



Child Protection Case Management Task Force Lebanon
Guidance for Child Protection Case workers to share with Children or Caregivers on COVID-19
Preventive Safety Measures when doing Case Management Work
March 2020

Child Protection COVID -19 DropBox [LINK](#)

As a Child Protection (CP) Case Worker (CW) during the COVID-19 outbreak, it's important to actively share **simple scientific**¹ and clear information with, children, their caregivers and community members regarding ways they can better protect themselves and their loved ones during the outbreak of COVID-19.

This guidance note focuses on **how to explain concepts around how to take safety precautions to protect others and yourself**. The information in this guidance is to be utilized whilst doing case management follow-up in person or remotely. This can be utilized:

- As a standalone with a family which you may deem very vulnerable and has not received the necessary information;
- As part of regular cases management follow-up.

Note: *In Italic below is the script of what to say to the children, caregivers or the community members, in non-italic some actions you can take as a case worker to mitigate risks.*

1. WHO SHOULD I TARGET FIRST?

Prioritize the most vulnerable children and families in your case load first, this can be done in line with case management guidance. Criteria for prioritization for Awareness sessions by phone or in person includes (in a no specific order):

- Children in your case load assessed as high risk
- Street connected children who are mobile including children who collect garbage
- Working children in all forms of labor
- Unaccompanied and separated children
- Children with disabilities
- Child survivors of gender-based violence
- Children experiencing mental health concerns
- Children with caregivers experiencing mental health concerns
- Children who are head of household
- Children with someone in their household with a chronic disease (details listed below)
- Children in your case load living in overcrowded conditions which may increase risk of transmission if they are aren't aware of prevention or response immediately.

¹ *Please note the content was adapted from the *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC website)* and *World Health Organization (WHO)*, for the information to be helpful for case workers visiting households and raising awareness to caregivers in Lebanon regarding the potential impact of COVID-19 on children.

2. CONDUCTING HOUSE VISITS

Whether or not you conduct a house visit will very much depend on the Government of Lebanon's (GoL) directive at the country and local level, as well as your organizations safety and security rules whilst taking into consideration the severity of the case.

When it is deemed safe by the GoL and your agency to conduct house visits, then it is recommended to:

- 1.) **Prior to conducting any visit and every time you speak to a family** on the phone, inquire whether someone in the family is unwell. **If someone in the family is unwell, do not conduct the house visit and advise and support them to call the Ministry of Public Health's hotline 76-592699** or any other Health service provider as per the updated referral pathways.
- 2.) **During your visit apply and EXPLAIN all the following to the family and why you are taking these precautions and why they should.**
 - a) **Maintain social distancing:** maintain at least 1-meter (3 feet) distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing.
EXPLAIN that as recommended by the World Health Organization when someone coughs or sneezes, they spread small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus if the person coughing has the disease.
 - b) **Wash/sanitize the hands before, during and after every visit:** Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water.
EXPLAIN washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub kills viruses that may be on your hands.
 - c) **Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth before, during and after the visit**
EXPLAIN Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and can make you sick.
 - d) **Practice respiratory hygiene:** Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately.
EXPLAIN droplets spread virus. By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19.
 - e) **Wear a mask (new one for every visit) but make sure you apply the following:**
 - Before putting on a mask, clean hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.
 - Cover mouth and nose with mask and make sure there are no gaps between your face and the mask.
 - Avoid touching the mask while using it; if you do, clean your hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.
 - Replace the mask with a new one as soon as it is damp and do not re-use single-use masks.
 - To remove the mask: remove it from behind (do not touch the front of mask); discard immediately in a closed bin; clean hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.**EXPLAIN** that you are wearing a mask because of your role and job, but that if you are healthy:
 - You only need to wear a mask if you are sick, coughing or sneezing and if you are caring for a person who is sick or with suspected COVID-19.
 - Masks are effective only when used correctly and in combination with frequent hand-cleaning with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.

Please note:

- **If you feel unwell, do not conduct the house visit and do not go to work and stay home.** If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention and call in advance. **IF** it is confirmed that you have COVID -19, all members of your household should remain in quarantine for at least 14 days. This is a measure that protects yourself, your family and your community.

3. HOW DO I REACH CHILDREN IN MY CASE LOAD NOW IF I CAN'T CONDUCT HOUSE VISITS?

- If given the directive by the GoL to cease all movements around the country, it is crucial that **CP agencies prioritize contacting families by phone to do case management and if appropriate raise awareness on COVID-19.**

4. SCRIPT TO USE WHEN VISITING and/ or CONTACTING FAMILIES BY PHONE FOR SPECIFIC COVID-19 MESSAGING:

Please note **only begin conducting the awareness session with the parent/caregiver first if appropriate.** It is important that child protection case workers, consider whether the parent/caregiver is present, whether they are likely to share the information with children in their care and whether they are likely to take the necessary precautions. If based on your experience you are aware that the parent/caregiver is absent and unlikely to take measures to protect the child receiving case management, please conduct the immediately next person able to take the necessary health precautions for the child, and community. In some cases, this may be the child who you are supporting.

Hello, this is _____ from _____. Is this a good time for a call?

Do you have around 20 minutes for me to go through some points with you about the COVID - 19 Virus?

News about the COVID - 19 virus is everywhere, we realize that for some this may be overwhelming, but we want you to know that we are here to support you and ensure that you have the right information.

At this time the GoL, the United Nations and civil society organizations (such as, insert name of your organization) are all trying to follow both the recommendations of Health experts to remain indoors and limit all movements including participation in social events such as gatherings amongst friends, for weddings, funerals, sports etc. The reason we are all being asked to do this is to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in order to protect the most vulnerable in all our communities. Your municipality (through the municipal police officers) and community leaders may have asked you to do the same, and this is applicable to everyone regardless of nationality or background.

As the parent/female or male caregiver of (child/children's names, it's important that you are comfortable with the information on COVID - 19 so that you are prepared to take measures and know how to manage a situation where someone in your community or household is suspected case or falls ill with COVID - 19 .

This is a lot of information to take in (and sharing this information over the phone is not ideal) but given the circumstances this is the best we can do right now. I am happy to support you to conduct an awareness session with (child/children's names) and your other children but would like to start with you first.

As part of our awareness campaign during COVID-19, we want to make sure that you as a family have the most up to date information about COVID-19. We are also learning about COVID-19 so will make sure that when we receive updates, we will share them with you. We would like to share with you:

- 1) Practical prevention measures you **can implement yourself, in your family and community**
- 2) **Whom to contact** if you, someone in your family, or community develops flu like symptoms: fever, tiredness, cough, difficulty breathing or muscle pain

- 3) What to consider as a family and with members of your community **different measures you can take to prepare** in case someone falls ill or is ill in your household

ASK: Can you tell me a little about what you have heard about COVID-19 and from whom?

Note: Take the time to listen to the caregiver or child to assess whether they have received sufficient/accurate information. Depending on whether they are well briefed and/or feel that they have sufficient /accurate information and to refine misconceptions you can go onto explain the following about the COVID - 19 virus.

EXPLAIN again: I will do, my best to share the information that we have received from globally reliable health sources, such as the World Health Organization. **I am not a healthcare professional**, and information is constantly being updated. Please do ask me any questions and I want you to know if there is something that I am not sure about, I will get back to you after checking with an official source.

First, let me explain what COVID-19 is: **COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus after an outbreak in China.**

I will now EXPLAIN HOW COVID-19 IS TRANSMITTED, COVID-19 is transmitted:

- **People can catch COVID-19 from others who have the virus.** The disease can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth which are spread when a person with COVID-19 coughs or exhales. These droplets land on objects and surfaces around the person.
- **Other people then catch COVID-19 by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth.**
- **People can also catch COVID-19 if they breathe in droplets from a person with COVID-19 who coughs out or exhales droplets.** Hence, it is important to stay at least 1 meter (3 feet) away from a person who is sick.

It is therefore important to wash your hands, clean surfaces and maintain social distancing to prevent spreading of the diseases.

I will now EXPLAIN PHYSICAL/SOCIAL DISTANCING:

- Right now, one of the most immediate and important measures that all of your household should take **is to avoid groups of people and overall gatherings, and also events like weddings, funerals, birthdays etc.**
- **We therefore need to maintain at least 1-meter distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing.** Why? When someone coughs or sneezes, they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus if the person coughing has the disease. This is important to protect everyone in your family and especially those who may be more at risk such as those who have chronic illnesses.
- The reason this is important is to protect your family but also **to help prevent the spread of COVID-19** to protect the community at large, **this way we also don't overburden health systems.**
- This means for example that only one household member goes to buy food and when going out keep a distance with others and try to not stand in line close to others when for example paying for food.
- If you have high risk people in your household and can find a way of physically/socially distancing them that would be ideal, if not try and ensure basic hygiene practices.
- Note that because some people do not have any of the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 they may not know they have it but pass it to others who are most vulnerable, this is why social distancing is key even if you are feeling well. COVID-19 has "incubation period", this means the time between

catching the virus and beginning to have symptoms of the disease. Most estimates of the incubation period for COVID-19 range from 1-14 days, most commonly around five days.

I will now EXPLAIN possible SYMPTOMS of COVID 19, key symptoms include:

- (1) 🤒 Fever
 - (2) 😴 Tiredness
 - (3) 🤧 Dry cough
 - (4) 🫁 Difficulty breathing
- **Fever, tiredness, dry cough.** Some patients may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhea.
 - These symptoms are **usually mild and begin gradually.**
 - Some people become infected but don't develop any symptoms and don't feel unwell.
 - **Most people (about 80%) recover from the disease without needing special treatment.** Around 1 out of every 6 people who gets COVID-19 becomes seriously ill and develops difficulty breathing.
 - **Older people, and those with underlying medical problems** like high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes, **are more likely to develop serious illness.** People with fever, cough and difficulty breathing should seek medical attention.
 - **If you are not feeling well, it is key that you contact Ministry of Public Health's hotline 76-592699 and they will also explain to you how to reach the closest health service provider while decreasing the change of you spreading the disease.**

I will now EXPLAIN a list of PRECAUTIONS to take especially regarding taking care of others in your household:

- *In case someone in the house is sick please make sure they contact a healthcare provider to ask about obtaining extra supply of medication. Explain that whilst it may be challenging to obtain, encourage them to have the discussion with the health provider by phone if possible, or support them by reaching out to their health care provider through a referral. It is important to have a supply of their medication in case they need to stay home for a long period of time.*

Note: If the family has not been able to access the necessary medication, please take note and include this in a list of referrals to the relevant Health actor present in the locality. Please obtain their consent, and flag this to your supervisor or relevant focal person in your organization (for referrals).

-Please always refer to credible resources from WHO' s Q&A: <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses> **and the WHO mythbusters:** <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/myth-busters>

-Please note that all Effective Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials are developed for COVID-19 Lebanon outbreak which target both Adults and Children at CP COVID-19 Dropbox

-Please note should your agency require additional guidance for child protection case workers, kindly inform the National Child Protection Case Management Task force leads:

- Sara.mabger@rescue.org
- Monica.Martinez@savethechildren.org

Or the Child Protection in Emergencies Working Group (CPiEWG) lead:

- jatwi@unicef.org