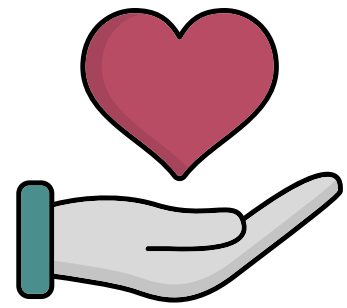


Supporting Children and Teens During COVID-19



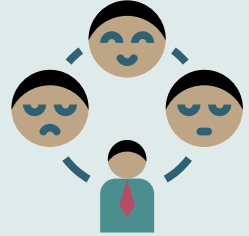
Communicate

Trust is the foundation between family members. Explain COVID-19 to your children using simple language they understand. Follow their lead in the amount you share at one time. Some children need small doses and others are information seekers.



Validate

When you name and validate emotions for children it helps normalize their experience. You can also model this behavior by labeling your own.



Play, Create & Express

Empower children through play and creativity. Encourage open-ended play opportunities using toys, nature, loose parts, and art. In the metaphor of play, children can process their experiences and gain control. Teens can create and express themselves through technology, music, art, drama, and journaling. Expression is healthy and builds resilience.



Safety & Security

Children & teens need to feel safe. Explain that the family has a job to keep themselves and others healthy by participating in good hand washing & social distancing. Prepare children with a plan if a family member becomes ill with COVID-19.



Grief & Loss

The pandemic causes grief. There is a loss of control and a change in routines. Separation from loved ones & friends. Heightened anxiety with uncertainty. There is also hope and connection. Read children's books with similar themes and open up the dialogue.



Self-Care

In order for caregivers to support children and teens, they need to take care of themselves first. Give yourself permission to have that time.



Resources

[CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)
[Childlife.org](https://www.childlife.org)
[Childrengrieve.org](https://www.childrengrieve.org)
[Dougy.org](https://www.dougy.org)
[Healthychildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org)
[Kidshealth.org](https://www.kidshealth.org)



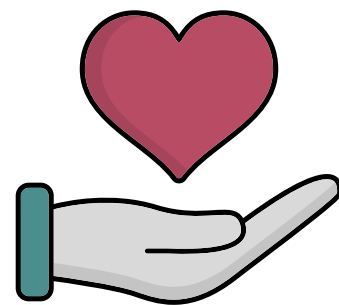
Shani Thornton, MS, CCLS, RWWP

[ChildLifeMommy.com](https://www.ChildLifeMommy.com)

ShaniThornton@ChildLifeMommy.com

Shani Thornton is a Certified Child Life Specialist supporting families coping with life's challenges of illness, medical trauma, and loss. For more information or to set up a virtual consult email at ShaniThornton@ChildLifeMommy.com

Supporting Children and Teens During COVID-19: Resources



Preschool-Aged

[Time to Come in Bear](#)
[Wash Your Hands with Baby Shark](#)
[Sesame Street Caring for Each Other](#)
[PBS How to Talk to Your Kids About Coronavirus](#)

School-Aged

[Brainpop: Coronavirus](#)
[NPR: Just for Kids](#)
[St. Jude Coronavirus Coloring Book](#)

Teens

[Social Distancing Teens & COVID-19](#)
[Supporting Teenagers & Young Adults During the Coronavirus Crisis](#)

All Ages

[How to Explain Social Distancing to Kids](#)
[DIY Child Life: COVID-19 Explanation](#)
[#COVIBOOK: Supporting and Reassuring Children Around the World](#)

Special Needs

[Social Distancing Story](#)
[Advice for Caregivers of Children with Disabilities in the Era of COVID-19](#)
[Autism Society](#)

Therapeutic Activities

[Family Activity to Help During COVID-19](#)
[Coping Skills with Candy Land](#)
[Helping Kids Get Comfortable Wearing a Mask](#)
[St. Jude: Learn About Coronavirus](#)
[CLDR: Virus Bingo](#)
[Staying Sane Through the Power of Play](#)
[23 Fun Indoor Activities](#)
[Cosmic Kids Yoga](#)
[Rainbow Breath](#)

Books: COVID-19 Themes

[*Why We Stay Home* By, Samantha Harris and Devon Scott](#)
[*The Story of The Oyster and the Butterfly* By, Ana M. Gomez](#)
[*A Book About COVID-19* By, Malia Jones](#)
[*So Much Toilet Paper!: A Kid's Guide to Surviving a Pandemic* By, Greta Davis and Makenzi Jordan Rodriguez](#)

Books: Grief, Loss & Separation

[*The Invisible String* By, Patrice Karst](#)
[*Sun Kisses, Moon Hugs* By, Susan Schaefer Bernardo and Courtenay Fletcher](#)
[*The Kissing Hand* By, Audrey Penn](#)
[*My Yellow Balloon* By, Tiffany Papageorge](#)
[*Death is Stupid* By, Anastasia Higginbotham](#)
[*Something Very Sad Happened* By, Bonnie Zucker](#)
[*The Memory Box: A Book About Grief* By, Joanna Rowland](#)