

The DrFs: Surviving Mompreneur Guilt



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Mompreneur guilt is a burden that takes run-of-the-mill guilt and tends to supercharge it. Whether the Mompreneur's business is in its formative stages or already established, it generally has pulls on her time and emotional resources day and night. Some parents can see this as a resource drain that it is in direct competition with the needs of their children.

A generation ago, decisions about where families lived, vacationed, and the types of jobs parents did had been largely adult-centric in nature. There was less emphasis on the wishes or suitability of these decisions on the children.



Image by Katherine Langford

Recently, these big decisions have been much more child-centric, with parents choosing vocations according to how the job requirements will impact the children. Decisions about where to live may be influenced by variables such as proximity to good schools, sports or extracurricular activities of their children.

The shift from adult-centric to a child-centric framework has influenced

the perception of what the gold standard for parenting ought to be and what it means to be fully available to your children. The prevalence of a child-centric perspective has fueled the guilt with some of the following beliefs or what we call *Mompreneur Myths*!

- All kids do better in life with a stay-at-home mother or a mom that works part-time.
- Moms are more committed and present when they are not employed or entrepreneurial.
- There is a correct way calculate the percentage of work versus direct interaction with the child(ren) that holds true for most children and families.
- Mompreneurs have their priorities all wrong.
- Mompreneurs are selfish.
- Children of working moms are poorly behaved.

We know that kids are happiest when there is an abundance happiness and contentment throughout the family. If the family needs the resources from mom working, and if mom adds to family finances, then it is positive for mom to work. If entrepreneurialism is the path via which mom works, and if it brings her challenge, fulfillment and meets her needs for connection, esteem or any other variable, then Mompreneur-ism is a choice that works for the family.

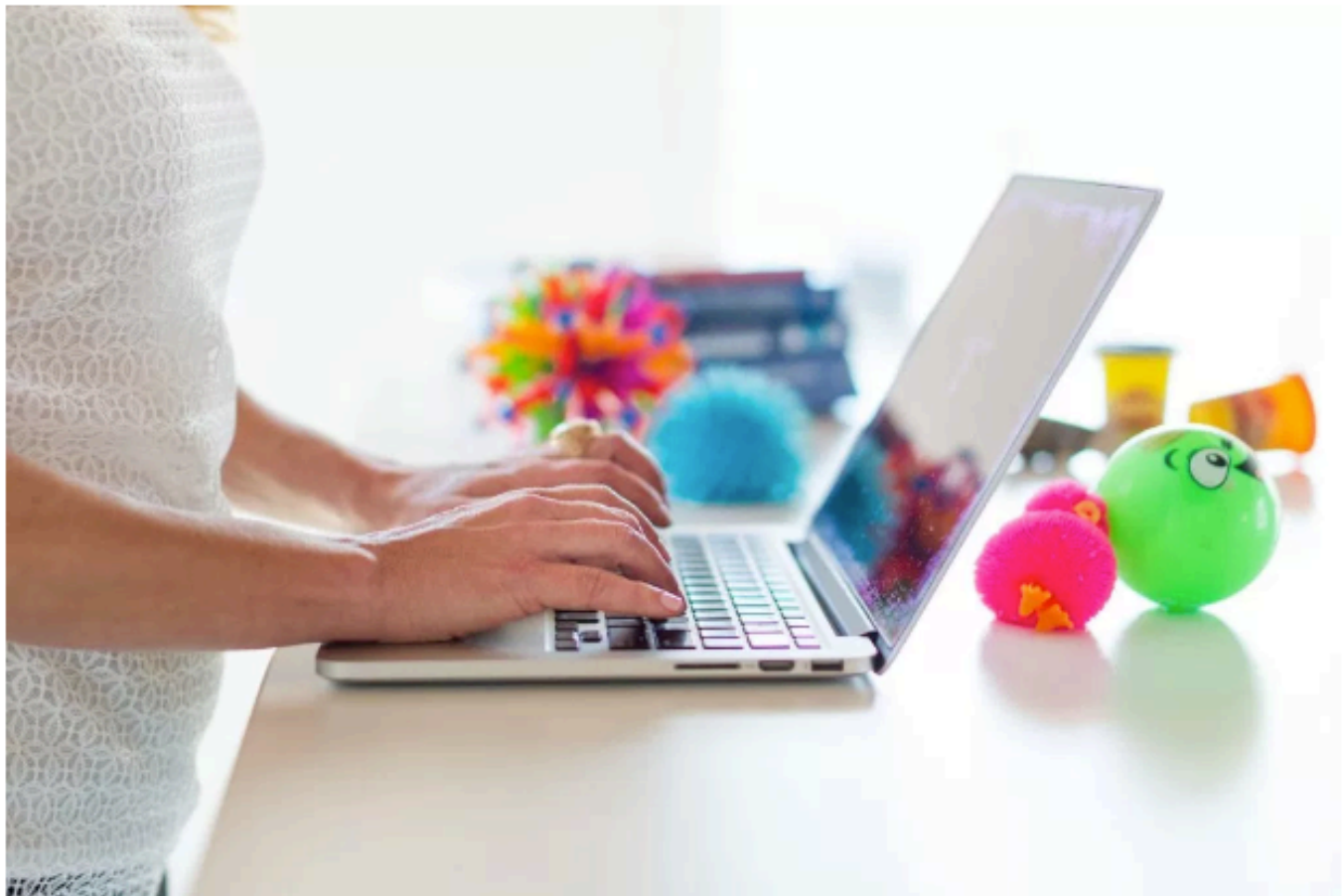


Image by Katherine Langford

Here are some Guilt Easing Truths for all you Mompreneurs

- Many moms are more engaged when they are with their children before or after a stimulating and engaging business meeting, a deal is brokered, or an article is published.
- Many Mompreneurs can adjust the timing of their workweek so they are able to do pick-ups or drop-offs from school, attend field trips and awards celebrations and sports days in a way that a traditionally employed mom cannot.
- Single biggest variable of a child's positive mental health is a mom's mental health.
- Mom that takes good care of her body and mental well-being can be a better, more present and engaged mom when she is connecting with her kids.

There are also positives to having your child interact with other caregivers or important adults while mom is doing business. This exposure can lead to several benefits such as a

diversity of opinions, rules daily routines, and vocabulary, and it fosters an extended community of support.

One of the biggest guilt inducers that Mompreneurs tell us about is the guilt caused by taking 'extra' time away from the kids for self-care such as exercise and socializing. Another guilt inducer that is often talked about is 'quality time' vs 'quantity of time'.

We highlight the following with Mompreneurs when we discuss how to authentically connect with their kids:

- Direct eye contact
- Close physical proximity
- All multi-tasking is paused
- Mom is unplugged-without being in a rush to disengage or jump to the laptop
- 100% in-the-moment with their child

There is no chart or exact science regarding how much connection time each child needs with their parent. This is more dependant on your child's needs. For instance, if their upset seems excessive, if they have had a big behaviour change, or if they are not sleeping well – in general, these are some indicators from a child of any age who may need more mom time.

What we help Mompreneurs in our office to do is to determine the 'sweet spot' for themselves, their family needs and the needs of their child(ren) to determine how much time they spend on growing their business, at what times of the day they work, and how to orient toward balance.

We also stress that true balance is not a constant, and due to all the moving parts, the sweet spot moves too. Perfection is not the objective here. Instead we focus on meeting everyone's needs in the best way possible while also valuing Mom's needs. And, most importantly, we believe that *if Mompreneur-ism is good for mom, then it is probably good for the kids.*