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AR Project

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The Ultimate Balancing Act: How To Be A Better Parent While Sitting At The Big Desk

Being an involved and present parent while also excelling at your job can seem like a constant give and take. I often find myself staying late at school, bringing school projects home, or going into school over the weekend in order to feel “caught up”. This takes time away from my children and husband, which causes me to feel guilty about choosing work over them. While I love what I do and can feel and see the positive changes that are occurring in my school, I realize that I need to work on balancing my work life with my home life. I used this project to intentionally schedule time to spend with my children, which led to feeling more content and happy at home, as well as positively impacting my staff and students at school. This presentation will share my journey to being a more present mother while still being a change agent at school.

The Ultimate Balancing Act: How
To Be A Better Parent While
Sitting At The Big Desk

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Background Leading to Inquiry

Being an involved and present parent while also excelling at your job can seem like a constant give and take. I often find myself staying late at school, bringing school projects home, or going in to school over the weekend in order to feel "caught up". This takes time away from my children and husband, which causes me to feel guilty about choosing work over them. While I love what I do and can feel and see the positive changes that are occurring in my school, I realize that I need to work on balancing my work life with my home life. I used this project to intentionally schedule time to spend with my children, which led to feeling more content and happy at home, as well as positively impacting my staff and students at school. This presentation will share my journey to being a more present mom while still being a change agent at school.

Purpose



The purpose of my project was to better balance my work life with my home life. I wanted to be able spend quality time with my children while also maintaining the high standards I have set for myself at school. This allowed me to:

- Build a better relationship with my sons, who are 12 and 9
- Demonstrate to my staff the importance of family
- Ease the guilt I was feeling when I work from home or over the weekend

My Wondering

I wonder if scheduling intentional time each day to spend with my children will help me to ease the guilt I often feel when I bring school work home with me or when I work over the weekend.



Actions

- Schedule in Outlook to take a walk with my children after school (4 pm) 3 times a week for 30 minutes
- Set a goal to intentionally schedule 3 hours on the weekend for work and dedicate the rest of the time to family
- Meet with my dean each morning to review the day's schedule and delegate when possible

Data Collection

- I used my Outlook calendar and journal to record the dates and times that I was able to walk with my sons after school
- I used our family calendar and my journal to record the dates and times I went in to school over the weekend
- I kept a journal to write down the conversations I had with my sons
- I used a daily to-do list with my dean to review each day's schedule and task management

Data

My goal was to walk with my sons 3 times a week for at least 30 minutes.

Month	Date I Walked with my Sons	Duration of Walk (avg/month)
January	1-8, 1-9, 1-3, 1-15, 1-20, 1-23, 1-28, 1-29, 1-30	27 minutes
February	2-4, 2-6, 2-13, 2-18, 2-19, 2-24, 2-25, 2-27	25 minutes
March	3-2, 3-4	27.5 minutes

Additional Data

Month	Dates Worked Outside School Hours	Duration (avg/month)
December	12-28, 12-30	4 hours
January	1-2, 1-5, 1-12, 1-19, 1-26	3.9 hours
February	2-3, 2-9, 2-16, 2-23	3.9 hours

Journal and Daily Schedule

The journal helped me to reflect upon the conversations I was having with my sons and was amazing qualitative data as to the effect this intentional time was having on my relationship with each of them.

Setting aside time to go over the daily schedule with my dean helped to narrow our focus as to what was truly a priority, as well as forcing me to delegate to him tasks that did not necessarily need to be completed by me.

What I Discovered

I discovered that although I did not meet my goal of walking with my sons three times a week, the days I was able to walk with them were valuable. The three of us were able to discuss their day at school, peer relationships, academic goals, and family goals without distractions.

I met my goal of only going in to work once a weekend, but I was not successful in only staying for 3 hours. Even though I did not meet my goal, I feel that I was more present during the time I was with my family.

The morning check-ins with my dean enabled me to free up my time during the school day to increase my role as an instructional leader and decrease the time I spent on management/administrative tasks. It also allowed my dean to take on more administrative duties that he had not done before, which helps him to grow his capacity as a school leader.

Looking Ahead...

I will continue to set the goal of walking with my children three times a week throughout the school year. By intentionally scheduling this time I will be more likely to continue this activity.

Clearly defining a date and time to set aside on the weekend to focus on school enabled me to be more present when with my family. My mind was not preoccupied with tasks I needed to complete at school because I knew I had already intentionally scheduled time to complete those tasks. I will continue to schedule my weekend in this way so that I have a better balance of my work and home life.

Developing a morning check-in process created a more productive school day for myself and my office staff. I will continue to utilize this efficient method in increase our organization and prioritize daily and weekly goals.

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