

Due to increased concern in the community about the spread of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), Rockland BOCES has developed this guide so that parents and guardians have accurate information regarding the illness, how to protect your child and what to do if you suspect a possible case.

Coronavirus is a new respiratory illness that originated in Wuhan, China. It is being closely monitored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Reported illnesses of COVID-19 have ranged from infected individuals with little or no symptoms to individuals who are critically ill.

■ WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT CORONAVIRUS:

The symptoms include mild to severe respiratory illness with:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing

Having these symptoms alone does not mean that someone has the virus. Symptoms may appear in as few as two days or as many as 14 days following exposure. According to the CDC, the greatest risk of infection is to individuals who may have traveled to China.

There are currently no specific treatments for COVID-19. However, preventive measures are similar to other respiratory viruses, such as seasonal flu.

■ WHAT ARE SEASONAL FLU SYMPTOMS?

Seasonal flu symptoms may include a cough, sore throat, fever, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headaches, chills, feeling tired and may include vomiting and diarrhea. Some people with the flu may not experience all these symptoms.

■ WHAT IF MY CHILD HAS THESE SYMPTOMS?

- Contact your pediatrician or medical professional
- Don't wait for symptoms to worsen!
- Parents/guardians are advised to keep children home when sick. **Do not return to school until your child is fever free for 24 hours without using fever-reducing medication.**

■ HOW CAN I PROTECT MY CHILD?

- According to the CDC, proper handwashing with soap and water is one of the best ways to prevent illness.
- Demonstrate proper handwashing for 20 seconds. Visit [cdc.gov/handwashing/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/index.html) to watch a video on proper handwashing.
- Demonstrate to your children how to cover their nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. They should throw away the tissue after each use and wash hands. If a tissue is not available, **THEY SHOULD NOT USE THEIR HANDS.** They should cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve.
- Children should avoid touching their eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- If possible, avoid people who are sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects.

■ TIPS ON FRAMING THE “CORONAVIRUS CHAT” WITH YOUR CHILD

- Monitor the information your child is receiving
- Explain what's going on at their developmental level
- Put the outbreak in perspective
- Give children a sense of personal action (i.e. teaching children how to wash hands regularly and sneeze into tissue/elbow provides a sense of control over their bodies)
- Use the opportunity to explain why it's important to stay home if you feel sick

VISIT [CDC.GOV](https://www.cdc.gov) FOR THE LATEST CORONAVIRUS INFORMATION.