Kids and COVID-19

For additional information, please visit coronavirus.ohio.gov.

Ohio Department of Health Director Amy Acton, M.D., MPH the Ohio Department of Health offers these guidelines for kids and COVID-19. The COVID-19 pandemic can be overwhelming for parents and concerning to kids. ODH recommends that parents and others who work with kids to talk about COVID-19 with kids in a way that children will understand.

- Remind kids that doctors and healthcare workers are learning as much as they can about the virus and are doing what they can to keep everyone safe.
- Reassure children that they are safe. Let them know it is okay if they feel upset. Share with them how you deal with your own stress so that they can learn how to cope.
- Reinforce with kids the importance of washing their hands often, coughing into a tissue, and getting enough sleep.
- Inform kids of COVID-19 symptoms including fever, cough, and shortness of breath.
- Strive to reduce panic.
- Limit your child's exposure to media coverage of the event. Keep young children away from frightening images they may see on TV, social media, computers, etc. For older kids, talk together about what they are hearing on the news and correct any misinformation or rumors you may hear.
- Set a good example by showing empathy and support to those who are ill.
- Help your child to have a sense of structure upon returning to school.
- Connect with friends and family members over electronic communications.

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For answers to your COVID-19 questions, call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).

Additional resources:

American Academy of Pediatrics: https://healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/chest-lungs/Pages/2019-Novel-Coronavirus.aspx

Helping Children Cope with Emergencies: https://www.cdc.gov/childrenindisasters/helping-children-cope.html

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's National Disaster Distress Helpline: 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746.