Unpacking a Parent’s Role in Hybrid Learning: Teacher, Taskmaster or Guide?

Write in Chat: What are the joys or challenges your family has faced due to COVID?
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Convened by:

Community Foundation of Jackson Hole
Inspire. Invest. Enrich.
Teacher, Taskmaster or Guide?

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Roadmap

Adolescent Brain Development
- Executive Function

Our Children as Learners
- Expectations, Motivation, Ownership

Stress Management
Brain Development & Executive Function
Why is my adolescent child...

- More difficult to manage than when s/he was little?
- Repeatedly making dangerous choices?
- Fighting about everything?
- So dramatic and negative?
- Spending more time playing video games, social media, watching Netflix, instead of doing what s/he is supposed to be doing?
Does the adolescent brain work differently than the adult brain?
“The Adolescent Brain” by Dr. Dan Siegel
PRE FRONTAL CORTEX = LOGICAL

DECISION MAKING   PLANNING   SELF-REFLECTION   EMPATHY
MORALITY         SELF UNDERSTANDING      EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING

FIGHT-
FLIGHT-
FREEZE

IMPULSIVE          REACTIVE
BASIC BODILY FUNCTIONS

LIMBIC SYSTEM/BRAIN STEM = EMOTION DRIVEN
EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING

01 Impulse Control
Think before acting

02 Emotional Control
Keep feelings in check

03 Flexible Thinking
Adjust behavior to unexpected changes

04 Working Memory
Keep key information in mind and use it

05 Self-Monitoring
Self-awareness to how one is doing in the moment

06 Planning and Prioritizing
To set and meet goals

07 Task Initiation
Take action to get started on tasks

08 Organization
Keep track of things physically and mentally

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How does the adolescent brain differ?

Adolescents are more likely to:

- act on impulse
- misread or misinterpret social cues and emotions
- get into accidents of all kinds
- get involved in fights
- engage in dangerous or risky behavior

Adolescents are less likely to:

- think before they act
- pause to consider the consequences of their actions
- change their dangerous or inappropriate behaviors
How to build a healthy brain

Your child’s unique brain + Environment = Healthy Adolescent
What can you do?

- Encourage empathy
- Emphasize immediate and long-term consequences of actions.
- Try to match your language level to the level of your child's understanding.

- Help your child develop decision-making skills
- Let your child take some healthy risks
- Talk through decisions
- Use family routines

- Help your child find new creative and expressive outlets
- Provide boundaries

- Praise your child
- Be a positive role model
- Stay Connected
- Talk with your child about their developing brain

Help your child get healthy food, exercise, and lots of sleep!
Our Children as Learners
Our Children as Learners

Who do you want your children to be as learners? (In terms of qualities or characteristics)

Write 3 words in Chat.
What our kids need: The 4 C’s

Positive relationships: **Connect**
Independence / Power: **Capable**
Significance / “I matter”: **Count**
Belief in one’s abilities: **Courage**
Our Children as Learners

Expectations
Motivation
Ownership
Expectations: The Triad

Teacher

Parent

Student
What are the high school’s expectations?

- For most students, expect 90 minutes of assigned virtual school work for each 90 minute class (4 classes for most students).

- 4 x 90 minutes = 6 hours of school work on virtual days

- The most successful students often choose to mirror face-to-face day on virtual days.

Sample schedule (visually posted in study space):

  8:55-10:30am - Biology virtual work (when class is typically held)

  10:35-12:05pm - English 9 virtual work (when class is typically held)

  12:40-2:10pm - Algebra virtual work (when class is typically held)

  2:15-3:45pm - Spanish 2 virtual work (when class is typically held)
The ART of Expectations

Are the expectations...

A - Aligned?
R - Reasonable?
T - Transparent?
Our Children as Learners

Expectations
Motivation
Ownership
Think of the last time you were completely motivated to do something. Why was that activity motivating?

Write a few words in Chat.
Motivation

Life is short. Do stuff that matters

Photo by Manasvita S on Unsplash
What Drives Motivation?

Value

People learn best when they find the content, outcomes, processes and relationships associated with the task important and relevant.
What Drives Motivation?

People learn best when they believe in their ability to grow and achieve mastery of what they are learning.
What Drives Motivation?

**Sense of Control**

People learn best when they perceive that they have meaningful and appropriate agency over their learning.
What Drives Motivation?

People learn best when they are in constructive emotional states.
What Drives Motivation?

- Value
- Self-efficacy
- Sense of Control
- Constructive Emotions
Our Children as Learners

Expectations
Motivation
Ownership
Ownership

How do we help our kids become independent learners?
Jessie has been spending most of their at-home school days in their room on their phone or watching TV. They sleep late and seem tired most of the day. They have school assignments but don’t work on them effectively. When I get home from work I ask them about their assignments and tell them they have to get to work. They often end up getting frustrated or angry with me and sometimes we end up in a fight. They seem unmotivated and distant. I’m concerned.

6 Steps

- Observe
- Notice
- Ask
- Validate
- Solve
- Believe
Ownership

Moods
Activities
Energy level

Observ
e
Ownership

Invite a conversation
“I’ve been noticing lately…”
Start casually.
Ownership

Dive in by asking questions so they can understand themselves.

“In an ideal world...?”

Go slow.

Ask
Ownership

Narrate your observations.
Show your understanding.
“This is a hard time.”
Ownership

Solve the problem (what works for them?)
Self-driven
Boundaries within the system
Privileges & responsibilities
Ownership

Believe in your kids!
Encourage
Focus on the positive
Be available
Ownership

Encourage your kids -- Believe in them!
Go slow -- This is a new game
Allow for failure -- Don’t save
Take a back seat -- So your child can be the driver!
Our Children as Learners

- Expectations
- Motivation
- Ownership
Stress Management
The Science of Stress

**Sympathetic Nervous System:**
ready to react, high alert, high arousal

**Parasympathetic Nervous System:**
relaxed, comfortable, intentional, optimal functioning

Think about a time when your child sent your parasympathetic nervous system into sympathetic overdrive. What were the triggers? What happened to tee the scenario up?
Healthy parasympathetic response

A Parasympathetically Dominant Nervous System

Panicked
Overwhelmed
Stressed Out
Performance
Active
Calm
Asleep

Occasionally gets stressed
But is able to return to calm quickly

Spends majority of time alternating between active and calm
Unhealthy sympathetic response

A Sympathetically Dominant Nervous System

- Panicked
- Overwhelmed
- Stressed Out
- Performance
- Active
- Calm
- Asleep

7 am 12 pm 10 pm

Spends much of the day in fight/flight/freeze

Alternates between being overwhelmed and exhausted

Responds to triggers with a heightened “Danger” reaction

Leads to cycles of Anxiety and Depression

Finds it difficult to calm down after a stressful event
Put on your oxygen mask before helping others

- Self-care is essential
- Doesn’t have to be solitary
- Give generous latitude
- Support each other
- Teenagers feel feelings more intensely than adults.
Proactive stress management

Exercise
Yoga
Mindful breathing
Time outdoors
Control what you can control

Sleep
Healthy eating
Routines
Exercise
Family time
Developing a Self-Care Plan

- Physical
  - Sleep or Rest
  - Eat well
  - Exercise

- Psychological
  - Time for reflection
  - Hobbies
  - Boundaries
  - Talking with supportive people

- Spiritual
  - Prayer
  - Meditation
  - Ritual
  - Nature

- Emotional
  - Cry
  - Laugh
  - Healthy anger outlets

What's one self-care activity you will do for yourself tomorrow that you didn't do today?

Comment in Chat.
Improve communication

Positive communication

- Respectful, open, honest, kind
- “5:1 Ratio”
- Notice and reinforce effort
- Behavioral momentum
- Growth Mindset! (focus on the process, not the result)
- Consistency and frequency

Triggers

- Identify and reduce
- Choices that lead to empowerment and validation
What percentage of your conversations about school with your teen are positive?

What percentage of your conversations about school with your teen are negative or neutral?

If you were a teen, which method would you prefer?

- Positive interactions to fill a student’s “bucket” to feel whole.
From students about what’s working:

- I work in the same place!
- I use my agenda. My mom signs it each day.
- I check my grades on Canvas to know what is missing. My mom checks every day.
- My parents call me at certain times to see what I’ve gotten done.
- I work at night, so I can play in the day!

Develop a consistent at-home and homework routine.
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Study Space & Routine
5 strategies for establishing an effective study space and routine.

1. Schedule a daily study time
   - Pick a time when you are at mental peak.
   - Add a recurring study time to your calendar.
   - Break learning into 20-30 minute chunks.
   - Take 2-5 min screen time and brain breaks.

2. Designate a study space
   - Select a space where you can focus.
   - Choose a space with good lighting.
   - Set up furniture and tech to avoid fatigue.
   - Organize your materials.
   - Alert your family when you are studying.

3. Eliminate distractions
   - Keep study space organized.
   - Control distractions and avoid multitasking.
     - Silence phone
     - Close and mute social media tabs
     - Avoid listening to music with lyrics

4. Develop good study habits
   - Review planner for upcoming deadlines.
   - Create & maintain task lists.
   - Prioritize assignments.
   - Avoid procrastination.
   - Read directions carefully; use 3R4T strategy.

5. Recharge for the next day
   - Recharge device(s) for school.
   - Recharge yourself.
     - Exercise
     - Eat healthy
     - Sleep

See also: Effectively Manage Your Time
Thank you and Q&A

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