7 Ways Parents Can Support Students in Online Learning

1. Designate a Space

Designate a spot in your home for your child to conduct all his/her virtual work. Equip this area with the tools that your child will use to learn (e.g. paper, pencils, laptop charger, etc.). When your child leaves this spot, he/she is no longer "in school."

Tip: *Choose a spot that is separated from the rest of the house with a door and that is not near high-traffic areas of the house (e.g. kitchen).*

2. Make a Schedule

Work with your child to create a schedule. It is important to maintain structure throughout the day, so that your child can follow a routine as they would in a school setting. Setting goals also helps your child be more efficient.

Tip: *Plan out chunks of time during which your child will work, so that they do not end up spending the entire day working online.*

3. Encourage Physical Activity

Working behind a screen all day is tiring. Encourage your child to move around!

Tip: *Ask them if they want to go for a walk with you outside in the morning, at night, or as a break in the middle of the day!*

4. Eliminate Distractions

Avoid distracting your child by entering his/her workspace for trivial reasons. Maintain a quiet environment at home to allow your child to focus. Encourage them to avoid using electronics for personal reasons while doing school work.

Tip: *Consider downloading the Google Chrome extension called Just Focus to remove social media as a distraction on your child's computer.*

5. Check Your Child's Progress

Regularly check in with your child to see their progress and to adjust his/her learning goals as the days progress. Ask them what they have accomplished during the day and praise them for the tasks they complete.

Tip: *Create a daily checklist with your child. At the end of the day, go through the checklist with them to see what has been completed and what still needs to be done the next day.*

6. Identify Learning Barriers

Talk to your child about what factors are causing difficulties with his/her online learning. Work together to eliminate or mitigate these issues.

Tip: *Be an active listener. Ask if your child is struggling with academic content or the way content is delivered.*

Don't Ask: *"What is making online learning difficult for you?"*

Do Ask: *"Is it quiet enough for you to focus in the house?"*

"Do you feel motivated to complete your school work at home?"

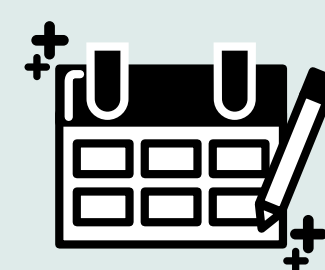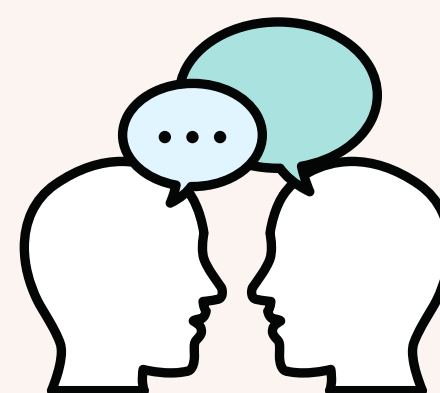*"Can we work together to hold each other accountable?"*

7. Make Breaks Fun

Ensure that your child is taking regular, active breaks. Watching Netflix may not be the best break, since your child is already on the computer for most of the day. Encourage them to leave the technology and do something else (e.g. read a book, try a new recipe, etc.).

Tip: *Suggest a book that you and your child can read a couple pages of together each day!*