

ever, ever enough time'



DO THE MATHS, MUM MOTHERHOOD IN FACTS AND FIGURES

WORKING HOURS

- More than two-thirds of women with dependent children were in employment in Britain in the second quarter of 2008.
- 38% of mothers work part-time compared with 4% of fathers.
- Half of working mothers with children under 15 would, in an ideal world, stay at home full time (Department of Education survey, 2001).
- Only 12% of mothers would work full time if money were no object (Centre for Policy Studies survey, 2009).
- 54% of mothers would accept a less well paid job in return for flexibility (workingmums.co.uk survey, 2009).
- 79% of women are considering either extending their existing working hours or re-entering the workplace because they are worried about the possibility of their partners losing their jobs in the recession (workingmums.co.uk survey, 2009).
- According to the ONS there are 192,000

house-husbands in the UK, compared to 119,000 16 years ago.

THE IMPACT OF MOTHERHOOD

- 30,000 women annually are estimated to lose their jobs after falling pregnant (Equality and Human Rights Commission).
- Before becoming parents, men and women are equally likely to be employed but afterwards, 57% of mothers of under fives are in paid work, compared with 90% of fathers (Fawcett Society, 2009).
- Of 14 European countries surveyed in 2006, the UK had by far the highest proportion of young single mother households at 8%. They receive an average of £3,546 a year each in benefits (Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona).

PARENTHOOD AND PAY

- Women in Britain are entitled to receive 90% of their average salary for their first six weeks of leave followed by 33 weeks of

maternity pay at £123.06 per week or 90% of normal pay, whichever is lower. They may take a further 13 weeks' unpaid leave, bringing the total up to 52 weeks.

- Fathers receive only two weeks' paid leave – at the statutory rate or at 90% of their pay, whichever is lower.
- Plans to give new fathers six months' paid leave were put on hold by the government last summer. Plans to extend paid maternity leave from nine to 12 months were also shelved.

WHEN A CHILD IS BORN

- Women are having more children than at any time in the past 35 years, according to the Office of National Statistics. The birth rate is now 1.95 children per woman (compared to 1.63 in 2001).
- The average age of first-time mothers is 29.

IMOGEN CARTER AND ELLEN NORTH-ROW



ine choices, but too much (over £5.4bn annually) for taxpayers to bear.

Rereading it this week, the economics still don't add up, but it does capture something about the inconveniently messy emotions involved. The desire not to be parted from your children, like all great love affairs, is powerful but irrational and thus almost impossible to legislate for. Yet there are hard-headed reasons why a partnered mother of a pri-