Summer can mean increased work life challenges

For some of us, summer means more leisure and vacation time. But when you're juggling work, parenting and elder care responsibilities, the season of vacation and warm weather can bring increased demands on your time.

It's important to find strategies to help balance work and family priorities, and to find time for yourself. By doing so, your entire family will be better able to enjoy the summer season—without becoming frazzled!

Tips and Tools You Can Use

A little planning can go a long way in making summer easier for everyone. Sit down with the whole family to discuss ideas for fun summer times you can all enjoy.

Get organized

- Create a family calendar and post it where it can be easily seen. Include activities, holidays, camp or child care details, chores, celebrations and family projects.
- Make an abbreviated version of the calendar for your older relatives, so that they feel included in the summer planning.
- Add other special dates or plans that are important to your older relative(s).

Get help

- Involve the entire family in scheduling and sharing chores, so that home and outside activities or vacations are fun for everyone.
- Be realistic—don't plan to spend weekends driving from one child's activity to another, or doing chores. Scheduling time to relax is important too.
- Set a practical schedule that allows time for you and your partner or close friends to be alone.
- Ensure your summer schedule allows for "down time" when your children can just hang out at home and relax.

Get healthy

- Build exercise into your personal and family schedules. Jog, walk, bike, rollerblade or hike.
- To restore your physical and mental health, find time for relaxation and sleep.
- Curl up with a good book in the garden. It's important to find time to stop and smell the roses!
- Resolve to make this the summer you all learn to eat a healthier diet.

In the time crunch of today's fast-paced world, it can be especially difficult for parents and families to maintain balance—and their sanity. Fortunately though, with a little planning, and some help from those you're close to, it's possible to get through it in one piece—possibly even with some nice vacation memories to share!