



Day 18 of the Corona Virus Lock Down

It took me a day to wrap my head around the idea that there will be no school for the rest of the 2019-2020 school year. It didn't seem possible, much less practical, to just up and suspend school. I was curious how kids were receiving this news so I went to my source --- a 15-year-old who prides himself on being "in the know." As I expected, he wasn't too distressed by the news. It was evident that he had already ran this topic past his trusted cohort (thanks to social media). The consensus was – "great news!" Then an interesting thing happened. The longer we talked about the subject of no school, the more questions started to surface (and a hint of panic set in).

"Does that mean we go to school this summer?"
"Will I have to repeat 9th grade?"
"When am I supposed to see my friends?"

"Great questions," said I, followed by the hollow words, "I don't know." I admit that I felt extremely incompetent in answering his concerns, but I chose not to beat myself up, too much. The simple truth is that I, nor anyone else, knows what will become of the school year.

Here's somethings I do understand and hope to offer these words of support as you face similar questions in your house. Our country's education system is founded on providing and preparing a generation of students for the challenges they will face later in life. We live in a freedom-loving society and our right to learn will not be denied. If the academic landscape changes for a short time, our collective ingenuity and motivation will rally and meet our needs. So often we look at the school experience through the lens of traditional learning. Still, learning experiences can be found in unconventional approaches. During this hiatus from our normal life let's spend some time and inspire our children to learn though our personal wisdom and sharing opportunities for life lessons. Ordinary, daily tasks may turn into great approaches for stimulating a child's mind and inspiring a child to seek out further learning.

By using everyday household chores and obligations, a child can be an active participant in learning new skills and developing existing talents. At the same time, these activities can heighten the child's perspective of self and build confidence. Let's look at how these daily activities can make learning experiences:

Meal preparation is a good exercise in learning about weights and measures, not to mention budgeting. Baking is a great way to understand chemical reactions. Daily household repairs can build confidence for future DIYers as they learn about the physics of water, electricity and carpentry.

Don't be afraid to step into the learning process with your child. Think about hosting a virtual book club with your child and two or three of his friends. Many books are available on line, and using an app like Zoom or Houseparty allows everyone to join the conversation from the confines of their own living rooms. Nervous about using these technologies – ask your child for assistance, then everyone learns something.

Please keep sending your suggestions for future topics – I enjoy hearing how you and your household are doing.

Wishing you continued health and happiness,

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