

# Distance Learning Tips

## CPS Families of Secondary Students (Grades 6-12)



With school buildings closed, all of us in Cambridge Public Schools are working hard to find creative ways to make distance learning fun and successful for students of all ages. Here are some tips for families to keep students active, engaged, and healthy at home.



### Establish a routine, and stick to it.

Just like younger children, adolescents thrive on structure and routine. This may be harder to stick to for older students, but you can suggest they make up their own daily schedule. Focus on school work in reasonable increments. Don't worry about a strict schedule as much as providing a sense of consistency, with time for learning, fun, exercise, meals, and sleep.



### Talk with your student.

Learning from home is a big adjustment for all of us. Older students in particular will be missing their friends and frustrated to miss out on important year-end activities, especially if they are completing upper school or high school. Talk to your student about the experience of trying to learn when schools are closed. Help your student overcome any fear or anxiety with reassurance, encouragement, and praise for working hard in tough times.



### Connect with your student's teachers.

Teachers are striving to maintain two-way interaction with students as much as possible. Teachers will stay in touch by phone, email, the Remind app, and other ways. Upper school teachers are available to support students in real time during designated blocks of 30-45 minutes each day. High school students participate in Google Meet lessons and can connect with teachers during office hours. Ask your student about their schedule, projects, and if they've attended class sessions. Reach out to your student's teachers, deans, principal or family liaison if you need assistance.



### Get outside and exercise.

Encourage your student to stay active. Exercising regularly will help maintain their physical and mental health. If your student is used to playing team sports, encourage them to continue with cardio and strength training at home or outdoors while wearing a mask and maintaining a safe distance (at least 6 feet) from others. Even on rainy days, students can engage in stretching and movement activities indoors.



### Provide opportunities for student independence and responsibility.

Include students in chores around the house and/or helping elderly neighbors (remotely, or while wearing a mask and practicing social distancing), so they can feel a sense of accomplishment. Support opportunities for students to stay connected with friends virtually through phone and video chat. Monitor social media use, and remind students that not all information they read online is accurate. Encourage them to ask questions about news stories that create confusion or anxiety.



### Have fun!

This is not the time for "all work and no play." It's more important than ever for families to find creative ways to laugh and have fun together. Watch movies, share video clips, tell jokes, play games, cook, sing or dance together. Do whatever makes your family most happy.