

Psychologically SPEAKING

An informational flyer for teachers and parents, created by the school psychologists of CCPS

Tips for Virtual Learning

September, 2020

As you are aware, CCPS will begin the 2020-2021 school year using an Enhanced Virtual Learning Model for instruction.

We hope that these tips can help you support your child as we transition into our new year.

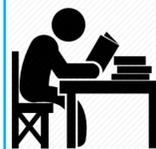
Back to Learning Tips:

- Create a structured bedtime routine. Incorporate consistency in the process of tasks, such as hygiene, reading books, and familiar “good night” routines. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends the following:
 - 10-13 hours of sleep for children ages 3-5 (including naps)
 - 9-12 hours of sleep for children ages 6-12
 - 8-10 hours of sleep for teenagers 13-18
- Similar to preparing for school or work in the morning, try to pre-manage tasks as much as possible. For instance, if your child eats a packed lunch, prepare or designate a time for you or your child to prepare that lunch ahead of time. If you will be accessing meals at one of the CCPS sponsored meal distribution centers or other community centers, plan to coordinate your visit with your child’s learning schedules as much as possible.
- Embed physical activity and breaks into the day. A time to play safely outside if possible is beneficial. Set a timer and provide countdowns (“Just a reminder, 2 more minutes before it’s time to head inside!”) Please become familiar with your child’s virtual schedule, which will allow



for time for recess or breaks during the day.

- Make sure your child is prepared with school supplies. Having materials organized and nearby helps ensure that your child is ready to access learning opportunities. But it also impresses upon your child that virtual learning is as important as learning that occurs when they are physically in school. Please contact your child’s school if you are in need of materials!
- Find a learning location: This may require some creativity and flexibility. Try to find a location that can be quiet enough for your child to listen, but is close enough to a supervising adult in case they are in need of assistance. Headphones can make it much easier for your child, their teacher, and other students in the virtual environment since they filter out noise. Remind your child that the device they are using should remain in one place during instruction in order to maximize attention.



Continued on page 2

Supporting Each Other:



Some teachers may incorporate a “Get to Know You” form, or may reach out to learn more about your child’s learning situation. Teachers may ask for this information because they recognize that families are dealing with vastly different circumstances. It can be very helpful to let your child’s teacher know your circumstances, to the extent that you feel comfortable sharing, since this allows staff to accommodate as necessary and think of ways that they can provide support. Building relationships with your child’s teacher at the beginning of the school year is very important, and can benefit students in many ways as they continue the learning process throughout the year. Communication with parents helps the learning process!

Be a Role Model: Teaching Flexibility and Positivity



Children often take on the emotional tone of what they are exposed to, and this shapes how they relate to the world around them. Although we realize these are not ideal times, we can make a difference in how our children handle adversity.

Instead of: “They should be....”

Try: “This may be a challenge but I know we can do our best.”

Instead of “Why can’t we....”

Try: “I know the things that we CAN control are.....”

Instead of focusing on what they are missing out on, Try: “What did you learn today? Or “What was the best part of today?”

Instead of displaying anger

Try: “I’m pretty upset, so I’m going to use a calm down tool (or mindfulness technique) like taking deep breaths, taking some space, counting to 10, etc.”

Show belief in your child’s teacher. These circumstances may not be ideal but modeling a positive attitude about your child’s learning will influence their receptiveness and perception of the importance of giving their all to virtual learning.

TIPS FOR ONLINE ETIQUETTE:

HERE ARE SOME OF THE VIRTUAL LEARNING EXPECTATIONS THAT YOUR CHILD’S TEACHER WILL LIKELY REVIEW WITH YOUR CHILD. YOU CAN HELP YOUR CHILD AND HIS OR HER TEACHER BY REINFORCING THESE EXPECTATIONS:

- Remind your child to have their snack either before or after their synchronous instruction
- Show respect by being a good listener to others
- Raise your hand and wait to be called on
- Keep yourself on mute until it is your turn to speak or share
- Sit appropriately in an upright position

REMEMBER

An important reminder for the adults in our student’s lives. If you feel that you or another family member is struggling and needs additional supports to address stress or mental health, there are many resources in our area. Many therapy providers are operating virtually, as well. Please visit: <https://healthycarroll.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/full-final-version.pdf> where community resources are listed beginning on Page 16. Additionally, as always, your child’s school psychologist, school counselor, or Pupil Personnel Worker are available to guide you towards resources and provide support. Reach out! We are here to help.

About the Author, Abby Wagner: Abby is a mother of 3 school-aged children, a military spouse and an avid trail runner. She enjoys camping with her family. Abby is entering her 8th year as a school psychologist in CCPS. She has previous experience in both Harford and Cecil counties.



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