## General Principles
- Remain calm and reassuring
- Be available to listen & talk
- Provide honest and accurate information
- Monitor media exposure and help identify credible sources
- Teach everyday actions to avoid spreading germs
- Avoid blaming and stigmatizing language

## How to Reduce Risk
- **HANDS:** Wash often
- **ELBOW:** Cough into it
- **FACE:** Don’t touch it
- **SPACE:** 6ft distance
- **HOME:** Stay if you can

## What is COVID-19?
- Disease caused by a new virus called the Coronavirus
- Virus has made many sick, but doctors and scientists think many people will be OK, especially children
- Common symptoms include fever, dry cough, and shortness of breath

## Elementary School
- Brief, simple facts
- Provide reassurance to manage fear
- Steps to stay healthy
- "Adults are working hard to keep you safe."

## Upper Elementary & Early Middle School
- Distinguish fact from fiction and identify credible sources
- Discuss local, state, and national action
- Identify ways your child can help self and others stay safe

## Upper Middle and High School
- Discuss issues with depth
- Engage in family decision making process

Please call the confidential Montefiore emotional support line if you need additional support at this time: (718)-920-8844
MANAGING CHILD BEHAVIOR
For Montefiore Frontline Providers and Associates

With schools closed, parents working long hours, and families facing uncertainty, it is more important than ever to use consistent, positive parenting and healthy approaches to discipline in order to manage child behavior.

Set a Daily Routine
Make a daily schedule for your children. Review the schedule with them daily and put it somewhere they can see each day. Make sure to include structured activities as well as breaks from schoolwork to relax, move around/exercise, and connect with others. Have dinner together as a family and maintain normal bedtime routines as much as possible.

Set Clear Expectations
- Maintain existing house rules and make clear new expectations related to schoolwork and other activities. Review expectations on a daily basis, or as needed.

Praise Good Behavior
Notice good behaviors and point them out to your children—this includes praising successes and attempts. Praising good behavior increases the chances that they will do that good behavior again, whether or not you instructed them to do it in the first place.

Schedule One-on-One Time
Set aside one-on-one time with your child as many days of the week as possible. It can be 15 minutes or less in which your child can pick a fun activity (play with blocks, color, read a book, dance to a song, cook a meal) to do with you. This is time a child gets your undivided positive attention. Don’t take away this time as a consequence for other behavior. This is your child’s daily vitamin for good behavior.

Ignore Minor Misbehavior
As long as your child isn’t doing something dangerous and they are getting plenty of positive attention, ignoring bad/annoying behavior can be a very effective way of stopping that behavior. Make sure that when you ignore, you keep a neutral expression on your face and don’t say anything at all. As soon as your child returns to behavior you approve of, jump in and praise!

Use Consistent Consequences
After giving one warning, use consistent consequences for misbehavior. Ensure that the consequence is delivered/stated in a calm, neutral tone. For younger children, use a brief time-out (5 minutes or less) in which they are removed from the situation and placed in a boring, safe place (e.g., facing a wall). For older children, give them a consequence that ‘fits the crime’ and can be followed through (e.g., remove phone until they complete an extra chore). Once time-out or the consequence is completed, give your child a chance to do something good and praise them!

Avoid physical punishment: The American Academy of Pediatrics reminds parents that spanking, hitting, and other forms of “corporal” punishment risks injury and isn’t effective in managing child behavior.

Take care of yourself: Attend to your own wellness so that you can be an effective parent. Be kind to yourself; find someone you can talk to, and take a break when you need it! Using safe and effective coping skills (i.e., deep breathing) models these skills for you child so that they are more likely to use effective coping skills.

Tip

Please call the confidential Montefiore Emotional Support Line if you need additional support at this time - 718-920-8844
CHILD ANXIETY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC
For Montefiore Frontline Providers and Associates

Recognizing and Responding to your Child's Anxiety

- For kids who do not verbalize feeling anxious, their anxiety may manifest through physical symptoms, for example, stomach aches or headaches.
- Parents can start by validating their child’s experience and reframing it in a more helpful way. Rather than tell kids they are fine, tell them that what they are feeling is anxiety and explain what that means.
- Normalizing anxiety for a child can be helpful as well. For example, saying “a lot of people are feeling scared right now,” “it is okay to feel afraid sometimes,” or “sometimes I get worried too” can help your child acknowledge or recognize how they feel.

Coping Skills to Teach your Child

- **Deep breathing**: Drawing in air by expanding the belly can help your child relax and reduce heart rate, blood pressure and stress hormones.
- **Mindfulness**: Helping your child focus on what’s around them, what they see and hear, can help pull your child away from the anxiety and ground them in the present moment. Doing activities together (playing a game) that can bring their attention into the present moment is another way to practice.
- **Coping statements**: Teach your child to talk back to their worries - “Even though I’m scared, I can handle it.” “I’m stronger than my worries.”
- **Coping ahead**: Teach your child that when you have to do something that makes you nervous, it helps to plan in advance how to help yourself in the moment. If you can push through it, it will get easier!
- **Acceptance**: Help your child acknowledge discomfort without fighting it. Ignoring, judging, or avoiding the anxiety will likely make it grow bigger and more powerful. Teach them that everyone feels anxious at times, and that it is okay to feel anxious. You can feel anxious, and do things that are important to you anyway.

Parents Can Also...

- Set up a reward system to reward your child when they push through their anxiety. Rewards can be small things you know your child will enjoy, such as snacks, quality time with a parent, or household privileges.
- Make empathize and encourage statements - “I know that this is really hard for you, and I know you can do it.”
- Praise and compliment your child when you see your child push through their anxiety. Tell them when you see them coping well with stressors or actively using coping skills.
- Try not to let your child avoid what is making them anxious. Avoidance actually reinforces the anxiety. Instead, gently encourage your child to face their fears (use empathize and encourage).
- Ask your open-ended questions - “How are you feeling about...?” (rather than, “Are you worried about...”), to avoid suggesting that you expect them to be worried.

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powered by PIKTOCHRAT
Helping Kids Cope with Grief & Loss

For Montefiore Frontline Providers and Associates

Grief is a normal reaction for children to have to the death of someone significant to them. When you’re thinking about how to share the news with your child, what to share with them, and how to support them through the loss, it might be helpful to review these steps:

**Tell the truth**

Use **concrete** language. Share information in **small** amounts. Your child will ask you questions when they need to know more. It is okay to say, “I don’t know.” You can help them find the answer later.

**Grief is unique**

Grief is **unique** for each child. They might feel sad, angry, afraid, guilty, numb, relieved, and might feel these emotions and others all at once or at different points in time after the death.

**Grief is not a problem**

Grief is not **something to be fixed**. It is important to welcome your child’s grief and be patient with it. Grief does not follow a specific timeline, and will continue to arise throughout your child’s life.

**Listen to your child**

Meet them where they are and try to understand their reactions. Don’t force their reactions to match your expectations of what grieving should look like.

**Show your emotions**

You can tell them how you are feeling, and show them healthy ways to cope with these emotions. Make sure to also leave room for their reactions, even when they are different from your own.

**Honor your loved one**

Discuss with your child and find ways to honor your loved one. The pandemic is preventing some rituals. You can describe what you might have done during a different time and explain what this means to you.

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MANAGING COMMON SOURCES OF ANXIETY

For Montefiore Frontline Providers and Associates

"I'm feeling alone"
Collaborate/organize with other front-line workers. Don't make difficult decisions alone. Ask and seek help, whether from peers or professionals. Especially when you feel afraid to do so. Build community with your coworkers and other frontline providers. Utilize available emotional support resources at Montefiore.

"What do I tell my kids and family?"
Reassure your children that you are a professional and have been trained to do this job while keeping safe. In a developmentally appropriate manner, tell your children what is going on, including your own feelings of fear/hope/sadness. Reassure them that we can focus on what is in our control.

"I am feeling scared"
This is so, so normal. Remember to treat yourself like you would treat someone you love very much with heaps of self-compassion and love. Find ways to be kinder to yourself. Try to attend to the things that you can control (e.g., my resilience, eating well, my routine, following the latest information/advice for safety).

"No one is listening to me!"
Explicitly express your needs for reassurance, support, supplies, & PPE. Collectively ask for what you or your team will benefit from in this difficult time. Attend town halls, grand rounds, and other forums that allow you to express your voice.

"I don't have time for myself"
Taking care of ourselves is more important than ever - take breaks, practice mindfulness, get enough sleep, and eat well! Treat yourself as you would treat a loved one! Visit employee support centers in the hospital to get respite, lunch, and emotional supports.

Use resources
- Emotional Support 7am-10pm, 7 days a week - 718-920-8844
- Montefiore Emotional Support Allie (MESA)
- Swift Montefiore Associate Referral Team (SMART) - mepa@montefiore.org

We deeply honor your work in this difficult time, and want to support you in providing care to our communities.