

# Back-to-school balance.

As kids go back to school, in-person or virtually, parents have the added stress of caring for school-aged children during the ongoing pandemic and the changes it brings to education and daily life.

## SEEK COLLABORATION

### Strategies at home.

- Find someone to collaborate with and establish goals you have for the school year. Due to the unpredictable nature of the pandemic, focusing on goals biweekly or monthly is helpful.
- Delegate responsibilities to older children, if able and appropriate (washing dishes, making food, helping younger siblings with homework).

### Strategies with teaching staff.

- Find out the preferred and best way to communicate with your teacher (email, text, phone, etc.).
- Ask for a copy of the daily/weekly schedule.
- Ask about home work grading policies.

## PRACTICE SELF CARE

Self care is an activity that nurtures you, recharges your energy, and connects you to a deeper self or higher power.

**Spiritual:** prayer, spiritual text

**Relational:** setting boundaries with others and practicing assertiveness

**Emotional:** practicing self awareness

**Physical:** get enough exercise, food, and sleep



## MAINTAIN CONSISTENCY

Consistency can help create safety and resiliency. Keep a visual schedule (calendar handwritten, app on phone, computer program)

- **Detailed Schedule:** follows the school schedule
- **Block Schedule:** can be less rigid (doing x amount of work in two hours)

### If schooling virtually, separate work and play spaces.

Home is often associated with relaxation and play, so create a specific area for school to help “cue” school mode for both parent and student.

**Having fun rituals or mini celebrations.** Recognize good behaviors, holidays, and more with celebrations that would typically be held in the classroom. Due to COVID, some of these traditions will be lost or changed in the future due to distancing requirements. Incorporate some of these lost school experiences into the home.

## REMAIN FLEXIBLE

Remain flexible and be kind to yourself. “A bad plan is better than no plan, and the most important quality of any plan is the flexibility to change.” – Judson Moore

- Accept, adapt, and acknowledge things will change.
- Focus on what you can and can’t control.
- This is a learning experience and an experiment for everyone. We are all going through this.
- Be aware of negative thoughts about your self and replace the negative thought with something more realistic or even positive.

**We’re here to help!** If you’d like to speak with someone more about the stressors of schooling during the COVID-19 pandemic, contact (716) 338-1586.