

QUICK TIPS FOR FIFO FAMILIES (DURING COVID-19)

If you're finding life a little tough during the COVID-19 pandemic, here are a few quick tips on how to keep calm and carry on FIFO-ing...

BE very clear about why you're a FIFO family: what you want to get out of it; what the biggest challenges are at any given time; and how (as a team) you're working to overcome them.

ALWAYS take an interest in how your other half lives.

REMEMBER that life is not a competition. You're both exhausted. You're both worried. You're both frustrated. You're both bloody awesome.

TACKLE all issues as a united couple ("How will WE fix this?" is much more constructive than "How will YOU fix this?")

DON'T dwell on being apart, or let sad feelings become negative thoughts.

TALK often on the phone but don't force conversation.

DISCUSS any emerging parenting issues with your partner before you get on the phone with the kids.

DON'T discuss your worries/concerns in front of the kids (but don't bottle it all up either – just make sure they're out of earshot).

BE smart about money. (SMART goals are Specific, Measured, Attainable, Realistic and Timely.)

MAKE big events special, even when you're apart.

DAD/MUM have never 'gone away'. Dad/Mum is 'at work'.

AVOID those who make you feel crap about the FIFO lifestyle. You know what works for your family and you don't need to justify it.

TAKE the time to create family rules (reinforce/amend over video chat whenever necessary) and involve the kids so they feel like they've got some control. Make sure those family rules stand whether you're together or apart.

REMEMBER, connectedness is king at anxious times like these. Send regular photos with quick, messages/emojis of love (or no words at all).

Don't be afraid to speak to your GP, your company's employee assistance program, a counsellor or a wise, trusted friend if the going gets really tough. For help right now, contact Lifeline on 13 11 14.

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