

Dear Joe Bloggs MP

I was encouraged by the news that the government are exploring widening the options for childcare, freeing parents to spend on childcare as they see fit.

I urge you to remind Liz Truss of her pledge to remove the penalties for parents staying at home to care for their children. It is a positive step in ending discrimination and I ask for a level economic playing field that any funds available to help with childcare should also be accessible for parents caring at home.

(If your MP is not Conservative...What similar policies are your party putting forward to help parents who would like to spend more time caring for their own children, and how would you remove the penalties that parents incur when they take the option to care at home?)

Parents **do** want **choice**. The latest survey by the Department of Education 2021 (released in August 2022) shows that the majority of mothers, if there were no barriers, would rather work fewer hours and be home more with their children. This was a survey of 5,955 parents with children aged 0-14yrs. If the survey was narrowed to mothers of children 0-3yrs the figures for those wanting to be more at home would, no doubt, be even higher.

One failure of our economic system is that it does not recognise this work as 'growth in GDP'. Work done 'for love' by a parent is not counted, whereas the same work 'done for money' in a traded economy is counted as valuable - regardless of which has a better result. If evidence of growth is needed, then perhaps it is time to re-evaluate what can/can't be measured.

Year: 2021			
	Family type		
	Partnered mothers	Lone mothers	All
Views	%	%	%
<i>Base: All working mothers with child(ren) aged 0 to 14</i>	2,438	871	3,309
<b>If I could afford to give up work, I would prefer to stay at home and look after my children</b>			
Agree strongly	14	12	13
Agree	17	16	16
Neither agree nor disagree	17	20	17
Disagree	40	40	40
Disagree strongly	13	13	13
<b>If I could afford it, I would work fewer hours so I could spend more time looking after my children</b>			
Agree strongly	24	17	22
Agree	36	34	36
Neither agree nor disagree	12	18	14
Disagree	23	25	24
Disagree strongly	5	6	5
<b>If I could arrange good quality childcare which was convenient, reliable and affordable, I would work more hours</b>			
Agree strongly	4	8	5
Agree	17	21	18
Neither agree nor disagree	13	21	15
Disagree	47	37	44
Disagree strongly	19	15	17

I am a member of Mothers at Home Matter which campaigns to give choice to parents as to how they care for their children. One size does not fit all and works neither for all mothers nor all children. Children benefit from time spent with their mothers (and/or fathers) and this should be supported.

Could I make an appointment to meet with you to discuss these matters.

Yours sincerely