

YOU'RE STUCK WATCHING THE KIDS WHILE YOU ARE TRYING TO WORK? HERE ARE SOME TIPS

By Michelle Quigley

Listed below are five of the favorite tips shared by the Work at Home Moms (WAHM) nationwide organization to amuse your children while working at home.

1. Hide some toys and rotate the supply in your home office often. Do not leave one bit toy bin in the office all the time, as your kids will ignore them. By having just a few toys out at a time, your kids will pay much more attention to them.
2. Apply the "free time" formula (devised by WAHM member Debbie): If what kids are doing keeps them busy longer than it takes you to clean it up then you have a net gain of "free time." Example: Your kids get into the linen closet. They play with the towels and sheets in the hallway, etc., etc. for 15 minutes. It takes you 3.5 minutes to scoop up and toss everything back in and shut the door. Thus, you have gained 11.5 minutes of free time.
3. Make sure to spend some undivided time with your kids before starting work. By doing this almost every day, you will find it really makes a difference. On the days you don't get to the park or somewhere else in the morning, the afternoons seem much longer.
4. Hire a neighborhood kid to come over and play with your kids. He or she doesn't have to be old enough to really baby-sit. By coming over for an hour or so some afternoons, your kids will benefit from the companionship and you will have a net gain of "free time."
5. Make a play drawer or cupboard in the office just for the toddler. Put some safe real or toy office supplies (phone, keyboard, notebooks, crayons, etc.) in there, and use that drawer or cupboard to distract your kids when they try to climb on your desk or get into your drawers in your home office.

In addition, any road construction going on right outside your house's front window can be great entertainment for your kids, but it won't last forever.

Michelle Quigley is a member of Work at Home Moms (WAHM), a nationwide organization. These tips were compiled by Michelle based on the input from WAHM members. For information on becoming a member of WAHM, please send a note to the following e-mail address: Wahmmom@aol.com.