because you hear the same things over and over again and it can be negative. When we hear the same things over and over again and it is negative information, it can make us feel sad. There are lots of positives too but sometimes news readers miss out the positive information. So, it is best to only watch the news once a day and maybe every other day. Or, you can decide not to listen to the news and ask others to tell you what is going on instead.



STAYING INDOORS

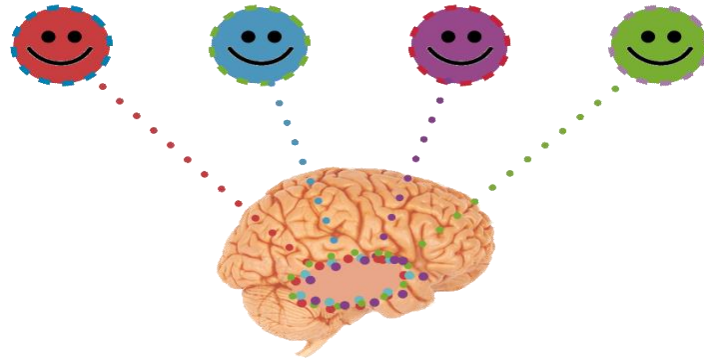
To slow down the COVID-19 virus, you might have had to stay at home a lot more which is helpful but it might have been hard if you could not go out at all. So, you may have thought it was a good idea to go in the garden or for a short walk with your family or person who looks after you. This might have made you feel a bit better. Input to the muscles and joints is regulating: it can be both calming and alerting. Find more information about **Sensory Proprioceptive input** [here](#).

It is important to realise that when we move our body it sends happy signals to the brain. This is because hormones such as dopamine, endorphin, oxytocin and serotonin increase in our brain and those hormones make us happier.

To slow down the COVID-19 virus, you might have had to stay at home a lot more which is helpful but it might have been easy for you. So, you may have thought it was a good idea not to go out. Your body needs movement to help you concentrate. See our resource **Exercising at home during lockdown** [here](#).

If we have no movements such as going for walk or riding a bike, our concentration changes and we do not learn as well as we did before the COVID-19 virus. This is not a good thing to do.

dopamine endorphin oxytocin serotonin



Read more information [here](#) regarding *how to look after your feelings and your body* during lockdown.

TALKING ABOUT IT

It is good to talk about things with others (family, teachers, friends, OSSME...); it helps you learn what is happening in the home, family/friends, community and school/college. Some people do not like to talk, do not know what to say or do not know how to ask questions or ask for help. If you don't talk about things that worry you or things you want to know, it could make you feel much worse.



If you do not know what or how to ask for information, you can say some of the sentences below:

- I would like to know lots of things about going back to school/college.
- I would like to know information about the rules of going outside now
- I would like to know information about what scientists are saying about the COVID-19
- **Add here any other thing you would like to know information about:**
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Read [here](#) for more information about *Do you worry about going back to school/college?*

It is also very important to *being kind to yourself* which you could practice [here](#)

QUESTION 5. HOW WILL WE GET BACK TO WHAT IT WAS LIKE BEFORE LOCKDOWN?

Once the Prime Minister and doctors tell us lockdown is completely over this could mean we have to go back to the way life was before. But this may feel like it was a long time ago. Therefore, it is important we look back and explore the things that will stay the same or things we may have to change.

Many questions might begin to fill our heads.

HOW WILL I KNOW WHEN LOCKDOWN IS OVER?

The Prime minister will announce when he has been advised by doctors if it is safe for restrictions to be lifted. However, this will be a gradual journey which means we will all have time to communicate with others to understand how this will affect us.

Read the *latest news about coronavirus given by the government* [here](#).

WHO WILL SUPPORT ME WHEN LOCKDOWN IS OVER TO GET BACK TO WHERE WE WERE BEFORE?

There will be many key people to support us. At home you will have your family members you live with who will guide you through any questions you may have. You may discuss the changes with your friends. When your school/college reopens the teachers will support you in class and throughout, OSSME is here to discuss any concerns you may have as well.

Who do I talk to about lockdown with now? _____

This person/people will probably be able to support you throughout this journey.



WHAT WILL STAY THE SAME?

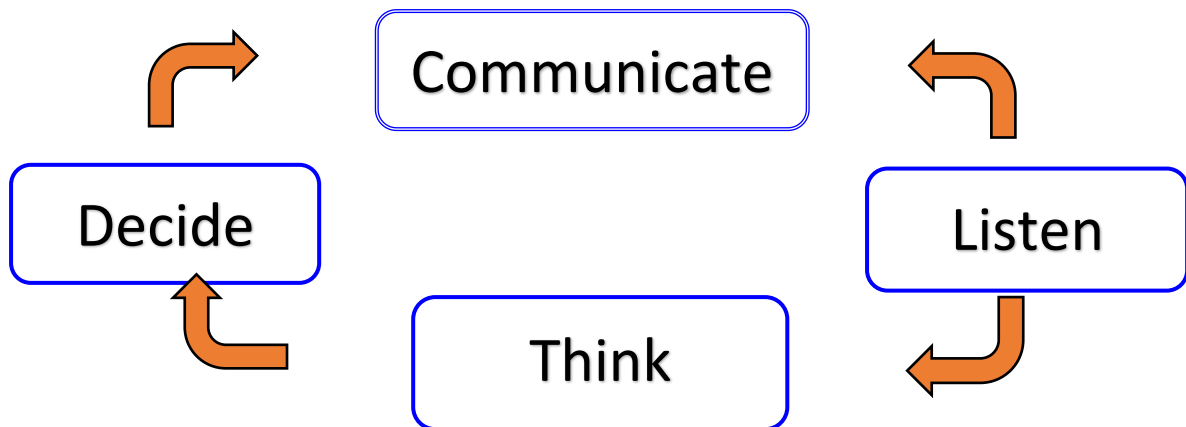
Although there have been a lot of changes since lockdown there are lots of things that have stayed the same. For example, the house you live in and the people that live there. You will be able to continue to do the activities you enjoy at home.

What are the things I like doing at home and would like to continue to do?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

HOW DO WE GO BACK TO THE WAY IT WAS BEFORE?

This is a tricky question as this may look different for everyone. When exploring the changes you can use the following four steps to help you.



1. **COMMUNICATE** – if you are unsure ask someone you trust, family members, teachers or friends. This can be through telephone, email or drawing.
2. **LISTEN** – listen when you are ready
3. **THINK** - think about the information.
4. **DECIDE** – think about what is being asked, decide whether you would feel comfortable in doing this. If you don't feel comfortable, start the cycle again, communicate your feelings!

Let's think about what we want to keep afterwards that may have already been there before or during lockdown?

HOW DID SCHOOL/COLLEGE LOOK BEFORE AND HOW WILL WE GET IT BACK?

Before lockdown school/college was where you would go every day to learn new things. You would see teachers, dinner ladies, other children and many more people. You would attend lessons and have break times.

What did I like/dislike about school/college before lockdown? (Which one are you?)

- My classroom 😊 - 😞
- My friends 😊 - 😞
- My teacher 😊 - 😞

During lockdown, you have been completing homework at home. You may have not been following a routine like you do in school/college. Your lessons may have been taught differently. You may not have been completing school/college work.

What did I like/dislike about being at home? (Which one are you?)

- Own space 😊 - 😞
- Choice of routine 😊 - 😞
- Choice activities 😊 - 😞

As you have discussed what you have liked or disliked, you are beginning to build an image of what is the best way for you to learn!

Although, this is not the only thing you may have developed during lockdown. You may have built new skills through being in your new environment.

You may have learnt to:

- Communicate with your family and friends through texting, FaceTime or writing.
- Create your own routine.
- Learnt to do something you didn't know before such as ride a bike, read a book and bake a cake

What things have I learnt?

- _____
- _____
- _____

It is important to continue using your skills when transitioning back to school/college. Use our four step cycle to discuss how we can take the skills we have learnt and take them forward to after lockdown!



Do you need a break? Yes - No

Short breaks can help you focus better on your work here.

You could always come back later to carry on 😊





QUESTION 6. WHAT WILL SCHOOL/COLLEGE LOOK LIKE WHEN WE RETURN?

When we can return back to school/college after the COVID-19 lockdown, we can begin to do more activities such as going back to school/college, the shops, parks and cafes for example. We may be able to see more people, family members, teachers and friends too. This can mean we may see some of our family and friends that we have not seen for some time. We may have spoken to some of them on the phone or seen them on video, but not meet them before physically. Seeing them physically for the first time again may feel scary. It may feel scary because you can see their body as well as their face. They may have a higher tone voice because they are excited to see you. They may want to hug you or smile more than they used to because they are so happy to see you in person. Some people may cry because they are so happy to see you. Some people may say they are scared when they see you because they have been in lockdown because of the COVID-19 for many weeks, and after weeks it feels strange to see you. Others may say they are scared because they do not know if the COVID-19 has really gone.

What would I be scared about?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

It is very important to know that when we come out of COVID-19 lockdown, the scientist will think it is safe to do so. When we come out of COVID-19 lockdown, the scientist will give us some rules to follow to keep us safe.

Find [here](#) a *story for all students to help you feel positive about returning to school*. This is not a social story and it might feel like it is aimed at younger children, but the message is still the same.

Or, read [here](#) this other *website with more information about going back to school*.

RULES MAY INCLUDE:**RULE: KEEPING OUR DISTANCE**

We still might have to keep our distance. This means staying 2 metres apart as it is recommended now for social distancing. However, this may change and the scientists will tell us when it does. When the scientists tell us what distance we need to keep from someone else, your parents and teachers will tell you and show you.

At the moment the distance we need to keep from each other is 2 metres.



The advice on social distancing measures applies to everyone. You may not be able to hug or touch other people.

People should be reminded to wash their hands for 20 seconds and more frequently than normal.

RULE: KEEP WASHING YOUR HANDSUsing Soap and Water:

- Put your hands under warm water.
- Using soap, rub into your hands and massage for 20 seconds.
- Before and after eating, wash hands.
- Try not to touch your face too often.

RULE: HYGIENE

- If you blow your nose, do it in a tissue and put the tissue in the bin. Then, wash your hand or use hand gel.
- If you cough, do it into a tissue or your sleeve.

OTHER THINGS THAT MAY HAPPEN

Your school/college week may be split into different days, so you might not be in school/college every day like before. So you may go into school/college on:

- Others (siblings, friends, cousins...) may be in school/college on different days to you. Or, you may be in school/college at the same time:
- You may go to school/college on a phased return. Meaning you (or siblings/friends who are normally in my class) may go to school/college in the first few weeks then your brothers and sisters will go to school/college a few weeks after for example.
- School/college times may change; you could be in school/college in the morning and not the afternoon or the other way round and have lunch at home.
- I may not have my lunch in school/college and will go home to eat my lunch or I may have my lunch in school/college.
- Breakfast club and after school/college clubs may be closed. If they are closed I could have breakfast at home.
- I may not be able to sit next to the person I sat with before school/college closed. Instead I may sit a little bit away from my friends. The teacher will tell/show me what to do and where to sit.
- You may have to be at a desk on my own.

Your teachers will tell/show you what to do

- I may have to travel differently to school/college. If I got the bus or taxi to school/college, I may have to walk or go in a family car.
- My family may be going to work on the same days or on different days that they normally do. My family can write down on a [timetable](#) what they will be doing so that I know what they are doing too.

Your family will let you know

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

To help you organise what will happen when we come out of lockdown, a [timetable](#) and an [information passport](#) about you could also be filled in by your teacher, person that looks after you at home or OSSME if you are currently being supported by us. Find a [blank timetable here](#).

A timetable could also be done for your family so you know what they will be doing too. Find a [family timetable here](#).

Also an [Information Passport](#) about you can be put together [here](#). This **Information Passport** will tell people such as teachers and your family how you currently feel and what can make you feel better about going back to school/college. It will also help to make sure we can tell others how you feel about going back to school/college.

Remember, once you have filled in this booklet, you can send it back to your OSSME staff if you know her/his contact details or ossme@autisminitiatives.org if you don't know. However, if you are not currently being supported by OSSME yet, you could speak to someone at home or school/college.



You have now just completed this OSSME transition booklet. Well done for your hard work!

☺ You can now get your certificate [here](#). Don't forget to sign it!

Finally, a huge **THANK YOU** to everyone who has taken part on this project. Special recognition to OSSME staff from Autism Initiatives who have worked tirelessly during the pandemic in order to achieve many different projects such as the creation of this third edition part of our **Transition Support Package**. OSSME resources aim to support students, families and other professionals independently if they are contracted to us. Our priority is to support other members of our community during this time of uncertainty.

thank you

For more information and resources, find OSSME on [Facebook @OSSMEAI](#), [Twitter @OSSME_AI](#) and [Instagram @ossme_ai](#)