**WGU Homeschooling Webinar Series**

**Session 2: Balancing work and school; what if I can’t do it all?**

**Q&A**

Q: ­We discussed having 5 families split and having the kids go to one house each day of the school week so parents can work from home the other 4 days.­

A: Great idea: so many ways to homeschool.

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Q: ­For attendance, do you count them present even if we don’t accomplish all we planned? ­

A: Sometimes the greatest learning opportunities are not planned nor part of any curriculum. Life lessons often come in the moments we least expect and taking advantage of those opportunities is what makes homeschooling so wonderful so the question for whether or not to “count” the day or half day as school was really what did we learn today not what did we finish. Many days will count with that philosophy.

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Q: ­I’m a nurse and I currently work night. We are considering schooling at home because of the current county model with includes half days in person.

How do I make schooling at homework while as trying to get enough sleep for work? –

A: Homeschooling can be crafted to meet the needs of your family. If you work at night you may decide that your homeschooling schedule will consist of 4-5 hours in the middle of the day. If your child is attending school part of the day, then select two to three activities in which they will be responsible for doing at home. For example: (homework, math on Monday and Wednesday, reading activities on Tuesday or Thursday).

Also, assign independent activities that can be completed on an App and then later checked by the parent. I would also consider partnering with other parents to determine a alternating schedule that will support your work schedule. If possible, include grandparents and partners to support your needs and the children’s need. Do not attempt to do it all yourself. If something doesn’t get complete it is okay to alter your schedule.

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Q: ­What tips do you have for parents who don't have a local support network?...specially to prevent burnout! ­

A: Great question. Kim shared in the presentation that developing a network may require you creating a network or co-op. You can do this by gathering members within your church, family or friends who may be homeschooling. If you don’t know of anyone ask people within your network if they know of organizations or families who may be homeschooling. I understand it may be uncomfortable at first to ask, but I believe that by sharing you will learn there are more people within your network seeking support and wanting to develop a community as well.

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 Q: ­How do I help my child become an independent learner? ­

A: Encourage independent learning by asking your child what they would like to learn today? To help my son become more independent I give him small task to complete each day. In addition, put up a schedule and ask them what they want to do when they wake up? My son has ADHD and I have learned that if I give him small incremental task, he seems to complete it sometimes more quickly than I would like. I would encourage increasing the task after formulating a routine that makes your child want to check the boxes that he/she accomplished the task. Please know this is a trial and error approach and may have to be reinforced frequently to help develop a habit of consistency and independent learning.

Great response Sunny. Ownership in their learning is the greatest motivator and provides the pathway to independence. Clear directions and guidance on what to do if they become frustrated unable to move forward without some help is also key.

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Q: ­For the different styles, any recommendations for ADHD type child and kinesthetic. ­

A: For us, this is where we tied art, exploration, manipulatives, experiments with content. This is such a great way to provide project-based learning rather than just textbooks. You will find so many resources for ideas that work for all learners.

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Q: ­Ideas for special needs children? ­

A: ­Ideas for special needs children and differentiation is the topic of the next webinar.

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Q: ­My greatest issue with my 5-year-old is keeping him focused. Please provide tips for this. ­

A: Invest in educational tools that are bright, musical, hands on that allows the child to be engaged. What does it mean to focus at five? My greatest tip it to allow your child to be a child. Adults are focused these days, and many are distracted by smallest thing. I would encourage you to make learning fun. Keep them engaged 5-10 mins. at a time and then incrementally increase their focus. Don’t fret. Not all kids are built the same. You may find this article helpful: <https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/tips-for-helping-your-child-focus-and-concentrate>

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Q: ­I’m a mom of two. my 6-year-old is starting 1st grade and i have a 15 month old, while working during school time. how can i balance that out?­

A: Divide and conquer is one way. You cannot do all things at the same time so look at ways to chunk times together, but no that it will not happen everyday. I had 6 plus ran a business so this was the only way to do things. What can you and your 6 year old do while baby is napping? What school/work could you do in the evening when you have support from a partner/spouse or can bring in help? 1st grade should be small brief sessions with a focus on reading skills, which both children will benefit from your reading to them. Educational toys can help support those skills.

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Q: ­Do you have suggestions on how to get your work-from-home spouse on board with the same schedule, curriculum, etc?­

 A: I would suggest communicating the needs of everyone in the family. What is the schedule of your significant other? What are the expectations? What does homeschool or schooling at home look like? What do you want the other person to do in efforts to contribute to child’s success?

I believe a lot of communication and family planning is required in efforts to establish a schedule. In regards, to a curriculum if you are the primary parent find the curriculum that works for both you and the child and then include the parent that is working into the educational activities. Take breaks and also establish what you need as you discover what you need. This may be new for the both of you and it will require time, patience and also asking for help often.

 I think this is where planning as a family is crucial. If you approach as just a homeschool mom belief, you will end up doing most if not all of the work. If the family approaches it together, everyone takes ownership of part of that. Ask your spouse what he thinks is important for the kids to learn this week, month, or year and then allow him to take the ownership of that. Perhaps, he feels that physical fitness or automotive maintenance is a must; those are great life skills, and he can provide that instruction. One thing that I would avoid is the belief that those that find a certain subject easy are the best teachers; the opposite is most true. One who struggles in a subject is more understanding of one who also struggles. Learn together and you will be surprised how well you both learn it!

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