

How and What to Tell Children about Covid-19

Children are curious and learn by asking lots of questions, but for some of our children being out of routine and seeing that everything has changed around them at this time may create feelings of worry and anxiety.

As a parent, it is important to connect with your child at this time and notice how your child is feeling. It may be useful to do the following (Reference Dr Caroline Leaf):

1. Put away your phone for a while and focus on communicating with your child.
2. Acknowledge and validate whatever your child is feeling may it be anger, sadness, disappointment or anxiety.
3. Model and reframe negative or unbalanced thoughts/ words your child is speaking.
4. Answer your child's questions with factual knowledge. Don't worry if you don't know the answer, it's OK to say "I don't know".



Courtesy of BBC

Check Out:

- ❖ **"Coronavirus: Clear Answers for All Kids"** by Arlen Grad Gaines and Meredith Englander Polsky. Particularly helpful for young children and those with special educational needs. <http://www.jkp.com/jkpblog/2020/03/i-have-a-question-about-coronavirus/>
- ❖ **Child Mind Institute**- articles on "Talking to Kids about the Coronavirus"; "Tips for Calming anxious kids".
- ❖ **Social story on Coronavirus**, particularly helpful for younger children (attached)
- ❖ www.elsa-support.co.uk- for **additional child friendly stories** on Coronavirus, importance of handwashing, social distancing and explaining why they are off school.
- ❖ **Calming strategies for children** (attached)