

Coronavirus: How to protect our children?

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The Convention on the Rights of the Child establishes as one of its fundamental principles the best interests of the child in all decisions affecting his or her life, both in the public and private spheres. In this time of emergency, when we are all obliged to keep our children at home, here are a few recommendations. Answers, as it were, to the questions and remarks of the Italian families interviewed. Answers that could help the families everywhere to live better through the coming weeks.

"What should we tell the kids about coronavirus?"

It is recommended that the situation be explained to children in a factual manner and that they be informed about the pandemic. Without dramatizing. If they know the rules of hygiene to be respected and understand the need to apply them, they can collaborate for the common good. It is rewarding for them and gives meaning to reality. They can, for example, then share their knowledge within the family by painting small posters on the rules of protection. It is also important to encourage children to think of the people affected by the virus and to be aware of the tireless work of so many doctors and care workers. This will help them to understand that although their situation is less comfortable than before, for others in their own town it is even more difficult.

"My children, and I, too, need organizational advice to work on their homework."

It is important for children to maintain a daily routine of activities within the home. They are accustomed to the rhythm of the school, from Monday to Friday, at set times. Setting up a daily schedule can thus help them to better manage this new reality, making it closer to their school experience.

It can also be a good time to help them develop personally, so that they become more autonomous.

"We must organize ourselves in the house. And we must learn to live in a small space."

In order to live as well as possible in a small space, everyone needs their own space and time for themselves. Respecting this is essential for the well-being of children and adults alike. And it can be learned.

Perhaps this is also the time (if it is not already the case) for all family members to participate fully in the dynamics of the home. Children and adults can help with household chores, adapting them to the age of each one, of course. A child who has participated actively in the life of a household, will hopefully become an adult who knows how to take care of himself or herself.

"We are taking this special time to rediscover ourselves as a family. To start a new dialog, to share, to build our household differently."

Television and digital resources are possible activities to occupy our children's free time. But not the best and only ones. Let's take the time to talk, share family stories, practice new activities (painting, drawing, board games, card games, reading, etc.). This is a good time to renew family ties.

Difficult moments are ahead of us. We know that uncertainty can be a source of anxiety. So it is time to get back to basics. By feeling loved and protected, children will strengthen their ability to overcome difficulties and become more resilient. In this way, we prepare them to better face the future.