

Remote Schooling Moms

expert advice for
successful distance
learning



Kimberly Coleman

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7 Takeaways From an Education Chat With Sal Khan



Education Chat With Sal Khan

Since [Google Classroom](#) was one of the web services that NYC schools used to connect students and teachers earlier this year, I checked to see if there were any updates. While doing so, I tuned into the [Google for Education's Anywhere School event](#).

While I was able to get a better understanding of Google's education products, the highlight for me was the "Fireside Chat with Sal Khan". He is the Founder & CEO of [Khan Academy](#), a free online education site. As a lover of public education, I appreciate that the Khan academy mission is to "provide free, world-class education for anyone, anywhere". During the talk, Khan shared his thoughts on COVID-19's impact on education, what he has learned in developing curriculum for remote learning and more.

As a parent, Khan Academy has been a great resource for my family. (The Physics section was especially helpful last year.) My husband and many of his fellow educators also recommend Khan Academy to their students for other subjects also.

Anyway, I want to share the parts of the talk that stood out for me. Afterward, I'll share the full video so that you can hear him for yourself.

1. Impact of COVID-19 on Education

In early crisis learning days, Khan's team was improvising to meet users' needs. Parents were asking for things like [daily schedules](#) to help structure their days during school closures, learning plans, webinars and the like.

2. Grit and Resilience

Khan was able to learn and share insights from various people during his "Homeroom with Sal" livestream conversations. His conversation with Angela Duckworth, the author of [Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance](#) stood out to me. They spoke about grit and resilience – how to keep kids motivated and engaged during these times.

Angela Duckworth talks about helping children develop grit and resilience | Homeroom with Sal



3. Growth Mindset

Having a growth mindset is something that Khan talks about a lot. He embraces Carole Dweck's notion of a growth mindset. (Dweck's book [Mindset: The New Psychology of Success](#) helped me out so much with the middle school transition for my oldest son. It's a pretty "dry" read but it's worth getting through.)

The book encourages the reader to push outside of their comfort zone. Khan also spoke about embracing and learning from failures. Fortunately, there are ways to create a growth mindset. Reflecting on failures and learning from them is one such way. We can all learn our weaknesses and still keep growing.

4. Mastery Learning

The traditional academic model doesn't necessarily support a growth mindset. Khan talked more about mastery learning. That's the idea of holding fixed that a student should master a concept but how long they take to do so should be variable. This allows kids to learn at their own pace. Almost any student can thrive in any subject with this approach.

Learning not being bound by time and space is essential now. Technology can help. *Online tools shouldn't be considered a replacement for teachers though. Khan noted that he would pick an amazing teacher over amazing technology every time.* Rather, technology should be in service to amazing teachers and pedagogical goals (what the student will be capable of doing after the lesson). Khan's pedagogical belief is that every kid has different gaps. Every kid learns at a different pace and teachers need more data so that they can do more focused interventions.

Learning Gaps Have Increased During This COVID-19 Time.

Every year, there is a summer slide. This year, there is also a COVID slide. This makes personalization, mastery learning and real-time data for teachers even more important.

Remote learning didn't work for many in the spring. Partially, it's an issue of timing. Devices and Internet access were issues. Keeping kids engaged was another. Classroom management (monitoring what kids were doing; making sure that they were not doing something else in another window while class was in session; etc.) was challenging.

Going into the fall, it's still a sub-optimal situation.

5. The Digital Divide

The conversation about the digital divide/access disparities focused on schools in the past. COVID-19 has now highlighted the digital divide at home. Connectivity is not just an academic issue but it is also an economic and mental health issue.

Khan Academy has a playbook coming out soon regarding what worked and didn't work. Some best practices include the following:

6. Best Practices

- Daily practice
- Video conferencing insights (teachers "pulling" kids out of the screen by calling on them to work on problems, using digital breakout rooms, etc.)
- Validating students' work (how to proctor)
- Less lectures and more small group settings

7. Lessen the Strain on Teachers.

Teachers shouldn't feel the need to exactly replicate school. Rather, the focus should be on areas that they can't drop (glass balls). For Khan, math, reading, writing plus a sense of community and mental and physical health are key.

If teachers can do 2-3 sessions a week, that would be great. If students can get 20-60 minutes a day practice, they probably won't atrophy. For English, Raz-Kids (<https://www.raz-kids.com/>) and Lexia Learning (<https://www.lexialearning.com/>) are recommended resources as well as reading and writing (i.e. blog posts and journaling). Khan Academy is recommended for math, science and college prep.

*Bonus

Thank teachers! Khan encouraged teachers not to let constraints dim their inner light. Although these times are sub-optimal, teachers still have so much to give. He encouraged them to *share their light, move forward, and make a dent on the universe.*

My husband Reggie is a high school math teacher so I immediately shared this portion with him. Since things are so uncertain here in NYC, teachers are under a lot of pressure. Teachers (the good ones, anyway!) want to do what is best for the students. At the same time, they want to stay healthy and keep their families safe. There are no easy answers. I am proud(er than ever) to be a teacher's wife!

In any event, I learned a lot from this talk. You can hear the full chat below:

The Anywhere School:

Fireside Chat with Sal Hkan

[Founder of Khan Academy]

Google for Education

You can put any text here



More Helpful Resources

- [Sal Khan: Let's teach for mastery – not test scores \(TED Talk\)](#)
- [50+ Google for Education updates](#)
- [Tech Toolkit for Families and Guardians](#)
- [Best Practices for Family Engagement](#)



Since many of our kids will be [remote schooling](#) this fall, I asked Design and Organization Expert Marty Basher for some home learning spaces advice. Mr. Basher, who works with [Modular Closets](#), has over 20 years of experience helping families organize their homes.

I specifically asked for tips regarding how to get homes (including small city ones) organized for remote learning. We can all use some distance learning room ideas this year and I found his tips to be helpful and practical. I think that you will agree.

Design tips for home learning spaces

1. Set up a study spot.

You don't need an entire room dedicated to distance schooling. If you have space and desire, go for it! However, many families living in small homes or urban apartments lack this luxury. A desk or kitchen table with a comfortable chair is all your child needs in terms of a designated spot. (Some homeschoolers actually work better with a lapdesk on the couch).

You can add a room divider screen and a stand-up bookshelf to separate the space even further. Natural daylight is always a plus so if it's possible to create the schooling/study area near a window, even better.

Promote creativity and a stress-free environment by adding visual aids and decor, such as a printed periodic table or a map on the wall. An area for some of your child's artwork, a colorful rug and a house plant next to the computer are also great options.

Keep a calendar and copy of your child's daily schedule in this space for easy access. If possible, avoid using your child's bedroom since they will need a space (that's not associated with school) to unwind and relax. The bedroom should be seen as a place of rest and relaxation.

2. Have adequate storage.

Consider milk crates for textbook storage.

One key to successful remote schooling is organization. Avoid arguments and wasting time scavenging for school materials throughout the house with a plastic or wooden milk crate for textbooks, binders and journals. Small enough to sit on top or underneath a desk/table, this crate acts like a locker and is a quick and inexpensive alternative for parents who do not have the space or time to clean out a cabinet, closet, or display shelf.

Each child should be given their own crate to avoid confusion and disagreements on whose stuff is whose, and it might be a fun art project to let your children paint and decorate their crate.

Use a school supply caddy.

Another organization hack for remote schooling is school supply caddies. Essentially, it's a plastic bathroom caddy that you can buy at Lowe's or Home Depot for less than \$5. You can fill the compartments with anything from pens and pencils to glue sticks and scissors.

Add canning jars or Dollar Store plastic cups to help steady longer items like rulers. Your children can share the supplies inside.

If you want something a little fancier that is more aesthetically pleasing, consider a shallow wicker basket or galvanized steel tray with canning jars or decorative tin planting pots for the holders.

3. Get noise-canceling headphones.

These are ideal if you have more than one child who is distance learning – in case one needs quiet time reading or studying and the other is actively engaging in a lesson.

4. Add a reading nook.

A great deal of reading comes with online learning – especially with middle grade and high school students. Sitting in an upright position for hours each day proves physically and mentally taxing. That is one of the cons of traditional schooling.

Embrace the comforts of home by creating a cozy reading nook/spot. Purchase a bean bag for underneath the window or add plush pillows and a soft blanket to an armchair. Invest in a lamp for better lighting in order to prevent eye strain and headaches. Be sure to keep this spot away from electronics and other distractions.

5. Keep a comfortable temperature.

Making sure that the study space is comfortable, temperature-wise is important. It can be really hard for kids to focus if it's too hot or cold. Depending on where you create your home learning spaces, you might want to add a little space heater or fan.

I hope that these tips about home learning spaces were as helpful for you as they were for me. I especially agree with #3 (get noise-canceling headphones). At first glance, it can seem not to fit with the topic of home learning spaces. It does though because noise-canceling headphones provide boundaries and mental space.

I have actually bought 5 pairs of [noise-canceling headphones](#) during these stay-at-home times. Initially, I had purchased a pair for my brother as a birthday gift. He enjoyed them so much that I bought two more pairs – for my husband and oldest son. When I noticed that my husband couldn't hear anything when he was using them, I bought two more pairs – for my youngest son and myself. Let's just say that they have been **such** a helpful addition to our home. (Everyone needs a break sometimes!)

As for new purchases, I think that I'll get a couple more milk crates and possibly a bean bag (for both of my sons) and a lap desk (for my youngest son who resists working at desks and tables at home).

Marty Basher is the design and home organization expert with Modular Closets, <https://www.modularclosets.com>. Marty regularly contributes on topics of home design, organization, improvement and more, helping homeowners get the most out of the spaces in their home.

Modular Closets are high-quality and easy-to-design closet systems made in the USA that you can order, assemble and install yourself, in no time at all. Using closet modules (closet pieces you can mix & match to design your own modular closet), homeowners everywhere are empowered to achieve a true custom closet look- for nearly 40% less than standard custom closets.



Since many of us moms will be remote schooling (partially or fully) this school year, I decided to get some homeschool organization tips from my friend Natalie. I call Natalie a homeschooling “expert” because she has successfully homeschooled her three wonderful daughters. (Two of them attend Harvard and one is a budding artist.)

I am a researcher by nature (and corporate training) so I wrote out what I **thought** were important tips and sent them to Natalie to see if there was anything that she would add, delete or change. I have indicated her input below.

Homeschool Organization Tips

1. Organizing Supplies

- a. Make a list of what is needed for school.
- b. Designate a place for everything. (Drawers, bins, plastic crates, etc.)
- c. Get students in the habit of putting everything back when they are finished.

*Natalie noted that it is more important to actually have the necessary supplies rather than having them be super organized. She is a big fan of using **Staples** and their \$1 deals to stock up.*

2. Organizing Books & Curriculum

- a. Organize them by subject.

- b. Get rid of old books and curriculum that you will no longer use. Sell or donate them.
- c. Have bookshelves to hold everything if you have the space.

3. Organizing Record Keeping

- a. Keep important records in a safe place.
- b. Make sure that you know and keep the necessary information that is required by your state to record your student's progress. This includes records, portfolios, projects and the like.
- c. It is important to have files and a filing system and filing cabinets if you have space.

4. Organizing Planning Schedules

- a. Plan your weekly schedule.
- b. Although you can be flexible, it is important to have some type of structure.
- c. The weekly plan should include time to learn the curriculum along with any other field trips and activities with your homeschooling support group/pandemic pod/etc.

5. Organize Your Food and Meals

For this tip, I asked Natalie,

What basics did I leave out? What would you tell a new homeschooling mom who asked you the question, "What should I know/think about regarding homeschool organization?"

Natalie encourages moms to think about organizing food and meals for the upcoming week. She cooks extra meals on the weekends and freezes them. That way, she always has an extra meal in case she can't cook in the middle of the week.

Natalie also encourages parents to make a trip to Costco (or BJ's) to get their kids' favorite snacks in bulk. She noted that sometimes snacks can serve as an incentive for kids to get things done.

I **loved** Natalie's answer. It was something that I hadn't really thought about but it makes so much sense!

I hope that these homeschool organization tips have been helpful. While there are still so many unanswered questions about the upcoming school year, I'm trying to prepare for the things that I have some semblance of control over – like home organization.

Next month, I will be focusing more on the health aspects of remote schooling. I have several interviews with doctors and therapists scheduled so stay tuned!

P.S. If you are interested in homeschooling rather than remote schooling, let me know. I can connect you with Natalie who is currently working on her first homeschooling course.

You Might Also Like

- [5 Tips to Create the Best Home Learning Spaces](#)
- [Ms. Most Organized](#)



According to [recent research](#), parents are concerned about their “kids missing important social interactions at school or with friends”. This concern applies to parents who are having their kids learn fully remotely as well as parents who have chosen the hybrid model of schooling for the 2020 school year.

To address this social-emotional skills concern, I spoke with [Joelle Shipp](#), a licensed mental health counselor with [MindPath Care Centers](#), a mental and behavioral healthcare organization based in North Carolina. I learned a lot of helpful information from our Q&A session. I hope that you will find it beneficial also.

Social-Emotional Skills Q&A

1. Why is socialization important for students from a professional perspective?

Learning effective socialization skills helps not just with school but across a person’s lifespan. It teaches kids how to build healthy relationships, set boundaries and work on their communication as well as their decision-making skills. These life skills carry on into their friendships as well as romantic relationships later in life.

2. How should parents talk to their children about how social interactions will be different this year?

Parents should have an open discussion regarding the things that are going on in the world that are impacting their child’s life. It’s important to validate their thoughts and opinion. You can agree that things are challenging while still offering them an alternative.

Focus on what is available – what they can do. You can say, “Well we can’t do this but we can do that.” For instance, they might not be able to spend time with their friends in close proximity but they can do things such as drive-bys or calling their friends. It’s not ideal but there are options when parents and their kids focus on being creative.

3. How can parents guide their kids regarding building and maintaining safe social connections during these (socially distant) times?

Once again, this is an opportunity to be creative. Families can find various socially distant activities (i.e. outdoor play or sharing socially distant meals outside). As an example, Joelle shared about a virtual birthday party where the parents had dropped off party bags for the kids beforehand. Then, the kids just played virtual games and watched a movie virtually for the party. Kids can see their friends and do activities with them – just in different ways.

In addition to being creative with friends outside of the home, Joelle also stressed that this is a great time for families to benefit from all of the extra family time that they have together. Family relationships can be cultivated by enjoying activities together like game nights, movies and cooking together.

4. What are the 5 core competencies of social-emotional learning (SEL)?

1. Self-awareness: This is about being aware of your own feelings and emotions and being able to identify them. Joelle suggests checking in with yourself 3 times a day – when you wake up, in the afternoon and in the evening. For kids who have a hard time putting their feelings into words she had a great suggestion – download one of the sheets of emojis. Since kids use technology so much, it’s sometimes easier for them to be able to identify with an emoji in order to put a name to what they’re feeling.

2. Self-management: This is how you take care of your feelings and emotions. It’s figuring out what is needed in order to help you manage your emotions. Examples include exercise, talking, writing, time with friends or coloring. Sometimes, it’s just having alone time. (A time-out doesn’t necessarily have to be a punishment or consequence. Sometimes people just need a break from others.)

3. Responsible decision-making: This involves encouraging kids to think about how their actions might impact themselves or others later on. It's teaching them how to make the best decisions for the best-desired outcome. For instance, it's teaching kids (and ourselves!) that a positive attitude often leads to positive outcomes.

4. Social awareness: This is being able to recognize and empathize with others. It's about not being fixated with "me" but really interacting with and considering others and how our behavior impacts others.

Sometimes it's helpful for kids to frame it around how it would impact those whom they love and care about. It can be too much of a stretch for kids to think about how what they do impacts strangers. The impact of their actions on someone whom they can actually relate to is helpful though.

We discussed how much social awareness is lacking in current society. This skill need to be cultivated in children so that they can grow up to be socially aware adults.

5. Relationship skills: This is comprehensive. This includes social skills, setting boundaries and making decisions. In summary, it's interacting in a loving and healthy way.

Initially, my concern was how parents could make sure that teachers were implementing these social-emotional skills in their classes. Joelle made a great point though. We parents need to focus on these skills in the home and not put the burden on educators. That's especially true during these times when kids aren't physically in class interacting with educators as much.

These skills can and should be touched on and taught in the home. Because the kids are at home and we're around them more, we parents can give feedback on how they are using the skills throughout the day. Most importantly, we parents need to model these skills ourselves. *It really is true that kids (of all ages) learn from what they see – not just what they're taught.*

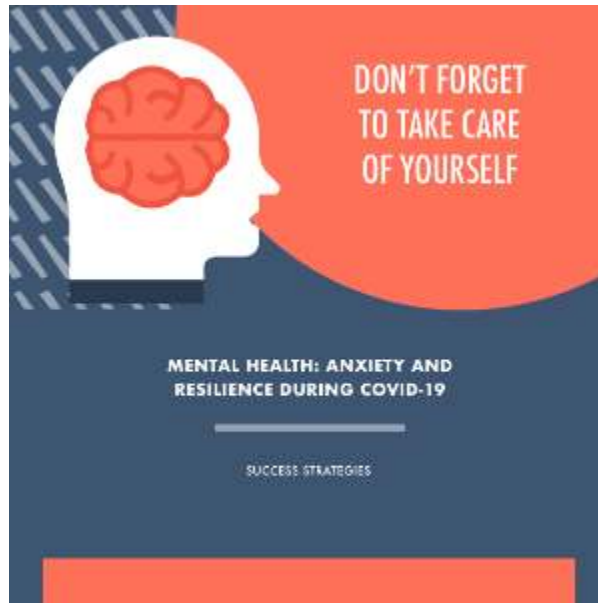
5. Are there any recommended online social and emotional resources that you can share?

- [Wingsforkids.org](https://www.wingsforkids.org): This site breaks down the core competencies, skills for success and has activities. It is especially great for elementary school kids.
- Of course, [MindPath Care Centers](https://www.mindpathcare.com) have various experts who provide therapy for parents and kids who need extra help with socialization or other challenges like anxiety, depression, and loneliness. Their services are offered in a safe, private manner.

You Might Also Like

In the middle of all that is involved with [remote learning](#), it is definitely important that we make our kids' social-emotional skill growth a priority. I am constantly bookmarking helpful resources as I prepare for this remote schooling reality. Below are a few helpful sites that I recommend for social-emotional learning:

1. [Social-Emotional Learning Remote Learning](#): Elementary, middle school and high school lessons by Fulton County Schools
2. [Social and Emotional Support in Distance Learning](#): Guidance and resources for K-12 students from the California Department of Education
3. [Social & Emotional Learning](#): Social-emotional skills toolkit from common sense education



As I navigate this new “remote schooling” reality, [Be Strong Families](#) is one of my favorite new resources. This week, I looked at their “Coping with Fear and Anxiety during COVID-19: Nurturing Resilience with Maria Muzik, MD” presentation. I recommend that you watch it also.

5 Key Takeaways

1. Anxiety can be a normal reaction. It’s important to know when it becomes a problem though.
2. There are four factors that heighten our alarm and stress response (novelty, unpredictability, loss of control and loss of social support).
3. There are many tools to build resilience/combat fear and anxiety. (Informing myself and focusing on what I can control were especially helpful reminders.)
4. I learned the “5-4-3-2-1” exercise. It activates the various senses to help calm anxiety.
5. [Social connections](#) are critical.



Time (really self!) management is important all of the time. It's even more important now that many of our kids are remote learning this year. Time management helps make remote learning easier for students and their families.

To help, I asked educator, author and mother of four (ages 3 to 14) [Lisa Collum](#) for tips. I think that her responses will help us parents navigate our kids' remote schedules more smoothly this year.

Time Management Tips

1. How does time management help parents and students overall?

Time management helps parents and students gain control over their time and achieve their daily objectives. For parents, it allows them to organize their day and follow through with the most important tasks they want and need to accomplish. For students, a set schedule is like a roadmap; they are able to see exactly what subjects/classes to work on at various times throughout the day.

With set times in place to complete different activities, more is accomplished. Everyone can stay on track, knows what needs to be done when, and can make sure there is enough time in the day to complete everything.

Create a schedule. This is the most effective way to teach time management.

2. How can parents work with students on time management/self-regulation?

For younger kids, make a board or a chart with pictures that shows different activities and their set times to be completed. Including a way to indicate completion with a check mark, or a moveable marker, can add a sense of accomplishment as they transition to the next task.

For older kids, design the schedule together with their input and include afterschool activities such as homework/study time and recreation. They, too, can benefit from a checklist to keep them on track. For all ages, post the schedule somewhere prominent where it can be easily referred to throughout the day.

Set specific times for each class and activity and build in breaks, lunch and snack time. Also, don't forget to schedule out "after" school time. After school activities can include arts and crafts, screen time, games, outside play, etc. Most kids end their "official" school day by 2 or 3:00 in the afternoon, while parents work until 5 or 6:00, leaving a large gap of time when kids need to be kept occupied. Making sure those extra hours are covered in the daily schedule is a key component to time management. Kids need downtime, but make sure their free time is guided so they have a routine to follow and can stay busy throughout the day.

For younger kids who cannot tell time, set timers that help them know when to start and stop their activities. Cell phones or voice activated home devices such as Alexa and Google Assistant can set reminders and act as a school bell. (This may also be helpful for older kids to remind them to move to the next class.)

Review schedules, keep them posted, and train students to follow the time frame for each activity and stay on track. Take time to assess any parts of the day that aren't working smoothly and adjust. Know what works best for your child. You may decide to add in more physical activity or quiet time, depending on their individual needs.

3. How can parents help their children with time awareness?

Depending on their ages and technical abilities, a digital calendar or a printed schedule can be utilized. Different methods work for different students depending on their learning styles. While some older children might do fine with a digital calendar, most will still benefit from having a prominent visual reminder such as a printed schedule, planner, or chart posted on a wall.

Setting an alarm that lets students know when to start and stop each class/activity, like a school bell, is a helpful reminder that it is time to go to the next subject or activity.

4. How can parents help their children to set a schedule for themselves?

Most kids are going to need the guidance of their parents to set a schedule. For elementary and middle school, I would create a schedule together. Go through their classes and set times for each subject and activity. Often, their school or teacher will decide their daily virtual class schedule, but together, you can schedule in what needs to be prioritized during any open slots and periods of time when they have completed what they have been asked to do in class, but it's not time to move on yet. Then schedule out what needs to be done after school, such as complete any assignments that were not finished in class.

For high school, I would assist them in coming up with a schedule and time management plan. You want to make sure they designate enough time for each class, build in breaks and lunch time, and include homework and study time. When trying to assess how much time to allot for something on their schedule, allow them to estimate, and then review how things went at the end of the day and adjust accordingly. Make sure their schedules are written out on paper, in a planner, or printed out and posted somewhere. Students should be referring to their schedule throughout the day.

5. How can parents ensure that their kids make a plan for the week and stick to it?

Parents can start by modeling. Every member of the family should have a schedule and spend some time over the weekend planning for the week ahead. Make the children's schedule as static as possible; they often do better with a consistent routine in place. Especially in the beginning, parents will need to monitor and make sure the kids are following their daily schedule.

Another way to help is to create a daily checklist that students can use to "check things off" as they complete it. This can be something that is turned in at the end of each day. Parents can list each subject/activity that the student is supposed to complete that day, and then have the students check each one off as they complete it. For those children who need extra monitoring, parents can take it a step further and have students bring the list to them as they finish each task and have the parent initial to show they checked it, and it was completed.

To help older children deal with procrastination, teach them to tackle harder tasks first. For example, if doing math problems is their least favorite afterschool activity, encourage them to get it out of the way first and then reward themselves with something they enjoy. This is a valuable life skill that will help make their days more positive.

For bigger projects that might seem overwhelming, such as a paper, teach them to break the task into chunks and to write the various steps into their schedule. For example, if they have a week to complete a project, they might do research on Monday, write an outline on Tuesday, a first draft on Wednesday, etc. Teach them to not wait until closer to the due date to start taking action.

6. How often should parents sit down with their children to review their assignments?

This depends on the age. For elementary, I would review assignments daily. They have a lot to complete, and parents should make sure they are understanding the assignments, completing them, submitting them correctly, and not missing anything.

For middle and high school, I would at least check weekly. For self-sufficient students, just reviewing their online grades from the school and emails from teachers is adequate. Again, a lot of schooling online is about making sure students see all of their assignments and submit them correctly. So you just want to work together and make sure they are staying on track.

7. How can parents guide students to limit or avoid disruptions, distractions and multi-tasking at home?

Have a designated “school” space for each child. For parents with multiple children, I would suggest spacing them out or even having them work in different rooms. Sometimes it is hard for students to concentrate when other students are listening to a live lesson. You could even have one “school” room where all of the desks and supplies are located, but have students station themselves in various areas of the house to work. This way they are not all together, all day, in the same spot. Using the schedule, you can assign various spaces in the house for each subject. You could assign the living room for reading, the dining room for math, an outside porch for science, etc.

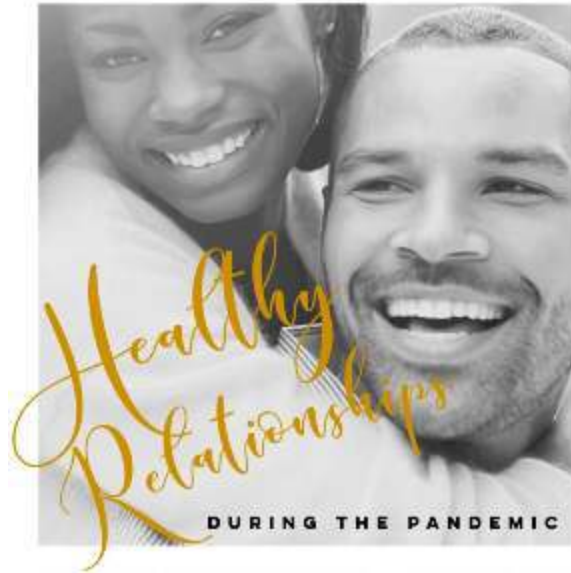
8. Are there any other practical time management tips that you would like to share?

- Keep kids moving. Don't have them stay in one spot all day. Allow them to work in different areas of the house, and even outside when possible, to complete their schoolwork. Make sure that all supplies needed for each activity are already out and organized before the day starts.
- With a schedule, alarms, checklists, and supplies, it should be a smooth school day for everyone.



Lisa Collum, author, educator, school owner and mother of four, is a motivational leader on a mission to make virtual learning as effective as possible.

For over a decade she's been helping kids get a grip on writing through public and virtual teaching, the launch of her own private school, and her creation of *Top Score Writing, Inc.* — a nationally utilized writing curriculum for 2nd-12th grades.



Healthy Couple Relationships

Sheltering in place and social isolation can put strains on family and couple relationships. A happy spouse (or partner) relationship is one of the best gifts that we can give to our children. That is why I asked relationship expert [Montrella Cowan](#) for strategies regarding how to address current challenges.

Challenge: Confinement/Too much time at home together

These times can be positive or negative depending on the pre-pandemic quality of the relationship.

On the positive side, there is more quality time. Couples are coming closer together due to distractions and the busyness of life being eliminated. For healthy relationships, be creative. Find new ways to have fun. Ideas include having a date night (perhaps a backyard candlelit dinner) and planning a staycation. Keep the things that were already working in your relationship.

Communication is also key. Validate your partner. Don't try to convince them that they're happy when they say otherwise. Rather, say things like "It's okay. I understand." in order to validate their feelings and decrease arguments. You can both be right because many things are a matter of perspective and past experience.

On the negative side, if the partnership was already unhealthy (a relationship of convenience, staying together due to fear, staying together simply for the children, etc.), then the issues have been exacerbated. Couples are being forced to acknowledge that they can't stand or don't like one another.

Unfortunately, during these times, past traumas may come up which can trigger violence and abuse in unhealthy relationships. Be honest. Take the pulse of your relationship and confront what is really happening. Reach out for professional help.

Challenge: Different views about restrictions

This is greatly affected by personalities. Many extroverts are losing it during these times. (Introverts are also having a challenging time.) Look for a balance.

Extroverts get energy from people so they need creative outlets. They need to be able to connect with others in safe ways. Isolation kills the spirit of some extroverts. Respect that by going out in safe ways. Also, make agreements regarding exposure to others and how it's going to be done in a safe way.

Just note that disagreements are exacerbated if the couple is not on good terms pre-COVID anyway. Then, the disagreements are simply a symptom of unhealthy relationships from the start. To be in harmony, communication is key.

Challenge: Economic challenges (loss of jobs and income)

Look for the blessings and opportunities in this storm – although they can sometimes be hard to see. Perhaps the lost job was toxic and not the best job anyway. Look at the loss as a push to start your own business or to move forward and get away from a toxic environment.

These changes are stressful so get help from an objective person like a therapist. A partner's role is simply to encourage, support and validate. Don't criticize or condemn partners regarding their job losses.

Acknowledge that grief is part of the new norm. Losses can lead to depression which is a stage of grief. Try to focus on the good because we often attract good when we are in good spirits.

Also, don't try to do everything alone. Sometimes the person who has experienced loss just wants to talk. Listen without trying to be a fixer. Encourage those who are struggling to reach out to someone. Do so by asking, not telling. For instance, don't say "You need to see a therapist." Rather, ask "Have you ever thought about talking to someone?" This puts them in the driver's seat.

Challenge: COVID-related health challenges and loss of life

Allow yourself and others to grieve. There are five stages of grief.

- 1 Denial
2. Anger
3. Bargaining ("if, then" type of questioning)
4. Depression
5. Acceptance

Note that everyone grieves differently and the order of the stages is fluid. Respect each other's timing. Understand that talking provides relief. Grief is normal so be patient with yourself and others.

Remember to take good care of yourself. If you're a caregiver, be especially careful not to burn out by neglecting yourself while caring for others.

Challenge: Mental health (anxiety & depression)

Pre-COVID, over 40 million people suffered with anxiety and over 17 million suffered from depression. The CDC has released information regarding mental health numbers during the pandemic.

Be honest. Stop thinking that you are a therapist and that you are going to "save" your partner. Reach out for help. **Don't be the therapist, get one.** Realize that the stigma attached to therapy can sometimes prevent people from seeking the help that they need.

Also, think of therapy like dating. You don't have to commit to the first therapist that you see. Rather, interview potential therapists until you find one that is a good fit. Their job is not to condemn or judge you.

Often there are signs when loved ones are suffering. Their language and actions give clues:

Verbal clues: “I need help.” “The world would be better without me.” “I want to kill myself.” “I want to die.”

Action clues: giving away treasured things; looking at suicide quiz apps; writing goodbye notes; self-injury and trying unsuccessfully to kill themselves

These are all things that need to be dealt with. These things don't make you unfit or a failure as a partner. It takes a village and it's important for those who are really struggling to hear from a professional.

Last question

Lastly, I asked for practical suggestions regarding how couples could continue to enjoy their relationships despite these new dynamics. I appreciated Ms. Cowan's practical suggestions.

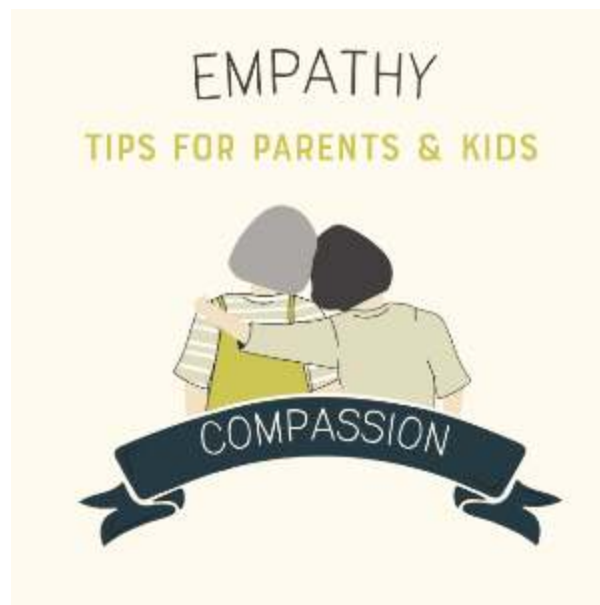
- 1. Keep your date nights.** Be creative and have fun.
- 2. Keep your appearance up.** Be the person whom your partner fell in love with. Look good, feel good. Self-care is important.
- 3. Look for the blessing.** This is a time that you can look back on together and share the positives that happened.
- 4. Try to get a break from the children.** There are resources and tutors that can help ease the day-to-day life burdens. Don't feel like you have to do it all alone.

Montrella Cowan, a licensed therapist, relationship expert, independent clinical social worker (LICSW), and speaker has been helping individuals, couples and families for over 20 years. She is the founder of [Affinity Health Affairs, LLC](#) and a holistic talk therapist and relationship coach, trusted for her high-quality service, knowledge, personal care, and passion to help people have healthy relationships and families.

Relationship expert Montrella Cowan is the author of a new book, [“The Purse – An Essential Guide to Healthy Relationships,”](#) that offers timely advice and strategies on how to avoid unhealthy relationships – and particularly how to avoid self-doubt and depression.

You Might Also Like

- [TALK ABOUT THE “S” WORD: SCHOOLING PARENTS ON TALKING WITH THEIR YOUTH ABOUT SUICIDE](#) (*Affinity Health Affairs*)
- [Coping With Stress](#) (*CDC*)
- [Mental Health: Anxiety and Resilience During COVID-19](#)



Empathy Tips for Parents and Kids

Merriam-Webster defines empathy as the following:

the action of understanding, being aware of, being sensitive to, and vicariously experiencing the feelings, thoughts, and experience of another of either the past or present without having the feelings, thoughts, and experience fully communicated in an objectively explicit manner

also : the capacity for this

It can be difficult to practice empathy when there are many painful things happening. Since America is facing a rare pandemic, widespread economic struggles, tensions over racial injustice and other challenges, many people are experiencing empathy burnout in 2020. That is why I asked Lynne Azarchi, the author of [THE EMPATHY ADVANTAGE](#), to share ways that we can still encourage empathy during this difficult time.

Question: How can we parents be more empathetic towards others – especially our partners and children?

Our kids are more stressed and anxious than ever – new to quarantine, not seeing their friends and some not allowed to be in school.

Before we can be empathetic to our children and others, we need to start with *ourselves*. There are many benefits to being kind to yourself. It is a great way to improve your mental health and the well-being of those around you. And you will not be surprised when I say that the way to increase self-compassion is... yes, empathy! I extol empathy *for others*, but Job One is you need to be empathetic to yourself.

Here are some of the tips highlighted in the *EMPATHY ADVANTAGE's Self Compassion* chapter:

What calms *You* down? Whatever it is that calms you down – do it, model it and demonstrate to your kids how you take some time for yourself every week.

Mindfulness 101: Buy a book, go online, get a book out to the library and pick and choose what works for you. You don't have to be a dedicated yogi. Just do some of it.

Try some FUN Self-compassion for yourself: Bubble baths, nature walks, writing, reading...What rocks your tranquil boat?

Learn about growth mindset for the whole family: "Growth mindset" is the idea that hard work and dedication allow your children to take their abilities and strengthen them! World-renowned Carol Dweck, a famous psychologist, counsels us to praise hard work and effort; and add praise for love, kindness, and empathy. Empathy development needs to be part of the "growth mindset."

Create a calming mantra for yourself like: 'every day I do my best – that's all I can do'.

Question: How can we help our kids to be more empathetic towards others in a healthy way?

By reducing stress, families take a big step forward together. Self-compassion helps children realize that they're not alone in their struggles. Furthermore, research indicates that self-compassion can be positively correlated with less depression and anxiety. The better that all of our children handle stress, the better they can handle future challenges.

THE EMPATHY ADVANTAGE coaches you on how to increase self-compassion for your family. Here's the best news! Acting compassionately and empathetically *toward others* engenders compassion for oneself; they go together like macaroni and cheese. How wonderful that giving support *to others* creates empathy for oneself at the same time.

Sadly, many kids don't have self-soothing strategies nor know how to manage their feelings; empathy and self-compassion improves kids' ability to do this. THE EMPATHY ADVANTAGE coaches you to:

Hold weekly family meetings – don't forget everyone gets an equal turn.

Schedule de-stressing family time: Nature walks, a ride in the car, visit to the zoo or a museum or family arts and crafts that include activities as simple as coloring. Ask your family members for suggestions.

Tell your kids and spouse you love them often.

The Walk in Others' Shoes activity. Use questions like these to prompt discussion:

What does it feel like to not be able to afford a laptop or an i-Pad to do your homework?

What does it feel like to be a refugee living in a tent in a camp far from their homes?

What does it feel like to worry about a parent who is a doctor or a police officer?

Take this opportunity to educate yourself using books, article and activities to teach diversity appreciation and acceptance – beyond 'tolerance'. Check out the [Kids Can Cope book series](#) by Free Spirit Publishing.

Model compassionate self-talk: Let your kids see you be self-compassionate too.

Discuss and acknowledge your child's feelings. Know that fear and anger are normal and okay in these extraordinary times.

Create a family mantra like: “May I be happy, may I be safe, may I be at ease.”

Mantras are a nice way to open or close family meetings. Together, you can make up a new self-compassion mantra unique to your family. Or how about each family member invent their own personal mantra? Have fun with it and be creative. Individual ones like: ‘I am still learning. Who can I ask for help? I am resilient. I will do better next time and of course, everyone makes mistakes.’

IN SUMMARY

By teaching our kids to walk in others’ shoes, and by encouraging them to be friends with children who look different from themselves, we increase empathy for ourselves and others while we reduce stress and anxiety, ultimately creating a kinder, more compassionate, empathetic family.

‘A door closes and a window opens’. COVID, and systemic racism provide a unique opportunity to do a better job than we have in the past. After all, we are spending a lot more time these days at home.

Now more than ever, it is time for all of us to focus on creating and coaching empathetic human beings- young and old. Teaching empathy is a great foundation for a more compassionate society. Let’s change the world for the better – one child and one adult at a time. My book THE EMPATHY ADVANTAGE is here to help you.

I’ll end with this lovely quote that Ms. Azarchi shared...

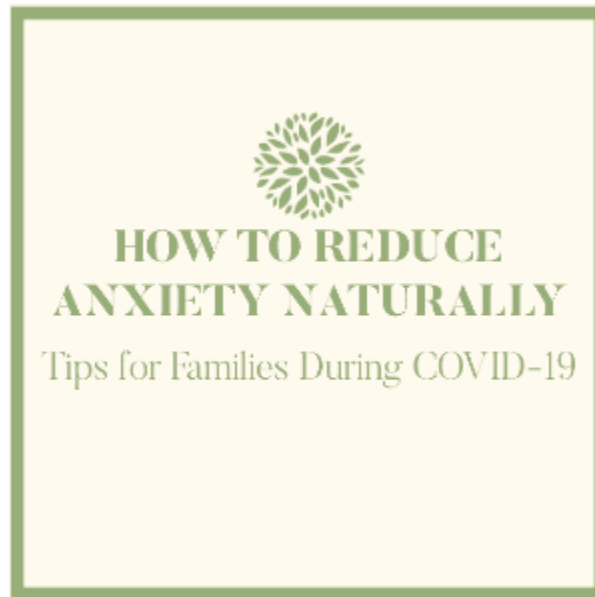
Knowing that we can be loved exactly as we are gives us all the best opportunity for growing into the healthiest of people.

Mr. Rogers

LYNNE AZARCHI, author of **THE EMPATHY ADVANTAGE**, is Executive Director of Kidsbridge Tolerance Center outside of Trenton, New Jersey—a nonprofit organization dedicated to fostering bullying prevention, anti-bias, diversity appreciation, empathy, and empowerment strategies for youth.

She is a tireless advocate for improving the lives of at-risk youth in communities across New Jersey. Kidsbridge helps more than 2,500 preschool, elementary, and middle school students and educators improve their social-emotional skills each year.

Azarchi has won many awards and her articles have been published both in newspapers and academic journals. She is a frequent speaker to parent and teacher groups, corporations and major educational conferences.



I don't know anyone who hasn't experienced anxiety at some point this year. That is why I spoke with Board Certified Clinical Psychologist Dr. Jenny Yip regarding how to reduce anxiety naturally for both parents and students during the current pandemic and these uncertain schooling times.

Anxiety vs. Depression

First, I wanted to define anxiety and learn how it is different from depression. **Anxiety is when a person experiences fear due to a perceived threat.** It makes the body want to react. The heart beats faster, breathing is intensified and the body often suffers some type of discomfort when a person is experiencing anxiety.

Depression tends to be the opposite physically. A depressed person often feels low-energy, disinterested, tired and fatigued. While anxiety and depression present themselves differently physically, they can overlap. (Some people with anxiety also develop depression and vice versa.)

How To Reduce Anxiety Naturally

Parents

Parents are dealing with anxiety and uncertainty ourselves. Many parents are having a challenging time balancing work and their kids' virtual learning. Dr. Yip noted that it's important for parents to understand that **anxiety thrives on uncertainty.** When there is no direction provided for people to know how to respond, it leaves people feeling unsettled.

What can help is to **plan around the uncertainties**. Have a Plan B, C or D – even when you don't know what "Plan A" is. Dr. Yip gave an example of how she decided to have an educator and a piano teacher come in to train her young child in order to take control during these remote schooling times.

I appreciated that direction. For me, it brought me peace and decreased my anxiety when my husband and I decided that our kids would do fully remote schooling this semester. It was just mentally overwhelming for me to have to think about which days of the week they would be going to school with the 2 days on 4 days off hybrid schedule.

Also, I didn't want to have to change up our routine if a school closed down – causing the kids to be fully remote anyway. I'm a creature of habit so that was the best choice for me. (Granted, I work from home so I had that option. I'm grateful/ don't take that choice for granted.)

I'm glad that I was able to make that choice though because (as of last week) both of my kids' schools have been closed down fully for at least the next two weeks. (Both of their schools are in zip codes where COVID-19 rates have risen above 3%.)

Kids

It's one thing to help parents reduce their anxiety regarding the pandemic and remote schooling. It's another thing to help our kids handle the anxieties that come with this new reality. There is uncertainty involved whether families chose hybrid or fully remote learning. In-person students have health concerns including wearing masks all day, being socially distanced and scheduling uncertainty. Fully remote learning kids have their own set of challenges including a new learning environment and independent learning.

Doctor Yip encourages parents to make their kids aware that the situation is not going to be perfect. We still need to accept and be okay with what it is though. **"It's getting and will be better"** is a great attitude to foster.

One thing that Doctor Yip pointed out is that many kids lack resiliency. The parents have been doing too much. When parents try to fix everything and make everything perfect, they aren't preparing their kids for the real world.

Instead, **parents need to give their kids an opportunity to figure out things for themselves**. Instead of telling kids the answer to everything, ask them questions and allow them to figure out solutions.

A practical remote schooling tip is to set kids up in different spaces to do their school work in order to make it as a school-like as possible. During the school week, the kids should take their classes in their workspace. Dr. Yip advises against setting kids up in their bedrooms to do their school work (if it all possible) because kids associate bedrooms with sleeping. During breaks, the kids can move around wherever they like.

Getting kids on a schedule, having clear expectations and setting up a structure will help ease the anxiety of remote schooling. Dr. Yip also encourages parents to talk with their kids at dinner regarding expectations for the next day of schooling.

The doctor also advises against constantly monitoring students. Our kids have to learn that their education is their responsibility and understand that there are consequences. For tweens, consequences can include losing gaming privileges or gaining privileges if their assignments are done in a timely manner. Setting limits and boundaries are essential.

For younger kids, this is a great time to help them learn to do their work before they play. Give them rewards to keep them motivated. For instance, you can say, "If you do a, b and c before a certain time then you can do x (desired activity)". This gives them some motivation until they're able to pick up the desire to excel on their own.

On a side note, we have a saying in our home: "Do what you need to do (well!) and then you can do what you want to do." This philosophy has worked great for my sons academically so far. They get to watch television, play video games, etc. throughout the week as long as they do what they need to do first.

Anyway, this current time can be a great reality check for students. It helps them to build skills and to be adaptable. There are really only two options: **adapt or be anxious**. These types of training and techniques help families learn how to reduce anxiety naturally.

There might be times when you should get professional help (either for yourself or your child) though. According to Dr. Yip, ***the time to seek professional help is when anxiety is so extreme that a person can't function, concentrate or get through the day without the anxiety interfering.***

I ended my conversation with Dr. Yip by asking her for some additional recommended resources regarding how to reduce anxiety naturally. There's so much misinformation out there about anxiety that it's important to go to the proper resources. The [Anxiety and Depression Association of America \(ADAA\)](#) educates and trains both the public and professionals. Doctor Yip's [Little Thinkers site](#) is another great resource – especially for kids with developmental challenges. Lastly, Dr. Yip's [Renewed Freedom Center site](#) is helpful for both parents and children with anxiety.

You Might Also Like

- [5 Tips to Create the Best Home Learning Spaces](#)
- [Mental Health: Anxiety and Resilience During COVID-19](#)
- [Social-Emotional Skills Growth: 5 Tips From a Licensed Therapist](#)



After speaking with Doctor Yip regarding [ways to reduce anxiety naturally](#), we briefly spoke about ways to build resilience in kids during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The American Psychological Association defines resilience as “the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress.”

Life is ever-changing and will have various challenges for every person. That’s why it is important to improve our kids’ ability to adapt. To help, I asked Doctor Yip to share some practical ways to build resilience in our kids.

The main thing is to encourage kids to be able to think outside of the box. Critical creative thinking skills are essential. Below are 5 practical ways to do so.

Ways To Build Resilience

1. **Give children opportunities** to solve their own problems and come up with their own solutions. Let them figure out what works and what doesn’t.

2. **Allow them to fail** so that they can figure out alternative solutions. Allow kids to experience little failures now so they will be able to deal with larger ones in the future. For parents, that means we have to hold back from fixing and figuring out everything. We don't need to give our children the answers all of the time. Rather, guide your child to come to solutions and encourage them to think of other ways.

3. Also, **be careful not to placate kids or invalidate their experiences**. If they say that they're not feeling great, that's fine. Direct them to what they **can** control by asking questions like, "What can you do?"

4. **Don't expect kids to be happy all of the time**. It's unrealistic and not the real world.

There are many challenges during this time. There are the normal disappointments of life. Then, there is the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some loved ones are becoming sick and even dying during this pandemic. The above strategies are great ways to build resilience but I also asked Dr. Yip for specific advice regarding helping kids be resilient when it comes to the loss of life.

5. Dr. Yip advises parents to help kids understand the circle of life. We **will** experience loss of life at some point so kids have to understand that everything ends. (She has been talking to her child about death since the age of 2 in age-appropriate ways.)

Use these times to help kids appreciate life more and not take it for granted. Don't protect them from the truth. Rather, prepare them for reality. Of course, there needs to be a balance. Parents shouldn't be morbid. Figure out what works and what doesn't work for **your** kids. Just be sure to keep things age-appropriate.

Doctor Yip ended with one last thought:

Our number one job (as parents) is to prepare our kids for real life.

I found this advice helpful and I hope that you do also. For additional guidance regarding ways to build resilience in your child, you can visit the [blog section](#) of Dr. Yip's Little Thinkers Center site. I especially recommend the [7 Tips to Help Your Child Build Resiliency and Self-Confidence throughout the School Year](#) post. You might also like the APA's [Building your resilience](#) section.

About Dr. Jenny Yip

Dr. Jenny Yip is a Board Certified Clinical Psychologist, author, speaker, and a nationally recognized OCD, anxiety, and parenting expert. She developed the Family Systems Based Strategic CBT, and has treated severe OCD & anxiety disorders for almost two decades. She's been featured in various media outlets, and co-hosts the Stress Less Life Podcast. Dr. Yip is Board Certified in Behavioral & Cognitive Psychology, is Clinical Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at USC Keck School of Medicine, and is on various professional boards and committees geared to improve mental wellness.

She is the author of *Productive, Successful You: End Procrastination by Making Anxiety Work for You Rather Than Against You*. In 2008, she founded the Renewed Freedom Center – Los Angeles to provide the most advanced treatment for those suffering from OCD and anxiety disorders. In 2016, she established the Little Thinkers Center – Los Angeles to help children with academic challenges develop the necessary critical and creative thinking skills that build self-confidence and resiliency.



When I decided to learn as much as I could about remote learning back in early August, I reached out to the PR team at [Zoom](#). Since kids are on Zoom so much for school, I wanted to get their input regarding best practices.

Beth (from Zoom) was kind enough to let me know that they would be hosting a parent-focused training about using Zoom for education in the future. Earlier this month, Zoom held a two-part “**Supporting Young Students with Remote Learning**” webinar series along with their partners – [ISTE](#) (The International Society for Technology in Education) and the [National Parent Teachers Association](#).

You can watch the videos and/or read the audio transcripts. The first part features a panel of experts that helps you with best practices for supporting your children. The second part shows you how to use Zoom’s tools and tricks in supporting your children at home. (Spanish and sign-language options of the recordings are also available.)

Supporting Young Students with Remote Learning

You can find the video and transcripts for [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#) on the Zoom site.

Part 1



[Click for Part 1](#)

Part 2



[Click For Part 2](#)

Additional Material

There is also a [twenty-page booklet/brochure](#) with notes and a [one-page “cheat sheet” infographic](#) available. I was really impressed by how much thought and detail went into the series. I hope that you find it helpful!

You Might Also Like

- [Parent ideas and tips for online learning \(*Learning Keeps Going*\)](#)
- [7 Takeaways From an Education Chat With Sal Khan](#)
- [5 Tips to Create the Best Home Learning Spaces](#)



One of my biggest concerns about remote learning is the effect of so much screen time on students' eyes. My youngest son is nearsighted anyway so I definitely didn't want to put more strain on his eyes. That is why I sought out some eye health tips from various professionals.

Dr. Jeff Kegarise, a board-certified optometrist and the staff of [EyeJust Blue Light Blocking Screen Protectors](#) were kind enough to share their eye health tips.

First, I wanted to learn more about digital eye strain. The causes include prolonged use of digital devices and overexposure to blue light. Symptoms include the following: overall eye discomfort (tired/red/itchy/dry eyes), blurred vision, headaches/migraines, increased sensitivity to light, difficulty concentrating, eye twitching and the like.

Eye Health Tips To Minimize Digital Eye Strain

1. Positioning

Position computer devices further away. The closer devices are, the harder your and your kids' eyes will need to work in order to focus on them. In addition, keeping devices two feet away reduces blue light exposure by 75%.

Adjust the position of the computer. The computer monitor and the keyboard should be positioned to conform to the child's size. Make sure that the screen isn't too high in the child's field of view. A [report by the National Institutes of Health](#) suggests an adjustable chair is the best option to get the height just right according to Dr. Kegarise.

2. Lighting

Dim the screen brightness on devices. Avoid eye strain by matching the brightness of the screen to the brightness in the room. You definitely don't want a computer screen to be the light source of your home classroom or workspace.

Ensure that rooms are properly lit. To build upon the above, make sure each room has a proper light source so that you or your children aren't looking at a device in a dimly lit room with dilated pupils, which will allow more blue light into the eyes than necessary.

Choose the right lighting. The type of lighting used in the students' workspace can make a difference. Incandescent lights work better than fluorescent lights because they give off less glare, Kegarise says. "It's also better if the light is placed over your shoulder than if it's shining straight down on the screen because that will cause fewer reflections," he says.

3. Blinking

Remind them to blink. Parents should remind children to blink when they spend a lot of time in front of a screen. That helps spread tears across the eyes, keeping the eyes lubricated and aiding in the prevention of dry eyes, Kegarise says.

4. The 20/20/20 Rule

Suggested by the [American Academy of Ophthalmology](#), the 20/20/20 rule encourages people to take breaks from their screens every 20 minutes by shifting their eyes to look at an object 20 feet away for 20 seconds.

5. Blue Light Blocking Products

Use blue light blocking screen protectors. Depending on what you do (or kids having online school), limiting your screen time may not be an option. [EyeJust blue light blocking screen protectors](#) not only block blue light at the source (helping to prevent damage to you and your children's eyes) but also protect your screen with crystal clear, scratch-proof, optical grade tempered glass.

Blue light blocking glasses are another option. Parenting.com has a helpful article called [The Best Blue Light Blocking Glasses for Kids](#).

More About Blue Light

Blue light (HEV, high energy visible light) is part of the electromagnetic spectrum that is visible to the human eye. Common sources of blue light include mobile phones, tablets and computers.

Blue light can pass through the cornea and lens of your eye. Research has shown blue light can disrupt the body's natural sleep cycles by suppressing melatonin production. It's also been linked to premature aging and hyperpigmentation.

Symptoms of overexposure to blue light include eye strain, tired or dry eyes. Studies suggest continued exposure to blue light over time could lead to damaged retinal cells and increase the risk of macular degeneration.

6. Device Use

Avoid using devices within 1-2 hours of bedtime. For example, finish the homework on a computer well before lights out and then switch to a device-free activity like reading. This enables children's circadian rhythm to kick in, ensuring high-quality sleep for their developing minds

There are also time limit apps you can add to your children's devices to limit their usage each day. Leverage one of these or Apple's [Screen Time](#) feature, which allows you to set a daily time allotment for apps and blocks them from usage once the limit is reached.

7. Proper Nutrition

Eating a proper diet is important for several reasons including the health of your eyes. Green, leafy vegetables are a great way to get essential nutrients. Eating fish can help reduce dry eye symptoms, particularly due to the omega-3 fatty acids. There's truth to eating a rainbow!

8. Adequate Sleep

On a more general note – A healthy immune system can fight off infection. ***A sleep-deprived immune system doesn't work as well.*** During sleep, your body produces cytokines, which help fight off infection (of any kind!) Less sleep means fewer cytokines, leaving you more susceptible to getting sick.

9. Spending Time Outdoors

According to Dr. Kegarise, forty percent of children develop nearsightedness, and it's an even higher percentage for those who have a parent who is nearsighted. Studies also show that less time outdoors contributes to more nearsightedness progression.

Dr. Jeff Kegarise, a board-certified optometrist and clinical management expert, is co-author with his wife, Dr. Susan Kegarise, of *One Patient at a Time: The K2 Way Playbook for Healthcare & Business Success* (www.theK2Way.com).

He has lectured for many years on clinical disease, and his management methods were recognized by The Institute for Healthcare Improvement. Kegarise is a graduate of The Ohio State University College of Optometry.

EyeJust Blue Light Blocking Screen Protectors defend your children's eyes and sleep from harmful blue light rays. Founder Gigi Mortimer developed EyeJust because her son couldn't sleep.

When she realized that it was related to late-night tablet viewing, she set out to find a solution to cut blue light at the source. Easy to apply, EyeJust is the first line of defense with blue light blocking technology embedded in the screen protector. As tested by doctors at UC Irvine, EyeJust blocks more blue light than any other filter that was on the market at testing time.

You Might Also Like

- [Children's Eye Health and Safety Month](#)
- [Protecting Your iHealth in a Digital World](#)
- [Why I Don't Let My Kids Go Out in the Sun Without Kids Sunglasses](#)

I hope that you found this eBook valuable. (I did.)

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Hello. I'm Kimberly Coleman, a NYC work from home mom. My husband Reggie, a public school math teacher, and I are raising our two teen sons (Michael and Sean) in Queens, NY.

Michael is currently a junior at Townsend Harris High School and Sean is an eighth grade student at Halsey Middle School. We chose all-remote learning for our sons for the 2020-2021 school year.

Initially, I felt panicked and overwhelmed at the prospect of remote schooling my sons in addition to all of my other work and life responsibilities. Fortunately, I was able to use my online platform (*Mom in the City*) to gain access to various experts for a limited-edition "Remote Schooling Moms" blog series. I am sharing those posts in this eBook.

While this current distance learning reality isn't ideal, my panic has turned into peace. Both of my sons are thriving and (besides the never-ending, "What's for lunch?" question) so am I. 😊

I hope that this eBook helps you and your family also!

Be well,
Kimberly

