

Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

FAQs CHILDREN

APRIL 2020

How Families with Children at Home Can Combat COVID-19

A lot of uncertainty surrounds the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic, especially when it comes to the greater affects it may have on our day-to-day lives. What experts tell us is that staying home with your family is essential to slowing the spread of the virus. As part of our response efforts to help families with children, we have partnered with Dr. David Hamer, a professor at the Boston University Schools of Public Health and Medicine and a board-certified specialist in infectious diseases with more than 30 years of experience. Included below are several Frequently Asked Questions and safety tips that will be useful in talking about and combating COVID-19 with children.

How should COVID-19 be communicated with children?

- This can be a very stressful and emotional time, but it is best to stay calm when speaking about the virus to children or when they could be listening. Children can easily pick up on emotions, and negative or stressful feelings can affect their sense of calm.

Should children take the same hygienic measures that adults do?

- Yes, children should follow all the recommendations that adults would follow:
 - Washing hands with soap and water for 20-30 seconds;
 - Social distancing of at least 6 feet;
 - Avoiding contact with public areas and highly-touched surfaces and objects;
 - Coughing and sneezing into a tissue.

How much information should be shared with children?

- It is important to communicate clear and simple facts about COVID-19 that come from reliable sources like the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).
 - For more from the CDC, visit: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html

- Based on data that is available through the CDC, children should be told that they are at very low risk for getting sick.

What if children ask who can get sick from the virus?

- Children should know that cases of the virus have been found across the globe, and it does not discriminate and can affect any individuals regardless of race or ethnicity.

What else should be done to make sure children feel safe?

- Like adults, children like to know what they can do to protect themselves from danger.
- Protecting themselves from COVID-19 is no different, and children should be taught how to stay healthy during the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes knowing appropriate information about COVID-19, proper hygiene, how to stay active, eating well and getting plenty of sleep to maintain a healthy lifestyle.