



Shaw Middle School | ABLE Newsletter

Week of 5/11/20

Hello ABLE families,

I hope you all had a relaxing weekend. We wanted to take a moment to thank each and every one of you for working with us as we navigate this difficult task of learning from home. We do understand that, for some of you, figuring out how to get your child to complete school work at home is very challenging. There are very specific visuals and strategies we use at school that create a routine around school work expectations for your child. For many families, the goal may be just to get your child to sit and do an activity with you. This is OK! It takes us a few weeks to establish work routines with your child. For my own children at home, we are just now starting to grasp some sort of established routine. This is all very normal. Take a minute for yourself and know we recognize your hard work 😊. Mr. Olson and I are doing our best to keep the weekly lesson activities the same or very similar. For many of our students, repetition is key to learning. If you get really good at a specific activity with your child it is OK to stick to what is working. We will not change much in hopes that you all can establish a good routine to finish out the year. A big thanks to all of you!

Mr. McCullough and Mr. Olson.



Recap

- Watch for weekly activity plans and materials being delivered. Follow them to the best of your ability.
- Please inform us on what is working and what is not working, so we can continue to create meaningful activities for each student.
 - Zoom meetings will be Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10:00am



Reminders

- **Safety** and health of you and your child are our first priority. All work provided to you is encouraged but not mandatory. For many students, work demands are quite a challenge and a trigger. Do what is best for you and your family and most importantly, be safe!
- If you need printed materials rather than having them emailed, Durham bus drivers can drop materials for your student at your residence. Talk with your child's teacher to set this up.



Tips for working with children with autism

- **Avoid sensory overload - It is very easy for students to get distracted. Keep your environment as free of distractions as possible.**
- **Use visuals when possible – Using visuals and modeling what you want your child to do often is more successful than a lengthy explanation. Keep things concrete and simple.**
- **Be predictable – Use a schedule to plan activities/work demands**
- **Use the Premack Principle – First “math” then “student choice of activity/free time”**
- **Familiarize yourself with token economy – Many students in our classes were successful completing work demands when they had a clear beginning and end. We often used tokens to deliver reinforcement for positive behaviors. When students earned 5 tokens during a work session the work session was done, and they exchanged their 5 tokens for a 10-15-minute free time activity. Tokens are also a good way to communicate non-verbally with the individual how close they are to being done with the task.**

Resources:

- [Conscious Discipline, COVID 19: Resources for Families and Educators](#)
- [Special Education Technology Center \(SETC\)](#)
- [Spokane Schools Sped services during COVID 19](#)
- [Do it yourself ABA based lessons for families](#)
- [Autism Speaks - How to handle closures for children with autism](#)
- [Autism Speaks \(info for families\)](#)
- [Token Economy Information](#)
- [Discrete Trial Training explanation and demo](#)

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