



TALKING TO CHILDREN AND YOUTH ABOUT COVID-19

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Ontario Centre of Excellence
for Child & Youth Mental Health

Centre d'excellence de l'Ontario en santé
mentale des enfants et des adolescents



The emergence of COVID-19 in populations across the globe has had a significant impact on children, youth and families. To support our community partners during this challenging time, the Centre has compiled links to resources published by child and youth mental health organizations, professional associations and organizations relevant to child and youth care, to support discussions between parents/caregivers and children and youth.

The resources shared were gathered through a rapid, non-systematic scan of practice guidelines with an intent to support you in a timely fashion. The resources shared were not collected through an exhaustive search or systematic review, but reflect information available at the time of writing. As new practice evidence emerges, recommendations may evolve.

Note that in this resource “COVID-19” and “coronavirus” are used interchangeably and refer to the respiratory disease that is caused by a novel coronavirus that was discovered in 2019.

English resources

World Health Organization

[Children’s story book released to help children and young people cope with COVID-19](#)

CHU Sainte-Justine (as published on the Canadian Pediatric Society website)

[Tips and tricks to help adolescents cope during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)

Children’s Mental Health Ontario

[Talking to your anxious child about COVID-19](#)

- Includes recommendations to stay informed, keep a consistent routine for children/youth, being open and honest with the facts about the virus; and suggests preventative measures
- Includes links to additional resources

Canadian Psychological Association

[Mental health and coping during COVID-19](#)

- Provides general information about how people might cope with COVID-19
- Includes suggestions on how to support those who have pre-existing mental health conditions
- Provides advice for parents/caregivers to identify and support children who are stressed by COVID-19



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (US)

- [Talking with children about coronavirus](#)
- [Managing stress and anxiety during stressful situations](#)
- [Key facts about coronavirus disease](#)

Kids Health

[Coronavirus: What kids can do](#)

- Information and tips on how to respond to the virus, *written for a young audience*
- Provides information on how to prevent contracting or passing on germs to protect oneself and their family

Child Mind Institute

[Talking to kids about the coronavirus](#)

- Includes a short video by Dr. Jamie Howard (Director, Trauma and Resilience Service, Child Mind Institute) on how to have conversations with children about the coronavirus and its impact
- Emphasizes the importance of being open and available for children to ask questions
- Highlights the value of keeping a routine and consistency during times of change and schedule disruptions (e.g. school closures)
- References other sources, including the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) resource on “what to do when children are anxious”

Psychology Today

[How to talk to kids and teens about the coronavirus](#)

- Provides suggestions on how to discuss the COVID-19 virus and support children and youth during this time
- Breaks down suggestions by developmental age (e.g. preschool, elementary school, high school)

NPR

[Just for kids: A comic exploring the new coronavirus](#)

- Print and fold comic
- The website link includes a short three-minute audio clip that explains (to children and youth) what the virus is and preventative measures we can take to stay healthy



World Health Organization

[Helping children cope with stress during the 2019 nCoV outbreak](#)

The Autism Educator

[Coronavirus social story](#)

- An infographic developed to help alleviate fears and anxiety children may be experiencing

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network

[Parent/caregiver guide to helping families cope with COVID-19](#)

- Includes information on COVID-19
- Provides suggestions on how to prepare families for the impact of the outbreak with links to resources that have accurate and up-to-date information
- Summarizes information on preventative measures to stay healthy
- Provides coping strategies to support families and children with the stress of an outbreak
- Provides strategies on how to help and support children and is broken down by age group/developmental period

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

[Talking to children about COVID-19](#)

- 14 suggestions to help parents/providers have conversations about the COVID-19 outbreak with children/youth



French resources

CHU Sainte-Justine (tel que publié sur le site web de la Société canadienne de pédiatrie)

[Trucs et astuces pour un confinement moins difficile à l'adolescence pendant la pandémie au COVID-19](#)

Unicef

- [Comment parler à votre enfant de la maladie du coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Maladie à coronavirus \(COVID-19\) : Ce que les parents doivent savoir](#)
- [Comment les enseignants peuvent parler aux enfants de la maladie à coronavirus](#)
- [Messages clés pour la prévention et le contrôle de la COVID-19 dans les écoles](#)

Organisation mondiale de la santé

- [Nouveau coronavirus – Conseil au grand public : En finir avec les idées reçues](#)
- [Ainsi que tout le dossier special](#)

Hôpital Ste-Justine (Montréal)

- [Questionnaire de dépistage à l'intention des parents d'enfants présentant de possibles symptômes de la maladie à coronavirus](#)
- [Plusieurs outils à l'intention des parents](#) : comment en parler aux enfants, quels sont les symptômes chez les enfants, comment protéger son enfant, etc.

Ordre des psychologues du Québec

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) : conseils psychologiques et informations au grand public](#)

Office fédéral de la santé publique (Suisse)

[Série d'affichages imprimables](#) – règles d'hygiène, comment se protéger, lavage de mains, etc.