

## 5 tips for home working productivity - with children

Today is the first day of the Summer Term for schools. Usually, many parents try to limit working from home with their children to the occasional sick or snow day. However, all that is set to change during these unprecedented times. With schools closed, many families are finding themselves in the position of needing to work and mind children – at the same time, under the same roof.

So, what can working parents do to ensure their children are occupied and happy, whilst still being able to support their business and colleagues?

**1. Create a family routine:** It's important to create a schedule to outline the full day from waking up to bedtime, your set 'office' hours, when food will be made, when it will be eaten and when any breaks will occur. Try to line up your work plan with your children's typical routines – for example, parents of young ones may find it easier to schedule calls during naptime or when older children are doing schoolwork. Schools may have provided you with a rough timetable, which is a good starting point for you all. Once your schedule is in place, try not to deviate from it. You want your children to adjust to the circumstances quickly, and establishing a routine is vital to achieving this, as well as assuring their general wellbeing. It will also be a good way to make them understand that there are set times where – if possible – they should try not to disturb any working adults.

**2. Agree your working hours:** Dependent on the age of your children, you may need to alter your hours slightly – some may find it easier to work earlier or later in the evening, for example. Most employers should allow for this, but they will also want as much business continuity as possible, so should be accommodating of all reasonable requests.

**3. Carve out a work zone:** For many parents the thought of creating an 'adult only' zone in your home may be wishful thinking. However, if your kids are a bit older, try to carve out a space to work in that is free from children's paraphernalia. This is so you can keep your work and parenting roles separate, giving each your full concentration for a set amount of time without feeling like you aren't doing either well.

**4. Face-to-face is still best:** Wherever possible, communicate with your colleagues via video chats. Face-to-face conversations help you feel more connected and are typically more engaging than conference calls. There are a wealth of technologies available to help facilitate this. Just remember to check you're dressed appropriately and your backdrop to ensure you're comfortable with what your co-workers will see on their screens.

**5. Expect the unexpected:** There is no point being too stressed about things. Things happen with children and if you need to reschedule a call or meeting due to a child-related incident, most of your colleagues, or customers should be understanding. Chances are your kids will be pretty excited to be spending so much time with you!

**6. Be kind to yourself:** Working from home can bring with it a number of challenges, whether they be in-home distractions or general technology frustrations. However, it can also be an isolating and even lonely experience, especially if you are new to it. These are stressful times for many people. However, it is important to try to notice the silver lining wherever you may find it. Be kind to yourself, don't put yourself under too much pressure. [Check out our wellness blog for more.](#)