



Isle Listen

Talking to Children about
Coronavirus (Covid-19)



Children's curiosity is a natural thing that we want to encourage, they talk between themselves and what they don't know, they will fill with their imagination. In this situation, we want as little imagination to be used as possible...

We have some tips to share, focussed on handling conversations with the younger generation related to the Covid-19 outbreak. They are grounded in psychological techniques, but will equally allow the soft touch that is needed in a sensitive situation such as this:



Reframing

With the cancellation of school, sports and other regular activities, young people will have immediately noticed the difference in day to day life. Do your best to reframe the situation from a negative, to an opportunity to learn and discover new things.

An exercise for this could be to make a note of everything you wish you usually had the time to do, be it cooking, art, or other activities at home. It's important to draw the positives out of having some additional time!



It is okay to feel worried

Having positive mental health is not about removing anxiety, it's about confronting and managing this emotion and accepting our own responsibility for it. If a given child is particularly worried, let them know that in a situation like this, it's normal and okay to feel these emotions. Adults are also concerned but we're all in this together. Despite this, avoid exposure to any alarming stories or sensitive news reports that could heighten levels of worry and anxiety to unnecessary levels.



Be honest and make the time to talk

If a child asks for more information, try and pause whatever is happening and make the conversation your immediate focus. It's near impossible to get away from information on Covid-19, and this will lead to kids asking straight, difficult questions. If they don't get the answers from you, they'll find them somewhere else, so be as factual as possible whilst not catastrophising.

Having up to date knowledge will make conversations with kids easier, so stay up to date on the relevant resources such as the BBC and the Isle of Man Government website.



**These are never easy conversations to have,
but...**

*Listen carefully, answer honestly, stay
factual and don't catastrophise.*

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E: getinvolved@islelisten.im
W: www.islelisten.im

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