

How Families Can Support Distance Learning

Five Guidelines to Support Distance Learning

Recognizing that families are experiencing unique circumstances at this time, this document provides guidelines to support your child/children with distance learning. The transition to distance learning will not be simple or easy, and will require all of us to rethink what learning looks like. The five guidelines provided below are intended to help families with this shift to distance learning.

1 Routines

- Establish routines for your child around distance learning (i.e., times of day dedicated to learning). This can take some planning at first while new schedules are being worked out.
- Define an appropriate location for your child's learning at home, providing materials that they require and limiting distractions as much as possible.

2 Balance

- Promote a balance of activities including learning, quiet time, family time and time for physical activity. Educators will be including ideas to support you with this.
- Encourage social interaction while setting guidelines on social media use. To support families with this, educators have been asked to provide both off- and on-screen learning activities for students.

3 Communication

- Monitor and/or maintain communication with your children's teachers, depending on the age and ability of your child. Seek out and communicate with school staff and other supports as different needs arise.
- Begin and end each day with a check-in, when possible.

4 Well-Being

- Let your child talk through how they're feeling. Acknowledge and help to label their emotions.
- Children look to us for how to respond to stressful situations. Remember that you being calm, helps your child to remain calm. Answer their questions as factually as possible but keep responses age-appropriate, balancing the facts with reassurance.

5 Support

- Look for ways to "bring the lesson home" by connecting learning to everyday experiences.
- Remind your child that they are capable of learning, whether at home, school or elsewhere.
- When possible, try to take an active role in your child's learning while still allowing your child to try to do the work independently prior to assisting.

For questions about...	Contact
A course, assignment, or resource	The student's classroom teacher
A technology-related issue	The student's classroom teacher
A personal, academic or social-emotional concern	The school Principal or Vice-Principal who may be able to direct you to supports Access the 211 directory by phone (dial 2-1-1) or at www.211ontario.ca for information on community resources related to specific concerns
Issues related to programming as per your child's Individual Education Plan (IEP)	The student's Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) or classroom teacher if their regular classroom is a Special Education Class setting
Other issues related to distance learning	School Principal or Vice-Principal