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Coronavirus - Homeschooling Tips

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The coronavirus has a major impact all over the world and in many countries the governments are taking intense measures to flatten the growth curve. Besides travel bans, quarantines and working from home, homeschooling might have the biggest impact on many families. Now people are have to juggle many roles: working, housekeeping, being a partner, being a parent and being a teacher!



Pinterest

With the homeschooling I have 6 weeks of experience by now with a pre-K and 1st grade boy (of which 5 weeks in a hotel room in Vietnam because we were stuck there because of the travel ban. Therefore we thought it was a good idea to share some tips to make this challenge as smooth as possible. I realize it all depends on your kids age and even character, so there's no "one-size-fits-all" set of tips, but hopefully you can find a few that fits your situation and will make your life a little easier the coming weeks.

The intensity also really depends on the method your school uses for homeschooling. Our International school uses the app "seesaw" where teachers daily upload the students work with video instructions, so the kids can work quite independently and upload their work. The teachers will provide individual recorded comments on each assignment, which makes it very

clear and interactive with great teacher involvement. Hopefully you can stimulate your school to create a high standard online education format which will make your life much easier.

1- **Explain** to your children what is happening and why, without creating anxiety. Position it as a fun opportunity to have a parent be "the teacher".

2- Let your kids pick some nice **new stationary** books, pens and craft supply to kick-off your homeschooling in a positive way.

3- Create **routines**: start early after breakfast, schedule short breaks and try to finish early before lunch time. Explain that the more focussed they are, the more playtime they will have in the afternoon. We also have "croissant Monday & Friday" where the short break is to go for a coffee&croissant at the bakery and "fancy lunch Wednesday" where the boys could pick the restaurant where we would go for lunch. If the restaurants are closed try "grilled cheese toast" Wednesday or anything that's easy and they like.

4- If you have multiple kids, always have some **extra material** besides their official homework on hand that they can do independently while you're explaining a task to your other kid. For example, practicing handwriting, the ABC, writing a "book", writing letters to their friends, work in official grade workbooks with practices suitable for that grade or any craft work.

5- Schedule "**I-time**" for yourself and your kids. Even if your kids are small, explain that you want 30 minutes for yourself to read a book. Or take them to the gym and let them play on a mat with some toys. Or even book a massage and bring them (and tell them to stay quiet so you can enjoy). My little boy even fell asleep and the other one loved it as much as I did. Whatever it is that makes you relaxed, do it, even though you have to adjust the setting a bit with your kids. Kids can use the 30 minutes a day "I-time" for anything they like, to let them relax and unwind.

6- Schedule **sports lessons** for your kids. We started with twice a week swim training and tennis training and they love it! This is the perfect time to help your kids develop some extra skills and practice in an area they like. But be quick before all coaches are busy ;). See some options here: https://www.moscowliving.org/post/profi.ru-hire-specialists

7- Hire a **tutor** twice a week, to help your kids with homework or some extra confidence in a certain topic.

8- **Pick a few topics** which you like your child to develop in and focus on that. You know your child best and this is the time to help your child to create more confidence, because at home it is a very comfortable environment, with your 1-on-1 attention and less social pressure. Don't worry too much that your kids will fall behind, because this 1-on-1 attention does a lot for them and you will see impressive growth.

9- Build in many **reading** moments, where they will read independently for minimum 30 minutes. Create a nice & cozy reading reading corner where they can relax and read. You can even make a nice "reading bingo" chart with funny reading assignments on it at have them finish each one in a week. See picture below (in Dutch).

10. Have them do **chores** and help you out in the house. We did vacuuming, mopping, cleaning their rooms, cooking, laundry, gardening, setting the breakfast table and more. The kids loved to get this responsibility and to participate and it will free up some of your time or annoyances.

11- **Stay connected** with your friends who are in the same situation. If you have kids in the same grade you can even rotate and take turns, so you share the burden a bit and create some free time. Especially if you work we can highly recommend this! But even if you don't rotate your kids, help each other out but being there for each other. You can schedule coffee dates and keep 1,5 meter distance or even just by phone.

12- **Reward** your kids effort with compliments, a star chart, a nice activity or even small gifts. This helps with the motivation in this period of huge change for kids.

13- **Don't be too harsh on yourself**, as it will take time before you will find a good routine. Accept that you will have mental breakdowns and yell at your kids. Don't feel bad about it as long as your good moments are more dominant ;) And allow yourself that glass of wine that you're craving for at the end of the day, you deserved it!

Check our complete blog to see some external resources that we got from our International School that might help your children in challenging situations: https://www.moscowliving.org/post/coronavirus-homeschooling-tips

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