



# National Work Life Week

11-15 October 2021

Top tips for employers



[#worklifeweek](#)

working families 



# Time to look forward after a difficult 18 months...



The last eighteen months, as we've all had to readjust and reset our working patterns time and again, have been tough for everyone.

Whether it's parents and carers in your team who've had to juggle delivering against deadlines with caring for little ones or older family members, or line managers who've had to support teams while managing their own workload and home commitments. It's been exhausting, frankly, and as we negotiate our own 'new normal' of work amidst lingering uncertainty about what the winter will bring it's more vital than ever to put wellbeing at the heart of building back from COVID.

That's where National Work Life Week comes in.

National Work Life Week, run by national charity Working Families and going strong for over 10 years, is the best possible excuse spend some time with your teams talking about wellbeing, good work life balance, and how to rebuild a workplace that allows everyone to thrive both at work and at home.

[workingfamilies.org.uk/nationalworklifeweek](http://workingfamilies.org.uk/nationalworklifeweek)

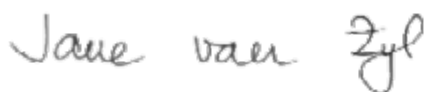
After all, it doesn't just make sense for individuals: an organisation staffed by people who feel seen and who are able to balance family and work effectively, is an organisation that will retain more staff for longer, attract the most diverse talent and see increased productivity. Our research for our #FlexTheUK campaign this summer showed that 69% of working parents would choose to apply for a new job advertised as flexible over one not. And 83% of parents want employers to do more to create flexible jobs without waiting for the government to intervene.

This short guide is your starting point, full of tips on how to make the most of National Work Life Week.

We've included a whole host of ideas for engaging your staff team and letting the wider world know that you are an employer that puts a high priority on work-life balance. But don't let it stop here! Let your imagination run and get input from your employees, family and carer network groups (if you have them), and senior team on ideas for activities that will suit your own unique culture.

Last year, we saw organisations of all shapes and sectors – including big banks, insurers, construction firms, universities, councils, charities and law firms – all get involved. We hope you will join us this time around, and look forward to seeing how your teams celebrate and mark the week: make sure you share what you're doing using #worklifeweek

Yours sincerely,



**Jane van Zyl**  
**CEO, Working Families**





# Top 5 tips on taking part

## 1: Get your big guns out

One thing we've learnt over the last 18 months is that for culture change to work, it needs to be led by action and role modelling from the front. Involve senior leaders and your CEO in National Work Life Week from the start (get it in their diaries now!) and make sure they are a visible part of your activities.

- Do any of your senior team work flexibly – part time or flexed hours? Job share? Different locations? Then ask them to write a blog to mark the week and share their experiences of flexible working
- Would your CEO be willing to lead a staff webinar / online session to talk work-life balance? They could do it alongside team members with different experiences (parents, carers, people with other commitments outside work) to highlight the benefits diverse experience brings to the organisation





## **2: Give your teams a priceless gift (quiet time!)**

We all know how hard it is (despite all the good intentions) to find time to focus on wellbeing and self-care. Particularly for those of us who have had to work very differently during the pandemic, discipline is needed to truly switch off from work and have some quiet time. Use this week as a chance to put on a series of lunchtime activities that will help your teams shut down those emails or get away from the customers for an hour. This is great one to involve parents and carers networks in planning for, but some ideas could include:

- A guided meditation session – online or off depending on your circumstances
- Team time together with a brew and a biscuit – and no work talk allowed!
- Invite in some inspiring speakers who can talk about balancing work and family life, building confidence and prioritising self-care. If your budget can't run to real life speakers, search for a TED Talk playlist to share and block off time for people to really switch off and listen

## **3: HR's time to shine**

Use this week as a chance to put the spotlight on your own family friendly policies and employee benefits. Run seminars, use your intranet to highlight a policy a day, or do an all-staff Q&A to help promote what you are already doing.





#### **4: Give space to talk about the positives of good work-life balance**

Kids gatecrashing Teams meetings, dogs having their say on zoom calls and the door constantly knocking with new deliveries: the barriers between our personal lives and our work personas have been melded like never before over the pandemic. While saying goodbye to lockdown life will be welcome for everyone as we move nearer to normality, we know a lot of people have found they see their colleagues and leaders as more human than before because of seeing this new, more personal, side to them. Why not keep this engagement going by inviting colleagues to share what flexible working and a good work-life balance helps them to do – whether it's getting into sports, being able to pick the kids up from school or get the shopping done when it's quiet. Set up a space on your intranet to share pictures and stories.



## **5: Stop work on time every day of National Work Life Week**

One of the major concerns that has come from the pandemic, particularly for those people who moved to home working, is of an 'always on' culture developing. Use this week to make sure that people are only working the hours they should be, and make sure line managers feel they have the skills and messages to encourage their teams to switch off on time. Encourage senior leaders to tweet or message the teams when they stop their shift, and share what they are going to do after work. Use it as an opportunity to show that productivity doesn't decrease when people finish on time: it often increases!

**These are some ideas of what you might want to plan for National Work Life Week, but it's by no means exhaustive. You know your organisation and its culture better than anyone, so be creative!**

**And remember to share your activities and spread the word on good work-life balance using the hashtag #worklifeweek. Making sure your communications team know about it well in advance will help make sure your organisation is primed and ready to make a big noise about all the great work you're doing. Who knows which employees-of-the-future will see it and be impressed...?!**





# Life after National Work Life Week...

Remember that a culture of workplace wellbeing and good work-life balance won't arrive by magic. If you want to build a family-friendly, flexible organisation that works for your employees and delivers huge business benefits for you, then we can help longer term.

## **Become a Working Families member**

Employers from all sectors realise that they need to provide new ways of working in order to attract and retain the best talent.

Our membership scheme works for all types of organisations, regardless of size, maturity, and working dynamic. Members have access to a wealth of information, support from experts, and easily accessible toolkits designed to help you to create a new culture and shift mindset and behaviours so you can embed a flexible, high performing workforce within your business.

Providing a benchmark analysis, regular network workshops, and webinars—as well as newsletters and updates on changes to legislation, case studies and best practice from the UK's leading employers—Working Families membership will help you to keep your business in front.

**[Contact us now to find out more](#)**



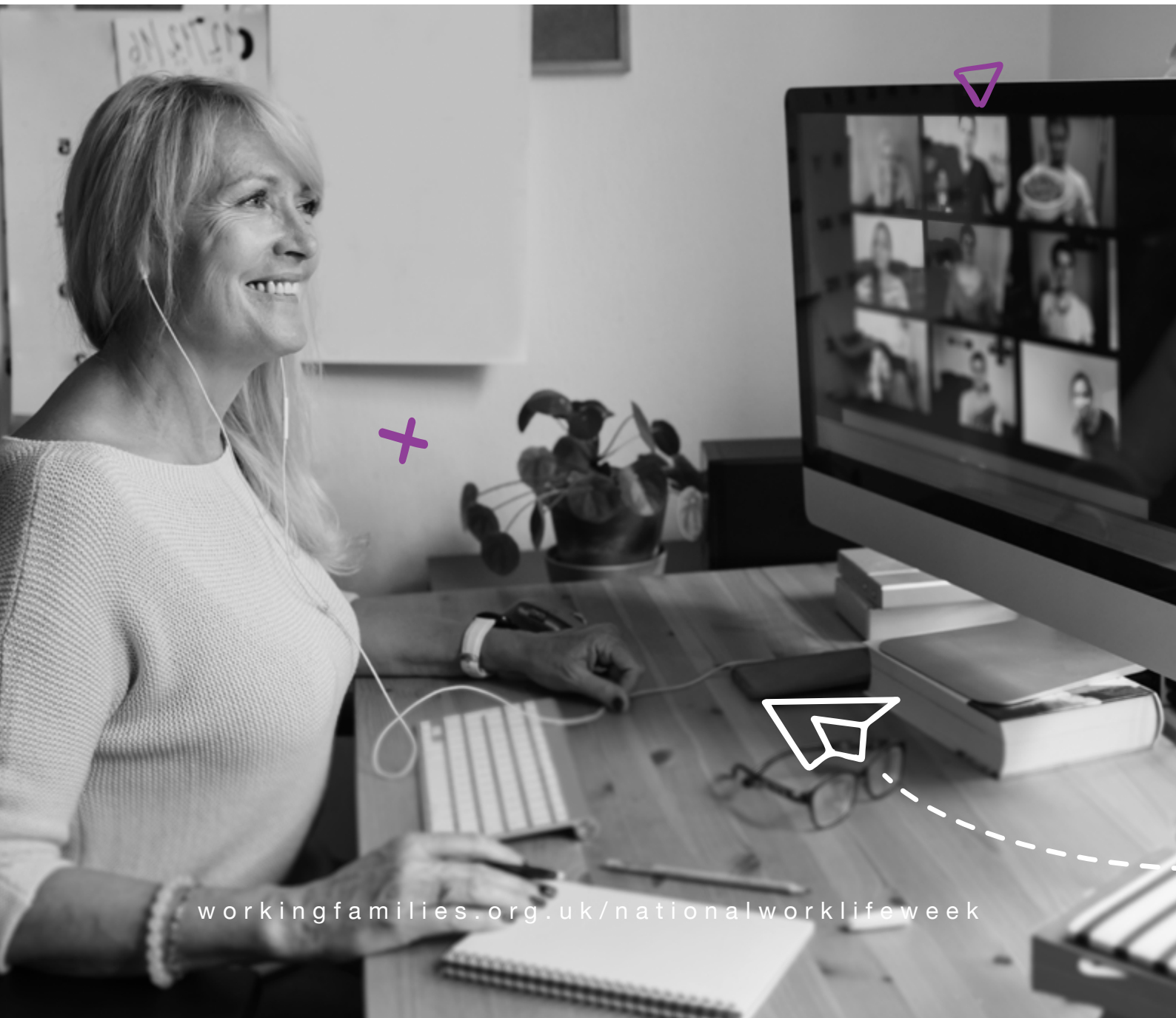




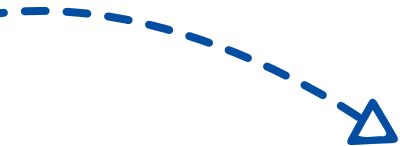
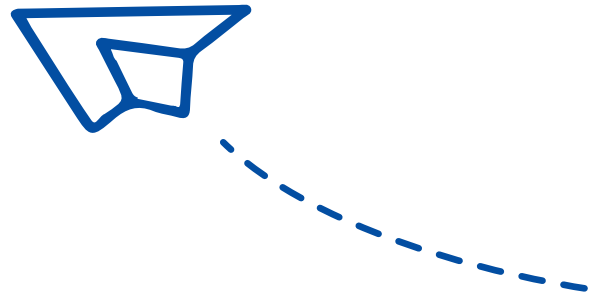
# Sign up to our newsletter

Our free newsletter will make sure you stay informed about our work, our free webinar series and new publications, as well as what's happening in the world of family-friendly working.

 [Sign up here](#)



[workingfamilies.org.uk/nationalworklifeweek](http://workingfamilies.org.uk/nationalworklifeweek)



**Working Families**

Spaces, City Point, 1 Ropemaker Street, London, EC2Y 9AW

Tel: 020 7253 7243

Email: [employers@workingfamilies.org.uk](mailto:employers@workingfamilies.org.uk)

[workingfamilies.org.uk](http://workingfamilies.org.uk)



[@workingfamUK](https://twitter.com/workingfamUK)



[WorkingFamiliesUK](https://www.facebook.com/WorkingFamiliesUK)



[company/working-families](https://www.linkedin.com/company/working-families)



[@workingfamUK](https://www.instagram.com/workingfamUK)