

TALKING POINTS DURING COVID-19

Boundaries

Kids need to understand what boundaries are, how to establish them, and how to understand them.

You might say: "Currently our boundaries, or personal space, are made for us through social distancing. But even after the pandemic, it is important to decide where you feel most comfortable around people. And personal space may change depending on the people you are around, such as getting closer to family members but staying further away from strangers."

Consent

In a time when we are very aware of our physical interaction with one another, it is important to establish that children have agency over their bodies.

You might say: "Because of the virus, many people are avoiding physical interaction, like shaking hands or hugging. But even when the virus isn't around, there are people who don't like to be touched and that is okay. It is important to ask someone if they are okay with you giving them a hug, but also, if you do not feel comfortable hugging someone then you do not have to."

Healthy Relationships

Kids are likely having a hard time being separated from their school friends. But this is a great time to learn more about their friends along with teaching them about healthy relationships.

You might ask questions like: what do you like about your friend? What would you do if you didn't agree with something your friend said or did? If your friend was being mean to you what would you do?

If you want to talk about romantic relationships you might ask: If you had a crush on someone how would you let them know? If they didn't feel the same way what would you do?

Good Coping Skills

The Coronavirus has caused an increase in stress for many people around the world. If not dealt with correctly, stress can lead to anger and frustration. It is important to teach children healthy ways of coping with their emotions by giving them tools and providing a good example.

Try this exercise with your kids when you are feeling stressed out:

- 5 things you can SEE
- 4 things you can HEAR
- 3 things you can TOUCH
- 2 things you can SMELL
- 1 thing you LIKE ABOUT YOURSELF

Confidence

This pandemic has been a particularly difficult time for parents. A lot of responsibility has been added to your plate and it is easy to feel like you are falling short as not just a parent, but now as an educator. Try to be forgiving of yourself and focus on the things that you have been able to do well during such a stressful time, and say those accomplishments aloud. Confidence is an easy and essential thing to model to your kids which helps them understand their self-worth and encourages positive self-talk.

Check out these resources for further help!

Boundaries: <https://childmind.org/article/teaching-kids-boundaries-empathy/>

Consent: <https://youtu.be/h3nhM9UIJjc>

Healthy Relationships: <https://amaze.org/?topic=healthy-relationships>,

<https://www.joinonelove.org/signs-healthy-relationship/>,

https://www.breakthecycle.org/sites/default/files/LINA_Parent.pdf

Coping: <https://childmind.org/coping-during-covid-19-resources-for-parents/>