

HELPING CHILDREN COPE

During the COVID-19 Restrictions

Your children may respond differently depending on their age. Below are some reactions according to age group and the best ways you can respond:



Age ;

Pre-school

Reaction ;

Fear of being alone,
Bad dreams, Speech difficulties,
Loss of bladder/bowel control, constipation, bed-wetting,
Change in appetite Increased temper tantrums, whining, or clinging behaviours

How to Help ;

Patience and tolerance
Provide reassurance (verbal and physical)
Encourage expression through play, reenactment, story-telling
Allow short-term changes in sleep arrangements
Plan calming, comforting activities before bedtime
Maintain regular family routines
Avoid media exposure

School Age (age 6-12)

Reaction ;

Irritability, whining, aggressive behaviour
Clinging, nightmares
Sleep/Appetite disturbance
Physical symptoms (headaches, stomachaches)
Withdrawal from peers, loss of interest
Competition for parents attention
Forgetfulness about chores and new information learned at school

How to Help ;

Patience, tolerance, reassurance
Play sessions, staying in touch with friends by phone and online
Regular exercise and stretching
Engage in educational activities (workbooks, board games)
Participate in structured household chores
Discuss the current outbreak and encourage questions, including what is being done in the family and community
Encourage expression through play and conversation
Help family create ideas for enhancing health promotion behaviours and maintaining family routines
Limit media exposure, talk about what they have seen or heard
Address any stigma or discrimination occurring and clarify misinformation

Adolescent (age 13-18)

Reaction ;

Physical symptoms (headaches, rashes etc)
Sleep/appetite disturbance
Agitation or decrease in energy, apathy
Ignoring health promotion behaviours
Isolating from peers and loved ones
Concerns about stigma and injustices
Avoiding school

How to Help ;

Patience, tolerance, reassurance
Encourage continuation of routines
Encourage discussion of outbreak experience with peers, family
Stay in touch with friends through phone and online
Participate in family routines, including chores, supporting younger siblings and planning strategies to enhance health promotion behaviours
Limit media exposure, talking about what they have seen/heard including at school
Discuss and address stigma, prejudice and potential injustices occurring during outbreak

TÚSLA

An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency