

Room: Harbour View 1
Session: 2.3.E



Gender, parenthood and career choices: an international education perspective

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[@Twitter](#)

Being an employee (with kids)

By Elissa Newall



Overview

- Insight into the experiences of colleagues in international education
- Review data to better understand the challenges
- Identify some tips for managing things at work

Challenges abound

COMPETING PRIORITIES

Can't be everywhere
Work impacts on family

EMOTIONAL TOLL

Stress
Guilt
Anxiety

NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS

Sick children
School events
Limited overtime capacity

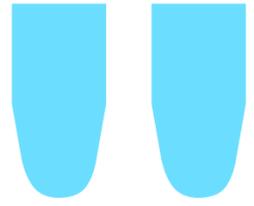
DISCRIMINATION

Glass ceiling
Resistance to flexible work

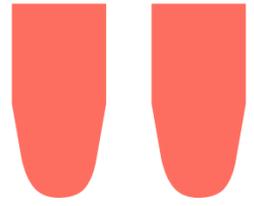
1 *in* **3**

**parents report
conflict between
their work and
family roles**

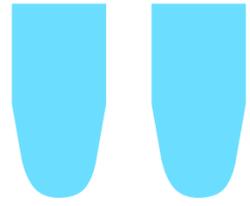
Judith Lumley Centre, 2016



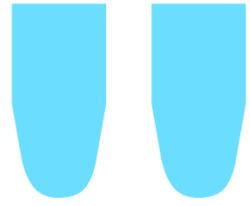
When I perform well at work, this normally comes at the *expense* of my family.



There are a lot of unexpected *distractions* like sick children, curriculum days and school holidays. It sometimes feels like others *judge* you as not working hard, or letting the team down or not caring about your career.



I ended up working from home on my days off and felt under *pressure* from every side - *stressed* that I was missing deadlines and *guilty* that I'm working when I want to spend time with my baby.

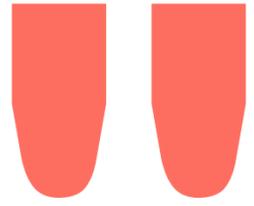


When it came to negotiating flex time it was *awkward* and *uncomfortable* and I was made to feel as if they were doing me a massive favour

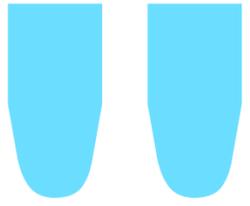
52%

**Working mothers
in Australia say
they have been
discriminated
against**

Flex Careers survey, 2016



After approaching my previous boss to have an open conversation about my career, she told me that it would be *impossible* to do her job with kids.



I have been *discriminated* against for more senior roles especially those that involve travel. People *assume* that because I am a mother, I am not as available or flexible.

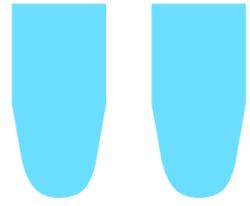
There are some benefits

FOCUS

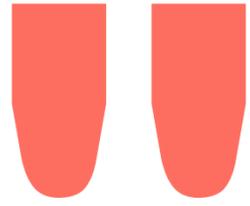
EFFICIENCY

EXPANDED NETWORK

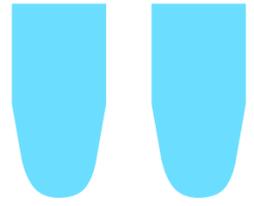
AUTHENTICITY



**My values and attitude
changed toward work
for the better – I felt
more *focused*, more
committed.**

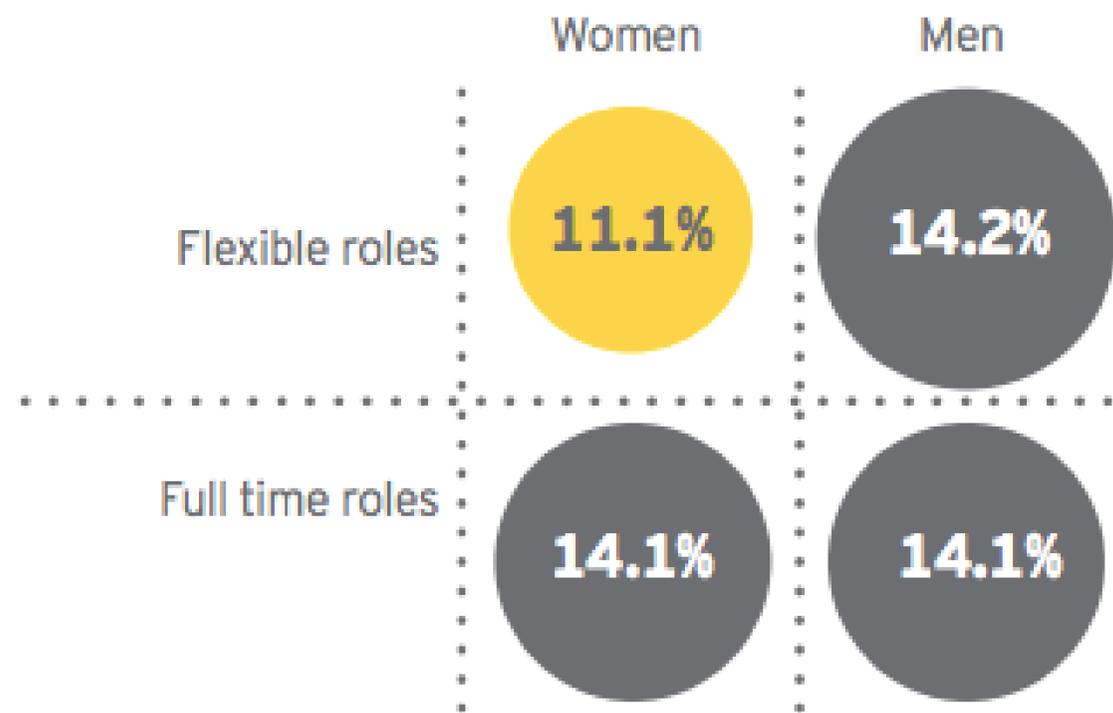


I worked more *efficiently*,
managed my time *smarter*
and became more sharply
focused on the work at hand
and outcomes while I was
there.



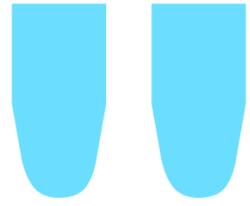
With a family to provide for, I became more *gracious* for the opportunities, the work stability.

Figure 2a: Percentage of time wasted in a typical working day



EY 2013

Women in part-time, contract or casual roles appear to be the most productive members of the workforce.

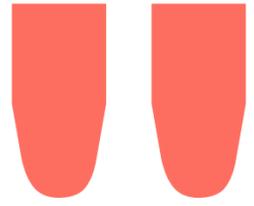


I have *like-minded* professionals around me and a close network of colleagues, we *share* stories and ideas.

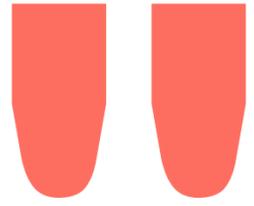
tips

(noun) *plural*

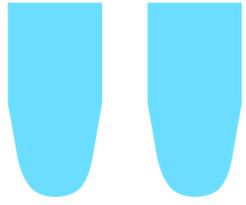
small but useful pieces of practical advice



I approach life as three balls
- family and health are glass,
and work is *rubber*



I have secured a 0.7fte roster which makes it *convenient* to manage home life as well as achieve what I need to in my work life



I work from home one day a week... it's a great way to get on top of emails and reading, which I don't get a chance to do when office days are packed with meetings.

Flexible work in Australia

86%

MEN WANT FLEXIBLE
WORK OPTIONS

<5%

MEN WORK
FLEXIBLY

96%

WOMEN WANT
FLEXIBLE WORK
OPTIONS

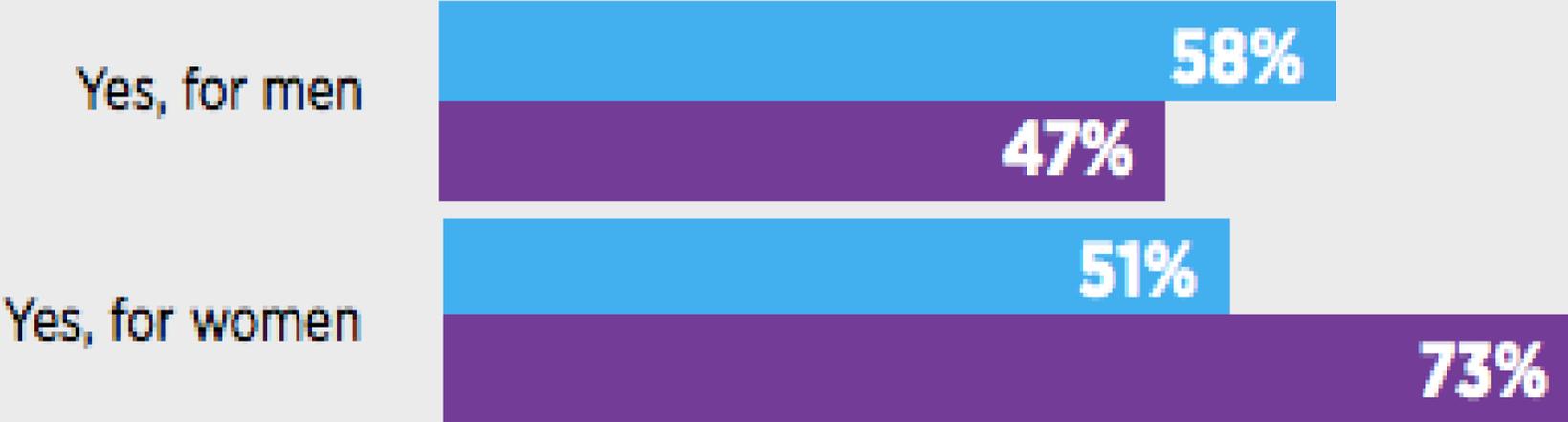
40%

WOMEN WORK
FLEXIBLY

HAYS GENDER DIVERSITY REPORT 2017

Do you think opting to work flexibly is a career-limiting move?

 Men  Women



**A STUDY OF
FEMALE
PROFESSIONAL
STAFF IN
AUSTRALIAN
UNIVERSITIES**

Bailey, Troup &
Strachan (2017)

**Periods of
part-time work
acted as a brake
on career
advancement.**

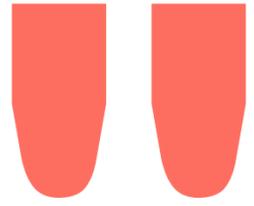
**"WE NEED TO
DETHRONE THE
FULL-TIME WORK
MODEL.**

Tom Schuler
Author
The Paula Principle

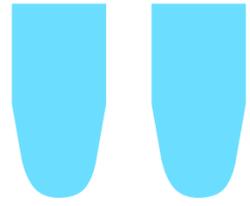
**We need a full spread
where both men and
women can have a
range of different
shapes and types of
jobs and careers."**

**manage
your
personal
brand.**

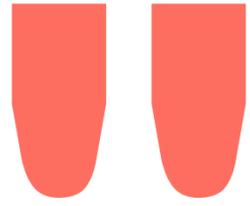




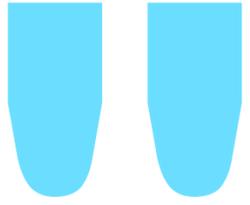
Use your time wisely... and be prepared to take work home and *catch-up* after the kids are in bed.



On a couple of occasions where there are *important* meetings, I have arranged an extra day's childcare.

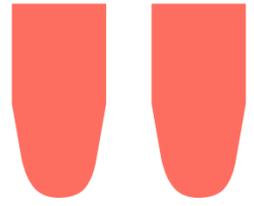


I still travel as strictly
required and keep my trips
as *short* as possible whilst
still meeting the *objectives* of
the trip.

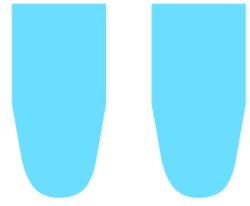


Don't try and do it all.

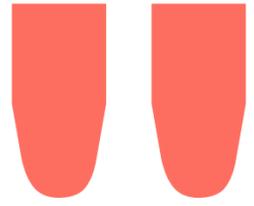
***Delegate* where you can,
give others opportunities
to step up.**



**It's very important to be
honest with yourself, your
family and importantly
your boss .**



Talk to other women - much of the most useful *advice* and *insights* I have had, have come from other women. Though everyone's journey is different and their own - there are some common themes.



***Highlight* the good work that you do. Seek *allies* who can help highlight it, too, if you feel you are not being recognised.**

In summary

- Explore flexible work options
- Be prepared to give and take
- Communicate openly and often
- Talk with other parents
- Make your career work for you

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- Flex Careers, 2016, http://www.huffingtonpost.com.au/2016/02/05/discrimination-mum-work_n_9155852.html
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- Hays Gender Diversity Report 2017
https://www.hays.com.au/cs/groups/hays_common/@au/@content/documents/digitalasset/hays_1832048.pdf

Supporting others

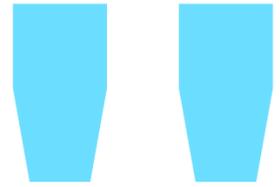
By Rob McDonald



The benefits of work and family flexibilities can be achieved in all workplaces, regardless of the size of the business, by developing and implementing family-friendly workplace policies.

Fair Work Ombudsman

Best Practice Guide Work & Family



Talent retention will become a bigger and bigger issue for people/organisations that don't yet understand the power of flexible, modern work arrangements.

80

%

**Employees say they will
stay longer if an
employer allows them
to work from home**

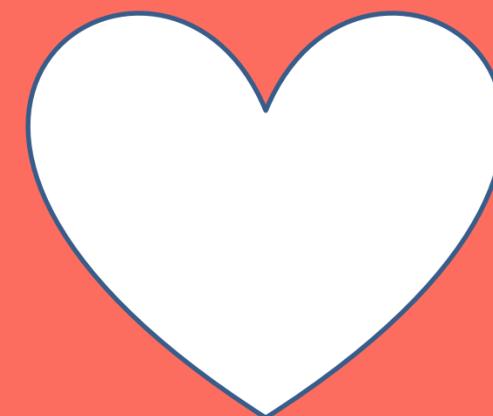
McCrindle Research, 2013

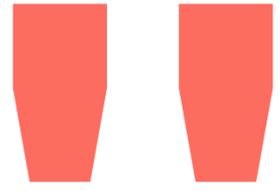
Mental health benefits

Flexible working arrangements can help improve employee health, well being and work-life outcomes as well as positively effecting workplace participation.

Bupa, Mental Health Stats in the Workplace, 2014

Why?





I am so thankful that I work in an environment that has a positive culture which supports parents...

I could not have asked for more from my employer and in return, I try to work my hardest to ensure that I give back as much as I can to my organisation because of this.

But?

Employers can refuse a request on reasonable business grounds, eg...

- **Too costly**
- **Can't change other employees' working arrangements, or impractical**
- **Can't hire new employees**
- **Significant loss of productivity/customer service would result**

49

%

Parents have chosen to pass up a job because it conflicted with family obligations

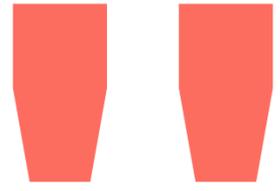
Pew Research survey, 2015

How? - Organisation level

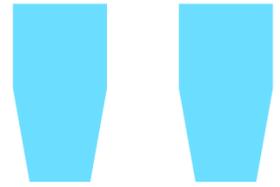
- **Inform employees and potential employees of available family-friendly working arrangements at recruitment and induction**
- **providing unpaid leave during school holiday periods to accommodate carer's responsibilities**
- **providing periods of paid parental leave**
- **creating meaningful part-time employment opportunities**

How? - Supervisor level

- **organising staff meetings when most people can attend and professional development or training during ordinary work hours.**
- **keeping employees on parental leave up to date, including any changes that might occur**
- **consenting to an employee working flexible hours to accommodate their personal circumstances such as dropping off or picking up children from school or day care, or assisting elderly family members**



Where possible working from home can also allow parents the satisfaction of doing the school drop off and pick up. This means a lot to some parents and kids.

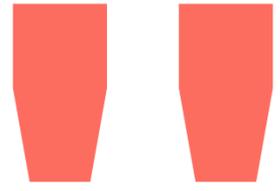


I manage a large team as well and...I also grant flexibility for my team members. Overall there is a general understanding, respect and empathy toward the challenges of being a working parent.

1 in 2

**Australian women
experience some
form of pregnancy
related
discrimination**

Grace Papers, 2017

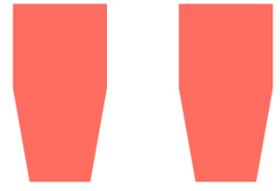


I had to arrange any return to work meetings and had to ask who my new manager was as this wasn't well communicated.

When I did return to work, due to the nature of my role, I set up meetings to understand what work was currently being undertaken and where I could be useful.

What? Supporting staff on parental leave

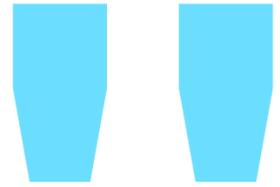
- **Good Governance.**
- **Manage bias**
- **Manage employees talent:**
 - What is their professional vision? What do they want from their career? What are their success stories, their strengths?**
- **Keep in Touch**
- **Transition employees back to work**
- **Flexibility**



My managers have also been very supportive by enabling me to have flexible work even though I am in a senior role. I think this sets a good example to others and makes sure good practices flow down the line.

Examples

- **Homing from work**
- **Repurposing long commuting time as work hours**
- **10am – 2.30pm meeting rule**



- **Set an example and leave on time**
- **Unless required to be at a meeting/desk/counter for operational purposes, allow staff to work when/where they want**
- **Don't be an arsehole**

In summary



Final word

A good place to start is to ask your employees what would make a difference to them.

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Keeping the house in order



By Bronte Neyland

The persona

“In an average Australian family, a woman will commonly behave like a housewife even if she isn’t one. And a man will behave as though he’s married to a housewife, even when he isn’t.”

Annabel Crabb

Work in the
home -
Australia

> 5 hours per day



3 hours per day



3%

of the Australian population are women working full-time, with a husband as the primary carer

The Australian Way

“Australian women respond to earning more than their husbands by increasing their housework, as if to make up for the gender deviance of female breadwinning and their husbands’ dependence on this.”

Michael Bittman, Paula England, Liana Sayer, Nancy Folbre and George Matheson

“Working mothers should work as if one *didn't* have children, while raising one's children as if one *didn't* have a job. To do any less feels like failing at both.”

Annabel Crabb

Working mothers spend more dedicated time with their kids one-on-one these days, than housewives did in the 70s.

“Guilt - I acknowledge that it is my decision in how I manage and mitigate it - but sometimes it does creep up on you.”

Keeping it real

You can't
have it
all

Outsource

Pressure
test

Quality
not
quantity

Start from the beginning



The conversation

“We discussed all aspects of how we could each balance the demands of work, what would happen when I travelled both internationally and interstate, what would happen in an emergency if I was overseas, the division of household chores and tasks and how each of us could try to retain some semblance of a social life and hobbies.”

The keeper



The oxygen mask



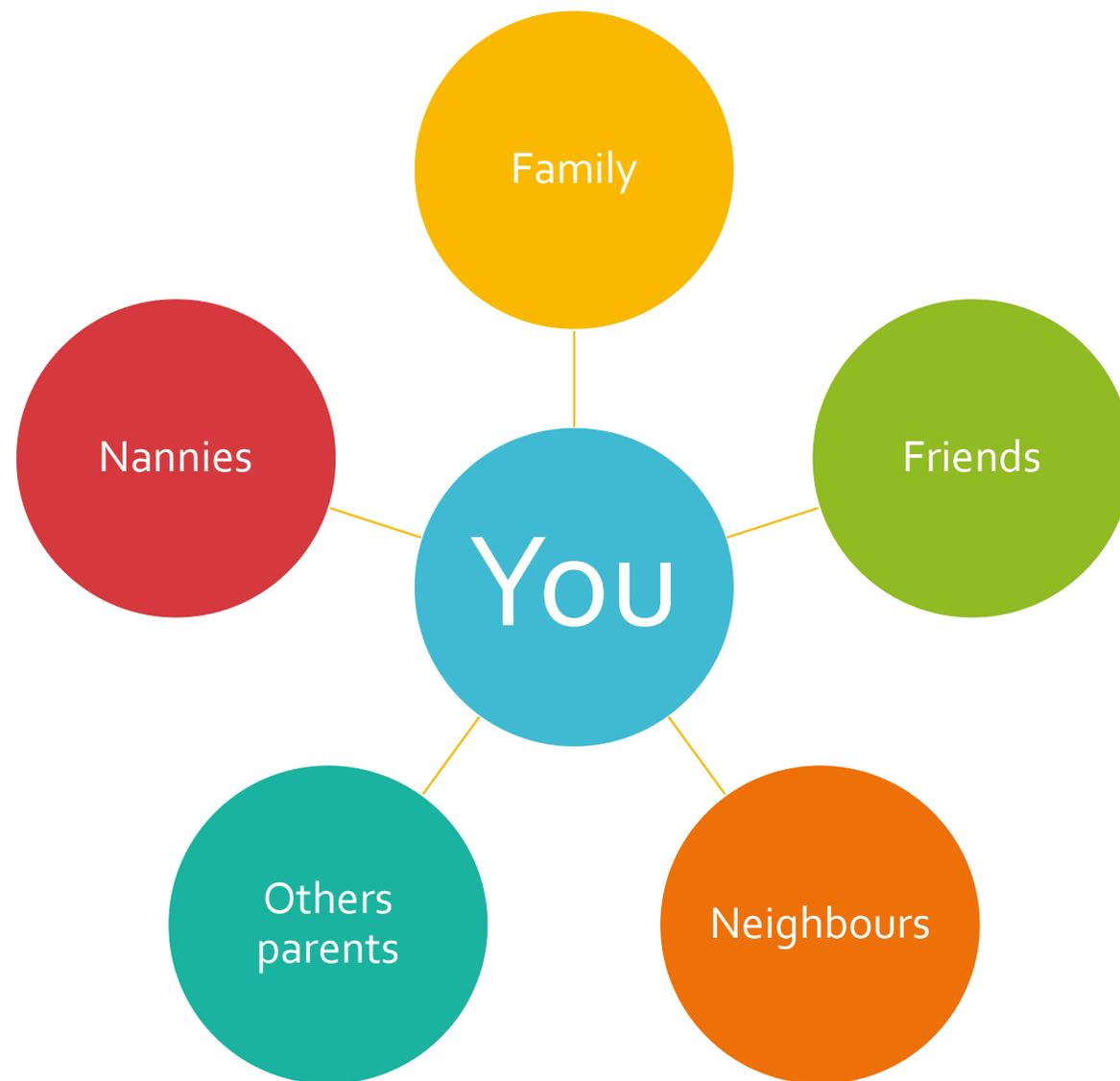
"We need to do a better job of putting ourselves higher on our own 'to do' list."

"Just do what works for you, because there will always be someone who thinks differently."

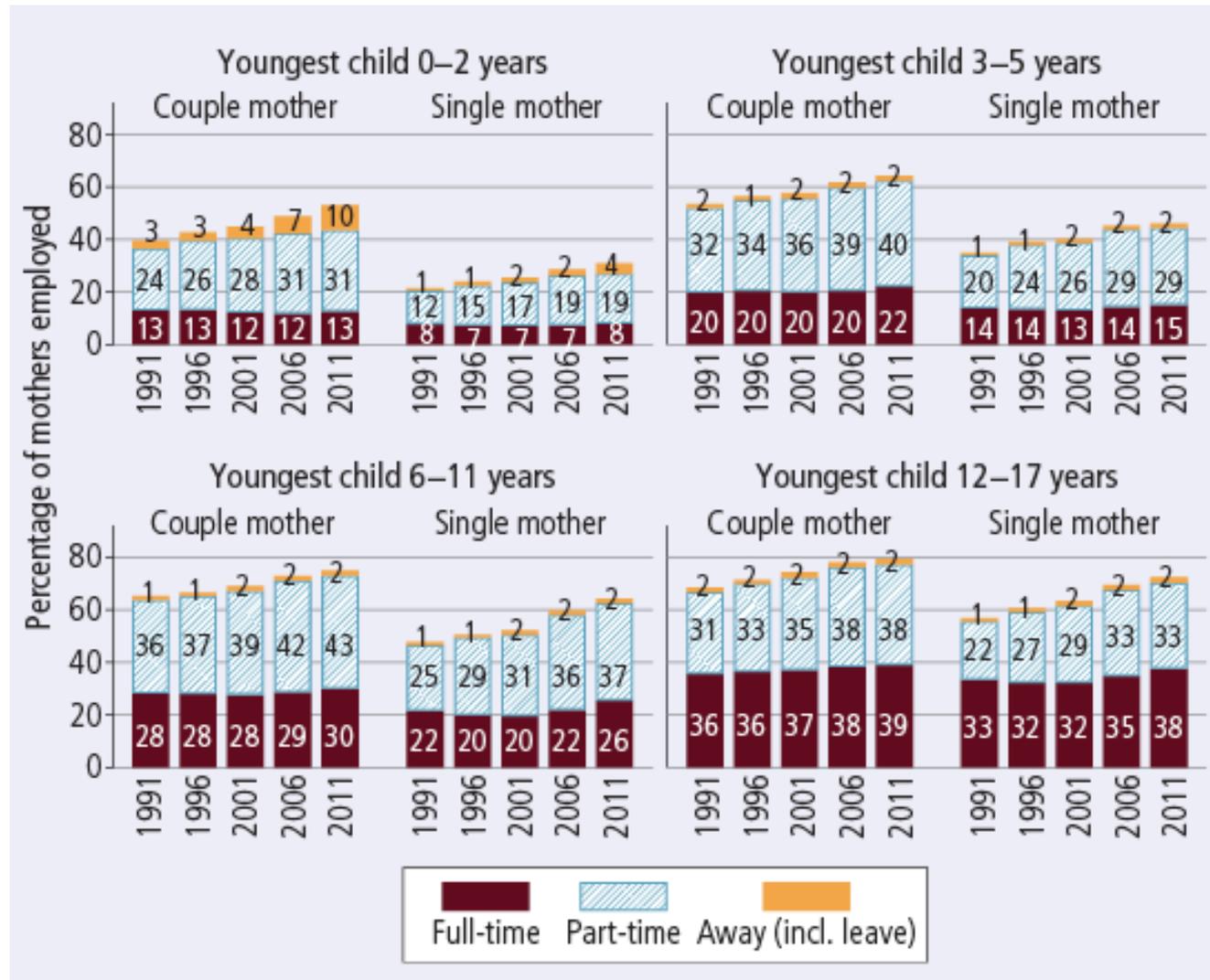
Michelle Obama



Create your
own village



Different ages, different challenges



The baby years

- The new you – who are you?
- I could do this for years vs get me back to work
- Establishing a network
- Feelings of anxiety – not helped by constant changes at institutions
- Return to work for many
- Travel is challenging

Tips

- Stay connected - attend planning days, workshops or meetings
- Volunteer
- Attend social events
- Find a mentor

The toddler years

- Build on the parental connections
- Increased number of events through kindergarten/childcare
- Their social life becomes busier than yours
- Time that travel often starts
- Importance of family and networks increases
- Juggling holiday periods – trickier if kindergartens

Tips

- Negotiate with your supervisor attendance at x number of events over the year
- Ask grandparents, siblings or other parents to be the “special person” at some events
- Explore what works for when you are away

The primary school years

- Starting school and the transition period
- Helping out in the classroom and on excursion
- School events - be vocal about notice and timing
- Period when your work status becomes very obvious
- Volunteer at as many events out of hours as possible
- The taxi driver years begin – sports and parties
- Too young to be left at home or to get to and from school themselves
- Latter years – push back on holiday activities

Tips

- School holidays – use your village, find activities
- Staying in contact when travelling - FaceTime, letters
- Presents - have them in advance
- Negotiate with your supervisor attendance at x number of events over the year

The high school years

- Can be left at home more by themselves
- Years when they may need you more
- Social pressure, digital pressure
- Mental health issues increase significantly
- How do you keep them focused and “on track”, particularly in the latter years?

Tips

- Be engaged and present
- Maintain good communication with the school
- Negotiate travel commitments at work

The children's view

Be honest about why you work

Connect with the school, day care, kindergarten

Identify other parents in a similar situation

Be present, when present

Create a ritual

Third metric of
success

Well-
being

Wisdom

Wonder

Giving

Some of my
favourites

