

This is my advice for those who have been thrust into schooling your kids at home due to the coronavirus COVID-19 shutdowns. You are NOT homeschooling. You are CRISIS schooling. Crisis schooling is stressful and even trauma-inducing.

Being at home all day is NOT our normal! Our kids are not used to being locked in their houses all day long. Children are grieving right now. Out of the blue, they lost a lot. It is wonderful that so many classes are going online, but it's not the same. They lost their in-person time with friends, their daily routine and the predictability of life that gives us security.

HONOR that grief process! Don't expect to just jump into a perfect program and learn, learn, learn. Expect them to act out. Expect them to not want to get out of bed. Expect them to not have words to express their inner turmoil.

YOU are grieving and experiencing loss. Give yourself a lot of GRACE! Even some of us veterans in education are struggling because our security has been yanked from under our feet. Some of you have lost jobs or your spouses have lost jobs. Those who are working are afraid of going out. Some of you have been to 5 grocery stores and still do not have what you need. Our society has been turned upside down. Give yourself a break.

It is okay to NOT be amazing. Don't try to be Pinterest Homeschool Mom/Dad of the Year. Even she/he is not that way all the time and truthfully there is at least one messy room in her/his house. Something always has to give. Those perfect people online have the same 24 hours in each day. From experience, I can tell you, something always gives no matter how perfect people pretend to be.

When you have 25 kids in a class, it takes a lot of time to get all 25 of them to turn to page 32, take out pencils, get their paper, stop pulling their friend's hair. There are natural distractions with a big class that do not happen in a small one. You will get done fast!

Don't artificially create busywork to do school for 6 hours a day. That is soul-sucking, will anger and bore your child and make you tear your hair out. When you're done, you're done! Go do some fun things! Or... even crazier... have fun learning!

If your teacher did not give you loads of books or worksheets, be glad. Now you can read lots of literature and do hands-on learning! There is a lot of learning that does not end in a worksheet. Read, read, read, read, read!

Get crazy and ask your kids what they are interested in and then learn about that! If your child thinks the solar system is really cool, then read about the solar system, look up YouTube videos about it, do projects about it. Immerse yourselves in learning and make it fun and engaging. If you do that, your day will fly by and you'll still be learning.

Life will go on if you are not stellar during a worldwide crisis. Maybe your best today will be to cuddle up with the kids and just be together. Maybe your best today is everyone is fed and you didn't cry in front of them. Maybe you did cry and your beautiful babies showed their remarkable best by comforting you in their beautiful little strength.

It's okay and even necessary to be REAL with yourself about what's actually happening. A bomb did not go off, but metaphorically it did. Our lives may never be the same after this. If you crumble, honor that. I promise you, your child will learn. We learn from all of life!

Care and love to all of the parents who are taking on this huge challenge! Give yourself grace! You got this!! I believe in you! I have seen parents work miracles in schooling their children. Teachers... my heart goes out to you. You are also on a steep learning curve to serve your students in this time. It's also okay for you to not be amazing.