



TIPS
HELPING CHILDREN AND TEENS
MANAGE EMOTIONAL DISTRESS AND ANXIETY ABOUT COVID 19

Parents and Caretakers, please remember children and youth often take cues from trusted adults around them, so it is important for the adults to remain calm, reassuring, and supportive.

Signs of Emotional Distress/Anxiety

 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Mood ChangesAnxietyFearSadnessWithdrawnSleep issues	 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Changes in appetiteClingy TendenciesJitteryCrying spellsAngry outburstDisobedience	 <ul style="list-style-type: none">ArgumentativeOppositionalAttention IssuesIrritabilityBed wettingPhysical complaints	
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Things you can do!

- Listen** Give children and youth the opportunity to express their feelings and ask questions. They may be repetitive, but that's okay. Be patient if you find yourself repeating similar information, it provides reassurance.
- Offer Reassurance** Reassure your children and youth that the family is taking steps to keep everyone safe. Go over specific actions that you have initiated to limit exposure to the virus. Let the children participate in the effort to stay free from infection. Offer tips from the CDC for handwashing and prevention.
- Stay Active** This promotes healthy practices to deal with stress. There are many free, online workout videos that can be streamed. Try something new! Example, yoga, pilates, dance cardio, etc. Try to continue indoor activities as well that bring you joy such as coloring, reading, exercising, listening to music, playing board games, etc.
- Create a Schedule** Create a daily routine and schedule when possible, including set times for school work, down time as well as bed time. Have children and youth assist in creating schedules and choosing activities when appropriate. This allows them to have a sense of control.
- Limit Exposure to Media Outlets** Monitor exposure to sensationalized media and rumors that may cause heightened fear and anxiety. Taking a break from the news and conversations around COVID-19 may be helpful to allow you and your children to focus on something else.

If a child/youth seems to be having difficulty adjusting to the current situation, reach out to a mental health professional for guidance. Please call the Nassau County Helpline at **516-227-TALK (516-227-8255)** to learn about resources available in the community and/or download the Nassau CARES app. 