

# NEWSLETTER

February 2021

## Principal's Message: The importance of homework

Dear parents,

The word *homework* can make a student roll his or her eyes and cringe. Procrastination may develop. Students at home often fall into a routine of preferring to play videos or watch TV instead of doing their homework. As we begin the start of our second semester, SIS teachers are encouraging parents to help out by making sure students complete their homework. Why must you – our SIS parents – get involved? Homework is essential for students and well as for you. It enables you to know when your child is having difficulty with schoolwork.

It is well established in scientific journals that parental involvement in their children's education will support achievement motivation and success in school. Undoubtedly, parents are their children's first teachers, and they have a profound influence on children's developing perceptions of their own abilities, as well as their views on the value of learning and education.



Parents can support a school's homework policy with the following suggestions.

"I didn't have time to finish my homework." That is a common excuse that teachers hear from students in class. The answer is simple – "homework time." Set a regular time each day for doing homework. That time should be free of distractions such as television, video games, and phone calls. Another suggestion is to change the name to "schoolwork time." Have you heard the excuse, "I have no homework"? That excuse cannot work if there's "schoolwork time," meaning the student brings home a book to read, reviews previous tasks and assignments, and corrects mistakes on previous tests and quizzes by learning the answers. Practice makes perfect.

Another distraction is an improper studying environment. Sitting in the dining room as nearby people are talking and siblings are running around will only sidetrack your child. The best solution is to establish a "homework area." Be sure your child has a comfortable place to do homework that is also quiet and well lit. Please make sure all appropriate materials – such as paper and pencils – are available.

Incentives can work at times. Try offering a snack or play break before homework. Another concept is to use the snack as a homework-completion incentive.

Please let your child know that homework is important and valuable. Consistently review your child's homework during homework time. The responsibility of doing homework and finishing it correctly will make the difference of graduating to the next level, having poor grades forever in the academic transcripts, or not progressing to the next grade with classmates.

Best regards,  
**Larry Synclair**  
Principal

## 10 TIPS FOR PARENTS ABOUT OPTIMAL CHILD DEVELOPMENT

By JOANNE FOSTER, EDD

***Kids have been “at home” this past month — and parents continue to seek ways to support their children’s development. From Education magazine, here’s an edited article about 10 suggestions that are central to children’s well-being.***

How can parents help their children develop an authentic sense of self, competence, strong values, and the confidence to be creative? The following suggestions are *always* relevant, but perhaps amidst the challenges posed by the COVID crisis it is even more important to focus on ways to support children’s successes.



1. Success comes in many different forms. Encourage kids to find opportunities to do something positive whenever possible. To be kind, contribute to the community and to the greater good, and benefit others in some way.
2. Show appreciation for children’s accomplishments. Convey recognition, reinforcement and pride. Emphasize growth and progress. Help them find a good educational match
3. Help kids understand the perspectives of other individuals and groups. This includes being respectful of race, religion, sexual orientation, age, feelings, ability levels, and various differences among people—and how these differences can broaden ways of thinking and doing.
4. Demonstrate how to make connections between values and actions. For example, what it means—and what it looks like—to have integrity, and to be honest, patient, altruistic, kind, forgiving, empathic, and grateful.
5. Respect children’s privacy. Try not to hover or micro-manage.
6. Listen. Intentionally, and as a way to learn and understand what children have to say. (Or what they may be hesitant to say...)
7. During times of change, risk, or turbulence (such as that caused by the COVID-19 pandemic) be sure to take into account children’s personal concerns and feelings. Be available to answer questions, and to offer guidance and coping strategies. Be resourceful and acquire information if need be, and professional counselling if circumstances dictate.
8. Dilemmas and predicaments are inevitable. For example, these might have to do with conflicts, lack of motivation, the complexities of moral issues, or how to deal with emotional upheavals. Ensure that lines of communication are open. Demonstrate problem-solving and calming tactics.
9. Life balance is paramount. Many children struggle while trying to juggle various demands. Kids need ample time to rest, play, unwind, exercise, and just be kids.
10. Expectations should be clear, and well suited to a child’s areas of strength and weakness. It’s best to offer kids choice—to adopt a flexible range-of options approach to tasks—and to be responsive to children’s changing needs, interests, and concerns.

Parents are well positioned to help their children develop their capacities, invest effort, feel empowered, and become the best they can be. The tips above provide a solid framework and sensible reference for offering support and encouragement, so children can have a robust sense of self and learn to face challenges, now and into the future.

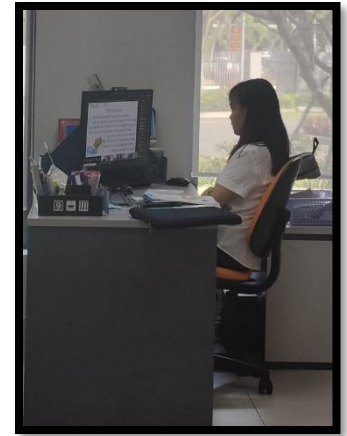
# Online teaching briefly returns



We hoped it wouldn't happen, but it did. Online teaching returned after government official issued the limited shutdown. Many thanks to the teachers for their continuous hard work.

The shutdown occurred after development of new coronavirus outbreaks in Vietnam on January 28.

Over 800 community-based cases have been confirmed in 13 provinces and cities since then, making it the most serious wave to hit Vietnam after the first-ever COVID-19 patient was announced on January 23, 2020.



Vietnam has recorded 2,401 coronavirus cases, including 1,502 local infections, as the last week of February, with 1,717 recoveries and 35 virus-related fatalities, according to the Ministry of Health's data.

I would like to make you aware of a few safety concerns I have noticed during HPE lessons in almost all classes.



By Aaran Meusen  
Health & Physical Education Teacher

There are a few main reasons for injury when playing sports:

Inadequate warming up

- Bad technique and body mechanics
- Bad equipment
- Rough play

Every lesson we start with a warming up, which is the most important part of the lesson. It is important for all students to participate and execute the exercises properly.

Just as in warming up, students are taught proper technique and posture. Not using proper technique and having bad posture can have all kinds of consequences. The most common is waste of their energy. Good technique means you can get more out of your sport with less effort. Worse is when bad technique causes them to fall and hurt themselves and wrong posture means that the tension of the movement is carried by their joints, tendons, and ligaments instead of the muscles that are made to carry that tension. They might not feel these kind of injuries right now, but those are the ones that tend to build up over time.

Another big issue is equipment and in this case I mean personal equipment, such as shoes. You cannot play sports on sandals or slippers. Please make sure your child has good shoes for HPE lessons. Shoes will support the feet and ankles while running, jumping, pivoting, etc. A good shoe will also cushion the steps. If students don't wear shoes, it will be uncomfortable to move around and kick balls etc. Some students do not put their heel into their shoes, but step on the back of the shoe and wear the shoes like slippers. This will damage the shoe, it will not support the foot, and it can make it easy to slip out of the shoe, next to the sole and twist or break an ankle. Last year, all classes practised tying their shoelaces. Still there are many students who are still not able to tie their shoelaces. One of the students stepped on his own laces while walking down the stairs and fell head first down the stairs. Luckily he was already at the bottom step, but this creates a real dangerous situation. The sentence that I use most in lessons is "Tie your shoes".

Please, help me make your child aware of these safety issues, so they can enjoy the HPE lessons in a safe way, and they can get more out of the HPE lessons.

## Feeling like a bossy parent? Time to reflect.

In the parenting section of *Psychology Today* magazine, here is an excerpt from Dr. Kirsten Bradbury's article, "Positive Parenting During Pandemic."



The authoritative parent is in charge, actively engaged, and providing for children's needs, but holds her power lightly. There are rules, but there are also exceptions; authoritative parents are flexible and responsive to changing circumstances. With an authoritative parent, children are free to express themselves and are included in decision-making in ways appropriate to their age and developmental status. Sounds good, but when we are stressed it's hard to stick to this middle-ground Authoritative style. Instead, stressed parents tend to drift toward the Authoritarian and Passive extremes of the parenting-styles continuum.

If you find yourself making a lot of rigid rules and demanding obedience, or yelling, you may have lapsed into Authoritarianism. You may wish to explore other ways to manage and discharge your very understandable anger and frustration without taking it out on your kids. If, on the other hand, you find yourself feeling down and unmotivated, you may wander into the trap of passive parenting. I feel you. It's easier to just let them eat ice cream and watch screens all day. But we can't just give up. They still need real meals, clean sheets, and hugs. They need lessons and playdates, with all the social

distancing complications. They need time outside. They need to be supervised. Constantly, continuously, endlessly supervised. Don't give up! Staying actively engaged in your kids' lives is worth the trouble.

If you're serious about making a positive home environment, you must take care of your own mental health. Self-care isn't selfish: Parents must find patience, or everyone will be miserable. Life cooped up with children requires deliberate attention to managing our mood. Start by regaining control over your social media exposure: Yes, there's lots going on in the world you need to keep track of, but you can put your phone away most of the time. Revisit sleep and whether you might be able to improve the amount or quality of sleep you're getting.

And be sure to treat yourself to little breaks, from the children and their mayhem, or from your work, or both: Take a solo walk around the block, savor a cup of tea, write in a journal for a few minutes. Try some videos of mind-body techniques. There has never been a better time to learn yoga, meditation, systematic muscle relaxation, or positive visualization. Kids can learn these self-regulation tools, too

Here's another effective adaptation: Try to soften up. Be extra gentle with your kids. Remind yourself often that they are small and young. Speak softly, forgive easily, delight in their noise and mischief. They may not seem sweet and precious when they are projectile vomiting at 3 AM, pestering you for more video, lying about having brushed their teeth, or spending money you don't have, but your children are the smallest now they will ever be. Look back at a few old photos from even a year or two ago—look how young they seem, how quickly the illusion that they are "big" recedes into the past. They are developing fast, and their formative years are right now. Love and appreciate your kids, and have mercy on them. Spare them your big adult problems.

They need you to put them first and be as kind and gentle and patient and tolerant as a person could possibly be.