Parent Café Session – At Home E-learning Resources

**Resources from Session:**

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED546474.pdf>

<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2020/04/cover-kids-screens>

<https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Illinois-Priority-Learning-Standards-2020-21.pdf> Pg. 167 SEL needs of students

\*\*Next CPS Board Meeting – Wednesday, November 18 at 10:30 - www.cpsboe.org 312 989-7313

\*\*Rockford Public Schools 815-966-3000 Ask for the office of Diverse Learners Support for Parents

<https://www.equipforequality.org/>

<https://www.equipforequality.org/issues/special-education/>

<https://frcd.org>

\*\*Parent Involvement Specialist Team - Procedures and Standards - Office of Diverse Learner Supports & Services - ODLSS Helpline 773-553-1840

Michelle Burgess: mburgess3@cps.edu

Janice Gutierrez: jmgutierrez11@cps.edu

Kimberly Johnson: kljohnsonevans@cps.edu

**Other Resources:**

ISBE [www.isbe.net](http://www.isbe.net)  Click on Statewide for Families and Students

Chicago Public Schools [www.cps.edu](http://www.cps.edu)  Click on Parents or Students

Chicago Public Library <https://www.chipublib.org/> Click on

22 Remote Learning Tips for Parents

**Bare Minimum: These are intended to be a set of basic tips that are true for most remote learning situations.**

**1. Set (and keep) a schedule**

The closer this is to a ‘school schedule,’ the easier it will likely be on everyone. You obviously can (and probably should) revise whatever you come up with at first to fit your circumstance at home (your work schedule, sleeping schedules, etc.). But once you’ve got something that works, stick to it. And this almost certainly means to use some sort of timer to at least clarify how much time is being spent on what.

**2. Make sure they have any materials necessary to complete all assignments**

Whether its pencil and paper, a stable Wi-Fi connection, log-in information for all accounts, a PDF reader, or [note-taking apps](https://www.teachthought.com/technology/5-apps-for-note-taking-with-an-ipad/) or [reading strategies](https://www.teachthought.com/literacy/25-reading-strategies-that-work-in-every-content-area/)–whatever they need to get the work done.

**3. Provide an environment conducive to learning**

This isn’t always easy. If they’re too isolated, it’s difficult to check in with them. If they’re at the kitchen table, depending on the child or their environment, they may be too distracted. This is even more challenging when everyone is home and the house is full.

[Background noise](https://www.teachthought.com/learning/made-background-noise-writing/) can help, as can music. I also use [this app](https://apps.apple.com/us/app/forest-stay-focused/id866450515) myself to keep me from needlessly scrolling social media or checking for messages too frequently.

**4. Create a daily plan**

Creating a daily plan isn’t just a matter of scheduling. A daily plan looks at the schedule and then identifies to-do items for that day and combines the two for a specific plan for that specific day.

**5. Don’t teach–help them understand**

Helping students understand is one of the more obvious remote learning tips for parents. This could be the topic for an entire book because how this happens is complicated and varies greatly from student to student and grade level to grade level and content area to content area.

Imagine the parent of a second-grade student helping them complete an essay on their favorite cookie versus the parent of a high school senior helping them with a Calculus problem or an analysis of Shakespearean versus Petrarchan meter. The former is a matter of sitting with your child, while the latter is going to likely require that you learn alongside your child–or even learn it first yourself and then review it with them after.

The bottom line is that helping your child understand the content is definitely part of the ‘bare minimum’ range of tips.

**6. Make sure all work is completed**

And any work that remains incomplete is incomplete for a good reason and has a time-bound, actionable next-step (e.g., email the teacher asking for clarification on step 3 of the activity so that you can turn it in tomorrow by noon).

**7. Help them check messages and communicate with school**

Check for messages daily from teachers and other students and make sure to reply to any messages that require one.

**8. Keep in mind that it’s about the child, not the work**

This can be difficult for some parents to keep in mind when there is so much pressure (on everyone) to complete the work. And further, this is obviously a parenting philosophy–for some families, it very well may be a matter of discipline to do what you’re told and ‘do well in school.’ If that’s true, this tip may not be useful.

But if you believe that assignments should serve the child rather than the child serve the assignments–or that this is at least partly true–then don’t over-emphasize ‘getting everything done’ over the well-being (not to mention creative genius and curiosity and intrinsic motivation) of your child.

**9. Learn to identify the barriers**

This is something teachers have to learn early on in their careers–how to pinpoint exactly what’s happening or going wrong (not unlike an automotive mechanic or NASA engineers or computer coder. Diagnostic teaching is one approach that can help here but the big idea is to identify precisely why your child might be struggling: Is it focus? Motivation? Too much or too little structure? Do they need a hug or finger-wagging or for you to sit with them?

And if it’s a knowledge deficit, exactly what do they not understand? When students say, ‘I don’t get it,’ the first step is to identify exactly what ‘it’ is–and this isn’t always easy. Most students don’t know what they don’t know. That’s why you (and an internet full of resources) are there to help them making this an especially powerful remote learning tip for parents.

**10. Use school resources**

Contact your child’s school, as well as the local school district and state education resources for support. This is especially critical if your child has an IEP or 504 plan and requires additional support and services at school.

**Intermediate Remote Learning Tips for Parents**

Going the extra mile: Slightly more intermediate tips for parents with the time and resources to dedicate

**11. Personalize the learning**

You can almost always personalize your child’s learning space (sound, light, room, equipment, etc.) and you can likely adjust their schedule. You may even have some control over the curriculum (what they are learning). Use your child’s strengths and gifts and build backward from them as much as possible.

**12. Encourage a growth mindset**

This isn’t about what to learn or how to learn but rather how to think about what they’re learning.

**13. Use the right resources**

The idea here is to know where to go for what to save time when you–or your child–need something.

**14. Mix in Genius Learning**

The goal is to help empower your child to see learning as something they have control of and that curiosity can lead them anywhere.

**15. Organize their learning environment**

Or help them organize their learning environments (both physical and digital).

How this happens depends (as with everything else on this list) on your circumstance: Are you using a Learning Management System (LMS)? Are classes meeting live? Daily or weekly? Does your child love learning or has school been a struggle for them? Is there a fixed curriculum? Any flexibility in that fixed curriculum? Are assignments graded? And so on.

Imagine a high school student sitting at a desktop computer in their bedroom logged on to their local school’s LMS. They have their iPad open and [Microsoft OneNote](https://www.onenote.com/) open to take notes. Their phone is playing a background noise to help them focus while their physical textbook is open beside the keyboard. They also have their web browser open with multiple tabs open for search, communication, and related learning resources as well as a digital or physical calendar with upcoming due dates for important assignments. And lastly, they have a to-do list and learning plan for that day to guide them.

That’s one example of a ‘learning environment.’

**16. Encourage self-direction**

This could’ve gone in the ‘basic’ sections complicated but at its most basic, the more they own their learning–and ideally have voice and choice in their work–the easier and more fulfilling everything will be for everyone.

**17. Honor the complexity of learning**

Think differently about ‘helping’ your child ‘with their school work.’ Realize that your child needs a wide range of ‘support’: academic, collaborative, psychological, technological, disciplinary, etc.

**18. Help them find their own motivation**

I tried to word this carefully because children range so drastically in not only their levels of motivation and where that motivation comes from. Further, the dynamic of parent-to-child is necessarily different from the parents-as-teacher-to-child.

However, motivating a child is one area where parents are (ideally) better than any teacher could be. The idea here is to help them ‘want to’ learn without punishing them psychologically or making all motivation external and independent from the actual value of the knowledge being gleaned.

**Advanced Remote Learning Tips for Parents**

Obviously, these would only apple for some remote learning situations but if you’re really ambitious, you could consider trying to do the following:

**19. Understand how the brain works and how learning happens**

[Learning theories](https://www.teachthought.com/learning/a-visual-summary-the-most-important-learning-theories/) and [neuroscience basics](https://www.teachthought.com/neuroscience-learning-41-terms-every-teacher-know/) are two good places to start. [Transfer](https://www.teachthought.com/learning/a-taxonomy-for-transfer-14-ways-learners-can-transfer-what-they-know/) is also an important concept.

**20. Gamify the learning**

Offer points, levels, challenges, visible markers of progress, etc. You can read more about [the definition of gamification](https://www.teachthought.com/learning/difference-gamification-game-based-learning/) here and about [how gamification uncovers the nuance of learning.](https://www.teachthought.com/learning/how-gamification-uncovers-nuance-in-the-learning-process/)

**21. Help your child build a learning network**

Connect them with their peers–ideally peers with similar goals and approaches to ‘life’ to their own (e.g., connecting your child who wants to study medicine in college with other students and groups with students who have similar ambitions.)

**22. Help them understand the value of specific knowledge and changing knowledge demands**

Further, emphasize critical thinking (learning how to think) and learning literacy (learning how to learn) over content knowledge (academic knowledge). This is probably more of a homeschooling tips than a remote learning tip but ideally it would happen in any formal learning scenario.