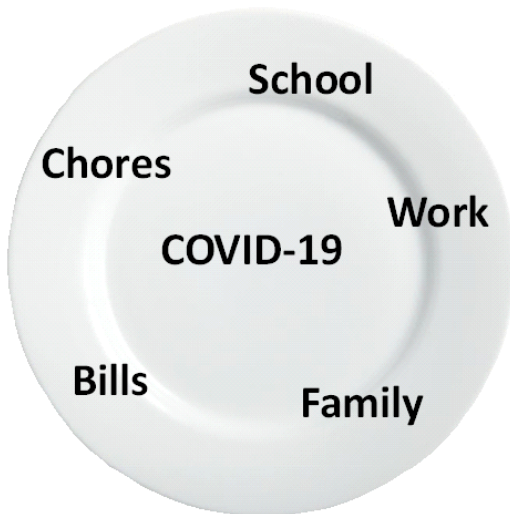


## You've got a Lot on Your Plate: Back to Basics



It's that time of year again: Back to school- but this year is looking very different. We wanted to bring you some helpful information about how to support the mental health of your students and children, as well as manage your own during this time of transition and change. This month's newsletter is focused on tips and tricks for managing Distance Learning while staying healthy and happy.

## It's Okay to lower your Expectations

*Of yourself and others...*

Whether an educator, staff member, parent, or student, the 2020 school year is presenting many challenges. It is important to remember to give ourselves grace, space, and time to focus on our basic needs. It's okay to prioritize what is most important for your family, and it's okay to say "no" to things

when it's getting to be too much.



## Make Time to Talk About It

It is important to make sure you continue to check in and have conversations about how you are feeling. Make sure to avoid labels such as good/bad, instead try comfortable/uncomfortable. For educators, if at all possible, make time during class when you can to check in with the students. It can help relieve some of the uncomfortable feelings and increase a sense of togetherness. Remember: Everyone has mental health, you are not alone!

## Realistic Routines

*Creating and maintaining a routine helps lower anxiety by preparing you for what is next. Here are some ways to help you and your child/student create a distance learning routine.*

1. Create the schedule with your child. Try to use their input so they feel more in control and take ownership.
2. Be flexible. Decide what the "must-do" items are and be more flexible with the rest of the day.
3. Match each child's age and needs. Younger kids (and some older kids) may need frequent breaks in order to stay on track.
4. Make time for family connections. Find activities that work for your child and family: walks, meals, reading, games, dancing, whatever!
5. Make time for movement. Let kids get the wiggles out or take a short walk like they normally would between classes. If they need it, allow for a longer activity

-Adapted from The Parish School Blog

## Artist's Corner: "Drawing on resilience!"



This week's art activity is to create a visual reminder of control.

**What you'll need:** Paper and Pencils or Markers

**How to do it:** Begin by tracing your hands onto the paper. On the inside of the hand, write, "In my control." On the outside of the hand outline, write, "Out of my control." Now, you will write or draw the things that are in their control on the inside of the hand. You could

write things like: my behavior, my thoughts, the words I choose to say, the words I choose to keep to myself, the way I react to others, etc. On the outside of the hand, you will write things that are not in their control. These could be things like: my parent's job, other people's actions, the weather, COVID-19, the lunch my peer brings to school, etc. The hand is an important visual reminder of control. If something is in your hands, you are in control of it.

**Added Bonus:** Pair it with our Mindful Moment!

## Mindful Moment

*Take a moment for yourself to keep the stress at bay!*

If you are experiencing overwhelming or out-of-control feelings, try to name 5 things you can control right now in the moment (like a grounding activity). Use your fingers to count and take deep breaths for each statement. See the example to the right.

For a more detailed example: [Click Here](#)

1. I can control my breathing.
2. I can control my thoughts.
3. I can control my words to myself.
4. I can control my words to others.
5. I can control my body.