Talking to Your Kids About COVID-19

Though the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) reports risk of COVID-19 infection is currently extremely low in the U.S., extensive news coverage about the virus may leave some children with questions and fears. Below are some tips on discussing the topic with your children.

Educate yourself about COVID-19

Parents should inform themselves about COVID-19 before speaking with their children about it. The best source is the CDC's website where news is frequently updated. Here you will find information on:

- The virus itself
- How it spreads
- Ways to protect yourself and your family
- Symptoms and testing
- What the CDC is doing about it
- COVID-19 and animals

Know whether or not to bring up the subject

If your child hasn't said anything about the topic yet, it doesn't mean they haven't been hearing about it. If they are feeling anxiety or fear, you certainly don't want them to hold those feelings in. Ultimately, you know your child best and should closely gauge their words and actions to determine if there are any heightened feelings.

Listen to their concerns

When your child is ready to talk, listen to their concerns and do not dismiss them. Practice active listening skills, allowing them to voice their worries. Answer all of their questions in a calm and educated manner.

Mirroring emotion

Consider whether your child is feeding off of your anxiety or fear about the situation. Kids are very intuitive and can feel when a parent is anxious. The best way to help them will be to help yourself first. Educate yourself on the risks, precautions, and discuss as a family the things you will do to stay healthy.

Don't be afraid to get help

A confidential third-party or therapist is the next step for adults or children with heightened fear or anxiety about COVID-19. Contact your Employee Assistance Program 24/7 for free, confidential guidance and support.