

## **NORTHERN IRELAND EDUCATION COMPANIES TO PROVIDE FREE SOFTWARE, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT TO TEACHERS AND PARENTS**

**Tuesday, April 28, 2020** (Belfast, Northern Ireland) Almost overnight schools across the country have switched to online learning in response to Coronavirus restrictions. A group of innovative Northern Ireland companies have come together to offer their support.

Some 30,000+ educators in Northern Ireland are having to adapt quickly to new ways of teaching with many experts suggesting that a blend of classroom and online education may become the “new normal” even beyond the current school year.

This is not only having a huge impact on teachers but also parents and students. As teachers contend with streaming video lessons and assigning homework online, parents are becoming increasingly involved in the day-to-day management of their children's education.

Innovative technologies and access to great educational content can certainly help make these changes more manageable for all involved. For many, simple advice on how to plan their days and maintain a healthy social-emotional balance can make a huge impact.

In response, NI EdTech - a network of over a dozen education technology and media companies from across the region - has today announced the release of a suite of free resources and software trials designed to help local schools and families navigate these changes.

Speaking on behalf of the network, Frank McGonagle of Wholeschool Software said:

*“As a group it's been really heartening to see so much hard work - from teachers, parents and students themselves - going into maintaining student learning at a very difficult time. Working in education we all know how quickly everyone has had to adapt and it's certainly not easy. So we wanted to help by giving local schools and families special access to some of our products, services and resources.”*

The group was established with support from Invest Northern Ireland through its Collaborative Growth Programme.

Niall Casey, Director of Skills and Competitiveness at Invest NI, said:

*“Northern Ireland is at the forefront of education technology and NI EdTech is readily responding to the current challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are delighted to have supported the group through our Collaborative Growth Programme, helping it to bring its innovative technologies to the education sector's new ways of teaching. By working collectively, it is bringing inspiring learning tools to those in education and helping to establish a new daily routine in homes and schools across Northern Ireland.”*

NI EdTech has also released a short video on the “Top Ten Tips for Children Learning at Home”. The video was produced by network member Learning Mole and addresses challenges like balancing screen time, keeping physically active and creating a schedule for young learners.

A full list of available resources released by the group is available online at [www.nied.tech](http://www.nied.tech) and will be regularly updated.

## **ACADEMY FOR INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE AND RESEARCH (AISR)**

Due to COVID19, AISR are offering a free 2 week taster course for their online Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities in [Behaviour Management](#), [Assessing Achievement](#), [Food Safety and Catering](#) and [Manual Handling](#).

<https://www.facebook.com/CoursesinDerry/>  
<https://twitter.com/AcademyISR?lang=en-gb>  
[https://www.instagram.com/aisr\\_uk/](https://www.instagram.com/aisr_uk/)

Contact: [drterry.mcivor@aisr.org.uk](mailto:drterry.mcivor@aisr.org.uk)

## **BOTTLETOP MEDIA**

To help schools and teachers communicate with parents, Bottletop Media are offering free use of their iClass mobile app for 1 year. The app can help schools eliminate SMS costs, reduce paperwork, manage home work plans and improve communication with parents.

<https://iclass-cms.com/ni-app-offer/>

Contact: [offer@bottletopmedia.com](mailto:offer@bottletopmedia.com)

## **EARLY YEARS APP**

Early Years App provides schools with software to record, review and report on child development milestones. They are offering schools a free Child Emotional Development module to provide support to children, teachers, and parents.

[www.earlyyearsapp.com](http://www.earlyyearsapp.com)

Contact: [eugene@earlyyearsapp.com](mailto:eugene@earlyyearsapp.com)

## **EDMIN SOFTWARE**

To help NI Special Education Needs Coordinators access up to date information and resources to support students with additional needs, Edmin Software are offering free access to their DSA Portal until September 2020.

[www.dsaportal.co.uk](http://www.dsaportal.co.uk)

Contact: [michael@edminsoftware.com](mailto:michael@edminsoftware.com)

## **BOOP**

BOOP is offering NI mainstream schools free access to our Special Needs Learning and Support Platform, for up to 12 students per school, so teachers can provide structure and consistency for those students and families who require additional levels of support over the coming weeks and months. The offer is subject to availability.

[www.boop.ie](http://www.boop.ie)

Contact: [info@limejar.co.uk](mailto:info@limejar.co.uk)

## **IZAK9**

The Izak9 Maths Team is providing access to their online user area plus free content for teachers and families via their Twitter and Facebook channels. You can find them online at [www.facebook.com/izak9](https://www.facebook.com/izak9) and [twitter.com/abacusandhelix](https://twitter.com/abacusandhelix)

[www.izak9.com](http://www.izak9.com)

Contact: [info@izak9.com](mailto:info@izak9.com)

## **JETPACK LEARNING**

Jetpack Learning is offering Northern Ireland schools free access to their “Game Changer” platform which enables teachers to create personalised educational games for their students.

<https://www.jetpacklearning.com/ni-schools-offer>

## **LEARNINGMOLE**

To support parents teaching their children from home, we have over 250 free videos on our YouTube channel and website. Animations, family learning and practical, fun activities to support home learning and children's development.

[www.youtube.com/learningmole](https://www.youtube.com/learningmole)

[www.learningmole.com](http://www.learningmole.com)

Contact: [michelle@learningmole.com](mailto:michelle@learningmole.com)

## **MAKEMATIC**

Makematic have teamed up with Concern Worldwide and “social network for social good” Horyou to launch the free #17DaystoLearn challenge. The challenge includes daily “at home” activities and dozens of family-friendly educational animations linked to the seventeen UN Sustainable Development Goals.

[www.makematic.com/promo/17daystolearn/](http://www.makematic.com/promo/17daystolearn/)

## **TAKETEN**

TakeTen are offering their school mindfulness programme free of charge - helping all schools to manage pupils' stress and anxiety - as well as a free trial of their new stress management app for smartphones to help teenagers, teachers and parents during Covid19.

[www.letstaketen.com](http://www.letstaketen.com)

Contact: [info@letstaketen.com](mailto:info@letstaketen.com)

## **WHOLE SCHOOL SOFTWARE**

Wholeschool's Platform of integrated services continues to support hundreds of schools during this crisis. They're offering a free Home-Schooling Audit to help schools understand how teachers, pupils and parents are adjusting to remote learning and gain insight into tools and practices that really work.

[www.whole.school/ni-schools-offer](http://www.whole.school/ni-schools-offer)

Contact: [info@whole.school](mailto:info@whole.school)

### ENDS ###

For more details visit [www.nied.tech](http://www.nied.tech)

Contacts:

Tony Woods, Jetpack Learning

[tony.woods@jetpacklearning.com](mailto:tony.woods@jetpacklearning.com)

Frank McGonagle, Wholeschool Software

[frank@whole.school](mailto:frank@whole.school)