

Quoted in Barbara Brabec's Book "Homemade Money"

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Share Your Business Success With Your Children

"Keep your children informed of what you are doing and share your business successes with them," advises Angela Allen, who offers small and home-based business consulting and virtual assistance services at CumberlandDunes.com. "My own sons, prodded by questions from friends, had to ask me what I did all day at home," she says. "I should have had the forethought to tell them! All they knew was that I worked on the computer. Make sure your children understand, in simple terms, what you do and why so they will be comfortable answering questions from their peers."

When Angela told her boys about her first contract, they gave her ecstatic "high-fives" and then began to check regularly to see if she had any more clients or prospects. "Now they are always interested in my current project's progress," she says. "Talk about built-in external motivation!"

Once involved in your business, your children may be of more help than you might imagine. One day as Angela's 13-year old son listened to her complain about her inability to relay to an online graphic artist exactly what she wanted in a logo design, he asked her to sketch it. Then he opened a paint program on the computer and created a great logo for her that required only a little touching up by the designer. "It's the one I use today," says Angela, and my son and I are quite proud of that fact."

If constant interruptions by your children are wearing you down, try teaching by example, as Angela did with her 11-year old boy. "When he became frustrated because I could not be interrupted while doing creative work on product descriptions for a Web site, I decided to show him why I needed the uninterrupted time," says Angela. "He loves writing poetry, so I asked him to write a poem for me. Once he started, I kept calling him for this or that reason--all nonessential interruptions--until he became quite frustrated. Then I sat down with him and asked him what was wrong. He told me he was angry because I kept interrupting him. He said he would start to write something, and before he could get it down, I'd interrupt him and he would lose his train of thought. About then, he looked at me and a light bulb went on. I asked him if he now understood why I became frustrated when he interrupted me. He smiled and nodded. Since that little 'exercise," he has been much more thoughtful about unnecessary interruptions."