

Preparing to Work & Parent Through a COVID Kind of School Year

2 of 3 Part Series

There are a lot of uncertainties for everyone as we prepare for the 2020-21 school year. As a parent, it is especially difficult to know how to plan for this year. While we all want to see children return to in-person classrooms, we know that the reality is that many students will at least begin their school year virtually. Parents really need to do what they can to plan for all scenarios: In-person, Remote Learning, and a Hybrid of both plans. We are likely to see one or all these scenarios play out throughout this school year. The saying, “It takes a village to raise a child” is especially true right now. We have compiled some tips to help parents prepare for these different scenarios and help them manage remote work and school under one roof once again.

Stay Organized and Involved!

Coordinate Work Expectations and Communicate with Supervisor & Colleagues

- Work with your supervisor to clarify realistic workloads, deadlines, schedules, and communication planning. Continually re-evaluate these things with one another throughout the school year.
- Maintain regular communication and accountability with team members and colleagues. Check-in with each other and offer to help one another. Communicate any changes in scheduling or work status in advance as much as possible – and remain flexible to change.

Plan Transition Time and Self-Care

- Continue to practice good hygiene and monitor for signs of COVID-19 as per the [Center for Disease Control & Prevention](#).
- Build transition time into your daily schedule. This may look different every day. Examples include taking a lunch break, going for a walk, exercising, etc.
- Accept mistakes and that not all things will go as planned. No one is perfect.
- Be compassionate and kind with each other.

Maintain structure and schedule

- Get yourself and your children on a regular schedule now. This is good for everyone.
- Structure the day for everyone. Include periods of focus and learning time into your child’s schedule. If you need help with this, look at your child’s previous year’s schedule and try to adapt something that will work for you and your family. Your child’s teacher should also be able to help you with this.
- Include healthy habits - eating, exercise and including breaks, social and outside time in each day.
- Enlist everyone’s help at home. Assign age-appropriate chores to kids.

Provide Additional Support When Needed

- Learn how you can provide scaffolding or any needed support for your child at home. Many children need help with executive functioning and staying focused while working at home. Reach out to school guidance counselors or school psychologists for help. There are lots of resources also available online and in books.

- Look into tutoring options if needed. Emory offers resources to help you locate tutors through Work-Life. Also enlist virtual help of neighbors, college students, retired schoolteachers, family and friends who may be able to help.
- Share a tutor if it makes it more affordable. Sometimes a small group of kids working with the same tutor makes it more engaging and less isolative. Encourage your child to reach out to friends for help.
- Find ways to use the lessons they are learning in school in real ways at home to help them better absorb the material.
- Be a role model to your children in setting social and emotional examples of how to interact with others during this stressful time.
- Pay attention to what your children are doing school-wise. You may need to take a bigger role than you would ordinarily with them not being in school. Maintain communication with your child's school and teachers to keep abreast to how your kids are doing and to provide help if you need it.
- Seek counseling with Emory Faculty Staff Assistance Program for yourself or your family when necessary.

Remain Socially Connected

- Find safe and creative ways to stay connected with friends as kids we will all be more isolated during the school year (at least initially).
- Use your Village Bubble to socialize with friends, family and classmates.
- Utilize online tools and groups to keep engaged
- Plan safe outdoor activities where social distancing is possible

Additional Resources

[Emory WorkLife Resource Center](#)

[Faculty Staff Assistance Program](#)

[Working Through COVID-19](#)