



TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING WITH CHILDREN DURING SOCIAL DISTANCING

Communicating with children, their families, and caregivers looks very different during this time of social distancing. We know not all children are safe at home. As a reminder, YOU are mandated by law to report suspicions of child abuse or neglect to the Division For Children, Youth & Families (DCYF). Here are some questions/talking points that may help you check in on the well-being of children, their families, and caregivers.

ROUTINE CHECK IN

- How are you feeling today?
- How was your night?
- How can I help you today?
- Who is home to help you with learning today?
- How are you doing with our new way of learning?
- What has been working well?
- What has not been working well?
- What fun things do you have planned today?
- What else would you like to share with me today?

REASSURANCE & VALIDATION

- Acknowledge this new way of communicating feels different and that you will get through this time together.
- Send positive notes through remote communication sites or mail.
- Share that you miss communicating in person and you are thinking about them and their family.
- Share some things that have helped you during this time.

For More Information
Visit [KNOWandTELL.org](https://www.knowandtell.org)



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WELLNESS

- What did you have for breakfast? For lunch? For dinner?
- What have you been doing inside/outside during the day?
- What was the best part about your day?
- What was the hardest part about your day?
- What do you like about being home from school?
- What do you miss about not going to school?
- What have you been doing for exercise?
- How is your family? Is there anything that you or your family need during this time?
- I know you and _____ are friends, have you been able to keep in touch with each other?
- Have you been able to talk to other family members or friends during this time? How are they doing?
- Now, that you do not have to wake up early for school, how are you sleeping? Are you getting enough sleep?

OBSERVATIONS & RESPONSES

- I know you like to _____, have you been able to keep up with it?
- I've noticed/it was shared that you have been struggling, how can I help with that?
- I'm having a hard time hearing you due to background noise/I'm hearing some other noises in the background, what else is happening at your house today?
- I saw a younger/older person walk by your screen, who is home with you today?

TIPS FOR WHEN TO BE CONCERNED AND WHEN TO REPORT TO DCYF

CALL DCYF WHEN

- You've made multiple, documented attempts to reach a child/family/caregiver and they have gone unanswered/ignored, and all opportunities to make contact (i.e., phone calls, email, reaching out to emergency contacts, etc.) have been exhausted
- The child is missing from programming/appointments (after multiple, documented attempts to engage the family/caregiver)
- You've noticed unexplained bruising, welts, cuts, or other injuries on a child, adult, or caregiver
- The child presents drastically different from how they have in the past (i.e., significant weight loss, change in hygiene, behaviorally aggressive, depressed, despondent, etc.)
- You believe the child, adult, or caregiver is under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- If you saw, or it was reported to you, that there are illicit drugs/paraphernalia or other hazards that create safety concerns in the home (i.e., weapons within reach)
- There is an outcry of abuse, neglect or domestic violence

**IF YOU SUSPECT ABUSE OR NEGLECT
CALL DCYF AT 800-894-5533
FOR IMMEDIATE CONCERNS, DIAL 911**

*After reporting, complete any required organizational documentation.