



School's Out... Now What?

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Clarifying all the Buzzwords

Distance learning/virtual learning - School systems using online resources to continue instruction. Some systems did this before the pandemic (think online college courses) and some (especially K-12) are figuring it out now. Some public school systems have been offering virtual learning for over a decade!

Homeschooling - Parent chosen and directed education at home and related environments following state requirements and guidelines. State requirements may include submitting/maintaining documentation of intent to homeschool, sample schoolwork, test scores, and completion of requirements for high school graduation, etc.

What am I doing wrong?

School's Out...Now What?

Big Idea #1: Accept and Simplify

Relax your productivity standards to a level appropriate for a worldwide pandemic.

3 self-statements that you can try:

- I am not homeschooling. I am doing my best to help my kids learn at home during a crisis.
- I am not “working from home.” I am doing my best to work at home during a crisis.
- I cannot be as productive as normal because these are not normal times. I will focus on what I can accomplish in just the next 24 hours and let go of what I cannot accomplish right now.

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Big Idea #2: Structure: Keep Calm and Structure On

For adults and kids alike, routine and predictability are calming during times of stress. If you've tried to set a schedule and your children are resisting it, here are some reminders:

- Now is not the time to clamp down and control your child's day. Now is the time to collaborate with your child on a schedule that works for the whole family.
- It is okay if your schedule does not go to plan every day. Every day is an opportunity to fine-tune what is working and eliminate what is not working.
- Your job as a parent is not to recreate an eight-hour school day. Your job is to help your child feel safe and do their best with the distance learning plan the teachers have provided.

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Big Idea #3: Support Connection and Emotional Regulation

“In stressful times, *children will be protected if they are connected.*”

3 Self-Statements to Tell Yourself During a Meltdown:

- My child is not giving me a hard time; they are *having* a hard time.
- Behavior is communication, and my child is “telling” me they need support.
- The teachable moment about behavioral expectations is never in the “hot” moment. I must calm my child through empathy first.

Self care for parents is essential!!



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Big Idea # 4: Priorities: First things First

First priority = Self-care; help yourself before helping others (put on your oxygen mask!)

- Choose a self-care practice to pursue regularly (ex. gratitude journal)
- While caring for yourself, you are modeling for your child(ren) how to cope
- Remember that by being the best YOU, you can help your family best

Second priority = Family stability

- The health and safety needs of your family must be met in order for it to be possible for other needs to be met well
- Our children will be able to learn better if they are well connected to us as parents

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Big Idea #4: Priorities: First things First (continued)

Third Priority = Education

- Goals - determine what is most important for your child to learn and focus your efforts there (can use IEP, or Individualized Education Plan, goals as a basis)
- Reach out to school personnel (general and special education teachers, etc.) as appropriate for support and clarification of expectations (acceptability of modified work assignments, etc.)
- If your child needs additional instruction past the end of the usual school year, ask for ESY (extended school year).
- Trust your intuition. You know your child better than anyone else!

Strategies to Increase Motivation

- *Determine if there is a skill or a will deficit.
- *Pick realistic goals.
- *Minimize distractions in the environment.
- *Offer choice.
- *Tie work to interests when possible.
- *Break tasks into smaller, more manageable steps.
- *Intersperse easy and fun tasks into the day.
- *Provide positive recognition or access to preferred activities when finished

How do I Keep My Child on Task and Less Distracted?

- *Provide an organized work space.
- *Use visual timers.
- *Make sure there are adequate movement opportunities embedded in the day.
- *Ensure work periods are developmentally appropriate (not too long).
- *Shorten tasks to have a clear, achievable end.
- *Consider instruction or work type (synchronous vs. asynchronous, print vs. online).



Getting More Support from School

Who to ask?

Elementary Schools:

- Primary teacher
- Special Education Case Manager
- Guidance Counselor

Middle/High Schools:

- Individual teachers
- Guidance Counselor
- Special Education Case Manager
- Academic Dean (Instructional or Curriculum supervisors) - school based

Getting More Support from School

What to Ask For

- Emergency IEP
- Modified assignments
- Reduced work
- Additional individualized instruction
- *Priorities only*
 - what are the essential skills and knowledge needed
 - What does a child need to demonstrate to fulfill proficiency requirements

How do I intervene before learning frustration
becomes emotional?

When approaching a task that you know is difficult for you child, and often causes behaviors and shut down, how do you start the task to avoid/decrease behaviors to get the task done?

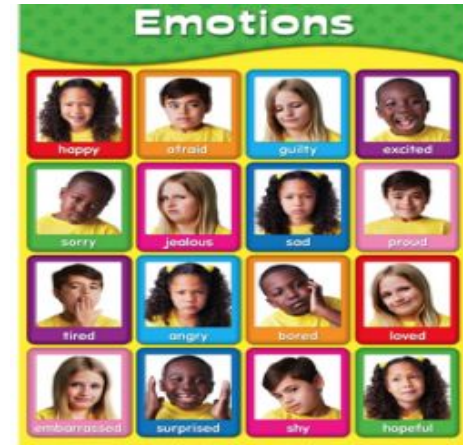
From a few questions...

What do I do when my child has a breakdown and is
crying “it’s all my fault?”

How do I redirect when my child gets into a negative
spiral? (I suck, I’m stupid)

Strategies to Support Emotional Regulation

- *Name it to tame it.
- *Validate feelings.
- *Post a calming chart. Make this collaboratively and practice *before* the meltdown.
- *Use visuals.
- *Pre-teach key concepts and modify work to reduce frustration.
- *Allow breaks.



How do I help my child to interact with peers and classmates when they aren't physically together?

How do we use this time to work on life skills and transitioning to adulthood?