

What parents can do to prepare the child and themselves for possible hospitalization during the COVID-19 epidemic

The epidemic affects the family life in various ways. The general rule is to inform children in the age-appropriate manner and to provide them calmly with the sense of encouragement and relief. Children should be told the truth so that they understand what is happening and prepare themselves for the changes that will follow. When life becomes unpredictable, children need help to adapt to changes.

As parents, you have the right to:

- Stay with your child at home during the epidemic, or to be hospitalized together whenever that is possible and in line with health/medical indications (whether you or the child need hospitalization).
- Make sure that, in case you need hospitalization, your child is primarily accommodated in a familiar environment (at home, with relatives, friends, etc.) and that you, as the parent, are the main source of information about what can be good for the child.
- Know where your child is and how they are doing, to stay in touch with them, and that both you and your child are supported for that.
- Have the information on all legal procedures being taken to protect your child and their rights.
- Continue your direct childcare as soon as possible.



Tell your child:

- that you, just like other family members (grandparents) are strong, and that you will continue doing everything in your power to stay safe and healthy.
- that you are prepared to keep them and the family members as safe as possible.
- that many people are working on solving the epidemic problem
- that many people will get sick and that some will be hospitalized.
- that you or your child may be taken for treatment.
- that you will stay with them as long as you can.
- that you and the people in charge will do everything you can to make sure that:
 - you are not separated / you stay together
 - they are in a safe place if you cannot stay together in case you need to go away for treatment
 - you have news about each other as soon as possible
 - you are together as soon as possible.

Prepare yourself and your child for the possible hospitalization

- Pack the necessary things for possible hospitalization for you and your child. Make sure you pack your child's favourite thing or toy, their medical documentation, prescribed therapy, pictures of family members and pets, or similar. Don't forget to bring chargers for your electronic devices.
- Make a list of trusted people (conjugal family, relatives, friends, neighbours) who can provide care or help and support during the possible separation. The list should contain the names of these people, information on the types of relationship to you and your child, phone numbers, email addresses, contacts on social networks and other useful information.
- Talk to your relatives, friends, neighbours about the things related to the possible hospitalization.
- Keep all the contact information in your phone, computer and on paper for you and your child, if the child uses a phone or computer.
- Make a list with information about prescribed medications, medical treatments, allergies, eating habits and your child's behaviour (especially how to get them to calm down and fall sleep). That list should also contain the information on contacting other persons familiar with your child's needs and habits (a relative, friend, teacher, therapist, doctor, etc.).
- Involve your child in preparation and packing.
- Talk to your child about possible options.
- Let your child know who they can turn to for help and how.
- Tell your child they have the right to ask questions, seek help or tell the adults taking care of them how they feel and what matters to them.