

## Are We Putting Our Children at Risk?

Information about Coronavirus (Covid 19) is shared almost constantly through media coverage, commercials, and even adult conversations. There are so many different things happening so quickly, it is hard for young children to fully process and understand what is happening.

Is this exposure putting our children at risk? Children at this age are vulnerable because they learn and grow through different experiences in their environment. As children process each experience, they develop new ways of problem solving, coping, and understanding situations. Children who are exposed to the media (even if the TV is just on in the background) may have unanswered questions. These unanswered questions make children vulnerable to forming their own explanations and feeling increasingly anxious and afraid.

### How does this impact children?

- Children may not have the coping skills to process
- Children are unable to distinguish what is real and what is not, what may happen and what probably will not happen
- Children may be afraid and become easily upset

### How can I help my child cope?

- **Restrict** - Children are listening even when you think that they are not, this is called passive listening. Be aware of what children are being exposed to in their environment (i.e., is the T.V, left on while you are eating dinner?).
- **Explain** - Help your child understand what is happening. Use simple and clear language to explain the virus to them and answer any questions they may have. Open communication is key to helping children understand these situations.
- **Reassure** - Be sure to talk to your child about the positive things that are occurring. Sometimes the media coverage can focus on the most dramatic parts of the event, but point out the good things that are happening too.
- **Safety** - Explain that you are doing what needs to be done to keep your child safe. Talk about some of the things you do, such as ensuring you stay home, practicing good handwashing habits, and avoiding contact with others who may be sick.
- **Acknowledge** - Allow your child to express their feelings and talk about them. It is okay to talk about how you are feeling too. This allows you and your child to brainstorm ways to make yourselves feel better!

We understand that this is a challenging time for many families throughout the world. At Learning Care Group, we are dedicated to help parents navigate those difficult conversations and provide children with the security they need.