

Coronavirus

How to Talk to Your Children

It's not always easy to protect our kids from troubling news. With coronavirus stories on every device, and schools temporarily closed, there's no hiding from this news. It's time for parents to talk honestly to kids about the pandemic. Psychologists and health experts have several tips for starting the conversation.

- **Get your facts straight.** We're all being bombarded with information; it's a lot to process and comprehend even as adults. Before you try to explain things to your child, be sure you have a clear understanding of the scope and risks. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)) is a great place to find reliable, up-to-date info.
- **Talk to your children at their age level.** The best advice is to begin the conversation by asking questions. Find out what they've already heard and what they're worried about. Then try to speak just to their specific concerns and questions. Avoid providing details they don't need to hear that may only cause more worry. Some kids want to talk it all out, others not so much. Don't force the conversation but let them know you're ready to listen and talk when they are.
- **Help your children take control.** Nothing is more stressful for children than feeling helpless. While it's important to reassure them that you, along with doctors, nurses and other professionals, are working hard to help keep everyone safe, it's also important to teach them how to help themselves. Simple lessons like proper handwashing (singing Happy Birthday two times while they soap and rinse), being a good germ catcher (cough or sneeze into the crook of your arm), and practicing healthy habits like eating good foods and getting plenty of rest, give children a sense that they can be part of the solution.
- **Try not to stray from the family routine.** This may be a challenge as school districts, restaurants and other venues close temporarily. Still, do all you can to keep to your family's routine. Even if your child is off school, keep the days structured, and maintain the same mealtimes and bedtimes. And, of course, staying busy and active keeps minds off worrisome things.
- **Above all, keep calm and carry on.** As the adult, your job is to be a calming and reassuring presence in your children's lives. When you talk to them about coronavirus, be honest but try not to let your inner worries come out. In that same calm voice, let your children know that they can always come to you if they feel afraid... and that they can count on you for honest answers.

This is an emerging, rapidly evolving situation. For the latest information visit [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

As always, your EAP is here for you and your family. Whether you are staying home or continuing your routine, there are a variety of ways to connect with your EAP including: telephone 800-327-4968 (800-EAP-4YOU), TTY: 877-492-7341, online at [EAP4YOU.com](https://www.EAP4YOU.com), through video, live chat or text message. Reach out to learn more about the many ways you can receive support from your Employee Assistance Program.



CALL US TODAY: 800-327-4968
800-EAP-4YOU | TTY: 877-492-7341
[WWW.EAP4YOU.COM](https://www.EAP4YOU.COM)