



COVID-19 Quick Guide: How to Support Your Teenager

Today we are experiencing many challenges and have constant information coming at us from television, commercials, social media and from our family and friends. It is important to check in with our teenagers to assess what they know and how they are coping/expressing themselves in this new world and how we can support them. Here are a few tips on how you can connect and help your teen:

- Teens can easily pick up on your stress level, so be aware of your own anxiety and initiate this conversation when you are in a calm state:
 - Ask your teen what they know about what is currently taking place in our society.
 - Does he/she have any questions?
 - Give your teen your full attention.
 - Provide honest and age appropriate information, using trusted sources.
 - Offer reassurance and supportive listening
 - Remember it is OK to not have all the answers.
 - You can always revisit the conversation once you know more.
- Teens may feel sad and frustrated because they cannot engage in normal activities: sports, spend time with friends, go to the mall and school. Validate their feelings and assure them, all these feelings are normal.
- Encourage your teen to come to you with future questions. Be aware that many teens rely on friends and social media to get news and information and it may not be accurate.
- Model and promote positive coping by engaging in activities such as : taking a walk in the backyard, deep breathing, and taking a break from things that cause anxious feelings.
- Encourage routines like school work, caring for oneself, sleeping, eating, tv -- and interacting with friends online.

