



National Indian Health Board
**NATIONAL TRIBAL
COVID-19 RESPONSE**

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Talking to Youth about COVID-19

How should I talk about COVID-19?

Young children, and especially adolescents, most likely have heard varying information about COVID-19 from social media and peers. It is important to discuss the topic openly and calmly with them. While youth are not as high-risk as other age groups, they can still catch the virus. Youth can also transmit the virus to others even if they themselves are not sick, so it is very important that youth understand why the temporary disruptions they are experiencing are necessary.

When discussing the virus:

1. Be calm and reassuring.
2. Provide age appropriate information.
3. Make sure they understand what they need to do to help stop the spread of the virus.
4. Remind them of the resiliency of Native peoples, and that we will get through this.
5. Provide a space for questions, and answer them as honestly as you can without causing more fear.

Be a germ buster!

Remind your children to keep good hygiene practices like frequent hand washing, covering their mouth when sneezing and/or coughing, and trying their best to limit touching their faces.

Smart hygiene practices:

- When washing their hands, have them sing “Happy Birthday” twice, and remind them frequently to use soap, to ensure they have washed thoroughly.
- Explain covering their mouths as the “vampire cough”. When coughing or sneezing, lift up your arm and put your face into your elbow, like a vampire.

Too much spare time?

Do your best to keep a routine for the youth just as you might during time away from home or on a break from school. If you find yourself or the youth getting restless, this might be a good opportunity to use some extra time to teach them more about traditional practices like cooking traditional foods, language learning, or prayer.



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