

Discuss Corona with your Little?

Don't avoid the subject

Children are hearing a tremendous amount. They're hearing big words that they've never heard before. For younger children that may just start with demystifying terms, like answering "what is coronavirus?" The answer: "It's a really big word but it's a scientific word for what we normally call a cold or the flu and something that's been around for a long time. Now there's a new virus and that's what everyone is talking about." For older children you may be addressing misinformation they hear from friends or on social media.

Listen first and talk second. Listen for concerns, questions and misinformation. Let your Little know you're glad they are asking you questions and sharing what is on their mind. It's a good practice to avoid the tendency to want to fill the silence when it comes to these types of sensitive conversations. If they ask a question, you answer their questions in a direct, clear and brief way and then pause and see if they have any more questions. Pause and see what happens next.

How to say, 'I don't know'

It's OK to say "I don't know," experts agree. In fact, it's important to do so. When children find out you misled them, it will undermine their trust in you.

But it appears there are more helpful ways to say, "I don't know" than just saying "I don't know." There is, "I don't know. Why don't we look that up together." This allows you to model for the child that when you don't know something, you seek out information about it. This can really enhance a sense of trust that a child has in you, knowing that you can count on your Big to tell you what they know, tell you what they don't know and then go find out the answer.

Kids can feel really comforted when you say 'you know there are so many people asking that exact question at this exact moment. We are in a community of a whole world of people, all asking that question.

Power them up

When we are all feeling pretty helpless, let's be honest, it can help children through these moments by giving them some of the power back. That can be helpful when explaining why they have to wash their hands so much, why they can't play with their friends like they normally do and it can be especially helpful with questions about grandparents and the elderly.

Empower children by saying, look we don't get very sick [from the coronavirus] but believe it or not we could still have that virus, we have to help so that not too many people get sick. That's part of our job.

That also explains the hand washing -- that keeps the germs away and the virus away.

That explains school closing -- we're trying to really keep this virus from spreading so you're not going to be with so many other people. That's why parents have to work from home now. All of those pieces can be put in the context of we're all working together.

It's important to remind them "the grown-ups are handling it," We don't have to pretend we know all the answers, but we do have to project a calm confidence that there are smart people everywhere -- doctors, policymakers, teachers -- all working together to make sure we get through this."

Source: <https://www.cnn.com/2020/03/16/opinions/telling-my-kids-about-coronavirus-bolduan/index.html>

If you prefer to share a comic with your Little exploring the coronavirus, (with the same content as above) I can recommend this one made by Malaka Gharib:

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/02/28/809580453/just-for-kids-a-comic-exploring-the-new-coronavirus>

How to help your Little learn at home while schools are closed.

As school are closed, try to find out how you can help with school work. In the coming days school will provide learning options at home. Ask your Little how you can help.

Here are some websites you might find some useful exercises you can do together:

<https://classroommagazines.scholastic.com/support/learnathome.html>

You can keep the learning going with these special cross-curricular journeys. Every day includes four separate learning experiences, each built around a thrilling, meaningful story or video

Khan Academy: <https://www.khanacademy.org/>

PBS Learning media: <https://kamu.pbslearningmedia.org/>

Additional Resources for your little:

Books:

[Free Audio Books for Kids and Teens](#)
[Read Alouds with Authors](#)

Science:

[Virtual Marine Biology Camp](#)
[Live Stream of Penguins in KC Zoo](#)
[San Diego Zoo Tour](#)
[Zoo Atlanta Panda Cam](#)
[Smithsonian National Zoo](#)
[Reid Park Zoo Lion Cam](#)
[Ouwehand Park Polar Bear Cubs](#)
[Monterey Bay Aquarium](#)
[Georgia Aquarium](#)
[National Aquarium Virtual Tour](#)
[Virtual Tour of the Seattle Aquarium](#)
[Dairy Farm Tour](#)
[National Park Tours](#)

History:

[Tour England 360 Video.](#)
[Tour Colonial Williamsburg](#)
[Ellis Island Virtual Tour.](#)
[Virtual Tour of Pompei.](#)
[Visit the Great Wall of China](#)

[NASA Live Streams](#)

Art:

[4H Online Art Camp Registration](#)

[Free Recordings of Broadway Plays](#)

[Art for Kids - Drawing Lessons](#)

[Watercolor Tutorial](#)

[Mo Willems Doodle Tutorial Live Streams](#)

[The Met is streaming free operas](#)

Exercise:

[Online Fitness Classes](#)

Ideas to stay in touch via phone/social media and how to bring some content to the meeting.

Visit a museum together! There is a way to get a little culture and education while you're confined to your home. Google Arts & Culture teamed up with over [2500 museums and galleries](#) around the world to bring anyone and everyone virtual tours and online exhibits of some of the most famous museums around the world. For example:

[British Museum, London](#)

This iconic museum located in the heart of London allows virtual visitors to tour the Great Court and discover the ancient Rosetta Stone and Egyptian mummies. You can also find hundreds of artifacts on the museum's [virtual tour](#).

[Guggenheim Museum, New York](#)

Google's [Street View](#) feature lets visitors tour the Guggenheim's famous spiral staircase without ever leaving home. From there, you can discover incredible works of art from the Impressionist, Post-Impressionist, Modern and Contemporary eras.

[National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.](#)

This famous American art museum features [two online exhibits](#) through Google. The first is an exhibit of American fashion from 1740 to 1895, including many renderings of clothes from the colonial and Revolutionary eras. The second is a collection of works from Dutch Baroque painter Johannes Vermeer.

[Musée d'Orsay, Paris](#)

You can [virtually walk through](#) this popular gallery that houses dozens of famous works from French artists who worked and lived between 1848 and 1914. Get a peek at artworks from Monet, Cézanne, and Gauguin, among others.

[National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul](#)

One of Korea's popular museums can be accessed from anywhere around the world. Google's [virtual tour](#) takes you through six floors of Contemporary art from Korea and all over the globe.

[Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam](#)

Explore the masterworks from the Dutch Golden Age, including works from Vermeer and Rembrandt. Google offers a [Street View tour](#) of this iconic museum, so you can feel as if you're actually wandering its halls.

[Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam](#)

Anyone who is a fan of this tragic, ingenious painter can see his [works up close](#) (or, almost up close) by virtually visiting this museum – the largest collection of artworks by Vincent van Gogh, including over 200 paintings, 500 drawings, and over 750 personal letters.

[The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles](#)

European artworks from as far back as the 8th Century can be found in this California art museum. Take a [Street View tour](#) to discover a huge collection of paintings, drawings, sculptures, manuscripts, and photographs.

[Uffizi Gallery, Florence](#)

This less well-known gallery houses the art collection of one of Florence, Italy's most famous families, the de'Medicis. The building was designed by Giorgio Vasari in 1560 specifically for Cosimo I de'Medici, but anyone can wander its halls from anywhere in the world.

[MASP, São Paulo](#)

The Museu de Arte de São Paulo is a non-profit and Brazil's first modern museum. Artworks placed on clear perspex frames make it seem like the artwork is hovering in midair. Take a [virtual tour](#) to experience the wondrous display for yourself.

[National Museum of Anthropology, Mexico City](#)

Built in 1964, this museum is dedicated to the archaeology and history of Mexico's pre-Hispanic heritage. There are [23 exhibit rooms](#) filled with ancient artifacts, including some from the Mayan civilization.

Sadly, not all popular art museums and galleries could be included on Google Arts & Culture's collection, but some museums are taking it upon themselves to offer online visits. The Louvre in Paris also offers virtual tours on its [website](#), but also our local galleries, like [DeGallery](#)

- **Google Arts & Culture also has an online experience for [exploring famous historic and cultural heritage sites](#).**

Games that you can (also) play over the phone/via social media

Play "Would you rather?"

This is a simple phone-based game that requires no set-up. Simply take turns thinking of would-you-rather questions and answering them. Would you rather become five years older or two years younger?

Use this link to find many example questions: <https://conversationstartersworld.com/would-you-rather-questions-for-kids/>

Play 20 questions

One person chooses a person, character, or object and the other tries to guess who or what it is by asking yes or no questions until he arrives at the answer. Technically the guesser is only allowed to ask 20 questions, but you can throw that rule out the window and just play for fun.

Play charades

All that this requires is a webcam. One of you must choose a movie (or book or song or anything you like) and act out its title silently so that the other player can correctly guess what you've chosen.

Play Battleship & grid games

Battleship wins major long-distance points for being one of the few games you can play together with the physical game. You'll need to buy one copy and mail half of the components to your Little, so that each of you has a copy of the board, colored pegs, and ships. Then you'll be able to play over the phone or on Skype. Alternatively, you can play with nothing but a piece of graph paper and a pencil. Chess, checkers, Connect Four, Quoridor, and Stratego also translate easily to graph paper.

Have list competitions

The website sporcle.com is great for having friendly trivia competitions. The many list-quizzes on the site focus on certain topics (for example, the countries of Europe, the original Pokémon, famous logos) and the goal is to list as many items within that category as possible within the given time limit. You could also do this as a pen-and-paper activity if you think of your own topics and use a timer

Play storytelling games

Ah, the ancient art of storytelling. It may feel ridiculous to sit down and tell each other stories, but it's tons of fun to weave stories together under the guise of playing a game. Some such games, like Sherlock Holmes Consulting Detective, are book-based (though expensive), and guide you through a fictional world, allowing you to direct the story based on your decisions. Other games, like the popular card game Once Upon A Time, require you to come up with the story, but gives you boundaries and inspiration in the form of keywords based around a theme. The game is affordable so you can purchase a copy for each of you and play via Skype.

Play board games online

Listing all the sites you can use to play board games would probably require another book. En.boardgamearena.com is one that has a bunch of excellent and popular games (popular in the gaming world, at least) like Hive, Coloretto, Saboteur, Jaipur, Seasons, and many more, and they are free to play. If you need more ideas, check out [here](#) for a nearly all-inclusive list of free online versions of board games

Draw each other

Your artistic skills are irrelevant to how much you will enjoy drawing your Little and vice versa. Take turns posing via webcam and drawing one another. Aim to draw a realistic portrait and just see how you do... if you're not practiced in art you'll probably end up with something really goofy looking that somewhat resembles your Little and (s)he'll draw a lopsided, squished-looking version of you. Then you can just enjoy making fun of each other. With practice, though, you can get pretty good pretty quickly.

Learn a language

If you're both sitting at the computer, you might open a language learning program and go through it together, lesson by lesson.

Hold a fitness competition

The site Fitocracy.com is an excellent tool for holding fitness competitions – with the ability to easily track every exercise you complete and give you an appropriate number of points per exercise, it makes working out feel like a real-life video game. You gain levels each time you earn a certain number of points and complete challenges, so it's very simple to compete with your Little, though the site has a special challenge feature as well.

Close Up

This activity works best for couples who have texting and media capabilities. Take really close up pictures of items you have around you. Try to make sure the object is still distinguishable from just a blob of color. Take turns sending the photos to one another and seeing if either of you can guess what the object really is.

Mystery sound

This activity also works best for couples who have texting and media capabilities. Record small 5 second snippets of random sounds or songs and send them to one another. See if either of you can guess the source of the sound, or what the sound really is.

Poetry Readings

If you are both artistically inclined, have a mini poetry reading. Share your library of poems and read them to one another.

Impersonations

Would either of you happen to be a comedian? Try some silly impersonations. You might be surprised at how good (or how awful) you both are.

Impersonate someone from a movie you're sure your Little has seen and have them try to guess what movie the character is from, or who the character is –without any hints!

Crossword puzzle swap/race

Print out a crossword puzzle from online or purchase a puzzle book from a local store. It can be the exact same puzzle, or two different puzzles that have the same amount of words to be found.

Race and see who can complete the puzzle first. Compile photo evidence and text it to one another.

Conversation Cubes

When conversation becomes slow, whip out your trustee conversation cubes! These can be homemade. You can make as many as you want.

Place random conversation topics on each side, and toss them around to see what your topic for the day is. Try movies, TV shows, previous conversations, music, something random, etc.



Thanks to:

<http://www.ldrmagazine.com/19-fun-activities-ideas-talking-phone/>

<https://www.escapenormal.com/long-distance-relationship-activities-the-ultimate-list/>

<https://www.travelandleisure.com/attractions/museums-galleries/museums-with-virtual-tours>