

Motherhood and work are not mutually exclusive [CA]^[1]

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Source: Montreal Gazette

Format: Article

Publication Date: 21 Apr 2006

AVAILABILITY

See text below.

EXCERPTS

The most brilliant thing I have done in my life is to have children. I have two daughters, who have filled my life and my husband's life with magic and joy from the moment they were born.

I have also always worked. I didn't want to "have it all." I wanted a family and a career. Men don't have to choose between family and work. In fact, a father would be considered derelict in his duties if he were not gainfully employed.

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Most young children in Canada are, therefore, cared for, at least part of the day, by someone other than their parents.

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So why on Earth are we still talking as though motherhood and employment are mutually exclusive activities?

It's difficult not to see that as the subtext behind the Conservatives' version of choice in child care. Canadian families with children under the age of 6 are to be given \$1,200 per child a year to spend as they see fit.

The options the Conservatives presumably envisage, on \$100 a month, appear to include one parent leaving the work force to stay home; providing a small stipend to a family member to care for the children; hiring outside help; paying a private daycare centre.

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Unfortunately, \$100 a month won't go far for care of any sort.

...

This is not an argument in favour of a state-run daycare system. I don't think there's a one-size-fits-all solution to childcare. If there's one element that seems to work for everyone it's flexibility: A mix-and-match system that allows people to look after family members when they need to do that.

No one would lose in a society where the work that people do for their families is valued as much as the work they do as part of the job market.

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- reprinted from the Montreal Gazette

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