

# Surviving Distance Learning

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Some tips for parents and families

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# There is no roadmap!

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- We are living in a unique time in history and all of our families and schools are being asked to do things they have never before experienced.
- We've never done this before, and no one has prepared us for this situation.
- Any provided suggestions are merely that....not requirements or expectations for you to meet.

# Important Facts

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- Your home is not a school.
- You are not expected to be your child's classroom teacher.
- You have been your child's first and best teacher for many years, and you have a lot to offer during this time.

# Learning at Home

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- Our first goal is safety! You are home to protect yourselves and your children.
- Every home is going to have their own challenges and unique factors that impact/support learning.
- Work packets and resources will be provided, but they are far from the only options for your child's learning.

# Spaces and Places

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- Provide your child with a single spot for deskwork.
  - Well lit.
  - Flat surface for writing.
  - Access to materials nearby.
  - Spaces for work in process and completed work (colored folders, for e.g.)

# Alternative Workspaces

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- Reading and research can be done in alternative settings.
  - Let your child lie on the floor (on their belly) to read and work if needed.
  - Comfy spaces for reading are great for encouraging longer times with books (magazines, graphic novels, online texts).
  - Ideally keep the child within sight or earshot.
  - Supervise and check in periodically to make sure they are where they are supposed to be.

# Alternative Workspace Tips and Pitfalls

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- Children are children
  - Be flexible with work times and allow for opportunities for movement.
  - Utilize parental controls where possible on devices, turn off internet to a device when signal is not needed.
  - Utilize devices without preferred games and websites accessible here possible.
  - Seek support from IT staff if you need advice on device controls.

# How to Help

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- When they are struggling:
  - Make supportive statements: “That sounds frustrating,” “I’m sure some of this is really hard.”
  - Be understanding about the challenge of working outside of class.
  - Asking them “how can I help?” where possible.
  - Acknowledge your role as parent and not teacher and reassure them that help is available.

# Managing Frustration

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- Acknowledge that this is hard and that their efforts are enough.
  - Write down specific notes and questions about their difficulties.
  - Consider collecting several questions during the work interval to be sent at one time to reduce the number of emails sent.
  - Don't be afraid to give the child breaks, or move to alternative activities.
  - Tell your child that frustration is normal, and that we all feel it. Tolerance for frustration is a major part of learning in all parts of life.

# Managing Frustration

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- Create a list of activities and tasks as alternatives to work packets
  - Get ideas from teachers on academic like games and tasks.
  - Provide your child opportunities to read, build, or play with items that require them to concentrate, attend, and solve problems.
  - Offer access to art activities, music, or building activities as a regular part of their school day schedule.

# Daily Tips

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- Maintain consistent sleep/wake schedules and mealtimes.
- Limit recreational screen use to similar schedule as when children are in school.
- Provide opportunities to get outside, play, and express their energies throughout the day.

# Final Thoughts

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- Do your best and forgive yourself when days don't go as you'd like.
- Take care of yourselves and model self-care to your children.
- Seek support from school social workers, your community-based supports, and families when you need it.
- You Are Not Alone!!!