

remember the children

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For all those that support young children and families in some capacity, but particularly as teachers, home visitors and therapists...

So many of us, and the parents of the children we work with, have concerns about all the different aspects of our lives that are being impacted by the coronavirus outbreak. In this environment, it is easy to forget that children continue to take in everything going on around them, including the emotional state of their parents and other adults, all of which is likely magnified by the disruption of their daily lives.

Not knowing what's going to happen next is one of the biggest triggers for stress. We spend so much energy on promoting routines and structure for children, and often for ourselves as well, because we all want to know what's coming next. We tend to prefer that life is more or less predictable.

Children need the adults around them to help manage their feelings when they are worried, scared or have other emotions that might feel overwhelming. This is why it is so important that we make space, and encourage parents to make space, for children to talk about what they are feeling and thinking. We need to talk with them, and encourage their parents to talk with them, in honest, simple, yet reassuring language. We need to create, and encourage parents to create, as much routine and structure as we can when old routines are no longer in place due to early care and education centers closing, parents being at home and similar unexpected changes. Particularly as home visitors and therapists, along with checking in to see how parents are getting on, we can explore with them any changes they might be noticing in their children's behavior, what they think their children might be experiencing, what they feel their children might be needing from them, and similar explorations.

I want to share two resources (below) that I believe are particularly helpful, one from PBS and the other from Zero to Three. Both will offer ideas that can be shared with parents on ways to talk to children about the coronavirus and the impact of the coronavirus outbreak on daily life. There are also a lot of other resources on both sites, including activities to do at home, children's videos for healthy habits, and more.

And as you continue to support young children and their families, I hope you also carve out spaces to take care of yourselves.

With gratitude for all the ways you support little ones,

David



https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/how-to-talk-to-your-kids-about-coronavirus#disqus_thread

<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/3210-tips-for-families-coronavirus>

*If you are interested in exploring the theme in this issue of Reflections further,
or for professional and personal growth opportunities,
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