

A Guide to Homeschooling Coronavirus Edition

1

Recognize homeschooling is not school

Kids are accustomed to the routine and school environment so it's predicted that they won't be as focused. Lessons won't be taught as professional as they are used to receiving. Socialization will be tough due to local government regulations. It's okay. We are all learning together.

2

Let kids be a part of the decision-making

Most schools have set up online learning platforms or sent kids home with packets of schoolwork to complete. These assignments are non-negotiable. Beyond these requirements, parents can give their children a say in what else they'll learn. Try having your kids make a list of things they'd like to do and learn. Possibilities include math and chemistry through baking; botany through gardening; basic carpentry; or learning about space through a mobile app. The possibilities are endless.

3

Make a schedule

Making a daily schedule to display gives everyone in the family a format for what's coming and when it's over. Most kids are used to schedules in their classrooms, so recreating something similar can ease the transition to a new learning environment. Try to not rely on a hard, academic schedule. If your child is up late reading or being productive, let them sleep in a bit. This will give you, as a parent, some time in the morning to get your own tasks done. The schedules can even include chores, meal times, and mobile device access.

4

Acknowledge that kids have different needs

Schools and teachers are prepared to teach a variety of children with different learning abilities and needs to help them succeed. In a home school environment, parents must run the show. Once again, we need to remember that we are all learning and we are bound to make mistakes. We just need to learn from them and adjust for next time.

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Build in recess

All traditional school programs incorporate some sort of recess or outdoor time, and a home school schedule should be no different. This recess time doesn't matter if this time is structured or unstructured, just long as the kids get outside, stay active, and have a break from academics.

6

Downtime is your friend

Downtime, or time for kids to work on projects quietly and independently, is just as important as active time outside. Kids need time to "disconnect" every day — from each other, from parents, from technology and from the outside world. Allow for the fact that kids will be holding a lot of tension around all these sudden and often stressful changes to their routines and lives.

7

Get crafty

Art is often overlooked, but an important part of education. Homeschooling also provides parents with an opportunity to get creative with crafts. Parents, remember to not stress about the mess these projects create, since that only detracts from the fun. Embrace your child's creativity. Messes can always be cleaned up, especially by teaching your children that skill along the way.

8

Accept your limits

Children aren't the only ones relegated to working from home in the immediate future. Many parents with office jobs have been asked to do the same. This means that many parents likely will be forced to balance homeschooling with their day-to-day responsibilities at work. We just need to try to do our best because there is no map for this journey that we're on.