

Working with your child during lockdown

Audrey Johnson, Educational Psychologist
Abigail Sterne, Educational Psychologist



Contents

- Self-preservation
- Routines
- Supporting learning
- Motivation and praise
- Managing behaviour
- Attention and Concentration
- Recommended resources, website, links
- Questions and Answers

Self-preservation –from education professionals

“I’ve just put myself in special measures”

“It feels a lot harder this time round; be kind to yourself - have time to yourself ”

“ ...We are fatigued, fearful, drained and overwhelmed at the prospect of home schooling yet again.”

Self-preservation

- There is pressure on teachers; this can be passed on to parents – so be realistic
- It is incredibly stressful for your children to try to learn this way. Prioritise wellbeing not productivity.
- Stay calm - they may take their frustration out on you. Step away - go to another room, breathe. Get outside when possible, even if just around the block
- Keep it in perspective
- Don't worry about what you haven't done, celebrate what you have done
- Consult your own support network

Routines

- Routines can provide a structure, promote co-operation and alleviate anxiety,
- Dressed and not in pjs – it is work time
- Make sure they've had something to eat and drink
- Designate a “work space” e.g. a table with a clear space and a set of pencils/crayons/felt tips/paper
- A bit of what they like, a bit of what school wants and a bit of helping with daily life to encourage independence
- Try short, defined sessions with an end point; e.g. “maths now, then play / then a snack. Wherever possible build in some outdoor / physical activity
- For younger children, include lots of play and relaxing time as well as work time. In school, children have lots of movement breaks and outdoor play
- Use visual schedules and time tables to plan your day / week together
- Allow your child to choose when you do the activities; give them a sense of control

Visuals

twinkl.co.uk	Label Here									
Monday										
Tuesday										
Wednesday										
Thursday										
Friday										



breakfast



brush teeth



computer



cooking



dinner



get up



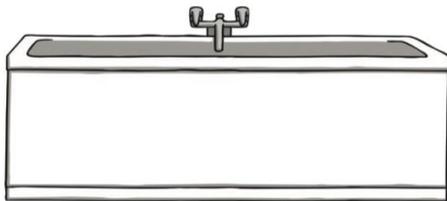
toys



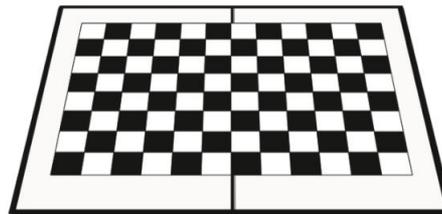
wash and
brush teeth



walk the dog



bath



chess



bedtime

Now

Next



ink savi

My choices

My choices

My choices

My choices

My choices

What is learning? - Supporting learning

- Learning in its widest context
- Thinking about how your child learns / what helps them learn (personalisation - metacognition)
- Importance of language development; learning by doing
- For younger children / those with speech and language difficulties - talk, talk, talk! about anything!
- If your child can't do the work, the likelihood is you won't be alone – so tell the teacher; seek the support you need
- Remember, in some countries, formal learning doesn't begin until age 7
- For years N-2 involve play as much as you can. Learning play is important. Play games together.

Motivation and Praise

- The vast majority of people enjoy and respond well to praise
- In general positive reinforcement works better and brings about more change than criticism / negatives
- Notice the positives; acknowledge even tiny steps of progress
- Make praise explicit and meaningful
 - “you wrote that sentence really well; I like that, that’s a great idea; you remembered that well; you couldn’t do that last week but now you can
- Validate their feelings and frustrations; acknowledge the difficulties, the negative feelings, what they are going through
 - “I can see that you’re trying your best and that this is a bit tricky”
 - “I’m wondering what I can do to help you” (joint problem solving)
- Try and be guided by what motivates your child; bring it in to their learning
- Immediate / cumulative / delayed rewards?

Managing behaviour challenges

- Managing challenging behaviour can be exhausting and feel demoralising. Persistent challenging behaviour is difficult for both you and your child to manage.
- Try to establish clear boundaries and routines; Follow through on consequences
- It's very difficult to learn in a high state of anxiety / agitation
- When your child is in a heightened state of anger / frustration is not the time to talk about what's gone wrong. You cannot reason when agitated. Everybody have a breather
- Try to stay calm, not to react back or argue. Give each other space and time
- Talk together at a calm point about what helps them stay calm. What could you both do differently?
- Help your child understand their feelings. Name them and explain what is happening in their body
- Don't 'sweat the small stuff'; choose your battles; tactical ignoring

A child's responses to a perceived threat



- A psychological threat can produce the same sort of response as a physical one
- Fight / flight / freeze
- Think about the body's responses to a threat ...
- Think about the brain's response to an immediate threat
- Think about your de-escalation strategies

Weathering the Storm - The Assault Cycle

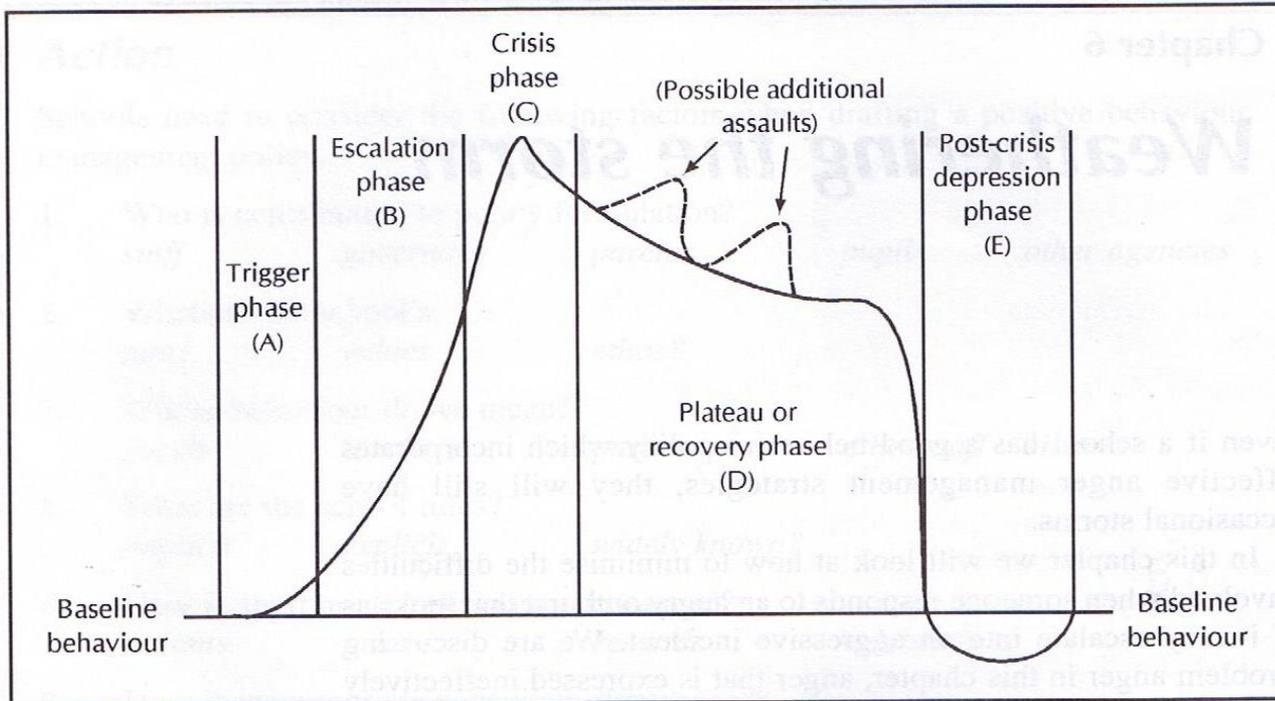


Figure 6.1 The Assault Cycle (from *Coping with Aggressive Behaviour*, Breakwell 1997)

Attention and concentration difficulties

- Huge variety in children’s ability to focus and concentrate; you know your child’s temperament – when do they concentrate best?
- Motivation is important; Some children do better with immediate rather than delayed rewards
- Remove distractions
- Think of your language and make it positive “lets look at this” rather than “stop looking out of the window”
- Ample movement breaks; relaxation breaks. Some children might need to fidget and move around; it helps them to focus. Some may be helped by a fidget object
- Use of timers and visuals; timed tasks
- Use the language that’s used in school – e.g. Now and next - Adult-selects / child selected tasks
- Computer learning sometimes helps – programmes provide immediate feedback
- Avoid flogging a dead horse!

Teenagers

- Pressure on teachers can be passed on to parents
- The chat function and banter can feel that you have a class of 30 pupils in your living room!
- Try to move to arms length supervision if possible. It may help to keep in ear shot
- Prioritise well being not productivity. This situation is incredibly stressful for your teenagers
- Try to keep the perspective of 'will it matter in 6 months time if my child didn't complete the entire French lesson this morning?'
- If needed, choose 1 or 2 lessons they will do with some degree of engagement and enjoyment that day (art, writing or whatever).
- Stay calm - they may take it out on you. Step away

Gaming/electronics

- What is their experience, rather than gaming is bad.
- Share their interest in what they enjoy about it
- Social gaming is also time spent with friends.
- Look for a compromise together

Q and A

- My children are 8, 6, and 3. I am occupied with work and home schooling the older two, and my youngest is missing her friends, her routine, and is regressing in behaviour. She's not sleeping, wetting, sucking her thumb. What can I do to make things better for her? She winds up spending most of the day crying.
- My child is anxious in large social settings and now seems calmer at home. Our family is all here safely together and the social stresses of school are almost non-existent. As this home period grows longer, I'm getting concerned about the difficulties starting up the regular school routine again.
- How do I help my child focus on a screen all day? The moment I turn to do something else (I also work full time) they are already doing something else. The teachers are unable to remind them to focus because they are also all online and can't see.

And finally ...

The most important thing is your relationship with your child(ren)

Remember to be kind to yourself



Sensory Activities for Home Learning Resource Pack



Sleep support

- **Seashell Trust offer free workshops about sleep and children and young adults (2-25yrs) with additional needs.** Sessions run throughout the year and are currently being delivered via Zoom:
- **Sleep Success** - A one day workshop offering an introduction into the behavioural approach to sleep. (22 April, 9.30am-1.30pm)
- **Sleep Better** - A five week course (one morning per week) giving parents evidence-based strategies as well as group support. (June 14, 21 & 28 June, July 5 & 12, 10am-12 noon)
- **Sleep Clinic** - A one to one intervention over a five week period, supported by a qualified sleep practitioner. (Please contact for availability)
- **Sleep Success for Practitioners** - This focuses on contextualising sleep issues and suggesting some strategies which may help. Aimed at practitioners working with families and/or children and young adults with complex needs. (April 19, 9.30am-1.30pm)
- These sessions are very popular, so book soon by contacting: outreach@seashelltrust.org.uk.

Resources for SEND (from Manchester's Local Offer website)

- **Teach Me Too** provides on-line learning resources for children with communication delay/special educational needs and have been designed with families in mind.
- **Parent/carer Home School Survival Toolkit** – [Tips around home schooling and taking care of your wellbeing](#) from Healthy Schools Manchester and the Manchester Local Care Organisation.
- **A-Z of Sensory Learning Activities:** [Special Education & Inclusive Learning's A-Z](#) has lots of ideas for sensory activities, like play with foil and material.
- **ChatterPack – Free SEND Resources:** ChatterPack is a voluntary-run, special educational needs and disabilities hub with free [SEND resources](#) for families and schools.
- **Healthy Schools Manchester:** [Primary](#) and [secondary](#) health and wellbeing challenges, like 'Draw Yourself Sunshine' and 'Happy Place'.
- **Home Learning For Visually Impaired Children:** Henshaws have put together a range of activities including quiz-making, baking and storytelling to help make learning at home fun. Explore their ideas [here](#).

- 
- One Education
Publishing Group Ltd
- **SEND Technological Resources:** Information on [SEND technological resources](#) to aid learning at home.
 - **Sensory & Messy Play Activities:** [Empowering Little Minds](#) has four free weeks of Parent & Teacher Support and Sensory & Play Training guidance, as well as Sensory & Messy Play Activities for children with SEND.
 - **Sensory Dispensary:** [Free resources created by two SEND teachers](#), aimed at children with profound and multiple learning difficulties.
 - **Sensory Projects:** A [bank of FREE resources](#) from Sensory Projects for those looking for activities to do whilst staying home and staying safe.
 - **Skills for Life Manchester:** The [SEND Independent Living Resource](#) is a great way of helping young people to identify and practise areas at home where they may need help. See the [library blog](#) for more information and links to useful resources.
 - **Special Needs Jungle Resources:** [SEND resources for learning at home](#), as well as coronavirus information.
 - **Ways to Learn Through Play:** This SEN Resources blog has [short You Tube videos](#) on different ways to learn through play, like activities with leaves and collecting rain.

Other Links

- Google Arts and Culture offers a huge range of learning experiences including virtual exhibitions, 360 videos, games and travel. Home webpage link here <https://artsandculture.google.com/>
- The Oxford University Press has developed some fantastic resources to develop literacy and Maths skills. Home webpage here <https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/>
- Oak National Academy online classes have nearly 10,000 free online lessons for Reception up to Year 11 Home webpage here <https://classroom.thenational.academy/>
- PE with Joe Wicks is back - starting Monday 11th Jan 2021 at 9am Joe will run 3 sessions a week (Mon, Wed, Fri). Sessions can be viewed on his YouTube channel PE with Joe Wicks
- Ruth Miskin Training have free videos to support speech sound development at different age ranges and for children new to English https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCo7fbLgY2oA_cFCIlg9GdxtQ
- Cosmic Kids have many fantastic videos to calm or energise <https://www.cosmickids.com/>
- Twinkl.co.uk
- Sparklebox.co.uk
- Resources here <https://www.southendlearningnetwork.co.uk/educationalpsychology>