MENTAL HEALTH
Talking with your children

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF FIRST. Children depend on the adults around them to feel secure. If you are anxious or stressed it is likely your children will be more affected by your emotional state than by your words. Find someone you can trust or a professional counselor to share your own worries.

LISTEN. Begin by asking your child what they have heard and what they have understood. While your child shares, make a mental note of misinformation and their fears and worries. Each child is different, so take cues from your child about the amount of information to share.

PAY ATTENTION to what your children are watching on television, the internet and social media, especially younger children. If your children watch the news, try to watch it with them and take the opportunity to discuss what they are seeing and how you and your children feel about it.

SHARE your feelings with your children in a manner appropriate for their age. This is an opportunity for you to show them how to respond to stressful news and situations, especially if you talk opening about the negative repercussions for many immigrant families.

PROJECT security and strength to your children to reassure them and quiet their fears.

Do you need professional counseling? CONEXIÓN AMÉRICAS can refer you to counselors. Call us at (615) 320-5152.
FAMILY PLAN

In these times of uncertainty for many immigrant families, the most important actions we can take are to be informed and be prepared with a Family Plan, which should include the following:

**LIST OF EMERGENCY CONTACTS**
Create a list of emergency contacts for your family. Share a copy with your children and relatives, with your children’s school and other trusted friends.

**CHILD CARE PLAN**
In case you are detained, prepare a Power of Attorney for Care of a Minor Child. This document allows a non-parent guardian to enroll the child in public school, make medical decisions and make other important decisions for the minor. Inform the school of the name and contact information for the authorized person.

**POWER OF ATTORNEY**
Assign a Power of Attorney to a relative or trusted friend so they can manage your properties and accounts if you are detained.

**DUAL NATIONALITY FOR YOUR CHILDREN**
If your children were born in the United States, seek double citizenship from the country of origin of the parents if possible. Contact your country’s consulate for more information.

**IMMIGRATION DOCUMENTATION**
It is the law that all non-citizen residents 18 and older carry all valid immigration documents issued by the United States with them at all times.

**KNOW YOUR RIGHTS**
Educate yourself and your family about your rights if you encounter police or immigration.

- **Stop and think twice if someone comes to your door. Normally you do not have an obligation to open the door to anyone. Immigration or police cannot enter your home without a warrant signed by a judge.**
- **Remain silent.** Immigration may use anything you say against you in court.
- **Remain calm and do not run.** Use your phone to take photos and notes about the raid.
- **Ask to speak to your lawyer and think twice before signing anything.** Do not sign documents that you do not understand or do not want to sign.
- **Ask if you are free to leave during an encounter with the police or immigration when you are unsure if you are being detained.**

**FILE OF IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS**
Organize a file with all of your important documents and keep it in a safe place. Use the “My family plan” checklist at the right.

**AVOID FRAUD**
Do NOT use anyone advertised as a public notary (notario público). In the U.S., notaries are not lawyers and cannot give legal help.

- **Consult a lawyer** or Department of Justice (DOJ) Authorized representative.
- **Require the following information from the provider:** Credentials, a contract and how much you will pay, copies of your contract and all papers filed for your case, and payment receipts signed and dated by the provider in your preferred language.
- **Keep originals in a safe place** at home, and bring copies of any requested documents to your legal counsel.

**My Family Plan**

- [ ] Emergency Contacts
  - Name ____________________________
  - Phone ____________________________
- [ ] Immigration Lawyer
  - Name ____________________________
  - Phone ____________________________
- [ ] Power of Attorney for Care of Minor(s), prepared for:
  - Name ____________________________
- [ ] File with all of these documents:
  - [ ] Power of Attorney for Care of Minor(s)
  - [ ] Passports from parents’ country of origin
  - [ ] Children’s passports
  - [ ] Birth Certificates
  - [ ] Registration of Birth (for children born in the U.S. but registered with the parents’ country of origin)
  - [ ] Social Security/ITIN cards
  - [ ] Immigration Cards/Alien number
  - [ ] Driver’s License or other identification cards
  - [ ] Marriage License
  - [ ] Documents that prove you have resided in the United States more than two years (for example tax records, birth certificates of children born in the U.S., or school records)

**Message from Dr. Adrienne Battle**
Interim Director
Metro Nashville Public Schools:

Metro Nashville Public Schools has bright students from all countries and backgrounds, and it is our job to ensure they receive an excellent education. We commit to being a welcoming place that provides a safe and supportive environment for students and families.