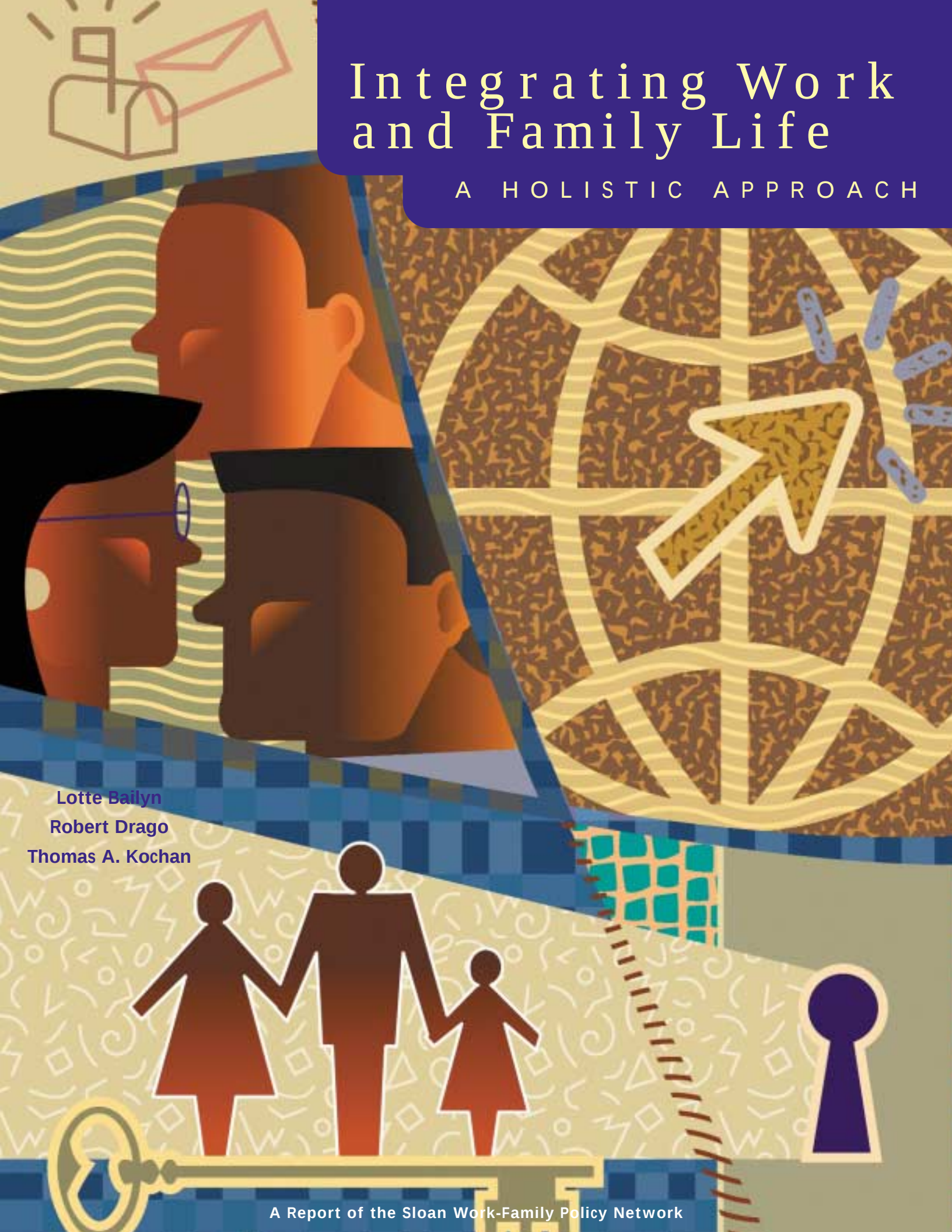




Integrating Work and Family Life

A HOLISTIC APPROACH

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Advisory Board members met over a period of the last year and a half and together determined the mission of the Network as well as assisted in the drafting and redrafting of this report.

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For more information or additional copies of the report, visit
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A Report of the Sloan Work-Family Policy Network

Lotte Bailyn, Robert Drago, Thomas A. Kochan

Written with the assistance of all the members of the advisory board,
with special thanks to

Randy Albelda, Eileen Appelbaum, Ann Bookman, Mona Harrington, and Phyllis Moen.

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Introduction and Overview

The challenges of integrating work and family life are part of everyday reality for the majority of American working families. While the particulars may vary depending on income, occupation, or stage in life, these challenges cut across all socioeconomic levels and are felt directly by both women and men. As families contribute more hours to the paid labor force, problems have intensified, bringing broad recognition that steps are needed to adjust to the changed realities of today's families and work.

Unfortunately, American society suffers from a severe policy and institutional lag in this critical area (Riley et al., 1994; Moen, 2001; Osterman et al., 2001). While work and family have changed, the public and private policies and practices governing employment remain mired in the past, modeled on the image of an ideal worker as a male breadwinner, with a supportive wife at home.

Most workers today, regardless of gender, have family responsibilities, and most married workers, regardless of gender, have an employed spouse. But jobs are still designed as if workers have no family responsibilities. The culture and organization of paid work, domestic care work, and community organizations remain predicated on the breadwinner-homemaker model. Thus, jobs, schools, medical services, and many other aspects of contemporary life operate on the assumption that someone (a wife) is available during the typical workday to care for children after school, during the summer, or on snow days, to take family members to the doctor or the dog to the vet, or to have the refrigerator fixed. And, increasingly, the sisters, mothers, grandmothers, friends, and neighbors that working women (married or single mothers) relied on in the past are themselves now in the labor force and, in the case

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of relatives, frequently live in another city. The new global economy, with its focus on 24/7 availability and long work hours, only worsens the problems generated by the lag in the organization of paid work, as if workers were without personal interests or domestic care concerns (Moen, 2001; Heymann, 2000).

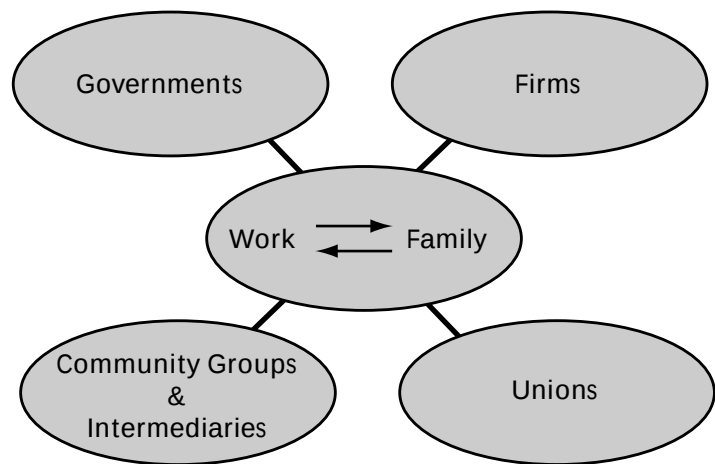
The problems this mismatch causes working families and the economy will not go away, nor will they be solved if each of the key institutions that share responsibilities for addressing them continue their current pattern of working separately, on sometimes parallel and sometimes conflicting paths. Nor will we return to the idealized image of work and family life of the past. Fewer than one-quarter of American families adopt the traditional division of labor in which a man provides financial support and a woman attends to family and community responsibilities.

This report offers a different, and, we believe, more productive, holistic approach to the challenge of integrating work and family life. Our basic premise is quite simple and straightforward: Integrating work and family life today requires a well-informed collaborative effort on the part of all the key actors that share interests and responsibilities for these issues. *Employers, unions, professional associations and advocacy groups, government, and communities all have roles to play in integrating work and family life, but none of them can solve this problem acting alone.* Each must recognize and reexamine the prevailing assumption that an “ideal worker” is one who can subordinate all other elements of life to the requirements of the job. Then all the players must engage in an ongoing dialogue over how to close the gap between today’s work and family realities and the policies and practices that govern their interrelationships.

Figure 1 illustrates the key groups and institutions we believe need to work together.

- *Employers* have a major stake in work and family issues. Industry faces a long-term labor shortage at the same time that the talents of many well-educated people are underutilized because they do not fit the ideal worker model that is built into organizational policies and reinforced by workplace cultures. But employers cannot significantly improve this situation by simply enacting more formal family-friendly policies. Employees must be brought into the process of designing and implementing flexible schedules, and practices and firms will need to work with the other actors involved to ensure that each party’s efforts complement and build on the initiatives of the others. By doing so, the participants can jointly address the dual agenda of restructuring work and careers to meet both the organization’s needs and employees’ personal and family needs and

Figure 1:
A Systematic Approach to Work and Family Responsibilities



responsibilities. Even with such initiatives, employers alone cannot succeed in solving these problems: More generous employers would be penalized by high benefit costs and women would suffer since there would be added incentives for employers to discriminate in hiring and promotions.

- *Unions and professional associations, community groups, and other employee or family advocacy groups* are becoming more focused and active on work and family issues. But by definition, advocacy groups need to engage and gain support from the private and public actors that control the resources needed to address this problem.
- *Government* response is needed, but it must be informed by what the private actors closest to the problems are already doing to integrate work and family life. Public-policy makers at the local, state, and national levels need to become catalysts for innovation and change and facilitators of the collaborative model envisioned here. Moreover, labor law must be reformed to enhance worker voice and improve flexibility for both employers and employees.
- Reluctance to recognize that the problems of work and family are societal has relegated responsibility for dealing with these issues to *individuals and families* to solve on their own. This is not to say that families cannot take action: Women are already active participants in the workforce and men are slowly increasing their participation in housework and child care. These issues clearly require the efforts of *both* men and women. But successful integration of work and family can only be achieved by engaging the energies and changing the practices of the full set of institutions affecting work and family relationships.

Now is the time for change. Women and men are struggling to adapt to the new realities and there is ample research evidence to draw on to help penetrate the full dimension of the problem and alternatives for addressing it. What is needed is the public discourse, leadership, and collective will to get on with the task.

The goal of this report is to describe the changes needed to jump-start this collaborative process. With the support and encouragement of the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, we have brought together leading researchers and experts on both work and family issues to prepare this report and start a public dialogue aimed at bridging this policy gap. In what follows, we explore ways that employers, unions, community groups, and local, state, and federal governments might work together to provide working families the resources they need to address the particular family and work issues they face.

We do so by first reframing the debate from the traditional view that work and family are separate spheres of concern. That view was predicated on an assumption of male breadwinner-female homemaker. We suggest another view of work and family, as interdependent, equally valued activities.

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Then we present the two sides of the problem by reviewing briefly how families and work have changed as the workforce and the economy evolved over the years. With this framing of the problem in mind, we then review the extensive body of research documenting what each of the key actors—employers, unions, community groups, and governments—are doing to affect the ability of working families to meet their work and family responsibilities. Much is being done; however, each of these actors tends to act alone with little regard, if not outright disdain, for the efforts of the others. The result is like ships passing in the night, or sometimes even worse, when adversarial relationships among the parties collide.

How to integrate these efforts into a holistic strategy is our next focus. Our aim is not to advocate detailed or specific changes in public policy or private practices. To do so would be inconsistent with the principle that the parties closest to the problems must be involved in shaping their own solutions. Instead we provide a blueprint for the changes needed for these actors to work constructively together and then illustrate the benefits we envision emerging out of this type of holistic approach.

Finally, to get this approach started, we issue a “call to action” and suggest five priorities for jump-starting this effort.

Reframing the Debate

Work and family life have always been interdependent, but the increased employment of mothers, rising family hours of work, today's service-intensive globalizing economy, and the trend toward long work hours for some and inadequate family income for others have rendered this interdependence both more visible and more problematic. The increased number of hours family members both individually and in total are contributing to the paid workforce means that both work and personal lives are not only under stress, but have changed in ways not anticipated by the assumptions, policies, and institutions that have previously shaped experiences in both work and family life. As the Sloan Foundation's Kathleen Christensen and Ralph Gomery put it, two-parent families now have three jobs but only two people to do them. Single parents who work for pay have an even more difficult task juggling their responsibilities at work and home.

Consequences

The stresses that result from these new realities affect families at all income levels and at all life stages.

- The most obvious implication for workers and families is the *increasing time squeeze*, which means that many working adults, particularly single parents and those in dual-earner families, have difficulty providing the ordinary daily attention needed for the well-being of family members, including themselves. Time to care for children, as well as for the increasing population of aging relatives, is becoming a serious concern. Such time pressures also make it difficult to deal with family emergencies or periods of special need, such as the birth or adoption of a child.
- For many, the time squeeze is accompanied by *financial pressures*. Women who are mothers as well as employees earn less than other women, and when they are single

parents, the result can be serious privation for both them and their children. Two-parent families in poverty also face difficulties, since parents at work must often leave children alone, with serious consequences for safety, health, learning, supervision, and nurturance. Well into the middle class, working parents have insufficient income to pay for all the care they cannot provide themselves; and even those who can afford it, face an inadequate supply of stable, quality help.

- Because of these limitations on family resources and the historic devaluing of care work, there is a *low wage ceiling for paid care providers*, resulting, in turn, in an unstable and inadequately trained care labor force.
- Family stresses inevitably *spill over* into places not designed nor sufficiently funded to deal with them—schools, social service agencies, police, courts, religious institutions—creating institutional overload and additional stressors for their employees.
- Employers with workers facing difficulties at home experience the *high costs of turnover, absenteeism, and lost investments in human resources* as workers seek more accommodating arrangements or even leave the workforce altogether. Ultimately, the economy and society pay the price of this underutilization of human resources in both a lower standard of living and a reduced quality of life.

Causes

Workplaces continue to be structured around the image of an ideal worker who starts to work in early adulthood and continues uninterrupted for forty years, taking no time off for child bearing or child rearing, supported by a spouse or family member who takes primary responsibility for family and community. In the last half century, we have moved from a division of labor depending generally on men as breadwinners and women as family caregivers to a way of life in which both men and women are breadwinners. But we have done so without redesigning work or occupational career paths and without making new provisions for family care. The result is a policy lag that has produced a care crisis and a career dilemma. Men as well as women increasingly feel caught in the mismatch between employer expectations and the traditions of family care. Paid work and career paths remain structured for the “unencumbered” worker, as if workers still had wives or someone at home to manage the domestic side of their lives. This crisis is exacerbated by an increase in working hours among men and women alike: Americans now work the longest hours in the industrialized world (Golden and Figart, 2000, p. 5; Moen, forthcoming).

These changes are driven by a powerful combination of cultural, economic, and political developments. Together, they make it imperative to reexamine existing legislation and corporate policies, as well as received assumptions about paid work, families, careers, gender, and care work that permeate governmental, corporate, labor, and community institutions and strategies.

- *Cultural Forces.* The women’s movement successfully expanded women’s claim to equality—from equal protection of formal legal and political rights to equal educa-

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tional and economic opportunity and political voice—conceptions that have motivated women to engage in all kinds of activities outside the home, including paid work. But in practice this means that women have greater opportunities to pursue the male ideal worker template of unencumbered work, even though few women and increasingly fewer men are, in fact, “unencumbered.”

- *Economic Forces.* Two decades of real wage declines for men required large numbers of women to enter the workplace and men and women to increase their hours of paid work to maintain middle- and working-class living standards. The breakdown of the traditional social contract at work that traded loyalty and commitment for long-term job security means that seniority no longer enhances job security. Workers across the full occupational spectrum now must deal with greater uncertainty regarding their future, which leads some to put in long hours as evidence of their commitment and others to work overtime today for fear their jobs may not be available tomorrow.
- *Political Forces.* There has been an overall retrenchment regarding the role of government in general, and the federal government in particular. Both electoral parties have agreed that the size of the federal government should be reduced and many of its historical responsibilities passed to states and municipalities. A key example of this was the passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act (PRWOA) in 1996 and the national policy to move people, particularly unmarried mothers, from welfare to work. This policy shift has placed yet more pressure on women to enter the paid workforce or to increase their hours of work without also sufficiently increasing the availability of affordable child care and health insurance for children and adults.

The Default Solution and Its Consequences

The default solution to the work and family challenge is increasingly long hours of work and an unchanged reliance on the care work of women. Most families manage their own work-family challenges by adopting a modified version of the traditional division of labor, with women continuing to take primary responsibility for families in addition to paid work. As a result of this common “double shift,” women’s work patterns, wages, benefits, and advancement continue to differ from those of men.

Women also constitute most of the paid caregiving labor force—workers in daycare centers, preschool and afterschool programs, various forms of family-supporting elder care, and the range of concierge services companies provide for favored employees. Most are paid little more than minimum wage, on which many must provide care for their own families.

A related consequence of staying the present course is that few women reach places of policy-making authority in private or public institutions—corporations, unions, legislatures—where the important decisions on social issues are made. In short, the default solution to the work-family problem, which imposes often debilitating pressures on families, also undermines women’s equal economic opportunity and muffles their political voice on matters that affect them and their families.

Necessary But Not Sufficient Solutions

Though most public discourse still frames these issues as private troubles, that is, logistical or “balance” problems that individuals or families should solve on their own, there have been a range of proposals for change. So far, however, such efforts have produced only piecemeal or patchwork solutions. Few question the existing organization of paid work or the fundamental proposition that paid work is the only “work” that matters. Moreover, by focusing on only parts of the problem, the groups often end up fighting or contradicting each other’s efforts. Examples of the limitations of this approach abound.

- *Family advocates*, assuming unchanged work structures, seek new systems of paid care for the children of working parents. Business groups tend to oppose these efforts as yet another federal or state government mandate that adds costs and administrative burdens without being responsive to their specific business realities, organizational practices, or workforce needs.
- Many *employers* approach the family issue by offering “family-friendly” policies designed to recruit and retain valued workers in tight labor markets, and make it easier for them to work the hours that businesses seemingly require. But the only policies that seem to generate significant utilization are those that provide “wife replacement” services, such as on-site laundry, meals, stores, and concierge services. There is nothing wrong with these services *per se*, but they do not address the fundamental issue of the inability of ideal workers to make time for family commitments and are not available to all workers.
- *Employment specialists* propose alternatives for parents, usually mothers, to arrange their work schedules in ways that allow them, at least theoretically, to balance work and family. This marginalizes women both as workers and caregivers and leads women’s advocacy groups to see such efforts as a form of discrimination. Some civil-rights lawyers point out that if you define the ideal worker around men’s traditional life patterns, the result is exclusionary and discriminatory for women. They favor the threat of litigation against employers who continue to promote or otherwise favor those willing and able to work long hours and maintain uninterrupted careers since this pattern continues to disadvantage women more than men. Employers and policy makers, in turn, are determined to reduce the amount of litigation arising from employment disputes.
- *Politicians and policy analysts* tend to propose piecemeal solutions that reflect particular ideological views or institutional perspectives. Some would leave work-family problems to the market to solve. Others see them largely as poverty issues and focus on the need to assist low-wage parents to provide for the health, education, and development of their children. Still others propose specific legislation or regulations to address particular problems, such as the need for paid

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leave. This stance focuses the debate on symptoms rather than on underlying causes and holistic strategies or solutions.

- Some *unions and employers* have begun to address these issues by negotiating and funding various leave and child-care provisions, complementing the traditional union emphasis on providing health-care and pension contributions. But many employers oppose any role for unions or collective discussions while employee groups/associations in their workplaces and policy makers are reluctant to intervene in ways that would transform labor-management relations from their current highly adversarial dynamic to one in which the parties negotiated and worked together efficiently and effectively.
- *Community groups* are becoming more active in attempting to provide supports for families and children. They have built coalitions at the grassroots level around “livability initiatives” that link economic development, environmental protection, and the care and health of children and families. But these efforts cannot be developed and sustained without resources from business, philanthropy and/or government.

Each of these approaches addresses only parts of the larger problem and, if implemented, would benefit only select segments of the broad population. In the end, they leave most workers and families stressed by the incompatibility of workplace requirements and the needs of family care.

Needed Solutions

In sum, public, corporate, collectively bargained, family, and community policies and practices remain predicated on an ideal worker template that assumes “serious” and “committed” workers have someone else to manage the domestic side of their lives, and a care-work template that assumes that caregivers can devote themselves full time to caring for their families with someone else providing for their economic needs. Society faces two sets of challenges in addressing this problem.

One set of challenges involves the task of (a) recognizing the unanticipated negative consequences of policies and institutions geared to a workforce and a “careforce” that no longer exist; and (b) developing new policies and arrangements that mesh with current realities, meeting the needs of employers and working families at all stages of life. What is required is a broader vision that recognizes the heterogeneity and multiple obligations of the contemporary and future workforce. While this is a difficult conceptual and technical task, we believe it is manageable, in part because many of the pieces of a comprehensive approach to these problems are already being developed and used in various settings around the country. What is required is a comprehensive effort at reenvisioning paid work, careers, and care work, bringing together scattered structural “leads” from across the country into a blueprint for change.

The second challenge is to overcome resistance to addressing work-family issues and to reframe them in a way that builds the broad-based support and collective

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energy needed to address them. We believe society is ready to act. Now, with a full generation of experience, women and men are realizing that rather than believing falsely that they can “have it all,” they find themselves “doing it all”—as paid workers and as unpaid care workers. As a result, women and men are now ready to see their stresses as a societal problem, one they cannot address completely on their own by simply changing the division of labor at home or by ending discriminatory practices at work. Instead, it is time to replace outmoded templates of the male breadwinner as the ideal worker and women as the unpaid or marginalized caregivers and begin the task of constructing adequate supports for both family well-being and productive and satisfying work.

The Two Sides of the Problem

Changes in Families and Work

Changes in Families

Today's families are more varied in structure and makeup than ever before. There are many fewer families with two parents, children, and a relatively clear division of labor between husband and wife.

- Three-fifths of women age 16 and over are in the paid labor force, as are 75 percent of mothers with children. Even if we look at the entire population of women, including the expanding number of elder women, the proportion of employed women rose from only 33.9 percent in 1950, to 60 percent in 1998. (Council of Economic Advisors, 2000, p.166, 168).
- In 1950, 13 percent of America's children lived in dual-earner households. That figure climbed to 44 percent by 1998 (Council of Economic Advisors, 2000, p. 166).
- Fewer than 25 percent of married families fit the old "breadwinner" model, with the husband in the labor force and the wife at home, compared to 56 percent in 1950.
- Not only have more women entered the labor force, they work longer hours: Among all employed women, average weekly hours of work increased from 34.2 hours in 1978 to 36.1 hours in 1998 (Cohen and Bianchi, 1999, p. 26).
- Longer work hours were not just for women. Figures from the Bureau of Labor Statistics suggest a 7.9 percent increase in average hours of work in the private sector per adult between 1960 and 1998.¹ This increase is surprising given that men's participation in the labor force was declining over the period and the ranks of retired Americans increased as well.
- Today, more than 20 percent of households indicate they are responsible for some or all of the care of elderly relatives. As the population ages, these percentages are

¹ Figure calculated from adult population figures (Table B-33) and establishment data on hours of work in the nonfarm business sector (Table B47), Council of Economic Advisors (2000).

expected to double in the near future (U.S. Department of Labor, 1999).

- There are now more single-parent families, a group accounting for 8.2 percent of all households in 1979, but 10.4 percent in 2000 (see Table 1).

Other changes in the family structure are also occurring, although exact numbers are not available to track them. For example, there are more dispersed and mixed families—parents and stepparents in separate homes—and more same-sex and communal households. Siblings are more scattered, living in geographic areas removed from elderly parents, while more grandparents or other relatives are back in the care business for others. In addition, there are more foster parents and other kinds of temporary arrangements. Finally, ages in parent-child situations vary more widely as the age of parents at childbirth has changed.

For our purposes, one implication of this picture is that the definitions of “family” and “personal” responsibilities are elastic. They have broadened over the years and may change even more in the future. And family roles and responsibilities change in significant ways over the course of life, as children grow and parents age. We should not assume the boundaries we place around these terms today will be the same in ten or twenty years and therefore we need to allow people more options for how they shape their families and meet their responsibilities, now and in the future. The goal of policy should be to allow people to make genuine choices about their family roles, the timing of family decisions, and the adjustments to changes over time in family roles and responsibilities. Policy should ensure comparable changes in the employment domain that make family and work roles complementary and economically viable.

The Changing Nature of Work

Numerous analyses have explored how work is changing, as we move from an image of work in an industrial/manufacturing-based economy to one in which information

Table 1: Changing American Families

	1979 # of Households (millions)	Percentage	2000 # of Households (millions)	Percentage
All Households	77,330	100%	104,705	100%
Married				
with children	25,189	32.6%	26,373	25.2%
without children	22,473	29.1%	28,938	27.6%
Unmarried Male Head				
with children	682	0.9%	2,169	2.1%
without children	8,998	11.6%	16,500	15.8%
Unmarried Female Head				
with children	5,617	7.3%	8,736	8.3%
without children	14,370	18.6%	21,990	21.0%

Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, 1980 and 2000.

and knowledge are key factors influencing the nature of work and the institutions, policies, and practices governing employment relationships (see, for example, Cappelli et al., 1997; National Research Council, 2000; Osterman et al., 2001). The former image presented the typical work setting as a stable, long-term relationship in a large industrial firm competing in an expanding domestic market with two classes of workers—managers or exempt white-collar salaried employees, and production workers or nonexempt hourly workers. The skills, decision-making responsibilities, loyalties, and legal status of these two groups were assumed to be different. Both sets of employees and their employers were seen as bound together in an implicit social contract in which loyalty and good performance by the employees were exchanged for satisfactory wages, benefits, and long-term security. Wages and benefits were expected to move upward gradually in tandem with improvements in productivity and profits.

This stylized description of the nature of work and employment has been rendered obsolete by many of the same developments that we focus on in this report. Today's workplaces are highly varied. They are located in a mixture of small and large firms scattered across service and manufacturing sectors, and in subcontracting arrangements that blur traditional industry categories. Organizations are devolving decisions and other responsibilities traditionally reserved for managers to employees and groups so that the management/worker and exempt/nonexempt distinctions are also becoming more blurred. Employment status is now more varied, mixing "standard" employees with contract, temporary, and project workers, and employment durations of even the standard white-collar and blue-collar workers have become more uncertain. Clearly, the old social contract no longer describes the expectations that either the majority of workers or employers bring to their relationships today. How this plays out in the future, however, is at best uncertain.

While all these developments in work and employment have a bearing on the relationship between work and family life, the one that is perhaps of most consequence is the changing pattern observed in working time. We give special attention to this issue here.

Developments in Working Hours

Historical efforts to reduce the length of the working week resulted ultimately in the 1938 passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The original statute specified that all hours beyond forty-four per week yield an overtime premium on the wage of 50 percent per hour. Two years later, the act was amended to make the forty-hour workweek standard. That act still governs a majority of employment relations in the U.S. today. Since the passage of the FLSA, American norms and institutional practices have strong ties to the forty-hour week. When a nationally representative sample of wage and salary employees were asked how many hours they were regularly scheduled

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to work, 64 percent claimed the forty-hour week as the norm. Moreover, 38 percent of employees claimed to prefer the forty-hour week when provided a choice of hours.²

Although the forty-hour week serves as a legal norm and a majority of employees are regularly scheduled to work such hours, with a substantial minority preferring to do so, the match is far from perfect. Comparing actual (as opposed to scheduled) hours of work to those individuals prefer, it turns out that fewer than 10 percent of employees both prefer and are working forty hours per week on a regular basis (Drago, 2000). What about the rest?

The Time Divide. There may be a general mismatch between preferred and actual hours. Concomitantly, there is substantial recent evidence that the forty-hour week is becoming less prevalent in the U.S. economy. These phenomena are creating an expanding time divide in the economy.

First, consider daily hours of work. Costa (2000, pp. 162–63) shows that between 1973 and 1991, daily hours of work declined for poor women (those in the bottom 20 percent of the wage distribution), and for poor men as well (those in the bottom 10 percent of the wage distribution). For high-wage workers, however, daily hours rose. Specifically, hours of work increased between 1973 and 1991 for women and for men in the top 70 percent of the wage distribution. This same pattern can be found in weekly hours of work (Jacobs and Gerson, 1998). The increase in long-hours jobs even affected those covered by the FLSA, who received an overtime premium for work over forty hours per week (Hetrick, 2000).

Drawing on data of married couples from the National Study of Families and Households, Clarkberg and Moen (2001) find that there are few couples where both spouses are working the hours they desire. Moreover, a significant number of wives who are full-time homemakers would prefer to be employed, but not full time. The problem is that most jobs come prepackaged, offering individuals two choices: full-time (which is now often long hours) or short hours, jobs with low pay and no benefits. The result is that most people are working more, or less, than they prefer.

Is the time divide driven by employee preferences or by the structure of jobs and careers? Using data from the 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce, Drago (2000) finds that a majority of employees are not working the hours they would choose. Instead, a clear pattern emerges with employees working short hours tending to desire longer hours, while those who work long hours tend to prefer shorter hours. Moreover, the average respondent does not wish to work forty hours per week, but thirty-five instead. Much of the time divide can therefore be traced to the structure of jobs and occupations, a structure that is anchored in legislation, but one that employees would like to change.

The legal profession illustrates the challenge of closing the gap between preferred and actual hours. Landers, Rebitzer, and Taylor (1996) show that while a majority of lawyers would prefer to work fewer hours, individually they will not do so unless their

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² Figures from Drago (2000) calculated from the 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce.

peers do so as well. Acting individually in this case would put their careers at a relative disadvantage to their “harder working” peers. Only if law associations and law firms address this problem together is progress likely. Indeed, such an effort is under way, nationally and, more specifically, in the Boston area (Women’s Bar Association, 2000).

Time Transfer. One way to deal with the time divide mentioned above is the notion of “time transfer” (Rogers, 2001). That is, we could resolve many of these issues by policies to induce a transfer of working time from long hours, overworked employees to short hours, underworked employees.

Policies that would support time transfer include the creation of high-quality part-time jobs (Williams, 1999). As noted above, most part-time jobs currently provide neither health-care coverage nor pension benefits. If the financial and career penalties associated with part-time employment were reduced, then those who are overworked would have an incentive to reduce their hours. On the employer side, if it became easier to retain part-time employees, firms would have a greater incentive to invest in the education and training of those employees, and to provide hours consistent with employee preferences.

However, it also seems likely that there are structural impediments to time transfer policies. For example, if those currently working long hours are largely in professional and managerial occupations, hours cannot simply be shifted to employees in other occupations. The skills and education necessary for a successful transfer of tasks might not be available.

The Benefits Connection. An explicit link between benefits and employment has been built into much of employment law since the New Deal. In doing so, it perpetuates the breadwinner view of work and family structures. When families fit this image, the husband’s job is assumed to provide a steady stream of health-care coverage for the wife and children in the home, as well as secure retirement income for the husband and wife. Because the average U.S. family no longer fits this model, health-care and pension systems are failing increasing numbers of Americans.

As of 1984, just under 70 percent of the U.S. population had health coverage provided through the employment of a family member. The children and nonemployed mothers included in this figure received coverage due to the husband’s employment.³ However, by 1997, overall health-care coverage provided by employers dropped to include only 65 percent of the population. Particularly hard hit by this shift were women, whose rate of noncoverage rose from 13.6 percent in 1984 to 16.2 percent in 1997.

Similar ills afflict pension benefit systems. A recent study revealed that, in 1993, only 51 percent of employed men and 47 percent of employed women held an employer-sponsored pension (Lichtenstein and Wu, 2000, p. 8). Similarly, coverage for white employees was more than 56 percent, while that for minorities was below 50 percent (op. cit., p. 10). These low rates of coverage, and adverse circumstances for

³ Information for the next two paragraphs from National Center for Health Statistics (2000), Table 128.

women and minorities, actually tend to understate gender and race differences. Lichtenstein and Wu (2000) argue that the amounts of money held in various retirement accounts for employees are likely to be far lower for women and minorities.

Gaps in health-care and pension coverage are most pronounced for part-time employees. As of 1994, 23.5 percent of part-time jobs provided health insurance, a figure that rose to 86.4 percent for full-time jobs. At the same time, only 26 percent of part-time jobs provided pension benefits, while 52.4 percent of full-time jobs did so (Lettau and Buchmueller, 1999, p. 31). Because women and particularly mothers are overrepresented among part-time employees, the failures of the system are far from randomly distributed.

Successful policies around work and family issues need to confront these institutions built upon an increasingly out-of-date model of the family and of employment.

Parallel or Conflicting Tracks: Current Efforts of the Different Actors

Achieving an integrated set of solutions to the problems identified above will require the combined efforts of employers, unions, families, various levels of government, and community-based institutions. But the pattern so far has been for each of these actors to design their own approaches, largely independent of and in some cases in conflict with or opposition to each other. Yet these individual efforts represent the building blocks for a holistic strategy. In this section we review the efforts of each of the actors.

Employers

The New Deal legislation of the 1930s assigned employers much of the responsibility for meeting the needs of workers and their families. More than citizens of most other countries, Americans rely on attachments to specific employers for health insurance, disability insurance, pensions, and social security benefits. The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) continued this pattern by limiting coverage to some but not all employers (those with fifty or more employees) and some workers (those who put in more than 1,250 hours per year). Given this centrality, it is important to understand how the assumptions and practices guiding employers and the relationship of workers to their firms are changing.

Almost five decades ago, William Whyte described the “organization man” in America. These individuals “have left home, spiritually as well as physically, to take

the vows of organization life, and it is they who are the mind and soul of our great self-perpetuating institutions” (1956, p. 3). In fact, the organization man achieved this state with the full-time support of a woman in the home.

The institutional structures supporting the patterns of work and family life for the organization man centered around the “ideal worker” model of the breadwinner as employee (Williams, 1999; Moen, 2001). The breadwinner model assumed that men can devote themselves entirely to the job and so be ideal workers, in return for a wage sufficient to support a family, with a wife at home performing unpaid care and housework (Albelda et al., 1997, pp. 156–60). Whyte documented ideal worker norms for professional workers, but the breadwinner model of work and family permeated blue-collar jobs as well during the 1950s and 1960s (Gordon et al., 1982, pp. 216–7).

Gradually, the changing demographics and family structures reviewed above have rendered the organization man and breadwinner assumptions obsolete, and organizational practices began to move away from them. Starting in the 1970s, some employers began to provide family benefits in the form of leaves for family needs, a variety of flexible work arrangements, help in various forms for child care, etc. Although this trend emerged only gradually, now many leading employers routinely provide a whole host of family policies, and there are family-friendly indices and lists of companies that are family friendly. Corporations vie to be among the 100 best companies compiled each year by *Working Mother* magazine. Many companies now have internal work-family or work-life professionals and there are numerous consulting firms to work with corporations on these issues. But there are still many employers, particularly small firms, that do not provide these policies, either because they do not have the resources or because they do not recognize the need for them.

We divide corporate work-family policies into two types: those that allow employees to more closely match the ideal worker norm, and those that seek to provide employees with flexibility so they can better manage their own work-life integration (Bailyn, 1993). Concierge services such as on-site meals, doctors, dentists, and laundry, as well as back-up child care and sick-child care services, serve as examples of the first type. Quite differently, options around parental leave, flexible work arrangements, and telecommuting provide employees with more control and flexibility in their work and family arrangements.

Two dynamics pushed the expansion of work-family benefits in recent years. As mentioned above, tight labor markets for professional occupations led employers to offer benefits to employees in the upper echelons of the corporate world. In addition, many work-family policies and benefits seem to be concentrated in large corporations (Osterman, 1995; MacDermid et al., 1999). These dynamics worked in the same direction, yielding the expansion of benefits for high-wage employees in some of America’s largest companies. For example, a survey of major corporations undertaken by Hewitt Associates in 1995 found 88 percent of major U.S. corporations providing child-care support (Hewitt, 1998). In contrast, the 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce found only 20 percent of all U.S. employees enjoying information and

referral services for child care (Bond et al., 1997, p. 96). The latter study also found for a subsample of employed parents that 62 percent of managers and professionals, but only 43 percent of parents in other occupations, were able to take time off to care for a sick child without losing pay, forfeiting vacation time, or having to make up an excuse for their absence (p. 99). These findings suggest that corporations are unlikely, by themselves, to expand work-family benefits to cover a majority of American employees.

Even though corporations expanded work-family benefits in recent years, utilization of policies falls far short of expectations. Arlie Hochschild documented this problem in a corporation in *The Time Bind* (1997). In her study, corporate leaders believed that employees should balance their work and family commitments, and had implemented a variety of work-family policies toward that end. What they found instead was that the policies were not being used.

This finding has now been widely replicated in other studies. Family policies are underused because of fears, realistic or not, of career reprisal, or of not being seen as a committed worker. Judiesch and Lyness (1999) found employees in a U.S. corporation who took family and medical leaves suffered promotional penalties as well as smaller wage increases in subsequent years. For these employees, fears of reprisal were entirely justified. The Women's Bar Association of Boston study referred to earlier documented this result in vivid terms. It found that while more than 90 percent of the leading firms in the area allowed associates and partners to work part time, fewer than 4 percent have chosen to do so and among those who do, turnover is higher and about one-third report their careers have suffered for having taken up this option (Women's Bar Association, 2000).

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Although the relevant evidence is far from conclusive, two studies suggest that the ideal-worker norm provides part of the explanation for career penalties. Thompson, Beauvais, and Lyness (1999) found that corporate culture around work and family played a significant role in explaining whether employees used work-family policies. The fact that some organizations but not others are able to provide a favorable culture suggests that we are indeed dealing with norms. Waldfogel (1998), for example, demonstrated that more generous maternity-leave policies are associated with higher rates of employee retention following childbirth. Given the high costs of replacing many (though far from all) employees, Waldfogel's research suggests that even a seemingly costly policy such as extended maternity leave may enhance firm performance.

Part-Time. Over the life course, most individuals flow into and eventually out of child rearing and may confront elder-care responsibilities at some point. Some researchers have argued for the creation of high-quality part-time jobs for individuals to move into and out of as needed to meet these responsibilities (Williams, 1999; Drago and Williams, 2000). (Although there is some debate, part-time work is

generally viewed as thirty-five hours or fewer per week.) Such an approach confronts the reality that parental leaves do not cover the entire period when children are typically in the home.

More generally, part-time employment is seldom connected to career tracks. The 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce (Bond et al., 1998) reveals that 14 percent of the workforce is working part time, primarily in services and sales. Many more women are in this category: 21 percent of women compared to only 8 percent of men. Among women this is more characteristic of white, non-Hispanic, and married women, particularly those who are parents. Among men, it is primarily the single men who fall into this category. Hourly wages of part-time workers are consistently lower than those working full time, and less than half of this group have health insurance covered by their employers, compared to well over 80 percent of those in full-time jobs. The firms in which these part-timers work tend to be small, and for both men and women this situation implies less negative spillover from work to the home. For women, working part time is associated with job satisfaction above the mean, whereas for part-time men, job satisfaction is somewhat below the mean. Male part-timers report relatively high autonomy, which is not true for the women. To date, the benefits of part-time work for women—especially flexibility—have been undercut by significant costs in lost wages, lower pensions, and lack of career advancement (see Bookman, 1995).

The relatively high level of corporate support for parental leave, particularly for professional and managerial employees, has yet to carry over to the provision of quality part-time jobs. Although the existence of recent experiments is encouraging, the track record to date suggests the need for rethinking the ideal worker norm, reshaping corporate culture, and redesigning jobs to broaden the opportunities for quality part-time employment. In addition, there may be a role for government and unions in promoting this strategy (duRivage et al., 1998).

Working-Time Flexibility. Flexible hours arrangements have the clearest link to the promotion of work-life integration. Recent studies find an increasing prevalence of flexible working arrangements. Hewitt Associates (1998) reports that the incidence of flexible arrangements in large U.S. corporations rose from 17 percent in 1993 to 77 percent in 1998.

The pattern of limited coverage identified earlier also holds for flexible arrangements. Using data from the 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce, we found that about half of the employees report high working-time flexibility. Executives, administrators, and managers are by far the highest, with 72 percent reporting high flexibility; services and operators are the lowest, at fewer than 40 percent. High flexibility (over 70 percent) is also reported in professional services and in wholesale trade. Education services, however, report the lowest degree of flexibility (31 percent). Except in the Hispanic group, men report consistently more working-time flexibility than women. The difference is greatest among those with at least a college degree. This group in general has the most flexibility, but among women the

incidence is reported to be 52 percent compared to 67 percent for men. That this work format has a different meaning for men than for women is shown by hourly wage data. Women with high flexibility have a higher hourly wage than those with low flexibility, whereas the opposite is true for men, which must be a function of the different distribution into job categories. For both men and women, flexibility is associated with less negative spillover from work to home and with greater autonomy. Job satisfaction is low among those with low flexibility, but it is only among women that high flexibility is associated with very high job satisfaction. Workers who report high flexibility tend to work in smaller firms than those reporting low flexibility.

There is some encouraging evidence regarding the flow-through of flexible working arrangements to employees of smaller firms. Pitt-Catsoupes (2000) found in a sample of businesses with fewer than fifty employees that 80 percent “sometimes” allowed employees to adjust their hours of work.

The Effects of Flexible Scheduling Policies. The preponderance of research on flexibility shows that there are significant positive outcomes for employees. Baltes and colleagues (1999) conducted a meta-analysis of thirty-one studies of flexible scheduling policies. They reported a significant relationship between flexible scheduling and employee outcomes (job satisfaction, satisfaction with scheduling) in eighteen studies of flextime and eight studies of compressed workweeks.

The business case for flexible work policies is considerably less robust (Lobel, 1999; Gonyea and Googins, 1992; Christensen and Staines, 1990). Early studies of absenteeism found that it was lower among employees who used flextime (Kim and Campagna, 1981; McGuire and Liro, 1987; Ronen, 1984; Welch and Gordon, 1980). However, Swart (1985) found that alternative schedules improved absenteeism in only one (banking) out of three industries (not public utilities or insurance) studied. Zippo (1984) similarly found that in a study of gas and electric companies, twenty-five of the 125 companies used flex scheduling, but only six reported decreased absenteeism. Baltes et al. (1999) found that absenteeism was lower in six out of eight studies of flextime, but only two out of five studies of compressed workweeks.

In one of the few longitudinal studies, Dalton and Mesch (1990) compared the absenteeism and turnover of employees in two divisions of one company: one with flexible scheduling and one without. Absenteeism fell significantly among employees eligible for flexible scheduling, but turnover was not affected. Other studies have also found limited or no support for the relationship between flexible scheduling policies and turnover or organizational commitment (Christensen and Staines, 1990; Dunham et al., 1987; Pierce and Newstrom, 1983; Pierce, et al., 1989). Though one study in a British computer company, which compared a systems design group working from home, with scheduling flexibility, to a similar office-based group, found the home-based, flexible group more likely to keep up their skills training and less likely to envision leaving the company (Bailyn, 1989).

Recently, Grover and Crooker (1995) studied multiple family-responsive policies together and found that employees with access to more of these benefits showed greater

organizational commitment and lower intention to leave. Their study supported the idea that corporate provision of programs symbolizes concern for employees, thereby positively influencing long-term attachment. Scandura and Lankau (1997) also found that workers with flexible work hours had higher organizational commitment.

In summary, the existing research suggests that flexible scheduling is likely to benefit employees and reduces absenteeism and possibly turnover. Employee control over managing work and family is likely to mediate the relationship between management practices and employee attitudes and behavior.

Work Design

Most of the work on recent workplace innovations—e.g., job enrichment, self-managed teams, total quality management, high commitment, and high-performance work systems—has not concerned itself with the effects of these practices on workers and their families. The bulk of what is available on work-family linkages has emphasized flexibility in the workplace. Growing evidence, however, demonstrates that work design is closely interconnected with family as well as with work outcomes. Indeed, it may serve as a key root cause of the problem and the place to focus if we are to improve employees' ability to integrate their employment with their family responsibilities.

Recently, a number of surveys (both nationally and within certain companies) have increased our understanding of the linkages between workplace characteristics and work-family integration. These instruments go beyond the presence of policies of flexibility in considering the link between the workplace and employee work-family integration.

The national survey by the Families and Work Institute (Bond, et al., 1998) is one such study. The researchers found that work conditions are closely linked to how employees feel about their personal lives. In particular, demanding jobs in an unsupportive environment can exacerbate personal problems. What is needed, according to these data, are jobs that have autonomy, flexibility, learning opportunities, and supervisory support. Such jobs have positive effects on workers' personal lives, and also are predictive of job satisfaction, commitment, loyalty, performance, and retention.

Appelbaum, Berg, and Kalleberg (2000) surveyed more than 4,000 employees in forty manufacturing facilities in steel, apparel, and medical electronics and imaging industries. They found "that the characteristics of the job and the overall work environment have significant effects on workers' views of the extent to which companies help them balance work and family." Their results show that benefits and formal family-friendly policies are not sufficient to lead to this perception. More is needed. "It depends as well on workers having jobs that are challenging and rewarding, workplaces characterized by trust. . . ." (p. 122). Their data show that the opportunity to participate has the greatest effect on workers' perception of their companies as helping them balance work and family, though, interestingly, this is much stronger for

Employee control over managing work and family is likely to mediate the relationship between management practices and employee attitudes and behavior.

men than for women. But overall, it has the highest effect, followed by child-care referrals, trust, and intrinsic rewards.

In a survey of over 400 employees in the biotech industry, Eaton (2000) looked at the effect of family policies on personal and workplace outcomes, particularly satisfaction with work-family integration and commitment to the organization and self-perceived productivity. Her findings add a new dimension to the understanding of these links. First, she showed that it was not the presence of family-friendly policies that contributed either to satisfaction about work-family integration or to commitment to the organization, though they did to perceived productivity. But even here, it was not the presence of policies but their perceived usability that had the greater effect. In other words, the presence of policies without a culture that makes employees feel free to use them does not produce these desired results. Second, she showed, as has been presented before, the importance of control over the conditions of work in producing double outcomes: increased satisfaction with the integration of work and family life on the personal side, and increased commitment to the organization and greater perceived productivity on the organizational side.

Batt and Valcour (2000) analyzed data from 620 dual-career couples identified through seven large employers in upstate New York. They found that work design characteristics were strong predictors of work-family conflict, and the strongest predictors of employees' control or ability to integrate work and family demands. Coordination responsibilities, flexible technologies, and long work hours were associated with significantly higher work-family conflict. In particular, coordination responsibilities and longer work hours also were associated with lower control over managing work and family. By contrast, decision-making autonomy increased employee control. Supportive supervision also was associated with lower work-family conflict and higher employee control. Job security predicted lower work-family conflict, while both job security and access to career development policies were associated with greater employee control over work-family integration. High levels of employee control, in turn, were associated with a lower probability of turnover. That is, particularly for men, work-design characteristics predicted employees' degree of control over managing work and family, and that control, in turn, predicted the propensity to seek alternative employment.

They also found some interesting similarities and differences between men and women. For both men and women, three dimensions of work design had significant positive relationships to control over managing work and family: decision-making autonomy, the use of flexible technology, and whether overnight travel is a work requirement. On the other hand, two gender differences are noteworthy. Women's outcomes (work-family conflict and turnover) were significantly influenced by having a supportive supervisor, while men's were not. Men's turnover intentions, by contrast, were significantly lower when they had access to flexible scheduling. Women's reported control over managing work and family was lower than that for men; and control, in turn, was a significant predictor of turnover only for men. Finally, among women,

flexible technology and work hours were significant predictors of work-family conflict, whereas for men, coordination responsibilities were significant.

In other words, there are key elements of work design that have a significant impact on work-family integration, over and above the importance of flexibility and other family-friendly policies. Kellogg (unpublished), in a survey of some 200 employees of a scientific research foundation, shows even more clearly the importance of these connections. She finds that work-family integration is positively correlated with a number of important organizational outcomes, particularly commitment to the organization and innovation potential. Further, her findings show that the same work practices—e.g., high workload, interruptions—that make work-family integration difficult also are conducive to lower commitment and less innovation potential. This study, initiated by the Center for Gender and Organizations at the Simmons School of Management in Boston, is part of a decade-long effort by a number of different groups that use action research to test the hypothesis that it is possible to design work in a way to ease the pressures on employees' lives while at the same time enhancing organizational effectiveness.

Dual-Agenda Action Research Projects.

The emphasis of these projects has been to identify work practices and the assumptions underlying them that create difficulties both for people's personal lives as well as for organizational effectiveness, and then to try, on an experimental basis, to change these practices. In all cases, existing work practices had served the organizations well over time, but changing economic, demographic, and family circumstances had created unexpected negative consequences for employees' lives as well as for the organizations' efforts to reach their goals (Rapoport et al., 1996; Bailyn et al., 1997).

To achieve this "double goal," researchers collaborated with local work units to understand the assumptions that underlie current practice and to experiment with new ways of working geared to helping employees' lives *and* helping the organization become

CASE example

The Promise and Limitations of Private-Sector Programs: IBM's Global Dependent Care Fund

IBM has developed a Global Dependent Care Fund that supports local child- and elder-care responsibilities for working families. This fund is described as a strategic business initiative that is hoped will aid in the recruitment and retention of high-tech workers. It was prompted by surveys of IBM employees on four continents who identified insufficient work-family services as a primary barrier to full worker participation. The corporation has committed \$50 million to the fund.

The program is the first of its scale to be implemented globally, and IBM has designed the program to administer funds to local in-country offices to support programs that are customized to the needs of those locales. The fund is also intended to support and leverage local collaborations with other companies and organizations to develop and expand dependent-care services.

Examples of programs the fund has supported in its first year of operation include: a new near-site crèche in Dublin providing up to twelve-hour child-care support; summer camps with a technology theme in three German cities; the creation of priority slots for children of IBM employees at a high-quality child-care center in Mexico City; and the construction of a child-care facility near new IBM labs in Toronto.

While the IBM program is exciting because of its emphasis on supporting local programs and collaborations to improve dependent care, it also illustrates the limitations of private-sector efforts in the work-family arena. The goals are focused around increasing "workforce participation" and business objectives. It is not designed with the dual work and family agenda in mind.

more effective. It is this dual agenda that these experiments were designed to fulfill.

The particular changes introduced in each of these projects were quite different, since the situation and context of these working units varied widely. In one case, for example, the structure of daily time was altered in order to allow software engineers to better plan their work (Perlow, 1997); in another case, a 360° performance review was introduced in order to allow the nonmeasurable “invisible” coordinating work of some employees to be recognized and valued (Merrill-Sands et al., 1999); in still another case, a form was developed so that systems people could have a clearer view of what was requested of them and thus eliminate many of the “re-dos” they had previously encountered (Rayman et al., 1999). In each case, the work of the unit was enhanced while at the same time giving employees more control over their work and thus easing the pressure on all.

But these specific outcomes are so situationally embedded that they are of less interest than the underlying procedures that brought them about. The critical point that makes these experiments successful is the bringing together of work practices with the needs of employees to integrate their work with their personal lives. Normal work-redesign efforts limit attention to the technical aspects of the work. Dual-agenda redesign efforts start with the needs of employees and link these directly to work practices.

In one case, creating a cross-functional team of service and sales employees produced double gains: increased sales, because service workers had customer information that helped sales, and greater control over time, since both groups benefited from sharing information on installations and service. The approach worked because it started with an analysis that showed that the existing distrust between service and sales contributed to long hours for sales and unpredictable hours for service. When brought together to work on these personal issues, each group also discovered, much to their surprise, that they could help each other work more effectively. By combining personal gain with business improvement, the process gave each group the motivation to work together and to share needed information. It was exactly this motivation that was missing from an earlier management attempt to increase the functioning of this same unit by creating a similar cross-functional team that failed to bring any improvement (Rapoport et al., 1998).

**. . . it is possible to
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These dual-agenda action research projects have shown that it is possible to design work that integrates work needs and family needs in a positive, synergistic manner. But they have also shown how very difficult this can be because it goes against very deeply held beliefs about the separation of work and family spheres, some of which are embedded in law and personnel regulations. Sustaining these experimental efforts has not been easy, and diffusing them throughout the organization even more difficult. It is not possible, for example, to take a “solution” in one place and implement it in another. This has been tried and failed each time. There is no best practice in this area. What works is not the imposition of a different design, for whatever reason, but

resolving with each unit the work issues that make people's lives difficult. It is the explicit linking between work design and what benefits people's family and personal lives that is necessary, and this goes beyond most other participatory modes of organizational change. That connection is also what creates the difficulties and resistances, because it goes against deeply held and hardly recognized assumptions about competence and the meaning and measurement of success, both individually and organizationally.⁴

Nonetheless, the idea of this dual-agenda approach is catching on. For example, over the last few years, the Work in America Institute has been involved in a project called "Holding a Job, Having a Life: Making Them Both Possible." Their recent report (Casner-Lotto, 2000) describes efforts by twelve companies to make this link. Five of the corporations studied describe work-process changes in the dual-agenda category. The SAS Institute case described here serves as another illustration of this approach.

Diversity in both work and family patterns and roles creates a variety of problems for individuals and groups that change over the course of people's life and career stages. This diversity calls for varied and flexible solutions and options and changes in the roles of all the key actors and institutions.

Unions and Collective Bargaining

Unions influence work-family integration through both their political efforts to expand public benefits and collective bargaining. At the bargaining table, unions have historically achieved wage and benefit premiums for their members, expanded coverage of traditional benefits such as health insurance, reduced work hours, and limited mandatory overtime. Numerous studies document that controlling for other demographic, industry, and occupational characteristics, the net effects of unions on these outcomes is positive (Freeman and Medoff, 1984). Moreover, union wage and benefit premiums tend to be greater for lower-skilled and lower-wage occupations.

⁴ For a full exposition of these projects and the methods involved, see Rapoport et al., *Beyond Work-Family Balance: Advancing Gender Equity and Workplace Performance*. Jossey-Bass: 2002.

CASE example

SAS Institute, Inc.

One example of a company that appears to build a dual-agenda perspective into its work-family practices is SAS Institute, Inc., a software firm that invented and produces SAS, Statistical Analysis Software, which is widely used for much more than statistical purposes by industry and government. In 1997 the company had sales of \$750 million and currently employs more than 5,000 people all over the world. As with all software development, the work can become all-consuming, leading to burnout, reduced performance, and turnover—a very expensive proposition in this industry. To deal with these factors, the company has adopted a policy that combines benefits in an unusual way. SAS Institute provides a high-quality daycare center on site as well as a number of concierge services, and offers unlimited sick days. Families are encouraged to eat together, and the SAS cafeteria includes high chairs and booster seats. Most importantly, however, the company has instituted a seven-hour working day and most workers, including the CEO, leave the office by 5 p.m. and the gate is closed at 6 p.m. SAS Institute is located in North Carolina and as a private company, offers no stock; salaries are not excessively high, but the turnover rate is under 5 percent. Fifty-one percent of SAS managers are women (Fishman, 1999). Though one would like to know more information directly from the employees, it is clear that this company works on a different underlying philosophy about the link between work and family.

The above estimates only capture the *average* union-nonunion differentials in employment outcomes. Most studies now emphasize the need to look at variations in their effects *within* the union sector—the variations tell more of the story than the average effects. Disparities arise both from differences in the priorities unions attach to work and family issues and to their ability to achieve gains in this area.

Variations in Priorities and Perspectives. Gerstel and Clawson (2000) found that some union leaders still view work and family as primarily women's issues. In unions where few women are in positions of leadership, or the workforce and membership are predominantly male, such as in construction, child-care and other work-family benefits tend to get low priority. This may change as more women move into union leadership positions and/or as male union members begin to see work-family issues as important to them as they are to women.

Many unions representing lower-wage workers recognize that time off is of little value to their members unless it is paid. As one union leader put it at a recent conference, "Our members are struggling to keep food on the table and have to hold down two jobs to do so; negotiating unpaid time off or taking FMLA leave is not an issue for them." Indeed, a recent survey of working women ranked wages and health benefits above work and family issues as priorities for improving their terms of employment (Nussbaum, 2000). Thus, like other terms of an employment contract, work and family issues must compete for priority and are subject to difficult tradeoffs and choices in allocating scarce dollars across different terms and conditions of employment. The fact that all bargaining-unit members share an interest in improving wages and basic benefits, and that personal and family needs of members will be more varied, suggests that attention to these issues will seldom be the top priority in bargaining.

Hours of work represent one of the most hotly contested issues in union-management negotiations today. Some unions see proposals for flexible work hours as a rollback of hard-won benefits, such as the forty-hour workweek, compensation for being on-call, or overtime pay. The key determinant of how a union is likely to approach proposals of flexible hours is whether employees control their schedules or management retains control (Gerstel and Clawson, 2000). Unions are also properly concerned that income not fall as a result of flexibility. This issue has surfaced in a number of negotiations over mandatory overtime in both the health-care and communications industries.

Illustrative Benefits and Programs. Not surprisingly, the pattern of diffusion is similar to that for other benefits: It happens where union bargaining power is strong enough to achieve gains in other contract areas. Thus, benefits are more likely to be found in larger firms and in settings where unions represent a significant proportion of the employees in an industry, company, or region (see the Labor Project for Working Families, <http://laborproject.berkeley.edu/home.html>).

Although priorities and bargaining power vary considerably, the number and variety of collectively bargained family benefits and programs have expanded in recent years. For example, in 1994, based on management's concern over absenteeism and membership surveys that showed child and elder care as top priorities, the Hotel

Employee and Restaurant Employees Union in San Francisco and the city's thirty-seven unionized hotels created a \$1.4 million child/elder-care fund financed by a \$.20 contribution for every hour worked. In addition, a flexible time-off policy was negotiated that allows parents to take time to attend to children's needs without having to provide a specific reason.

A similar child-care fund was negotiated by the Health and Human Service Employees Union 1199 in New York and the nearly 200 health-care institutions that employ its members, an affiliate of Service Employees International Union. Approximately 8,500 children are served by the fund (see Case Example). The use of the fund is overseen by company-level labor-management committees, which decide how the money will be spent at their facilities. Choices include child-care centers, child-care stipends, resource and referral services, holiday programs, and summer camps.

Harvard University and the Harvard University Clerical and Technical Workers Union illustrate another labor-management approach that addresses work and family issues. These parties have set up joint labor-management councils at the departmental level to review workers' issues. Nearly half of the issues that arise are related to balancing work and family. While the above examples come from medium-sized organizations and bargaining units, some of the most far-reaching programs are found in large units such as in the auto and telecommunications industries. Ford and the United Auto Workers (UAW) were among the leaders in negotiating for child-care centers, adding the benefit to their 1984 contract and opening their first facility in Livonia, Mich., in 1993. (See Case Example on page 29.) The newest Ford-UAW initiative is the establishment of thirty Family Service and Learning Centers. These resources are significant because they serve both blue-collar and salaried workers equally, and because they have entered into a partnership with local community groups to expand the array of services and programs available to families. Each of the Big Three automakers now has similar centers and each is in the process of opening a series of family-service and learning centers offering a range of services,

CASE example

New York State Health Workers' Union: A Labor-Management Partnership for Child-Care Funding

The 1199 Health and Human Service Employees Union (HHSEU) in New York State collaborated with health services employers to provide a special Child Care Fund for its members. The fund supports a child-care resources and referral service, as well as summer camp, cultural arts, after-school, daycare vouchers, and holiday programs for over 7,000 children up to seventeen years of age. The program was negotiated and implemented by the union with the management of 168 hospitals, nursing homes, and health-care facilities at which its members work.

The fund is governed jointly by labor and management, both of which contribute funding. In addition to the general fund contributions, each employer and its union membership have formed local labor-management child-care committees which assess their members' needs and make recommendations for policies and programs. This governance structure has received praise from the community for its grassroots design and flexibility.

The Child Care Fund was designed to meet the needs of 1199 HHSEU members, who earn between \$22,000 and \$28,000 annually from health-care jobs, including housekeepers, physician assistants, nurses, food servers, pharmacy assistants, and orderlies. Four-fifths of Local 1199 members are African American, Caribbean, and Latino.

including up to thirteen child-care centers, preferred-rate centers, and storefronts showcasing what services are offered. Services and educational programs that may be offered include legal services, home repair, adult education, teen programs, afterschool tutoring, and grants to child-care providers to extend hours and improve the quality of care, benefits that would in many cases help the whole community. The UAW also received a federal grant to start an apprenticeship program for child-care workers who will get a union journeyman card at the end of the two-year course.

At Bell Atlantic, the Communications Workers of America and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers negotiated a “Kids in the Workplace” program that provides on-site child care on school holidays and days off. The program runs about sixteen days a year and costs \$20,000 per location. When needed, worksite space, such as a conference room or a section of the cafeteria, is temporarily converted for child care. Bell Atlantic hires a vendor and deals with insurance issues. Employees register in advance for the program, which features licensed providers and structured activities.

Public-sector unions have been at the forefront of negotiating flexible leave provisions and leave banks that can be drawn on for various purposes. Some of these unions allow those who contribute unused days of leave to the bank to borrow against the collective

reserves in times of family or personal emergencies or extended illnesses. The workers then pay back part or all of the days borrowed after they return to work.

As the above examples illustrate, unions and collective bargaining offer a number of attractive features for both extending work and family benefits and programs to broader segments of the workforce and for making the best use of scarce resources by adopting the mix of benefits and programs suited to the particular needs of the workers and families involved. These benefits are available because first, union leaders tend to take an expansive view of benefits, while focusing on those that best match the particular needs and priorities of their membership. In bargaining units with many low-wage jobs and workers, the focus tends to be on improving wages and basic

CASE example

UAW-Ford Partnership

The United Auto Workers (UAW) and Ford Motor Company were among the leaders in negotiating for the funding of child-care centers. The issue was included in their 1984 contract, and the first child-care facility was opened in 1993. Similar child-care facilities now exist in UAW partnerships with all three major American automakers.

Plans under the UAW-Ford partnership now include expansion to a broader range of services for working families, through a family-service and learning center that is scheduled to open in June 2001. This center will offer services such as teen programs, afterschool tutoring, grants to child-care providers to extend hours and improve quality, legal services, and adult education. It will offer a location for bringing retirees and children together, and for building community ties. In addition, using a federal grant, the UAW is sponsoring a child-care worker apprenticeship program that offers those who complete it a journeyman card and higher wages.

The UAW-Ford family programs are seen by Ford management as an enhancement to employee recruitment and retention, as well as a key contribution toward a “focused and engaged workforce.” They are seen by the UAW as essential help in bridging the gap between workplace demands and family obligations. A decade of success in building and running employer-sponsored child-care centers is allowing the partnership to expand into innovative family and community services.

health and leave benefits. In other units where there is already an adequate floor of basic benefits, priority can shift to child care, elder care, or other issues, depending on the particular needs of the members. This flexibility is a hallmark of collective bargaining in general and applies to this set of issues as well. Second, negotiated benefits cover the entire workforce in the bargaining unit and thereby extend advantages to groups often left out of employer-initiated benefits. Third, collective bargaining provides a funding model for family benefits—either an amount per hour allocated to a fund or a trade-off among other issues in contract negotiations. Either way, the parties themselves decide. Fourth, most negotiated plans provide for employee and union participation in implementing and overseeing the benefits—joint administration, as in the UAW–auto company child-care centers or the San Francisco hotel industry programs.

Families

Families have necessarily been at the forefront of institutions dealing with conflicts between work and family. Much work-family research has ignored the potential role of the family in resolving work-family conflicts, and some researchers fear that a focus on the family will tend to individualize and privatize the issues, leaving them in the separate sphere of the home instead of bringing the issues into the light of the public arena (Harrington, 1999).

Yet there are many ways in which families create or reduce conflicts between work and family. Recent research suggests that some women engage in sequencing behavior, timing the child-rearing and high-intensity career years so that the two do not overlap (Blair-Loy, 1999; Moen and Han, 2001). Other research suggests that men have in recent decades increased their time commitments to child care (Pleck, 1999; Bond et al., 1998), a movement that reduces the burden of work in the home for many women, while making work-family issues of greater immediacy for men.

A different strand of research stemmed from fears that women's employment would have ill effects on children (Perry-Jenkins et al., 2000). Although the results never justified these fears, they did demonstrate the importance of family behavior. For example, Moorehouse (1991) found the negative effects on children from changes in mothers' employment status were reduced when the mothers shared time with their children for activities such as reading or telling stories. Relatedly, Crouter et al. (1990) found that the school-aged children of employed parents performed better in school when the parents monitored the children's afterschool activities.

The Changing Division of Labor within Families. Recent research by Moen and Yu (2000) suggests that many dual-earner couples fall into a category they label as "neotraditional." In such families, the man holds a full-time job with career prospects, while the woman works reduced hours for lower pay with few opportunities for career advancement. The reason for women working reduced hours is to free up time for housework and particularly for caring for children. Such an approach not only promotes continued inequality, but also a continuation of the undervaluation of care work by society in general.

Bookman (1999) has further documented in her study of biotech employees that

women whom the media portray as “stay-at-home moms” who have left the workforce completely are actually members of the contingent workforce. They maintain a flexible relationship with paid work by working on a temporary or contract basis for low pay, no benefits, and no job security.

An alternative to neotraditional families lies in equality in the marriage relationship. Like other institutions, the family is slow to change. It is only very recently that substantial numbers of couples explicitly committed to equality have emerged, long after the large-scale entry of women into the workforce. Deutsch (1999) documents the experiences of many such couples and finds the division of labor is sometimes fluid, and sometimes fixed, but is consistently very different from that found in traditional or neotraditional households. One of Deutsch’s key findings was that in virtually all couples that divide child care and housework relatively equally, career opportunities were limited for both members. Nonetheless, Deutsch also uncovers a very rich vein of positive attitudes about the lives and relationships of members of these couples.

A still different attempt to change families has been put forward by Jessica DeGroot in the Third Path (<http://www.thirdpath.org>). DeGroot is working on the concept of “shared care,” where every adult in a household with children works for pay while at the same time being actively involved in the care of children. Such arrangements can vary widely and change as the needs of the children change. The underlying principle is that both family and work are redesigned to allow parents equal access to success at work and at home.

Single parents cannot rely upon either models of neotraditional families or equality in marriage to meet their commitments to work and family, though the concept of shared care applies to them as well as to two-parent families. In addition, single parents, as a rule, cannot rely heavily on markets to solve their work-family conflicts because there typically is not enough money to support regular, back-up, and sick-child care. Instead of or in addition to market arrangements, many single mothers develop networks of family and friends, or “fictive kin” (Hertz and Ferguson, 1997). Although such networks are often invisible to the larger community, they hold the promise of involving nonparents in parenting, and of developing a sense of community among those involved.

As is true of the other institutions discussed here, the ability of families to provide a comprehensive response to conflicts between work and family commitments is limited. Families alone cannot change the structure of careers nor alter the availability of child care. And when families experience crises, whether financial or personal, external supports are needed.

Nonetheless, the potential role of the family in helping to resolve the problems discussed here should not be overlooked. What is common to all the strategies discussed is that each requires a high level of communication, coordination, and trust among participants for success. These ingredients, when carried into the workplace, are also

Families alone cannot change the structure of careers nor alter the availability of child care.

required for success with the dual-agenda approach. Brought into the community, these ingredients are needed for the successful targeting and implementation of the sorts of community strategies to be discussed later.

Government

American political culture traditionally assigned a very limited role to government. This is especially true in the area of employment relations, and perhaps even more true when it comes to work and family issues. With respect to employment relations, the model for government policy carried over from the New Deal was that the federal government should set minimum standards on a limited array of generally accepted universal rights (safety and health, maximum work hours, equal employment opportunity, etc.), establish fair rules for employees and employers to negotiate among themselves so they can either individually or collectively go beyond these minimums when conditions permit, and leave market forces to do the rest.

Applied to work and family issues, the New Deal approach leads us to highlight several pieces of employment policy that embody this tradition. The most visible, but not universal, is the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) passed by Congress and signed by President Clinton in 1993. But while this is the only federal law that explicitly focuses on family and work issues, other labor market and social policies and regulations have significant indirect, and sometimes unanticipated, effects on the ability of individuals and organizations to integrate work and family responsibilities. We will focus on two of the more obvious ones in addition to the FMLA: The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) of 1938, which sets out basic rules governing work hours and overtime regulations, and the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) of 1935 and its amendments, which regulate how workers and employers negotiate and administer conditions of employment, including those that affect work and family life. Social safety net programs are also crucial, but are covered only briefly here.

Clearly, the biggest social policy initiative of recent years affecting family and work is welfare reform—a policy that joins federal and state actions. We will discuss this issue briefly as an example of the growing importance of state and local government policies and administrative rules affecting work and family welfare. Finally, the federal government has a major effect on work and family life through the federal budget and so we will illustrate its role in this regard as well.

Federal Government

The FMLA. The FMLA serves as the most visible, direct piece of federal legislation affecting work and family life. It requires:

“...[E]mployers of establishments with 50 or more employees to provide up to twelve weeks of unpaid leave per year to employees who need leave to care for a newborn, newly adopted or newly placed foster child; a child, spouse or parent who has a serious health condition; or the employee’s own serious health condition, including maternity-related disability and prenatal care. Employees are eligible for protection under the Act if, in addition to working for a covered establishment at a location where at least 50 employees are employed within 75 miles of the worksite, they have worked for this

employer for at least 12 months; and have worked at least 1,250 hours for this employer during the 12 months before leave is needed.” (U.S. Department of Labor, 2000)

The FMLA was enacted in 1993 following nearly a decade of debate. The 1993 statute established a bipartisan “Commission on Leave” to study the impact of the new law and other voluntary leave policies on business and labor. The commission conducted two nationally representative random sample surveys in 1995—one of employers and one of employees—and the findings from these surveys were published in the commission’s final report to Congress, *A Workable Balance* (May 1996). In 1999, the Department of Labor (DOL) decided to run these two surveys again with minor modifications and additions to the survey instruments. The data were collected in 2000 and the results were published in a DOL report in early 2001. We will briefly summarize some of the findings from these two reports.

The most significant overall finding of the 1996 report was that the FMLA was not the burden to business that many employers had predicted it would be during the congressional debates of the 1980s and early ’90s. Between 89 and 95 percent of employers reported no costs or small costs on a variety of items related to administration, hiring, replacement of workers, and continuation of health benefits, and 3 percent even reported cost savings. Large numbers of employers reported “no noticeable effect” of FMLA on productivity (86.4 percent), profitability (92.5 percent), and growth (95.8 percent). The only area of significant difficulty was the administration of “intermittent leave.” Although only 11.5 percent of leaves were taken on this basis, 39 percent of employers reported that such leaves were difficult to administer.

In the 2001 report, employers reported more problems with overall enforcement and compliance. Whereas only 10 percent mentioned this as a problem in the 1996 report, 36.4 percent said it was a problem in the 2001 report. However, employers are still finding that the FMLA has not significantly hampered various measures of business performance. On productivity, 76.5 percent report that it has no noticeable effect; on profitability, 87.6 percent say it has had no noticeable effect; and on growth, 87.7 percent say it has not adversely affected their companies. While these numbers have fallen since the earlier survey, it is still the case that only a minority feel that the FMLA is having a negative impact on their bottom line. On the positive side, 8 percent of employers report that the FMLA has resulted in cost savings, especially in decreasing turnover, and 24 percent say it has had a positive impact on employee morale. And, interestingly enough, the issue of intermittent leave (which has risen to 28 percent of all leaves) is reported as a problem by a smaller number of employers: Only 12.7 percent said it had a negative impact on productivity, and fewer than 2 percent said it had a negative impact on growth.

Turning to the experiences of employees, again there is a great deal of consistency between the findings of the 1996 commission report and the 2001 DOL report. The percentage of employees taking a leave—across FMLA-covered and uncovered workplaces—has remained steady at around 16 percent of the workforce. Leaves continue to be fairly short, the vast majority of employees return to the same employer, and a

majority are satisfied with their leave in terms of the ease of arranging it, the time taken, and the job-related consequences when they return to work. Unfortunately, there is also a negative factor that has remained consistent: a lack of knowledge about the new law. In 2000, almost six years after the passage of the FMLA, only 38 percent of covered employees report that the law applies to them, and only a little over half (56 percent) of employees at covered sites report that their employer has posted public notices about the FMLA, as required by the statute. Looking across both covered and uncovered employees, approximately two-fifths (41.6 percent) have never even heard of the act. Clearly, there is a huge “knowledge gap” to be filled.

There are several interesting changes in employee experiences that are worth noting. First, the reasons for leave have shifted somewhat. Although leave for one’s own serious health condition is still the leading reason for leave, the percent of leave-takers using the act for their own health concerns has fallen from 61.4 percent to 47.2 percent. Leave for family caregiving has risen: Parental leave to care for a newborn or adopted child has risen from 14.3 to 17.9 percent of all FMLA leaves; and leave to care for a seriously ill parent has risen from 7.6 percent to 11.4 percent. Second, the demographic profile of leave-takers has shifted. The 2001 report shows that use of the law is growing among older employees, married employees with children, and employees earning \$50,000 to \$75,000. Finally, the difficulties posed for employees by unpaid leaves is increasing. The most significant concern of leave-takers is that they will not have enough money to cover their bills while on leave. Although about two-thirds of leave-takers have access to partial pay during their time away, this kind of wage replacement is mainly available to men, older workers, and workers with high levels of education and income. Half of all leave-takers in the 2001 report said they would have taken longer leaves if some pay or more pay had been available. Also, among the group of “leave-needers” (those who wanted to take a leave, but did not), 77.6 percent report that they did not take time off because they could not afford it, a 12 percent increase over those mentioning this problem in the commission’s earlier report.

A good deal of FMLA leave may be masked by the fact that many employers already offer more extended benefits than the minimums required by law. About 70 percent of all employees and more than 90 percent of employees covered by the FMLA have some form of sick leave. Some of these policies allow workers to use sick leave for family and medical reasons. Consideration needs to be given to how any proposed changes in the FMLA would relate to benefits that many firms already provide to some or all of their employees. This is particularly important in devising paid-leave policies that will build on existing benefits while not forcing employees to choose between vacation time and time needed to care for family members.

Workers often criticize federal agencies for delays and costs involved in processing and resolving alleged violations or for lacking the staff or other resources to adequately enforce the law. This does not yet appear to be a significant problem for the FMLA. Data from the Department of Labor’s Wage and Hour Division unit, which is responsible for administering and enforcing the act, indicate that the agency has been

successful in resolving the 16,500 complaints it received between 1993 and 1999 without any appreciable backlog. Nearly 90 percent of the complaints have been resolved by informal conciliation. Since at least 20 percent of the complaints brought to the agency are from individuals not covered or for issues not included under the act, agency administrators frequently must advise employees and/or employers concerning some other enforcement agency that has jurisdiction over the issue of concern. The Wage and Hour Division uses its web site and other outreach/advisory services to support its efforts to answer these types of inquiries and provide information to employers (especially small employers) and workers about the law. Given rather widespread uncertainty among both employees and employers over who and what is covered by the FMLA, these information, advising, and informal dispute settlement activities play important roles in administering this policy.

Since the FMLA is the central piece of legislation governing work and family benefits, it is the focal point for proposals to change or expand the minimum benefits required by law. Proposals for expanding the act tend to focus on (1) broadening coverage to smaller firms (firms under fifty employees are exempt from coverage), (2) broadening coverage to include more extended family members and the reasons for which leaves may be taken, and (3) providing some form of paid family leave. Currently, the issue gaining the greatest attention is paid leave following the Clinton administration's regulatory initiative to allow states to use their unemployment insurance programs to fund leave at the time of child birth or adoption.

In early 2000 the Department of Labor indicated it would allow states to use their unemployment insurance funds to support paid family leave, the first statement from a federal government body affirming support for the concept of paid family leave. To date, legislatures in over twenty states have introduced bills to use their unemployment reserves or to introduce or expand existing temporary disability insurance programs to fund paid family leave. The Massachusetts legislature passed such a bill at the end of its legislative session in June 2000, but the governor sent back a watered down version to the legislature who then took no further action. Now, a year later, both chambers of the legislature are committed to passing paid parental leave, but the funding mechanism and benefit structure are still to be determined. No state has yet to enact legislation to provide paid leave. This policy issue will continue to be the topic of considerable debate in the years ahead. The debate is likely to focus on the following questions: (1) Should federal or state governments require some level of paid family leave? (2) If so, how should these leaves be funded? (3) Who should pay—employers, employees, the government, or should there be cost sharing instead? and (4) How should these requirements relate to existing paid leave provisions provided by employers or contained in collective bargaining agreements?

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The historical trend for over a century has been to reduce the number of hours people are required or expected to work. From the

Since the FMLA is the central piece of legislation governing work and family benefits, it is the focal point for proposals to change or expand the minimum benefits

campaign for the eight-hour day in the late 1800s to the passage of the forty-four-hour standard and then the reduction to forty hours in the FLSA in 1938 and 1940 respectively, society has seen fit to measure progress in part by our ability to be a productive economy with high standards of living, while reducing the number of hours devoted to paid work.

The provisions of the FLSA that have the biggest bearing on work and family life are the regulations around the forty-hour per week norm that trigger overtime requirements for “nonexempt” workers, i.e., those classified as hourly rather than salaried employees. As noted earlier, there is increasing variation in work hours around this forty-hour standard in contemporary employment relationships. Moreover, business groups have been seeking greater flexibility in overtime rules to accommodate better their varied schedules and project deadlines, as well as varied worker preferences. This would appear to be an area ripe for experimentation with a more flexible approach. However, efforts to introduce flexibility have, to date, ended in impasse in Congress.

The most recent debate centered around a “comp-time” bill that would allow employers to offer employees the option of being compensated for hours worked beyond forty with compensatory time off rather than the current requirement of receiving wages at one and one-half times their normal hourly rate. While part of the difficulty this proposal has encountered reflects the larger impasse in labor and employment matters that has existed for some time, the essence of the problem with proposals aimed at increasing flexibility comes down to the issue of who will decide whether to take comp time or overtime pay in a given situation and when the comp time will be returned. Will employers or employees control this choice? Or will there be some joint process by which employees and managers make these decisions? In the next section, this question is tightly linked to issues at the heart of current debates over labor law.

There are other ideas and policy proposals for introducing more flexibility around working time. Among these are proposals to extend the period of time beyond the current single week/forty-hour threshold before overtime is required so as to adapt to peaks and valleys in work requirements. Averaging work over a two- to four-week time period is one such idea. Other proposals would seek to directly reduce the forty-hour threshold for overtime. Some advocate joining these two issues—essentially trading greater flexibility over timing of the threshold in return for lowering it. Still others emphasize that the entire distinction between “exempt” and “nonexempt” work and workers is more blurred today than when the doctrine was first introduced in the FLSA in 1938 (Commission on the Future of Worker-Management Relations, 1994). Since how work is classified affects overtime obligations and benefits, as well as other rights and duties under the law, there are incentives to misclassify work or game the system to meet one’s interests rather than the objectives of the statute. Yet recognition of this reality has not led to concrete or clear suggestions for what to do about it. So it remains another outdated concept governing work today.

All of the discussions to date about work time have been predicated on the concept of an individual’s workweek. Today, some are suggesting we need to consider a

family workweek that consists of the sum of the hours of paid work contributed by a household. While it may be difficult to regulate total family hours, a first step toward sensitizing society to the dual responsibilities of individuals, parents, and household members would be to collect systematic data and track trends in this metric over time.

The National Labor Relations Act (NLRA). Labor law is both complicated and highly controversial. We need not review the voluminous literature on this subject since much of that has been compiled in recent government reports and academic studies (Commission on the Future of Worker-Management Relations, 1994; Weiler, 1990; Osterman et al., 2001). Two problems with current labor law that are documented in these reports are directly related to work and family issues. First, most experts agree that current labor law does not provide workers with an effective

ability to join and organize a union. Therefore, basic labor-law reforms to strengthen the enforcement of this principle are needed if collective bargaining is to serve as an instrument for extending coverage of work and family benefits to more workers and their families and for providing workers a voice in how to fund and administer these benefits and programs. Thus, labor-law reform is a work and family issue.

. . . labor-law reform is a
work and family issue.

Second, there is considerable ambiguity in the law and its enforcement over whether giving nonunion employees greater voice and control over the implementation of work and family policies and firm-level practices would be legal or illegal under the NLRA. This needs to be clarified, either through amendments to the act to allow for such processes, perhaps under some limited conditions, or through rulings of the National Labor Relations Board that allow for these types of processes within the existing legal framework.

To date, the political impasse that plagues labor law has been an insurmountable barrier to achieving these or any other labor-law reforms, largely because labor law has remained the sacred domain of business and labor relations lobbyists and interest groups. Perhaps outside voices speaking on behalf of the need to address work and family issues will help to reframe this debate and provide a new avenue for discussion and experimentation. Labor law may be too critical a problem for working families and their employers to leave to traditional labor relations specialists and their political tacticians.

The Social Security Act. The U.S. Social Security Act of 1935 governing unemployment insurance and old age benefits is based on funding formulas linked to hours and years in the labor force and/or with the same employer. These time-based rules have the effect of increasing male-female income and benefit gaps. Moreover, Social Security provides special benefits to single parents who are widowed but not to those who divorce or are never married. The presumption is that a mother is worthy of economic support while married, but not otherwise.

Other Programs. In addition to the statutory and regulatory roles noted above, the federal government also funds a wide array of programs and services for working families. These programs are scattered across the federal government. Most are housed

in agencies of the Departments of Labor (DOL); Education; Housing and Urban Development (HUD); and Health and Human Services (HHS). Each agency has its own mission and focus—workforce development and economic policy (DOL), educational reform and academic excellence in public schools (Education), expansion of affordable housing and home ownership (HUD), ensuring the physical and social health of all citizens (HHS)—and each funds important programs that affect the quality of family and work life.

There is little coordination among these agencies, even though they may be serving the same families and dealing with many interrelated issues. And there is no government body responsible for periodically reviewing or evaluating whether these programs add up to a coherent strategy for meeting the needs of working families. In part, this reflects the lack of a clear or explicit set of goals for work and family policy, an issue we will return to in the final section of this report.

State Government

A number of important programs that bear directly on work and family issues are funded at the federal level and have federal minimum standards associated with them, but are administered by state governments. Two of the most important are the welfare reforms introduced in recent years and the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).

In 1996, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) was passed by the U.S. Congress and signed into law by President Clinton. The act transformed the existing system of welfare, a system that had guaranteed minimums in terms of income, food, and medical care for mothers and their children living in poverty. At the heart of the PRWORA were the notions that individuals who are capable of working for wages should do so, that time limits should be imposed on welfare recipients, and that the states should be responsible for the specific design and administration of the new policies.

Earlier, we discussed how many laws and social norms in the U.S. have implicitly been built upon the notion of the male breadwinner, who serves as an ideal worker, while the wife engages in child care, housework, and community service. The PRWORA explicitly breaks with this assumption by *requiring* mothers to become employees as well.

The states were given great leeway in the design and implementation of the act, and the opportunities for experimentation—whether successful or not—have been broad. The overall pattern of results suggests that welfare caseloads have declined dramatically, while rates of poverty have declined, but by far smaller percentages. For example, in Wisconsin, considered a leader in welfare reform, caseloads dropped by 67 percent between 1986 and 1997, while the rate of poverty fell by only 12 percent (Moore and Selkove, 1999).

The EITC is distinct from but related to the PRWORA. In essence, the EITC operates as a negative income tax, subsidizing the income of poor working individuals. As of late 2000, eleven states had adopted some form of EITC. Key to understanding the EITC is that it is only received by individuals who earn taxable income. It therefore increases the incentive for the poor to seek paid employment.

It is unlikely that the PRWORA (or EITC) will ultimately be labeled either an unqualified success or unqualified failure. For many individuals, opportunities and income have improved, but for others in extreme poverty, supports that existed in the past are being removed. Time limits for welfare recipients will gradually phase in over the next few years across the states, implying the removal of the limited supports that exist today for many living in poverty.

The PRWORA will be up for funding reauthorization in 2002. Although we do not detail any specific suggestions for further reform here, five issues will be among those to be considered.

- The cost of quality child care is substantial. If the booming economy were to falter, or if the time divide and related income inequality continued to increase, it would require a sustained and significant monetary commitment on the part of the public to maintain child-care quality at even moderate levels for poor families.
- Even with a sustained monetary commitment, existing shortages of quality child-care providers, and the low wages and high turnover rates found among child-care providers, are likely to remain as problems. Current rates of annual turnover among paid child-care providers—averaging around 30 percent (Harrington, 1999, p. 34)—cannot be healthy for children’s development.
- As state government supports for child care continue to increase for the poverty population, calls from working families of moderate means for such support can be expected. Given the high costs of quality care, linkages between private and public-sector provisions for child care might also emerge as an option.
- There will be a segment of those currently living in poverty who will be worse off as a result of the PRWORA. How society will care for these individuals in any restructuring of the PRWORA is an open, though crucial, question.
- While government-sponsored health care is available for women leaving welfare for employment, it is time limited (usually one year). Studies of those who have left welfare find that a large percentage work in low-wage jobs in which employers often do not provide health insurance, paid sick days, or vacation (see for example Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance, 2000). In this case withdrawing public support, without ensuring important employment safeguards, creates a new set of problems for families, employers, and governments.

The broad array of state initiatives currently under way suggests that opportunities to implement well-designed policies are relatively abundant.

There is a disturbing disconnection between the welfare-reform policies discussed above and the recent movement for paid parental leave initiated by the Clinton administration. Because the FMLA only covers employees with relatively high annual hours and job stability, employed by firms with at least fifty employees, most individuals covered by PRWORA provisions would not be covered by paid leave funded through Unemployment Insurance (UI). Conversely, those receiving paid parental leave, if such legislation were to pass, would not typically be individuals for whom government-subsidized child care or health insurance would be available. In short, the states are

simultaneously designing distinct work-family policies for different (and unequal) segments of the population.

This disconnection leaves an opening for us to conceptualize policies that cut across the poverty line. The broad array of state initiatives currently under way suggests that opportunities to implement well-designed policies are relatively abundant.

Of equal importance, some states are already leading the way in terms of coordinating the implementation and provision of services. Many states are trying to do what the federal government so far has failed to do—enhance the quality of community life by coordinating existing programs and ensuring that the needs of families are being met and financed in a comprehensive manner. Increasingly, we are seeing such interagency coordination at the state level, using both state and federal funding. O'Brien (1996), for example, documents a variety of bold reform initiatives by state and county governments that attempt to “pool funds” to better serve working and poor families in their communities. These efforts have been motivated by two concerns. One is to transform services from being fragmented and crisis-oriented to being comprehensive and prevention-oriented. The second is the idea that the programs and services available to families should not be driven by the funding streams available, and their often narrow eligibility requirements, but by what children and families actually need.

Even in the absence of an explicitly articulated vision or set of objectives, federal, state, and local governments are active players in the work and family arena.

Even in the absence of an explicitly articulated vision or set of objectives, federal, state, and local governments are active players in the work and family arena. Governments fund, enact, and regulate a wide array of policies and programs affecting work and family life. But most of these efforts have been implemented in a piecemeal fashion, with little or no regard to how they relate to each other or to existing workplace practices. They also tend to be “targeted” policies, affecting only poor or low-income workers, or only a segment of the paid labor force, as in the FMLA. Broad “universal” policies that would benefit middle-class families are rare, with the noted exception of Social Security. Finally, government policy suffers from a serious time lag—most of the policies affecting work and family life still reflect the breadwinner model of the 1930s. So a major overhaul, not just in the substantive content of government policies around work and family but in the very role of government and its relationship to the efforts of private actors—firms, unions and firms in collective bargaining, and community groups—is needed.

Local Government

Local governments also have a role to play in this discussion. For example, Living Wage campaigns, although limited to urban areas, help to address the work and family issues of the working poor. These campaigns strive to achieve the passage of local ordinances requiring that recipients of public funds (particularly contractors and sub-contractors) pay at least a minimum wage to all of their employees that is sufficient to bring a family of four out of poverty. To date, sixty local ordinances have passed, and

another seventy-five campaigns are under way (see www.livingwagecampaign.org). Living Wage campaigns are important to our thinking about work and family policies for at least two reasons: First, they directly address the fact that many in poverty are attempting to support children, and they highlight the important monetary aspects of work-family conflict for poor families. Second, they demonstrate the positive opportunities available on a local level to respond to issues of work and family. The fact that many have been passed as unfunded mandates has undercut their current impact, but not their long-term potential and importance.

Communities⁵

Communities have a dual role to play in addressing work and family needs. Inherent in the very term community is an understanding that those who live together in a neighborhood, a city, a suburb or a region share a collective interest in the quality of life. Thus, community institutions inevitably play a key role in organizing and delivering child and elder care, education, family-support systems, and other social functions. The second role communities have always played is to provide infrastructure, network building, and coordinating institutions that support work and employment in a local labor market. The relationship between community issues and work-family concerns is multi-faceted, and intersects with other players in community institutions in significant ways.

Community institutions play an important coordinating role for individual firms and local labor markets.

We use the term community here not just to connote a geographically bounded physical space or region but also to mean a social institution or network where people connect, care, and identify or affiliate with each other in the course of their daily lives. In this sense people can belong to multiple communities—as members, for example, of their neighborhood, their church, synagogue, or religious community, or some other group that shares a common interest based on race, sexual preference, occupation or profession, political advocacy, etc. We need to keep both these physical and social perspectives in mind in thinking about how community institutions can contribute to better integrating family and work today.

Intersections with Other Players

Attention to work-family issues can be initiated by players from the private sector, the public sector, or the nonprofit sector. As the following examples show, communities can partner with other players to enhance the possibilities for people to both work and care for their families.

Employers. Community institutions play an important coordinating role for individual firms and local labor markets. Employers, in turn, have two key roles to play relative to community: They need to provide time for employees to participate in community institutions and activities, and, inevitably, they are asked to contribute financial resources to help support the institutions that provide family services. In this

⁵ Many of the concepts and examples in this section are drawn from *Who's Caring for Community? How Work-Family Pressures Are Threatening Our Civil Society*, Ann Bookman, forthcoming.

sense, individual employers must be part of their local “business community” and interact with and contribute to the support of cross-cutting institutions and groups that contribute to the functioning of the local labor market and quality of life.

Some firms have organized networks to address family issues collectively with their communities. The “American Business Collaborative for Quality Dependent Care” is a group comprising twenty-two large corporations, local service providers, and Work/Family Directions (a work and family consulting firm) that have organized to provide quality child care for their own employees and for residents in the communities where they are located. So far, their efforts have had a positive impact on both the quality and supply of child care in sixty-eight communities across the country. Another initiative that brings together an array of employers is located in the health-care industry, the 1199/Employer Child Care Fund, described earlier in this report. This consortium, put together with strong labor union involvement, is providing a range of care options for children of all ages. They serve 7,000 children through three types of community-based services—an early education center for preschoolers, several school-age child-care programs, and a cultural arts center. The Case Example on this page illustrates another type of partnership with Eli Lilly.

These kinds of community partnerships are significant for the work-family area. They are a particularly important strategy for small- and medium-sized firms which do not have the level of resources that large companies have, but which want to help their own employees—according to their ability—to access needed services for health care, child care, elder care, and other family-support services.

Some employers also support employees in their individual community efforts, though it is difficult to estimate how many companies actively promote volunteerism;

CASE example

Public-Private Partnerships: Eli Lilly & Co.

The evolution of Eli Lilly & Co.’s child-care activities illustrates the wisdom of public-private partnership for expanding capacity and access to child-care services. In the early 1990s, Lilly acted on its own to fill the needs of its Indiana-based employees for child care by funding employee-only services and bringing in consultants from outside the state. By 1996, however, Lilly management realized the potential gains from community involvement. By working directly with local and state government and care providers in the community, Lilly believes it leveraged its dollars and expertise and contributes toward more lasting child-care infrastructure than would otherwise have been achieved.

While continually viewing its expenditures as a business investment in workforce retention and productivity, Lilly management nonetheless came to believe in a partnering approach to building child-care capacity in Indiana communities. Participating in public-private efforts with the state social services administration, Lilly and other leading Indiana employers helped develop county-based child-care councils and a corporate mentoring program that assisted counties with business skills used to build local child-care capacity. They also contributed financially toward a \$3 million state Child Care Fund that supports training and education for child-care services. In the first few years of operation, these programs generated 3,000 new child-care slots, and trained more than 300 credentialed care workers.

In addition to these broad-based partnership efforts, Lilly developed two on-site child-care centers and four community-based science camps for employees’ children. The training activities for these Lilly child-care programs have been extended to other child-care providers in nearby communities, under the belief that building skills outside Lilly will generate more lasting community improvements benefiting everyone.

there are few random sample surveys of firms on this issue. For example, the Points of Light Foundation surveyed almost 2,800 companies in 1992 and again in 1999. They found that the number of employers that had implemented an employee volunteer program increased from 19 percent in 1992 to 48 percent in 1999. This upward trend is encouraging, but the overall response rate to their survey was only 9 percent and the sample was not representative.

Of those companies that offer employees paid time off for volunteer work, it is usually done on an informal, case-by-case basis. However, in 1996 AT&T announced that it would give all of its 127,000 employees one paid day off a year for volunteer work. The focus of AT&T's volunteerism has been on child care, elder care, housing repairs for the poor, and meals for the homeless. A different approach has been taken by the Xerox Corporation, which provides a smaller number of employees with the opportunity to take up to twelve months to get involved in community projects. The GAP, Inc., has taken a more modest approach, giving their employees five hours a month to devote to community projects.

These examples are suggestive of what could happen if many more employers implemented such programs, particularly if the emphasis were on contributing to community service for child and elder care

Unions. Unions can also play a community role, both in partnership with employers (as in the 1999 Case Example on page 28) or on their own. The health-care union-management collaborative, as well as other union-management multi-employer programs, are good examples of the roles that unions can play at a local level. Unions are also active members of multiple political coalitions. For example, the Massachusetts AFL-CIO is in the leadership of the Family Leave Coalition that is working to lobby for paid family leave. Another example of union involvement with work-family concerns is the Labor Guild of the Boston Archdiocese, which has sponsored two annual work and family conferences and held a series of informal dinner meetings to explore how local business, labor, and family groups might work together to shape a common agenda on these issues.

Government. Two ways that federal, state, and local governments can help communities become environments that are supportive of working families are by providing data necessary for strategic planning and by funding local services and institutions that help families meet their dual responsibilities.

Several important data-collection efforts are organized at the federal level that might be useful for planning. First is the "American Community Survey" (ACS), started in 1996, which is under way at the U.S. Census Bureau. The goal of the ACS is to assist communities in the "planning and evaluation of programs for everyone from the newborn to the elderly" (U.S. Census Bureau web site). Another important source of community data is the "State of the Cities Report," which provides an analysis of four macro-level trends affecting America's urban and suburban communities. The report shows how the economic recovery has reversed decades of decline in cities, but at the same time driven up the price of homes, making affordable housing difficult to

find. The latest report also documents a “new demography,” with minority groups increasing in both cities and suburbs (minorities comprise 46.9 percent of urban residents and 23 percent of the suburban population). A third resource for community-based planning sponsored by the federal government is “The Livability Initiative,” based on a set of proposals announced by Vice President Gore in January 1999. This agenda promotes the idea of sustainable economic development, prosperity, and opportunity for all, enhancing the quality of community life and building a stronger “sense of community” at the local level.

There are also some state government data-collection efforts that have been undertaken to provide a basis for a more integrated approach to planning community development and integrating services available to families and workers. Many states are trying to do what the federal government so far has failed to do—to enhance the quality of community life by coordinating existing programs and ensuring that the needs of families are being met and financed in a comprehensive manner. Increasingly, we are seeing such interagency coordination at the state level, using both state and federal funding. A few examples from an excellent publication by the National Child Welfare Resource Center (O’Brien, 1996) document a variety of bold reform initiatives by state and county governments.

A number of communities are also working to put in place an integrated set of services for an economically and socially diverse group of families, redirecting a wide range of existing funds into particular areas where they see a need. This has been done through Missouri’s “Caring Communities” program and in West Virginia’s “Family Resource Networks.” In a second model, states pool funds for one particular type of service that is already funded by multiple agencies. This approach was used for out-of-home care for at-risk children in Virginia and Maryland. In a third instance, both of the first two approaches are used, but the collaboratives are made up of players at the local level. This was enacted around child welfare issues in Iowa and the development of the Youth Pilot Project in several California counties. Finally, a fourth approach is to identify children who are being served by multiple agencies at the same time and pool all available funds to serve these high-need children in the most effective and coordinated manner. This model was utilized in Ohio under the Kids in Different Systems (KIDS) project and in Oregon under the Oregon Partners Project.

Similarly, the Community Partnerships for Children Program (CPCP) was started in Massachusetts in 1996. The program is built on the recognition that there is an insufficient supply of quality programs for children at the community level. CPCP was “designed to increase the availability, affordability, quality and comprehensiveness of early childhood programs through existing programs in communities, including public schools, Head Start and private programs.” The CPCP is an example of taking programs funded through local tax dollars, federal tax dollars, and state tax dollars, and melding them into a system that makes government at the local level work for young children of working parents.

CASE examples

Government and the Civil Sector

There are several community-based efforts—some started by citizen groups, some by city governments, and some by state governments—that deserve detailed mention because their work goes beyond a particular set of work-family needs and services. Their purpose is enhancing the overall quality of life in our communities. These programs are helping to create definitions of what it means to live in a “family-friendly” community. They are promoting the idea that a “family-friendly” workplace is a necessary but not sufficient ingredient in creating a healthy social environment for children and families. They are significant not only for the scope of issues being addressed, but because the voices of citizens at the community level have been central in defining what issues are on the agenda.

These four examples provide models that could be replicated in other communities according to the needs of local residents. They are all significant in their effort to link issues that are often dealt with separately, and in their effort to promote citizen voice and activism—much like some of the worker voice models in high-performance workplaces. These kinds of local policy/action organizations could potentially have an enormous positive impact on the ability of working families to achieve their economic, family, and community goals. There are also a large number of nonprofit organizations that work as advocates for children and families, for education reform, for quality accessible health care, for equitable workplaces, and for a “living wage.” Such organizations are not for-profit corporations and they are not the family. Rather, they comprise a third sector, whose strength and sustainability is vital to both our economy and our families because they serve the needs of diverse employers and diverse families in caring for the members of our society.

Oregon Benchmarks

Oregon was the first state to get involved in monitoring and measuring the quality of community life. Started in 1989, the benchmarks are now operating under a twenty-year strategic plan called “Oregon Shines,” which has reformulated its primary goals to include quality jobs for all Oregonians: safe, caring, and engaged communities, and healthy, sustainable environments. In moving to the strategic plan, the focus of the strategic vision has expand-

ed beyond economic development and the environment to include the objectives of enhancing health, caregiving, and citizen engagement.

Minnesota Milestones

Minnesota Milestones was created in 1991 by the state’s governor as a way to involve the public in setting goals for Minnesota’s future, to establish outcome indicators, and to hold the government responsible for results. Their most recent report, “Minnesota Milestones 1998: Measures that Matter,” showed improvement in some of their major goals, particularly economic growth, academic achievement, recreational opportunities, and health. However, the report cited other areas in which they are not realizing the goals set in the earlier part of the decade, including pressures on the environment, a lack of voter participation, stress in rural areas, and “more families facing acute problems.”

Sustainable Seattle and 1000 Friends of Washington

There are two efforts in the state of Washington, one at the city level and the other at the state level, to promote sustainable development. The focus of these initiatives is on the intersection of economic development and the preservation and conservation of the environment. A “Sprawl Watch Report Card” was issued by 1000 Friends of Washington, which focuses on the quality of life in a number of cities and towns in the Central Puget Sound area. It looks at the impact of economic development, transportation policies, environmental preservation, and the balance of jobs and housing in each community. The report has not yet integrated issues of child and family care and well-being into its agenda.

The Livable Tucson Program

In 1997, the mayor and city council of Tucson began a process of community participation to develop a vision of what the citizens of Tucson wanted life to look like in their community. They developed a set of indicators to help both city officials and citizens measure whether their community was in fact becoming more “livable.” Their efforts rely on a model of “sustainable development” that is gaining ground in both the United States and in some less-developed nations.

**There is a connection
between the lack of
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communities.**

Redesigning Communities: Planning and Design Issues

Besides partnering with other institutional players, communities themselves might be redesigned to become more supportive environments for integrating work and family. This idea builds on the disciplines of geography, urban planning, and architecture, suggesting that we must give focused attention to the physical layout of our cities, towns, and suburbs, and even our own homes. There is a connection between the lack of “family friendliness” in our workplaces and the lack of “family friendliness” in our communities.

An interesting response to the negatives associated with suburban sprawl is a movement called the “New Urbanism,” which is promoting the benefits of urban living and trying to redesign urban environments to entice people back into the cities. One such experiment is the creation of “Celebration, Florida,” one of a number of planned suburban/urban communities in various parts of the country that is struggling against the pressures of urban growth and the erosion of neighborhoods. The planners have tried to re-create some of the older forms of residential neighborhoods by designing a community that is more “people-friendly,” less reliant on cars, and offers a range of services and institutions in walking distance of people’s homes.

Another example deals with domestic design and the possibility of sharing domestic work across family units. Hayden (1984) has shown how profoundly our domestic spaces affect the division of labor in the family, relationships between men and women, and between parents and children, and suggests ways to redesign these spaces. Others, who are part of community-based food cooperatives, and co-housing units that share dining room and kitchen facilities among several families, are seeking to give voice to these concerns with bold new social experiments at the domestic level.

Finally, the disconnect and tension between work and family is graphically portrayed in the long physical distances between many people’s places of employment and their places of residence. This is a very difficult issue to remedy because our labor-market institutions are often driven to locations where rents are low or land is cheap, and these places are often distant from livable and affordable housing. Some have argued that telecommuting is the answer, but telecommuting poses its own difficulties in terms of isolation from co-workers and a blurring of the boundary between work and home that may compromise family caregiving. This is an area that deserves creative thinking and experimentation through new approaches to zoning, tax incentives to employers, family-friendly uses of computer technology, and other private and public policies.

Communities have not been a large part of the thinking about work-family issues. Employees are viewed as being either “at work” or “at home,” as if there were no larger context of social relationships and institutions outside of the family to which households and individuals belong. But it is the very “embeddedness”—or lack of embeddedness—of families and individual family members in specific communities that may determine whether employees can successfully negotiate the worlds of work and family. Similarly, it may be the embeddedness, or lack of it, of businesses in the communities in which they are located that determines their success in recruiting and

retaining workers, and in selling their services or products. Employers and members of their workforces must acknowledge and contribute to the communities of which they are a part. The quality of community life is important to the survival of both employers and employees, and communities need the involvement of both to build and strengthen their capacity to offer livable environments for all.

The contribution of each of these actors is significant. But the question, indeed the central challenge, remains: Can we envision an alternative approach in which these actors work collaboratively, with complementary efforts, to achieve a better integration of work and family life? We turn to ideas for doing so in the final section of this report.

Putting the Pieces Together

Thus far in this report we have summarized the current contributions and limitations of each of the major actors functioning on their own to improve work and family integration. Our view, as laid out in Figure 1 (page 2), is that this is only the starting point for what is needed to move to the next level of development and to accelerate progress toward achieving better integration. The next critical step is to encourage each of these actors to work together and complement each other's efforts. The total combined impact could indeed be significantly greater than the sum of the parts. This final section will shift, therefore, from describing the current state of play to suggesting steps each of these parties might take to energize a collaborative, systemic effort. We then end our report by envisioning what might be accomplished through this type of effort.

We begin by asking, What changes in each of the actors are needed for a systemic approach to be put in motion?

Employers

It is clear that firms should continue to act in their self-interest by expanding the array and reach of “family-friendly” benefits and practices to better enable workers to contribute to their business objectives and meet their family and personal responsibilities. This is what is generally referred to as the business case for work and family practices. It is a necessary but far from sufficient solution. Firm-initiated benefits will inevitably be limited to those with labor market power, will not reframe the objectives of these efforts around the dual agenda of strengthening work and family outcomes, and will continue to be underutilized. To increase the utilization and effectiveness of their own

What changes in each of the actors are needed for a systemic approach to be put in motion?

policies and contribute to a more collaborative, systemic effort, we believe employers need to adopt new approaches to dealing with work-family issues.

Focus on Work Design. Work design was identified as a root cause of many of the problems associated with work-family integration as well as a key lever and opportunity for making progress. But in getting at this root cause, a broader, dual-agenda perspective needs to be taken to work design. The problem should be framed not as how organizations can design high-performance work systems, but how work practices can be redesigned to achieve both high performance at work and a more satisfying personal and family life.

Share Control and Responsibility with Employees. The evidence presented in this report shows that sharing control over policy and practice with employees and their representatives is necessary for at least three reasons. First, front-line employees and supervisors know their work practices best. Their inputs are critical to any effort at work redesign. Second, only by engaging employees in efforts to change the prevailing workplace culture will fear be overcome that use of part-time or flexible work options will hurt one's career prospects. Further, the culture must allow men as well as women to participate in these options. Unless this happens, flexible policies will continue to be underutilized. Third, dialogue among people in a work group is critical to overcoming both subtle resistance among supervisors and resentment of peers to benefits seen as favoring one group (e.g., young parents) over others. Those who work together need to figure out what is efficient and equitable, given their varied family needs and personal circumstances. The best solution to these endemic problems is for employees to participate in the choice, design, and administration of firm practices and benefits.

Move More Women into High-Level Corporate Positions. The fastest way of elevating the priorities assigned to work and family issues is for corporate leaders to reflect the demographic profile of their staff. While work and family are not simply women's issues, the reality is that women often have more personal experience than men in dealing with these issues and are more likely than men to make them a priority.

Engage Other Actors in a Systemic Approach. The traditional tendency of managers to protect their organizational autonomy has to be overcome for a systemic approach to succeed. Employers will need not only to work together as a cohesive and responsible business community but also to participate constructively in community, state, and national dialogues that involve unions, professional associations and other worker advocates, women and family advocates, and government agencies. And the traditional perspective taken in these interactions must shift from one seeking either to keep these groups and organizations at bay or to minimize their impacts on business to one negotiating arrangements and policies that dovetail with and complement what firms are already doing on their own.

Unions and Professional Associations

Like employers, unions and professional associations have a baseline of experience and achievements that are part of the foundation for a systemic approach to work and

family integration. Both unions and professional groups, however, need to give work and family issues a higher priority in their organizing, recruitment, negotiation, coalition building, and joint efforts. Specifically, these groups need to address basic issues.

Organize for Work and Family. Just as we urge employers to accept a dual agenda—the business case and family concerns—we urge unions and professional groups to organize for both work *and* family benefits and concerns. This means seeing potential members both as employees and as citizens, parents, and members of households with varying needs. Doing so would mean expanding the organizing model from a narrow one aimed at achieving majority status for collective bargaining to one that provided a full array of representative services to members and their families and to one that pooled resources to reduce the costs of child care, education, job market information, career counseling, etc.

Move More Women into Leadership Positions. As is true of corporations, a larger cadre of women leaders in unions and professional associations is more likely to place issues of equal pay for equal work as well as the expansion of negotiated health care, paid leave, flexible hours, quality part-time work, and other family benefits higher on their agendas than men would.

Build Lasting Coalitions with Other Actors. The power of the Living Wage campaigns illustrates the value of coalition-building efforts of unions and community groups. Jointly, union-management child-care and educational programs in the health-care, hotel, and other industries demonstrate the innovative potential and staying power of shared ownership and stable funding. Working with employer and community groups and local/state government groups to build support for experimentation on ways to expand paid leave and other benefits to workers not covered by employer-provided or collectively negotiated plans is within reach. We see this latter issue as an opportunity both to build new institutions and processes for dialogue and for making substantive progress in diffusing benefits to broader segments of the population in ways that build on rather than conflict with or limit what already is being done.

Governments

We envision a key but very different role for government agencies as complementary participants in a systemic approach to advancing work and family integration. Too often government bodies have implemented new legislation or regulations with little knowledge of or regard for what firms, unions, and community groups are doing. The role of government needs to be recast as a catalyst for private actions, addressing the needs of workers and families the private actors will not or cannot reach on their own. Above all, government policies and regulations need to be informed by what is being done by these other parties. Local, state, and national government agencies must engage in an ongoing experimental and learning process. Indeed, consistent with trends toward devolution of responsibility in other areas of social and labor market policy, we envision an expanding role for state and local government bodies, with the federal government serving in enabling, funding, and information-disseminating roles.

But while we emphasize a recasting of the perspective and processes by which government influences private efforts, government must also be the force to ensure that basic minimum standards for work and family life are available to all. What these minimum standards ought to cover, and at what level, are, in the best sense of the term, political issues. While our role here is not to propose a comprehensive agenda or to make specific legislative proposals, the evidence presented in this report leads us to suggest the following issues should be front and center on the political agenda today.

Paid Time for Care. A strong case can be made in support of efforts to provide more paid time off for family responsibilities to more workers and family members. Indeed, we expect that one way or another, some form of paid time off will be enacted in America in the not-too-distant future. Rather than debate whether or not to do so, we suggest this is an ideal opportunity to shift to a dialogue over *how* to enact and diffuse this new benefit.

Consistent with our systemic and learning perspective, we propose that experiments be designed collaboratively at state and local levels in ways that dovetail with paid time off provisions and funding arrangements in firm policies and collective-bargaining agreements. The specific experiments should be the product of a deliberative process involving employers, union representatives, and other employee groups within specific state and local areas. While government policy makers may need to establish a minimum standard or floor that all such experiments must meet, the goal should be to encourage different approaches, track and evaluate their experiences, and disseminate the results. If historical experience with this approach is indicative, over time a single or a small number of models will very likely rise to the surface as preferable, but this would be an emergent not a mandated phenomenon. To jump-start this process, the current Department of Labor guidelines allowing states to use their unemployment insurance funds to support paid leave could be broadened to encourage other funding approaches and to offer tax incentives and/or matching funds to experimental programs.

Quality Part-Time Jobs. Given the substantial numbers of individuals who prefer part-time work at particular stages in life, a key policy objective should be to improve the quality of part-time jobs. This implies providing proportionate wages, benefits, and promotional opportunities and ensuring that individuals can move between part-time and full-time work without fear of discrimination or career retribution. Such options must be available and used by both men and women to ensure that employees can successfully navigate transitions to part time and back to full time while achieving career success. How to implement this long-term policy objective, however, is not an easy question to answer.

Employee Participation and Representation. A central conclusion of the research reviewed for this report is that work and family integration will be enhanced by more employee access to independent representation and participation in the choice, design, and administration of workplace policies and benefits. A comprehen-

sive updating of labor law that addresses at least the following three elements is needed to achieve this.

- First, the processes governing who can organize and how one gains access to union representation must be changed from the present high-risk, high-conflict, slow, and expensive all-or-nothing process (if 50 percent of unit members vote yes, all workers in the unit are represented; if fewer than 50 percent vote yes, none gain representation). Workers and their families must have greater choice among models of representation, experience less resistance from employers, and have opportunities to be represented and participate in key issues, even if less than a majority of their peers concur.
- Second, employees and employers should be free to consult and work together on work and family issues in a decentralized and collaborative fashion without fear that doing so violates the company union provisions of existing labor law.
- Third, employers and employee representatives should be encouraged to create cross-firm consortia in their industries and/or labor markets to promote joint efforts to address work and family issues.

Flexible Hours. Following the historical trend, the long-term goal of policy should be to reduce gradually the length of the workweek and work year, consistent with growth in productivity. At the same time, the means of introducing more flexibility concerning the point at which overtime provisions kick in should be explored, as should the question of overtime benefits taking the form of premium pay or time off. Again, however, the key to making progress on these issues is to ensure experiments are designed in a decentralized and collaborative process and that employees have a meaningful voice in their design and administration. Framing the debate in terms of family hours is an intriguing possibility. Collecting systematic data to track family hours would be an essential first step to begin a discussion of this approach.

Portable Benefits. Health-care and pension benefits tied to specific employers should become portable. The Social Security system does this now to a limited extent, but more is needed, given declining private-sector health-care and pension coverage. Federal and state governments can experiment with incentives to make these benefits portable, and unions and employer associations could help as well.

Quality Care Work. Steps must be taken to ensure that care workers have the skills needed to provide quality care and are compensated a living wage for doing so. This means that federal and state government funding formulas must allow for pass-through of living wages so that child-care, elder-care, and family-service providers and their employees do not find themselves locked in a no-win clash of wanting to pay and receive a living wage but lacking the resources to do so.

National and Local Work and Family Councils. Finally, we suggest the need to establish broadly representative work and family councils at the national and local levels to promote, coordinate, and evaluate the types of systemic efforts called for in this report. The councils should have the authority and resources to promote experimentation, evaluation, and learning and should issue annual reports assessing progress toward goals laid out in this report.

Communities and Families

Communities and families play crucial roles in providing care and sustaining cooperative connection at the most basic level of society. For this they need far greater support from other institutional players than they have traditionally received, but they also need to engage in a more clearly focused way in joint efforts to relieve present conflicts between work and family. There are several initiatives communities might explore.

Organize Cooperative Family Programs. Children, elders, and others in need of care benefit from the services of schools, daycare centers, libraries, and various supportive programs in their communities, and from the participation of family members in such services. But few working adults have time to volunteer their labor. Working together with each other and with employers, unions, and professional associations, community institutions could promote such efforts as sustained paid leave time for volunteering, as well as networks of cooperative family care. At the same time employers need to make it possible for their employees to become clients and participants in such cooperative arrangements.

Convene Stakeholder Dialogues. Enhancing citizen voice and activism is a key to developing community strength. Ongoing discussions among community groups and the diverse players involved in work and family issues—business, labor, governments, families, advocacy organizations—could establish processes for functions such as continuing needs assessments, pooling resources for family support among small companies, and coordination of family programs among different governmental and nonprofit agencies. Ongoing discussions could also provide a means for all players to focus on the levels and kinds of resources families need for health and strength and to consider, in a nonadversarial setting, the proper distribution of responsibility for such costs.

Promote Family-Supportive Community Design. Increasing concern about sustainable development raises the even larger question of the physical organization of communities in relation to the well-being of families. Community leaders engaged, again, with all other players, could include family impacts in local planning processes for economic development, infrastructure development, environmental preservation, and the balance of jobs and housing.

Envisioning the Results

Suppose the leadership is forthcoming from these different parties to put a systemic approach in motion. What effects do we foresee? Our end vision is a world where the ideal worker is an integrated worker: where care of family and community is as much a part of an individual's sense of identity and as socially valued as occupational achievement. It is a world where women and men are equally eligible to participate in the economic sphere of paid work and the private sphere of caring for themselves, their families, and their communities. It is a society where changes in the composition of family or health status of family members—whether it be a new child, an adult

Communities and families play crucial roles in providing care and sustaining cooperative connection at the most basic level of society.

entering or leaving the household, a critically ill relative—do not threaten economic security as caregiving responsibilities or income-generating capacities change.

What are the elements of such a world? We end the report with a series of statements that describe what we believe would be accomplished by addressing the challenge of integrating work and family life through a systemic approach. In doing so, we challenge America's leaders to get started on this approach and to hold each other accountable for turning this vision into reality.

- In this integrated world, work demands would no longer take automatic priority over other pressures on workers' energy and time. Work practices and routines, as well as allocation decisions, would routinely assume that employees have interests and responsibilities in activities outside of their employment. This assumption would be built into all aspects of work design and all efforts at process improvement. Work would be redesigned around the integrated worker, not the "ideal" worker who is assumed to be able and willing to give complete priority to paid employment. By meeting the new realities of the workforce, these changes would allow employees not only to live better lives but also to contribute more productively to their employing organizations.
- A broad and varied complement of firm-specific flexible benefits, scheduling arrangements, and family-support services would be available to a growing number of employees at all occupational levels in small and large firms. Utilization rates would increase for both men and women, and their use would result in improved work units and organizational performance as well as in worker and family satisfaction. Employees, supervisors, and managers would be engaged in monitoring and adapting these policies to fit their varying personal needs and work processes. Over time, flexibility would become a normal, accepted part of workplace cultures.
- All Americans would have access to paid time off to attend to their varying personal and family needs. Flexible leave banks to which employees, employers, and government could contribute would be available for use in times of need, emergency, or for more extensive time off to care for infants and small children, an illness in the family, or an elder. These banks would be integrated with other leave policies provided by employers, subject to the minimum amounts of paid and unpaid leave required as a matter of public policy.
- Workers employed in caregiving jobs would be earning a living wage and have access to union representation. Many of them would be included in local living-wage ordinances. Care workers would have access to training programs that enhance their basic and job-related skills, improve the quality of care they provide, and offer access to other career opportunities in human services and related professions. The organizations employing caregivers would serve as models for cooperation at the community and national levels with unions and associations and with representatives of the families they serve to ensure that adequate public funding to pay living wages and

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provide quality care are forthcoming from federal and state governments.

- Hours devoted to family and personal matters would increase as the choices open to individuals and families for how to integrate work, career, and family expand. There would be fewer penalties associated with moving across full-time and part-time options, with using the flexible schedules and arrangements on the books at their workplace, and with taking time off for child and other family care. This flexibility is needed to respond to changing family circumstances and different capacities to generate income. These needs are particularly acute for single parents and families with ill or handicapped dependents.
- Women would enjoy equal economic opportunity without compromising the kind of care they want to provide for their families. There would be greatly increased numbers of women in policy-making positions in firms, unions, government agencies, legislatures, community organizations, and other institutions important to society.
- Communities would be empowered to support this kind of integration by partnerships with other players, and by having access to resources for community-wide innovations. Employers would value the role community institutions play and would encourage their employees' participation.
- Productivity and economic growth would devolve from this systemic approach to work and family issues because flexibility would be built into the employment system. Public and private investments in human resources would produce a higher return as individual and family members are better able to utilize their talents and integrate their work with family roles and responsibilities.

A Call to Action

The conditions leading to our current situation will not go away. Indeed, we believe the problems will continue to deepen as the population ages. Therefore, all of the institutions needed to create a successful result, one that will lead to coherent, coordinated, and systemic efforts to address the problems, have and will continue to have a strong incentive to be involved. The opportunity is there for the taking.

To jump-start this approach, we suggest the parties begin working together to achieve five high-priority objectives:

- **Work Design.** Managers, employees, and employee representatives should work together to adapt work systems, processes, and schedules to meet the dual agenda of improving work and organization performance and personal and family life.
- **Paid Leave for Family Caregiving.** American families need access to a universal paid-leave policy to meet different needs over their life course. But the specific forms and means of financing paid leave should build on what leading firms and union agreements already provide some workers. State-level experimentation with alternative financing arrangements and options that build on private sector practices must be encouraged.
- **Reduced Hours and Hours Flexibility.** The historic trend of reduced hours of work in tandem with economic growth has been reversed in recent decades for many Americans. More options for working reduced hours while simultaneously increasing

flexibility and responsiveness to employer and customer requirements need to be available to working parents. Experiments are needed to allow employers and employees to negotiate arrangements that better suit their varying needs, to administer them together in ways that are mutually beneficial, and to prevent and reduce overwork.

- **Women in Leadership Positions.** Research shows that women in positions of leadership in corporations, unions, and government organizations give work and family issues a higher priority in decision-making. All these institutions therefore need to accelerate the pace of moving women into top-level positions.
- **Worker Voice.** These policies will only be effective if all the parties share in their design and administration and experiment with different ways to fit them to their varied work and family circumstances. This requires updating and strengthening labor law to ensure workers have their own voice in shaping workplace policies and practices.
- **Community Empowerment.** We need to recognize the importance of community-based institutions by fostering greater investment in their services, and by facilitating volunteerism in their programs. These groups are diverse, and they must have a seat at the table when work-family problems are defined and work-family solutions are created.
- **Work-Family Councils and Summit.** To foster and learn from policies and practices of employers and unions, government at all levels, communities, and others, and to keep these issues on the national agenda, we suggest creating a set of broad-based regional Work-Family Councils whose members would come together annually for a national-level Working Families Summit.

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