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:
Teacher, Taskmaster or Guide?
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   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 will using 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

How do I support my child?

Without nagging & micromanaging?

The power struggles are bad for our relationship!

Support without saving

Get on the same team

Allow our kids to take responsibility in all aspects of their own lives
Our Children as Learners

Who do you want your children to be as learners? (qualities / 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 middle school’s expectations?

- For most students, expect 60 minutes of assigned virtual school work for each “core” class + 30 minutes of assigned work for each “encore” class (most students have 2 core classes and 2 encore classes). We also expect 30 minutes of daily independent reading.

- \[ ((2 \times 60) + (2 \times 30) + 30) \div 60 = 3.5 \text{ hours of school work on virtual days} \{I \text{ hate New Math!}\} \]

- The most successful students often choose to mirror face-to-face day on virtual days. Sample schedule (visually posted in study space):

  - 9:00-9:30am Orchestra
  - 9:30-9:45am Break
  - 9:45-10:45am Math (take 5 minute break in here to allow for refocus)
  - 10:45-11:00am Break
  - 11:00-12:00pm History (take 5 minute break in here to allow for refocus)
  - 12:00-12:30pm Reading in the Content Area
Check-in Survey about Hybrid Schedule

What gets in the way of getting your AT-HOME work completed?

1. Wifi and internet connection
2. I can’t get motivated.
3. The work is too hard or too confusing.
4. I can’t find my work.
5. My family has other plans.
6. I’m confused about how to use Canvas.
7. I have to help my siblings.
8. I can’t get organized.
9. I’m sucked into my video games!
10. I have two dogs.
The ART of Expectations

Are the expectations...

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

Expectations
Motivation
Ownership

MAKE IT HAPPEN
Think of a time when you’ve had to do something that you really didn't want to do.

What were your feelings?

Think about how your kids might feel.
What behaviors are you seeing because of this?
Think of the last time you were completely motivated to do something. Why was that activity motivating?

Write a few words in Chat.
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.

Self-efficacy
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?
Ownership

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
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.
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

7 am 12 pm 10 pm

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
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- Active
- Calm
- Asleep

7 am 12 pm 10 pm

- Responds to triggers with a heightened “Danger” reaction
- Finds it difficult to calm down after a stressful event
- Alternates between being overwhelmed and exhausted
- Spends much of the day in fight/flight/freeze
- Leads to cycles of Anxiety and Depression
Put on your oxygen mask before helping others

- Self-care is essential
- Doesn’t have to be solitary
- Give generous latitude
- Support each other
Proactive stress management

Exercise
Yoga
Mindful breathing
Time outdoors

Sleep
Healthy eating
Routines
Family time
Improve communication

Positive communication
- Respectful, open, honest, kind
- PACE
  - Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy
- “5:1 Ratio”
- Provide Choices
- Growth Mindset! (focus on the process, not the result)
- Listen, Validate, and Identify Emotions

Triggers
- Identify and reduce
Develop a consistent at-home and homework routine.

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!
Thank you and Q&A

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