

WALSALL EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

WORKING FROM HOME WITH YOUNG CHILDREN: ADVICE FOR PARENTS

Things to remember

- Stress and anxiety have psychological and physical effects on both adults and children, For example, you may find that it is harder to concentrate and you feel more physically tired than usual. Bear this in mind in terms of the expectations you have for yourself and your children.
- You are not expected to replicate what school or nursery provides for child, this would not be possible under any circumstances and is not what your child needs from you.
- All children will be in the position of having missed school or nursery when they return, schools in Walsall will be planning for the transition back to school and will be supported by services within the local authority including the Educational Psychology Service.

What do children need from adults at this time?

- To be supported to understand what is happening, and why, in a developmentally appropriate way.
- To be supported to talk about what they are worried about if needed
- To experience consistency and predictability in their daily lives
- To maintain contact with people who are important to them

“Start where you are, use what you have, do what you can”

Arthur Ashe

Managing work and child care

- Evidence suggests that working from home can use more mental energy than working in an office, so plan breaks and meal times into your day and avoid working late to catch up where possible so that you have time for rest and recovery.
- Quality of time with your child is more important than quantity, focus on short periods of quality time with your child where you give them your full attention. Commenting on and observing your child’s play can be as valuable as joining in and will be experienced by your child as getting quality attention from you.
- If you need to attend meetings try to stay only for essential agenda items to minimise the time you are “unavailable “ for your child. Have a clear visual signal to indicate when to your child you are not available e.g. headphones, a sign on the door etc.
- If you need your child to play/work independently for a period of time try starting an activity with them and then moving away as they become absorbed. This means they are less likely to feel rejected when you have to work.
- Evidence also suggests that “psychological detachment” is essential to avoid working from home having a negative impact on mental health. It helps to have clearly set times and spaces for work and for leisure, and to engage in absorbing and enjoyable activities outside work.

For further information about talking to children about coronavirus, talking to children about worries and feelings, and ideas for activities at home please refer to the “Tips for supporting your children during the coronavirus outbreak” document on the Walsall Council website <https://go.walsall.gov.uk/>



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