Surviving Extended Time at Home During School Dismissal

Parents and Guardians,

With the Stay Home, Stay Safe Directive implemented in Utah and school shut down until at least May 1st; families are facing an unprecedented amount of time at home with their children. We understand that in a typical situation, children are allowed to engage in preferred activities, or receive preferred items freely at home. While this is typical in normal life, it could be helpful to implement the suggested “Stay home/ Stay safe schedule” within a daily schedule during the pandemic. Reasons to use the schedule include:

1. Ensures that your child does not get bored or tired of preferred activities or reinforcers
2. Slows down access to reinforcers so you will not run out of preferred items, particularly food items that could be hard to find in the grocery store or order online if they are not deemed “essential”.
3. Provides structure and stability to daily life at home
4. Includes child in daily chore routines

Steps for implementing “Stay Home/Stay Safe Schedule”

1. Go around home and identify all potential reinforcers (items or activities that child shows any interest in)
2. Lock up the items
3. Identify chore activities that students can naturally engage in throughout the day. This can include helping with the dishes, getting dressed or changed, putting toys away, taking out the trash, school activities, communicating wants and needs, setting the table, walking the dog, anything that should be happening throughout the day that they can assist with (given any level of prompting and support).
4. Create a detailed daily structure including basic need activities (eating, going outside, toileting, changing, sleeping) and “dead times”. Schedule reinforcement time to be earned during the “dead times”. School work, could also be scheduled in those “dead times”. Schedule could also include which adult is in charge of the child’s activity and schedule at that given time.
5. In order to access the preferred activities or items, the child must participate in 2-5 of the identified task activities or actions before receiving the reinforcer. If you have your child’s token board from school, you can use that to visually represent their task completion.
6. Child chooses a reinforcer.
7. Child is allowed to engage in reinforcing activity for no more than 30 minutes. IF you need extra time for the child to engage in reinforcing economy, do another cycle of engaging in 2-5 activities before receiving reinforcer

\*MAIN KEY: The activities that students are being required to engage in before receiving reinforcers are natural parts of the day that need to be occurring regardless of the child assisting or not.

Please feel free to contact me (Molly) with questions on how to implement this.

385-218-0930

memurphy@graniteschools.org