

Talking to kids about COVID-19

<p>Find out what your child already knows.</p>	<p>Chances are your child might already have some understanding of what is going on from listening to the news and conversations between adults or at school. Check in to find out what they know and whether they have any questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ask open questions- Follow their lead
<p>Stick to the facts and stay calm</p>	<p>It's important to stick to the facts and use calming and reassuring tone. Explain COVID-19 in a way your child can understand. Some examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- COVID-19 is a disease caused by a new germ or bug- You cannot see germs with your eyes; you need microscope to see them.- People are getting sick from the germ or bug and they are being looked after well by doctors and hospitals.- The germs spread easily from person to person through tiny droplets when people cough or sneeze and impact our nose, throat and lungs.- The droplets can be breathed in by others or might land on surfaces like phones, door handles tables and hands.- It is important to not get too close to others, touch our eyes, mouth or nose so the germ can't get inside us.- We need to wash our hands often to stop the spread of the virus and help protect everyone.
<p>How children might react</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The child may become anxious, confused or frightened of how the virus can affect them.- They can be frustrated that some of their previous routines are no longer possible or that they can no longer see their friends or grandparents.
<p>Provide reassurance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Acknowledge their feelings.- Assure them that it's natural to feel frightened or anxious.- Find out what conclusions they have drawn from the information.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Put news stories in context.- Correct any misinformation and reduce catastrophizing.- Remind them that you are there to look after them.
Help kids feel in control	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Give your child specific things they can do to feel in control. For example, wash their hands well and often, avoid getting too close to other people.- Get your child involved in making family plans for self-isolating.- Check in on their friends or talk to elderly relatives who are self-isolating via phones or video calls.- Keep up routines and normal life as much as possible. For example, if it's a school day, get them up, dressed and doing school work by 9 am.
Remember	Remember, <u>EAP</u> is a free, 24/7 confidential counselling service for employees and their immediate families. This means your child can use the services too. Contact your <u>local EAP provider</u> for more information or appointments.