

We are doing all we can to stay available to you for your health care needs during this unprecedented time.

Walk-in appointments are temporarily on hold, but scheduled appointments are available on a case-by-case basis.

Video appointments are also available.

Please call if you have any questions and stay safe!

Resources for parents regarding the COVID-19 crisis

Video from Child Mind Institute:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=5&v=WhVad8ToCiU&feature=emb_title

American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry

[Talking to Children About Coronavirus \(COVID19\)](#)

Fun Experiment that Highlights Importance of Washing Hands:

[Pepper and Soap Experiment](#)

KidsHealth from Nemours

[\(Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): How to Talk to Your Child \(for Parents\) - Nemours\)](#)

- **Kids and teens often worry more about family and friends than themselves.** For example, if kids hear that older people are more likely to be seriously ill, they might worry about their grandparents. Letting them call or Skype with older relatives can help them feel reassured about loved ones.
- **Keep checking in with your child.** Use talking about coronavirus as a way to help kids learn about their bodies, like how the [immune system](#) fights off disease.
- **Talk about current events with your kids often.** It's important to help them think through stories they hear about. Ask questions: What do you think about these events? How do you think these things happen? Such questions also encourage conversation about non-news topics.

National Association of School Psychologists

[\(Talking to Children About COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\): A Parent Resource\)](#)

[\(Helping Children Cope With Changes Resulting From COVID-19\)](#)

- It is very important to remember that children look to adults for guidance on how to react to stressful events. If parents seem overly worried, children's anxiety may rise. Parents should reassure children that health officials are working hard to ensure that people throughout the country stay healthy. However, children also need factual, age appropriate information about the potential seriousness of disease risk and concrete instruction about how to avoid infections and spread of disease. Teaching children positive preventive measures, talking with them about their fears, and giving them a sense of some control over their risk of infection can help reduce anxiety
- You know your children best. Let their questions be your guide as to how much information to provide. However, don't avoid giving them the information that health

experts identify as critical to ensuring your children's health. Be patient; children and youth do not always talk about their concerns readily. Watch for clues that they may want to talk, such as hovering around while you do the dishes or yard work. It is very typical for younger children to ask a few questions, return to playing, then come back to ask more questions.

- Keep Explanations Age Appropriate
 - Early elementary school children need brief, simple information that should balance COVID-19 facts with appropriate reassurances that their homes are safe and that adults are there to help keep them healthy and to take care of them if they do get sick. Give simple examples of the steps people take every day to stop germs and stay healthy, such as washing hands. Use language such as “adults are working hard to keep you safe.”
 - Upper elementary and early middle school children will be more vocal in asking questions about whether they truly are safe and what will happen if COVID-19 comes to their community. They may need assistance separating reality from rumor and fantasy. Discuss efforts of community leaders to prevent germs from spreading.
 - Upper middle school and high school students are able to discuss the issue in a more in-depth (adult-like) fashion and can be referred directly to appropriate sources of COVID-19 facts. Provide honest, accurate, and factual information about the current status of COVID-19. Having such knowledge can help them feel a sense of control.
- Be aware of how you talk about COVID-19. Your discussion about COVID-19 can increase or decrease your child's fear. If true, remind your child that your family is healthy, and you are going to do everything within your power to keep loved ones safe and well. Carefully listen or have them draw or write out their thoughts and feelings and respond with truth and reassurance.
- Explain social distancing. Children probably don't fully understand why parents/guardians aren't allowing them to be with friends. Tell your child that your family is following the guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which include social distancing. Social distancing means staying away from others until the risk of contracting COVID-19 is under control. Showing older children the "flatten the curve" charts will help them grasp the significance of social distancing. Explain that while we don't know how long it will take to "flatten the curve" to reduce the number of those infected, we do know that this is a critical time—we must follow the guidelines of health experts to do our part.
- Demonstrate deep breathing. Deep breathing is a valuable tool for calming the nervous system. Do breathing exercises with your children.
- Focus on the positive. Celebrate having more time to spend as a family. Make it as fun as possible. Do family projects. Organize belongings, create masterpieces. Sing, laugh, and go outside, if possible, to connect with nature and get needed exercise. Allow older children to connect with their friends virtually.
- Establish and maintain a daily routine. Keeping a regular schedule provides a sense of control, predictability, calm, and well-being. It also helps children and other family members respect others' need for quiet or uninterrupted time and when they can connect with friends virtually.
- Identify projects that might help others. This could include: writing letters to the neighbors or others who might be stuck at home alone or to healthcare workers; sending positive messages over social media; or reading a favorite children's book on a social media platform for younger children to hear.
- Offer lots of love and affection
- Monitor Television Viewing and Social Media

- Parents/guardians should monitor television, internet, and social media viewing—both for themselves and their children. Watching continual updates on COVID-19 may increase fear and anxiety. Developmentally inappropriate information, or information designed for adults, can also cause anxiety or confusion, particularly in young children.
- Dispel rumors and inaccurate information. Explain to your child that many stories about COVID-19 on the internet may include rumors and inaccurate information. Older children, in particular, may be accessing a great deal of information online and from friends that contains inaccuracies. Talk to your child about factual disease information.
- Provide alternatives. Engage your child in games or other exciting activities instead.

Harvard Health Publishing

[\(How to talk to children about the coronavirus - Harvard Health Blog\)](#)

[\(How to talk to teens about the new coronavirus - Harvard Health Blog\)](#)

- Think about what your child absolutely needs to know to understand what the virus is and what to do about it. If you have your own questions about the coronavirus, check reliable sources, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which offers a range of information about the virus. The World Health Organization’s myth busters page can help you give correct answers to some surprising questions and misinformation that is spreading.
- Four questions children may have about the new coronavirus
 - **What is the new coronavirus?** The new coronavirus is a kind of germ that can make people feel sick. Remember how the flu made (you/your classmate/anyone your child knows) feel? It can be a lot like getting the flu. Some people feel just a little bit sick. Some people get a fever and a cough. Sometimes, the cough can make it hard to breathe easily.
 - **How do you catch this coronavirus?** The virus spreads like the flu, or a cold or cough. If a person who has the coronavirus sneezes or coughs, germs that are inside the body come outside of the body. That’s because sneezes and coughs can send germs into the air.
 - When the germs go into the air, they can travel for up to six feet—probably further than you are tall. That’s why it’s important to stand six feet apart from people other than your family. You don’t want to breathe in air with germs.
 - A healthy person also might get germs on their hands. This might happen by touching someone who is sick, or touching surfaces where germs landed because someone sick sneezed or coughed or touched those surfaces. To keep germs on hands from getting inside the body, wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer afterward. Try not to touch your mouth, eyes, or inside your nose because those are places where the germs can get inside the body.
 - Kids and grownups can try their best to stay healthy by practicing these healthy behaviors:
 - Sneeze or cough into tissues (and throw them away) or sneeze or cough into your elbow. This helps keep germs from traveling and making other people sick.
 - Wash your hands with soap and water at the same times you usually do, like after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose. When you wash your hands, remember to count slowly to 20. (Parents can help by singing the ABCs or “Happy Birthday” with their

children the number of times it takes for 20 seconds to pass. This helps children remember to wash for a sufficient amount of time.)

- Try to keep your hands out of your mouth, eyes, and nose.
- **Why are some people wearing masks?** Masks are for people who are sick to wear so that they don't share germs. The masks also are for medical staff, like doctors and nurses, to wear so they can help people who have the virus.
- **Can you die from the new coronavirus?** Most people who have caught the virus have not died, just like with the flu. Doctors are working really hard to keep an eye on anyone who is feeling sick. They want to make sure everyone gets the help they need and to keep the virus from spreading.
 - What is important is that you keep doing what you love to do and not let worries about the virus boss you around. If you're doing what you love while practicing healthy behaviors like sneezing into your elbow and washing your hands after you go to the bathroom, then you're showing the virus and the worries who is boss instead!
- **Model calmness about the new coronavirus.** Even though you may be concerned yourself, it is important to model calmness when talking about the virus. Children will look to you to see how afraid they should be. Think about flying on an airplane when there is turbulence. A flight attendant that appears terrified may make you think there is something really wrong and you should worry. If a flight attendant calmly offers you a beverage with a smile, you might think there's just some windy weather that will pass soon.
- **Answering questions teens may have about the new coronavirus.** Before you start, ask what your child knows so far in case you need to clarify anything, and find out what questions your child has. Below are some questions teens might ask about the new coronavirus and some suggested responses.
 - What caused this new coronavirus?
 - Coronaviruses cause the common cold and the flu. This coronavirus is believed to have started in animals and then passed on to humans at a live animal market in China.
 - Why now?
 - This is actually not the first time that there has been a widespread virus that started in animals and spread to humans. Another example is the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) outbreak in 2002 that was caused by a different coronavirus. That virus eventually was contained. Doctors, scientists, and government officials are working hard to do the same with this newest coronavirus.
 - One reason why we are hearing more about this virus is because of how fast it is spreading and how much it has affected people in many different countries. Another reason is that we also have many more ways of sharing information than we did in 2002, and posts now have the ability to "go viral" themselves. If you notice that you are becoming distressed after reading all of the posts about the virus, then it might be helpful to limit how much you read about the virus in the news and on sites or apps, to be informed just enough.
 - Can our pets get sick?
 - There is little evidence that domesticated pets, including dogs and cats at home, are likely to get sick from this new coronavirus, or spread the virus.
 - Can you die from the new coronavirus?
 - Most people — probably more than 95% and possibly more than 99% — who have gotten sick from the new coronavirus have not died. The death rate is likely even lower than has been reported in the news because, just like with the flu, some people with mild cases of the virus may not have gone to the doctor to get tested.

