



**WVU**MedicineChildren's

## **Parenting Recommendations**

### Self-Help Skills and Chores around the House

- Create a schedule (visual with pictures or written out) with daily tasks for your child to complete. Allow them to mark off the tasks as they go so they know what is next. When they complete the list, consider providing some kind of reward. This does not have to be a tangible item, like a new toy or a popsicle. This might be choosing the next game for family game night or choosing the book to read at bedtime, whatever your child is motivated to work for. Visit [www.do2learn.com](http://www.do2learn.com) for free visual schedules to download.

If your child is overly active and has a lot of energy, consider the following:

- Allow your child to stand at times while working
- Provide opportunities for activity – this might be a few jumping jacks, getting up to get a glass of water or a snack, or running a lap around the outside of the house (download the Go Noodle app for great activities your child can complete inside)
- Give your child many short breaks – this will help them better focus on the tasks at hand
- Remind your child to double check their work
- Provide fun, physical activities, even if the work is not complete
- During some tasks, have a defined “spot” for your child to stay in, if needed
- Provide physical prompts when needed (tapping the paper, scooting your child closer to the table) to help with focus
- Place visual cues in the room to limit impulsivity (e.g., red stop signs in strategic locations, tape lines to identify spots to stand, carpet squares to define personal space, color coded folders for different school subjects, designated places for personal items that are labeled)
- Take charge of the environment by strategically arranging the room to promote positive behavior (e.g., laying out the items he needs to complete his daily hygiene routine in the order that the items are needed; eliminating distractions in the room during school time) can be helpful

If your child has trouble paying attention and focusing, consider the following:

- Enforce rules consistently
- Have pre-established consequences for misbehavior and follow through with them
- Remain calm, state issue, do not debate or argue – this will only escalate the behavior
- Avoid criticism and ridicule – off-task behavior is not always intentional
- Provide immediate praise for good behavior
- If your child is impulsive, ignore the minor, inappropriate behaviors
- Use time-out if needed
- Provide structure to activities and tasks
- Simplify rules so your child knows what is expected of him or her
- Focus on their positive behaviors
- Provide warning for transitions or new tasks
- Allow flexibility in the position, manner, and location in the room when they are completing their work (that is, allow him or her to lay on the floor, stand at the table, etc.)
- Engage in active learning experiences that are hands-on
- Give only 1 or 2 directions at a time

## General Tips

- Set up the environment to reduce difficulties and increase positive behavior.
- Focus on the behavior you want your child *to* do, not what you *do not* want them to do. If you want your child to use an inside voice, praise her for using her inside voice. Catch them being good!
- Make your expectations clear. It is hard to follow the rules if you don't know what the rules are. Ensure that the consequences of misbehavior are clear, as well.
- If your child misbehaves, provide the consequence as soon as possible. Make sure the consequence is mild and presented immediately and consistently. If the consequence is removing something (e.g., access to tablet, no dessert), make sure your child knows how long this will last and what they can do to earn the privilege back.
- Provide clear directions.
- If a situation is coming up that might be a problem for your child, pre-teach them about the situation and behavioral expectations. Talk them through what is going to happen and what is expected of them. Consider role-playing the situation for practice.
- Model expressing emotions using your words. This will help your child learn how to express their emotions verbally.
- If your child has difficulty with emotions and emotional regulation, label their emotions. If your child is upset, say, "You're upset because it's time to turn off the TV." If your child is happy, say, "You're excited for snack time!"
- Try to offer choices when you can. This will help your child feel a sense of control and decrease the likelihood of pushback if they do not want to do something.

## Local Resources

- COVID-19: What You Need to Know - *WVU Medicine* <https://wvumedicine.org/covid/>
- What You Need to Know about Coronavirus - *West Virginia University Health Sciences Center* <https://coronavirus.wvu.edu/>
- Monongalia County Health Department, (304) 598-5100 - <https://www.monchd.org/covid-19.html>

## Helplines

- **WVU Medicine J.W. Ruby Memorial Hospital** has established a phone number for patients to call if they have respiratory or flu-like illness that they believe could be related to COVID-19. **Patients can call 304-598-6000, option 4, to speak with a staff member.**
- **West Virginia Child/Adult/Domestic Violence Abuse Hotline** 1-800-352-6513
- **Help4WV** 844-HELP4WV – Helpline for West Virginians struggling with addiction or mental health concerns, Available 24/7
- **West Virginia Circle of Parents Network** 304-595-7087 <https://teamwv.org/circle-of-parents-landing/>
- **National Alliance on Mental Illness**, Crisis Helpline: 800-950-6264 or Text NAMI to 741741 Available 24/7 <https://www.nami.org>
- **National Parent Helpline** 1-855- 4A PARENT (1-855-427-2736), *Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM* <https://www.nationalparenthelpline.org/>
- **Parental Stress Line** 1-800-632-8188, Available 24/7 in all languages <https://www.parentshelpingparents.org/>
- **National Child Abuse Hotline** 1-800-422-4453
- **Crisis Text Line** Text START to 741741
- **Girls & Boys Town National Hotline** - Parenting and Child Mental Health Support, (800) 448-3000
- **National Hopeline Network** (800) SUICIDE
- **National Youth Crisis Hotline** (800) 442-HOPE (4673)
- **SAMHSA National Helpline** (800) 662-HELP (4357)