

# LEARNING AT HOME

How to reduce stress and motivate children to learn from home.

The events of the past few months are presenting many people with new and diverse challenges. At the same time, they also encourage us to rethink our behavioral perspectives. Thanks to the home office countless professionals can continue their work outside of the typical office, and companies can be saved. But that also means that parents are now faced with additional tasks. Suddenly they are asked to coordinate their work with that of their children, and to support them in learning. And it is unclear when schools can be reopened to all students at the same time.

## Our goals: well-being and less stress

Regardless of the resulting complex stresses, one aspect must not be forgotten - it's important that everyone, parents and children, should feel well. That means healthy and stress-free cooperation is the basis for health, successful work at home, and motivated learning for children.



Illustration: well-being starts where we can make individual and intuitive decisions.

## Choosing rooms and furnishings

Our workrooms and study rooms should have a friendly atmosphere, with lots of daylight, good acoustics, and lots of plants.

In addition, working and studying at home requires ergonomic equipment and behavior-friendly furniture, as is also required in the office or at school. The spatial conditions and the ergonomic furniture selected for learning and working determine how healthy life will be in the home environment.

In contrast to what we adults may have been taught, working and studying at home should not be limited to just seated work with a chair and table combination..



Illustration: daylight, good acoustics, plants, friendly colors - these stimuli are a feel-good accelerator.

Scientific studies show that conventional furnishing recommendations with rigid chair-table combinations do not optimally promote or maintain physical and mental development or health. Constantly sitting still leads to a standstill, physically and mentally. From an early age, we spend far too much time sitting. Children, like adults, often sit up to ten hours a day. We have to free ourselves from this inertia trap. Studies show that the energy turnover when sitting passively is so low that the risks for diseases such as obesity, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and dementia not only increase significantly in adulthood, but also in adolescents.



Illustration: conventional furnishing recommendations result in a physical and mental dead end.

## Let them fidget

As children are growing up they need regular changes of position and a lot of movement for the harmonious development of body, mind, and soul. This is particularly important in their first 11 years, because in these years children can sit still for less than one minute due to their development, as they are passing through phases of sensitive physical and mental maturation, with a high urge to move

The observed “fidgety” behavior of children is rarely a hyperactive behavior. On the contrary: the growing brain is constantly dependent on impulses from the body’s sensory cells (muscle, movement, and balance) so that nerve cells in the brain can mature and interconnect optimally. In adolescents starting puberty, the need for movement is not as strong as in younger children. Nevertheless, teenagers and adults should not sit still for longer than about 20 minutes.



Illustration: mobile seating, such as a stool, enables children to develop their urge to move as needed. These natural movements ensure balanced physical and mental behavior.



Illustration: actions that appear to be acrobatic at times are actually intuitive and not deliberately planned – actions children take in order to organize their physical and mental well-being.

**As much sitting as necessary,  
as much change of position and  
movement as possible**

For this reason, the following questions regarding development-oriented and stress-free working and learning conditions for home are of particular importance.

- Do rooms and furniture leave enough room for flexible behavior?
- Do spaces always allow new room for movement and action?

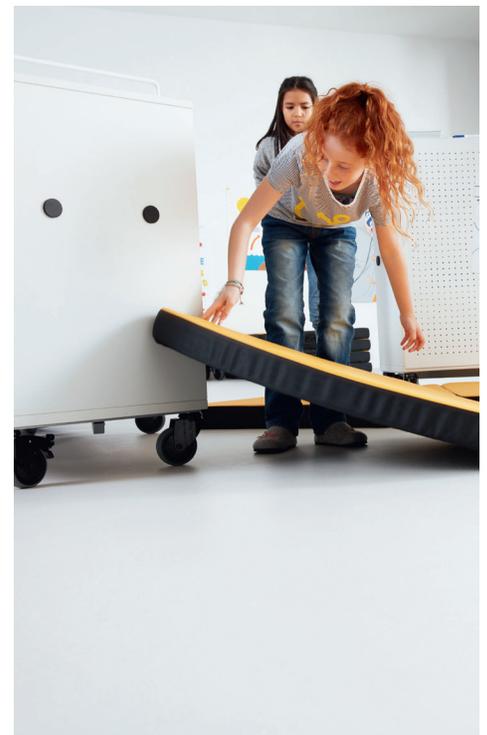
Learning and working must include a certain level of physical activity. This is the only way to keep body, mind, and soul – well-being – in balance.



Illustration: concentrated learning is only possible with the freedom of integrated movement.

## Allow a variety of movement options

The most obvious characteristic of designed learning and working places for the well-being of all people is the variety of changing behaviors and the flexibility of spaces. Only these prerequisites support all learning behaviors required in the course of a learning day, enabling physical and mental well-being and thus the success of teaching. This means a selection of learning space conditions that spontaneously encourage adolescents to crouch on the floor in various positions, to sit actively and dynamically, to stand and be allowed to move around the rooms.



Illustrations: well-being and stress-free learning do not know an ideal posture, but only the physical freedom to intuitively organize their inner and outer posture.

## The best place for kids to study at home? Anywhere.

The entire home environment should be designed in such a way that adolescents as well as adults are repeatedly encouraged to change their behaviors, their location, and experience diverse forms of work and learning.

Changes in the working and learning environment also change perception and behavior. Successful learning for children therefore requires more than just a children's room or a chair at the dining room table. A use of various spaces equipped with different furniture enables different behavior and actions, such as:

- Individual work
- Retreat areas for reading or social activities
- Learning together with siblings or parents

In this way, we make domestic learning conditions more behavior- and movement-friendly and therefore more child-friendly. There is a good place to study everywhere, so all areas inside and outside, if available, should be used. Thanks to flexible furniture – such as stools, seat cushions, or mats – it's easy to turn a terrace, balcony, or even a garden into a learning space.



Illustration: learning can happen everywhere, especially when the learning locations are close to nature.

## And children need more!

The recommendations we have made for children learning inside their home can only supplement the requirements for free play and movement in a natural environment. Nature is of great importance because it has a wealth of child-friendly experiences and uses, especially for the younger children. In addition to rich sensory and movement experiences, nature also offers a pleasant atmosphere in which children feel comfortable. Children of different personalities, ages, and genders can all feel welcome here.

Playing in nature:

- Encourages creative play, social behavior, and communication
- Enables diverse sensory and movement experiences
- Allows experiences of the elements earth, water, fire, and air in a playful way
- Permits manageable risks and possibilities
- Promotes the important ability to plan, develop, execute, and change



Illustration: in the age of supported learning, we must remember that true learning is the free play with others in a movement-stimulating environment.

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His emphasis in research is comprised of the following issues:

- Sitting is the new smoking. What are the consequences?
- Physical activity and the impact on physical and mental health
- Well-being as a result of complex physical, mental, and emotional interdependencies
- Enriched environments - health preventive measures in school and office



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