

Top 15 Tips for School at Home

From Andrea Keener

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Hello Christ Church! I was asked if I could put together some best practice tips for homeschooling. I have been homeschooling my now 6, 8, and 10 year old children since 2018, and I LOVE IT! I will do my best to share some of our daily routines, best practices, handy resources, and helpful recommendations to hopefully help you out during your days of teaching at home.

Tip Number 1. I recommend coming up with a school name. I realize that many are participating in e-learning, but giving your “home” school a name can be fun and gives kiddos a sense of ownership. I suggest letting your children help come up with a name, as well as a homeschool logo. If you have any art loving kids, suggest they come up with some drawings. This could be done by hand with paint or crayons or done on the computer.

Tip Number 2. Every morning we start our day with a mindfulness meditation. There are a number of children friendly books with daily meditations or daily cards that you can find on Amazon. A few of our favorites are, *Breathe like a Bear* by Kira Willy. There's also a free audiobook on Audible (however, my kids need a visual). Our other favorite is *Mindful Kids Card Deck* by Whitney Stewart & Mina Braun.

Tip Number 3. We do Cosmic Kids EVERY day. My kids love Jaimie! This is a fun way to incorporate a daily yoga routine. She has a website or you can simply find her on youtube.

www.cosmickids.com

<https://www.youtube.com/user/CosmicKidsYoga>

Tip Number 4. Two words... Mystery Science. Doug is unbelievable and kids love his quick and easy to follow lessons. Main lessons have hands-on activities after. There are also quick 5 minute mini lessons. Many sessions coincide with the seasons and holidays. There was even a great one that just came out about why it's important to wash hands. There is a yearly charge (I believe \$69.00), but it's totally worth it and you will use this well after kiddos go back to physical school. www.mysteryscience.com

Tip Number 5. Adventure Academy! We LOVE this program. My kids have learned more on this app than any other. It's 9.99 a month and that includes up to 3 kids! Although I highly recommend saving some money and purchasing the year for about \$60. This is a great anytime app that your kids will beg you to play. For younger kids (preschool - 2nd grade) try ABC mouse. It's the same awesome company and I think they both do a free month trial.

www.adventureacademy.com

www.abcmouse.com

Tip Number 6. I can't say enough about Big Life Journal. Visit their website at www.biglifejournal.com and click on FREEBIES. Every Friday they will send you a FREE activity that practices having a Growth

Mindset. You can also purchase reasonably priced PDF printables (that you can print right after purchase) as well as journals for kids. Both my boys have one and they write in them every day.

Tip Number 7. Physical Challenge! We get up and move every day with some help from exercise dice. But instead of paying more for fancy dice with the exercises already on them, we recommend *Foam Dry Erase Blocks* by Mind Sparks. This way your kids can choose what the exercise will be (my kids get pretty silly) and for how long. This comes with 4 die so we designate 1 die for the different exercises, 1 die for how long, one die for which room (or even outside as an option), and the 4th as what type of animal. These cost 10 bucks on amazon!

Tip Number 8. Brain Child on Netflix. Need I say more ;-)

Tip Number 9. Outschoool classes online. Go to www.outschoolclasses.com and join for FREE. Explore fun, social, and safe learning experiences—taught over live video chat. 10,000+ classes led by qualified teachers. Learn from home for as low as \$5/class. This place has EVERYTHING for EVERY age group!

Tip Number 10. Got kids that love to draw? Check out www.artforkidshub.com for FREE art lessons. All 3 of my kids love this.

Tip Number 11. I was top of my class at the 2 year American Sign Language school that I attended (long long time ago), so you can bet we practice ASL everyday. You can teach this to any age group and kids love it because they generally have an easier time learning visually. *I suggest ASL with Meredith.* You can find her on Youtube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uujugTMW7ZQ> If this link doesn't work, google ASL Easter Signs with Meredith. We are going to start learning these words tomorrow through Easter. It's a lot of fun and you'd be surprised how quick the kids learn these.

Tip Number 12. Most of you are familiar with Scholastic Reader. These are the order flyers that teachers send home with the kids. You pick what books you want then send it back to your child's teacher and then they arrive a few weeks later. Well, did you know that you can call and set up your own homeschool account? We did this right away (because I'm a kids book junkie and was going to really miss this when we decided to leave traditional schooling). Any-who, by doing this YOU get all the deals and points and free books... it's amazing! AND when you order, you don't have to wait, they ship pretty quick. We always receive our books within a week from ordering. Missing those hand held flyers? They send you those too, every month. *Give them a call at 1-800-724-6527.* They are the nicest people and would probably really welcome the business right about now.

Tip Number 13. Zen Pig. We LOVE Zen Pig. His website is www.zenpigbook.com (but I just checked and their site said, "Back Soon"). You can still purchase his books from Amazon if his site is still down. We have all 6 books. They teach children how to live with a growth mindset, live in the moment, practice awareness and so much more. We purchased the ADORABLE hand knit Zen Pig and when anyone (including mommy) needs to step back and breathe through their emotions, that person takes Zen Pig and sits with him and can either meditate or read one of his short but powerful books.

Tip Number 14. We begin our school day with a mindful meditation and we end our school day with a Zen Den meditation. This is part of Cosmic Kids. Jamie has a special section called *Zen Den and Peace Out*, which helps kids wind down and be mindful. Visit www.cosmickids.com and click on *watch the episodes*. Then choose either *mindfulness or relaxation*. You can also search youtube for it.

Tip Number 15. Finally - Raddish! This might be my favorite thing. This is a kids cooking company. But they ALSO incorporate math, history, geography, trivia, and of course family values. Go to www.raddish.com and you can sign up for a free e-kit! Check out their FB page as well. They have live cooking classes that kids can easily follow along with. It's truly awesome for kids of all ages!

Ok, I am forcing myself to stop here. I was going to try to do top 5 and then 5 turned into 10 and I am finishing with 15, lol! I hope that you all find this information useful on your new homeschooling journey. Remember that you were your child's very first teacher in this world. They love being taught by you. Try to look at the good that is coming from all this - More time spent with the ones you love most. I wish you all peace during this time and feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions. God Bless.

Peace and Love,
Andrea Keener

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On the next page is a "Dr. Seuss" poem I found that really sums it up for me. Enjoy!

**I imagine if Dr. Seuss were alive today, he'd write something
like this:**

(Read with Dr. Seuss book rhythm).

**The buildings were big and people would smile
And travel they would mile by mile.
But sick they become, in numbers it grew
Businesses worried, communities too.
Things stopped for a bit, the world slowed its roll
The virus had certainly taken its toll.
But what they then saw from slowing things down.
Is in fact they now had less reasons to frown.
Families now gathered, what game shall we play?
Pass me the blue crayon, give mommy the grey.
Dad's home guys! He'll read us a book
then all of us together will cook.
The lungs of the planet caught a small break
less travel meant less pollution to make.
People did realize they'd all be ok
They don't need so much to get through the day.
Maybe this virus that caused so much stress
Showed the whole world that more can mean less.**

Written by XXXXXX

Inspired by Dr. Seuss