

Holding Space: Let's Talk About Reassurance

Reassurance consists of words, actions, or non-verbal expressions that have the power to make someone feel comforted, cared for, confident, and secure.

Reassurance can reduce worry, fear, anxiety, and doubt. Reassurance can be given at a cognitive level by providing information and at an emotional level by showing empathy and understanding.

The COVID-19 crisis has given us months of stress, change, and uncertainty. During this time, early childhood education professionals and families have come to depend on each other in new ways and created new routines for daily life. Now, we anticipate yet another change: transitioning back to work, child care, and a familiar-yet-different way of life.

As we contemplate this new transition, we may find ourselves wondering about our children: How has this experience affected them? What emotions, behaviors, and reactions might we expect to see? How can we support children's social-emotional growth so that we can all become more resilient?

The Pennsylvania Key Infant-Early Childhood Mental Health Program offered *Holding Space: Let's talk about: Reassurance, Regulation, Relationships, Resilience*, a series of online discussion groups to allow early childhood education professionals and families to connect and gain new insights about how to support ourselves and our children during this transition.

Check out the resources below to support reassurance.

Resources for Early Childhood Education Professionals

We Wear Masks, a Social Story about the coronavirus (1:35 min): *We Wear Masks* is an animated social story that helps that explain some of the issues we are facing right now including wearing a mask, school closure, and social distancing.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=lnP-uMn6q_U

National Center for Pyramid model Innovations (NCPMI): Access resources to support families and young children cope with the challenges that might occur during stressful emergency situations.

challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/index.html

National Center for Pyramid model Innovations (NCPMI): *COVID-19 and Pandemic Resources*

challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/emergency/index.html

Helping Your Child During the Pandemic: Ways to reassure children during this challenging time (1 pg. handout with tips)

challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/Pandemic_family_infographic.pdf

The Pennsylvania Infant Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (IECMHC) Program is a child-specific consultative model which addresses the social-emotional development of young children within their early childhood education program. For more information, visit www.pakeys.org.



Classroom Visuals and Supports: a variety of downloadable visual supports for Classroom Expectations, Daily Schedule, Build Social Skills, Friendship Kit, Problem Solving and more
headstartinclusion.org/teacher-tools#visual

Creating Routines: FOCUS on Early Childhood Mental Health (2 pg. handout with tips)
<https://bit.ly/2zQiNJV>

Resources for Families

Positive guidance for Young Children: Be Consistent (1 pg. handout with tips)
illinoisearlylearning.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/GR-PGconsistent.pdf

Comfort Strategies: Comfort from a grown-up can help kids feel calm and protected (1 pg. handout with tips)
sesamestreetincommunities.org/activities/comfort-strategies/

Helping Your Child During the Pandemic: Ways to reassure children during this challenging time (1 pg. handout with tips)
challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/Pandemic_family_infographic.pdf

What Comes Next: Back to Child Care Following Shelter in Place (short article with some tips for managing the preschool transition post-COVID)
www.zerotothree.org/resources/3413-what-comes-next-back-to-child-care-following-shelter-in-place

We Wear Masks, a Social Story about the coronavirus (1:35 min): *We Wear Masks* is an animated social story that helps that explain some of the issues we are facing right now including wearing a mask, school closure, and social distancing.
www.youtube.com/watch?v=lnP-uMn6q_U

Talking to children about the Coronavirus Crisis (Child Mind Institute Article with tips in English and Spanish)
childmind.org/article/talking-to-kids-about-the-coronavirus/
childmind.org/article/como-hablar-con-los-ninos-sobre-el-coronavirus/

The Pennsylvania Infant Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (IECMHC) Program is a child-specific consultative model which addresses the social-emotional development of young children within their early childhood education program. For more information, visit www.pakeys.org.

