

Intermediate 3
Unit 1: Reading
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Who's Taking Care of the Children?

Around the world, more and more women are working outside the home. In the United States, over 70 percent of women with children under 18 have another job besides that of mother and homemaker. Most are employed in traditional fields for females, such as clerical, sales, education, and service. However, a growing number choose a career that necessitates spending many hours away from home. These women are engineers, politicians, doctors, lawyers, and scientists, and a few have begun to occupy executive positions in business, government, and banking, breaking through the so-called glass ceiling.

take care of = look after

over = more than

besides = in addition to, as well as, on top of

homemaker = a person who does **household chores** (i.e. cooks food, does the dishes, does the laundry, keeps the house clean, and looks after the children)

- household (adj.) = related to a person's home
- chore = a difficult and often boring activity

tradition (n.) = a belief, principle, or way of acting that people in a particular society or group have continued to follow for a long time, or all of these beliefs, etc. in a particular society or group

traditional (adj.) = following or belonging to the ways of behaving or beliefs that have been established for a long time

females = girls or women

clerical = related to office work

growing = increasing

necessitate = require, need

occupy = hold

executive (adj.) /ɪg'zɛk.jə.tɪv/ = relating to making decisions and managing businesses

- Executive files on a computer usually have the extension "exe".
- CEO = Chief Executive Officer

break through = go beyond

- beyond = farther than

glass ceiling = invisible limitations in the society; social limitations

so-called = known as

Monetary factors influence women to work. Some are employed full-time, some part-time, and some seek creative solutions such as flextime work schedules and job-sharing. Many are single mothers raising children by themselves. But in most cases, one income in the household is not enough so both parents must work to support the family.

monetary = related to money, financial

factor = parameter

seek = look for
flextime = flexible time
income = the money that you earn
household (n.) = family

A backward glance from this side of the new millennium reveals that the role of married women in the U.S. has changed radically since the 1950s and 1960s, when it was taken for granted that they would stay home and raise children. This is still the image so often portrayed in American movies and advertising. In fact, the traditional combination of the husband as exclusive breadwinner and the wife as a stay-at-home mom caring for one or two children today accounts for only 7 percent of the population in the United States.

a backward glance = a look at the past
millennium = a period of 1000 years
 millennium (singular) ⇒ millennia (plural)
reveal = unfold, make something known to the public
role = part
radically = a lot
1950s = from 1950 until the end of 1959
1960s = from 1960 until the end of 1969
it was taken for granted that ... = it was obvious that ..., everybody was sure that ...
portrayed = shown
exclusive = limited to one person or group
breadwinner = the person who earns money for the family
account for = to make up a particular amount; amount to

Who, then, is taking care of the children? When extended families — children, parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles — lived in the same town and sometimes in the same house, a relative of the working parents took care of the children. But beginning with the Industrial Revolution, people moved away from farms and small towns to find better job opportunities in larger cities. Now, most often, the family is just the immediate family — mother, father, and children. Or, it could be a single-parent family, with either the mother or the father living with the children. Another variation is the blended family, the result of a marriage between a previously married man and woman who combine the children from their former marriages into a new family.

Industrial Revolution = the period of time during which work began to be done more by machines in factories than by hand at home
variation = different form
blended = mixed
combine = put together
former = previous

So who watches the children while the parents work? Answers to this question are varied:

1. Some parents put children in day-care facilities.
2. Some parents put children in informal day-care centers in private homes.

3. Companies and hospitals are realizing that providing day care at the workplace makes for happier and more productive employees.
4. Individuals or couples that are wealthy enough have a nanny, a woman who comes to care for the children in their own home. Many of these child-care workers are from other countries, e.g. England, Jamaica, Poland, or the Philippines.

watch = look after, take care of

varied = different

day-care facility = a place where children are kept while their parents work

make for = lead to, result in

wealthy = rich, affluent

nanny = baby-sitter

e.g. = that is (to say), for example

A trend that has emerged recently is the sharing of child-care responsibilities between husband and wife. Young couples will try to arrange their work schedules so that they work opposite hours or shifts in order that one parent is always home with the children. Since child-care is expensive, this saves money for the young couple trying to establish themselves and provide a secure environment for the family. Husband and wife may also share household chores. Some fathers are just as capable as mothers at cooking dinner, changing and bathing the baby, and doing the laundry.

trend = tendency

emerge = appear

schedule = timetable

since = because

establish oneself = be successful

secure = safe

just = exactly

capable = able to do something

In some cases, the woman's salary is adequate for family expenses, and the father becomes the "house husband". These cases are still fairly rare. One positive trend, however, is that fathers seem to be spending more time with their children. In a recent survey, 41% of the children sampled said they spend equal time with their mothers and fathers. "This is one of our most significant cultural changes," says Dr. Leon Hoffman, who co-directs the Parent Child Center at the New York Psychoanalytic Society. In practice for 30 years, Hoffman has found a "very dramatic difference in the involvement of the father — in everything from care taking to general decision making around kids' lives".

adequate = enough

rare = scarce, uncommon, hard to find

survey = study

sampled = selected randomly

significant = important



Leon Hoffman

direct (verb) = manage

co-direct (verb) = manage a place with another person

psychoanalysis (noun) = psychological analysis

psychoanalytic (adjective) = related to psychoanalysis

in practice ≠ in theory

dramatic = big, sharp, radical

involvement = being involved

Full Text:

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Monetary factors influence women to work. Some are employed full-time, some part-time, and some seek creative solutions such as flextime work schedules and job-sharing. Many are single mothers raising children by themselves. But in most cases, one income in the household is not enough so both parents must work to support the family.

A backward glance from this side of the new millennium reveals that the role of married women in the U.S. has changed radically since the 1950s and 1960s, when it was taken for granted that they would stay home and raise children. This is still the image so often portrayed in American movies and advertising. In fact, the traditional combination of the husband as exclusive breadwinner and the wife as a stay-at-home mom caring for one or two children today accounts for only 7 percent of the population in the United States.

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larger cities. Now, most often, the family is just the immediate family — mother, father, and children. Or, it could be a single-parent family, with either the mother or the father living with the children. Another variation is the blended family, the result of a marriage between a previously married man and woman who combine the children from their former marriages into a new family.

So who watches the children while the parents work? Answers to this question are varied:

1. Some parents put children in day-care facilities.
2. Some parents put children in informal day-care centers in private homes.
3. Companies and hospitals are realizing that providing day care at the workplace makes for happier and more productive employees.
4. Individuals or couples that are wealthy enough have a nanny, a woman who comes to care for the children in their own home. Many of these child-care workers are from other countries, e.g. England, Jamaica, Poland, or the Philippines.

A trend that has emerged recently is the sharing of child-care responsibilities between husband and wife. Young couples will try to arrange their work schedules so that they work opposite hours or shifts in order that one parent is always home with the children. Since child-care is expensive, this saves money for the young couple trying to establish themselves and provide a secure environment for the family. Husband and wife may also share household chores. Some fathers are just as capable as mothers at cooking dinner, changing and bathing the baby, and doing the laundry.

In some cases, the woman's salary is adequate for family expenses, and the father becomes the "house husband". These cases are still fairly rare. One positive trend, however, is that fathers seem to be spending more time with their children. In a recent survey, 41% of the children sampled said they spend equal time with their mothers and fathers. "This is one of our most significant cultural changes," says Dr. Leon Hoffman, who co-directs the Parent Child Center at the New York Psychoanalytic Society. In practice for 30 years, Hoffman has found a "very dramatic difference in the involvement of the father — in everything from care taking to general decision making around kids' lives".

Sample Summary:

More women around the world are working outside the home. In the U.S., over 70% of women with children under 18 have jobs. Many work in traditional female roles like clerical and sales, but more are now in careers like engineering, politics, and medicine. Financial needs often drive women to work, and many families need both parents to earn money.

In the past, women were expected to stay home and raise children, but this has changed. Now, only 7% of U.S. families have a stay-at-home mom and a working dad.

With both parents working, child care is a big concern. Options include day-care centers, informal care in private homes, workplace day care, and hiring nannies. Some parents also share child-care duties by working different shifts to ensure one parent is always home. This helps save

money and provides a stable environment for the family. Fathers are also taking on more household chores and child-care responsibilities.

Recently, more husbands and wives are sharing child-care duties. They often work different hours so one parent is always home, which saves money on child-care costs. Husbands and wives also share household chores, and many fathers are just as good at tasks like cooking and bathing the baby.

In some families, the mother earns enough to support the family, and the father stays home as a “house husband,” though this is still uncommon. Fathers are spending more time with their children, and a survey showed that 41% of children spend equal time with both parents. This change is significant, according to Dr. Leon Hoffman, who has seen fathers become more involved in their children’s lives over the past 30 years.

Source:

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