

Working Mom Advice for Life by Dr. Marjorie Greenfield

The topic of balancing work and motherhood could fill several encyclopedias! And yet many of us feel anything but balanced during those years with young children. Here are some strategies that many moms have found helpful when dealing with the inevitable challenges of parenting while holding paying jobs.

* **Be proud** of your juggling abilities. Although you may sometimes feel overwhelmed, step back and look at all you're achieving. By handling it all, you become an inspiring role model for your kids.

* **Learn** to live with guilt. Most moms feel guilty when dividing their time, attention, and loyalties between home and work. Accept that you'll sometimes feel conflicted, and then move on.

* **Think** creatively about work options. Try to negotiate work hours that fit with your whole life. Ideas include part-time, flextime, job sharing, and having your partner work less and parent more.

* **Find child care** that works for your family. Learn about your childcare options as early as possible, and pick the one that will free you physically and emotionally to do your best on the job.

* Have **backup child care** at the ready. Plan ahead for when (not if) a child care crisis will arise.

* **Be efficient and organized.** Spend the last few minutes of your workday preparing for the next morning. Keep only one calendar and coordinate with your spouse--doctor appointments, kids' activities, work obligations. Put clothes out for the next day; make lunches the night before. Pick up toys just once a day.

* **Book grown-up time.** When life gets busy, you need to schedule time for yourself or you won't get it. Nurture your relationship. Rather than role modeling mom-as-martyr, model an adult with a balanced life. A happy parent has happy kids.

* Remember to **enjoy life**. Take pleasure in your children. The time you have as a parent of young children passes more quickly than you expect. Think of parenting as a gift, and make time for fun with your family.



10 Tips to Being a Happy and Productive Stay-at-Home Mom

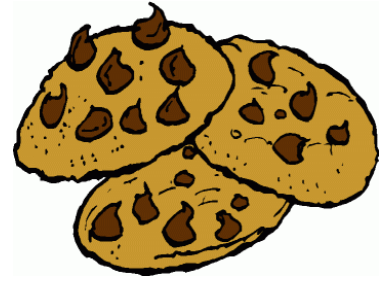
By [jessiejoathome](#)

1. **Stick to a schedule.** I have learned that with little ones, it's so important to keep them on a good routine/schedule.
2. **Become an early riser.** I used to sleep until the girls woke up. Then we would all be tired, trying to wake up and get some breakfast, and it would become chaos. Now I try to wake up before the girls so I can have some coffee and sit by myself and watch the morning news.
3. **Make lists/goals/rules.** I'm the type of person who makes lists for everything, but it really does help to have a "to do" list everyday. The night before I write down things I need to get done the next day. It's a good idea to not forget anything important that needs done (which is easy with little ones!), and the feeling of crossing something off your list is a feeling of satisfaction.
4. **Keep up on housework.** Yes, at times this is impossible, especially with a three-year-old and a nine-month-old, but it's best to *try* and stay on top of it! I've seen some people only designate one day a week as 'cleaning day,' however I find that with kids, it's more efficient to do a little bit of cleaning everyday.
5. **Get out and get involved.** Just because you're a stay-at-home mom doesn't mean you literally have to *stay at home*. Get out of the house with your kids and go to the park or library. Even going for a walk or playing in the yard works.
6. **Go on date nights and spend alone time with your partner.** This is so important! Staying connected with your partner while raising children can sometimes take the backseat so always take the opportunity to have some quality alone time with them.
7. **Do 'You Time'.** Having time for yourself is important as well. Sometimes we as moms forget to take care of ourselves because we are taking care of the kids and house all day. It's important to set aside time for yourself, whether it be early in the mornings, during nap time, or after the kids have gone to bed.
8. **Limit electronics.** Leaving the computer and TV on all day can cause you and your kids to become zombies. Shut them off and have some time to actually get down on the floor and play with your kids, read books, sing songs, do crafts, or play outside.
9. **Slow down and include the kids.** When you are cleaning or cooking, if your child shows interest in what you are doing, let them help! Most household activities kids can participate in with you, and it will make them feel like your big helper. It may take longer to get done, but it will teach them what you are doing and make them feel special. In the end they will be learning responsibilities *and* having fun with mom at the same time!
10. **Show love everyday.** The most important thing in my opinion, and it goes for everyone, not just stay at home moms, is to show your love for one another. I think that when you show love to your family it makes it easier for them to show love in return, which equals happiness. Hug them, kiss them, cuddle them. Make them know that they are loved everyday!

Excerpts taken from: www.blogher.com/10-tips-being-happy-and-productive-stay-home-mom

FUN THINGS TO DO THIS SPRING/SUMMER

1. Visit a farmer's market.
2. Plant a garden.
3. Plan a picnic at a local park or your backyard.
4. Bake cookies.
5. Pick berries.
6. Go for a walk and make a collage from nature's objects.
7. Go hiking or biking on a trail



8. Have a backyard campfire...or grill! Roast hot dogs on a stick or make s'mores.
9. Go fishing.

10. Set up a tent in backyard.

11. Check out summer reading program at local library.

12. Wade through a stream and search for minnows or tadpoles.

13. Collect rocks and paint them to use as paperweights or pet rocks.

14. Bake cupcakes in ice cream cones and then decorate them.

15. Make an indoor sandbox using colored rice: 4 cups of rice with 3 tablespoons of rubbing alcohol and a few drops of food coloring and let dry overnight.



How to teach kids to stop lying by Cathie Kryczka

Toddlers and preschoolers

Fairies, fantasy and fibs Someone has been practicing scissor skills. There are mangled shreds of hydro and phone bills all over the floor. Your four-year-old tells you that his sister did it. This seems unlikely: His sister is two months old and not interested in crafts.

Why they lie Very little kids don't exactly lie. "To lie, children have to know that what they are saying is false — they have to understand the difference between a lie and the truth. That usually doesn't happen before the age of four," says Debbie Nystrom, manager at the Mothercraft Brookfield Place, Centre for Early Development in Toronto.

Later in the preschool years, a child's imagination is developing, and he starts to explore with his thoughts and may begin to make up stories. "Preschoolers may mix make-believe and reality — they combine stories, putting something they saw on TV together with an event that really did happen," says Nystrom.

An older preschooler may lie to get some advantage or to protect himself against unwanted consequences, such as having a toy taken away. As much as we dislike lying, "it's all part of natural, normal growth and development," says Nystrom.

What to do

- React in a calm tone and approach the situation as a teaching opportunity. You might say, "I'm pretty sure that's not what happened — do you think it happened that way?" If the lie is hurtful, you could try saying, 'How would you feel if someone said that to you?'"
- Focus on fixing the problem together. Suppose your preschooler draws on the floor; you might say, 'We draw on paper. Now come help Daddy so we can clean it up together.'
- Explain why the truth is important. If the lie puts your child at risk (maybe he's hidden your sewing shears or plugged in the hair dryer), make sure he understands that telling the truth helps you keep him safe.
- Make a practice of negotiating some choices with your child so he knows he has a say in what he eats, wears, plays with. Then he doesn't have to make up a story to do it his way.



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