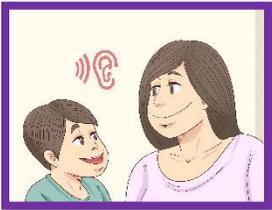


Helping Children Cope with Corona Virus (COVID-19) Outbreak

The outbreak of the corona virus (CoVID-19) may cause children to feel worried and experience stress regardless of their age. Some children react right away, while others may show signs of difficulty much later. Children's response to this COVID-19 outbreak will depend heavily on what they see from the adults around them. If parents and caregivers deal with the outbreak calmly and confidently, they can provide the best support, model and reassurance for their children.

What You Can Do to Help Children Cope the COVID 19



Talk to children about COVID-19 and what is happening in a way that they can understand. Encourage children to share their feelings, concerns and ask questions.



Be sensitive to their emotions. Give children time to adapt. Be patient and supportive. Give children extra time and attention. They need close personal attention in order to feel safe and secure.



Help your children feel a sense of control by encouraging them to practice proper hygiene such as hand washing, coughing in elbows and so on.



Practice and model healthy lifestyle choices, such as eating balanced meals, drinking plenty fluids and exercising.



Stay calm and reassure your children. Let your children know you are prepared to keep them safe. Share with them how you deal with your own stress so that they can learn how to cope from you.



Limit your child's exposure to media coverage of CoVID-19. Keep children engaged in age appropriate activities for leisure and educational purposes. Structure and routine help children feel safe and secure.

Be vigilant with children with pre-existing chronic health conditions such as asthma.

Be on alert for the following signs and seek professional support if they prolong:

- Excessive crying and irritation
- Returning to behaviours they have outgrown (e.g., toileting accidents or bedwetting)
- Excessive worry or sadness
- Unhealthy eating or sleeping habits
- Irritability and "acting out" behaviours
- Poor school performance or avoiding school
- Difficulty with attention and concentration
- Avoidance of activities enjoyed in the past
- Unexplained headaches or body pain
- Onset of drug use

Keeping calm, adhering to hygienic practices and staying informed will be key to managing this public health emergency.