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Family-friendly return to work initiatives

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Some numbers

- CPSU 2010/2011 “What Women Want” survey
 - 17%/47% of women aged 25-34/35 - 44 have children
 - 90% of women work additional hours each week
 - Work to “get all work done to proper standard”
 - 50% of women (more in astronomy I expect) are expected to travel, average of 3 times per year
- UK National Childbirth Trust 2008 Survey of women returning to work concerns:
 - 60% concerned about childcare
 - 56%/53% Missing child/Child missing them
 - 33% *concerned about perceptions of their boss*
 - 28% concerned about ability to be a good employee
 - 15% concerned about ability to continue breast-feeding

Issues returning to work

- Childcare
- Caring responsibilities/desires and travel
 - Cannot/Unwilling to leave young child behind when travelling
 - Travel with young children not easy!
 - Effect on networking - astronomy happens at the pub
- Reduced working hours
 - Drop-off in productivity
- Coping with unpredictable nature of small children

CSIRO Ruby Payne-Scott Award

- Up to \$35k awarded to a *parent* returning to work after at least 18 weeks of leave to be primary carer for *newborn* child
- Named after Ruby Payne-Scott, CSIR researcher forced to resign in 1951 after her marriage became known because of her pregnancy
- May be used to pay for:
 - research assistant
 - “buy-out” from projects to commit time to research
 - funding visitors’ travel
 - funding meetings
 - partner/nanny travel

CSIRO Ruby Payne-Scott Award

- Some examples of recent Astro usage:
 - NMc-G:
 - 4 weeks in Europe (ASTRON & Uni Bonn) including partner travel
 - Brought DVs to Sydney & ran “Diffuse Gas in and Around the Milky Way” workshop
 - 4 weeks in US, including funding to bring collaborators to NRAO
 - Brooks/Feain: Recent ALMA Community Workshop ++
- Application statistics: 1st year 10 applied, 6 awarded. 3rd year 6 applied, 5 awarded
 - Meets need or just poorly advertised?
- CSIRO committed as part of the WISE Summit April 2011 to increase the number of Payne-Scott Awards

Payne-Scott Thoughts

- Payne-Scott funds useful to the rest of the community
 - More support staff for organising meetings would be useful
- Application simple, easy - but may be necessary to apply while still on leave
- Would be helpful to string the funding out over 2 years
- Increased flexibility - use P-S to pay for nanny at home?
- Flexibility to apply for grant anytime in first 3 years back at work?

Walter & Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research

http://www.wehi.edu.au/about_us/gender_equity/

- Childcare support: \$15,000 per annum for childcare costs
- Family rooms. A suite of offices, comprising private rooms in which to breast-feed infants, express and store milk, and offices that can be used by parents while caring for their infants and children.
- Meeting and travel support.
- Additional time for contract renewal.
- Technical support while on maternity leave.
- Family-friendly meeting times (start after 9:15, end before 4:30)

UNSW Vice Chancellor's Childcare Support Fund for Women Researchers

http://www.hr.unsw.edu.au/equity/childcare_support_fund_vc.pdf

- \$500 for conference attendance within the Sydney metropolitan;
- \$1,000 if child/ren is to accompany the woman researcher for Australian conferences
- \$2,000 if the child/ren is to accompany the woman researcher for conference attendance overseas.
- *Available once per year and for children up to 18*

University of Sydney Brown Fellowship

<http://sydney.edu.au/eo/women/index.shtml>

- Brown Fellowships for University researchers “whose careers have been interrupted by the undertaking of sustained primary caring duties” (can be child-rearing or other caring responsibilities).
- Provide academic staff with relief from routine teaching and administrative responsibilities, and research only staff with funding to secure technical assistance, for up to two semesters.
- Fellowships provide up to \$60,000 per fellow at \$30,000 per semester (\$25,000 in teaching relief/technical assistance and \$5,000 in research support).

Monash University's Populate & Publish Policy

<http://www.sci.monash.edu.au/research/maternity.html>

- The grant aims to provide assistance to female academics engaged in teaching / research positions who have taken maternity leave by providing an untied grant of \$15,000 to be used for any research-related purpose.
- Examples include: teaching relief, research assistance, and the purchase or maintenance of research consumables.
- The grant must be spent within two (2) years of the date of its award.

University of Adelaide

http://www.adelaide.edu.au/hr/policies/polbrowse/leave/mat_leave.html#4

- Can sacrifice 12 weeks of the 26 weeks maternity leave to fund:
 - Conference leave
 - Convert job to part-time
 - Study leave
 - Employ research or teaching assistant
- Forces you to choose your child vs career - these grants should be about enabling both

Thoughts on useful things

- On-site childcare
- Flexible work hours, *encouragement* to work from home
- Travel support for up to (and beyond?) preschool-age children
 - Drawing the Payne-Scott out over 2 years would be useful
- Extend return-to-work grants to fathers who take substantial time out for caring
- Family friendly office space

Thoughts on useful things

- Recognise, appreciate and acknowledge staff working reduced hours
 - Don't schedule a meeting on a day you know one of your key staff won't be there
 - Don't expect part-time staff to attend all meetings, 80% time usually means 100% time overhead, so less pro-rata time for research
- Help metrics recognise the reduced work hours
 - Promotion cases should ask everyone what fraction of FT they work
- Mentors needed

Summary

- A large fraction of women entering/at the mid-career level have children
- Balancing family and work is a universal challenge but falls largely to women
- Most universities and research institutes have some programs in place to help people returning to work
 - Some good, some mediocre
 - Most focus on enabling relief or travel
 - Should there be more programs, extensions to current programs?
- What else is needed:
 - Work flexibility
 - Recognition of part-time work day-to-day and in metrics
 - Family-friendly work places & observatories