

**Tips for helping children who must be at home instead of school**  
**www.projectreassurance.pitt.edu**

**General Suggestions**

- Be sure that teachers and caregivers know how trauma affects children and teenagers. This information is available from [Project Reassurance](http://www.projectreassurance.pitt.edu). Teachers and other adults can be more helpful and patient if they know the reactions to expect.
- Children who are suddenly changing school routines have a lot on their minds and may not remember well. Be patient. You may need to explain things over and over.
- Write down important information. This allows children and their families to reread the ideas. This helps with memory, especially for those also struggling with learning and emotional problems.
- Try to find out if there are reminders that upset the child or teen. For example, you can ask, "Sometimes people who have been through a scary event can get scared or upset all over again, even when they are safe. Can you help us to know what reminds you of the news about the virus? That way, we can try to prepare you for these reminders or not have them happen."
- Let children know that you understand that they may feel overwhelmed and scared by all the changes. Tell them that the adults who take care of them will help them get used to the new way of doing school. Show children that it is okay if they feel confused or don't understand something.
- If possible, plan a time when students can "meet on-line" with their teachers. Ask the teachers to explain how the on-line classroom works.
- Introduce the child to a helper whom the child can call at any time to talk. This might a relative, neighbor, friend, or volunteer.
- Tell children that it is okay to talk about their experiences with other children, but they don't have to if it makes them uncomfortable.
- Tell children some happy things about going to school from home. "You don't have to wear your uniform." "It's like being on tv!" [If the child can see others or be seen by the teacher.] "You can have a snack while you are in school!" "Your stuffed animal [or doll] can go to school with you!"
- Help the child find a special place to plug in their device and work on their lessons. "Let's make a sign to show people where you will do school!"
- If children like to write or draw, invite them to share their ideas about this new way of doing school.