

Advice for COVID-19 Home Educators

Most children being kept home from school due to the pandemic will miss their friends and routine, they may also be scared about what's happening around the world. The most important thing is to ensure that we support kids' mental, as well as physical, health. Here are some ideas to help you as adapt to the 'new normal'.

Homeschooling Registration

Where schools are closed, school families do NOT need to register for home education.

In states where schools are still open, speak to your school if you've decided to keep your children home. They probably have provisions for home learning at this time and can approve a leave of absence.

Home education registration is only required if you wish to home educate in the longer term (or in the unlikely event your school refuses permission for an absence). Registration requirements [vary from state to state](#).

Keep in touch with friends

Now you're home, use tools such as [Zoom](#) to facilitate online group gatherings.

Explore online gaming options where kids can chat online whilst they play together. Terraria and Minecraft can be great and

your kids may have ideas about other games that work well for groups.

Keep active

Being cooped up in the house makes kids stir crazy - they need a chance to burn off energy.

Encourage them to go out into the backyard regularly. Workout DVDs, yoga, and table tennis are good indoor activities. It's also a good time to pull out the totem tennis or rollerblades, and trampolines are great.

There may be other options as long as you comply with the current social distancing requirements.

You don't have to replicate school

There are many forms of education. Some families find a school routine works for them. Others quickly dispense with set hours, timetables, organised breaks and even school subjects.

If your school provides work to be completed, try and spread it out over the day, with breaks to eat, phone friends and pursue hobbies.

Victorians can download the old [Distance Education materials](#) free. These follow the Victorian curriculum.

Or you can think laterally. For many, home education is [very different to school](#); instead of one adult teaching



a group of children, the adult's role is one of facilitator and in many cases co-learner. Practical, hands-on learning is easy to facilitate at home and you can support your child's learning using what you have around you, for example:

- You can use measuring jugs, cups and water to learn fractions and percentages.
- Writing a journal, or a collaborative story with friends is a good way to practice English skills.
- The internet is a great source of inexpensive science experiments for all ages.
- [Many resources are currently free.](#)
- There are many free activities for [specific learning areas.](#)
- Visit our [Resources page](#) for more inspiration.

What if kids won't listen?

Rather than insisting that they do, try a different approach. Home educators are fans of 'strewing', leaving a variety of educational options around the home for kids to pick up and run with. 'Modelling' is also very effective. If a parent is sewing, watching a documentary, or planting a veggie garden, then children usually want to join in.

Learning happens all the time, and much of it is incidental. Talking, reading together, watching documentaries, observing nature, playing board games, crafting – these are all learning opportunities. They are not inferior to 'school work', just different.

What about teenagers?

As well as the ideas above, explore free online courses from providers such as [Khan Academy](#), [OpenLearn](#), [Coursera](#), and [edX](#). Many providers are making [some or all content free](#) in a response to the pandemic. YouTube has great options like [Crash Course](#), as well as tutorials about every craft/skill imaginable.

Focus on the positives

Being less busy can be a blessing, if we allow it to be. Spending more time together

as a family is often cited as a goal, the pandemic will allow us to do just that.

Be kind. Not just to your kids, but to yourself. Things may not go as you planned, but facing a global crisis is one way to bring perspective to our lives – don't sweat the little things.

Recognise the importance of community. Join neighbourhood and community groups online, share resources; organise a board game or book swap, share your skills via a Zoom meeting, create an online choir ...

Welcome!

We recognise that you're with us for a specific reason and at a unique point in history. Home education was never part of your plan. We don't expect you to home educate long-term and you don't need to join HEN to be welcome in the home education community.

Over 20,000 Australian families home educate. We are [a diverse community](#) who home educate for various reasons and in myriad of ways. Our usual busy range of activities has been suspended in the current situation, but some are moving online. We also have a wealth of knowledge and experience for you to draw on, and home educators around Australia are using social media to share ideas and support you:

- The HEN [facebook page](#)
- Facebook groups:
 - [Home school due to Virus & School Closures in Australia](#)
 - [Homeschoolers Supporting Families During School Shutdowns](#)
 - [Home Education Australia Community](#)
- Plus many [local groups](#) have an online presence.



www.home-ed.vic.edu.au