

# Preparing to Work and Parent Through a COVID Kind of School Year

## 1 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.

### **Don't Delay - Start Planning Now!**

#### ***Put Everything on the Table***

- Look to your Bubble Village. If you don't have one – create one! A Village Bubble is a small group of family, friends, neighbors that share the same social distancing beliefs and practices that you do, where our children can socialize safely and can lean on each other through this challenging time.
- While not all of these learning options will work for every child or every family, some ideas parents have been exploring include home schooling, looking into accountability coaches for kids, independent schools, private online education and/or supplemental instruction, creating an at home education pod (a small group of children within your Village Bubble that work with a shared privately paid teacher or tutor) or hybrids of any of these ideas.
- Find online resources and lesson plans to use as backup options if your child needs some supplemental work. Now is the time to do this research in order to be prepared for classes to resume. Your child's school website and/or fellow parents should be able to point you to some credible and affordable (or free) resources.

#### ***Sync Up with Your Partner***

- Research *all* employment benefits and policies: including health, childcare, eldercare, leave, finance, etc. You may find some help in there that you had not thought of before.
- Look at flexibility in your schedules and ways you can support each other and manage childcare needs. Stagger hours to each take some to help your children. They will need support academically, socially and emotionally.
- Get on board with shared parenting and together coordinate household and childcare responsibilities.
- Talk through different scenarios and develop creative solutions. Don't wait until a crisis arises to start planning.
- If you share custody of children, be sure to sync with all involved to keep everyone healthy and productive.
- If you are a single parent and have others in your Village Bubble helping you, be sure to sync where needed with them as well.

#### ***Prepare Workstations & Supplies for All School Scenarios***

- Create workstations at home for anyone who needs them. This will require creativity for many.

Look to your Bubble Village if needed here too. Rotate stations, set up barriers, use headphones – remember this is temporary. Remove distractions the best you can.

- Make signs to post on doors, walls, or tables to let others know when someone needs uninterrupted time.
- Assess and do your best to ready technology needs. Reach out to LITS and your child's school with questions if needed. Many school systems have developed web pages to assist parents and students with technology.
- Recognize limitations and needed skills with technology and take advantage of free training available online.
- Prepare school supplies for return to classroom whether it is in person or at home. This year, that list will include some new items such as masks, hand sanitizer, etc. Children working from home will still need pencils, paper, etc.
- If mobile technology is needed in the home to help with schoolwork, research online what the school can do to help or if you may be eligible for any type of technology through a nonprofit in the area.

### **Additional Resources**

[Emory WorkLife Resource Center](#)

[Faculty Staff Assistance Program](#)

[Working Through COVID-19](#)