

HELPING CHILDREN WITH WORRIES

As the media and conversations around the Island focus on our fears and uncertainty about the Coronavirus (COVID-19), our children may well have questions and worries of their own. The following advice may be helpful in thinking about how you respond to children you care for.

SHOW a CALM APPROACH

Children look to the adults around them to know how to behave and feel. Set the mood in your house by taking a calm approach. If you feel worried, show children how you manage this by listening to music, taking a deep breath etc.

LISTEN

Children may have questions and concerns about the things they've heard. It's helpful to give them time when they know they can talk. A shared activity such as cooking or playing a game can be a good time to listen to worries and correct misunderstandings.

MANAGE EXPOSURE TO THE WORRIES OF OTHER PEOPLE

Limit time spent on social media and news websites for older children. For younger children, be mindful of the conversations being held around them. Be around to talk through any information they may have read or overheard.

PLAN FOR CHANGES IN ROUTINE

We will need to make changes to our lifestyle to limit the spread of the virus. Let children know we will have to stay home more. Plan some fun activities to do – trying out new recipes, playing new games, rearrange their bedroom, or try a new craft etc. With good planning, this could be an opportunity to spend positive family time together. Make sure you factor in ways to have breaks from each other as well, with individual activities such as reading, colouring in, watching a programme etc. in case frustrations arise.

PROVIDE TRUTHFUL INFORMATION

Children try to make sense of the information they hear, but may get it wrong. It's important to provide clear basic facts. There is a lot we don't know about the virus, and it is ok to tell children that. In the next column are some common questions children may have and suggested responses.

WHAT IS THE CORONAVIRUS?

It's a kind of germ that can make people feel sick. Remember how the flu made you feel? It can be a lot like getting the flu. Some people feel a little bit sick. Some people get a fever and a cough. Sometimes, the cough can make it hard to breathe easily.

HOW DO YOU CATCH THE CORONAVIRUS?

If a person who has the coronavirus sneezes or coughs, germs that are inside the body come outside of the body. That's because sneezes and coughs can send tiny drops carrying germs into the air. There is a lot of traveling those germs would have to do to get inside another body, though, and make someone else sick. A healthy person would need to touch those germs that came out of the sneezes and coughs, and then touch their mouth, eyes, or inside their nose. You can try your best to stay healthy by:

- Sneezing or coughing into tissues (and throwing them away) or sneeze or cough into your elbow
- Washing your hands often
- Trying to keep your hands out of your mouth, eyes, and nose

CAN YOU DIE FROM THE CORONAVIRUS?

The great majority of people who have caught the virus have not died, just like with the normal flu that comes every year. Doctors are working really hard to keep an eye on anyone who is feeling sick. They want to make sure everyone gets the help they need and to keep the virus from spreading. Scientists are also working hard to find a medicine that will protect people from getting the virus in the future.

Information in this section adapted from Press Release issued by the SHG Mental Health Team – 30.03.20

COVER YOUR COUGH AND sneeze

WHEN YOU COUGH OR sneeze COVER YOUR NOSE AND MOUTH WITH a TISSUE

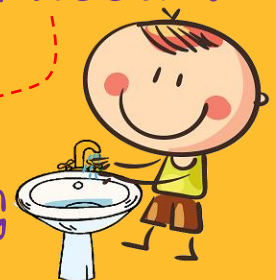


OR COUGH OR sneeze INTO YOUR ELBOW, NOT YOUR HANDS



THROW AWAY YOUR TISSUE!

CLEAN YOUR HANDS AFTER COUGHING OR sneezing



HIGH 5

1. WET
2. SOAP
3. WASH
4. RINSE
5. DRY

SING THE 'HAPPY BIRTHDAY' SONG TWICE WHILST DOING number 3

