

[A family and work balance](#)

Life can be tough sometimes, we get busy, especially at this time of year and it can be very easy to loose track of having basic fun. I am lucky enough to be able to stay at home with my children, but I am aware that it can be even tougher when you have to work. How do you find time to fit in work, family and provide the opportunity for your children to experience a great of childhood fun? I didn't feel I was in a position to answer this question, so I asked the lovely Jocelyn from [The Reading Residence](#) to tell us how she manages home and work.....



Hello, and thanks to Karen for inviting me over here to her fabulous blog. I've been enjoying reading it from the first, and regularly join in with Tuesday's #LetKidsBeKids linky.

I have two children, both at home with me, though Boo now goes to preschool for two days a week. She's four, and Little Man is 15 months old. As you can imagine, they require a fair bit of attention and stimulation! Along with looking after them (and the house), I blog daily and I run my own business selling greetings cards and stationery. I think this is why Karen's asked me over here, so I can try to explain how it all fits together for us.

I suppose the first thing to point out is that the reason that I started my cards business and now my blog, too, is because of the children. I had a full-on career that would have taken me away from them, so I made the decision that I wanted to be here with them, enjoying them, watching them develop and helping them to do so. I make this point, as it's the one that I remind myself of on the days where I could just do with a few hours of getting my head down and getting some work done! I could put more hours into both the business and the blog, but to do so would be kind of missing the point, and so I find myself working to strike a balance each day.

I work within a routine. I find the children like a routine, and it allows me to roughly plan our day. I tend to work after they go to bed each evening, maybe an hour blogging, and then I can sit in the living room with the husband sorting card orders etc. while watching TV, so it feels pretty relaxing still. I also work for around an hour every morning, while Little Man naps and Boo is either at preschool or she'll colour-in, play with her toys or watch a film at this point (sometimes an amalgamation of all three!) It's been a learning curve, as I find that having a to-do list and diary really help to keep me on track, but having too much planned simply results in my getting annoyed as I can't finish it all! I don't want to be frustrated with them, I want to be happy with them, so I spread it out across the week. Of course, sometimes, I also go out selling my cards, but this is often of an evening when the Husband is home with them, or their grandparents will come round and play with them if it's a daytime event.

Along with work and chores on my to-do list, there is a 'fun activity'. We always have a couple of free play sessions a day (where literally anything could happen!), a game of some sort, perhaps building blocks, cars, dolls, all together, and then we tend to have something a little more structured. It may be a trip to a playground, soft play, feeding the ducks, a nature trail, playing with a cardboard box, painting, some gardening - anything really, as long as it involves us all and we enjoy it. Most things we do are free and easy to set up. I think this is important to do for the children, but to be honest, it's as much for me as it is for them. I can easily get drawn in to working, so this makes me devote my full attention to them and I always enjoy it and feel as though we've done something constructive with our day. Oh, and we read. We read, read, and read some more! This is something we've done with them from their first weeks of life, so it easily slots in to every day. Little Man has a story before his naps, they both have a few stories each before bedtime, and then they'll invariably pick up books throughout the day and bring them to me to read to them. I'll always make time for stories, as I'm a total bookworm myself, and strongly believe that children should be surrounded by them from an early age so that they develop an interest and a love of reading - I cannot imagine a childhood without being transported to magical, faraway lands by the power of books, and they can often shape our daily adventures. And, of course, the weekly #LetKidsBeKids linky always gives me fresh ideas of things we can get up to, too 😊



I find this all works well for us now. I can get some work done, the children get plenty of time to play and attention from me, so the routine is pretty slick. Until they get ill, and it all goes out of the window...!

Thank you so much to Jocelyn, I hope that lovely post inspires you all to continue having fun with your children, I know it has me.