

10 TIPS from Rethink to support your family right now

Many schools are closed, and we know providers are running on limited availability at this time. Rethink Benefits wanted to share with you some tips for navigating life while working at home and managing your child's temporary at-home schoolwork.

These supports were made available by Rethink's behavior experts, all Board Certified Behavior Analysts, who specialize in helping parents of children at all levels. Here are their tips:

- 1 Create predictability to your child's day** by arranging a general daily structure. Having a schedule or routine can help create family expectations, lessen stress, build independence and save everyone time
- 2 Use picture schedules or written checklists** to help your child know what activities will occur and when. Pairing a verbal instruction with a picture can better communicate the routine. For examples of daily schedules, check out a leisure activities schedule [here](#).
- 3 Integrate choice** and allow your child to make the schedule. Alternatively, pick the order of (a few) events to increase your child's sense of control and often helps reduce behavior challenges.
- 4 Maintain skills** by scheduling time for academics in the daily schedule. Download a visual schedule to help plan out academics and subjects for your child [here](#).
- 5 Provide structured breaks** in your child's daily schedule to give an outlet for energy or to recharge with relaxation routines.
- 6 Add in structured windows of free play.** One example is creating a visual choice board or checklist of available free play choices such as screens, electronics, games, toys, etc. **Pro tip:** String several preferred activities together to increase your child's independence in leisure activities and decrease the need for you to help them "find something to do."
- 7 Help your child stay on task by setting clear expectations** with a designated area for schoolwork and using visual supports such as a 'keep working' visual in the area. For more information on visual supports, click [here](#).
- 8 Maintain your regular nighttime and morning routines** to ensure consistency, whenever possible.
- 9 Take advantage of canceled school/extra-curriculars/events to teach new skills.** Examples include using an alarm clock, starting to shave, independent play. Set small, achievable goals.
- 10 Use positive reinforcement** to support the desirable behaviors you want to see at home. Download tips on positive reinforcement [here](#).

Taking care of yourself and accepting support can help you have more patience during this time.

Find out more at rethinkbenefits.com