

ENGAGEMENT

How to Increase your Child's Engagement during Distance Learning

Set Realistic Expectations

Distance Learning is not only new to our students, but new to teachers and parents as well. Be realistic about your expectations for your child, and remember to set them up to succeed! Adhere to a bedtime, have them get up and dressed in the morning, and celebrate the small victories.

Stay Connected

Children (and adults) thrive in social environments. Set up "Virtual Hangouts" for your student with other students in the class. These can be with a small group of friends where they can discuss assignments, study for an upcoming test, or complain about the woes of distance learning. These virtual sessions work great with parents too!

Take Breaks

Close the computer, put the phone away, and take a break! Use this time to eat a quick snack or run around the kitchen table and let loose (both you and child).



Help your child focus and stay engaged during Distance Learning

As schools are faced with the challenge of providing learning opportunities for all students at a distance, parents are faced with the task of ensuring that their students are engaged while sitting in front of the computer at home. Students must learn how to learn at home. We know that this is not ideal- home is likely to have a number of distractors, from the dog, to the hum of the TV in the background, to the sibling who may or may not be struggling with distance learning right next to you. Older





Set Attainable Goals

Children, unlike most adults, are unable to work with an end goal in mind that is too far away. Younger students may need hourly goals (while older students would benefit from daily goals) that allow them access to a reward if achieved.

These goals should be attainable, meaning that they should not be something your child will significantly struggle to meet. This is especially important in the beginning. Children have been out of school and largely free of any responsibilities for approximately 5 months, thus ease them in. Once you feel that the goals are being met, increase the difficulty level or require for a long-term goal to be met in order to have access to a reward.

Rewards do not have to be physical items (but they can be). Sit down with your student and create a list of rewards they would like to work for. Examples can include: a walk to the park, ice cream date, movie choice, a chore excused, cooking together, baking, extra TV/screen time, etc.

students are likely to have higher expectations when it comes to the amount of time they spend in front of a screen, while younger students often require interaction and play. This means that if you have multiple ages at home, your job will be twice (or more) as hard. The good news is, this is new for everyone! The following tips will allow you and your student to make the most of learning from home:

- Remind your child that even though they are at home, they are in school and must behave as such. Be realistic with your expectations, but fair.
- Create a work space that is as free as possible from distractions (somewhere quiet, well lit, comfortable) and check in on them often throughout the day. Ensure that all the materials they need is within reach (this limits the need to get up and roam around and will hopefully lessen the amount of “Mom!” calls).
- Encourage movement! Some children are able to better focus on tasks while standing
- Print out or write/draw their schedule and place it on the wall so that they can see what is expected everyday.
- Your teacher will have scheduled breaks throughout the day but do not be afraid to take more as needed.
- Remember to be specific when you praise your child (“I really like how you finished your reading assignment” is specific, vs. “Good job!” is not).
- Encourage organization by creating check lists and helping your student create to-do lists (these can and should be related to goals) that they can work toward completing every day or throughout the week.

Every student is different

Some students will adapt easily and quickly to online learning, while others will struggle. However, by setting daily goals and offering lots of praise, you and your student can and will succeed. Consistency is key!