



Taking Care of Our Children

In times of crisis, it is critical that parents, teachers, grandparents, and other caring adults are prepared to serve as sturdy, nurturing foundations that children can lean on for love and guidance.

Children fear many things, but illness, going to the doctor/hospital, or death of a parent or loved one are among the top of those fears. You may not hear a child verbalize it, but they may show it through changes in eating, sleeping, eating, or behavior.

How can we help our children:

- ❖ The most important thing a parent/adult can do is to remain calm themselves. Children will mirror the reactions of adults. So, pay attention to what you say and do! They will pick up on changes in your tone of voice and non-verbal body language.
- ❖ Answer their questions (even if they are repetitive and don't make sense to you). Answer in a way that is direct and calm.
- ❖ Give children the facts in a developmentally appropriate way. If you do not, they will imagine something on their own that may be far worse as to what the crisis really is. This is not the time to discuss "what I heard" on social media with them.
- ❖ During the pandemic, you could use these responses:
"Yes, we do need to be careful about washing our hands and staying away from others who might be sick".
- ❖ "The likelihood of one of us getting the virus is not high, but if we do, doctors will take care of us".
- ❖ "It is okay and normal to be worried, scared about this-of course you are. We all are, and that is why we are doing everything we can to keep you safe".
- ❖ Above all else, this is an opportunity for lots of quality time. Make new connections with your children or students (if possible). Play? Lighten up expectations (behavior, communication, academics, etc.) when children are worried or scared.

If you are feeling stressed and need someone to talk to, reach out to Samaritan CrisisCare for support. 937-224-4646