

Distance learning can be a challenging time for most of us! It can be hard to help our children stay interested and motivated to do their schoolwork, especially when we have other children and/or a job to attend to.

The following are proven tips and strategies that can help motivate your child to stay on task with schoolwork at home.

Put your child in the driver's seat as much as possible



Control, control, control. When a child feels controlled, or out of control when it comes to their education, they often withdraw from learning. It's important to guide children through the learning process, but it's just as important to allow children to have control of their own learning experience. A good way to do this is to provide children options. For example, have your child choose which assignment to do first, or where they prefer to do their schoolwork, use a pen or pencil, etc.

Encourage open and sincere communication



Encourage your child to express his or her opinion about what's going on with his or her education. Create an open atmosphere where s/he feels comfortable expressing his or her likes, dislikes or concerns. When s/he shares his or her opinion, make sure to validate his or her feelings – even if you disagree.

Focus on what your child is learning, not their performance



Instead of asking your child how s/he did on his math test as soon as s/he finishes, have them teach you what they learned in math today. Focus on what your child is learning, as opposed to how s/he is performing. While performance is important, focusing on his or her learning experience will communicate to your child that (1) actual learning is more important than test grades, (2) results are not the most important thing, (3) you're more concerned about them than you are about your child's performance.

Help your child stay organized



Helping your child organize his or her papers, books and assignments will go a long way to helping them feel motivated to learn. Disorganization is typical among young school age children, but it can also lead to a feeling of being overwhelmed.

Recognize and celebrate achievements



No matter how small they may be, it's important to recognize and celebrate your child's achievements. This is especially important for elementary age school children who

require constant positive reinforcement to keep them motivated to learn and challenge themselves to do better.



Break it down

Thinking about doing it all at once is overwhelming, and it can give you that feeling where there's so much to do that you don't even know where to start. Think about everything you need to do and write each piece down. Then, break it down into small chunks you can tackle one at a time. Don't focus on learning it all right now, just think about what you can do in this moment.



Start easy

Schoolwork can be hard and boring at times. Have your child try the easier tasks which can give them the momentum they need to keep going.



Schedule your day

Schedule a specific time in your child's day when he or she will sit down to do their schoolwork--actually scheduling it on your calendar make them less likely to put it off because it becomes a concrete task that must get done.



Find a spot

Have your child choose a spot he or she absolutely loves. Maybe it's in a favorite chair or lying outside in a hammock. Maybe you even create a cozy space in the corner of his or her bedroom. Wherever it is, make it their designated study space and use it only for schoolwork. The more they love to be there the better; they'll be motivated to study.

Try some strategies out

With so many strategies and tips, there's bound to be at least one that works for you. Test a few out and see if they make a difference and remember that many of these strategies work well together. Studying is hard work and it's not always fun, but these motivational techniques can help your child get down to it and make it more bearable.

