

MENTAL HEALTH TIDBIT (BETTER INFORMED TOGETHER)

STRESS LESS OVER REMOTE LEARNING

DAUPHIN COUNTY MH/A/DP
JANUARY 2021 MENTAL HEALTH TIDBIT

Remote learning for your child is not new. By now, it may be growing old for both you and your child. As schools continue some form of online learning, it might help to have strategies to use on days when this type of education feels stressful.

- ❖ **When in doubt, choose empathy** – When brains are stressed, they are in “fight or flight” mode, making it hard to think or reason. To get your child back to work, show you understand how they are feeling. Start by saying “I get why this is so hard for you”.
- ❖ **Build in fun movement breaks throughout the day** – Getting up and dancing, jumping or taking a walk can be just the reboot everyone needs.
- ❖ **Create a gratitude jar ritual** – Help retrain your brain and your child’s brain to look for positive moments. Put sticky notes next to a jar and ask each family member to add one positive thing each day. Then, once a week, have a special time when you read them aloud to each other.
- ❖ **Use Mindfulness to help with stress** – Mindfulness is about slowing down and tuning in and focusing on the present moment. Mindfulness activities improve calm and self-control skills and decrease stress and anxiety. Check out some activities at the link below.
<https://www.popsugar.com/family/mindfulness-activities-for-kids-47595392>
- ❖ **Balance screen time with green time** – Research shows that spending time in nature is associated with positive mental health, so head outside after school. This goes for older children as well. Swapping one kind of screen for another still means they are sitting inside.
- ❖ **Remember that behavior is communication** – If your child is acting out or refusing to do work, it is important to remember they are not *giving* you a hard time; they are *having* a hard a time. Ask what they are really trying to tell you with their behaviors. Is the math too easy or too hard or are they upset because plans with friends had to be cancelled?
- ❖ **Make time for connection** - Children who feel seen and supported by the adults in their lives can bounce back from stress easier. Schedule some one on one time with your child where you just focus on connecting and enjoying without talking about school or being on electronics.
- ❖ **Model calmness** – Stress is contagious but so is calmness. Calmness is the “water” that can cool down any emotionally charged situation. Take a step back and find calm before responding in stressful moments.
- ❖ **Connect with your child’s teacher** – Connection with a teacher is important as well. Let your child’s teacher know if they are struggling. The teacher can provide some extra attention or a personal check-in. We are in this together, so it makes sense to partner with the school to get through this together.

Excerpted from: <https://www.popsugar.com/family/what-to-do-if-your-child-hates-distance-learning>