

The spread of the coronavirus is forcing working parents into telecommute situations across the country. If you're struggling to navigate your work outside of campus, these tips from full-time work-from-home parents and online resources may help.

Tips/Online Resources

Create a Schedule

Line up your day carefully with set office hours. Ask yourself, how many hours will I work? When will I return calls? What can I accomplish while my child(ren) is coloring? If you have zoom meetings or conference calls, schedule those in. The flexibility of working from home is that when your child(ren) is fussy, it's okay to attend to them and return to work when your little one has settled down

Communicate

Discuss with your supervisor if [non-traditional work hours](#), such as early mornings and evenings, is possible while employers are telecommuting due to the Coronavirus. Waking up a few hours before your child will allow you to cook breakfast and get important work done.

Capitalize on Nap Time

Sleep is a big part of child's good health and for some cases our as well. Every child differs in nap time, and most give up naps by the age of five. If your child is under the age of five there are [guidelines](#) for how much sleep your child needs in a 24 hour cycle. Use this time to work on projects that require your complete focus and concentration. Schedule work-related phone calls and meetings.

Set Downtime for Children Above 5

Kids need regular breaks to optimize brain function and mental health. Downtime to get work done could be movie time, but it does not always need to involve screens. Videogames, tablets and social media can actually be stimulating rather than calming. Artistic creations, playing outside, daydreaming, solitary, creative play, writing or taking a bath could all fall into this category. [Click](#) for 21 absorbing quiet games for quiet times.

Separate Parent and Business Roles

You will need to give each responsibility your full attention for a set amount of time or you won't feel like doing either well. [Creating an office space](#) that will allow you to disconnect from both sides will be helpful.

Keep Kids Entertained

Renee Belbeck, CEO of the National Association of W.O.M.E.N discovered a simple rule when her children were toddlers: "If I gave them a little quality time, I'd get two hours to work." She says the rule still holds true, even though her children are now 10 and 6. Look for online inspiration for [entertainment activities](#) for children of all ages, [including toddlers](#), during the Coronavirus crisis.

Plan for Interruptions

Know that many employees are going through the same thing. You may have been on a conference call and hear kids playing and babies crying. We are all in this together. If your child is older, teach them a “do not disturb” signal when you need quiet time. Parents.com had an example of wearing a tiara when you’re on the phone to signify that kids are not allowed to make loud noise or interrupt unless there is an emergency.

Seek Extra Help if You Need it

If you have a partner at home, alternate working hours. There will be some days you need more help and that’s okay (as long as you aren’t under self-quarantine). Having a responsible person come over for two-three hours a day will allow you to concentrate on your projects, returning emails and returning phone calls.

[Calm Parents, Healthy Kids](#) was created in collaboration with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and is a parenting skills simulation for users to learn how to manage the behavior of their 2-5-year-old children during common stressful situations.

We hope you find these tips and resources helpful. [UCR Healthy Campus](#) and the [Faculty/Staff Wellness Program](#) remains committed to the health and well-being of the campus community.

If you have any questions or would like more information, feel free to reach out to healthycampus@ucr.edu or wellness@ucr.edu.

Stay safe and healthy!