

celebrating thirty years

30

changing the way we live and work



# the 1980s

## the grass roots years – a movement begins

Work-life balance was primarily a 'mother's issue', championed by women who wished to return to work. Interest from organisations centered on childcare as they sought to recruit and retain women. High profile campaigns to get female teachers and nurses back into work offered childcare assistance. Innovators were beginning to think about jobsharing and new ways of working.

1979 1980 1981 1982 1983 1984 1985 1986 1987 1988

1979: The EOC funds the Job Share Project's first paid worker, Adrienne Boyle, who works from her front room writing the three guides on job sharing for employees, employers and trades unions, published in 1981. The project was formed by a group of women who met at a conference in 1977 discussing the problems they faced trying to combine paid work with caring for their children. Between 1977 – 1979 the Job Share group consisted of an informal network which met regularly. By 1981 this group helps establish Hackney Job-share, who exhibit nationally promoting job sharing. **In 1982 the Job Share Project becomes New Ways to Work**, widening their objective to promoting flexible working for all. Innovative research and publications soon appear, including the first detailed guidance for employers on implementing job sharing.

Almost simultaneously, in 1980, a group of mothers meet in Clapham, London, to discuss the problems of going back to work and childcare. From this comes the Working Mother's Association, with over 100 groups around the country. In 1982 the group publishes a guide to finding and choosing childcare, which eventually goes to more than 25,000 people. **In 1985 the group becomes the Working Mothers Association**. In 1989 they produce first UK Employer's Guide to Childcare.

1970: Equal Pay Act – equal pay for equal work

1975: UK Sex Discrimination Act outlaws discriminating against a person because of their gender. The Act specifies two types of discrimination – direct and indirect. Indirect discrimination will play a key role as women start to ask for reduced hours and flexible working. Also in 1975 The Employment Protection Act gives limited maternity rights to women.

1987: Education Secretary Kenneth Baker supports job sharing to encourage more women to return to teaching.

1988: Family Credit introduced, providing support for low income families in work. Gemini Recruitment, the first job share agency, launched in Essex by June Saltmarsh and Fiona Elphick. Today this kind of work goes from strength to strength, with jobsharing and flexible working promoted by many innovative enterprises, including Working Families partners Jobshare UK, Sapphire Partners and Women Like Us. Midland Bank launches workplace nurseries programme. Boots Retail Division and British Telecom launch job share schemes. CBI warns of impending demographic time bomb – an aging workforce and a smaller pool of new employees. Attracting and retaining working mothers becomes increasingly important.

# the 1990s

## the family friendly years

Flexible working of all kinds evolved as a way for employers to enable women to reconcile work and family life. It was also a necessary adaptation to compensate for a shortage of affordable, good quality childcare and eldercare. Business focussed on the benefits for recruitment and retention delivered by flexible working.

1989 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999

1990: Inaugural WMA Employer of the Year Awards, to reward good practice and drive the agenda. The first winner: Oxfordshire County Council. In 1993 WMA is founder member of Childcare Umbrella, which campaigns for a national childcare strategy, and **a year later become Parents At Work**. They join with NWW to give evidence to the House of Commons Employment Select Committee on Mothers in Employment. In 1995 PAW's Waving *not* drowning network of parents of disabled children launches the first campaign to help parents work as well as care. Go Home on Time Day follows in 1996, challenging long working hours.

NWW continues to produce innovative research and publications. In 1995 *Balanced Lives*, an ahead-of-its-time study of men and flexible working, is published. NWW provides expert evidence at a number of Employment Tribunal hearings. The Robinson v Odbbins indirect sex discrimination ruling is aided by NWW's "very impressive" evidence. NWW forges international links with a joint Government/EOC/EU conference in 1998.

In 1999 Minister Margaret Hodge MP launches NWW's *Time for Change: a guide to flexible work patterns for SMEs*. She says: **"It's a sobering thought that NWW has been advocating change in the culture of the workplace for nearly 20 years. Is it any wonder then that their latest booklet is called *Time for Change?*"**

1990: BBC Radio Woman's Hour and the Department of Employment spearhead a campaign, 'Back to the Future', to encourage women with family commitments back to work.

1993: £45 million government grant scheme to create after school and holiday childcare facilities.

1997: Labour government elected – faster pace of political change around work-life balance issues, leading to the Right to Request flexible working, increased maternity leave provision, limited paternity leave and the National Childcare Strategy.

1998: Fairness at Work white paper on family-friendly employment. **"My ambition for this White Paper goes far wider than the legal changes we propose. It is nothing less than to change the culture of relations in and at work – and to reflect a new relationship between work and family life."** PM introduction to white paper.

1998: National Childcare Strategy sets out to ensure "accessible, affordable and quality childcare for children aged 0 to 14".

1999: Employment Relations Act implements parental leave, and enhances maternity leave. Lloyd's TSB launches Work Options scheme – first employer programme to enable every employee to request flexible working on a business neutral basis.

**From 1990 Europe increasingly influences flexible working in the UK. Directives on Working Time, Pregnant Workers, Parental Leave and Part-time Workers make a significant impact.**



# the 2000s

## the flexi decade

We are living through a real escalation of flexible working. Technology starts to have a significant impact in changing how and where work is done, and employment regulations help support this change. Increasingly flexible working is seen as making 'business sense' and linked into employee engagement and heightened performance. More and more the conversation around work life balance includes men and carers, as well as mothers.

19 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009

2000: PAW launches Britain's Best Boss competition. Pam Walton of NWW appointed to Government's Ministerial Advisory Committee on Work Life Balance. NWW and PAW both accredited as consultants to the DTI Work-Life Balance Challenge Fund for employers. In 2001 Sue Monk of PAW appointed to Government's Work and Parents Taskforce, whose recommendations lead directly to the Right to Request Flexible Working.

### 2003: PAW and NWW merge to form Working Families.

In 2004 WF publishes *Daddy's Home* – its highest selling publication, reflecting a growing appetite amongst men for flexible working. Also published is *Time, Health and the Family*, a new look at the way work is affecting family life. In 2005 WF publishes studies on managing absenteeism and on enhancing productivity and goes on to publish a number of reports which further develop the business case for work-life balance. From 2006 WF leads a consortium of voluntary sector organisations and trades unions in the influential Working Parents lobbying group. In 2007 jointly with Scope and Treehouse, WF publishes *Making work WORK for parents of disabled children*, promoted at fringe meetings at main party conferences. In 2008 WF convenes a group of working parents to give evidence to the Walsh Review into Flexible Working, and celebrates the Review's recommendation that parents of all children up to the age of 16 should have the right to request flexible working.

2000: Government's £11m Work-Life Balance Challenge Fund encourages employers to introduce flexible working.

2002: Employment Act introduces paid paternity leave of two weeks and a new right to request flexible working for fathers and mothers, implemented April 2003.

2003: Launch of current tax credits system, including more generous help with the costs of registered childcare.

2006: Work and Families Act extends maternity leave to a year and pay from six to nine months, and extends the Right to Request to carers of adults (implemented April 2007). Provision is made for the future introduction of Additional Paternity Leave, transferable by the mother to the father.

2008: The Walsh Review considers flexible working in the UK and recommends that the Right to Request flexible working is extended to cover the parents of older children. This is accepted by the Government. Enhanced rights for fathers to take leave are also recommended.



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## Pam Walton

**In 1976 Pam Walton returned full time to her job as a senior professional role for a water authority after three months maternity leave.**

After a year she tried to negotiate a job share, but her employers were unwilling to try out this highly unusual practice. Reluctantly Pam left and (after a year) went to work for the EOC, but her experiences fired her commitment to flexible working and she went on to be a founder member of New Ways to Work.

In 2007, whilst carrying out research for Working Families on flexible working, she interviewed two women job sharing a job at Yorkshire Water at a similar senior level to the one she had to leave over 30 years ago.



## Lucy Daniels

**Lucy was working in the electronics industry when she had her first child.**

The early 1980s was a time when there was very little information or support for new parents returning to work and she became involved as a volunteer in a fledgling group to do just that. From its roots in Clapham grew a network of self-help groups throughout the country. Going to talk to other groups and hearing about other mothers' lives, Lucy was struck by the barriers many women faced – especially those on low incomes seeking to return to work.

She went on to help set up the Working Mothers Association, becoming the charity's founding director. Ten years on, Lucy oversaw WMA becoming Parents at Work. She remains a close associate of what is now Working Families.

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.....

..... Postcode: .....

Daytime telephone number: .....

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I enclose my donation of £ .....

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Start date   /   Expiry Date   /   Switch Card Issue No.

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Charity Number: 1099808

**Working Families**  
**1-3 Berry Street**  
**London EC1V 0AA**

Telephone: 020 7253 7243

[www.workingfamilies.org.uk](http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk)

30,000 women each year are forced from their jobs after becoming pregnant.

3 out of 5 people will be a carer at some stage in their working lives.

One third of fathers spend more than 50 hours per week at work, compared to one quarter of men without children.

# working families is thirty years old

**We have successfully met many different challenges along the way, and helped to change the landscape of how work and 'life' works. As we look to the future, we ask for your support to continue and develop the charity.**

The Working Families vision is still for families, for each parent and carer, to be able to control their balance of working and caring.

There are many common threads in our work today which can be tracked back over the thirty years, but the key issues we face today are: in-work poverty, long hours and wasted talent.

These are important because:

- **being in work doesn't stop families being poor;**
- **discrimination against working mothers wastes talent and reduces family incomes;**
- **long working hours steals time from family life;**
- **outdated working means employers lose out.**

Part-time work confines almost three million women to jobs that do not use their full potential. These women are either over-qualified or have more experience than necessary for the jobs they are doing. The main reason for this is the lack of part-time or flexible jobs at more senior levels.

Talented individuals are slipping through the net because of a lack of flexible opportunities. Opening up more jobs on a reduced-hours basis will allow employers to fish in a much bigger talent pool.

Employees look to employers to match their flexible working aspirations. Increasingly, they will choose the employer who offers the opportunity to achieve a good work-life balance.

The gender pay gap is 17%. For women working reduced hours, the part-time penalty is even higher at around 35%.

# and needs your support in 2009 and

When we look ahead, we can add two more challenges. Today's uncertain economic situation threatens to send employers and our political leaders back in time. It is vital that Working Families continues to demonstrate the benefits to business of working flexibly, and to shape and use employment rights to protect the most vulnerable.

There is going to be an explosion in the number of carers for older people in the next decades, which will have an enormous impact on employers and employees. In many ways it is harder to manage than childcare because of its unpredictability in duration and demands. What we have learned about supporting working parents, and about employee motivation and performance, must be applied and extended so that the huge challenge of an aging population can be met successfully.

## We need your help in finding the funds to:

- provide legal and benefits advice to those most in need, to low income parents and to parents of disabled children;
- carry out research and lead new thinking about how work and family life can add value to each other;
- argue for the political changes which will help families and businesses in the future;
- work with employers to demonstrate how working smarter is the future for successful sustainable working practices;
- speak up for working parents and their children.

**Average cost of a full time nursery place for a child aged under two is over £8000 per year. The average UK full time salary, after tax, is around £18,500.**

**Where parents are able to spend time with their children, the children are likely to benefit. Improved educational performance, better relationships and better mental health have all been identified by researchers.**

# beyond

[www.workingfamilies.org.uk](http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk)

Work today just doesn't work for far too many families, and for too many employers it does not deliver the returns which business needs to flourish – especially in challenging economic times.

The future is in our hands, a future where men and women are able to work at their best, at home and in the workplace, where children flourish and business is profitable.

**Working Families has the vision, experience and the expertise to achieve this future.**

**With your help today, we can.**



**Long hours and unsustainable working practices harm organisational effectiveness. Stress, wellbeing and performance are improved when employees are able to better balance work and life.**

**Over half of poor children now live in households in which an adult is working and the number of poor children in working households – 1.5 million – has not changed since 1997.**

**It costs three times more to bring up a disabled child than a non-disabled child. Over half of families with a disabled child live in, or on the margins of, poverty.**



## helpline

Both NWW and PAW operated helplines for employees who were trying to negotiate flexible hours with their employers. Demand for this service meant that it became a significant area of work for each charity. Following merger, Working Families continued to provide a helpline, with qualified solicitors and benefits advisers providing a free advice service. Since 2003 the advice service has helped between 5000-7000 people each year. The information from callers is used as an evidence base to inform and develop Working Families policy and campaigning themes.

### In 1978 Working Families legal adviser Cathy Rogan was born.



Her mother was entitled to 6 weeks maternity pay at 90% of earnings, and 11 weeks antenatal and 29 weeks postnatal leave.

She had to have worked for her employer for two years to have the right to return to her job.

Today Cathy would be able to take up to a year's maternity leave, with SMP paid for up to 39 weeks.

Her partner is able to take off two weeks paid paternity leave.

In addition, each parent is entitled to take Parental Leave.

Today, every woman has the right to return to her job, irrespective of how long she has worked for her employer.

