

HEALTHY AT HOME

Navigating COVID-19 with Cooperative Extension

Talking to your kids about COVID-19

BY DAVID WEISENHORN, PH.D.

Senior Specialist for Parenting and Child Development

As hard as it is for adults to make sense of the uncertainty around COVID-19, it is even harder for children. Talking to your children about coronavirus can go a long way in making them feel safe, secure, and loved. Ways you can help your child will be different based on your child.

- **Listen.** Always be willing to listen to and answer your child's questions, but realize not every child will want to talk about the subject. Allow them to bring it up in their own time.
- **Honesty.** Try your best to answer your child's questions correctly and honestly. Talk about the subject in terms of "strong germs or serious illness." Relate it to something they already know like the flu or a bad cold, but explain that some people respond differently. Remind children the reason for the cancellations is an effort to keep us safe.

Continued page 2



Talking to your children about coronavirus can go a long way in making them feel safe, secure, and loved.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Talking to your kids about COVID-19

- **Limit.** Limit news footage as this can increase anxiety and sadness, especially in younger children. If you find your child in front of a television showing virus updates, try to distract them. Offer to play with them, ask about their day, or read a book with them.

You can reassure them that there are people who are doing their best to keep them safe like police officers, firefighters, health-care workers, and government officials.

OTHER RESOURCES

Related podcast:

http://bit.ly/UKfcs_show2-41

Full article:

<https://coronavirus.ca.uky.edu/files/talking-to-your-kids-about-covid-19.pdf>

Managing stress during hard times

BY AMY F. KOSTELIC

Adult Development and Aging Extension Specialist

Stress can help you rise to a challenge and help you prepare to meet situations with focus, strength, stamina, and heightened alertness. Negative stress, however, can prevent you from feeling and performing well. Common emotional symptoms to stress include anxiety, irritability, increased forgetfulness, and difficulty making decisions. Physical reactions to stress could include headaches, upset stomach, increased arthritis pain, tightness in the chest, and problems with sleep.

It is important to experiment with different ways to ease negative stress. Two common strategies include changing the situation and changing your response to the

situation. If there is a situation that causes you stress, avoid it. In unavoidable situations, you may have to change your reaction. Accept it for what it is, focus on what is important or on what you can do, and adapt as best you can.

- Take deep breaths, and count to 10 before you react or speak.
- Set aside relaxation time.
- Connect with a support system.
- Do something you enjoy every day.
- Keep your sense of humor.
- Stay physically active.
- Do not get overwhelmed with the big picture; break down big problems into smaller parts.
- Find light at the end of the tunnel.
- Get temporarily lost in music or a book.
- Get a little pet therapy time.



OTHER RESOURCES

Related video:

http://bit.ly/UKfcs_StayPositive

Full article:

<https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/managing-stress-during-hard-times.pdf>

Cleaning does not kill germs. Disinfecting means to kill germs by using chemicals such as bleach solutions, alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol, or other EPA-registered disinfectants.

Cleaning versus disinfecting

BY ANNHALL NORRIS

Extension Specialist for Food Safety
and Food Preservation

It is important to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces like doorknobs, handles, chair backs, faucets, light switches, etc. Cleaning means to remove germs or dirt. Cleaning does not kill germs. Disinfecting means to kill germs by using chemicals such as bleach solutions, alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol, or other EPA-registered disinfectants.

When cleaning, use soaps or detergents and water to remove dirt. Follow by disinfecting.

If you don't have an EPA-registered household disinfectant, you can make your own. Start with regular, unscented bleach, and wear protective gloves. Mix 5 tablespoons bleach to one gallon of water or 4 teaspoons bleach to one quart of water.

EPA-registered household disinfectants are commonly available in sprays and wipes. The label will tell you whether you need to dilute the product, what surfaces you can use it on, drying time, and any precautions such as wearing gloves and making sure there is good ventilation when using the product.



OTHER RESOURCES

Full article:

<https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/cleaning-versus-disinfecting.pdf>

HEALTHY AT HOME

**THIS NEWSLETTER IS PUBLISHED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE.**

The University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service provides practical education you can trust to help people, businesses, and communities solve problems, develop skills, and build a better future.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, EMAIL US:
ukfcsext@uky.edu**

EDITING by Alyssa Simms
DESIGN by Rusty Manseau

- **Alison Davis, Ph.D.**
Director, Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky
- **Jennifer Hunter, Ph.D.**
Assistant Extension Director, Family and Consumer Sciences
- **Mark Mains, Ph.D.**
Assistant Extension Director, 4-H Youth Development
- **Craig Wood, Ph.D.**
Interim Assistant Extension Director, Agriculture and Natural Resources