



Cheat Sheet For Parents Who Are Home-Schooling

Mental Health Technical Assistance Needs

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1. Management of your “classroom” is key! Designate a space for purposeful learning. That will signal to your kids to concentrate when they are in that zone ... it may be the kitchen table or a make-shift desk in the living room.
2. Make a schedule! Do your best to start at the same time each day. Consistency is extremely important, so taking time to establish a daily schedule is well worth it. Make a copy for each child and post it on your fridge or put it in their own “school box or cubby.”
3. Start with a good breakfast. Kids learn best without the distraction of a rumbling tummy! Now here’s an unpopular opinion, but think about it: don’t let the kids sleep forever and then work in their pajamas. If they get up and get dressed at regular times and take care of their daily self-care and hygiene, they’ll be less likely to go back to sleep and be lazy.
4. Make time for breaks! Small breaks can be frequent and between tasks, some breaks should be longer and more active (think situps, jumping jacks, a song and dance). Some breaks should be quiet breaks: reading, looking at books, playing a game on the computer (use a timer!), coloring, a fun project (making stained glass windows with tissue paper and tape). Some breaks should be active: take a walk if you can get outside safely, etc, dance party indoors or on the balcony or deck.
5. An example of the day might look like: wake up and play, breakfast, work, small break, work, lunch and big break, work, done for the day.
6. Check out: gonoodle.com for activities.
7. Give each child a little exclusive time with Mom/Dad for extra help or simple words of encouragement: *“I know this is really hard for your right now, but if we work together, we’ll get through it and both get a good grade. How would you like to be my teacher’s helper?”*
8. Parents, also give yourself a break! I mean a few minutes of private down-time and tell yourself, “This is not going to be perfect and no one expects it to be! Let yourself know when ‘it’s good enough’ for today.” And know that even teachers don’t have all the answers, so it’s perfectly ok to feel overwhelmed as we all transition to this kind of learning.

9. If you can, for each child, make a calendar with due dates for assignments. It's easier to see than just on a computer. Keep it in your child's folder or school box.
10. New "home-school rules: 1. Show up; 2. Do the thing; 3. Get the points; and 4. Don't suck!"
11. Have your kids make a poster of the new home-school rules, they can even make a song about it!
12. When you can, reinforce daily life skills: have them measure when cooking or baking, have them read the directions for cooking and baking, set the timer, etc., this is a math and reading lesson; have them help with a menu for the week, each child takes a day, this is a nutrition and health lesson; have them help with laundry, sorting by lights, darks, brights, and putting in the soap, folding when done, this is a home management lesson; have them help you clean, there are skills to really learn here with choosing disinfecting cleaners to use in your home, it can be their science lesson too; you can be as creative as you wish. Then reward them with special family time each day; each child chooses a day and an activity. Make sure you finish up 30 minutes before bed, so they can calm down, do their bedtime self-care and then relax into sleep.
13. If possible, ask your kids what they would like to learn during this stay-at-home time and that they might like to share with their friends.
14. I know your kids will be missing their friends. Allow 30 minutes a day for them to connect if possible and remember to set a timer. Internet traffic is at an all-time high, so do your part and observe down time with that as well.
15. Good luck! And make sure to observe any difficulties your kids have and reach out for help from their teacher/teachers/paras/therapists and for sure reach out to see how other Parents are doing this thing! Sometimes all it takes is a little support and you're back on track too!!



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