

5 tips to help you cope in case of school closures

 By Louise Schoonwinkel

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Covid-19 infection numbers are on the rise again, which means that more stringent lockdown regulations could follow.



This might include the closure of schools, and the return of more regular remote learning again.

In fact, several schools have already taken the step to start closing partially or fully amid community or localised outbreaks. In addition, many parents may be taking their children out of school in a bid to protect themselves.

For many parents, this is familiar territory by now, but for others, they may need some extra advice to help them get through this period.

Here is some advice from us at Optimi Home, the company that operates South Africa's biggest homeschooling provider Impaq.

1. Have a conversation

Firstly, have a conversation with your children to make sure that they are calm and that they understand what is going on regarding the current situation. By now, many children may have a better grip of this situation, but it's still important to try to reduce any possible anxiety, while also communicating that learning will now take place at home for the next few weeks.

2. Learning packs

If your child's school has handed out learning packs, make sure you have them on hand. If possible, look through the packs and search the internet to see if there are ways to supplement the learning topics with e-learning, especially if it's free e-learning resources. There are also many providers out there who offer free e-books. One local South

African example is that of this e-book library from Optimi Classroom, which consists of 45,000 free e-books.

3. Stay organised

Being organised is critical. Make a schedule that you and your children agree to and stick to it. You don't have to follow a strict timetable to complete academic work throughout this period, but having a plan does help. If you need assistance with setting up a timetable, we have previously put together this simple daily schedule that can guide you and your children with staying on track during school closures. Bear in mind that you might not be able to stick to a timetable if someone in your household is sick, needs to return to work, or do other activities. Your child will then have to adapt the schedule and complete the academic work at another time. However, even loosely sticking to a timetable will help everyone know what is expected while ensuring that learning takes place.

4. Importance of playtime and hobbies

It's also critical to ensure your children are engaging in physical activities such as playing in the garden or even going for walks. You can add playtime into your timetable as a reward for completing schoolwork. Apart from this, you can also encourage your children to take part in hobbies or even certain extracurricular activities, where it is deemed safe from a social distancing perspective.

5. Extra help

Finally, if you feel you need extra help and resources, look to credible homeschooling providers out there that follow the CAPS curriculum. Homeschooling providers can offer a structured approach to learning as well as guidance on what to teach and when. There are independent tutors across the country who can meet virtually to help guide you and your children during this time.

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