

# Family Education Sheet

## Tips for a Structured Day at Home



Boston Children's Hospital

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This document was created in collaboration by the Developmental Medicine Center and the Autism Spectrum Center at Boston Children's Hospital

This time has come as a surprise to us all. Remember, as caregivers **you must take care of your own mental and physical health**. Utilize your current support systems as best as you can, modify things when necessary, and take a deep breath.

The sample schedule and general tips below are intended to provide you with ideas to structure your child's day when out of school. **Consistency is important** for both you and your child. We understand things can vary day to day but utilizing a schedule helps to reduce extra stressors.

### Sample Daily Routine Schedule

<b>Breakfast</b>	<b>Stay consistent</b> with your child's breakfast routine. Starting the day at the same time helps everyone to stay on schedule for the rest of the day. Try creating a healthy menu together to work on functional life skills.
<b>Academics and Learning</b> <i>*this will look different for each child depending on individual needs</i>	<b>Pick a designated area in your home for academic work.</b> This will help with routine and consistency. Designating a specific area also makes it easier for your child to take a break in an area not designated for work. <b>Talk with your child's teacher.</b> Get a copy of your child's school schedule to help plan their at-home schedule. They may have sent home activities or homework for your child. If not, there are many <a href="#">educational online resources</a> offering free memberships during the COVID-19 outbreak.
<b>Sensory/Movement Break</b>	<b>Move your body!</b> Incorporating necessary movement/sensory breaks for your child throughout their day can help them focus on less preferred tasks. <b>Caregivers too!</b> Don't forget to incorporate some exercise into your day. Check out <a href="#">GoNoodle</a> , <a href="#">Cosmic Kids Yoga</a> , or other <a href="#">Youtube Kids</a> free exercise videos.
<b>Daily Living Skills/Chores</b>	<b>Have your child help with chores around the house.</b> Base these tasks off your child's strengths and goals. If they're working on sorting or folding, have them help with the laundry!
<b>Outside/Free Play</b>	<b>Make time to be outside</b> , keeping in mind recommendations of social distancing. Play in the yard, go for a walk, and explore nature. You can even base your afternoon activities on the discoveries you've made <a href="#">outside</a> . When staying <b>inside</b> , have a dance party, play a board game, or start a puzzle.
<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Use meal prep as a time for teaching.</b> Measuring, counting, mixing, stacking measuring cups. Cooking together can be a great opportunity to work on a variety of life skills. Visual recipes help maximize independence. Check out <a href="#">Accessible Chef</a> .

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<b>Read and Rest</b>	<b>Tailor reading and book time to your child’s ability.</b> This can look different for every child, whether it’s reading on their own, together as a family, or listening to an audiobook. Use your public library’s electronic book resources or other apps, like <a href="#">Libby</a> .
<b>Academics and Learning</b>	You can <b>ease back into academics with fun activities</b> , including Virtual Field Trips. Check out the <a href="#">New England Aquarium</a> , the <a href="#">San Diego Zoo</a> , and other locations around the world for virtual learning opportunities.
<b>Dinner</b>	<b>Look online for healthy fun recipes</b> for the whole family. <a href="#">ChopChop</a> , <a href="#">Accessible Chef</a> , and other online resources are available. Include your child in the preparation for dinnertime to help with chores and routine.
<b>Wind Down</b>	<b>Stay calm and be mindful.</b> Practice deep breathing and relaxation together. Model calm behavior for your child. Try guided meditation and relaxation apps to help, including <a href="#">Insight Timer</a> or <a href="#">Calm</a> . Using calm strategies before bedtime helps with the sleep routine for both you and your child. Spend some time talking about tomorrow’s schedule. Limit time with electronics.
<b>Bedtime</b>	<b>Keep bedtime consistent each night</b> in both routine and time. This will make sleeping through the night and waking up in the morning easier.

**General Tips**

- Use visual timers to help your child transition between activities, or to let them know the remaining time in an activity
- Overlap on what is being done in your child’s school setting
- Keep to a routine and schedule
- Turn mundane tasks into learning opportunities
- Check out virtual field trips or activities promoted through your local library