

CARING FOR YOUR CHILDREN AND YOURSELF DURING COVID-19



As you navigate COVID-19, your family may be experiencing multiple changes, including shifts in your daily routines. Your child may be asking lots of questions and expressing feelings of fear, worry, or uncertainty. With children at home and staying indoors, there is so much for parents to juggle day-by-day and it can feel overwhelming.

Here are some ways you can reassure and comfort your children, while taking small steps to care for yourself as well.

TUNE INTO YOUR CHILDREN'S FEELINGS.

Help your child express feelings by using words like *sad*, *worried*, or *happy*. Let them know that it's okay to feel the way they do and that many people are feeling the same way. Reassure your child by letting them know that this situation won't last forever. Children pick up on their caregivers' stress and anxiety, so try to be aware of your own feelings before having a conversation with your child.

TAKE TIME TO LISTEN AND RESPOND TO YOUR CHILD'S QUESTIONS.

Let your child know that you are always there to listen to their questions. Try to remain calm when responding and answer their questions simply and honestly. If you don't know the answer, you might say, *"I don't know, but what I do know is that I'm doing everything to keep you safe and there are a lot of helpers out there to make sure we're safe, too."*

FOCUS ON THE THINGS YOU CAN DO TO STAY HEALTHY AND SAFE DURING THIS TIME.

This is a challenging time and while there are many things we currently can't do, it can help to stay focused on things we all can do. This includes keeping our bodies healthy and strong by making sure we wash our hands regularly, remain indoors, stay active, cover our nose and mouth when we cough or sneeze, and get enough rest.

MAINTAIN DAILY ROUTINES AND GET CREATIVE.

As much as you can, try to create consistent daily routines for your child and your family. This can help create a sense of calm and comfort, especially during times of stress and uncertainty. Use ideas from our "Indoor Activities Kit" to help plan out your days with fun, playful activities.

SHARE ACTS OF KINDNESS.

Talk together about simple ways you can show kindness to loved ones or people in your community. You can call, Skype, or FaceTime with family or friends to let them know you're thinking about them. You can also write or draw thank you notes for helpers in your neighborhood—like healthcare workers, mail carriers, and other essential workers.

BE KIND TO YOURSELF.

Try your best to set aside some time each day to care for your own health and well-being. It may be tough finding time for yourself but even taking a few moments to take deep breaths, stay hydrated, stretch, and exercise your body can help. It's also important to create a strong support network with close friends, family, relatives, and/or other community members to help you feel closer during this time.

Please visit www.talkingisteaching.org/indoors for more tips and activity ideas for families.

