

Family Day on the treadmill: Alberta families at risk of too much stress ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Full report in pdf ^[2]

EXCERPTS:

Family childcare challenge

Alberta's families are further stressed by lack of access to affordable quality childcare. According to a Parkland Institute March 2010 fact sheet, the government of Alberta allocates the lowest number of dollars for regulated child care spaces, per 0-12 aged child, in Canada, and has done since 2003. Only 17% of children aged 0-5 in Alberta have access to a regulated child care space; Alberta is in the bottom three in Canada. Alberta's total number of regulated childcare spaces has not grown appreciably since 1992, though the population and the economy have both grown substantially. High working hours, low vacation entitlement, and lack of childcare is not a recipe for a healthy productive workforce or community.

At what cost?

Working this hard comes at a cost. Working harder means less time for family and community as well as personal health and activity. It means less time for parents to spend with children or in their community. It means less time for young workers to spend on social and community activities or studying. It means more stress and poorer health. Studies have found longer hours linked to health risks such as depression, unhealthy weight gain, and an increase in smoking and drinking, it also is linked to higher risks of injury at work. Studies have also found that longer work hours can reduce time needed to "unwind" when away from work; nurture family relationships and parent effectively; provide non-financial support to extended family members; and engage in voluntary community activities."

What does this mean for communities?

Long work hours can also be detrimental for communities, by limiting the time and energy people have for community engagement, and undermining and weakening neighborhoods social networks and trust. It is not coincidental then that Albertans rank among the lowest in the nation for sense of belonging to their communities.

Conclusion

Alberta needs more than a statutory holiday named after families. This Family Day should be a day to take pause and reflect on policies needed to properly support Alberta's families.

Related link: Albertans work hard for a living ^[3]

Region: Alberta ^[4]

Tags: work/life balance ^[5]

Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/12/02/family-day-treadmill-alberta-families-risk-too-much-stress>

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/12/02/family-day-treadmill-alberta-families-risk-too-much-stress> ^[2]

<http://parklandinstitute.ca/downloads/reports/FamilyDayFactSheet.pdf> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/12/02/albertans-work-hard-living> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7859> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/5668>