

# Motherlode: Revisiting the debate of working moms vs. stay-at-home moms <sup>[1]</sup>

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## EXCERPTS

Thank you, Diane Finley. Thank you Honorable Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development for finally stating what we've known you -- and your boss -- have long believed. Thank you for letting all women know how valuable they are to this country, the economy and, most importantly, their families.

Parents -- surprise, there are two of them -- should absolutely have the option to raise their children in a way that is most beneficial to those children and that family. But all of those options need to be safe, affordable and good. Politicians are elected to do the greatest good for the greatest number. You may not always get what you want, as Mick says, but you should be able to get what you need. And most of us need decent child care at some point in our children's lives. Canada is a rich country. The allocation of those resources should reflect a considered view of the health and well being of our citizens, even the ones who can't vote yet.

....

You have succeeded brilliantly in one way: You have revived a debate that deserved to have a stake driven through its heart years ago. Working mothers versus stay-at-home mothers. Do we really need to do this again? Every mother I know works, and works hard. Every one of us has used some combination of maternity leave, job-sharing, nannies, daycare, after-school programs and babysitters. Some have given up jobs to stay home; some have worked from home; some have called on family.

But what happens when things go wrong? What happens when a marriage crumbles or someone gets sick? And consider how many women in the workforce in the past two battering years have kept their family anchored. And how many of those families have been grateful, even in the face of uncertainty, that at least one income meant they could keep their homes.

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Politicians like you need to stop gazing into so many mirrors and start looking out of a few more windows. You are taxed with representing all of us, not just the tiny few who still make up your world view from another age.

- reprinted from the Toronto Star

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