

# Where's Daddy?: The UK Fathering Deficit



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## WHERE'S DADDY?: THE UK FATHERING DEFICIT

Families are society in miniature. Families foster trust, build relationship skills and moral values. It is inside families that we learn to trust, to form secure attachments, to be intimate with others whilst protecting each others' boundaries.

As the prime generator of human capital, the family unit is a central dimension of the modern economy. Families are where we learn emotional intelligence, an essential precondition of success in the new networked economy. In this sense, families are our primary sites of learning. They are informal schools, colleges, and skills agencies and the first tier in a lifelong learning system. They underpin safe and sustainable communities, in which enterprises and business can thrive. Families are also the centre of the care economy, without which the paid economy cannot function.

But all the signs are that families are under strain and experiencing a major under-investment of resources - of time and money. Paid work is taking up more and more time, whilst family structures are becoming more complex. By 2010 one in ten children will be stepchildren, meaning that relationships need to stretch across different households and family structures. Rectifying our under-investment in family life this means taking care seriously, re-framing our notions of social inclusion, and strengthening family networks and the capacity of families to invest time and resources in family life. It will include:

- positioning families in the minds of policy-makers and business as generators of the national wealth and a valuable resource from which everyone - including the single and childless - benefit;
- establishing that the care economy and the competitive economy are two sides of the same economic reality, neither of which can function without the other;
- recognising the increasing importance of eldercare, particularly to the 'sandwich generation' who have childcare and eldercare responsibilities;
- encouraging new patterns of male responsibility in the domestic sphere to complement women's transformed economic role;

- focusing attention on the quality of relationships (e.g. secure attachments), as opposed to family structure, between adults and their children.

In this context, considerable attention has been paid to the economic and labour market participation of women over the last twenty years or so. While this has resulted in significant improvements, more needs to be done to remove glass ceilings and pay gaps for women. However, the position of men – and fathers in particular – has received scant attention by comparison. In this paper we consider the causes of the UK's growing 'Fathering Deficit', present findings from a survey of working fathers, and suggest adjustments to both policy and practice.

### **Fathers in the UK Economy**

The focus on women's economic and labour market status has, in large measure, been due to the relative advantage enjoyed by men for centuries. However, in a modern, developed economy, the role which men need to play in family formation, in childcare and child development and in eldercare can often be underestimated. Indeed, it has taken the UK until 2003 to recognise that fathers should have a statutory right to paternity leave. There are several factors which hold working fathers back from participating more fully in family life:

- The Great British long hours culture - 1 in 8 employees usually work more than 48 hours a week and a third of employees work over 40 hours a week (plus 4 hours travelling time). It is overwhelmingly men who report working long hours – and working fathers are more likely than other men of a similar age to work long hours;
- Fathers in Britain work the longest hours in Europe – the National Child Development Survey (Ferri and Smith, Parenting in the 1990s, 1996) suggested that two-thirds of fathers were working in the evening and 6 in 10 at the weekends. Other research shows that Britain has the highest percentage in the EU of men and women working over 51 hours a week;
- New fathers work the longest hours of all men, working four times as much paid overtime as childless men. Typically, fathers spend very little time alone with their children, whereas their partners spend on average 63 hours a week. 48.3% of men and 48.5% of women employees experience conflict between work and

family. Half of British workers arrive home exhausted (highlighted as a key problem in Listening to Children exercises);

- By 2010 a quarter of all families will be single parent families, with over nine in ten headed by single mothers. More fragmented families can make it more difficult for fathers to participate in their children's lives;
- A study in 1997 suggested that fathers earn, on average, two-thirds of family incomes.<sup>1</sup> If they are in low paid jobs and depend on overtime, the long hours required to support their family may make it more difficult for them to spend time with their family.

If fathers are crucial to the formation of secure attachments and stable family life for children, and if sons are to play a full part in the care of elderly relatives, then their working lives will need to become more accommodating. But how desirable and possible is this likely to be? Is it what most men want, or is long-hours working a safe haven away from the complexity and pressure of family life?

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<sup>1</sup> Burgess, L. et al (1997) *Fathers and Fatherhood in Britain*: London: Family Policy Studies Centre

## **THE FATHERS' TALE**

In order to investigate how fathers themselves view the challenges and dilemmas facing them we conducted a survey of 500 working men. The survey, conducted with support from BT and Management Today magazine, focused on a range of work and domestic issues, and also sought their views on inter-generational differences in attitudes and behaviour.

Our 500 male respondents had the following characteristics:

- Most (four-fifths) had worked with same company for at least 3 years
- Three-quarters were aged 35-54
- 85% were married or living with their partner; two-thirds of these had partners who work
- Just over half (55 per cent) had children;
  - o one-fifth of all respondents had children under 5 years old
  - o two-fifths of all respondents had children under 10
  - o 9 out of 10 respondents with children lived with at least some of their children full-time. 7 per cent of respondents lived with their children part – time and 8 per cent did not live with their children at all.
- 6% had other caring responsibilities
- Nearly half of those with caring responsibilities for children or elderly relatives live with the people they care for full-time

Respondents were asked a range of questions about their goals, their careers, and their family life. The core findings were as follows:

### **Work-Life Balance and Family Matter**

Work-life balance matters. All the respondents, regardless of whether or not they had children, rated achieving a good work-life balance as one of their most important personal goals. This demonstrates that work-life balance is not simply about childcare, but matters also to those who may have other aspirations outside paid work.

For those with children, being a successful parent was the most important personal goal. However, all respondents were clear that achieving a work-life balance and being successful at work were important personal goals. The fact that achieving success at work was not linked to the personal goal of gaining a promotion suggests that, for many men, 'success' is not just about climbing the career ladder. Indeed getting a promotion trailed well behind other priorities, with providing support to parents being the lowest personal goal of the majority of respondents. It is clear that personal priorities lie with immediate family, doing well at work and getting the balance right.

### **Men at Work**

Most men enjoy their work, find it satisfying and like the people they work with:

- 96% find the work they do interesting and challenging – with over 55s more likely to be satisfied than under 35s who are building their careers
- 93% get a feeling of accomplishment from their job - with over 55s again more likely to feel satisfied
- 95% were treated with respect by their colleagues
- 91% are proud to work for their organisation, and pride increases with age
- 88% exercise a great deal of control over their working patterns, although again older workers do better, as do those in the public sector.

Most men were also happy with the way their career was progressing, with one third saying they had succeeded more quickly than they had expected. Half felt that they had progressed according to plan, with only 15% feeling that they were not progressing as quickly as they would like. In contrast to most statistics for women, where having children can affect career progression (senior women are much less likely to have children than their male counterparts), having children or having young children makes no difference to how well men are doing in their career.

Men were quite clear what mattered to climbing the career ladder. They argued that the four main factors in getting ahead were:

1. Being reliable
2. Being good at your job
3. Being good with clients
4. Being open and honest (although over 55s think this matters more than the under-35s do).

Being innovative, creating and using contacts, and getting on with your boss were also seen as important. But they all felt that, overall, having a career plan and knowing where you wanted to be was the most important factor in succeeding over a working lifetime. This may be a product of the 'new psychological contract' where individuals are expected to build their own career, as a quarter of under 35s saw this as important, compared to only one in ten (9%) of the over 55s. Being able to communicate and having strong interpersonal skills were also rated as important to success over mens' working lives.

### **Work vs. Life?**

However, despite men generally being satisfied with their work, there are clear signs that working life is seriously harming some respondents' family commitments and work-life balance:

- Nearly a third (30%) agree that the demands of their job seriously interfere with their private life
- A quarter feel they have neglected their family commitments
- Nearly a quarter (24%) feel they have neglected their children

And despite recent reassuring surveys from the DTI that found that over two-thirds of employers allowed their employees to vary their working hours<sup>2</sup>, our survey – conducted before the April 2003 regulations about flexible working – found that over two-fifths (41%) of respondents claimed to work for organisations NOT offering family friendly facilities or practices.

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<sup>2</sup> *The Second Work-Life Balance Study: Results from the Employers' Survey* (2003) DTI Employment Relations Series No.22

It was clear too that the British long hours working culture was alive and well. Four-fifths of respondents worked at weekends (most at least once or twice a month), usually for at least 4 hours at a time. And, for many, work commitments got in the way of Christmas festivities and commitments. 37% had some unscheduled working over the Christmas period, preventing 22% from buying presents for the family and 21% were prevented from attending the school play.

### **Negotiating the trade-offs between work and life**

For years research has shown that women have actively been making choices during their working life about when to have children, how to fit this into their career, and how much they will sacrifice at work for satisfaction at home, and vice versa. Our research shows that men are starting to make these choices too, becoming more willing to make a trade-off between their work and their family life.

Over a third of our respondents would gladly trade career progression for more time with their family - compared to 39% who would not. And it is not the youngest age group but those who are slightly older who are saying this: 38% of those aged between 35 agreed they would trade career success for work-life balance, as opposed to 38% of 25-34 year olds. Having a working partner has an impact: over 4 in 10 (42%) of those whose partner did not work would trade career progression for time with their family, compared to 34% of those whose partner did work.

Men who valued work-life balance were also more likely to spend more time helping around the home, and were slightly more likely to feel that they neglected their family over Christmas. 1 in 10 who thought work-life balance was important felt they neglected their family (11%), compared to 8 per cent of those who did not think work-life balance was important.

### **Attitudes to government policies**

The new flexible working regulations were introduced in April 2003, and included regulations that enabled parents of children under 6 to request flexible working and the introduction of two weeks paid paternity leave. It is unclear what the impact of

these regulations have been on employers, with some surveys suggesting that less than 1 in 1300 employees have been requesting flexible working.<sup>3</sup> However our survey conducted before the regulations were implemented suggested that organisations had some work to do to convince employees that the regulations were business relevant and necessary.

Our survey at the end of 2002 found that older workers were more likely to believe that the government had gone too far, with one in three over-45s arguing this, in contrast to only 7% of under-35s. In fact over half of under 35s believed that the government had not gone far enough. Those who were married were more likely to say that the policies did not go far enough: 45% of married respondents felt this way, as did 40% of cohabiting respondents, compared to a third of those living alone. Interestingly, however, it is co-habiting respondents who are most likely to think that the policies have gone too far: over one-fifth believe this (22%) compared to 19% of married couples and only 9% of those who are single, widowed or divorced.

The way that the household is organised changes men's views about government policy. Over half of men whose partners were not in paid work were far more likely to say that the policies did not go far enough. Career priority also impacts upon views. Contrary to what might be expected, 27% of men whose partner's career takes priority over his own think the policies have gone too far, compared to 16% of those whose own career takes priority.

### **Ambition vs. Life?**

Men with children have a different attitude to work. Whilst over three in five men said children had not impact upon their ambition, 28% of respondents who were married, co-habiting or had children said that their domestic commitments meant they were less ambitious. On average, our survey found that men with children are less ambitious than men without children, and that those with children aged three to four years are likely to have slightly lower ambitions than those with younger or older children.

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<sup>3</sup> KM Legal site

## **Generational differences**

Men agree that they are dealing with different issues to their fathers, and that they have far more to juggle in terms of demanding work, partners more likely to be in paid work, and a desire to spend more time at home.

These differences are reflected in the survey results: three quarters of all the respondents agreed that they were more likely to attach importance to work-life balance issues than their father, a response particularly likely from those aged under 55. Two-thirds of 35-44 year olds agreed that they played a bigger part in domestic life than their father and nearly two-thirds (64%) of 35-44 year olds said they felt guilty about neglecting domestic duties. Over 55s were less likely to agree with either of these statements.

## DIFFERENT DADS

The Work Foundation, Management Today and BT survey identified five distinctive types of fathers with different characteristics and ways of coping with a changing world. These are:

**21<sup>st</sup> Century Dad:** they consciously want to spend more time with their family than their father did – meaning they are more likely to feel they have neglected family commitments. Spend more time with their children and helping around the house, and likely to make some concessions at work to spend time with their family.

**Family Dad:** more likely to live in an unconventional family structure and perhaps not live full-time with his children. Likely to trade career progression for family time and choose employers for their work-life balance policies.

**Happy Dad:** probably work long hours but have high levels of job satisfaction and are not worried about work-life balance. Unlikely to feel they are neglecting their children.

**Juggling Dad:** likely to have a stereotypical family structure and have young children. More likely to have a traditional division of labour in the household but feel that they neglect family commitments and make use of employers' work-life balance policies.

**Carer Dad:** have elderly or sick dependents and spend five hours each day caring for dependants - but also work longer days than other dads because work success is a primary personal goal. They are more likely to feel they have neglected family commitments than those who do not have additional caring responsibilities.

**Childless Man:** more likely to be older and not married. They are more likely to pay for someone to do the housework and to have their 'next promotion' as their primary personal goal.

## **21<sup>st</sup> Century Dad**

*21<sup>st</sup> Century Dad* is acutely aware of generational differences. Whilst many of the men surveyed were juggling different roles – father, son, individual – *21<sup>st</sup> Century Dad* consciously wants to be different from his father, and spend more time with his family. However, they are also likely to be well aware that highly demanding jobs and their different attitudes to spending time with the family mean they are juggling a different set of balls than their fathers did. Depending on the issue between 40% and three-quarters of respondents felt that on a particular issue they were likely to act differently to their father.

*21<sup>st</sup> Century Dads* are more likely to be younger men and have children, especially younger children. For example, four-fifths of those with children agreed they thought work-life balance was more important than their father did, compared to 67% of those without children, and one in seven of those with children agreed they played a bigger part in domestic life than their fathers compared to half of those without children.

And *21<sup>st</sup> Century Dads* are also likely to spend more time with their children and to spend longer helping around the house – three-fifths (62%) felt that they both played a bigger part in domestic life and were more likely to feel guilty about neglecting domestic duties than their fathers had. This desire to spend time with the family may explain why, although *21<sup>st</sup> Century Dads* are likely to work half an hour less per day, they are more likely to feel they have neglected family commitments than those who do not perceive there to be significant intergenerational differences. Three quarters (74%) of men felt they were more likely to attach importance to work-life balance issues than their fathers but only a quarter of respondents felt that they were neglecting their family.

*21<sup>st</sup> Century Dads* are far less likely to have ‘work success’ as a primary goal and will probably become less ambitious when they have domestic commitments. Indeed two-fifths of respondents say they are more inclined to sacrifice career success in favour of their family than their father was. However, some *21<sup>st</sup> Century Dads* do not seem to think that having time with the family is a disadvantage to their career, believing that there are equal opportunities for those with families in the workplace. This seems to be a widespread view – four-fifths (82%) of respondents agreed that

there were equal opportunities for those with family commitments – but it was far more likely that those who did not perceive there to be significant intergenerational differences were amongst the 9 per cent who did NOT believe that there were equal opportunities for families at their workplace.

Although *21<sup>st</sup> Century Dads* believe there are equal opportunities, they are also far more likely to be one of the two-fifths of respondents who do not feel that government policy on family friendly working practices goes far enough, showing that they also feel family friendly issues are important, in contrast to those who do not perceive there to be significant intergenerational differences. This is despite the fact that *21<sup>st</sup> Century Dads* get a feeling of accomplishment from their job (as did 93 per cent of respondents) and that those who do not perceive there to be intergenerational differences are more likely to be in the 12 per cent of respondents who did not gain a feeling of accomplishment from their job.

The perception of career development varies as well. Those who do not believe there are intergenerational differences are more likely to see hard work as important to success at work. In contrast, *21<sup>st</sup> Century Dads* seem to endorse the importance of skills said to be crucial in the 'new economy'. These included communication and interpersonal skills, gaining a reputation, management skills and taking risks; a more entrepreneurial, network focused approach.

### **Family Dad**

*21<sup>st</sup> Century Dads* are not necessarily *Family Dad* however, a man who has children and is particularly concerned about the impact of work on his family life. Whilst both enjoy spending more time with their kids, it is the personal demographics in particular that differ for *21<sup>st</sup> Century Dads* and *Family Dad*. *Family Dad* are less likely to conform to a married with 2.4 (or 1.8 now) children stereotype, and are more likely to be one of the 9% of respondents living with an unmarried partner or to be divorced, and to have co-habited previously. Their eldest (two) children are also more likely to live with them on a part-time basis or not at all. It may be that these demographics reflect a previous experience of work impinging too much on family life (something that could perhaps be explored further in interviews).

Interestingly *Family Dad* are more likely to be amongst the 8 per cent who have a lower income than their current partner and they are less likely to have 'work success' or 'getting next promotion' as a primary personal goal. They are also less likely to believe that visibility to senior management and having a good understanding of internal politics are important to their career – both of which require more 'face time' in the workplace. This suggests both that *Family Dad* are less likely to believe in the importance of face time, and that they are more likely to worry about the impact of 'too much face time'.

*Family Dad* are also far more likely to be in the 34 per cent who would trade career progression for more family time, and to see job satisfaction as less important to overall career development. Instead dedication and determination are viewed as far more important to career progression. This seems strange given that this would imply a struggle for career progression, as if face time is important, whilst *Family Dad* are actually more likely to be fortunate in their employers. They are more likely to have employers who are concerned with health and well-being and to have employers who promote flexible working (which two-thirds of all respondents' employers did), offer family-friendly facilities or practices (three-fifths), maternity or paternity leave (12%), and extra leave arrangements.

Given that just over two-fifths (41%) of respondents claimed to work for organizations not offering family-friendly facilities or practices, this is a striking finding. However these paragon employers are unlikely to be coincidental; *Family Dad* are likely to select their employers on the basis of the work-life balance policies that they offer.

### **Juggling Dad**

*Juggling Dad* are men who have the stereotypical family structure: they live with their partner and their children also live with them full-time. This group is more likely to be younger, have fewer children and have younger children. They are also more likely to have a traditional division of labour within the household, with their spouse likely to be amongst the one in three (29%) staying at home, perhaps because of the youth of the children. They are also less likely to have co-habited previously.

*Juggling Dad* are more likely to be amongst the 6 per cent who have elderly or sick dependants and are more likely to feel that they neglect family commitments – for example work commitments prevented them seeing the school play at Christmas - although they work a slightly shorter day than those without traditional family structures. However they generally have understanding employers who offer extra leave arrangements.

Regarding career ambitions, *Juggling Dad* are more likely to have 'next promotion' as their primary personal goal – perhaps reflecting their youth as, the younger the respondent, the more likely it is that they will see promotion as an important personal goal. They see being a graduate as less important to career development and are sceptical about the importance of confidence and self-belief to careers overall.

### **Happy Dad**

*Happy Dad* are those who are not worried about work-life balance, have high levels of job satisfaction and do not feel they are neglecting their children. Generally *Happy Dad* are older, have older children and are likely to be amongst the 85 per cent who earn more than their partner.

*Happy Dad* are quite clearly in the four-fifths (39%) of all respondents who will not trade career progression for more time with their family (compared to a third (34%) who would). And to progress in their career, *Happy Dad* believes that being a graduate who is good at their job, does not make mistakes and is reliable are all crucial factors. However they also believe that luck is very important in determining overall career progression in the end.

Job satisfaction is high for *Happy Dad*, who do not feel great pressure from work, perhaps because they are content about the time they spend with their family. This would seem to be the only conclusion given the fact that *Happy Dad* are more likely to say they neglected their family over Christmas: 15% of *Happy Dad* did so, compared to 8% of other dads. According to their statistics, *Happy Dad* also spend less time with their family: 3 hours 20 minutes on domestic duties each work compared to 4 hours a week spent by other dads. However *Happy Dads* spend roughly the same amount of time with children each day, putting in 1 hour 54 minutes with their children each day. More than half (54%) of *Happy Workers* have a spouse that works (with the remaining 46% having a spouse not in paid work).

## **Carer Dad**

*Carer Dad* are those men who have elderly or sick dependents and make up 6 per cent of the respondents. *Carer Dad* spend five hours each day caring for dependants, and yet are also more likely to work longer days than those without eldercare or healthcare responsibilities as well as being likely to be in the 9 per cent working most weekends. It is perhaps unsurprising that they are also more likely to feel they have neglected family commitments than those without additional caring responsibilities.

This may be because 'work success' is likely to be a primary personal goal, – although interestingly this is not allied with the goal of promotion, which *Carer Dad* are unlikely to prioritise - and they are particularly likely to be one of the 9 in 10 respondents proud to work for their organisation. But it seems that *Carer Dad* may be feeling it will be difficult to achieve this; they are less likely to feel valued by senior management (only 8% do not feel valued by senior management) and they are likely to be one of the 28 per cent whose employer has expressed concern about their health and well-being – perhaps because of the openness and honesty they say is important in their current role.

The qualities seen as important to overall career development also seem symptomatic of a general feeling of being under pressure: confidence and self-belief are seen as particularly important to success. Having a mentor is regarded as a help in developing their career in their current role.

Given the long working days, desire for success and the feeling that the family is being neglected, it is not surprising that *Carer Dad* may also fall in the *21<sup>st</sup> Century Dad* category in that they feel themselves to be under greater work pressure than their father had been. The tension between caring responsibilities and success at work seems to be taking its toll.

## **Childless Men**

*Childless Men* are more likely to be older and not married, in contrast to men with children (more likely to be younger and married). Not having children also makes it

less likely that these men will pay for someone to do the housework, with only one in three of *Childless Men* paying compared to two-fifths of those with children.

*Childless Men* are more likely to have their 'next promotion' as their primary personal goal and see work success and supporting their parents as more important. However they are less likely to see taking risks, being good with clients or intelligence / analytical ability as being particularly important in overall career development.

## **WHAT NEXT?**

Dads matter. Men have usually been the breadwinner in families, but as more and more women enter paid work, their roles are changing. Dads are not only important to their families and children, but they also want to become more involved. Men are starting to face the same choices as women do, to recognize the trade-offs they may need to make between their career and the rest of their life – and nearly 4 in 10 (39%) would sacrifice their career for the rest of their life. But what about the men who would like to change the way they work and live – but feel they can't? What about the 40% of respondents who said their organization did not have family-friendly policies for them? What else should change to address the UK's fathering deficit?

### **Government policy**

The importance of the early years of children's lives have been recognized in numerous government policies, from Sure Start to the Children's Trust Fund. Ensuring children get a good start in life pays dividends throughout their lives – and fathers have an important role to play. Enabling fathers to spend time with their children and partners, to share domestic responsibilities and to provide role models for their children is important for the family, community and wider society. It also has economic implications, as more and more women are in paid work and rely upon partners to help juggle domestic and economic responsibilities.

The Pre-Budget report's pledge of £50 a week to all working families with children is welcome. However, the government needs to do more to link early years policies with employment regulations, welfare to work policies and measures to tackle child poverty. In practice this means giving parents – particularly mothers but fathers as well – genuine choices about how to manage their paid work and their caring responsibilities during the early years of children's life. The recent Working Parents regulations were a significant step towards this. Two weeks paternity leave, paid at the Statutory Maternity Pay level of £100 per week, and allowing parents to request changes in their working patterns acknowledge the importance of giving parents greater flexibility.

However, choices are restricted according to income. Many fathers who need to work long hours in order to make ends meet – particularly with the costs of a new

baby – may be unable to afford to take up this leave. If paternity leave is to be a possibility for most dads, it needs to be better remunerated. Similarly maternity leave pay decreases after a certain period of time, which may mean that mothers have to go back to work earlier than they would like, or that fathers have to work long hours to enable mothers to stay at home. Research quoted by Liz Kendall, Director of Maternity Alliance, in the Guardian on 12 December 2003 suggests that how mothers feel about working during children's early years has a huge impact upon children. If a mother wants to, and can, work, and it improves her sense of well-being, it may be beneficial to children. However, if she does not want to work or is forced to work long or inflexible hours, there may be risks for child development. Early years education and childcare needs to be linked to flexible working opportunities that enable men and women to have genuine choices about managing their responsibilities.

### **Organisational issues**

There is also a cultural issue; many fathers who may be able to afford to take the leave may feel unable to do so. An investment bank, for example, said about its new paternity leave policies: *"We're going to use it to weed out the losers."*<sup>4</sup> Long hours cultures in organisations, believing that presenteeism equaling productivity, assumptions about who should have responsibility for childcare and the knock-on effect this can have upon career development continue to be disincentives for many men who might otherwise take up the option of paternity leave.

More regulations are not the answer to this cultural problem. However, government could do more to encourage organisations to track whether rights to paternity leave, maternity leave and flexible working are being taken up – and through employee surveys whether new dads and other working parents would like to use the leave, but are unwilling to do so. Similarly tracking whether it is possible for employees who take up flexible working options to progress through the organisation may indicate that organisations have policies saying one thing, and promotion criteria demanding people work long hours in order to progress. With demographics changing rapidly, organisations cannot afford to lose all this talent.

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<sup>4</sup> Reeves, R. (2002) *Dad's Army*: The Work Foundation

Indeed work-life balance policies are increasingly becoming cost-effective methods for organisations to retain key employees who wish to have greater flexibility over their time. The average cost of labour turnover in 2001 was £3463 per leaver, and turnover amongst managers costs an average of £5699 per leaver. It is clear from this survey that social attitudes are changing and it is becoming increasingly acceptable for men to want to spend time with their children. Men are becoming more and more willing to make career sacrifices for their family as work-life balance becomes more important to them – and they may vote with their feet if their organisation will not provide it.

Dads should be encouraged to take on more responsibilities within the domestic sphere, not discouraged. Those dads in our survey who struggled to spend time with their family and achieve success at work are experiencing the struggles that many women have been dealing with for years. It's about time society woke up and recognised the importance to the economy and society as a whole of ensuring that mums and dads can invest time and resources in their families. The care deficit needs to be filled.

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