

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 teacher or subject matter expert. The most important thing you can do is continue to provide routine, support and encouragement to your child.

You can support your child to learn from home by keeping up to date with your child's school communications.

Your child's school will:

- clearly communicate the responsibilities of your child's teacher as well as what students and parents and carers 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 about the 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 with you 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 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. This is important for them and for family members, to provide an environment that encourages 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 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 (DET)
- are respectful when communicating online, just as they would be when speaking face-to-face
- use digital devices in open areas of the home

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.

It may take your child some time to adjust to their new routine for learning and key changes such as not seeing classmates in person. Every child will react differently to new circumstances – feelings of sadness, frustration, anxiousness and even anger are entirely normal.

You can help your child by:

- providing an opportunity to talk about how they feel and listening to what they say
- identifying some specific actions they can take by themselves or with you to address any concerns they might have
- asking how they are finding learning remotely, and if there is anything they'd like your help with.

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 AND CARERS 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 DET website (www.education.vic.gov.au/parents) has several resources to help parents and carers support learning from home.

For parents and carers 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 and carers 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 and carers 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 and carers 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*