Back to School
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Where we are

- We know online learning isn’t ideal
  - CDC: “Extended school closure is harmful to children” [CDC, 2020].
- We also know we live in a city where we have a lot of online learning ahead of us because of current COVID numbers [Harris County Public Health, 2020].
- Challenges differ across age group
- Online education will impact kids differently based on racial/ethnic groups and income [Dorn et al., 2020].

Average months of learning lost in scenario 2 compared with typical in-classroom learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Months Lost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low income</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Dorn et al., 2020).
We all have some online education in our future

School district has gone online

- Ex: HISD online starting Sept 8th through October 16th \[(HISD, 2020)\]
  - In-Person starting Monday, October 19th
- Ex: Fort Bend ISD online starting August 17th for at least 4 weeks \[(FBISD, 2020)\]
- Ex: Families might elect to remain online if someone in their family has underlying medical conditions that put them at higher risk \[(CDC, 2020)\].

The unknowns

- What if districts decide to remain online for longer than planned?
- What if schools go in-person and then move online?
- Some kids will get sick and will probably be out of school for a long time waiting on COVID results regardless of whether or not they have COVID.
What you can do

Set up a space for your kid

Where it is depends on:

• The age of the kid
  o Ex: 4 or 5-year-old – in a space where they are near the parent
  o Ex: 6-year-old – maybe put a desk in their room
• The work situation of parents/caregivers at home
  o Ex: near your desk if you work vs. at the kitchen table if you don’t work

Limit out of school time to non-screen activities
To pod or not to pod

• **Benefits**
  - Social interaction for kids
  - Potential relief of duties for parents
  - Reduce role-conflict
  - Fun factor
  - Potential for increased engagement

• **Downsides**
  - Kids in your house or your kid in another house
    - Do you have the space?
    - Can you take the health risk?
    - Can you handle the noise/added cleaning/responsibility
  - Cost – hiring a skilled teacher and paying his/her benefits could cost a ton (tens of thousands).
  - Widens the gap across race/ethnicity/income
Special thanks to my lab members!

- Ritu Sampige
- Lida Ehteshami
- Katherine Zopatti
Dr. Kayce Solari Williams
Professor of Health
What does it mean to be healthy?

Physical Health
• Movement
• Nutrition
• Sleep

Mental Health
• Emotional
• Social
Benefits of the School Day for Students & Families

• Skill building
• Socialization
• Structure
• Support
Possible Negative Impact

us schools reopening

Top stories
Possible Negative Impact
Recommendations

Keep C.A.L.M.

C - Communicating
A - Active (as a family)
L - Listening to each other
M - Mindfulness practices
Thank you!

Dr. Kayce Solari Williams
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For more information and resources, visit:

- [www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/index.htm)
- [www.ASHAweb.org/resources/](http://www.ASHAweb.org/resources/)
- Preparing for a New Learning Environment (Resource Library)
  [https://asha7-13webinar.heysummit.com/](https://asha7-13webinar.heysummit.com/)
Parents as Partners

- Start with a positive mindset
- Educators have your kid’s best interest in mind
- The most difficult public challenge in a century and in our lifetimes
- Schools and school systems should be transparent with information
- Parents should review all information and make the best decision possible
Safety

- Assess school district’s safety protocols
- Each families' dynamics are different
- Make the best decision for your child and your family
- Be flexible and make adjustments based on latest information
- Expect disruptions throughout the school year
Special Needs

- Schools are very concerned about their special needs kids
- Expect many school districts to prioritize special needs
- Consistent routines are critical
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