



مدرسة جيه اس اس الخاصة JSS PRIVATE SCHOOL

Grades KG1 to 12

JSSPS/CTP/PO/GEN/166/19-20

9 March 2020

Subject: CORONA Care

Dear Parents,

The Corona virus (now officially named COVID-19) has been declared a public health emergency by the World Health Organization (WHO). Concern over this new virus can make children and families anxious. Acknowledging some level of concern, without panicking, is appropriate and can result in taking actions that reduce the risk of illness. It is very important to remember that children look to adults for guidance on how to react to stressful events. If parents seem overly worried, children's anxiety may rise. Parents should reassure children that health and school officials are working hard to ensure that people throughout the country stay healthy. However, children also need factual, age appropriate information about the potential seriousness of disease risk and concrete instruction about how to avoid infections and spread of disease. Teaching children positive preventive measures, talking to them about their fears, and giving them a sense of some control over their risk of infection can help reduce anxiety. Following are some of the strategies to build resilience, and have reassuring conversations with your children:

1. Be Positive:

Remember to keep calm. If you show anxiety or fear, your child will pick up on this and also feel nervous and afraid. Changes to the environment and routines can create unease. Having calm, panic-free discussions can ease emotions around these changes. Check-in on how your child is feeling and acknowledge and address their worries rather than ignore them.

2. Make Yourself Available:

Children may need extra attention from you and may want to talk about their concerns, fears, and questions. It is important that they know they have someone who will listen to them; make time for them. Tell them you love them and give them plenty of affection.

3. Have Reasonable Conversations:

It is important to have thoughtful conversations regarding the Corona virus to distill anxiety, worry or fear. Look at the facts. Consider your child's age, processing, and emotions to determine how to frame these conversations to ensure your child understands. Let them know that UAE is doing everything they can and you are up to date on current information. If they have additional questions you can look to find the answers. Check-in on what your child is thinking and address their worries. Discuss that not everything they hear or see is real. It can also be comforting to be reminded that doctors around the world are looking for ways to address the Corona virus and highlight positive news as well.

4. Consume Authentic Media:

When looking online, consider the source and fact check to prevent fake news, think before you share. Be mindful of how much media you are checking and minimize how often you are reading stories. Try to keep a healthy balance (both online and offline) in your daily routines and lifestyle.

5. Eliminate Stigma/Label:

It is important to be aware of how the Corona virus is explained to your children to avoid any person or group being blamed. Also, to communicate that if someone has a fever or cough does not mean this person has the Corona virus.

6. Boost Your Coping Muscles:

When anyone has change or uncertainty this can create some levels of worry or anxiety. When this occurs, it is important to use positive coping strategies to manage those emotions. Coping strategies can include: positive self-talk, constructive leisure time activities, creating a gratitude list, meditation, yoga, exercise, talking to a friend or family member or doing other activities that are fun or give you joy and make you feel good.

7. Model Good Hygiene Practices:

There are still many unknowns about the novel Corona virus and how it spreads. But experts and public health officials agree that practicing good hygiene is critical. Those measures include not touching your eyes, mouth, or nose with unwashed hands and covering your mouth and nose when you sneeze. Giving children guidance on what they can do to prevent infection gives them a greater sense of control over disease spread and will help to reduce their anxiety.

8. Keep Explanations Age Appropriate:

Early elementary school children need brief, simple information that should balance COVID-19 facts with appropriate reassurances that their schools and homes are safe and that adults are there to help keep them healthy and to take care of them if they do get sick.

Upper elementary and early middle school children will be more vocal in asking questions about whether they truly are safe and what will happen if COVID-19 comes to their school or community. They may need assistance separating reality from rumor and fantasy. Discuss efforts of school and community leaders to prevent germs from spreading.

Upper middle school and high school students are able to discuss the issue in a more in-depth (adult-like) fashion and can be referred directly to appropriate sources of COVID-19 facts. Provide honest, accurate, and factual information about the current status of COVID-19. Having such knowledge can help them feel a sense of control.

9. Boost Immune System:

One thing which may stand out as the most critical element is your and your children's immune system. Encourage your child to eat a balanced diet, get enough sleep, and exercise regularly; this will help them develop a strong immune system to fight off illness.

10. Access to JSS PS Pastoral Care Team:

The Pastoral Care team is available through **Microsoft TEAMS** to speak to students and/or parents during school hours. Please note the below email addresses for our Pastoral Care Team:

Mr. Andaleeb Ishteyaq	andaleeb@jsspsdubai.com
Ms. Ashley Abraham	ashlymaria@jsspsdubai.com
Ms. Roshan Ahmed	roshan@jsspsdubai.com
Dr. Reshma Tauheed	reshma@jsspsdubai.com
Ms. Deepa Shaul	deepa@jsspsdubai.com

If you notice your child is still worried or anxious, be assured that this is a normal reaction, and continue conversations and providing care for your child. If you find that additional support is needed, please reach out to one of our Counselors who can refer you to outside Counseling or to schedule time with you or your child to make a plan on how to support them during this time.

Warm Regards

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Chitra Sharma
Principal

Some Relevant Resources:

- ❖ Talking With Children: Tips for Caregivers, Parents, and Teachers During Infectious Disease Outbreaks, <https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Talking-With-Children-Tips-for-Caregivers-Parents-and-Teachers-During-Infectious-Disease-Outbreaks/SMA14-4886>
- ❖ Coping With Stress During Infectious Disease Outbreaks, <https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Coping-with-Stress-During-Infectious-Disease-Outbreaks/sma14-4885>
- ❖ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Corona virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>
- ❖ Hand washing and Hand Sanitizer Use at Home, at Play, and Out and About, <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/pdf/hand-sanitizer-factsheet.pdf>

Useful UAE Contacts:

- ❖ Dubai Health Authority call centre -800 342
- ❖ Estijaba service at the operation center, Department of Health – 8001717
- ❖ Ministry of Health & Prevention - 80011111.