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## Doing the Impossible, Daily

Your team has been working from home for months. For caregivers, that means doing the impossible: working full time while caring for kids.

With no end in sight for WFH, employers are now wrestling with how to support caregivers for the foreseeable future. Remote work and flexibility are a start, but that still means parents are left to do 2 jobs simultaneously. As a result, parents are showing signs of chronic stress and complete burnout. *The key question is 'what are sustainable policies and structures that companies can use to support caregivers throughout the pendency of this crisis?'*

Kunik is a family support solution for working parents and their employers. Through our platform, covering thousands of working parents nationally, we have a differentiated perspective into the challenges working parents face. With their feedback in hand, we have outlined practical steps employers can take to more sustainably support caregivers over the long term.

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## How to Support Caregivers during COVID-19

### Work:

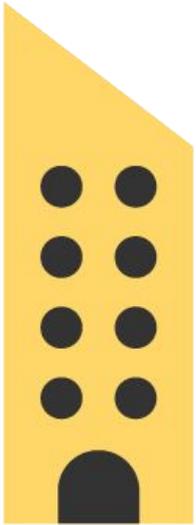
- No meeting days:
  - ✘ Have you done a Zoom meeting with kids crawling all over you? No meeting days are a gift to caregivers: it means they can focus their time and energy on getting work done. Plus, aren't we all a little Zoomed out anyway? **Pro-tip:** *select 1 day of the week and make it a no meeting day for teams or company wide.*
  - ✘ Can't do a full day without meetings? Try to adjust meeting schedules instead. For example: nothing before 9, after 3 or from 12 -1 (someone has to feed kids lunch!)
- Adjust work/performance targets:
  - Encourage managers to do a deep dive into forecasting and planning projects, needs, and goals. Be brutal. What *really* needs to get done and what can wait? Anything that can wait, move or get rid of it.
  - *An exacting focus on the 'must-do's' will help your entire team, not just caregivers.*

### **Managers must set specific targets & deadlines for their teams.**

Explicit goals enable caregivers to hone their focus to work on projected related tasks with dedication and clear expectations.

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Companies need to balance initiatives:

- What is more or less time sensitive?
- What is a reach goal?
- What is truly fully in the employee's control?

Identify “nice to have” initiatives that can be pushed out or table them altogether.



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Move review and promotion cycles:

- Supplement or replace formal reviews with 1:1 check-ins that blend actionable feedback/advice with empathy. If you're sticking with the set promotion cycle, consider how you weigh pre & post pandemic work. If an employee was up for promotion but has struggled in the last few months, it is important to have a structure that handicaps performance appropriately.

*Pro tip: make sure 1:1s include asking your employee what they need to make their situation workable - each circumstance is different.*

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### Change PTO

- Saving up vacation days for the future isn't good for employers or employees. Instead, try giving X days that expire each month. One team we work with has a rotation schedule - everyone must choose a Friday to take off. Their system encourages and reduces the stigma of using PTO.
  - Many companies are giving extra PTO and we've seen some companies encouraging employees to set "unavailable" hours.
  - One company we work with did 2 weeks of no internal meetings to help their team recharge/take vacation without feeling like they were missing something.
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- Ask and listen
    - Survey WPs to see what they need and how they're doing. Enable your employees to be heard and share what's on their minds, gather the info you need to help support them and boost productivity.
    - Communicate often and clearly. Your employees understand that the workplace is changing rapidly. They will appreciate and value your transparency as to what is being planned and changed. Open communication will build trust and confidence.
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- A stylized icon representing a group of people, composed of several overlapping circles in black, blue, and yellow.



## How to Support Caregivers during COVID-19

### L&D Meet D&I; D&I Meet L&D

There are two things this pandemic has made clear: 1) your company has more working parents than you thought, and 2) they all need help, no matter how old their kids are.

- Parents are more isolated, vulnerable, exhausted and overwhelmed than ever before. There is a desperate need to connect, share, and find relief in talking to someone in the same position who experiencing similar challenges.
- Are you enabling caregivers in your firm to connect with each other *and* peers at large? Do you have a safe space/forum for caregivers to connect? Building such a space will build camaraderie and morale, while showing you value them and recognize their challenges.

Pro tip: It's a lot of work for either a parent or HR to run a full time group like this, especially right now. Think about how you can use providers or benefits to help

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## How to Support Caregivers during COVID-19



Do you have any new or expecting parents at work? A global pandemic is a uniquely stressful and overwhelming period to become a parent. Consider how you can provide additional support, coaching, and connections to peers and mentors. Helping your employees through this transition will enable them to adjust productively and help you retain talent.

### - Manager Coaching

- Like everyone else, your managers were thrust into remote work overnight. Not only are they adjusting, but they're responsible for ensuring that the rest of their team finds their stride as well. Do they have the training, support, and coaching they need to successfully manage a remote team? Are they prepared to lead through a crisis, effectively communicate, and understand the needs of everyone on their team (parents included)?
- These skills weren't necessarily the ones you looked for when they become a manager, but they're critical to success. Now is the time to invest in your managers to ensure that teams and the organization adapts successfully. **Pro tip:** *focus on coaches who have the training to specifically target today's challenges, not managerial skills at large.*

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## How to Support Caregivers during COVID-19

- Parent coaching
  - Parents are arguably your most vulnerable employees. Help parents combat burnout, find solutions for their 'new normal', and get the help they need to make this impossible situation workable. Help keep your talent productive, happy, and engaged at work, while preventing off-ramping and expensive turnover.
  - **Pro-tip:** *parents are time constrained. Coaching should be focused on practical, actionable advice for this moment in time. Some ideas include: productivity when WFH, encouraging independent play, burnout, sleep.*

Group coaching is an affordable, scalable option to support large portions of your workforce, while building community, collaboration, empathy, and understanding

- The most valuable gift? Time:
  - More than anything, parents lack time. The reality is they spend hours sourcing the information they need. Can HR or a 3rd party collect the resources they need for them? This includes information on COVID, on-demand coaching, firm benefits, & children activities. These resources must evolve over time. It need not be perfect off the bat, but collecting this information will deliver immediate value and ensure that your parents feel appreciated.

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## How to Support Caregivers during COVID-19

- Family child care shares
  - With many schools going remote or using hybrid schedules this fall, parents are desperately searching for childcare solutions. In an ideal world, everyone would have a full time nanny and tutor, but that's not realistic. Instead, how can you enable employees to connect with other parents in their area to share caregiving responsibilities? It's a lot of work and a huge amount of time for parents to do this on their own, if you can save them that burden, it's one less thing on their plate. **Pro tip:** *this is a new solution for everyone, look for organizations that are getting creative to help parents problem solve.*



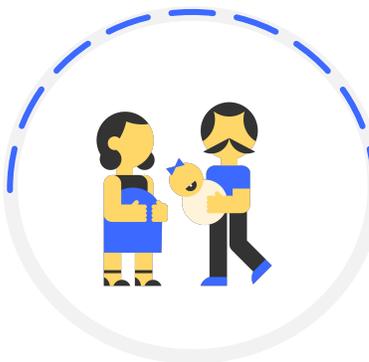
- Sandwich generation
  - The reality of COVID is that many of your parent employees are now also responsible for the health of their own parents. We've seen a surge in multigenerational households, as parents with young children are moving back home to help relieve the stress of childcare. While helpful, it of course introduces new stress and different demands. We encourage our partners to be aware of this dynamic and the challenges it may present to emotional wellbeing.

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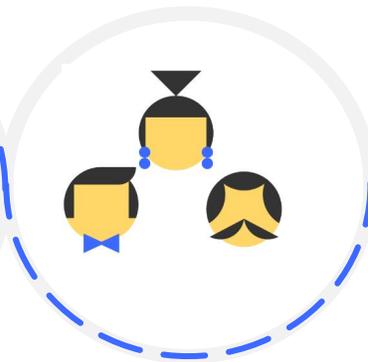
Making work *work* for caregivers during COVID is an enormous challenge. Our COVID Care package is the only family support solution for your entire company.

We deliver coaching and community to equip parents with the practical tools and emotional support they need to integrate home, work & family, plus training to help managers lead teams in real time.

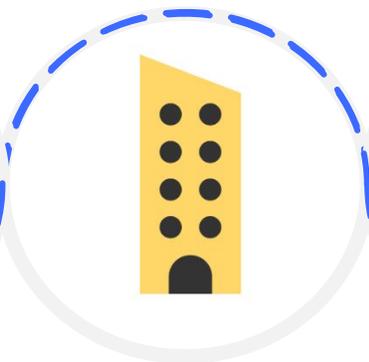
## COVID Care: An Integrated Solution



Caregivers



Managers



Firmwide



Children

**Contact us to learn how you can offer COVID Care to your team immediately**

**[BOOK A DEMO](#)**