



EDUCATION AND COVID-19

Your best efforts are valuable and important to your children

Whether you have formal education or not, you are the most important adult in your child's life. You know a lot about your child; what makes them sad and what makes them happy or interested. You know what makes them scared and how to comfort them. You love and care for them and together you have built the foundations to enable your child to go out into the world. As a parent or primary caregiver you are the first educator of your child.

You are not expected to become a substitute teacher

You are in partnership with the teachers and the school. Your role as a parent is to support your child through their learning by creating a space for her or him to explore their interests, develop ideas and ask questions. Learning at home will not be the same as it is at school. This period of lockdown is a chance to make stronger some of the basics that are needed for your child to do well and enjoy school. A good relationship with your child can help them learn. You can build on this relationship using some of the helpful info offered by M4M. These can be found at www.messagesformothers.co.za.

How can you support your child as they return to school?

Your child has a right to quality basic education, no matter what school they go to and whether you are paying school fees or not. It is important to remember that if you are worried that your child is not getting the support they should be getting from their school during the lockdown and beyond, you have the right to ask questions and propose solutions. You should discuss any concerns with your children's school and teachers. As a parent, you can help them develop more positive attitudes and behaviours towards returning to school. Show an interest in their feelings towards school and what they are learning and try to be positive when discussing school and teachers.

Supporting your child's feelings as they return to school:

- Let them know it's normal and ok to feel scared about going back to school
- Allow them to talk to you about how they're feeling
- Ask them about how things have changed at school.
- Know that they might behave in ways that are different to their usual behaviour.
- Use the tips in the other M4M resources to help you understand and deal with any behaviour changes

Supporting your child's health and safety practices when they return to school:

- Wash their hands frequently, always with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Not touch their eyes, mouth and face
- Sneeze or cough into a bent elbow or tissue, and to discard the tissue safely in a bin with a lid, then wash their hands immediately
- Not tease anyone about being sick
- Tell their teacher or you if they feel sick.
- Find out what the school has put in place to protect learners and teachers from COVID19 related risks. This should include break times and in the classroom. Discuss any concerns you have with the school.

