



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Addabbo: Talk to your children about COVID-19 with help from these resources

SENATOR JOSEPH P. ADDABBO, JR. May 5, 2020

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As New York State continues with the stay-at-home order to help flatten the curve against the Coronavirus pandemic, many parents and teachers may have children or students with questions about the virus, how our fight against it is progressing, and what happens next. State Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. wants to give adults resources to help explain what is going on to children.

By this point of the state-wide shutdown, children have been living in this new world for several weeks now. However, with the shutdown for New York City most likely to be extended beyond May 15, they may have more questions on why we need to remain inside and continue with our social distancing efforts.

“It is important for children to understand what is happening in their city, their schools, and their homes. If a parent or teacher needs to explain to a young child what COVID-19 is, and what is going on with the shutdown and social distancing, there are many resources for them,” Addabbo said. “Government agencies, like the CDC, and organizations like PBS have online resources available for parents and teachers that give tips and guidelines on how to talk to children of all ages about the changes that are taking place.”

As adults watch news updates to get the latest information on the pandemic, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends parents pay attention to what children see or hear on television, radio, or online, and suggests parents consider reducing the amount of screen time focused on COVID-19 that children are exposed to. “Too much information on one topic can lead to anxiety,” the CDC’s website says.

The CDC also advises on being truthful with children about what is happening by providing age-appropriate information that is honest and accurate. Adults should also dispel any rumors and correct any misinformation that children may hear from television, the internet, or peers.

Both the CDC and PBS emphasize explaining to children how you are staying safe, and the practices your family has put in place to remain healthy.

“Children are going through a lot during this pandemic as well, with the quick advent of online learning, not knowing what will happen the rest of this school year and even the next, and coping with social distancing,” Addabbo added. “By having open and honest discussions with them about the pandemic and answering questions they have, we can help them better deal with this situation we are all facing.”

For more information, visit:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/talking-with-children.html>

<https://childmind.org/article/talking-to-kids-about-the-coronavirus/>

<https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/how-to-talk-to-your-kids-about-coronavirus>

<https://www.SesameStreet.org/caring>

<https://kidshealth.org>