

# Virtual School Tips

## For Parents

**Once school resumes, the school must make every effort to provide special education and related services as agreed in your child's IEP or 504 plan.**

**If your child has an IEP or 504 plan, be sure to:**

- Within the first two weeks of school, contact the IEP Case Manager or 504 coordination to discuss your child's IEP or 504 plan.
- If your child is 16 or older, discuss transition plan, which include post-high school goals.
- Request your child's schedule and especially teacher(s) contact information such as email or phone number
- Consider discussing/sharing the following information at the annual IEP to assist with educational planning:
  - Parent(s) work schedule
  - Sibling(s) school schedule- other responsibilities
  - Your needs at **no cost** for appropriate and applicable training or resources to support your child at home.
  - Creating a schedule with breaks.
  - Other family stressors (i.e. finances, childcare, health needs)
    - ❖ Schools may be able to help families connect with community resources, such as food banks, health centers, behavioral health supports, etc.
- When appropriate, communicate observations from last year's virtual learning. (This information will be helpful in adjusting plans as needed.) Examples include:
  - Child's reactions to activities (i.e. sitting at a computer, lack of socialization, completing assignments, need for breaks, etc.)
  - Child's favorite and least favorite home activities.
    - Some activities can be incorporated into learning activities
  - Changes in child's behaviors (clingy, poor sleep, temper-tantrums, crying, etc.).
  - Reactions to changes in environment (home, school, community, etc.).
  - The time of day that your child is most alert.
  - Ask for flexibility in tasks, such as reducing workload or extra time.
  - Ask for weekly to monthly check-ins if needed.
- ❖ Parents are encouraged to be patient with themselves, their children, and the school team. Have realistic expectations of yourself and of your child(ren). Practice self-care during this journey by taking small breaks, walking, coloring, listening to music, dancing, etc.

## **Helpful Resources**

**Great Schools.org- At-home Learning Resources:** Offers multiple family resources for families in both English and Spanish-[www.greatschools.org](http://www.greatschools.org).

**National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD): A Parent's Guide to Virtual Learning:** A guide specifically designed for families of children with disabilities- [www.nclld.org](http://www.nclld.org)

**Edutopia- Apps for Students with Special Needs:** Educators share tips for apps to support learning at home- [www.Edutopia.org](http://www.Edutopia.org).

**Surviving the COVID-19 Pandemic with Children:** A parents' guide for meeting the challenges of COVID-19- [www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org).

**Parent to Parent of Georgia:** Resources to a variety of services to Georgia families affected by disabilities or special healthcare needs- [www.p2pga.org](http://www.p2pga.org).

## **Suggestions**

Make the first day special at home by taking pictures and sharing/posting first day of virtual school, eating breakfast as a family or dressing up in school colors for the first day of virtual school

Contact school about laptop and your child's code for laptop before the first day of school

Do not stress and enjoy the moment

Make a special working place for schoolwork at home