

WORKING

From Home (WFH)

with kids



For the kids:

1. Make sure your children have the right educational tools. If you have children in middle school or high school, chances are they have been sent home with readings and assignments to complete. Many schools are continuing some form of classroom education online. As much as you can, make sure your kids have the right tools for the job.

- Will they need access to a computer or tablet for virtual (online) learning?
- Is there a particular software or app you need to download?
- Do you have pens, pencils, notebook paper, rulers, calculators, and any other essential school supplies?

2. Establish a schedule and stick with it. Everyone thrives on routine, children especially. Have an established, Monday-Friday schedule of activities & tasks, and hold everyone accountable to it.

- Alternate schoolwork with healthy leisure activities, such as getting outside for a bit or doing yoga inside (check out Cosmic Kids Yoga YouTube channel for some healthy, kid-safe, active screen time - https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC5uIZ2KOZZeQDQo_Gsi_qbQ)
- Assign daily household chores
- Throughout the day, don't forget to wash your hands with warm water and soap, for at least 20 seconds

3. Minimize screen time and save it for the afternoon. Let's be honest: we love our phones, computers, tablets, and video games. In moderation, these are fine ways to pass the time and a great way for us connect with our friends & family members while still practicing good social distancing. But too much screen time, especially early in the day, can lead to overstimulation and/or lethargy. Save screen time as an incentive for a productive morning. Here are some educational ways for your kids to stay occupied online:

- Math: <https://www.khanacademy.org/>
- Science: <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/>
- Reading: <https://www.squigglepark.com/>
- History: <https://www.historyforkids.net/>

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For the parents:

- 1. Alternate child supervision with your spouse/partner.** Depending on the nature of your job, and if your spouse/partner is also working from home, it's a great idea to share child supervision duties if possible. "Splitting the shift" (one parent takes the kids in the morning, the other parent takes the kids in the afternoon) is probably best for establishing a routine, but if you need to be flexible and alternate based on the day's work schedule, that's fine too. Alternating supervision duties gives each parent time to focus singularly on work tasks – this would be the time to schedule any telephonic or video conferences.
- 2. Don't wear your pajamas (hear us out).** While you don't need to put on a suit and tie to work from home, we suggest that you wear something casual, comfortable, and yet presentable. Part of this is to get your brain adjusted to a working/workplace mindset. Also, if you do any teleconferencing or Skype video-chatting as part of your job, you do not want to be scrambling to find appropriate attire at the last minute.
- 3. If you video-chat, make sure you are in a clean, well-lit area of your home.** Switch on the lamp or the overhead light, even if you have the blinds open and the sun pouring through. If you don't, you may appear underlit or barely visible to the people watching you.
- 4. Keep in touch with your manager and your co-workers.** As an alternative to emails and phone calls, if your company utilizes an instant-messaging system, such as Skype for Business, this can be a great tool for reaching out to colleagues regarding both work-related matters and as a personal check-in.
- 5. Keep it real.** This is not a normal time. We are making unprecedented changes in our day to day lives and in our day to day way of doing business to help curb a public health crisis. During a crisis, no one is going to be 100% all the time, and that's okay. If you're on a conference call and your kids are making a racket, be honest – apologize once for the background noise, try to minimize the noise (remember you can mute your phone!), and do the best you can. If something needs to be rescheduled due to your childcare situation, ask if it can be rescheduled. Keep your leader informed. Keep your co-workers informed. Ask for help. Help others. Together, we will make it through.



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Some Do's and Don'ts:

- **Do** have a family meeting to discuss expectations, responsibilities, and at-home rules.
- **Don't** do everything on the fly and hope it all works out.
- **Do** have a set schedule or pre-planned activities for everyone. This makes times you are unavailable or slammed with work much more manageable and less stressful.
- **Don't** let them set their own schedules, if younger especially, or sleep in super late.
- **Do** ask about flexible working hours, as in early hours, then break for family responsibilities, then later hours.
- **Don't** expect your boss to know your specific needs without communicating them.
- **Do** encourage kids to exercise each day and get outside (you too!)
- **Don't** let this mean tons of screen and couch time.
- **Do** have a dedicated work space/school space that is uncluttered and as separate as can be for each person.
- **Don't** work in your bed.
- **Do** let your children DO more for themselves and consider that valuable learning (chores, organizing, creating activities and exercise plans, calling grandma).
- **Don't** do everything for your family and wear yourself out.
- **Do** expect some chaos and frustration from everyone, and possibly some anxiety and meltdowns.
- **Don't** expect everyone to handle this the same, and don't ignore your children's feelings and cues that they might be struggling.
- **Do** reach out to friends and family and take social breaks away from social media.
- **Don't** leave the news on in the background all day.
- **Do** give yourself a break and practice good self-care.
- **Don't** ignore your needs for everyone else's.