

Ministry of Health

COVID-19 Fact Sheet: Talking to Children About the Pandemic

This is a very difficult time for children and their loved ones. Children are home from school or daycare and may be worried about themselves, their loved ones and friends getting ill from COVID-19. Parents/guardians, family members, school staff and other trusted adults can play an important role in helping children understand the current situation in a way that is honest, accurate and minimizes anxiety or fear. The following resources are available to support you in talking to children about the pandemic and provide guidance to prevent getting and spreading COVID-19.

Available Resources

Children's Mental Health Ontario has released a [resource](#) with the following suggestions about how to talk to children about the pandemic:

- Begin with informing yourself. Correct misinformation and limit news exposure, if appropriate.
- Focus on the details that are most relevant and/or things that you and your child can control.
- Limit routine changes where possible.
- Take time to validate their concerns with your words and attention.
- Review good hygiene practices and, if appropriate, make fun games out of these habits.

Additional Resources

- School Mental Health Ontario – [Resources for Educators, Parents and Students Related to COVID-19, 12 Easy and Fun Mental Health Practices To Try With Your Children At Home](#)
- [Centre for Addiction and Mental Health – How Do I Talk To My Children About COVID-19 and Its Impact?](#)
- Mind Your Mind – [Staying on Top of Your Game During A Pandemic](#)

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - [Talking with children about Coronavirus Disease 2019: Messages for parents, school staff, and others working with children](#)

Accessing Mental Health and Addictions Supports for Your Child

Children and youth under 18 experiencing increased anxiety due to COVID-19 can locate mental health services through the [Ontario.ca](#) and [Kids Help Phone](#) websites and addictions services through [ConnexOntario](#) (1-866-531-2600).

24/7 support is available through Kids Help Phone (1-800-668-6868) and [MindYourMind helplines](#).

Additional Information

Visit [Ontario.ca](#) for the latest information and advice on COVID-19, including a [self-assessment tool for COVID-19](#).