Talking to your child about the coronavirus outbreak

Due to extensive and often alarmist news coverage about COVID-19 as well as community anxiety, children may develop fears regarding their own health and safety. Monitor and moderate the information and news your children are exposed to at home via tv, internet, and radio. Be aware that children are highly sensitive to our emotional states, and draw much information from the adult conversations they overhear.

Our goal is for our students to have developmentally-appropriate, concrete and understandable information that empowers them to make positive choices about being respectful and honoring our sense of belonging by keeping everyone safe. There is alarmist information surrounding us and providing straightforward information is both reassuring and a call for positive action.

- For K-2 students, focus on hygiene practices as good prevention and ways to stay healthy during cold and flu season. Avoid sharing alarming information, but a basic explanation of the coronavirus that is developmentally appropriate is fine if students need this information.

- For grades 3-5, focus on prevention and good habits. A basic and factual explanation of the coronavirus is fine for context. If students are interested in current events discussions, make sure to plan those with intention.

- For grades 6-8, when questions/comments about the coronavirus come up, distinguish between fact and myth and focus on prevention and good hygiene.

- Please reach out if you have questions about what is appropriate to address.

- Students may not always admit that they are alarmed, so we must be mindful of what is developmentally appropriate.

How to have a panic-free conversation with your kids about the coronavirus - THE WEEK, Anna Bassi, January 30, 2020

How to Talk to Your Kids About the Coronavirus Outbreak - TIME, Jamie Ducharme, February 4, 2020

Talking to Kids About the Coronavirus - Child Mind Institute, Rachel Ehmke

Talking to Teen and Tweens About Coronavirus - The New York Times, Donna De La Cruz, March 5, 2020