

Remote learning for students with special education needs:

Parent tip sheet

Supporting your child

Help your child choose a place to work. For some students, this is a spot where a family member can be nearby; for others, a private area is better. Some students work well independently. Others need parents to take a more active role.

Support your child to manage their time. Help your child set up a calendar with specific due dates and reminders. You might want to add important dates and times to your calendar, too.

Set a timer to help your child work through assignments in smaller pieces or “chunks”.

Remind your child to take breaks to move around. Try to spend time outside during the day, if possible.

Have conversations with your child. If they become overwhelmed, try problem solving with them or reaching out to a teacher.

Give your child choice in when and where they complete their work, when possible.

Prioritize your child’s wellbeing. Contact your child’s school if you think they have a mental health concern or if they could use wellness supports.

Help your child communicate with their teacher. Sit with your child while they draft an e-mail to their teacher to ask for help.

Communicating with the School

Talk to your child's teachers about how you can communicate. Find something that works for everyone.

- How will you communicate? Will you use a virtual communication book, email or a phone check-in?
- When will you communicate? How long should it take each person to respond?
- Who will you communicate with? Is there one member of a student's school-based team who will take responsibility for remaining in regular contact?

Talk about your expectations and come to a shared understanding about what families and school staff are each going to provide.

Help educators understand your child

Families have unique insight into how remote learning is working for their child.

Let school staff know:

- how long your child can focus during synchronous learning

- what your child finds most engaging
- if your child feels like they can participate
- If they can understand the material
- if assignments being sent home are a good fit for the child or need to be adapted
- what is working well at home
- if tools from school (e.g. equipment, fidget toys) could help at home

Talk to your child's teacher about how their Individual Education Plan (IEP) might need to be updated to support remote learning.

Working with technology

Ask your child's school about help available for you and your child. Some schools offer video tutorials or helplines. This might help you if your child usually uses assistive technology at school and has brought it home for remote learning.

Talk to your child about cyber security and privacy. Some students with special education needs might need parents and teachers to teach safety rules using tools like social stories.