

Distance Learning: Creating a Home Classroom

- Create a designated study area that is as distraction-free as possible. Some children might do better at a desk in his or her room while others might do better at the kitchen table.
- Create a daily schedule that is visible in the study area. Some children will do better with graphic icons for his or her schedule.
- Schedule set breaks within the "school day."
- Some families may need to share technology among multiple children. When allocating device time, take into consideration if a particular child will remain more focused while using the technology during specific hours.
- Provide visuals for time-management. Some children will do fine with a traditional clock, and others might need a different visual such as a timer, hour-glass, or [Time-Timer products](#).
- Have all curriculum materials located within the study area.
- Have a printed or electronic document with links to the required websites your child will need to access.
- Have a printed or electronic document with your child's usernames and passwords to all websites, software programs, and apps your child may need.
- Provide sensory objects within the study area. Examples include an exercise ball, goop/ thinking putty, and various fidgets.
- Create task lists for the steps your child needs to do for accessing, working on, and completing/submitting homework. Examples include: turn on your iPad/computer; go to "x" website (add link); etc. Create a checkbox for your child to mark completion for each step. Checkboxes can be used electronically and created as a template to reuse daily. Paper versions can be placed inside of a large ziplock bag or laminated for reuse with a dry erase marker.
- Create a document outlining what the temporary schooling at home will entail. Be as detailed as possible. Go over this plan with each child and ask him or her detailed questions to acknowledge their comprehension. Do not merely ask, "do you understand?"
- Check-in with your child and ask detailed questions about what he or she did and learned. Do not ask, "did you finish all your work?" Instead say "I'm interested in what you did today, can you tell me what you did for each class and something new you learned or found interesting? Was anything confusing?"
- Some children may need a system to help with motivation and accountability. It may be helpful to create a written contract identifying expectations, rewards, and consequences that both you and your child should sign.
- Remember, this will likely be a difficult transition for your child. Children may experience fear and anxiety. Children may also feel withdrawn from friends and extra-curricular activities. For some children, those extra-curricular activities or social aspects are the only portions of the day the child feels acceptance or success if academics are frustrating. Listed below are resources to help your child if he or she struggles with academics.