

Back to School During COVID-19

Creating a Space for Learning at Home

The physical space where children learn is almost as important as what they learn. With a significant number of children participating in full or part-time remote learning for the upcoming school year, many parents are focused on creating a designated space for learning at home. Here are some things to consider as you establish a consistent learning environment with your child:

- ▶ Involve your children and make decisions about the space together. Ask their opinion on what they think will make their space the most productive. Consider seating and work surfaces, light, noise, distractions, access to digital technology, and proximity to help when needed.
- ▶ If you have multiple children who will be learning at home, work together to determine the most effective set up. Do they do well working closely together, or would it be beneficial to spread out?



These siblings like a variety of options for seating and work surfaces.



These sisters like to work in one room with space for concentration, yet close enough so they can help each other.

- ▶ For smaller spaces, develop strategies to help children identify their personal work areas. Each child could have a placemat or work tray, or use painter's tape to designate individual work spaces. Consider color coding supplies so that each child's individual materials are a specific color.
- ▶ When the learning space is located in a communal area such as the kitchen table, organize learning materials to allow for quick, organized transitions. For example, backpacks or baskets are efficient for packing things up when it's time for meals, etc.
- ▶ For older children who prefer to work in their bedroom versus a shared space, come up with an agreed upon schedule as a compromise, e.g., half days in their room, or three days in a shared space, and two days in their room, etc.
- ▶ Part of the fun of a new school year is getting a few new school supplies. Take inventory to determine what needs to be replenished and let your child choose the items. Spend time setting up and organizing the space together to make it functional and inviting. When children have ownership over their space, they will be more motivated to utilize and maintain it.