

# LEARNING COACH 101

*How-To Help Your Child(ren) be Successful in  
Distance Learning*

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As if being a parent wasn't a hard enough job, now, as so much (or all) of school is happening at home, you are taking on the important role of Learning Coach. The great news is that you will have help with the big stuff as you navigate this new educational environment that includes a support network of teachers, administrators, counselors, and family or friends. However, we know that the day-to-day stuff will fall to you, the Learning Coach! So, what can you do to make this easier for you and help your child(ren) be most successful?

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# MINDSET SUCCESS TIP: GIVE YOURSELF THE TITLE OF LEARNING COACH

When you are making plans and figuring out how to support your children in their work at home, it is helpful to give yourself a title (and one that is a little more helpful than “Super-Stressed-Out-Parent-Who-Doesn’t-Know-What-I-Am-Doing). By adopting the title “At-Home Learning Coach”, you get clarity on your role.

1. Let the teachers teach. They know what they are doing and are working really hard to teach in this new way and support their students and families.
2. Let your children learn. A moment of truth and grace: Your children will learn things this year. They won't be able to help it - that is just what kids do naturally (even if it doesn't always feel like it). Yes, they will have struggles, but struggles are also part of the learning process and they will figure it out - with the help of ALL of the people on their team.
3. Let the administration, school district, coaches, and counselors support you and support your children. They too are working double-time to make sure families are feeling connected and supported.

Your job as an At-Home Learning Coach at home is to primarily help facilitate the learning that is already taking place. (And we promise, it is taking place.)

# So, what is the role of an At-Home Learning Coach?



## An At-Home Learning Coach...

- Supports their students (children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, etc...) along their learning journey and to make sure they are getting the best education they can at this moment.
- Monitors their student's progress on assignments and in their classes.
- Communicates with their student's learning team of teachers, counselors, and administrative team (if they are younger students) OR encourages older students to communicate directly and often with their teachers.
- Encourages their child(ren) to become independent learners by providing at-home learning tools (technology, quiet space), organization tools (schedule), and time-management strategies.
- Provides grace and love for their child(ren) as they too navigate a whole new learning system.

# What a Learning Coach IS NOT...

- A Teacher who designs curriculum Solely responsible for the student doing their work - they are part of the equation
- Knowledgeable in all areas of their student's courses

While you will aid in these areas, these are not your primary responsibilities. Remember, you have a team of people either in the schools or in your online program, whose job it is to help you.

*Success Tip #1: Ask for help when you need it (in a kind and friendly way - #teachersarepeopletoo). Teachers, Counselors, and Administrators want to help. However, they won't know you need help if you don't reach out.*

*Success Tip #2: Our children often have a hard time asking for help as well. You can model this positive behavior in your own life AND also by checking in with your older students to ensure they are checking in with their teachers when they get stuck.*





# How much time do I need to plan to spend as a Learning Coach each week?

The answer depends on a few things:

- 1) If your child(ren) is in a full-time online program or if they are in a hybrid program within their school district
- 2) The age and grade level of your children. Younger children will need more support than older children. However, older children will need your support as well
- 3) The unique learning needs of your children.



A nice starting point of a general time frame for you to use as you plan your days, weeks, and months is that if your child is in an online program NOT attached to a district hybrid (part-time in school and part-time at home) program, you will need to spend:

- Grades K-5: 3 to 6 hours
- Grades 6-8: 2 to 4 hours
- Grades 9-12: 1 to 2 hours
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- \*Timeline adapted from K12.com



# Gifts of being an At-Home Learning Coach



- You will gain intimate knowledge of how your child(ren) learns best.
- You will learn more about the specific challenges and strengths that your child(ren) have in particular classes, motivation, focus, organization, technology which will help you better be able to support them as they continue along their educational journey and be a strong advocate for their school needs in the years to come.

# Parting Thoughts...

Life looks much different right now than it has in the past. For most of us, our routines have completely changed as a result of either now working at home, having been laid off, or losing access to family support.

We may feel like we are camping in life without the resources we have utilized in the path and that have made us feel successful - which means that for most of us, expecting this to be an A+ year for us AND our family, maybe is an expectation that we can let go of...at least for the next few months.

Instead, we can choose to keep a larger perspective on life and our priorities, knowing that this too shall pass and when it does, we will put things back in place, but for now, it is okay to also focus on:

- 1) Making sure our family is healthy and feels loved
- 2) Enjoying being together in a new way, and
- 3) Trying new ways of learning, living, and being together.

While this time period is incredibly challenging, one way to help ease the challenge is to let go of past life expectations and be open to doing and trying something new. Flexibility is key. Some days will go well and some days won't - and that is okay. Tomorrow is a new day. You can do this.

