

Motivating Students THROUGH CHOICE

Why is it important to provide **choice**?

- 1** Providing students with choice teaches them how to communicate their desires in an appropriate way, encourages them to advocate for themselves, promotes independence, and gives them a sense of control over our expectations.
- 2** Both in our SESI classrooms, and at home during distance learning, it is important that we sprinkle choice into our student's everyday life in ways that include providing choice with academics, desirable breaks, or building a daily schedule with your student to increase their motivation to be successful.

3 ways to provide options to your students:



1

Provide Choice with Academics.

For example, you may give your child the choice of 15 minutes of math or 15 minutes of English. Another example of this may be letting your child choose whether they would like to complete their academics in the following order – math, then English, and finish with computer or computer, then English, and finish with math.



2

Provide Options for Breaks.

For example, you might ask your child “would you like to play basketball or ride your bike today?”



3

Build A Visual Schedule With Your Child By Allowing Them To Choose The Breaks They Will Take Throughout Their Day.

- For a younger child, you might allow them to choose from a list what activities they would like to do during their short breaks in between their academics.
- For an older child you might allow them to choose three times per day when they can go outside and play basketball.
- Keep the visual schedule somewhere that is easy for your child to review throughout the day.

Get to Know Your Student



All individuals learn differently! This might mean that some may become overwhelmed with a choice of more than two activities or items at a time and may need some help. If you see that your child is struggling to choose an activity out of a selection of three, start smaller by only offering two choices.

Reduce Task Demands



Have you ever arrived at work, looked at your "to-do" list, and become overwhelmed by the number of tasks listed?

Your child may feel similarly when they open up their weekly distance learning packet and see the amount of work they have to complete for the entire week.



You may notice your child is struggling to complete an entire assignment in one sitting, refusing to get started all together, or engaging in other problematic behaviors.



Breaking up the work into smaller achievable tasks may help your child in ways that include satisfaction of completing a task, and a decrease in other problem behaviors, and motivation to continue working.



3 strategies that will help break up the day and increase motivation:



1

Take 3 to 5-minute breaks in between task demands.

Make sure that these breaks will be easy for your child to transition back from.

- For a younger child, movement breaks are great options that gets your child up and out of their seat and can include jumping jacks, crab walks, and dance moves.
- For an older child, going for a short walk outside, 5 minutes of basketball, or going to get a snack and drink of water might be good options.



2

Break up a 10-question assignment into two, 5-question assignments with either a break or a different assignment or topic in between.

- Some examples of how to break up a worksheet could include drawing a line through the middle of the sheet and indicating to your child they can take a break when they get to the line or cutting the worksheet in half so your child is looking at fewer problems at once.



3

Have your child complete 2 to 5 easy tasks before they tackle a harder one.

- This will allow them to access the satisfaction of completing the easier tasks while preparing them to tackle the harder task.
- For younger children, it may be asking them to verbally answer some questions about the color of their shirt, their age, or label items that are in their area then asking them to complete a more difficult task such as matching the color green to the word "green."
- For older children, this may look like having them spell, four, 3 letter words, before spelling one, 10 letter word.