

The Reality of Online Learning for Low-Income Students and Their Families

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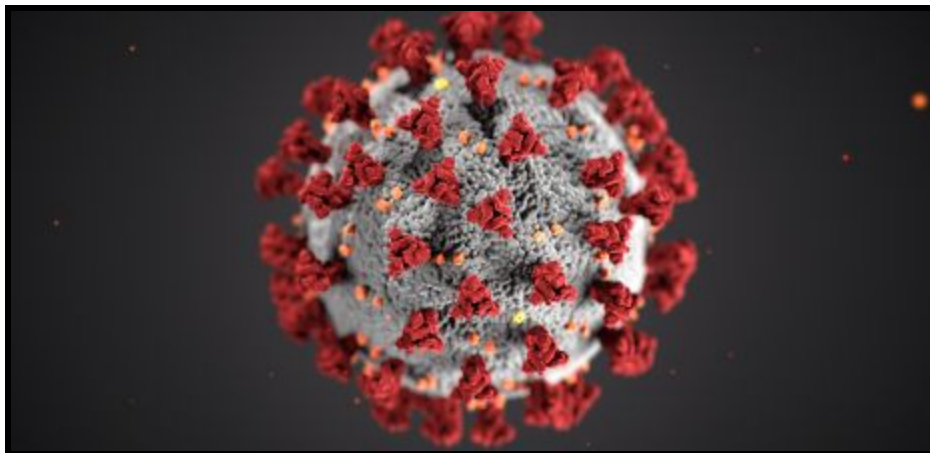
Here we see students who can all come from different income families working on computers inside school before the Covid-19 pandemic.



Here we can see all students working to better their education with school supplied computers. Not all schools have the capability to supply their less fortunate students with computers to allow for them to continue their education outside of an actual school building. However if schools did have this capability of supplying the lower income families with computers the real question to be asked is *how many of these students would have access to the internet?*



Here is a teacher at the front of her classroom with a group of students who may have been struggling to understand the topic of interest, so by being in a normal school setting this teacher was able to work more closely with these kids to ensure they are fully understanding what is being taught to them.



The Corona Virus shut down schools in the month of March and caused schools to shut down for the rest of the school year.



Here is what a Covid-19 testing center is. Cars go through a maze of cones and lanes to reach the destination of finally getting tested for the virus.



Classrooms are empty with no students or teachers. Teachers now have to teach online with the unknown if they are going back. They think of their students who don't have the resources to complete online learning. They think about their home and food situations. The teachers think about the services and help that they can't give.



When you think of low income neighborhoods most people tend to drift to the thought of crammed together apartment buildings in big cities, but the reality of this is that low income families can live anywhere. The struggles they face inside the home can shift to causing problems with an online education if the internet can't be afforded or even a computer is too expensive.



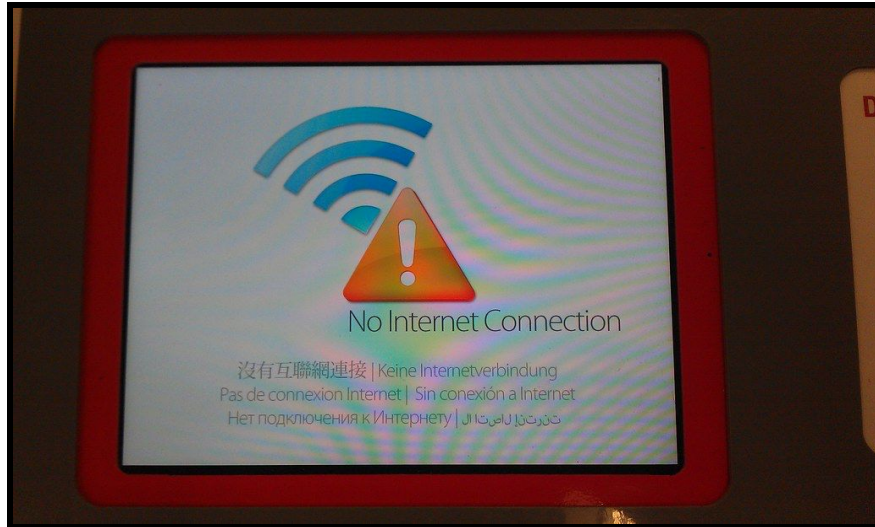
Same thing with higher/middle income families; these families can live anywhere they see fit for their families but the only difference here is that online schooling won't be a big fuss to shift too. These families tend to have easy access to the internet and computers to allow for an online education now that it is necessary with the pandemic.



This is what most people would expect their children to be doing when online schooling starts up in the fall, but the reality of how smoothly things would run is totally up in the air as this new reality is not only brand new to the students but to teachers as well. This whole online education is going to be a learning curve for everyone involved in the process.



Some kids get the opportunity to talk to teachers face to face on computers with the apps Zoom, Microsoft Teams and other different applications.



While other students don't have internet or computers to complete online school. The students don't get to see their teachers and exceed in learning.



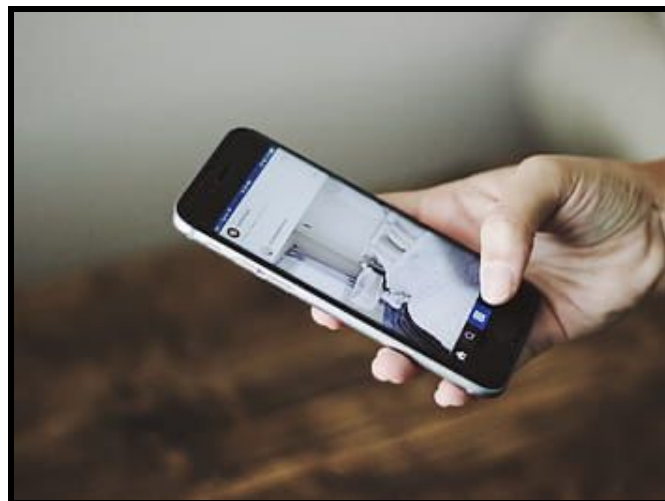
One huge issue particularly for low income families is food. The food served at school is vital to some students who may not be provided three meals a day, and need this food to remain healthy. Being fed at school is extremely important to some students and losing that in their daily life can seriously impact some low income families and students.



A lot of children use going to school everyday as a way to get a meal, and with the closing of schools back in March would these kids be left hungry. Most schools know that students may use school as a place to get fed so they found a way to pack “to-go” meals for the students who need it most. But with the growing pandemic and uncertainty of the virus some families don’t want to leave their homes, so how would these children get their “to-go” meals.



One major struggle that will hurt both parents and their children is trying to work from home as well as help their children do their online learning and make sure that they are working. Most parents don't have the time on weekdays to help their children nonstop if they need it, and with them working from home this makes it even harder because they need to do their job, but the younger the child at home is the more help they may require with online learning.



Phones are a huge distraction to learning everywhere. Now that students are home, they can be on their phone all day and not paying attention and it's possible that nobody would even notice if their phone is not visible. A student being on their phone all day during distance learning can really impact their learning if they completely zone out and miss important information.



The possibility for distractions while learning are higher than ever because of distance learning. One of these distractions is video games. Video games consume a lot of kid's lives even when they are still actively going to school, so when kids are home all the time this distraction can impede on the student's learning at a much higher rate because it will always be available to them when they are home.



A distraction that is impacting younger kids primarily is toys. All young kids want to play with their toys instead of doing their work and when the parents are working, sometimes they may not be stopped from leaving their work to distract themselves with some toys. All kids want to do is have fun and the discipline of school creates a necessary balance where kids can work and enjoy themselves, and with distance learning there could be a fear that some younger children lose that balance.



Schools close permanently for the rest of the school year. While the school year in the fall is still unknown.



Now this is the new reality for students all over the world. Schools are trying new ways to teach in person, hybrid or all online. The school systems of the U.S have to make big choices and make sure that they are supporting the students, teachers and the community.

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