

“Anything that is human is mentionable, and anything that is mentionable can be more manageable. When we can talk about our feelings they become less overwhelming, less upsetting, and less scary.” – Mr. Fred Rogers

How to talk to kids:

Ask kids what they know about Corona Virus and COVID-19 and go from there

- Share age appropriate facts in **SIMPLE** terms
 - For example:
 - The corona virus has similar symptoms to that of the cold or flu (cough, sore throat, fever, and body ache).
 - Most people who get ill get better by staying home.
 - In RI, MA, and across the USA we have good doctors and nurses who help people who need it, just like when someone gets a typical cold or the flu.
- Reassure children that they are **SAFE**
 - How does your child know they are safe?
 - By watching how their parents act and listening to how they talk.
 - Parents should talk in a calm and soothing voice.
 - Parents should not appear scared or worried or talk about being scared or worried in ear shot of their child.
 - If our facial expressions and tone of voice are calm, then children feel safe.
 - We know how to keep healthy and have **AMMUNITION** against COVID-19
 - Practice “Social Distancing” (staying at home and keeping 6 feet away from people who live outside of your home).
 - BUT PLEASE SPEND TIME OUTDOORS GETTING FRESH AIR!!!! (i.e. bike riding, going for walks, sitting on your front stoop, etc.) But, please stay 6 feet away from your neighbors, friends, and non-household members).
 - Wash hands with soap and water before and after eating or using the bathroom. Remember to spend 20 seconds singing your ABCs, Happy Birthday Song 2x, or Lizzo song.
- Limit / stop child’s exposure to Corona Virus/COVID-19 information (Turn off news, radio, internet, and T.V. coverage).
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What we can do to battle COVID-19

- Be germ **BUSTers** (Protectors of older people)
 - Wash, Wash, Wash your hands! (Soap is our Super Hero)
 - Vampire Cough (cover your mouth)
 - Give 6 feet space
 - Stay home
 - Go for walks and play outdoors, but stay 6 feet apart from non-household members
 - Don’t share drinks, food, and utensils
- Externalizing fear
 - Draw a picture
 - Tell stories about how to defeat COVID – 19
- Ask about your child’s fears and challenge them with facts:
 - For example, if your child is scared of loved ones dying. You can tell them that is why we are being germ **BUSTers** and we are using our ammunition to bust COVID-19.

What we know is that when parents are anxious children get anxious and worried so the best thing is to stay calm and show a calm presence.....

Simply said if we are worried or anxious our kids are anxious if we are calm our children are calm.

The best way for children to feel safe and for parents to stay sane is to be on a schedule.

Write down a home schedule of activities and stick to it.

Example schedule:

9am	Wake (on or before 9am)
9 – 9:30am	Breakfast
9:30am – 10am	Get dressed, brush teeth, wash hands and face
10am – 10:30am	Free play time
10:30am – 11:30am	Academic time / school work
11:30 – 12pm	Something kids want to do that is special
12pm – 12:30pm	Lunch
12:30pm – 1:30pm	Outdoor time or indoor active play
1:30pm – 2:30pm	Academic time / school work
2:30pm – 3pm	Creative time / play and snack time
3pm – 3:30pm	Outdoor time or indoor active play
3:30pm – 4:30pm	Family play time
4:30pm -- 5:30pm	Cook dinner and quiet time
5:30pm – 6:30pm	Family dinner
6:30pm – 7pm	Family clean up dinner
7pm – 8pm	Bath, brush teeth, PJs etc....
8pm	Bedtime for kids
9pm	Bedtime for kids who are good listeners

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