

Parenthood, gender, and the risks and consequences of job loss ^[1]

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Source: Social Forces

Format: Article

Publication Date: 13 Jul 2021

AVAILABILITY

Access online (via subscription) ^[2]

Excerpt from Abstract

Job loss can be difficult to navigate for individuals and their families. However, we know very little about the relationship between parental status and job loss. Drawing on rich data from Statistics Canada's Workplace and Employee Survey, we analyse differences across gender and parental status groups in both risks of job loss and its consequences: re-employment, unemployment, and quality of new jobs relative to those that were lost. We find that parenthood reduces the probability of job loss for prime-age men with young children, but only when employer discretion is involved. This advantage is not shared by otherwise similar mothers or fathers of school-aged children, suggesting that employers are particularly sympathetic to risks to men's breadwinning role in the early years of fatherhood. Despite similar risks of job loss relative to other groups, mothers of young children are the least likely to be re-employed in the subsequent year, mainly because of their higher levels of labour market withdrawal rather than unemployment. Holding out for "family friendly" work arrangements does not seem to account for this pattern. Overall, our results show that the risks and consequences of job loss strengthen connection to employment for fathers of young children while weakening connection for mothers. Job loss dynamics thus not only reflect but also reinforce asymmetrical breadwinning and caring roles for mothers and fathers of preschool-aged children.

Region: Canada ^[3]

Tags: gender equality ^[4]

mothers' labour force participation ^[5]

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