

## ***Franklin County Schools***

### ***Anxiety in School-Aged Children Regarding the Coronavirus Pandemic***

#### ***Guidelines for Teachers***

***March 13, 2020***

**Facing the unknown is frightening for anyone, but even more so for children. At the present time there is much fear regarding the Coronavirus Pandemic. This information is provided to assist you in your classrooms as you interact with your students.**

Important Tips:

- **Take care of yourself** first. Children depend on the adults around them to be and to feel safe and secure. If you are very anxious or angry, children are more likely to be affected by your emotional state than by your words.
- **Children may need extra attention from you** and may want to talk about their concerns, fears, and questions. It is important that they know they have someone who will listen to them; make time for them. Refer to the guidance counselor or school nurse if necessary.
- **Talk about the Coronavirus Pandemic with your students if you feel it is appropriate** – only provide information that is **CORRECT** and age appropriate for the class. Do NOT repeat information to students that is not factual. Provide specific information:  
Example: “This is a respiratory illness spread by coughing and sneezing.” “The CDC states these symptoms appear in a few days after being exposed to someone with the disease or as long as 14 days after exposure: 1. Fever 2. Cough 3. Shortness for breath. For some people the symptoms are like having a cold; for others they are quite severe. Your parents will need to contact your health care provider for any specific concerns”
- Advise older children that everything they see/read on the internet is not necessarily factual. Tell them that the Centers for Disease Control and Alabama Department of Public Health provides the most up to date information.
- **Reassure children** of the steps that are being taken to keep them safe. Provide specific information: “We are all going to be very careful to cover our coughs and sneezes by coughing/sneezing in our elbow”. “We must all wash our hands or use hand sanitizer often”. “Everyone should try to practice social distancing – which is to stay 6 feet away from others **when possible.**” “We are keeping our classroom clean to decrease the spread of germs at school.”

More detailed information is available on the CDC website:

Talking with children about Coronavirus Disease 2019: Messages for parents, school staff, and others working with children

