

Coronavirus

Coping Strategies for Children

Children are always learning how to cope with stress. They learn from role models: their parents, teachers, friends, influential adults and social media. During the COVID-19 pandemic, new coping skills for all ages are being developed and implemented in the moment. Facing increased stress, fear and anxiety, families need to come together and learn new life skills to meet the challenges of this global health crisis. Recognizing your child's challenges or struggles when dealing with this crisis is the first step in helping them.

Symptoms of stress your child may display:

- Easily frustrated over simple or routine tasks
- Sudden outbursts
- More withdrawn
- Regression to previous development stage (sucking thumb again, wetting the bed, etc.)
- Sudden problems with eating or sleeping
- Sadness, easily cries, moping
- Negative self-talk (I can't do anything right, I'm a loser, it is all my fault, etc.)
- Excessive worry/rumination about COVID-19
- Disinterest in school
- Loss of interest in things that brought them joy
- Unusual aches and pains

Tips for helping your child:

- Be a role model, show you are taking care of yourself
- Express yourself in a healthy way
- Help your child feel more in control of themselves and their environment: have them build a routine
- Help them set goals and find ways to accomplish them
- Address their COVID-19 concerns openly
- Limit access to news and social media
- Reassure them—they are doing their part by sheltering in place, staying healthy and practicing good hygiene
- Acknowledge their feelings
- Teach mindfulness and deep breathing exercises
- Download video messaging software like Zoom, Whatsapp or FaceTime to help your child stay connected
- Encourage them to create and mail handwritten letters
- Have them make signs and cards for healthcare workers
- Play interactive games with your child
- Watch for signs of intense grief
- Be attentive and reassure them this crisis will pass

This is an emerging, rapidly evolving situation. For the latest information visit [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

As always, your EAP is here for you and your family. Whether you are staying home or continuing your routine, there are a variety of ways to connect with your EAP including: telephone 800-327-4968 (800-EAP-4YOU), TTY: 877-492-7341, online at [EAP4YOU.com](https://www.EAP4YOU.com), through video, live chat or text message. Reach out to learn more about the many ways you can receive support from your Employee Assistance Program.