

Caring and counting: The impact of mothers' employment on family relationships ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Available in print for order (see SOURCE for ordering information) and online for download.

[Access report online](#) ^[3]

Excerpts from press release: Flexible hours and other 'family friendly' employment policies are of limited help to working mothers if their work spills over too much into their home life and they feel overloaded and under stress while at work, according to a report for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. The quality of working time may have as much impact on family relationships as the amount of time they spend at work. Researchers at South Bank University who investigated the experiences of mothers with pre-school children working in contrasting workplaces a large accountancy firm and hospital found no evidence of mothers becoming more 'work centered' at the expense of family life. Those who worked full-time were just as concerned to 'be there' for their children and their partner as those working part-time. Apart from increasing the family income, mothers also felt their employment was helping them to meet their children's emotional and social development. Separate interviews with the women's partners revealed widespread agreement that the mother's work was having a positive impact on family relationships. Most fathers felt their children had benefited from their mothers' work, which provided a positive role model for their children. Some mothers, nevertheless, expressed concern that their job had a negative impact on the family particularly when they were overstretched at work, felt tired or had trouble 'switching off' from a bad day at work. A number of fathers also felt uneasy about the demands placed on their partners at work and the effect that work-related stress could have on their children and their relationship with each other. The researchers suggest that 'family-friendly' policies can be improved by putting more effort into reducing stress in the workplace. More attention could be paid to controlling workloads, managing the intensity of work and ensuring that goals and targets are achievable in the time available.

Region: Europe ^[4]

Tags: pre-school ^[5]

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