

Tips and Resources for Families:

Preparing Children for Reentry to School During COVID-19

UNDERSTANDING COVID

HELPFUL TIPS:

1. To help children cope with the changes resulting from COVID-19, families can have a conversation about what is happening and teach children how to handle the situation.
2. Let your children ask you questions and validate their feelings.
3. Social stories (see below) can be a useful tool for families to help young children navigate this difficult situation.

RESOURCES:

- [How to Talk to Your Children About the Coronavirus](https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/how-talk-your-child-about-coronavirus-covid-19)
<https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/how-talk-your-child-about-coronavirus-covid-19>
- [Let's Talk About the Coronavirus](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xkZ23tDzN4c&feature=youtu.be)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xkZ23tDzN4c&feature=youtu.be>
- **Social Stories- Understanding COVID**
 - <https://littlepuddins.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Accessible-Corona-Virus-Social-Story-The-Autism-Educator.pdf>
 - https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/02/28/809580453/just-for-kids-a-comic-exploring-the-new-coronavirus?fbclid=IwARoGh-Y_z9S_t73LnzO-sL1jFqgbvZxhOI35Gjetuz8LZEUCYrCtNC970
 - https://carolgravsocialstories.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Someday-A-Story-of-Hope-for-Children-2.pdf?blm_aid=32695
 - <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/docs/default-source/default-document-library/learn-at-home-2020/coronavirus-social-story-elementary.pdf>

HELPING CHILDREN COPE

HELPFUL TIPS:

1. Be calm and proactive- have a conversation with your children about the coronavirus and the important role they can play in keeping healthy.
2. Stick to a routine- children thrive on structure and predictability, especially during stressful situations and times of uncertainty.
3. Let your children feel their emotions- provide validation, empathy and support.
4. Check in with your children about what they are hearing- to answer their questions and provide accurate information by using websites of trusted organizations.

5. Create welcomed distractions- go for a walk/bike ride, cook dinner/watch a movie together, family game night, etc).
6. Monitor your own behavior- children rely on their parents to provide a sense of safety and security.

RESOURCES:

- Coping Skills for Kids
<https://copingskillsforkids.com/coping-with-coronavirus>
- 6 Ways Parents Can Support Their Kids During the Coronavirus
<https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/6-ways-parents-can-support-their-kids-through-coronavirus-covid-19>
- How to Cope With Anxiety About the Coronavirus
<https://www.verywellmind.com/managing-coronavirus-anxiety-4798909>
- Helping Children Cope
<https://cdn.peachjar.com/1584213242753.pdf>
- Feelings Face Chart and Template
https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/FeelingFaces_chart_template.pdf
- Balloon Breathing
<https://pbskids.org/video/esme-roy/3032584660>
- Mindfulness Jar and Calming Timer
<https://www.pbs.org/parents/crafts-and-experiments/make-a-mindfulness-jar-or-calming-timeout-timer>
- Coping and Calming Strategies
<https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/prioritize-coping-and-calming-skills>
- Social Stories- Helping Children Cope
 - https://660919d3-b85b-43c3-a3ad-3de6a9d37099.filesusr.com/ugd/64c685_0a595408de2e4bfcbf1539dcf6ba4b89.pdf

SOCIAL DISTANCING

HELPFUL TIPS:

1. Use a measuring tape or a yardstick to measure six feet of ribbon or string. Place it on the floor so everyone can learn how far six feet is. Now remove the ribbon or string and have each family member guess how long six feet is. The closest guess is the winner. This is the distance you should keep between you and other people for now.
2. Cut out people from magazines and draw an outdoor scene on a piece of paper. Glue or tape the people into positions in the scene that keep them as far apart as possible to signify social distancing.

RESOURCES:

- <https://youtu.be/KXUT6zG-lcU>
- How to Get Your Kids to Stay 6 Feet Away
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/13/style/kids-children-social-distance-coronavirus.html>
- 6 Tips for Social Distancing with Kids
<https://www.childrens.com/health-wellness/6-social-distancing-tips-for-parents>
- Story for Children About Social Distancing
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DA_SsZFYwow&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwARo2vac21OoJi-E1OIPCMTvNPVq5c_f8qChG1ou2oH4pTcxHvCP4_j8oYfc
- Social Stories- Social Distancing
 - <https://vkc.vumc.org/assets/files/resources/Social%20Distancing%20Social%20Story.pdf>

WASHING HANDS

HELPFUL TIPS:

1. Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
2. Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.
4. Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
5. Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

RESOURCES:

- Everything You Need to Know About Washing Your Hands
<https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/everything-you-need-know-about-washing-your-hands-protect-against-coronavirus-covid-19>
- What You Need to Know About Handwashing
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d014EnpU4Fo>
- Handwashing- A Family Activity
<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/handwashing-family.html>
- Teaching Children to Wash Their Hands
<https://stemie.fpg.unc.edu/covid-19-resources-families-teaching-children-wash-hands>
- Social Stories- Handwashing
 - <https://paautism.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/SS-HandWashing.pdf>

WEARING A MASK

HELPFUL HINTS:

1. Explain what a mask is for, read a book or watch a video about wearing masks.
2. Put a mask on their favorite doll or stuffed animal.
3. Draw a smiley face on the front of a mask.
4. Demonstrate and set an example by wearing a mask yourself.
5. Let them practice wearing a mask before going to a place or location where they would need to wear a mask.
6. Gradually increase time wearing a mask (10mins, 30mins, 1hr, 2hrs).

RESOURCES:

- How to Make Face Masks More Comfortable for Kids
<https://www.childrensmn.org/2020/06/05/make-face-masks-comfortable-kids/>
- How to Get Your Child to Wear a Mask
<https://indywithkids.com/coronavirus-kids-masks/>
- Wearing a Mask for Kids
<https://youtu.be/3GYtTaOmVEM>
- Social Stories- Wearing a Mask
 - https://drive.google.com/file/d/1R1SbfZSTRchbHCiK_4svK7WLIH62lSII/vi ew?blm_aid=32695
 - https://www.ucucedd.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/I-Can-Wear-a-M ask-Social-Story_FINAL.pdf
 - https://drive.google.com/file/d/1B2FEF1DTXpmgH8ZL79Vg7E_Bu7ZO kBoA /view
 - <https://paautism.org/resource/wearing-mask-social-story/>
 - <http://www.childcareresources.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/COVID -19-Masks-Book-Young-Kids.pdf>
 - https://drive.google.com/file/d/1B2FEF1DTXpmgH8ZL79Vg7E_Bu7ZO kBoA /view

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

- Free Online Resources
[Coping with corona - FINAL.pdf](#)
- Dial 211 for Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services (24/7 crisis help for children)
<https://portal.ct.gov/DCF/Behavioral-Health-Partnership/Emergency-Mobile-P sychiatric-Services>

- Stratford Community Services- (203) 385-4095 call for counseling services
<http://www.townofstratford.com>
- Child and Family Guidance Center- (203) 394-6529 call for counseling services
<http://efguidance.com/>

OTHER RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

- 1000 Things to Do During COVID-19: For Children, Teens, Adults and Families
<https://fairfieldcounty.kidsoutandabout.com/content/1000-things-to-do-during-covid-19-online-activities-kids-teens-families-and-adults>

CORONAVIRUS INFORMATION, SUPPORT & RESOURCES IN SPANISH

- Understanding COVID, Coping Skills, Social Distancing, Washing Hands, Wearing Masks, etc.
<https://famielstogetherinc.org/coronavirus-2019-covid-19-cn-espanol/>