

Chapter 1 : 10 Random Facts About Me Vol. 12 â€” Laura Likes Design

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American Academy of Pediatrics. Available online at accessed December 4, Available online at www. The SECC study appears to confirm earlier findings that the children of working mothers often benefit from her involvement in the outside world in terms of cultivating their own interests. Stability of the marital relationship: In general, married couples appear to be less affected by this issue than cohabiting or lesbian couples. Household safety and security: Household safety is most likely to become an issue when the children of a working mother are too old for day care and must stay in an empty home for several hours after school before the parents return from work. Such children are sometimes called "latchkey children" because they are usually given a key to the house or apartment so that they can let themselves in when they get home. The American Academy of Adolescent and Child Psychiatry AACAP maintains that parents should limit as much as possible the time children must be at home alone because of the many risks involved. These risks range from physical dangers in the home matches, knives, gas stoves, and household cleaners and other dangerous chemicals, etc. AACAP recommends that older children should not be allowed access to "adult" channels on cable television or similar sites on the Internet. As a partial solution to parental concerns about latchkey children, some schools, churches, and synagogues offer after-school programs for children who would otherwise spend several hours at home alone. Posted by imasaliza at working mother common challenges Common problems that working mothers confront can be summarized as follows: Nursing mothers who return to work before an infant is weaned often have to make complicated arrangements for expressing and storing breast milk during the working day. These include the cost of child care arrangements, problems with continuity of health insurance coverage, and loss of income related to missed work. Working mothers who cut back their employment to part-time work often lose opportunities for promotions as well as such benefits as health insurance. Working mothers are often more vulnerable to stress-related illnesses than those who remain at home with their children. Some of the stress is related to ongoing social controversy about changing sex roles and family structures; many working mothers are made to feel guilty about their decision to continue working. In addition, working mothers often do not get enough sleep. Sleep deficits are known to make people more susceptible to infectious illnesses as well as automobile or workplace accidents. Many working mothers, particularly those whose jobs give them little control over their work such as food service, factory assembly-line work, retail sales work, etc. They are often concerned about the effects of job-related stress on other family members. If the family is coping with the care of elderly relatives as well as children, interpersonal stress is intensified. Parents may find themselves withdrawing emotionally from their children as well as quarreling more often with each other. Phase I of the SECC study followed these children from birth through three years of age and was completed in Phase II followed the children who remained in the study from age three through second grade between and Phase III follows the remaining participating children through The SECC researchers reported in April that over 90 percent of the children enrolled in the study had spent some time in the care of people other than the mother, with 50 percent of the children spending 30 hours or more per week in the care of others. The report contained three major findings: The quality of nonmaternal child care makes a major difference. A good childcare center should have no more than five children per adult caregiver. The study found that the type of care relatives versus nonrelatives was not significant. Posted by imasaliza at alternatives of work arrangement Given the failure of either home or workplace demands to ease significantly, working mothers routinely sacrifice time for themselves, and many report high levels of stress, anxiety , and fatigue. In addition, many still feel torn between the conflicting demands of family and career and guilt for not being able to spend more time with their children. Increasing numbers of working mothers also feel responsible for helping their own aging parents as they develop health problems and become less able to handle their own affairs. And parents traditionally place greater demands on grown daughters than on sons. In addition, working mothers are often expected to assume most of the responsibility in family emergencies, such as the illness of a child, which periodically disrupt their already overloaded schedules. Dissatisfied with

the pressures and sacrifices of combining mothering with full-time work, many women have sought alternatives that allow them to relax the hectic pace of their lives but still maintain jobs and careers. According to one study, the number of companies offering some type of employment flexibility to their workers rose from 51 percent in 1990 to 73 percent in 1995. Fifty-five percent offered flex-time, while 51 percent offered part-time work. In 1995, Working Mother magazine reported that 97 percent of the companies on their list of the best companies for mothers in the workforce offered compressed workweeks or job sharing opportunities. Mothers who work part-time gain more flexibility and more time with their children, as well as time to devote to their own needs. They are able to be there when their children get home from school, attend school plays and other functions, and take their children to doctor appointments without facing conflicts at work. However, part-time work also has disadvantages, aside from the cut in pay. Many part-timers carry workloads disproportionate to the number of hours they put in, sometimes being required to be available by telephone to clients or colleagues during their hours at home. In most cases they lose health insurance coverage. They may also face the resentment of coworkers who are required to keep a nine-to-five schedule. In addition, part-time work, like time taken off the job, usually places women at a disadvantage in terms of professional advancement. Promotions come later, and the "fast-track" positions are often out of reach altogether. Another employment pattern that works well for some couples is working different job shifts, so that the father can provide child care when the mother is at work and vice versa. Many fathers in service occupations are able to share childcare responsibilities because they can work evening or night shifts. One study of 4,000 dual wage-earner Canadian families with children below the age of 11 found that children whose parents worked nonstandard schedules were more likely to develop difficulties than children whose parents did not do shift work. The researchers found that this correlation held whether it was the father, the mother, or both parents who worked nonstandard hours. An employment arrangement is job sharing, in which two people jointly fill one full-time position. They may alternate their hours in a variety of ways depending on what arrangement best suits the personal and professional needs of both people. For example, one pair of job sharers may work alternate days, while another arrangement may have each person working two days in a row and part of a third day. Job sharing opens up a wider arena of employment than that normally available to holders of traditional part-time jobs, and unlike most part-time employees, women who job share generally receive benefits prorated in accordance with the number of hours each works. For working mothers another advantage of job sharing is that people who job share often cover for each other when unusual family needs arise. In successful job sharing arrangements, the partners have a cooperative and supportive relationship, staying in close touch to maintain continuity on the job. Job sharing may be an option for a husband and wife in the same field as well as for two unrelated workers; some colleges and universities have allowed faculty couples to share a teaching position. The computer revolution makes possible yet another alternative work option for mothers seeking extra time and a more flexible schedule: telecommuting. According to reports in both the Wall Street Journal and the New York Times, telecommuting was the fastest-growing type of alternative work arrangement in the United States as of 1995. Even when a telecommuting employee is expected to adhere to fixed work hours, the arrangement still provides a significant savings in time spent dressing for work, commuting, and socializing with other employees. Experts caution, however, that a woman who works at home should not expect to simultaneously take care of her children. Telecommuting mothers may want to arrange for child care during their working hours and may be interested in establishing boundaries between their work and their family life. Some employers may change the employment status of telecommuters to that of independent contractors, resulting in a loss of benefits for the workers. A less common option is for the mother to become the sole family breadwinner while the father assumes the role of "househusband. One finding reported by the American Heart Association in April 1995, however, was that househusbands have a significantly higher risk of developing heart disease than men employed outside the home. The researchers who wrote the report theorized that the increased risk of heart disease is the result of stress caused by violating social expectations rather than the demands of child care. Some working mothers who want a challenging but flexible work schedule are drawn to self-employment. While the number of entrepreneurs in the United States increased 56 percent overall in the 1980s, the number of female entrepreneurs grew 82 percent. Women were expected to start 2. In the early 1990s

home-based businesses started by women were the fastest-growing type of small business. The number of women employed in these ventures tripled between and . Self-employment accommodated a wide range of skills and employment backgrounds, from cooking and crafts to consulting, writing, and practicing tax law. Self-employed women working at home may put in long hours and those leaving high-powered corporate jobs usually earn less money, at least initially, but they gain flexibility and control over their schedules. Like telecommuters, self-employed women may want to daycare arrangements and find strategies for separating their business and personal lives. Fortunately, start-up costs for home-based businesses are relatively low. For women requiring assistance, low-interest loans can be obtained through the Small Business Administration , which also runs a variety of training and networking programs for female entrepreneurs. A number of states also offer programs that aid women-owned businesses. Posted by imasaliza at babysittings More than 8 million school-age and 15 million pre-school-age children in the United States are placed in the charge of substitute care givers during the hours their mothers are working. The major options for child care include staggered work hours that allow parents to meet all child care needs themselves; care by relatives or close friends; hiring a babysitter or housekeeper; and child care in a private home or at public facilities, including day care centers, nursery schools or preschools, and company-sponsored programs. In , provisions for children under the age of five were split almost equally between in-home care by parents or other relatives and out-of-home care by nonrelatives. Between and , employment by day care centers increased over percent, representing a gain of almost , new jobs. Workplace child care facilities did not grow at the same rate: There are also a number of options for part-time child care as of the early s: A group of families share responsibilities for child care. Most cooperatives operate on a point basis rather than charging a monetary fee. Points are assigned to each family according to the number of its children and the number of hours of care they require. These programs send an adult caregiver to the home of a sick child on an as-needed basis. There are also day care programs run exclusively for chronically ill children. Play groups are similar to cooperative babysitting in that several parents get together to provide opportunities for supervised play for a group of children. Most play groups meet once or twice a week for two or three hours. Drop-in care is an option offered by some child care centers on an as-needed basis. Parents must pre-register and pay for this service, usually on an hourly basis. Drop-in care allows parents to bring their child in for three to four hours of supervised play on an occasional basis. Most child care centers that offer a drop-in option set an upper limit of 45â€”50 hours per child in any given month. Posted by imasaliza at household responsibilities On the home front, married working mothers, even those whose husbands espouse an egalitarian philosophy, still find themselves saddled with most of the housework and child care responsibilities.

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