

# Worrying world news: How can I help?

This article was written by a Kooth worker and contains the following themes: upsetting news, difficult emotions

When things we see, hear, and read about on the news are worrying or upsetting, it can leave us feeling helpless and out of control. It can also connect us with difficult feelings, such as anger, sadness, frustration, and confusion - especially when it's hard to make sense of what is going on.

We might also want to do something to help but aren't quite sure what to do or where to start. If that feels familiar, please read on.

## **How can I help?**

When there's a crisis, it's natural for people to want to do something to help. Not only can it make a real difference to those in need, but it can also help you in the following ways:

It can give you a positive focus when things feel distressing  
It might relieve or lessen your difficult feelings  
It might help you feel more in control

Here are just a few things you might want to think about if you want to do something in response to concerning local or world news.

## **Number 1 - Make a contribution**

There are many ways to contribute to important causes, from raising money, donating supplies (such as clothes), organising charity events, or volunteering your time. If this is something you want to think about, you could talk to your form tutor, head of year, or student council at school to see what they have planned already and also to share any ideas you might have, too.

If you are donating your own money, make sure you tell an adult. only give what you can afford, and don't leave yourself without (e.g. don't use all your lunch money).

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## **Number 2 - Think carefully about what you share or interact with online**

There is such a lot of information shared online, and it can be difficult to know what is true and what isn't. Something we can all do to help is to think more about what we share or interact with online. Asking yourself the following questions is a good first step:

Does this information sound/look right? For example: does the story or image feel accurate to you?

Where has this information come from? For example: is the source trustworthy? Sometimes websites that spread "fake news" articles might convince you that they are a reputable source by using typical .com, .co.uk, or .org in their URLs. But if the URL also contains an unusual ending (e.g. .com.co or .com.lo), it could be an indicator that it's not credible.

Digging deeper by researching the organisation (or the author themselves) could be a helpful way to see if what you are reading, watching, or viewing is from a trustworthy place. Other indicators to look out for might be: poor website design, poor grammar or awkward, unprofessional writing in the article itself; broken links, and a high volume of adverts.

Of course, this isn't to say that all sources with those elements are unreliable, but it's a good place to start in order to raise your awareness and to get into the habit of looking beyond the news story.

Are there similar stories out there already from reliable sources? For example, is this something you have seen or heard about before from a website or news source that is trusted and has a good reputation? Check out our article on fake news for more information on this topic.

## **Number 3 - Make a stand**

If you feel really strongly about something you've seen, heard, or read about, writing to your local MP enables you to make a stand, share your voice, feel empowered, raise awareness, and even contribute to change. It might sound like a small act, but if lots of people are doing the same, it can really make a big difference.

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## Number 4 - Be kind to others

This sounds really simple, but world news that is happening far away can still affect people we know or come across in everyday life. School friends, teachers, neighbours and family members - anyone can be affected by world news.

People we know might have family members or those they love who are directly impacted by something happening far away. Kindness is something we can offer that doesn't cost a penny but might mean the world to someone else. Check out our article on the importance of kindness for more on this important topic.

As well as being kind to others, don't forget about yourself. It can be so difficult to control what is happening around us at these times, but what we can do is learn to manage the thoughts and feelings that may arise from this.

Our article on what to do when the world feels unsafe might help you look after your own wellbeing.

Are you affected by the news right now? If you have tips or support you'd like to share, we'd love to hear from you in the comments section over at [Kooth.com](https://kooth.com).

If this article has affected you in any way, or you just want to talk to one of our team about anything at all, simply click on the speech bubble icons at the top of the Kooth homepage.

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