

# Parenting and Remote Working

With social distancing implemented across the UK to help reduce the spread of COVID-19, many professionals are now finding themselves having to manage workload whilst supporting their children at home.



Even if you are familiar with working from home, you might not have anticipated your family being present, causing slower internet connections and distractions from your daily tasks. With timings on how long this new remote setup will last, many remote working parents will have to consider steps towards a structured working from home plan that keeps you and your family happy and content.

Whilst we recognise that all of these will not be realistic for everyone, here we offer some tips that may help support getting the balance right for family and working commitments through these continuing times.

## Practical tips for the working day



The advantage of working from home is that you don't waste time commuting. Let children sleep in and use this as some extra quiet time in the morning.



Plan conference calls wisely - at a quiet time during the day when you are less likely to be interrupted, e.g. while the children are watching TV.



Talk to your manager about your home situation, navigate the challenges together and come up with realistic solutions or reasonable adjustments.



Whilst not always possible, if both you and your partner work from home, it can be useful to work alternate timings with your partner.



Arrange your tasks in order of importance and make sure you can carry out the most difficult tasks at times when it is calm for you.



It is important to ensure your work-life balance is maintained. Once your workday is done, shut down your PC and enjoy family time.

**When you finish for the day switch off all technology including your work phone. Put something in place that clearly defines the transition away from work and into your personal life, e.g: music, relaxation, exercise.**

## Discussing your working needs with your family

Talk to your family together about your working needs, explain what working from home means and discuss the things that they can do to help you. Devise a plan that the whole family agrees to and ensure the plan is visible for all. We've included some simple suggestions that the family can help you with below:



### Set clear boundaries

Just like in the office, it is important to have your own designated workspace where you can work at ease without distractions. Use a simple signal like a “do not disturb” sign on the door when in a meeting as a code to let your family know when you are not available.



### Prepare where you can

Plan some playful and more quiet activities for smaller children to minimise interruptions on busy days. Where possible save yourself time by doing your shopping once or twice a week and preparing several meals in advance during the weekend. Have daily snacks set out for each child.



### Set a routine for the children

When you have finished your workday, take some time to review their homework together. It will allow your children to learn how to organise their own tasks during the day. Older children can also be involved in little chores around the house. This will keep them busy and free up your own to-do list, leaving you more family time.



### Self-care

Looking after yourself is vital, and it is important to take time out for you where you can. Maintain physical exercise and a balanced diet to look after your immune system. Ensure you get a good night's rest and recharge. When you feel overwhelmed remember you are doing your best, and don't be afraid to ask for help.

## Additional Support

Help EAP have created a 60 minute Parenting and Remote Working Webinar to help support you at this time. For more information on how to book please e-mail [workshoprequest@optimahealth.co.uk](mailto:workshoprequest@optimahealth.co.uk)