



Chinook

Extension Family Life Newsletter
University of Wyoming

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Ben Silliman, Family Life Specialist, Editor

WE CAN WORK IT OUT

Clearing the land together; haying, lambing, branding...together. For many Wyoming families, work and family life are synonymous. The agrarian pattern of self-sufficiency and cooperation gave way to "separate worlds" as industrialization isolated breadwinner, homemaker, and child roles. Communities organized around single resources (coal, cattle) with large-scale production and marketing. Economic expansion brought more wife/ mother participation in the labor force (38% in 1960, 58% in 1990). Declines in wages (9%) and benefits (14%) in the 1980s left the average U.S. family unit with only 3.5% more in earnings. More members worked harder for the same level of rewards, as expenses for housing, medical and child care soared.

'80s technology and global markets replaced conventional manufacturing and national competition. Families experienced unemployment, displacement, and economic uncertainty. Observers of the high tech workplace note quality and efficiency factors will key future productivity and profit: better inventory control, efficient use of labor, production quality control, high employee involvement, continuous learning, and cooperative decision-making. Families who practice efficient management, interpersonal skills, and democratic decision-making will prepare children for the 21st century

Families who practice efficient management, interpersonal skills, and democratic decision-making will prepare children for the 21st century workplace.

workplace. Child abuse, teen pregnancy, school dropout, and other family problems will undermine productivity and profit. Corporations across the nation are investing in schools, quality child care, and youth development in addition to millions in employee development. Other studies in the past 15 years suggest that work climate and benefits recruit and retain prime employees.

Clearly, the family, community, and workplace are changing. Most state industries lack the expertise and profit margin for extensive work- place services. The UW Cooperative Extension system can aid them in developing policies and educational programs in which strengthen persons and profits. The "Impacting Private Sector Policy for Families" bulletin distributed in January as well as resources featured here can help promote economic and social development across the state.

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FAMILY SPC. CALENDAR

- Mar. 9 Rock Springs
- Mar. 10 Evanston
- Mar. 11 Pinedale
- Mar. 14 Chey: Children's Coalition
- Mar. 17 Torrington
- Mar. 21 Lander
- Mar. 22 Worland
- Mar. 23 NW District/Worland
- Apr. 14 Newcastle
- Apr. 15 Gillette
- Apr. 16 Chey: Wk. of Young Child

ANNOUNCEMENT

An Extension SUMMIT on "Strengthening Families and Communities" is planned for May 17 (noon) to May 19 (1 PM) at Thermopolis. Purposes include assessment, education, and priority-setting. Register with Deb Johnson, 235-9400.

-HUM.DEV./FAMILY NEWS

In "A National Study of the Changing Workforce" released by New York-based Families and Work Institute in September 1993, the majority of the 3,400 workers surveyed indicated increasing demands at work and home. Advancement and money were less important than control over jobs and schedules. Seventy percent had no desire to move on to their boss' position. Jobs were described as "very hard" by 80%, "very fast" by 65%; "making me feel 'used up'" by 42%. In the past decade over a million more people took on two jobs. Sixty percent of households depend on two incomes. The average workweek is 41.4 hrs, the highest since 1966, with 26% working over 49 hrs., a rise from 20% in 1980.

**A WORK-FAMILY "FLOP:"
LEARNING FROM
OTHERS' MISTAKES**

In her excellent review, Family Supportive Policies: The Corporate Decision-Making Process (Conference Board, 1987), Dana E. Friedman tells the story of the Austin TX Child Guidance and Evaluation Center in which 6 hospitals with a year and an over \$100,000 in DHHS grant money were unable to develop a child care center plan, but did report the pitfalls of their efforts for others to learn:

Cooperation

1. Give consortium planners time to "stew" on plans before commitment
2. Planners should use this period to educate members on benefits, costs, and risks of providing child care.
3. Work out conflicting goals early.
4. Know partys' degree of ownership.
5. Consortium cooperation may be affected by past competition.

Research over the past decade show employed moms physically and emotionally healthier than those at home. Studies suggest income, personal and career rewards, and social interaction may be among reasons for better adjustment of employed moms.

A 1990 Southern California survey by the LA Times found 40% of dads and 80% of moms would quit jobs to spend more time with their children. Many parents felt they weren't living up to ideals and 2/3 called family the most satisfying part of life.

Economic Utility

1. Each company must decide if child care is a benefit or charitable gift.
2. Tax and equity must be considered.
3. Noneconomic benefits must be weighed against actual costs.

Power

1. Power, the capacity to limit others' choices, measured by accessible resources.
2. Consortium partners with similar power and access to resources have better success.
3. Powerful members can foil plans.
4. Financial contributions "seal" commitment to planning, start-up.
5. Representatives must be able to speak for their organizations.

Conflict

1. Set rules and roles first thing.
2. Mediators or neutral planners can facilitate negotiation.
3. Failure or breakdown of consensus is signaled by apathy, absence, open hostility. Resolving underlying conflicts is critical for constructive dialogue and progress.

...in fact, these insights may be useful no matter what the purpose of your community consortium!

Research with 387 rural adolescents in Nebraska 4-H found extremely high loneliness scores. Self-esteem was significantly related to loneliness.

Middle class working moms are more likely to participate in the workforce due to preference. Poor and working-class moms more often work for economic reasons.

FAMILY/WORK BALANCE: OVERVIEW

An Extension Program Statement (mid-1980s)

SITUATION STATEMENT

Families with parents in the workplace are gaining in number. Necessary adjustments to family/work balance include areas related to: child care, marital relations, effects upon children, household tasks and leisure activities.

RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

- * Estimates are that between 5 and 25 percent of seven to eleven-year olds are latch-key children. Long, L., and Lang, T. (1983). The Handbook for Latch-Key Children and Their Parents. New York: Berkley.
- * Alternative work scheduling eases stress on family members' schedules. Alternative work scheduling may include staggered work shifts, flexible starting times, flexible work hours, flexible work days, or a compressed work week (4 days/week @ 10 hrs/day).
- * Alternate work scheduling ALONE will not increase time spent with family unless attitudes also change. Kanter, R.M. (1978). Jobs and families: Impact of working roles on family life. Children Today, (Mar./Apr.), 11-16. Aldous, J. Occupational characteristics and males' role performance in the family. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1969, 31, 707-712. Renshaw, J. (1976). An exploration of the dynamics of the overlapping worlds of work and family. Family Process, 15, 143-165. Bohen, H.; & Viveros-Long, A. (1981). Balancing Jobs and Family Life. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- * A major challenge to employed parents, and particularly for mothers who often assume employment responsibilities with little relief from household duties, is that of balancing conflicting time demands. Two-earner families and employed single parents share this struggle and report that there is seldom enough time to accomplish all that they feel is necessary. This conflict is stressful for employed parents. Harris, L., and Associates. (1981). Family at Work: Strengths and Strains. General Mills Am. Family Report. Pleck, J.; & Staines, G. (1981). Work schedules and work-family conflict in two-earner families. In J. Aldous (ed.), Two paychecks: Life in dual-earner families. Beverly Hills: Sage. Portner, J. Stress in the dual-earner family: A case study. J.C. Penney Forum, May 1983. Robinson, J.P. (1982). Of time, dual careers and household responsibility. Family Economics Review, Special Issue.

- * Nearly four million single mothers of children under 18 were employed in 1982 (the most recent year for which statistics are available). By contrast, 35 years earlier, in 1947, only 19 percent of women with children were in the labor force. This rapid change has been accompanied by a significant shift in role expectations of men, women, and children, although the wives bear the brunt of the discontinuity between early gender socialization and current wishes. That is, wives continue to spend much more time doing housework than their husbands, even when the wives are employed full-time. Some dual-earner couples are finding that role-cycling (staggering demanding career and family cycles throughout the life span) eases the strain somewhat, and some fathers are discovering the benefits of greater involvement in child care. Kanter, R.M. (1977). Work and Family in the United States: A Critical Review and Agenda for Research and Policy. New York: Russell Sage. Klinman, D., and Kohl, R. (1984). Fatherhood U.S.A. New York: Garland Publishing. Rapaport, K., and Rapaport, R.N. (1978, Eds.). Working Couples. New York: Harper and Row. Safilios-Rothschild, C. (1976). The dimensions of power distribution in the family. In H. Greenebaum, and J. Christ (Eds.). Contemporary Marriage: Structure, Dynamics, and Therapy. Boston: Little, Brown. Shreve, A. The working mother as role model. New York Times Magazine, September 9, 1984. Sholnick, A., and Skolnick, J. (1977). Families in transition. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company. Vanek, J. (1974). Time spent in housework. Scientific American, 231, 116-120.

POTENTIAL PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

_____ % of _____ (estimated number to be reached) of _____ (target audience) will:

- * Locate and utilize quality child care.
- * Review current division of household tasks.
- * Develop time management skills.
- * Increase communication about work/family balance.

PROGRAM/DELIVERY METHODS

- * Describe alternative work arrangements with working parents.
- * PTA involvement with after school care programs.
- * Letter series.
- * Media releases.

"I've met a few people in my time who were enthusiastic about hard work. And it was just my luck that all of them happened to be men I was working for at the time."-Bill Gold

**FACTS AND STATS:
WORK AND FAMILY TRENDS**

Work-Family Conflicts Reported by Women & Men

Note 1) employers would benefit from educational programs to reduce conflicts; 2) gender (and life cycle stage) needs vary.

Source: Dana E. Friedman, (1987). Linking work-family issues to the bottom line. New York: The Conference Board. Report Number 962.

Female Income Contribution to Family Income, 1979-1987
Note increases in income over the three categories and the role of female income in keeping "up-scale" groups ahead. Poorer families saw declining income despite 2 workers.

Quintile	Male earnings	Female income	Total family earnings
Top	12.0%	51.9%	16.9%
Fourth	0.8	44.1	7.3
Middle	-2.5	39.5	3.5
Second	-7.6	37.9	-1.4
Lowest	-15.4	18.4	-10.8
Total	1.9	44.4	7.8

Source: Ray Marshall. (1991). The state of families. 3: Losing direction. Milwaukee: Family Service America, p. 47.

Wyoming Labor Market Information

Statewide '93 employment growth was 2% (mostly outside metro areas), with less of a seasonal drop than usual. pronounced from previous years. Oil & gas, retail, (esp. eating & drinking), and health services grew most, with state government and coal mining declining. Construction dropped seasonally by 500 jobs in Nov.-Dec. '93.

Hours Spent by Married Persons on Work & Family Tasks

Note how many more hours (and probably stress) is involved in each day for parents. This trend has two, mutually disagreeable consequences: Less time for leisure and support of/by friends and More need for that support.

Source: Dana E. Friedman. (1987). Linking work-family issues to the bottom line. New York: The Conference Board Report, Number 962.

Ohio State Extension Work-Family Impact Study

In 1989-90, OSU CES conducted a pre/post assessment survey, with educational materials distribution with 365 people in 22 Ohio counties. Pre/post comparisons on **Attitudes Toward Present Work-Family Situation** revealed: 1) Reduced sense of stress; 2) Less difficulty setting aside family time; 3) More feelings of pressure from parents/in-laws for home time; 4) Increased importance, enjoyment of home; & 5) decreased need for additional help with work-family conflicts. Top **Educational Needs** identified: 1) building family strengths; 2) strengthening adult relationships; 3) personal development; 4) changing family structures; 5) balancing multiple roles; 6) single parenting; 7) managing conflict; 8) strengthening stepfamilies; 9) eldercare; 10) parent-child communication. **Program Delivery Modes** most preferred: 1) books/print; 2) newsletters; 3) newspaper; 4) videotapes; 5) workshops; 6) TV. Suggests often made for **Worksite Programs**: 1) financial management; 2) job stress; 3) balancing work-family; 4) developing flexibility; 5) resolving marital conflicts.

Source: Kathryn Beckham. (1991). Ohio Statewide Impact Study Columbus, OH: OSU Cooperative Extension.

Teton, Laramie, Sweetwater, and Sheridan counties had significant annual employment growth. Dec. '93 unemployment was 5.2, up from Nov. '93, but same as Dec. '92. WY rate was 5.1 (USA 6.4%). Albany (2.7), Teton (2.9), and Niobrara (2.9) had lowest unemployment rates. Unita (7.1) was highest.

Source: Wyoming labor force trends, Vol. 31, No. 2. Dep't of Employment, Research, & Planning Division, February 1994.

CONSISTENT (sometimes surprising) FINDINGS FROM WORK AND FAMILY EVALUATIONS

1. There is a cost to not providing work-family assistance.
 - *1/3 of employees worried about children while on the job..
 - *25% had childcare 2-5 breakdowns/3 mo. resulting in higher absenteeism, tardiness, lower concentration on the job, and less marital and parental satisfaction.
 - *35% of mothers with children under 12 years old had a sick child in the last month; 51% missed work to care
2. While family responsibilities may have a negative impact on work, there is more negative spill-over work-to-family.
 - *Men and women reported that work interferes with family (32% and 41%) at twice work-to-family interference. *51% of employees rated family performance good or unusually good; 86% rated job performance good.
3. There are benefits to providing generous parental leave.
 - *Aetna retention rose from 77 to 91% with a 6-mo. leave.
 - *Pregnant employees working for family responsive firms were more satisfied with jobs (73% vs. 41% at others), felt sick less often, missed less work (2.1 days vs. 3.5 days), worked later in pregnancies and likely to returned to jobs.
 - *Predictors of retention (4-state sample) were: self-image, income, company policies, and child care availability.
 - *Companies spend 3-4 times more to replace an employee on parental leave than to hold the job open.
4. Productivity effects of work-family programs must compare similar companies and program users.
 - *Users of an on-site child care center (vs. waiting-list) had fewer breakdowns in child care, more satisfying time with children, less worry and more confidence.
 - *Users did, however, report that care-giving interfered with work and absenteeism than did non-users (70% of non-users never missed work; 40% of users).
5. Financial assistance in paying for child care may not improve the quality of the child care selected.
 - *Child care vouchers most often used "to make ends meet" rather than to improve child care arrangements.
6. Impact of the job environment on family may be more powerful than impact of specific policies, programs.
 - *Impact on family more critical for changing, keeping job than work-family programs, policies.
 - *A demanding, low-control job is significantly linked to work-family conflict, work-family spill-over, problems in children's development, and marital tension.

Source: Ellen Galinsky & Dana Friedman. (1992). Families and Work Institute. New York. & Deb Gebeke, NDSU CES.

BALANCING WORK AND FAMILY

Trends in Work and the Family

- * Over 50% of preschoolers' (70% school-agers') parents work outside the home
- * 1980-90 dual-career increase 4.5 million (25%).
- * Number of female homemakers declined, but family is still #1 to most women and men

Three Principles About Work-Family Connection

1. Work & Family Settings Have Built-In Potential for Conflict (due to external, internal stresses)

External Stresses

- Societal Expectations for ideal family set economic and nurturing standards beyond parents' average time, energy, talents, and patience levels.
- Job Expectations for advancement (based on time sacrifice, willingness to move, or continuous employment) don't blend well with priorities for nurturing children or elders.
- Less Free Time for socializing due to work commitments

Internal Family Stresses

- Overload from too many tasks, demands, too little time
- Identity crises as members (esp. mom, but increasingly dad) are strained to meet home and career ideals
- Role Cycling as parent/employee to mesh home and career (i.e., start family after establishing in career)
- Family Characteristics such as geographic isolation from family-of-origin, ages of children, special needs, etc.

2. Work & Family Life Influence Each Other

- "Spillover" can occur when a promotion, praise, or progress is experienced at work, resulting in a positive mood and interactions at home; or when parents have a "heavy demand" day at work and lack energy at home
- "Crossover" effects occur when one spouse influences the other as he/she comes from work or goes out to work

3. Stress is Reduced When There is "Synergy" Between Work and Family Life

Personal Resources: Material and Financial Assets, Education, Healthy Living Habits, Redefining the Situation, Realistic Expectations, Shared Efforts, Reduced Work Time

Family Resources: Quality Marriage, Cooperative Housework and Parenting, Personal Priorities/Style, Talking Out Conflicts
Workplace/Community Resources: Flexible Work Hours, Job Sharing, Paid Work at Home, Shorter Workweeks, Adequate Child Care, Flexible Transfer and Relocation Policies

Source: Steve Duncan. (1991). Balancing Work and Family. Alabama Extension Service Circular HE 632. Also, write for accompanying instructional guide. Steve is now Montana State Human Dev/Family Specialist and might be a good resource or collaborator for WY Extension Work-Family Programs.

STRENGTHENING DUAL-CAREER MARRIAGES

Reviewed by Curtis Hobbs

Sources of Conflict & Stress in Dual-Career Marriages

1. Roles and responsibilities
2. Structuring
3. Managing time
4. Competition
5. Dependency needs

The Enrichment Program's Goals

1. Examine values and priorities concerning work and family;
2. Examine allocation of roles and responsibilities and determine how effective and appropriate they are;
3. Become more aware of influence of gender-role, socialization on division of roles and tasks and options;
4. Identify attitudes, beliefs and behaviors which create barriers to change, and develop ones which are more facilitative;
5. Become aware of new options and choices;
6. Develop communication and negotiation skills, the spirit of cooperation and flexible attitudes necessary;
7. Develop support system for exploring life-style and equity.

Group Preparation & Session Content

1. Interview couples to determine adjustment. Refer distressed couples to therapy for intensive work.
2. Assign pre-program reading of "The Two-Paycheck Marriage" (or other like "The Second Shift")

Session 1: Getting Started -Introduction and Goals.

Objectives are to identify goals for the individual, couple and family; establish group rules; and clarify roles.

Session 2: Talking Together. Objectives are to increase partner's skills in expression of thoughts, feelings, perceptions, expectations, intentions, needs and wants in "personally responsible" ways. Listening skills and identifying the meaning of things are also covered.

Session 3: Gender Socialization and Us. Objectives are to help spouses become aware of their gender socialization on their beliefs, roles and choices; and identify expectations of self and spouse;

Session 4: Power and Control -How Can We Share It?

Objectives are discuss power and control issues in the marriage; determine division of power, negotiate conflicts.

Session 5: Negotiating Responsibilities Objectives are to review couples' roles, responsibilities and determine if they are meeting their needs; and resolve problems relating to roles.

Session 6: Managing Time. Objectives are to assess how time is presently spent and whether it meets the needs or not; and to encourage couples to schedule time alone with each other.

Session 7: Termination. Objectives are to help couples identify change that has occurred in their relationship during the time they have been in the program; and close the program.

Source: Judith Myers Avis. (1986). "Working together": An enrichment program for dual-career couples. In W. Denton. (Ed.). Marriage and family enrichment. NY: The Haworth, pp. 29-45

STRENGTHENING SINGLE PARENTS AT WORK AND AT HOME

Programs that strengthen single parents need to include:

1. **Building a support network**
2. **Personal self-esteem**
3. **Developing assertiveness**
4. **Job-seeking skills**
5. **Learning how to make career decisions**
6. **Managing family and self**

Mother-based single parent families after a divorce or separation, need to mourn their losses, which include reduced income; re-establish family rituals; confront issues of time management and structure. In addition, single parent mothers have to deal with limited economic resources and negative expectations as head of family.

Source: Kris Kissman (1992). Single parenting: Interventions in the transitional stage. Contemporary Family Therapy, 14, (4).

Shift Work

Harriet Presser's research on the effects of shift work are exemplary work-family studies. Her 1988 article abstract from "Shift work and child care among young dual-earner American parents." (Journal of Marriage and Family) 'uncovers a high rate of non-day employment among 19-26 year-old American parents with children under 5. Reliance on spouses (particularly mothers) for child care is much higher among shift workers than day workers, especially when work hours do not overlap.

In "Impact of shift work on individuals and families," Barbara Levy Simon (Families and Society, 6/90) notes that about 1/6 of the workforce (1/2 of part-timers) work shifts, most often in mining or manufacturing, and most often not by choice. Health (esp. sleep) is often affected by such work as body rhythms are upset; irritability, anxiety, poor eating habits and accidents on the job can result. Shift workers often feel their late hours are valued less than day workers. They may have trouble making friends, dating, or participating in the community. Caregiving and family life (esp. marital interaction) are disturbed; fatigue and guilt are common.

Note: The June 1990 edition of Families and Society focuses on work and family issues and is available from Family Service America, 11700 West Lake Park Drive, Milwaukee, WI 53224 (414-359-1040) for \$6.50. FiS is a down-to-earth practical journal used by social workers, counselors, and community professionals in many other fields.

"Home on the Range"

MANAGING FARM-RANCH FAMILY ROLES

Source: Robert Fetsch. (1992). "Ranching and Farming with Family Members." Service In Action. CSU Extension #10.217.

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- *95% of US commercial farms are family owned/operated
- *Intergenerational farms and ranches are unique among businesses due to their remarkable integration of production and family life cycle stages.
- *At the root of many financial problems is a serious communication or relationship problem.
- *Open communication among both generations works even with the highly stressful issue of land transfer.
-

"Farming and ranching are two of the few remaining occupations that involve entire families. It is estimated that over half of the farm and ranch families have intergenerational conflict. The root of this conflict is financial and relationship problems."

"Some of the sources to this conflict are different ages, life experiences, beliefs, needs and wants. Building skills in communication, goal-setting, decision-making, role negotiations, problem solving, conflict resolution, and strategic planning can help families enhance their relationship and trust level. A team effort can help accomplish a shared family vision that can increase net profitability."

TAKING CHARGE IN CHANGING TIMES

Source: Dan and Randy Weigel. (1987). Keeping peace on the farm: Two generation farm families. IA State Univ. Cooperative Extension Service.. Pm1292

Stressors

In this 1980s study of two generation Iowa farm families they found major stressors to be:

1. Living with tight money
2. Farm taking priority over family
3. Poor teamwork
4. Differing time commitments
5. Not involved in family decisions

Coping With Stress

The top five coping strategies were:

1. Spiritual beliefs
2. Encouraging
3. Flexibility
4. Problem analysis
5. Relaxation

What happens when two or more generations farm and ranch together? in-law, sibling and male traditions all influence the tension in a family. A Cornell study found farm organization and management unique since they combine production and family life-cycle changes.

Stressors

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Operational stressors | Not on one's own |
| Responsibility for risks | Land transfer issues |
| Farm family stressors | |

Coping Strategies

- Open communication, acknowledging feelings
- Plan early and multiple options

Successful stress managers are aware of their strengths and weaknesses
Reducing blame in the face of economic hardship
Shifting loss perceptions to opportunity statements

Practical Strategies

- Write out goals (personal, family and work)
- Schedule time to think
- Keep relationships current and nothing undone
- Develop communication and negotiation skills
- Have family meetings
- Recall past "good decisions" the family made
- Seek professional help

To keep peace in farm families:

1. Keep communication open
2. Compromise
3. Practice family decision making
4. Allow everyone to make mistakes
5. Provide motivation
6. Separate work from family
7. Write down all agreements and plans
8. Keep everyone informed

"A farm is a hunk of land on which, if you get up early enough mornings and work late enough nights, you'll make a fortune--if you strike oil on it."

--"Fibber" McGee (Jim Jordan)

LATCHKEY CHILDREN: SELF-CARE

"Self-care" refers to children between 5-13 years of age who regularly care for themselves while their parents work.

2-3 million children are in self-care

Self-care is higher for: older children; white children; and families with higher incomes, the mother working full-time, mother is more highly educated, and in white-collar jobs.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS AND RISKS OF SELF-CARE

Benefits

- Increased independence and knowledge
- Increased sense of personal responsibility
- Increased self-esteem
- Increased feeling of contribution to the family

Risks

- Physical safety
- Emotional well-being
- Reduced learning opportunities
- Reduced social contacts
- Increased misbehavior

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH A MORE POSITIVE SELF-CARE EXPERIENCE

Method of choice for parent and child

Child is developmentally ready

Good parent-child relationship

Training in safety and self-care skills

Safe neighborhood, limited time alone

Completion of a trial period

WHAT CHILDREN NEED TO KNOW

- Rules for self-care
- Positive self-concept
- Dealing with fear, loneliness, boredom
- Medical emergencies and first aid
- Phone skills
- Personal safety
- Kitchen and food safety
- Nutrition
- Fire safety
- Getting along with others

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO

- Be sure child is ready
(As you can see from the above list, children under the age of 8 are probably not developmentally ready for these kinds of activities.)
- Learn correct safety procedures themselves
- Teach children safety skills
(Teach information slowly, have children act out responses, and teach flexibility in responding.)
- Review procedures every 3-6 months

Source: Peggy Cooney, Children in Self-Care. Laramie, WY: Independent Marketing.

"Invest in School-Age Child Care" NC AFTER-SCHOOL PROJECT

Reviewed by Curtis Hobbs

Options

- Self-Care
- Supervised Care

Recognizing Quality Child care

- Low staff-child ratios
(the younger the age group, the lower the ratio)
- Small group sizes (the total number and age range of children in each group or room)
- Child-related training of staff members
- Safe, clean, attractive, and spacious indoor, outdoor settings
- Developmentally appropriate activities and experiences for each age group and level of skills
- Positive interactions among children and staff
- Positive staff-parent interactions
- Health and safety practices that protect children
- Nutritious meals and/or snacks

Finding Care for School-Age Children

- Local child care resource and referrals
- Yellow pages

What Can You Do?

- Identify what services are available in your community.
-What is needed?
Be a partner with your community leaders, churches, synagogues, professional organizations, civic groups, employers, employees and governmental agencies to develop quality, affordable alternatives for families who need them.
- Advocate for resources to develop new programs and support existing ones.
- Creatively pool existing resources to develop programs where they are needed.
- Investigate the need for summer youth programs in your community.
- Work with community leaders and businesses to provide good child care for families. Support family-friendly programs.

Source and for more information: School-Age Child Care Project, North Carolina State University, Cooperative Extension Service, Department of 4-H Youth Development, Box 7638, Raleigh, NC 27601-7638, (919)515-6387

Too Much of a Good Thing:"
WORKAHOLISM AS A THREAT TO
PERSONHOOD, PARENTING, PROFIT

In her book Working Ourselves to Death (1990, Harper), Diane Fassel discusses work as addiction:

1. Workaholism is an obsession with work with a related inability to relax, abuse of substances, persons, power, or other neurotic behaviors.
2. Workaholism is "the cleanest of all additions," with dysfunctional effects unnoticed or rewarded by benefitted employers and families.
3. Myths which lead to misconceptions:
 - Always working: Binges or obsessive play qualify
 - Only high-achievers: Anybody can be a work-addict
 - Only stress and burnout: It tends to occur more at high-stress times, but it's "typical" for workaholics
 - No one ever died of hard work: Ask the Japanese.
 - Profitable for corporations: "Nonstops" are less productive
 - Positive addiction: Addicts are "possessed"
 - Only adversely affects the workaholic: Friends, family, and workmates have to put up with the overwork, overstress.
4. Workaholics come in four types:
 - Compulsives: Driven to work all the time, never planning ahead, perfectionistic, won't confess negative effects, hostile when confronted.
 - Binge Workers: Like compulsives, but with intensity, not constancy of effort. Work can be medication to ward off depression, gain a "high."
 - The Closet Worker: Indulges when no one's looking (hides work in gym bag), pursues "jobs within jobs" as excuse to get more done.
 - Work Anorexic: Actually avoids work or procrastinates, often due to perfectionism.

TRAITS OF AN ADDICTIVE ORGANIZATION

Systems, as well as individuals can operate in an addiction mode unhealthy for participants or the whole. Demands on work with little room for relationships, no sense of humor, competitive paranoia, disincentives for critical thinking or questioning, punishment of even small and honest mistakes all take their toll on creativity, enthusiasm, and productivity.

True productivity happens when management facilitates respect, participation, lifelong learning, and teamwork. Free flow of information, supportive criticism., and responsible decision-making by employees, fellowship, and times for relaxation and stress-management in the job promote long-term effectiveness.

5. Women and men experience it differently:
 - Women often deny feelings, attempt to be perfect and "in control" to overcome gender inferiority complex
 - Women often maintain high expectations of both family and work roles, adding more stress on themselves
 - Women project perfectionistic expectations on children
 - Men deny feelings, take on "logical," superiority complex
 - Men tend to overdo job sacrifices and disdain support
 - Men rationalize their family role as economic
 - Both men and women lose capacity to judge stress effects
 - Both see themselves as indispensable, yet unappreciated
6. Families can become codependent (unintentionally "support" parents' addiction), confused about origins, symptoms, or "cure," angry, neglect roles, yet often pass on this distorted "work ethic" to subsequent generations.
7. Work addiction originates like many addictions: Need for control, depression, fear of rejection, often founded in childhood emotional abuse.

SIGNS OF WORK ADDICTION

Tunnel vision: Single interest, focus all the time
Crisis mentality: Every project an "emergency"
Perfectionism: Constant anxiety of doing it just right
Self-centered work style: No time to share with or support others; demands to be supported
Dishonesty: Lies, gossip, rationalizing to manipulate
"Peaks" and "Valleys" of emotion, energy
Fault-finding: Always blaming others, circumstances
Burnout: Physical, emotional breakdown; spiritual emptiness

RESPONDING TO WORK ADDICTION

Within self...allow time for fun, building relationships; set priorities rather than trying to do everything; monitor stress and workload, then negotiate (with self or boss) to let up; If behaviors, depression persist, seek professional help

With others...encourage relaxation, teamwork; avoid any hint of high expectations or rewards; affirm for "who the person is" rather than "what they did;" above all, set limits on your support for their addiction (define job roles, be assertive, ignore guilt, lies, threats); pray that they will realize what's happening before they drive everybody nuts!

CREATING FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACES

Flextime: Allowing for flexible hours (i.e., 8 hours a day, anytime between 6 AM and 6 PM) rather than insisting on "clock in" hours, permits greater control for personal scheduling, less pressure to "get there" or "get out," with more focus on productivity.

--Note: Don't try this with firemen or EMTs!

Job Sharing: Allowing two persons to fill one position, especially if benefits are included, permits greater use of talent by employers and more part-time work by interested employees.

--Note: Could create some problems if brain surgeons didn't finish their work before their job-share partner came on.

Compressed Workweeks: 12-hour days may create greater risk of job injuries, but a 4-day week may reduce work-family stresses (i.e., hectic schedules, limited parent-child time, transportation costs) and thus raise productivity.

--Now what to do for folks already doing 12 hours a day, 6 days a week!

Flexible Benefits: Using a "cafeteria plan" which allows employees to choose the insurance or pension plan/provider increases employee control and individualized advantages.

--A benefit that helps many families is to be able to include grandma or a non-related child on insurance

Resource and Referral: Contracting with a clearinghouse on child care, medical, social, and educational services, gives employees (especially new-to-town) access to information which will help their adjustment outside work.

--Note: It's like the old "R & R" when you've run all over town trying to make connections and made no progress.

Family Leave: Maternity/paternity, sick-member, and eldercare leaves are not often abused and gains in employee loyalty and motivation tend to outweigh temporary losses to employer.

--It makes sense to give leave before you take leave of your senses

Child Care Services: Especially for employers with many moms, near or on-site (with sick-child care infirmary or in-home) really reduces distracting worries, absenteeism, and tardiness. High quality care contributes to child adjustment and readiness for school...a positive contribution to the community. Sharing costs reduces the pricetag for both employers and employees. Before- and After-school programs provide needed safe, stimulating environments for school-age children.

--Increasing numbers of middle-aged employees are called upon to care for their aging friends and relatives, too.

Limiting Transfers: Parents are valuing rootedness and nearness to kin over "moving for job advancement." Opportunities to change jobs or roles in the same place are often regarded as more rewarding than bigger salaries and oppressive responsibilities.

Employee Assistance Programs: Education, counseling, and recreation programs which include families as well as employees help prevent serious problems (with both productivity and insurance costs) and enrich lives of long-term employees. "Warmlines" for nurturing/information to parents and children, personal/professional growth classes (on-site or sponsored in the community or schools), and family-support services such as homework assistance, tuition aid for college, or family recreation days are offered by many companies.

--Note: Anonymous and no/low cost services get the best use and show the best results nationwide.

Profit-Sharing: Corporate willingness to financially reward "good work" is much more effective than threats of lay-offs for motivating workers.

For more information on options and effects of corporate efforts toward family-friendly settings:

Dana E. Friedman. (1987). Linking work-family issues to the bottom line. New York: The Conference Board.

Family Resource Coalition Report, Special focus on Work and Family. Vol. 11, No. 2, 1992. Call (312) 341-0090.

RESOURCES ON WORK-FAMILY ISSUES

School-Age Child Care

R. K. Baden, A. Genser, J.A. Levine, & M. Seligson. (1982). *School-Age Child Care: An Action Manual*. Boston: Auburn House, 486 pages.

J. Bender, C.H. Flatter, & B. Schuyler-Haas. (Eds.). (1984). *Half a Childhood: Time for School-Age Child Care*. School Age NOTES, PO Box 126074, Nashville, TN, 107 pages.

P. Coolsen, M. Seligson, & J. Garbarino.. (1985). *When School's Out and Nobody's Home*. National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse, 332 South Michigan Avenue, Suite 950, Chicago, IL 60604-4357, 54 pages.

Steve Duncan. (1986). *Children in Self-care: A Parent's Guide*. Cooperative Extension, 401 Hulbert Hall, WSU, Pullman, WA 99164-6244 (509) 335-2844.

D. B. Fink. (Ed.) (Pub. 3 times/yr.). *School Age Child Care (SACC) Newsletter*. (Available from School-Age Child Care Project, Wellesley College, Center for Research on Women, Wellesley, MA 02181. Sub. Price: \$18/yr).

L. Long. (1984). *On My Own: The Kids' Self Care Book*. Washington, DC: Acropolis Books, 176 pages.

Women's Issues for the Workplace

Women's Bureau Work and Family Clearinghouse
US Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Ave., NW,
Washington, DC 20210 (202) 523-4486.

School-Age Child Care Project, Center for Research on Women; Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA 02181.

Balancing Work and Family Programs

Pat Nelson, et al. *Balancing Responsibilities at Home and Work*. Corning Tower, Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY 12223 (302) 451-2538.

Voydanoff, P. (1987). *Work and family life*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Preparation for the 21st Century Workplace

Stephen Hamilton & Nancy Darling.. *Mentors in Adolescents' Lives*. Cornell Univ. Cooperative Extension., Ithaca, NY 14853

Family Life and Worker Productivity. (1986). Bloomington: Vocational Education Services, Indiana University.

Work-Family Assessment & Programming Models

(cited in *Family Resource Coalition Report*, 11, (2), 1992.

The Conference Board, 845 3rd Ave., New York, NY 10022 (212) 759-0900.

"...is a global business membership organization whose purpose is to improve the business enterprise system and to enhance the contribution of business to society by enabling executives to explore and exchange business practices and policy issues through a variety of forums.

"...the CB sponsors the Work and Family Research Council which produces a number of publications including a substantive report titled Linking Work-Family Issues to the Bottom Line, which addresses the questions: What is the impact of work-family problems on absenteeism, turnover, and employee stress? Who bears the brunt of work-family conflict? What are the effects of on-site childcare, maternity leave, flextime, and employee assistance programs on productivity?

Families and Work Institute, 330 7th Ave., New York, NY 10001 (212) 465-2044.

Founded in 1989, the FWI is a not-for-profit research and planning organization dedicated to balancing the changing needs of America's families with workplace productivity. The Institute's program addresses the entire life-cycle of the family, maintains a commitment to both the public and private sectors, examines the effects of work on family life as well as the effects of families on work performance, and forecasts future trends with input from all sectors of society. The four major activities of the Institute are: policy research, dissemination, strategic planning, and management training. The Institute operates a national clearinghouse on work and family life and The Corporate Reference Guide to Work-Family Programs, a 437-page volume ranking and profiling the work-family programs and policies of the largest Fortune 1000 companies in each of 30 industry areas.

Work and Family Program Center, US Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street, NW, Washington, DC 20415-0001 (202) 606-5520.

The Work and Family Program Center established in June 1992 provides leadership and assistance to federal agencies in developing and implementing work and family policies. OPM literature includes A Study of the Work and Family Needs of the Federal Work Force (report to Congress), detailing OPM findings on dependent care needs and programs, work and family employment options, key measures to increase the effectiveness of work and family programs, and agency program implementation.

PARADOXES: A PARTING THOUGHT
"Living to Work or Working to Live?"

Calvin viewed work as God's calling; Freud saw love and work as key themes of adult development; Dad said, "Do what you love; that's is life's greatest reward. Work means a lot more than a paycheck: A place to socialize, to be creative, to serve, to grow. The dilemmas of the changing workplace give us pause to think about the meaning of work.

"Study hard in school...Work your way up...Keep your nose to the grindstone..."

The maxims that motivated hard-workers and high achievers on the road to the American dream are giving way to questions. As lay-offs and "early retirements" displace older workers they ask:

"Where's their loyalty after years of mine?"
"How do I start over when this is all I know?"

Many baby boomers are finding little room for advancement, and little hoped-for relief from the torrid pace of early career.

"I'm exhausted...overwhelmed...There's no let-up"
"It's a rat race, and the rats are winning!"
"I'd gladly trade higher pay/status/etc. for quality time."

Younger workers denied jobs in spite of training or bound to 50+ hour weeks just to get a start are likely to respond:

"When do I get a life?"

With due respect to Horatio Alger, there are no guarantees of a lifetime in one company, a little more cash, status, or free time after early sacrifices, or recognition for creative ideas and early zeal. But creative solutions are giving workers new hope:

Corporate, community stress, time and management classes
Recreation programs at work
Flexible hours
Brainstorming sessions for gripes, innovative ideas at work
Support groups in and out of work
Mentoring programs
Retraining programs in corporations and community colleges
Project-oriented work, with rotating leaders, project teams
Family-oriented schools offering participation and support

A generation ago, women "expanded" their roles with the hope of new rewards and shared parenting. While husband participation in housework and child care has increased slightly, men now work longer hours than ever and most working moms do the "second shift" (most home tasks plus employment). In the face of continuing lower wages and higher stress, increasing numbers of women say:

*"If I don't have to do this financially...
let's wait 'til the kids get into school...
how about part-time?...
let's take turns on career and home focus."*

Despite public cries for parental responsibility, few options exist to blend work, financial survival, and parenting. At the same time, women's income is increasingly important for family economic well-being and mom's career satisfaction is positively related to her well-being and children's achievement.

In yet another ironic twist of fate, the new generation of "liberated" (well, almost) males has increasing rates of depression and poor mental health:

*"I'm doing what I can to get ahead...and to be a good dad...
I always feel I'm not quite making it on either court."
"Is this what my mom/wife/women in general had to deal with all those years?"*

Again, both the home front and the workplace are generating humane solutions to inhuman demands:

Parenting classes
Babysitting exchanges and "respite" weekends
New lifestyles focused on living simply
Cooperative work-blitzes to get more shared time
Family leave policies
Job sharing
Corporate support for child care (finding and affording)

Resolving the dilemmas of work and family will continue to take a measure of hard work, sacrifice, management and communication skills, imagination, and just plain good humor. So relax and make it a game!

"When people are serving, life is no longer meaningless."
--John Gardner
