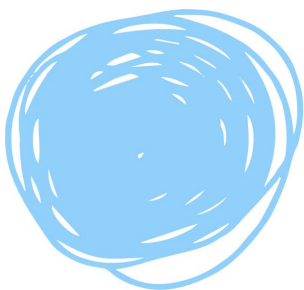


Remote Learning

A Handbook for Parents



Deirdre Brandner

Psychology

About Deirdre.



DipT (Primary) BA (Soc Sci) Grad Dip Child & Adol Psych., MPsychEd (MAPS)

Deirdre Brandner is a highly respected Psychologist. Deirdre is skilled in working with children who experience social, emotional and academic difficulties. She prides herself on the ability to offer practical strategies and programs tailored to meet the needs of the child, their family and the school. Due to her extensive experience, Deirdre has been able to establish a network of health professionals and knowledge of educational systems. Deirdre is renowned for her ability to quickly build rapport and trust with children and their families and is committed to obtaining the best possible outcomes for her client.

Deirdre is a fully registered psychologist (AHPRA) and has been a member of the Australian Psychological Society (APS) for over 20 years. Deirdre commenced her career as a teacher and as such has an exceptional understanding of the educational sector. Deirdre has a BA (Social Science) at Monash University and a post graduate in Child Adolescent Psychology from Melbourne University. Deirdre completed her Masters in Educational Psychology at the University of Melbourne, of which she is an Honorary Fellow. Deirdre is a board approved supervisor for both Masters and Doctorate Psychology students. With her interest in Autism Spectrum Disorder Deirdre has also sought ongoing studies in both the UK and the USA.

Deirdre's knowledge and experience has led to role as an consultant presenter on ABC News Breakfast and a Guest Speakers in both hospital and educational settings.



Lower your expectations

I am not talking about personal grooming or clothing choices during isolations... This is about realistic expectation about what we can and can't be expected to do as parents during this time. There has never been such a thing as the perfect parent and if you think there is someone close to that on your social channels than please do yourself a favour and unfollow them.

The parent award
goes to every mum
and dad who got
through this
pandemic



If your child engages in remote learning and likes the activities great! If it gets too hard take a break and try again tomorrow.



Try to be positive, pat yourself on the back for playing that game with your child you didn't really want to and for watching Peppa Pig for the 1000th time.



Pick your battles, rooms aren't always going to be tidy but the kids are happy



If you can be anything, be calm, be realistic and be flexible.

How to manage technology



Technology for Communication

Technology for communication is absolutely critical in lockdown and is most important for adolescents in bonding with their peers and critical for development. Social connection is the foundation for emotional wellbeing. Allow them to have safe options to socially connect with others using online communication is the new normal. Young children also need the chance to engage in social play, this could be a video with grandparents or a classmate, ensure they are supervised at all times.

Technology for Education

This is most likely your child's least exciting way to use technology although essential. Every child learns differently, if learning via Zoom Calls is not working for child, which is completely expected, you can supplement with other learning resources such printable worksheets, Learning Apps and ABC TV Education channel.

Technology for Creating

Not everyone will have access to fantastic arts and crafts. Lego sets or a musical instrument to meet our child's needs and desires during this time. However, to support child development we want to keep them engaged in creative activities during this times as this is known to reduce anxiety and stress. Utilise google to get resourceful, how to make our own playdoh slime, origami or even a cookie recipe.

Technology for Entertaining

Technology for entertainment is a great afternoon treat to wind down after the day. During COVID-19 although it is important that boundaries are put in place. Boundaries includes, only watching content that is for your age group, not in bedrooms and no purchases. Content that can watched together is also a great bonding activity during COVID-19 that provides relief to parents.

No phones or social media during class time for both kids and parents. Model the behaviour you want your child's teacher to exhibit.

How to homeschool



Get Organised!

Access your child's curriculum the day before, that way you can start thinking about how to tackle the learning. Online learning is new to many of us, make it as easy as possible for yourself by ensuring all links are loaded on the device and print outs are ready the night before.

Your child is not
going to fall behind
if they do not
complete all lesson
and tasks.

Make a List!

Make a list of all tasks to be completed and ensure there are lots of breaks in between. If there are tasks your child is unable to complete, move onto the next or take a break. Let your child tick off each task as this provides a feeling of satisfaction.

Working to a modified curriculum?

If your child works to a modified curriculum, ensure this is provided in advance from the teacher. If this is not available, make your own modifications to the lesson plan.

Incentivise

A great way to get through tasks is to provide a reward e.g. complete 3/5 tasks receive an ipad break for 15 mins.

Reduce distractions

Have a workspace free of all the fun stuff that could distract your child. Try and ensure this area is in a quieter part of the home if possible. Ensure all learning resources are in the one area, reduces time spent wandering off...

Take a break

When things get all too much, and yes there may be tears, take a break and come back in an hours time. If not, cease all work for the day and try again tomorrow.

What to do when it just isn't working



Break things down and focus on one step or question at a time



Use technology to help you! E.g. talk to text is a great tool which works as an online scribe



Do less, but do let your child do the tasks they are able to complete, builds their confidence



For tasks your child cannot do, adapt them or complete the sections they can do



Highlight questions/steps your child is to complete



Go back to familiar tasks they were doing earlier in the year

Children may get stressed if they feel they aren't 'doing the same as everyone else'. A great way to overcome this is to have a letter/email from their teacher stating that parents can adapt the work load

Coping statements for your child to practise

I will try and do work each day

I can tick off the tasks I have completed

I will send my teacher my work and she will tell me if it's okay

I can't see my teacher all the time, but I will check my schedule for the time he/she will be meeting with me on video

I just need to try my best

It doesn't matter what other children are doing

My teacher will be happy that I tried

My mum/dad are trying their best to help me with my schoolwork

What to do when your child keeps getting distracted



Do's

- ☒ Provide a quiet space for them to regroup when it gets too much
- ☒ Use visuals for schedules or directions
- ☒ Help the child complete the task
- ☒ Get your child involved in 'setting up' the task e.g. what materials do you need
- ☒ Break down large tasks into smaller subtasks
- ☒ Allow your child to complete most of the task on their own and provide them with a visual signal to ask for help e.g put their hand up
- ☒ Reward your child for keeping on task, even for a short period of time
- ☒ Provide your child with plenty of water and crunchy/chewy foods, this help with focus

Don't

- ☒ Have an overstimulated environment e.g. no tv, no young siblings around
- ☒ Complete tasks for your child
- ☒ Have your child working for long periods of time, breaks are essential
- ☒ Criticise your child when they fiddle with objects, items such as blutak or stretchy toys can actually keep your child focused



What to do if you're home-schooling more than one child

This is going to involve negotiation and flexibility, remember you cannot be everything to everyone

Allocate work area

Children working too close together will increase the chances of distraction, chatter and/or arguments. Separate working stations are ideal where possible.

Individual Assistance times

This will involve some coordination, although this is possible. Have a visual schedule that displays the times you are available for support to each child. Instruct them to move on to the next question/step until their support time. If you have to sit with your child for more than 30 minutes, the task is too hard and you should contact the school.

Headphones

Noise cancelling headphones, although are a luxury are very useful in open plan working environments and now home-schooling. Remember with video meetings, it is important that your child can receive instructions without competing noise.

Coordinate snack, lunch and brain breaks.

Some younger children or children with learning challenges will need more breaks and the chance to run around. You do not want this impacting other children who need to be working for a bit longer. Consider structuring these in a manner that suits the family and want to avoid arguments e.g. "this is not fair why do I need to keep working". Be preventative and have this scheduled ahead of time.

Troubleshooting

Will not do what I say	Use less words, a quiet voice and remember these phrases, “I need you to...”, “Let’s stay focused”, “That’s not appropriate”, “We need to be on task”
Will not stay in their seat	Use phrase, Where should you be sitting? Use a timer and reward minutes spent in seat. Provide frequent breaks and use a visual schedule so they know when the next break is.
Needs my help all the time	Use a card system e.g. red card turned over for help. On the visual learning schedule, marks time you will be available to help and tell your child to move onto the next step/question. Modify tasks so they can be completed independently and schedule a time to finish other tasks together. If the work is too hard, let the school know.
Interrupts me with questions	Encourage your child to have a go, provide your child with 3 question tokens they can use per session to ask you a question. Teach your child interruption etiquette, e.g. excuse me, I know you’re busy but... See above for more strategies.
Gives up too quickly	Make sure tasks are within your child’s ability, set goals on time spent on tasks not how many tasks. Decide prior to commencing, how many tasks they will try.
Refuses to get out of bed	Have two alarms set, 10 minutes apart. Pull up blind, open door and have TV noise within earshot. Sleep in time is paid off by enforcing an earlier bedtime or extra chores. Reward compliance to responding to the first alarm.
Gets teary and emotional	Acknowledge the feeling, solve the problem together to build their confidence, work out which tasks they can do independently and take a reset break.

Troubleshooting cont.



Gets angry and refuses to continue	Acknowledge the feeling, solve the problem together to build their confidence, work out which tasks they can do independently and take a reset break.
Does not understand the task	Focus on one part of the task at a time and complete the first one as a demonstration. Break down tasks and use visual cues.
Mum and Dad do not understand the task	Then no one does the task
Does not have the right tools/materials to complete the task	If you don't have what you need and you are unable to improvise then do not complete the task. If you child is creative let them investigate otherways to complete this.
Keeps turning off the camera during online classes	Contact the school/teacher, reward system for time the camera is on and ensure there are no distraction



Routines

Routines only work in a situation if they work for your family. Daily Schedules are useful, but you don't need to have timed segments for each part of the day. There are already so many rules and restrictions in place. Focus on the order of what is to be followed and this will help provide anchors throughout the day. In saying this there are two things I would strongly recommend. First it is essential to start with the family all out of bed, dressed and having eaten breakfast. Second, have an outdoor activity planned early.

On the following page, I have provided an example Daily Schedule as well as a template for you to create your own.

Sleep is essential for you as a parent

Getting a good night sleep is often overlooked. Why? When you home-school, your life is centered around your children. Many hours of precious alone time happen at night, and some of use run with this freedom with reckless abandon. When you have limited sleep and are cranky the next day, everyone suffers. A cranky home-schooling parent does no one any good. You know how much sleep you need, so get it.

It goes without saying that all children need consistent bedtime routines.

EXAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
BREAKFAST				
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY				
LEARNING TIME				
SNACK				
CREATIVE TIME				
LUNCH				
FREE TIME 1 ST HALF NO TECH 2 ND HALF TECH				
FAMILY GAME				
DINNER PREP				
FAMILY DINNER				
BATH/SHOWER				
FAMILY MOVIE				
READ/BEDTIME				

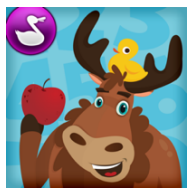


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Apps.

Free Numeracy App



Moose Math - Aged (Prep - Year 1)

Numbers, counting addition & subtraction, geometry and measurement

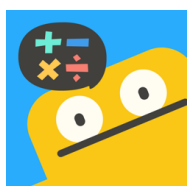
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Meet the Numberblocks - Aged (Prep)

Counting and number recognition

[Link:](#)



To Do Math - Aged (Prep - Year 2)

Levelled maths covering counting, number, calculation, logic, geometry, clocks and calendars

[Link:](#)



Math Multiply & Divide Training for Kids - Aged (Grade 2 - 3)

Beginners multiplication and division practice

[Link:](#)



10 minutes a Day Times Tables - Aged (Grade 3 - 6)

Multiplication skills

[Link:](#)



Feed the Monkey - Aged (Prep)

Counting, number recognition and one-to-one correspondence

[Link:](#)



Marbotic 10 Fingers - Aged (Prep - Year 1)

Counting, number recognition and simple addition to 10. Select so you do not have the smart numbers at the beginning)

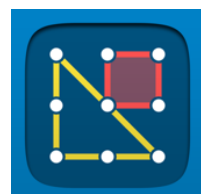
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Prodigy - Aged (Grade 1 - 6)

Levelled Maths Facts (Free parent account needs to be set up through www.prodigy.com)

[Link:](#)



Geoboard - Aged (Prep - 6)

Use to create shapes, measure perimeter, discuss irregular shapes or fractions

[Link:](#)

Apps. cont



Marbotic 10 Fingers - Aged (Prep - 1)

Practice, reinforce and extend math fact fluency- addition and multiplication

[Link:](#)



Prodigy - Aged (Prep - 6)

Tangrams can be used for more difficult concepts such as symmetry, angles, fractions

[Link:](#)

Free Literacy App



Meet the Alphablocks!- Aged (Prep)

Letter sounds and names

[Link:](#)



Starfalls AB

Recognise and learn sight words

[Link:](#)



Teach Your Monster to Read - Aged (Prep - 1)

Phonics and reading

[Link:](#)



Vooks- Aged (Prep - 3)

Animated Story Books (Need to sign up to a plan that is currently free)

[Link:](#)



ABC Kids Listen - Aged (Prep - 1)

A great app to listen to stories and songs

[Link:](#)



Eggy 100 HD - Aged (Prep -1)

Recognise and learn sight words

[Link:](#)

Apps. cont



Bluster

Vocabulary and Word understanding

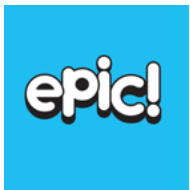
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Draw & Tell - Aged (Prep - 3)

Drawing, colouring and storytelling about what has been drawn

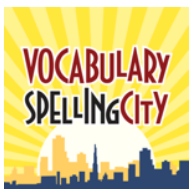
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Epic! - Kids' Books and Videos - Aged (Prep - 6)

Digital Library for Kids

[Link:](#)



Vocabulary Spelling City - Aged (1- 6)

Practice, reinforce and extend math fact fluency- addition and multiplication

[Link:](#)



Word Wagon- Aged (Prep - 2)

Letter names, sounds and spelling

[Link:](#)



Out & About - Aged (Prep - 1)

Recognise and learn sight words

[Link:](#)

Apps. cont



Bluster

Vocabulary and Word understanding

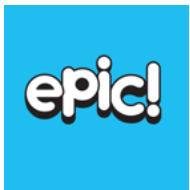
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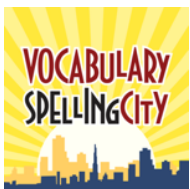
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Word Wagon- Aged (Prep - 2)

Letter names, sounds and spelling

[Link:](#)



Out & About - Aged (Prep - 1)

Recognise and learn sight words

[Link:](#)

For information please head to my website

www.deirdrebrandner.com.au or follow head to my following social channels



[linkedin.com/in/deirdre-brandner](https://www.linkedin.com/in/deirdre-brandner)



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