

## Webinar: Supporting Families in Promoting Early Learning at Home

Strategies for students in pre-k and kindergarten

*A Publication from Regional Educational Laboratory Southwest at IES*

To access the RELs' evidence-based COVID-19 response resources, visit <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/projects/covid-19>.



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**Primary Audience:** Teachers      **Secondary Audiences:** Instructional Leaders and State Administrators

This Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Southwest webinar provides an overview of a spreadsheet of resources that educators and families can use to support learning at home for children in prekindergarten (pre-k) and kindergarten. It also includes a facilitated question-and-answer session with early childhood education practitioners to discuss how they are supporting early learners and their families.



### Evidence-Based Recommendations

Maintain and build strong adult-child relationships (teacher-child and caregiver-child). The importance of healthy, supportive adult-child relationships remains true as schools and families have transitioned to remote instruction. Find ways to stay connected to students during remote instructions; strategies include using technology to support those connections:

- Sending videos of teachers reading books aloud or giving a short lesson
- Requesting videos and pictures in return from students/parents
- Convening video conference calls with their classes to dialogue with students, hear what students are doing and thinking about, and provide students with an opportunity to connect with their peers

Not all students have access to Internet and devices, and those that do might have to share that with other members of their families. As such, outreach to families by sending personalized notes or letters to children's homes can be another option for facilitating that connection.

Evidence:

- Stable and positive adult-child relationships, characterized by warmth and responsiveness, are important for children's healthy development.
- Children who have positive relationships with their teachers tend to demonstrate greater academic performance, better social skills, and less negative behavior (Crosnoe, Johnson, & Elder, 2004; Ladd & Burgess, 2001; Pianta & Stuhlman, 2004).



- A youth's emotional connection with adults is perhaps the single most important factor for fostering positive development, including higher levels of engagement, motivation, and academic performance (National Research Council, 2004).
- Furthermore, caregivers help children learn to regulate emotions and behaviors, especially when there is a secure attachment bond between child and caregiver (Calkins & Marcovitch, 2010).

REL Southwest [database of instructional resources and guidance for supporting early learning at home](#):

Two searchable lists of resources:

1. **Free** (not examined in studies reviewed by What Works Clearinghouse [WWC]), including online and offline activities for pre-k and kindergarten
2. **Resources with impact studies reviewed by WWC**, including online and computer-based resources for pre-k and kindergarten



## Questions to Consider

- How can the school community assess families' needs as they are promoting learning at home?
- What evidence can you collect about families using school-provided early learning resources at home?
- What supports does the local education agency need to provide to teachers as they plan and implement distance learning activities for pre-k and kindergarten students and their families?
- How can you maintain open lines of communication between home and school and among educators when students are learning at home?
- How can you build relationships with families during distance learning?
- How can we support parents in managing their child's learning activities and their own home and work responsibilities?
- How can schools and teachers work with families to develop contingency distance learning plans for future use?
- What lessons have you learned from pre-k and kindergarten distance learning so far?



## Related Resources

- [Supporting Families in Promoting Early Learning at Home](#). Searchable spreadsheets of resources that educators and caregivers can use to support young children's learning and development at home during the COVID-19 health crisis.
- Bowlby, J. (1969). Attachment and loss. *Vol. I: Attachment*. New York, NY: Basic.
- Bronfenbrenner, U., & Morris, P. (2006). The bioecological model of human development. R. Learner (Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology, Volume 1: Theoretical models of human development* (ch. 14). New York, NY: Wiley.
- Sabol, T. J., & Pianta, R. C. (2012). Recent trends in research on teacher-child relationships. *Attachment & Human Development*, 14(3), 213-231.
- [Regional Educational Laboratories Evidence-Based Resources for COVID-19 response](#).
- [Comprehensive Center Network Education Resources](#).

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The U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences funds a network of 10 Regional Educational Laboratories (RELs). Each REL serves a designated region of the country and works in partnership with educators and policymakers with a mission of supporting a more evidence-based education system to improve outcomes for students. In response to the impact of COVID-19 on education systems, the RELs collaborated to produce evidence-based resources and guidance.

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