

Ideas to Address Your Child's Needs During This Stressful Time

I. Spiritual Needs

- A. God is love and has a beautiful plan for your family during this time.
- B. Pray together as a family each day.
- C. Read the Bible together out loud each day.
- D. Create a prayer table or corner in a central place in your home.
- E. Choose a devotion to pray together: the Rosary, Divine Mercy Chaplet, Stations of the Cross, etc...
- F. If you are unable to make it to Sunday Mass, watch it on a device and make a spiritual communion.
- G. Our Dominican Sisters have many wonderful resources on prayer and virtue at www.goledigital.org
- H. There are many free online resources: Magnificat, Laudate, and Formed.
- I. In moments of stress, pray simple prayers
 1. Jesus, I trust in you.
 2. Come, Holy Spirit.
 3. Have mercy on us and on the whole world.

II. Emotional Needs

- A. Reassure your child that they are secure- you will provide for their basic needs: shelter, food, clothing, medical care and protection from harm.
- B. Predictable, consistent routines will bring peace and stability to your child.
- C. Children thrive in spaces that are beautiful and orderly. Even the littlest children can help clean up the clutter and tidy the messiness.
- D. Your child will experience disappointment when they miss out on activities they are looking forward to. Give them permission to express this disappointment in an appropriate way. This time is full of disappointments for all of us!
- E. Your child will miss their friends. Snail mail, phone calls, and video chats might be really important and helpful for them.
- F. Children can be overstimulated by technology. Be cautious with the amount of screen time.
- G. Your child might be experiencing more stress and anxiety. Explain that school is closed so that we can all stop sharing germs for a while and let the germs go away. Encourage your child to pray and also help them with calm music, laughter, play, exercise, and sleep.

III. Physical Needs

- A. Hygiene: teach them how to wash hands, cover coughs, and not touch eyes, nose, and mouth.
- B. Get outdoors every day and exercise.
- C. Maintain a consistent sleep schedule.
- D. Being hungry distracts from learning.
 1. Have your children help prepare healthy meals.
 2. Eat lunch at the same time as it would be at school.
 3. If you are in need of food, there are several resources and restaurants offering food in the area plus Hastings Family Services.
 4. School aged children can get meals from ISD 200. Click [here](#) for more details.

IV. Academic Needs

- A. Create a schedule with your children.
 1. Your children need to know the difference between spring break and an eLearning day.
 2. Checklists are a helpful visual that help to organize tasks.
 3. The mornings are the best work time, so media free mornings are highly recommended.
 4. Set apart Sunday as a day of rest. The Lord's Day and Solemnities should feel completely different!
- B. Practical Considerations
 1. Your child needs a place to work with their materials.
 2. They need to know where to find pencils, a pencil sharpener, erasers, dictionary, and math resources: ruler, coins, analog clock, counters, etc...
 3. If you do not have wifi or internet, see if you qualify for two months of free service.
 4. Designate one place to keep school books and materials. Books are often accidentally damaged at home by spills, pets, toddlers, etc... Please help your child find a safe place to store school items. Many of the books will need to be returned for the students to use next year.
 5. Timers (sand timers are wonderful) often help students concentrate on one task at a time.
 6. Creating a cubicle from cardboard, may help your child focus while working at a table with siblings.

7. Your child might not want to work in the same place all day. Perhaps morning study time is at the kitchen table, but midday reading is on the front step and afternoon study time is in the den.
8. Parents may need to proctor some tests at home. We trust that you will create a non-distracting testing environment where the student will work independently. As you supervise the test, do not provide verbal or nonverbal hints regarding the correct answer.
9. Please realize that these eLearning assignments maybe different than typical assignments in the school setting with a group of students. The teachers will do their best to pace assignments accordingly.

C. Multiage Learning

1. If you have multiple children at home, build in time for the older children to read aloud and help the younger ones.
2. If there are young children at home, set up invitations to play (playdoh station, rice tray with scoops, etc) to engage them while getting “real” schoolwork done with bigger kids. Pack a box of toys for toddlers that they can only touch while you are working with the big kids on schoolwork. Then it’s more exciting because the things are usually unavailable! Set up a blanket on the floor for them, their special space.

D. Additional learning your child can do at home.

1. Now might be the perfect time for your child to learn a new hobby: baking, indoor plant care, painting, candle making, knitting, crocheting, needlepoint, painting, drawing, memorizing poetry, jigsaw puzzles, learning a new language, dance, etc... YouTube has so many lessons!
2. Find a free typing tutorial and have your child learn finger positions to increase their typing speed.
3. Create time for musical instrument practice.
4. This will be a huge adjustment for your family and you have a fresh start each day.
5. When school resumes, the most important thing will be that the child’s hearts and minds have been growing in faith, reason, and virtue.
Thank you for helping to foster the learning in your home.