

Parent Problems

While juggling deadlines, work and school, busy families should find time to spend with each other.

By Eliza

Sometimes Eliza Shapiro, a fifth grader at Manhattan New School feels her life is as mixed up as an unsolved puzzle. She feels as if her parents are always out at work, a party or meetings. She's mad, she's frustrated and doesn't want them to stop. She just wants to see more of them. This is a problem kids like Eliza can relate to.

Kids can fix this problem several ways but one thing's for sure, busy families in the year 2001 need to find time to spend with each other. According to A Mother's Place, in 1970 less than half of all mothers worked. Now more than ¾ of all mothers work, full or part time and many jobs aren't flexible. That is a big change people have to deal with. But there are some solutions.

One of the best things you can do with your parents is talk! Sophie, another 5th grader says, "my dad is always checking his e-mail, when I'm around him I can always hear the keyboard keys clicking and the 'You've Got Mail' beep." Sophie could talk to her dad about limiting his computer time. Sometimes Eliza's mom says, "homework gets in the way of seeing you." Eliza could try to not lollygag and just get her homework done.

Another way kids can spend more time with their parents is to actually do their work together. The

family around a table whether eating, playing a board game or doing work will reinforce quality time.

Some other advice to all of you kids in the same situation. One more way kids can find more time with parents is (though you may not like it) to do the chores with them. Instead of waiting home alone with anger in your heads while your mother does the laundry in the basement, go along and you'll actually be able to talk.

But kids need to see that it's hard for working parents to find a lot of time as well! "I try not to do my work at home unless it's an emergency", Eliza's mom says, but still work for parents is like school for us. Kids have to understand that parents need to do things too, but kids should try to get them to do as little work as they can when they're at home.

Even though you might not always think it, your parents are the mold that shapes who you become. So do the best you can to make sure you see enough of them. Trust kids like Eliza—it's worth it.

Eliza's published article.