



HOME SCHOOLING A PARENTS' GUIDE

Top tips for home schooling

With the nation in another lockdown, millions of children, including those with autism, are once again being educated at home. Here are some practical tips to help with the many challenges that home-schooling brings.

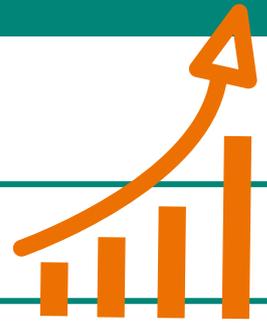
The tips will cover everything from creating routines to keeping an eye on mental health. It is vital to set yourself reasonable expectations – home-schooling can be a challenge in itself let alone when coupled with the additional stresses of a national lockdown and working from home commitments. If you are finding things difficult, reach out to your child’s school for support or advice.

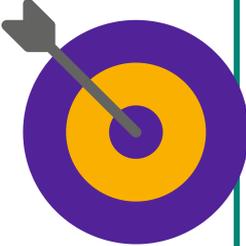
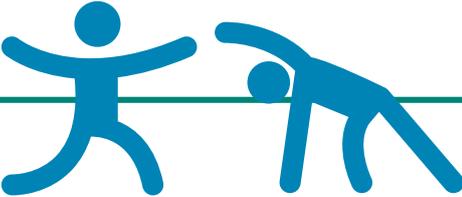
In the accompanying document you will find a selection of printable resources that you may find helpful when working with your child.



Challenges	Solutions
<p>Lack of routine/changes to routine</p> <p>If you’re trying to work from home as well as teach your children it can be easy for routine to go out of the window. Here are some things you can do to try and maintain structure throughout the day</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create structure and a new routine at home. Use tools like now/next boards and visual timetables to help reinforce the structure. Templates for these can be found towards the end of this pack• Having a task you complete daily can help to anchor the routine, this could be a Joe Wicks work out video or a BBC Bitesize lesson or anything that your child can look forward to each day• Use timers to signal when to take a break or how long some independent work should take• Set up the working environment away from distractions, in a separate space if that is possible• Where possible, communicate changes to the routine before they happen. You could use a picture on the visual timetable that indicates that something has been cancelled, or that something is still undecided• Prioritise what you want to achieve each day, try using a tier system e.g. <p>Will definitely: complete phonics Will try to: complete maths problems Might do: finish handwriting practice</p>

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Challenges	Solutions
<p>Difficulty attending to tasks</p> <p>Your child may have difficulty focusing at home compared to being at school. Some of these tips could help to build up your child's concentration</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start with small tasks and slowly build up. Make sure to praise your child even if you've had to help them with a task to reinforce their good work. You can then help your child become more independent by gradually fading out your support. If something isn't working, take it back a few steps to what worked previously and build yourself back up. This is known as the principle of errorless teaching• Try using the now/next board found at the end of the pack to help engage your child in a task they don't want to do. The idea being that they complete the first task they don't like and afterwards they get to do something they enjoy, e.g. now: spelling, next: garden time. This is the Premack principle• Set clear goals: if the aim is to attend 1 phonics live lesson and complete 2 maths tasks, make that clear and stick to it• Have clear rules such as no TV time until schoolwork is done. Make the rules achievable and enforceable, don't set yourself or your child up to fail• Work does not have to mean sitting at a table doing a worksheet, it could be identifying colours while playing with toys or counting the number of cars that go by the window. Be creative, children can learn in many different ways• Schedule movement breaks to keep the blood flowing and to have some time away from work! Work in different areas of your house if possible but remember to try and avoid too many distractions 

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Challenges	Solutions
<p>Maintaining good mental health</p> <p>It will be difficult at times so make sure you're doing things that will have a positive effect on your mental health</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have a clear end to the day, whether schoolwork or working from home. Creating structure is important for maintaining work/life balance which becomes harder when the physical boundaries are blurred• Schedule in family time doing activities together that you all enjoy e.g. playing board games, movie nights, pizza parties, going for a walk etc.• Prioritise physical activity, whatever can be done under the current restrictions. Exercise videos, jogging, yoga in the garden are all great ways to clear the mind• Connect with others, video call extended family, talk to your neighbours over the fence, text a friend• If your child is missing the social aspect of school, you could arrange a video call with friends• Keep your expectations realistic. It is a difficult time for everyone, it's likely that you are not a teacher and are having to juggle your own work with educating your children. There's no perfect way of doing things, if it works for you and your family, that's the right way

Visit the [NHS website](#) for information on how to identify if you or your child needs support with your mental health. Reach out for help when things are difficult. Your child's school, NHS 111, your local GP are good places to start.



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Challenges	Solutions
<p>Behaviours that challenge</p> <p>With regular routines disrupted and time spent away from peers, you may see an increase in behaviours that challenge. You should always seek support if these become unmanageable</p> 	<p>Behaviours that challenge can be caused by a range of factors. It is important to remember that all behaviour is communication and any behaviours that challenge can stem from barriers to communication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work with your child's school to try and understand why the behaviour is happening and what can be done to help. See the functions of behaviour sheet for more information<li>• Encourage the behaviour you want to see and keep things positive. Praise your child for sitting nicely, listening or following instructions, even if these are things they usually do<li>• Try to promote communication to replace behaviours that challenge e.g. asking for a break instead of swiping the work away<li>• Think about what can be done proactively to avoid behaviours that challenge. Take regular breaks, have things to look forward to during the day<li>• If you are struggling with behaviours that challenge you can seek the support of a behaviour analyst. Our Outreach Team would be happy to offer advice and support

In the accompanying document you will be able to find a range of different resources which will help you implement some of our suggestions. If you have any questions, please contact us using the details below.

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