

**Live Well,  
Work Well**



## Supporting Work-life Balance During Back-to-School Season

**NIS**  
National Insurance Services

For working parents with school-age kids, the return to school can be chaotic. There are new routines to figure out, numerous activities to manage and sometimes kids' transitional meltdowns to soothe. As such, balancing work with caregiving responsibilities can be incredibly challenging, often without straightforward solutions.

Work-life balance refers to equal prioritization of career demands and personal obligations. A good work-life balance has numerous positive effects, such as less stress, lower risk of burnout and greater well-being. Whether you work from home or commute to your office daily, simultaneously taking care of school-age kids can be challenging. As such, this article highlights tips to help working parents manage their work-life balance during the back-to-school season.

### Set a Schedule

Try to adapt your schedule around your children's activities. If you work a flexible job or in a remote environment, you may be able to shift your hours to accommodate your children's school and activity schedules. You may find it helpful to be home when your kids return from school each day. To accommodate this, you could shift your work schedule to start earlier or work later.

Keep in mind that this doesn't mean you should be sacrificing sleep, either. A lack of sleep can increase stress, affect alertness, distort memory and hurt your physical health. Since children need more rest, plan earlier bedtimes to help you finish your work without sacrificing sleep. The ability to adjust your schedule may depend on where you work and your role. Be sure to discuss any changes you want to propose with your manager.

### Communicate Your Needs

Communicate with your employer about schedule changes during the school year. Your children's transition back to school and extracurricular activities can be a lot for your family to handle. Most employers are willing to help you adjust your day or provide necessary support and resources.

### Review Workplace Policies

It's essential to be prepared for anything during your children's school year, including illnesses that may require you to take time off. Review your workplace policies to understand your available resources during the back-to-school season. You should feel confident you're protected in an emergency. Contact your manager or HR department if you're unsure of the policies that are in place.

### Prioritize Your Health

Adapting your schedule to that of your children may be ideal on paper, but it's important that you still prioritize your own health. This includes getting enough sleep, fueling your body properly, exercising and spending time outdoors. Set realistic expectations about what's possible during a typical day. Some days, you may be able to prioritize your kids' schedules, while other times may be geared more toward yourself. It's important to find a balance that works best in your life.

### Get Help

Paying for additional assistance is not feasible for everyone, but if you can afford it, options are available to make life more efficient. Services are available to shuttle kids to school, nanny and take care of other tasks, such as grocery shopping or picking up dry cleaning. Paying for an external service to help with certain aspects of your day can allow you to spend more time with your family outside of the workday.

### **For More Information**

No matter your challenges during the school year, proper planning and communication are essential. Talk to your manager if you have concerns or questions about your work-life balance.

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