

STRIDE Distance Learning Tips for Parents and Guardians

Make Running Fun - First and foremost, running should be fun. Encourage kids to participate and try their best. Never use running as a punishment.

Focus on Participation and Self-Improvement - With the elementary school STRIDE program, running is about participation and developing a healthy lifestyle, not about being the fastest kid in the school.

Consider Individual Differences - You may have multiple kids at home, avoid a one-size-fits-all activity. Accommodate differences in abilities. Children mature physically and emotionally at different rates, and this factors into their ability to participate in running.

Increase the Running Workload Gradually - The running workload includes volume (distance), intensity (speed or effort) and frequency (number of days per week). Start with a low-volume, low-intensity plan and limited frequency of a couple of days per week. Workload should increase over the duration of the distance learning, but should remain appropriate for the individual student-athlete.

Different Types of Movement - We use the term running to refer to the activity at any speed. Running can also be used to describe forward movement by other means, such as in a wheelchair or with other assistive devices.

- Walking – Moving across a surface at a slow to moderate pace by taking steps so there is always one foot on the ground.
- Running – Moving swiftly so that both feet leave the ground during each stride.
- Jogging – Running at a leisurely, slow pace.
- Sprinting – Running at full speed.

Pacing - Pace is defined as running at the same speed over a period of time. Pacing allows participants to run farther or longer without getting out of breath or having their heart rate get too high.

- Conversation pace – An easy, gentle pace that allows you to carry on a conversation.
- Tempo pace – A swift, sustained pace that's faster than conversation pace; also referred to as threshold or steady-state pace.
- Race pace – A person's maximum pace for a given distance; it's faster than conversation pace and tempo pace.

Nutrition - Teach kids that not all foods are created equal. While two foods may have the same caloric content, they may differ significantly in nutritional value and be high in fat, sodium, or added sugars compared to other, healthier foods. Stress how important it is to eat healthy foods and be physically active for 60 minutes or more every day.

Here are some tips for healthy eating:

- Fill half of your plate with a variety of fruits and vegetables.
- Eat lean protein like white meat chicken, beans, eggs, or nuts.
- Eat whole grains like brown rice and oatmeal.
- Incorporate low-fat or fat-free dairy such as milk, yogurt, and cheese.
- Quality does not equal quantity. Be mindful of recommended portion sizes.

Hydration - The body is made up primarily of water (about 60%), and water consumption is key to maintaining a healthy body. Discuss the importance of drinking water throughout the day and especially before, during, and after exercise. The body loses water when we sweat and when we exhale. Dehydration occurs when the body doesn't get enough water, which negatively affects the body's performance. Encourage your kids to drink several glasses of water each day.

Runner Safety - Discuss the basic concepts of pedestrian safety. Review common road signs such as stop signs, yield signs, and crosswalks. Talk about how cars and people should react to these signs. Emphasize the importance of stopping, looking both ways, and listening when crossing roads. This is also a good opportunity to review stranger danger when running outdoors, especially with participants in older grades who may be allowed to run on their own.

- Don't wear headphones when running. You need to be able to hear cars, pedestrians, animals, and other potential dangers.
- Run with a group, friend, or family member when possible.
- Always notify a parent, sibling, or friend of your running route.
- Run in familiar areas.
- Run on sidewalks as much as possible.
- Run facing traffic if you have to run on the road.
- Cross the street at designated crosswalks.
- Wear bright clothing and dress appropriately for the weather.