

Recommended Conversation Starters & More

What is my child feeling?

- I have been feeling a lot of new feeling lately. How about you?
- Have you felt sad or lonely lately?
- Have you liked being at home? Do you miss school? I know I would miss school if I couldn't go.
- Do you feel okay or is there something on your mind?
- Are you feeling confused about anything? I know I am!
- Is there anything you'd like to talk about? I know there are a lot of changes happening and was wondering how you are feeling about everything?
- Are there any strong feelings that have been bother you?
- Is there anything you'd like to talk about?
- I've been feeling really ____ (pick an emotion you think is correct), what about you?

Why is my child feeling this way?

- There are a lot of things that are different. Have you noticed that?
- What things are different?
- Do you know why things are different?
- Have you heard the word Coronavirus or COVID-19? Do you know what that means?
- How are you feeling about everything?
- Do you have questions about anything that is going on?
- Do you feel like you've wanted more quality time with mom and dad? Do you know why?
- Let's brainstorm why you've been feeling _____. We can draw a picture or just talk.

You've identified your child's specific emotions when you can complete this sentence: "My child feels _____, because_____."

How can we develop a plan to help you feel better?

- I hear that you are feeling _____ because _____. I want to help you feel better and was wondering if you had any ideas?
- Do you have an ideas for how you can feel better?
- I know when I miss my friends something that helps me is doing an activity that me and my friends do!
- Even though we can't see _____, or go _____ we can still do other fun things. Is there something special you'd like to do that would help you feel better about _____.

A few more strategies:

- Always give plenty of processing time. This can mean giving children up to a whole minute to contemplate their answer before repeating a question or trying to move the conversation along. Don't work harder than your kids!
- Give choices when kids get stuck. For example, if they can't answer the question "How are you feeling?" You can repeat the question with choices and say "Are you feeling sad, or happy?"
- Use yourself and your feelings as an example. Try to put yourself in your child's shoes and give "personal" examples to help encourage your child's communication.