

TIPS FOR HOW TO SHARE NEWS WITH YOUR KIDS

<https://childmind.org/article/talking-to-kids-about-the-coronavirus/>

Don't be afraid to discuss the coronavirus. Most children will have already heard about the virus or seen people wearing face masks, so parents shouldn't avoid talking about it.

Be developmentally appropriate. Don't volunteer too much information, as this may be overwhelming. Instead, try to answer your child's questions.

Take your cues from your child. Invite your child to tell you anything they may have heard about the coronavirus, and how they feel. Give them ample opportunity to ask questions. You want to be prepared to answer (but not prompt) questions. Your goal is to avoid encouraging frightening fantasies.

Deal with your own anxiety. If you notice that you are feeling anxious, take some time to calm down before trying to have a conversation or answer your child's questions.

Be reassuring. Children are very egocentric, so hearing about the coronavirus on the news may be enough to make them seriously worry that they'll catch it. It's helpful to reassure your child about how rare the coronavirus actually is (the flu is much more common) and that kids actually seem to have milder symptoms.

Focus on what you're doing to stay safe. Remind kids that they are taking care of themselves by washing their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds (or the length of two "Happy Birthday" songs) when they come in from outside, before they eat, and after blowing their nose, coughing, sneezing or using the bathroom.

Stick to routine and keep talking. Make sure you are taking care of the basics just like you would during a spring break or other vacations. Structured days with regular mealtimes and bedtimes are an essential part of keeping kids happy and healthy. Tell kids that you will continue to keep them updated as you learn more.