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**How To Balance Working At Home And Raising Your Kids**

**By Adriana Copaceanu**

Most work at home moms start home based businesses because they want to be home with their little ones. And I was no different: I left a great corporate job to be around my two children.

But then, you put a lot of work in your business, and it works! Yes, you are getting orders, and making some money, but the flip side is that you don't have as much time for your little ones. How do you then balance your time? Do you still put your children first? Or do you go for the "just a minute honey!" line and hope they can't tell time?

It happened to me: one day, during my first Christmas season in business, I was busy with an order for 150 gift baskets. It was hard work, and stress was running high. The deadline was approaching, and I had no time to stop to even straighten the room.

There were boxes with product everywhere, there were empty boxes, and there was gourmet food everywhere: a true disaster area! And just then, my 4 year old daughter (now 11) came to me with her big brown eyes in tears: "Mommy, I am bored and I am lonely... Can we play a little?" What could I do? I was alone at home with her, and if I stopped to play, there was no way I could finish my order in time.

So, I thought quickly, on my feet, of how I could play with her and work at the same time. And I came up with the idea of building her an office right next to mine out of used/damaged boxes. She was ecstatic! And SHE did all the work! I told her where to go and get the boxes, and made room for her by me desk. She built a desk, improvised a chair, and even had items to sell in her store.

With that in place, I was able to continue my work uninterrupted most of the time. She loved watching and copying me: when I picked up the phone to talk to a customer, she picked up her imaginary phone. When I needed to make a basket, she made one of her own. When I calculated the price for my baskets, she picked up a pencil and calculated her own prices.

In time, her office evolved: the old, damaged boxes were replaced with actual wooden drawers. Inventory I wasn't able to sell became her store's inventory. She even got an adding machine, and a couch. Now, her office is her favorite spot to play. And it's not just an office anymore: it's an entire

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building with different shops. She has a restaurant, a bath and body store, a book store, and a toy store.

The store has helped her in many ways:

– she learned about maintaining and ordering inventory – she learned about phone etiquette – she learned addition and subtraction – she learned organization skills – she learned to be creative (little bits and pieces of ribbon, irregular baskets, empty containers have become great assets to her business)

Could YOU be using your business to teach your kids business basics while having fun? I am sure you could. Just take some time and think how your situation can be used to plant some business seeds in your child.

Adriana Copaceanu is a work at home mom of 2, and the publisher of

<http://www.Babys-First-Year.com>

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### **"EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT RAISING KIDS..."**

**By Terry L. Sumerlin**

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"EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT RAISING KIDS..."

While it's not entirely true that "everything I need to know about raising kids I learned behind a barber chair," it is true that I've learned some things.

I was reminded of these things, after hearing a sad statement from a conscientious dad. He said that he and his son are now on different paths. I asked how old his son is. "Twelve," he answered. I thought of how close I am to Jon, our 22-year-old son, and how it would hurt me to think we were "on different paths" when he was twelve.

But, I also thought of the many kids who come through our doors and of the many parents who seem to be getting it right. Thus, I've developed sort of a "Barber-osophy for Raising Good Kids." Here are a few such "Barber-osophies":

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1. Be in charge. It doesn't seem possible that a 4-year-old child can control a 40-year-old parent. However, I've seen it happen, and it makes you wonder who is the child and who is the parent. It also makes you wonder if child abuse doesn't sometimes take the form of a parent who won't take charge.
2. Reduce the choices. While this is relative, depending on the age of the child, it seems that children who always have a choice regarding such things as treats and privileges tend to be ungrateful, unhappy and undisciplined. Sometimes it might be more appropriate if the choices are reduced to something I read on a friend's refrigerator: "This ain't Burger King. You take it my way or you don't get it at all."
3. Be careful about showcasing the child. There are far too many kids who receive no positive attention from anyone. There seems to be a growing number of parents, however, who make every interaction between their child and themselves a public event, a look-at-me-and/or-my-child situation. Thus, the child begins to think that the world revolves around him (her).
4. Expect the best. Parents who expect the first haircut to be "a piece of cake" are often rewarded. Similarly, by our words and actions we must always let our kids know we believe in them and expect the best from them. It propels them toward success.

BARBER-OSOPHY: Though there are no perfect parents or perfect children, it's easy to spot the parents who are genuinely trying to get it right.

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