

**As COVID-19 is spreading across the globe, your child may have a few questions about news items they have seen or heard. It’s important to address their questions, but also to keep it simple. Here is a list of considerations that can help you with that conversation.**

**Assess your child’s knowledge on the subject**

Ask your child if he/she has heard about the Coronavirus. Find out what they have talked about with their peers and/or teachers.

Open ended questions are always a good way to assess knowledge. Here are some examples:

“Tell me about what you have heard/know about the Coronavirus.”

“What have your talked about in school/with friends about the Coronavirus?”

“How are you feeling about what is happening with the Coronavirus?”

**Determine your level of anxiety and address it before talking to your child.**

It is important not to transfer your fears or anxiety about the global situation to your child. Address your needs regarding the situation and then address your child’s.

**Talk at an age appropriate level**

You don’t want to make your child confused or scared, so it is important to talk to them at an age appropriate level. Use words that they understand and explain words they do not understand. Try to avoid emphasis on the negative aspects of the situation, as it may increase fear surrounding the issue. Potentially make a game about out of this learning moment to make it fun. You could find a fun but factual video that helps teach what is happening in a positive educational light.

**Emphasis good hygiene**

Have your children was their hands before each meal. Inform children about the correct way to cover coughs and sneezes (ie. Into the elbow not into the hands). Show them that touching their face, particularly when they have a friend who is sick, should be avoided. Clean table tops and door knobs with disinfectant frequently. Clean toys especially upon returning home from school in a 1% bleach solution.

Frame possible school closures in a positive way

If a closure occurs, make it fun! Explain to your child that the school is “washing their hands”. You can relate this to how they need to wash their hands to stay healthy. For example you can say, “The school has gotten dirty and it needs to take a bath.”