

PART-TIME PROS

Family-Friendly Careers Balance parenthood and your profession

By Ysolt Usigan, ClassesUSA

With Hollywood parenting suddenly in vogue, you've become well-read about the lifestyles of the rich and famous. Despite their infants' sporadic sleep schedules, teething issues and frequent diaper changes, these new celebrity moms and dads have the luxury of taking lots of time off from work, making their own schedules, bringing their babies on set if necessary, and having access to the finest nannies their "people" can find.

Of course, most of us don't have the perks and connections of Hollywood parents. But that doesn't mean we have to choose between a thriving career and our kids. Career moms and dads can jump on the baby bandwagon, too. And it doesn't call for putting your jobs on hold, nor will your work suffer. With all the demands that come with having a family, there are options -- you just have to spot them.

Take it from these career parents -- they managed to succeed in the office and the nursery.

Health care

Having a career in health care may be the next best thing to being Gwyneth Paltrow, especially since it's one of today's fastest-growing industries.

For Julie Swiderski, regional director of government relations at Covenant Healthcare in Milwaukee, Wis. -- also a mother of three -- the industry afforded her room to juggle family and function. There are no nannies on the set of her job, but as with similar health-care providers, child care centers are located nearby Covenant. Swiderski and her co-workers are also granted flexibility with a choice of shift lengths ranging from four to 12 hours, on top of generous benefits and ample time off.

In fact, Covenant's widely accepted self-scheduling program has allowed for up to 80 percent of its nurses to work part time, if that's what their family responsibilities require.

In Swiderski's mind, her employer goes above and beyond accommodating her demands as a parent. "During my maternity leave, they let me take as much time off as I needed," she explains. "I worked from home toward the end of my leave. They even gave me a laptop to make things easier."

Now that she's back working on site, Swiderski is delighted to find that Covenant has addressed her new-mom needs by installing a special privacy screen on her office window and allowing her extra time to express breast milk for her newborn.

"I couldn't ask for a better environment to work and raise a family," she attests. "Having remote access to our computer network, and all the ways they've made parenting more simple, gives me peace of mind. I never have to feel awkward about having to leave work for a sick child or other family matter."

IT

Even though Bruce McGuire of Chino Hills, Calif., already received a bachelor's degree in business and a master's in business administration, he knew a career in a related field wasn't his true calling. A few years ago, he changed paths to pursue a career in information technology (IT). Years of training and a handful of computer certifications later, McGuire began work as an IT professional.

The single father made the transition into IT while caring for his teenage daughter and working in part by enrolling in an online program. "Taking classes online fits into my lifestyle," the DeVry University undergrad explains.

McGuire is looking forward to earning his B.S. in computer science this coming summer, and says he's learned valuable life lessons from the experience. "Time management or multitasking is not just limited to the working world -- it's everywhere. You need to always be flexible to changes and be willing to adjust to life as it happens."

For McGuire, that includes playing an active role in his daughter's life no matter how busy his work life gets. "We're very close. I feel we have a solid relationship in which we can talk about almost anything," he says. "There are other jobs, but I have only one family."

Accounting

Although Stacy Brackeen works from home as a finance director for Breakthrough Collaborative, a nonprofit educational program, she still has a set schedule. "My days start at 5 a.m. and end at midnight," she says, "and they're action packed -- from waking my kids up for school to working, from home on the laptop Breakthrough gave me, or going into the office."

If Breakthrough didn't offer the telecommute option, Brackeen says taking care of three young kids and working would be nearly impossible. "I've been divorced for eight years, and there's a huge difference between raising children alone versus with a spouse," she points out. "Single parenting is the biggest challenge in my life because I have to do everything myself. When I was married, my spouse and I would split the [parental] duties. Now I have to cook dinner while helping my kids with homework. Plus, I don't have a backup when I have to work late."

With e-mail and special accounting software at her fingertips, however, she can meet all her work-related deadlines after the kids are in bed. "As long as you have a computer, particularly a laptop, accounting work can be done anywhere," she explains. "There were times when I would complete work at my child's basketball game or at the dentist's office during their checkups."

For these professional parents -- whether it's because of technology, using online education to make a family-friendly career change, having understanding employers, or working during off-peak times -- they've shown that you can have the best of both worlds. As McGuire explains, "You make your priorities. If you feel your family is the most important thing, then you will make time for it."

Do your research and you too can find a career that fits your lifestyle.

View original article here:

http://msn.careerbuilder.com/custom/msn/careeradvice/viewarticle.aspx?articleid=1303&SiteId=cbmsnen41303&sc_extcmp=JS_1303_encarta>1=23000

Part-Time Pros Staffing Company

Part-Time Pros staffing company unites talented part-time professionals with companies who have part-time staffing needs. From the stay-at-home mom wanting to contribute to their household income, to the early retiree looking to supplement retirement, or the college student needing to earn extra income, Part-Time Pros staffing company is looking for individuals who are degree-educated or have equivalent work experience wanting to work full or part time.

Part-Time Pros helps employers and employees have it all!

(918) 551-PROS (7767) ✦ www.parttimepros.net