



Office of Catholic Schools

WAYS PARENTS CAN HELP CHILDREN LEARN AT HOME

The Archdiocese of Chicago Catholic Schools have been forced temporarily to close to help slow the spread of COVID-19 (coronavirus) and families are in a new environment. Your partnership in your child's learning is essential to promote academic progress during this unique time.

Here are some strategies to help positively impact learning at home:

Connect with your children (Family Meeting)

Talking together as a family about the coronavirus outbreak and how it's affecting everyone is a good place to start. Talk to your children about this 'new normal,' and communicate with them that while they may be at home, their education is a top priority – lessons and assignments still go on. Since your child is coming from a structured school environment, continuing a structured routine can be valuable for the entire family. [Click here](#) for some additional information about helping families cope.

Create a daily schedule

It's important to have set hours for school, meals, chores and other daily activities.

Many routine activities are now disrupted and that's going to be an emotional process for everyone. Children may be disappointed, as are parents and educators, not to have their normal routine – seeing friends, engaging in class, etc.

Many of our schools are providing daily schedules, but for others deciding on a schedule together as a family may be helpful.

Help children create a learning environment

Help them create their own work space — at the kitchen table, in their room, in a comfy chair in the living room — and know that you may find that a rotation works well for different subjects, especially for those students accustomed to visiting different classrooms and teachers for math, English and electives. Use a timer to indicate periods for different activities.

Check-in

Start each day with a check-in to set the goals and priorities for the day. Take 10-15 minutes to wrap up at the end of the school day to go over your child/ren's work. CELEBRATE your child's progress! Celebrating milestones such as finishing a lesson or reaching a specific goal can help keep your child motivated. You can share celebrations with the rest of the family and even decide on a fun activity as a reward.

Give yourself grace

We have all been thrown into a situation that is unfamiliar and somewhat scary. Your “school day” may not be perfect and that's OK. Just try to remember that you and your child/ren are adjusting to something new and there will be some bumps along the way, but all experiences are teaching us lessons.

Resources

Luckily, parents and schools are not completely alone in this challenge. Below are some resources to use during this time:

- **Zoom**, a video conferencing software company, is offering its services to K-12 schools for free. Using Zoom is a great way to help students, teachers and parents stay connected with one another. Try setting up a virtual hangout for your child and some friends via Zoom to keep their social interactions going.
- **Khan Academy** is a great resource for students of all grade-levels. Students can find free video lessons on a variety of topics, including SAT prep, math, physics, grammar, world history, reading, and more.
- **Scholastic** has also put together a **Learn at Home** website to encourage students to stay active and learning. The site will include grade-specific learning experiences that will be updated every day for free.
- **Storyline Online** and **Veoleo** in Spanish offer virtual story time with books to help keep children engaged.
- **Sesame Street** and **PBS Kids** both have a plethora of interactive material such as games to help with phonics, colors, rhymes, and more.
- **Unicef Kid Power Brain Break Ideas** provides non-screen time brain breaks for all ages.
- **Kid Yoga Stories** has a parent guide that offers 5 ways to integrate yoga into your new home schedule in 2 minutes a day.