

We are TR!

Wellness Ideas for our Families

New things and situations are anxiety producing. As we engage in at-home learning and deal with so many unknowns related to Covid-19, we understand that this can be worrisome for both adults and kids. As a result, we've put together some ideas and resources to support the social, emotional and overall wellness of our families.



Highlights from “Steps to Ease Kids Fears & Anxieties About Covid 19,”

by: Beverly Hubbard Smolyansky, PhD, staff psychologist Cincinnati Children's Hospital.

1. MANAGE YOUR OWN ANXIETY. Kids pick up on how adults are feeling, and if we're anxious, they'll be more likely to feel the same way. Limit your exposure to the news. It's a good idea to be informed but limit the amount of time you're watching or reading the news. Get your information from reliable resources, such as the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the World Health Organization. It's time to be prepared but not panicked.

2. ASK WHAT THEY KNOW. To start the conversation, start by asking what they know about the disease rather than beginning with an explanation of it. This will allow you to immediately address any misinformation. For older kids and teens, ask what they've seen on social media. There is a lot of inaccurate information out there.

3. ASK WHAT THEY'RE WORRIED ABOUT... that way you can help ease their anxiety directly. You may be surprised by what they're anxious about. Let their questions and behaviors guide the conversation.

4. EXPLAIN THE FACTS ON A DEVELOPMENTAL LEVEL. For younger kids, you may only need to explain that COVID-19 is a virus, or germs, that can make people sick and it spreads by coughs and sneezes. For older kids and teens, you can explain the disease at a higher level, with the recommendation of letting their fears and what they already know about it guide the conversation.

– Tell the truth. Like most situations, it's best to tell the truth. But don't be overly optimistic. Don't tell them that they'll never get sick or it won't affect them. There is just so much unknown about this condition to say that for certain. But reassure them that the adults are on it by explaining what they are doing and what your family is doing to help prevent it.

- Revisit only as needed. If we're bringing it up too much, it may unintentionally make their anxiety worse. Let their questions and behaviors guide the number of conversations you have about it.

5. EXPLAIN WHAT IS BEING DONE

Explain that our government, schools, doctors, researchers, and many more really smart adults are doing everything they can to help prevent the spread. School is shut down because they want to keep their students safe, even if no one at their school has it yet.

6. EXPLAIN WHAT YOUR FAMILY IS DOING

Describing what they can do to help prevent it in your household may help them feel more in control, and thus, help manage their anxiety. Examples can include washing hands frequently and always before you eat. Coughing and sneezing into their elbows. Not touching their faces and helping to clean surfaces such as door knobs and frequently touched surfaces.

7. REINFORCE KINDNESS AND TOLERANCE

It's important for parents to remind kids to be kind to one another. Everyone is different. Just because someone is coughing, it doesn't mean they have COVID-19. They may have seasonal allergies or the common cold. While it's important to be vigilant and to stay away from sick people, it's equally important to be tolerant and understanding of others. We're all in this together.

Click on the links below for a few more helpful resources:

[NPR Goats & Soda Comic exploring Corona Virus](#) (read and listen).

[Handling Kids Disappointment When Everything is Canceled](#)

[Help Your Family De-Stress During Coronavirus Uncertainty.](#)

Be Well...together!

- ★ Read together! Talk about books, share ideas, wonder about characters, and go to distant places! How about a [book challenge](#) or [another book challenge](#). For older readers, [Good Reads Challenge](#). Books are free on [Audible](#) while school is out. Check out [OVERDRIVE](#) for free digital books, and check out more ideas on the [Lester Library](#) web page.
- ★ Need a great pick for your next **family movie night**? Having trouble finding a movie you can all agree on? Here's a list provided by Common Sense Media: [Movies](#)
- ★ How about a Podcast? Podcasts are growing in popularity with families - and for good reason, they are a great way to connect with kids, no screen required and they are free.
 - [Podcasts for little kids](#)
 - [Podcasts for tweens and teens](#)
- ★ Playtime! [Simple card games](#)
- ★ Lets Cook?
 - [Here's](#) a variety of fun kid-friendly snacks, meals and treats



Weekly Challenge -- Gratitude

What is gratitude?

Gratitude means more than simply saying thank you. Researchers **define** gratitude as a feeling or state that results from both (1) recognizing a good thing, such as a positive outcome or gift we've received, and (2) recognizing that this good thing came from outside ourselves. Although we most often experience gratitude in response to the actions of other people, we can feel grateful to nonhuman sources, too, such as nature, a higher power, or the universe.

- ★ One night at the dinner table this week, have everyone share one thing they are grateful for.
- ★ Express your gratitude to someone by making a card or writing a letter and sending it in the mail, sending a video message, or making a phone call.

Piglet noticed that even though he had a Very Small Heart, it could hold rather a large amount of Gratitude."
-A. A. Milne

When help is needed...

[211 Wisconsin](#) OR 1-800-924-5514

- 211 connects you with thousands of nonprofit and government services in your area.

TREP Pantry - 793-5364 *Call before visiting*

- Hours: Mondays and Fridays - 8:30 - 12:00 and Wednesdays - 9:00 - 12:30.

[National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) - 1- 800- 273-8255

[Crisis TEXT Line](#) Text HOME to 741741

[Lakeshore CAP](#) community services for home & family needs.

[InCourage](#) supports for domestic violence & sexual assault

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