



Dr. Brian Otott  
Superintendent

*Engage. Inspire. Prepare.*

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Dear Parents/Guardians:

Right now, many people are worried about the COVID-19 coronavirus. Stress during uncertain times is a normal reaction but it can take a toll on mental health, especially for children. Here are some suggestions for talking to children about what's happening:

- Remain calm and reassuring. Children will react to and follow your verbal and nonverbal reactions.
- Limit television viewing and social media. Try to avoid watching or listening to information that might be upsetting when your children are present.
- Be honest and accurate. In the absence of factual information, children often imagine situations far worse than reality.
- Review and model basic hygiene practices. Wash your hands. Cough or sneeze into your arm.
- Keep explanations age appropriate.
  - Younger students need brief, simple information. They need reassurances that they are safe.
  - Upper elementary and middle school aged students may ask more detailed questions. They may need help separating reality from rumor.
  - High school students can discuss the situation more in-depth and can be referred directly to official sources of information.

Here are some important points to emphasize when talking to youth:

- Adults are taking care of their health and safety.
- Not everyone will get the coronavirus (COVID-19) illness.
- There are things you can do to stay healthy, like washing hands and coughing into your arm.

For additional resources, please go to the [Prevention/Intervention webpage](#)

If your student needs some additional mental health support, please call the Georgia Crisis and Access Line at 1-800-715-4225. This is a good way to get some expert mental health advice for your family.

Sincerely,

Mary Wade, Prevention Intervention Coordinator