



# 12 Tips

Supporting Families to Help  
Children Learn and Develop  
at Home during the

**COVID-19 Crisis**



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# 1. Take your time



- **As parents/caretakers, you know your children best; trust your instincts.**
- No need to start helping your children to learn from home on day one.
- Take time to adjust and prepare your home.
- Help children understand they will be learning in new ways for some time.
- Adopt a positive attitude and take heart that you are not alone!

## 2. Progress not perfection



- **Strive to do better today than you did yesterday.**
- Your best ideas just might not really go as planned; that's really okay!
- Be kind and patient with yourself during this time; you're doing amazing.
- There is no ready-made roadmap to address the many challenges ahead.
- Your main responsibility is to keep our families healthy and safe at this time.

### 3. Accept a new pace



- **You do not need to become a fulltime teacher and cover an entire curriculum.**
- Children are not focused on academics for the whole day in school.
- Focus on helping your children to feel safe, loved, and comfortable.
- Focus on helping children engage in learning activities that they love and enjoy.
- Remain patient with yourselves while becoming a new facilitator of learning.

## 4. Create a daily routine as a family



- **A daily routine should be a 'work-in-progress' that can always improve.**
- A daily routine should help children focus and transition to new learning tasks.
- Becoming comfortable with a new daily routine can take a few weeks.
- Develop the daily routine with all family members to gain buy-in.
- A daily routine should remain flexible, but be consistent over time to help kids.

## 5. Be mindful of attention spans



- **If you are working remotely, request your colleagues to consider shorter virtual meetings during optimal attentive learning times for your children.**
- Older children can focus on an activity for about 45 minutes to 1 hour.
- Younger children can engage in learning activities between 20-30 minutes.
- Babies and toddlers may focus on an activity for 5-10 minutes.
- Being respectful of children's needs requires being respectful to yourselves.

## 6. Get daily fresh air



- **Fresh air helps children (and caretakers) to destress, relax, and re-center.**
- Find that daily moment of breathing in fresh air as a family.
- Take short walks, play outside in front of your home, or explore new areas.
- If you can't go out, open windows or doors to let the fresh air inside.

## 7. Keep exercising



- **Physical movement is so important to maintaining everyone's health.**
- Take at least 30 minutes a day to get some sort of exercise as a family.
- Don't be afraid to be creative in new family fitness routines.
- Exercise will help you and your family members de-stress and remain positive.
- Turn up the music and go for it! Your kids will absolutely love this time with you!



## 8. Take time as parents and caretakers for yourselves



- **It is important for each parent to take time, daily, for themselves and relax.**
- Reach out to your friends, talk to family members, or simply sit back and rest.
- If possible, consider starting or participating in virtual parenting social circles.
- Remember to eat and drink regularly; meals are very important for adults, too.
- Consider learning something new just for you.

## 9. Limit screen time



- **Maintaining social connections is important and a great use of screen time!**
- Children should not be on their electronic screens for most of the day.
- If children need the electronics for their work from school, allow it.
- If they watch a movie or show, perhaps have a conversation about it afterwards.
- Keep a watchful eye on the online content that children are accessing.

## 10. Children are learning all the time



- **Children are wired to keep learning new things, all the time, anywhere.**
- "Less is more" when designing new learning activities for children.
- Enable children to independently play and explore something they love.
- Create multi-day challenges for your children to make progress on each day.
- Don't be afraid to ask your children to learn how to teach you something new.

## 11. Talk about COVID-19



- **It is important to keep talking to your children about COVID-19.**
- Give them space to tell you what they already know and what they've heard.
- Be honest and respond to their questions as best as you can.
- If you don't know the answer, that's okay; just say so and learn together.
- Take a break and build 'COVID-19 free' time into your daily routines.

## 12. Learning to be grateful for one another, together



- **Remember that the greatest lesson of all is learning to be grateful for one another.**
- Help children to reflect on what they have, rather than what they do not have.
- Invite children to write, draw, and talk about things and people they are grateful for.
- Encourage children to give 'surprise small acts of kindness' for each family member.
- Think of 'small acts of kindness' you can give to your children as 'surprise moments'.



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**Thank you.**  
Stay safe.  
Stay well.  
Stay together.

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