

Below are some suggestions on how to talk to your child about the Coronavirus and how to help relieve some of the anxiety that they might be experiencing.

Set the tone. Use a calm, reassuring voice. This will help your children see how you are trying to cope and will help them do the same. They learn best from watching how you handle situations.

Give your children accurate, age-appropriate information about the Coronavirus. If you don't talk to your kids, they may invent their own explanations, which can be even more frightening than the facts. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/share-facts.html> Upper middle school and high school students can discuss the issue in a more in-depth (adult-like) fashion and can be referred directly to appropriate sources of COVID-19 facts. Provide honest, accurate, and information about the current status of COVID-19. Having such knowledge can help them feel a sense of control. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/share-facts.html>

The latest information from the Center for Disease Control:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Answer your children's questions as accurately as possible. It's important to listen to your children about what they have heard, what they understand, and what questions they have. Children may ask why people are not shaking or holding hands in church. Let them know that this is one way to help stop the spread of germs that happen when someone coughs or sneezes. We can still connect with people at church with a smile or wave. The World Health Organization provides several short videos providing advice relevant to preventative measures that may be of help to you.

Help children cope with stress. Helping children cope with anxiety requires providing accurate prevention information and facts without causing undue alarm. Talk to your child about their fears, rely upon the data we currently know to minimize misinformation and don't be afraid to turn off the news if necessary.

Stick to a routine and keep talking. This is particularly important if school is shut down. Make sure you are taking care of basics just like you would during spring break. Structure day with regular meals and curfews. Tell kids that you will continue to keep them updated as you learn more. Let them know that the lines of communication are open.

Call or email me. Please reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns about your student. jwills@gswhs73.org

The above information came from the following sites. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov>, <https://childmind.org/article/talking-to-kids-about-the-coronavirus>
Talking_to_your_Child_Coronavirus_DOJ2.pdf