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## Returning to Work

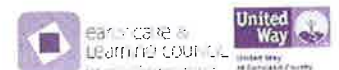
Whether this is your first child or your third, returning to work after a parental leave for childbirth or adoption can be a challenging time. Consider the following ideas to make the transition easier.

- Before you return to work have a family meeting to discuss the changes that will be coming.
- Ease yourself back into work by working part-time for a while, if possible.
- Talk to your supervisor about your workload and schedule needs.
- Talk to others at work who have returned after a parental leave for support.
- Realize that it may take time for everyone in the family to adjust.

Returning to work after having taken many years off to care for your children or attend to other family needs is a major turning point for you and your entire family. Good preparation and communication within your family will help with the adjustment process. Consider the following tips:

- Delegate tasks to all family members; household chores will need to be shared by all. Responsibility and a sense of achievement are positive benefits, even to young children. Typically, a three-year old can throw her own clothes in the laundry hamper.
- Give yourself and your family plenty of time to adjust to your new schedule. Do not expect everyone to be “up to speed” all at once. Do praise their efforts. Try to catch your children doing things that are helpful and positive, and tell them how much you appreciate it.
- Join a support group of others in your area who are returning to the labor force after an absence.
- If possible, start slowly with a part-time job, and move to full-time work later.
- Understand that you may feel guilt and the pull between your new job and family responsibilities. This is normal. Try to appreciate your own efforts towards supporting your family and doing a good job at work.
- Look into books at your local library on this topic for yourself and your children.
- Talk with friends who are balancing work and family needs for tips and advice.

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