

Top 5⁺¹ Hints for Family survival

To the student:

First in family and older students are often driven by a strong desire to achieve personal and career goals, and this can mean lots of change in many aspects of their lives and routines. But because of their resilience, the good news is that everyone is likely to survive, but here are some strategies for surviving 'well' ..."

	Strategies	What students said:
1	Make sure you have 'quality time' with family and friends	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Making sure I have time for my husband and for our children is very important. Quality Family time together helps. (Female student, 25-30, mother of two children)</i>• <i>I study on weekends and sometimes miss out on doing things as a family. I try to study at night but like spending quality time with my husband while he is home. (Female student, 30-40, mother of two children)</i>• <i>I take every opportunity to spend quality time with my family. (Female student, 25-30)</i>• <i>I have less time to participate in socializing ... etc. but I consciously make an effort to take mum out shopping, or to lunch. (Female student, 50+)</i>• <i>I ... now realise that family and studying is my biggest priority. Applying myself more and being more organised has helped not only my study itself but also my household (Female student, 25-30)</i>

	Strategies	What students said:
2	Involve family in your study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>My youngest daughter is 12, and at this age, she is quite happy for me to study, or read a textbook alongside her on the lounge ... I do a lot of my study, on the weekends when she is with her dad. (Female student, 40-50, mother of one child)</i> • <i>I discuss with my family a lot about what I learn, what subjects I am doing and what I want to do next semester ... I'll explain things I learnt about ... which is really fascinating to see them point in their own ideas and we all discuss it together. (Female student, 18-21)</i> • <i>My children will often ask me about what I am doing and we will have a conversation about it, they think that all of a sudden I am really smart, my wife and I will usually talk about what I am doing a few time a week and she is interested in a couple of my subjects (Male student, 40-50 , father of three children)</i> • <i>My daughter has helped me with questions I have had about certain things. We can both talk about our uni studies and how they are going. (Female student, 50+)</i> • <i>Well my eldest son now sits at the table and studies more. But not enough! (Female student, 40-50 , mother of three children)</i> • <i>My kids actually study around the table with me. (female student, 40-50 , mother of three children)</i>
3	Have a routine: time management and planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A milestone was being able to develop a management plan and stick to it. (Female student, 40-50)</i> • <i>Studying has made me more organised with my time - slightly! (Female student, 50+)</i> • <i>It's not easy, when planning weekends and time before and after work, I need to include study time. I almost have to have an appointment system in place to try and keep on top of everything. (Male student 40-50 , father of two children)</i> • <i>I've had to learn time management very well. I've had to prioritise university work (Female student, 25-30)</i> • <i>... the more I have to fill my days the more I actually get done so my time management can be elaborate but key to my sense of self fulfilment and motivation. (Female student, 25-30)</i>
4	Let family and friends know that study is important to you	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>My children have had to help out around the house more, and accept that my studies are no less important than theirs. I have to be less fussy about the state of my busy household, and not insist on cleaning before study. (Female student 40-50 , single mother of three children)</i> • <i>Because I am not working my studies are my number 1 priority (now that my son is 19 it is easy to fit my study with his needs). (Female student, 40-50 mother of one child)</i> • <i>I often study well after the kids have gone to bed and on weekend. I have had to commit to less things and prioritise all the time (Female 40-50, mother of two children)</i> • <i>University is my first priority, so all aspects of my life (such as my part-time job, sport and down time) work around my study. (Female student 18-21)</i> • <i>I don't get as much time to spend with friends. Some don't understand that uni work is another priority for me. (Student 40-50 , mother of two children)</i>

	Strategies	What students said:
5	Have someone you can share with / vent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I often express my frustration with this to my husband. When my oldest son is frustrated with his homework, I use my study as an example of how we are always learning and it takes time and patience (Female student, 40-50, mother of three children)</i> • <i>My friends and family outside university were best to talk to and vent any issues I'd been having ... I talk to my family about the things I'm learning ... so i try and teach them, doesn't usually work but they seem to enjoy it. (Male student, 18-21)</i> • <i>I talk frequently with my mother and grandmother about university, they have a keen interest in what I'm doing. I describe the things I have learnt and how I might use them. When I am doing prac work, those conversations are far more interesting as it's putting what I have learnt into use, and there are often funny stories/anecdotes to share about working in classrooms (Male student, 21-25)</i> • <i>I was recently discussing with my sister that I was feeling overwhelmed (and exhausted) with work and study and that I really needed a break; but that, at the same time, I was conscious that every semester I took off would delay finishing my degree. My sister was quite sympathetic, and said it was more important that I had time to myself... (Female student, 30-40)</i> • <i>I often talk about the latest things I've learned and attempt to explain in detail the various concepts. I do this with both my children and my husband. (Female student 40-50 , mother of two children)</i> • <i>I discuss my studies all the time, it's a major facet of my life now. My family always ask me how my studies are going (Female student, 40-50)</i> • <i>We often just discuss the day we have all had, and I always reiterate to the kids the importance of homework and turning up on time to class etc. I do mention to my husband/sister ... that workload is tough and the hours are many and how I often feel perplexed that I can walk away from some classes and not feel that I have learnt a great deal! (Female student, 40-50 , mother of two children)</i>
+1	Take up offers of help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>My mum is always offering to come and do some housework. she wants to see me finish. (Female student 40-50 , single mother of two children)</i> • <i>I check - How are they coping? Can we help? What are they studying at the moment? Female, 40-50, mother of student)</i> • <i>I was pleased that she had set herself a goal and was planning her future - I thought about which University and cost involved but ultimately how I could help her achieve her goal. (Female, 50-60, mother of student)</i> • <i>... being a low income family, by studying full time I don't have the time to work and so only receive a very basic income from centrelink. After paying my share of the rent ... I am left with about \$7 a fortnight, so rely on my mother financially, which until I complete my degree will cause us to struggle. Fortunately my mother is very supportive. (Female student, 25-30)</i>