

Name (if identified)	QUESTION
Jessica	<p>How can we help our children that are struggling to even get their workload for the day done because they are struggling mentally and online school is the trigger? I know you say that set a timer for breaks and have them take breaks but that also means that they will not get all their work completed for the day and then they are behind, get bad grades which triggers more mental health issues.</p> <p>ANSWER: Thank you for your question. Virtual learning does bring about some challenges for students because they are missing that face-to-face connection that is important for some students' educational and social and emotional growth. This pandemic has really forced us to look at alternative ways to meet these needs and there is still some learning to do. I am going to include some strategies that will be shared out soon in our Parent Newsletter, but ultimately your child's mental health is a priority. Know that your school's counselors, social workers, and mental health providers are available to speak with you to create a specific plan to address any mental health issues your child may be experiencing. They can help your child work with his or her teachers on completing schoolwork.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recent research shows that many children and adolescents are experiencing higher rates of anxiety, depression, difficulty concentrating, stress, sleep disorders, and other mental health problems since the start of the pandemic (Psychiatric Times, 2020). This information below provides some simple ways parents and caregivers can help students navigate these challenges (Place2Be.org.uk, 2020). <p style="text-align: center;">Stay Creative</p> <p>As well as encouraging children to keep up the hobbies that they already love, try something new. For younger kids, anything lying around the house can be transformed with imagination. For older children, try cooking some new recipes with them.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Stay on Schedule</p> <p>Having some structure to the day can help children feel more secure. Try having a weekday routine in place and keep some familiar routines going, such as morning and evening routines.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Stay Active</p> <p>Staying physically active is a key part of looking after our mental wellbeing. Fresh air and being outdoors can do wonders for our mental wellbeing. If getting outside isn't an option, you could schedule in some indoor exercise time.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Stay in Touch</p>

	<p>Find time for your children to connect virtually with their friends.</p> <p>It's natural to want to keep up to date about what is happening but try to limit the amount you and your children are exposed to social media.</p>