



Dr. Debbie Pushor

Learning at Home During a Crisis: *The Role of the Parent/ Guardian*

Commonly Asked Questions

Thames Valley District School Board

The following questions were questions that were common questions that Dr. Debbie Pushor did not have the opportunity to answer. To hear all of the questions that she did have the opportunity to answer for our families/participants please listen to the recording of the live event posted for your viewing.

Q How does a parent work with educators who struggle with parent led on line learning?

A: Parents/guardians who are struggling with any part of the on-line learning should reach out to their child's teacher(s) to express their concerns. Together, educators and parents/guardians need to determine what will work for each family situation. Educators are selecting approaches to teaching but need to hear from parents/guardians on what is and what is not working.

Q When are the teachers going to provide at-home work and lessons that is somewhat equivalent of being in school?

A: It is very challenging to provide the same educational experience a student would have at school during the 'learning at a distance'. Schools are equip with many resources and learning materials that families would not be expected to have which assist in facilitating the learning. It is also recognized that every family has a different schedule during these unique times. Educators need to differentiate their learning strategies and expectations to meet each student and their family where they are and with the right balance.

Q My son is struggling with the organization of his work - he can get many e-mails in one day and doesn't know how to prioritize. What can we do to help him be more autonomous and independent with this?

A: Depending on the age of your son, if he is a secondary student then he needs to determine a schedule that will work for him (ie. certain time allotted for each subject and focus just on that subject during that time). If there is too much work to manage then perhaps it is him or a parent/guardian reaching out to the teacher to let them know that there is a lot of work and it is overwhelming. Sometimes educators provide more work in order to ensure that there is enough but also realize that it may be too much for some students. The key to success during this new learning is for the communication to be happening between the teachers and the family.



How do you reconcile the expectations of teachers for elementary students to complete new learning and to hand in assignments with the informal experiential life learning Dr Pushor is proposing?

A: If some of the work requested from a teacher does not get completed because there was other learning taking place for a student then the teacher should be made aware of this. Teachers appreciate knowing that families are making other choices for their child and that other learning opportunities are taking place. Teachers love it when parents/guardians/students share with them what they are working on or doing during their time away from school.



My teenage daughter is really struggling mentally being stuck at home and trying to find the motivation to do not only school work but just basic everyday self care etc. Do you have any suggestions on how to support her in her schooling and mental wellbeing?

A: Please communicate with your daughter's Principal or teachers of challenges that she may be facing. As a system, we do not want students to become overwhelmed or anxious because of their school work. Reach out to the school to make sure that they are aware and then they can help to take away some of the anxiety. Also, the TVDSB has excellent resources on their website – on the main page there is a section titled 'Mental Health and Well-Being' which has a wealth of information available for students/families to access.



How much of remote learning will impact report cards, regarding grades?

A: The Ministry of Education has clearly stated that any remote learning shall not negatively impact a student's grades. It is recognized that each family has a significant amount of pressure and challenges placed upon them during these unique times and no student's 'grades' should have to suffer or be negatively impacted due to the different way that learning is occurring. Students do have the ability to improve their marks. Although marks are not to decrease they definitely can increase and improve. Therefore, students are encouraged to continue with their learning in order to improve on their skills and their grades.



My daughter has a learning disability which causes her high anxiety about being behind other kids. She feels she has to complete her online work but is upset by needing to get help from her father or me. She also pushes back when we suggest learning can take place in ways other than the assignments being handed out?

A: Reassure your daughter that each student is learning differently right now and is getting some form of help and/or support from their parent/guardian. Also communicate with your daughter's teacher about her frustrations because they may be able to reach out to her more regularly to offer additional support.



It is recognized that parent engagement is a key factor in the enhancement of student achievement and well-being.