

SUPPORTING DISTANCE LEARNING AT HOME

Tips for caregivers of K-5 students, from the Stanford Project on Adaptation and Resilience in Kids (**SPARK**)

1 LEARNING SPACE

- Find a space in your home that can be used every day for distance learning.
- If the space is shared, create a cardboard or cloth separation to minimize noise and distractions.
- Offer your child the chance to decorate this space to feel welcoming (draw a sign, bring a favorite pillow, etc.).
- Make sure the space includes essential learning materials. Ask teachers for help.

3 PREDICTABLE ROUTINE

- Start early when your child is rested.
- Review the daily schedule and make sure your child understands it (e.g., first you will..., then you can ...).
- Help your child build independence (e.g., learn to prepare their own snack, troubleshoot computer problems).
- Let your child know when and how they can ask for help.
- Keep regular sleep times.

5 MANAGING FRUSTRATIONS

- Use simple calming strategies: counting to 10, taking deep breaths, a short break.
- Help your child describe the problem and express their feelings (I feel ..., when ...).
- Together, come up with a potential solution and connect it to previously set expectations.
- Explain how the child's behavior is linked to consequences. Set gentle and firm limits.
- Assume that everyone is trying their best. Be kind to yourself. Be patient with others.
- Ask teachers and others for help.

2 DAILY SCHEDULE

- Understand what teachers expect from your child. Email, call, or text to clarify.
- Write a simple list of activities that your child needs to complete each day.
- Include breaks for snacks, physical activity, wiggles or stretches, and free choice time. Younger children will need more breaks.
- Encourage your child to decorate the schedule and post it in their space.
- Revise to fit your family's needs. Be flexible.

4 GOALS & PROGRESS

- Together with your child, set behavioral expectations and review them daily.
- Set goals and timelines that your child can complete. It's about progress, not perfection.
- Teach your child to use a timer to stay focused for a period of time. Start small!
- Mark daily progress (even not-so-good days) with stickers, pennies, pebbles, etc.
- Use your child's favorite activities as rewards for showing effort and progress.

6 CLOSENESS & CONNECTION

- Start each day with a brief joyful experience: a fun greeting, song, dance.
- Create opportunities for your child to be helpful (e.g., household chores, cooking prep, read to siblings).
- Each day, try to connect with your child without any distractions. Highlight positive experiences. If you have time, do an activity together that the child selects.
- Create opportunities for your child to share their worries, and provide reassurance.