

Surviving the transition into In-Home, On-Line, Remote Learning

Times are changing. As concern grows around the COVID-19 virus, many education leaders are making the difficult decision to close schools. Our District has made that decision. In this article you will find some ideas on how to navigate through this change and survive the transition into in-home, on-line, remote learning.

You are probably asking yourself, “What will the kids do all day?” It is one thing to entertain them all day during the weekends and it is another when you have seven days a week to fill for an indefinite period of time - while holding them accountable for completing their school work and assignments via remote learning. Following you will find some tips to help you survive the transition:

The first tip for a successful transition is to create a routine.

Kids are used to following a schedule, so making a blueprint for each day of the week will help everything run a little smoother. The goal is to keep kids busy and learning while allowing you to get other things done. You can do this!

Start with their school routine. You can start by using the school schedule as the framework and honor what had been your child’s routine. Since you will be implementing your own routine, there is room for flexibility. You might want to consider the following:

When are they used to having breakfast and lunch?

When are they used to having recess?

How long are the typical class periods?

How long are they able to focus during classes?

When creating your child/children’s’ remote learning routine, you can base it on when your child/children work best. You have room to be flexible while providing enough structure to help them be successful in managing their moods, reducing their anxiety and performing academically.

Things You Can Do to Create a Routine That Works:

➤ Create a daily routine, not a schedule.

Need to run some errands? Need to work? You have the flexibility to do what you need to do without feeling the constant need to catch-up. Since all assignments will be expected to be submitted by Sunday – it would be helpful **to follow up every Saturday or Sunday, to ensure your child/children have completed and submitted all required class assignments in order to receive credit.**

➤ Remove specific times.

“But what about creating a routine?” you ask. Create a routine...sure! Just leave out the times. Free yourself from having to have things done by a certain time. Life happens. School may usually happen in the mornings but some days you won’t get to it until the afternoon. Make your routine flexible so you can adjust with what is going on in life. When you create a routine without times, your kids may find freedom in not being bound by a schedule **while still knowing what is coming up next.**

➤ Now it is time to focus, use a timer.

Still need time as a motivation? Use a timer! Since the time your child or children need to complete a certain task may change, have a timer handy. When you begin a new block of time, set the timer for the amount of time you think will be needed for your child to focus and complete his or her class, an assignment, and/or a quiz/test.

➤ Add brain breaks.

Add in brain breaks, recess and other activity times to give their brain a break. Kids need as many, if not more, brain breaks than an adult. In fact, it has been recommended children engage in short lessons (as few as 20 minutes for little ones) to keep children from becoming overloaded, bored, and/or tired.

➤ **Alternate what they consider difficult subjects with easier subjects.**

Your child/children don't have to take a break after every subject; however, alternating a more challenging subject with a lighter subject, may help kids stay on task.

➤ **Most importantly, follow your natural inclinations.**

If your family does not jump out of bed running in the morning, then resist scheduling an early start to your day. Enjoy the flexibility of in-home, on-line, remote schooling and let your child work at times of peak productivity. This also means taking into consideration your children's natural schedule and the fact that they have variations (which may not match yours!). Got one early riser? Schedule his or her independent work first. Let the others get up right before group or activity time and then do their independent work after.

Take the time you and your family needs to figure out what works best for you.

Sometimes it helps to live with your plan a while before finalizing it. Get it good enough, live with it a week or two when you begin, and make adjustments as needed. Remote learning is beautiful because it allows flexibility, life/school balance and the opportunity to allow your child to work at their individual pace and time of peak productivity. **Embrace it!**