

COVID-19 Checklist for Talking To Kids Responding to COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic can be overwhelming for parents and concerning to children. Ohio Department of Health Director Amy Acton, MD, MPH, recommends that parents and others who work with young people strive to help them feel understood, empowered, and hopeful. She offers the below guidelines.

- Remind children that doctors and healthcare workers are learning as much as they can about the virus as quickly as possible and are doing what they can to keep everyone safe.
- Reassure children that they are safe. Let them know it is OK if they feel upset.
- Help children label strong emotions and understand how those emotions might drive them to act in unhelpful ways.
- Share with them how you deal with your own stress so that they can learn how to cope. Help them discover what works for them to address stress (activities that build skills versus activities that help them escape).
- Limit children's exposure to media coverage of the pandemic. Discuss what they are hearing on the news or through social media and correct any misinformation or rumors you may hear. Keep young children away from frightening images they may see on TV, social media, computers, etc.
- Discuss ways to maintain a sense of structure. See [Setting a New Routine](#).
- Ask children about their ideas for connecting remotely with friends and family members. Encourage contact through electronic communications, phone calls, letters, and other safe ways to engage.
- Discuss examples of people, including young people, who are trying to help others during the pandemic or sharing messages of hope. Participate in a community response, such as chalking the sidewalk, creating rainbows, or hanging hearts in windows. Set a good example by showing empathy and support to those who are ill.
- Remind children that lifestyle changes and stressors are temporary and that some sense of normalcy will return when it is safe.



Discuss with children the importance of washing hands often, coughing into a tissue, and getting enough sleep. Inform them of COVID-19 symptoms, including fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

For additional information, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov.

For answers to your COVID-19 questions, call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).

If you or a loved one are experiencing anxiety related to the coronavirus pandemic, help is available. Call the Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990 (1-800-846-8517 TTY); connect with a trained counselor through the Ohio Crisis Text Line by texting the keyword “4HOPE” to 741 741; or call the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services help line at 1-877-275-6364 to find resources in your community.

Additional resources:

American Academy of Pediatrics, Ohio Chapter, Good4Growth Parent Resource Page: <http://ohioaap.org/parent-resource-page/>.

Good4Growth: Stress and the Brain: A Developmental Approach: http://ohioaap.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/StressAndTheBrain_Handout.pdf.

Good4Growth: Promoting Resilience in Children: Building a Relational Home: http://ohioaap.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/PromotingResilienceInChildren_Handout-1.pdf.

American Academy of Pediatrics Parenting Website: <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/Pages/default.aspx>.

CDC’s Helping Children Cope with Emergencies: <https://www.cdc.gov/childrenindisasters/helping-children-cope.html>.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s National Disaster Distress Helpline: Call **1-800-985-5990** or text **TalkWithUs to 66746**.

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 Ohio

Department
of Health

Protect yourself and others from
COVID-19 by taking these precautions.

PREVENTION

For additional information call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH or visit coronavirus.ohio.gov.



STAY HOME



PRACTICE
SOCIAL
DISTANCING



GET ADEQUATE SLEEP
AND EAT WELL-
BALANCED
MEALS



WASH HANDS OFTEN
WITH WATER AND SOAP
(20 SECONDS
OR LONGER)



DRY HANDS WITH
A CLEAN TOWEL
OR AIR DRY
YOUR HANDS



COVER YOUR MOUTH
WITH A TISSUE OR
SLEEVE WHEN
COUGHING OR SNEEZING



AVOID TOUCHING
YOUR EYES, NOSE,
OR MOUTH WITH
UNWASHED HANDS
OR AFTER
TOUCHING SURFACES



CLEAN AND DISINFECT
"HIGH-TOUCH"
SURFACES OFTEN



CALL BEFORE VISITING
YOUR DOCTOR



PRACTICE GOOD
HYGIENE HABITS

For more information, visit: coronavirus.ohio.gov