

Talking about COVID-19

People worry that including children in the difficult conversations may cause more stress and worry, but actually it can reduce stress and increase coping.

Keep it simple. Use language that the child will understand: "COVID 19, an illness caused by the coronavirus, is like the flu and can cause a person's body to feel sick. Most people who have the virus may have a cough, fever, chills (feeling cold) or body aches."

How does COVID-19 make people feel?

Some of the symptoms of COVID 19 are coughing, having a fever, sore throat, and feeling like it is hard to breathe. If your loved one needs to spend the night in the hospital, the doctors and nurses will work hard to help them feel better so they can go home.

Delta Variant:

Delta is a new strain of COVID 19 that has been causing a lot of concern. It is very contagious and can easily spread. The symptoms are the same as the original forms of COVID 19.

Find out what they know and give facts:

1. Ask what they have heard about COVID 19. This gives you space to clear up any misconceptions and misinformation.
2. Keep things simple, concrete, and factual.
3. Watch a video or read a book from a trusted medical source about COVID 19.

Avoid telling your child "Don't worry."

Validate the child's feelings by saying something like, "It is OK to feel worried or scared (or whatever words they use), and a lot of other kids and adults are feeling the same way. Share tips for staying healthy like washing hands, staying home if you are sick, and keeping your hands away from your face.

Make sure children know they are always able to ask questions.

As things change so quickly with COVID 19, make sure children know they are always able to ask questions. Help share accurate information with them as needed.

For more information or to reach a Child Life Specialist, please email childlife@erlanger.org or call 423-778-5907.