

Ten top tips for parents to survive lockdown home schooling

A collective sigh was heard through Melbourne when parents and caregivers were thrust into another lockdown, meaning students would not return to the classroom.

To help, OneSchool Global, recognised as a leader in online learning in the 2020 Zoom Innovation awards, has shared its ten top tips for Melbourne parents and caregivers juggling work and home schooling demands.

OneSchool Global's Victorian Regional Principal Simon Beaumont said that many parents in Melbourne are already struggling to balance their own work demands while also ensuring their children are focused on learning.

"Some parents eventually found their home schooling rhythm last lockdown, but online learning isn't as straight forward as most parents assumed," Mr Beaumont said.

"Online learning has been at the core of OneSchool Global's teaching for more than 10 years - but we recognise it's not always easy. However, when managed in the right way, it can be a really effective learning tool.

"Our Campuses are geographically spread and some are relatively small, so we use virtual classes to join our students and their peers from other Campuses with high quality teachers from across Victoria."

TEN TIPS FOR PARENTS & CAREGIVERS

1. Balancing the role of parent and "teacher"

"You were not trained to teach children, but we all have a natural inclination to be teachers. See your role as more of a learning coach. Your key role is to encourage, be interested, foster curiosity and know when they really need a break. There will be times where a short walk is the best thing for your child," Mr Beaumont said.

2. Set up learning areas

"Children do not cope well with sitting in one place for an entire day. Where possible, create different spaces for different types of learning – they don't need to be extravagant."

Main Learning Area - where children participate in online classes, work on problems, make notes or complete written tasks. The best option is the dinner table. If you have several children they can share this space, and headphones may assist in minimising disruption of siblings, and similarly peers in online classes.

Passive Learning Areas - lounge areas or outdoors. This will suit reading, thinking about ideas and solutions or reviewing notes they have made.

Allowing children to work on appropriate tasks in their rooms or another private space is also helpful. This will be important should you have more than one child.

3. Sleep

"Be willing to allow additional sleep time. Young people need 8-10 hours of sleep. The last hour of sleep is critical and aids memory retention. Be careful not to allow children to oversleep though," Mr Beaumont said.

4. Create a structure

"It is important to formalise the change in learning environment. A day planner is a good idea. Students can set goals each day, factor in any online class times and plan what they need to do on the planner. Break and mealtimes are critical. There are no hard and fast rules over how many breaks, but as their parent you are likely to know if they genuinely need a break or are avoiding work."

5. Support, but resist doing the work

"Be available to make suggestions and answer questions, but try to let your children do things themselves as much as possible. If you don't know the answer, work with your child to discover a solution," said Mr Beaumont.

"Let your child, where possible, self-regulate – that is to take control of their own learning and not rely on you. Be a motivator and monitor. Ask about assignments, quizzes, and tests. Give encouragement, check completed homework, and make yourself available for questions and concerns."

6. After school screen time

"Depending on how things pan out, your child may be looking at screens for longer than normal. If this is the case, minimise non-school related screen time after school hours. At very least, create some separation between the learning day, and the use of screens in relaxation time."

7. Reading is critical

"Encourage your child to read. Model reading, get your children books and discuss them. Biographies and auto-biographies of people who have endured challenges and overcome them may be very beneficial in these challenging times. Improved reading will help them in all learning areas."

8. Don't allow game addiction to flourish

"Computer games are highly addictive. Don't let children lapse into playing games to kill time. It is tempting but destructive. Reward them with 30 minutes if they already play games."

9. Physical activity

"Look for opportunities to incorporate physical activity into your child's day, as well as yours. Some fresh air and exercise will make minds more active and alert and can help reduce stress."

10. Revise the basics

"Many things have never changed. Children who know their times tables find maths easier. Secondary students often struggle with order of operations in maths. Same for spelling and grammar rules. You can make a huge difference by re-learning these and other key aspects of knowledge with your child."

While online teaching has been a new concept for many teachers through the COVID-19 pandemic, the majority of OneSchool Global teachers were already experienced with online learning platforms.

"Our digital aptitude meant we could confidently move all our learning online almost overnight in regions that went into lockdown. Our students lost very little learning time because the majority of our teachers were already very confident teaching online," Mr Beaumont said.

For more information about OneSchool Global, go to <https://www.oneschoolglobal.com/>.

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About OneSchool Global

OneSchool Global is one of the world's largest and most comprehensive, truly global schools. With over 9,500 students, 126 campuses and over 2,000 staff and volunteers operating across 20 countries, OneSchool's global education ecosystem provides an environment in which our staff and students thrive.

We develop learners who "learn how to learn". We facilitate this learning through a forward-looking and pioneering approach to education. While academic excellence has and always will be a priority, OneSchool challenges dated educational practices and processes with our Self-Directed Learning program. We place the focus on what and how students are learning, rather than merely on what is being taught.

OneSchool Global's 126 campuses span five regions; Australia, North America, New Zealand, United Kingdom, and Europe – and cities including New York, Paris, Sydney, Rome, Bridgetown (Barbados), Auckland, Melbourne, Copenhagen, Los Angeles and San Francisco.

Click here to watch a video of OneSchool Global teacher, Jess, explain how innovation and technology is used in schools.

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