

# How to Manage Your Family Outside of Work Life

*By the WDS Practice Advisory Committee*



## ***From Dr. Mona Sadeghpour:***

I am part of a dual physician career household; and juggling house and work responsibilities is a daily challenge. The advice that was given to me during my baby-shower was "hire as much help as you can afford." But sometimes the help you hire ends up not working out. Remaining flexible has been the key to success in our household. When we had to suddenly let our nanny go without advanced planning, we found ourselves without childcare when both of us had to work full time. Thankfully, we were able to transition to a full-time daycare within a couple days (by cold-calling all daycares in the area) where our son has since been wonderfully taken care of since. Children get sick (often), nannies don't work out (sometimes), and life still goes on. Remaining flexible and aiming at over communication with your partner, so you can divide and conquer, is key. And for everything else: "hire as much help as you can afford".

## ***From Dr. Lori Fiessinger:***

I think keeping one detailed shared digital calendar is key for this. I recommend keeping the calendar as specific as possible. I block out my work hours, appointments, social engagements, exercise classes, etc so I can see how everything fits together. I'll even block out time to finish important work before a deadline. If it's on the calendar, it will get done!

***From Dr. Sarah Harvey:***

As a mother of 4, work life balance is one of my biggest priorities. We have a nanny which has been life changing. She picks up the kids from school or activities and has dinner ready for us when we get home so that we can have a family meal before the kids get too tired or 'hangry'. Additionally, my husband is a physician so canceling clinic to stay home with a sick child is very difficult for us and having the nanny there alleviates that stress. I only work 4 days a week and opted to take a shorter lunch so that I can leave at 4 everyday. We also hire a cleaning company to clean the house every other week so that I can spend more quality time with the family.

***From Dr. Catherine Tchanque-Fossuo:***

Whether both spouses are active working professionals or not, managing your spouse, kids, and family, outside of work can be a juggling challenge. You need to consider that you are in this together as a team. Communication in a team is what "makes the dream work!" The first step with your spouse is to establish priorities. It is essential to have frank conversations of what is important to your family. You might consider having a shared family calendar with a list of family events (birthdays, holidays, graduations), and school events, which might even include, scheduled meal plans (meal preps can make mornings easier), dedicated time zones for work, relaxing ones for outings, movies or game night, etc. Some people might get very granular about the details, but ultimately this can help build sacred family rituals. You might set up goals by creating your own performance metrics that would make you a better parent or spouse. Remember to reduce time waster, make time for yourself, cherish the relationship with your spouse, and use each other's strengths and interests to split up responsibilities. Along those lines, you should set up healthy boundaries, and be able to let go of the guilt of having to say "no" to requests that do not add any value to your work-life balance.

Staying on top of the household is never a dull moment but rather an exciting continuous life-long education.

The [Women's Dermatologic Society \(WDS\) Practice Advisory Committee](#) supports Dermatologists at any stage of their career looking to manage or start their own practice by offering resources on navigating the practice environment. Visit the [WDS blog](#) for more tips and advice.