

Fact Sheet

COVID-19: Working from Home with Kids

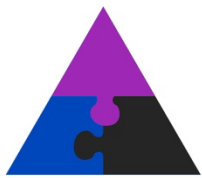
In these uncertain times, having your kids at home while you work has become a necessity as schools close down or encourage their students to stay home if they are able to. Having your children at home with you while you are trying to work yourself can be a source of stress for many parents. However, there are many things you can do to ease this and even make the experience of working at home with your children enjoyable. The first thing to do is to stay calm yourself – parenting your children at this time is all about reassurance, routine and fun. Many children worry about what is happening and pick up stress from the adults in the home, so if you take personal responsibility for your own calm, it will make a huge difference to the state of mind and more than likely, the behaviour of your little people.

How you co-exist with your children at home while your work, will depend wildly on a variety of factors from the ages, abilities and interests of your children. Keep it flexible but be clear about what the rules are. There is no need to stress about kids spending too much time on screens at this time. This is an unusual situation we all need to get through so to reduce stress you can relax your rules and focus on fun if you like. Ultimately, you know what works for your kids, but we've put together some ideas to inspire you. Choose what works and leave the rest:

- **Routine** – Get them up, breakfasted and dressed at normal time and get them started for the day. Set up a simple routine you stick to each day with start time, recess time, lunch time and finish time. You can even set a cool recess bell on your phone!
- **Set Expectations** – Explain to your children that it is a work day for you and a school day for them. Let them know that you'll need to be working without interruptions for certain periods during the day and let them know clearly what you expect of them – eg. that they can't talk to you during phone and video calls. Be clear about when you will interact with them (recess, lunchtime, after school and after you have finished working for the day) and plan something fun (outside if you can) for those times even if it is as low-key as jumping on the trampoline or sitting on the lawn or balcony eating strawberries!
- **Set Tasks** – Give them 1-3 tasks to achieve during the day. For example, find out three weird facts about your favourite animal and report back in a family presentation at recess time or at the end of the day.
- **Defined work areas** – Specify a work area for yourself and a special school area for each child, that is separate from where other family activities take place. Put activities, coloured pencils, paper etc in their school space with a laptop or device for them to access online resources. When work / school starts you all step into your spaces and work.

This information and advice is general in nature, based on our interpretation of current legislation and policy, and does not take into account your specific circumstances. You should consider whether the information is appropriate to your needs and seek professional advice if required.

Last updated 7 April 2020.



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PEOPLE SOLUTIONS

- **Use Your Support Systems** – Many parents will tag-team to 'home school' care for their children during this time and many will be able to rely on grandparents and other family members. Use friends and family where possible to arrange online or outdoor activities at home – building a veggie garden with grandma, doing woodwork with grandpa or reading a story, with grandma online over Zoom or Facetime.
- **Use Online Resources** - If you have technology and a reliable internet connection at home, there are lots of online learning resources you can take advantage of to teach and engage your little ones while you work. Many schools are providing online resources and daily work tasks for children. There are a great many other online sources of interesting educational material such as Study Ladder, Reading Eggs, Mathletics and many more.
- **Keep them active** – Get them to step away from their work area at break times and head outside for handball, trampoline time or to kick a soccer ball around if you can. If you are inside, you can do star jumps! There are online resources provided on YouTube by PE teachers to keep kids moving.
- **Virtual Playdates** – Set up a time for your child to connect with a friend over zoom or Facetime for a chat or to share tips on video games or whatever. This will work best with older kids and help them stay connected to their friends.
- **Virtual Reading time with grandma** – If your child's grandparents live far away or cannot interact with your child due to restrictions, why not set up a time for grandma or other family member or friend to read a story or sing a song with one or more children at once.

At the end of the day, as every parent knows, you'll have good days and bad, just stick to a simple routine, stay calm yourself and focus on fun and you'll get through.

Need help? Contact admin@pinnaclepeoplesolutions.com.au

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