



10 Guidelines for COJOWA's Parents

The transition to distance learning will be challenging for families. Parents will need to think differently about how to support their children; how to create structures and routines that allow their children to be successful; and how to monitor and support their children's learning. Some students will thrive with distance learning, while others may struggle. The ten guidelines provided below are intended to help parents think about their role in helping their children find success in a distance-learning environment.

1—Establish clear routines and expectations:

From the first day COJOWA implements its DLP, parents need to establish routines and expectations. COJOWA encourages parents to set regular hours for their children's school work. Parents should make every attempt to maintain normal bedtime routines for younger children and expect the same from your MS- and HS-aged students (don't let them stay up late and sleep until noon!). Your children should move regularly and take periodic breaks as they study. Parents should set these expectations for how their children will spend their days starting as soon as distance learning is implemented, not several days later after it becomes apparent a child is struggling with the absence of routines.

2—Define the physical space for your child's study:

Your child may have an established place for completing homework under normal circumstances, but this space may or may not be suitable for an extended period of time, as might be the case with DLP implementation. We encourage families to establish a space/location where their children will learn most of the time, ideally, a public/family space not in a child's bedroom. The setting should be quiet at all times and have a strong wireless internet signal, if possible. Above all, it should be a space where parents are present and supervising their children's learning.

3—Monitor communications from your children's teachers:

Teachers will communicate with parents through email as necessary (or through other channels like Classdojo, Google Classroom, etc). The frequency and detail of these communications will be informed by your children's ages, maturity level, and the degree of their ability to complete independent work. COJOWA generally encourages parents to contact their children's teachers; however, we ask you to remember that teachers will be communicating with dozens, if not hundreds of students/parents, so communications should be essential, brief, and self-aware. We also encourage parents to familiarize themselves with our schoolwide Learning Management System (LMS),



COJOWA

Distance Learning Plan



Google Classroom, that teachers will be using to instruct their students. Please review this [parent guide](#) to Google Classroom.

4—Begin and end each day with a check-in:

Parents are encouraged to start and finish each day with a simple check-in time with their child(ren). In the morning, ask about your child's learning plan today? What are their learning targets or goals? How will they spend their time? What resources do they require? What support do they need? This brief grounding conversation matters because it allows children to process the instructions they have received from their teachers. You can also help them organize themselves and set priorities. Older students may not want to have these check-ins with parents (that's normal!), but please make this check-in nevertheless. Parents should establish these check-ins as regular parts of each day. Remember that not all students thrive in a distance learning environment; some struggle attempting to manage too much independence or lack of structure. These check-in routines need to be established early, before a student falls behind or begins to struggle.

5—Take an active role in helping your children process and own their learning:

In the course of a regular school day at COJOWA, your son or daughter engages with other students and/or adults dozens if not hundreds of times. These social interactions and opportunities for mediation include turning to a peer to exchange a thought or idea, participating in small or large-group discussions, asking questions for clarification, collaborating on group projects, and countless other moments. While some of these social interactions will be re-created on virtual platforms, others will not. Students often learn best when they have opportunities to process their learning with others. Beyond the check-ins recommended at the start and end of each day, parents should regularly circle back and engage with their children about their daily learning. You should also make sure that your child does his/her own work; refrain from completing assignments for them, even if they are struggling. You should inform the teacher under these circumstances, so extra support can be provided.

6—Establish quiet times for work and reflection:

A major challenge for families with multiple children will be how to manage all of their children's needs, especially when those children are different ages and have uniquely individual needs. You may find times when siblings need to work in different rooms to avoid distractions. Parents might also consider experimenting with *mlr d, b` nbdllrf B gd` cognmlr* (no music necessary!) to block out distractions.



7—Encourage physical activity and/or exercise:

Make sure your children remember to move about the house and exercise. These steps are vitally important to their health and wellbeing as well as to their learning. COJOWA's physical education teachers will recommend activities or exercises, and parents should model and encourage exercise for everyone in the family!

8—Remain mindful of your child's stress or worry:

COJOWA will only implement this DLP if a serious crisis event or emergency has occurred. If this happens, the probability increases for the need of parents to help their children manage the worry, anxiety, and range of emotions they might experience under these circumstances. Although a difficult undertaking, parents should make every attempt not to transfer your own stresses or worries to your children. Students will most likely be impacted by the factors causing a distance-learning context, whether they admit it or not, and they need as much normal routine as parents can possibly provide.

9—Please exercise patience... we are learning together!

We ask that parents remember most teachers are neither highly trained nor experts in distance learning, and the process will require some trial-and-error before everyone finds the right balance between online and offline learning experiences. Building principals and teachers will periodically check in with you to assess what you are seeing at home and what we might need to adjust. Your feedback is critical during this time. We thank you in advance for your patience and partnership during the learning process.

10—Children remain socially interactive, but set rules around their social media use:

In the event that COJOWA implements this DLP, the initial excitement of on-campus school being closed will fade quickly when students start missing their friends, classmates, and teachers. Parents should help their children maintain contact with friends and see them in person when circumstances permit. While attempting to maintain this connection, you should also monitor your child's social media use, especially during an extended school closure. In general, older students will rely more on social media to communicate with friends. Social media apps such as SnapChat, Instagram, WhatsApp, or Facebook are not official school channels of communication. COJOWA recommends that parents monitor their children's use of social media – remind your children to be polite, respectful, and appropriate in their communications and to represent your family's values in their interactions with others.