

LEARNING FROM HOME: INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Advice, tips and resources to support children as they learn from home.

This factsheet provides advice, tips and resources to help you support your child's continuity of learning from home.

To increase physical distancing across the population and prevent the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19), children in government schools will move to remote and flexible learning and care at the commencement of Term 2.

This means that from the start of Term 2 most children will be learning from home.

For more information on coronavirus (COVID-19), visit the [Victorian Government website](#)

ABOUT LEARNING FROM HOME

When you start to think about helping your child to learn from home, remember that no one expects you to be a subject matter expert or teacher. The most important thing you can do is to continue to provide comfort, support and encouragement to your child.

You can help your child to learn from home by working with their school and supporting your child as they undertake the activities provided.

HOW THE SCHOOL WILL SUPPORT YOUR CHILD

Your child's school will:

- communicate with you and your child about teacher responsibilities and what you and your child need to do
- communicate with you and provide learning activities for your child to do at home
- use their normal communication tools such as their website, newsletters, emails and other online tools
- provide technical support with devices, as needed.

ACCESS TO COMPUTER DEVICES AND INTERNET

Your child's schools will contact you in the first week of Term 2 to determine if your child needs access to the internet, or if they need to borrow a laptop or tablet. This will include children from disadvantaged and vulnerable backgrounds, and those who attend schools in bushfire-affected areas – these children will be given priority.

The Department has partnered with Telstra to provide 1000 4G dongle devices with 4G internet access, and 4000 SIM cards that provide 4G internet access, for families who do not have access to the internet at home. These will be free of charge, and will be provided for the next six months.

Devices will be distributed in the first two weeks of Term 2.

You do not need to understand how to use tablets or laptops. Most children have been using them at school and are familiar with how to use them.

If you do not have internet access at home, for example, if you live in an area without 4G reception, talk to your school about how your child may receive materials that do not require online access. These can be mailed to your child, or you could collect them. Completed tasks can be returned in the same way. The materials are aligned to the Victorian Curriculum F-10.

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT YOUR CHILD

You can support your child by:

- having a routine and setting expectations
- making sure your child has a space to work in
- providing a level of supervision suitable to your child's stage of development
- monitoring communications from teachers
- checking in with your child often to help them manage and pace their work
- monitoring how much time your child is spending online.

YOUR CHILD'S RESPONSIBILITIES DURING REMOTE LEARNING

You should change these responsibilities according to the age and stage of your child.

Your child's responsibilities include:

- regularly monitor digital platforms for announcements and feedback from their teachers
- do their best work by completing tasks with integrity and academic honesty
- do their best to meet timelines and due dates
- communicate openly with their teachers and tell them if they have any concerns or issues
- collaborate and support their classmates
- continue to abide by their school's behaviour guidelines.

SETTING UP A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Every home is different but it's important to provide a quiet and comfortable space in which to learn.

Where possible, extended learning should take place in a space your family shares. For example, a lounge room or dining room. These spaces are preferable over a bedroom, where your child can feel isolated and supervision can be more challenging.

It should be a place:

- that can be quiet at times
- that has a strong internet signal, if possible

- where you or another adult is present as you would normally when your child is online, dependent on age

ESTABLISHING ROUTINES AND EXPECTATIONS

Start and end each day with a check-in to help your child:

- clarify and understand the instructions they get from their teachers
- help them organise themselves and set priorities for their learning at home.

A healthy daily routine is great for mental and physical health, as well as concentration and learning.

Encourage regular exercise breaks. This might mean going for a walk, using exercise DVDs and apps, dancing, floor exercises or using home exercise equipment.

Encourage healthy eating habits and make sure they drink enough water.

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR CHILD

We encourage you to start and finish each day with a simple check-in. These check-ins can be a regular part of each day.

Morning check ins

In the morning, ask:

- What are you learning today?
- What are your learning targets or goals?
- How will you be spending your time?
- What resources do you need?
- What support do you need?

Afternoon check-ins

In the afternoon, ask:

- What did you learn today?
- What was challenging? You could come up with a way to deal with the same problem if it comes up again.
- Consider three things that went well today. Why were they good?
- Are you ok? Do you need to ask your teacher for something? Do you need help with something to make tomorrow more successful?

These questions allow your child to:

- process the instructions they get from their teachers
- help them organise themselves and set priorities.

You could also check-in with your child throughout the day. This depends on your child's needs.

ADVICE FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS

- [How you can support your child with additional needs at home](#) – this resource helps you support your child’s learning at home.
- [Understanding learning difficulties for parents: a practical guide](#) – this guide provides you with practical advice about learning difficulties. This includes the evidence base supporting particular intervention programs and a [recommended apps](#) list for children with learning difficulties.

RESOURCES AND TIPS

In addition to the resources and materials that your early childhood service or school may provide, you could also use the following resources:

GET PARENTS INVOLVED WITH LITERACY

[Get parents involved with literacy](#) includes programs and supports, including the ‘Literacy and numeracy tips to help your child’ booklet. This booklet gives advice to parents with children from birth to year 6 about supporting their child’s literary and numeracy learning.

You can also find ideas to [support the development of early literacy skills](#) including speaking listening, reading and writing for children aged from birth through to the early years of school.

PREMIERS’ READING CHALLENGE

The [2020 Premiers’ Reading Challenge](#) is now open and provides a great incentive to spend more time reading.

Ask your child’s teacher if their school or early childhood service is taking part in the 2020 Challenge.

Participating schools will register your child and give you a username and password.

Participating early childhood services will register your child, and all you need to do is start reading with your child every day.

If your child’s school or early childhood service is not taking part, your child can still take part. Visit:

- [registering school students as home-based readers](#)
- [registering young children \(birth to 5 years old\) as home based readers](#)

More information on how to take part in the Challenge is available at: [School student and parents: taking part in the Challenge](#)

MATHEMATICS AND NUMERACY AT HOME

[Mathematics and numeracy at home](#) provides links to a range of advice and resources for families.

To support the development of numeracy skills for children aged from birth to the early years of school visit: [How to build numeracy skills from birth to year 2](#).

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING AND MATHS (STEM)

Find ways to engage children in [science, technology, engineering and maths \(STEM\) experiences](#).

Visit the [Fun at home](#) webpage for more parent-focused resources.

MANAGING SCREEN TIME AND ONLINE SAFETY

It's important you keep a balanced approach to home learning. Time spent using digital devices for learning should be broken up with physical exercise and offline learning tasks often.

It's also important that during this time of remote learning we maintain safe and responsible use of information and communication technologies. This includes:

- The appropriate use of digital platforms, privacy and information protection
- Respectful online communication.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING CHECK-IN

Just as you set aside time for physical exercise, it is important to make time each day to check in on your child's mental health and wellbeing.

As your child adjusts to their new routine and not being able to see their friends in person, it is important to be understanding of their feelings of frustration, anxiousness and even anger – every child will react differently.

To support your child, use these mental health and wellbeing check ins to:

- Provide an opportunity to talk about how they feel and listen to what they say
- Identify one or two things they could do to address what they are concerned or angry about
- Ask how they are going, whether they are finding it easy or hard to learn remotely, and if there is anything they'd like your help with.

There is a risk that your child may be bullied online. If you think this happening to them, support is available on how to talk to your child and your school at: [bully stoppers](#).

If you have any other concerns about the health and wellbeing of your child, contact your school directly, which will have access to resources that can help.