

Theme 1: Talk about COVID-19 – Parent’s conversation

Before you start – Remember:

- Remind yourself of the Safeguarding Code of Conduct
- Check with the parent that this is a good time for the call, and remember to ask both the child and parent if they are still happy to take part in the project
- Take notes so that you are able to complete the call log accurately after the call
- For this session: Make sure you have up-to-date awareness and information on your local guidelines for COVID-19 prevention

There are options in red for children with special needs. Always begin with the instructions for typically developing children. Move to option 1 for a modified version of instructions for children with mild difficulties. For children with severe difficulties move to option 2 or 3. Visuals will be attached to this document to be shared with the children and parents. A video call is preferred over a regular telephone call with the child.

Beginning the time together

- Ask about what have been the best parts and most difficult parts of the last week
- Remind them of the process: What to expect from these calls and how long they will last

If the parent was shy or hesitant, it is advisable to share your experience of the past week at work (e.g., I had a long week at work, but I rested well during the weekend).

Introduce the theme: Talk about COVID-19

Today’s topic is COVID-19 – by the end of our call we will have talked about:

- Facts and good practices for protecting ourselves against COVID-19
- How we can talk to children about COVID-19
- What we can do together with children to take action during COVID-19

Topic 1: Good practices for COVID-19

Ask: We’ve all heard a lot about COVID-19. What are you already doing to stay safe/healthy?

Affirm: Encourage any good practices they are already doing and notice any ‘myths’ or false beliefs that you will need to pick up on in the conversation.

Share: Provide more context-specific information where needed on:

- **Handwashing** – washing hands frequently, for at least 20 seconds, kills viruses that may be on your hands. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, as this is where the virus can enter your body.
- **Social distancing** – staying at least 1m away from people from other households. This is because if someone coughs, sneezes or speaks, they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth. This could infect you with the COVID-19 virus if the person has the disease. Avoid going to crowded places.

- Recognising and understanding **symptoms of COVID-19** – if you have symptoms including a cough or fever, you should stay home until you recover. This protects others from COVID-19.
- Give more detail on updated rules and guidelines where you are, including recommendations about **wearing masks**, which vary from country to country.
 - Masks are only effective when used in combination with frequent hand-cleaning, and they should cover your nose, mouth and chin. You should avoid touching your mask when wearing it.
- Most people with COVID-19 will only experience mild symptoms and most people are able to make a full recovery. It is important to follow guidelines to ensure that we minimise these risks as much as possible.

Ask: Is there something we've talked about that you are going to put into practice or do differently this week?

Topic 2: Talking with children about COVID-19

You will need to record answers to the next two questions in the call log.

Ask: How often does your child (the mentee) seem stressed or worried [not at all, sometimes, often, most of the time]

Ask: How often is your child (the mentee) able to talk about their problems and share their worries [not at all, sometimes, often, most of the time]

Describe the different signs of being stressed or worried that parents might notice (e.g., irritability/tantrums, tearful/crying, nightmares/difficulty sleeping, clingy, unexplained stomach aches, biting nails....).

Ask: Have you and your children talked together about COVID-19? How did it go? What are some of the fears or beliefs children are expressing? Do you feel comfortable and confident to have these conversations with children?

Reinforce the fact that the expression of stress or worry can be physical, as mentioned above. Inform the parent that if it is difficult to talk with their child about COVID-19, try watching a developmentally-appropriate video about COVID-19 online (recommend a video from the list below). Afterwards, the parent can engage the child in a discussion about COVID-19.

Affirm: Affirm any examples of steps to reach out and listen to children. Explain that it is very important because children really value when we are open and honest with them and take their concerns seriously.

Share: Give some key tips:

- Be open – Allow your child to talk freely. Ask them open questions (which means questions that can't just be answered by a 'yes' or 'no') and find out what they already know.
- Be honest – Always answer their questions truthfully. Think about how old your child is and how much they can understand. It's ok to not know the answers – you can learn together!
- Be supportive – Your child may be scared or confused. Give them space to share how they are feeling and let them know you are there for them.

Answer in a manner that is developmentally/cognitively appropriate for the child. Make sure that the child can identify their feelings. If not, parents should help them identify the different emotions via visuals (e.g., happy/sad/scared face). Send visuals to the parents Via WhatsApp or e-mail. Demonstrate in front of them and ask them to model. Use Picture [1. 1] or [1. 2]

- Share the facts – Make sure you help children to be aware of what is really true about the virus when there are many myths and rumours.
- Be positive – Remind your child that you care and that they can talk to you any time.

Provide praise or rewards – Encourage your children to talk by providing tokens that they can collect to receive a prize (e.g., favorite snack).

Share: Being proactive or feeling like we can do something positive can really help us to cope in times of difficulty – both adults and children! You could think together about ways you can help others in this crisis – they might be really simple things like: sharing the facts with family and friends, following the guidelines together, helping children to create some encouraging pictures or messages, or working with children to help others in your family who might be having a hard time.

Putting it into practice this week

An activity to do with your child this week:

- Game: ‘Clean hands detective’ (send by WhatsApp or explain)

Option 1: Since some children are not comfortable with closing their eyes, closing eyes can be optional. When the music stops, the person who has the soap has to go wash their hands.

Option 2: Have an adult assist the child that needs help with the game using physical prompting (e.g., by holding the child’s hand).

- Read together: [‘My hero is you’](#) – a story about how children can help, if available in your language

Option 1: In case the child cannot read the story, the parent should read it aloud and slowly. Encourage parent to provide a brief summary of the events at the end of each page.

Option 2: Use puppets or stuffed animals (from your child’s toys) to represent the characters of the story. You can also create paper puppets as an activity with your child.

Option 3: Role play the story with your child.

- Talk with your child about what they have heard about COVID-19 and any questions they have. What can you do together as a family to help?

What action will they put into practice this week?

Restate the discussed options. Make a list of suggestions and let the parents pick one.

[Follow some safety guidance about COVID-19 for first time / Talk with child about COVID-19 / Other]

When will you meet again? Agree a date and time and note this in your calendar.

Ask: the parent if they are happy for you to speak to the child now and ask them to hand over the phone.

Theme 1: Talk about COVID-19 – Child’s conversation

Before you start – Remember:

- Remind yourself of the Safeguarding Code of Conduct
- Remember to ask the child if they are still happy to take part
- Take notes so that you are able to complete the call log accurately after the call
- For this session: Ensure you have up-to-date awareness and information on your local guidelines for COVID-19 prevention

Inform the child that they are allowed to take breaks. Agree with the child on a sign or word that represents wanting to take a break when they need one (e.g., raising hand, crossing arms, or saying “break”). Prompt them to take a short break to stretch when you feel necessary.

Beginning the time together

- Begin with your regular check-in questions, such as:
 - What was the best thing that happened this week?
 - What was something funny that happened this week?
 - What was hard about this week?

Share some personal experiences from your week (e.g., the best thing about this week was meeting my best friend. A funny thing about this week was learning a magic trick. A hard thing about this week is not being able to go to the beach).

Option 1: How are you feeling today? What did you do today? Tell me about a game that you played.

Option 2: Ask the child “how are you feeling today” and provide a diagram of emotions to choose from.

You can prompt them by reading the emotions aloud (e.g., are you happy, sad, or angry)

Use Picture [1. 1] or [1. 2]

- Reminder that these calls are about: checking on how you are doing, giving you a chance to talk and share how you are feeling, and sharing ideas together which can help you and your family

Ask: Are you still happy to be part of this project?

Inform the child that we have many interesting activities and topics to discuss together and make sure that he is happy to continue.

Remember to provide brief breaks when needed (for stretching, toilet break, walking around, or having a snack)

Introduce the theme: Talk about COVID-19

Game: Changes – good and bad

Explain that you will read some statements of things that could happen – a change – like winning a prize or starting a new school. The child should quickly decide whether the change is a good or a bad thing. There are no right or wrong answers!

- Option 1: point to “Good” or point to “Bad”. Use Picture [1.3]
 Option 2: Thumbs up for “Good”, thumbs down for “Bad”. Use Picture [1.4]
 Option 3: Happy face for “Good”. Sad face for “Bad”. Use Picture [1.1] or [1.2]
 Make sure to send the visuals before starting the activity.

e.g. You: “Winning a prize!” – Child: “Good!” You: “Starting a new school” – Child: “Bad!”

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| • Winning a prize | • Starting a new school |
| • Moving house to a new city | • Getting a new puppy |

Optional: use pictures of children rather than the phrases (e.g., child winning a prize). Use Pictures [1.5], [1.6], [1.7], or [1.8]

COVID-19 has made a lot of changes in our lives – both good and bad. Explain that today we’ll be looking at COVID-19 – what the facts are, how we feel about it, and what we can do to help.

Topic 1: COVID-19 – what’s the story?

Ask: What have you heard about COVID-19 from school, friends, or family?

- Break the question into parts.
- Have you heard about COVID-19?
 - Where have you heard about COVID-19?
 - What have you heard about it?

Affirm: Affirm true statements and notice any ‘myths’ or false beliefs that you will need to pick up on in the conversation.

Share: Explain that COVID-19, or the coronavirus, is so tiny that we can’t see it, but it spreads in the coughs and sneezes of people who are sick, and when they touch people or things around them. People who are sick usually get a fever and a cough and might have trouble breathing. Most people who get sick with this coronavirus have a mild case and get better, but a few people need to be cared for in hospital.

Ask the child to describe visible signs of somebody that is sick (you or the parents can prompt the child to answer by providing examples or asking questions)

It is advisable for parents to use the “pepper and soap experiment”, as described below:

1. Put water and pepper powder in a container.
2. State that pepper powder represents germs.
3. Ask the child dip their finger into the water and pepper powder container so that the pepper powder can stick to it.
4. Ask the child to put soap on another finger.
5. Ask the child to dip that finger into the water and pepper powder container.
6. Encourage the child to see that the pepper powder moved away.

Make sure children are aware of the key messages for staying safe in your location – including:

- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water, for at least 20 seconds, after using the bathroom or being outside
- Cover your cough or sneeze with your elbow – this stops germs from going into the air and onto your hands
- Try not to touch your face – your nose, eyes and mouth are where germs can enter our bodies
- Stay at home, and staying at least one metre away from others outside your household (or your current government guidelines)

Below are alternative options. Make sure to demonstrate the actions and ask the children to model them. Explain how washing hands can move germs (pepper) away and how if we cover our nose, the pepper will not spread.

Place a timer for 20 sec next to the handwashing sink. You can also encourage your child to sing a song for 20 sec while washing their hands (e.g., the Happy birthday song).

Encourage covering mouth while sneezing using the dab move (i.e., a dance move or gesture in which a person drops their head into the bent crook of a slanted, upwardly angled arm, while raising the opposite arm out straight in a parallel direction).

Encourage child to stay the equivalent of the length of one arm away from others (or to spread their arms to their sides).

Ask: Is there something we’ve talked about that you are going to try to do this week?

Summarize what you spoke about today in a few points.

Ask “from the above, which activity will you try this week?”

Ask child to write down or record their answer.

Before moving to Topic 2, ask the child again if they are willing to proceed with the call (see previous guideline). If the child seems tired, please to do not force them to continue.

Topic 2: Talk about it

Ask: How do you feel about COVID-19? Do you have any worries or concerns about it?

Affirm: It's normal to feel scared or upset. Adults do too! Lots of things have changed and it can be scary when we don't know what will happen next and lots of things have changed, like going to school.

Share: It's good to ask questions and to share how you are feeling. If there's anything you might be confused or worried about, don't be afraid to ask someone you trust.

Here are some ways you could talk to your parents about your questions or what's worrying you:

- Ask your parent(s) to sit down with you for a few minutes and tell them how you are feeling
- Look at some online facts about COVID-19 together with your parent(s) e.g. from the WHO website

Option 1: With the assistance of parents. Encourage parents to regularly ask child about the above. Provide emotion diagram (i.e., happy/sad faces) when asking about feelings. Use Picture [1.1] or [1.2]

- Draw a picture about how you are feeling about COVID-19 and share it with your parent(s)

Wrap up: What can we do together this week?

Ask: Do you think there are any ways that children can help in this COVID-19 crisis?

Try to simplify the question. For example, you can ask the following: can you remind/help your brother wash his hands? Do you think you can put on a mask before you leave the house? Do you think you can close your mouth with a tissue while sneezing?

Share: We might feel overwhelmed by the situation but actually there are so many things we can do ourselves that can help us, our families, and our communities.

Some ways children can help are:

- Sharing the facts with your family and friends
- Following the guidelines – washing your hands, covering your coughs, staying home
- Being kind – put a picture in your window with an encouraging message
- Helping others in your family who might be having a hard time at the moment

Check: Ask if the child can remember the good practice facts shared. Ask them to tell you as much as they can in 60 seconds! Re-share any information that they've remembered wrongly.

Give them the time they need to express themselves. Ask questions for prompting, such as: like what can you do at home? What activities can you practice? How can you help others around you?

Ask: What will they do this week to stay safe and to help others?

Prompt the child and give them options. Ask the parents to be involved.

[Something new to stay safe from COVID-19 / Talk with parents about COVID-19 / Share information with others / Encourage or help others / Other]

Close the call by thanking the child for talking with you, and explain when you will meet again.

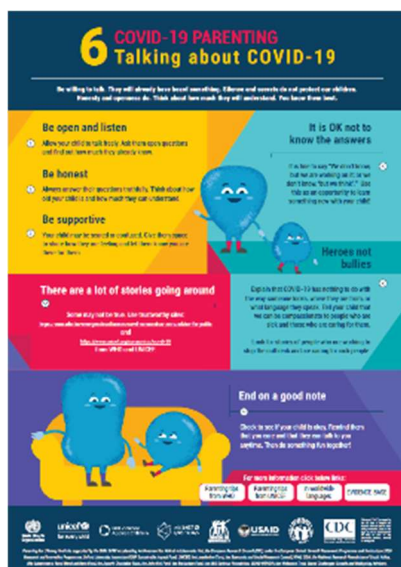
Do not forget to praise the child for the effort. Encourage the parent and child to pin the date of the next meeting on a calendar and ask them to check the shared date on WhatsApp.

After the call

- Share the poster or image over WhatsApp or as a printout if you are able to: 'Parenting Tip Talking about COVID-19'
- Share 'Clean Hands Detective' game
- Complete the call log now
- Contact your supervisor if any safeguarding issues have been raised or if you have any concerns

- Share the video links on COVID-19:
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IX3dpN91E1I>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UkduY5SdnIO>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YDxVBWcQJgU>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IhYAxlc1xUc>
- Share the pictures: [1.1], [1.2], [1.3], [1.4], [1.5], [1.6], [1.7], and [1.8]

NB – images to share (you will be given these by your supervisor)

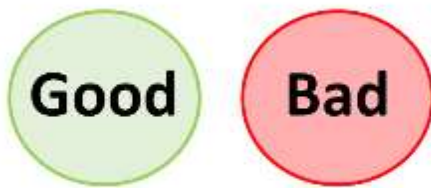




1.1



1.2



1.3



1.4



1.5



1.6



1.7



1.8