

Work From Home Guidelines for Parents

Transitioning to an environment where we are newly working from home, and managing our children being home at the same time, means we are going to be facing some unique challenges. These tips and tricks (plus included PDF of activities) to building out a productive day at home will help you navigate this new environment and even have some fun too.

- **Create a routine.** The secret is one that schools know well: Make a routine. Kids are used to following a schedule, so making a blueprint for the day will help everything fall into place. Use school as the framework and honor what had been your child's routine: When are they used to having breakfast? Snack? Lunch? When is recess? Break the day into small chunks much like school does with subjects. The goal is to keep kids busy and learning while allowing you to get other things done too.
- **Dedicate time for play.** Once you've mapped out times for things like food and school assignments, you're ready to fill in the rest of the day and carving out time for dedicated child-led play is huge for kids. When a child is imagining, creating, building or inventing, they are doing some serious learning. Limit adult involvement: play is the child's job, not the adults. Accept some play invitations, but don't feel guilty about skipping others. Kids need to play independent of adults (independent doesn't mean unsupervised).
- **Build in reading.** Study after study shows the [importance of reading to kids](#). Being home all day is a great chance to increase that habit. Put in reading blocks. Fifteen to 20 minutes a day is a great place to start (remember, that's total minutes, not all at once. Break it apart).
- **Go to recess.** If possible, add in two to three recess times for your child to explore outside. Remember that recess time is a part of school life and kids are used to a little cold and a little rain. Outdoor time has lots of [benefits for kids](#)— and a key one for you: If they burn off steam, they may be more tired and willing to go to sleep at night. THIS RECESS TIME is great for you to also step away from your work and clear your mind and get some activity with your kids.
- **Utilize many of the free online activities available.** Fear no more if it is online resources you are looking for. The PDF created by Global Wellness and the STEM Outreach Team can help you find resources for any age-group or topic, as well as offering a comprehensive list of screen-free activities.
- **Make a screen time schedule.** If you choose to have screens available to your kids while school is closed, use them wisely, as a parenting tool. Make screen time predictable: have a set time in the schedule so children know when to expect screen time (like while you make breakfast or before nap time) and for how long. Turn it off: Follow through when the scheduled time for screens is over, and don't leave TV on as background noise. If the house feels too quiet, turn on some music instead. Outside of the scheduled time block, only use screens when you (the parent) chooses it because you need it. Save screens for big moments, like when you have a conference call or dinner prep isn't going well.
- **KEEP IN MIND,** even with the most perfectly planned schedule, you will still have days when you can't muster the energy to come up with even the simplest activity, keep the schedule organized, or keep work and home running smoothly. This is a work in progress, so cut yourself some slack. Let them watch an extra episode of their favorite show. Do what you need to do to get through that day. You'll have your routine to go back to the next day. And the one after that. If you have read this far, just remember you're doing great.