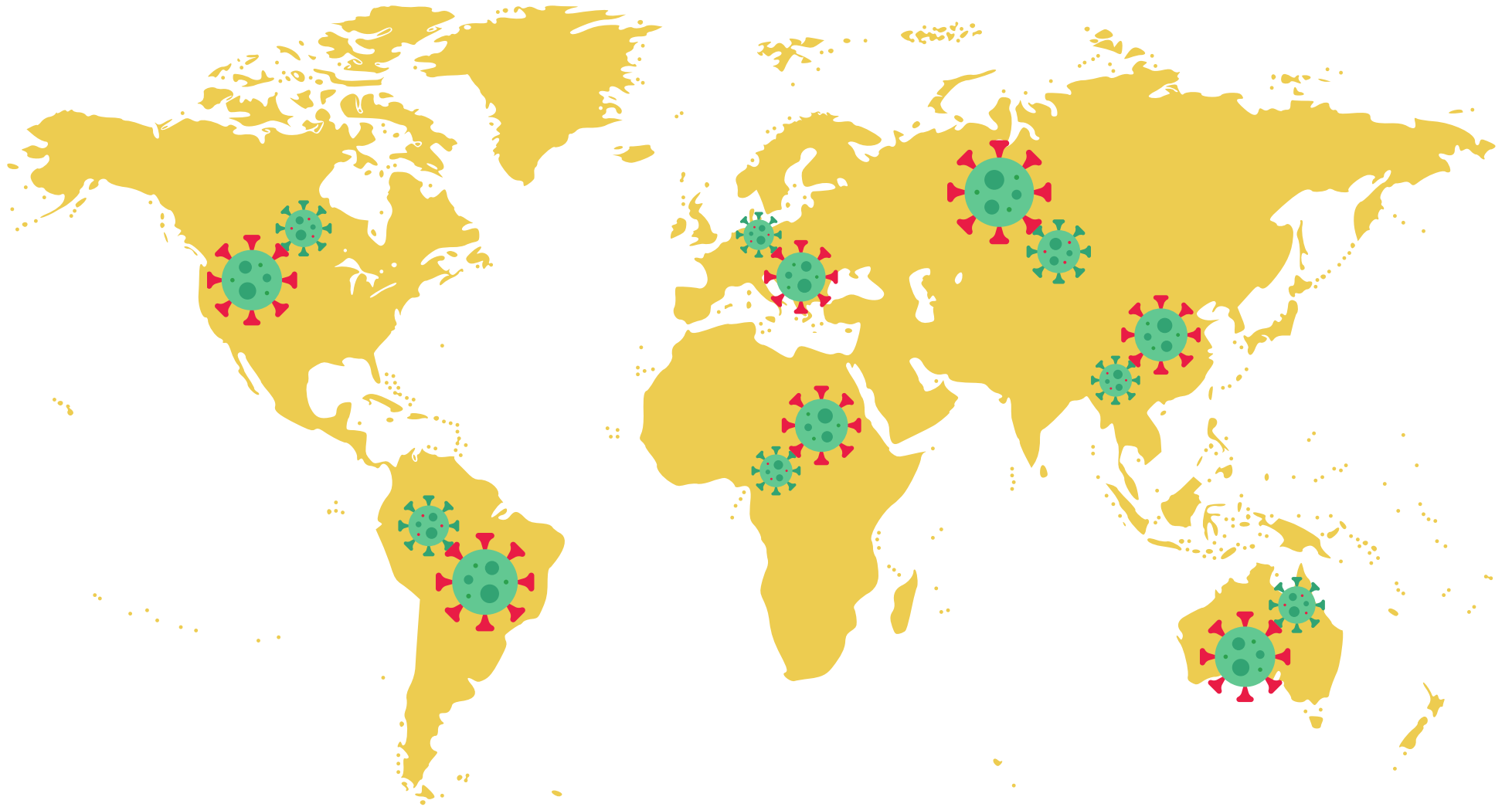


# LIVING WITH COVID IN THE COMMUNITY



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COVID 19 is a new virus that started last year and has been making some people unwell. When an illness spreads across the world, it is called a pandemic.



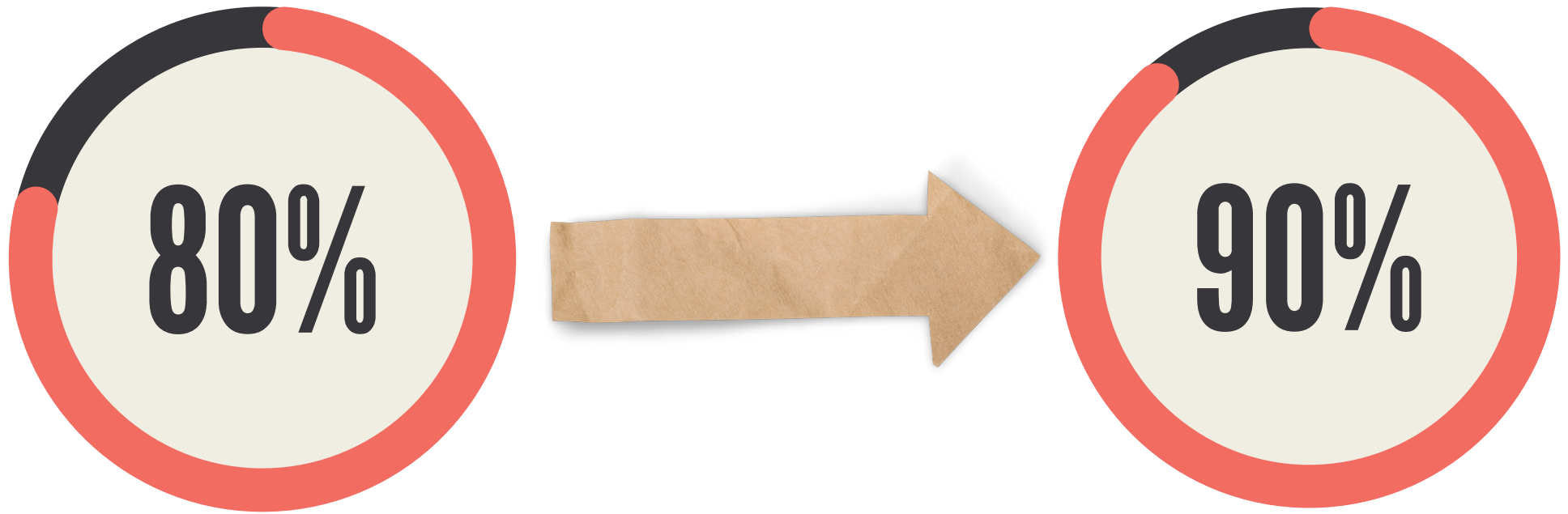
We have had lockdowns to slow the spread of the virus. Since last year, we have had 6 lockdowns.

# ~~0 Cases~~

Last year, lockdowns were extended until there were almost no COVID cases in the community. This year, the government have said getting to zero cases is not possible any more. This is because the Delta strain of COVID spreads more easily, even during lockdown when everyone is being careful.



The new COVID management plan is vaccination. When people have been vaccinated, they are less likely to get sick with COVID. Once the majority of people have been vaccinated, the virus cannot spread as easily. People all over the world have been getting vaccinated against COVID.



At the moment, 87% of people over 12 in Victoria are fully vaccinated. Nearly 93% have had their first dose of vaccine. Some children between 12 and 16 have also been vaccinated. As the number of vaccinated people increases, restrictions can ease, and we can start doing things like we used to.



Children under 12 do not need to get vaccinated. This is because children under 16 don't tend to get sick with COVID. If children get COVID, they often have few or no symptoms.



Since COVID started we have heard a lot of information about COVID being unsafe and scary. The news reports on the number of people getting sick, those in hospital or when people die. We don't hear many good news stories about COVID.

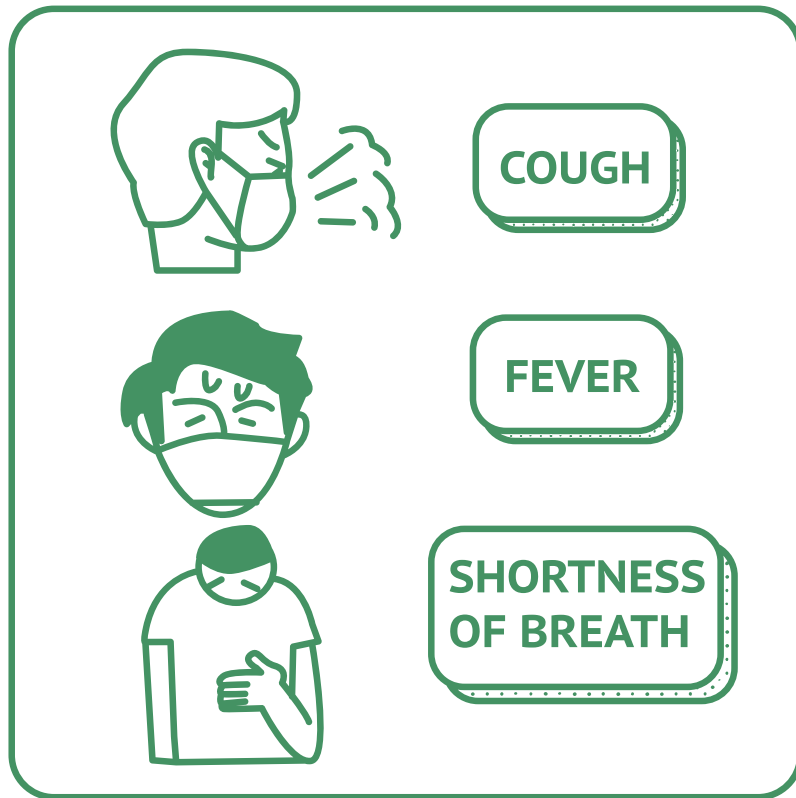




Our brains are wired to keep us safe. The 'security system' in our brain tags things as safe or dangerous. For most of us, COVID has been tagged as unsafe. Given this, it is expected for us to feel different feelings about coming out of lockdown and living with COVID in the community. We might feel worried, unsettled or stressed or about this idea.

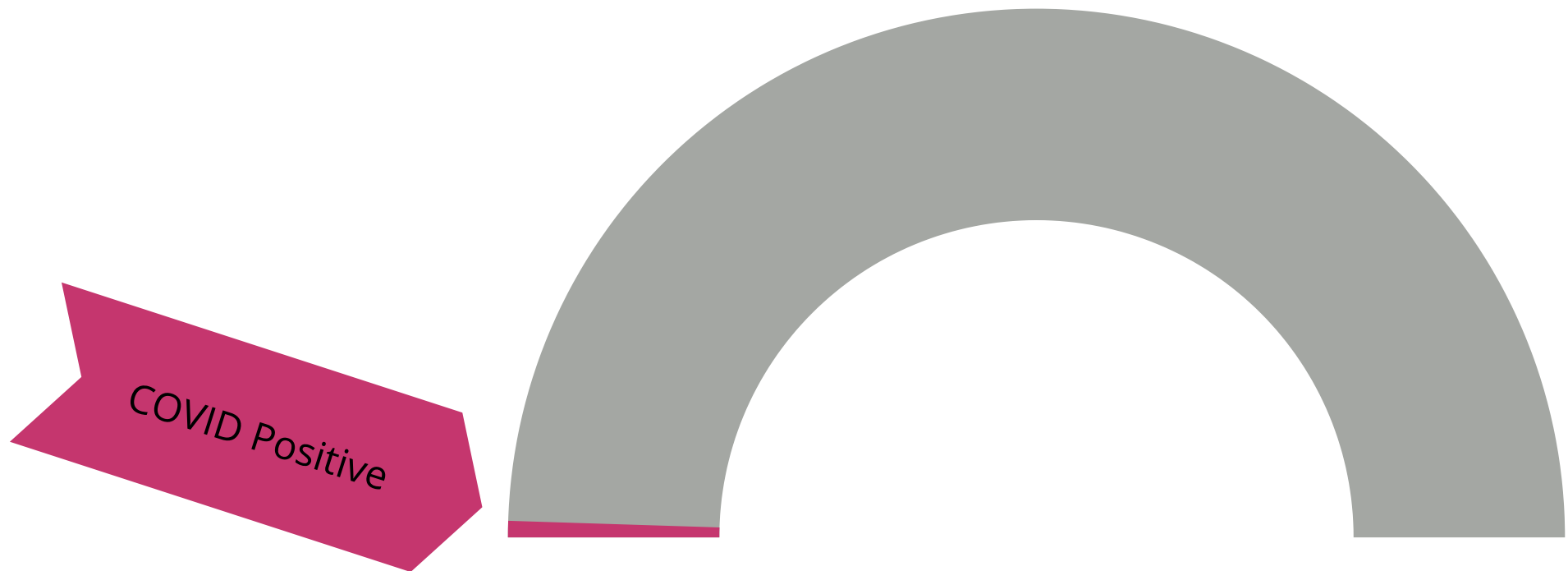
Here are some facts and ideas to help you get used to the idea of living with COVID in the community.

1. Children are very unlikely to get sick with COVID. They may have few or no symptoms.

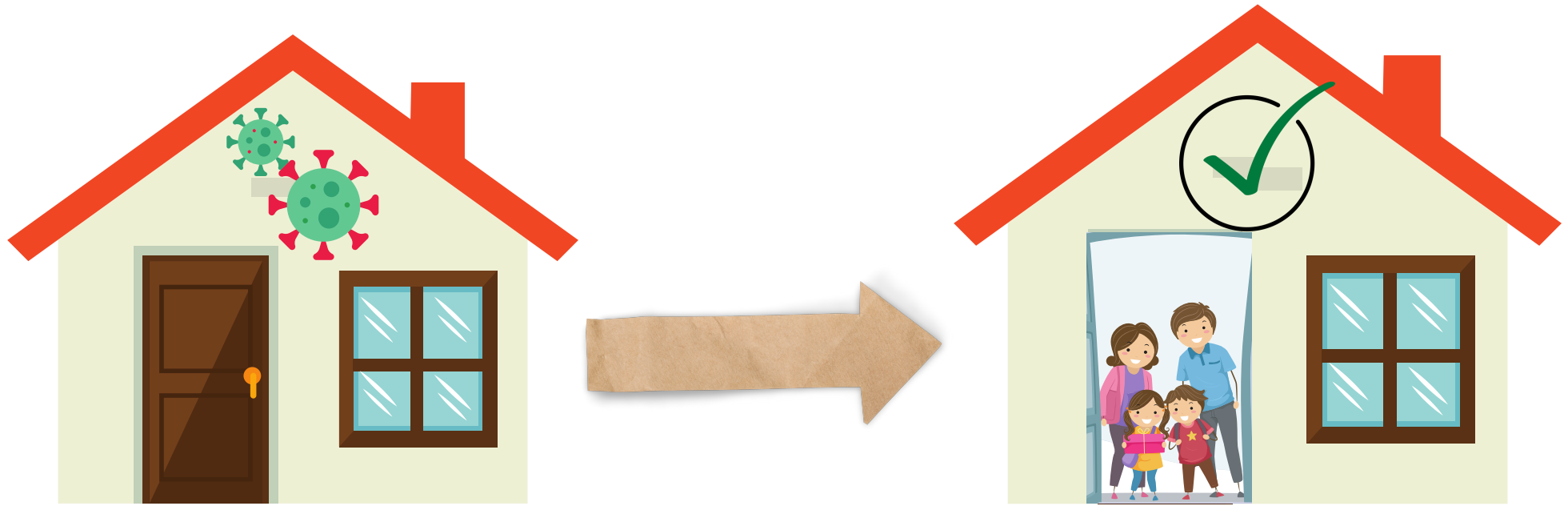




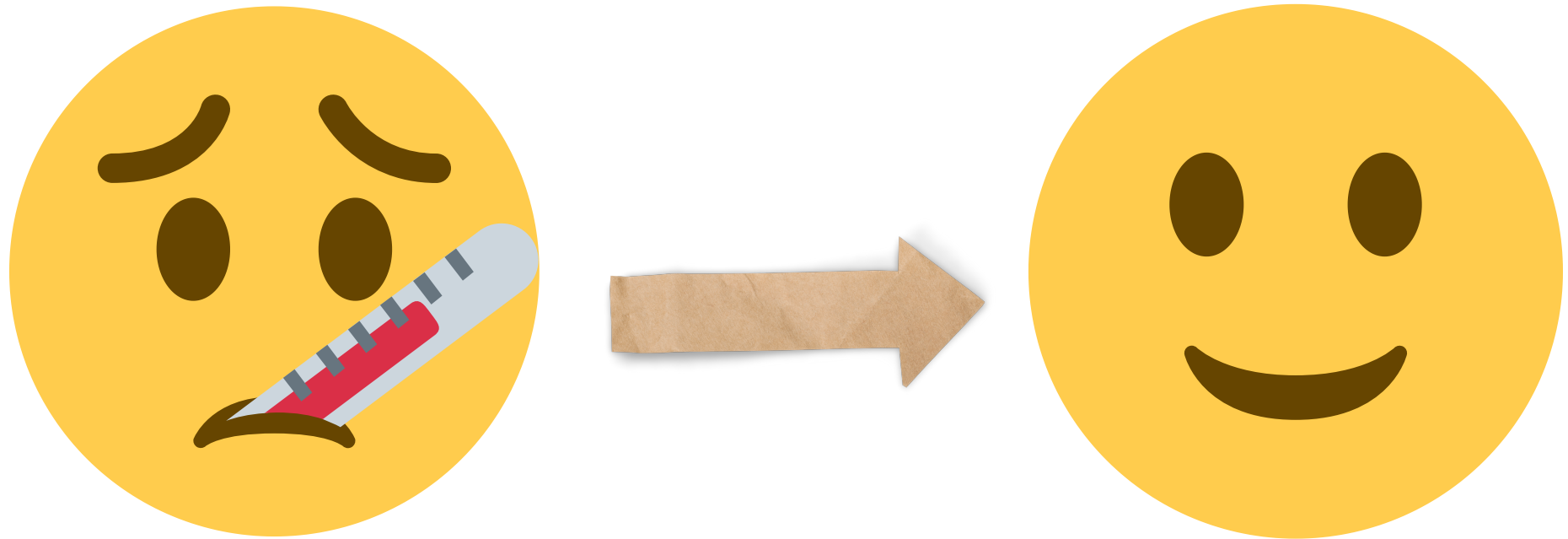
2. Adults who have had COVID say it can feel like a bad cold or flu. Usually, people feel unwell for 1-2 weeks and they get better. The number of people who go to hospital because of COVID is less than 1%. This means the chance of going to hospital with COVID is very low.



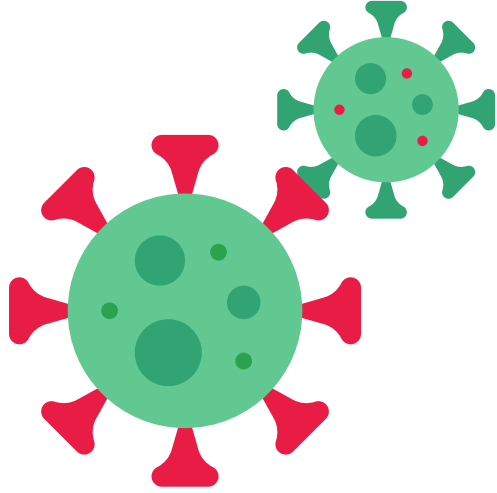
3. The news reports on how many cases there are a day and when the numbers get into the thousands it can feel worrying. When we consider this number against the number of tests conducted – at the moment, this is about 0.02% of people tested who have COVID. This is a very small number.



4. If someone in our family or someone we know gets COVID it is not their fault. They will stay at home until they are better. They will have a test to make sure that it is okay for them to be around others again. It is okay to see them when they are better.

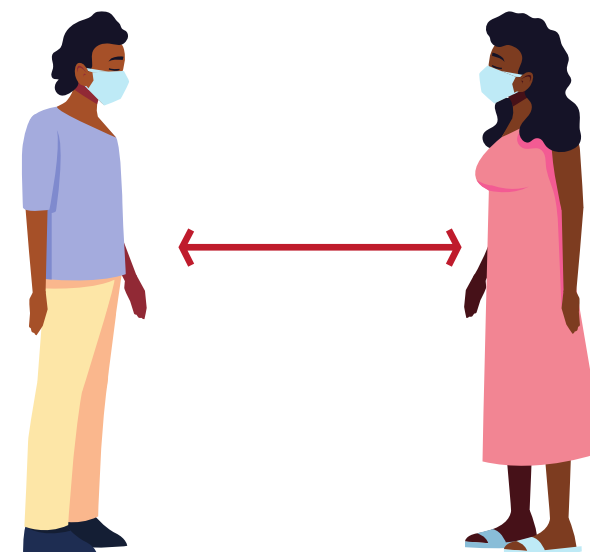


5. If you get COVID, it is not your fault. You will stay home until you get better. Your family will look after you. After you stay home, recover and you don't have COVID any more, it is okay to go back to school, visit your friends and family and visit places again.



As things open up and we get used to living with COVID In the community, the following might happen,

- We are more likely to know someone who has had COVID
- We might visit a place where someone with COVID has visited. We may need to stay home when this happens and get a test to see if we have it too.
- Our school may be closed for a short time if someone there has COVID.
- We might need to get a COVID test.



We can keep following guidelines to stay healthy and manage living with COVID in the community, like...

- If we are sick, we can get a COVID test
- Stay home if we are unwell.
- Check in when we visit places
- Wear a face mask when we are out in the community. Some children also have to wear masks at school too.
- Physical distance when we are out in the community.





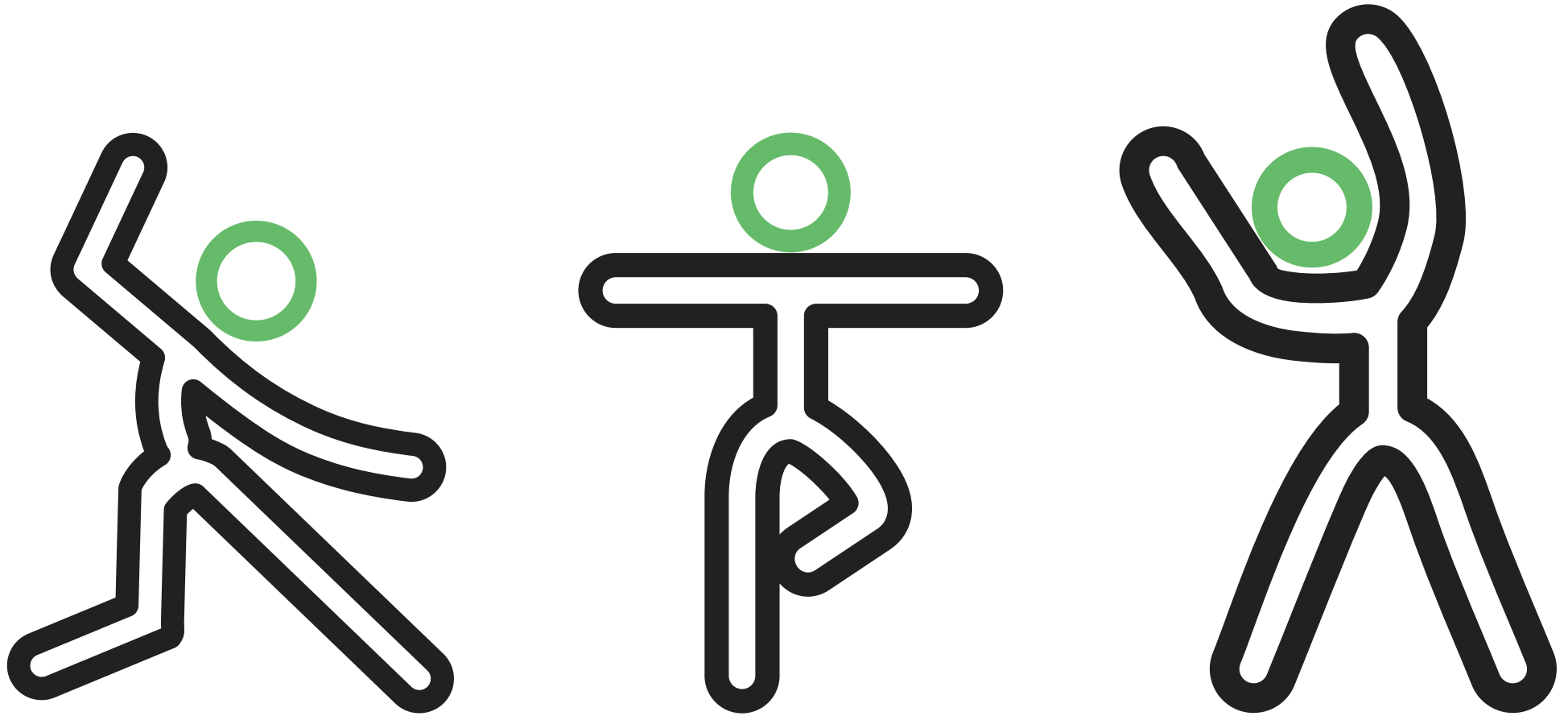
COVID 19 has brought lots of uncertainty and change to everyone's lives. This can feel stressful and unsettling for lots of people. It is expected to feel lots of different feelings about living with COVID in the community



As we learn to live with COVID, it will become a normal part of life – like having a cold or the flu. As time goes on, we will feel less stressed and uncertain about COVID as it becomes part of life.



We can't change COVID. We need to remember that it is really normal to have lots of different feelings at the moment. Talking to friends, teachers, carers and parents about our thoughts, feelings and questions is helpful.



Doing things that we love and moving our bodies helps our mind to focus on the moment, and helps manage stress and worry.



Extra cuddles and thinking about the good things in our day, also really helps.

My thoughts and worries....

My questions...

What are you most enjoying about lockdown ending?