



## Talking to Children About COVID-19

The following are suggestions for talking to your children about the COVID-19 threat offered by our professional staff:

**Calm Demeanor:** When talking to your children about the COVID-19 crisis, maintain a calm and reassuring demeanor. Remember, your children are sensitive, not only to your words, but to your body language, as well. Be aware of the body language cues you are exhibiting when talking with them and when talking to others in their presence. Also, be aware of what you are saying to others in the presence of your children. If your words or body language are filled with fear, that is what you will communicate.

**Conversation:** Remember that conversation is a two-way process. Listen more than you speak. They won't hear a lecture. Answer their questions to the best of your knowledge. Be truthful. They'll know if you're faking it. Don't be afraid to say "I don't know." If you don't know the answer, tell them you don't and then get the answer.

**Honesty:** Be truthful, authentic and accurate. Don't use euphemisms in your conversations.

**Prayer:** Frequent prayers with your children that are uplifting, marked by praise, gratitude and confidence, will demonstrate your faith and point them to the source of their help and strength, as well.

**Age Appropriateness:** Children will not understand the language of the COVID-19 crisis. When conversing with them, use age-appropriate language they will understand.

**Patience:** Be patient with your children during this time. They may surprise you with questions when you are not expecting or ready to answer. Keep the lines of communication open with them. Be available to talk and answer their questions when they are ready. Validate their reactions. Don't give false reassurances or minimize their concerns.

**Media Exposure:** Monitor your child's exposure to both formal and informal (Facebook, Instagram, etc.) media coverage of this crisis. Filter their exposure to reduce their fears and misunderstandings.

**Prevention:** One impactful thing you can do to help your children feel safe and secure during this crisis is to teach and practice the prevention strategies widely publicized online by the CDC.