

HOW TO FACILITATE ONLINE LEARNING

*Recommendations
for Parents*

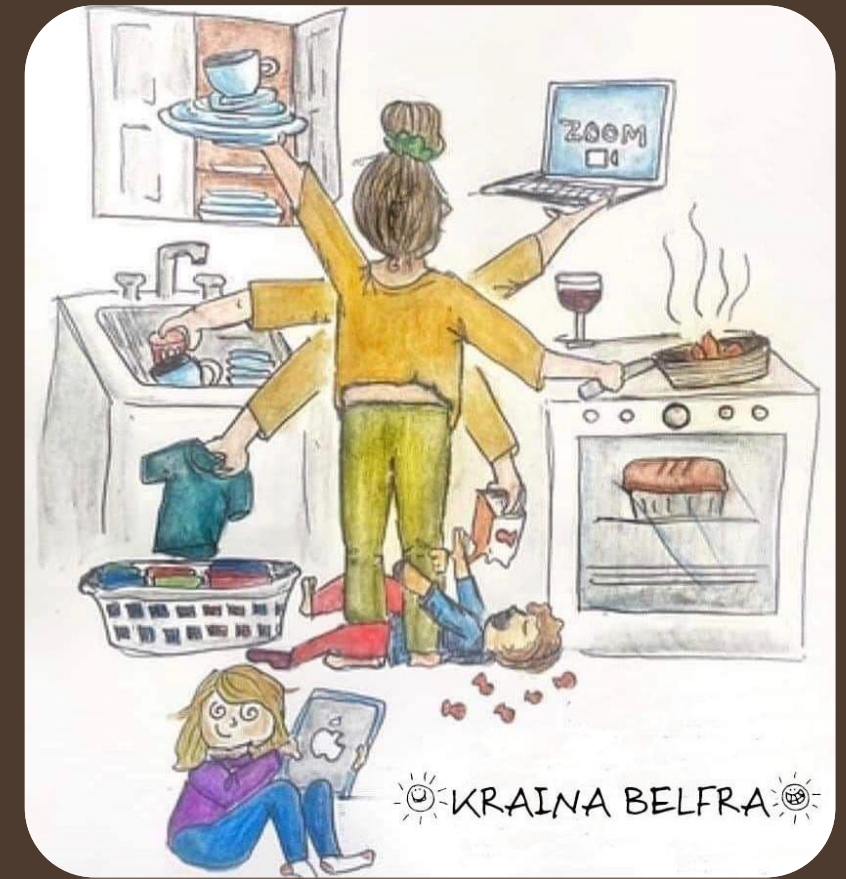
MALGORZATA “GOSIA” GUSILETOV

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- 1) Parents' concerns related to homeschooling and facilitation of online learning
- 2) Recommendations for parents
 - Self-Care
 - Taking Control
 - Consistency
 - Emotional Support
 - Alleviate Stress Reactions
 - Social connectedness in the time of Social distancing?
 - Academic Support
 - Support Within the Family
 - Striving to Perfection?
 - Seek Help
 - C.A.L.M.

WHAT HAS CHANGED WITH COVID-19?

- Parents are now forced to reorganize their home life. They also deal with many uncertainties related to their work and worries about their and their children's health. They and their children may experience anxiety, fear, or hypervigilance.
- They not only have to manage their work from home but at the same time facilitate their children's online learning – making sure that they access all necessary material to continue their education.
- Everybody's family/home situation is unique.
- **Questions – What are some difficulties the parent may be experiencing when facilitating their child online learning?**
- What recommendations the School Psychologists can make to help parents facilitate their children's online learning in the time of a global pandemic?



Not enough
electronic devices
available for all the
children in the family

Too much
screen time

Managing different
grade children at
the same time

Juggling work and facilitating
children's online learning

Not being able to explain
lesson the same way that is
expected since many parents
learned the curriculum a
different way

Difficulty finding
resources in the
abundance of the
information

Facilitating
conflicts among
siblings

PARENTS' CONCERNS

SELF-CARE/MODELING



GET SOME
EXERCISE



MAINTAIN
GOOD DIET



GET ENOUGH
SLEEP



SEEK OUT THE
PEOPLE WHO
ARE POSITIVE
AND BE THAT
PERSON FOR
OTHERS



APPRECIATE
THE
OPPORTUNITY
TO SPEND TIME
WITH THE
FAMILY –
BRING THEM
TOGETHER



CREATE NEW
TRADITIONS
IN YOUR
FAMILY

- Taking care of your own needs can help us strengthen our immune system and decrease irritability and feelings of anxiety and sadness – It builds **resiliency!**
- This will also teach the children healthy habits and coping strategies when facing a crisis.

“Your actions speak so loudly, I can not hear what you are saying.”— Ralph Waldo Emerson

TAKING CONTROL

- Research shows that preserving sense of control has psychological and physical benefits. We cannot control the virus but we can control our behaviors.
- What are the things that the parents and the children can control?
 - Following directives on how we can reduce the spread of the virus
 - social distancing, washing hands frequently and thoroughly, covering mouth, wearing a mask, isolating from others, staying home except for the essential shopping.
 - Helping others getting supplies, food,
 - Continuing daily routines,
- Children respond best when they know specific actions they can take.
- Control your worry – have a scheduled time when you talk about your worries, meditate.
- The child may have a sense of control if the parent allows him/her to make choices, e.g., what clothes to wear, what games to play.

*Dr. Lisa Shin and Dr. Samuel Sommers - Pearson Presents: Unwritten Ep 2. Psychology

*Dr. Scott Poland - Coping with COVID-19: Mental Health Tips for Children and Families



CONSISTENCY

- **Steady Schedule** – make the schedule similar to the one the children had when they were in school
 - Keep the same study area each day,
 - Make sure to know the online class schedule for the children,
 - Take breaks from electronic devices, about every 20 minutes for younger children – use timer,
 - Children may start with activities they can do on their own. When the parent is done working, he/she may help the children with other activities,
- **Create a schedule for each child**
 - Picture schedule for smaller children; older children can create their own schedule, which also will give them a sense of investment,
 - E.g., Written on a board; block schedule, clipboard checklist. Children can make checkmarks next to the task they completed. This will give them a sense of accomplishment and progress,



CONSISTENCY

- **Steady daily AND weekly schedule**
 - Differentiate week days to give children a break and reward them for their hard work during the week. They will have something to look forward to,
 - E.g., on Fridays the family has a movie night or Wednesday is a game night,
- **Make sure that the children don't think that they are on vacation because they don't have to go to a physical school**
 - Keep them busy, maintain the same responsibilities they had before, e.g., throwing away the garbage, walking the dog, making their bed,
- **Consistent bedtime schedule**
- **Balancing responsibilities and rest-time**
 - Children and parents need time to rest,
 - But keep their brains and bodies busy,
 - Make it fun and provide opportunities for self-expression,
 - Talent shows,
 - Dancing,
 - Family games,
 - Promote creativity and humor,



Preschool/Kindergarten

8:00	Eat breakfast , get dressed, put away pajamas, brush teeth Set up daily plan and materials, organize snacks
9:00	Outside Time: Play tag, kick a ball around
10:00	Calendar: Talk about the day of the week, date, and weather Reading: Read-aloud, letter practice, independent reading Snack Break
11:00	Building: Blocks, Magnatiles, Duplo Fine motor skills: Cutting with scissors, finding buttons in play dough, putting stickers on paper
12:00	Lunch and help with clean-up
12:30	Quiet time: puzzles, nap, audiobook
1:30	Outside: Play catch, work in the yard, take a walk Science: Observe animals, sprout seeds, move pipe cleaners with magnets
2:30	Shapes and Colors: Sort shapes, match colors, draw geometric patterns Numbers: Count objects, name numbers, a board game with dice
3:30	Art: Sculpt clay, make a collage, build a house from delivery boxes Music: Hold a dance party, play instruments, sing along Snack Break
4:30	Calm Down: Do yoga; listen to a mindfulness recording, audiobook or podcast; watch a video Project or Craft: Mold play dough, string beads, paint
5:30	Dinner

Elementary School Kids

8:00	Eat breakfast , get dressed, put away pajamas, brush teeth
8:30	Write out the day's schedule , set up materials, make snacks for the morning
9:00	Get outside! Head out for a walk, run a few races
9:30	Student reads aloud or independently
10:00	Math practice or logic puzzles
10:30	Story or nonfiction writing , with a snack
11:00	Choose and memorize a poem
11:30	Geography , social studies, or current events
12:00	Lunch and clean-up, make afternoon snacks
12:30	Quiet reading or outside play
1:30	Virtual museum visit or science activity
2:00	Art or science project or music practice, followed by a snack
3:00	Physical activity
4:00	Online meet-up with friends
4:30	Clean up school area
5:00	Downtime with electronics, music or a book
5:30	Dinner and family time

MY *daily* BLOCK SCHEDULE

TIME BLOCK					
TASKS					
TIPS					

✓ STICK TO 2-3 HOUR BLOCKS

✓ USE THE ALARM IN YOUR PHONE TO REMIND YOU OF UPCOMING BLOCKS

FUNCHEAPORFREE.COM

✓ DON'T MICRO MANAGE YOUR DAY

✓ SET AN ALARM FOR WHEN A BLOCK IS ENDING

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Block Schedule Template

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT



BE ALERT OF YOUR CHILD'S NEEDS - OBSERVE AND LISTEN

- Offer lots of love and affection,
- Don't force the child to talk,
- Validating child's feelings - it is ok to feel upset and to reach out for help,
- Reassure that the parent will take care of them,
- Acknowledge child's disappointments – e.g., not being able to play with their friends, missing important football game,
- What can the parents do to minimally reduce their disappointment, e.g., organize or encourage the child to organize online meeting with their friends or football teams,
- Notice and honor the ways the children deal with stress, e.g., playing a guitar, talking to friends. Everybody copes with crisis/difficult differently
- Observe child's at play or when drawing – as children may express their worries through play,
- Find the shared times when the children truly talk and take time to answer their questions,
- Seek professional help when necessary,

ALLEVIATE STRESS REACTION

- Stress responses (should subside when the crisis has ended):
 - Emotional – shock, anxiety, fear, irritability, anger, helplessness,
 - Physical – sleep disturbance, changes in appetite → impaired immune system
 - Cognitive – inability to concentrate, decreased memory
 - Behavioral – withdrawal, hyperactivity, defiance,
- Find out how much the child knows about the virus and don't dismiss his/her fears. Dispel the rumors. Communicate that if they will follow the safety rules, they will be safe.
- Recognize child's reactions to the crisis – communicate that these are normal reactions to abnormal situation,
- Give appropriate explanation – limit news exposure to limit fear, scan the information being exposed to the child,
- Allow the child to make choices to have a sense of control,
- Take time to rest,
- Increase physical activity – reduce stress, improve the ability to focus on academic tasks,

SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS IN THE TIME OF SOCIAL DISTANCING?

- Adults and children have a natural need for social connectedness,
- Social support can be a buffer against any mental health issue and immune responses:
 - Zoom family or friends meetings,
 - “Balcony parties,”
 - Calling family members who we would normally visit more frequently,
 - Allow children to call their friends – “iPad playdates,”
- The families now have the biggest opportunity to spend more time together and work on the relationships among family members
 - Game nights
 - Create new family traditions



ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Show that you are listening and that you are there for the child

- Children are natural learners – acknowledge the effort they make in learning and the progress they have made,
- Promote good communication:
 - Go to child's eye level,
 - Limit verbal directions to two steps for preschoolers and three steps for older kids,
- Listen when the child does not understand the lesson/assignment:
 - Ask them to read the directions aloud, → Ask them to point to the section that is confusing,
- Listen when the child feels overwhelmed/tired:
 - Suggest a break – Allow to play outside (if possible and with regards to safety) – Encourage physical activity,
- When teaching:
 - Get child's attention – wait for the eye contact,
 - Ask the child to restate the main points of what was said,
 - Include written assignments along with online options – written assignment create stronger memories and understanding, [Printable materials](#),

ACADEMIC SUPPORT – STAY CONNECTED TO SCHOOL

- **Locate learning resources.** Schools' capacity to conduct virtual learning experiences will vary greatly, but most schools are providing lessons and learning activities for children to do. Take advantage of the many companies and online platforms currently offering free learning opportunities. More online resources available here: [Catherine Hall - How to Home School During Coronavirus. New York Times](#)
- **Identify additional resources.** Know if your school or district is providing additional resources, such meals, or technology, such as a laptop or tablet.
- **Stay in touch.** Find out how the school is communicating with families and students. Be sure to read any communications you receive. Check with you children, particularly older ones, as they may be receiving information directly that would be helpful for you to know.
- **Connect with school staff.** Reach out to your child's teacher and other relevant school staff if you have concerns about their coping and keeping up with assignments or activities.

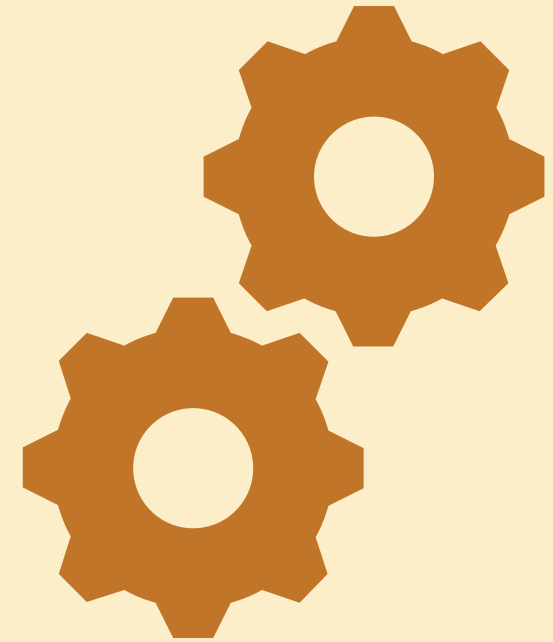
SUPPORT WITHIN THE FAMILY

- Balance responsibilities related to children between the two parents as much as possible. Have a conversation with each other what has changed since the children are not at school and what are their needs now → Make a plan.
- Involve older children in helping younger children – reward them for doing their part.
- Make sure that the activities that require more noise are coordinated at the same time with all the children – larger families.
- Turn chores into learning opportunities – e.g., cooking, doing laundry.



STRIVING TO PERFECTION?

- Adjust your expectations,
- Parents have to be aware that even teaching in a regular classroom, not always goes as planned. Some children may have difficulties understanding the lesson,
- Learning from mistakes,
- Understand that children may regress due to high level of stress,
 - Behaviorally,
 - Academically,
 - Nightmares,
 - Sleeping problems,
 - Worries about the future.
- Be flexible with your schedule,
 - If the child is interested in the subject and wants to do more work, let them do it.



- Teachers, School Psychologists, and other professionals are still working remotely – they are there to support parents in seeking resources or managing child's behavior
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: 800-985-5990
- Miami-Dade Schools
 - District Emergency Operations Hotline: 305-995-3000
 - To answer questions from students, parents and other community members about school district-related coronavirus response efforts,
 - Instructional Learning Plan Hotline: 305-995-HELP (4357)
 - To support students, parents, and teachers in engaging in distance learning
 - Mental Health Services, Parent Assistance Line: 305-995-7100
 - To assist students and their families with mental health support
 - Project UP-START: 305-995-7558
 - To provide information regarding services available for students experiencing unstable housing
 - Distance Learning Website -
<http://distancelearning.dadeschools.net/parent.html>

SEEK HELP



WE ALL HAVE TO STAY C.A.L.M.

Some of the children and parents are experiencing heightened anxiety caused by the uncertainty and the changes that occurred due to the COVID-19 outbreak. There are few tips that may help both, the parents and the children alleviate the anxiety and other negative emotions.

C.A.L.M.

- **C – calm, control, consistency**
 - Staying **calm**,
 - Think about the things that we can and cannot control. We can control **OUR** reaction to the virus, e.g., following health recommendations, such as wearing masks or utilizing social distancing,
 - Keeping a steady schedule as children need **consistency**. Consistent bedtime schedule. Children thrive on structure and routines.
- **A – available, alert**
 - Being **available** to the child and his/her needs and being **alert** to their emotions and worries – children want to share things with their parents.
- **L – limiting**
 - **Limiting** the news coverage that usually covers negative events and making sure that the information are from the trusted source and age-appropriate.
- **M – modeling of coping, management**
 - The children are watching their parents – it is extremely important that the parents model coping optimism for the future

REFERENCES

- [Dr. Scott Poland - Coping with COVID-19: Mental Health Tips for Children and Families](#)
- [Dr. Lisa Shin & Dr. Samuel Sommers - Pearson Presents: Unwritten Ep. 2 Psychology](#)
- [Catherine Hall - How to Home School During Coronavirus. The New York Times](#)
- [Frank Zenere, District Coordinator, Crisis Management Program - Helping Your Child Cope in a Crisis](#)
- [NASP Webinar: Strategies for Engaging and Supporting Parents During the Pandemic](#)
- [NASP: Helping Children Cope with Changes resulting from COVID-19](#)

Additional Resources:

- [Center for Disease Control and Prevention – Caring for Children](#)
- [NASP & NASN: Talking to Children about COVID-19. A Parent Resource](#)
- Florida Department of Education – Free Resources for Families <http://www.fldoe.org/em-response/resources-families.shtml>
- Miami-Dade Schools, Parent Academy - <https://parentacademymiami.com/virtual-campus/>
- WLRN At Home Learning – TV
- [Supporting Families with PBIS at Home](#)
- [Mindful Kids Miami](#)

DISCUSSION



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THANK YOU!

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