

Working Virtually with Kids

Survival Tips

Be Kind to Yourself

- **Give Up Your Need for Perfection:** Parenting is one of the hardest jobs in the world! It gets even harder when you add working at home in the midst of a global pandemic. Acknowledge that it's hard and it might get a little messy.
- **Get Support:** Take time for yourself and reach out to family, friends and co-workers for support. Your [well-being is important to Ohio State](#) and the university is here for you.

Maintain Routines

- **Maintain as Much of Your “Normal Routine” as Possible:** Identify your foundation/guideposts that make up your “normal” day-to-day schedule. Keep the same general structure for the weekdays such as meal times, activity blocks, outdoor time, or other aspects of your typical routine.

Create a “Kid’s” Schedule

- **Create a Schedule for Each Child:** The schedule can mimic a school or day camp schedule, changing activities at predictable intervals, and alternating periods of study and play. It may help to print out a schedule and go over it as a family each morning.

Manage Anxiety and Meltdowns

- **Create Transition Times:** Setting a timer can help kids know when activities are about to begin or end. Having regular reminders will help head off meltdowns when it is time to transition from one thing to the next.
- **Provide Predictability and Consistency:** Consistency and structure are calming during times of stress. Kids, especially younger ones or those who are anxious, benefit from knowing what is going to happen and when. Try to make their life as predictable as possible during this stressful time.

Plan and Prioritize Your Schedule

- **Take Breaks:** Start with scheduling frequent breaks in your day. Break up your day by working 30 or 50 minutes and then take a 10-minute break to hang out with your kids.
- **Make the Most of Quiet Moments:** Strategically plan meal times, screen time, naps and activities that engage your kids so that they align with phone calls, virtual meetings or time for focused work.



Manage Interruptions

- **Use the Mute Button:** If your child wants to cuddle up with you when you are about to start a virtual meeting, hit the mute button to spare your co-workers from your child's musings, and unmute when you need to pipe in.
- **Set up a Do Not Disturb Signal:** Set up a kind of signal that lets others know when you are in focus mode. Maybe it is a "do not disturb" sign on your door or when you put on your headphones.

Plan Activities for Kids

- **Get Your Kids Some "Work" To Do:** Your children, especially the younger ones, will want to be just like you, so give them a workstation too. Let them pretend and work alongside you.
- **Start an Activity with Them, Then Leave:** After you are both having a good time, and your child is self-directing his/her play, then you can leave.
- **Create Activity Stations:** You can set up your own craft and hobby stations just by putting the supplies for some activity in a container where the kids can reach them.
- **Rotate Toys and Activities:** Instead of having all the toys and activities available to the kids at all times, keep some locked away somewhere and rotate them out to keep your kids from getting bored of them.
- **Set up a Snack and Drink Station:** Do this with activities, household tasks or chores that they can own. If they are older, build details like taking the lead on cooking dinner into their daily schedule so they know what to expect and when.

Additional Resources

Articles

- [Harvard Business Review: A Guide for Working \(From Home\) Parents](#)
- [Parent Magazine: How to Master Working from Home While Under Quarantine with Kids](#)
- [Chicago Parent: How to Host a Virtual Playdate](#)

Educational Resources and Activities

- [Kids Activity Blog](#)
- [School Choice Week: Parent Resources During the Coronavirus](#)
- [Very Well Family: Things Kids Can Do While You Work](#)
- [Cosmic Kid's Yoga](#)
- [Virtual Exhibits for Online Learning and Fun](#)
- [Good Housekeeping: 30 Amazing Virtual Tours of Museums, Zoos and Theme Parks](#)

Updated Mar. 25, 2020



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

WEXNER MEDICAL CENTER