

# Shared parental leave: Dads believe childcare should be shared equally between parents <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

Read online <sup>[2]</sup>

## EXCERPTS

More than half of Britons believe that childcare should be divided equally between mothers and fathers, new research has revealed. 53 per cent of Brits believe that couples should bear equal responsibility

Flying in the face of traditional gender stereotypes, men are more likely than women to back shared parenting with 56 per cent in favour, compared to 50 per cent of women who support the idea.

The research, released today, was carried out by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills ahead of new employment legislation which comes into force on April 5, and will apply to the parents of children born or adopted from that date. The new Shared Parental Leave rules will mean parents can evenly split 50 weeks of leave and 37 weeks of pay between them during their baby's first year.

Since April 2011, mothers and fathers have been able to share parental leave, however only as a single block and not at the same time.

When the new changes come into effect, parents will effectively be able to divide the year however they want – aside from a compulsory two-week recovery period for the mother after giving birth – and can also take time off together. The level of flexibility they can have will be decided by their employer. Around 285,000 working couples a year will be eligible to share their leave according to Government projections.

The new research also found that 83 per cent of those who are considering becoming parents would consider taking shared parental leave when they have a child.

75 per cent of men who are already fathers said they would have considered sharing parental leave had it been available at the time of their child's birth, compared to 63 per cent of mothers.

Deputy Prime Minister, Nick Clegg, said: "This Edwardian notion that women should stay at home while men go out and support the family has simply no place in this day and age. We need a modern Britain and a fair society that works for families, not against them.

"We've introduced shared parental leave so that parents can make their own decisions about how to raise their family, whether it's giving women the choice to go back to work earlier or men the opportunity to spend more time with their children."

Employment relations minister Jo Swinson, added: "This survey shows people are rejecting dated stereotypes about the roles of men and women. Parenting is a shared endeavour and couples want more flexibility when they are adapting to the demands of a new baby. Shared parental leave will let couples choose how to share their childcare responsibilities in whatever way works best for them, and enable both parents to spend time developing that vital bond with their baby in the early stages."

Their enthusiasm was not shared by the Institute of Directors business group who said the measures would be a "nightmare" that would "heap yet more burdens on struggling employers."

**Region:** Europe <sup>[3]</sup>

**Tags:** maternity and parental leave <sup>[4]</sup>

**Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022):** <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/15/01/shared-parental-leave-dads-believe-childcare-should-be-shared>

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