



Grade Level Distance Learning Recommendations

*Provided by Educational Therapists at the
Masonic Center for Youth and Families*

Many of these suggestions are for situations where there is a less structured on-line program being offered by your child's school. Although, the ideas can be incorporated within more structured programs as well.

PRE-K / Kindergarten

- Routine paired with patience; all ages need routine but particularly this age group.
- Use a timer for transition times so it takes the personal out of it; instead of it being about what you are wanting them to do the timer lets them know it's time to move on to the next activity.
- The GoNoodle website offers guided videos for movement breaks.
- Look for shapes in the house or on a neighborhood walk.
- Count items in house; eating utensils when setting the table, socks when folding the laundry, etc.
- Helpful screen time breaks: this site can remove the possible inappropriate ads on YouTube videos.
- [This website](#) is great for letter sounds, counting and sight words set to music.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- Routine is always key and reading every day.
- No busy work; aka worksheets for the sake of doing worksheets as they do not promote critical thinking. Worksheets should be used for practice of a new skill that has been taught.
- Critical thinking activities: puzzle games, chess, checkers, scrabble, or sudoku.
- Don't fill every hour with academics; let them be bored as it spurs creativity. Have them create their own brain teasers and mazes.
- Start a family book club.
- Science experiments; there are many websites with home-friendly experiments.
- Use cooking together to teach fractions.
- Create research projects on areas of interest or curiosity.
- Building with Legos.
- Encourage journaling about their day; journaling can be in a handwritten format or by dictating with a device.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

- Routine with flexibility (children begin to separate home from school more during this phase of development) home is rest and school is work.
- Rotate classes like a block schedule for sake of variety, if their school is not offering a structured on-line program.
- Break up the schedule with movement time; yoga, jumping jacks, trampoline (if you have one) or creative activities.
- If the week is particularly challenging to stay engaged, offer a reward at the end of the week; virtual time with a friend, picking the family movie, ice cream, etc.
- Encourage an independent research project to promote autonomy.
- Use the “Ask three then me” rule when your child has a question about their schoolwork and if they still need support, then research the answer together to model problem solving.
- Creativity ideas: make a jar for music; put names of different artists, time periods or genres in the jar and listen to one song a day.
- Explore different movies through the library’s free movie access: <https://www.kanopy.com/>
- Watch [educational videos](#) online.
- Encourage video chatting with peers about academics and day-to-day life to keep social connections.

HIGH SCHOOL

- This age group needs structure and normalcy.
- There is a big difference in the need of a 9th grader and a 12th grader. A 9th grader is going to need more modeling for structure.
- Encourage pursuing personal interests (learning to draw, paint, play a musical instrument); things they may have pushed to the side for academics in the past
- If you have access to a basketball hoop, basketball drills to keep physical activity going.
- Reading is key, especially if they aren’t being assigned a lot of reading; it strengthens analytical skills (reading newspapers, articles, books, journals).
- Journaling written reflections on their day/week will help keep their writing skills sharpened.
- If enrolled in AP courses, it’s important to keep up with notifications from the college boards and study in small chunks each day.
- Be open about your own feelings and how the stay-in-place experience is affecting you to invite the conversation with them to share their experiences.
- It’s best to ask, “What do you think you need to do?” and “What do you need from me?” versus telling them what to do. It’s important to give them the option of just listening or to do something concrete for them.