

COVID-19 Counselor' s Message for Parents

<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Counselors would like to provide guidance to parents around how to help support their child's emotions around COVID-19.</i>
<i>Topic</i>	<i>Supporting your child's emotions around COVID-19.</i>
<i>Source</i>	<i>ISCA Coronavirus Suggestions to Parents; Adapted from Chatsworth International School Letter to Parents February 13, 2020.</i>

Dear Parents,

Uncertainty about the Coronavirus can bring about emotions of worry or fear in children. I would like to provide some tips for talking to your child about COVID-19 so you can help support your child and provide reassurance during this time.

Tip #1 - Model Positivity *Children are gauging how worried to be about COVID-19 by looking at the reactions of adults around them. The more you can model positivity about the situation, the more secure and calm your child will feel. Try to keep a sense of normalcy at home by maintaining your usual family routines.*

Tip #2 - Give the Facts, Challenge Rumors *Try to reduce your child's anxiety and fears about COVID-19 by offering them the facts. When presenting information, consider your child's age, maturity level, and emotions. Ask your child what they know about Coronavirus and COVID-19 and help to offer facts and dispel rumors. Provide comfort by reminding them that organizations like the WHO are working very hard to help people stay healthy and reduce public risk.*

Tip #3 - Consider Limiting Media Consumption *For older children, you can have a conversation about getting information about COVID-19 from quality sources. You can ask them about what they've seen on social media and how to tell if it is real or fake news. Remind older children that the media often uses shocking or disturbing headlines to "hook" its readers and that this often leaves out any good or hopeful news about a situation. For younger children, you may wish to limit what they're hearing. Consider what is on in the background (TV, radio, podcasts, etc.).*

Tip #4 - Eliminate Stigma When talking to your child about COVID-19 it is important not to assign blame to any particular person or group of people. Remind your child that symptoms of a cough or fever don't necessarily mean that a person has COVID-19.

Tip #5 - Practice Coping Strategies Invite your child to calm conversations about how your child is feeling and offer reassurance. Model taking breaks and practicing self-care by turning off the news and doing something fun. If your family is spending more time at home here are some ideas: replace outings with family games or movies, bake or cook together, read, have a craft afternoon, rearrange the furniture in your child's bedroom You can also do some mindfulness meditating before bed, look up home decor DIYs and read up on coping strategies and healthy activities that will work for your family.

If you notice your child is still worried or fearful, reassure your child that what they are feeling is normal. If you find that additional support is needed, you can reach out to Mrs. Lisa.

Source: ISCA Coronavirus Suggestions to Parents; Adapted from Chatsworth International School Letter to Parents February 13, 2020.