

# The MAHMifesto

A voice for mothers wanting choice to be primary carers



**What is the impact & cost of long hours for children in external settings?**



**Why does the UK not recognise the family in its taxation system?**



**Loving maternal care has a positive long-term impact on child health & well being.**

## Mothers at Home Matter too!

As the political parties release their manifestos and promises in an attempt to win your vote, we remind you of what matters for many mothers across the United Kingdom.

Mothers at Home Matter is the voice for the many mothers who want to be at home to bring up their children yet who are so rarely represented in public debate or in policy circles. One freedom the average mother no longer has is to choose to be at home to care for her children.

1

### PROMOTE

A better understanding of children's developmental need for loving and consistent care.

2

### CAMPAIGN

For an economic level playing field for parents who stay at home.

3

### ENHANCE

The status and self esteem of mothers at home, representing their voice in policy debates.

## 1. Needs of the child

The needs of the child do not appear to be at the heart of the drive for subsidised childcare.

Mothers at Home Matter are concerned for families who financially need to go out to work and cannot because of the cost of childcare, and for those who do go out to work but find their earnings are all used up in childcare. However many parents would prefer to care for their children themselves if they could afford it and this vital element appears absent in all the debates on 'affordable childcare'.

No political party is talking about the injustices that force the mother away from the family in the first place. And there is almost no debate about the impact of childcare on the wellbeing of babies and children. Instead debate focuses on the need to 'remove the obstacles' which 'prevent mothers finding fulfilment in the workplace' because 'sitting at home' is a 'waste of talent' and 'experience'.

'Significant advances have been made in neuroscience research on infant brain development which confirm the infant's need for early attachment to at least one primary caregiver.'

*Society for Research in Child Development, Dec 2014*

'The context of early care is critical for it can literally shape the brain's architecture.'

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



*The decline of the mother at home and the addiction to being busy is a leading factor in the rise of depression and anxiety in our children. Could these hectic lifestyles be depriving young people of something they needs as much as oxygen; attention & time?*

*Esther Rantzen, Founder of Childline 2017*

'The nature of a child's first relationship, usually with the mother, is crucial, because it acts as a template that permanently moulds the capacity to enter into all later emotional relationships'.

*[www.waveitrust.org](http://www.waveitrust.org) citing Allan Schore, a leading researcher in the field of neuro-psychology*

For further research please see:

<https://mothersmatter.libsyn.com/mothers-and-childcare>

<https://mothersmatter.libsyn.com/5-mothers-and-guilt>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAl8p1pHJP4ZRCctyTuD9sw>

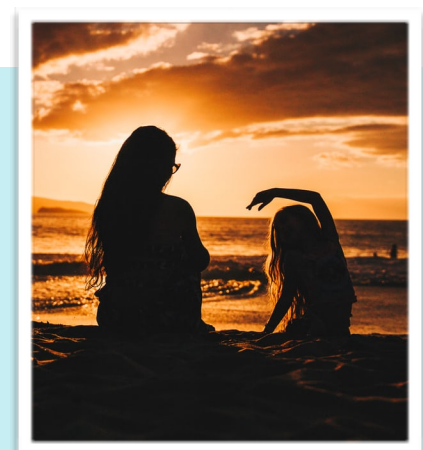
## RESEARCH INTO EFFECTS ON CHILDREN

The more hours a child spends in childcare, away from their mothers, the greater the negative effect on emotional development and behaviour.

*(Jay Belsky's Emmanuel Lecture: Developmental risks (still) associated with early Child Care.)*

Hearing their mother's voice helps children manage their emotions, reduces their stress, increases their feelings of well-being, helps babies recognise emotions in others, helps babies learn language etc. and so on.

*(Beauchemin et al: Mother and stranger: an electrophysiological study of voice processing in newborns; Grossman et al: The developmental origins of voice processing in human brains; Abrams et al Neural circuits underlying mother's voice perception predict social communication abilities in children.)*



## 2. Economic Justice

The average mother no longer has the freedom or choice to be based at home to care for her child.

MAHM campaigns for:

- Economic level playing field for parents who stay at home.
- Taxation which falls fairly on those who stay home and those who work.
- Childcare subsidies which follow the child, with parents able to choose whether they use it to stay home, or give it to a grandparent, childminder or external setting for care.
- Child benefit to be distributed fairly.

**The UK is one of the only countries in the world that does not recognise the dependent nature of the family in its taxation system.**

**Treating the family as a unit should be the first principle of taxation.**

Anomalies & unfairness from not doing so:

- Households on £30k, where a parent stays at home, are taxed double the amount as those where parents work.
- Some families are financially better off apart than together by £12k.

The income tax system has not taken proper account of families since the 1960s but the problems families face today stem from the introduction of “independent taxation” in 1990.

[www.taxandthefamily.org](http://www.taxandthefamily.org)



- Some families caught in the Child Benefit Tax Charge will be in the poorer 50% of the population while some of the richest families continue to receive it.

- Our taxation system together with the welfare system catches over half of all families with children in a tax trap. It becomes almost impossible for primary earners to bring home extra disposable income forcing the mother into paid work to plug the income gap.

**A person’s individual income is not a measure of how well off the family is. Net household income is a better measure.**

MAHM campaigns for the option of a transferable tax allowance and for childcare subsidies to follow the child allowing parents choice as to who cares.

For further research please see:  
<https://mothersathomematter.co.uk/who-cares-about-the-family>  
<https://www.taxandthefamily.org>  
[http://traffic.libsyn.com/mothersmatter/16\\_Mothers\\_and\\_Taxation.mp](http://traffic.libsyn.com/mothersmatter/16_Mothers_and_Taxation.mp)

**Chart showing extra tax paid annually (& mthly) by Single Income Families**

Total household gross income	Annual tax and NI paid by Single Income Family (SIF)	Annual tax & NI paid by Double Income Family – 2 equal earners	Higher rate child benefit tax charge	Extra tax paid by SIF annually & mthly
£	£	£	(2 children) £	£
20,000	2,862	328		2,534 211 pm
30,000	6,062	2,524		3,538 295 pm
40,000	9,262	5,724		3,538 295 pm
50,000	12,462	8,924		3,538 295 pm
60,000	16,660	12,124	1,788	6,324 527 pm
70,000	20,860	15,324	1,788	7,324 610 pm



### 3. Valuing Care

As a society, we undervalue the role of care and undermine the role of the mother at home.

MAHM aims to enhance the status and self esteem of mothers choosing unpaid care and represents their voice in policy debates.

Mothers who are, or who would like to be, at home are radical and progressive wishing to make a conscious choice to raise our own children. We believe this is in the best interest of our families and our own fulfilment.

We challenge the notion that gender equality is achieved simply through narrow income measurement.

Mothers who stay at home are not old fashioned un-economic units who contribute nothing to the economy and do not work hard.



**The ONS calculates the value of informal childcare as £343 billion per year – 23% of GDP.**

We believe that:

– Equality also lies in valuing *the role of caregiving*, which is a key priority for many mothers

– Raising the next generation is an important contribution to society.

– We save costs to the economy in minimising the adverse mental & emotional health of children.

– Mothers develop a wide range of skills in raising children which makes them valuable to employers on returning to work. This needs to be recognised.

For further research please see:

<https://mothersmatter.libsyn.com/14-mothers-and-family-friendly-policies>



#### MOTHERS AT HOME MATTER: WHO ARE WE?

*MAHM was set up almost 30 years ago in response to the increasing pressure on mothers to return to the workplace before either they or their children were ready. Our members are from all walks of life.*

*We are a campaigning organisation to help make the choice of staying at home possible for mothers while also supporting mothers in their journey as they raise their children and to help deal with the challenges of being at home.*

*All our committee members are volunteers, with many of us fitting campaigning work around our main task of raising children. Follow us online via our website or on social media to find out more. [www.mothersathomematter.co.uk](http://www.mothersathomematter.co.uk)*