



27 March, 2020

Dear RHAC Community,

As we continue through this time of online learning for our College, I want to provide regular updates to families rather than our weekly newsletter. Our staff have been working tirelessly to ensure that all students have meaningful opportunities to engage in online learning and I am deeply grateful to them all for their efforts in this regard. Moving to this new platform certainly will not be without problems along the way, but I am greatly encouraged by the level of engagement of our students right across the College with this new format of learning.

I also want to acknowledge that this is a particularly challenging time for parents in terms of coping with all of these changes within our households as well as the financial challenges that will no doubt be impacting a number of families. The Anglican Schools Corporation Board are certainly also aware of these pressures and will be sending through communication in the coming days to reassure of their practical support.

Additionally, managing expectations of working from home yourselves while overseeing online learning for one or more children can present some difficulties. We are so grateful for the positive messages that many are sending through to teachers along the way about the way in which students are engaging at home and some of the novel approaches that some are taking to make the experience interesting for their children.

I have included some tips that have come from various sources that you may find helpful as we progress into our second week of our online learning program.

### **Supporting parents during home learning**

"Over the coming weeks, you will no doubt see an increase in behaviour issues with your kids. Whether it's anxiety, or anger, or protest that they can't do things normally — it will happen. You may see more meltdowns, tantrums, and oppositional behaviour. This is normal and expected under these circumstances."

### **Some tips:**

**Prioritise your child's wellbeing:** "Great learning happens when children feel happy, safe and secure. Provide your children with reassurance and love."

**Keep to a routine:** "Children need normality, familiarity and structure."

**Limit tablets, phones and TV:** "It will be important for friends to stay in virtual contact with each other as long as interactions are friendly and supportive – but avoid an unhealthy overreliance on screen time in all of its guises. Too much screen time has very negative effects on physical and mental health and it disrupts sleep patterns as well." Clearly, screen time limits that may have been in place prior to our online

learning period should be adjusted to allow children to participate in this learning as well as have a reasonable time for their own leisure, while also encouraging outdoor and non-screen activities.

**Don't expect children to work non-stop:** "The younger the child, the less time they can sit and learn. Frequent breaks are important for students of every age."

**Praise children's efforts and behaviour, not their achievements:** "Positive constructive praise that targets effort, behaviour and specific aspects of a child's work is much more powerful than just saying 'well done for completing your English'."

**Go easy on yourself.** Do what you can. These are difficult and uncertain times for parents and children. Parents will feel stressed, and children will, too. Talk about this with your child, explain how you manage stress, and invite children to help think through ways they can be more helpful or ways you can both make a difference in your own community or family. Skype with older relatives or invite them to Zoom in for dinner one night. Seek out support. Ask friends and relatives what they are doing to keep busy.

**If you can, have fun.** Build a fort. Have an indoor picnic. Take a walk. Make a pie. Create playlists. Have a dance party in the kitchen. Write funny tweets about how hard this is. Try to find a rhythm or a time when you can get the most work done and maximise this. In a world where children often feel over-scheduled and overwhelmed, try to frame this time as a break from the stresses and pressures children face.

As we continue to receive updates from our Government, we will continue to provide information to you regarding the delivery of our programs to assist you through these unprecedented times.

With kind regards,

Peter Fowler  
**Principal**

*"My salvation and my honour depend on God; he is my mighty rock, my refuge. Trust in him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge."*  
**Psalm 62: 7 - 8**