

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FAMILIES

On 15 May 2020, the world acknowledges International Day of Families. This particular awareness day offers an opportunity for us all to remind ourselves of the importance of family. Strong family units and support networks help us feel more secure, give us belonging and feel more positive.

With the health and wellbeing of the world's population being on everyone's mind due to the outbreak of COVID-19, there is no better time to reflect on the importance of family and the role it plays in our lives.

Depending on how the COVID-19 outbreak has affected your living situation and family life, you may find obstacles that make observing the awareness day a little more difficult this year. However, regardless of how many family members you share the same roof with, there are still lots of ways to connect to the people closest to you and observe the day in a meaningful way. Here are a few suggestions.

- **Technology** - There are many free online video calling platforms that allow you to stay connected to your loved ones during this difficult time. Arrange a video call on 15 May and celebrate the awareness day with the people most important to you, wherever you, or they, are in the world.
- **Reflect** - Family doesn't have to mean that you are related. Any person that you deeply care about can be considered as 'family'. Use the awareness day as an opportunity to think about what family really means to you and how you can strengthen the relationships that matter to you most.
- **Letters** - Texts, messages and emails are great ways to stay in touch with those closest to you during these tough times. However, can you remember the last time you wrote a hand written letter? Writing can be a fun, meaningful and therapeutic way to keep in contact with your loved ones. If you live with others, get them involved too!

Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, many of us are spending more time at home and for those who live with children, this time can be both a blessing and a challenge.

While these turbulent times can be a challenging period for families, whether they are under the same roof or not, use International Day of Families as a chance to reflect on the importance of family and how you, and your loved ones, will all come through this time as a stronger unit.

Please remember that our Employee Assistance Programme which is provided by **Health Assured** remains available to all our employees. Health Assured can provide support on a wide range of wellbeing issues. Health Assured can be contacted 24/7 on **0800 030 5182** where professionally trained counsellors are available to take your call and provide confidential advice and support on any issue that may be concerning you. There is no cost to you for accessing the service.