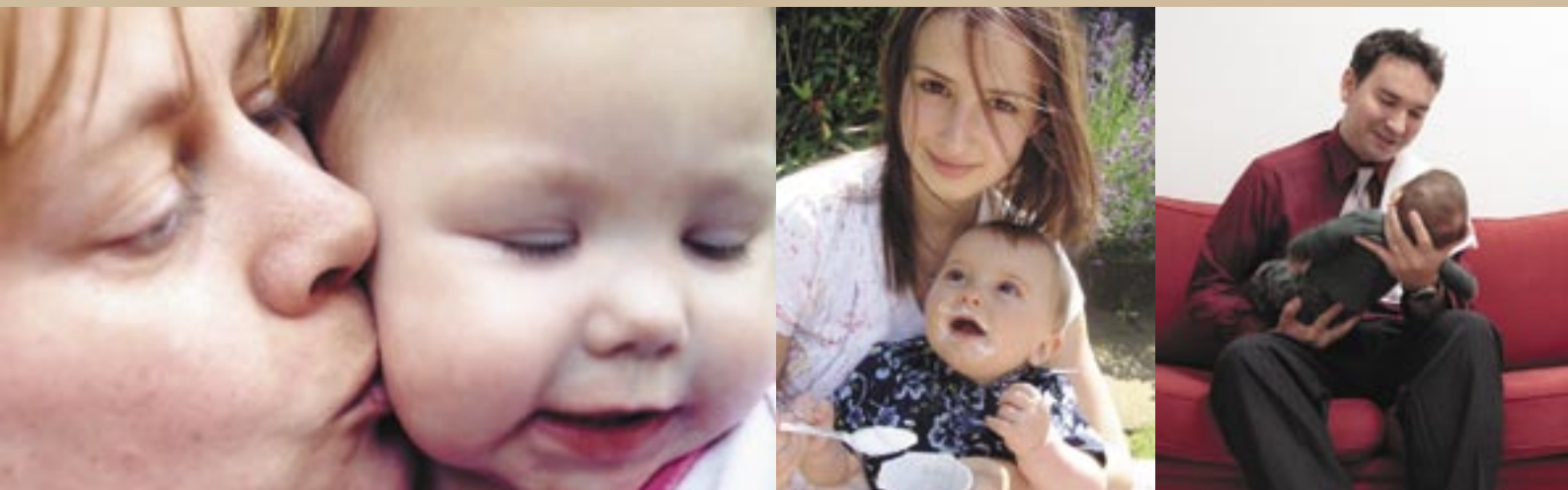




# survival tips for working parents



## survival tips for working parents

Tresillian 24 hr Parents Help Line  
**(02) 9787 0855**  
or 1800 637 357  
(Freecall outside the Sydney Metropolitan area)  
[www.tresillian.net](http://www.tresillian.net)

Speak to a Tresillian Child & Family Health Nurse  
on-line at [ninemsn.com.au/messengermums](http://ninemsn.com.au/messengermums) or  
visit our website at [www.tresillian.net](http://www.tresillian.net)

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Being a working parent is a challenging role. It involves a balancing act between meeting your child's needs for care and attention, sharing a satisfying relationship with your partner and friends and being a reliable and competent employee while trying to enjoy life and parenthood.

#### Make Life Easier by:

- Setting realistic and achievable goals for you and your family
- Asking for help
- Changing your expectations and priorities around the house
- Involving other supportive adults in the planning and sharing of parenting and household responsibilities
- Be realistic about what can be achieved each day

Routine is important. Having an unpredictable lifestyle is time consuming and unsettling for everyone. Young children become frustrated, overwhelmed, and rushed when routines are frequently changing (understandably, sometimes it cannot be helped).

Talk to your partner about household responsibilities and expectations as a parent and an adult household member.



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#### Starting and finishing the day on a happy note:

- Give yourself extra time in the morning
- Re-think what is essential to be completed before leaving the house each morning
- Pack your work and childcare bags the night before
- Use time in the car as a valuable opportunity to connect with your child both on the way to childcare and on the way home. Sing songs, and listen to your child when they speak to you
- Most importantly, leave work stresses, at work
- Organise the next days clothing the night before, for you and your child
- Avoid conflicts and fights in the morning – it is always a no-win situation for everyone
- Make sure your child goes to bed early enough as this ensures they have adequate sleep for development and growth and gives you and your partner time to interact as adults and friends

#### Feeding the family does not need to be stressful!

- Prepare double amounts of food and freeze for later
- Invest in a slow cooker and put dinner on before you leave for work
- Also remember your evening meal does not always have to be a hot meal
- Depending on the age of your child, try and enjoy dinner around the table with the television off and all family members present. This is a good habit to get into and provides a great opportunity to meaningfully interact with your family
- Consider a no TV rule in the morning as this can distract everyone from getting ready

#### Shopping:

- Add an extra hour to childcare for shopping later in the day
- Avoid taking tired and hungry children shopping
- Consider shopping on-line or in the evening ask your partner to do the shopping
- Another suggestion is to do a big weekly shop to avoid the need to shop every day

#### Washing:

- Wash and hang the clothes the night before
- Fold washing properly and save ironing

#### Children do get sick when you least expect it:

- Ensure your employer knows you are also a parent, so if your child does become sick you can take leave
- Otherwise, have an alternative plan – either arrange for your partner to care for your child or have a backup such as a grandparent or good friend on standby
- Babysitting clubs are a great idea if you want to go out at night time with no extra childcare costs, but remember you do need to 'repay' the hours and babysit other people's children

#### Maintaining family harmony and thinking of yourself:

- Take time out for yourself and your partner to reconnect and maintain a healthy relationship
- Go for a walk, taking time to talk and listen to each other even if it is only for a short time
- Plan regular enjoyable family activities that are simple (i.e. once a month take the family into the city – kids are fascinated with tall buildings and sailing boats on the harbour!). It's these activities that provide your children with family memories later in life!
- Continue or start to do a regular exercise program. This is an essential part of caring for yourself

**If you still need further assistance contact the  
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