

# THE ULTIMATE PARENT GUIDE DURING SHELTER-IN-PLACE

--Ushma Sampat MS, OTR/L



## DO NOT EXPECT PERFECTION. KEEP REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

From yourself and your child. It is OK to not have the most productive day, or for the children to not get as many homeschooling hours as they “NEED”. It is okay for the lessons to not be as professional, the child to not be as focused. We are all working outside of our comfort zones. Parents are playing roles of multiple community members all at once and we get it! Let's remember that the lives of our children have also been disrupted in more ways than one- changes in routine, lack of outdoor play time, limited/no social interactions with peers, and all the anxiety that arises from not fully understanding what is going on! Your patience, time, attention and love in everyday life activities is enough. Consider everything else a bonus!

## TRY TO STICK TO A ROUTINE. MAKE SCHEDULE & LISTS

A schedule for yourself and the children will help keep everyone in sync and on the same page. Reduce frustration and set realistic expectations of achievable activities. Setting a new routine and schedule can be hard in the beginning but will pay multifold with time.



Children will learn when the parents are available and when not. Alternating duties with a partner can be super helpful if you have younger kids that need more attention. Keep digital or handwritten lists for everything! Free up mental space, the lesser you have on your mind the more grounded you'll feel during uncertain times like these that are anxiety provoking!

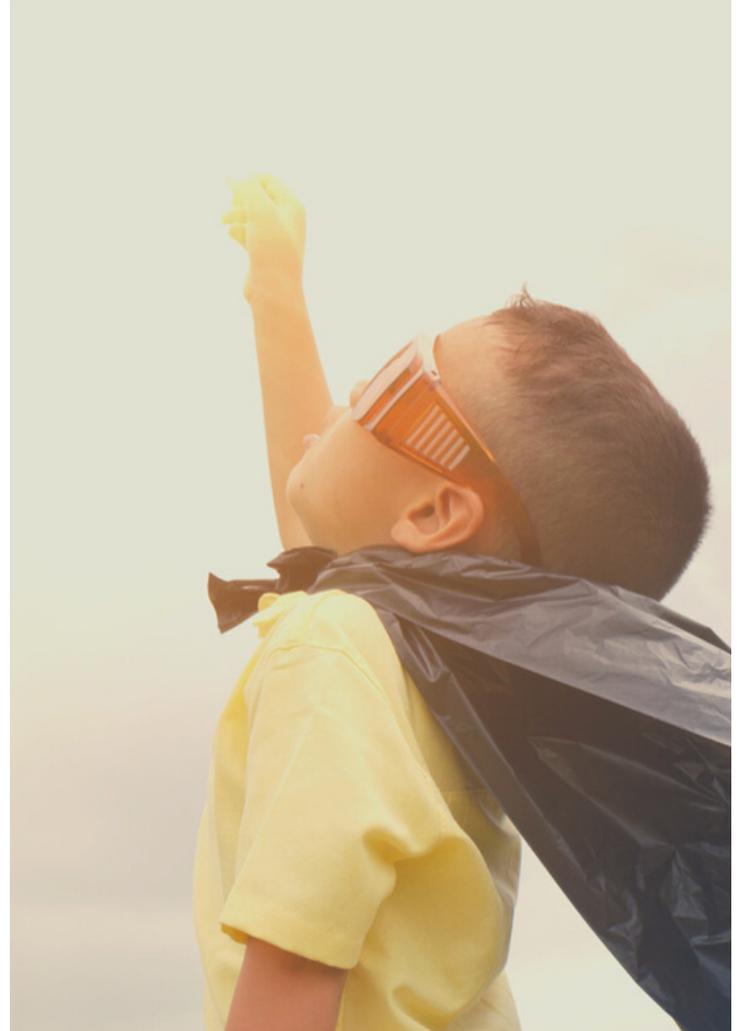


## SUPPORTING ONLINE LEARNING FOR KIDS

Firstly, don't expect homeschooling to be the same as regular school, it's not! Yes, it is true that kids are at school on average for 6 hours, but their learning experiences are a combination of academic as well as non-academic- SO important to remember that! Average time for academic tasks in a given day should range from ½-1hr for Pre-k to 3-4hrs for High school children. Don't aim for 6 hours of academics at home! Make kids part of the process in planning their schedule to gain more buy in from them. Be sure to include opportunities for non-academic learning experiences throughout the day. Transition or break times can include a snack, movement/games/sports, reading a book, online socializing with a peer and so much more! Use timers to help kids with better follow through. Have a written schedule for the day. Use color coding as necessary to help with planning and organizing their learning process and assignments. Make a "to-do" visual list for younger kids and a written list for older kids to better support them. Happy to set up a [consultation call](#) to brainstorm specifics about your child and provide recommendations to support their learning!

## PURPOSEFUL SCREEN TIME AND FACILITATING INDEPENDENT “PLAY”

It's definitely okay for kids to engage in a little more than usual screen time. It will give you time to finish up your work and also keep them socially connected- try to arrange virtual playdates for kids with their friends. Depending on the child's age- challenge school aged children to come up with several ways of playing with one item per day (eg. blocks, balloons, spoon, etc). For younger children, demonstrate a couple of ways to engage in play using household items eg. spoons and lemon to hold in mouth and walk, passing the lemon from spoon in the left hand to the right hand or passing it to and from a play partner, playing drums on different sized pots and pans. Heavy work/ high intensity activities offer brain breaks for children and promote regulation and focus. Sensory pathway is a great way to engage the child's body and mind. Get 5 Free “Play with me” ideas and videos [here!](#) Lastly, regardless of age, there is something that each one of our children can assist with at home! My son, all of 2 years, loves emptying the dishwasher and vacuuming the house. Delegate! It will not only lead a helping hand for you but also teach our children important life skills, and give them a sense of accomplishment.



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