



success through diversity  
Ahakoia whakaaro kē, ka puta a ihu

#### Also in this issue:

- EEO Trust resources for parents and employers of parents ..... 2
- UK legislates to accelerate flexible working ..... 2
- Recent survey shows employers paying for parental leave ..... 3
- Private work/life solutions can't work. 4
- Workbase wins international literacy award ..... 5
- Stress in the workplace ..... 5

## Legislation to suit transformed workplaces

The Government's proposed paid parental leave (PPL) legislation is perhaps the most tangible sign of a growing recognition that workplaces aren't what they used to be. An MIT Sloan Management School study summarised on page 4 of this Bulletin refers to the increasingly rare "ideal worker" around which too many workplaces continue to be structured.

This "ideal worker" is a male breadwinner who works for 40 years without a break supported by a spouse or family member. However in the last half century, this "ideal worker" is increasingly a minority with a wider variety of workers with a range of personal, family and community responsibilities and interests.

Minister of Women's Affairs Hon Laila Harré, who introduced a Private Members Bill for 12 weeks PPL in 1999 and was instrumental in getting the paid parental leave legislation to its current stage, maps the changes:

- In 1945 married women were 18% of all women working 20 or more hours a week
- By 1956 the proportion had risen to 32%
- By 1971 married women were 50% of the women in paid work

- By 1996 76% of mothers of teenagers were in paid work as were 30% of women with a baby under one and 50% of mothers of one to four year olds.

"It is in the context of this new reality that the Labour-Alliance Coalition Government is set to introduce paid leave from the time of a baby's birth or adoption."

The UK Government announced extensions to its existing PPL scheme only days after the announcement of New Zealand's new scheme.

It is proposing that PPL be extended from 18 weeks to six months, with a further six months unpaid leave for mothers and two weeks paid leave for fathers, as well as an increase of over 60% in the rate of statutory maternity pay. The rate was previously 90% of salary for six weeks and then £75 for 12 weeks.

The EEO Trust has been proactive in encouraging New Zealand employers to adopt a range of work/life measures which support new parents. These cover anything from short-term carparks for pregnant employees to childcare subsidies and flexible work hours for returning parents.

#### What does New Zealand's new PPL scheme offer?

- Available to expectant mothers with a due date, actual delivery date or adoption date on or after July 1 2002
  - Must have been in paid employment with a single employer for an average of 10 or more hours a week for a year before the due birth date or adoption of a child
  - Payment of \$325 gross/week or 100% of previous weekly earnings, whichever is lower
  - Payment for 12 weeks
  - Can be shared between eligible partners with the payment being transferred from the mother to her partner
  - Estimated annual gross cost to government is \$57 million
- Go to [www.eeotrust.org.nz/new.shtml](http://www.eeotrust.org.nz/new.shtml) for further information on PPL.

If you would like information about the Equal Employment Opportunities Trust services or resources, please contact:

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PO Box 12929  
Penrose, Auckland

ph 09 525 3023  
fax 09 525 7076  
admin@eeotrust.org.nz  
<http://www.eeotrust.org.nz>

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#### Maximising the value of your membership

If you're an EEO Employers Group member and would like others such as line managers or supervisors to get enthusiastic about work and life issues, feel free to forward the Bulletin PDF onto other people in your workplace or print it out and distribute it around your workplace. Don't forget that the *Work & Life Bulletin* is available only to members, subscribers and some key influencers so please don't distribute it outside your organisation.



## EEO Trust resources for parents and employers of parents

A recent addition to the EEO Trust's resources is the Ministry of Health's *Breastfeeding and Working* leaflet. It is designed for women who are returning to work or study after having a baby and want to continue breastfeeding and is available free of charge from the Ministry of Health or the EEO Trust. This is ideal to add to information provided to women going on parental leave.

The EEO Trust also supplies *OSCAR and the Workplace*, a video and booklet package which examines ways employers can assist their employees with primary and intermediate age children. It examines issues around out of school care and recreation, shows how to identify workplace trends and assess the cost of not providing out of school care. A sample staff survey is also included. Cost: \$39.95. Developed by Oscar and funded by the government's EEO Contestable Fund.

*How can we help? Families and Workplace – A Guide for Employers* assists employers in deciding on whether to implement or extend dependent care facilities. It provides a checklist of issues to consider in implementing or extending family friendly policies and provides examples from 25 organisations. Cost: \$10. By Rae Torrie and Rose Ryan and funded by the government's EEO Contestable Fund.

To order these and other publications and resources go to [www.eeotrust.org.nz/information/resorder.shtml](http://www.eeotrust.org.nz/information/resorder.shtml)

## UK legislates to accelerate flexible working

The British Government plans to introduce legislation to help parents of young children work more flexibly. The proposed legislation will compel employers to go through a formal process of assessing applications by parents who wish to work more flexible hours.

The proposed legislation is a response to the report by the Government's Work & Parents Taskforce published in November, and largely agrees with all the recommendations made by the taskforce.

The taskforce was charged with considering how employers and working parents could be encouraged to adopt a constructive dialogue to find working patterns which suit them both. It recommends a "light-touch legislative solution" which it says will speed up the finding of solutions for working parents.

This solution will force employers to consider parents' requests for changed working hours when their child is under six-years-old or, if disabled, under 18-years-old.

Parents will need to request flexible working hours, describing their preferred working pattern. The parent and employer will then meet to

discuss the request and consider alternatives if necessary. Employers can reject the request on specific business grounds and need to explain their decision to the parent in writing.

The taskforce suggests that parents can appeal their employer's decision and where cases cannot be resolved in the workplace, binding mediation and arbitration should be available through the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service.

The taskforce believes these measures "will make a real difference to working parents and their employers in a way that will also contribute to increased productivity."

Around 3.8 million parents will be able to apply for new working arrangements and it is estimated that there will be around half a million additional requests each year.

Trade and Industry Secretary, Patricia Hewitt, says the proposed legislation would accelerate flexible working by a generation. "I believe these proposals will set in place legal standards that will revolutionise the culture of the workplace."

For more information: [www.dti.gov.uk/er/review.htm](http://www.dti.gov.uk/er/review.htm).

# Recent survey shows employers paying for parental leave

The recently released *EEO Trust Diversity Index 2001* indicates the prevalence of employer funded paid parental leave (PPL) in New Zealand workplaces. Over a third of respondents (34%) are now providing paid parental leave with larger organisations more likely to provide paid parental leave than smaller ones.

EEO Employers Group members are more likely to pay for parental leave than non-members (41% compared to 22%). The proportion of EEO Employers Group members who provide PPL has increased by 6% since 1998.

## Percentage of respondents providing paid parental leave 2001 (1998 figures in brackets)

| All       | EEO Employers Group members | Non-EEO Employers Group members |
|-----------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 34% (31%) | 41% (35%)                   | 22%                             |

Eighty-one percent of those who provide PPL have a formal policy for its implementation. This is an increase of 6% since last year. For 7% PPL is provided at the discretion of individual managers (6% less than last year), while 11 organisations indicated that it was part of their employment contracts.

Sixty-seven percent of those organisations that have PPL provide it to all staff.

## Keeping in touch

The EEO Trust Diversity Survey also asked respondents whether and how they kept in touch with people on parental leave as this can be critical to encouraging people to come back to work.

Sixty-four percent of the respondents said they always keep in touch with people on parental leave (2% more than last year) and 19% said they sometimes do – a decrease of 3% from last year. The proportion of private sector organisations always keeping in touch has substantially increased since 1998 while the proportion of public service organisations has decreased.

Respondents who kept in touch did so by a variety of means with the most common being invitations to social events and regular phone calls. Email was used to keep in touch by 58% of respondents, a 23% increase on last year.

If you can't wait for next year's *EEO Trust Diversity Survey* do a 15-minute check of your organisation's commitment to work/life balance on [www.employersforWork-LifeBalance.org.uk/index2.htm](http://www.employersforWork-LifeBalance.org.uk/index2.htm).

## Please Read On...



### Contented cows give better milk

This very accessible American book is based on research into six organisations with reputations as good places to work and compares their performance with that of six of their competitors. The research showed significantly better financial performance by the first six organisations which treated their staff with dignity, respect and consideration. This book uses case studies and practical tips to advise on how to empower staff in order to improve business competitiveness. [www.contentedcows.com](http://www.contentedcows.com)

### Five strategies for successful part-time work

This American article reports that 10% of professionals now work part-time, mostly due to parenting, studying and caring responsibilities. The authors note that part-time work leads to workplace difficulties and discrimination and they

report on the strategies developed and used by professionals for more successful part-time working.

*Harvard Business Review*, July-Aug 2001.

### Capturing the diversity dividend – views of CEOs on diversity management in the Australian workplace

This report discusses the findings of a survey of 227 Australian CEOs in the largest firms. It found that nearly 60% of firms had diverse workforces but diversity management was not prioritised, few firms had documented diversity policies, training, management capabilities or data collection, and few recognised the business benefits of improved diversity management. The report also defines diversity and outlines the business case for better diversity management. [www.ecom.unimelb.edu.au/acib/diverse](http://www.ecom.unimelb.edu.au/acib/diverse)

# Private work/life solutions can't work

A new study from the MIT Sloan School of Management looks at the challenges Americans face in integrating their work and family lives.

The authors, Bailyn, Drago and Kochan, say these challenges which include time squeeze and financial pressures are a result of workplaces continuing to be structured around an outdated image of work and the "ideal worker"

They describe the "ideal worker" as one "who starts to work in early adulthood and continues for 40 years uninterrupted, 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.

They say that this is no longer the reality but workplaces and career paths have not kept up with the changes, particularly in terms of making provision for family care. "The result is a policy and institutional lag that has produced a care crisis and career dilemma."

They say that these issues tend to be framed as private or family troubles and suggest the solution lies in a collaborative effort on the part of employers, families, worker and family advocacy groups, government and communities. "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."

As an example of the unco-ordinated efforts which do not work, they say that politicians tend to propose piecemeal solutions that focus debate on symptoms rather than on underlying causes

and holistic strategies or solutions.

They then go on to suggest what actions should be taken, for example, they say that employers need to:

- focus on work design,
- share control and responsibility for designing and implementing organisational policies with employees, and
- work collaboratively with other actors.

They say government needs to become a catalyst for private actions, addressing the needs of workers and families that private actors will not or cannot reach on their own.

The authors also suggest the approach that should be taken by unions and professional associations, and communities and families.

They then suggest that all the institutions need to take a co-ordinated approach to seven high priority objectives:

- Redesigning work systems, processes and scheduling
- Providing paid leave for family caregiving
- Reducing hours and increasing flexibility
- Increasing the number of women in leadership positions
- Strengthening the voice of workers
- Empowering communities
- Creating work-family councils and a summit.

*Integrating Work and Family Life: A Holistic Approach* by Bailyn, Drago and Kochan. For a pdf of the summary or full report: [lsir.la.psu.edu/workfam/workfamily](http://lsir.la.psu.edu/workfam/workfamily).

## World Wide

### UK funding for work/life balance

Eighty-seven British employers have so far received support from the "work/life balance challenge fund" launched in March 2000.

The fund aims to "increase employers' awareness and take-up of employment policies and practices that benefit their businesses and help their employees achieve better balance in their lives."

It plans to spend £10.5 million over three years on providing free consultancy support to 93 organisations. Projects carried out so far including looking at the hours employees work, where they work and when they do their work, and measures for parents and carers.

Organisations which have received funding include:

- Easyjet to construct a work/life balance package to minimise absenteeism,
- HM Prisons to tackle traditional shift patterns and draw up more flexible rotas, and
- Watford FC to develop innovative ways of flexible working to help players and staff become more successful both on and off the pitch.

UK Department of Trade and Industry 00 44 20 7215 5000.

# Workbase wins international literacy award

Workbase, the National Centre for Workplace Literacy and Language, and EEO Employers Group member, has received a top UNESCO literacy award which Workbase Chairman, Jane Currie, believes will help focus the need to develop the literacy skills of the adult workforce in New Zealand.

New Zealand's participation in the International Adult Literacy Survey showed that one million adults were below the minimum level of literacy competence required for everyday life and work. Workbase's further analysis of the data showed that 50% of employees in the manufacturing, construction and agriculture sectors were below the minimum literacy competence.

"The demand for literacy and numeracy training in New Zealand workplaces is increasing rapidly as enterprises understand the business benefits of such programmes," says Jane Currie. Workbase has won the International Reading Association Literacy Award, which is UNESCO's top international award made by the International Literacy Prize Jury at UNESCO's Paris headquarters. This is the first time New Zealand has won the top award, which attracts applications from literacy training organisations from throughout the world.

Workplace literacy is a work and life issue because of the impact better literacy has on people's lives outside work, particularly on

parents' ability to participate in their children's school life by helping them with homework, reading school reports and feeling confident about participating in events like parent/teacher evenings.

Workbase is a national not-for-profit organisation that works in partnership with business, the education sector and government to raise the literacy, English language and numeracy skills of the workforce. Workbase was founded in 1996 and pioneered many of the established workplace literacy training programmes in this country.

It has established approximately 40 workplace literacy programmes in New Zealand workplaces, delivering literacy training to nearly 800 people each year. The programmes take place in work time at no cost to the employees. Workbase places tutors in each workplace to establish learning centres that meet the specific needs of the employees.

The literacy programmes aim to build literacy skills at the same time as technical and work skills are being taught. Workbase development manager, Susan Reid, says this leads to faster skills gain than programmes that focus just on literacy skills. "Because what is taught is work-related, the students are highly motivated. They can apply the skills they have learned in their jobs."

## Stress in the workplace

Proposed changes to the Health and Safety in Employment Act which seek to increase the emphasis on stress as a workplace hazard could also increase awareness of the importance of work and life balance.

In its *Stress and Fatigue* booklet, OSH lists the home/work interface as one of the factors that can impact on workplace stress, particularly:

- Conflicting demands of work and home life
- Low social or practical support at home
- Dual career problems (Having two jobs or juggling schedules with a working partner.)

Workload, work schedule and work relationships are also listed as factors which can result in stress.

Sole parents obviously also experience stress and fatigue from juggling their multiple responsibilities.

The new legislation was tabled in October and it was anticipated that the Bill would go to select committee before the end of the year.

The amendments propose developing a code

of practice under the HSE Act to encourage employers and employees to adopt sound occupational stress management practices.

"Employers and employees would be free to arrive at their own arrangements for managing occupational stress and hours of work, for example through collective bargaining arrangements or through industry codes of practice."

The Minister of Labour's office has noted that media comment on the proposed changes has been misleading as the intention is to strengthen the emphasis on stress and fatigue as workplace hazards.

"The proposed changes recognise that stress and fatigue need to be managed in the same way as any other workplace hazard is managed. "The existing Act recognises them as hazards, the new legislation would highlight them further."

OSH is also currently updating its *Stress and Fatigue* booklet and expects the new publication to be complete by late next year.

### Overload and overwork challenge family life

A new Australian study has examined the impact of men's overwork and overload on family relationships. It found that:

- the combination of overwork and overload was consistently associated with less positive father-adolescent relationships, and
- overload consistently predicted less positive couple relationships with spouses feeling less loving and reporting more couple conflict.

Overload is defined as feelings of being overwhelmed by multiple commitments and not having enough time for themselves.

The study by Crouter, Bumpus, Head and McHale (*Journal of Marriage and Family, 2001*) involved face-to-face and telephone interviews with both partners and adolescent children in 190 dual-earner families. The telephone interviews were held on seven different evenings to discover how the families spent their day.

The study concluded that: "Employers and human service providers need to be aware of the possible drawbacks of both overwork and overload. Employer practices such as mandatory overtime represent potential risks for families, especially when parents are employed in stressful work circumstances.

"The economy needs more jobs in which workers can support their families without having to work very long hours. Long work hours do not tell the whole story, however. Employers need to develop strategies to reduce employees' feelings of overload. Strategies should not only include training in stress management, an approach which puts the burden of responsibility on the worker, but also reducing the pace, deadlines, interpersonal tensions and pressures at work that may generate feelings of overload."

### Flexible working offers benefits and challenges

A new study from the Boston College Centre for Work and Family has shown that greater workplace flexibility is usually good for workplaces and employees.

The two-year study of 1,353 employees and 151 managers in six major US corporations found that:

- 70% of managers and 87% of employees believed that working flexibly had a positive or very positive impact on productivity,

- 65% of managers and 87% of employees believed it had a positive or very positive effect on quality of work and
- 76% of managers said it had positive effects on staff retention.

The study assessed three types of flexible working:

- Traditional flextime involving specified core hours with start and finish times chosen by the employee
- Daily flextime where the employee can vary working hours every day
- Telecommuting where the employee works off-site for some of their core working hours.

Daily flextime users tended to report the most positive results. They had the highest life satisfaction scores and the best scores for work/life balance.

The report said that telecommuting arrangements posed more problems than other forms of flexible working and that companies need to actively manage issues like communication, clarity of objectives and equal treatment of all workers.

*Workplace flexibility – a powerful strategy for today's dynamic workplace* available from the Boston College Centre for Work and Family at [www.bc.edu/cwf](http://www.bc.edu/cwf).

### Women and CEOs disagree on gender barriers

A new study by Opportunity Now and Catalyst presents the views of senior women and chief executives in the UK's most prominent organisations on the advancement of professional women. It explores the barriers to women's advancement and organisational and individual strategies that are critical to women achieving their potential.

The research found that:

- Senior women and CEOs could present a strong business case for women's senior representation
- CEOs were more than twice as likely as senior women to believe that opportunities for women to advance to senior leadership in their organisations had greatly improved in the past five years
- CEOs had a far more positive view of EEO policies and programmes than did senior women
- Senior women and CEOs agreed that the main

barriers to women's advancement were commitment to family responsibilities, male stereotyping and preconceptions about women's roles and ability, and lack of senior visibly successful female role models

- CEOs fail to recognise the impact of hostile organisation cultures
- CEOs were more positive about organisational strategies while senior women rely on personal strategies to get ahead
- Flexible working was not properly implemented
- Amongst the women surveyed there were generational differences in expectations and experiences.

The report concludes with a number of recommendations for UK organisations including demonstrating commitment to EEO, investing in women's careers and changing workplace culture.

*Breaking the barriers: women in senior management in the UK*, Catalyst and Opportunity Now. Email: [information@bitc.org.uk](mailto:information@bitc.org.uk)

### Lone fathers hit glass ceiling

Recent research by British charity, Gingerbread, shows that many lone fathers suffer like women from a "glass ceiling" at work. This is largely a result of the long hours work

culture of professional and management positions which reduces employment and promotion opportunities for lone fathers.

The report is the result of a questionnaire survey of 115 lone fathers and monitoring of 360 lone father calls to Gingerbread's Advice Line in 2000.

The survey found that:

- 86% of respondents were employed before lone fatherhood compared with 63.4% afterwards (this compares with 47% of lone mothers), 15.5% of employed respondents were working part-time.
  - The main reason given for leaving employment was being unable to balance work and caring for their children.
  - 54.7% of employed respondents experienced no change in their conditions of employment on becoming a lone father. 45% experienced changes, mainly reduced working hours. 26% found that these changes had a detrimental impact on their career.
  - 46% thought that unpaid parental leave would be helpful. Those who did not think so either could not afford to take unpaid leave or felt they would be discriminated against if they took leave. 84% said they would be more likely to take leave if they were paid.
- [www.gingerbread.org.uk](http://www.gingerbread.org.uk)



## Upcoming Events

### Family Day Care – Choices, Challenges and Collaboration

The 7th International Family Day Care Organisation Conference is calling for papers for its three-yearly conference being in Wellington from February 19-23 2003. Confirmed keynote speakers include Phillip Gammage of Australia/UK, Peater Heaslip of New Zealand/UK, Susan Kontos of USA and Anne Stonehouse of Australia. Email: [lyn.foote@dce.ac.nz](mailto:lyn.foote@dce.ac.nz)

### EURAM Conference in Stockholm

A call for papers has been issued for "Special Conference Track of Work and Family Research" at the European Academy of Management annual conference in Stockholm from May 9-11 2002. The deadline for submission is February 2002. Themes of particular interest include new theoretical approaches to work/family conflict, positive work/family interactions and family-friendly and family-hostile organisational cultures. More information: [www.sses.com/public/events/euram](http://www.sses.com/public/events/euram).

### San Francisco Work/Family Conference

The advance programme for the fourth annual academic work/family conference is available on [www.bpwusa.org](http://www.bpwusa.org), click on Calendar of Events. The conference is being held in San Francisco from February 7-9 2002.