

# Top Tips for working from home with children.

Transitioning to working from home can be challenging and with schools closed, many of us also have children to support and entertain!

## Top Tip 1: Keep the lines of communication open

- Keep the lines of communication open with your colleagues. The more people understand that you are working with young children in the house, the more they will understand the inevitable disruptions.
- Also, keep the lines of communication open with the people who live with you! Ensure they understand that you will be working and agree together what you all need to do to make this new living/working situation effective for all of you.
- If you have a co-parent, good communication with them is also critical. Talk through the daily schedule and be flexible as things change.

## Top Tip 2: Communicate with your manager if you think you may need some flexibility.

Talk to your manager if you feel you may need a little flexibility, so you can balance work around nap times, meals, or bath times. Have an honest and open conversation and agree on a schedule. Then, make sure your colleagues know when you're working. That way, you have set clear expectations and, when you are with your kids, you are wholly with your kids.

This is a difficult situation, but we all still have work to do. Most employers will support a more flexible approach to work at this time but will no doubt expect the same back from employees.

## Top Tip 3: Don't sweat the small stuff.

If your children make noise in the background or wander into view on a video call, people will absolutely understand, and many of your colleagues are probably dealing with the same thing!



## Top Tip 4: Have empathy and show support.

Whilst your situation might be different from your team members or businesses you work with who may not have children or have access to childcare, everyone is working through stress and under pressure. Showing you understand and supporting each other is vital at this time.



# Top Tips for working from home with children.

## Top Tip 5: Remember, you're not alone

Working from home and practicing social distancing can feel isolating enough without the additional stress of school closures. Here are a couple of things you can do:

- Find a colleague or business contact in a similar situation and set up a regular virtual meeting to share tips, talk and get it off your chest. Or, talk to someone in a completely different situation, and chat about anything BUT kids. Do whatever you need to connect.
- Talk to your manager – maybe there is a way to make things easier that you haven't thought about yet.

## Summary

- If your child needs your attention while you are on a call, just excuse yourself, turn off your video and mute your microphone. Do what you need to do and come back - people will understand.
- If your child is making noise and it is a distraction for your colleagues, just hit mute until you need to talk.
- Stick to a routine that makes sense for your family. Routine is important to kids so when possible stick to a familiar schedule. Get them dressed in the morning, stick to the same bedtime, shower schedule and family mealtimes, if possible.
- Preparing in advance can also help. Some ideas include laying out clothes for the day if you aren't able to help them get dressed; packing lunches and snacks for your kids that they can get on their own; setting up different play stations they can move to for a change of pace; having nap time ready to go (books, blankies, and special stuffed animals at the ready).
- When you feel like you need to be in two places at once, for example, feeding your kids lunch and being on a call, or starting a new movie for them to watch, consider dialling in to the meeting instead of video calling. This way, you can listen and contribute while tending to your kids at the same time.

