



## TALKING TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT THE CORONA VIRUS (COVID19)

Kids worry more when they don't have accurate information. Here are some tips for helping them to understand what's going on and to stay calm:

**PUT ON YOUR OXYGEN MASK FIRST** - Self-regulation is paramount. Kids know when you are anxious and it can automatically make them anxious too. Do what you can to soothe yourself before talking with your children. Take a few deep breaths, talk to a friend, pray, mediate, go for a walk. It's Ok to let them see you do this so you are modeling self-care and self-regulation.

When you feel ready and steady:

**ASK what they already know.** Find out what they are concerned about. Try to listen and acknowledge their fears. Do not dismiss them.

**REFLECT their feelings back to them.** "I can tell you are really worried about Grandma." OR "It is frustrating to not be able to see your friends." OR "I know you are scared that you will die."

**REASSURE them.** Let them know what your family is doing to keep everyone healthy. Teach them good hygiene. They will feel more empowered (and less afraid) if they learn how to wash their hand properly or practice "social distancing."

**MAKE A PLAN - a fun one, if you can.** Have them sing their favorite song while washing their hands. Have them do a one minute crazy dance if they touch their face or cough without covering their face. Come up with creative ways for them to see friends or loved ones ~ online, through a window or door, taking a walk (6 feet away!!), mailing letters or cards. Some communities are standing on their porches and banging pots and pans for 3 minutes every night at 6pm to connect with neighbors.

*SEE BELOW*

*FOR OTHER RESOURCES FOR TALKING TO YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT COVID19*

1. Watch this 4 minute long video from WCAX with Vermont's child psychiatrist, Dr. David Rettew talking about how to talk to your children about Coronavirus/COVID-19:

<https://www.wcax.com/video?vid=568848502>

2. The **Sesame Street** website has all kinds of information, activities, a newsletter and videos to support families of young children during the COVID-19 health crisis:

<https://www.sesamestreet.org/caring>

3. Here is a link to a [3 minute long podcast](#) from NPR with a **"Just For Kids: A Comic Exploring The New Coronavirus"**:

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/02/28/809580453/just-for-kids-a-comic-exploring-the-new-coronavirus>

4. **Read this article from the CDC:** *"Talking with children about Coronavirus Disease 2019: Messages for parents, school staff, and others working with children."*:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/talking-with-children.html>

See [www.okyouvegotthis.org](http://www.okyouvegotthis.org) for more resources

*Adapted from Vermont Child Welfare Training Department*

