



Back to Work

You've just gotten used to being a mother or having another child, and now it's time to go back to work—another change. You can make the transition easier on yourself and your baby by planning ahead as much as possible.

Child Care

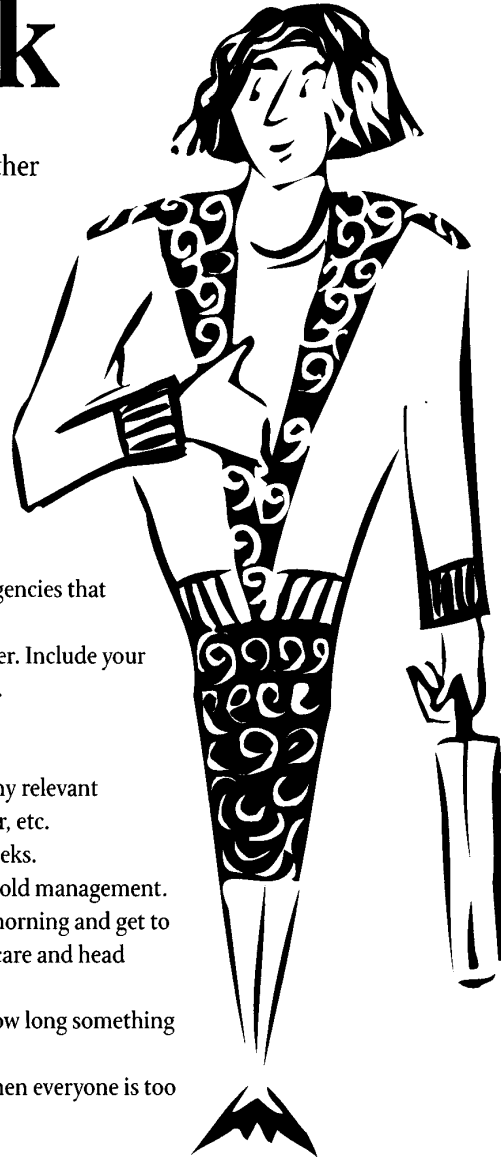
- Set up reliable child care well in advance.
- Send your baby for a couple of trial days before you're actually working so you can get used to the idea, while you're not worrying about work.
- Find a reliable backup in case your baby's sick and can't go to her regular child care.
- Have a list of friends and relatives to call for different types of emergencies that may come up.
- Make a list of emergency phone numbers for your child care provider. Include your baby's doctor and how to reach your partner, a friend and a relative.

Making the Transition Work

- Find out what's been going on at work while you were away. Read any relevant publications, keep in touch with a trusted coworker, your supervisor, etc.
- If you worked full time, try working part-time hours the first few weeks.
- Enlist your spouse in planning shopping, meals and general household management.
- Make a practice run to see how long it will take to get ready in the morning and get to work on time: Get yourself and your baby ready, drive by the child care and head toward work.
- Be realistic about your new time requirements. When estimating how long something will take, always add extra time.
- Make or buy simple meals to store in the freezer for those nights when everyone is too tired to cook.
- Invest in a calendar to keep track of family and work obligations.

Separation Anxiety

- Admit it to yourself if you're having feelings of guilt, doubt or even grief.
- Talk it over with your partner or a close friend.
- You've chosen a caregiver you feel comfortable with, now it's time to let her do her job.
- Many children who have working mothers learn to make transitions easier and develop more confidence.
- When it's time to leave your child, always say goodbye, but don't drag it out.
- Never sneak out, no matter how much you want to avoid a crying child. He'll be fine once you're gone.



Watch Out for Supermom

No one can do it all. Those who try, can eventually burn themselves out. Give yourself breathing room. Prioritize and let go of what you can't control.