



NSW Women

Juggling work and family

These days just about every woman has a story about juggling work and family. While mostly we just have to get on with it, work and family pressures can impact on women's health, emotional wellbeing, financial security, and work or career opportunities.

Many of these impacts can be mitigated for working women through family friendly workplaces, which provide flexibility when the family has to take priority for whatever reason.

Flexibility can be offered in a variety of ways. One of the most sought after is paid maternity leave. Australia is one of only two OECD countries that does not offer paid maternity leave. Yet a recent poll confirms that a majority of the population support it (p.8).

The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's (HREOC) recent paper *It's about time: women, men, work and family*, which reflects almost two years of consultations with communities about work and family, calls for 14 weeks paid maternity leave, a minimum two weeks of paid paternity leave, and a further 38 weeks of paid parental leave for either parent.

In the UK, providing more flexibility in the workplace for workers who are also carers, was legislated first in 2003 when parents of children aged under 6, and of children with a disability aged under 18, were given the right to apply to work flexibly. This year it was amended to accommodate other kinds of carers as well. Employers have a duty under the legislation to consider the request seriously. HREOC has proposed something similar for Australia (p.4).

According to the Equal Opportunity in the Workplace Agency (EOWA), employers that offer workplace flexibility are rewarded by greater loyalty, reduced absenteeism and increased productivity. Some large financial institutions, legal firms and universities offer flexible working arrangements, because they want to recoup the investment they have made in their highly qualified and well trained staff.

Top (left to right): Nicole Webb and daughter Ciara (15 months), Monique Fenech and daughter Sophie (14 months) and Allison Lee and daughter Mia (4 months) at the Impact Communications workplace, which has a creche on-site, and is an accredited breastfeeding friendly workplace.

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MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER



Managing our work life and family life as two separate entities is just not possible. When they collide, the way that employers respond can make a big difference to their employees. Employers who are flexible and supportive find they not only have a happier and more productive workforce but also that they are better placed to attract and retain the best talent.

Many employers are now offering a range of family friendly conditions. Some of the conditions which are most critical include paid maternity leave, carers leave, flexible working hours and part-time work.

Professional women, and women working in the public sector, or in larger businesses, generally have reasonable access to benefits, but in many workplaces flexibility is much more limited.

For this reason, some women have seized the initiative and started new businesses. Others have opted for part-time work, which while desirable for many women, reinforces the stereotype of men as the primary breadwinner. Part-time work can often sideline women's careers onto the "mummy track" which has important implications for our retirement incomes. In regional and remote areas, where work itself can be scarce, the challenges are greater.

For women in low skilled and low paid jobs there are greater hardships, and these have been exacerbated, according to several recent research studies, as a result of the Federal Government's *Work Choices* legislation. The impact of *Work Choices* has led to reductions in pay, less certainty about wage rates and pay rises, more work demands, a weakening of job security, and less financial independence. Research has found women in industries such as hospitality, aged and child care, and call centres, are up to \$100 a week worse off.

The Howard Government's industrial relations and welfare reforms do not just affect working women but their families as well. The introduction of *Welfare to Work* will force many women receiving income support to seek paid work. Women who have been receiving the Parenting Payment to help them care for children are required to look for paid work, for at least 15 hours a week, once their youngest child reaches school age.

These new rules force the very people who need the most support and flexibility in the workplace – mothers and women with disability – into accepting jobs which leave them struggling to balance their childcare, housing and transportation demands.

Women who already struggle because of the myriad of demands made on them, need workplaces that provide them with security, fair pay and decent conditions, respect their contribution and accommodate their need for flexibility.

Whether you are an employer or employee I urge you to consider the benefits of flexible work practices.

Verity Firth MP
Minister for Women

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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



Welcome to another issue of *NSW Women*, in which we focus on 'work and family'. It's a refrain we hear in all sorts of conversations, particularly among women who are working and combining responsibilities for managing households, and caring for family members.

Recent work and family employer and employee surveys on the NSW Office for Industrial Relations website, completed by more than 1400 people, found that the majority of employers (87%) and employees (93%) agreed that 'accommodating family and caring responsibilities in the workplace is beneficial to both employers and employees'. We agree. The demands on working women in particular make it critical that we have family friendly workplaces. Fortunately, the government and some businesses are providing such workplaces. These employers say they offer flexibility to attract and retain capable staff.

The Equal Opportunity in the Workplace Agency (EOWA) publicly acknowledges businesses that offer flexible working arrangements, via their annual awards for Equal Employment Opportunity excellence (see p.6). In this issue of *NSW Women* we focus on some small to medium businesses, to demonstrate that the size of the business makes little difference to the opportunities which can be provided.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Bigsworth'.

Kerrie Bigsworth
Director
Office for Women
NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet

JUGGLING WORK AND FAMILY

Page 1 story cont'd.

Given the ageing population, a national skills shortage and the low fertility rate, there would appear to be lots of good reasons for business to offer women more flexible workplaces. But the surge in the number of women starting up their own businesses in recent years suggests that women are taking the initiative to create their own flexible working environment.

Charmaine Papallo and Naomi Simson both set up and run successful web based businesses because they wanted to work and have time with their children. Now they provide the sort of workplace flexibility they were looking for in their own businesses (p.6&11).

Other women have chosen to work part-time for the same reason, and make a financial sacrifice, both in the short and longer term (particularly in relation to superannuation), to do so. But there are often real downsides to part time work with research suggesting that employers often do not provide the same leave, training, and promotional opportunities for women in part-time positions as they do for their full-time counterparts. In Europe, unlike Australia, steps are being taken to reduce these impacts through the introduction of legislation that is designed to stop discrimination against part-time workers.

New studies also suggest that there is a time limit on how long women can spend outside of their jobs and still make a successful re-entry to a full-time career (p.12).

Despite some of the possible shortcomings, other research suggests that the positive effects of work on family life are greatest for those women who work part-time (p. 4).

One of the other big factors that can make life a challenge for parents is finding affordable and accessible care, both child care and other dependent care. For people who have family members with a disability, or those living in regional or remote areas, care can be even more difficult to access.

The pressure is on governments to promote and implement more family friendly policies. The Work and Family Policy Roundtable, which includes academics from eight Australian universities, put together a series of benchmarks for work and family policies to measure the political parties against for the 2007 election.

The Roundtable suggests government should be providing a framework which offers reasonable working hours; a better approach to part-time work; greater access to sick leave, annual leave and leave for family reasons; government funded maternity, paternity and parental leave; a relevant living wage; fairer and more effective tax and welfare policies; and a new national approach to improving early childhood and care.

MANAGING WORK AND FAMILY BETTER

Financial stability, satisfying jobs, time to do daily tasks, time to spend with close family and relatives in leisure, and working voluntarily within the community all contribute to our wellbeing.

The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's (HREOC) latest report *It's About Time: women, men, work and family*, has come up with a guiding principle which it suggests we adopt, to manage work and family better. It is the notion of 'shared work – valued care'. In the labour market and the community it means sharing paid and unpaid work better; within households, it means men and women sharing the work load; and in terms of caring, it means sharing the responsibility between families, the

community and public institutions. It says governments should take a primary role in sharing the costs of care, by providing accessible, affordable and high quality care and support services, for both children and adults.

HREOC has put together 45 recommendations; among them are the creation of a Family Responsibilities and Carers' Rights Act, which would define both direct and indirect discrimination on the ground of family and carer responsibilities, and a right for workers to request flexible work arrangements due to family or carer responsibilities.

HREOC has presented their report to the Australian Government; which is currently considering its recommendations.

WORK, FAMILY AND WELLBEING

With more women entering the workforce there has been a major impact on family life. The Australian Government has initiated a long term research study to investigate how families cope with these impacts. *Growing up in Australia; the Longitudinal Study of Australians (LSAC)* provides information on over 10 000 children and their families.

It was initiated by the Australian Government Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and is managed by the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS). Using the data from the first phase of this study (2005), the AIFS has produced a report *Mothers and fathers with young children: paid employment, caring and wellbeing*.

Not surprisingly, it finds that having young children has a much greater impact on the employment of mothers, compared to fathers. For a start they are less likely to be employed, they work shorter hours, and they have quite different jobs.

It reports that nearly two-thirds of mothers did not want to change the number of hours they worked. Among full-time working mothers, more than half would prefer to work fewer hours, while those working less than 16 hours were the most likely to prefer more hours.

For mothers, the positive effects of work on family life were greatest for those working 16 to 24 hours per week, and the negative effects of work on family life were lowest for those working less than 16 hours per week.

Full-time working mothers reported having poorer health, higher levels of psychological distress, a poorer quality relationship with their partner and more time pressure. In contrast, part-time hours were associated with greater wellbeing.

Mothers and fathers who were permanently employed showed better wellbeing, compared to casual and self-employed parents.

The findings suggest that parental wellbeing and close family relationships are central to children's wellbeing. Because most children live in families where one or both parents are employed, optimising parent's wellbeing may also benefit children now and in the future.

Australians use a variety of working arrangements to juggle work and family commitments. Women are far more likely to vary their working arrangements to accommodate caring responsibilities, and they use flexible working hours more than anything else, followed by part-time work. As Figure 1 indicates, shiftwork and job sharing were used less frequently.

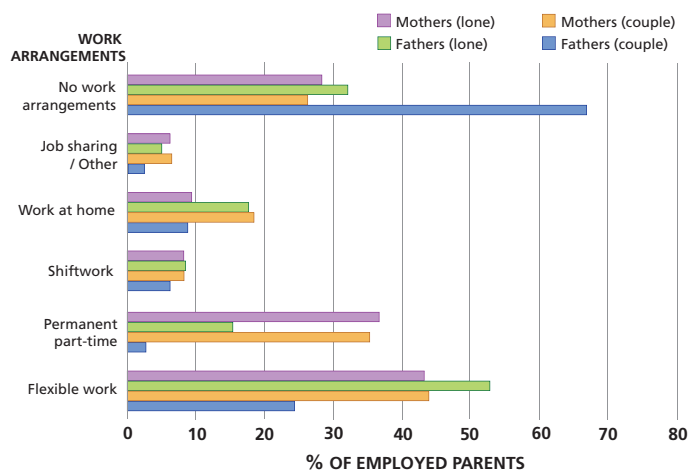


Figure 1: Work arrangements used to care for a child in couple and lone families with children aged 0 to 12 years with at least one parent employed, 2005

Source: *Women in Australia, 2007*, Australian Government Office for Women, 2007, Figure 2.15

FLEXIBILITY AT WORK

FLEXIBLE WORK OPTIONS

Different workplaces have adopted a wide variety of flexible work options, including those listed below. Not all will work in every workplace, but through a process of negotiation between employers, employees and unions many workplaces have been able to introduce family friendly options which meet everyone's needs.

PARENTAL LEAVE

Under national workplace laws employees (full-time and part-time) are entitled to 12 months unpaid maternity leave, provided they have 52 weeks continuous service in their existing position. Some casual employees are also eligible if they have been employed on a regular and systematic basis for a period of at least 12 months, and if there is a reasonable expectation of ongoing employment.

Part of this period of leave can be taken by the father as parental leave, or as adoption leave if they are in the role of the primary carer. Fathers can also take a week's paternity leave at the same time as the mother at the time of birth. Many employers offer better maternity, paternity and parental leave entitlements than the minimum standards and women should always check with their employer about their arrangements.

PART-TIME WORK

Regular, ongoing work where employees work less than standard full-time hours.

JOB SHARING

A form of part-time work in which one job is done by two or more part-time employees, with responsibilities and working time shared, and the full-time salary divided between them.

FLEXIBLE HOURS/ROSTERED DAYS OFF

Flexible hours may vary day to day, or differ from the traditional pattern of hours.

Instead of working 38 hours per work, some employees can work a longer day or week, and take a regular day off, usually once a fortnight or month.

ROSTERING

Employees can work to rosters that define a permanent shift each week or rotating rosters, where employees work different shifts at different times. Rotating rosters are often difficult for workers with family responsibilities.

HOME BASED WORK/TELEWORKING

The employee works at home for an agreed period of time. The employer provides the infrastructure to enable the employee to work from home. Other employees may alternate between home and the workplace on a regular or emergency basis.

Telework can be done either at home or from another local office. It eliminates travel time and costs and allows the employee to work at convenient times, while dealing with family responsibilities.

FLEXITIME

Requires employees to be at their place of work for certain specified periods, called core time, but allows them to vary their start and finish times. The lunch period can also be variable. Not all jobs are suitable for flexitime schedules. In some cases, hours worked in excess of core hours can be banked and used to accumulate leave, as commonly occurs in government agencies.

BRINGING CHILDREN TO WORK

Some workplaces accommodate employees bringing children to work. This can either be to a workbased child care facility or for a shorter period, in special 'family rooms'. Employers will need to consider the occupational and safety issues associated with having children in their workplace.

CAREER BREAKS OR LONG SERVICE LEAVE

Employees can negotiate to have a break from work for family reasons, for a negotiated period of time, usually unpaid. It is often used in association with family leave.

CARER'S LEAVE OR FAMILY LEAVE

Carer's leave or family leave often involves employees using their own paid sick leave entitlements to care for a sick or injured family member.

PERSONAL/CARER'S LEAVE

Under federal law, all employees with 12 months service are entitled to a minimum of 10 days paid personal/carer's leave a year. This leave can be used for personal illness or the illness of a family or household member. Pro rata entitlements exist for employees with less than 12 months service.

COMPASSIONATE/BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

Most employees are entitled to two days unpaid leave under federal law. Leave is available for death or serious illness of a family member or if a carer's leave has been exhausted.

FLEXIBLE WORKING YEAR SCHEMES

Employees take additional unpaid leave each year and their income is averaged over 52 weeks.

Source: *Family Friendly Ideas for Small Business*, Department of Industrial Relations, Sydney, 2001, revised 2003 available on www.workplace.gov.au

FLEXIBLE WORKPLACES

360HR

Di Pass and her husband, John Pass, are Directors of 360HR – a boutique human resources and recruitment business, which services clients both nationally and internationally. They have 19 people in their organisations; four of whom work in their office at Birkenhead Point, and another 15 who are called Associates, and who work from home offices in Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong, (the company provides infrastructure and back office support for the Associates). Half the team are women.

Di says the company is structured to offer maximum flexibility to the team; many of whom have families with school age children.

Staff who work in the office are able to take advantage of part-time work – some pursue other interests, as well as work, and Di says that the company enables that to happen. Associates have maximum flexibility and can set their own hours of work.

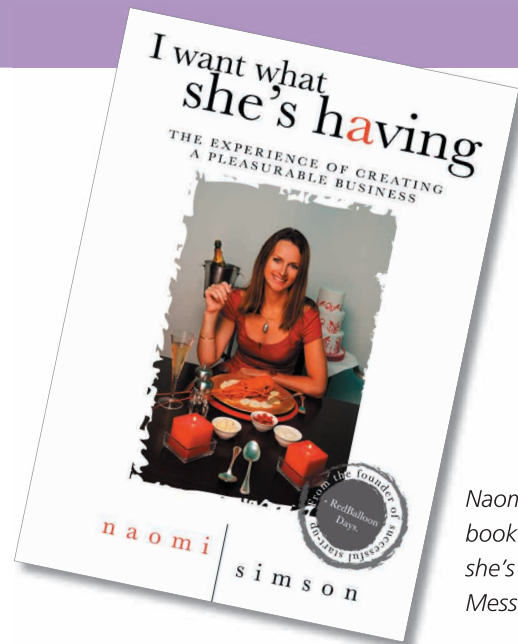
Di says that rigid employers are just not going to get the best out of people. 'I believe that you get the best out of people if you meet their needs as well as your own. Because we are flexible we get tremendous loyalty from our team,' she says.



Di Pass and Associates Graeme and Anne Hodder

Redballoon.com

'I want what she's having' is the book that Naomi Simson published this year about the first five years of her business, Red Balloon Pty Ltd. After working in-house as a marketer, and then as a freelancer following the arrival of her children, Naomi says she grew tired of 'always being on the outside looking in'. She decided



Naomi Simson's book 'I want what she's having', Messenger, 2007

to start up a business in 2001 from home, and her online service which sells gifts and experiences is flourishing – she now employs nearly 50 staff. Naomi still works hard, but she says she now has time for her children in the school holidays.

She also practices what she preaches and offers her employees flexible working arrangements.

'Employers are looking for great employees but some of them have other things going on in their lives, either families or other interests, and they want more flexibility.

'The most successful employers are going to be those that offer very flexible workplaces,' she says.

One of her employees, Patricia Gilchrist, who has a computing degree and IT experience gained both in Australia and the United States, agrees. Patricia leads a sales team which has five staff and is focused on helping companies develop experiential reward, recognition and incentive programs. She was able to negotiate four days of work each week, three in the office and one day at home. With three children, all at school this year, she was prepared for longer working hours, but still wanted some flexibility. Before joining Red Balloon she had been struggling to find a job that provided it. She says it can be difficult breaking into larger companies that market their flexible workplaces. 'They seem to fill positions from within.'

Patricia is impressed that there are also dads working part-time in the company.

Acumen Alliance

In 2006, EOWA recognised Acumen Alliance (ACT) Pty Ltd in their 2006 Business Achievement Awards for achievements in innovative use of workplace flexibility, (the 2007 awards will be announced in late November).

FLEXIBLE WORKPLACES

Acumen provides consulting services ranging from IT, corporate governance, financial management, assurance, contracting and recruitment. It employs over 300 professional and support staff with offices in Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne and Brisbane and has revenues in excess of \$60m.

Acumen's workplace flexibility program was introduced in 2001 and has been a significant contributor to the increased proportion of women at all levels of the organisation. Acumen was one of the first private companies in Australia to introduce three months paid maternity leave, unlimited unpaid maternity leave, and paid paternity leave. A sabbatical is available after five years in lieu of long service.

Staff members have the authority and flexibility to determine their working patterns (hours per day, days per week and weeks per year) and can vary them to suit the changing stages of their lives. The program is available to everyone in the organisation from the receptionist to the CEO.

The company's chairman, Robert Kennedy, believes Acumen Alliance's success is due to not expanding at the expense of attracting and retaining talented staff and to rejecting the work/life dichotomy.



Sean Gilchrist

CH2M HILL

Sean Gilchrist is the Business Development and Operations manager for one of four Australian business groups in the global engineering company CH2M HILL, (the company has 162 staff in Australia).

Sean says that among its peers, the business, which employs mainly engineers and scientists, is very flexible, but he says 'we still recognise we need to catch up to other more female-friendly industries'.

'We have become very successful at attracting and retaining female staff, and we are keen to encourage more women into — or back into the profession,' he says.

Sean has 11 staff; six are women and three are currently working part-time in senior roles, after returning from maternity leave, (the company provides six weeks paid maternity leave).

Sean says the arrangement works because 'we have put in the effort to plan, coordinate and accommodate flexible schedules, and because the company has a team-based approach to serving its clients'.

BREASTFEEDING FRIENDLY WORKPLACES

The findings of a recent House of Representatives Inquiry into Breastfeeding found that Australia has a very high proportion of women breastfeeding their babies when they leave hospital, but after three months the number still doing so falls dramatically.

More than 40 workplaces have gained accreditation from the Australian Breastfeeding Association as a Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace. Accredited workplaces offer a range of employment conditions, including workplace facilities which make it easier for women to combine breastfeeding and paid work. They include AGL, Westpac, the Reserve Bank and one of the latest to sign up is the NSW Parliament.

In fact, last month Ms Firth attended a ceremony at Parliament House where the NSW Parliament officially received accreditation as a breastfeeding friendly workplace. The NSW Parliament will now offer lactation breaks, flexible work options and a private area in which all mothers who work in the building can breastfeed or express and store their breastmilk.

The only NSW-based small business which has so far been accredited by the Australian Breastfeeding Association is Impact Communications Australia. For Allison Lee, her business partner, Nicole Webb, and two other work colleagues, the arrival of babies on the scene 12 months ago, made them think about how to maintain their desire to breastfeed for as long as possible, and still perform as communication consultants. The solution was to set up a crèche on the site at their office at Pyrmont and employ a full-time nanny, which Allison says 'has been a great outcome'.

The business has ten staff and four part-time employees.



Launch of NSW Parliament as an accredited breastfeeding workplace. From left Lynn Lovelock (Clerk of the Parliaments), Peter Primrose (President of the Legislative Council), Verity Firth (Minister for Women), Pip Mercer and baby Lucy, Steve Whan (Member for Monaro), Richard Torbay (Speaker) and Russell Grove (Clerk of the Legislative Assembly)

MATERNITY LEAVE

Despite the research which says families want paid maternity leave (see box) Australia is one of only two OECD countries which has not legislated for it. In Australia, permanent employees with at least 12 months continuous service with their employer are entitled to 52 weeks of unpaid parental leave following the birth or adoption of a child. Some casual employees are also eligible if they have been employed on a regular and systematic basis for a period of at least 12 months, and if there is a reasonable expectation of ongoing employment. The period of unpaid leave is reduced by other leave taken by either parent.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) states that countries should provide at least 14 weeks of paid maternity leave. Of 166 member countries of the ILO, Australia stands with only the USA, Swaziland, Papua New Guinea and Lesotho without a scheme of paid maternity leave for all working mothers.

Currently, just over one-half (51%) of women, who were employed prior to the birth of their child, used paid leave for the birth and care of their child and only 30% has access to paid maternity leave. Those who do, tend to work in the public sector and in larger organisations. Women in skilled occupations have much greater access to paid maternity leave than those who work in clerical, sales and service industries (see box).

The majority of women take a mix of paid and unpaid leave to have children. Of those who don't, just over a quarter leave their jobs permanently, commonly citing the lack of paid maternity leave as the reason.

Paid maternity leave has benefits for children as well as mothers. Organisations like the NSW Commission for Children and Young People cite benefits including improved child cognitive, social and emotional development as well as reduced child care costs.

For employers, existing employees have organisational history and understanding on their side which can improve productivity. Retaining women employees by offering paid maternity leave can result in significant savings in the costs of recruiting, training, relocating and replacing employees.

A coalition of small business organisations, women's organisations, and child development groups, has recently established a website to encourage people and organisations to sign an on-line petition in support of paid maternity leave at www.nfaw.org.

Poll shows majority support for paid maternity leave

A Newspoll in July 2007 found that 76% of Australians supported paid maternity leave for working women.

Marie Coleman, spokesperson for The National Foundation for Australian Women (NFAW), one of the organisations that commissioned the poll, said that 'Access to paid maternity and parental leave can no longer be left to market forces and the new poll shows Australians now want paid maternity leave to be given reasonable, bi-partisan political consideration.'

Source: Media release, *New Poll: Australians want Paid Maternity Leave*, 13 July 2007 at www.nfaw.org/media/2007

The 2005 Australian Bureau of Statistics *Pregnancy and Employment Transitions Survey* found that:

- 56% of professional women took a period of paid maternity leave, compared to only 8% of women employed in elementary clerical, sales and service positions.
- 76% of women employed in the public sector accessed paid maternity leave, compared to 25% of women working in the private sector.

The Parental Leave In Australia Survey, December 2006 (conducted as part of the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children) found that:

- one-quarter of working mothers returned to work within six months after the birth of their child, around 60% returned within 12 months, and 70% returned within 15 months.
- just under half (46%) of mothers who returned to work within 15 months said they would have taken longer if they had access to some (or more) paid maternity leave.

CARING FOR FAMILY MEMBERS

The Parental Leave in Australia Survey, December 2006 found that almost 50% of families thought better child care would have improved things most for them in the period since the birth of their child, and 39% thought that more affordable child care would have improved their situation.

In 2003, an alliance of non-government and businesses formed a Taskforce on Care Costs (TOCC). Their research found the cost of child care has risen by 65% over the last five years, while disposable incomes have risen by 17%. As a result, one in four parents say they are likely to leave the workforce, and one in four has already reduced their hours.

In June 2005, there were 1.5 million children aged 0 to 12 years in non-parental care. Over half (54.2%) used informal care, 16.9% received formal care and 17% used a combination of both. The demand for formal child care is much greater than is currently available.

Many grandparents care for grandchildren, but as the Council on the Ageing reported in HREOC's *It's about time* this can be at a cost. 'When grandparents have to stay in paid work themselves as well as provide caring responsibilities, it may limit senior Australians' opportunity or choices of employment as they age, which will have an impact on their retirement income ...'

In the formal child care system, the number of skilled child care workers is impacted by the low remuneration offered.

Child care also works when children are well, but can fall down when children are sick. And there are very few options for childcare before and after school and during school holidays which will satisfy the needs of older children at high school.

The quality of care provided across the board is a fundamental issue, since the first few years of a child's life are considered critical to their lifelong development, and child protection is an issue at all ages.

For parents with disabled children, finding care can be a particular problem. Many centres, and outside school hours care options are not available for children with a disability.

Care is not just limited to the care of children – caring within families includes caring for elders and adults with disabilities. According to *It's about time* more than 2.6 million Australians provide informal care for a person who needs assistance due to disability, chronic illness or old age and almost half of these are primary carers. In 2005, the value of this care was estimated at \$30.5 billion. Home-based care givers (relatives, friends or others in the home) are estimated to provide about 75% of care for elderly people in Australia who need assistance with daily activities. In 2003 more than 40% of spouses or partners were providing care for their partner.

Women represent 71.3% of primary carers and many combine paid work with caring. In the process however, they may be jeopardising their own financial future.

The TOCC reported that the cost of care was having a significant impact on the capacity of individuals to work – 60% of unemployed carers would re-enter the workforce, if care was more affordable.

TOCC recommended to the Australian Government in October 2006 the introduction of a 50% Care Costs Reimbursement (CCR) for out-of-pocket expenses, up to \$10 000 per annum per household.

The 'Childcare: A Better Policy Framework for Australia' Workshop, held at Sydney University in July 2006, resolved that Australia should adopt a universal system of paid parental leave that gives parents and primary carers the opportunity to take leave from work for at least a year, and preferably up to eighteen months, to care for infants and young children. It would require the payment of a living wage during the period of leave, which could be combined with other forms of leave (including the opportunity to request to return to work part-time) and allows parents to share leave (and requires fathers to use a portion of it on a 'use it or lose it basis'). For this to work it says, requires a progressive individual tax system that does not penalise parents who move between paid work and caring duties, or disadvantage dual-income households.

TYPE OF CARE	AGE OF CHILDREN (YEARS)							
	LESS THAN 1	1	2	3	4	5	6-8	9-12
Before/after school	-	-	-	-	0.8*	13.6	14.8	6.9
Long day care	4.5	21.0	29.9	37.6	27.7	6.0	0.5*	0.2*
Family day care	1.6*	7.1	10.8	10.7	6.0	2.2*	0.8*	0.4*
Occasional care	0.8*	3.2	5.2	5.8	3.8	0.2*	0.2*	0.2*
Other formal care	0.1*	0.8*	1.8*	1.6*	1.2*	0.4*	0.4*	0.1*
Total children	6.9	31.0	46.3	53.4	37.8	21.8	16.6	7.7

* Estimates have a relative standard error of 25% or higher and should be used with caution.

Table 1: Proportion of children who received formal child care by age of child and type of formal care, 2005

Source: *Women in Australia, 2007*, Australian Government Office for Women, 2007 Table 2.12

PROVIDER OF CARE	AGE OF CHILDREN (YEARS)							
	LESS THAN 1	1	2	3	4	5	6-8	9-12
Grandparent	22.9	33.2	30.7	26.2	26.8	17.8	17.1	12.0
Brother/sister	-	0.4*	0.4*	0.2*	0.5*	1.5*	1.7	3.5
Other relative	4.2	6.7	7.8	7.7	7.2	8.3	8.9	6.4
Other person	4.1	5.2	6.4	5.6	6.2	7.3	6.9	5.0
Total	29.4	42.8	42.7	37.9	38.6	32.4	32.3	26.2

* Estimates have a relative standard error of 25%.

Table 2: Proportion of children who received informal care by age of child and provider of care, 2005

Source: *Women in Australia, 2007*, Australian Government Office for Women, 2007 Table 2.13

STARTING A WHOLE NEW CAREER

For some women returning to a job or a career after having children can be difficult – employer expectations don't match what women can deliver in terms of time and commitment. While it may be the end of one career for women, in some cases it can be the beginning of another.

SAMANTHA TUNBRIDGE ran her own successful fashion design and retailing business for over six years, but that ceased in January when her son Ben turned nine months old. She decided the long hours had become too much, and made up her mind to sell her business.

'I realised that my work and family was all out of balance so I rearranged my life.

'I decided to launch a marketing and management consulting business, so I could control the number of hours I worked. I started with my first client two weeks after I sold my fashion business. They offered me the position of general management when my month long contract had finished.

'It's a fantastic arrangement, I love the work and my new lifestyle,' she says.

Samantha says her work is family friendly and flexible – she works 30 hours a week, 8am to 4pm three days per week, 8am to 2pm one day and she has one weekday off.

'I can do some work from home if we're really busy, and I can rearrange my hours if something comes up with my personal life.

'My husband and I employ my parents to care for our son. They absolutely love it and so does he.

'I'm happy too because I feel I've still retained a great deal of my own identity as I continue my career, but also have the delight of being a mummy.'



Dawn Newton

DAWN NEWTON worked as a customer service manager with the St George Bank and the NRMA for many years and then she had children and confronted the challenges of managing work and family. After looking for work for some time she found a job through careermums (see p. 11). Several months ago

she started working for Travelex, the foreign exchange company that has shopfronts at the airport and other sites around Sydney, providing products for overseas travelers. Dawn works on her own and provides relief for staff in offices in Sydney's northern suburbs.

'It was hard to find part-time work that offered flexibility, but with Travelex I have found work that is flexible, that fits in with managing the kids.'

Dawn says she may well go back to full-time work when the children are older but for now she has found something that gives her flexibility.



Emma Walsh and her twins in the office

EMMA WALSH had twins 16 months ago and balances the demands of a busy family life with an expanding Human Resources consulting business. Following a career in senior HR management roles in the financial sector, Emma now runs an online career service www.mumsatwork.com.au, which provides return-to-work career guidance services for mothers wanting to re-enter the workforce. It also works with progressive employers wanting to adopt flexible, family-friendly practices.

'Every woman deserves the opportunity to enjoy raising their family and to have a rewarding working life,' she says.

Emma works from a home office, and employs a nanny, which proves more cost-effective with twins than long day care.

'You don't receive any additional government childcare benefits with twins; making it twice as expensive to return to work,' she says.

Emma has staggered her return to work on the premise that 'quality outcomes are more important than physical hours spent in the office'.

'I wouldn't do it any differently. I love working and balancing it with spending quality time with my twins,' she says.

STARTING A WHOLE NEW CAREER



Charmaine Papallo

CHARMAINE PAPALLO runs a web based business www.babybuds.com, which she set up following the arrival of her first child six years ago.

Prior to that she had been working as a corporate lawyer, and there just wasn't the flexibility she needed when she returned to work, following maternity leave.

She decided on the baby gift theme after receiving 28 bunches of flowers following the birth of her first child.

Now she employs 20 staff – all women – and offers them a variety of flexible work options. That includes working school hours, working from home and a mix of both.

She says in order to attract the best staff she has to offer flexibility.

'I understand their needs because I want to have the same sort of flexibility. I want to do reading at school and spend time with my children.'

Charmaine's husband, who was a very successful barrister, followed her into the business a year after she started it, as the chief financial and legal advisor.

'He did it for the same reason as me – we want to be active parents, she says.'

KATE SYKES set up www.careermums.com.au mid last year and the site went live in December. Kate had a background in marketing and communications in the financial services and IT area, prior to having her two children. She wanted more flexibility and started thinking about new work opportunities. She thought that there needed to be a site that appealed to women who were skilled, and wanted to get back into a career again, but needed flexibility.

'Many women never get their old job back after they have children. They are not taken seriously and they are not challenged.'

Kate says she has close to 6 000 registered job seekers looking for flexible jobs.

'Everyone says there's a national skills shortage but there are a lot of skilled women who can't get jobs. If employers offered more flexible workplaces then that might change,' she says.



Kate Sykes

WORK AND FAMILY SURVEYS 2005/2006

Between 18 August 2005 and 21 November 2006 more than 1400 people completed the Work and Family Employee Survey and the Work and Family Employer Survey which were on the NSW Office of Industrial Relations website. The vast majority of employers, and employees believed that accommodating work and family arrangements in the workplace resulted in increased staff retention, loyalty, productivity and staff morale. They also thought that it reduced staff training and recruitment costs, resulting from increased staff retention; unplanned absenteeism, and reduced workplace stress.

Employers said the most commonly provided working arrangements were:

- flexible start and finish times, additional unpaid leave for caring for sick family members, rostered

days off, and additional unpaid leave during school holidays, job sharing and working from home.

- 92% of employers said their staff had the option of returning to work on a part-time basis after parental leave.

Employees said the most commonly reported family friendly work arrangements were:

- flexible start and finish times, rostered days off, and additional unpaid leave to care for sick family members.
- 63% of employee respondents felt that their caring responsibilities had adversely affected their career prospects and employment opportunities, and the same number thought it had negatively impacted on their financial security.

PART-TIME WORK AND A CAREER?

There is plenty of anecdotal evidence from women that working part-time has a negative impact on careers. Australian research by Jenny Chalmers and Trish Hill from the University of New South Wales seems to confirm it¹. They found that a woman who works part-time following the birth of her child, and then returns to work full-time, can expect to earn less than she did before working part-time.

Part-time work appears to have a ‘scarring effect’ on the full-time career of women. The researchers found that women part-time workers lose around 6% per year in earnings growth, compared to their full-time counterparts, and that this loss accumulates to 49% after ten years.

By working part-time, women give up the earnings growth they would have achieved through working full-time.

The figure below illustrates alternative earnings trajectories for a hypothetical woman who commenced working full-time with a weekly salary of \$500. After five years of continuous full-time work, this woman would earn \$610 per week.

If she then moved into part-time work for a year, the weekly wage on her return to full-time work would be \$601. If she had stayed in full-time work she would have earned \$631 per week.

If the woman worked for two years part-time, her weekly salary on returning to full-time work would be \$593. By staying in full-time work, her weekly wage would have advanced to \$651.

The area between the lines, representing the earnings associated with continuous full-time work and full-time work interspersed with part-time work, can also be thought of as representing the career advancement a woman forgoes by working part-time, rather than remaining in full-time work.

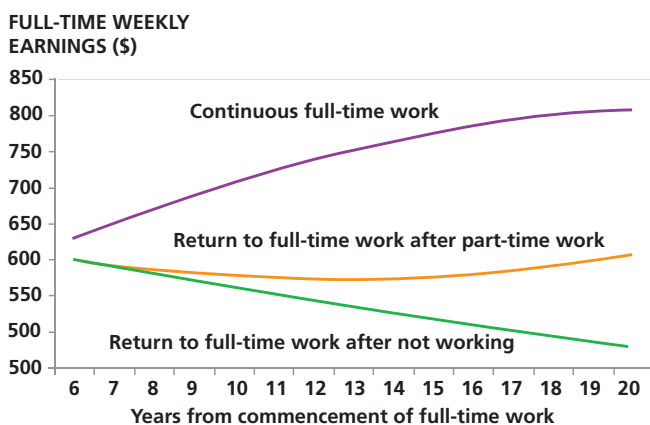


Figure 2: The relationships between years of work experience and full-time weekly earnings

In further analysis the researchers found that short amounts of part-time work experience (up to three years) do not seem to have a scarring effect on full-time earnings. Even so, any skills gained through working part-time are not rewarded.

What the research highlights, is that women who move out of their career job on taking up part-time work, have a limit on the time they can spend outside of their careers, and still make a successful re-entry.

There are several consequences of this: the short term consequences for women of relying on others to provide financial support, and the longer-term issue of women being able to fund their own superannuation.

¹ J Chalmers, T Hill, *Marginalising women in the labour market: "Wage scarring" effects of part-time work*, article being submitted to Australian Bulletin of Labour, for publication October 2007



KATIE YATES is a marketing manager at MYOB's Sydney office. She returned to her job part-time in April this year after one year's maternity leave. Initially, she worked three days in the office —now she has added one day working at home.

Katie's return to work was considerably less challenging than she imagined. Her request for more flexible, part-time work was fully supported by senior management. 'They have a strong view that you should keep talented people.'

Kate is still doing the same work she was doing prior to her leave, and she is still getting a pro rata market rate for her salary. She says she may have missed out on a salary review while she was away, but she feels her career is still on track.

MYOB are reviewing their paid parental leave provisions — they currently offer only the statutory leave, which is one year unpaid parental leave and three days paid parental leave.

WOMEN & WORK IN REMOTE & REGIONAL NSW



Oliver, Phoebe and Toby Maroulis.

PHOEBE MAROULIS lives just out of Bourke and has three year old twins. She and her husband run an irrigation business. Phoebe, who is an industrial designer by training, has become accustomed to doing a bit of everything. At the moment it is project managing a women's leadership program in Bourke, which helps women recognise the skills that they have, and how this might translate into a job or position of leadership in the community.

Phoebe says that many women around Bourke have spent a large part of their time supervising the distance education of their children, and they are now looking to take on part-time work, to supplement their farm income because of the drought.

Phoebe was expecting about 20 women to express interest in the program, and received 63 applications.

MICHELLE McMANUS has just completed the first stage of the program. Michelle lives one hour west of Bourke on a 245 000 acre station called Toorale, which her husband Tony manages.

Michelle has four children aged 12, 14, 16 and 17 years and she has supervised their distance education — sometimes with the aid of a governess — until they were ready to start high school. The closest primary school is 50km away.

Michelle also hosts visits by company representatives and feeds the jackaroos every night — the number varies depending on the work being done on the farm. During January it can be 13 or 14 every day.

With her last child joining the other three at schools in Sydney, Michelle says she will have to take on part-time work to help with the financial pressures.

'I'm at a cross roads — for the last 20 years I've been a mother and an educator — I haven't been in the workforce.'

She's hoping that Phoebe's program will lead to something.

RACHAEL ARNOTT lives on a property in Canowindra in the Central West of NSW and runs a mobile book-keeping and accounts service for farmers and small businesses in the area. She can travel up to three hours to reach clients.

This year has become slightly more challenging for Rachel with the arrival of her daughter Ruby. Despite being on the waiting list for over 12 months, child care for Ruby is not available until 2008, and then it is only available for one day. Rachel says day care is a big problem in rural areas.

She doesn't expect the situation to change much in the short term. 'I'm lucky that I have lovely clients who understand my situation,' she says.

FIONA ROSSITER has six children, ranging in age from 2 to 20 years, three foster children, works as a registered theatre nurse, is a Councillor on Orange Council, is a regular public speaker, and in her spare time has set up a website www.australianfamilymatters.com.au, which offers tips and techniques for achieving happier families.

She says she manages because everyone pitches in, and because of the support of her husband, who is semi-retired.

Fiona does two shifts of nursing each week at Orange Base hospital and says she is very grateful to them for the way they accommodate her involvement in the council when they schedule her shifts.

Fiona trained to be a nurse in the late 1990s when she had five children, and the experience convinced her that the government should encourage more workplaces to have child care on site. 'It would encourage more people to work full-time because they wouldn't feel so guilty about leaving their children in child care,' she said.

Fiona was the 2006 NSW Woman of the Year nominee for the electorate of Orange.



Fiona Rossiter, her husband and children

UP THERE PINK LADY!

SYDNEY TURNS IT ON FOR THE FIELD OF WOMEN LIVE

It was a powerful sight – 13 000 Australians standing together in pink, and 100 in blue, to show the human face of our annual breast cancer statistics. The event, held at Telstra Stadium on 11 August was the Breast Cancer Network Australia's (BCNA) Field of Women LIVE display, and it was beamed across Australia and the world.

The BCNA helps those affected by breast cancer by ensuring they get the best information, treatment, care and support. The money raised by this event will support BCNA's programs, the distribution of *My Journey Kits* (see right), the presentation of forums around the country, and new initiatives.

The Hon Verity Firth MP, Minister for Women, and Ms Robyn Kruk, Director General, Department of Premier and Cabinet – Ambassadors for Field of Women LIVE – were amongst the women invited to stand together united on the field showing their support. To view the amazing photos and vision from the night visit www.fieldofwomen.org.au.



The Hon Barbara Perry MP, Minister for Juvenile Justice, the Hon Verity Firth MP, Minister for Women, Ms Julia Gillard MP, Deputy Leader of the Opposition at the Field of Women LIVE event.

MY JOURNEY KITS

Every day, 36 women in Australia will be told they have breast cancer. The *My Journey Kit* provides comprehensive information for these women, and is distributed free of charge, anywhere in Australia.

Launched in 2004, the Kit is the result of five years' input from breast cancer survivors across Australia. It includes a comprehensive information guide, personal record, state-based resources sheet, the National Breast Cancer Centre's book *A Guide for Women with Early Breast Cancer*, a copy of BCNA's quarterly magazine *The Beacon*, and several BCNA brochures.

You can visit the Breast Cancer Network Australia website www.bcna.org.au or telephone 1300 78 55 62, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to order the free kit.

2008 NSW WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARDS

The 2008 theme for International Women's Day is '100 years of active women in paid and unpaid work'. It is designed to recognise the countless contributions that women in NSW have made towards improving workplaces and working conditions, as well as their tireless volunteering work, which has contributed to the growth of more vibrant and robust communities.

As part of the celebratory activities planned for International Women's Day, the NSW Woman of the Year Award is presented at the Premier's Reception for International Women's Day. The NSW Woman of the Year Awards recognise the outstanding achievements of talented women across the state.

Nominations for the 2008 Woman of the Year are being sought from Members of Parliament and for the first time, from the general public. The 2008 NSW Woman of the Year will be announced at the Premier's Reception for International Women's Day on 6 March, 2008.

2008 INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY GRANTS PROGRAM

The Minister for Women, the Hon Verity Firth MP, has invited local councils and shires to help celebrate International Women's Day (IWD) on 8 March 2008, by applying to the Office for Women for funding.

Grants are provided for councils to work with local community groups to celebrate local women's achievements, in line with the theme – 100 years of active women in paid and unpaid work – and the contribution they will continue to make to their area.

In 2007, 112 councils were funded to provide events including breakfasts, barbecues, art exhibitions, workshops, and guest speakers, to recognise and celebrate local women's achievements. The Minister is hoping that even more councils will submit an application for 2008.

Visit www.women.nsw.gov.au to see what councils did last year, and contact your local council to find out what they are planning for 2008.

PREMIER'S COUNCIL FOR WOMEN (PCW)



The Council is concerned about the economic inequity of women and the inequality of pay for women, particularly given the impact of the Australian Government's *Work Choices* legislation, and the *Welfare to Work* legislation, on women and their families.

Earlier this year, the PCW presented a report to the

Premier and Minister for Women, about current workplace arrangements for low-paid and/or non-unionised women. The report, which was based on consultations, was about the changes in workplace arrangements, including those brought about by the introduction of *Work Choices* legislation, and their effect on women and families. It was clear that the *Welfare to Work* legislation was already worrying many women with marginal or no attachment to the work force.

We have since pursued the impacts of *Welfare to Work* reforms in consultations with women across the state, and examined the legislation's effects on carers, single mothers, women with a disability, and women in rural and regional areas. The feedback is being collated, and the main themes will be reported to the Premier and Minister for Women shortly.

Each year a different rural town hosts the popular 'NSW Women's Gathering' — an event which encourages women from across the state to come together to share skills, experiences, and to network. This year Hay hosted the event and six council members, including the Minister for Women attended. Next year it is Coonamble's turn to be the host (17-19 October 2008). The event is particularly important for rural women as the drought adds further stress and financial pressure, but city women are also warmly welcomed. Can I urge you to book the 2008 event in your diary now?

The terms of appointment for most Council members conclude later this year. For the first time, there has been a public call for expressions of interest to fill the positions. The successful appointments will be announced by the Minister for Women, as soon as they have been approved by Cabinet.

Deirdre Mason
Deputy Chair
Premier's Council for Women

KYLIE PARKER, DIRECTOR, LOGICCA

Kylie Parker is one of five directors in a Chartered Accounting firm called Logicca, that she co-founded in 2006. Like many of the women profiled in this edition of *NSW Women* the catalyst for the business was the birth of her first child. Until she went on maternity leave Kylie had been pursuing a successful career as a client director with one of the 'big four' accounting firms in Sydney. The work was interesting – her clients were mainly from the entertainment industry. She had also travelled extensively and worked in London for the BBC.

With the arrival of her son, Kylie decided to reassess her working life and opted for part-time work doing bookkeeping and tax consulting. This wasn't as satisfying as she hoped, and in a quest for new opportunities, and with the support of an ex-'big four' partner, she started her own firm, specialising in the entertainment industry. She has retained several high profile celebrities as clients. This business has since grown to include four other directors and 20 staff, and has recently moved from Broadway to Macquarie Street, Sydney.



Kylie says the business has given her more flexibility. She works five days a week, 9am to 4pm and so has time with her young sons. She also gets to travel, which she loves; albeit the flights aren't as relaxing as they once were.

Kylie has been a mentor to three university students under the Office for Women's *Lucy Mentoring program*.

More information:

FLEXIBLE WORK PRACTICES:

NSW Office of Industrial Relations

Family friendly ideas for small businesses, 2001,
revised 2003
Tel: 131 628
www.industrialrelations.nsw.gov.au/

Equal Opportunity in Public Employment

Tel: 02 9228 4444
[www.premiers.nsw.gov.au/workandbusiness/
workingforgovernment/payandconditions/
flexibleworking.htm](http://www.premiers.nsw.gov.au/workandbusiness/workingforgovernment/payandconditions/flexibleworking.htm)

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC)

Tel: 02 9284 9600
TTY: 1800 620 241
General enquiries and publications: 1300 369 711

Its about time women: men work and family, July 2007
[www.humanrights.gov.au/sex_discrimination/its_about_
time/index.html](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/sex_discrimination/its_about_time/index.html)

Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency

Tel: 02 9448 8500
www.eowa.gov.au

MATERNITY AND PARENTAL LEAVE:

NSW Office of Industrial Relations

Tel: 131 628
www.industrialrelations.nsw.gov.au

Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency

Tel: 02 9448 8500
www.eowa.gov.au

The University of Sydney Women and Work Research Group

wwrg.econ.usyd.edu.au

NSW Anti-discrimination Board

General office number: 02 9268 5555
General inquiries & Employers Advisory Service
02 9268 5544
www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/adb

Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

www.workplace.gov.au

WEBSITES FOR WOMEN LOOKING FOR FLEXIBLE WORK AND CAREER COUNSELLING:

www.careermums.com.au

www.mumsatwork.com.au

www.justbe.com.au

www.parttimeonline.com.au

OTHER REFERENCES:

The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children
www.aifs.gov.au/growingup/

The Parental Leave in Australia Study, November 2006
www.polsis.uq.edu.au/index.html?page=54055

2007 Benchmarks Work and Family Policies in Election 2007
Work + Family Policy Roundtable
www.familypolicyroundtable.com.au

Centre for Work + Life

Hawke Institute for Sustainable Societies,
University of South Australia
www.unisa.edu.au/hawkeinstitute

National Foundation for Australian Women

www.nfaw.org

Taskforce on Care Costs

www.tocc.org.au

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