Best Practices for Staying Productive While Working from Home (With Children)

☑ **Communicate Expectations**: Let your kids know what is going on and talk to them about the changes so they know what to expect. Make sure they are as prepared as possible for the new normal, understanding that although you are home, you may still need to focus on work tasks. Here are some helpful tips from the CDC on how to talk to your kids about the pandemic.

☑ **Create a Schedule:** Try to build a schedule for yourself and your kids. Grouping similar activities (like lunch or break times) together can help so that you are still able to spend quality time with your kids during the day and take breaks as needed. Capitalize on any block of time where your kids are napping or when they might be having their outdoor "recess" time- these can be the times where you schedule that needed conference call or make sure you are getting through your inbox. If possible, try to split your time so that you have times that are primarily focused on work duty, and other times where you are primarily focused on kid duty.

☑ **Vocalize Your Needs:** Make sure your managers and co-workers know what your home situation looks like. That may mean that you need to work different hours or adjust an upcoming deadline. If things are getting overwhelming at home, ask a co-worker if they can cover for you while you get things back in order and try to be available when and if they may ask you for the same help. Over communicating your needs will help to bridge that gap while at home.

☑ **Plan Activities That Don't Require Supervision**: While they may not be possible all day long, try to coordinate things that your children can do while you are working. This can include:

For young children/babies:
- Naps, swings, bouncy chairs
- Shows or videos such as Baby Einstein or whatever you trust
- Listen to musical songs

For toddlers through elementary aged children:
- Favorite shows and/or related online games. PBS has many options.
- Educational games and apps
- Creative tasks such as coloring/drawing, crafts, and building with legos

For older children:
- Reading, writing stories
- Educational, positive, or inspirational shows or movies: *Nature*, *America's Got Talent,* funniest home videos, etc.
- School platforms
- *Minecraft* or activities that keep them socializing online with their friends.

☑ **Reward Good Behavior:** While you are getting acclimated with these changes, your children are also adapting to the new normal. If they are playing nicely, focusing on their chores, or keeping themselves entertained, show them your appreciation and reward their good behavior. Whether that means verbal recognition or providing treats and prizes, make sure you encourage that behavior so they will be more inclined to continue with those actions.

☑ **Recognize, Accept, and Breathe:** You might not have it all together, and the plans you put into place might not be working out as expected. That is ok. You might need to allow more screen time than usual. As long as your children are safe, you should not feel guilty about any options that you are employing. This is a completely different process than what you and your family are used to- give yourself some time to adjust and find what works for you.

COVID-19

Supporting
At-Home Children
Resources for Parents

The COVID-19 pandemic has created challenges for families across the country. As more and more schools close, requiring school-age children to remain at home in an effort to promote self-distancing, parents are looking for ways to maintain their responsibilities while supporting the educational needs and development of those in their care. Many schools have provided distance-learning programs and resources to help students continue their education while at home. Parents are encouraged to check the information provided by local school districts to determine what steps should be taken to stay on top of their children's education.

For those parents who are looking for extra information, activities, programs, and social-emotional learning (SEL) resources, we have prepared a list of programs and courses available from online sources. Some of these recommendations are paid programs for those parents looking to invest in more long-term support.

- **Scholastic Learn At Home Program**: An activity portal of free daily courses for kids

- **Mystery Science**: Free Science lessons for students in kindergarten to 5th grade

- **Hippocampus.org**: 7,000 free videos across 13 subject areas

- **Mindfulness Resources for Teens**: Techniques for developing the skills to be present and aware every day

- **15 Mindfulness and Relaxation Apps for Kids with Anxiety**: Technological solutions that support addressing and overcoming stress and anxiety

- **Emotional ABCs**: Social-emotional learning resources and programs

- **GoNoodle**: Movement and mindfulness videos created by child development experts

- **30 Emotional Health Activities**: A month-long calendar of daily activities that's free to download and use
- **Online Museum Tours**: Free virtual trips to famous artworks and artifacts from around the globe

- **Virtual Field Trips**: Free videos and cams of animal habitats, famous locations, and unique areas

- **Free Art Lessons**: Youtube-based art classes starting 3/16

- **TED Talks**: Educational discussions organized by topic of interest