

SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN REMOTE LEARNING



An Authoritative Approach

Authoritative leaders provide high levels of both **structure** and **support** to those in our care. This leadership style contributes to supportive school and family environments. These authoritative leadership tools grounded in Positive Discipline offer suggestions for mutually respectful ways to **connect** with children while supporting **accountability** in time of Coronavirus remote learning.



Lead with Empathy

Learning in the easiest of times can be challenging. Our children are likely feeling overwhelmed, anxious and nervous right along with us. When adults validate children's feelings, children feel seen and heard.

- I'm feeling _____ about this. Are you feeling _____ too?
- I can understand if you feel nervous or anxious about this.
- Is there anything else?



Ask Questions

When we ask questions that begin with "what," "how," "where," and "when" in a *truly* curious tone, we support children in our care to contribute and build problem solving skills. Consider avoiding "why" as a question. Notice that questions beginning in "why" often elicit defensive responses instead of inviting reflection or intrinsic motivation.

- What would you like to work on first?
- What would help you now? Calling a friend, taking a break or emailing your teacher?
- Where in your materials have you seen this before?
- How can I support you?



Encouragement is Connection in Action

Rudolf Dreikurs said "A misbehaving child is a discouraged child." Adapting our frame to consider "misbehavior" as a cue for us to offer encouragement and support allows us to build connection with those in our care while supporting the growth internal sense of well being.

- I see your hard work and effort on this.
- I noticed you were willing to work through that difficult spot.
- We are going to get through this together, and ask for help if we need it.



SEL Chicago provides experiential learning in authoritative leadership including Positive Discipline to educators, schools, youth organizations and early childhood centers in both live and online settings. SEL Chicago's Founder, Kristin Hovious, is both a Certified Positive Discipline Trainer and author of *Our Brain Book*, a rhyming children's book to support adults and children in developing the skills of self- and co-regulation.

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Gather information

- Empower yourself to ask your child's teacher and school for help.
- Our educators have rich, deep experience with in-person instruction, and are NEW and GROWING in the skills of on-line delivery. This is an opportunity to model willingness to ask for help and empathy for others' learning.
- Understanding the tasks required of your child is now an added responsibility in an already demanding time.
- For younger children, is it possible to go through the child's work before the child is with you so you can help the child organize, and understand some of what's being asked of them?
- Anticipate your child's questions, learning styles, and learning differences. Model the skill of asking for help if you need it. This is *all* brand new - for everyone.



Allow Time for Building Routines and Learning New Expectations

Creating routines and clear expectations for activities is helpful in building structure around this new online way of learning.

How can your routines be visually supported?

Consider using walls, windows or other spaces to create visual calendars and clear expectations. Make sure that your expectations are understood by your child(ren). Make time for reflection and review.

- How can I help you?
- Would you like my review now or later?
- What questions do you have about this?
- What time are you working on math today?



Build Trust with Planning and Support

Co-creating plans and deadlines helps build the child's skill of accountability and problem solving.

- Younger Children - Here are the things we are being asked to do. What two things should you can tackle today, and the rest of the week?
- Children in Middle School and High School - What are the things you are being asked to do? What is your plan for completing those things this week?
- Co-create a daily agenda with clear expectations, timeliness, and deadlines.
- Use encouragement when deadlines are met.
- Completing work on time is a learned skill. Expect that children will not complete the plan on the first (or second or third) attempt.
- If plan is not completed, use as an opportunity to model self-regulation.
- Use encouragement to support growth. Ask "What was your plan?" or "What's one step you can do right now to move your plan forward?"