



## 10 Tips for Helping Your Child Manage Anxiety During the Coronavirus Pandemic



*At many times throughout their lives, children will feel the world has turned topsy-turvy. It's not the ever present smile that will help them feel secure. It's knowing that love can hold many feelings. Including sadness and that they can count on the people they love to be with them until the world turns right side up again.*

-Fred Rogers



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Anxiety can be contagious. Chances are that if you're worried about the coronavirus, your children are, too! Experiment with the following 10 tips to see what works for you.

- 1 Reassure your child that you and other adults, such as government and health officials, are doing all they can** to prevent the spread of infection and keep people safe.
- 2 Share accurate, age-appropriate information** about the virus, including information about what you as a family are doing to prevent its spread and reduce the chance of illness.
- 3 Let your child ask questions and discuss concerns openly.** Offer enough information to help your child understand, without additional details that may contribute to his or her fears.
- 4 Ask "What do you think would help you right now?"** The opportunity for introspection is a great way for your child to develop self-awareness and build resilience.
- 5 Allow your child to make controlled and safe decisions, when possible.** Would you like cereal or oatmeal for breakfast? Do you want to take a shower now or in an hour? Math or reading next?
- 6 Offer extra affection during times of worry.** This assumes, of course, that you have not recently been in touch with someone exposed to the coronavirus or that you yourself are not quarantined.
- 7 Model your own self-regulation strategies.** Show your child some of the (age-appropriate) strategies you use when you are worried, anxious, or stressed.
- 8 Breathe together.** Breathe in to a count of four, hold for a count of four, breathe out to a count of four, and hold for a count of four. Repeat three to five times.
- 9 Limit television viewing, social media, or news access** that may be upsetting to your child.
- 10 Contact a qualified health professional** if your child's anxiety becomes severe, or your child seems increasingly depressed.