

Coronavirus Is a Big Word

SOCIAL STORY

In the wake of COVID-19, our normal way of life and our usual routines have been turned upside down. For children, these abrupt changes are especially confusing and scary, and so is the idea of a mysterious virus. Providing age-appropriate information soothes anxiety, and this simple social story gives you the words to use.

Developed by Conscious Discipline Certified Instructor Abbi Kruse, this story uses reassuring language and colorful illustrations to explain a complex topic in a way that children understand.

For children (and adults), predictability and routine feel safe. Sudden change is often scary and leaves children feeling anxious. Anxiety is soothed with information, so it's helpful to answer children's questions and explain why their usual routines have changed.

However, talking to young children about COVID-19 is challenging, especially when we remain worried and uncertain ourselves. This simple social story is a useful tool to explain what coronavirus is and why it's important to stay at home for now.

What Are Social Stories?

Social stories are visual reminders typically used to teach children appropriate behavior. These behaviors can be related to procedures, like how to stay safe on the school bus or successfully follow a bedtime routine.

They can also teach social behaviors, like how to manage anxiety when a parent goes to work or how to express frustration in a healthy manner. Social stories help children make sense of their own feelings and the world around them.

How to Use Social Stories

When a child is missing a skill or struggling to navigate a situation, social stories can help. If possible, it's especially powerful to include pictures of the child or children in action throughout the story.

Read social stories often to ensure children understand the message. Pause after each page to ask or answer questions, and even roleplay if it's helpful.

Remember, too, that reading a story can always represent a precious moment of connection. Be present as you read the story with your child, enjoying your time together. Connection translates into increased cooperation, willingness, and impulse control. During these unprecedented times, connection with our loved ones is more valuable than ever.

To learn more about social stories, read the article [Teaching Missing Skills: The Power of Social Stories](#).

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Created by Abbi Kruse & The Playing Field, Madison, WI

**Coronavirus is a very
big word.**



**But, the coronavirus is
not very big.**



**It is very small. It is so tiny that you
can't even see it.**



The coronavirus can make people sick.



Not everyone will get sick.



**Most people who do get the coronavirus
will feel a little sick.**



But, a few people can get very sick.



When a lot of people are in the same place at the same time, it is easy for them to pass viruses to each other.



**If we all stay home for a while, we
will not pass the coronavirus
around.**



**Staying at home will help everyone stay
safe and healthy.**



**We won't have to stay home forever.
When it is safe for us, we can all be
together again.**

