

Working mothers who need to work full time have choices

When it comes to choices, mothers can rethink their options. In a just released Pew Research Center study, survey results indicate that when it comes to attitudes of working mothers with young children, slightly over 40% are comfortable with the idea of part time work, 30% prefer staying home and only 16% are okay being full time.

Yet when it comes to full time work, mothers with children under the age of 18 are shifting their attitude. Since 2007 there has been an increase from 20% to 32% of mothers stating a preference for full time employment. According to co-author Kim Parker, a Pew Center associate director, the shift is less about "... career ambitions than financial realities." Additional poll results indicate that –

- Almost half of mothers and fathers prefer to be with their children at home, but financial necessity dictated otherwise
- Mothers (56%) found it slightly more difficult than fathers (50%) to balance work and family
- In family with children under the age of 18, Mothers (40%) and 34% of fathers report always feeling rushed

While the Pew Research report focuses on trending social changes and cites the economy downturn as a motivating force, it leads us to believe that mothers only choice is to seek full time employment outside the home.

While women who are already working full time may find some relief in enlightened companies that provide flexibility scheduling, it also creates internal resentment among both male and female co-workers without children. Some companies are reconsidering their flex programs.

In companies which allow working from home, again mothers benefit. However, with Marissa Mayer of Yahoo changing corporate policy and requiring a physical office presence, this policy may become a trendsetter in itself.

While current economic realities leave some mothers very little choice but to find a way to increase family income, but as working mothers their choice however need not be limited to part time or full time outside employment.

The greater question mothers should be asking is what financial sources will meet present and anticipated financial needs and how they want to balance their work and family obligations. To focus solely on outside employment is to miss other opportunities they have access to – be it a home based, a web based or a small business enterprises.

According to Kiplinger, women with small businesses have a growth rate of 50% greater than all small businesses. *“... by 2018, one-third of new U.S. jobs will be generated by female-owned companies, compared with 16% now, based on projections by The Guardian Life Small Business Research Institute.”*

What we actually may be seeing is a trend for a different kind of income generating model that is more flexible for women in their desire to balance work and family, especially during the motherhood years.

Pew Research report:
<http://www.pewresearch.org/modern-parenthood/>:

<http://www.kiplinger.com/slideshow/business/T049-S001-fast-growing-small-businesses-led-by-women/index.html#JbqpizWSwVtxED4T.99>