



Indiana United Methodist Children's Home Foundation, Inc.

Hope Has A Home

Our Teaching Family Model Experts Share Advice with Parents

Helping Kids and Families Cope with the Stress of Covid-19 and the New Challenges of E-Learning

We all feel stress right now, and kids need their parents to help them manage through the uncertainty of the Coronavirus situation. Here at the Indiana United Methodist Children's Home, we help kids work through the past trauma in their lives and teach them behaviors to ensure future success.

As experts in the Teaching Family model, we know all parents need strategies to help ensure the coming weeks are positive for your children's emotional well-being and for their success with their educational goals.

We hope the tips below help your family find success and enjoy the time together in the coming weeks.

Helping Families Cope with Stress of Covid-19

Your children may feel anger, sadness and disappointment about cancelled events and stress from change in the way their school learning will take place.

Here are five simple ways you can begin to help your kids cope with the uncertainty and fear of the Covid-19 virus.

1. *Validate their feelings but give them hope:* Look for ways to initiate discussions about the realities of Covid-19 and validate their feelings of fear by sharing your own feelings in an age appropriate way. Be sure to focus on hope for the future by doing your part with social distancing to keep loved ones safe. Remind them that God will care for us. Share Philippians 4:6 ~ "Don't worry about anything. Instead pray about everything." Be sure your body signals are consistent with your words, (calm voice, hopeful expression).
2. *Limit social media and news media:* Too much time spent on social media and watching news shows on TV gives children feelings of hopelessness.
3. *Make time to exercise, get fresh air and give children an opportunity to make their own choice:* There are many studies that demonstrate good mental health results from daily exercise. This could also be an opportunity to give children a choice about leisure activities they participate in and some feelings of control.
4. *Think about those less fortunate:* Encourage your children to take focus off their own worries by helping others. Pray for, send a note to or call an elderly relative or sick friend every day.
5. *Focus on the positive:* Create daily opportunities to focus on the good things your children are experiencing, like more time with mom or how fortunate they are to have internet connections to do their studies. Give thanks to God every day for something they are grateful for.

Helping Families Cope with Challenges of E-Learning

The new challenges of teaching your children at home while also maintaining your own responsibilities may seem overwhelming.

Here are five simple ways you can begin to help your kids ensure success with the challenges of E-Learning.

1. *Create a structured routine and be consistent with enforcing it:* Start each day with a family meeting to discuss the day's schedule and yesterday's accomplishments. Avoid spontaneous requests during the day that are not a part of the schedule. Keep your E-Learning space consistent: at a table or desk, but not in the same space as leisure activities.
2. *Create a culture in your home that values a fresh start each day to invite opportunities for improvement, but hold children accountable by issuing consequences for poor behavior:* Here is an example of a simple phrase: "Since you did not complete your English assignment yesterday, you will not be able to play video games, but if you complete all your assignments today, you can stay up an hour later tonight."
3. *Use praise:* To encourage good behavior, search for small opportunities to praise them. Here is an example of a simple phrase: "I like how you got started right after lunch with your math work." Praise their steps along the way like staying on task or not whining.
4. *Give age-appropriate reality statements:* Help them understand how their hard work today will make a difference in the future. Here is an example of a simple statement: "Learning your science homework this week will help you understand why our dog drools so much at dinner."
5. *Institute rewarding events for successful behavior:* Small rewards for tasks accomplished can give needed breaks and encourage appropriate behavior. Here is an example of a simple statement: "As soon as you finish your science work, you can go ahead and use your cell phone to connect with a friend."

To learn more, head over to our website to listen to the new ***Hope Has a Home*** trailer and podcast about the Teaching Family Model and how our proven strategies can help you in your own home. Go to: iumch.org/podcast