



SCHOOL REOPENING 20|21

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Keep Children Healthy during the COVID-19 Outbreak

Based on available evidence, most children do not appear to be at higher risk for COVID-19 than adults. While some children and infants have been sick with COVID-19, adults make up most of the known cases to date. Even so, coronavirus susceptibility can be impacted by any number of pre-existing issues, some of which do occur in children. Parents need to be aware of their child's individual health situation to protect susceptible children from COVID-19.

Watch your child for signs of COVID-19 illness

COVID-19 can look different in different people. For many people, being sick with COVID-19 may resemble having the flu. People can get a fever, cough, or have a hard time taking deep breaths. Most people who have gotten COVID-19 have not gotten extremely sick. Only a small group of people who get the virus have had very serious problems.

CDC and partners are investigating cases of multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children associated with COVID-19. Learn more about COVID-19 and [multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children \(MIS-C\)](#).

Keep children healthy

Teach and reinforce everyday preventive actions

- Parents and caretakers play an important role in teaching children to wash their hands. Explain that hand washing can keep them healthy and stop the virus from spreading to others.
- Be a good role model—if you wash your hands often, they're more likely to do the same.
- Make [handwashing a family activity](#).
- Learn more about what you can do to [protect children](#).

Help your child stay active

- Encourage your child to play outdoors—it's great for physical and mental health. Take a walk with your child or go on a bike ride.
- Use indoor activity breaks (like stretch breaks or dance breaks) throughout the day to help your child stay healthy and focused.

Help your child stay socially connected

- Reach out to friends and family via phone or video chats.
- Write cards or letters to family members they may not be able to visit.
- Some schools and non-profits, such as the [Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning](#) and [The Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence](#), have resources for social and emotional learning. Check to see if your school has tips and guidelines to help support social and emotional needs of your child.
- Please note: BCPS is attempting to replace the term “social distancing” with “physical distancing” to reinforce the spatial need to stay safe rather than suppressing the need for social connections, which kids need now more than ever.

Ask about school meal services

Check with your school on plans to continue meal services during the school dismissal. Many schools are keeping school facilities open to allow families to pick up meals or are providing grab-and-go meals at a central location.

Help your child cope with stress

Watch for signs of stress or behavior changes. **Not all children and teens respond to stress in the same way.** Some common changes to watch for include:

- Excessive worry or sadness
- Unhealthy eating habits
- Unhealthy sleeping habits
- Difficulty with attention and concentration

Support your child

- Parents can find more information about supporting their children during a COVID-19 outbreak on CDC’s [Helping Children Cope](#) page.
- [Talk with your child or teen about the COVID-19 outbreak](#). Answer questions and [share facts](#) about COVID-19 in a way that your child or teen can understand.
- Learn more about common reactions that children may have and how you can [help children cope with emergencies](#).