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# Parenting in the times of COVID-19



The team of your school counsellors from Drishti will provide online and tele-counselling to the students, parents, teachers and administrators during this difficult period of COVID-19. We feel privileged to be of help to you.

***-Dr. Smita Desai, Founder -Director, Drishti***

# COVID-19: FACTS & TO-DO'S

# COVID - 19

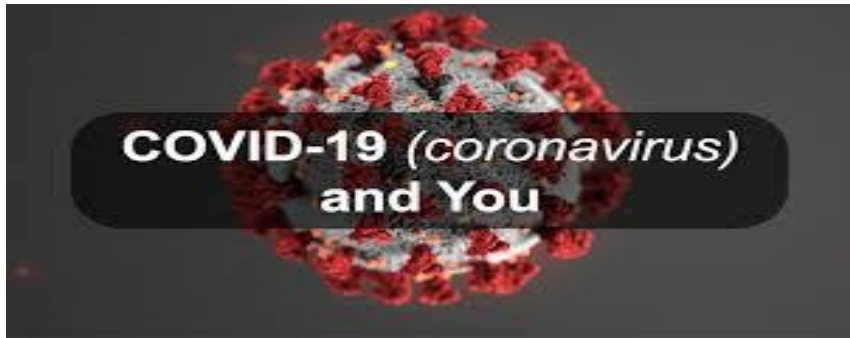
- In January 2020 the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak of a new coronavirus disease, COVID-19, to be a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. WHO stated that there is a high risk of COVID-19 spreading to other countries around the world. In March 2020, WHO made the assessment that COVID-19 can be characterized as a pandemic.
- The disease causes respiratory illness (like the flu) with symptoms such as a cough, fever, and in more severe cases, difficulty breathing.

You can protect yourself by:

- Staying at home and following Government protocol.
- Washing your hands frequently as prescribed
- Avoid touching your face
- Avoiding close contact (at least 6 feet distance ) with others/people who are unwell.

# PARENTING: Q&A, TIPS

# Should I speak to my child about COVID-19?



- Be willing to talk. They will already have heard something.
- Silence and secrets do not protect our children. Honesty and openness do.
- Think about how much they will understand.  
\_\_\_\_ You know them best!

## TIPS- Talking about COVID-19 with your child

- **Listen and Ask**- Encourage children to ask questions. Ask them questions and find out how much they already know. Let them talk freely.
- **Be honest** - Always answer their questions truthfully. Keep in mind how old your child is, how much they can understand and speak accordingly.
- **Be supportive** - Your child may be scared or confused; let them share how they are feeling and be there for them

## TIPS- Talking about COVID-19 with your child

- **It is OK not to know all the answers** - It is fine to say “We don’t know, but we will find out; or, we don’t know, ‘but we think’...” Use this as an opportunity to learn something new with your child!
- **Compassion & care** - Explain that COVID-19 has nothing to do with the way someone looks, where they are from, or what language they speak. Share stories of people who are working to stop the outbreak, helping and caring for sick people.
- **Use the ‘*Feelings thermometer*’** - Use the thermometer as per child’s needs (not yours!). Distract, do something fun together!



# How can I keep my home happy and positive ?



It's hard to feel positive when our kids or teenagers are driving us crazy. We often end up saying "Stop doing that!"

But children are much more likely to do what we ask if we give them positive instructions and lots of praise for what they do right.

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# CARE for a positive and happy family

- **Stay as CALM as possible-** Shouting at your child/others will just make you and them more stressed and angry. Be calm, smile, laugh, praise your child for good behaviours. Remember, your children are always watching you. They will behave as you do!
- **Normalize the ANXIETY everyone is feeling-** Remember that Anxiety is a normal and healthy function that alerts us to threats and help us make protective decisions. Encourage children to *Express* themselves.
- **RELAX & Do at least one fun activity together as a family-** Do what you did not get time for in your daily routine. Board games/making a pizza/baking a cake! Make the most of it!
- **EMPATHIZE** - You know it is an exceptionally difficult situation for all. For young children it is even more difficult without a structure, freedom of movement and their social group. Try to see the world from their viewpoint. *Teens* especially need to be able to communicate with their friends. Help your teen connect through social media and other safe distancing ways. They will appreciate you!

**Do the children  
need their day to be  
structured at home?**



***YES, YES, YES!!  
COVID-19 has taken  
away our daily work,  
home and school  
routines. This is hard for  
children, teenagers and  
for you.***

***Making new routines can  
help. All of us are in the  
same boat and need to  
create a new normal!***

# Structure & Restructure

- **Create a consistent, but flexible daily routine for all** - Kids need as much predictability as you can offer. Plan a schedule daily; don't try to figure one out every morning. Include structured activities, exercise and fun!
- **Plan the day-** Get the '**have-to-do**' activities (school work, home chores, etc) done in the morning. Leave the rest of the day for '**get-to-do**' activities (cooking, playing, reading). Plan for ***your work-from-home*** routine.
- **Relax the routine-** Everyone can move at a more relaxed pace: wake up a little late, let kids make the breakfast/lunch, wash the dishes, etc.
- **Build Responsibilities-** This is a good time to get children to take up daily responsibilities at home. Allow them to choose. Encourage, praise and reward!

**At the end of each day, take a few minutes to think about the day. Tell your child about one positive or fun thing they did. Praise yourself, feel good. You are a star!!**

# How important is a Parent's behaviour in a time of crisis?



*To be a good role model during a crisis situation, a Parent will have to strike the right balance between 'Expression-of-Emotion' and 'Containment-of-Emotion'*

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# Role Model in crisis situation

- **Some Parents may get very anxious-** Be aware that the children will sense it and respond to your behaviour.
- **Share your anxiety-** It is important to share this anxiety with other adults: spouse, family, friends. This will provide an outlet that should not be your child.
- **Share the required minimum information** with the children based on their age, level of understanding, personality, ability to handle stress. You know your child best.
- **Find a balance** between *‘expression of your emotions’* and the need for *‘containment of your emotions’*.

# How can I manage the stress we are all facing?



***Keep Calm to Manage Stress***

***View the current situation as a journey on an airplane- you will have to wear the oxygen mask first before you can help the others in your family!***

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# KEEP CALM TO MANAGE STRESS

1. **You are not alone** - Millions of people are in the same situation and have the same fears as us. Share with friends, spouse, relatives. Listen to calm advise. Avoid social media that makes you feel panicked.
2. **Captain of the ship**- View the current situation as a long and choppy journey on a ship; your children are the passengers while you are the captain. How would you like to steer the ship?
3. **Practice Mindfulness**- Live in the present as much as possible. Tell yourself that 'this too shall pass' . Focus only on things under your control.
4. **Listen to your kids** - Be open and listen to your children. Your children will look to you for support and reassurance. Accept how they feel and give them comfort. They may also be able to offer you support!!
5. **Pause/Take a break** - 2-5 minutes relaxation activity that can help destress you (stretch, close your eyes, take 10 deep breaths, yoga, visualize yourself in a beautiful place...)



# Call for Help!

## Who?

- School Counsellors
- Teachers
- Coordinators
- Principal

## How?

- Pick up the phone and contact them during the given timings
- Write an email to them



For further assistance contact your School Counsellors on these days and timings only:

➤ **Ms. Karishma Jivani**

Monday and Wednesday - 9 am to 12 noon

Mobile Number: 9833174863

Email Id: [karishma@drishtionline.com](mailto:karishma@drishtionline.com)

➤ **Ms. Meeti Jain**

Monday and Wednesday - 12 noon to 3 pm;

Tuesday, Thursday & Friday - 9 am to 12 noon

Mobile Number: 9619398033

Email Id: [meeti.jain06@gmail.com](mailto:meeti.jain06@gmail.com)

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# Stay Safe, Stay Well!!



## References:

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

<https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/helping-children-cope-with-stress-print.pdf>

<https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331490/WHO-2019-nCoV-MentalHealth-2020.1-eng.pdf>

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?pli=1#inbox/WhctKJVqssIWQmDFdJrqDskMRfxFRcQwFtbKSIDkJVkmPKKGFgSrhrWxBFpjNdpSWRLQFv?projector=1&messagePartId=0.1>