

Helping Children Understand What They See or Hear in the News

From your school counselor's office

Check your own attitude. Children “catch” their attitudes from you. If they see you frightened and worried, it will make them more frightened and worried. Be brave and be strong as you prepare for whatever the news has to say.

Limit media. While it is important to keep updated to know what to expect and what to do, limit the time children view and listen to media. Media often paints a dismal frightening picture and when children see this, it scares them more.

Talk honestly. Tell children that there may be a big storm, or a new virus, etc. Tell them the precautions you are taking so you will all be safe.

Involve children. Make a list of everything you have to do to prepare and offer some of the jobs in preparedness to children.

Find times to laugh and sing. I know that this may sound ridiculous with some of the things we see and hear in the news, but it truly is the best medicine, so find ways to laugh and smile and sing.

Listen. Your children may want to talk. Listen to their fears. Reassure them. Be there for them.

Be full of hope. No matter what is happening on the outside, it is important for children to feel hope on the inside. Things will get better. You are a family. You will be together, and together you can do anything.