

Interacting with Students' School Online (Self-guided)

This document will lead you through the material covered in this workshop.

Instructions:



Complete each section of instructions, then mark the checkbox next to the bold title, and move to the next one.

Many videos have sound, so if you need help finding a way to listen or turn on captions, just ask!

☐ Complete School Communication Introduction

- Spend one minute thinking of the ways you communicate with school and write them below:

- On your list above, circle your favorite way to communicate and draw a line through your least favorite. Tell your partner why you made those choices.
- Schools communicate with families many different ways from old-fashioned letters carried home by students to new smart phone apps. Each teacher has their own preferences, but there are a few that most schools and teachers have in common.
- When you need information from school, try the following methods in order:
 1. **School Websites and Apps** – If you need information from the school, check if it has been posted or shared online first. If so, this will save the school time answering your questions and save you time because you will have an immediate answer. You can check the website, social media pages, and any apps the teacher might use to share announcements.
 2. **Email or Text** – Sending an email allows teachers to answer you when they have time, rather than interrupting them while they are teaching. If you would like to speak to the teacher on the phone, it is a good idea to schedule a time in an email first.



3. **Phone** – Calling the school is usually the last option teachers suggest. Remember, teachers are usually busy supervising students the entire time they are at school, so you might need to leave a message and wait for a call back.

☐ Complete School Website Activity

- Since websites are the first place you should look for information, let's spend a few minutes looking at the school website.
- Every school website is different. Being familiar with your school website will help you find information quickly and know what information isn't available on the website.
- Go to your student's school website. Spend five minutes looking at what information is available. Feel free to click on links and other school pages, like Facebook or Twitter.
- Discuss together:
 - Which parts of the website do you think are the most useful?
 - Did you find anything you didn't know would be there?
 - What information do you wish was on the website that you couldn't find?
- Checking here first might save you and the school staff some time.

☐ Complete School Email Activity (below)

- A good email can save both you and the teacher time and confusion. Let's think about what kind of email a teacher would like to receive.
- Imagine your student says they are going to be given an award next week but they lost the paper with the details. You've already checked online and can't find any information about it.
- Answer these questions together:
 - First, we need a recipient email address. Who should we send this to? (e.g. *homeroom teacher or teacher in charge of award*)
 - Where can we find their email address? (e.g. *website*)
 - Next, we need a subject line that gives the teacher an idea of what this email is about.
 - What subject line can we use for an email about this award? (e.g. *Student Name – Award Question*)
 - Now for the email message. How should we address this teacher? (e.g. *Hello Mr. Smith,*)
 - » In a school setting, teachers are used to being referred to by their last name, so unless you know the teacher personally, this is a good, respectful option.



- How long should this email be? (*Just a few sentences. Stick to the facts and keep it to the point.*)
- What information should be included? (*e.g. your student's name, the information you have, and the information you need*)
- At the end of the email, include your name and contact information so they can reach you.
 - *Example email:*

Hello Mr. Smith,

My child Jack Jones tells me he is receiving an award next week but he lost the paper he was supposed to bring home. I haven't been able to find anything about it on the website. Can you give me any information about this award or the paper he lost?

Thank you,

Jennifer Jones

jenjones@gmail.com

555-555-5555

- Many teachers are unable to reply to emails during school hours, so you might expect a reply within a day or two.

☐ Educational Technology Activities

- Schools use computers and other devices for many activities. Adults, ask your students what their three favorite apps, devices, or websites they have ever used for school work and write them below:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

- Discuss together:

1. Why do you like those educational technologies?
2. How do they help you learn?

- Try out a few educational websites together now. Adults should control the computer but students should be involved too!



- **VR Field Trips:** Technology allows students to take virtual reality field trips all over the world.
 - Instructions - Use one of the links below to visit a new place:
 - » The British Museum: bit.ly/FieldTripBrit
 - » The Eiffel Tower: bit.ly/FieldTripParis
 - » Swim with Sea Lions: bit.ly/FieldTripSea
 - » Ford's Theater: bit.ly/FieldTripFord
 - » Hindu Temples in Indonesia: bit.ly/FieldTripIndo
- **Play & Learn Games:** There are many online games that teach concepts and skills while you play. They keep students engaged with the topics they are learning and give them a chance to try them out.
 - Instructions - Learn a little about computer coding with one of these games on this site: <https://code.org/learn>
- **Common Sense Media Homework Help Apps:** Common Sense Media, a trusted website for information about all kinds of things students might be doing online, has a list of homework help apps with reviews and information for parents.
 - Instructions - Visit this website and search for one of the subjects your student is studying. Choose an app and discuss whether it would help your student with their school work. <https://www.commonsensemedia.org/lists/homework-help-apps>

Well done! You've completed this self-guided set of activities about interacting with school and education! The next page includes a review of these topics, as well as links to additional resources to learn more and practice the skills involved. Keep it as a reminder of what you've learned. If you need credit for completing this self-guided workshop, complete the Workshop Forms page and see a member of the library staff.



Interacting with School Online

Review & Resources to Continue Learning

Contacting School Online Review:

- First, spend 5 minutes looking for the information you need on the school's website and social media.
- Use the school's website to decide the right person to contact and find their email address.
- Write a subject line that describes your email in a few words.
- Address school staff respectfully with their last name.
- In the first sentence, identify who you are (and who your child is).
- Keep your email message to a few sentences. Stick to the facts and get to the point of your question.
- Sign your name and include contact information for yourself.
- *When not to use an email:*
 - When it's urgent! They may not see your email until after the school day ends.
 - When it's a complicated issue, but you can send an email to set up a time for a phone call or meeting.

Resources to continue learning:

- Guide to email: <http://bit.ly/emailgcf>
- PowerSchool introduction: <http://bit.ly/pwrschvid>
- Common Sense Media Homework Help apps:
 - <https://www.commonsensemedia.org/lists/homework-help-apps>
 - Includes suggestions and reviews of educational and homework help apps and websites.
- Learn-At-Home Resources:
 - <https://wideopenschool.org>
- Parent's Ultimate Guide to Google Classroom:
 - <https://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/parents-ultimate-guide-to-google-classroom>



Workshop Forms

COMPLETED WORKSHOP FORM – PARTICIPANT COPY

I _____ and I _____ have completed all the
(adult) (student)

self-guided tutorials and activities for Interacting with School Online. This will be added to my attendance record.

Adult Signature _____ Date _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Staff Signature _____ Date _____

COMPLETED WORKSHOP FORM – LIBRARY COPY

I _____ and I _____ have completed all the

self-guided tutorials and activities for Interacting with School Online. This will be added to my attendance record.

Adult Signature _____ Date _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Staff Signature _____ Date _____