

Losing a Loved One to Coronavirus



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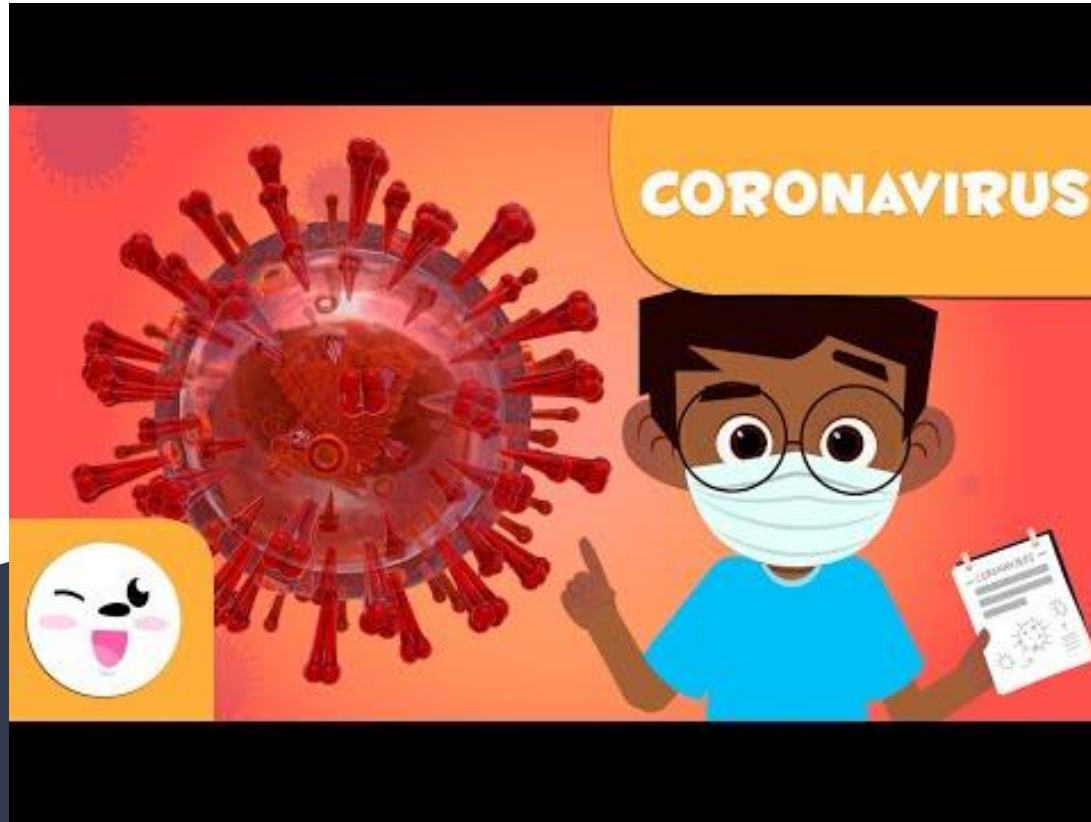
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If you or a friend have lost a loved one to Coronavirus, the following information will help in understanding the onset of grief and offer ways to self-care and respond to those around you.



What is Coronavirus



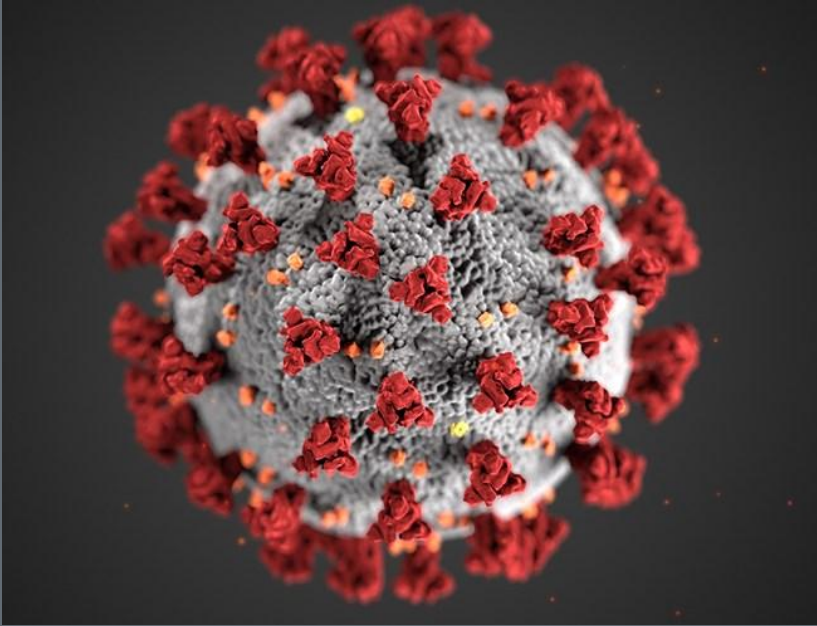
[Smile and Learn - English](#)

Educational video for children to learn what the coronavirus is and what measures they can take to protect themselves and others. COVID-19 is a disease caused by a virus in the family of coronavirus.

Talking to Children About Coronavirus and Death



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From the moment of death forward, its ripple effects can be surprisingly far-reaching. The closer the relationship, the greater the impact it will have. The inability to say goodbye, to be with the person, or to have a 'normal' funeral are all ways this loss is far different from any previous loss. And all of these differences need to be explained to children and teens.

For parents facing the task of talking to their kids about the death of a loved one to COVID-19, here are four tips to start a conversation in a way that feels approachable.



1. Speak slowly

“We tend to speak quickly when talking about difficult topics,” Curry said. “This can be especially problematic when talking to a young child about death since they will have a harder time understanding and remembering new concepts when they’re feeling strong emotions. Slow down your speech until it feels strange and pause for three to five seconds between sentences, allowing them time to take in the information.”

~ Jan. 27, 2021, 4:59 PM EST / Source: TODAY

By Kait Hanson

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2. Answer questions honestly

Young children think in concrete, literal terms.

“Well-intentioned attempts to explain death to children using euphemisms like ‘going to sleep,’ ‘passing away’ or ‘losing someone’ can confuse and scare little ones who may not be able to make sense out of why going to sleep has suddenly made everyone so sad,” Curry explained.

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“Grandpa Joe was at the hospital because he was very sick with COVID-19.”



3. Use age-appropriate language

Be as specific as possible to prevent any potential misunderstanding.

Curry shared the following example as a guide:

“Grandpa Joe was at the hospital because he was very sick with COVID-19. The doctors tried as hard as they could to make him better but his sickness got so bad that it made it very hard for Grandpa to breathe. The doctors tried to help him breathe but they weren’t able to and when he stopped breathing he died.”

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4. Address fear

Learning about a COVID-related death may cause a child to become preoccupied with fear that the virus will take their parents as well.

“Here again, an honest and yet reassuring response is key,” Curry said. “Incorporating words like ‘I expect,’ ‘most’ and ‘usually’ can help guide you. For instance, you might tell your child that most people do not die until they are very old.”

As is true for adults, Curry reminds parents there is no right or wrong way for children to grieve:

“By approaching your child’s grief process with the same openness and acceptance that you brought to the topic of death, you can help them to understand these experiences as inevitable aspects of life and ones that they can manage while looking forward to the future.”

~ Jan. 27, 2021, 4:59 PM EST / Source: TODAY By Kait Hanson

3 Easy Steps When Talking to Children about Coronavirus



[Detroit Public TV](#)

As parents, it is important that we understand how to talk to our kids about Coronavirus. Watch this video to learn helpful tips.

SUPPORT AFTER A CORONAVIRUS DEATH: SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS AND FAMILY MEMBERS



The best way adults can help children is to have open, honest discussions and encourage them to express their feelings, worries and questions.



- Maintain routines to foster a sense of security and reassurance.
- Identify a time or place during your child's daily routine to talk.
- Consider the age of your child and where he or she is developmentally.
- Provide simple answers, short descriptions, and listen for their questions.
- Particularly with younger children, be prepared to hear the same questions over and over. They are trying to grasp and understand what this is all about.

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- Avoid nonessential separations at this time; it can increase apprehension and distress.
- Maintain discipline and whatever family rules you usually have.
- Even teens, despite their need for independence, need reassurance and a sense of safety.
- Know children and teens will be highly anxious and worry who else might die. Be careful not to provide false reassurances but instead remind them of how careful everyone is being.

~Wong, M. C., Teoh, J. Y., Huang, J., & Wong, S. H. (2020). The potential impact of vulnerability and coping capacity on the pandemic control of COVID-19. *The Journal of Infection*

Ma's Minute on COVID-19



[Sesame Street International Social Impact](#)

Elmo's Mommy, Mae, takes a minute to help caregivers talk to their kids about the coronavirus.

If you or anyone you know is grieving and would like more resources or talk to someone, please use the contact information below to reach Board Certified Coach [Melissa James](#).



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