

# Work left to be done: Why working motherhood (still) affects wages <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

Listen online <sup>[2]</sup>

## Description

The U.S. is woefully behind its counterparts when it comes to guaranteeing paid leave for new parents. But when mothers in particular do return to work, they are often penalized for being parents.

The Brookings Institution writes of the “motherhood wage penalty”:

It is real.

There is no corresponding “fatherhood wage penalty.” If anything, men appear to receive an income bump in response to having a child.

It reflects, in part, these facts: women are more likely to leave their jobs, reduce their hours, or take on more flexible or less-intensive (and thus lower paid) positions in response to having a child.

But a large portion of the penalty is unexplained by job experience and seniority, implying employer discrimination or impacts of motherhood on productivity.

With more women in the workforce and more mothers devoting more time to their jobs than in the past, what works to help close the pay gap for working moms? And how can employers better support mothers in the workplace?

## Guests

- Jill Filipovic Author, "The H-Spot: The Feminist Pursuit of Happiness"; @JillFilipovic
- Ai-jen Poo Executive director, National Domestic Workers Alliance; @aijenpoo
- Sari Kerr Senior research scientist, Wellesley College

**Related link:** The fatherhood bonus and the motherhood penalty: Parenthood and the gender gap in pay <sup>[3]</sup>

**Region:** United States <sup>[4]</sup>

**Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022):** <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/18/09/work-left-be-done-why-working-motherhood-still-affects>

## Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/18/09/work-left-be-done-why-working-motherhood-still-affects> <sup>[2]</sup>

<http://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/18/09/work-left-be-done-why-working-motherhood-still-affects-wages> <sup>[3]</sup>

<https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/17/04/fatherhood-bonus-and-motherhood-penalty-parenthood-and-gend> <sup>[4]</sup>

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