



EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

EDUCOV PARENTS TRAINING PROGRAM



© 2023. This work is licensed under a [CC BY-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license.

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union





Welcome
TO EDUCOV
PARENTS TRAINING PROGRAM

WEBSITE:
[HTTPS://EDUCOV.EDUKOPRO.COM/](https://educov.edukopro.com/)

SOCIAL MEDIA:
[HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM](https://www.facebook.com)

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union





Contents

01

INTRODUCTION

02

CHAPTER 01
DIGITAL SKILLS

03

CHAPTER 02
PEDAGOGICAL SKILLS PART 1

04

CHAPTER 03
PEDAGOGICAL SKILLS PART 2

05

CHAPTER 04
TIME MANAGEMENT

06

CHAPTER 05
STRESS MANAGEMENT

07

CHAPTER 06
COMMUNICATION

08

PARTNER AUTHORS





INTRODUCTION

These days, we're overlapped with so many messages about how to parent "the right way." It's easy to take advice from the media, relatives, and other parents. It is easy to be confused and to start worrying if we're doing the right things towards kids. At the same time nobody teaches you how to be a parent. The world is rolling faster and faster. Our life roles are switching quicker and stronger. A question arises.

"What am I responsible for as a parent?"

Obviously, parents play a central role in their children's life. They are the pillars of support, guidance, and love. Family is where life begins and love never ends. No matter how old a child gets there's nothing more comforting and soothing than their parent's arms and words.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

The role of parents in education involves more than just getting kids safely to and from school /bus stops. Different researches show that “the most accurate predictors of student achievement in school are not family income or social status, but the extent to which the family becomes involved in the child’s education at school.” It’s undeniable that parents who are active supporters of their children’s learning are giving their kids the best opportunity for educational success.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of parental support, as parents have had to join the front-line teaching and learning process. Parents’ lack of education and ability to provide support for homework may crucially affect child learning outcomes, especially during school closures.

The EduCOV project is an attempt to fill in the gap between parents' drawbacks and childrens’ needs. EduCOV parents training program is developed to support parents in Covid times. With this training, we aim to promote parents' positive involvement in their children's education, and help parents who may be struggling when it comes to distance learning.

Parenting is one of the hardest tasks we’ll ever face, yet it’s one of the most rewarding callings in life. The tips and tricks provided below could be of support for achieving this mission.





01

CHAPTER ONE

DIGITAL SKILLS

DEVELOPER: JUMPIN HUB, PORTUGAL

GLOSSARY OF USED TERMS

Digital Skills: the ability to find, evaluate, use, share, and create content using digital devices, such as computers and smartphones.

IT: Information Technology (I.T.)

Online Education: a method of education whereby students learn in an entirely virtual environment. Online learning refers to internet-based learning.

Distance Learning: a method of study where teachers and students do not meet in a classroom but use the Internet, email, mail, etc

Hybrid education: an educational model in which students spend at least half of their time learning online and the rest of their time learning in physical classrooms

Google Classroom: a free blended learning platform developed by Google for educational institutions that aim to simplify creating, distributing, and grading assignments.



INTRODUCTION & THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Digital skills involve the critical and secure use of information technology for work, leisure, and communication.

They encompass skills, knowledge, attitudes, and strategies for using digital media and information and communication technology.

Digital skills involve the ability to use computers to find, evaluate, store, produce, present and exchange information and to communicate and participate in collaboration networks through the internet.”

(European Parliament and the Council, 2006).

Digital skills are considered to be one of the eight Key Skills that are required for Lifelong Learning.

To be digitally competent, it is necessary to develop a series of knowledge and skills organised within five broad areas:

- Information, alphabetical listing of information, and data processing: identifying, locating, recovering, storing, organising, and analysing digital information and assessing its relevance and purpose.
- Communication and collaboration: communicating in digital environments, sharing resources online, connecting and collaborating with other people using digital tools, interacting and





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

participating in communities and networks, and intercultural awareness.

- Creation of digital content: creating and editing new content (texts, images, videos, etc.), integrating knowledge and reworking previous content, creating artistic works, multimedia content, and IT programming, knowing how to apply the relevant rights
- Safety: personal protection, protection of data and digital identity, security, safe and sustainable use
- Problem-solving: identifying needs and digital resources, making decisions to select the best digital tools according to the situation or purpose, resolving conceptual and technical problems through digital means, creative use of technology, updating one's skills and those of others

How critical are Digital Skills in the learning process during COVID?

Although the discussion on the importance of using digital technologies in education is not recent, mainly because its importance in developing soft skills and preparing students for the current needs of society is already widely recognised, the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the importance of digital education. This issue has been enhanced by the total closure of schools which, according to UNESCO (n.d.), will affect, by April 2020, more than 90% of the world's student population by.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

During this period, digital technologies were the substitute for something until then considered irreplaceable: face-to-face education. Due to the closure of schools, computers and smartphones replaced the classroom.

The use of videoconferencing platforms has grown significantly, resulting in global experimentation with education technologies on an unprecedented scale. The current context has accelerated a tendency to use eLearning that we have already seen in recent years.

The main advantages driving the adoption of eLearning in education are:

- Versatility and flexibility because students can customise the learning pattern to meet all learning needs;
- Improve knowledge retention;
- A higher degree of coverage of all subjects;
- Access to the content whenever one wants, for an unlimited number of times;
- Free access to alternative sources of information through forums, tutorials, or online libraries.



What are the most common difficulties parents face regarding Digital Skills?

During Covid, digital skills assumed extreme importance for the learning process. With so many children staying at home having online classes, they can use digital tools and platforms to keep them connected with their classmates and teachers and continue their learning. Parents must have good digital skills to support their children's online learning. This way, they can help their children with any problems they may encounter and guide them using digital tools.

Parents who are not confident in their digital skills may find it challenging to help their children with schoolwork. They may also feel overwhelmed by the amount of technology their children are using. It can be scary for parents to see their children spend hours online, so they often try to limit the amount of time their children spend in front of a screen. However, digital tools and resources can be beneficial for supporting learning at home. For example, digital badges can make it easy for parents and teachers to keep track of what their children are learning in school, and digital tools such as digital planners can help parents stay organised.



Moreover, the most common difficulties that parents face when it comes to digital skills are:

- How to use the internet
- How to use a computer
- How to use other digital devices (cameras, microphones, tablets)
- How to use digital tools and apps (Zoom, Teams, Skype)
- How to protect their children online
- How to control the time their children spend in front of the screen



How can better Digital Skills for parents help their children in an online school?

The unprecedented pandemic forced the whole educational system to adapt quickly to new demands and needs. Due to school closures worldwide, digital technologies had to step forward and substitute the face-2-face education we always took for granted. Video Conferencing platforms assumed great importance as the best tool for online education, allowing to "recreate" classroom environments in a digital world.

Therefore, adopting new elearning methodologies and strategies demanded that teachers, students, and parents be versatile and flexible to keep up with the regular education programs during the pandemic.

Having this in mind, digital literacy in education is more than ever necessary, not only from teachers' and students' points of view as direct users but also from parents, as they are the prominent supporters of their children's elearning process.

As digital technologies are not about skills to be learned or tasks to be completed, digital literacies are necessary for parents to support their children through online learning. With digital tools and platforms, s





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

tudents can stay connected with their classmates and teachers and continue learning independently at home. Digital literacy skills are critical because digital technology has become integral to children's lives.

Parents who are not confident in their digital skills may find it challenging to help their children with schoolwork. The digital skills parents need to help their children with online learning depend on digital tools. Students can use different digital platforms for various purposes, but many require the same digital tools and skills. For example, parents who use video conferencing with their children (i.e., Zoom) may want to use digital resources which are helpful for learning. This means that parents should know how digital tools can support learning effectively and how digital tools differ from other digital skills.

There are many ways in which better digital skills of parents can help their children in an online school. Some of these ways are:

- Parents can help their children research for their projects by using the internet and search engines.
- Parents can help their children edit and create digital content using Microsoft Word, Powerpoint, Publisher, or even online platforms like Google Docs.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

- Parents can help their children create digital content using digital tools to edit videos and photos.
- Parents can help their children research digital projects by creating digital scrapbooks, collages, or digital books with online resources.
- Parents can help their children share digital content online safely.

Nonetheless, parents who are not yet confident in their digital skills should seek ways to learn them online. Digital platforms may help! The digital world is full of digital training courses which parents can use to improve their digital skills. There are also digital platforms that collect digital resources for different purposes, such as digital planning or digital badges. For example, the Council of Europe provides a New Digital Parenting Guide, an online guide that parents can use to discover useful digital tools and resources and tips for using digital tools and digital skills.

In addition, to foster and concretely support positive digital parenting approaches, the Council of Europe has published a new guidance tool on “Parenting in the digital age” containing “positive parenting strategies for different scenarios.” On the same platform, you can find a Digital Literacy Handbook, which provides valuable information and knowledge on digital literacy for parents while focusing on a balanced approach supporting children’s equal opportunities in accessing digital technologies and their protection from harm.



How can parents control their children's time in front of the screen and monitor online activity?

Children should not spend too much time in front of digital screens. Parents can find digital platforms that help them control digital activities. These digital platforms tell parents how much time a child spends online, and they can set limits for how much time a child is online. Parents can monitor their children's digital activities and see what they do online.

There are several ways parents can use digital platforms to monitor and control how much time their children spend on digital devices. For example, digital platforms like the “FamiSafe” App is a good tool that allows parents to monitor and control all digital activity of their children online - they can set time limits for digital activities but also check each digital activity of their children (i.e., how much time per day is spent online)

Parents can also monitor and control their children's digital activity offline when using digital platforms. Parents can view what content their child views or shares on social media.



Suppose parents want to control the digital activity of their children entirely. In that case, they can view digital content their children save on digital devices like computers or smartphones (such as photos, files, videos, and apps). If parents lose the digital device, they can also remotely access digital content saved online.



Summary

To maximise digital skills at home, we would recommend following these three tips:

1. Find digital resources for kids if parents want to introduce digital technology to their children. For example, the Futurelab website has a great digital planners section, which parents can use to introduce digital tools to their kids.
2. Always be informed of what digital resources are available for free so that you can download them, and children won't have access to online shops. For example, the BBC website has a section where parents can learn about digital safety by watching videos about cyberbullying and digital slang.
3. Keep children involved in digital activities by playing games together, such as Minecraft. This way, parents can get to know what their children are looking for online and manage their time on the computer or tablet.

Here is a list of educational applications, platforms, and resources to help parents, teachers, schools, and school administrators facilitate student learning and provide social care and interaction during school closure periods. Most of the solutions curated are free, and many cater to multiple languages.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

Resources to provide psychosocial support

- [InterAgency Standing Committee guidelines](#) to protect and improve people's mental health and psychosocial well-being in the midst of an emergency
- [WHO mental health and psychosocial guidance during the COVID-19 outbreak](#)
- UNICEF guidance on [how teachers should talk to children about COVID-19](#)
- UNICEF guidance on [how parents and caregivers can talk children about COVID-19](#)

Digital learning management systems

- [CenturyTech](#) – Personal learning pathways with micro-lessons to address gaps in knowledge, challenge students and promote long-term memory retention.
- [ClassDojo](#) – Connects teachers with students and parents to build classroom communities.
- [Edmodo](#) – Tools and resources to manage classrooms and engage students remotely, offering a variety of languages.
- [Edraak](#) – Arabic language online education with resources for school learners and teachers.



- [EkStep](#) – Open learning platform with learning resources to support literacy and numeracy.
- [Google Classroom](#) – Helps classes connect remotely, communicate and stay organised.
- [Moodle](#) – Community-driven and globally-supported open learning platform.
- [Nafham](#) – Arabic language online learning platform hosting educational video lessons that correspond with Egyptian and Syrian curricula.
- [Paper Airplanes](#) – Matches individuals with personal tutors for 12-16 week sessions conducted via video conferencing platforms, available in English and Turkish.
- [Schoology](#) – Tools to support instruction, learning, grading, collaboration and assessment.
- [Seesaw](#) – Enables the creation of collaborative and sharable digital learning portfolios and learning resources.
- [Skooler](#) – Tools to turn Microsoft Office software into an education platform.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

Collaboration platforms that support live-video communication

- Dingtalk – Communication platform that supports video conferencing, task and calendar management, attendance tracking and instant messaging.
- Lark – Collaboration suite of interconnected tools, including chat, calendar, creation and cloud storage, in Japanese, Korean, Italian and English
- Hangouts Meet – Video calls integrated with other Google's G-Suite tools.
- Teams – Chat, meet, call and collaboration features integrated with Microsoft Office software.
- Skype – Video and audio calls with talk, chat and collaboration features.
- WeChat Work – Messaging, content sharing and video/audio-conferencing tool with the possibility of including max. 300 participants, available in English and Chinese.
- WhatsApp – Video and audio calls, messaging and content sharing mobile application.
- Zoom – Cloud platform for video and audio conferencing, collaboration, chat and webinars.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

Mobile reading applications

- [African Storybook](#) - Open access to picture storybooks in 189 African languages.
- [Biblioteca Digital del Instituto Latinoamericano de la Comunicación Educativa](#) – Offers free access to the Spanish language works and book collections for students and teaching staff in schools and universities
- [Global Digital Library](#) – Digital storybooks and other reading materials easily accessible from mobile phones or computers. Available in 43 languages.
- [Interactive Learning Program](#) – Mobile app in Arabic to advance reading, writing and numeracy skills created by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency.
- [Reads](#) – Digital stories with illustrations in multiple languages.
- [Room to Read](#) – Resources to develop the literacy skills of children and youth with specialised content to support girls.
- [StoryWeaver](#) – Digital repository of multilingual stories for children.
- [Worldreader](#) – Digital books and stories accessible from mobile devices and functionality to support reading instruction. Available in 52 languages.





Self-directed learning content

- [ABRA](#) - Selection of 33 game-like activities in [English](#) and French to promote early readers' reading comprehension and writing skills; [French](#) to promote reading comprehension and writing skills.
- [British Council](#) – English language learning resources, including games, reading, writing and listening exercises.
- [Byju's](#) – Learning application with large repositories of educational content tailored for different grades and learning levels.
- [Code It](#) – Helps children learn fundamental programming concepts through online courses, live webinars and other kid-friendly material. Available in English and German.
- [Code.org](#) – A wide range of coding resources categorised by subject for K12 students offered for free by a non-profit.
- [Code Week](#) – List of online resources to teach and learn computer coding, available in all EU languages.
- [Discovery Education](#) – Free educational resources and lessons about viruses and outbreaks for different grade levels.
- [Duolingo](#) – Application to support language learning. Supports numerous base and target languages.
- [Edraak](#) - A variety of resources for K-12 education in Arabic, targeting students, parents and teachers.
- [Facebook Get Digital](#) - Lesson plans, conversation starters, activities, videos and other resources for students to stay connected
- [Feed the Monster](#) – Android application in multiple languages to help teach children the fundamentals of reading, available in 48 languages.



- [Geekie](#) – Portuguese language web-based platform that provides personalised educational content using adaptive learning technology.
- [Khan Academy](#) – Free online lessons and practice in math, sciences and humanities and free tools for parents and teachers to track student progress. Available in 40+ languages and aligned to the national curriculum for over ten countries.
- [KitKit School](#) - Tablet-based learning suite with a comprehensive curriculum spanning early childhood through primary levels.
- [LabXchange](#) – Curated and user-created digital learning content delivered online that enables educational and research experiences.
- [Mindspark](#) – Adaptive online tutoring system that helps students practice and learn mathematics.
- [Music Crab](#) – Mobile application accessible for music education.
- [OneCourse](#) – Child-focused application to deliver reading, writing and numeracy education.
- [Profuturo](#) – Resources in different subject areas for English, Spanish, French and Portuguese students.
- [Polyup](#) – Learning content to build math and gain computational thinking skills for primary and early secondary school students.
- [Quizlet](#) – Learning flashcards and games to support learning in multiple subjects, available in 15 languages.
- [SDG Academy Library](#) - A searchable library of more than 1,200 educational videos on sustainable development and related topics.
- [Smart History](#) – Art history site with resources created by historians and academic contributors.
- [YouTube](#) – Huge repository of educational videos and learning channels.

Monitoring platforms for online activities and time in front of the screen

- [FamiSafe](#) (iOS / Android)
- [Family Time](#) (iOS / Android)
- [Kaspersky Safe Kids](#) (Windows / Mac / iOS / Android)
- [Screen Time](#) (iOS / Android))
- [Mspy](#) (Windows / Mac / iOS / Android)
- [mLite Parental Control](#) (iOS / Android)
- [Norton Family Parental Control](#) (Windows / Mac OS / iOS / Android)
- [Qustodio's Parental Control](#) (Windows / Mac OS / Android / iOS / Kindle / Nook)



CHAPTER TWO

02

PEDAGOGICAL SKILLS PART 1

DEVELOPER: BALTICUM UNIVERSITY, POLAND



GLOSSARY OF USED TERMS

Active listening: the listening can be called “active” when we focus on the person we are listening to, on their words, emotions, body language. It also means we are able to repeat the information we were given and understand links between every part of the story and between the speaker’s words and emotions.

Asking questions: the basic and simple way to show our interest and to assure others that we listen to them. The question can be very simple, i.e.: “What happened then?” or very detailed, concerning a particular part of the conversation.

Didactic and methodical competences: knowledge about the teaching process, teaching techniques and methodology of educational process.

Educational triangle: three members of the pedagogical process: the pupil, the parent and the teacher. Each of them impact on the pedagogical process and the other two parts of the triangle. Every time we talk about education, we also talk about the relationship between: pupil and parent; pupil and teacher; parent and teacher.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

I-message: shows our feelings, uses the word “I” (so I talk about myself, my feelings), shows emotions, our needs and expectations. I-message concerns the particular situation, shows what happened and how we react. It avoids labels (“lazy”, “stupid”, “irresponsible”) and avoids dividing the world into only good and only bad.

Strengthening: showing the speaker our interest by our behaviour, i.e.: body position (sitting closer, nodding), words (questions, verbal encouragement like “I see”, “Oh!”, “Really? Tell me more”) and eye contact.

Paraphrasing: saying something with our own words, repeating things said by someone again but in our own way. Paraphrasing allows us to show other people what we have actually heard. It is sometimes used with a question, i.e.: “Do I understand correctly that you said you decided / you thought / you wanted...?”. Paraphrasing is a very good tool which helps us understand each other better and prevents misunderstandings.

Pedagogical skills: knowledge and ability which are necessary in teachers’ and parents’ work with children, divided into three levels: substantive competences; didactic and methodical competences; raising competence.



Raising competence: knowledge and skills necessary for bringing up someone, teaching them values, life rules and understanding emotions.

Substantive competencies: knowledge and skills of the particular school subject or the scientific field.

You-message: the way of speaking which generalises incidents and divides everything into two parts: only good (mine) and only bad (yours). You-message uses general descriptions like: “you always / you never”, “everyone / no one”, “always / never” and shows particular situations as general situations (i.e.: you forgot your homework today – you always forgot your homework, you are lazy, you are irresponsible).





INTRODUCTION & THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In surveys, the pedagogical skills are defined quite differently depending on the researcher and the methodology. Still, we can indicate the three categories that are common for every kind of definition. Pedagogical skills are divided into substantive competencies, didactic and methodical competencies, and, finally, raising competence. The “raising competence” could be called educational competence – which is even more correct – but the term “educational” refers to teaching someone – and teaching is a part of didactic and methodical competencies. That is why, at least for the needs of this text, we will stay with the term “raising competence.” These levels are connected, and each impacts the other two; however, each of them can exist on its own, without the rest. Moreover, we can observe these competencies separately in other people’s behaviour and work. Some of us know some field; some of us can explain the ideas, terms, show the proper way of doing or using something; others can inspire others to impact someone’s behaviour, choices, decisions, and way of thinking. What distinguishes the teacher from other people with one or two of these competencies is the fact that the teacher is the one who combines all of the competencies into the one capability – the capability we call here “the pedagogical skills.” Parents are not supposed to dispose of the pedagogical skills understood as the complete combination of substantive, didactic-methodical, and raising competencies instead of





the teachers. To be more precise, we should say that parents should realise these competencies with a different emphasis. The first component – substantive competencies – is mainly assigned to the teachers who are the experts of the particular school subject or the scientific field. The fact that parents are not the specialists of some school subjects is the less important factor that impacts parental activities. The second component – didactic-methodical competencies – is also the ability of the teacher. However, there are some areas where the parents can help their children (pupils) and accompany the teachers during the educational process. Notwithstanding, the most crucial component is the last one: raising competence. It is the factor that parents are primarily responsible for. Parents raise their children from the first day of children's life; parents always are the people present in the kids' world; finally, parents are the first and most vital role models for children and decide on the way of bringing up children. Teachers, who also have the raising competence and are responsible for raising pupils, appear in children's life later and, in the end, have less opportunity to influence them. Let's look at the parents' pedagogical skills in this way. We can realise the problems parents need the most support with and the most important issues that parents struggle with because of online education during the pandemic. We need to focus on developing some of the parents' didactic-methodical competencies connected with the IT skills and how to support their raising competence, especially by the tips concerning psychology, motivation, dealing with stress, and time management.



How to organise learning conditions for a child?

Many months of the pandemic affect everybody's life. Many families have children at home who have not seen the inside of the school for some time. Those who learn at school may change it any minute. The considerable role of parents in making their children familiar with the still new reality is evident, and the parents' exhaustion is an understatement. Coping with multiple roles without a break causes a feeling of hopelessness along with pessimism and irritability. Distant school is a challenge, so we suggest some ways to make this time a bit easier.

The learning outcomes are influenced by the conditions under which we learn:

- Before your child begins lessons, make sure that there are no distractors;
 - Turn the radio, TV off and close the door to the room
 - The less distracting things, the better
 - Make the place of studying as quiet as possible
- Organise a study corner for your child with your desk and chair adapted to the kid's height





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

- Only the things needed for learning should be on the desk with all the textbooks
- Lighting is essential;
 - for right-handed children, the light should fall on the left
 - for left-handed children, the light should fall on the right
 - However, daylight is the best
- Temperature;
 - It cannot be too cold or too warm, so remember to let some fresh air from time to time
 - The temperature around 20 - 21 degrees Celsius is OK
- Make sure your child does one thing at a time;
 - First f.e. English, then Maths, etc.
- Establish a plan with your child;
 - Decide together when it is time to play and when for learning
- Help if your child needs it because it is not good to feel left with the problem;
 - Sometimes it is better to let them face the problem and solve it
 - But do not do homework for them



How to motivate a child to learn systematically at home?

The parents' attitude helps to create a positive atmosphere for learning and school. The more support, the better the learning atmosphere. Also, agree on how you will supervise the child's work. You can have a look at the notes, ask for explanations, and ask some questions.

Decide together on the way to help when the child doesn't know or understand something.

Make notice efforts and praise even small home learning activities. However, be careful with the praise. Instead of simple praise, it is advisable to replace it with a positive "I" message, which is a clear message that shows how the child's behaviour affects you

Here are some examples of "I" messages:

- "I like your homework done so well, I do appreciate it"
- "I can see how much effort you put into writing better and better, congratulations"
- "I am impressed with your grade in maths. I'm proud of you"
- "I am happy that you have already done your project"
 - This type of messages speaks about you and does not judge the child. They are authentic if they are positive and honest.



- Again – encourage your child to work independently because coping with tasks on your own builds self-esteem
- Do not use morals, f.e. “Remember, you learn for yourself,” or compare your child with classmates, friends, or siblings
- Do not always take the point of view of the teacher or tutor - “If you studied harder, you would get better grades, you need more effort,”
- With older students, the best is to understand their problems and talk about the duties in a calm conversation. It is essential for them to realise that they are learning for themselves and to see the use of their knowledge in the future

And please, remember:

The way you talk to your children is very, very important. Understanding that achievement, competence, and self-respect come from the person's internal motivation is crucial and incontestable.



How not to lose your patience with distant learning.

While being a multitasking parent, it is not easy to lose your patience - no matter how much you want to be and do your very best.

The reasons why a parent is impatient may be various:

- The parents are tired
- A child doesn't understand their parents who cannot explain well,
- Parents do not know the asked topic, and it is difficult to answer more questions
- Parents may want to finish quickly and be free while the child needs more time to think and understand the topic
- Sometimes parents have too high expectations

Here are some tips to be remembered while coping with a considerable stressor as a parent being in a situation of distant learning.

1. As in any other difficult time in our lives, it's crucial to let yourselves start fresh every single day

Children may have a worse day. A brother or a sister is annoying. Still, it may be an excellent opportunity to learn how to overcome some conflicts and cope with different feelings and days. And despite their



help at home, support another member of the family. It may help to discover new things and grow differently. This unique situation may give a profound lesson of surviving and managing new circumstances.

2. Do not hesitate to look for some support

Millions of parents are facing the same situation with school, homework, and many more everyday issues. If you feel overwhelmed by juggling all the chores -what about meeting with other parents, someone you rely on, or just having a good laugh together? Talk to people in the same situation, compare your problems, exchange fears, and support each other. Such support may be beneficial to our mental and physical health.

3. Have your values with you

When you feel burnt out by the constant helping or the technology, try to look further and think about the purpose of all your efforts. Consider the values you want to convey to your child, what kind of parent you want to be, and how you want to look back at these harsh times one day. It may always happen that you have a feeling like it's all wrong. But when you see a larger purpose of your parenting during this time, your children waiting for your guidance, it may remind you of what is essential.



4. Empathy

When we all are in difficult times, it is not easy to empathise with others as we feel we do not have enough. But empathy can improve our patience significantly while being frustrated by online learning. Compassion for the teachers who also have to manage their situation at home, empathy for your child with the screen instead of being with friends, and empathy for the administrators who have to organize chaos and uncertainty.

5. Use a sense of humor whenever you can

Humor is essential in our physical and mental well-being so do not feel guilty for those moments when you feel like laughing and having some relaxation. Humour can lower your blood pressure and help the whole body feel better. What is more, if you laugh together, you strengthen the bond between you and your kids.

6. You don't have to be perfect

Nobody is perfect! You try, you do your very best, but you do not have to be the best. Admit that you may be wrong, you may not know the answer, or- you may be tired and need some silence and rest. Your kids will learn to accept and support as well. You will survive together. If





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

you do not have enough patience while studying together – take a short break. During this break, calm down – for example, count to ten, take a few deep breaths or jumps, or drink some water. You know why you are helping your child. After the break, help your child learn differently. Treat helping your children as an excellent opportunity to spend time together, strengthen your bonds, and refresh the school knowledge. Never be afraid to admit that you do not know, are not sure, or don't remember, and you have to check sth out. When you are honest, your child will try to learn on their own.

What is concentration of attention

One of the necessary conditions for practical study and work is the ability to concentrate attention, which is the ability to focus attention on a specific thought, event, object, issue, situation, or stimulus and keep it in time. This ability develops in human life, and everyone can learn to control their attention by regularly performing appropriate concentration exercises. Nowadays, more and more children have trouble paying attention as they tend to be constantly distracted. They do several things at the same time without completing previous activities.

A child who has a problem with concentration gets tired very quickly, complains of malaise, headache, lack of strength. Other symptoms may be forgetting the command heard not long ago or difficulties in being in the task situation. We can talk about a child's attention disorders when concentration is inadequate concerning age.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

What affects concentration

- Our excessive haste
 - In the multitasking style of life, it is difficult to slow down and stop for just one task
- No time for authentic relaxation and reset
- Lack of adequate breaks between the cycles of concentration and attention
- Distractors
 - All that draw attention away from the child supposed to concentrate
 - It can be any noise, like TV or music
- Diet
 - We should take care of proper nutrition and amount of water
- Breaks
 - Even a few minutes break can help get back to the task more easily
- Sleep
 - We achieve better effects when refreshed and well-rested



How to help children to concentrate

- Organise the place and time
 - Remove distractors - leave only the items needed to perform one specific task on the desk, reduce noise, remove entertainment
- Set one task at a time
- Set regular breaks with some physical exercises eg. learnt by child on PE lessons
- Appreciate the partial stages of work, endurance and effort.
- Do not say to your child "concentrate", because it only causes frustration
- So not blame the child for the lack of concentration
- Be a good listener and supporter
- Do exercises which will help your child to learn how to concentrate attention.

During these exercises remember to change the type of activity (drawing, writing, moving, listening etc) to engage all the senses- sight, movement, touch, hearing. And finally- make sure that attention concentration exercises accompany the child's natural everyday activities.



Sample exercises, games and activities to improve concentration and memory

A) Solving:

1. Crosswords
2. Labyrinths/mazes
3. Comparing illustrations
4. Connecting points
5. Puzzles

a. Creating a picture from several elements is a challenge. Still, even little ones can cope with this task - choose the right illustration difficulty and start with a few elements, gradually increasing their number (better traditional version, not with mobile).

B) Paper-pencil games:

1. Battleship,
2. Tic-tac-toe,
3. Country-City game
4. Deleting in the text, e.g., specific letters, words with a certain number of letters, or containing a given letter; for older children: crossing out words that are particular parts of speech, crossing out words from "f," "ch," etc.





5. Drawing with both hands. After selecting and printing the sheet, place the drawing in front of the child. The child draws simultaneously with both hands to follow the mirror image principle. The arrows shown in the pictures help start drawing.
6. Colouring with the use of more and more popular zentangle technique

C) Board games

1. Checkers
2. Chess
3. Man, Don't Get Angry
4. Memory
5. "No match" cards -the task is to find an item without a pair. To increase the difficulty of the exercise, you can set a timer - the time to find the missing item is 30 seconds. The worksheet helps to focus and practice observation.
6. Cards "What is the difference between the two pictures?" - The task is to find the difference between two very similar pictures. You can limit the time to, e.g., 10 seconds. The task helps to focus attention and practice perceptiveness.
7. "A fly. Concentrate!" - We play it using a 3x3 square with a fly in the middle. The task is to react when the fly goes outside the square. Speak slowly, always starting with: "The fly is in the middle." Later you decide, f.e." The fly goes up. The fly goes to the left. The fly





goes down, the fly goes down, the fly goes right, the fly goes down. The child says when the fly is out. (IT IS OUT!) Later, cover the square, increase the pace of instructions, and use more squares. You may change the roles.

D) Other

1. The “parrot” - the adult and the child repeat the sentence, gradually expanding it by adding in turns new words. They may be a series of colours, numbers, animal names, or words on the drawn letter. The words may be repeated backward, starting with short rows consisting of 2 or 3 items.
2. “The lamp, the nose, the floor” - the parent says the words and points to the lamp, nose, floor; the child imitates, then the parent says a word and shows another item- the child tries not to make a mistake and shows what is displayed.
3. Playing the rhythm - repeating a specific sound using hands or feet, as well as particular instruments is a task that requires concentration, and at the same time, it is an attractive game for young children; in the version for older children, we present sounds, e.g., with blocks: 1 clap - yellow block, one stomp - 1 red block, the child listens to the rhythm and presents it with blocks.
4. “The printer” - the parent “draws” numbers, figures, or letters on the child’s back, and the child names or draws it on a piece of paper.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

5. Performing maths operations in memory, counting games from one hundred back, e.g. every 6 ($100 - 6 = 94$, $94 - 6 = \dots$ etc.).
6. Listening to fairy tales, audiobooks or text read aloud by a parent while following the text, then narrating the content or making a plan of events, or just reacting to a chosen earlier word. Children can also be asked questions, more and more detailed.
7. Recalling activities from the whole day for the child: lying in bed before going to bed tries to remember carefully “what…….” answering questions such as” what did you do today between 3:30 pm and 4:00 pm?”
8. Visualisation – this concentration exercise involves creating simple images in mind for a short time. It is worth starting with simple everyday objects, keeping this image in mind for a longer time, and then extending this time. Visualisation stimulates the work of both hemispheres. This training can be done anywhere.
9. Writing summaries may be writing summaries or writing in the form of a diagram - e.g., a mind map of seen fairy tales, watched movies, reading books.



Summary

Pedagogical skills are divided into substantive competencies, didactic and methodical competencies, and, finally, raising competence. There are several times when parents may assist their children (pupils) and attend to the teachers during the educational process.

- Make sure there are no distractions before your kid starts lessons.
- Organise a study corner for your child in your workstation with a chair and desk that are appropriate for the youngster's height
- Only the materials required for learning should be on the desk, along with all of the textbooks.
- Make sure your child does one activity at a time.
- Establish a plan with your child
- Help if your child needs it because it is not good to feel left with the problem

Children must be able to concentrate in order to learn effectively. Diet, breaks, and the way they do tasks all have an impact on attention, which is critical for kids to succeed.



Organise the area and time before beginning. One activity at a time is best. Set regular rest intervals with some physical activities such as those learned in PE classes. Appreciate the small stages of work, hardship, and endeavour. Do not tell your child to "concentrate", because it only causes frustration. So do not blame the child for the lack of concentration. Be a good listener and supporter. Do exercises that will help your child to learn how to concentrate attention.

During these activities, change the sort of activity (drawing, writing, moving, listening, etc) to stimulate all five senses—sight, movement, touch, and hearing. Finally, make sure that attention concentration activities are integrated into the child's everyday routines.



CHAPTER THREE

03

PEDAGOGICAL SKILLS

PART 2

DEVELOPER: GOLBASI DIRECTORATE, TURKEY



GLOSSARY OF USED TERMS

Teaching method: Teachers use principles and methods to enable students to learn.

Learning styles: Learning styles are the different ways that people learn. Some people learn best by listening, some by reading, and some by doing. Everyone learns in their own way, and it is essential to know your learning style to study in the best way for you.

Self-confidence: Self-confidence is an attitude about your skills and abilities. It means you accept and trust yourself and have a sense of control.

Self-efficacy: Important Topic. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their capacity to execute behaviours necessary to produce specific performance attainments (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1997). Self-efficacy reflects confidence in the ability to control one's motivation, behaviour, and social environment.

Responsibility means you do what you are supposed to do and accept the results of your actions. A responsibility: something you are expected to do. Being responsible: doing the things you are supposed to do. Accepting responsibility: taking the praise or the blame for something you have done.



Teaching Methodologies

A teaching method comprises teachers' principles and techniques to enable student learning. These strategies are determined partly by the subject matter to be taught and partly by the nature of the learner.

For a particular teaching method to be appropriate and efficient, it has to be concerning the characteristic of the learner and the learning it is supposed to bring about. Suggestions are there to design and select teaching methods that must consider the subject matter's nature and how students learn.

In today's school, the trend is that it encourages creativity. It is a known fact that human advancement comes through reasoning. This reasoning and original thought enhance creativity.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

List of Teaching Methods

1. Teacher-Centered

Often thought of as one of the most traditional teaching methods, the teacher-centred methodology, attention is concentrated on the teacher. Teachers are in charge of the classroom and direct all activities. Typically, in this approach, children are seated at individual desks that face the teacher. While group work may take place, most classroom time is spent with the teacher explaining concepts and assigning individual work.

2. Flipped classroom

Broadly, the flipped classroom label describes the teaching structure with students watching pre-recorded lessons at home and completing in-class assignments instead of hearing lectures in class and doing homework at home. Teachers who implement the flipped classroom model often film their instructional videos, but many also use pre-made videos from online sources.

3. Kinesthetic Learning

Sometimes known as "tactile learning" or "hands-on learning," kinesthetic learning is based on the idea of multiple intelligences' External link, requiring students to do, make, or create. In a kinesthetic





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

learning environment, students perform physical activities rather than listen to lectures or watch demonstrations. Hands-on experiences, drawing, role-play, building, and the use of drama and sports are all examples of kinesthetic classroom activities.

4. Student-Centered Methods of Instruction

Differentiated Instruction

Differentiated instruction is the teaching practice of tailoring instruction to meet individual student needs. Teachers can determine in several ways: how students access content, the types of activities students do to master a concept, what the end product of learning looks like, and how the classroom is set up. Some examples of differentiation include: having students read books at their reading levels, offering different spelling lists to students, or meeting in small groups to reteach topics.

Inquiry-based Learning

Based on student investigation and hands-on projects, inquiry-based learning is a teaching method that casts a teacher as a supportive figure who provides guidance and support for students throughout their learning process rather than a sole authority figure.

Teachers encourage students to ask questions and consider what they want to know about the world around them. Students then research their questions, find information and sources that explain key concepts,



and solve problems they may encounter. Findings might be presented as self-made videos, websites, or formal presentations of research results.

List of Teaching Methods

Expeditionary Learning

Expeditionary Learning is a form of project-based learning in which students go on expeditions and engage in an in-depth study of topics that impact their schools and communities.

The learning in this model includes multiple content areas so that students can see how problem-solving can happen in the real world-- ideally, their worlds. For example, a student in a big city might study pollution statistics, read information about its effects, and travel to sites in their city that the problem has impacted. When they understand the circumstances, students and teachers work to find a solution they can actively implement.

Project-Based Learning

As the name suggests, in project-based learning, students complete projects. However, these are big, meaty projects where students acquire knowledge, research, think critically, evaluate, analyse, make decisions, collaborate, and more. Also, an essential tenant of the project is that students have a choice.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

Typically, projects are created in response to open-ended questions such as “How can our school be greener?” or “How was our city planned in the past, and how could it be planned in the future?” Another essential part of the projects is that they relate to real-world problems. The projects shouldn’t be just a project for school but have an impact, too. For example, students might make a radio show for the whole school to hear. Or, they might write a letter to the town council and attend a meeting to express their opinions.

Technology-wise, G Suite (Google Docs, Sheets, and Drive) and internet access can aid student research, presentation, and implementation of projects. But the hands-on work and getting out into the community are the cornerstone of this methodology.

Personalised Learning

Personalised Learning External link is such a new educational model that its definition is still evolving. At the heart of models' hearts, have students follow personal plans specific to their interests and skills. Student self-direction and choice in the curriculum are hallmarks of Personalised Learning.

Game-based Learning

Game-based learning comes from the desire to engage students in more active learning in the External classroom link. Because they





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

require students to be problem solvers and use soft skills they will need as adults; games are a great way to encourage a “mastery” mindset rather than focusing on grades.

In a game-based learning environment, students work on quests to accomplish a specific goal (learning objective) by choosing actions and experimenting. As students make specific progress or achievements, they can earn badges and experience points, just like they would in their favourite video games.

What are the different learning styles?

Parenting is one of the most challenging tasks we’ll ever face, yet it’s one of the most rewarding callings in life. Parents can help their children by understanding learning styles and identifying which ones apply to their kids.

Every child has different learning preferences. Some prefer to learn by seeing or hearing, others by doing, some by reading, and others by asking questions. One thing all students have in common is that they all learn best when they incorporate items and topics that interest them into their studies.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

While your child may fit more than one learning style, you may notice patterns in their learning preferences. For example, a visual learner may also be a very social and verbal learner who prefers to learn tough topics using their primary communication skills.

Understanding how your child learns is one of the best ways to gain the most from their homeschool experience and choose the best curriculum for your family.

One of the most accepted understandings of learning styles is that student learning styles fall into three categories: Visual Learners, Auditory Learners and Kinesthetic Learners.

These learning styles are found within educational theorist Neil Fleming's VARK model of Student Learning. VARK is an acronym for the four learning styles: Visual, Auditory, Reading/Writing Preference, and Kinesthetic. (The VARK model is also referred to as the VAK model, eliminating Reading/Writing as a category of preferential learning.)

The VARK model acknowledges that students have different approaches to processing information, referred to as "preferred learning modes." The main ideas of VARK have been outlined in Learning Styles Again: VARKing up the right tree! (Fleming & Baume, 2006)



Visual

Visual learners prefer using images, maps, and graphic organisers to access and understand new information.

Auditory

Auditory learners best understand new content through listening and speaking in lectures and group discussions. Aural learners use repetition as a study technique and benefit from mnemonic devices.

Read & Write

Students with a strong reading/writing preference learn best through words. These students may present themselves as copious note-takers or avid readers and can translate abstract concepts into words and essays.

Kinesthetic

Kinesthetic learners are individuals who prefer to learn by doing. They enjoy a hands-on experience. They are usually more in touch with reality and more connected to it, which is why they require using tactile experience to understand something better.

Presenting new information to a kinesthetic learner is through personal experience, practice, examples, or simulations. For instance, they can remember an experiment by recreating it themselves.



EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

Determining your child's learning style may sound intimidating, but you don't have to be highly scientific about the process. The first step is to start being aware of your child's strengths. Use the following guidelines to help determine your child's unique learning style — and then build on these strengths as you support your child's education at home and in school. Keep in mind that these styles are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Yes, we can learn to accommodate kids' unique learning styles, but we should avoid trying to label or categorise them neatly. Every human being is complex, and you may discover that your child has a mix of some — or all — of these different styles.

Auditory Learners

- I need to hear myself say it to remember it.
- I often need to talk through a problem to solve and memorise
- I memorise best by repeating the information aloud or to myself over and over.
- I remember best when the information fits into a rhythmic or musical pattern.
- I would rather listen to a recording of a book than sit and read it.



Visual Learners

- I often need to see an illustration of a concept before fully understanding it.
- I am drawn to colourful, visually stimulating objects.
- I almost always prefer books that include pictures or illustrations with the text.
- It may look like I'm daydreaming when I'm simply trying to get a mental picture of what's being said.
- I usually remember better when I can see the person talking.
- Kinesthetic Learners
- I have difficulty sitting still for more than a few minutes at a time.
- I usually learn best by physically participating in a task.
- I almost always have some part of my body in motion.
- I often prefer to read books or hear stories full of action — or stories read in a dramatic fashion.



How to develop children's learning skills?

1. Let children pick their books to read, help them read, and create activities for them that make reading fun.

2. It's important to guide children through the learning process, but it's just as essential to allow children to control their own learning experience. An excellent way to do this is to provide children with options.

3. Encourage open and sincere communication

Please encourage your child or student to express their opinion about what's going on with his education. Create an open atmosphere where he feels comfortable expressing his likes, dislikes, or concerns. Validate his feelings when he shares his opinion – even if you disagree. Good learners know their opinion matters and feel reassured that they can be open about their educational experience without being judged, put down, discouraged, or ignored.

4. Focus on your child's interests

If you want to help your child become a good learner, encourage him to explore topics and subjects that fascinate him.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

5. Introduce and encourage different types of learning styles

Every child has learning preferences and styles best suited to their way of learning. By helping your child discover his preferred learning styles, you can use techniques to improve his rate and quality of education.

6. Share your enthusiasm for learning

If your child or student sees that you're enthusiastic about learning, they're likely to become passionate about learning. Whether it's history, science, reading, writing, or even math, help him see that learning is a journey of exciting discoveries. Take every opportunity to discover new information with him without being overwhelming or overbearing. As your child sees the joy and excitement learning brings to her life, he'll also begin to share her enthusiasm for learning new things.

7. Make learning fun through game-based learning

Using games as an education tool provides opportunities for deeper learning and the development of non-cognitive skills and helps motivate children to want to learn. When a child actively engages with a game, their mind experiences the pleasure of learning a new system. This is true regardless of whether the game is considered "entertainment" (e.g., video game) or "serious" (e.g., military simulator). Games that are entertaining provide the added benefit of motivating children to want to engage in the learning process and learn more.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

8. Help your child stay organised

Helping your child organise his papers, books and assignments will go a long way to helping him feel motivated to learn. Be patient and consistent in helping your child manage school supplies and assignments. This will help him feel in control, less overwhelmed, and more motivated to learn.

9. Recognize and celebrate achievements

No matter how small they may be, it's essential to recognise and celebrate your child's accomplishments. This is especially important for elementary-age children who require constant positive reinforcement to keep them motivated to learn and challenge themselves to do better. Finishing a complex project deserves a special treat; doing well on a math test could call for a trip to get ice cream. Always use positive reinforcement as your tool to motivate learning with your child.

10. Focus on strengths

Focusing on strengths can be difficult when there is so much your child struggles academically. Notwithstanding, concentrating on your child's strengths is vital to healthy emotional and academic development and progress. Focusing on your child's strengths is another form of positive reinforcement that will motivate him to keep learning. Conversely, focusing on your child's weaknesses does nothing but cause discouragement, distress, and a lack of desire to learn. Did Johnny fail



his math test? Well then, in addition to getting him a little extra help with his math, make sure to congratulate him on how well he's doing in science class.

11. Make every day a learning day

Encourage your child to explore the world around him, ask questions, and make connections whenever possible. Help him categorise, classify and think critically about what he sees and experiences. Turning every day into a learning day will help your child develop the internal motivation to learn in the classroom, at home, or wherever he may be.

How to adapt to the remote classroom environment?

Set clear expectations. It's essential to have candid discussions with kids to remind them that they aren't on vacation although they are home.

Provide structure and stick to it. Each morning identify what work needs to be done and how you plan to tackle that work as a family, particularly if you have to share devices.

Establish a working space for kids. This space should be where they feel most comfortable completing work. Feeling relaxed can help them





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

perform better, Mullins pointed out.

Don't allow what wouldn't be allowed in the classroom. Kids don't have television and video games while learning in the classroom, so those devices shouldn't be on while learning at home.

Give kids breaks. Kids can only focus for so long, Rendeiro noted, so parents should give children breaks from work before moving to another assignment. If they can only do 15 minutes of continuous work simultaneously, that's OK.

Use positive reinforcement. The television shouldn't be on while completing an assignment, but motivating children by saying they can have an outdoor break or more TV time after work can help them remain on task.

Remember that the school staff is there to help. If you have concerns or challenges, voice them to teachers. And note that for students with special needs, social workers, school counsellors, and other support staff are often still working and available to help, Rendeiro said.

Rely on your fellow parents as resources. Other families in your neighbourhood are learning how to navigate this situation and may be able to offer help if you struggle to understand an assignment.



How is self-confidence-self-efficacy created in a child?

Right from birth, kids learn new skills at a dizzying rate. And along with those new abilities, they also acquire the confidence to use them.

As children age, that confidence can be as important as skills. To thrive, kids need to trust in their capabilities while, at the same time, knowing that they can handle it if they aren't successful at something. By experiencing mastery and rebounding from failure, they develop healthy self-confidence.

Ways to improve children's self-confidence

Model confidence yourself: Even if you're not quite feeling it! Seeing you tackle new tasks with optimism and lots of preparation sets an excellent example for kids.

Please don't get upset about mistakes: Help kids see that everyone makes mistakes; the important thing is to learn from them, not dwell on them. Confident people don't let fear of failure get in their way—not because they're sure they won't ever fail, but because they know how to take setbacks in stride.

Please encourage them to try new things: Instead of focusing all their energy on what they already excel at, it's good for kids to diversify.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

Attaining new skills makes kids feel capable and confident that they can tackle whatever comes their way.

Allow kids to fail: It's natural to want to protect your child from failure, but trial and error are how kids learn, and falling short on a goal helps kids find out that it's not fatal. It can also spur kids to the more significant effort, serving them well as adults.

Praise perseverance: Learning not to give up at the first frustration or bail after one setback is an important life skill. Confidence and self-esteem are not about succeeding at everything all the time. They're about being resilient enough to keep trying and not be distressed if you're not the best.

Help kids find their passion: Exploring their interests can help kids develop a sense of identity, which is essential to building confidence.

Set goals: Articulating goals, large and small, and achieving them makes kids feel strong. Help your child turn desires and dreams into actionable plans by encouraging them to list things they'd like to accomplish.

Celebrate effort: Praising kids for their accomplishments is excellent, but it's also important to let them know you're proud of their actions regardless of the outcome. It takes hard work to develop new skills, and results aren't always immediate. Let kids know you value their work,





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

whether they're toddlers building with blocks or teenagers teaching themselves to play the guitar.

Expect them to pitch in: They might complain, but kids feel more connected and valued when they're counted on for age-appropriate jobs, from picking up toys to dishes to picking up younger siblings from a play date. Homework and after-school activities are great, but what is needed by your family is invaluable.

Embrace imperfection: Help kids see that whether it's on TV, in a magazine, or on a friend's social media feed, the idea that others are always happy, successful, and perfectly dressed is a fantasy and a destructive one. Instead, remind them that being less than perfect is human and okay.

Set them up for success: Help your child get involved with activities that make him feel comfortable and confident enough to tackle a more significant challenge.

Show your love: Let your child know you love him no matter what. Win or lose the big game, good grades or wrong, even when you're mad at him. Making sure your child knows that you think they're great — and not just when they do great things — will bolster their self-worth even when they're not feeling good about themselves.



How can we support children to gain sense of responsibility and duty?

Creating a Home Environment that Promotes Responsibility

Model the behaviour you want to see in your children.

Share your own experiences about school and responsibility in moderation.

Teach and show your child how to be organised and manage time.

Create a structure and schedules for homework, chores, and morning and evening routines that consider your child's temperament, learning style and biological clock. A successful morning begins the night before.

Use conversation starters at mealtimes, car rides, or while doing chores together to connect with your children. And then LISTEN! Without judgment or criticism:

On a scale of 1 – 10, how was your day? What made it that way?

What was the best (high point)/worst part (low point) of your day?

What did you do today to help someone else?

What is the favourite thing you learned today?

What's a thought or feeling you had today?

What happened today that you did not expect?



What's something you've done recently that you are proud of?

What's on your mind these days?

What are you looking forward to these days?

Encourage your children to find a place where they can and want to give their all – classes, sports, clubs, music, arts, volunteer activities etc. so they can experience that success is more about persistence and less about talent. They can experience the satisfaction that comes from taking responsibility.

Try not to worry too much – if we do the worrying. It leaves less responsibility and ownership for the child.



Summary

Children need to develop a sense of responsibility to be prepared for adult living. Teaching responsibility can begin when young and is one of the best values for children. Cooperating with and helping others can be important for children to learn responsibility. Parents can help children develop and improve their cooperative attitudes by giving them challenging, satisfying, and appropriate tasks for their level of development. Children benefit when they feel they are doing a real job and contributing to the family.

Regular family meetings are also valuable learning experiences, teaching children about decision-making and cooperation. These meetings allow family members to discuss and work on issues and plan events or things together. Here are some tips that can help children learn to assume responsibility: Give children clear and positive instructions for doing the task and plenty of time to complete it.

Avoid doing things for your children that they can do for themselves. Children must learn from their experiences through trial and error and by taking the time to figure it out. Let children assume responsibility and accept their standards.

Ask children instead of ordering. Demanding or forcing children to do tasks is not the way to help them develop responsibility. Children will be



willing to help out when they feel needed and are made to feel they can do the job. Use consequences. Parents must explain the results of breaking a limit, which will help children develop a sense of accountability for their actions.

Be a good role model. Children learn by watching and imitating what they see their parents do. Parents must model appropriate behaviours, such as keeping promises, sharing, cooperating, helping, caring for their belongings, and being responsible.





04

CHAPTER
FOUR

TIME MANAGEMENT

DEVELOPER: LANGUAGE SCHOOL SKY, BULGARIA

GLOSSARY OF USED TERMS

Time Management - the ability to plan, organise, and control one's time;

Prioritise - determine the order for dealing with (a series of items or tasks) according to their relative importance;

Work/ life balance - an equilibrium state where one effectively balances work or career demands and personal life. An individual who lacks a work-life balance has more work and home obligations, works longer hours, and lacks personal time.

Procrastination - the action of delaying or postponing something;

Four burners theory - provides a straightforward method to consider your life duties in terms of Family, Friends, Health, and Work.

Eisenhouer matrix - a productivity, prioritisation, and time-management framework designed to help you prioritise a list of tasks or agenda items by prioritisation, and time-management framework designed to help you prioritise a list of tasks or agenda items by first categorising those items according to their urgency and importance.

SMART goals - SMART is an acronym for Achievable, realistic, and Timely.



Delegate - entrust (a task or responsibility) to another person, typically one who is less senior than oneself.

Getting things done (GTD) - a time management and productivity system that helps a person complete tasks and meet commitments stress-free and efficiently.

Pomodoro technique - a time management method based on 25-minute stretches of focused work broken by five-minute breaks.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

INTRODUCTION & THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Time is the most valuable resource people have. As adults, we know that we can never get it back once lost. As parents, we know that our children lose it like champions. They need extra guidance on how to plan their activities, especially regarding schoolwork.

Little can we help them if we don't know how to manage our time efficiently. We are expected to have figured it out by ourselves, and no one has taught us how to plan, prioritise and follow through on our intentions. For many of us, this can be a foreign concept that needs extra effort to develop.

Time management is one of the essential skills for all types of education. Parents must plan their time to find time for their kids and themselves and maintain a good work/life balance. Parents that are stressed become impatient and unapproachable. Parents must also communicate with their children about getting on track with schoolwork, homework, and projects. Parents can support children's online education by finding reliable sites for information about how best to use their knowledge.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

What is Time Management, and why is it Important?

Time Management is the valuable ability to plan, organise, and control your time. People with good management skills save time and become more productive.

It would be best if you had time management because it:

- Ensures that you make the most of this finite source
- Reduces stress and anxiety, encourages self-discipline, and makes you feel fulfilled
- Prevents indecisiveness and procrastination
- It helps you control and manage your energy levels
- It enables you to prioritise appropriately and keeps you focused on your goals
- Improves all aspects of your personal and professional life while allowing you to control the work-life balance





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

What is work-life balance, and how is it connected to time management?

The scientist Greenhaus and his colleagues defined work-family balance in 2003 as the "extent to which an individual is equally engaged in and equally satisfied with his or her work role and family role." Work-life balance results from a daily effort to take care of our family, be present for friends, and maybe even devote ourselves to spirituality, personal growth, and self-care - all of this in addition to the demands of the workplace. Maintaining a work-life balance means keeping track of priorities and, as a result - being able to live our life the way we want to.

Time management helps us avoid losing time. And when we speak about losing time, we usually mean that we have lost the opportunity to devote our energy to something that we consider essential enough - a priority.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

The Four Burners Theory

The four Burners Theory is a way to look at work-life balance. Imagine that your life is depicted as a stove with four burners. Each burner symbolises one major topic of one's life.

1. The first burner represents family.
2. The second burner is friends.
3. The third burner is health.
4. The fourth burner is work.

According to that theory, “to be successful, you must cut off one of your burners. And to be *really* successful, you have to cut off two.”

People often react with a search for a way to bypass it. “Can I succeed and keep all four burners running?”.

Maybe I could combine two burners. “What if I lumped family and friends into one category?” Maybe I could combine health and work.

Often people realise they invent these workarounds because they don't want to face the real issue: life is filled with tradeoffs. If you want to excel in your work and marriage, then your friends and your health may suffer. If you want to be healthy and succeed as a parent, then you might be forced to grow back your career ambitions. Of course, you are free to divide your time equally among all four burners, but you must accept that you will never reach your full potential in any given area.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

So, what are your life priorities? What matters most to you? When you're offered the possibility to join up, can you always determine if the activity matches your values and priorities? In the long run, prioritising will make you a happier person and a better parent. So, once you've realised your current work-life balance, you can modify it to match your life's priorities and fit the children's distance learning schedule.

How does time management help parents like you with children in primary school during school closures?

Taking care of the distance learning process of your children is a complex and time-consuming activity. Parents must add additional activities to their regular schedules during the pandemic and the consecutive online learning format. In this Module, you will find information about time management and some valuable ideas and tools, plus resources to deepen your knowledge further if you are interested. You will also gain new skills in prioritising, scheduling, setting the right goals, and focusing on the things that matter.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

Time management helps by allowing parents to set specific goals for their children and themselves. Parents can also allocate time for specific activities, such as studying, playing, and relaxation. Parents can help their children in several ways by setting rules and limits on technology use, providing a quiet place for studying, and helping with homework. Parents should also relax and enjoy their time with their children.

How to check if you need to work on your time management skills?

The questions below might help you determine if you need assistance in regards to organising your time:

- Are you often running late for meetings?
- Can you usually say that at the end of the day, you have fulfilled all you intended?
- Do you find that time is not enough to do everything you want to?
- Do you lack time with your children, your partner, or time for yourself?
- Is it enough for maintaining or starting a hobby?
- Do you sleep enough?

If the answer to any of the above is undesirable for you, we hope we will help you change this with some of the information below.



Time Management Strategies

1. Try to identify where you waste time

Take 30 minutes away from your busy schedule to do this simple but effective task:

Write down a list of everything you did last week, including every action that took more than 5 minutes, including meals, showers, and transport. Try to pinpoint each activity to a specific time and write down its approximate duration. After you finish your list, underline or highlight the most important ones by starting with those that couldn't be rescheduled or removed. Take a good look at the rest.

Ask yourself - how much time you spend each day scrolling social media or watching videos. The average for European users per day on social networks is 1 hour and 15 minutes - without considering other online spaces—70% of people worldwide access Facebook daily. Most parents restrict their children's use of technology but don't restrict themselves and spend more than an 8-hour workday each week online.

If you decide to cut on your screen time, a variety of apps available for your smartphone or tablet can help you. Without stopping completely, you can invest those hours in activities for yourself or your family, which will bring you much more joy.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

2. Learn how to do time audit

After discovering where you're spending your time, you may be surprised to find some "leaks." However, people often overestimate the necessary speed and underestimate other related tasks they need to accomplish their end goal. For example, you might need to go to a shop and set aside one hour to do this. With the addition of traffic, possible distractions in the shop, and forgotten items to buy, this one hour could take an hour and a half or 50% more time than you initially planned. Now, 30 minutes does not seem much - but if this happens three times that day, you have spent an unplanned hour and a half.

3. Set Achievable Goals and Prioritise your Tasks

Have you ever heard of the Eisenhower matrix? Its simplified version is also known as the 4 Ds of time management: Do, Defer, Delegate and Delete. They can help you prioritise by having you put your tasks into one of the following four groups:

Do: Important and urgent tasks

Defer: Important but not urgent tasks

Delegate: Urgent but not important tasks

Delete: Neither critical nor essential tasks

These four categories can help you quickly determine what tasks you should prioritise. Once they have been distributed, they will no longer



hand over your head like a sword, and this will help both organise your time better and avoid the unpleasant feeling of being overwhelmed.

4. Divide and Conquer

Nobody can do all tasks in a single try; this is the same for goals. One of the most common barriers to completing the task is not beginning it because it looks hauntingly big. If something you need to do looks too big - take a good look at it, think about its due date, and separate it into more achievable ones you can do in several tries.

For example, cooking a big meal during the week - with children in the online learning process and you working - can seem too hard. But separating the process into the preparation of the products + the actual cooking can make it easier.

For many children making a plan for doing their homework beforehand and splitting it into more doable parts makes the workload easier to handle. This bears even more true when in the distance learning process - some students even plan and split their homework during the breaks to free some time in the evening.

5. Define SMART goals

SMART is the acronym for goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely.





- *Specific* - What do I want to accomplish? Why is this important?
- *Measurable* - How will I know when my goal is accomplished?
- *Achievable* - How can I accomplish this goal? How realistic is it, especially considering financial and emotional circumstances?
- *Relevant* - Does this match my other efforts and my needs?
- *Timely* - Do I have a fixed start and end time for this activity? Are they realistic?

The concept of SMART goals is widely used in the education and business fields. It is recommended by pedagogical experts and entrepreneurs who credit it for their success, so we hope you will find it helpful and practical.

6. Throw away your perfectionism, or at least reduce it

Too many parents put a strain on themselves and their children to achieve a certain level of excellence. Having standards is OK, but you must let some things go. Attempting to be perfect takes far too much effort, which is valid for time organisation. Remind yourself that it is not always possible to do what you set your mind, and this is fine. Being realistic often wins the day over being perfect.

7. Prioritise and delegate

Work-life balance does not imply that you should treat all areas of your life equally. Because of your children's new involvement in the distance





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

learning process, you may reconsider some things and see if some can be handled later or even handed off to other family members, coworkers, or close relatives. You will become overwhelmed, overscheduled, and spread too thin if you accept every possible chance that comes your way. Remove activities from your life that don't provide value, and you will feel less guilty due to this.

Make it clear what responsibilities are expected of each member of the family. Create a chore chart for your children that they can follow. When your children can complete their daily chores and obligations without you having to tell them every job that needs to be done, it makes life simpler for you as a parent. Making their beds, collecting their belongings, doing the dishes, removing the trash, sweeping the flooring, and dusting are just a few of the chores that even very young youngsters can accomplish. This is a beautiful opportunity to teach your kids the value of self-reliance and responsibility while also giving you more time to spend with them; It's a good idea to outsource some tasks that don't require your time and attention.

Suggest the idea of collaboration at your workplace - perhaps there are other parents with children in the distance learning process. You can align your schedules according to your new obligations to finish the work on time. If the situation allows for this, speak with your employer to reschedule your working time or delegate some tasks during distance learning for your children.



Practical Application:

Create a daily plan or to-do list

Once you have mastered the above skills, you can move on to their more practical application - the actual time planning part. Start your organisational journey by getting used to making daily plans or to-do lists. You can do it chronologically or list them and number them by order of doing. This will help you not miss essential activities and drop others off if you see they are not worth your time. Preparing a daily routine will allow you to gain more time for new activities as a supporter of the distance learning of your children.

To do this, you can use paper or digital list tools that will allow you to easily track what has been done, the next task on the list, a blueprint of your day (to organise events, for example), etc. You can have a shared schedule with priorities with your partner and help each other in such busy times. This way, you can plan what is coming up as an activity properly, without a doubt, if your partner can cover the obligations at home. You can use shared Google calendars or other apps available for free usage.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

Plan your week and do it on Sunday before

Daily plans are great and valuable, but every adult knows you must prepare for some events. We suggest scheduling your week to avoid unpleasant surprises and allow for well-deserved leisure time.

Take a look at the whole month.

This is the final step for the professionals in time management like you. At the end of each month, you can plan events and activities for the month ahead. This will make weekly and daily planning easier.

Useful methods and practical tools for better usage of time (daily routine, scheduling, etc.)

1. *Getting Things Done (GTD)* is a personal productivity system developed by David Allen and published under the same name. The GTD approach is based on externalising all things of interest, helpful information, problems, tasks, and projects and then breaking them down into actionable work items with known time limits. This helps one's attention to focus on executing each activity documented in an external record rather than recalling them intuitively.

The GTD process has five stages: capture, clarify, organise, reflect, and engage. When all items have been captured or collected, each of them gets organised. To do this, you need to start asking and answering questions about each item to understand its purpose better.





2. *The Pomodoro Technique* is a time management method. It was developed by Francesco Cirillo. Pomodoro uses a timer to break work into intervals, usually 25 minutes long with some short breaks. The technique has been widely popularised by many apps and websites (you can use, for example, this one: <https://pomofocus.io>)

The original approach has six steps:

- Decide on the task to be done;
- Set the timer - for 20 or 25 minutes;
- Work on the task;
- End work when the timer rings and take a 5-minute break;
- After four such work-break repetitions, take a more extended break - 20 or 30 minutes.

3. *The FlyLady Method*

It was developed as a support and self-help group that assists with housekeeping. The messages of FlyLady include clutter control and stress on the importance of routines, weekly and monthly cleaning, increased self-esteem, and letting go of perfectionism.

The techniques used by the FlyLady organisation are outlined in Cilley's book, *Sink Reflections*, and on the website. The method encourages "baby steps" to form routines and habits to help you organise and maintain your house. The emphasis is on "Finally Loving Yourself" by decluttering, menu planning, "anti-procrastination" day, establishing routines, and financial and health-related self-care.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

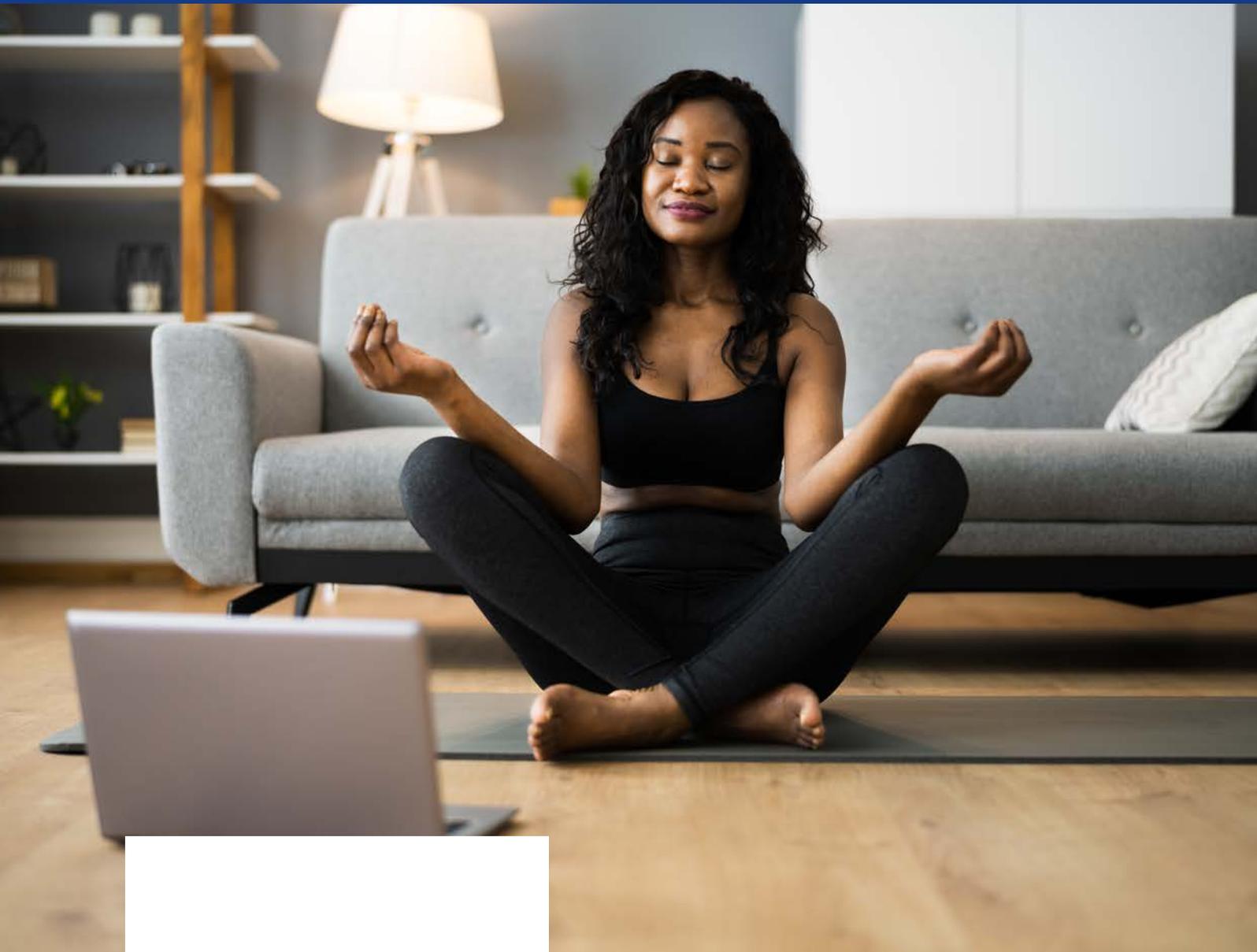
Summary

There are many more tools and techniques that you could try. Time Management is an art, but it's accessible to everyone and especially necessary for parents with children in primary school.

Prioritising, scheduling, and self-control create a balance between work, development, and life that lets you focus on many different areas of your well-being without letting one area overwhelm you and pull you down. A balanced life promotes productivity while it embraces personal growth and healthy living.

And keep in mind that the distance learning process is not permanent. However, no one knows how long it will take. You need to support your children during that time, as it is equally challenging for them to study online and lose their typical social environment. As soon as the situation is normalised, don't go back to the old habits and keep your good time management performance. Turn the ability to manage time into a skill for life.





05

CHAPTER
FIVE

STRESS MANAGEMENT

DEVELOPER: VRIJEME PUBLISHING HOUSE,
BOSNIA AND HERZEOVINA

GLOSSARY OF USED TERMS

Stress: The process by which an individual perceives and responds to events perceived as overwhelming or dangerous to one's well-being.

Stressors: Environmental events that can be interpreted as threatening or demanding; stimuli that start the stress response

Response: The body's immediate physiological reaction to a threatening situation or another emergency is analogous to the fight-or-flight response, the first stage of the general adaptation syndrome.

Exposed: When exposed to a stressor, the adrenal glands release a stress hormone that helps to provide an energy boost, preparing the individual to take action.

Distress: wrong type of stress; usually intense; frequently causes exhaustion, fatigue, and a sense of being burned out; associated with declines in performance and health-positive

Positive stress: A suitable type of stress is low to moderate in intensity and is associated with positive feelings and optimal health and performance.

Fight reaction: set of physiological reactions (increases in blood pressure, heart rate, respiratory rate, and sweat) that occur when an individual encounters a perceived threat; these reactions are caused by the sympathetic nervous system and endocrine system activation

General adaptation: Model of the body's physiological responses to stress and the process of stress adaptation: alarm reaction, resistance stage, and exhaustion stage.

Psychology of health: a branch of psychology concerned with the psychological influences on health and illness, as well as how people respond when they become ill





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

INTRODUCTION & THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Stress management is essential for parents, especially when it comes to their children. Being a parent can be exhausting and stressful at times. Nonetheless, stress management for parents in the home online educational process is critical if you want to care for your family and give them the best life possible.

Stress affects people in various mental and physical ways; however, stress management can help reduce these effects and make parenting easier. Understanding how stress affects you is critical to determine which coping strategies work best for you (Scott, 2020).

Stress management is a skill that parents must learn to control their stress levels and those of their children. Parents should spend time with their children and engage in activities that will help them relax, such as reading a book or going for a walk.

Parents should schedule time, even if it is only a few minutes every few hours. Parents must also discuss what is going on in their lives with their children who are going through difficult times.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

What exactly is stress?

Stress or put refers to any change that causes physical, emotional, or psychological discomfort. Stress is your body's reaction to any significant outside stressor. Work deadlines, finances, and family and relationship dynamics can all be stressors. Because stressors frequently interact and compound stress, managing one may not excuse you from all of them.

Stress is your body's reaction to anything requiring attention or action. To some extent, everyone is stressed, especially because stress is an emotional state that describes how you feel and what's going on in your body.

When both high and low-stress environments are maintained for an extended period, they can cause various health problems. Low stress means being relaxed and enjoying the present moment; sleeping well at night; having a robust immune system; maintaining a healthy weight, and controlling blood pressure through sensible lifestyle choices.

Happiness is a fleeting emotion that lasts only as long as positive events continue. Even if we appear to be developing a stress tolerance, our nervous systems are still dealing with an overload, which can have serious long-term effects on our overall health.



One of the most common physical responses to stress is muscle tenseness, which can lead to tension headaches, migraines, and other musculoskeletal problems (Eliaz, 2021).

What is the significance of stress management?

The body's reaction to demands is stress. It reacts by producing stress hormones (adrenaline and cortisol), which cause physiological changes such as increased blood sugar levels, increased heart rate, shallow breathing, alarm responses, and other stress indicators.

Understanding stress management techniques can assist people in dealing with stress without feeling overwhelmed or powerless. With each new challenge added to our loads, it may be difficult to determine what will best serve us at this time:

- Do we require more sleep?
- More time to unwind?
- A dietary change?
- Exercise to burn off stress-related energy?



All of these are critical for staying healthy.

Stress management is essential for moms, dads, students, and anyone who faces stress. It is critical for physical and mental health because stress causes various problems, such as heart disease, ulcers, depression, and anxiety disorders. Meditation, the most popular stress-relief method, has been shown to help reduce symptoms in people with chronic pain conditions such as arthritis or muscle pain.

How to face and cope with stressful situations?

The first step in stress management is to identify the sources of stress in your life. This isn't as easy as it appears. While significant stressors such as changing jobs, relocating, or going through a divorce are easy to identify, determining the source of chronic stress can be more difficult. It's easy to overlook the impact your thoughts, feelings, and behaviours have on your daily stress levels.

You may be constantly concerned about work deadlines, but the stress may be due to your procrastination rather than the actual job obligations.



Examine your actions, attitudes, and justifications to determine the authentic sources of your stress:

- Do you justify your stress as "just a million things happening right now," even though you can't remember the last time you took a break?
- Do you consider stress part of your job or personal life ("Things are usually busy around here")?
- Characteristic ("I just have a lot of anxious energy")?
- Do you blame your stress on other people or outside circumstances?
- Consider it wholly ordinary and unexceptional?
- Your stress level will remain uncontrollable unless you accept responsibility for your role in causing or perpetuating it. (2021, Robinson)

What's the effect of stress on parents?

Parental involvement stress has been connected to the emotional well-being of parents. That is, parents who report more difficulties with everyday parenting have lower life satisfaction and more negative mood and emotional pain. While there is some evidence that stress





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

from everyday problems is more strongly linked to mental health than significant life events, stress from either source leads to decreased emotional well-being. Parents under a lot of stress have a negative attitude toward parenting and enjoy it less, which negatively impacts their own emotional well-being. They also experience less delight and pleasure from their children.

They exhibit lower levels of self-efficacy in the parenting role, implying that they are less capable of carrying out their parental responsibilities and are less confident that their efforts will benefit their children. In some parents, high levels of parental stress can result in psychological illnesses such as sadness and anxiety. Moms who experience more parental stress due to low-birth-weight or medically sick infants, for example, are more likely to suffer from postpartum depression.

Parenting stress and poor parental mood are linked. Parental stress can aggravate bad parental mood, whereas low mood can aggravate parenting stress perceptions. Parents in a bad mood are more likely to notice their children's bad behaviour, attribute hostile intent to unclear actions, and have a lower threshold.(Jennings and Dietz, 2007)





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

How can I deal with homework stress in my family?

It's no secret that homework and stress go hand in hand. Stress can impair motivation, concentration, and the ability to care for oneself. When stress becomes out of control, it can lead to problems at home or poor academic performance.

Creating a solid support system is one way to reduce stress. Everyone, including parents, teachers, and older siblings, should provide an account for assistance.

This will reduce the strain on children's stress levels and improve work quality. Following a relaxation routine before starting work can be beneficial for those who need extra help with stress management: Begin with deep breathing exercises before progressing to muscle relaxation.

Establish a Post-School Routine

Having an after-school routine is essential for overcoming homework stress. A homework schedule is recommended based on what works best for your children. Some people prefer completing their schoolwork as soon as they arrive home, while others prefer taking a break.



With this time limit, children will not be able to put it off, and you and they will not be stressed on the morning of homework submission.

Create a Homework Zone

Nothing is more upsetting to a child than doing homework in a crowded kitchen or lounge where their siblings are playing. It not only causes anxiety in individuals, but it may also cause conflict among family members.

Instead, we recommend creating a homework zone where children can work away from household distractions. They must have a quiet place to do their homework, whether a desk in their bedroom or the dining room.

Remove any potential distractions.

When the TV is on or their phone rings, it is nearly impossible for children to concentrate on their homework. It could make things stressful and unpleasant. It's critical to keep all distractions out of their homework zone so they can focus entirely and complete their work to the best of their abilities. 2020 (Helliwell)



What are the effects of stress on the educational learning process of students?

Parents' stress management is a significant impediment to their children's academic success. Ignoring stress and paying little attention to focus allows parents to miss signs of stress and fail to find ways to support stressed children. This stress is then internalised by the child, manifesting as classroom behaviour problems or other externalising behaviours that can interfere with their relationships with others or even lead to anxiety.

Students' personal and social lives, stress levels, and emotions are all affected by stress. The stressor responsible for stress determines the stress level. Family and personal factors that affect their stress level can be stressors. Students who are stressed out may struggle to focus on learning tasks and are more likely to become upset if they feel unappreciated.

When stress levels are higher than usual, children may experience more emotional distress, such as anxiety, depression, boredom, difficulty concentrating on schoolwork or homework assignments, and concerns about not getting enough sleep. According to studies, stress



significantly impacts children's grades and stress levels at school.

Stress can affect their motivation, concentration, and ability to take care of themselves. When stress gets out of control, pressure from parents can lead to difficulties at home or bad grades at school.

How can parents and their children reduce stress caused by different types of stress?

When there is stress at home, it can be difficult for parents to care for their children. So, what are your options? When stress occurs repeatedly, you should try to find a way to relax. You can take time off from work or school to relieve stress. If you need more ideas on how to relax at home, videos online about reducing stress caused by various types of stress with parents and their children may be helpful! Parental anxiety can be highly distressing. To help reduce stress, take breaks and avoid other stressors such as too much work or not enough sleep. Make sure you have a sound support system from family, friends, or even your baby's caregiver.



Learn to deal with stress in the present moment.

If you're stressed out because of difficult circumstances, you need a technique to control your stress levels. This is where immediate stress relief comes in handy.

The quickest ways to relieve stress are to take a deep breath and use your senses—what you see, hear, taste, and touch—or to engage in a relaxing exercise. Looking at a favourite photo, inhaling a favourite aroma, or listening to a favourite piece of music can help you relax and focus immediately.

Of course, not everyone responds the same way to every sensory experience. The key to quick stress relief is to experiment with and discover the sensory experiences that work best for you.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

Summary

Parents must be able to manage their own and their children's stress levels. To help their children relax, parents should spend time with them by reading a book or taking them for a walk. Parents must make time, even if it is only a few minutes here and there. Parents must also discuss issues in their own lives with their children going through difficult times.

The first step in stress management is to identify the sources of your stress.

The consequences of parental stress are intertwined. Poor parental mood can be exacerbated by parental stress, while low spirits can heighten perceptions of parental stress.

Suppose their stress levels are higher than usual. In that case, children may experience more emotional distress, including anxiety, sadness, loss of interest, difficulty concentrating on schoolwork or homework assignments, and concerns about not getting enough sleep.

You are facing difficult circumstances that stress you out. You'll need a stress-reduction strategy right now. Use these ideas to determine what causes your stress at home, and then use the techniques outlined to control it when it is inevitable.





06

CHAPTER
SIX

COMMUNICATION

DEVELOPER: TRAINING CENTRE RAGINA, BULGARIA

GLOSSARY OF USED TERMS

- **Communication** - the imparting or exchanging of information by speaking, writing, or using another medium.
- **Pattern** - a repeated decorative design.
- **Express** - convey (a thought or feeling) in words or by gestures and conduct
- **Exchange** - an act of giving one thing and receiving another (especially of the same kind) in return.
- **Biological Predisposition** - when a subject (human, animal, plant) possesses some internal quality that increases the likelihood of developing a disease or pattern of behaviour based on the genes we inherited from our parents (and our parents' parents).
- **Sender** - a person who sends or transmits a message, letter, email, etc.
- **Receiver** - a person who gets or accepts something that has been sent or given to them.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

- **Gesture** - a movement of part of the body, especially a hand or the head, to express an idea or meaning.
- **Mimic** - imitate (someone or their actions or words)
- **Barrier** - something material that blocks or is intended to block passage
- **Interpersonal** - relating to relationships or communication between people.
- **Transgenerational** - Acting across multiple generations.
- **Conflict** - a serious disagreement or argument, typically a protracted one.
- **Nonviolent** - using peaceful means rather than force, especially to bring about political or social change.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

INTRODUCTION & THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Every being on this planet communicates with the world beyond its borders somehow. Communication was a simple survival mechanism and remained a vital human skill. Furthermore, every parent can confirm that adequately expressing themselves and listening to them wins about half the battle when raising children.

Communication and its Connection with Family Relationships

A unique field studies every exchange at our home - from the rituals we have to say “Good morning” to the funny stories we share using the social apps on our phones. Family communication studies the roles and the rules each family makes. It tries to better understand the interactions between family members and their so-called “behaviour patterns” in different circumstances. These patterns may initially seem ‘random’ but reflect each individual’s biological predisposition, life experiences, beliefs, and culture.

Based on its findings, family communication tries to predict how these factors, combined with the changes in the environment, will affect the relationships within each separate family. It tries to discover the recipe



to construct healthy bonds and a stable environment that, in turn, will foster capable and happy individuals.

Parents have to deal with a wide range of situations in and outside the family, and quite often, those can cause feelings of intense stress. Bringing up children, supporting them during their school years, going through their teenage years, and helping them transition into adulthood is not easy. And to top this today, it also includes helping them through the unprecedented health crisis caused by COVID-19, even at this young age, with all of its implications - including social isolation and online learning.

All these experiences can create a lot of anxiety, consequently affecting family communication. Misunderstandings lead to further difficulties for both parties involved, result in a child's refusal to engage in similar situations, and can remove an essential tool for parental influence.

In this Module, you will learn more about the theory of communication, the most common mistakes we all make, and, most importantly - how to communicate effectively with your child. Experts developed the content here in the field who are also parents - just like yourself.

You will find practical tools, exercises, and valuable resources should the subject raise your interest.



General Theory of Communication

In the most general sense, communication is expressing or exchanging information with another person or persons. The word comes from Latin and means “to share.” Indeed, the only obligatory condition for communication is to be willing to share information - to both understand and be understood.

Communication could happen through listening, speaking, writing, and movement - gesturing, mimicking, touching, etc. - or a lovely mix. In the most general case, the human body can communicate the message clearly and explicitly. Even so, it is still relatively easy to misunderstand someone or to fail to present your point. Ironically, the closer you are to someone, the easier it gets to fail at communication. But the more we know, the better we can become at this.

So here is what we believe you should know:

In the communication process, usually, there is a **sender** and a **receiver**. Each of those roles can be performed by more than one person - through mass media and social networks or as it happens in the classroom. The **sender** must encode the information being conveyed; after this, the **receiver** can decode the message to understand its meaning and significance.





The person or people who understand their audience and use the appropriate skills could significantly reduce misunderstanding. Good communication is usually less about talking and more about listening and observing.

There are two types of communication:

- **Verbal communication** - It uses both written and spoken words with the intent to express or receive various ideas;
- **Non-verbal communication** - It uses all forms of expressing and receiving information that does not use words. It is considered that between 70 to 93 per cent of all communication is nonverbal.
- In most cases, people communicate through a **mixture of verbal and non-verbal** activities, which is why we need to pay attention to everything we say and do if we want to be adequately understood.

If we speak calmly to our child, but our posture and facial expression show anger, the message will be interpreted with tension, and its meaning could get blurred.



What affects communication and how do conflicts arise?

For many reasons, communication between parents and children - young or older - can fail. Predicting and overcoming everything is impossible. But being aware of the most common barriers to communication means you can be better prepared to avoid and handle others better.

- *Physical Barriers - Noise, walls or closed doors, or even the use of phones - everything that could distort, hinder, or completely block the normal communication flow*
- *Psychological Barriers - Stress, unresolved daily problems, and any unresolved traumas that can contribute to misunderstanding.*
- *Transgenerational Barriers - Unavoidable differences that arise between each generation*
- *Interpersonal Barriers - Created by the natural diversity of views and personalities in the family despite the typical upbringing and culture - these become apparent well before the child enters puberty*

Conflicts between parents and children usually result from the above barriers. They are painful but completely normal and expected. It would have been great if love were enough to solve them and help us get the



most out of them, but in reality, we can and are very often left with unpleasant, lingering feelings and unresolved issues. To avoid them or if this is not possible - to learn and make the most out of them, we recommend using the tools of effective Nonviolent communication.

Effective Nonviolent Communication

How to talk, so your children listen and how to hear what they say.

Parents can establish effective communication if the message has been sent and received. Effective nonviolent communication goes even deeper than this - it strives to achieve the aims of the information exchange in the most humane possible way.

Nonviolent Communication (NVC) is a communication process developed by the American psychologist Marshall Rosenberg. It applies compassionate human behaviour in the exchanges between people regardless of age, relationship, ethnicity, or any other characteristic that is used to separate them from each other in different circumstances. NVC is based on respect and acceptance of the other person regardless of age. It is advisable to start with it as early as possible.

Both verbal and nonverbal communication is a form of negotiation and exchange. In NVC, we perform them compassionately and assume that compassionate communication yields significant results.



Why use NVC?

You might feel the need to say: “Why do I have to use Nonviolent Communication - my child misbehaves!” or “They are too young to understand!” even: “It is hard enough to talk about anything at the moment, especially during the period of online education!”.

These are all outstanding statements. And we recommend trying NVC, especially if this is the case. Or anytime you want your intentions to be understood and heard.

NVC helps us to:

- Take ownership of our choices and increase our ability to live with them;
- Connect with others and have more meaningful relationships;
- Have a better relationship with ourselves.

NVC contributes significantly to the quality of human connection and is used by therapists, psychologists, educators, and parents to resolve conflicts, prevent misunderstandings and maintain positive relationships efficiently.



How to practise NVC with your Child

1. Observe:

It is tough to be idle when you feel your buttons are pushed or that the situation needs your immediate attention. We do not advise you to stand still and watch. However, you can express your opinion differently. Do not speak out of the place where your feelings arise because your child will only hear your anger and your anxiety. We also talk about our bodies, remember?

The phrase *“You are not paying attention to what I am saying! Stop playing with your toys!”* can be said as *“I noticed that you were looking at your toys when I was speaking just now.”* Instead, try saying what you have noticed without the emotional colour of judgement, fear, or disappointment.

Reserving your judgement prevents the triggering of your child’s defences. It opens up the possibility for dialogue and discussion of something that bothers you and might harm them.

2. Take Responsibility for your feelings:

Applying the philosophy of nonviolent communication means that no one else gets to take the blame. You are responsible for your feelings and how you have or are acting. The way others behave or what they



say is only the *stimulus* but not the cause of what you experience on the inside.

To illustrate this further, NVC presents four options for reaction to a hostile provocation:

- To take it personally
- To fight back
- To consider your feelings
- To consider the feelings of the other person

To resolve it, we recommend turning to the last two options. The first two are usually the reactions that deepen the conflict and cause it to escalate.

We do know that in the beginning, this thought process will happen only after the conflict. But with time and some practice, internal reasoning will start to occur earlier. And finally - just in time to help you prevent or make the most out of the conflict with your child.

3. Be aware of your needs - especially the unmet ones

We have been talking about negative feelings a lot - and there is a reason for this. In our daily conversations, we call it “taking it out on someone,” but to scientists, this is the expression of anger or hurt, indicating that we have unmet needs. We might be in a condition of some time for ourselves.





We might be tired or need to feel more appreciated. We might be stressed about money, our job, the health of a relative, or about our child's online learning. The feelings that follow aim to make us fix whatever is wrong. This is not necessarily bad, but there are two reasons why acting out of a feeling is not the best strategy in most cases.

First, it has been proven that emotional decision-making is not as transparent and objective as rational decision-making. Second, according to the previous point we discussed, taking the situation personally or fighting actively against it does not help us fix anything - they make us the aggressor or the victim.

According to NVC trainer Peggy Smith: "Sometimes (...) we regard needs as something that could be met or unmet by another person (...). Or we end up holding blame or implying wrongdoing. People are more likely to resist a request made from this stance."

4. Request - do not demand

Imagine your boss comes to you and says: "I want you to do this, and I want you to do it immediately." Now imagine something else - they come to you and kindly ask: "Could you please do this as soon as possible? It is urgent." Which one of those sentences is more likely to make you **want** to cooperate and maybe even put more effort into it? The second, right? This is why we would like to share the fourth





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

principle of NVC. Too often, we have to repeat ourselves and say the same thing to our children repeatedly. Science has proven that demanding action is not as efficient in the long term as is requested. Being respectful demonstrates how one should behave and has the added benefit of showing your children that you take them seriously - just as they should you. Yes, yelling makes them act quicker, but the repair of your relationship takes longer afterwards. It is up to you to show them how a proper conversation is made.

We understand that the pressure on a parent never stops, and we all have heard the small unpleasant voice stating that we are not good parents. But we know our best chance for a better world is through our children. So we ask this simple question? If we haven't succeeded so far using force, isn't it time to try another way - the practice of hope and trust in a better outcome?

We also know that the shared information here is just the beginning - a pointer to a specific direction. You can find more information about Nonviolent Communication from your trainer and the links in the "Useful Resources." You can also try and practice using some of these exercises.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

Helpful Exercises and Games

1. Exercise to try before a conflict

Ask your child if they want to try a small game with you. One of you starts talking, and the other behaves like they experience the opposite state of empathy. Switch roles. Then try the same but listen in the most empathic and understanding way possible. Switch roles again. Discuss how you felt in the first and the second case. You would be surprised how mature and aware children could be even at this age.

2. Exercise to try during a conflict

Stop and walk out of the door—nothing else.

As soon as you see the tension on your child's face, stop talking and leave the room. Do anything afterwards - jump, beat that pillow, write down how you feel, and take deep breaths. Once you think you are more in control of yourself, go back to the room and explain: "I needed some time to calm down so I could talk to you from a better place in my head."

We know this is hard. But we also know that with practice, you will get it better. Showing your young child that emotions don't control you is an important lesson.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

3. Exercise to try after a conflict

Remember something particularly emotional that you said during a conflict. Describe it in as much detail as you can. Now write down the question: “Why did I do that?” and answer in writing. Write down the same question but now regarding your last answer. Do this as many times as possible. After you think you can ask no more, try and dig even more deeply- what are the actual intentions behind your statement? Would you change the way you said it or what you said? Finally, write down the feelings that you are experiencing after completing this exercise.

Other tips for healthy communication with your child

Listen:

- Try and maintain eye contact
- Remove any distractions - make listening to your child a priority
- Do not open your mouth when the other side is talking - just your ears

Confirm that you have heard what they said.





Properly express yourself:

- Don't forget the eye contact;
- Do not talk for too long time or you will lose their attention or confuse them;
- Admit when you have made a mistake or don't know something - it is healthy to be wrong and let the other person see it.
- Do not raise your voice - many teachers and parents confirm that children pay more attention when spoken quietly.

Avoid using negative patterns in expressing your opinion and encourage your child to do the same:

- Don't try to control your child using guilt
- Don't use sarcasm - say what you mean
- Do not deny your child's feelings - they might not be pleasant, but suppressing them will cause them to rot and cause another conflict later.

But if conflicts happen:

- Don't argue about more than one thing - the past is in the past
- Be polite
- Do not generalise - use statements that begin with "I...."





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

How to make the most out of the communication with your child's teachers

Online education has been challenging for families and educators all over the world. Being unable to discuss matters face-to-face, being put in an unprecedented situation, or being overly stressed and tired can cause miscommunication between adults. To make the most out of communication with your child's teachers, we recommend applying the techniques of NVC and being as open as possible to the idea of cooperating for the best of your loved ones.

The following strategies might help you remain well-informed about your child's progress while maintaining a good relationship with their teachers:

- Ask about the best **time** to contact them - some teachers have classes the whole day, while others' personal lives do not allow for calls outside working hours.
- Ask about the best **way** to communicate - a phone call, an email, or an online conference, for example.
- Make it clear that you are reaching out because you care and remain positive and open to cooperation - nothing helps a teacher care better for a child than a parent who understands they are all on the same team.



Useful Resources:

- <https://www.nonviolentcommunication.com>
- <https://positivepsychology.com/non-violent-communication/>
- <https://parenting-ed.org/wp-content/themes/parenting-ed/files/handouts/communication-parent-to-child.pdf>
- <https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Communication>
- <https://nvcnextgen.org/games/>





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

Summary

To be effective in communication, you must be willing to share information - both comprehend and be comprehended. Effective communication between parents and children can be established if the message has been delivered and received. It goes even further than this with nonviolent communication, which aims to accomplish the information exchange objectives in the most ethical manner possible.

Listen and maintain eye contact. Express yourself appropriately. Negative patterns in expressing your thoughts should be avoided, and you should encourage your kid to do the same. But if things get tense, don't quarrel; talk it out.

We recommend applying the skills of NVC and being as open as possible to cooperating for the best of your loved ones to make the most out of communication with your child.





PARTNER AUTHORS

EduCOV parent's training program combines different backgrounds from various experts. Below, you can find a short introduction to the partner organisations involved in training development.

Collegium Balticum Akademia Nauk Stosowanych (CB ANS) is a Polish private university which educates in social sciences, homeland security and medical sciences. Collegium Balticum realises many international projects as a coordinator or partner in the Erasmus+ programme.



Smart Idea is a private enterprise established in 2017. The company is developing and implementing innovative educational methodologies and tools, as well as the digitalisation of educational products and processes. In the last few years, Smart Idea has specialised in the introduction of new techniques of learning and management into schools and actively lectures at educational conferences (SIRIKT Slovenia, InfoCom Tech Slovenia, Future of Education, Italy).

Vrijeme Publishing House was established in 1998. Vrijeme publishes around 30 titles annually, included in several editions: Bosnian Portraits, New Sensibility, World Literature, Text, Cultural Memory, Pippi Longstocking, etc. Since 2004, the Vrijeme Book Club has been acting within the Vrijeme Publishing Company, providing book lovers with many national and world production publications. On average, a valuable team of this publishing house treats readers with a dozen new editions during the year. It is essential to note if it is known that during these difficult times, some of the once most respected Bosnian publishing houses stopped working for the book and publishers.



JumpIN Hub - Association for Innovation and Entrepreneurship is a non-profit organisation established in 2019 in Portugal. The Association's main objective is to promote, in a sustainable way, innovation and entrepreneurship as promoters of development in the social and business areas through integrated education supported by non-formal education methodologies for young people (NEET) and adults, covering three main areas:

- Socio-cultural education;
- Education for personal development;
- Professional qualification.

Training Centre Ragina (TCR) was established in 2011 with the main focus - on corporate training and language courses for adults. We subsequently expanded our products and implemented innovative methodologies - vocational education, critical competencies training, specialised language training, etc.

Our main goal is to be innovators, imposing a new vision of learning and trying to pave the way for the world trends of modern education in Bulgaria. Created as a language centre, we are among the first who implement fully interactive learning.

Gradually we expanded our services, but we retained our basic philosophy - to look for the best systems and forms of teaching we can implement in each educational product.





EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES

Gölbaşı District National Education Directorate is an organisation under the Ministry of National Education and situated in the provincial organisation that conducts national education service is a public institution. It is the local authority responsible for education. Golbasi National Education comprises 39 primary schools, 36 secondary schools, 36 high schools, and several institutions dealing with adult and special needs education. There are 3300 teachers and 34.500 students.

Language school Sky is an SME established in 2017, providing extracurricular activities in kindergartens and primary schools in the Rousse region. The company is a leader in the market of extracurricular activities for children. Each year, 550-600 children participate in different educational activities of the centre – Bulgarian and foreign language activities, maths, art ateliers, mental arithmetic, etc. The centre currently has contracts for extracurricular activities in 6 public kindergartens and three public primary schools. It also provides equipment for training halls in all kindergartens/schools that it is working with, implementing a fully interactive learning environment, including education for the team of the public entity and how to use it for the needs of the formal education process during the study year.



Contact us

PROJECT COORDINATOR

Szczecińska Szkoła Wyższa Collegium Balticum
t.staron@cb.szczecin.pl

PROJECT PARTNERS

Smart Idea, Igor Razbornik s.p.
igor.razbornik@gmail.com

Vrijeme Publishing House
vrijemem@gmail.com

Jumpin hub
jumpinhub@gmail.com

Training centre Ragina Ltd
galena.robeva@ragina.net

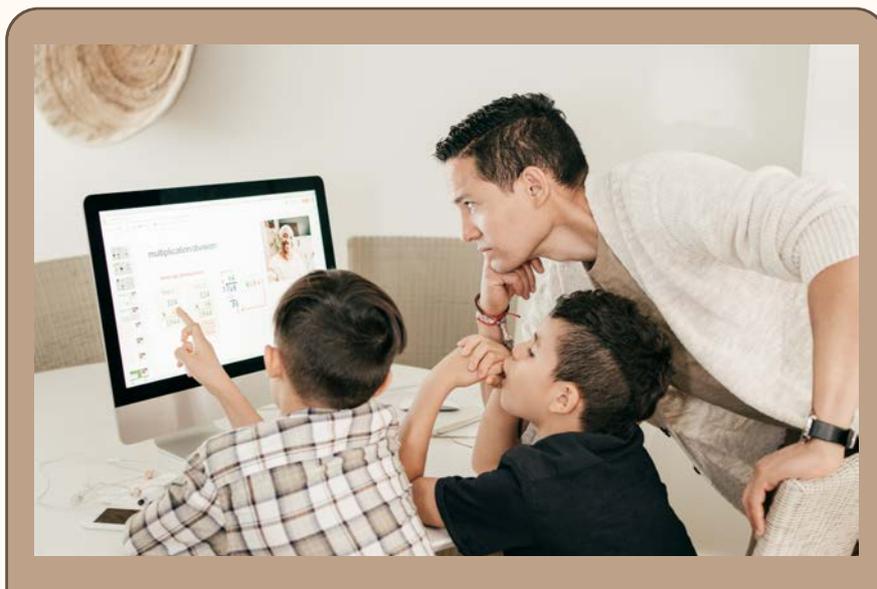
**Gölbaşı District National Education
Directorate**
namalsalih@gmail.com

Language school Sky Ltd
elmiramandajieva7@gmail.com



EDUCOV

SUPPORTING PARENTS
IN COVID TIMES



Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the National Agency(NA). Neither the European Union nor NA can be held responsible for them.

Please consider the environment before printing.

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

