



A WAY OF BEING WITH CHILDREN

Juggling Work and Family

Tips for Working Parents During the Holidays

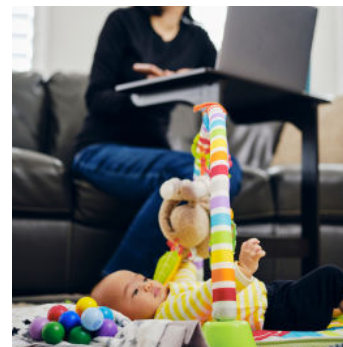
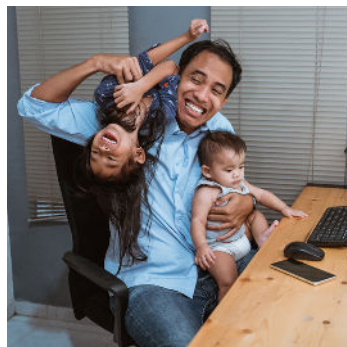


Holidays Can Be Hard!

Balancing work responsibilities and family time during the holiday season can be a challenge for working parents. With kids at home and work deadlines looming, the key to managing during the holidays is flexibility, realistic expectations, and intentional planning. By finding a rhythm that works for your family, you can stay productive while ensuring your children enjoy a joyful and memorable holiday season.

Balancing Work and Family

- **Plan a structured holiday schedule.** Create a daily schedule that balances your work hours with activities for the kids. Include time for independent play, screen time, crafts, and family moments. **How it helps:** A structured day keeps children engaged and minimizes interruptions during work hours while giving them a sense of routine.
- **Leverage quiet time for productivity.** Take advantage of early mornings, nap times, or evenings to tackle focused work tasks. Use these quiet periods for meetings, emails, or deadlines. **How it helps:** You can maximize productivity during uninterrupted times, reducing stress during the day.
- **Involve kids in independent activities.** Set up age-appropriate, independent activities like puzzles, crafts, or reading that can keep children busy while you work. Remember, young children must stay within eye-sight. Rotate activities to maintain their interest. **How it helps:** Children stay engaged without needing your focus and attention, giving you dedicated time to focus on work.
- **Communicate work boundaries.** Explain to your children when you'll be working and when you'll be available for them. Use visual cues, like a sign on your office door, or set timers to help them understand. **How it helps:** Clear communication helps manage expectations and reduces interruptions while working.
- **Prioritize quality family time.** Dedicate specific times during the day or week for family activities, like baking, watching movies, or playing games. Use this as an opportunity to unwind together. **How it helps:** Focused family time strengthens your bond and alleviates guilt about balancing work with parenting during the holidays.



Self-Care for Holiday Survival

Self-care is essential for parents who are working while their children are on holiday because it helps maintain balance and prevent burnout during a busy, demanding season. Juggling work responsibilities with the added pressure of keeping kids entertained can be overwhelming and leave little time to recharge. By prioritizing your own well-being—whether through small breaks, setting boundaries, or moments of relaxation—you'll find it can help to replenish your energy and patience. This not only benefits you but also ensures you can be more present, calm, and effective both at work and with your children.

Quick, effective self-care for holiday survival:

- **Take micro-breaks:** Use 5-10 minutes between tasks to stretch, breathe deeply, or sip your favorite beverage. These small moments can recharge your energy.
- **Prioritize sleep:** Resist the urge to stay up late catching up on work, chores, or binge-watching TV. Rested parents are more productive and better equipped to handle holiday stress.
- **Delegate and simplify:** Don't try to do everything yourself. Delegate age-appropriate tasks to kids, like tidying up or helping with simple chores, and streamline holiday activities to avoid burnout.
- **Stay connected with friends:** Schedule a quick coffee chat or a phone call with a friend to decompress and share laughs. Social connections can be a great stress reliever during busy times.
- **Practice gratitude:** Take a moment each day to reflect on three things you're grateful for. This simple practice can help shift focus away from stress and onto positive moments, even amidst the holiday hustle.

It's All About Attitude

Dr. Brené Brown, research professor and author says, *"What we are teaches the child far more than what we say, so we must be what we want our children to become."*

This helps us remember the profound impact of our actions, attitudes, and behaviors, as parents, on a child's development. Children learn more from observing their parents than from verbal instructions or lessons. It suggests that if we want to instill certain values or traits—like kindness, patience, or resilience—we need to embody those qualities ourselves. For example, teaching a child about respect is far more effective when parents consistently demonstrate respect in their own interactions. It reminds us about the importance of self-awareness in parenting, as children naturally mirror what they see rather than just what they are told.

All that to say, this tough period of juggling work and family life while children are on holiday is temporary. The parental guilt can feel overwhelming, the to do list might seem endless. The things that matter though, are how you go about managing it – because it's your attitude and behavior that will shape the experience and ultimately leave your children with wonderful holiday memories that will stay with them for years to come.



Get more resources at: www.centerforchildcounseling.org/awayofbeing



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