

# TIME MANAGEMENT FOR BUSY BUSINESS MUMS

*How to make home schooling work for you  
during lockdown*



**EMMA WALKER**  
**THE MUMPRENEUR'S MENTOR**

## Emma Walker – Business Coach & Busy Mum of 3



I know what it's like to be overwhelmed about starting a business.

I have been doing 'my thing' since 2005 when I decided that there was no way I could continue to work for my employer any longer and haven't looked back!

Over the course of the last few years, I have been developing my skills and experience so that I can help other mums create their own family friendly business.

My life looks a lot different to when I first started (and made lots of mistakes).

I've been home educating my 3 daughters since 2016 which is something that I LOVE to do so I have to juggle running my business whilst educating my daughters. It definitely keeps me busy, but I wouldn't have it any other way!

I'm not telling you this to brag, but to show you that if I can do it, you can as well. I am passionate about helping other mums do the same and learn from the mistakes I've made – that's why I focus my time coaching and training other mums like you to realise your dreams.



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## Welcome to the world of home schooling

### 2020 is going to be a year to remember – thank you Coronavirus!

I don't think anyone had any idea of what was going to happen – I know I was blissfully unaware when I was thinking of what I wanted to achieve this year.

But if someone had told me what was coming, I wouldn't have believed them.

- Non-essential shops and restaurants closed
- McDonald's, KFC, Burger King closed
- "Social distancing", "flatten the curve", "#stayhome", "#savethenhs", "Covid-19" become the new buzz words of everyday life
- We publicly acknowledge who the essential and keyworkers are for the country and its not the rich and famous!
- Schools, colleges and universities closed
- All after school clubs and activities closed (dance, martial arts, football, rugby, netball etc)
- Parents must educate their children at home
- Employees to work from home where possible (I'm just imagining all the employers who previously thought home working wasn't possible embracing this option now)
- We must self-isolate so we can't see family or friends unless they live with us
- Exercise is limited to once a day and only with people in your household
- People are furloughed from their jobs (didn't even know this even existed until lockdown)

With all schools closed, children are now having to learn from home with parents taking charge. For a lot of parents, this is a big challenge and a stressful situation.

## This isn't normal though

We've been home educating for 4 years now and its something we love doing, BUT its something we CHOSE to do whereas you have been FORCED into home schooling.

The first thing I want you to realise is that this isn't what home schooling is normally like – first of all, its normally referred to as home education and we aren't at home all the time.

There's lots of groups, workshops, meetups and events we can get involved with as well as meeting up with friends. There's normally too much going on that we have to pick and choose things that we attend as we can't actually do everything and sometimes its nice to actually get a day at home to catch up and chill out.

## Time Management for Busy Business Mums Get it all done in School Time!

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During the good weather we've had during lockdown, we would have taken the opportunity to do more things outside with friends, but we obviously haven't been able to do that. Luckily, we've got a decent sized garden so at least we've been able to play outside and get lots of fresh air – we even managed to have a bit of slip and slide fun 😊

### What does a typical day / week look like?

I want to be completely honest with you, we don't actually have a typical week as it all depends on what's going on.

Monday is the only day that is always the same. We have a Taekwondo class (just for home educated children) on a Monday morning, which is great fun as we have a nice mix of beginners and advanced working alongside each other with the fantastic Instructors. We love it, the kids love it. And then we have a gymnastics session on the afternoon (again, just for home educated children). So, Monday's are always the same.

Then for the rest of the week, it really does depend on what is going on in the area. There might be some workshops. West Midlands Safari Park do a Home Educator's Day every term which we've been to before. They normally offer some workshops or sessions as well as access to the park for a great price. So, it could be that we go to something like that.

Or there might be a maths or science workshop somewhere. We were booked on to attend multiplication, storytelling and biology workshops before lockdown. We meet up with one set of friends to do some maths and another set of friends to do a geography project and some spellings.

But there are lots of other events that we can go to depending on what our interests are. There's ice skating, skiing, forest schools, sports, history, bowling, trampolining, STEM, crafts, creative writing, photography, Lego, storytelling, recycling, animal based sessions – this is a selection of what was on offer from January! There's always lots going on and you can be as active as you want to be.

And then outside of those outside events, we do a mixture of guided and self-led learning. Megan is thirteen so she can do a lot of the learning on her own. Whereas Kenzie is seven and Ripley is four, so they need more time from me which is fine as we work it so that I spend one-on-one time with each of them.

The thing to remember is that we can get through work quickly because it's one-on-one learning. So instead of spending a week at school covering a particular learning goal, we can get it done in 20 or 30 minutes because it's tailored learning that is specific to that child – we can talk in the language that works best for them.



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One question I get asked a lot is based on how we decide what to learn about. We tend to focus on topics as the basis for our learning and go on what the girls are interested in or what questions they have.

For example, Kenzie wanted to learn about clouds, so we started looking at the different clouds and what they were all for. We found one (of the ten different cloud types which I didn't know) that holds the energy of ten atomic bombs, so we then got to talking about how WW2 ended with the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This then led on to learning about WW2 and some of the famous people including Anne Frank. I can honestly say that I'd heard the name, but I didn't know anything about her whereas Kenzie can now tell you who she is and what happened to her – all from wanting to learn about clouds!

Obviously, my typical day and our friends and other home educators is going to be a little bit different.

But since lockdown ...

All our groups and regular activities are cancelled. Any events we were booked on for have been postponed and we can't meet up with friends to do our normal maths or project learning. Basically, anything that we used to do has been cancelled – which is absolutely the right thing to do given the circumstances!

We're at home more than we've ever been at home. Normally we can meet up with friends, we can make the most of wonderful weather. We could go out and play, or explore, or go for walks, or go to a National Trust site ... there's so much that we could normally do, but now there's nothing.

We're adapting and we're making use of the downtime.

But for you guys, you've being forced into home schooling because the schools have closed, and it is a difficult time for you all. I do feel for you, I really do because we've chosen this path, we knew what we were getting ourselves into, we knew what it was all about. We had made that decision. Whereas you haven't had a choice.

## Top tips to help you through this time

Our children must be so stressed because they're normally used to going to school every day, they're used to going to their clubs and they have their routine – but that's just been took away from them overnight. Their world has completely changed, and they have no control over anything (to be fair adults are feeling the same).

It's hard for us and we know what's going on! So how much stress do you think they're under?

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So, here's some simple things you can do to get through home schooling during these difficult times.

### **Be easy on yourself**

Take a deep breath and pat yourself on the back, you're doing an amazing job given the difficult times so please don't beat yourself up, that isn't any good for anyone.

Do the best you can with what you've got, and you will make it through the other side.

### **Don't try to replicate school at home because it's not the same**

You might have been given lots of work from school or not. You might have a set schedule you're supposed to follow each day or not. It looks like each school is different with the approach they're taking so go with what you've got.

But don't replicate school at home, it's not real and you need to let your children learn how they learn best. Go with the flow as much as you can, go with what your child wants to do – you know your child the best so go with that knowledge and your instincts to help guide your children.

You know your children, be their champion and show them how to get through this together

Remember though, just because they aren't sitting down at the kitchen table learning their times tables or algebra doesn't mean they aren't learning.

They will all 'catch up' when they go back to school.

### **Make some amazing memories**

Can you imagine in 20 years when people are looking back you want them to think that these were the best of times. "Mum and Dad were at home, we built this fort in the house, we did indoor picnics, we had water fights, we did PE with Joe Wicks in the morning, we did online classes, we Facetimed our friends and family or we didn't actually do any school work at all and watched films all day."

Who cares? You're never going to get this time back again so make memories and have fun if you can.

### **And just break it up**

Children learn best in small chunks of time and I find 20 – 30 minute sessions work best so break up the learning throughout the day.

Let them go out and play in the garden because obviously they can't go to meet their friends or any after school activities.

### **Let them craft, let them bake, let them build ... whatever it is, just let them be!**

What do they enjoy doing, let them do it even if its gaming.

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Think about letting them learn through Minecraft as there's so much more to the game than you realise. The amount of strategy, planning, STEM and maths involved is unbelievable so let them explore and build as there are so many learning opportunities available just with this one game.

My table in the living room where we would normally do all of our sit down learning stuff is a complete mess and looks like a bomb has exploded because there's random crafting stuff all over the place as the girls are always making stuff. Some of it is rubbish (not going to lie, it goes in the bin), but some of it's really good. Kenzie made a 3D house which was a remarkably simple design, but she could have taken it onto a few different things, different levels if she wants to and that's something that we can explore further.

## You're doing a great job, remember that!

Home schooling won't be forever (well some of you may decide not to go back to school) so take each day at a time.

- Are they fed?
- Are they healthy?
- Have you got through the day?

If yes, that sounds like a good day to me!

I just want to take the opportunity to wish you luck and if you have any questions about home education, head on over to the [Facebook page](#)

Take care of you and your families!

