

SUPPORTING CHILDREN FOR SUCCESS AS REMOTE LEARNERS



One of the biggest challenges for children in remote learning is staying organized and on task. The skills needed to do this are called executive functioning skills, which include the ability to focus, plan, and manage time. These are skills we use to complete everyday tasks. Developing executive functioning skills is typically built into the process of daily learning at school to help students manage tasks and complete their work. Here are some tips to help students do this at home.

Focusing and Staying on Task

- The Pomodoro Method supports someone to focus on one task at a time and to complete it in a timely manner. It is used widely in the professional world and is helpful for students working independently as well. Use a timer to set work times and break times. The official technique suggests completing four sets of 25 minute work periods with five minute breaks before taking a longer break. Adjust the time lengths and number of work periods as appropriate.
- Create a clean, clutter-free space used only for school work. If a separate space is not available, clear a space, only keeping the materials the student needs at that time.
- Use checklists to keep track of completed tasks.

Planning and Time Management

- Create a daily routine that is consistent.
- Place visuals of the daily schedule—written either with words or in pictures—in the student work space as a reminder of the plan for the day.
- Break down big tasks and projects into smaller sections or “chunks.” Create a timeline for completion of each chunk of the assignment.
- Record assignments and tasks in an agenda or calendar. Consider a color-coded agenda or calendar system. For example, indicate when to complete chunked tasks for a big assignment in blue and write the final due date for the entire project in green.
- Schedule reminder alerts on devices for due dates or when particular tasks should be completed.
- Evaluate and adjust the work plan as necessary.
- Create an at-home organizational system that works for the student, e.g. different colored folders for different subject areas.