

**HELPING FAMILIES
FROM REFUGEE
BACKGROUNDS TO
SUPPORT THEIR
CHILDREN'S LEARNING**



**Foundation
House**

The Victorian Foundation
for Survivors of Torture Inc.

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Supporting children's at home learning is vital to focus and work on with families, particularly for students from refugee backgrounds during the current COVID-19 period. Below are some important lessons shared with, and by, Hume LGA schools at a recent webinar hosted by Foundation House.

1. QUICK WINS - REMOVING BARRIERS TO AT HOME LEARNING

- » **Provide families with information** about how to create a suitable space to work and learn.
- » **Ask families about their access** to the required equipment (for each child), and help to problem solve.
- » **Provide information to families** regarding balancing learning time with the family schedule and be understanding of the challenges this presents.
- » **Create opportunities to assist families and students** to develop technology proficiency - remembering that families from refugee backgrounds may have limited experience utilising technology.

2. SUPPORTING FAMILIES TO ADVOCATE FOR THEIR CHILD

- » **Approach families regularly** to see whether they need assistance.
- » **Provide information** about how to monitor their child's learning and identify concerns.
- » **Make it simple** to contact the school to request assistance by having a single contact point who is known to families.
- » **Register your school for the inbound service** provided by the DET via Language Loop (enables families to call the school with an interpreter free of charge).
- » **Help to connect families with supportive community** agencies and services such as [Spectrum](#), [Foundation House](#) and [Centre for Multicultural Youth](#).
- » **Consider that when families experience** agency and control around the education and wellbeing of their children their recovery from traumatic refugee experiences is accelerated. Be understanding of individual circumstances and non-judgemental in your efforts to engage with families.



3. ASSISTING FAMILIES TO ENGAGE WITH THEIR CHILD'S LEARNING

- » **Utilise Language Loop interpreter service** for all communication unless the family declines it (default is to book the interpreter).
- » **Use existing processes** and connections to check frequently on student and family wellbeing.
- » **Provide clear and up-to-date information**, translate important school communications into key languages including wellbeing activities so that families can benefit from these.
- » **Break tasks** into smaller steps.
- » **Stick to a common structure** for setting-out the expected learning and activities, including: time allocation; learning intentions; and success criteria.
- » **Provide the home learning timetable**, log-in details and expectations to families so that they can more effectively monitor their child's at-home learning

4. MAKING AT HOME ACTIVITIES MORE ACCESSIBLE

- » **Utilise the audio function** in PowerPoint to explain, read aloud, and clarify.
- » **Format activities** so that they are set-out clearly and simply using familiar terms, make use of editable forms and documents.
- » **Create** mini lesson videos.
- » **YouTube can be accessed in any language** which can be a great way to demonstrate a new concept or skill remotely.
- » **Create a virtual space** that is welcoming, accessible, personal, and fun.
- » **Help students practise** accessing online platforms, activities, password details etc.
- » **Utilise High Impact Teaching Strategies (HITS)** to plan activities that will meet the learning needs of students from refugee backgrounds. Access Foundation House's teaching resource relating to HITS.
- » **Provide access** to one-on-one or small group support where possible.

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