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BACK TO SCHOOL 2022



How the Pandemic Has Affected Our Children



Students are:

- Glad to be back to school in person
- Developmentally behind
- More self-centered, and less patient and tolerant with others
 - Resulting in more violence and fights
- Still processing high stress levels from the pandemic
- More fearful in general (perhaps from parents' fears, personal loss, the news, wearing of masks, etc.)
- More students are exhibiting behavior problems (acting out)
- More students are struggling with advanced courses
- Many more students are chronically late

Students have:

- a hard time focusing.
- difficulty staying organized.
- difficulty getting back to the rigor of in-person school.
- very high levels of anxiety.
- forgotten how to engage in conversations with others.
 - they are having a difficult time building friendships, especially those transitioning from middle school to high school.
- forgotten previously learned material/subjects.
- forgotten good study habits.
- experienced the loss of significant family members.

Students have spent much more time with adults than they have in the past, seeing the good, the bad, and the ugly. Although there have been some good experiences, some parents have lost their patience with their children. The increased time with adults, and a lack of time away in a casual environment have resulted in a changed view of adults.

One public Middle School teacher found that after two years of remote learning, honors students continued to fare well and showed few effects academically, while those who were struggling before the pandemic are still struggling, and some seem to have regressed even more.

Students in a private Middle School had a half year of remote learning. Most of the students performed according to their academic track record prior to the pandemic. However, the parents of several students chose remote learning for an additional year, which resulted in academic setbacks and loss of motivation especially when they realized no one could be failed.

From A Christian School Headmaster

“The most profound effect that I have been consistently seeing amongst new applicants is that they appear to be getting straight A's and B's in their public schools but have a difficult time passing our entrance exam (which we have not changed for years) if they can pass it at all. It seems that the assessment standards in their schools have deteriorated, thus making them look like better students while, in fact, they know less.

“During the pandemic, many schools had their teachers submit their lesson plans in the morning and then the teachers were done for the day. This forced parents to do much of the work, from keeping the children accountable to teaching them the material. While this is an academic problem, it is not the only problem. There is a domino effect that has resulted from the way many schools mishandled the pandemic.

“Kids have become much less resilient. They were robbed of developing good work and study habits and now demand that the school continue to accommodate their laziness. A lot of grace and mercy was understandably extended throughout the pandemic but it created a generation of kids who now expect it. We are finding them to be less organized, less motivated, less ambitious, and less mature. Children are much quicker to cry victim and use this status to demand alleviation from difficult tasks and discipline.

“What is difficult to separate from the direct effects of the pandemic are the effects of other major things that happened during the pandemic, which we have seen many churches give credence to. Children seem to be much more self-centered, quickly offended, less restrained in reacting to offense, and much farther removed from a Biblical worldview. Jesus let them know that to gain life they must give life away. The current culture has turned that on its head and has convinced these kids that in order to gain life you must be absolutely consumed with your own and how everyone perceives you, accommodates you, speaks to you, etc.

“Reference to depression and being suicidal, quickness to dismiss everyone with a differing point of view, and willingness to be considered trans, bi or gay have all increased during the pandemic. Kids who have remained as GCA students throughout the pandemic tend not to fall prey to any of this stuff. It is widely and profoundly observed, though, in newcomers and those attempting to get into our school. We have had more applicants this year than ever in our history and have had to turn more kids away than ever before because of poor academic ability or dangerous social ideas.”

Stephen R. Schultz, Headmaster
Grace Christian Academy



Suggestions for Parents

- Take time to converse with your children
 - Try to see things from their perspectives and verbalize what they're saying, i.e. “So, what you're saying is ...”
 - Don't be too quick to offer an answer or solution to a problem unless pressed for it.
 - If you don't have an answer or solution, admit it, and try to explore it together with them.
 - Think through some ideas beforehand on topics they might bring up.
 - What concerns do they have?
- Try to have meals with your children and enjoy light conversation.
- Encourage your children, letting them know they *can* learn new and difficult subjects in school, and may actually enjoy them.
- Be patient as children re-adjust to regular school life. It will take time.
- Allow for students to talk about how they feel and what's going on around them –Listen, Listen, Listen, Think, then Respond.
- Minimize as much as possible all electronics: T.V., time online with social media, TikTok, and video games at night. (Lack of sleep will affect both memory and school performance significantly.)
 - Now that remote teaching/learning is not being used, try to negate electronics all together while studying. (If your child has become addicted to electronics, seek help.)



- Be encouraged; with time and guidance students can adjust and develop skills to succeed in school.
- With younger children, read books together. With all children, encourage lots of reading. In the summer, ask children for creative book reports based on the book(s) they have read.
- Spend time with your kids – they were created to be social and attempts to provide that electronically are counterfeit.
 - Visit local museums, farms, and other outdoor establishments.
 - Have family game nights (play old board games like Monopoly and Scrabble).
 - Get the kids outdoors to experience and interact with God’s creation.
 - Do leaf and bug collections, dig in the dirt, grow crops, etc.
- Counteract limitations COVID placed on us: get out, get back to church, have children join church youth groups and Sunday School, help them stay active, and off the couch.
- Be diligent in parenting. Learn parenting skills – you can start with this list. – You can also ask in the local library where you can find parenting classes.
- Observe children for depression or anxiety. If your child is having social or emotional problems, seek help – PCCF can help.
- Check with teachers to learn how your child is adjusting back into school.
- Be concerned with more than just grades.
- Children need the reassurance of parents on safety and encouragement more than ever.
- If your child is having difficulty academically, do not hesitate to seek help. Many teachers have after-school tutoring available. There are also special tutorial services. You could also use an older sibling or young person who understands the subject very well.
- Establish a free account with www.KhanAcademy.org and assign daily doses of math practice.
- www.Axis.org is a website for parents with teens. It will help you with conversation starters for various topics to use with teens. It will also help you to understand the culture our teens are living in today, (The Culture Translator).



Ways to help your child succeed in school and faith

1. Prayer with your child everyday before school and again at the end of the day can help create a lifelong routine.	2. Reading the Bible together daily will foster the habit, familiarity, obedience, appreciation and love for God.
3. Scheduling a regular wake-up time and bedtime will help your child feel confident and secure as activities are predictable and familiar.	4. Allowing your child to participate in creating a study space can give them a sense of joy and ownership when retreating to study.
5. Getting healthy nutrition and the right amount of sleep will give them the ability to focus, and energy needed for the day.	6. Incorporating regular conversation about their day and yours will help sustain closeness, and a caring and sharing environment.

Some examples of a car game that I play on the car ride home with my children is “Who in the class would you send to the moon and why?” “What is the name of a person that you did a kind thing for today at school?” “If you could swap lunches or snacks with someone in your class, who would it be and why?” These are a few questions that help me to know who are some children/teachers that they may be having difficulty with and who might become close friends. Try to prepare your one or two questions beforehand and be sure they are not the same every day. My children really look forward to the questions and often remind me whenever I forget to ask them.

*O Lord, You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up;
You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down,
And are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, But behold, O Lord, You know it
altogether. You have hedged me behind and before,
And laid Your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
It is high, I cannot attain it.
Psalm 139:1-6 NKJV*

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MISSION

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psychotherapeutic techniques with biblical principles**

Generous contributions have blessed the ministry in various ways. PCC continues to depend upon your prayer and support. For donations please use the inclosed donation slip and an envelope addressed to PCCF. Thank you.

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