

Try These Home-Schooling Tips, Resources

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Many schools across the continental United States and the globe have temporarily closed their doors to help keep students, their families, administrators and teachers safe and slow the spread of [coronavirus disease 2019](#). Here are some tips and resources you can use to help your child learn at home.

Talk with your child about the pandemic

Children may know more about the virus than you realize, even if they are young and are not talking about it. Here are ways to address the topic:

- **Speak with your child**, in an [age-appropriate manner](#), about [COVID-19](#) and its impact on their normal routine and the routines of those around them. Start the conversation by determining what, if anything, they already know.
- **Reassure your child** that you are doing everything you can to protect their well-being and that of the family.
- **Encourage your child** to come to you with any questions or concerns. You might start a journal together to document your experiences and emotions during this time.

Establish a routine for learning at home

- **Consider your child's age.** Transitioning to home-based learning will be very different for a preschool student than a middle or high school student. Discuss your expectations for learning at home and go over any concerns so you are on the same page.
- **Set and follow a weekday schedule** for starting and ending the school day and going to bed. All children benefit from structure, even if they try to resist it.
- **Build in flexibility** to accommodate your own work and other responsibilities. You may be [teleworking](#), for example. See if you and your spouse, partner or another adult in your household can share some of the teaching. It might also help to set aside time in the evenings to check over assignments or work together on reading and other skills.
- **Take breaks.** Schedule time during the school day for lunch, snacks and age-appropriate breaks. Think physical education, recess, etc.

- **Build in time for creativity.** Make time for music, art and other creative subjects. This may include time for your child to practice an instrument, draw, paint, try their hand at drama or develop other skills. Have younger children practice counting by stacking blocks, or build a fort from sheets.
- **Help your child safely connect with friends and relatives.** Connecting with friends and family members outside your household is important. Work with your child's school, their friends' parents and others to help them stay in touch. Consider taking turns leading virtual lessons or hosting virtual play dates. Have your child write letters to people they care about while practicing handwriting and grammar.

Tap resources through your child's school

- **Embrace online assignments and virtual lessons.** Many schools are offering online assignments and/or virtual lessons in place of traditional in-person learning. Monitor your child's assignments and make sure they complete all work and log in on time for online sessions. Provide any help they need, such as reading instructions and using laptops and other devices.
- **Ask for teaching advice.** Don't hesitate to reach out to your child's teachers, guidance counselors and administrators for advice as you support your child at home.
- **Seek assistance.** Contact your child's teachers or school to resolve issues that may come up with technology, connectivity, assignments and more.

Tap installation and community resources

- **Explore home-schooling resources on your installation.** These can include school liaison officers, Department of Defense Education Activity school activities, and programs for children, youth and teens.
- **Check out Head Start and Sure Start programs.** **Head Start** teaches reading, math and other developmental skills to children 5 and younger before they start school. **Sure Start** is a Department of Defense Education Activity program open to command-sponsored military children at overseas installations who meet age requirements and other criteria.
- **Reach out to Military OneSource education consultants.** They can assist you with questions about your child's education. These one-on-one sessions are free and confidential and can provide you with referrals to resources in your area. Call 800-342-9647 at any time to schedule an appointment. OCONUS/International? [Click here for calling options.](#)
- **Turn to the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Digital Library.** This is your source for free online resources for children, teens and adults - including eBooks and audiobooks on virtually every topic. Use the library to help your children learn and stay engaged and entertained.
- **Connect with other parents.** Stay in touch with parents in your existing network and work together to widen your circle. Share resources, try teaching virtual group lessons and more.
- **Celebrate reading.** The Department of Defense Education Activity joins the National Education Association and schools across the nation in celebrating **Read Across America** year-round. Check out the campaign's [tools and resources](#) to help your child read, experience its joy and feel valued and welcome.
- **Take advantage of remote learning opportunities.** Nonprofit and other educational organizations are offering free resources, such as instructional videos, live streams and webinars, that parents and students can use during school closures.

Tap resources in the arts, sciences and more

- **Have a blast with Kennedy Space Center.** Inspire a love of science and space by joining [Kennedy Space Center's Facebook Live sessions](#) for young children and young adults.
- **Explore the Smithsonian Institution.** Families can't go to Smithsonian museums or the National Zoo during their temporary closures, but the museums can come - virtually - to families! [Meet the animals](#), watch them on [live cams](#), check out the [Smithsonian Learning Lab](#), discover museum treasures in [3D](#), play a wide variety of [games](#) and much more.
- **Serve up science lessons.** Turn to the [Morale, Welfare and Recreation Digital Library](#) for resources including ScienceFlix, which offers more than 50 complete units of study with thousands of science-related assets. It uses hands-on projects, videos, interactive features and more to give children and teens a better understanding of science concepts and ideas.

Stay informed

Understanding of COVID-19 is rapidly changing. For updates and information specific to your location, visit your installation's official website. You can also follow your installation's Facebook, Twitter or Instagram platforms.

For Department of Defense updates for the military community:

- Visit [Defense.gov](#)
- Follow Military OneSource's [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) platforms
- Continue to check the [Coronavirus Information for Our Military Community](#) page for updates.