

# Getting Back to Basics: Practical Tips for Students and Families



## Maintaining Routine and Motivation

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### **Sleep**

- have the same wake and bed-times as previously
- ensure there is a bed-time routine, such as having a shower or bath before bedtime
- do a relaxing activity (i.e., reading a book or being read to by a parent)
- have a night-light in the room if child is scared of the dark
- have a favourite toy/teddy available to cuddle to help settle
- consider having mindfulness/breathing exercises available to help settle children (i.e., Smiling Mind app)
- use an alarm in the morning to help wake up
- ensure children are waking up with enough time to have breakfast, change into their day clothes, brush their teeth and prepare their materials for the daily learning tasks.

### **Eating**

- have breakfast, lunch and snack times at similar times of the day
- eat fruit, vegetables and having required water intake, daily
- prepare meals for the week on the weekend (including dinners), where possible
- prepare snacks and lunch for the next day, the night before
- have meals at the family table to connect and speak about the day

### **Exercise**

- identify ways in which individuals and families can exercise. For example:
  - exercise at park (with supervision)
  - bike riding (with supervision)
  - walking the family dog together
  - playing outside
  - skipping rope activities
  - watching YouTube videos of Yoga exercises
  - at home exercise equipment (i.e., treadmill, exercise bike)
  - exercises from Ashley Joyce (PE teacher)-Sport Google Classroom

### **Limit Technology Use**

- have technology free times (outside of school hours or work use time)
- consider turning WIFI connection off once work has been completed for the day
- have devices out of bedrooms and in an area of the home where supervision can occur
- consider locking up devices in another space if needed and to prevent inappropriate use
- identify activities that can be done other than use technology. For example:
  - exercise at park (with supervision)
  - play outside in backyard
  - read
  - family puzzle
  - painting/arts and crafts
  - relaxation activities (i.e., Smiling Mind app)
  - gardening/planting a family garden
  - making dinner together
  - chalk drawing on concrete

### **Motivation**

- use a rewards strategy for when children have completed the required tasks (i.e., sticker chart, or being able to choose an activity to do at the end of the day or the family meal for the evening)

- consider using egg timers to help children know how much time they have to complete a task or when they need to complete a task by
- consider having 'movement breaks' for children in between tasks; get up out of chair, stretch and move around, prior to commencing next task
- break tasks down into easy and manageable pieces
- consider colour coding work tasks and the appropriate items needed
- reassure children that the current situation of learning from home will not be forever, that family members are ok and that what has been suggested by the government for keeping well are being followed.

### Visual Timetable

- consider preparing a weekly timetable to visually present details of tasks that will be completed each day during the week
- the timetable can be presented in a word document, on a whiteboard or as deemed appropriate to suit the needs of the family
- consider writing on this timetable on a Sunday afternoon with each family member present, so all are aware of what will be happening during the week and expectations
- discuss with family members the activities they can do, which they can look forward to doing together or individually (i.e., walking the family dog together, making a meal together, making a vegetable garden) during each week day and on the weekend
- see visual timetable below as an idea with examples included

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
7-8am	Wake Up						
8-9am	Breakfast/ Dressed						
9-10am	Learning					Gardening	Exercise
10-11am		Learning					
11-12pm			Learning			Free time	Free time
12-1pm				Learning			
1-2pm					Learning	Exercise	
2-3pm							Meal prep
3-4pm							
4-5pm	Draw	Colour	Read	Exercise	Exercise		
5-6pm	Dinner						
6-7pm							

### Work Spaces

- ensure these are well-lit, are of an adequate size and have enough space to allow work tasks to be completed
- have the desk at the correct height and an appropriate chair available to support the posture of children
- make sure work spaces are tidied once learning is completed for the day, to ensure the space is ready for the next day's learning
- if parents are working from home, devise a communication method between family members of when parents can and cannot be interrupted due to their work commitments (e.g., using signs on doors) or leaving a notepad that children can write concerns on that they want their parents to know about when they are free to attend to these.

## Resources

-Raising Children Network (selected websites on COVID-19, sleep, eating, exercise, and routine-*\*please keep in mind social distancing requirements when undertaking suggestions*)

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/guides/coronavirus-covid-19-guide>

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/newborns/sleep/understanding-sleep/about-sleep>

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/nutrition-fitness/healthy-eating-habits/healthy-eating-habits>

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/school-age/nutrition-fitness/daily-food-guides/school-age-food-groups>

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/nutrition-fitness/family-meals/family-meals-tips>

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/nutrition-fitness/common-concerns/fussy-eating>

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/guides/first-1000-days/looking-after-yourself/eating-exercise-for-parents>

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/guides/first-1000-days/looking-after-yourself/sleep-for-parents>

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/nutrition-fitness/physical-activity/physical-activity-getting-involved>

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/family-life/routines-rituals/daily-routines-for-your-family-four-steps>

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/autism/behaviour/understanding-behaviour/changing-routines-asd>

-Smiling Mind: <https://www.smilingmind.com.au>

-Kids Helpline: <https://kidshelpline.com.au>

-Beyond Blue: <https://www.beyondblue.org.au>

-Lifeline: <https://www.lifeline.org.au>

-Black Dog Institute: <https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au>

-eSafety Commissioner: <https://www.esafety.gov.au>

-The eSafety Guide: <https://www.esafety.gov.au/key-issues/esafety-guide>

-Online Safety Guide (eSafety Commissioner): <https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents/online-safety-guide>

-Australian Psychological Society- Find a Psychologist:  
<https://www.psychology.org.au/Find-a-Psychologist>