

TIPS FOR PARENTS KEEPING YOUR STUDENTS SECURE

We are all feeling the impact of this difficult time. Our children are feeling the same mix of emotions without the life skills that help us work through them. The following advice is adapted from *Helping Children Feel Secure During Uncertain Times* by Stanley I. Greenspan, M.D.

What can parents do to help their children feel safe?

Spend time together as a family. Children need to trust. That means they need enough time with you to feel the world is safe and he/she is protected. That begins with parents.

Express feelings. Help your children express their feelings and concerns. It will take time and patience. Listen and reflect back what they are saying. For all of us, it helps to know that someone hears what you are saying.

Provide reassurance. Children need to feel secure. The reassurance needs to be couched in realistic terms. Children will want to know what you are doing for them as a parent to make them feel protected, so it is important to go through the steps you are taking at home first. Then explain to them what the government is doing in terms they can understand. This will help children from being shocked, surprised, or confused by what changes they see.

Contribute and help others. We all benefit by helping others in need. Small and large efforts can make children feel more secure and not helpless. When children (and adults) are involved and doing something positive and constructive, everyone gains energy and confidence.