

Coping Tips for Young Children during Covid-19

Young children may not be able to verbalize the anxiety or stress they are experiencing around them, but their behaviors may reflect the uncertainty they are feeling. Here are a few tips to help young children cope with the current world.

Share with children simple concrete facts about the virus

- “Covid-19 is an illness called a virus”
- “It is spread by germs that are shared between people.”
- “Some people may get very sick and others may not feel very sick at all.”
- Remember it’s ok to say “I don’t know” and explain that we are learning more about this virus every day

Establish predictability

- Routines may look different from before and even from day to day. Establish predictability for kids by letting them know what to expect for each day
- Create a visual schedule

Offer choices that promote a sense of control

- Providing children with appropriate choices can help them have a sense of mastery over their situation
- Try to offer A or B choices (carrots or broccoli with dinner?) instead of open-ended choices

Model appropriate emotions

- Let them know you are sad that you can’t see your friends or angry that people are getting sick. This helps children name emotions and learn appropriate coping methods

Make staying healthy fun

- Sing a fun or silly song while washing hands
- Include children in making healthy meals

Offer opportunities to PLAY

- Children learn, heal, grieve, and cope through play
- Young children especially benefit from sensory or tactile play
- Participate in the play! You may find that it is therapeutic for you as well