

BHIPP RESILIENCE BREAKS

How to Talk to Kids About COVID-19



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Optimizing your Session

1. **Close all applications and windows** that will not be needed during the session
2. To optimize PC performance make sure your **power adapter is plugged in**
3. Make sure to use the **Cisco WebEx Meetings Desktop App** and NOT the browser, when possible
4. When using a web browser be sure to use **Google Chrome** only

➤ **Use the chat function for questions & support with technical difficulties**



Meet The Presenters



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Clinical child psychologist in the
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Who We Are – Maryland BHIPP



Offering support to pediatric primary care providers through free:

- Telephone consultation (855-MD-BHIPP)
- Resource & referral support
- Training & education
- Regionally specific social work co-location (Salisbury University and Morgan State University)
- Project ECHO®

Coming soon!

- Direct Telespsychiatry & Telecounseling Services
- Care coordination

*Supported by Maryland Department of Health,
Behavioral Health Administration*



Session Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, learners will be able to:

1. Identify 3 strategies for talking to kids about COVID-19
2. Give an example of a developmentally appropriate explanation of COVID 19 for a young child, school age child and teen.
3. Identify at least one strategy for supporting kids who are impacted by grief and loss due to COVID 19.



Disclosures

- No commercial or financial interests to disclose



What Parents are Saying about Parenting during the Coronavirus Pandemic...

- “They [my kids] are confused. They don't understand fully the dangers of a pandemic. They want to play with their friends and are getting annoyed with the same routine at home, and playing only with each other. We are also rationing food and household items, and they are anxious and scared by that. I can see it in their faces and their volunteering to make sacrifices for us.”
- “She [my daughter] is just sad because she misses her friends at school and her teachers... She is tired of being stuck in the house and extremely bored. She has been quite mouthy the last couple of weeks, but I think it's out of sheer boredom.”
- They have gotten scared of getting sick or losing grandparents”
- “Not only has my daughter been less energetic, she has expressed worry regarding the virus. This differs from her usual happy-go-lucky demeanor...”



Strategies for talking with Kids about COVID-19: General Themes

- What you say, and how you say it
 - Managing your affect and anxiety
 - Nonverbal cues
- Deal with your own anxiety before responding
 - Take some time to address how you're feeling
- Maintain Normalcy
- Limit media exposure and direct to facts
- Use your team
 - PCP or BH provider



Strategies for talking with Kids about COVID-19: General Themes

- Welcome questions
- Remain calm and reassuring
- Take cues from your child
- Focus on what you are doing
 - How are you staying safe?
- Don't avoid questions you can't answer
- Keep the conversation going
- Be Developmentally appropriate



Strategies for talking with Kids about COVID-19: Young Children

- Respond Honestly
- Keep information accurate, but age appropriate
- *Why are we wiping down everything with wipes?* “We wipe things down to keep them clean.”
- *Why is that person wearing a mask?* “Sometimes people wear masks when they aren’t feeling well or to help keep them safe so they won’t get sick.”
- *Will I get sick?* “Everybody gets sick sometimes. If you get sick, Mama/Dada will take care of you until you are all better. The doctors will help you, too.”
- *Why can’t we leave the house? Why can’t my friend come over to play?* “Right now, there is a rule that families need to stay home for a little while and be together. That helps us and our friends stay healthy.
- *“Not everyone has the germ, so don’t be scared. People are working on medicines to kill the germ, but this can take a long time.”*

<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/3265-answering-your-young-child-s-questions-about-coronavirus>;

https://www.cstsonline.org/assets/media/documents/CSTS_FS_Finding_Right_Words_Talk_Children_Teens_Coronavirus.pdf



Strategies for talking with Kids about COVID-19: School Age Children

- Find out what they know, gently correct misinformation
- Express appreciation for coming to you; “I always love to know what is on your mind,” “I’m always happy to find a time to talk”
- Expect that questions may be focused on themselves (developmentally appropriate)
 - Will I get sick?



Strategies for talking with Kids about COVID-19: School Age Children

- **Question: Can anyone get coronavirus?**

- *Answer: Yes. Coronavirus is spread through coughs, sneezes, and close contact with someone who's already sick. It doesn't matter what you look like or what country you come from.*

- **Question: Why is school closed? When will it be open?**

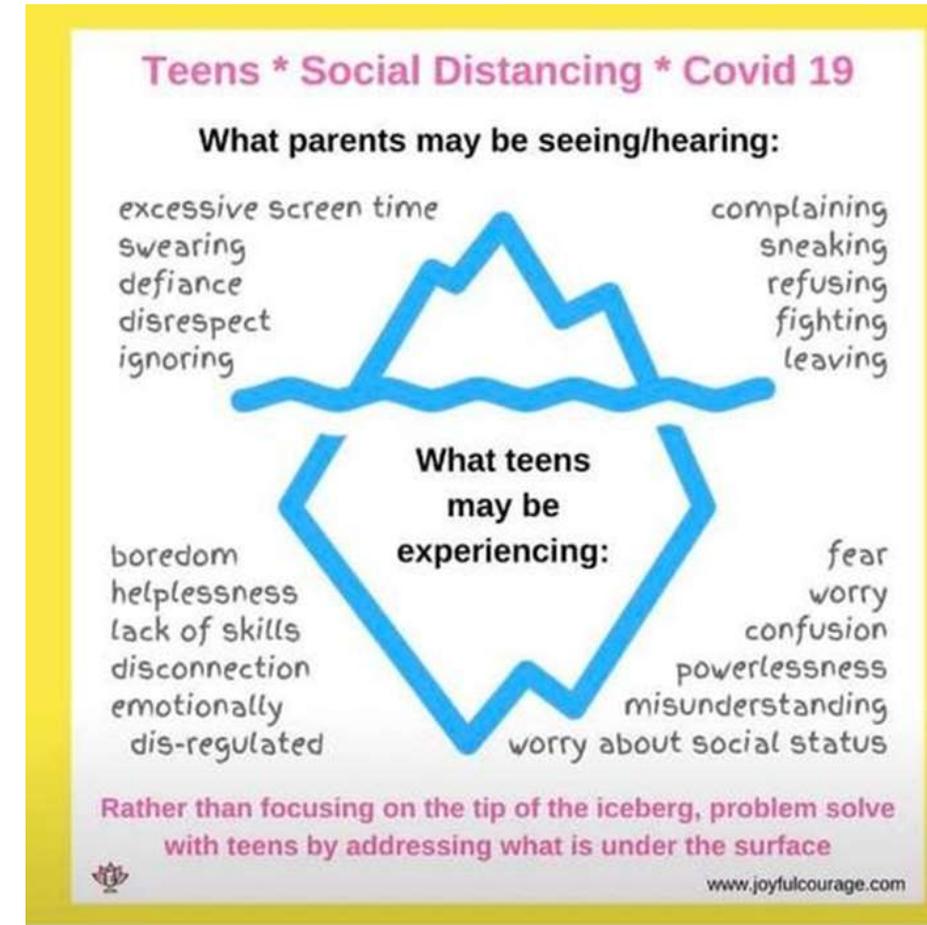
- *Answer: School is closed so that we can work together to help reduce the spread of germs and the virus. We will keep doing online school based on what our school decides is best. We will probably have times when we enjoy it and we might also have times when we feel grumpy or bored. We might need time to ourselves. Whatever we do, we will be together and it will be okay.*

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Strategies for talking with Kids about COVID-19: Tweens & Teens

- Open and Honest Communication
 - Calm and Factual
 - Correct misinformation
- Stress that staying home saves lives.
 - Have a strict “no cheating” rule
- Talk with your teen about how they're feeling
- Check in about what they are seeing/hearing online
- Emphasize Social Connection while Social Distancing
 - Monitor privacy settings and content while allowing connection with friends
 - Can teens help be the family tech expert?



Strategies for talking with Kids about COVID-19: Grief & Loss

- Traumatic loss, impacted by social distancing
 - Build in opportunities for rituals and remembering
 - Include children and adolescents in these activities
- Developmental Considerations
 - Consider use of language
 - Loss of typical opportunities for “closure”
- Continue to provide structure, routine



- <https://www.dougy.org/>



Reminders

MANAGING CORONA VIRUS (COVID-19) ANXIETY

♥ For You

- Avoid excessive exposure to media coverage
- Connect through calls/text/internet
- Add extra time for daily stress relief
- Practice self-care
- Focus on your mental health

BlessingManifesting

For Kids!!!

- Reassure them that they're safe
- Let them talk about their worries
- Share your own coping skills
- Limit their news exposure
- Create a routine & structure

For Quarantine/Isolation

- Keep in contact with your loved ones via social media, texts, and phone calls
- Create a daily self-care routine
- Keep yourself busy: games, books, movies
- Focus on new relaxation techniques



BHIPP is Available to Provide Support to PCPs During Coronavirus



BHIPP is open.

The BHIPP phone line remains open during this challenging time to support primary care clinicians in assessing and managing the mental health needs of their patients.

1-855-MD-BHIPP
(1-855-632-4477)

www.mdbhipp.org



Ways to Connect:

- Visit our COVID-19 Resource Page:
www.mdbhipp.org
- Sign up for our newsletter:
<https://mdbhipp.org/contact.html>
- Follow us on Twitter:
[@MDBHIPP](https://twitter.com/MDBHIPP)

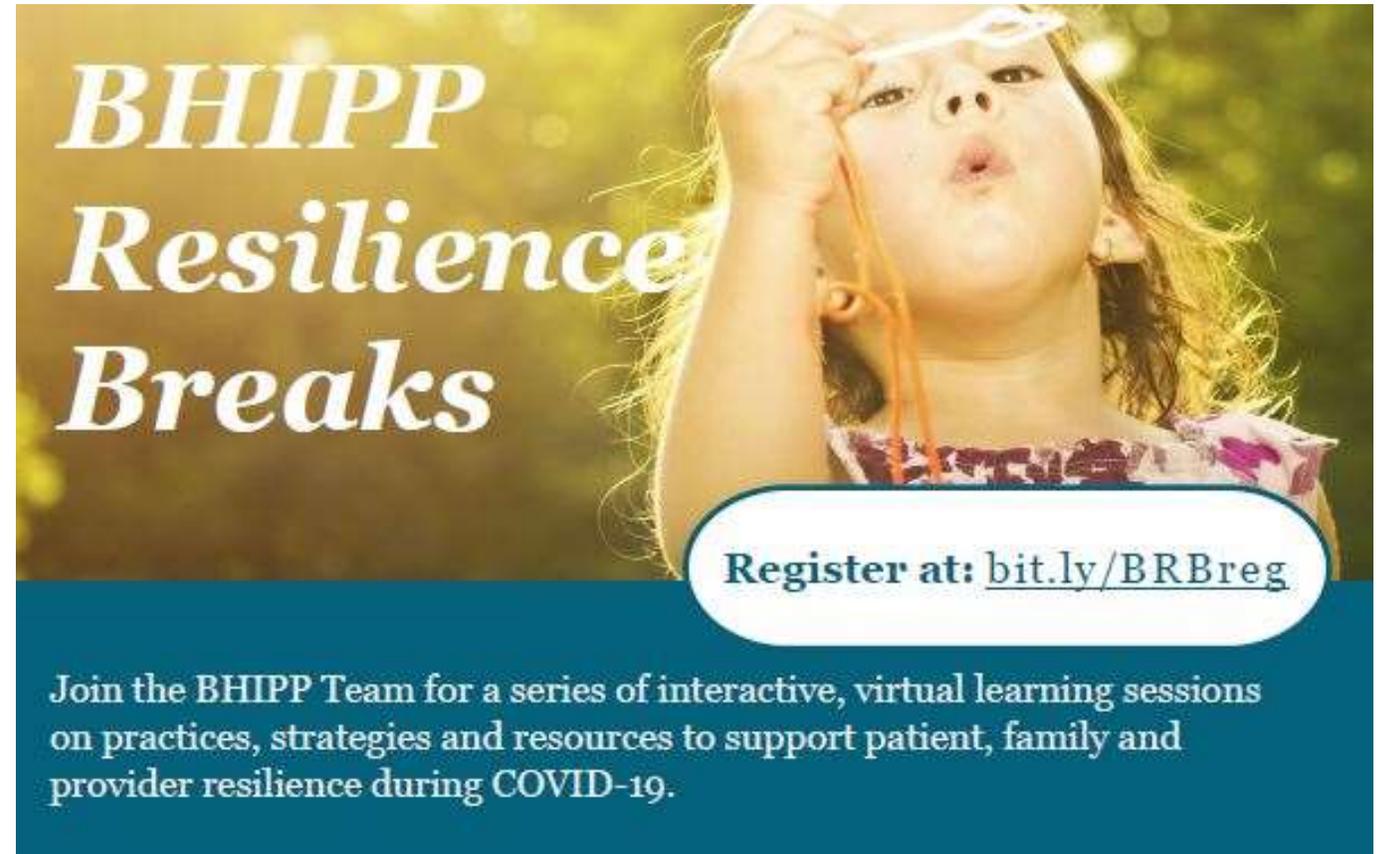


Upcoming BHIPP Resilience Breaks Learning Sessions

Provider Resilience

Thursday, June 11th, 12:30pm-1:30pm

**Additional dates & topics to follow*



**BHIPP
Resilience
Breaks**

Register at: bit.ly/BRBreg

Join the BHIPP Team for a series of interactive, virtual learning sessions on practices, strategies and resources to support patient, family and provider resilience during COVID-19.



Resources

Parenting In Context: *Stress and Parenting During the Coronavirus Pandemic*

- https://www.parentingincontext.org/uploads/8/1/3/1/81318622/research_brief_stress_and_parenting_during_the_coronavirus_pandemic_final.pdf

Zero To Three: *Answering Your Young Child's Questions About Coronavirus*

- <https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/3265-answering-your-young-child-s-questions-about-coronavirus>

Super Healthy Kids: *At Home Flexible Daily Schedule for Kids*

- <https://www.superhealthykids.com/parenting/at-home-flexible-daily-schedule-for-kids/>

CSTS: *Discussing Coronavirus with Your Children*

- https://www.cstsonline.org/assets/media/documents/CSTS_FS_Discussing_Coronavirus_w_Your_Children.pdf

Child Mind Institute: *How to Ask What Kids Are Feeling*

- <https://childmind.org/article/how-to-ask-what-kids-are-feeling-during-stressful-times/>



Resources

NCTSN: *Supporting Children During Coronavirus*

- <https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/fact-sheet/supportingchildren-covid-factsheet.pdf>

Zero To Three: *Tips For Families: Coronavirus*

- <https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/3210-tips-for-families-coronavirus>

Child Mind Institute: *Talking to Kids About the Coronavirus Crisis*

- https://childmind.org/article/talking-to-kids-about-the-coronavirus/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

Sesame Street: *Talking to Children About COVID-19*

- https://www.sesamestreet.org/sites/default/files/media_folders/Images/PDF3V3.pdf

Anxiety and Depression Association of America: *How to Talk to Your Anxious Child or Teen About Coronavirus*

- <https://adaa.org/learn-from-us/from-the-experts/blog-posts/consumer/how-talk-your-anxious-child-or-teen-about>

HealthyChildren.org: *Teens & COVID-19: Challenges and Opportunities During the Outbreak*

- <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/chest-lungs/Pages/Teens-and-COVID-19.aspx>



Questions?

- Use the chat & feel free turn on your audio/video

