

LEARNING FROM HOME: INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Advice, tips and resources to support children as they learn from home.

ABOUT LEARNING FROM HOME

When you start to think about helping your child to learn from home, remember that no one expects you to be a subject matter expert or teacher. The most important thing you can do is to continue to provide routine, support and encouragement to your child.

You can help your child to learn from home by keeping up to date with your child's school communications, so you know how best to support your child at home.

Your child's school will:

- clearly communicate the responsibilities of your child's teacher as well as what students and parents need to do
- provide learning activities for your child to undertake
- communicate with parents and students through their normal channels, for example via the school website, newsletters and email
- advise parents and students what online tools your child can use to support their learning from home.

If you do not have a computer device or internet at home, your school will be in contact to discuss whether your child needs to borrow one and how your child can receive materials.

SETTING UP A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Every home is different. Where possible, extended learning should take place in a space your family shares. For example, a lounge room or dining room. These spaces are preferable over a bedroom, where your child can feel isolated and supervision can be more challenging.

It should be a place:

- that can be quiet at times
- where you or another adult is present.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES DURING REMOTE LEARNING

Depending on the age and stage of your child, they may be expected to:

- regularly monitor digital platforms for announcements and feedback from teachers
- do their best work when completing tasks
- do their best to meet timelines and due dates
- communicate openly with their teachers and proactively raise any concerns or issues
- continue to abide by their school's behaviour guidelines.

ESTABLISHING ROUTINES AND EXPECTATIONS

It is important to develop a routine to support your child as they learn from home, for them and also so family members can help provide an environment conducive to learning.

Start and end each day with a check in to help your child:

- clarify and fully understand the instructions they get from their teachers
- help them organise themselves and set priorities for their learning at home.

Encourage regular exercise breaks. Your school is likely to provide some suggested activities.

Encourage healthy eating habits and make sure they drink enough water.

Try to keep normal bedtime routines for all children, especially for younger ones.

MANAGING SCREEN TIME AND ONLINE SAFETY

As your child is likely to be spending more time online, it is important that you talk to them about online safety. This will help them to make good digital choices and use information and communication technologies responsibly.

You may wish to speak to your children about ensuring they:

- use only the online tools recommended by their school or the Department of Education and Training
- are respectful when communicating online, just as they would be when speaking face-to-face
- use digital devices in open areas of the home
- have a balanced approach to home learning; break up the day with time for using digital devices, time for physical exercise and time for offline learning tasks.

For more online safety advice for parents and carers go to: www.esafety.gov.au

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING CHECK IN

Just as you set aside time for physical exercise, it is important to make time each day to check in on your child's mental health and wellbeing.

As your child adjusts to their new routine and not being able to see their friends in person, it is important to be understanding of their feelings of frustration, anxiousness and even anger – every child will react differently.

To support your child, use these mental health and wellbeing check ins to:

- provide an opportunity to talk about how they feel and listen to what they say
- identify one or two things they could do to address what they are concerned or angry about
- ask how they are going, whether they are finding it easy or hard to learn remotely, and if there is anything they'd like your help with.

There is a risk that your child may be bullied online. If you think this happening to them, support is available on how to talk to your child and your school at:

- <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/>

If you have any other concerns about the health and wellbeing of your child, please contact your school directly, which will have access to resources that can help.

ADVICE FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS

If your child has additional needs, you should talk to their teacher about an individual education plan. This will help guide their learning from home. The parents' page of the Department website (www.education.vic.gov.au/parents) has several resources to help parents support learning from home.

For parents of children with learning difficulties, a comprehensive resource "Understanding learning difficulties for parents: a practical guide" can be downloaded from www.uldforparents.com. This guide provides parents with practical advice about learning difficulties as well as a list of recommended apps.

LITERACY AND NUMERACY RESOURCES AND TIPS

In addition to the resources and materials that your school will provide, you could use the following resources to support your child as they learn from home:

Literacy and numeracy:

Tips for parents to build their child's literacy and numeracy skills can be downloaded from the www.education.vic.gov.au. Search: *get involved in literacy and numeracy*

Premiers' Reading Challenge:

The challenge encourages children and students from birth to year 10 to read a set number of books over the year and record their efforts online. Register at www.education.vic.gov.au. Search: *premiers reading challenge*

Mathematics and numeracy at home:

Parents play an important role in helping develop their child's numeracy skills. Advice and resources for families can be downloaded from www.education.vic.gov.au. Search: *mathematics and numeracy at home*

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