



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# HELPING CHILDREN DEAL WITH ANXIETY ABOUT CORONAVIRUS

**Helping children cope with anxiety about COVID-19 requires providing accurate prevention information and facts without causing undue alarm.** Children look to adults for guidance on how to react to stressful events, so be aware of how much of your own anxiety you are conveying to children. Parents and caregivers can reassure children that health and school officials are working hard to ensure that people stay healthy. However, children need age appropriate facts. Teaching children positive preventative measures, letting them talk about their fears, and giving them a sense of some control over their risk of infection can help reduce their anxiety. **Here's what you can do:**

- **Remain calm and reassuring**

- What you say and do can either increase or decrease the child's level of anxiety.
- Remind children that the adults are working to keep them safe.
- Let children talk about their concerns and help reframe them into an appropriate perspective.

- **Make yourself available**

- Children may need extra attention- make time for them.
- Children may want to talk about their concerns, fears, and questions- it is important that they know that they have someone who will listen to them.
- Give them plenty of affection.

- **Monitor television viewing and social media**

- Speak to children about how some stories about COVID-19 on the internet might be based on rumors or inaccurate information.
- Give children factual information about the disease from reputable sources.
- Try to avoid watching or listening to information that might be upsetting when children are present as this can cause confusion or anxiety.

- **Maintain normal routine**

- **Be honest and accurate**

- Children may imagine situations that are worse than the reality if they don't have factual information.

- **Review and model basic hygiene such as hand washing, covering their mouth with a tissue when they sneeze, and not sharing food or drinks**

- Giving them information on how to prevent the infection can give them a greater sense of control over disease spread and reduce anxiety.

**For more information, visit:**

[https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-\(coronavirus\)-a-parent-resource](https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-(coronavirus)-a-parent-resource)