



# **SINGLE WORKING PARENTS**

**Survival guide for single  
parents juggling work &  
family life**



## Survival guide - from one single parent to another

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Balancing work and family life is a challenge for any parent, but when you're managing it all solo, the juggle can feel overwhelming. At Parent and Professional (P&P), we understand the realities of being a single working parent because many of our team members have been, or still are, in your shoes.

We know the late-night work sessions after bedtime, the guilt of missing a school event due to a last-minute or over running meeting that you felt too embarrassed to leave, and the constant effort to make everything work.

This guide is designed to offer practical, real-world tips that help single parents navigate work and family life with greater ease. Whether you're looking for support in setting boundaries, managing time, or simply finding ways to prioritise your own wellbeing, we've put together tried-and-tested strategies that can make a difference.

Most importantly, we want you to know that you're not alone. There is a strong community of single parents out there—working, thriving, and redefining what balance looks like every day.



Save the date

### **Celebrating Single Parent Day - March 21st**

Every year on March 21st, Single Parent Day is recognised as a time to celebrate and support the millions of single parents raising children on their own.

For many, this day is an opportunity to reflect on their journey, celebrate their successes (both big and small), and connect with other single parents who share similar experiences. Employers and organisations can also use this day to highlight the importance of workplace policies that support single parents, such as flexible working arrangements, parental leave, and wellbeing initiatives.

Whether you mark the day by treating yourself to some well-deserved self-care, reaching out to other single parents for support, or simply recognising how far you've come, Single Parent Day is a reminder that you are seen, valued, and not alone.



## Top tips from our single parent team members

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### Set Boundaries Between Work and Family

- **Define work hours:** Be clear about when you're working and when you're 'off' to avoid the blur between work and home life. Your work must always come second when you're responsible for others, but equally, expectations must be set at home that work is essential to your mental health as well as to the financial maintenance of life.
- **Use time blocks:** Allocate specific times for work, housework, and quality time with your child to avoid multitasking burnout. Set 'Do Not Disturb' for work emails after hours.

### Involve Your Child in Everyday Tasks

- **Turn chores into bonding time:** Cooking together, tidying up with music, doing the school run or making errands fun can help lighten the load. This also teaches a sense of responsibility for self as well as care and consideration for others.

### Prioritise Self-Care (Without Guilt)

- **Let go of guilt:** The saying you have to put your own oxygen mask on first, is very true, if you're not in a good place, you can't be the parent you want to be.
- **Find micro-moments of joy:** Whether it's a quick coffee break, a podcast, or dancing in the kitchen, small things add up. Take yourself for a walk in nature, there are thousands of studies that prove the benefits of walking in nature.

### Plan Finances for Peace of Mind

- **Save for you and for your children:** Maximise company pension schemes and tax-free ISA accounts – even if it's just a small amount every month
- **Tap into benefits and resources:** Budget, and be strict about it, talk to a financial advisor. Look into child benefit, grants, or employer-sponsored childcare perks.

### Maximize Support Networks

- **Build a 'parent village':** Connect with other parents at work, school, or in your community to swap favours like school pickups or playdates. Always ask for help, set up WhatsApp groups for specific needs, you are not alone.
- **Leverage workplace flexibility:** Talk to your employer about flexible working hours, remote work options, or compressed workweeks.



## Top tips from our single parent team members

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### Streamline Your Routine

- **Batch tasks:** Plan meals, outfits, and weekly schedules in advance to save time. It won't always run smoothly but the more you plan, the more streamlined life becomes, and you find more time for you.
- **Have a grab and go area:** Have a dedicated spot for school bags, work essentials, and keys to avoid morning chaos.
- **Prioritise what matters:** Let go of perfection, focus on essentials, and build a routine that works for you and your child.

### Plan for Quality Time (Over Quantity)

- **Create small daily rituals:** A bedtime story, a short chat at dinner, or a weekend pancake breakfast can become meaningful traditions. If your teenager only wants to game online it doesn't mean they don't love you, schedule in time together - such as a board game once a week - and stick to it.
- **Use 'pockets of time' wisely:** A quick cuddle before school, a 10-minute chat in the car or during a walk to school can reinforce connection.

### Single-parent out loud

- **Be proud of everything you're accomplishing:** There is only a perceived stigma today, stand proudly and parent authentically. Don't try to hide what you're going through, you're managing work and parenting on your own, and that's something to be proud of.
- **Have the sensitive work conversations:** Be open with your manager and colleagues about how your circumstances may impact your work schedule or availability. You'll find you're not alone, this may be an opportunity to create more support.

### Join the Community



Join a supportive community on LinkedIn for working parents navigating the challenges and joys of balancing professional careers and family life.

Share resources, stories, tips, and build a network with fellow parents. Build a support system to offer and receive guidance during critical parenting and career milestones. Highlight and promote companies with family-friendly policies. Share resources suited for working parents.

➔ [Join the P&P Working Parents Network](#)



## Takeaway tip



My takeaway tip is that as a single working parent with minimal family support, I recognised that making a concerted effort to build reciprocal relationships with parents who role modelled the values and behaviours I respect, was key to my single parenting journey. Not only did these parents become an invaluable and trusted part of my support network, but it ensured my child was safe and in a nurturing environment, in my time of need. It also taught me that your support network doesn't always have to come from family, but can be proactively and intentionally built through shared values and trust.

Czarina Charles

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