



CONNECTIONS

LOCAL EFAP NEWS

Vol. 11 No. 3

Work & Family: Meeting the Challenge

EFAP/North
 1095 Cassells Street
 North Bay, ON
 PIB 4B1
 Phone: 494-8086
 1-800-266-3506
 Fax: 494-1042
 E-mail: efapnorth@vianet.ca
www.efapnorth.com
 For more information and to submit articles contact
Debbie Maltby,
 Administrative Assistant
 at EFAP/North

Best Ways to Balance Your Life

Working people today often feel they have two jobs - one at work and one at home. And sometimes, things seem to add up to more than one person can handle. The good news is, it's possible to get all the pieces under control so you can enjoy a satisfying family life **and** be more productive at work. **The secret:** Set realistic goals, make the most of your time, and know when and where to get help.

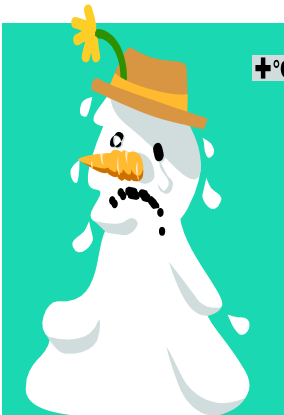
Taking Control: Where to Start

To achieve better balance, keep these basic principles in mind:

- Prioritize. Decide what is most important in your life.
- Avoid trying to do everything at once.
- Learn to say "no".
- Delegate wherever possible.
- Focus on work at work.
- Be ready for the unexpected.
- Control time-wasters
- Vary your activities
- Take good care of yourself.

Ideas to Take Control at Home:

- **WRITE** down your priorities for home -the same as you might for work.
- **KEEP** breakfast simple—but keep it. Research shows that people who eat breakfast think better and try harder than those who don't.
- **GREET** your spouse or partner with a smile each evening. Take time to listen.
- **SKIP** dessert one night a week and instead go for a family walk.
- **TURN** off the TV. People spend 40% of free time in front of it. But studies show they feel less relaxed and satisfied **after** watching TV than they did before.
- **SUBSTITUTE** a half-hour of TV with some "prime time" with friends or family.
- **STICK** to a regular bedtime - even on weekends and holidays.
- **INVOLVE** family in your work by telling them what you're working on - and what it might mean to you and them.
- **ADD** fun to routines.
- **MAKE** others in your life feel important with a compliment, hug, card, etc.



Happy Spring
March 20th

CONNECTIONS

Ideas to Take Control at Work

- **PLAN** your morning goals the night before to dive into that first work hour. *Extra tip:* Listen to weather and traffic reports so you're prepared for the morning commute.
- **SET** boundaries to help you stay focused. *Try:* partially closing your office door.
- **CARRY** important phone numbers with you so you're prepared for any home or family emergencies.
- **GIVE** your brain a break during breaks - it needs a breather as much as your body needs nourishment.
- **LIST** time-wasters. *Examples:* telephone interruptions, people dropping by to chat, trips to the copier. Put a check mark next to those you create yourself and tackle them first.
- **CHECK** your progress halfway through the day. Set realistic goals for the remainder, then finish what's left to do. You'll go home feeling more accomplished.
- **BE** understanding of your co-workers' home and family situations. They'll be more likely to offer **you** support when you need it.
- **SPEND** more time with upbeat people at work. You'll boost your own mood and may learn more tips on how **they** balance work and family.
- **TAP** any resources available at work or in your community to help you manage your life. *Examples:* stress workshops ... time management courses ... counselling.
- **TALK** to your supervisor if you feel unable to cope with combined work and family duties. Discuss any schedule conflicts and how they might best be resolved.

If You're a Parent

At work. Make a date with your spouse or partner for lunch - or have the kids come to meet you for a picnic in the park.

After you get home. Feed your children before they say they're hungry and crankiness sets in.

Tip: Keep a bowl of fruit within easy reach at all times for children to help themselves.

Anytime. To tackle chores, delegate.

Examples: Take turns with your child or spouse doing the dishes ... folding laundry ... washing the car.

Tip: Buy children's socks in only one style and color to simplify laundry sorting.

More Work-Family Tips

- Work or home, make goals **REAL**: realistic, explicit, actionable, livable.
- Get a head start each morning by packing lunches, loading backpacks and laying out clothes the night before.
- When your spouse or partner travels on business, call the hotel and leave a "miss you" message.
- At home, leave a large calendar in plain sight where everyone can write activities and appointments.
- Hold weekly family meetings to review schedules, work around calendar conflicts and plan "together" time.
- Examine your finances every three months as if you were a company. Look to keep spending in check, stay out of debt and maintain sensible savings goals.
- At least once a year, review all wills, pension forms, insurance policies and other important documents.
