

Distance Learning Tips

CPS Families of Elementary Students (Grades JK-5)

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.

Create a rhythm for each school day that complements your own family schedule. Don't worry about a strict schedule as much as providing a sense of consistency, with time for learning, fun, exercise, meals, and sleep.



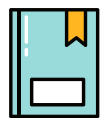
Designate a space for learning.

Let your child help decide how their schoolwork space will be set up. If it is a temporary work space (like a kitchen table where your family also eats), help your child decorate a box or bag to store their electronic device and any school supplies and learning materials you have in the home. Putting materials and supplies away when schoolwork is done can help mark the end of each school day.



Offer your child a variety of learning activities.

Help your child engage with different activities and everyday household items that can be used for learning and exploration. If you have puzzles, books, art supplies, and other non-electronic options at home, encourage your child to make them part of the school day.



Start each day with a plan of action.

Check email or Google Classroom for messages from your child's school to find out which lessons and activities are scheduled for the day. Construct a learning day that's about half the length of a regular school day - about 3 hours. Organize the time into several blocks of activity, with breaks in between. The blocks will be a mix of teacher-led learning, self-directed learning, and activities with parents/caregivers. Remember, not all learning will be online.



Connect with your child's teachers.

Teachers are striving to maintain two-way interaction with students as much as possible. Teachers are available to support students in real time during designated blocks of 30-45 minutes each day. Some will lead a class lesson, host a "Morning Meeting" through Google Meet, or work with students in small groups. Others will stay in touch by phone, email, the Remind app, and other ways. Reach out to the teacher, principal or family liaison if you need assistance.



Get outside and exercise.

Try to get outside regularly, and find ways for your child to be active. Although playgrounds are closed, you can still go for a walk or bike ride. Just remember to wear a mask and continue to practice social distancing by staying at least 6 feet apart from people who do not live with you. Even on rainy days, you can engage in fun stretching and movement activities indoors.



Talk with your child.

Learning from home is a big adjustment for all of us, especially for younger children. Talk to your child about the experience of trying to learn when schools are closed. Help your child overcome any fear or anxiety with reassurance, encouragement, and praise for working hard in tough times.



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. Watch funny videos, tell jokes, play games. Do whatever makes your family most happy.