



## **Epping School District Mental Health and Wellness Newsletter Strategies to Support Stress-free Remote Learning**

April 7, 2020

Dear Epping Community,

One of the many challenges that all parents are facing right now is figuring out how to support our children's education during this time of remote learning. Some of us are finding that the biggest challenge is having to juggle working remotely while keeping our children focused and on task and being available to help them if and when they need it. For those of you who are essential workers and not able to stay home, you are facing a whole other challenge of not being able to be home to support your child's education (not to mention the added health and safety concerns that come with being out in the community every day). Either way, remote learning is a very difficult endeavor and we commend you for the efforts you have made to support, encourage and hold your children accountable.

We thought it might be helpful to give you some tips on how you can help your child find success with remote learning. The first thing to keep in mind is to do your best to be patient with yourself and your children. This is so new to all of us and we are figuring it out as we go. You are not expected to be your child's teacher. However, as a parent, you can put a few simple strategies into place that will maximize academic success while keeping things as stress-free as possible. Secondly, this is a good time to stop and evaluate: What is working? What is not going so well? Perhaps you have some strategies in place that are going well, while maybe you and your child could use some help rethinking your approach to remote learning over the last few weeks. Engage your child in this conversation to get their input. The following are some strategies that we have found to work well for us, as we are home trying to parent and work remotely as well. We hope these tips are helpful to you. Please reach out with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,  
The Epping School District Counseling Department

### **STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT STRESS-FREE REMOTE LEARNING**

#### **1. Create a home learning environment**

- ◆ Choose a designated workspace for your child. This space should be devoted to schoolwork and not a place that is also used for play, TV, video games, etc.
- ◆ The workspace should be comfortable and free from clutter and distractions.
- ◆ Try to have all necessary materials readily available.
- ◆ Have your child help set up the workspace so they have a sense of ownership over it.



## 2. Set a schedule

- ◆ As human beings, we tend to function better when we have structure and routine. Children do especially well with this and are used to having a schedule during their school days.
- ◆ Try to have your child wake up and go to bed around the same time every day.
- ◆ Create a schedule that includes designated work time, meals and breaks. Remember, students have down time built into a regular school day. Be sure to give younger children time for recess!
- ◆ While having a schedule is helpful, it's also important to allow for some flexibility and spontaneity. If it's been raining all morning and the sun comes out just as it's time to sit down and do some math, put the math off for a bit and get outside to enjoy the sun! The schedule should help to relieve stress not create more.
- ◆ When establishing blocks of time for schoolwork, keep in mind the age and needs of your individual children. Younger children have a short attention span and will do better with just 15 or 20 minutes of work at a time. Older students who have attention challenges will also do better with shorter blocks of work and more frequent breaks.

### Daily Schedule

8:00 Wake up/eat breakfast  
9:00 Schoolwork  
10:00 Break – get outside, move your body  
10:30 Snack  
11:00 Schoolwork  
12:00 Lunch  
12:30 Be Creative – make some art, build something  
1:30 Schoolwork  
2:30 Get outside, move your body

## 3. Make a “to do” list for each day

- ◆ Help your younger children make a plan for the day listing each activity or lesson they need to accomplish.
- ◆ Older students should make their own to do list but may need you to check on it to be sure it lists all the necessary tasks and is a realistic plan.
- ◆ Encourage your child to check off each item as it gets done. It's so satisfying!
- ◆ When children complete tasks on the list allow/encourage them to reward themselves with maybe a quick snack or listening to a fun song. Bigger tasks should have a bigger reward, like a walk outside or a 30 minute show.



## 4. Be sure to build screen-free fun and physical activity into the day

- ◆ We all need breaks from screens throughout our day. It is not good for us physically or mentally to be in front of our devices for long stretches of time.
- ◆ Physical activity gets blood flowing to the brain which will only help your child focus and learn.



## 5. Keep lines of communication open

- ◆ Actively check in with your child on both their academic progress and how they are doing emotionally.
- ◆ Stay connected with your child's teacher(s). Be sure to reach out if you are concerned your child may be falling behind or if they are having trouble keeping up with the work.

- ◆ Encourage your older children to connect with their teachers as often as possible. Many teachers are holding Google Meets sessions for students. This is a great opportunity for your child to connect with supportive adults and peers, even if they do not need help with that class.

**6. Remind yourself that you are a rock star!**



- ◆ You have a lot of new responsibilities and stressors and you are doing a great job managing it all. Your encouragement, accountability, and dedication to your child's education will help them thrive when they get back to the classroom. Try to keep a positive attitude towards remote learning and your children will too!

RESOURCES FOR SUPPORT

<u>Counselor/Psychologist email and office hours:</u>	<u>Community Resources:</u>
<b>EES</b>	Dial 211 for statewide resources  Seacoast Mental Health Center: 431-6703 and 772-2710  Unemployment assistance: <a href="http://www.nhes.nh.gov">www.nhes.nh.gov</a>  Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-237-TALK (8255)  Crisis Text Line: Text 741741  Community Partners: 516-9300  HAVEN: 994-SAFE (7233)
Julie Kratimenos: Julie.kratimenos@eppingsd.org, 9:00am-12:00pm	
Marianne McDonough: mmcdonough@eppingsd.org, 8:30am-10:00am, 2:00pm-3:30pm	
Kathy Stanley-Berting: KStanley-berting@eppingsd.org, 8:00am-10:00am, 1:00pm-2:00pm	
<b>EMS</b>	
Sarah Wagner: swagner@eppingsd.org, 8:30am-10:00am, 1:00pm-2:30pm	
Nick Degruttola: ndegruttola@eppingsd.org, 9:00am-12:00pm	
<b>EHS</b>	
Sarah Wagner: swagner@eppingsd.org, 8:30am-10:00am, 1:00pm-2:30pm	
Julie Morin: jmorin@eppingsd.org, 9:00am-10:30am, 1:00pm-2:30pm	
Melorah Bisallion: mbisailion@eppingsd.org 10:30am-1:30pm	