# COVID-19
## Helping Your Child Manage

Parenting is a highly important and challenging task in relatively "normal" times.  During periods of societal crises such as what is being experienced with the COVID-19 pandemic, parenting can be especially taxing.  Parents must at the same time practice and model good self-care while teaching and supporting their child in developing their own self-care skills.

Children react, in part, based on what they see from the adults around them.  When parents and caregivers deal with the COVID-19 calmly and confidently, they can provide the best support for their children.

## Not all children respond to stress in the same way.

**Some common changes to watch for in children include:**
- Excessive crying and irritation.
- Returning to behaviors they have outgrown (e.g., toileting accidents or bedwetting)
- Excessive worry or sadness
- Unhealthy eating or sleeping habits
- Irritability and "acting out" behaviors
- Poor school performance or avoiding school
- Difficulty with attention and concentration
- Avoidance of activities enjoyed in the past
- Unexplained headaches or body pain
- Use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs

## How can I support my child?

- Take time to talk with your child and answer their questions about the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Reassure your child that they are safe.  Let them know it's okay to be upset and share with them how you cope with stress as a model for learning.
- Limit your child's exposure to media coverage of the event. They may misinterpret what they hear and become frightened about something they do not understand.
- Help your child to have a sense of structure.
- Be a role model: take breaks, get plenty of sleep, exercise, and eat well.  Connect with your friends and family members and rely on your social support system.

NPR has a helpful comic available to explain the COVID-19 outbreak to children:
https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/03/07/811616161/kids-around-the-world-are-reading-nprs-coronavirus-comic

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/coping.html

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