

TOP PARENTING TIPS FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

6 Be truthful in answering children's questions.

Find out what they know about the issue before answering. Keep answers simple. Get information from trusted sources (e.g., official government websites) rather than social media.

7 Have a family plan of action.

Involve children in preparing the plan. As situations can change quickly (e.g., new travel restrictions, school closures), update the plan as needed.

8 Help children learn to tolerate more uncertainty.

The COVID-19 crisis creates uncertainty for everyone. Parents need to find a way to accept uncertainty and, through your actions and words show this acceptance to your children. It's OK to say, "I don't know; let's find out what we can." Big changes to children's lives can be hard and are often scary. They can also create opportunities for learning new skills.

9 Take care of yourself the best you can.

Deal with your own distress by taking actions that give you a better sense of personal control. Stress management skills such as mindfulness and/or deep breathing can help reduce stress. Keep healthy and safe (good personal hygiene, exercise daily, eat well, get enough sleep, avoid using alcohol or drugs to lessen stress). Avoid behavior that might increase your stress. For example, while it is helpful to keep informed about COVID-19, constant checking on your screens can increase stress.

10 Reach out and connect with loved ones.

Make greater use of phones, online communication tools (video conferencing) and social media to keep in touch with family, friends, and neighbors. Help others in need who are going through a tough time and are more vulnerable (e.g., parents/caregivers with disabilities, older people).

Written by Matthew R Sanders and Vanessa E Cobham
Parenting and Family Support Centre | © The University of Queensland

