

Helping Children Cope With Changes Resulting From COVID-19

KEEP EXPLANATIONS AGE-APPROPRIATE

- **Early elementary school children.** Provide brief, simple information that balances COVID-19 facts with appropriate reassurances that adults are there to help keep them healthy and to take care of them if they do get sick. Give simple examples of the steps people make every day to stop germs and stay healthy, such as washing hands. Use language such as "adults are working hard to keep you safe."
- **Upper elementary and early middle school children.** This age group often is more vocal in asking questions about whether they indeed are safe and what will happen if COVID-19 spreads in their area. They may need assistance separating reality from rumor and fantasy. Discuss the efforts national, state, and community leaders are doing to prevent germs from spreading.
- **Upper middle and high school students.** Issues can be discussed in more depth. Refer them to appropriate sources of COVID-19 facts. Provide honest, accurate, and factual information about the current status of COVID-19. Engage them in decision-making about family plans, scheduling, and helping with chores at home.
- ***For all children, encourage them to verbalize their thoughts and feelings. Be a good listener!***