

# We All Need to Help Protect Children During Covid-19

COVID-19 has turned everyone's lives upside down. The isolation has caused many families to lose their support networks, which has been especially stressful for families with children. As a result, some children may be at higher risk of harm. Others may not be safe because there isn't a responsible adult who can watch or take care of them.

**Calls to the Fairfax County Child Protective Services' (CPS) Hotline have dropped 62% from 498 during the first week of March to only 192 the last week of June.**

The drop in calls to the hotline began as soon as children had limited contact with teachers, counselors, school social workers, child care providers and others who normally keep an eye out for signs of abuse and neglect.

Right now, community partners like **you can help to keep eyes on children** who may be experiencing abuse or neglect.



## How can you help protect a child?

### Our CPS HOTLINE (703-324-7400) is a HELP Line

- **If a child is in immediate danger or is under the age of 7 and unsupervised, please call 911** for an immediate response.
- **If you have concerns about a child's safety, please call the Fairfax County Child Protective Services (CPS) Hotline at 703-324-7400**, 24-hours, 7 days a week to make a report or discuss your concern.

### If something doesn't look safe, sound safe, or feel safe – report it!

- **Ask open-ended questions** – If you suspect abuse of a child you know, be intentional in conversations with them, i.e.:
  - What's the best part of being home and what's the worst part of being home?
  - If there was one thing you could change about being home what would it be?
  - It's a scary time right now in the world, do you feel safe at home?
- **Signs of abuse or neglect** – Be on the lookout when interacting with children in person, on the phone, or online for changes in:
  - Behavior – Evasive answers, mood changes, seeming uncomfortable, frightened, or withdrawn
  - Physical appearance – Marks, bruises, changes in weight, hygiene, or attire
  - Supervision – A lack of responsible, age-appropriate supervision
  - Environment – Safety hazards in the home, rodent or insect infestations
  - Engagement – Changes in interaction with others or participation.

[Learn more](#) about what to consider if you suspect child abuse, how to make a report, and resources to help.

**Help a child and their family get support. Please share this information with others who may come into contact with children.**

[View this information in browser](#)

(Check back soon to access translations of these documents online.)



FAIRFAX COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF  
**FAMILY SERVICES**



Where a TTY number is not indicated, use 711/Virginia Relay. Reasonable accommodations provided upon request, call 703-324-7758.