

Occupational Therapy Tips for Families

1. Routine

Follow a daily routine – make sure there is balance between work and play! Following a routine makes you feel safe and organized. Your child probably already has a routine they follow at school, so try to replicate as much of it as you can at home (i.e. shower in the morning, eat breakfast, complete schoolwork, break etc.)

2. Hygiene

Good hygiene is important for mental and physical wellness. Prompt your child to shower daily, change their clothes, brush their teeth twice a day, and wash their hands frequently.

3. Leisure/play

Leisure and play are important activities and they give our lives balance. With all this extra free time, it is important to participate in activities that are familiar and comforting while also trying new activities. Some activities might be:

- a. Exercise videos on YouTube (i.e. Just Dance, yoga, Zumba)
- b. Making art (i.e. building, drawing, painting, writing, signing)
- c. Watch a new show or movie
- d. Reading books, magazines, or comics
- e. Listening to music and podcasts
- f. Playing card or board games
- g. Play outside- make sure to check the weather first!

4. Independent Living Skills

Your child is learning a lot of independent living skills at school and can practice doing some at home. Here are some ways your child can practice different life skills tasks at home:

- a. Cooking/meal preparation – wiping down surfaces, washing dishes, chopping ingredients, measuring and mixing ingredients, finding and following a new recipe, make a snack independently, take inventory of food in the house
- b. Laundry- putting dirty clothes in hamper, sorting clothing, filling washer/dryer, pressing buttons to start the machine, folding clothing, setting timers to track laundry
- c. Money management- counting change and bills, checking bank account online,
- d. Home management- clean and organize bedroom, vacuum, sweep, clean surfaces
- e. Community mobility- safely crossing streets, looking for items in grocery store and identify the price

5. Sensory/Self-regulation

Since being home your child may be experiencing increased anxiety and stress due to the various transitions in this time of uncertainty. Your child uses a variety of coping skills

and sensory strategies at school to help remain regulated and focus on schoolwork. Here are some strategies they may use:

- a. Deep breathing- 4 counts in, 4 counts out
- b. Movement breaks- pacing, stretching, running, spinning
- c. Drink cold water or chew mint gum
- d. Use fidgets (if available)- a fidget can be anything you play with in your hand that provides sensory inputs
- e. Deep pressure squeezes- provide squeezes along the arms and hands to cause calming affect (can be done by another person or independently)
- f. Dim lighting and quiet environment