

How to talk to children about the coronavirus

1) BE HONEST



Try to talk to your child openly. It's okay to admit that we don't know how the current situation turns out and that we are all a little bit nervous. However, you can agree on keeping your child informed about the most important changes. But be careful: this doesn't mean it's convenient to update your child about the number of infected or deceased people.

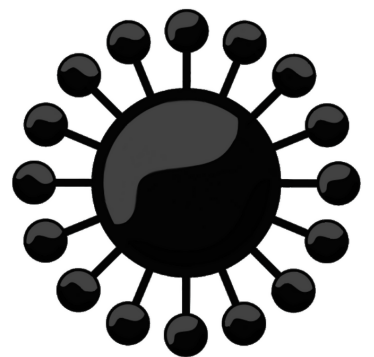
2) EXPLAIN THE CAUSE OF THE CURRENT SITUATION

Gently explain what coronavirus is and why children have to stay at home. Choose words your children understand. Don't overwhelm them with details, nor hide anything from them.

"What is the coronavirus disease? It's a new kind of illness which usually causes fever, cough and breathing problems. But sometimes people with coronavirus disease feel healthy and still can pass it on to others. Even when someone doesn't cough nor has a fever, they can still transmit the disease. That's why we need to protect others, even if we feel healthy. The coronavirus could hurt older and sick people."

"Schools are closed, and we have to stay at home, so we don't pass on the new illness to others."

"We don't know how long the schools will be closed, but it will help against spreading the illness. Doctors are working very hard to find a cure for the coronavirus disease."



3) EXPLAIN HOW CAN WE PROTECT OURSELVES AND OTHERS



Explain to your children *the purpose of wearing a face mask* and show them how to use it. Teach your children to wash their hands properly. Tell them why it's so important to stay at home instead of going to the playground.

"I know it's annoying to be home all the time and not going to the playground. But this new disease is spreading very fast, and doctors are trying to stop it. If all of us stay home now, wash our hands properly and cover our nose and mouth, we will hopefully be able to go out again soon. We can make it together, what do you say?"

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4) PATIENTLY ANSWER THEIR QUESTIONS

Encourage your children to ask questions. Answer them gently and sensitively. If your children are frustrated or anxious, be understanding.

"I understand you're upset because you can't go see your friends. I'm also looking forward to doing things we can't do right now. But by staying at home, we help other people a lot."

"I understand that staying home might be boring and it might make you sad. But we will handle it together for a little bit longer. We can play a game together, watch your favourite fairy tale. Or we can call your friends, how about that?"



5) DON'T FORGET TO TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Relax, stay in touch with your friends and relatives. Have some time for yourself - take a hot bath, have a cup of coffee or tea, read a great book or simply do anything that makes you feel good.

Czech Coronavirus Infoline: 1212

[Current information on coronavirus from Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic](#)

M U N I Katedra
F S S psychologie

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