



## Top Tips - Working from home with children

*This document is aimed at supporting colleagues balancing working at home and caring for children.*

### Routine

- Planning out a routine for your working day now you have children at home will look quite different. It's important to have some sort of plan (which will inevitably change as everyone gets into their own rhythm).
- If you have older kids think about discussing with them what their day may look like and how that works for you and others in the house. It's important for them to remember, this isn't the same as doing homework at the weekend, this is as close to a normal school day as possible.
- Getting dressed as if you were going to the office or school can make a big difference in your energy level and attitude.
- It's important to plan when your breaks and meal times will be - move around, stretch and step away from the space you are working in. Use it as time to spend with the children.
- Stick to normal wake up and bedtimes - this will help you work 'out of hours' if you've needed to take more breaks during the day.
- We've included some ideas and online resources at the end of this that may help inspire you for the times you have breaks or when they finish their school work.
- Understand where your workspace will be. Think about having some way of letting everyone in the house know if and when you need quiet time for a call or concentration - this could be a sign on the door or that you hold up. Get them involved in creating this?
- You might set up spaces: teaching room (kitchen), quiet room (bedroom) and a play area (living room).

### Get outside

- Depending on where you live, if you have a garden or not — try and get some fresh air, this also allows you some headspace. Go for a walk either by yourself or with the children (this could double as a fun activity for them).

### Sharing responsibilities

- Try and share the responsibilities of childcare with other adult members of your household where possible.
- Think about how you can possibly flex the timings of your working day. This could free up time during the day when you manage care and allow you to work slightly different hours when another colleague could take over. Remember to discuss this with your line manager.



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## Communication

- Have a clear understanding with your manager of what needs to be completed, deadlines, and expectations. Give them an idea of your daily routine, this will help them understand when it could be tricky for you to join meetings for example.
- Call, Zoom or email colleagues, not only to see how they are doing with work, but also to benefit from their support. Staying in touch can help you feel more comfortable with the new working situation and provide a sense of normality.
- Help your kids communicate with their friends., They will also feel isolated without their normal social interactions in school and out.
- Depending on their age, talk to your children about what's happening. Here are some resources that may help:  
<https://childmind.org/article/talking-to-kids-about-the-coronavirus/>  
<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/looking-after-your-mental-health-while-self-isolating/>  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/17/parenting/coronavirus-kids-talk.html>  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-51734855>
- If you don't live with those you care for, keep in regular contact over the phone, through email or through video calls.

## Lastly

Don't stress! If the routine doesn't work from day one or if there's noise sometimes while you're on a call. There will be a time of adjustment as everyone gets used to their new daily life. Everyone will need to tweak and adjust their plans until you get to a place that works for all.

## Activity ideas

- Use post-its for everyone to write things you like to do that takes between 5 and 30 minutes. Fold each one in four. Place them in a cup and every time you can take a break, pick one of the papers and do what the activity says. Kids can have their own post-it cup and use it during their breaks.
- Set aside breaks for TV and iPad. Use these times to schedule work emails or calls
- Reading sessions: schedule in some reading time then ask them to tell you about what they've read in your break.
- Gardening: this is a great activity to do with kids whatever their age. Whether it's in a garden or pots of herbs in the kitchen.
- Cooking class: think about setting aside time to teach kids one dish a week, it could be cupcakes with small children or something more advanced with older ones.
- Learn a Tick Tock dance: get involved in what they're interested in online. Play an online game with them, laugh at Snapchat.



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- Exercise: get them moving inside or out, even for a short time. Whatever they enjoy.
- Podcasts: a great resource, there's something for everyone whatever your age.
- Meditation: there's lots of kids meditation apps or online resources (see below). It could be something they do on their own or together.
- Board Games: great opportunity to dust off the board games at the back of the cupboard. Get everyone involved.
- Film night: make it an event, you each get to choose a film, why not turn it into a film and pizza night.
- Project: why not get them to do an art project or something they're interested in outside of school, could be photography.
- Disney dance-alongs are a perfect, and fun, way to get active with the kids.
- NHS Change4Life has created some Disney-themed indoor games and activities, including a Toy Story 4-inspired Find Forky game, that are bundles of fun and will get the kids moving.
- Active indoors. There are also lots of ways to keep disabled children and young people active indoors, including a seated version of a classic obstacle race.
- The Body Coach also does some workouts for kids.
- Free coding lessons for 6 - 14 year olds:  
<https://medium.com/ingeniouslysimple/launching-our-redgate-coding-club-for-kids-fdc29b715d04>

## Online Resources

- BrainPop
- Curiosity Stream
- Tynker
- Outschool
- Udemy
- iReady
- Beast Academy (Maths)
- Khan Academy
- Creative Bug
- Discovery Education
- <https://literacytrust.org.uk/family-zone/>

## YouTube Channels

- Crash Course Kids
- Science Channel
- SciShow Kids
- National Geographic Kids
- Free School
- Geography Focus



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- TheBrainScoop
- SciShow
- Kids Learning Tube
- Geek Gurl Diaries
- Mike Likes Science
- Science Max
- SoulPancake

## Free learning resources:

- <https://www.starfall.com/h/>
- <https://www.abcva.com/>
- <https://www.funbrain.com/>
- <https://www.splashlearn.com/>
- <https://www.storvlineonline.net/>
- <https://Obskids.org/>
- <https://www.hiahlightskids.com/>
- <https://www.turtlediary.com/>
- <https://www.e-learnforkids.org/>
- <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/>
- <https://www.coolmath4kids.com/>
- <http://www.mathaametime.com/>
- <https://www.uniteforliteracy.com/>
- <http://www.literactive.com/Home/index.aspx>
- <http://www.sciencekids.co.nz/>
- <https://www.switchzoo.com/>
- <https://www.seussville.com/>

Scholastic has created a free learn-from-home site for 20+ days of learning and activities:

<https://classroommagazines.scholastic.com/suPPort/learnathome.html>

Pretend to travel the world ... go on a virtual tour of these 12 famous museums:

<https://www.travelandleisure.com/attractions/museums-galleries/museums-with-virtual-tours>