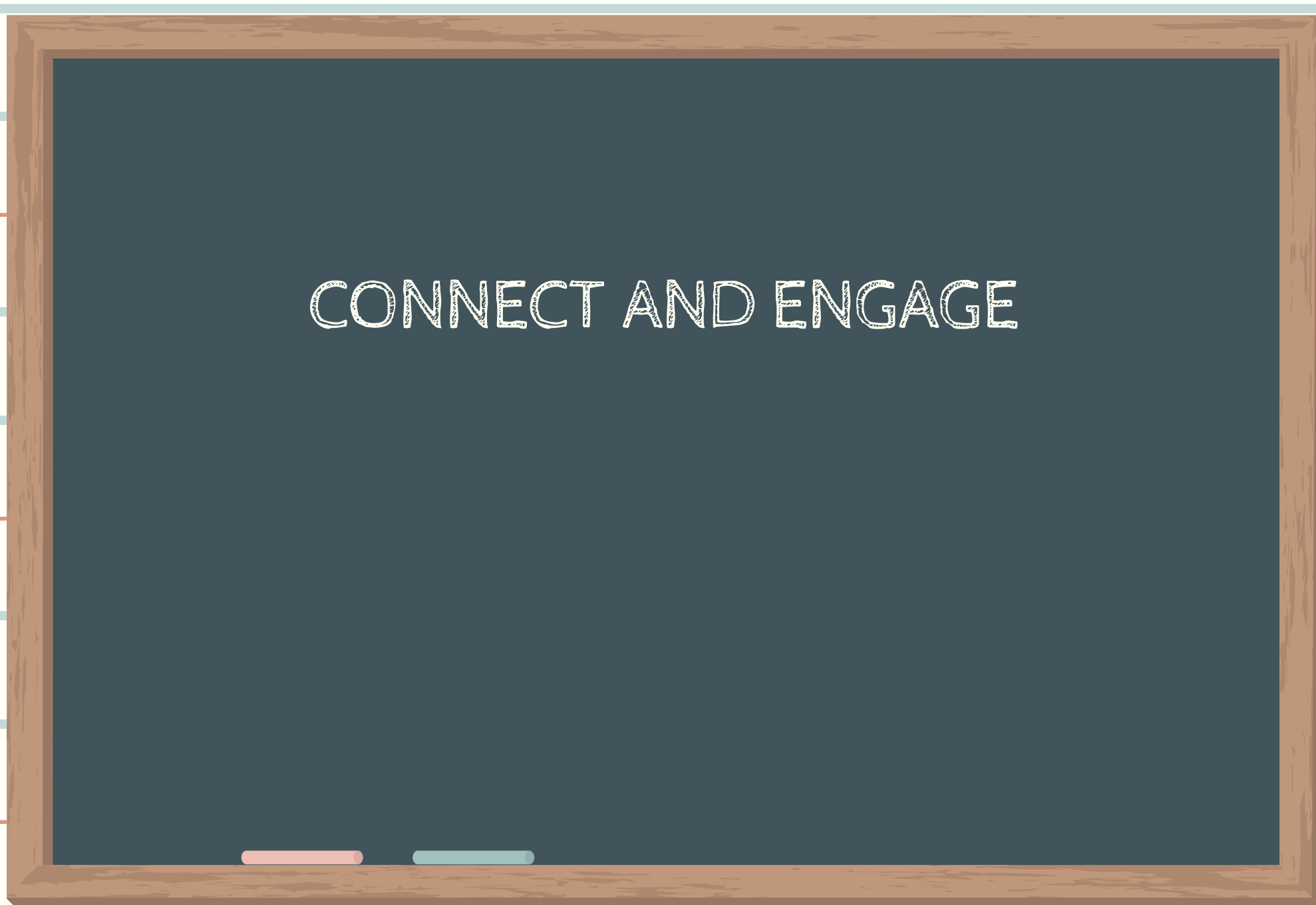


Teaching At Home Tips

For Parents



For Remote Learning
Practice these at home if you feel comfortable!



Finding yourself at home and taking on the role of teacher for your child or children can be overwhelming and challenging, especially with the extraordinary world events going on around us.

However, there are a few things you can do to help make this learning experience at home calm and enjoyable for both you and your child or children.

Here are some tips and techniques to guide you through the journey.

Parent Tips

Breathe and Relax

- This is a temporary arrangement and, you will do the best you can do in the circumstances, and, so will your child/ren.
- Even temporary change can be daunting for everyone, but particularly stressful for a lot of children with additional needs. Please take some time to allow your child/ren to adjust to the change.
- Many students may want a specific length of time these arrangements will be in place, or a date when they will be back at school. Unfortunately, at this stage, this is unknown, so perhaps a good way to settle anxiety around this is by giving a definite structure in 2 week blocks. This may give the child/ren enough reassurance and you enough space to navigate the road ahead.

Breathing Techniques

4-7-8 Breathing

- breathe in through the nose for a count of **four**
- hold the breath for a count of **seven**
- part the lips and exhale loudly for a count of **eight**

Breathing Resources

For Kids:

<https://copingskillsforkids.com/deep-breathing-exercises-for-kids>

For Parents/Carers:

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/breathing-techniques#alternatives>

Where will I work?

Make Simple Arrangements

Many children like the assurance of regularity. This makes them feel safe and help know what to expect, thus limiting the impact of hidden surprises or situations which can cause great stress.

Creating regularity can include:

- (1) Creating a specific learning space where you and your children will do school work
- (2) Deciding on specific times that you and your child/ren will do school work
- (3) Creating a daily timetable (Visual schedule for your child) so your child knows what is expected of them
- (4) Having a finished box where any completed work that your child/ren has done can be put into – signalling that it is finished.
- (5) Having an alternative plan for the days when things just might not happen the way you would like.

Specific Learning Areas

Deciding on a specific learning area can help:

- keep school work and equipment together in the one spot
- cue your child/ren into school or learning time
- maintain a routine and create familiarity and predictability

Specific learning areas:

- should be as uncluttered and organised as possible
- should be away from other distractions (where possible) such as TVs/iPads, loud sounds
- should be comfortable places to engage and learn (sensory aids can include pillows, medicine ball, stretch band to rest the feet)
- are best with access to good lighting and fresh air
- can be anywhere inside or outside the house

Create a Timetable

Creating a timetable will:

- give you a guide as to what you will do each day
- help you stay organised
- give your child/ren routine and expectations



Have 2 timetables:

- (1) **Weekly** – is good for the parent to use as a guide of what you would like to get done.
- (2) **Daily** – is good for the child/ren so they know what's expected during the day.

Weekly Timetable

This is essentially a guide for you, so:

1. **Make it timeless** – putting in particular times to do things will inevitably cause you more stress and anxiety. Therefore, by just allocating topics to be covered on a particular day provides more flexibility and less stress.
2. **Be flexible** – when there is a 1 to 1 situation (ie: 1 student : 1 teacher) learning can be more focused and intense, therefore you may get through work quicker than you thought. If you finish the work quickly that's ok, don't look for other school work to fill in time ... instead fill in extra time with a physical activity like a movement game or a walk, or discussing the Zones of Emotions.
3. **Allow for fun** – make sure you incorporate some fun or sensory time either in between learning times or at the end of the day.

Daily Timetable

Remember this is a guide for your child/ren, so:

1. **Do one day at a time** – a daily timetable let's your child/ren know what they will be doing for that particular day. Create a visual schedule day by day to allow for flexibility.
2. **Use visuals** – have a visual for each topic (clip art on google). It doesn't matter what visual you use as long as you use the same one each time for that topic. You can even draw your own visuals if necessary.
3. **Display the timetable** – display the visuals in order vertically on a whiteboard or schedule strip. You could add a visual name for every day of the week on the schedule strip. Have either a finished box for your child to place the finished activities in or a marker for them to tick off the work as it is completed.

Minimise Distraction

Distractions: Anything that diverts a child/ren's attention away from what they are meant to be doing is a distraction.

Types of Distractions:

- Loud noises
- Sensory toys
- television
- music
- phones
- iPads
- computers



Where possible, learning should be away from all these things. These things can be used as a motivation reward, but should not be present when learning is taking place. Sometimes even when they are in sight and not turned on they can still be a distraction, therefore, where possible, these things should be out of sight.

Engage your Child

Learning from home might be new and different for your child/ren and will therefore take some adjusting for you both. Some simple ways to encourage and engage your child/ren in this temporary learning arrangement are:

- **Show what is expected** – you can do this by using a daily visual schedule strip.
- **Give choice** – remember we are all more likely to engage when we are given some choice. If you have 5 things you need to get through that day perhaps ask your child/ren what order they want to do things, or show them 2 things and have them choose which one to do first.
- **Praise, praise and praise** – nothing encourages engagement more than feeling like you've done a good thing. Remember to praise your child/ren for their efforts and be specific when giving praise, example "Max I really like how you started your work right away, thank you".
- **Include physical movement** – physical movement gets our whole body and brain ready to learn. Physical movement can be done by a quick walk, jumping on a trampoline, throwing and catching a ball, yoga, stretching etc (Go Noodle, Cosmic Yoga). Incorporate physical movement into learning whenever you notice that your child is disengaged or becoming elevated.
- **Time Warnings** - giving a time warning (you have 10 minutes to play with the trains then we will do some maths) can be very useful. Tangible times are also great for children to physically view the time they have left for play/an activity.
- **Sensory Breaks** - when your child is becoming disengaged, elevated or over-stimulated, sensory breaks enable a child to self-regulate, become calm and continue with their work. Sensory breaks could include: lights off with calming music and light toys, weighted blanket, stretch band, squishy toys, rolls on a medicine ball).
- **Motivate with Special Interests** – There will be many times when your child/ren need a little help to continue learning. Help your child/ren through these times by allocating time to play with something they are really interested in. A reward chart can assist you.

Motivation

Choose the motivation:

Desired – something short your child/ren enjoys doing – could be listening to music or a dance or watching a youtube clip, playing UNO.

High - something long your child/ren is really interested by ... could be playing time on the iPad, watching a video, lego world.

Desired motivation:

This is a short quick boost. Something that won't take long and something that your child/ren will be happy to do for short amount of time and then return back to work. Use this motivation when you feel a break is needed. This can include sensory breaks (having 10 mins of outdoor play)

High motivation:

This is an end reward. This motivation is something your child/ren will enjoy for a long period of time, such as playing on the computer, iPad etc. When you use a high motivating reward you need to be prepared to allow your child/ren to continue with it for a longer length of time.

