



Tips for helping kids navigate COVID-19

News and information about novel coronavirus (COVID-19) can be stressful for everyone, including children. We encourage you, as the parent or caregiver, to be kind to yourself and remember it's ok if you don't have all the answers. None of what is happening is normal and everyone is doing their best to adjust to what is happening.

Ask children to tell you what they have heard or what they know about COVID-19

- This will allow you to clarify any misconceptions and listen to any fears your child has.
- Encourage your child to ask you any questions or share any worries they have.
- Keep checking in with your child as questions and needs could change over time.
- Acknowledge that it's OK to feel scared or worried and remind them that this is temporary.

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 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.

Tell kids what you can do together to stay prepared and keep your family safe

- Review your family's plan for food and supplies.
- Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, often.
- Practice "social distancing" by staying home and avoiding large groups of people.

Talk about the helpers who are working to keep us all safe

- The nurses, doctors, first responders and government officials.

Limit access to screen time and electronics

- Encourage kids to be creative and active.
- Decide how much time can be spent on a screen per day.

- Set timers to alert kids when their screen time is up.

Get outside

- Go for a walk around the neighborhood.
- Take a hike or a scenic drive.

Stick to a routine as much as possible

- Consistency is helpful, especially for children who are feeling stressed.
- Make a schedule and empower kids by giving them simple choices regarding their schedule.

Share with kids that if they or someone they know were to get the virus, it's not because they were bad or did anything wrong.

- Just like when we get a cold or flu, it's not because of something we did.

Kids are impacted by their parents' anxieties. Find ways to relieve your own stress and worries. If you remain calm and positive, your children will feel better.

- Take a break from the news and social media.
- Go for a walk alone or take small breaks if you have young children.
- Tell your kids one positive thing about the day.

