



# DEALING WITH YOUR CHILD'S COVID-19 ANXIETY

**The COVID-19 pandemic came out of nowhere, posing a challenge to even the steadiest of people to keep it all together. And we shouldn't lose sight of the fact that our children may not be as resilient as we are.**

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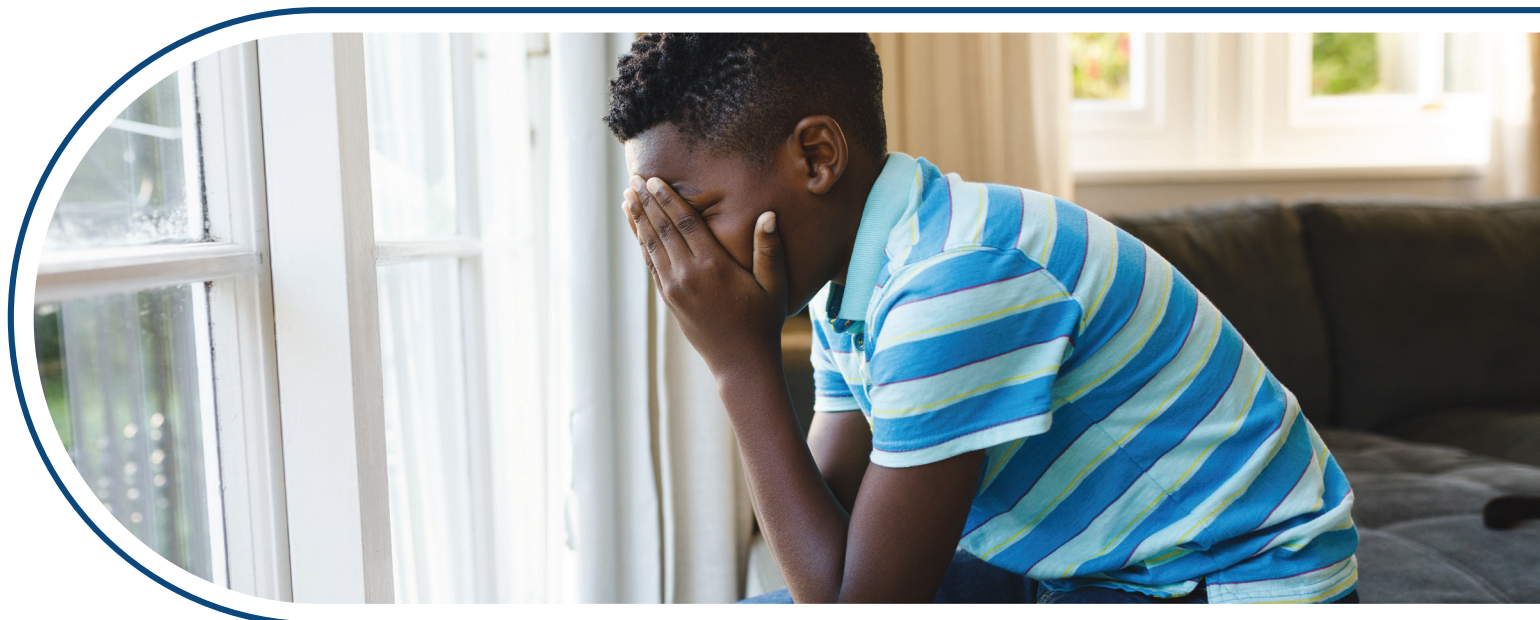
According to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

- Between March and October 2020, emergency-department visits for children with mental-health emergencies rose by 24% for children aged 5 to 11, and 31% for children aged 12 to 17
- Emergency-department visits related to suspected suicide attempts increased by more than 50% among girls aged 12 to 17 in early 2021, compared to the same period in 2019

## How do you know when your child is experiencing anxiety?

If your child has any one or more of these symptoms, it's possible they may be experiencing anxiety from COVID-19. However, children process their emotions differently, and anxiety can manifest in other ways too:

- Difficulty falling asleep
- Different eating patterns – weight gain or weight loss
- Loss of concentration
- Memory loss
- Lack of personal hygiene
- Unusual irritability – at levels that are not normal for your child
- Feelings of rage and hopelessness
- Increased conflict with siblings or friends
- Unusual retractions from regular habits – for example, if your child no longer sends you messages or calls you as much as they used to
- Loss of interest in activities they usually enjoyed



## Dealing with anxiety

If your child is experiencing anxiety, even if it's mild, you should have them assessed by a professional. If you feel that your child's symptoms are manageable, here are some practical suggestions:

### Choose your reading, viewing and listening material carefully

Too much negativity in the news, on the radio and even in your conversations with your partner, family and friends can impact on your children. Always be aware of what they are listening to and watching.

### Develop healthy routines

Routines provide structure and a feeling of security, and can keep your child's mind off what is going on around them. Eat at the same time every day, let them go to bed at the same time every night, or go for a walk at the same time every afternoon.

### Have a daily check-in

Perhaps before bedtime or when you fetch them from school, let them tell you about the best and worst part of their day. Ask questions, to get as much out of them as possible.

### Keep calm

Even if you're not a relaxed person, try to establish a calm atmosphere at home. Play soothing music or use calming essential oils, for a pleasant aroma. Train yourself to blow off steam when your children are at school.

### Teach them to look for the silver lining

When your children are sad or stressed, let them know that there is always a silver lining. For example, their granny may be in hospital with COVID, but she has excellent doctors who are caring for her.



*If you or your loved one needs support during this time, reach out to your ICAS EHWP via your toll-free number or the ICAS On-the-Go App to seek counselling support.*

Toll-free:

*(from land and mobile phones)*

Or request a call back: **\*134\*905#**

Company App Code:

Applicable to you and those who live under your roof

#### References:

<https://childmind.org/article/anxiety-and-coping-with-coronavirus/>  
<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Signs-your-Teen-May-Need-More-Support.aspx>  
<https://www.aap.org/en/news-room/news-releases/aap/2021/pediatricians-child-and-adolescent-psychiatrists-and-childrens-hospitals-declare-national-emergency-for-childrens-mental-health/>