

# Learning from Home



A family support  
guide

## Information for parents

Learning at home is a new experience for most families. The main thing to remember is that you're not alone. Support from the school and your child's teacher is just a phone call, seesaw message or an email away. The relationship you have with your child is the key to supporting them on their learning journey, so keep in mind what their interests are and use this to keep them motivated during the day.

We have included 10 Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) strategies to support your family at home during the current situation. These strategies have been adapted from the *"Ten Strategies to Support Families at Home-From Association for Positive Behaviour Support"*.

They have been designed as modules so you can read them one at a time or all at once, whichever suits you best. Activity ideas and website links have been provided to help you on your journey.

We encourage both you and your child to stay in contact with us while you are on your learning from home journey. We are all on this new learning adventure together and will be available to answer questions along the way.

### Important Contacts

Child and Adolescent Health Services Urgent Mental Health  
Support

1800 048 636

<https://healthywa.wa.gov.au/>

Beyond Blue Australia

1300 224 636

<https://www.beyondblue.org.au>

Kids Helpline

1800 551 800

<http://www.kidshelpline.com.au/>

Lifeline

13 11 44

<https://www.lifelinewa.org.au>

# 1. Think about your child's strengths and interests

- With the current changes, think about the things your child loves to do and how you incorporate those things into your time together. Try to focus on the positive: more time to do some things together.
- Spending time with your child on the things that matter most to them will help them adjust to not being in school or having their typical social contacts with friends and family.
- Use a “first \_\_\_\_\_, then \_\_\_\_\_” strategy by pairing non-preferred activity with a preferred one so they are not sitting in front of a screen or video games all day. Rotate family activities or household chores with screen time, online games or talking to friends.
- Encourage outside time with supervision. Nature isn't closed. Take walks, ride bikes, walk the dog, get some fresh air.

## Fun Things to Check Out Online

Move and learn at home with Go Noodle

<https://www.gonoodle.com/good-energy-at-home-kids-games-and-videos/>

Explore Sydney's virtual zoo from your home

<https://www.wildlifesydney.com.au/>

Dive into Sydney's virtual aquarium

<https://www.sydneyaquarium.com.au/explore/virtualaquarium/>

Science activities for kids at home

<https://www.scitech.org.au/explore/at-home/>

## 2. Establish clear expectations at home

- Given that students are now being required to work in a new learning environment, spending some time talking with your child about the behaviours you expect from them while they are learning with you at home would be a valuable opportunity for you all.

- At Boyanup Primary School we have 4 behaviour expectations.

Be an active learner

Be respectful

Be caring and safe

Be responsible

- Use the following matrix to discuss what behaviours you expect your child to display when they are learning with you at home. Each home is going to look different as your circumstances are not all the same. For example; you might have 3 children learning with you at home, so the following behaviour expectations might be needed.

	Be an Active Learner	Be Respectful	Be Caring and Safe	Be Responsible
Learning at Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to show independence when you're working on a task</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use your manners</li> <li>• Wait patiently when you need help</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help and encourage your siblings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be organised and keep your work area tidy</li> </ul>



We'd love to see what you come up with, so please share your ideas with us!



# 3. Create routines for your family and child

- Children do best when they have predictable routines and know what is going to happen throughout the day. Most have very predictable routines at school.
- Use the timetable provided by your child's teacher to help organize the day so your child knows what is happening.
- Utilize a schedule that includes chores, learning time, self-help (showers and teeth), exercise and fun, choice activities. And remember hand washing!!
- Brainstorm activities that the family can do together. Bring out the board games or puzzles. Look at family photographs and tell stories about when they were taken. Paint together, cook together. Write letters to people in nursing homes. Start a journal.
- Use transition warnings to let your child know what is coming next. For example; "In 5 minutes, iPad time will be over and we will do some journal writing".
- Use a timer or visuals to help with transitions. Your child may need a home visual schedule or a calendar to provide needed structure.

Further support can be found on the Department of Education WA website

<https://www.education.wa.edu.au/learning-at-home/learning-environment>

# 4. Anticipate challenges and plan accordingly

- Preventing challenging behaviour is always easier than addressing it.
- Know what things or triggers seem to set your child up for challenging behaviour and try to address through your routines and schedules.
- Taking regular 'Brain Breaks' can help your child to focus their attention and regulate emotions. Any activity that requires movement can be considered as a brain break.

## 9 Great Brain Breaks for Kids

<p><b><u>5-4-3-2-1</u></b></p> <p>Children are given five different actions to complete in descending order. For example: "Do five star jumps, spin around three times, hop on one foot six times, run around the room twice, touch your toes four times (get faster and faster to keep them on their toes) .</p>	<p><b><u>Dance Party!</u></b></p> <p>Put on some great music and dance! If you can make the room semi-dark and have a few torches you can wave, your kids will love it!</p>	<p><b><u>Freeze!</u></b></p> <p>Similar to Dance Party, except when the music stops, everyone must freeze and hold their position until the music starts again.</p>
<p><b><u>Keep It Up</u></b></p> <p>Best played with two or more children but parents can also get involved. Inflate a balloon and try and keep it off the ground. For extra difficulty, add a second balloon.</p>	<p><b><u>Simon Says</u></b></p> <p>An oldie but a goody!</p>	<p><b><u>Go Wild</u></b></p> <p>Take turns suggesting animals and go crazy doing your best imitations.</p>
<p><b><u>Find It Fast</u></b></p> <p>Choose a colour or description (something round, flat, brown, long, etc) and race to see who can find objects that match the description first.</p>	<p><b><u>Physical Challenge!</u></b></p> <p>It's time to battle - take turns completing physical tasks and challenge your opponent to do the same. An old favourite, rub your tummy and pat your head.</p>	<p><b><u>Limbo</u></b></p> <p>All you need is a stick and some flexibility. Music is nice, too.</p>

# 5. Know how you are going to react and be consistent.

- As the adult, we set the tone for the family. The current situation is challenging for everyone.
- Choose your battles wisely but be supportive and understanding.
- Say what you mean and mean what you say. Be sure to follow through.
- Provide as many choices as possible throughout the routines of the day.
- Avoid arguing, threatening and negotiation.

The Australian parenting website has some helpful tips and advice

[https://  
raisingchildren.  
net.au/](https://raisingchildren.net.au/)

# 6. Model the behaviour you want your child to learn

- Your child will copy your words and actions. Focus on controlling yourself, not your child.
- Strive to manage his/her behaviour with a calm attitude that comes from knowing you understand that self-control is necessary and good for your child.
- When we are tired and stressed, we often reach a point where we just give in. We may need to be the one taking a deep breath, counting to ten and taking a brief time away.
- Schedule in some mindfulness time into your daily routine. This can be done by yourself or together with your child.

## Mindfulness Support

Smiling Mind

<https://www.smilingmind.com.au/mindfulness>

Cosmic Kids Yoga

<https://www.cosmickids.com/>

## 7. Set up for success with positive language of the behaviour you want to see

- Communicate clearly what behaviour you want your child to demonstrate. Phrase directions in the positive, telling your child what you want them to do, not what you don't want them to.
- Sometimes the most appropriate response is simply redirecting your child's behaviour.
- Setting boundaries reinforce our expectations and sends a clear message we believe they can do what we ask.

Triple P (Positive Parenting Program) have a free guide to support parents during COVID-19

<https://www.triplep-parenting.net.au/au-uken/get-started/parenting-during-covid-19/>

# 8. Provide words (and pictures and signs) for emotions and feelings

- Children and adults have a lot of feelings and emotions about our current situation. Use empathetic statements to let your child know you understand how he/she feels.
- When you see challenging behaviour, it often means your child can't figure out how to express her feelings in an acceptable way or doesn't know how to get her needs met.
- Talk about feelings and use visuals to help your child understand.
- Provide acceptable choices for your child to go with the different feelings.
- Provide opportunities to help your child practice calm down strategies and problem solving when they are calm.

## Calming activities for children

- Get some fresh air
- Read a favourite book
- Sit down in a quiet, comfortable place
- Speak to a friend, teacher or parent
- Count to 10

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/behaviour/understanding-behaviour/self-regulation>

# 9. Look behind the behaviour to what your child is telling you

- It is our job to try to understand what lies beneath the behaviour and what your children are trying to tell us.
- We often personalize our children's behaviour as something they are doing on purpose.
- Try to remember that however a child is behaving, he/she is doing the best they can at that moment in time.
- Remember the age and developmental level of your child.

Kids Helpline have a range of resources available to support both you and your child

<https://kidshelpline.com.au/parents>

# 10. “5 to 1” positives and reinforce steps in the right direction

- Give attention to the behaviour you want to see, not the behaviour you don't.
- Genuine, specific praise has a powerful effect on your children's behaviour. This includes their efforts to work hard at following your directions and small steps in the right direction.
- Use positive reinforcement as often as possible. Focus on activities that support your child's strengths and reinforce feelings of self-esteem, accomplishment and cooperation.
- Do something special with your child so the “reward” also strengthens your relationship.
- If your child needs a more structured reinforcement system, remember the simpler, the easier it is to implement and the most likely you will be consistent.

## Free Reward Ideas

- Have a special art session together
  - Scavenger hunt
  - Bake together
- Read a book together as a family
- 30 minutes of extra TV time
  - Choose a game to play
- Choose what we will have for dinner one night this week
- Stay up 30 (or 15) minutes past your bedtime this weekend
  - Choose a movie to watch together
  - No chores for a day
- Camp out in the backyard with a parent