

Balancing School, Work and Family Life

A [National Center for Education Statistics](#) report indicates that 40% of undergraduates are employed while in college. Balancing work, school and home life can cause added stress when obligations overlap, creating the feeling that managing your workload is impossible. Learning how to prioritize and set boundaries in all areas of your life is vital for your emotional, physical and mental health.

Tips for balancing it all

- **Block out time.** Effective time management skills ensure that every part of your life receives the attention it needs. Start by keeping a calendar and blocking off time for each project. For example, a family calendar can help you and your loved ones stay updated with one another's schedules.
- **Enlist the help of others.** While you may be tempted to do everything yourself, when balancing it all becomes difficult, seeking helps prevent burnout. Ask a loved one for child care support or a co-worker to cover a shift if needed.
- **Communicate.** Letting those around you know what's on your plate helps them understand your workload. For example, let your professor know if you have children and may need to miss a class or tell your boss you are in school to see if a flexible schedule is possible.
- **Practice mindfulness.** When managing so many different things, it can take effort to concentrate. Living in the moment and focusing on the present can help you block out distractions and reduce intrusive thoughts.
- **Reward yourself.** Create milestones to stay motivated. For example, take yourself to dinner after a long shift or have a movie night with loved ones after an exam.
- **Set boundaries and learn to say no.** Boundaries preserve your mental health and prevent burnout. Consult your calendar and examine your energy levels before agreeing to a request.
- **Remember why.** What goals do you have for the degree you are earning? What do you plan to do with the skills learned? How will your current sacrifices improve your life down the road? Keeping these things in mind will help you stay focused and motivated.

School brings various challenges. If you feel you need support, exploring your school's counseling options is a great place to start.