



Learning Knows No Bounds

Re-Imagining Current Learning Spaces for Children with Special Needs

by Dr. Loretta Burns



Understanding *Distance Learning*

As clinicians and educators, **WE** must help parents grasp and understand virtual learning

- Parents will need to get **some** Special Education training as you're now a learning coach
- You are your child's number one advocate and know your child better than anyone
- You understand their needs better than any clinician or educator
- Let this be your primary tool for success.



Clinicians

How to Best *Support* Your Student

- Consider adding additional supports in all related service areas
- Allow additional time for the student to warm up to the therapist (increase session length)
- Reduce distractions (headphones for noise)
- Provide visual schedule or other visual aides
- Ensure use of positive behavior interventions that is easily implemented also by parent/family
- Provide frequent breaks
- Train students on Assistive Technology



Transition To *Virtual* *Sessions*

- **Gather & Review** Data to determine what each student requires in the home
- How can you get the student to attend sessions regularly?
- How can you closely monitor progress on goals?
- What is the expected duration of participation for fidelity?
- Does the student exhibit maladaptive behaviors during session?
- Collect data for at minimum 6 weeks



Schools – *Virtual* IEP Meetings

- Schools, you should be holding virtual IEPs with your students and families during this time
- Review progress on goals
- Discuss data taken during virtual sessions
- Review new accommodations/supports:
 - Frequent breaks
 - Fidget spinners
 - Highlighting words on screen during instruction



Creating an *Inclusive* Virtual Classroom

01	02	03	04	05	06
CREATE A WELCOMING VIRTUAL SPACE	DEVELOP A REWARD SYSTEM	MAINTAIN HIGH EXPECTATIONS	REACH OUT TO AND SUPPORT FAMILIES	OFFER SCAFFOLDS THROUGHOUT THE LESSON	USE ENGAGEMENT TECHNIQUES
<p>Start class with a greeting</p> <p>Pose a question</p> <p>Set an agenda</p>	<p>Develop goals</p> <p>Rewards can include positive emails to parents, certificates, or a virtual dance party.</p>	<p>Create a procedure for each virtual feature of your classroom</p> <p>Communicate your expectations before starting the lesson every day</p> <p>Remember that you control the virtual learning space</p>	<p>Reach out to families at least once a week</p> <p>Always reach out from a place of support</p>	<p>Offer sentence starters</p> <p>Provide extra video examples</p> <p>Record yourself reading</p> <p>Offer exemplar answers</p>	<p>Prompt students to respond</p> <p>Call on students</p> <p>Share your screen to highlight exemplary answers</p> <p>Allow students to share their screen</p>



Making *Distance Learning* Successful –

Strategies for *transition*

- Parents, set a **Distance Learning Routine** for you and your **student**
- Children on the autism spectrum [benefit from routine](#) and **structure**. This helps make the day **predictable**, and it can be calming. Some ideas to implement your routine:
 - **Set a time** to start school work every day and stick to it, just like you would in a regular school setting
 - Do **different subjects** in the **same order** each day
 - Set the **same amount of time** for each subject
 - Establish **breaks** that occur at **predictable** intervals and **times**
 - **End** the Distance Learning at the **same time each day**
 - **Post** a printed **schedule** near the work space for distance learning



Making *Distance Learning* Successful –

Strategies for *transition*

- Establish a **distraction-free Learning Spot**
 - Choose a **small room** with a **desk space** or a **small corner** with desk space for your child to engage in learning.
 - Set up a **place** for **parental supervision**
 - **Don't allow:** music, toys, devices or other distractions
 - Give your child **headphones** to help **focus on the instruction**
 - Have all **necessary materials** at hand to **avoid interruptions**
 - Manage Sensory and behaviour needs by planning ahead during sessions, e.g breaks, massage, exercise, tactile items, etc.
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Making *Distance Learning* Successful –

Strategies for *transition*

Create a Visual Schedule for Distance Learning

A challenging activity for students with autism involves ‘Transitioning’.

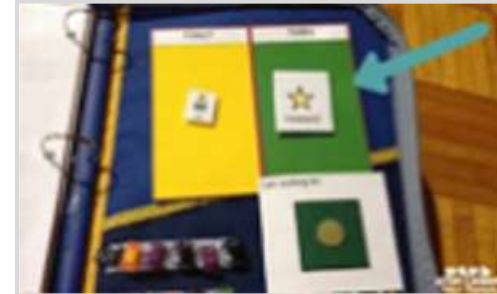
Using visual schedules can help pair an activity with an image. In a glance, this allows the student to see what is going to happen next. In doing so, he or she can prepare and know what to expect. Keep a timer or clock nearby so your child can anticipate how long before they get a break or the task ends. This priming tool can help reduce anxiety, and some behaviours related to ‘staying on task’.

visual schedules include:

- **Take a picture** of the learning **environment** and put that next to the time school is starting, along with all accompanying sessions for the day.
- Use a **screenshot** of any **apps** or **programs** your child uses next to the name of the associated program



Visual Daily Schedules



TO DO	FINISHED

Daily Schedule	
1	7
2	8
3	9
4	10
5	11
6	12

- Lunch
- Art
- Mystery Reader
- Arrival



Contact Details

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