

COVID-19 Support for Kids Parent Resource

For Parents of our Junior Jumpers preK/K kids

Keep the news to a needed minimum. Turn off or down the TV, computer, phone and radio news when your little ones are present. Read or catch up on the news about COVID-19 when impressionable eyes and ears are bedded down for the night or busy elsewhere, knowing young children can react strongly to pictures and news stories. Preschool kids don't need to see or hear prolonged or detailed accounts about COVID-19, especially because they can easily confuse facts with fantasies or fears.

Stress that your family is safe when safety is practiced. At this age, kids are most concerned with your safety and their separation from you. Try not to minimize or discount their concerns and fears, but reassure them by explaining all the can-do measures that exist to keep them safe. Emphasize that handwashing is something we are all practicing many times each day. Talk positively about wiping down high touch places, keeping self and surfaces clean and about the value of time with siblings and parents in the home.

Be together. Though it's important to listen and not belittle any fears expressed by very young children, distraction and physical comfort can go a long way. Snuggling up and reading something light hearted or watching something that cheers or doing something fun together may be more effective than logical explanations about infection probabilities.

Faith at home. Now is the time to read and share Bible stories of strong courage and trust in God. Now is the time to share testimony of how God has seen you through difficulties in the past. Time together praying and worshipping-yes, lighten things up with some fun kids' praise tunes- is a great choice. What a hope we have in Jesus!

For Parents of our Frog Squad/Crosswalk elementary school aged kids

Carefully consider how God has wired your child. Some kids can handle a positive but mature discussion of concerning COVID-19 events, and others will draw a smart sense of strength from being included in a mature discussion of the global facts at hand and the actual vs the perceived risks. However, if your kid tends toward the sensitive side, be sure to limit their exposure to the TV news especially; repetitive images and stories can make dangers appear greater, more prevalent, and frighteningly close to home. You might explain that even news programs compete for viewers and rightly or not, endless news

stories about coronavirus captivates audiences. Regardless, if you let your kids use the Internet, go online with them. COVID-19 news is everywhere and some facts and visuals concerning. Monitor where your kids are going, and set limits of both time and content.

Be available for questions and conversation....and faith at home! At these ages, kids will have good and important questions and with COVID-19 and with the many set backs and cancellations involved, will need their moms and dads to be those with whom they can share their own frustrations and disappointments. Try to be careful about making sweeping generalizations, since kids under age 10 will take what you say sometimes too literally. This is a good time to ask your children what they know, since they'll probably have gotten even some of their information from friends or even siblings, and you may have to correct facts. It's an ideal time to speak about faithfully following Jesus because frankly, our daily living with the COVID-19 pandemic is a walk of hygiene and vigilance, but very much more a walk of trust in Him as well. Lead your kids in prayer for those suffering and in praise, too, for the many wonderful front line workers and positive stories of courage and helpfulness out there. Such stories are out there and need sharing for encouragement, too.

Be an example. Your kids will look to the way you handle COVID -19 news to determine their own approach. If you stay calm and clear and observe mom and dad pressing into their faith, they see faith as a real and responsive transaction with a very real and responsive God!

A call to action. There's literally a ton of ideas out there on line and some are also available to you each week out of Anchor Points for kids as the weeks progress. If as a family little gestures of checking in on people via phonecalls, emails, facetime, etc. or doorstep drop offs of something delicious kids learn that while social distancing is the mandate, it cannot stop relationships. If as a family something is donated or done to recognize or appreciate front line health care workers or even the local grocery store and pharmacy clerks, kids catch on that everyone matters and such workers are God's blessings to us at this time. If Thinking of You or Praying for your Health cards are passed onto grandfriends, respect for elders is lived out. There's always something kind to do; it is a privilege for kids to be used by God at this time. They've got time on their hands and are ready for ideas like these!

Thanks for reading! Stay safe. Stay healthy! God bless you, each one.

Lovingly,
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