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COVID-19: Share Facts, Not Fear Packet

Helpful Tips & Information for Families

- Talking to Younger Kids About COVID-19
- COVID-19 Facts
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For more information, contact HCRS at (802) 886-4500
Supporting families since 1967 across Windsor and Windham Counties
www.hcrs.org
Talking to Younger Kids about Germs and the Coronavirus

The old approach of talking to children about bad news or problems was to hide it from so to not scare them. But children are keen at picking up distress around them. If they do not have a trusted grown-up’s explanation, they fill in the blanks with scary thoughts. The best thing teachers and parents can do is find a way to give children information without frightening them and provide them with comfort and support.

Remember - When talking to a child about germs or coronavirus you should:

• Stay calm and speak in a “matter of fact way”
• Be positive and optimistic, the child will mirror your approach
• Be honest and truthful, but use developmentally appropriate language

Facts about Germs

• Germs are everywhere! They are all around us. They are on objects around us, they are in the air, they are even on our bodies right now.
• Germs are unavoidable! You can never avoid ALL germs.
• Germs aren’t all bad! Our bodies have immune systems with little “ninja fighters” that help fight off germs. These little ninja fighters need exercise and practice to be good at what they do, just like we do. Everyday we come into contact with germs, and these germs teach our fighters how to beat those germs. When our fighters practice, they get stronger and smarter. If we don’t allow our fighters to practice, then they don’t know how to fight germs as well. So introducing our fighters to germs isn’t a bad thing.

Colds vs. Flu vs. Coronavirus

• Most of us have had colds before, right? Colds caused by germs called a virus. Our parents or teachers always tell us to wash our hands, and cover our mouth when we cough or sneeze so we don’t give our cold to a friend. Usually after a few days we start to feel better.
• Sometimes we can get a stronger virus called the flu. The flu can make us feel sicker and it usually lasts longer than a cold, which is why some of us get flu shot from the doctor each year. The flu shot can help us to not get sick.
• Every now and then is a new virus - this new one is called the coronavirus and most of us have never had it before. Because it’s new there is no medicine or vaccine yet, and our little ninja fighters don’t recognize it when it gets into our body and they have a hard time fighting it off. This is why it is making some people very sick. But the doctors and scientists are working on making medicines and shots that will cure us.

Staying Safe!
The best way to avoid getting sick, whether it’s a cold, the flu, or coronavirus is to practice good hygiene and avoid others if we are sick. When talking to kids, it is important to emphasize what families, teachers, and communities are doing to protect each other from the coronavirus and other viruses. The more we practice these safety guidelines, the less likely it is that we will get sick or make someone else sick.

• Washing hands frequently (for at least 20 seconds)
• Wearing cloth facial coverings
• Staying at least 6 feet apart (physical distancing)
• Special hours for older people to shop in supermarkets
• Limiting number of people in certain places
Diseases can make anyone sick regardless of their race or ethnicity.

Fear and anxiety about COVID-19 can cause people to avoid or reject others even though they are not at risk for spreading the virus.

For most people, the immediate risk of becoming seriously ill from the virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to be low.

Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for more serious complications from COVID-19.

Someone who has completed quarantine or has been released from isolation does not pose a risk of infection to other people.

For up-to-date information, visit CDC’s coronavirus disease 2019 web page.

There are simple things you can do to help keep yourself and others healthy.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- When in public, wear a cloth face covering that covers your mouth and nose.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

You can help stop COVID-19 by knowing the signs and symptoms, which can include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Seek medical attention immediately if you or someone you love has emergency warning signs, including:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or not able to be woken
- Bluish lips or face

This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning.
Know the symptoms of COVID-19, which can include the following:

- Cough
- Fever
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Cough
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- New loss of taste or smell

Symptoms can range from mild to severe illness, and appear 2-14 days after you are exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

*Seek medical care immediately if someone has emergency warning signs of COVID-19.*

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

This list is not all possible symptoms. Please call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.
Important Information About Your Cloth Face Coverings

As COVID-19 continues to spread within the United States, CDC has recommended additional measures to prevent the spread of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. In the context of community transmission, CDC recommends that you:

- Stay at home as much as possible
- Practice social distancing (remaining at least 6 feet away from others)
- Clean your hands often

In addition, CDC also recommends that everyone wear cloth face coverings when leaving their homes, regardless of whether they have fever or symptoms of COVID-19. This is because of evidence that people with COVID-19 can spread the disease, even when they don’t have any symptoms. Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

How cloth face coverings work

Cloth face coverings prevent the person wearing the mask from spreading respiratory droplets when talking, sneezing, or coughing. If everyone wears a cloth face covering when out in public, such as going to the grocery store, the risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2 can be reduced for the community. Since people can spread the virus before symptoms start, or even if people never have symptoms, wearing a cloth face covering can protect others around you. Face coverings worn by others protect you from getting the virus from people carrying the virus.

How cloth face coverings are different from other types of masks

Cloth face coverings are NOT the same as the medical facemasks, surgical masks, or respirators (such as N95 respirators) worn by healthcare personnel, first responders, and workers in other industries. These masks and respirators are personal protective equipment (PPE). Medical PPE should be used by healthcare personnel and first responders for their protection. Healthcare personnel and first responders should not wear cloth face coverings instead of PPE when respirators or facemasks are indicated.

General considerations for the use of cloth face coverings

When using a cloth face covering, make sure:

- The mouth and nose are fully covered
- The covering fits snugly against the sides of the face so there are no gaps
- You do not have any difficulty breathing while wearing the cloth face covering
- The cloth face covering can be tied or otherwise secured to prevent slipping

Avoid touching your face as much as possible. Keep the covering clean. Clean hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer immediately, before putting on, after touching or adjusting, and after removing the cloth face covering. Don’t share it with anyone else unless it’s washed and dried first. You should be the only person handling your covering. Laundry instructions will depend on the cloth used to make the face covering. In general, cloth face coverings should be washed regularly (e.g., daily and whenever soiled) using water and a mild detergent, dried completely in a hot dryer, and stored in a clean container or bag.

For more information, go to: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-faq.html
Handwashing is an easy, cheap, and effective way to prevent the spread of germs and keep kids and adults healthy. When your family is healthy, you don’t have to worry about missing school, work, or other activities.

Help your child develop handwashing skills

Parents and caretakers play an important role in teaching children to wash their hands. Handwashing can become a lifelong healthy habit if you start teaching it at an early age. Teach kids the five easy steps for handwashing—wet, lather, scrub, rinse, and dry—and the key times to wash hands, such as after using the bathroom or before eating. You can find ways to make it fun, like making up your own handwashing song or turning it into a game.

Lead by example

Young children learn by imitating the behaviors of adults in their lives. When you make handwashing part of your routine, you’re setting an example for your children to follow.
Building handwashing skills takes time. At first, your child will need regular reminders of how and when to wash hands. It is especially important to remind children to wash their hands after using the bathroom, before eating, after touching pets, after playing outside, and after coughing, sneezing, or blowing their nose. But once handwashing becomes a habit and a regular part of your child’s day, they will practice it throughout their lives.

Give frequent reminders

Handwashing can prevent

1 in 3 cases of diarrhea

1 in 5 respiratory infections, such as a cold or the flu

What if soap and water aren’t available?

Washing hands with soap and water is the best way to get rid of germs. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that has at least 60% alcohol.

Did you know?

Baby wipes may make your hands look clean, but they’re not designed to remove germs from your hands. CDC recommends washing hands with soap and water when possible.

Remember to make handwashing a healthy habit at home, school, and at play!
Sleep Hygiene Tip Sheet

What is Sleep Hygiene?
‘Sleep hygiene’ is the term used to describe good sleep habits. Common sleeping problems (such as insomnia) are often caused by bad habits reinforced over years or even decades. You can dramatically improve your sleep quality by making a few minor adjustments to lifestyle and attitude.

Obey your body clock
1. **Get regular.** One of the best ways to train your body to sleep well is to go to bed and get up at the same time every day. Soon this strict routine will help to ‘set’ your body clock and you’ll find yourself getting sleepy at about the same time every night.

2. **Don’t ignore tiredness.** Go to bed when your body tells you it’s ready.

3. **Sleep when sleepy.** Don’t go to bed if you don’t feel tired. You will only reinforce bad habits such as lying awake.

4. **No naps.** It is best to avoid taking naps during the day to make sure you are tired at bedtime. If you must nap, make sure it is no longer than 30 minutes and before 3pm.

Improve your sleeping environment
5. **Your bedroom.** Invest in a mattress that is neither too hard nor too soft, make sure the room is at the right temperature, and ensure the room is dark enough. If you can’t control noise (such as barking dogs or loud neighbours), buy a pair of earplugs.

6. **Bed is for sleeping.** Use your bedroom only for sleeping and intimacy. If you treat your bed like a second lounge room – for watching television or talking to friends on the phone, for example – your mind will associate your bedroom with activity.

7. **No Electronics.** Avoid using iPads, laptops, tablets, and mobile phones 1 hour before bed. The screens emit light that tricks your brain into thinking it is daytime, which stops your body from producing your natural sleep hormones.

Avoid Drugs
8. **Caffeine & nicotine.** It is best to avoid consuming any caffeine (in coffee, tea, cola drinks, chocolate, and some medications) or nicotine (cigarettes) for at least 4-6 hours before going to bed. These substances act as stimulants and interfere with sleep.

9. **Alcohol.** It is also best to avoid alcohol for at least 4-6 hours before going to bed. Many people believe that alcohol is relaxing and helps them to get to sleep at first, but it actually interrupts the quality of sleep.

Other Suggestions
10. **Exercise.** Regular exercise is a good idea to help with good sleep, but try not to do strenuous exercise in the 4 hours before bedtime. Morning walks are a great way to start the day feeling refreshed!

11. **Eat right.** A healthy, balanced diet will help you to sleep well, but timing is important. Some people find that a very empty stomach at bedtime is distracting, so it can be useful to have a light snack, but a heavy meal soon before bed can also interrupt sleep.

12. **Warm bath.** Having a hot bath 1-2 hours before bedtime can be useful, as it will raise your body temperature, causing you to feel sleepy as your body temperature drops again.

13. **Relaxation.** Try relaxation exercises. You could consciously relax every part of your body, starting with your toes and working up to your scalp. Or you could think of a restful scene, concentrate on the rhythmic rise and fall of your breathing, or focus on a mantra (repeating a word or phrase constantly).

References:
National Sleep Foundation USA: [https://sleepfoundation.org](https://sleepfoundation.org)
## Sleep Hygiene Diary

### Pre-Sleep Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day/Date</th>
<th>Naps?</th>
<th>Caffeine, alcohol, nicotine</th>
<th>Medication</th>
<th>Pre-bed Activity</th>
<th>Fatigue level (0-5, 5 most tired)</th>
<th>Tension in bed (0-5, 5 most tension)</th>
<th>In-bed Activities</th>
<th>Lights out (time)</th>
<th>Time to fall asleep (minutes)</th>
<th>Waking time</th>
<th>Woke up?</th>
<th>Hours slept</th>
<th>Rest Score (0-5, 5 most rested)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example:</td>
<td>2pm, 30 minutes</td>
<td>1 coffee, 1 wine at 6pm</td>
<td>Nil.</td>
<td>Bath, watched tv 1 hour</td>
<td>3 – somewhat tired</td>
<td>1 – slightly worried</td>
<td>Read a book, 30 mins</td>
<td>9:30pm</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
<td>5:30am</td>
<td>1 time, toilet, 10 mins</td>
<td>7 hours, 50 minutes</td>
<td>5 – felt well rested</td>
</tr>
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### Bedtime Pattern

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Resources: Centre for Clinical Interventions: www.cci.health.wa.gov.au