



Perry J Bell, Psy. D.

How to talk with your children about Covid-19 Tips for Parents

1. Parents need to manage their own emotions to be able to better reassure their children. It is OK to have difficult feelings and to show children how oneself manages.
2. Parents need to educate themselves so that they can answer their children's questions accurately.
3. Parents should ask their children what they know about the virus and how they feel, This is in order to correct misinformation and address their child's specific feelings and understandings.
4. It is important for parents to empathize with their children's feelings- that is it normal and OK to feel what they feel.
5. Parents should be aware and help manage “catastrophic and future telling” thinking traps. Children may make inaccurate “*overly worried*” *judgements* if they have symptoms that sound like the virus (catastrophic thinking) or may *imagine extremely scary outcomes* (future telling). If children show these styles of thought, parents should explore facts with them to help examine if they are in a “thinking trap”.
6. Parents should contact a psychotherapist if their child's thinking, feelings or behavior makes it challenging for them to do typical things like chores, pay attention, follow directions, enjoy fun activities and/or go to sleep.