

## Talking to kids about scary news

**T**he world can be a scary place, especially if you're a kid. Clowns, birds, what's under the bed — you name it, children are often afraid of it. But there's also bigger dangers in the world, as TV and online news shows. When your kids are exposed, how do you talk to them about it? What can you say to satisfy them, without giving them too much information?



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### Tips on talking to your kids:

**1** News on TV and online can be pretty scary. You should monitor how much news reaches your children. If you limit what they are hearing and seeing, you can stop them from becoming overly afraid.



**2** When your child is exposed to scary news, talk to them about what they've seen or heard. Ask "What do you think is going on?" and "What do you know about this?"

**3** Clear up their misconceptions, but don't overwhelm them with heavy ideas about politics or death. Speak at a level they can easily understand, but also be truthful and direct with them.

**4** On rare occasions, you and your child might be part of scary news, such as having to evacuate your neighborhood due to flooding from a storm. Reaffirm that everything is OK. Both of you will be home soon and life will be back to normal.

**5** Be honest and reassuring in scary situations. Always stick with the positive.



>> For more information on talking to kids, visit [www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org).