

FAQ: Families with children

Introduction

In the current situation, making everyday life work can be a challenge – not least for families. For this reason, we have put together some frequently asked questions and answers that we hope can be useful.



Socializing

Are playdates allowed?

Yes. Healthy children may indeed play together. That said, we recommend meet-ups not exceed 2 or 3 children, and to stick with the same few children each playdate. Preferably, playdates should take place outdoors.

May my children use the playground?

They may, if the guidelines mentioned above are followed. Avoid sharing toys and be extra watchful that the children wash their hands when coming home.

My child has a birthday coming. Are we allowed to have a small get-together?

No, we request that you postpone all birthday parties and other get-togethers.

Does homeschooling constitute a risk?

With collective homeschooling, the same recommendations apply as with playdates – have a maximum of 1-2 children visiting, and preferably the same children each time. Remember, if a child shows any sign of infection, they must not be around other children but must stay at home instead.

Are sleepovers okay if both children are healthy?

No, we do not recommend having sleepovers. At sleepovers, one tends to be in close proximity to others, indoors, for an extended period of time. Instead, have your child call their friends to wish them a good night.

What are the recommendations for families living in densely populated areas or apartment complexes, where many children live close by and want to play together?

The same recommendations as with playdates apply – keep your child's social group to a few select children.

My teenaged child works in a grocery store. Should we forbid her going to work?

No, but do ask her to talk to the store manager about necessary precautions.

Should I bring my children along to the supermarket?

We recommend that only one family member does the grocery shopping. If possible, leave the children at home.

Children and fear

What do I tell my children?

Talk to them about what worries them. In an age-appropriate manner, explain why we are currently living with certain restrictions and rules. Most people who are infected with the coronavirus will experience only mild symptoms. For the elderly or those already living with certain health issues, the symptoms can get more severe. Reassure them that our health care system works very well and that we have highly skilled doctors and nurses who help those who do get sick to get better. If the child is old enough, you could watch "news for children" on TV together and use this to talk with them about the current events.

What should I tell my child will happen if they do not follow the rules?

Talk with your child about why and how to protect themselves and others.

What do I do if my child misses their friends and grandparents very much?

Call friends and family as often as possible. Use video chat and send each other letters or postcards.

Children and grandparents

At what point is it no longer advisable to see the grandparents?

If the grandparent has a chronic health condition, then no visits. The older the person, the greater risk of them experiencing severe illness if infected. Even elderly persons who feel healthy have a weaker immune system than when they were younger.

Hygiene

How often and when should hands be washed?

Often. A good rule of thumb is to wash your hands every time you enter and leave the house, as well as before each meal.

How much should I focus on correcting my children (e.g. no nose-picking, taking a bath, touching others)?

Focus on the general recommendations on maintaining a good standard of hand hygiene and coughing/sneezing into your sleeve.

How often should I clean the children's room - and the rest of the house?

More often than usual. Especially now that you are spending more time at home and in close proximity to each other.

When children or parents fall ill

I have COVID-19 and cannot take care of my child. What do I do?

If at all possible, get help from friends, family, or anyone else offering it.

My child is showing symptoms. How do we talk about it?

It is important to talk about any worries and concerns that may arise. For most people, COVID-19 only causes mild symptoms. For the elderly and those with chronic health conditions, it may become more serious.

My child has asthma. Is she at risk?

If her asthma is severe, then yes. If the condition is well-controlled, then no.

Can children be carriers, even if not exhibiting signs of illness themselves?

The more symptoms you show, the more infectious you are to others. If a child does not have any symptoms, the risk of them passing on infection to others is negligible.

Children of shared custody

What are the guidelines for parents who share custody?

Maintaining the usual co-parenting or visitation schedule is permissible. If, however, the child starts showing symptoms, they must remain with one parent.

My ex-husband/wife has just returned from a trip abroad. Do they need to get tested before seeing the child?

The returned parent should self-isolate for 14 days. We recommend that any in-person contact with the child be postponed until after those 14 days have passed.