

LIFE

The role parents play with children attending classes at home

Home » Life » The Role Parents Play With Children Attending Classes At Home

Owing to the Covid-19 pandemic, Thailand's educational sector has had to transition from classrooms to online learning. As per the Office of the Basic Education Commission (Obec), schools must continue using online learning/teaching methods through the first semester of the 2021 academic year given the surge in infections.



For this new system to be successful, cooperation is required between the Education Ministry, school principals, teachers, students and most importantly, parents, who need to spend more time understanding the change in their children's needs.

When a child, especially the very young, has to study online, it inevitably becomes the parents' duty to provide the resources and manage the setup. This in many cases becomes challenging because remote study is still a new concept.



Children also must adapt to the new set up and change in their learning environment. Also, the lack of physical activity may cause additional stress for children. Online learning may not be suitable for young children, but most of us have no choice but to adapt to the “new normal”.

To make online learning effective for young children, parents must develop methods and techniques to get their kids happily involved in learning by doing the following:



Start with an open mind

Parents must open their minds to online learning, so they can make adjustments to ensure positive outcomes.

They should encourage their children to practice social skills, albeit virtually, by interacting with their teachers and friends.

Online learning also helps develop children's IT skills and parents should set up a variety of online activities daily.

With the absence of school, children may start losing the discipline of waking up early, getting to school and sitting in their classroom focusing on what the teacher is saying. Parents, however, must be open-minded and accept that learning online can be more difficult, especially when children do not have other classmates sitting with them.

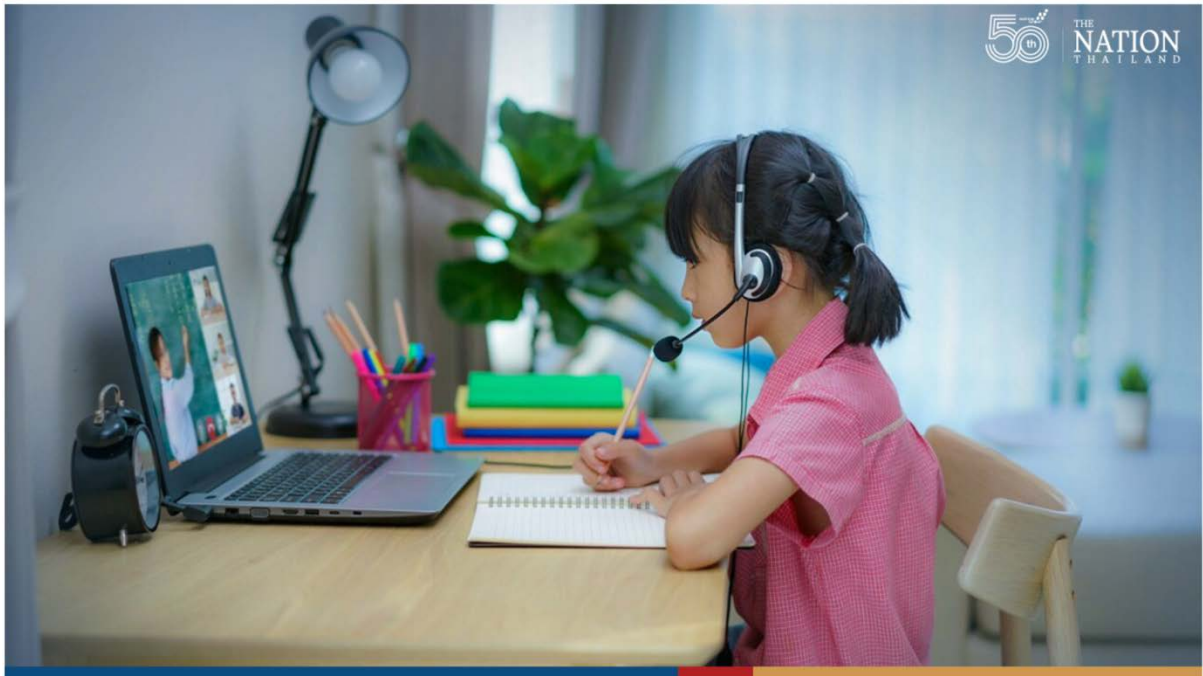


Setting up a schedule

Firstly, parents must know and understand their children's concentration and attention level, as well as ability to learn certain subjects.

Without the need to go to school, a child's daily life changes completely. They have more free time, and they may become fussy or refuse to pay attention when their class begins. To avoid this, parents should set up a daily "activity schedule" for their children.

Getting children involved in setting up a schedule that covers activities like waking up, studying, playing, eating, bathing, resting and going to bed will also give them a sense of purpose.



The second factor is setting up the right environment. Parents need to provide a suitable spot for their children to sit and study. The desk and chair should be of the right size to ensure the child has the correct sitting posture. The study area should also be quiet, not crowded or have any stimuli that may distract the child. School supplies should also be available and ready to use.

Parents must also understand teaching styles and coordinate with teachers to learn about their children's potential, so appropriate arrangements can be made.

Parents also need to understand technology because online learning can be conducted via different devices, including computers, notebooks and tablets.

These devices and learning methods may be new to both parents and children, and it may take time for them to learn about the applications required for distance learning. Parents must also have to learn how to set up parental controls on the internet, but most importantly, they must set up rules for their children to follow.



Pay attention

Parents must also explore their own physical and emotional readiness, including their stress levels. Keep in mind that being irritated, stressed or losing your temper can affect your children's studies. If parents are able to control their emotions, stay calm and cope with situations, children will also learn to do the same.

Pay special attention to preparing your child for online classes. Normally, children have activities before starting classes such as breakfast with friends, playing and doing morning exercise routines.

Parents should also set up similar activities for children to do before they start their online classes, such as doing some cardio exercise.

Spending at least 20 minutes on physical activity, such as running, cycling or kicking a football will help prepare the body and stimulate the brain to release dopamine and norepinephrine, key neurotransmitters associated with attention, concentration and self-control. However, do not do too much heavy exercise or it may make the child tired and sleepy.

Parents must also understand that children cannot be expected to always focus on the screen. In classrooms, children have a lot of distractions, and it is normal sometimes for them to lose interest in what is being taught.

Hence, parents should focus on what will keep their kids engaged as well as whether their children are understanding the lesson and if they can answer questions.

Parents should also do away with negative words like "no, don't, not or stop" to prevent children from developing a bad attitude towards learning. For instance, sentences like "why don't you listen to your teacher" or "don't be silly, baby" will make them anxious and stop them from wanting to learn.

Instead, parents should show appreciation to their children for focusing on their studies and completing their assignments.



Many parents think their children get to interact with their teachers and classmates during classes, so no other activities need to be planned.

However, activities are necessary, not just for helping children relax after school but to also help them develop and strengthen familial bonds.

However, the most important thing is caring and realizing that online classes alone cannot help with children's cognitive development.

For this, parents can invite their children to read, describe the environment around them or practice daily routines. Children should also be given simple household chores.

But the most important job for parents is to be by their children's side when they are in trouble because for children, their parents are always their "important teachers, friends and toys".



By: Keerathi Oanmun, Occupational Therapist

Faculty of Physical Therapy, Mahidol University

Published : August 02, 2021

By : The Nation