



### STAY IN YOUR LANE!!

#### Setting Guidelines For Parent Involvement In Remote Learning!

Whew....6 weeks in and we are thriving in remote learning! This is amazing because we are ALL still trying to figure out what virtual or remote learning is and how it should work! One thing is certain, this is NOT school as usual, and we should not treat it as if it is. This is a necessary accommodation or adjustment for the current time. While sooner or later, things will be back to whatever normal will be, at this time, we must be patient and open to whatever comes our way.

This week we take a look at how to support our children in virtual learning environments in a way that that empowers your children and lightens the load for YOU (parent/caregiver). For those who are not registered homeschoolers.....You have always been your child's teacher, but NOT formally. Parents teach children in a very different way than school teachers and that's okay. We have some tips to help you stay in your lane and let the teacher do the heavy lifting. This should ease the load of feeling totally responsible for your child's education during remote, at-home, virtual or whatever-you-call-it learning. Children are accustomed to learning in a classroom environment that motivates and encourages different social and emotional development as well as vigorous academic development. These times are VERY different to say the least, BUT children are born with **resilience**. They are able to adjust to changes very differently than adults and they typically don't take long to learn the new way.

Take a few moments to step back, assess, and adjust...lighten up even, if needed! Your children are doing much more now than they were 4 weeks ago. They are getting it...let's position YOU to get it, without spazzing out! Parents, remember...Stay Positive.

#### 1. Support your children from a distance...Don't be a "Hover Parent": This helps to promote independence and gives opportunity for the learning process to fully take place

- Set aside a time of day, or start routine check-ins to review your child's work and stick to this
  - When your children come for check-ins at other times, ensure it's not an emergency and refer them back to the check-in time
    - ✓ For example, if you child comes to you with: "Mom can you show me how to...", try responding with: "...Sure we can

discuss this at our 3pm check-in, write it down so you don't forget it"

- **Encourage your child to use problem solving techniques (explored below) before coming to you for assistance; if after making attempts at independent problem solving your child still needs support, be available to provide the support needed**
  - **Here are a few techniques that promote problem solving:**
    - ✓ Set and maintain a schedule for breaks and end of virtual learning time
    - ✓ Make sure your child is aware of when classes start, when breaks occur and when it's time for school to start/dismiss – this helps to minimize their dependence on you for scheduled items
      - Set timers throughout the day ("school bells") for transitions between classes, activities and breaks
      - POST YOUR SCHEDULE...get creative, add pictures for younger children and remain consistent
  - **Direct your children to read instructions clearly (if needed read them again) and to ask the teacher for assistance during live instruction time**
  - **Tell your children to ask the teacher for help during any live instruction time when the teacher is available for questions and answers**
    - ✓ Consider a private chat to the teacher for questions if it's not relative to the current lesson (\*depending on the teacher chat may be disabled)
    - ✓ The teacher will determine if a separate or additional one-on-one Live instruction time is needed
    - ✓ For older children/teens advise them that email is always available for asking questions
    - ✓ Inquire about the teacher's office hours and take advantage of them
  - **Allow children to have comfort items that help them stay focused & on task**
    - ✓ Some children need things to fidget and other's need organization and quietness
    - ✓ Determine what your child needs to be focused and provide that when possible

## **2. Know expectations for students and set YOUR expectations accordingly**

- **Talk to your child's teacher about expectations for student success - example: 3rd Grade students are EXPECTED to be able to read the instructions for their assignments or High Schoolers are expected to be on time and dressed appropriately for all virtual classes**
- **Talk to your child's teacher about expectations for parent involvement –**
  - **For example:**
    - ✓ Could I teach or assist my child with math the way I learned how to solve problems?
    - ✓ Is it okay for adjustments to be made for assignment due dates? How should my child request this?
- **Everybody's family is different...Keep communicating with your children's teacher about the best way to meet requirements and what adjustments you can make to accommodate your family's needs**

### 3. Allow your children to be themselves and learn at their pace...mistakes will happen and it's okay

- Remind yourself and your child that learning is a process and that we learn from our mistakes
- Be aware that actual student responses, whether right or wrong set the level for which teachers teach.
  - If you give the answers or don't allow mistakes to be submitted teachers will start teaching at a level that is beyond what your child actually knows.
    - ✓ Consider this real example – Kindergarten students at one school are performing on a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade level on the district testing. This is an anomaly! Some teachers were reporting that they could hear parents supporting the children with answers or picking answers for them on the test. This is NOT helpful for these children. If indeed they were testing on a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade level this would require the teachers to teach at a higher level and realistically some or most students wouldn't get what they needed at that level
  - As in the classroom, some assignment grades will turn out better than others...It's OKAY
- If your child makes a grade that they are not pleased with, remind them that you are invested in their success and work together to create a plan for improvement
- Avoid threatening or punishing for poor grades on assignments that may be related to processing issues rather than performance issues - this could build resentment and teach your child to hide their work from you
  - Take time to understand specifically why your child received the poor grade
    - ✓ Does your child not understand the process?
    - ✓ Were they rushing and made careless mistakes?
    - ✓ Were they distracted or unfocused?
    - ✓ Were they overwhelmed?
    - ✓ Did they not have enough time to finish?
    - ✓ Was the assignment turned in late?
    - ✓ Were the directions not followed or unclear?

Understanding the REASON for the poor grade allows you to address the problem by providing assistance, seeking help from the teacher, or enforcing consequences for behavior related problems.