

Three Key Election Questions For your Prospective Parliamentary Candidates

Are you interested in what the next Government will do for working parents? Who has the most family friendly ideas?

Ask your prospective parliamentary candidates these three questions:

1. How will you increase the number and quality of flexible jobs available?

You could ask your candidates where they stand on extending the right to request flexible working or how they think more jobs might be advertised on a flexible or part time basis.

Working Families solutions:

- All jobs to be advertised on a flexible or part time basis (unless there are sound business reasons why not)
- Extend the right to request to all workers so parents don't get sidelined and the benefits of flexible working are more widely available

2. What will you do to improve families' choices to share the care?

In particular, how will they make it easier for fathers to take leave or work flexibly? Do they think that statutory payments should be at least at national minimum wage levels? How will they improve parental leave so that more parents can use it?

Working Families solutions:

- Give fathers a paid and independent right to extended leave for a new baby
- Ensure all fathers/partners are allowed paternity leave, regardless of how long they've been in work
- Extend the eligibility criteria for paternity leave and pay
- Pay Statutory Maternity Pay and Statutory Paternity Pay at least at national minimum wage levels
- Improve parental leave so more parents can access it and introduce an equivalent for carers

3. How will you simplify childcare, benefits and tax credits?

What will they do to help parents working weekends and evenings find appropriate childcare? Can they make the benefits system easier to understand and more responsive to parents' frequently changing hours of work?

Working Families solutions:

- More flexible and affordable childcare to reflect flexible work patterns
- Tax credits awards to be made for shorter periods
- The state to pay 100% (not 80%) of childcare costs via tax credits

Working Families has produced a manifesto of demands for the next Government, which sets out some solutions for the new government, which you can view here:

http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk/index.php?view=article&id=434&Itemid=717&option=com_content

We've received support for our demands from a number of organisations, details are available here: <http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk/index.php?view=article&id=440>