

HOW TO TALK TO YOUR PARENTS ABOUT ONLINE SCHOOL

A Helpful Tool Kit from Connections Academy*



Step 1: Decide Whether Online School Is Right for You

If you've already done your research and have determined that online school (and Connections Academy) is the best choice for you—congratulations! You can move on to the next step of this guide. But if you're a little less sure, that's OK! Here are some resources that might help you decide whether online school is the right fit:

QUIZ:

[Is Online School
Right for Me?](#)

WORKBOOK:

[Finding the
Right School](#)

Remember: Online school isn't just for one kind of student—it's for students with all different types of goals, dreams, and needs!



Step 2: Make a List of Benefits—for You and Your Family

Switching schools is a big decision—one that will affect both you and your other family members in a big way. It's important to do your research and really think about the opportunities—and possible challenges—this will bring into your family's life.

To help get you started, we've put together a list of questions to ask yourself. If you feel comfortable, ask your friends, family members, counselors, or other trusted adults to tell you what they think too!

1. Why do I want to switch to online school?
2. How will online school impact my daily schedule or routine?
3. How will it impact the daily schedule or routine of my family members?
4. How will online school help me achieve my goals?
5. What can online school offer me and my family that an in-person school can't?
6. What are some of the positives of online school?
7. What are some of the potential challenges?

Step 3: Map Out the Facts and Benefits of Online School

There are a lot of great things about online school. Although each one is a little bit different, online school generally gives you more freedom to learn when you want, where you want—and gives you the space and time you need to pursue your interests and passions.

Although we can't tell you about every other online school option out there, we can tell you more about us. Below are just some of the benefits of Connections Academy that you and your parents might want to consider.

Check off the benefits of Connections Academy that you think will be most important to you and your family:

- more than 20 years of online education expertise
- tuition-free
- fully accredited
- the ability to infuse family values into students' education
- high-quality curriculum aligned to state standards
- state-certified, specially-trained online teachers offering one-on-one support
- ability to earn a high school diploma from your state
- students can learn at their own pace
- a focus on students' social and emotional well-being
- fun ways to connect with other students, such as virtual clubs and optional in-person events like field trips, prom, and graduation*
- a safe, collaborative environment focused on student success
- support services to help students find the right path

Step 4: Prepare for the Conversation

Now that you've done some research—and identified some of the best reasons to switch to online school—it's time to prepare for the conversation. Some things to consider:

Who you want to approach?

If you have two parents or caretakers, do you want to talk to both of them at the same time or would it be easier to have a conversation with just one first?

When is a good time for this conversation?

Would it feel easier to bring up your desire to attend online school in a more casual environment (like when you're driving somewhere together in the car) or in a formal setting (by calling a family meeting)?

How your parents/caregivers typically make decisions?

Changing schools is a big change - for you and your entire family. Don't worry if you don't get an immediate yes; it's likely that your caretakers will want to have more than one follow-up conversation, either privately or with you.

What happens if they don't immediately say yes?

Try to accept a no or even a maybe. Ultimately, they might decide that online school isn't the right option for you - and that's OK! Or they might just need some time to process or get used to the idea.

If they say no, try not to get angry or upset - show that you respect their opinion and ask if they'd be open to talking about it again or another time. If they have specific concerns or questions, write them down so you can research some answers and discuss them at another time.



Step 5: Answer Your Parents' Most Pressing Questions

As we mentioned, it's likely that once you bring up the idea of transferring to an online school like Connections Academy, your parents and caretakers are going to have some questions. Below are a few of the most common ones for your family to review and discuss together.

Is online school legitimate?

Yes, Connections Academy is a division of Connections Education®, which is accredited by Cognia, formerly AdvancED. It is also directly supported by Pearson, the world's learning company. Many of the Connections Academy-supported schools are also accredited by one or more of six regional accrediting organizations for higher-education institutions, recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation and the United States Department of Education.

How much will it cost?

Connections Academy is an online public school, with no tuition costs for our students or their families. In addition to required texts and instructional materials, many Connections Academy schools provide computers to their students at no cost. Other schools require or allow students to use their own computer. Families are responsible for optional expenses, which may include extra school supplies and field trips.

Do Connections Academy Students learn the same things?

All of our lessons follow the education and curriculum requirements of the state they operate in. Designed by experts in online learning, our curriculum inspires curiosity; helps students become resilient learners capable of thriving in a changing world; and can be tailored to each student's unique interests, goals, and abilities.

How is Connections Academy different from homeschooling?

In a typical homeschool environment, parents are responsible for creating (or purchasing) curriculum, teaching, and grading homework. Connections Academy, on the other hand, operates as an at-home, online public school, with an established curriculum and dedicated teachers.

If they're learning at home, who does the actual teaching?

While many of our lessons are self-paced by students, they also keep in regular communication with dedicated, certified teachers who are specially trained to teach in an online environment. Regularly scheduled LiveLesson® sessions enhance materials and help students master subjects and collaborate with peers.

Parents and caregivers act as their student's Learning Coach, offering additional support. The time commitment associated with being your student's Learning Coach depends on their grade level and specific needs or learning style.

If they're learning on their own, how are students held accountable?

Like most schools, we conduct regular assessments to monitor growth and check knowledge. In addition to regularly evaluated assignments, students are tested in math, reading, and English/language arts to help measure progress and establish learning goals. Parents act as the Learning Coach to make sure their student stays on track and fully understands concepts as they learn.



Step 6: Additional Resources

When approaching your parents/caregivers about this decision, it's important to come as well prepared as possible, which will show how seriously you are taking this conversation. Below are some resources to help you start the discussion in a fun and productive way.

[A PowerPoint Presentation](#)

The PowerPoint template below is designed to help you organize your thoughts. While it was built to help you talk to your parent/caregiver about the benefits of Connections Academy, you can also use it to start conversations about other things, from why your family should adopt a new pet to extending your curfew, and everything in between!

[A Written Letter](#)

If you're more comfortable expressing yourself in long form, try writing down your thoughts in a traditional letter, whether you deliver it on paper or send it in an email. We suggest telling your parents it's on the way, ("I want to talk to you about the possibility of transferring to online school. I've written down my reasons for you to consider. Can we talk about it as a family this weekend?")