

Issues during COVID-19 with Children: Perspectives on Education

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Overview

- Impact of COVID-19 on Children Considered Typically Developing
- Impact of COVID-19 on Children with Disabilities
- Examples from Teachers
- Educational/Policy Considerations

Impact of COVID-19 on Children Who are Typically Developing

- Purpose of formal schooling in U.S.
 - Literacy, Math, Writing Skills
 - Content Knowledge
 - Social Skills

Impact of COVID-19 on Children Who are Typically Developing

- Spring 2020 most schools segued from in-school to virtual means of education.
 - Preparation of teachers
 - Expectations of parent involvement

Impact of COVID-19 on Children Who are Typically Developing

- Teacher and Parent Reports about Children's Learning
- Formal measures: NAEP
- Why? Technology, limited attendance, quality of instruction, children's attention

Impact of COVID-19 on Children with Disabilities

- Opportunities for both academic and social emotional growth were lost during virtual and hybrid learning
 - Children with special needs often need support in academics and social emotional skills

Impact of COVID-19 on Children with Disabilities

- Parents reported their children received fewer special education hours
- Related services decreased
 - Academic and social progress was lost

Impact of COVID-19 on Children with Disabilities

- Parents of children with special needs reported that their children struggled with
 - Attending to virtual instruction
 - Understanding instruction
 - Appropriate socialization

Impact of COVID-19 on Children with Disabilities

- Parents reported
 - a need for constant adult support
 - lessons and activities took too much time
 - adequate directions were not provided

“It is up to the parent to modify, teach, and let's be honest, do the work.”

Impact of COVID-19 on Children with Disabilities

- Parents also noted they were unable to provide their children with assistance due to
 - work
 - caring for other children in the family
 - stress caused by COVID-19

What Teachers Have to Say



What Teachers Have to Say



"We should be careful not to make generalizations about students in regard to whether the impact was "good or bad". It depended on the student, the disability (Could they attend, non-verbal, etc.), the teacher and their teaching style and level of devotion, the school and their level of care for the students (Did they send manipulatives, books, etc.)" **-Intermediate Elementary Special Education Teacher**

What Teachers Have to Say

"During virtual instruction, I made bags of manipulatives for my students to use with me during my instruction. Students were sent or it was left at the building for pick up, math manipulatives such as counters and place value blocks. I also sent white boards, markers and erasers, crayons, pencils, extra erasers, pencil sharpeners, as well as phonics books and work books. The school prepared math manipulative bags as well. This helped my students minimize learning loss. I understand this was not the case in many schools around the country or even within the same county. School was taking place virtually, as if we were in person. The schedule was followed and instruction was happening daily in my school. "

-- Intermediate Elementary Special Education Teacher

What Teachers Have to Say

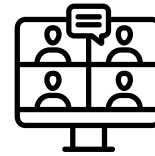
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Challenges included: **difficulties with technology** (navigation, completing assignments in different platforms, signing in, etc.), **availability of devices, attendance because of no device, no adult proximity** for very low-performing students, **not responding to live sessions** (cameras-off, not opening lesson material in specific apps of platforms used), **incomplete assignments** (synchronous and asynchronous), **environmental factors** surrounding students that highly distracts them (noise background, siblings playing, TV's and music on, toys, beds that makes them go to sleep, too much comfort that it's becoming a distraction."

- **1st & 3rd Grade Elementary Special Education Teacher**

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What Teachers Have to Say



"It was a challenge on, use online fe and camera, logg

The challenges younger students

Older student however, the c remained." - **4th &**

Education

"A lot of time was spe technology. Very ofte entire session directing

click instead of teachi grade math, students multiplication, which

we'd spend time focus the table, how to make rows and columns and

do the problem." - **2nd &**

Education Tea

"The digital divide was huge. Students not having the support at home to help them to access getting online. Having to get a hotspot or not having access at all was horrible. I had to meet them in the school parking lot. Or parents had to drive students to a friend's house before work to get internet." - **Intermediate**

Elementary Reading Special Education Teacher

What Teachers Have to Say



"Some students were home alone. Others had difficulty finding quiet places for them to access the education. I had some students where each child of the family was in a different corner of the apartment and even when they all wore headphones, everyone could hear what was going on in all other classes. One of my students had to take care of his little baby brother babysitting younger siblings, playing with toys, bringing their chromebooks around their house to show off new toys and more. The biggest challenge was all of the distractions of home. Students were bouncing on their couches, jumping on beds, watching TV, doing their hair, eating, constantly disappearing and saying, 'I'll be right back', and couldn't focus on me. Another family didn't have electricity and so the little girl had to go on the balcony to try to use the sunlight to help her see the screen."

-2nd & 5th Special Education Teacher Grade

-Intermediate Elementary Reading Special Education

Teacher

What Teachers Have to Say

"Pre covid –we would work on specific skills with students during pull out sessions, we would focus on and address students' identified deficits. However, during covid, students with disabilities understood less of the classroom instruction than before which meant our pull out sessions now focused on reteaching what was being taught in the classroom and helping students complete their graded work." - **Primary Grade Special Education Teacher**

"We could no longer use physical proximity to support students. We could not use hand over hand support. we could not interrupt the classroom teacher during whole group to speak to a student who was distracted." - **5th Grade Special Education Teacher**

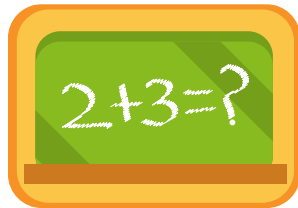
What Teachers Have to Say

"I tried to create slide shows that were colorful, had a theme, used fun bitmojis, and had information presented in a simple broken down format. I also used visuals to support comprehension (very helpful for DD students), OHI students - I created activities that paired them up in teams and created competitive warm up activities (math review)." - **2nd & 5th Grade Special Education Teacher**

"For instruction, I used different platforms for presentations and student responses. I used PearDeck, Nearpod, and Google: Jamboard, Slides, Forms. I used timers so students stay on task and complete activities. I had to require students to turn cameras on and wear headphones. I posted the Agenda and what platforms to use. I asked students to paraphrase directions. Breaking down the assignments is important. I used videos and I also gave time for practice and show how to navigate." - **Intermediate Elementary Special Education Teacher**

What Teachers Have to Say

"There has definitely been a fall back on the basic skills. I had to reteach certain basic skills that I knew they could do precovid but lost the consistency of the skill (such as decoding certain word patterns, add, subtract with regrouping). I just had to keep on moving with reteaching the skills." - **2nd & 3rd Grade Special Education Teacher**



What Teachers Have to Say



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"Students' writing skills have been challenging because they don't know how to write since they were asked to type all their answers during virtual learning which means they were using their keyboards. Also, a lot of activities during virtual learning did not even require writing, but rather drag and drop type movements. So now that we are back in-person, these students do not know how to form letters correctly using pencil and paper. I had to start all over again when they came back. I needed to teach them to write correctly. When I say write, I mean letter formation and spacing, for example." - **2nd & 3rd Grade Special Education Teacher**

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What Teachers Have to Say



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These students come back to school and now, school is not what they knew it to be. So speaking about two of the students I teach who have Autism Spectrum Disorder. I frequently observe these two students playing by themselves – and it isn't parallel play – it is more like because they are used to playing alone. – **2nd Grade Autism Classroom Special Education Teacher**

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“It also has taken my students a while to get used to the rules and routines of the structured environment of school. For example, virtually, I didn't have to tell you to go to bathroom because at home mom says when you have to go, you go but now you have to get permission. ” – **2nd Grade Autism Classroom Special Education Teacher**

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Educational and Policy Considerations

- What should instructional emphasis be?
 - Teaching missed skills?
 - Keeping up with new skills and content?
 - Academic vs. Social skills?
 - Should instructional emphasis vary by age group or normative populations?

Educational and Policy Considerations

- Teacher shortages
 - Teachers left or leaving the field
 - Fewer new teachers coming in.



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