

WHO CARES?

RECENT RESEARCH ON CAREGIVING
SPRING 2005

POSITIVE EFFECTS OF GOOD CARE

Often we hear of how a famous person got his start being inspired or advised by a role model. But we rarely think of this role-model as a 'caregiver'. Yet he/she was. It is very common that such a person also was unpaid for the advice and that their input was all the more appreciated because it came out of love, and not because of a paycheck. Comedian Dave Allen has died March 10- 2005 at age 68 - a renowned performer in Britain for many years. He admitted that he got his start working with Sophie Tucker who spotted him during a minor role in London in the 1960s and suggested he come to Australia. While there he worked with operate singer Helen Traubel who suggested instead of using corny one-liners that he use material from his youth. It was the switch to reality humor that became his trademark.

Though thinking hard about a problem has long been thought the way to solve it, recent research has given support to the old solution adage of 'sleep on it". Professor Ap Dijksterhuis at the U of Amsterdam has released results of experiments in which students were given complex problems to solve such as choosing an apartment or roommate with one set of students forced to decide fast while the other was distracted by an irrelevant task first. Dr. Timothy Wilson at the U of Virginia asked people to choose between five posters to take home but had some choose immediately and let others think the decision through for a long period. The results of the studies suggested that those who were happiest with their decisions long-term were those who decided quickly and that 'unconscious ' thinkers make the best decisions. Dr. Matthew Walker at Harvard Medical School woke up subjects at several points in the night and asked them to solve anagram puzzles. Those who were awakened immediately after REM dream-filled sleep did 32% better on the puzzles than those who were awakened after sleep wit no dreams. Researchers suggested that the more complex a problem is, the less likely it is that intense conscious thought will help solve it- but dreaming, and daydreaming may help. One stunning example is that Nolan Bushnell had his

best video game design idea ever while lazing on the beach. He founded Atari using \$500 US and sold it five years later for \$28 million US.

Dr. Michael Guiffre has just been awarded Physician of the Year by the Calgary Medical Society and says he became a pediatrician mainly because as one of the older ones in a family of seven children, taking care of those younger was second nature. Saying "in a big family the little kids are part of your responsibility" , he says he loved being surrounded by the resilient and inspiring spirit of little babies. Guiffre himself has five children and though his life is surrounded by high incidence of sadness (pediatric cardiology has higher death rates than pediatric cancer), he remains devoted to the field.

Hospice Calgary Society has announced that it has recently produced a book entitled "Good Grief: Supporting the Bereaved Student" (March 2005). The book was co-written by Sarah Walker and notes that young children often appear to be coping well with grief but are hiding real emotional upheaval. Walker has seen situations where a child is happy and horsing around in the day but sobbing or having stomach aches every night and she felt it necessary to create a guidebook for adults to help notice what grief looks like in a child. She has found that children mourn not just death of a parent but also death of a sibling and even death of a grandparent. Through talks with bereaved children and teens she discovered that not everybody wants the same type of treatment either. Children often say they don't want excess attention such as a PA announcement of the death but they also don't want their situation to be ignored or belittled with statements like 'Get over it'. Some like condolence cards, a memory table, a scrapbook to honor the deceased. Teens prefer freedom to grieve in their own way but do not like to be spied on, kept at home, or bombarded with endless questions. Some teens prefer that only their closest friends know of their loss. Walker says that if grief is becoming a problem the child or teen may turn to drugs or thoughts of suicide. Even before a loss, children may show symptoms of grief if there is serious illness in the family that threatens death. Walker advises that when a parent is seriously ill, there is not just a threatened loss of their presence, but also a huge change in daily routine and every family member deals with such losses differently. She suggests that real friends and family members appreciate concrete efforts to babysit, drive, help with homework or meals, rather than generalized condolences.

<http://www.hospitce-calgary.com>

Lieutenant-Governor James Bartleman of Ontario has responded to recent news that the rate of suicide attempts among residents of Nunavut is 3,000 for a population of 26,000 by a unique action. He has created a Books Up North campaign and has already sent 1.2 million books to isolated native communities with the view that literacy will help disaffected youth find hope (March 2005) Bartleman is the nation's first aboriginal lieutenant governor and was himself raised in poverty in central Ontario, next to the 'village dump'. A wealthy Pittsburgh neighbor befriended him and offered to pay for his education and Bartleman attended university, entered the foreign service for 35 years and has now authored 3 books. He has contributed royalties from his latest book to his campaign and now plans to establish summer camps for native children to include literacy training. He says that simple literacy can save lives.

NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF BAD CARE

Christine Berry of the Calgary Counselling Centre has revealed that the increasing incidence of teens cutting themselves is not related to suicidal tendencies in most cases. She says children who self-harm or self-mutilate are often trying to get rid of an emotional or other pain and cutting themselves actually releases endorphins and gives them a pleasant rush.. Berry estimates those who self-harm number 400 -750 for every 100,000 in the population, equally distributed between males and females. Her organization is hosting workshops to help caregivers and counselors in the field. Berry notes that a history of sexual abuse is not uncommon in self-mutilators but often peer pressure is playing a role, to get attention and be part of a crowd.

Though parents and schools point out to teens the dangers of alcohol, recent studies show that peer pressure to join clubs and parental role models of drinking are so strong that binge drinking among teens is still a problem. Dr. Bill Mountain-Stephen of the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto says the number of teens admitted for excessive drinking in 2004 was 45, more than triple what it was four years earlier. In the 2001 Ontario Student Drug Use Survey, 27.5% of Ontario students in grade 7 said they had engaged in binge drinking at least once in the preceding four weeks and 6.2% of those asked had done so at least four times. Among students age 19-24 at post-

secondary, 72% reported having engaged in binge drinking at least once in the preceding 12 months with 6% saying that they had done so at least 50 times. Binge drinking is defined as a man having at least five or a woman having at least four drinks on a single occasion. In some cases the alcohol binge is part of a fraternity initiation with teens not aware of signs of alcohol poisoning such as semi-consciousness, unconsciousness, breathing 8 or less breaths per minute, cold clammy skin, bluish skin or lips. Dr. Jurgen Rehm of the Canadian Centre for Addiction and Mental Health advises that when a crisis happens many teens panic and worry about calling for help because they may get in trouble with the law. He suggests that schools do a better job in encouraging teens to get help in crisis and that schools work harder to get teens to not engage in the activity.

Dr. Suniya Luthar of Columbia University has released results of a study comparing teens in a wealthy New York City suburb with teens in the inner city (March 2005) and has found that the wealthier ones are not faring well. Though the average household income for the wealthy was over \$130,000 US per year, teens in those homes had an average consumption of cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana and hard drugs higher than did those in poorer homes. Dr. Luthar found that the incidence of wealthy teenage girls showing signs of clinical depression was 3 times the national average and at least one in 10 of the wealthy teens was doing poorly in school and showing classic signs of juvenile delinquency -'acting out". Those most likely to exhibit bad behavior were those left alone at home for several hours a week. Those whose behaviors were good, had high self-esteem and who were doing well in school were most likely to have dinner with at least one parent most nights

How to respond to bullies has become a key focus of many schools with a common approach being calm discussion with offenders, and campaigns to discourage bullying for the general school population. However a teacher at Langruth Elementary School in Manitoba has taken a different tack. (March 2005). When three young boys were complained about for swarming and mocking other children and spilling water on a notebook, the teacher forced the 3 offenders to be subjected to taunts and jeers of older students to see what it was like to be a victim. The children, one of whom was ten, were also forced to wear hockey helmets with inscriptions of "Loser' or "I tease people" or "I'm stupid because I'm a bully" written on them. Jackie Sutherland, mother of one of the boys thus treated, said the punishment

was excessive . However the principal of the school says it was appropriate. Alicia Ordonez of the U of Manitoba department of psychology however says there are other ways to teach empathy and this is more like fighting violence with violence.

Dr. Tom Lipinski, chartered psychologist has suggested March 2005 that emotional nurturing is as important as physical nurturing and yet is often neglected in our culture. He believes that if a child's feelings are not recognized and responded to the child remains stuck at that stage of development, and he has often seen adults dealing with anxieties based on arrested emotional development from childhood. Lipinski say that from birth babies need to be cuddled and held and that is why hospitals often have cuddlers in the nurseries. He says that children told in our culture told to ignore hunger after a meal or pain for a minor injury learn to not believe their own body's messages of emotion, to their later detriment. Lipinski says that it is vitally important to have an adult attend to the emotional needs of the child.

Though many educators permit a level of chatting among students as conducive to creative thought, recent studies are finding that noise levels within classrooms may be so high as to hamper learning. The Canadian Language and Literacy Research Network has released results of studies March 10 2005 finding that in a typical grade 1 classroom there is so much background noise that children had trouble understanding even one of 6 simple clearly spoken words. Though current guidelines for acceptable background noise levels are under 35 decibels, the study found that most classrooms exceed that noise level ten times. Some of the noise was from student chatter while other noises came from manipulating classroom equipment and furniture. Researchers said children are more susceptible than are adults to distraction and that for optimum learning, students in grade one need a classroom 7 decibels quieter than those needed by students in grade 6.

Dr. Andrew Herrell of the U of Alberta has released results of a study March 14 2005 that looked at how parents act with their 2-5 year old children in grocery stores. The children were rated by researchers on a 10 point scale of physical attractiveness and then it was noted whether the

parents treated those low on the scale differently from those high on the scale. The research found that only 1.2% of the least attractive children were buckled into the grocery cart compared to 13.3% of the more attractive ones and that the less attractive children were allowed to wander away more often than were their cuter counterparts. The researchers concluded that parents tend to favor attractive children and set them up for less injury. Dr. Judith Langlois conducted a similar study at the U of Texas in 1995 and found that mothers of more attractive infants were more affectionate and more playful with them than were mothers of less attractive infants. Herrell says the favoritism may be unconscious and may be based on evolution, the desire to nurture those who pass on best genetic material. He notes that the neglect may be very subtle, such as engaging in conversation with other adults more readily and letting the less attractive child wander off. (attractiveness is subjective and one can't help but think of other theories such as the 'unattractive' children may be more exploratory and therefore bruised from injury to begin with so wandering is their nature, or that, were there such as category as attractive parents, they may have somehow had more lifestyle choices themselves and may be keener parents.. editor)

CAREGIVING RESEARCH

Though historically men have waged war and women have waited back home or manned the factories to keep the economy moving, it is often the voice of women that has ended wars. In Ireland after the death of their brother Robert at the hands of the Irish Republic Army, five sisters have dared to speak out against the violence. Robert McCartney was killed at age 33 and was survived by a fiancée Bridget Hagan. She and McCartney's sisters Gemma, Paula, Donna, Cathrin and Claire have now denounced the IRA and its code of silence and have demanded courtroom justice for the murder (March 2005). Some have praised their outspokenness as parallel to the work of Bernadette Devlin who in 1969 at age 21 was elected to the House of Commons in that country. The sisters were feted on St. Patrick's Day at the US White House, in lieu of the usual guest on such occasions, Gerry Adams of Sinn Fein. The sisters appeared at a Sinn Fein conference in Dublin and were greeted with applause when they turned down an offer by the IRA to shoot the men who had killed their brother. Paula McCartney attends Queen's University in Belfast and has said the men engaged in killings are

psychopaths - she says likening them to the Mafia is an insult to the Mafia and feels that "the only way our family will know the truth is when we hear witness statements in a court". The five sisters and two brothers were raised in a Roman Catholic district and were sheltered in early childhood from the yearly parade of the Orangemen. The nonpartisan stance of the sisters has been praised as having a potential to end violence. Martin Mc Guinness of Sinn Fein has said "It's vitally important for the McCartney campaign that they don't stray into party politics".

Since the care of young children is now getting much government attention but only if provided by 3rd party strangers, I have done a quick look at large institutional daycare providers in the US to see what they offer. (March 2005)

1. scope and scale of the operations - Knowledge Learning Corporation operates 1300 child care centers in the US (750 community based, 90 employer based, 450 school partnerships) Mulberry Child Care Centers has many administrative levels including teacher, assistant teacher, lead teacher (staff supervisor), assistant director, center director, regional director, bookkeeper/clerk and cooks. Bright Horizons says it is the world's leading provider of employer sponsored child care, early education and work/life consulting services, managing over 550 early care and education centers in the US, Europe and Canada It serves over 400 companies including over 80 Fortune 500 companies. La Petite Academy operates 645 early childhood education centers including 587 free-standing operations, 29 early learning centers, 29 Montessori Unlimited schools, and 80 private kindergartens. It has 13,000 employees. La Petite Academy has teachers and staff accountants, field auditors and senior business systems analysts Blackstocks Development Corporation has wholly owned subsidiaries of Kids Connection Corp and Tiny Tots, Inc. KinderCare operates over 1250 learning centres serving 120,000 children between ages 6 weeks and 12 years.

2 corporate interests _ Knowledge Learning Corporation merged with KinderCare Learning Centers Inc. Blackstocks Development Corporation says its strategy is to 'acquire 49 centers yearly until a national footprint is achieved' by 2007. The website says 'we are an innovative group of entrepreneurs and educators" It analyzes the markets on its website and says its goal is to make acquisitions. Kids Connection Corp focuses on acquisition, development and operations of existing, successfully run daycare centers in growth areas. Tiny Tots Inc focuses on one-site daycares for

hospitals and health related professionals. It names the 'competition' as the 'other center based childcare providers, schools, home-based, nannies and parents"

3. claims for the care - most centers advertise they provide 'loving teachers" (Knowledge Learning Corporation) Mulberry Child Care says bookkeepers and management staff all 'provide love, attention and positive interaction with all children' La Petite Academy claims infants are taught in a 'warm loving environment' and that it provides "high quality care and education in a professional, effective and caring manner" Blackstocks says its' competitive edge' is that its centers make money, that it has shareholder value built in and that it has 'economies of scale'

Some claim an educational component. Knowledge Learning Corporation says it 'promotes skills in reading and language development, math, 'creativity and imagination" Mulberry Child Care Centres focuses on 'child's play". They say they want a partnership with parents so they 'communicate details about daily activities, sleeping, eating patterns, diaper changes and toilet training" Bright Horizons says it has 'skilled and sensitive teachers' and a 'loving faculty'. It says it has a full-service program for those aged 6 weeks to 6 years as they 'experience a world rich with discovery" La Petite Academy offers year round programs and has arranged 75090 learning 'activities' for 3-4 year olds and says it helps 2 year olds develop their 'understanding of language, vocabulary, new concepts, movement and sensory motor skills" La Petite Academy promises to communicate to parents several times during the year results of its daily progress written reports tracking each child. It has 19 themed curricula sections and offers parents Intranet service to keep them involved. It serves children from infants to those in school using before or after school care It says it adheres to the highest standards of "safety, security, cleanliness, teaching and loving care" and it has a 'warm nurturing environment" It says it helps children 'to love books"

4. claims about the staff competence _ Mulberry Child Care says care of young children is a 'career worth committing to'. Bright Horizons requires that a director have 8 years experience taking care of children. La Petite Academy says it has 'outstanding teachers" who provide children with a 'love for learning for a lifetime' Ads for assistant academy director require a high school diploma and willingness to become a director. Some employees need two years experience and a high school diploma.

5. appeals to employees - Mulberry Child Care Centres offer a staff bonus program which includes convenient payroll deductions, retirement savings

assistance, two weeks of paid bonus per year and a monetary bonus for bringing another enthusiastic teachers for employment. It offers tuition reimbursement towards first aid courses and director-training during work hours focusing on "all aspects of center management including finance, marketing, curriculum development and center operations" It also assists with health and dental insurance for employees and offers the chance to purchase short-term disability benefits for maternity or surgery, as well as paid vacation time, sick leave and a discount on childcare rates if you have your own child at the centre. Bright Horizons says its Director salaries are 40% above the national average. KinderCare offers its staff life insurance, childcare tuition discounts, vacation pay, and medical, dental and vision benefits.

(I would just like to comment that there are several ironies to these claims from my own personal opinion. I am a 30 year parent and teacher of small children, personally with my own four who I home-schooled for a time, and professionally as paid teacher in the elementary and secondary school systems. Claims about early childhood 'education' amuse me for their vagueness.

-promising to teach children who are already learning to talk, walk, move around, and socialize is not hard to do. All kids do these things anyway

-promising a 'loving, warm, nurturing' environment is reassuring for parents but handily impossible to train, test for or measure

-education is such a nebulous and generalized thing that promises of a lifetime benefit for a given lesson, or of a love of books simply unprovable

-there is an irony to claiming the profession of child care worker is a noble career choice while discouraging parents from taking care of their own children.

-It is troubling to me to see that a parent has to pay to have her own child at the center with the mother providing the care, even if the rates are reduced. A shorter route to benefit though not one profitable to the corporation might be for the mom to be home with her own child . However the commercialization of caregiving seems to be spreading-editor)

Dr. Jacqueline Martin and Dr. Hildy Ross of the U of Waterloo have released results of a study March 2005 on links between childhood aggression and parenting style. The researchers looked at forty families over a two year period, noting behavior in six 90 minute sessions in the family home, when the children were 2-4 and again two years later. The study found that boys

were more aggressive than were girls - grabbing, insulting, doing property damage. However looking at parental behavior it was found that when the children were little, parents discouraged aggression equally regardless of the gender of the child. But for older children, parents prohibited aggression more if girls did it, and more if it was done against girls than if it were boy to boy. All aggression decreased as parents clamped down it using reasoning, spanking or simple commands but the researchers found that parents in general discourage girls from engaging in the same level of pushing, grabbing that they permit of boys against boys.

Though family member caregivers are completely unpaid, the waged version is asking for greater dignity and support for the care it provides. Mary Kay Russell of the Persons with Developmental Disabilities board permits payment of caregivers of \$15.90 per hour at government-run facilities but for those in their own homes the pay rate is \$13.30 per hour. Sherri Stroub at age 45, is able to have some measure of independent living despite her cerebral palsy thanks to having 3 community care workers who takes turns helping her with routine bed, bathing, dressing and eating tasks. She has a Lifeline button for evenings when she is alone. Her legal guardian however wants to state to provide more funding for her workers. and seeks a pay increase of \$1.70 an hour for them to match the government funding formula.

Steven Bathiche has revealed March 2005 that he has designed a toy for Microsoft that enables parents to monitor their child from a great distance. The computerized teddy bear contains microphones, a camera and motors to operate its head and limbs. It has face-recognition software to watch a given child in any room and will turn its head to track the movements. It then sends pictures back to the parent via remote video link and can even speak to the child from the adult, using the bear's sound system. Bathiche says the new bear will enable a parent to be two places at once though there is no firm date yet for commercial production of the bear. Claire Rayner, patron of the children's charity Kidscape in Britain has however expressed misgivings. She said what children really need is human contact and having a talking teddy bear does not help a child later relate well with real people. She said when she first saw the bear she said it made her think of "Brave New World"

POLLS

New Woman magazine has surveyed 1500 women recently (2005) - an average age of 29 - to see what their main sources of happiness were and found that over two thirds wanted a home life with a marriage and with the man as the main financial provider. 70% of those asked said they did not want to do as much paid work as their mothers of the 70s did and only one per cent said that after they have children, their paid career will be a top priority. Such a poll result pleased writer Lydia Lovric who said that today's young mothers often spent much of their own childhood in daycare and want something different for their own children. (*This is not a backward step for feminism as some might fear. I think it is actually a step forward for women to have a full range of choices and to not just feel tied to the office desk, or to the kitchen. - editor*)

In many large cities a few businesses have converted to being 24-7 operations, consistent with the wide range of paid work shifts people have. In Calgary, population about one million, there are two 24-hour drugstores and at least one 24 hour grocery store. Convenience stores some time ago moved from operations 7-11 to having 24hour outlets and many gas stations are open all night. This trend is even more widespread in other cities. In Montreal the Rose Bowl offers 24 hour bowling with a licensed restaurant and Jean-Phillippe Deon has found business brisk at 3AM, many saying bowling helps them relax. Montreal has a 24 hour casino and in Windsor, Casino Regina is open till 4AM. The Olympia Restaurant in Saskatoon provides its full menu, including steak, lobster, bacon and eggs any hour of the day or night and many cities have 24 hour coin laundries. Kitsilano Fitness in Vancouver also now operates all through the night 4 days a week. Darren Moore says that business drops off at 1AM but around 75 people still come and go in the early hours, many shift workers, flight attendants for instance who need to unwind. Emergency services of police and fire fighters, tow truck operators and street cleaners also are on call but some other crises now are being met 24 -7, such as a computer crisis. Xydom Technologies in Calgary have what they dub 'geeks' on call.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CAREGIVER

Though for a time it seemed movies viewable by children were hard to find,

The National Association of Theatre Owners in the US has released business results March 16 2005 finding that PG rated films grossed \$2.3 billion last year, compared with only \$2.1 billion for R-rated films. Five of the top ten moneymaking movies last year were PG, including Shrek 2, The Incredibles, Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban, and of the top 26 only 4 had R ratings. The Motion Picture Association of America admitted that ticket sales have actually dropped at all movies by about 2.4% but that that because admission prices have gone up, revenue rose to \$9.5 billion.

Though the police are the key players in fighting crime, recent moves to enlist help from the general public have increased. In Calgary 4500 local real estate agents have been trained to recognize marijuana grow ups by seeing foggy windows, noticing pungent smells or unusual traffic patterns. Letter carriers and meter readers have for some time been asked to report evidence of seniors' homes showing no signs of recent activity and now in Calgary commercial garbage collectors are undergoing training to help fight crime. Dave Griffiths, general manager of the city's waste and recycling services has revealed that his crews have taken classes in how to spot marijuana grow operations and how to identify suspicious people or vehicles along the route. The new program entitled "Waste Watch" provides police officers to train garbage collectors in to alert the police about unlocked buildings that should be locked, vehicle crashes, road hazards and graffiti or other damage. Mike Nelson who has driven a garbage truck for 18 years has endorsed the program, saying for him it's not a new part of his job but a basic responsibility of any citizen/

A new trend emerging is the baby as gift-giver, according to Ann Armstrong of the Rotman School of Management (March 2005). Armstrong has found that many parents with means are suggesting that the birthday parties of their offspring collect money or gifts not for their own child, who already has enough, but as fundraisers to later give to charity. Such early philanthropy according to Armstrong teaches children a philosophy that continues into adulthood. "Charity birthday parties" have become popular in Europe and the US recently and according to WorldVision International have even generated money for school supplies in the 3rd world. Maureen Lutz of the Peter Pan Children's Fund says such parties help parents teach their kids values. In 2003 the Sick Kids Foundation launched such a program in Toronto and raised \$60,000 from 80 parties, 2/3 of them birthday parties for

children. Is there a downside? Dr. Jeffrey Derevensky of McGill University says that children under the age of 11 or 12 may have a problem understanding the idea of there being people less fortunate. Some parents allow their children then to keep one gift or maybe the gifts from close family members, to help them be generous without tears.

HEALTH OF CHILD

Facing concerns of childhood obesity, the Calgary Health Region has embarked in March 2005 on a policy called "Re-Think Your Drink" to warn children in grade 4 of the dangers of over-consumption of soft drinks. Dr. Luke Shwart says that nearly 40% of preschoolers drink over 8 ounces of soft drinks a day and the average adult in 1997 was drinking 12 cans of soft drinks per week. This rate compares to only 2 cans of soft drinks per week in 1947. Kerri Staden of the CHR nutrition and active living program says soft drinks are often high in sugar and calories which fill up small children and discourage them from eating healthier food and she feels that age 10 or grade 4 is not too young to start. The campaign also warns children and parents about the high levels of caffeine in some pop, and about the link between caffeine and nervousness, irritability, sleep problems and rapid heartbeat.

Though a crying baby with colic was assumed for years to be suffering intestinal distress, gas or cramps, Dr. Ronald G. Barr of the U of British Columbia has released results of studies March 2005 finding that such babies are not in pain and they are not having gastric reflux or allergic reactions to food. He believes that unsootheable colic is simply a natural phase of infant development, beginning usually at 2 weeks of age, peaking at 6 weeks, ending at about 4 months. His findings are similar to those of Dr. Ian St. James Roberts at the U of London Institute of Education. However Dr. Barry Lester of the Colic Clinic of Women and Infants Hospital of Rhode Island disagrees that colic is insignificant. He says colicky crying can interfere with child development or cause family problems. Dr. Harvey Karp of Santa Monica California has devised a treatment he suggests parents use to soothe the colicky infant based on recreation sensations from the womb. He advises parents to create the whooshing sound of blood through the placenta by shushing in the baby's ear loudly, holding the baby tightly as in the womb, swaddling it in the arms or lap and letting it suck on a finger. Karp

has published a book of his technique entitled "The Happiest Baby on the Block"

Francoise Susset, Montreal Psychologist says March 2005 that recent studies show sexual orientation is not nearly the same issue as gender identity. She has found that though sexual orientation declares itself in adolescence, gender identity emerges as a concept by ages 3 and 4. That small segment of the population (estimates are about 2%) that feels it is not of the gender its body is, may feel such an awareness very young. A transsexual man is someone who was identified as female at birth but who feels male while a transsexual woman was born male but feels female. Gender dysphoria or gender identity disorder is a state of profound depression driven by gender confusion according to McGill professor Olivia Jenses. Jenses was born male and underwent sex-change surgery in 1993 having felt trapped in the wrong body. Jensen's research has shown that in some cultures there is a gradation in labeling genders, not just an identification of two. Plains Indians identified seven genders, differentiating between aggressive males and softer gentler males for instance. Though surgery can reassign gender by creating or removing organs, the main concern is psychological. Regardless of their old or new gender, those aware of the problems sometimes are victims of workplace discrimination, intimidation and exclusion.

Professor Hannah Bruckner of Yale University has announced results from a study of rates of STDs, including chlamydia and gonorrhea, of those who did and those who did not make a 'virginity pledge'. The study was made among 11,471 teens drawn from the UN National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health and is following students grades 7 to 12 since 1995, with follow-ups to age 24. The study found that many students had made public signed statements with their schools, churches or community groups to abstain from sexual intercourse until marriage. Those who made the pledge had a 4.6% rates of STDs compared with a rate of 6.9% among those who did not make it. Failure of the rate to be zero compared to 6.9% was explained by noting that some who made the pledge had previously had sex, that some who refrained from vaginal intercourse had engaged in other forms of sexual contact and that some teens who made the pledge did not keep it.

Standards for health in daycares have been set down in some organizations.

In 1993 the National Network for Child Care in the US established a list of medical conditions for which children should be excluded from daycare.

These include vomiting over twice a day, tuberculosis, strep throat, aseptic meningitis, bacterial meningitis, chicken pox, uncontrolled diarrhea, head lice, impetigo, measles, mumps, whooping cough, pinworm, pink eye, scabies, rubella, shingles, red eyes, rash and fever, sore throat, crusty yellow skin sores, yellow skin, clay-colored stool, tea-colored urine, earache, headache, itchy scalp or yellow nasal discharge. Parental permission is required to administer medications of antihistamines, fever reducers, cough medicines, decongestants, anti-itch cream, diaper ointment or sunscreen.

(given the high incidence of illness among children it is evident that for most children in daycare there are likely to be instances through the year when they can't attend. Federal programs that only fund daycare and provide no funding for emergency informal care actually then also harm daycare children. A more flexible policy of benefits that flow with the child would permit parents to have funding for all sites of care of the child - even for at-home care when the parent had to take time away from paid employment-editor)

Dr. Catherine Pruissen of the childcare.net resource Center has revealed results of recent studies of the spread of germs in large groups of children. (March 2005) She suggests that cribs be apart so babies don't cough, breathe on or sneeze on each other, that windows be opened daily to air the room out, and that there be no hairbrush, toothbrush or food sharing. She recommends that handwashing and sanitizing take at least 20 seconds, that toys be sanitized daily with bleach, that diaper changing areas be sanitized with bleach after EACH use, that high chair trays, counter tops, garbage cans and diaper pails also be sanitized daily.

The site Familymanagement.com has listed advice to prevent food-borne illness in places where large groups of children congregate (March 2005) It is recommended that food dropped on the floor be discarded, that all dishes and cups be washed in dishwashers, that tables be cleaned and sanitized after every use, that cutting boards be disinfected, that hands be washed before food is prepared and that those who change diapers do not handle food. It also recommends that the person who prepares food not come to the paid job if he/she has infected skin sores or diarrhea. The site notes

that improper food handling can lead to diarrhea and has been linked to hepatitis A.

In 2002 Dr. Jay Belsky of the University of London studied 300 children and compared the results of their caregiving styles for the National Institute of Health in the US. He found that of those who spent under 10 hours per week in care, 6% ranked as aggressive, but of those who spent over 30 hours a week in daycare, 17% ranked as aggressive. Dr. Kathleen McCartney of Harvard in 2001 for the National Institute of Child Health and Development looked at 1350 children being followed in a longitudinal study from birth to 14 years. She found that number of hours in daycare is associated with increase in behavioral problems on a Childhood Behavior checklist. Of those who had been raised with an at-home parent 9% had behavioral problems but of those who had had long daycare experience, 17% had behavioral problems.

(There are no guarantees of good outcomes, and some kids from each care style have problems. But in terms of risk and likelihood it seems to me that all children want a sense they are important, unique and loved preferentially by at least one significant adult in their lives. Children who have that sense do not act out as much as those who are still searching desperately for attention and that love. As a long-time teacher I regularly see little children, a few per group, who are nearly always disrupting the group to get affirmation that they are important above all else. The longer time we let a parent or principal constant caregiver give one on one attention, the less chance we have of children feeling so insecure-editor)

Statistics Canada has released results of a 2003 survey March 15 2005 finding that though 85% of new mothers in Canada now try to breastfeed, under 50% continue to do so till age 6 months, and only 17% use breast milk excluding all other food till 6 months as recommended by Canadian pediatricians. (the WHO recommends breastfeeding till age of 2 years). The number of mothers who try to breastfeed has tripled over the last 40 years but reasons for not continuing still trouble advocates.. Some women have to return to paid work, some find there are too many demands for milk or they fear they don't have enough milk and others prefer to be able to let the father or another caregiver feed the baby without having to express milk first.

HEALTH OF PARENT

Though many people fear that air circulating in airplanes puts passengers at a higher risk of disease, Dr. Mark Gendreau of the Lahey Clinic Medical Centre in Burlington Mass has released data March 2005 finding that such fears are generally unfounded. Proper ventilation removes 63% of airborne organisms in any confined space and large commercial aircrafts circulate about 50% of cabin air through high efficiency particulate air filters (HEPA filters) These filters remove 99.97% of dust, vapors, bacteria, fungi and viral particles. He has found that 95% of US commercial airlines carrying over 100 passengers have such HEPA filters. Laura Cooke of Air Canada says her airline's 244 planes all have HEPA filters and they are replaced every 6000 hours of flight. The US and Canada do not have federal regulations regarding use of such filters. Dr. Gendreau says many people fear germs will move from the front of the plane to the back but in fact airflow is from side to side, entering from overhead and leaving the cabin through the floor. However despite the optimism, some cases of disease transmission were found. A passenger with tuberculosis can be contagious to those sitting within 2 rows on a flight that lasts over 8 hours and the S.A.R.S. disease is believed to have been transmitted to 37 people on five flights in 2003, some as far as seven rows from the infected passenger.

Dr. Brian Baker, psychiatrist at the U of Toronto has released results of studies of blood pressure of 249 men and women at and away from their paid jobs. The one year study found links between job strain and high blood pressure but a moderating influence if the employee came home to a supportive love relationship. Baker found that if a stressed worker came home to a non-soothing spouse, blood pressure actually went up. He found that for those whose marriages were not supportive, avoiding each other actually was better for blood pressure.

CAREER TRENDS

With the rise in use of the Internet and then of high-speed services and laptops, many companies are now even advertising to those at nonstandard worksites. Sony has taken out full-page ads in national newspapers in Canada promoting its mobile technology saying it is for 'out of homework' and calling the new integrated wireless notebook an 'ideal mobile companion' (*Given the*

*redefinition of the 'job site' and of 'work' it hopefully will not be long before governments recognize that people are 'working' wherever they are, and this could bode well for valuing the at-home caregiver type work options too
_editor)*

According to the US Census Bureau Alert Oct 20 2004, nearly 4.3 million Americans worked in their own homes for pay in 2000. This is a 23% increase since 1990. In addition women are very often owners of their own business. Of 5.6 million women business owners in the US, 2.1 million or over one-third are women with children, many women with children creating a businesses to enable them to spend time with the children. The IDA found in 1998 that there were 10.7 million households in the US where parents of dependent children earn from home. Small businesses are home-based in the US 53% of the time. In 1999 around 19.6 million workers telecommuted according o the International Telework Assoc and Council - and that number approached 29 million in 2003.
<http://www.hbwm.com>

MP Paul Crete of the Bloc Quebecois has jointed MP Carole Lavallee and MP Nicole Demers in addressing what they feel are inequities of the present employment insurance program for women. Statistics were recently cited (March 2005) in the House of Commons that 2/3 of women who are without paid employment get no EI benefits. The gender gap is increasing according to historical study. In 1994 53% of unemployed men but only 49% of unemployed women got EI. Due to changes in the requirements to qualify, in 2005 44% of unemployed men but even fewer women, 33% got EI benefits. *(one problem may be that there is an ongoing gender based assumption that being home to take care of a young or elderly relative is a requirement for women, and is supposed to be done out of love and without financial recognition. This assumption should be addressed. Even the term 'unemployed' needs to be reassessed given that the new mother is putting in longer and more intense hours than at most paid jobs- she is surely working and employing her time for unselfish purposes - editor)*

Though large companies are significant employers, most companies in Canada

still are small businesses and a recent study has found that they are at a disadvantage in being able to offer their employees medical and dental benefits. Watson Wyatt Canada surveyed workers recently (March 2005) to ask if a comparable job became available elsewhere would they consider quitting and find 46% would, with benefits being a key deciding factor. Mike Sanford of Canadian Benefits Consulting Group found that employee health benefits attract and retain good employees but the Canadian Federation of Independent Business found in a 2002 survey that most small business does not offer such coverage. 46% offer no employee benefits and 13% more offer them only to family members of the company's owners. Since health and dental coverage often is priced according to scale, with lower costs for larger companies because of their spreading the risk, companies with few employees or large staff turnover (restaurants, hairdressing salons, daycares) often cannot pay the high premiums required. The cost of coverage can range from \$15000 to \$3000 per employee depending on such factors. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business notes that 78% of those who do provide coverage also saw their premiums increase in the past year. The federation, according to spokesperson Catherine Swift has been 'nagging' insurance companies for years to provide more options for small business.

As noted in other newsletters, though the career-family balance is difficult for most women with paid employment, and for all women over the course of a lifetime, women lawyers face particularly high hurdles. Linda Pieteron, corporate lawyer with McCarthy Tetrault has admitted that in private law practice a 9 to 5 work week is considered part-time. According to a Catalyst Canada report, an associate at a law firm works an average of 2100 billable and nonbillable hours a year. The average Canadian nonlawyer works 1300 hours per year. Generally for a lawyer to be able to handle clients and important files, he/she is expected to put in the long hours, particularly if there is any hope of becoming a partner in the firm. And because of this dilemma, it is sometimes women lawyers who are the strongest lobbyists for corporations to recognize the particular demands caregiving has. If they do not, women not only opt out of the profession for a time but some leave forever. A survey of over 1400 Canadian lawyers found that 84% of female law associates and 66% of male associates feel the most important part of any firm is its support of family and personal commitments. . 81% of women and 67% of men wanted more control over their work schedule and 66% of

women and 54% of men wanted to work fewer hours. Responding to these demands, several major firms have tried to restructure to not lose valuable female and male lawyers. Catalyst research and advisory group for women has estimated that the cost of losing an associate is \$315,000, about twice the salary of the worker, simply because recruitment and training costs are added to the loss of the work by the experienced lawyer. Borden Ladner Gervais LLP offers flexible work arrangements and part-time options. McMillan Binch LLP admits that four of its 50 associates have reduced their hours. Some offer flexibility to have a full-time secretary even with a reduced hour load, but do expect the lawyer to keep in touch with clients by phone and Blackberry.

FAMILY FINANCES - POVERTY, PENSIONS, TAX

Though the wealthy have the means to give their children lavish gifts early, several have admitted they do not do that - and that they dole out allowances sparingly so their offspring will understand that money should be earned. Michael Schumacher who earns \$80 million a year US as a Formula One world champion gives his 8 and 6 year old children \$3 a week each saying "They have to learn wealth isn't automatic." He says they can buy something they really want or save it. John D. Rockefeller had a similar philosophy with his 5 sons, giving them 35 cents a week in the 1800s, and requiring them to give 10% of that to charity and to save 10%. Bill Gates who is an \$80 billion dollar man, could leave his children vast sums of money but has said publicly that he plans to leave them each \$10 million US only and will give the rest to charity. He says leaving them more "would not be good for them". Karyn Gordon, parent/teen coach in Toronto says that allowances are a good tool to teach children the value of money yet in her experience some wealthy parents shower their children with gifts instead of making them earn money. Gordon feels that giving a child for instance \$800 a month for expenses, essentially trains a child to expect to have \$800 of disposable income.

To celebrate its 100th anniversary the province of Alberta has announced it will give a \$500 start on a Registered Educational Savings Plan to any baby born in that province this year (2005). It has also announced March 15 2005 that it will add \$100 more for those parents currently on social assistance,

totalling about 1,750 in the province. Nicola Fairbrother of the Edmonton Social Planning Council has applauded the move.

A note within the Ministry of Finance in Canada in Oct 2004 has admitted that the education savings program designed in 1998 ostensibly to help the poor get post secondary education, has in fact largely benefited the wealthy. Under Access to Information the National Post has found March 2005 evidence that low income families have only marginally participated in the \$410 million plan for education savings grants and also that this participation rate was admitted as 'not surprising' by officials. Higher income families were admitted to have more disposable income so were more likely to be able to save money to take part in the plan.

UNPAID LABOR

Though selfless labor generally goes unnoticed and unpaid, Rodger Cuzner, MP for Cape-Breton- Canso in Nova Scotia has proposed a private member's bill to permit those who volunteer 100 hours as firefighters to a \$1000 tax deduction for their work, increasing to \$2,000 if they do 200 hours work. Cuzner's Bill C-273 has passed second reading and is on its way to finance committee study. Though private members' bills rarely pass, Cuzner who is a Liberal MP said he has talked to the PM about it and is optimistic.

Though labor has recently been divided into two categories -paid and unpaid, a 2003 paper by Dr. Donna Baines of McMaster University determined there are about 7 kinds of 'work' and only one of them is paid. Baines was speaking at an IWPR international women's policy research conference and summarizing interview data from Alberta, Nova Scotia and British Columbia social service workers. She found that they do paid social work but that they also do

-unpaid overtime work - during lunch hours and coffee breaks, evenings and weekends

-formal volunteer work - the use of volunteers in social service agencies being prolific in Alberta

-unpaid policy development - for instance developing in their spare time services for cultural needs they have seen

-informal unpaid work - checking in on relatives and neighbors of people and then ending up having to make referrals and becoming advocates for them also

-union activist work

-unpaid work in the family

. Baines has found that recent downsizing and government cutbacks have required those who still have paid jobs to work with fewer resources and have assumed that many are willing to do extra work free. Baines cited an example of one woman who ended up putting in 40 hour weeks, only 20 hours paid, a rate which for her was in essence a wage cut of 50%. Baines cited research by Dr. Luxton in 1997 finding that when there are economic downturns, domestic work actually intensifies - women work harder. (*Though the study is of social workers, parallels could be drawn to all women's contributions because there starts to be a carry-over between the paid and unpaid worlds. People use their skills from one to work, for free, in another-editor*)

Though many countries continue to just assume women work for free as caregivers, and will not permit the state to fund them for providing care of relatives, while funding 3rd parties to provide the same care, there are exceptions. A study by Barbara Swirski in August 1997 has come to light looking at the funding of care of the elderly in Israel. In that country the health care system already has some inconsistencies. Seniors who have an acute transitory problem such as a fracture or pneumonia can get full health care coverage but those who need long-term care and are bedridden or have memory and orientation problems cannot. The study did however find that when care of a long term and mentally frail patient is in the community there is an inconsistency about coverage of costs. Sometimes, though rarely, care by a family member is reimbursed. Family members who do not live in the same household as the ill person can be remunerated for geriatric care under the Long Term Care Insurance Law. This option is most commonly used in the Arab sector, a community which does not accept hiring 3rd parties to enter homes to care for relatives. Though this policy recognizes caregiving of family only when it is done outside your own home, it is a partial recognition of family-based care work. Care reimbursement is based on 3 factors - income of the senior (those whose income is under 1.5 times the national average wage can get some help), kinship (which is generally seen as a reason to exclude someone from benefits) and place of the care (if the ill

person is in your home it is generally a reason to exclude from benefits) The kinship issue is also interesting. A daughter or daughter-in-law who cares for a mother or mother-in-law is not deemed to be working but a granddaughter who cares for an elderly Arab citizen is deemed to be working if the care is not in her own home. The wage is minimum or subminimum but hourly.

A further study of other OECD nations found similar trends. Swirski found that 'care for the elderly is not considered 'work'; it is deemed one of the family functions of the wife, daughter or daughter-in-law." It is viewed as invisible work and not counted in the national product. Swirski says uncompensated labor hours and loss of personal benefits disadvantage family-based caregivers and create an 'inequitable social policy"

- in most countries geriatric care is provided by family members
- long-term care in hospital is very expensive so many patients are moved to long-term care in special institutions such as nursing homes which cost less. Private nursing homes however employ women with little training and at low wages so Swirski feels such a move is not good for recognizing women's work and that it is not a good move for patients.
- having a senior cared for in the home by a paid caregiver complete with services of hot meals, personal care, hygiene, home repair and geriatric day centers is not necessarily less expensive than is institutional nursing care
- women outlive men and tend to be the predominant gender not only as careproviders but in later life as care receivers.
- in Germany, women's time off from paid work to care for children or seniors is considered 'full-fledged service time ' for pensions
- In Sweden women who reduce paid work hours to care for family members get payment from the municipal authority for their caregiving. There is a 30 day paid leave period for providing palliative care.

LEGAL AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

In 1991 four Ontario universities fought to preserve mandatory retirement at age 65, anxious to make way for young professors. However in 2005 the University of Toronto has reached a tentative agreement with faculty to remove the requirement for mandatory retirement. U of T administrators have found that there is no longer an excess of senior professors and it wants to retain the expertise of those it has, and not lose them to competing schools where retirement is not required. It has found that those

over 65 often have no wish yet to quit their paid profession. The Government of Ontario is considering legislation in the same direction - to ban mandatory retirement. Prof Brenda Milner, at age 86 is still a full-time professor at McGill University in Montreal, teaching neuro psychology and medicine. Milner says that though she thinks early retirement should be available to those who want to leave at 65, some of whom may want to pursue a second career, she personally wants to continue as long as her work is 'scientifically credible' and she continues to get grants for research. She is a lecturer about the brain and memory and feels that seniors often have invaluable lessons to offer because what they have learned, students can now hear', 'from the horse's mouth'.

The Conservative Party under leader Stephen Harper held its policy convention in Montreal March 16 2005 and key on the list of topics to be discussed were changes to the Income Tax Act that would benefit stay-at-home parents. One proposal aims to eliminate 'all tax disadvantage to families " and to 'include those who care for children at home and to recognize the economic value of stay-at-home parents' . The solution it proposes is not an increase in the child tax benefit or a universality of the child expense deduction as some have advocated in the past but an adjustment of the basic assumption about taxation. The party is recommending that income -splitting be permitted, allowing a high income parent to divide his/her income with the low income parent, thus eliminating the high income earner's tax rate. (*Currently because taxation is not based on the individual, households that all bring home the same income, for instance \$60,000 pay quite different tax rates, with the family having only one earner paying 42% more than the family with two earners each getting \$30,000. The party apparently aims to eliminate this major inequality. Such a recommendation has been made frequently in Canadian history and is already in force in many nations including the US . It was advised by the Carter Commission in 1960 -editor)*

A Nova Scotia woman who needed long-term medical care was unable to get it in a facility near her home and was forced to be sent a considerable distance away from family. She appealed to the court that such a situation was a hardship and the case reached the Nova Scotia Family Court which felt it could only approve or veto the hospital decision. However the Supreme Court has ruled March 2005 that the family court should have

played a more 'muscular' role under the province's adult protection law. Justice Rosalie Abella said the law gives the family court authority to order the province to provide appropriate care or living arrangements.

With motions on behalf of several major political parties to value caregiving at home, (Liberal convention in late Feb 2005, Conservative convention in March 2005), there seems to be a growing trend for caregiving to be on the agenda. The Progressive Canadian Party (not the new Conservative party which is the official opposition) has also in its platform amendments several items that are of interest to caregivers

- create tax incentives for non-professional caregivers to look after elderly or disabled relatives in the home
- appoint a minister responsible for seniors
- establish a TeleSenior call centre of toll-free access to a live nonrecorded person to give seniors help
- create measures in the tax system to offset economics costs of caregiving at home "The Conservative Party of Canada believes in the right and duty of parents to raise their own children, a responsibility according to their own conscience and beliefs. We believe no person, government or agency has the right to interfere in the exercise of that duty except through due process of law"
- establish a a policy to not discriminate against parents who opt to take care of their own children in the home
- make scholarships and bursaries tax free
- no longer require those aged 65 and over with paid employment to pay Employment Insurance premiums. (*currently they can't collect EI but they still have to contribute to the plan*)

Stephen Hammond, a Vancouver lawyer, has recently written a book "Managing Human Rights at Work: 101 practical tips to prevent human rights disasters" (March 2005). In his experience, well meaning but uninformed employers can create for employees situations which may contravene Charter Rights, such as asking someone to set up store Christmas decorations. He cites such a case of a Jehovah's Witness employee who though employed with the same company for 16 years, had never before been asked to set out six poinsettia plants during the Christmas season, and when asked to do so refused. A court later ordered a settlement of \$30,000 because the owners had violated the employee's rights to freedom

of religion. Hammond also warns companies that an environment where provocative pictures are on the wall or where dirty jokes are told in the lunchroom could create charges of sexual harassment. He reminds employers that employees have the right to freedom from harassment about age, sex, race, gender, colour, creed, religion, ethnicity or even pregnancy.

FEMINIST ANGLE

Though Hollywood is renowned for its cult of the nubile young woman, a demographic shift is being felt in the fashion industry which it often emulates. Joey Basmaji, founder of the store chain J acob, has announced March 16 2005 that he is opening five new stores for women aged 35 and up and will name the chain "Joseph". Gap Inc is expected to also start catering to the mature woman soon, having opened 10 new stores this year. Anthony Stokoan, retail and marketing consultant at Anthony Russell and Associates has said this demographic has been 'enormously neglected' to date and that only high-end designers used to even admit there was such a market. He says the Joseph chain will create clothing for women in their 50s who want to have a 'look for women 35-45 years of age". Trendex North America, a Toledo Ohio market researcher has found that clothing sales for women aged 15-24 actually shrank last year while sales for women aged 45-59 were up 3.8%.

It has long been known that women carry two X chromosomes and men carry one X and one Y. For many years it was believed that in each case, one of the chromosomes is dormant and the other one is active but Dr. Huntington Willard of the Institute for Genome Sciences & Policy at Duke University has found that is not accurate. His research looked at samples of skin cells from 40 women, discovering that both X chromosomes were active in several of the women. The implication is not just that women have sometimes more chromosomal input than do men to possibly help them escape disease propensities in one or the other chromosome, but that women differ between each other in how active the second chromosome is. The X chromosome, with about 80 genes on it, has been sequenced by Dr. David Page at Whitehead Institute in Cambridge in 2003 but sequencing the much more complex female chromosome, which has 1098 genes may take more time. 250 scientists are currently working on the task. It is known that the same Y chromosome is handed down from father to son each generation and

that men disproportionately inherit hundreds of X-linked recessive genetic disease from their mothers including hemophilia and Duchenne muscular dystrophy. Women by contrast can escape some of these diseases because they have two X chromosomes and can sometimes select the healthier one to resist the disease tendency.

Though divorce rates appear to be high, recent studies show that many of those numbers are from people who divorce more than once. Statistics Canada has revealed March 9 2005 that repeat divorces are increasing. In 2003 16.2 % of divorces involved men who had previously been divorced, up 5.4% from 20 years earlier. And 13.7% of women who divorced had been divorced earlier, also up 5.4%. York University professor Anne-Marie Ambert suggests that for some people there is a tendency to end a marriage when anything goes wrong, because society values choice so much, and is not tolerant of imperfection. The study also found that those who live common-law before marriage risk divorce more than do those who did not cohabit. The study found that the actual number of marriages ending in divorce has been relatively stable in recent years, at less than 2% change. In 2003 the divorce rate was 38.3% though it did reach a high of 50.6% in 1987 shortly after reforms were made to divorce law. Peak divorce rates occur about 3 years after marriage.

Noticing that many Ikea furniture store manuals show more men than women assembling furniture, Kjell Magne, PM of Norway has laid a formal complaint with the company (March 2005). A spokesperson for Ikea has said her company acknowledges the fact and will review its policy.

MPP Lorenzo Berardinetti in Ontario has introduced a private member's bill at Queen's Park in his province (March 2005) asking that discriminatory pricing in marketing, based on gender, be fined \$2,000. He has found that a drycleaner will routinely charge a man \$1.25 to clean a cotton shirt but will charge a woman over \$3.00 to clean a very similar cotton blouse. According to the proposed bill, a second offense could result in a fine of \$5,000 (*years ago someone pointed out to me that touring through the men's and women's wear departments can reveal quite different prices on nearly identical T-shirts. An interesting issue - editor*)

Though some feel that having a special wing of a political party to focus on

issues of youth or women, is a good thing, not all agree. Andrew Scheer, MP at age 25, has expressed the desire that his Conservative Party dispense with a 'youth wing' and just have everybody vote on the same issues. Scheer joins other young MPs - Pierre Poilievre 25, Jeremy Harrison 27 and 15 other MPs -advocating against having a 'youth wing'. On the other hand, Ken Lobo, a politics and economist student at McGill University says that having a youth group enables a party to provide a training ground for politicians and to recruit on university campuses.

ECONOMICS OF THE NATION

Though the Canadian government has embarked on a plan to fund preferentially only one style of child-rearing, institutional daycare, many parents are raising objections and so are some organizations. A parent petition can be seen at <http://www.petitiononline.com/kidcare/petition.com>

Bishop Pierre Morissette, Chairman of the Catholic Organization for Life and Family has revealed March 8 2005 that he has sent a letter to the Hon Ken Dryden, expressing his concerns. The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops supports the idea of a national daycare program but also wants the state to provide 'real freedom of choice among childcare options for all Canadian parents". He is asking the government 'to put in place a series of fiscal and social measures in order to help those parents who wish to fulfill ' the child-rearing mission without using daycare. By his statistics 70% of women with children have paid employment but nearly the same percent of mothers would prefer to be home if they had the funds to do so in the early years of the child's life. Morissette added that the fertility rate of only 1.5 children per woman raises the specter of major socio-economic problems within a generation and he says 'we must recognize the great personal and social value of the work of a parent who chooses to stay at home and raise children. We believe that a democratic government must respect parents' freedom of choice in childcare options, trust their choices and make each choice financially possible"

<http://www.cccb.ca/publicstatements.htm?ID=1636>

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

One of the ongoing criticisms caregivers have noted over the years with national accounting systems is the favoritism of some countries for the dual income family and the penalty on the single earner lifestyle. Some nations have a tax based on individual income alone (Canada does) while others admit households share income and permit a household-based tax (eg. the US). Another option however is simply a single rate tax which does not play favorites between earning styles. The province of Alberta embarked on a single rate tax in 2001 and several European countries have recently changed their economies to also have a single rate or flat tax. Estonia, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine have now all embarked on this new tax system. Some commentators have said that the results is reduced complexity of the tax form and the editorial board of the Calgary Herald says that such a simple plan results in more people complying with tax rules.

Though reporters are often not permitted to report on third world street life such as prostitution in Calcutta, Zana Briski, and American photographer, found a novel way to document such lifestyles. Briski with collaborator Ross Kauffman gave children of prostitutes cameras and asked them to take photos of their world. Their pictures have now been made into a film entitled "Born into Brothels" which is 85 minutes long and which just won an Oscar (Feb 2005). In the film a grandmother, mother and daughter are all engaging in prostitution and expecting their granddaughter to join them as a way of life. Puberty seems to be the age for entry into the profession. Briskin aimed to help her young camera crew escape such a fate however and tried to get them into a boarding school but met with opposition from their parents and from Indian bureaucracy. The children who were given photo classes before they got the cameras did however get a sense of empowerment from doing the task and some have won a trip to Amsterdam for a photo exhibit.

In the Indian state of Tamil Nadu, 2500 of the 8000 who died in the tsunami were children and many of their mothers have reported entered a state of depression at the loss, not only of their children but of their own childbearing. Facing a ballooning population India in 1999 offered tubal ligation as part of a family-planning initiative and many young women had the

procedure done and now regret it. Nicmala Palanisamy, a state counselor has revealed that at least 55 women have applied already to have their surgeries reversed and this week March 15 2004, officials in Channia, the state capital, have offered such surgery free to help some women conceive again. The Community Health Education Society says that in the entire area over 600 women now want such tubal ligation reversals and about 100 men have expressed an interest in reversals of their vasectomies. There was another option according to Pinagapani Manorama, society director, that of adopting one of the 350 youngsters who lost parents in the tragedy, but to date not one local couple has applied to adopt. Many couples have expressed not only the wish to have a baby again, but plans for that baby that are quite specific to fulfill their dreams. Though gender screening is against the law, it is common in India and in some clinics there are rates as high as 95% of all recent births being male. Gender policies continue to differ in India where the tubal ligation surgery is free for mothers who lost all their sons but is not free if they have a surviving daughter. In some cases the fee for the tubal ligation reversal is being paid with funds of compensation paid by the government for the lost child.

The state of Andhra Pradesh in India has offered \$2.765 cash (US) to families who have only one daughter, in a bid to reverse the trend in the area to favor gender selection of sons. The cash incentive is not payable at birth but only when the girl reaches 20 and only if there are no other siblings. In the southern Indian province the sex ratio is 943 females to 1000 males. Within the entire country the ratio is 927 females to 1000 males, down from 945 females to 1000 males ten years ago. India formally banned prenatal sex testing but nongovernmental agencies say the law is toothless and such tests are common. To promote having daughters the Andhra Pradesh government has appointed Sania Miraza, a tennis player as state ambassador 'of the girl child'. Mirza is a 19 year old and the first Indian woman to get into the 3rd round of the Grand Slam. Billboards featuring her carry the caption "Your daughter may be the next champion"

The Scottish Parliament in Nov 2004 passed the Breastfeeding Act to fine companies up to \$5,700 if they prohibit mothers from breastfeeding their babies in public. According to UNICEF Scotland has a high rate of breastfeeding babies at four months old, while the UK as a whole has a rate

of only 21% of babies being breastfed at 6 months. In Norway 80% of babies are breastfed compared with 30% in the US.

Rates at daycares vary widely as does the participation of the state in covering those costs. In Brussels private commercially run daycares charge \$9,000 - \$14,000 per child per year. Public facilities charge even less but are generally full with long waiting lists. It was revealed recently however (March 2005) that a daycare for the use of children of high level European bureaucrats bills its users \$46,000 per child per year - and most of those costs are paid for by government. The high costs in the 180 place daycare due to open next year in Schaerbeek have been a source of public dispute though director Vittorio Griffio has said that \$11,000 per child of the cost is due to purchasing and building costs for the facility and the actual cost is about \$35,000 per child to operate the daycare. The debate has centered on several factors - the high cost, the fact the taxpayer subsidizes most of it for bureaucrats and the fact the facility excludes ordinary citizens. In response to such criticism, the Council has said it would make 10-18 places available to local parents to encourage 'co-education'. However mayor Bernard Clerfayt has pointed out that ordinary Belgians are being asked, when included, to pay the full fees.

This newsletter is a courtesy of
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Beverley Smith is a long-time researcher and activist promoting equality for all roles for men and women, paid and unpaid, and for the state to value the family side of the career family balance. The international movement to support caregivers has no political or religious affiliation and is not affiliated with any movements against daycare, against gays, against abortion. It is a movement for choices and for the state to value choices of how to provide care of those we love.

A complete copy of her research is available in book form at cost. Ask for "Stealing Candy from a Baby" Cost \$20 Cdn. plus postage.

Beverley Smith was named 1999 Calgarian of the Year by Business in Calgary magazine, was nominated for the YWCA Women of Distinction Award In Feb 2003 she has requested personally that the Attorney General refer to the Supreme Court to decide if current laws affecting caregivers are consistent with the Charter of Rights

http://Beverley_smith__1.tripod.com/thecaregiverscase

In May 2003 she was awarded the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal for her work on behalf of options in caregiving. In March 2004 she was invited to be guest speaker at an International Women's day meeting of members of the federal Department of Finance and the Treasury Board.