

At-Home Learning Tips for Parents

Any teacher will tell you that classroom management is not easy. Managing a room of children takes patience, planning, and flexibility regardless of how many kids you have. **Remember that it will not always go as planned and that's okay!**

Environment:

Creating a “space for learning” will be important to show children and teens that when they are seated at this desk, table, or they are sitting in this spot on the floor, this is the space they will do their school time.

- Organized, uncluttered space to minimize distractions.
 - Make sure there is enough light (either natural light or with lamps)
 - Have materials accessible in the learning space (pencils, coloring materials, computer, books, manipulatives, etc.) to minimize movement around the house. Encourage your child to take inventory of their own space and include them in the conversation of making sure they have everything they need to learn that day.
 - Create a calm and quiet space to read, draw, write or create during breaks or scheduled time in the day.
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Schedules:

Having a schedule provides predictability and structure for your day. Limit “school” or learning times to best suit the age and ability levels of your children. You know them best.

- Appropriate timelines by grade level. Adjust for children who have specific learning challenges or needs. Student participation will vary.
 - Early Childhood and Kindergarten, students can be engaged for 30-45 mins and Grades 1-2, for 60 mins
 - Grades 3-4, (90 mins), Grades 5-8, (120 mins)
 - Grades 9-12, students can be engaged for a few hours.
 - Use visuals or pictures in the schedule for early learners or learners with special needs. A sequence in their routine (first, next, last) may be more helpful than giving specific times. Some may even need “First/ then” language.
 - Set up a routine including a time to wake up, snack and meal times throughout the day. Mix up activities to avoid boredom.
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To Learn More

- Education Department
206-987-6634
- Ask your child’s healthcare provider
- www.seattlechildrens.org/clinics/school-services

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line, 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.



Seattle Children's offers interpreter services for Deaf, hard of hearing or non-English speaking patients, family members and legal representatives free of charge. Seattle Children's will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Call the Family Resource Center at 206-987-2201. This handout has been reviewed by clinical staff at Seattle Children's. However, your child's needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your child's healthcare provider.

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- Do not feel like you need to schedule the same learning time at home as your child would get in a typical school day. Having a handful of learning or discovery blocks of time in the day is perfectly fine.
- Mental and physical wellness are important and can be added to the schedule.
- Mindfulness activities like deep breathing, yoga poses, or time to talk about emotions and feelings.
- Use physical movement breaks to dance, stretch, run, jump and play in between learning blocks. AKA: Recess at home.

Behavior Expectations:

Setting up behavior expectations about “how” you want your children to behave during their learning time will be important. If your child knows what to do during specific times, it increases the chances they will do it.

- Stay consistent with the daily schedule. Once they learn the routine, the structure will help them know what to expect each day.
- Limit instructions to one or two steps for younger children, or three step for older children.
- May vary depending on individual needs.
- Writing instructions down may be helpful for kids with attending challenges.
- Create due dates or concrete learning activity expectations. This could look like setting a date for an independent reading book to be finished or saying, “One math worksheet should be finished by the end of math learning time today.”
- Set a learning goal for the day, something reasonable for your child to accomplish.
- Set up the schedule to have more rewarding activities or subjects follow those that may be more challenging to help increase motivation to compete the difficult tasks.
- Set noise level guidelines such as quiet independent work time, but during transitions and breaks they are allowed to be silly and sing.

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This may be helpful if a parent is working from home and overseeing homeschooling.

- Some teachers have a visual for noise level such as a stop light system (Red= no talking, Yellow= quiet talking, Green= normal conversational volume).
 - As you make a schedule for the day, allow your child to choose where to place some activities in the day. Offer choices when possible to increase engagement.
 - Example: Allow your child to select their favorite pencil or a place to read their book.
 - If you or your child become frustrated around learning a specific skill or concept, it is OKAY to push the pause button and try again tomorrow. Sometimes a break and a different approach can help everyone involved.
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