

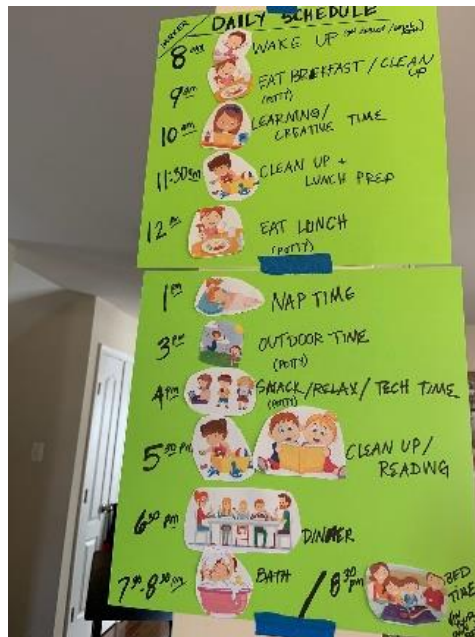
How to balance working from home...when kids the kids are home!

Sure, each of us has probably had the one-off 'work from home' day when our kids are sick, have a doctor's appointment or snow day. But transitioning to a fulltime experience, 40+ hours per week, is more than likely uncharted territory. Taking some time to think through potential scenarios, looking through your schedule for the week, and triple-checking what resources at home you can leverage during this time will make your life just a bit easier during this time.

Here are some useful tips as you plan to make the transition for the next few weeks...

1. Try to replicate a normal day

Studies show (and parents agree), children thrive on a schedule. Set simple time-blocks throughout the day for different tasks or activities. Include them in the process of what they'd like to work on, or when they'd like to have their dedicated screen time.



2. Leverage their downtime as much as possible

If you've worked naptime or 'quiet time' into the day, try and get as much done during those hours as you can. Schedule any client calls or customer check in's - really anything you don't want to be disrupted while doing. As a suggestion, make a 'nice to have' and 'must-have' list for the times you'd like/need quiet time for.

3. Communicate, even more than normal

This tip extends to both your colleagues/manager and your kids. Being upfront that your kids may pop-in during a video call, or that your fur-kid may bark at the mailman sets the right expectation for how the call/meeting may go. When it comes to your kids, communicate to them when you will need quiet and no distractions. Ask them before a call if they need anything from you (hello, snacks!) so you can get them situated beforehand.

4. Set boundaries early on

We all need our 'space' and that extends to office space too. If you're lucky enough to have an at-home office, then you can talk to your kids about what it means when the door is closed. You could even include them in an Arts & Crafts project in making a STOP & GO or Thumbs Up/Down sign you can put on the door, so they understand when it's okay to come in or stay out.

If you don't have a dedicated space at home, that's okay too. Find a place in your home that you intend to work from consistently, and then talk to your kids openly about the temporary transition of this space, and how you'd like them to interact (if at all) with that space.

5. Be flexible with screen time

While following the guidelines put forth by the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) is important, during this weird time, a little flex or strategy can be useful! If you need to hop on a last-minute conference call, make it a game to earn more time. "Hey kids, if you pick up all your toys in less than one minute, you can watch a movie!" Or schedule time in the day for education movies or tv shows. Setting a start/stop time will help with the transition of turning off or giving up the tablet/iPad/tv afterward.

6. Take breaks and Enjoy this time

There are studies show that in some cases employees who work from home are more productive than employees who work in an office environment. Just because you're at home and don't have co-workers coming into catch-up for 10 minutes over coffee or popping in to tell you about their date last night, doesn't mean you can't take a break and catch up with your kids. If you're diligent about scheduling your day and setting expectations with your manager and team about how/when work needs to be done, you can build in some reprieve time to color a picture, play dinosaur hunt or play a quick game of memory.



Sources:

- [American Academy of Pediatrics](#)
- [Forbes](#)
- [NBC News](#)
- [PopSugar](#)