



## Parenting Essentials for the Work at Home Mom

By Kelly Nault, M.A.

"A mother's work is never done." Just when you think you're through, you find you've only just begun.

If the pressure of balancing your work and parenting is ultimately leading you to give both your work and family less, it is time to find a new parenting strategy and quick!

### Your happiness as a work at home mom depends on your commitment:

- To ask for the help.
- To prioritize and stick with your schedule.
- To put some of your self care needs first.

By doing these things, you will be able to model for your children a happy and healthy woman. AND your family deserves a work at home mom who is not a "burnout mom" but a happy one.

### Six Essential Work Life Balance Parenting Tips for the Work at Home Mom

The six parenting time management below will allow even the busiest work at home mom to finally have her cake and eat it too.

1. **Ban your open door policy.** Set your work hours and stick with it. Unless your job requires you to answer the phone, answer it only on your schedule. A work at home mom has no time for distractions that lead to low productivity. Make certain every member of your household knows the times in the day when you are available for interruptions and stick with this.
2. **Schedule your self care time.** With so much to do and so little time, it is essential to schedule a minimum of 30 minutes a day for you. This is an essential commitment to make to you and your family. Your emotional and physical health means you can give more quality time to your family and will continually help to renew your passion for parenting.
3. **Remember it's about parenting quality time, not quantity time.** When you are with your family, *be* with your family. Focus on them and "light up" as soon as they come into the room. Find fun ways to do mealtimes together and listen to stories about their day.
4. **Solve time misbehavior wasters.** As a family counselor, I regularly hear a form of, "My kids are driving me crazy, but I'm too crazy to find time to learn how to stop them from driving me crazy." There are simple ways to motivate your children to want to be well behaved. Invest the time now, so you don't spend much *more* time and frustration later on.
5. **Involve your family in what you do.** Talk about what you do, ask your family to help

solve work problems (children often find very creative solutions), and let them help you with small jobs like licking envelopes. One work at home mom I know, asked her nine year old daughter to answer the business telephone when the receptionist called in sick on one of their biggest sales day. This boosted her daughter's self-esteem and helped her appreciate how her mother's work put a roof over her head, food in her mouth and clothes on her back.

6. **Consciously make the transition from work to home.** When it is family time, focus on the family. Make certain you have cleared the work cobwebs from your head. Write down your to do list for the next day and ask yourself before you leave your desk, "How can I make my time with my family special?" Then smile and give them a hug when you see them. Too tired? Take a 20 minute cat nap, quick walk or say a prayer to let go of your day so you can be all they deserve you to be.

Decide to set clear boundaries on your time working and your time with family can go far to eliminate the stress you feel. The most critical key to your success though is to nurture some of your needs so you can continually renew your passion for parenting. If putting your self care needs makes you feel guilty and selfish-then don't do it for you, but do it for your family. It is time that your self care became a necessity, not a luxury so you can give more to all you do-at both work and home!

Kelly Nault, MA corporate spokesperson and award winning parenting author of *When You're About To Go Off The Deep End, Don't Take Your Kids With You* inspires moms to put themselves first—for the sake of their children. She shares time-tested tools that motivate children to want to be well behaved, responsible and happy! Sign up for her free online parenting course at [www.UltimateParenting.com](http://www.UltimateParenting.com).

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