

## **New to teaching your kids at home? We've got you!**

We are all in a new season, and I'm sure if you've just started leading your child's learning at home it can be overwhelming. We want to help, knowing that we're on this journey together. Our hope is to provide you with reputable resources so that you can stop the scroll and focus on the important. Your presence is their priority. Try not to feel overwhelmed. Choose a starting point and build gradually from there. We can trust God with the details and watch Him create special moments with our kids and strengthen our relationships with our families.

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### **Schedules:**

Kids positively respond to schedules and instruction. While schedules may take time to develop, it will help your kids know what to expect each day. When kids know what is expected of them, they are more willing to press in and do work knowing that free time is coming. Prioritize your time! Start each day getting a word from the Word. Build in time for spiritual formation during their school time. Then, build in time to intentionally connect with your kids. Quiet time is a necessity for recharging. Remember, one size does not fit all! Customize your schedule to meet your family's specific needs. Here's a fun resource to get your kids involved.

- [Family Activities—Daily Schedule](#)
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## Tips:

- Pray first. It is so important to begin the day with Jesus before jumping into your homeschool routine.
- This is a perfect time to really press in and develop strong relationships with your kids. You simply being with them is ultimately what they need; everything else is a bonus!
- You aren't alone. We are here for you. If you have questions, just reach out and we will do our best to help get you connected.
- For parents with multiple kids, try starting with spending time with your youngest kid. Focus on them for 20 min, then move to the next oldest and spend time with them. Let the older kids know that their time is coming. Give them a quiet project or a subject that comes easily to them to work on while they wait. Having a set time with each individual kid allows you to have productive work with fewer questions and interruptions.
- After quiet time, try doing the more hands on stuff; exercise or read aloud from a favorite book.
- Embrace quiet moments and don't fear boredom. Boredom is good for fostering creativity and independence.
- Focus on building memories and finding daily rhythms that aren't overwhelming. Use this season as an opportunity to create moments to come together as a family that you wouldn't have gotten with your kids away at school. Move forward with open hands and welcome interruption!
- If it's just not working today, don't get frustrated. Grab a snack and play in the yard. Or, do something fun and interactive as a family!

- Try to avoid *regularly* turning to TV. But there are many good resources available on TV that can supplement education.
  - For working parents, try to homeschool and be with kids from 9:00am–12:00pm. Then do creative time/screen time in the afternoon while you get your work done.
  - Try to share responsibilities with a spouse or caregiver but stick to the same schedule so the kids have an easy transition.
  - Use technology like Marco Polo, Google Meet, Zoom, etc. to stay connected. However, be aware of filters and establish settings to create a safe environment for your kids.
  - Work with other parents in the community. This brings socially distant recharging as well as accountability and increased creativity on how to teach.
  - Have a relative or friend read or tell a story to your kids over FaceTime or Zoom.
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## **Where to Start:**

- Seek clear direction from their school.
- Build a schedule that is workable for your family.
- Have strict bedtime and wake up time, just like your normal school routine.
- Start each day with quiet time and Jesus. One Year Bible Plan, SOAP studies, prayer requests and praises are great examples!

- Start school time with the difficult subjects for your kids. They will have the most capacity and focus early in the day.
  - Expect bad days to come and have grace for that. Focus on making sure your child feels heard, understood, loved, and cared for.
  - Remember: Interruptions can be places and times for the really beautiful things to happen. So, welcome this interruption and expect God to meet you and your kids in it.
  - Start somewhere and try it for a few days. Don't worry about finishing something that isn't working; try something new. Have lots of grace for yourself! You are new to this and nobody is expecting you to teach your kids like their teachers do!
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## **Resources:**

- [How to talk to your kids about the Coronavirus](#)

- Field Trips:

[Cincinnati Zoo](#), [Mars – interactive 360 degree map](#), [Virtual Field Trips](#),

[Google Earth](#) – Explore the world, learn about different cultures and people.

- Gym time: Kids workouts at [OrangeTheory](#), [Planet Fitness](#)

## For Kids Ages 2–7:

- [The Other Goose](#) – Free 3 week trail
- [ABC Mouse](#)

## All Ages:

- [An all-inclusive list of free resources](#)
  - [Scholastic Learn at Home](#)
  - [Rainbow Resource](#) – Affordable Christian curriculum, including forums
  - [Exodus Books](#) – Christian resources
  - [Novel Effect app](#) – plays sounds from phone while reading books aloud
  - [Khan Academy](#) – Teaching videos for many subjects, particularly helpful with math and sciences. Helpful when stuck explaining a difficult concept.
  - [Audio books](#) – Great for quiet time. Work from home while they listen.
  - [Raddish Kids](#) – Turn mealtime and baking into education.
  - [Read Aloud Revival](#) – Great book lists broken down by genre and age.
  - [Metropolitan Opera](#) – NYC will stream their HD opera recordings.
  - [Museum of Natural History](#) – Interactive website.
  - [Language Arts Teaching](#) – Three free weeks of intensive teaching for kids
  - [Social Emotional Learning](#) – This online resource is helpful for equipping parents with tools to engage with their kids and to allow them to process through difficult times.
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## Helpful Books:

Books for helping explore the ideas behind homeschooling:

- *Mere Motherhood* by Cindy Rollins
- *For the Children's Sake* by Susan Schaeffer Macaulay
- *Teaching from Rest* by Sarah Mackenzie

Great Books to Read aloud to Kids:

- *Where the Sidewalk Ends* by Shel Silverstein
  - *Little House on the Prairie* by Laura Ingalls Wilder
  - *Ramona* books by Beverly Cleary
  - *Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen
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## Mental Health Resources:

\*As information and the situation with COVID-19 has been changing rapidly, some of these resources may no longer be completely accurate.

## Supporting Kids and Teens Through COVID-19:

- [How to talk to your child about COVID-19 \(Unicef\)](#) – Good general guidelines to use when preparing to speak to children about COVID-19.
- [Talking to Kids about the Coronavirus \(Child Mind Institute\)](#)

- [Managing Anxiety and Stress during COVID-19 \(CDC\)](#) – Gives a list of behaviors that children or teens may exhibit due to stress from COVID-19 and ways to help before seeking professional help.
- [Parenting during the Coronavirus \(Focus on the Family\)](#) – Tips for parents including parenting effectively during the outbreak, educational activities for kids in quarantine, practical resources for teaching kids from home, and how to talk to kids about COVID-19.
- [How to handle increases in sibling fighting \(Raising Children – A parenting website\)](#). Includes resources around what to do after a disagreement or fight.
- [Committee for Children](#) – Online resources for families that are free through June to help kids with managing their response to COVID-19.

## **How to know if your child or teen needs additional support with mental health:**

- [Signs that your child or teen may need professional help \(Cleveland Clinic\)](#) – Offers a good general list of symptoms to be aware of in regards of when to get help.

You may consider contacting a mental health practitioner if a child's symptoms last more than 3–4 weeks and gets in the way of his or her everyday functioning (i.e. social relationships, schoolwork, ability to engage in extra-curricular activities). However, having kids stay home for long periods of time with little to no in-person contact with others outside of the home may mean you want to intervene faster than 3–4 weeks. If in doubt, contact your child's pediatrician.

## **If you have a child or teen that is struggling with mental health and you want to get help:**

If you think your child or teen needs additional help, the first step is to contact his or her pediatrician. They are a resource for mental health services and know how to proceed based on your insurance. When you call, it helps to have a list of the symptoms you've noticed in addition to the severity and length of the symptoms to share with the doctor or nurse. They can then direct you to the next steps. Below are additional local mental health resources:

- [CHKD Mental Health Resources](#)
- [VDBHDS Mental Health Resources](#)
- [The UP Center](#)