

What Do You Say to Children about COVID-19?

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Children are curious, and at times, become worried about abrupt changes in their lives. This pandemic has entered our lives and young children need to know some of the facts to alleviate some of their anxiety. Check this website for further information; www.cdc.gov/coronavirus

Sometimes we don't know what to say. Avoid language that might blame others and lead to stigma. It is best to state the facts in simple terms. Starting the conversation with simple open-ended questions: "What have you heard about corona virus? What are you most worried about?"

Children are wondering why they are home from school for such a long time, why people are wearing masks, and if they will become sick. These are some questions that children may ask you. Here are some guidelines to help children understand a little bit about the corona virus. Remind children that there are adults taking care of them every day.

Q. What is COVID-19? It is the short name for corona virus disease 2019. It is a new virus and doctors and scientists are still learning about it. Recently, it has made a lot of people sick. Doctors and health experts are working hard to help people stay healthy.

Q. How did the virus get here? The new corona virus probably first entered the United States when somebody who didn't realize they had it flew here from China. It was sometime in January.

Q. It seems a lot of people are scared. What can I do to not be scared? We have all the power to protect the people in our communities by letting them know how we can be healthy and safe. Children feel empowered when they can teach and remind others about washing their hands often, coughing and sneezing into our elbows, and practice social distancing.

Q. How long will school be out? This is a difficult question to answer. Estimates range from 6 weeks or longer. Right now, we don't know for sure.

Q. How can I help? We can all do our part to not spread the germs that cause the virus, so we are staying home from work and school for a little while. We will go back to our usual routine in a few weeks. There are easy steps we can do every day to prevent the spread of infection; staying home and refraining from interacting with others in close contact will help.