

Distance Learning Tips for Parents and Caregivers

1. Set a schedule - Routine will be key

Make a schedule that fits with the circumstances in your home - parents' work schedule, activities outside the home, mealtimes, etc. Once you settle on a schedule that works, explain it to everyone and stick to it. The amount of time a child should spend on independent study will vary with age. Remember that these are not traditional eight-hour school days. Do the best that you can do with the time that you have.

[Sample Schedule Elementary](#)

[Sample Schedule Middle School](#)

[Sample Schedule High School](#)

2. Be prepared everyday

Have a plan for each day. Know what your child will need to complete their work. This does not just include pens/pencils, paper, printouts, websites... this also means know their assignments or what they need to do. It can be very stressful for you and your child to try to figure this out on the spot.

3. Create a learning spot

This may not be easy. If they are tucked away in their room, it might be difficult to check in with them. If they are at the kitchen table, depending on the child or their environment, they may be too distracted. This is even more challenging when everyone is home and the house is full. Find a spot where they can focus and distractions are at a minimum. Sometimes light background music can help with distractions.

4. Help them understand

How this happens is complicated and varies greatly from student to student and grade level to grade level and content area to content area. Sometimes it may be a matter of simply sitting with your child, while other times it's going to likely require that you learn alongside your child-or even learn it first yourself, and then review it with them after. Helping your child understand the material can be overwhelming and sometimes frustrating. Do your best and take breaks when needed. You could also consider a reward system to foster better focus as needed. Be open to the fact that not all days and or lessons will go well. Be kind to yourself (and your child).

5. Check for completion

Know what the assignments and tasks are for each day. If any work is incomplete - and is incomplete for a good reason - you should make a plan for the next steps (e.g., email the teacher asking for clarification on the activity so that you can turn it in tomorrow by noon).

6. Maintain good communication

Check for messages or help your child check for messages each day from teachers and/or other students. Be sure to reply to any messages that require a reply in a timely manner. If your child is having a hard time with something, good communication with the teacher will be very helpful.

7. Identify the barriers

The idea here is to identify precisely why your child might be struggling: Is it focus? Motivation? Too much or too little structure? Do they need a hug or finger-wagging or for you to sit with them? And if it's a knowledge deficit, exactly what do they not understand? When students say, 'I don't get it,' the first step is to identify exactly what 'it' is-and this isn't always easy. Most students don't know what they don't know. That's why you (and an internet full of resources) are there to help them.

8. Implement brain breaks

A quick internet search will provide multiple options for "brain breaks" during learning time to give your child - and his or her brain - a break. These range from stretching to simple exercises to video-led activities. A brain break only takes a few minutes and can help relieve frustration and "reset" your child's brain for better focus.