

▲ Coronavirus Updates

□ Coronavirus Updates

Normal life looks a lot different these days, especially in healthcare. But there is one thing that hasn't changed at Children's Colorado: Your child's health and safety are our highest priority. Kids need great pediatric care as much now as ever, and it's for that reason that we're reactivating services we temporarily suspended due to the pandemic. We are here to deliver safe, thoughtful, high-quality care for kids who need it. Learn what to expect – and all the **ways we're keeping patients safe.**

For ongoing updates, a list of open locations and how to get care virtually or in person, please see our **coronavirus resources for parents** and **resources for healthcare professionals**. For questions about visiting our locations, such as face covering requirements, inpatient visitation and outpatient appointments, please see our **visitation policies**.

10 Tips for Talking to Kids About Wildfires



When wildfires are close to home or in the news, it can cause considerable anxiety in kids. Here are 10 tips for parents and caregivers to keep in mind when talking to children about wildfires and other natural disasters:

- 1. Recognize they may be scared.** Kids age 6 and older, based on how much they know, could have big worries about wildfires, especially if there's something about the natural disaster that touches on them.
- 2. Limit kids' exposure to the media.** Parents may want to follow TV coverage, and local news trucks and helicopters are around, which can lead to repeat consumption of tragic stories and images. This can be harmful. Parents should think about viewing coverage when children are not present.
- 3. Develop and ensure open communication.** For example, use sentences like, "You sound worried," or "You look like you could be worried about ____." If the conversation doesn't go anywhere, that's fine. Parents should be honest in terms of their feelings, too; it's okay to say, "This is worrisome." Use words appropriate for a child's age.
- 4. Make this a teaching moment.** Talk to your children about why it's important to prepare and why we have agencies in place to help. Try to answer their questions about how wildfires can happen. Talk about insurance companies and how, "If we pay them a little bit every year we don't have to worry so much about not having a house if a fire destroys it."
- 5. Reassure them.** Children need to understand that, if evacuated, they won't starve and relatives or agencies will take care of them. The message should be "safety first." Parents can say, "We're going to stay safe. We can get another house; we can't get another you." Read about how to help your children stay calm during a natural disaster.
- 6. Stay calm and think ahead.** Imagine that you received the call to evacuate: what would you take? You can replace a house, but other things you cannot. Make a list of the things you can't replace and know where they are if you need to grab them quickly. Pack a suitcase ahead of time, if necessary.
- 7. Breathe deeply** from the diaphragm in adrenaline-filled moments.
- 8. Keep things as normal as possible.**
- 9.** If you're worried about your own home or community, **let kids help.** A mental health counselor in Children's Colorado's Neuropsychiatric Special Care Program gives this advice: "Parents can give their child some kind of 'helper role' in the midst of the chaos. Having a 'job' can help keep thoughts from imposing fear and worry. This job could be to update others on the status of the weather, to have a volunteer role in the shelter or to plan the next family vacation."
- 10.** If experiencing a loss, tell your kids how you **depend on other people's kindness.** Nobody's out in the cold, all alone. If there is a loss, there will be people to help and life will go on. In dealing with loss and grief, it is important to let children ask questions and to acknowledge their questions and validate their emotions. Parents need to be careful not to underestimate the loss their children are experiencing.

I want tips and advice about

topic ▼

for

age ▼

Find