



LiveWELL Now!

May 11, 2020



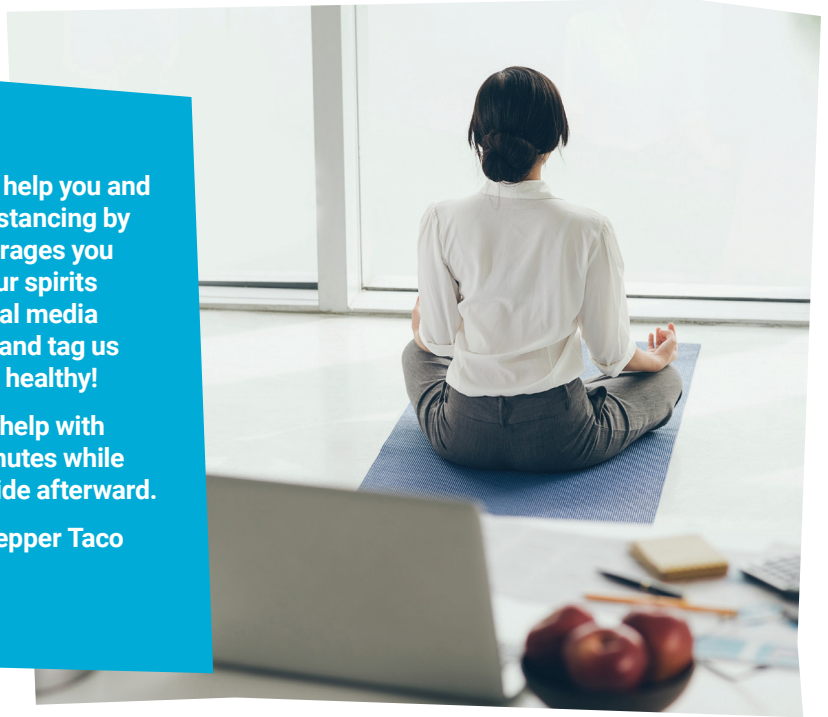
Community WELLNESS

Best Practices for Working from Home

Wellness AtoZ is sending out weekly communications to help you and your family stay healthy and well as we practice social distancing by working from home. We hope this communication encourages you to continue practicing your health regimen and keeps your spirits lifted during this uncertain time. Connect with us on social media via Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram @GoWellnessAtoZ and tag us #LiveWellNow. We would love to see how you are staying healthy!

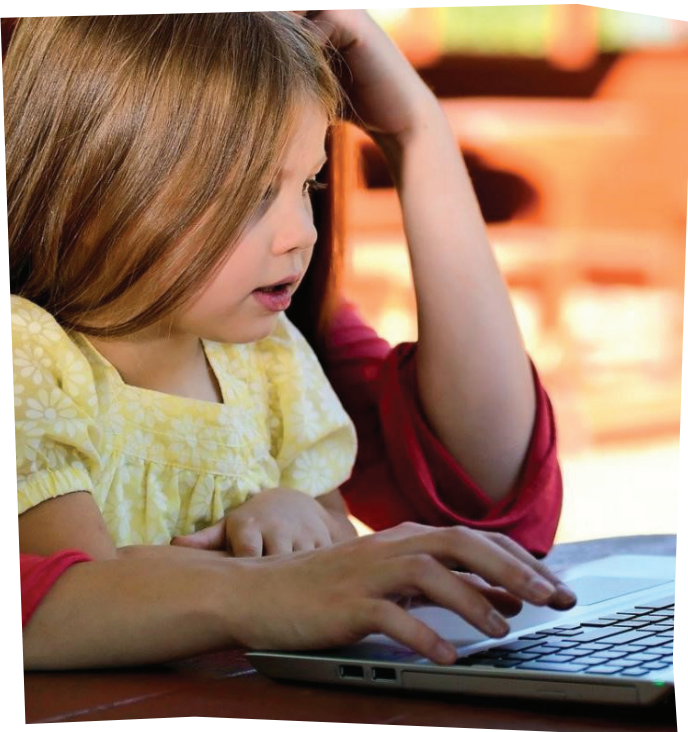
Weekly wellness tip: Offer incentives for kids at home to help with work-life balance. Example: If your child reads for 30-minutes while you are on a work call, they will be rewarded with a bike ride afterward.

Healthy recipe of the week: Try this healthy Baked Bell Pepper Taco recipe for Taco Tuesday.



LiveWELL Now!

Best practices for working from home



Mindfulness: Try eating mindfully—with no distractions from TV, electronics or paper in front of you. Truly enjoy the meal you are consuming.

Find balance: Find the social media platforms that best serve you instead of participating in all of them!

Stay active: Set your workout clothes and shoes out the night before and change into it first thing in the morning.

Social distancing: Go for walks around the neighborhood or local parks with your family while maintaining 6 feet distance from others.

Hydration: Especially in hot weather, if you sweat more, be sure to replenish any lost electrolytes.

Healthy meals: Try making seafood your main protein twice a week.

Family Time: Have a picnic at the park!

Balancing work with kids at home: Check out this week's LiveWell Now! for a deep dive on balancing work with kids at home.

Stay safe in the sun: Check how long your water-resistant sunscreen lasts (only 40 or 80 minutes). You will need to reapply. Water-resistant does not mean that it is waterproof.

Transition back to the office: Connect with your co-worker by collaborating on projects!



BEST PRACTICES FOR WORKING FROM HOME WITH CHILDREN

Be realistic

During this time, many working families have transitioned to working from home. This can pose a challenge for many as they try to balance work priorities with managing their household chores, caring for their children, and distance learning (for grade school children).

If this is the case for you, it is important that you take breaks throughout your day. Since your children are home, they may want more of your time. Especially during the uncertain and stressful time that our community is facing, take the time you need with your children, and prioritize the people in your life.

Communication with Supervisors

The phrase "Communication is key" has never been more true than in these times. It is important to maintain clear communication with your supervisor in all aspects. Especially, since now we are balancing home and work life all in one place. In this regard, both supervisors and employees need to be understanding of one another and receptive to communication.

Establish boundaries

Since you are at home, your children may see you as the parents and may not understand the role you have in your job or even that you need to work from home. So, it is important to remember this piece- children will always see you as the parent. Be diligent about creating positive boundaries that work best for you and your family. Some examples of ways that you can create boundaries are:

- Create a sign that says, "Stop, in a meeting."
- Use a red cup as a symbol that you are working which means "do not disturb."
- If you are in a shared family space, wear a hat that symbolizes that you are working which means "do not disturb."

The tips mentioned above work best for older children who can be more independent and understand and learn boundaries. Tip: Adding an incentive to help kids establish boundaries for when you are working could be helpful. For example, you could offer to play a board game or give screen time if they make an effort at following boundaries. In all, establishing boundaries is a good learning opportunity for the whole family.

For younger children, the best time to maximize your productivity at work or home is when your baby or toddler is napping or when you have a trusted adult who can help you care for them.

Flexible Scheduling

A key factor in work productivity in the work from home lifestyle is developing a schedule and finding the time that works the best for you to be productive. This is where it will be important to establish good communication with your supervisor.

Early Bird: If you find that waking up early to work is best for you and your family, consider sharing this with your supervisor.

Weekends: Ideally, most people would like to reserve their weekends for family and rest. However, the reality might be different now that the two mesh every day. Another option to consider for work productivity is working fewer hours in one day, but working throughout the 7 day period.

After dinner: For most people, they can be most productive when they work in a quiet space. This is why for some people working after dinner and bedtime might be the best option for work productivity. While not all work can be done during this time frame, this could be a good time to work on emails and individual projects.

It can be a real challenge to manage caring for your child/ children while remaining productive at work. It especially varies depending on the child's/children's age. We hope these suggestions can help you find the best option that works for you and encourages you to communicate with your supervisor if you need to revisit your schedule during this time.

Be compassionate to yourself

We are all doing our best to adapt and manage through this new normal. Be gentle with yourself! The kids might have more screen time than usual, we might need some more time to ourselves than usual, and that's okay. Acknowledge and honor yourself for doing your best.

Derived from worklife.msu.edu





MAKING FOOD FUN

Add more color

Adding more color to your kid's plate is not only fun visually, but it is also an indication that you have a healthier plate. Try making it a challenge among your family to see who can eat the most colors of the rainbow.

Incorporate their interests

At different ages, children go through different interests. Perhaps, as toddlers—they love cartoon characters like Elmo or Barney, and as they get older—perhaps they begin to love animals. Discover what your children's interests are and try incorporating that into their food. For example, if they love animals, use food to design a layout of their favorite little animals.

Create fun names

Just as smoothie and shake shops get creative in what they name their smoothies and shakes to make it more exciting and custom, so it is similar with children. It may be more fun for them to call a green juice a "Monster Juice" instead! Give it a try!

Change up the presentation

Making food fun requires a lot of creativity! Try changing up the presentation. For example, try making a fruit kabob for the little ones instead of a bowl of grapes!

Make food selection and preparations a family affair

Including children in the food selection process when you go to the grocery store is a great opportunity to teach them about different produce, their health benefits, and the different colors of each produce item. Furthermore, when you cook, invite your kids to help you so they can feel included in the process of making dinner. It's a great way for them to learn while spending time with you.

Adapted from goodlifeeats.com

OWL RICE CAKE RECIPE

Ingredients

- 4 each rice cakes, brown rice, plain
- 1 medium banana
- 4 tablespoon peanut butter, all-natural
- 1 cup blueberries
- 1 medium apple
- 1 medium carrot
- 1 cup cereal, Cheerios

Directions

1. Lay rice cakes on a baking sheet.
2. Slice banana and put aside.
3. Spread peanut butter over each rice cake and then place 2 slices of banana towards the top of the rice cake which will serve as your owl's eyes. For more detail, add a small amount of peanut butter on the center of the banana owl's eyes and add a blueberry as the eye pupil.
4. To make the owl's wings, cut apple in half and then slice the halves into very thin wedges (1/8 inch thick). Place 2 onto each rice cake.
5. To form the owl's nose, peel the carrot and slice thinly. Use 4 slices of the carrot and cut into triangles.
6. At last, add some cheerios to act as feathers between the wings.

Recipe and Image superhealthykids.com





INDEPENDENT ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN OF ALL AGES

Caring for children looks different for every age group. At any age level, we understand that our children need our attention until they are able to be more independent. The suggestions below are ideas for children of all ages to be able to do activities independently.

Babies are one of the age groups that require the most care and attention because they are so delicate and they are not able to communicate. The activities below are good options for parents with babies to consider for activities for their little ones:

- Naps, swings, bouncy chairs
- Shows or videos such as Baby Einstein or whatever you trust
- Listen to musical songs

For children who are toddlers through elementary school-aged, this is a great time for them to learn. During this age, it is good for them to participate in educational experiences. The activities below can be good options for them to try alongside you as you sit through a virtual meeting. Both of you can be participating in a productive activity!

- Favorite shows and/or related online games PBS has many options.
- Educational games and apps

Once children are older, it becomes a little bit easier for them to have more independence. They can do bigger tasks like work on projects, read longer texts, understand more in-depth educational documentaries, and help around the house with chores. Below is a list of suggestions for older children.

- Reading, writing stories
- Educational, positive, or inspirational shows or movies: Nature, America's Got Talent, funniest home videos, etc.
- School platforms

Derived from fastcompany.com

TALKING WITH CHILDREN ABOUT COVID-19

Make children feel safe

At some point, we have all experienced some sort of uncertainty

and unease surrounding the global pandemic. Our children can also be susceptible to experience this anxiety. This is why it is important that we are aware of the words and the tone we use when expressing ourselves about the Coronavirus. During this time it is important that we reassure our children that this will pass and they and their loved ones will be okay.

Give them power and responsibility

We have heard the saying "With great power comes great responsibility." What a great learning opportunity for our little ones to learn how to activate the superhero within while learning that there is a great responsibility that comes with it. It is important that we are honest with them about the fact that the Coronavirus is a bad germ, but that we allow them the space to express how it makes them feel and educate them on what they can do to help. For example, washing their hands with warm soap and water for the amount of time it takes to sing the Happy Birthday Song.

Empathy

There is a lot of good that comes from acknowledging and accepting your child's emotions when they express themselves even if you don't necessarily agree. When a child feels understood they are more likely to cooperate. If a child's feelings are dismissed or minimized they may express themselves in other way like throwing a tantrum, fighting with siblings, or not cooperating.

Try to maintain a normal routine

Just as it is a big change for us as adults to adapt to not going to work everyday, it can be just as impactful for the kids to no longer be going to school as they normally would. Be patient with them as they also adapt to the new normal and try your best to create a schedule for them to follow at home. Tip: Create a calendar with fun pictures that will give them an idea of how things will go.

Model the behavior you want to see

As adults and caretakers, we have the responsibility of modeling the message we give to our children. They look to us for comfort so we must remain as grounded as possible in all aspects including hygiene. It is important that we practice proper handwashing so our children can follow the example.

Adapted from pbs.org

