

# Be Well Tips

## Maintaining Wellbeing During School Closures

These are uncertain times as a parent. As well as not being able to tell your child what is or isn't going to happen in the coming weeks, you will also need to oversee their learning at home. It is natural that you may feel anxious about this, but some of these tips may be helpful.

- **Timetable.** Avoid the weekdays blurring into the weekends. Instead, treat weekdays as normal school days, with clear boundaries between lessons and play or down time. You can find a sample timetable in our useful resources document in the [Be Well Resources for Families](#) section on Cognita.com.
  - Children should get up at the same time, get dressed for the day and follow their timetable of lessons/activities/mealtimes.
  - Where possible, include time in nature within your timetable – even if it is simply getting some fresh air in your garden or on your balcony.
  - Include opportunities for learning beyond the traditional curriculum – for ideas, go to our useful resources document in the [Be Well Resources for Families](#) section on Cognita.com.
- **Space.** Factor in the physical and emotional space for your family. Being 'on top of each other' for long periods can cause friction – we usually can all benefit from some private time out.
- **Practical Logistics.** Establish a clear workspace for your child. Unless they are old enough and disciplined to manage their workload, consider somewhere more communal. It is also worth 'packing the school bag the night before' to make sure that you can start every day positively and feeling organised.
- **Technology.** This will be a fundamental part of your child's learning experience, the aim being to achieve a balance of creative and interactive use rather than just passive consumption of online material. Our useful resources document in the [Be Well Resources for Families](#) section on Cognita.com includes links to helpful websites that can complement your school's online provision.
- **Sleep.** Maintain your child's normal sleep routine.
- **Physical Activity.** This is critical and must be factored into the timetable. If longer bouts of exercise aren't possible, check out ideas for shorter bursts of exercise via the useful resources document in our [Be Well Resources for Families](#). These can help refocus attention if your child (or you!) is becoming restless.
- **Diet.** Keep your diet as healthy as possible and drink plenty of water. Reinforce the routine of a designated break time for snacks.
- **Connecting, Doing and Giving.** In challenging circumstances, local communities often pull together and provide help to those who need it in a safe and sensible way. These are all things that help contribute to good mental health and you can use a timetable to identify suitable times to do this.

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- **Manage your expectations about what your child can achieve (and adapt them as time goes on).**

Online learning can be an intense experience; support your child in taking regular breaks and, where possible, balance with physical activity.

- **Accept.** This is a unique, highly challenging situation and something none of us would ever wish for. However, accepting it and finding a way to embrace any positives, such as supporting each other as a family, can help your child cope with unpredictability better in the future.

## WE IDENTIFY SIX MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS TO WELLBEING<sup>1</sup>

### 1. Adequate and restful sleep

Recharges both body and brain; improves the capacity to learn and retain information; and improves social and emotional interactions

### 2. Healthy and balanced diet

Gives our organs and tissues adequate nutrition to work effectively and reduces risk of disease and ill-health

### 3. Moderate to vigorous and regular physical activity

Decreases the risks of developing certain diseases and conditions

### 4. Connecting with self and others

Develops moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings and bodily sensations and gives a sense of belonging, identity and security

### 5. Being engaged in a fulfilling activity

Provides a sense of engagement, meaning and purpose

### 6. Giving to help a cause or others

Creates more compassionate and grateful communities and generates positive emotions for the giver as well as the receiver

You can find more information and advice in our [Be Well Resources for Families](#) on Cognita.com.

<sup>1</sup>Source: 1 – 3 are based on work from The World Health Organization

4 – 6 are based on work from The New Economics Foundation and used by the Mental Health Foundation

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