

What you should know:

- Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that cause various illnesses. Covid-19 is a novel virus which means that it is a strain that has not been previously identified in humans.
- It is mainly spread person to person and there is not currently any treatment or vaccine.
- Children are less likely to be affected; however, you should check with your medical provider to make sure that your child is not high risk due to any other pre-existing illnesses.
- AVOID EXPOSURE TO PREVENT THE VIRUS

How to Avoid Exposure:

- Avoid people who have symptoms or are sick and cover your mouth when sneezing or coughing.
- Wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Wear a mask in public.
- Stay home as much as possible.
- Try to stay informed about current practices.

Parent/Caregiver Guide to Helping Families Cope With the Coronavirus Disease

How to Cope with the stress of an infectious Disease Outbreak:

- Keep updated about what is happening with the outbreak and get information from credible media sources such as updates from the CDC.
- Seek Support from friends and family by texting, communicating through social media and email, and stay in contact with your school teachers and classmates.
- Focus on supporting your children by encouraging them to ask questions and help them understand the current circumstances.



Ways to Help Children Feel Validated:

- Allow your child to talk about their feelings and acknowledge that these are normal reactions under the circumstances.
- Help them to express their feelings through drawing or other activities.
- Clarify misinformation about how the virus is spread and that not every virus is COVID.
- Provide comfort and try to be extra patient.
- Check back in with your children regularly in order to see how they are feeling.



Common reactions from children who are anxious:

- Fear of being alone, bad dreams
- Change in appetite
- Irritability
- Headaches, stomach aches
- Competition for parents attention
- Forgetfulness about chores and new info learned at school
- Isolating from peers and loved ones (especially teens)
- Avoiding work/school
- Decrease in focus and energy

Scheduling & Activities:

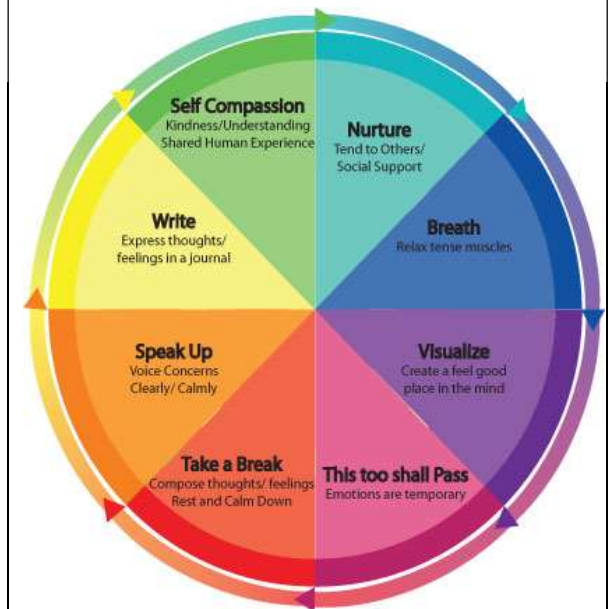
- Even if your family is isolated or quarantined, realize that this is temporary.
- Keep your families schedule as consistent as possible (i.e., bedtimes, meals, exercise).
- Make time to do things that your family enjoys together: movies, listening to music, going on walks, exercising, religious activities.
- Have children participate in e-learning activities for school and communicate regularly with your child's teacher.

How to Help Your Children Cope:

- Show Patience and Tolerance
- Provide verbal and physical reassurance that they are ok
- Allow short-term changes in sleep arrangements (for young children)
- Maintain regular family routines
- Avoid media exposure
- Set firm limits and boundaries
- Stay in touch with friends and teachers at school
- Regular exercise and stretching/breathing
- Participate in structured household chores
- Regular play sessions
- Communicate with your child regularly and check in with how they are feeling

Self-Care & Coping:

- Modify your daily activities and focus on what you CAN accomplish.
- Shift expectations and priorities to focus more on what gives you meaning and purpose.
- Remember that YOU are a role model for your children and how you handle stress can affect how your children manage their worries.
- Give yourself small breaks from the stress of the situation.



Please reach out to your school for information and/or support. Wishing you well!

Your school social work and case management team: Shannon, Katie, Kendra, Ellen, Billy, Paula, Melissa, and Hillary