



# TALKING TO KIDS ABOUT COVID-19



## TALK ABOUT IT

Children will have heard about coronavirus. They are intuitive and pick up on much more than we think. It's important to acknowledge and validate their reality. Children need to feel comfortable talking to us about it—we are their greatest source of information, reassurance, and comfort.



## ENCOURAGE QUESTIONS

Giving children the space to ask questions can help alleviate their anxiety. Try to provide an immediate, direct answer that's either short or a little detailed, depending on what you know and what your child can understand. Sometimes all that is needed is a simple, informational answer. It is OK to say you don't know! Encourage your child to share their ideas through words or illustrations.



## BE PRACTICAL

Talk to them about good hygiene—washing hands, using a tissue to cover your nose and mouth when coughing, and not touching your face. Finding fun, silly ways to remember to practice good hygiene practices will keep them motivated, like singing a song while washing hands.



## STAY HONEST

Children rely on adults to make sense of this confusing world; they need us to explain the truth in a way they understand. Find out what they know and clear up any misconceptions they may be hearing from peers or others. Listen to the news with your child, but avoid having the news on too often as it may cause fear. Filter the information to make it fit the child's age, with reassuring explanations like, "We don't have the medicine (or vaccine) for it yet, but doctors are working very hard on it" or "A lot of people might get sick, but normally it is like a cold or the flu and they get better."



## CARE FOR OURSELVES

As the saying goes, we must put our own oxygen mask on first before helping others. When we manage our own anxiety and worry, we model for children how to manage their own. Psychological and spiritual self-care is crucial in times of crisis. Try to take breaks whenever possible. Connect with an old friend, find sources of inspiration like listening to an uplifting podcast, or schedule a teletherapy session with a counselor. Self-care helps build resiliency—something we need more than ever right now.



Commonwealth Catholic Charities  
We  The Power of Hope Every Day™

[WWW.CCCOFVA.ORG](http://WWW.CCCOFVA.ORG)