

'Ohana Tips for Parents:

Ways to Support At-Home Learning

Hawai'i Statewide
FAMILY
ENGAGEMENT CENTER



Prepared by the [Hawaii Statewide Family Engagement Center](#)

Updated: 05/04/20

Plan and Prepare

Use this guide to help you and your child be ready to learn from home!

Please stay informed with **credible sources** such as:

- The [State of Hawaii COVID-19 site](#)
- Hawaii Department of Health ([DOH](#))
- The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#).

Additional resources include:

- [Talking to Children About COVID-19 - A Parent Resource, Feb. 29, 2020](#) from the [Hawaii Public Schools Website](#).
- At this time, some schools are providing meals for students under the age of 18. Visit this HDOE web page ([HIDOE COVID-19 Information and Updates](#)) for information about which school sites provide Grab and Go Meals in your community.
- You can also access a list of [Grab and Go Meal School Sites](#) which has the locations of 40 Hawaii public schools offering breakfast and lunch to children who are 18 years or younger.
- **Call 211**, Hawaii's only statewide hotline partnering with the Department of Health. Connect with specialists to help you find food, shelter, financial assistance, child care, parenting support, elderly care, disability services and much more. Visit the [Aloha United Way 211 Information & Referral Service](#) web page for more information.



General Tips

#1 Create a Space for Learning

Show your child that you value their education by creating a space for learning.

A space should be similar to a home office.

Do your best to ensure that it is:

- ☐ Distraction-free
- ☐ Quiet, with little to no noise
- ☐ Well lit to read and write
- ☐ Close to an electrical outlet, if needed
- ☐ Equipped with space for your child to sit, stand, and lay out paperwork and books (if any)
- ☐ Equipped with a desk or table to write or type on
- ☐ Equipped with most of the school supplies they need within reach



Source: Adapted from AFFECT's [Creating an environment for learning at home](#).

#2 Arrange A Daily Structure

Create predictability to your child's day by arranging a general daily structure. The predictability and familiarity that comes with routine offers the perfect "safe space" kids need in challenging times, so your kids can relax in knowing what to expect. It is also fundamental in the development of good habits and establishing boundaries and family expectations. Importantly, it saves everyone time.

- ☐ Maintain your regular nighttime and morning routines to ensure consistency.
- ☐ Use picture schedules and/or written checklists to help your child keep track of what activities will occur when.
- ☐ Integrate **choice** and allow your child to make the schedule, pick the order of events, and feel a part of the decision-making process.

- ❑ Maintain skills by scheduling time for academics in the daily schedule. See next General Tip on Creating A School Schedule at home.
- ❑ Provide structured breaks throughout the day to give an outlet for energy and allow for time to relax and recharge.
- ❑ Add in structured windows of free play. (e.g. create a visual choice board or checklist of available free play choices such as in-door sports, games, toys, screens, outdoor play, etc.)

For younger children, planning a series of short (20 minute), varied activities is best. Art and music can be integrated to add interest and fun. And don't forget the healthy snacks - that is always a great tool to include in your routine.

#3 Create A “Learning” Schedule

Maintaining a structured routine for your child is key when learning takes place in the home. You may choose to model your child's normal school schedule or plan one as a family. One tip for motivating your child to follow the schedule is to involve them in selecting the classes, activities and break times. Visual schedules help the child and any family member supporting them to stay organized.

These [printable schedules](#) can help you plan your day!

#4 Set Learning Goals

Learning goals should always be age and developmentally appropriate. Instruction and activities should be linked to learning goals for your child's current grade. A key fact to remember is that the younger a child is, the shorter their attention and focus on a task is likely to be. For younger children, planning a series of short (15-20 minute), varied activities is best. Art and music can be integrated to add interest and fun.

#5 Dedicate Time to Read Together

Whether you are reading to your young child, listening to your child read, or independently reading next to each other, it's important for your child to read everyday.

#6 Teach New Skills

Take advantage of canceled school/extracurriculars/events to teach new skills. Examples include using an alarm clock, starting to shave, cooking together, independent play. Set small, achievable goals.

#7 Use Visual Supports

Use visual supports to help your child stay on task by setting clear expectations. For additional information, view this document on [Visual Supports](#).

#8 Positive Reinforcement

Use positive reinforcement to support the desirable behaviors you want to see at home. To access tips on positive reinforcement, view the document [Positive Reinforcement: Fun and Easy Ways to Make It Happen at Home](#).

#9 Talk to Your Child About What They Are Learning

Talking about what they are learning shows you value their education. It's also a great opportunity to learn about your child's interests. Encourage your child to do their best to earn good grades. Make time to answer your child's questions. If you don't know the answer, reach out to a teacher, the internet, another family member, or a friend. Avoid telling your child you're too busy to answer their questions. Other ways to encourage conversations about learning at home include:

- Having each family member in your household to share something they learned with the rest of the family each day.
- Discussing current events together.
- Playing a problem solving game together.

Literacy & Reading Tips

Birth to 5: Tips to Encourage Reading

- Read picture books to your child and point out the objects and describe them.
- While dressing your child read nearby text aloud.
- Read a variety of texts using different voices and emotions.
- Read to your child for at least 15-minutes a day

Source: Adapted from Learning Point Associates - [Reading: Birth to Age 5](#).

K-12: Tips to Encourage Reading

- Have your children read recipes aloud to you while you are cooking dinner.
- Set aside for independent reading a book, magazine, or article of their choice.
- Involve loved-ones who live far away by using a video conferencing program and have your child share a book with relatives.

Source: Adapted from: Scholastic's [9 Creative Ways to Read as a Family](#).

K-12: Family Reading Support

- Listen to your child read to you for 10-minutes in a day.
- Instead of watching a 30-minute show on TV, read together as a family.
- Encourage your child to read something from as many of the following categories as they can:



- ☐ Biography
- ☐ Comic/Manga
- ☐ Crime and Mystery
- ☐ Fantasy
- ☐ News Article
- ☐ Nobel Prize Winner Book
- ☐ Popular Fiction

- ☐ Romance
- ☐ Science Fiction
- ☐ Test Preparation Guide

Tips for Homework

Establish a Homework Routine

Teach your child time management skills by establishing a regular homework routine. You can also help them to decide which assignments to do first. Communicate with your child's teachers to ensure that your child's homework is submitted on-time.

Check out these [8 Homework Strategies](#) to help your child with homework.

1. **Set up a homework schedule.**

Dedicate a specific period of time for your child to do their homework and stick to it.

2. **Rank the assignments.**

Help your child to decide which assignments to do first.

3. **Encourage your child to work independently.**

Let your child work independently and check on him/her occasionally.

4. **Check correct problems first.**

Let your child know how well they did on their correct answers. For the answers that are incorrect say, "I bet if you go back and check these over you may get a different answer."

5. **Avoid letting homework drag on all evening.**

You should stop the homework activity when a child is no farther along after one or two hours into the assignment. Allowing a child to linger on hour after hour with very little performance may increase feelings of inadequacy. You may choose to end the homework activity and write the teacher a note explaining the circumstances. Collaborate with your child's teacher to identify challenges your child may be having and work together to identify strategies and solutions.

6. **Success strategies for textbook assignments.**

Discuss and talk about the questions before your child begins reading. It will help your child know what important information to look for in the chapter. Encourage your child to take notes and flag important pages.

7. **Be aware of negative nonverbal messages.**

Sighs, slumped body posture, raised eyebrows, eye-rolling, and other types of body language are all nonverbal responses. If children are sensitive, they will pick up these messages, which can only add to the tension of the homework relationship. Try sitting up straight or lean slightly forward to convey encouragement. Maintain good eye contact with your child when they are speaking and minimize phone distractions. Listen carefully (don't interrupt), and most importantly, be patient.

8. **Avoid finishing assignments for your child.**

Children tend to feel inadequate when a parent finishes homework. If children cannot complete an assignment, and they have honestly tried, write the teacher a note explaining the circumstances. Most teachers will understand the situation.

Source: Adapted from Teacher Vision's [Help Parents Deal with Homework](#)

Not sure where to start?

Start with the [Homework Routine: Student Checklist](#):

- ☐ Write Down Homework Assignments correctly and completely
- ☐ Assemble all necessary materials
- ☐ Use available time to work on homework
- ☐ Create a comfortable and organized homework space
- ☐ Schedule a regular daily homework time
- ☐ Develop a daily homework plan
- ☐ Do not procrastinate on larger homework tasks, break them down into smaller parts that can be tackled daily
- ☐ Get your school and homework organized
- ☐ Note any areas of homework confusion to ask the teacher
- ☐ Check the homework quality, maybe even create a rubric!



Adapted from: Teacher Vision's [Help Parents Deal with Homework](#).

Online Resources

The Hawaii Statewide Family Engagement Center has compiled a variety of free online learning resources that can be used at home during school closures.

30 Families Learning

For Elementary students. National Center for Families Learning guide to 30 Days of Families Learning Together provides a month's worth of family literacy activities and practices designed to inspire family memories rooted in imagining, playing, and learning together.

Camp Wonderopolis

For Elementary students. Camp Wonderopolis builds upon this rich content by offering interactive STEM and literacy-building topics boosted by Maker experiments that are easy to do at home using household items families already have lying around. During this out-of-school time, keep your student engaged with these brain-building resources. Created by the National Center for Families Learning and its partners.

Ed Helper

For Pre-K through High School. Provides free daily printable workbooks.

Educational Resources for Parents

For Parents and Families this educational resource sheet full of information is provided by Representative Lisa Kitagawa and Representative Scot Matayoshi.

They provide charts for educational resources organized by subject area, free of cost, and age range. This is simply a list of popular educational websites intended to assist parents and families during this challenging time.

Home Learning Daily Digest

For Kindergarten - Grade 2 students. [Subscribe](#) to the South Dakota Statewide Family Engagement Center's Newsletter, to receive a digest of easy-to-use activities to support your child's learning at home. Example Activities STEM, Self-Paced Lessons, Mindfulness, Physical Activities, Art, and Fun! Sample: [March 17, 2020 Daily Digest](#).

Khan Academy

For Kindergarteners - College students. Khan Academy offers practice exercises, instructional videos, and a personalized learning dashboard that empower learners to study at their own pace in and outside of the classroom. We tackle math, science, computer programming, history, art history, economics, and more.

Scholastic Learn at Home

Daily courses for students from Pre-kindergarten to Grade 6 students and higher to keep kids reading, thinking, and growing.

TED-Ed

For Kindergarteners - College students. Video lessons and series by top educators, made into animated videos for kids.

Unite for Literacy

For Birth - Kindergarten students. Build your home library by using this online library of books to read to your child everyday. Books are narrated in a variety of languages including: ASL, Chinese, English, French, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Samoan, Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and more!

Wonderopolis.org

For Elementary students. A free online learning resource visited by 13 million students, teachers, and parents annually. Created by the National Center for Families Learning and its partners.

Want More?

You can find detailed guidance from the University of Hawaii College of Education's AFFECT for:

- [“Ways to Help Parents Support Academics at Home”](#)
- [“Ways to Engage Families at Home”](#)

Contact the Hawai‘i Statewide Family Engagement Center Team!

- hfec@hawaii.edu
- cds.coe.hawaii.edu/hfec/

Suggested Citation:

Hawaii Statewide Family Engagement Center (2020, April) *At-home learning: ‘Ohana tips for parents*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii at Manoa, College of Education, Center on Disability Studies, Hawaii Statewide Family Engagement Center Project. <https://cds.coe.hawaii.edu/hfec/at-home-learning/>

Parenthetical citation: (Hawaii Statewide Family Engagement Center, 2020).

Narrative citation: Hawaii Statewide Family Engagement Center (2020)

This resource is based on a program and materials developed under a grant from the US Department of Education - The Hawaii Statewide Family Engagement Center (U310A180056) - Dr. Chuan Chinn, PI, Center on Disability Studies, College of Education, University of Hawai‘i at Manoa. Funding agency’s endorsement of the ideas expressed in this website should not be inferred.