Working From Home with Young Children

Routines

* Establish and maintain a schedule that mimics your child’s previous schedule-use visuals so children can follow along with the schedule throughout the day.
* Try to schedule your more intense work times during your child’s downtime.
* Prep snacks/drinks prior to your work intensive moments so they can be offered easily to your child.
* Begin to consider how children will transition back to previous routines.
* Take frequent work breaks so you are consistently engaging with your child in predictable intervals.

Connection

* Plan an afternoon/end of work day activity that children will enjoy/can look forward to (game, walk, cooking together, art activity, etc.).
* Use social stories to help children understand what is happening.
* If your child has an early education program, utilize the opportunities they provide to connect to their peers or teachers.
* Provide opportunities to virtually connect with other family members/friends.
* Provide opportunities for children to “work” with you (play laptop, calculator, paper, pencil, etc.)

Activities

* Offer activity choices during times when you are working.
* Keep preferred activities near your work space.
* Incorporate time for children to be active at various points throughout the day (dance party, obstacle course, outside play).
* Offer “new” play experiences during your work intense times (pull out bin of rice, play dough, magazine to rip).

Expectations

* Teach expectations for new routines.
* Set a visual timer (like a sand timer) so children know when you are going to engage in an activity with them. This will help solidify young children’s understanding of time expectations.
* Explicitly teach children the steps to getting your attention during virtual meetings (tap on arm, wave, stand near desk, etc.).
* Be Kind to yourself and your child