



Boston College

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NATIONAL SURVEY FINDS TODAY'S 'NEW DAD' CARING, COMMITTED AND CONFLICTED ABOUT FINDING WORK-LIFE FIT

Boston College Center for Work & Family Releases Expansive Study for Father's Day 2011

CHESTNUT HILL, MA (June 15, 2011) – Today's dads want to share equally in the duties of raising their children, but most acknowledge that they are not yet doing that, according to a new survey of nearly 1,000 fathers by the Boston College Center for Work & Family.

The New Dad: Caring, Committed and Conflicted, the latest assessment of the changing role of fathers by the Center, delivers an in-depth portrait of America's working fathers, revealing that today's dads associate being a good father just as much with the role of effective caregiver as the traditional role of "breadwinner". These men want to be engaged parents and successful professionals, yet find conflicts as they try to achieve both objectives, the researchers report on the eve of Father's Day on June 19.

These survey findings confirm that "balancing work and family is not just a woman's issue" said Brad Harrington, Executive Director of BC's Center for Work & Family, which helps global organizations create effective workplaces that support and develop healthy and productive employees. "We see that fathers, too, need a family-supportive work environment when it comes to aligning work and family, and this has tangible benefits for their jobs and careers, and in turn for their organizations."

The New Dad: Caring, Committed and Conflicted expands on the center's 2010 study of new dads by drawing on a national sample of nearly 1,000 professional fathers from Fortune 500 companies in four different industries.

"Our findings show that fathers want to have more time to be with their children and they aspire to do more at home," Harrington said. "At the same time, they have equally strong desires to be successful at work and to advance in their careers. Thus, we have an image of today's fathers as caring, committed *and* conflicted, struggling to be engaged parents while striving for advancement in their careers. From our research, we believe that men are on the verge of a new beginning, one that brings a greater appreciation of the important role fatherhood plays in their own lives and that of their family members."

Significant findings from ***The New Dad: Caring, Committed and Conflicted*** include:

- **Job security rates as the most important job characteristic** by fathers; in fact job security and a job that allows flexible working rate higher in importance than good advancement opportunities and high income.
- **Most of the fathers in our study aspire to share equally in caregiving** with their spouse/partner, but often are unable to bring this desire to reality.
- **Fathers who spend more time with their children report having more confidence as parents.** Unfortunately, only 1 in 20 fathers took more than two weeks off after their most recent child was born, and 1 in 100 took 5 weeks or more off.
- **A supportive corporate environment** that includes a family-supportive culture, supportive managers, and supportive co-workers leads to better alignment between work and family, and also **leads to more satisfied employees who are less likely to leave the company.**
- **Fathers utilize informal flexible work arrangements** at a much higher rate than formal flexible work arrangements. Fathers using flexible work arrangements, whether formally or informally, have higher job satisfaction and also higher career satisfaction than those that do not use flexible work arrangements.
- **Surprisingly, 53% of fathers would consider not working outside the home if this option were financially feasible,** leading us to infer that the role of “stay at home dad” is becoming more acceptable.

For additional information about the findings and recommendations of the study, access the full report at www.bc.edu/cwf

To learn how CWF researchers can help your organization get to know and support your fathers, please contact the Center for Work & Family at cwf@bc.edu

About The Boston College Center for Work and Family

Boston College Center for Work & Family is a global leader in helping organizations create effective workplaces that support and develop healthy and productive employees. With over 100 corporate partners worldwide, the Center links the academic community to leaders in employment settings who are committed to promoting workforce effectiveness.

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