

## Help for Moms Working from Home

I've now had the experience of working in an office and working from home – both with two small children. When I was working in an office (60 hours a week), commuting one hour each way, and putting my children in daycare five days a week, I knew that I was being unfair to them, me, and my husband. I wasn't striking a good balance between family and work, and I know I'm not the only one that has had that experience! I was exhausted, and I felt like I never saw the kids. My husband and I knew something had to change, and we decided it was best for me to leave my job. I have never made a better decision!

Now, as a mom who's trying to work from home as a virtual assistant, it's a whole new balancing act. I have to find peace and quiet in which I can get some work done! It can be frustrating, but it can also be rewarding when you strike the right balance. Here are some helpful hints to making your business a success:

1. Always be professional. This is so important! Don't make phone calls or answer phone calls when the kids are running around. If you are taking or making calls on behalf of your clients, they will expect (and deserve) absolute professionalism. It will reflect poorly on their business if it sounds like a daycare in the background. It will likely lose them business, and then you'll lose their business! Try to schedule appointments around naptime, play dates, or school. Have a professional voicemail message in place, and return calls as quickly as possible. This way you don't have to worry about missing a call. You can tell them that you were on another line or in a meeting when you call them back.
2. Select tasks that don't involve phone communication. Market yourself so that you are primarily able to accept projects that don't involve phone interaction. Some things you can do include: data entry, research, transcription, writing, and editing. Any of these projects could easily be communicated and completed via email. Until you have a routine in place, be cautious of projects that will take a lot of time on the phone or require long periods of quiet (for instance, recording audio files).
3. Recruit some help. No one expects you to be a super mom! Find other work at home moms in your area and work out a baby sitting schedule. Each of you can help each other out by taking the kids for a morning, an afternoon, or a day. Taking turns babysitting will save the moms involved money and will give them valuable time to get work done.
4. Be realistic. Know your limits when it comes to balancing work and the kids. Don't overextend yourself and risk missing a deadline or something important in your children's lives.
5. Set up a home office. Being in an office environment will help you operate more easily. You can stay organized and have a place dedicated to your work. Of course, I'm usually attached to my laptop which is connected to our home network and wireless

Internet. That way, I can work where the kids are, whether that is in our living room or outside in the back yard.

6. Daycare. If you have the option, put your children in daycare either full-time or part-time. I have found that having my kids in daycare three days a week gives me plenty of time to get work done and gives them plenty of time at home. Giving them somewhere to go and interact with other children and adults is good for their development anyway!

These may seem like common sense suggestions, but sometimes all we need is a little dose of something simple to help us along. Many moms are able to strike that balance between work (whether it's working from home or not) and their family, and you can do it too!!

Rebecca Albertini is a certified virtual assistant. She has an MBA and national certification in human resources. Check out her website [www.premierebusinesssolutions.com](http://www.premierebusinesssolutions.com) for a list of services and testimonials. See how she can help your business grow through top-notch support.