

Understanding the impact of uncertainty on children

Around the world families are adjusting their day-to-day life as COVID-19 continues to spread. While many adults are feeling concerned, so too are many children. With news coverage at saturation levels, it is impossible for anyone to be immune to the information and issues being discussed.

As a parent, grandparent or carer, one of the most important things you can do is take time to listen to the questions your child is asking, and to understand what they might be concerned about. It is important to provide honest answers and to talk openly with your child in an age-appropriate manner. If you don't have an answer to some questions, it is better to say you don't know, than to make up an answer.

When you are talking with your child about the situation, make time to sit with them and talk calmly so you do not exacerbate any feelings of anxiety they may have.

A few tips

- ◆ **Listen carefully and encourage their questions** – take time to listen, encourage their questions and let them know their concerns are important to you
- ◆ **Ask what they are worried about** – help them to share with you what they are worried about as this may help you to provide reassurance to them and help you to understand what they do or don't know
- ◆ **Keep yourself calm** – while you don't want to shy away from the facts, the way you present information and the way you behave will be important. Your child will be influenced by your own approach so if you stay calm, it will help them to feel calm
- ◆ **Provide reassurance** – reassure your child that during times of uncertainty it is very normal for people to feel a little worried and there is nothing wrong with them if they feel a little worried
- ◆ **Keep your routine** – during times of uncertainty it can be easy to let usual routines slide. This is particularly relevant at the moment when many people are working from home, staying indoors and not visiting family and friends. Children need routine and it will help them if you keep activities as close to normal as you can
- ◆ **Take care with your language** – children can be strongly influenced by the words and the language that we use. Try to use non-emotional language and ensure that you are providing information in a way that is appropriate for the developmental stage of your child

If you need assistance in talking with your child, or have concerns about them, reach out for support. Our professional team are here for you at any time.

We're here when you need us

1800 808 374 ◆ www.assureprograms.com.au