

## Survival guide for parents and carers

### -home learning-

**April 2020**

1. Don't be too ambitious! Think about chunking work - learning at home is more intensive than in a classroom with lots of people to discuss with.
2. Consider 30 minutes maximum a day per subject, ideally split into smaller sections, and don't attempt to do every subject every day.
3. Think about what the outcomes are of what you are getting young people to do. You might need to cover the same topic several times before they understand it - don't worry if they don't appear to "get it" first time! You can always try a different resource.
4. Be clear in your expectations of what you want young people to achieve. Know what success criteria is (which might not be just having the right answer, but young people asking questions).
5. Any engagement with science, maths, design and technology, engineering and computing is good. Don't feel guilty about allowing young people to watch a wildlife documentary, or browse parts of the internet. You could set some challenges around these as well, such as making a simple poster about how meerkats live and how they are adapted to their environment.
6. Encouraging young people to help out with cooking and cleaning can be really useful - being able to follow a recipe, read labels, sort out clothes, group and tidy up toys can all be useful learning. With older children, encourage them to follow a recipe or make something that the whole family can eat. Encourage them to do this as independently as possible and take responsibility. Ideally work towards a regular day or days in the week when they plan and make the main meal for everyone.
7. If you download learning materials, have a look through them to make sure you understand the content. Many schools will provide advice, but the resources on the home learning section of [stem.org.uk](http://stem.org.uk) have some useful notes to help parents and carers to get the best out of them.
8. Don't be afraid to say you don't know the answer to something. Encourage young people to write down the questions you cannot answer between you - this could be a good task then for them to explore and find out for themselves, or ask a friend or teacher.
9. If possible, use time outside to engage with STEM activities, such as when you are on a walk or bike ride as part of your daily exercise. Try and count the number of different tree types, or work out how far/fast you have walked.
10. To have a sense of what young people should be learning, it may be worth downloading the National Curriculum for each subject as appropriate from here: <https://tinyurl.com/qjdxyp> (for England) then you can use these to help you plan broad coverage of what is appropriate and age-related for your child.

STEM Learning operates the National STEM Learning Centre and Network, alongside other projects supporting STEM education [www.stem.org.uk](http://www.stem.org.uk)

11. Create a purposeful environment. Set aside a space for learning, pull together in a box of pens, rulers, colouring stuff and so on, to keep everything needed close to hand.
12. Create a routine. Schedule a timetable - it doesn't have to be perfect but it helps to have an allocated time for a subject and structures the day.
13. Find learning in everyday activities, building an indoor den, creating from Lego, preparing simple food all link to the curriculum.
14. Don't try to be a teacher, find out what interests your child and create learning around this.
15. If something isn't going well, remember that tomorrow brings another day and it is better to leave it than have a battle.
16. Play games like cards and dominoes, treasure hunts, battleships. It doesn't have to feel like a school lesson for learning to happen.
17. Grow something edible - many supermarkets sell seeds for vegetables and herbs so, if you can, get out to the shop get some with the groceries. Cress on paper towel or cotton wool to add to a sandwich is a good starting point.
18. Older children can be set the task of creating a brief ten-minute presentation to talk you through a topic, such as Tim Peake's time on the International Space Station or the effects of plastics in the oceans.
19. Finally, enjoy it as much as possible. Remember that everything they do is learning and they will remember this time for the rest of their lives!