

Cult of Pedagogy Survey on Balancing Teaching and Parenting

This survey was conducted through the Cult of Pedagogy website from February 27 – March 7, 2015. The 250 participants came from 13 countries, with the bulk from the United States (77%), Australia (6%), Canada (4%) and the United Kingdom (4%). U.S. participants came from 41 different states.

A discussion of this survey can be read at <http://www.cultofpedagogy.com/survey-how-well-do-you-balance-teaching-and-parenting/>.

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Question 1. Do you feel your parenting suffers as a result of your work responsibilities?



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Taking work home on weekends and nights. Not being able to attend special events due to meetings, trainings, classes.

For me, it all depends on the various initiatives promoted by the district or school, the number of committees I'm on, and the needs and ability of my students. Some years the balance is easy. Other years it's a burden, yet a burden of love.

At the end of the grading period especially. When I'm stressed or having to work long hours, the quality and quantity of time I spend with my offspring dramatically decreases.

I have taught at the school my children attended and was able to be more involved – not less.

I teach "at risk" students with behavioural challenges. My son has ADD. When I come home from work I have burned through my reserves of patience. **I continually struggle with being kinder to other people's children than to my own.**

I am sometimes too exhausted at the end of the day to fight battles.

I often work in my classroom several hours after school and on the weekend just to stay caught up. Therefore, I do not have as much time to do things with my family.

I fear that the emotional drain I sometimes feel at the end of the day impacts my ability to connect emotionally with my own children.

I often find myself grading papers or planning lessons when I should be reading or spending time with my own child.

In this age of proving that I am an excellent teacher, too often my own family has to suffer the long hours that this job requires. **All of my children are glad to help when asked, but say that they would never choose this profession.**

There are simply not enough hours in the day to get work done. I often end up taking it home or staying late at school when I would rather "leave work at work." Many days, I am so exhausted from teaching that I am short-tempered and cranky with my own school-age kids. I feel guilty that I don't model patience at home (after I've done it at school all day).

When I get home, sometimes I am spent. The children at work require so much of my patience, I come home and it is hard to do what I know is best. For example, ask open-ended questions of my children, using positive reinforcement, or present them with a choice.

I put a great deal of physical and emotional energy into teaching [during the day and on my days off] that my children simply get 'what's left' of me at the end of the day.

I work hard to be present in both situations and that's not always something I achieve.

I want to do the best that I can so sometimes I am late picking up my children or make them hang out with me late after school when they are ready to go home.

The nights I have events at my school, I feel bad that I am not home for my three boys.

Taking work home cuts into time I could be spending with my kids. It is also easier for me to let my 3 year old watch tv or play on the tablet because then he is quiet for a while so I can get work done.

My students absolutely suck me dry with their needs. When I come home, I feel as if my own children are simply two more needy children. My at-risk students don't often have the basic necessities, and I spend a lot of time planning for ways to meet those needs. My children, sadly, get what's left over from me.

I spend so much time at home on schoolwork. This is because I teach middle school language arts and I never have enough time at school to read all of the writing my students create.

I am not able to be a volunteer or chaperone at my child's school. I feel like my work schedule at school and my workload at home detracts from family time. I don't have as much energy for my own family as I do for all the children I teach.

Too tired and too busy with work. Afraid that I will be unprepared when my principal walks in.

My patience is often worn thin by the end of the day. I have so little time with my son before he goes to bed, but it is often hard to motivate myself to spend this time meaningfully with him because I'm spent.

When my daughter was in elementary school we were both at the same school and she often spent days at school late with me. It did give her time to complete homework, but at times it was unfair for her to be stuck at school with me. Now we are both at different schools (middle schools) and while that certainly has advantages I feel like I am not as involved in her school as I was previously.

I can't spend the time I want to with my daughter because I have to take so much work home.

Tired most of the time. Cannot attend my children's school functions. Feel guilty having days off to care for my own children when they are sick

Often out of gas by the time we get home at the end of the day. Want to still have patience and creativity for fun and problem solving, but that's not always the case

Often I feel that I spend more time on other people's children than my own. I personally have a hard time doing homework with my own brood, but tutor other kids often with no problem. In addition, I spend so much time on planning and grading in my spare time, that family time definitely suffers.

I do a lot of work at home and as a result **we end up not having a lot of adventures as a family.**

I am noticing it more with my second child. My job has changed so I get out later and I will not have summers off anymore. I had time to teach my oldest son so many more things that I have my younger one. I feel so bad that he does not have the same knowledge that his brother did at the same age.

Working towards National Boards so between that, meetings, grading and planning I'm pretty spent at night.

Work has been stressful lately, so by the time I get home, I just want to relax, but I can't.

I am a special education teacher, which I feel takes a bit more patience at times than being a general education teacher! When I get home to my son (who is going into his terrible twos) I feel like I hardly have any patience left to give to him. I often get upset way too quickly as he is whining and crying about not getting his snack soon enough. He gets frustrated with me because I do not take the time to try to understand what he wants, then I get frustrated with him because he acts out due to those frustrations.

I find myself telling my kids to "wait while I finish this" too often.

As a teacher I would like to see my children excel in their coursework, but this is not the case. I try to make myself available to them to review homework but I don't do this consistently enough and I feel bad about that when I see their grades falling.

Some nights I'm too tired to really talk with my kids. It's all I can manage to tuck them in to bed. On these nights I let the TV do the babysitting and it happens more than I care to admit. Sadly, it's been a LONG time since I've taken my kids to the park too... And when I do it's usually so they can play and I can mark..... My kids RARELY have play dates as I'm not able to reciprocate freely... (I'm undertaking work related study in addition to general work/time pressures)

I spend more facetime hours with my students than my own kids. Teaching does not allow for days off to go on field trips and get to know the other children that my kids go to school with.

I often find myself wanting to spend my personal time reading education-related blogs, creating lessons or lesson materials, etc., rather than spending quality time (unplugged from education-related/career-related activities) with my husband and kids. This is primarily because to some degree, my education-related activities are also sort of recreational activities for me because I truly enjoy them. They just don't feel like "work."

I would have been harder on my kids' teachers if I hadn't been a teacher.

Balance has been much easier since I moved from a classroom teaching role to an admin role. Admin life can be super stressful, but as a teacher there was ALWAYS planning and grading to be done at home.

The "behind the scenes" (papers to grade, planning, preparing, reading data from assessments, etc.) most often are brought home to complete or done after contract hours on campus ... while my family is at home patiently waiting for me.

By the time school is over, I am exhausted and weary of even speaking to children. Of course, my own children are walking in the door from their elementary school - ready to share news of their day, ready to do their homework, ready to have a snack and head to practice. And of course I squelch all of those feelings of exhaustion and annoyance - but it is hard EVERY. DAY.

When you are a teacher, you start to parent all the students that are lacking that need at home. Then I realize that I'm lacking on the parenting at home, with my own kids. Another example would be that: my daughter's 3rd grade class had invited all parents to come and eat with them. Even though she is in the same building as me, I had a high school class at that time and couldn't go. Other parents were able to switch their hour lunch break and make it.

As a music teacher at the middle school level, I have VERY busy times during our "concert seasons" in the Oct, Dec, March and May. I often feel very stretched during those couple of weeks, and especially in Dec and March. Luckily I have family in the area and I can call upon them for help...if I did not have that, I really don't know how I would do what I do. My own children get off the bus every afternoon at their grandmother's house allowing me to coach extra-curricular music events and work on school work at school (bringing work home from school at this point is not really viable).

I work with children who for the most part do what I ask of them with little argument at school. Then when I go home I expect my three year old to do the same. It is hard to turn of the teacher switch and jump into mommy mode.

No, my children are well cared for. **If anything, my marriage suffers as I do school work after putting the kids to bed when my husband would rather have my attention.**

I find it hard to have patience with my own children. It often feels as though I expend all of it on other people's children all day long -- so there is very little left for my own children when my school day is done.

Not much. I will say I'm still on top of things & attend everything. I may allow the "paperwork" to sit on the table a day or two longer than before I went to work. Since I work, I can't POP in on the teachers or school to resolve issues or head them off I have to resort to email & plan ahead. Just last week I missed a concert because of a work conflict. First one....felt sick about it. Adds MORE STRESS!!! What really interferes is the health issues of my aging mother over my son. Hiring a housekeeper helped A LOT!!

At home I focus on being a parent, not a teacher of school subjects. At home, I am a teacher of life for my kids. Of course, I will always support and help them academically when needed, but I am not their school teacher. I leave that job for the school!

There are some days I come home too tired to do anything but collapse on the couch. And there are days I come home with no patience so my kids get yelled at for things they otherwise wouldn't.

Because I work in the schools, I understand what kids from high to low performance ranges fluctuate in their motivation and innate sense of "get-r-done". I see the variances in my own boys. Also, after hearing other teachers gripe and complain about kids, the job, problem-parents, and admin support, I can claim both sides of the table.

Mostly in the area of developing new materials. The single teacher seems to come up with something innovative several times a week, and I just don't have the time.

I have shorter patience with my own children and often do not want to take the extra time to make sure they understand concepts. I also expect more of my children and think they should just "know".

Missing things at kids school - assemblies, not being able to volunteer in classrooms; spend less quality time with kids;

always feel rushed; tired at the end of the day when do get time to spend with kids.

I am not as able as I would like to be to attend day-time functions (or serve as a chaperone) at my child's school as a result of my inflexible schedule at my own school. **Taking leave for such parenting activities is frowned upon.**

Miss parts of his games when have to stay after school for parent teacher meetings, part of the weekend is always taken up by grading papers, check on students' grades more than my child's, and so on

I am not always able to be present for the everyday moments in my son's life because I have to go into work during non-school hours to ensure that I am ready to go for the week. I will often bring marking to his practices and games. My usual practice is to do work at home after he's asleep, but this is not always possible.

Athletics is definitely a problem. Even off-season, though, I'm still pretty much constantly either planning or grading. And in those rare times when I have no school work to do, I'm pretty much exhausted and really over planning anything, so it can be a real effort to plan and attend events with my own kids.

I miss too many Saturdays, especially during report card and individual program planning time.

Exhaustion at the end of the workday, the need to be up earlier than most working professionals.

I take home so much work that I can't be present for my own kids, or I'm so exhausted that I can't be the kind of mom I want to be.

I'm overwhelmed by the to-do list for school that has nothing to do with my students or my lessons.

After 17 years of classroom teaching, and 15 years as a mom, I still find myself at times spending creative energy on my students with little left for my own children. I'm thankful that I became aware of it early on, but the guilt that accompanies it can be tough.

I'm tired at the end of a teaching day and that sometimes makes it difficult, though not impossible, to be a patient & caring parent. Also it's a big time commitment (at least 50 hours per week).

I don't give totally to my family because of teaching tasks to complete. Mind not always on family tasks. I'm late for many family events.

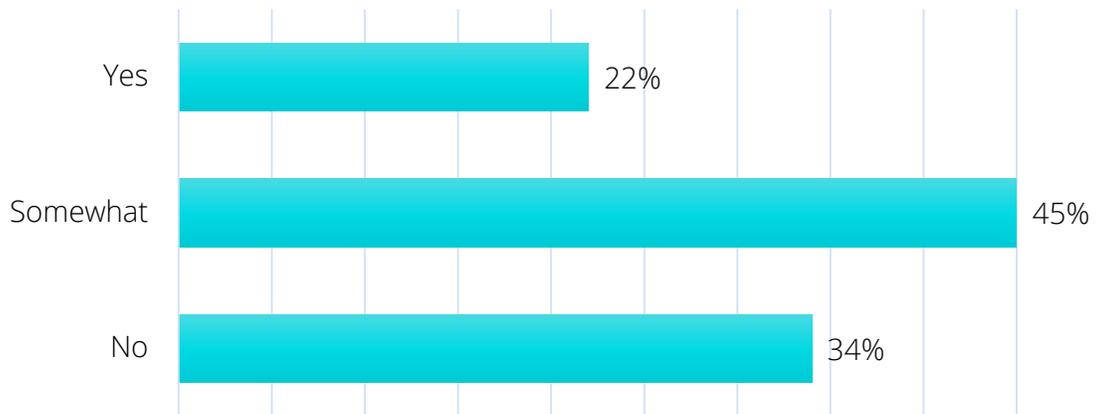
Students with special needs are given very little support, and may not be in my area of expertise - I spend a lot of time and mental energy on this, so come home quite exhausted - giving my best to other people's children.

Hard to help my own children with projects, I am late to their games and we eat late.

Too many uncontrollable situations such as phone calls for misbehaving kids happen for the end of the day resulting in late pick up for your own.

My husband (also in education) and I argue over who has to miss work to stay home. There is often the struggle between being there for my students versus being there for my children. I also will stay later at school so when I am home, I can fully devote myself to my family.

Question 2. Do you feel your work suffers as a result of your parenting responsibilities?



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I feel it enhances my work, especially when interacting with parents.

Trying to balance being a good mom who is able to make dinner for her family each night and be a good teacher who does the best for students each day.

For me, the demands and needs of your children change with their age. My infant deserves a lot of attention, I will not sacrifice their well-being for the needs of my students. **If I'm up all night walking around the house to calm my 2 month old, well that has to come first.** And of course it will affect my clarity the next day. Sorry students! But I will most likely let them know where I'm at!

Only when I put family first and go to my son's activities rather than be in school teaching. With him in middle school sports, this happens approximately 10 times per year that I have to leave an hour early from school...and I feel guilty.

Juggling work and home, it is often difficult to decide at any given moment which needs my attention the most. Prioritizing and scheduling my time to meet both needs are not my strong points.

I would say "yes" except "suffers" seems a bit dramatic for it. I often have to arrive late (not on mornings when I teach first period, but others) and/or leave a bit early from meetings for day care drop off and pick up.

I typically have put work before family, but occasionally family obligations cause me to put off work that needs to be done for school.

My kids' activities and school events will always take priority, so some things are left for another day

I try with desperation to avoid 2 or more days in a row of being out and having to get a sub, due to one of my children getting sick. I'm in a high-achieving district, so I put pressure on myself to not ever get behind.

Yes. Kids should get relatively quick feedback on their learning but because other responsibilities at home, work suffers.

Sometimes I have to put aside work to consciously spend time with my kids. I never feel up to date with my work.

My youngest is a baby. I am still in the throes of sleep deprivation. Some days, I just do the minimum at work because I don't have the energy or pep to engage the students properly.

Less coaching and extracurricular plans for kids. Less interesting and thoughtful lessons/units.

My spouse probably feels like a single parent because he takes care of everything our child needs so that it doesn't interfere with my job. He is a college professor and doesn't have to do nearly as much for his job as I do.

There are evenings I really need to work, but my kids need an ear or a shoulder or just want some cuddle time. I remind myself I will never get this time back.

Sometimes I would rather spend my weekends NOT working. Then oh well if grading doesn't get done.

Sometimes I don't get all my grading done as timely as I'd prefer. Parents have never complained though. Students are pretty understanding. **Recently I told my students about a movie I'd seen over the weekend, and one of my students asked me, "How did you have any time to watch a movie?"** (I had taken home ~90 argument essays to read over the weekend.)

The guilt I feel from short-changing my family leads to the pendulum swinging in the opposite direction. Those essays/tests/whatever don't get returned to students in a timely manner or my lesson-planning ends up a little haphazard.

I am not able to spend the exact amount of time preparing, reflecting, and differentiating for my students because I want to spend time with my family. There is never enough time to get everything done in teaching and pairing it with a family means there REALLY is never enough time.

Even though it shouldn't be this way in the perfect world, I do prioritize my job unless my kids are deathly ill or in trouble.

Not often able to stay at work late into the day--many colleagues do. take work home, but by the time kids go to bed and family needs are met my bed is calling and the work I brought home remains in the bag and goes back to school the next day without being checked.

I try hard to only work on something after the kids have gone to bed but there are times that I'm just too tired to do anything. I know I could be preparing more for what I do at work but with kid and home responsibilities, it doesn't happen.

Along with my 20 month old I am also seven months pregnant and my husband works odd hours and is never home before 6:30 so the time between when I get home and bed time is completely jam packed with taking care of my son. By the time he goes to bed at 8:00 I have already made dinner (sometimes two different meals), done bath time and played...hard! I am just plain worn out! There are SO many things that I put off until the last minute because I am too tired to do a lot of work after 8 pm. I never feel like I am ahead of the game which completely goes against my personality. I love having everything organized and ready

well in advance and that has been extremely hard to accomplish with a kid at home.

Sometimes I have to tell myself that spending time with my own children is worth the lack of preparation for teaching.

Normally, and this goes across all jobs, those without children are the best employees when it comes to being productive. However, those with children are better equipped to handle interpersonal communication and issues.

Work barely suffers - and how wrong is that! Where are my priorities!!! I only say "somewhat" as my husband travels in his work a fair bit, and when that happens I put in face 2face hours and scrimp on the rest just to get children to school/scouts/karate... (tasks he would usually undertake.). Don't ask about my family's nutrition on these nights!

I tried very hard to complete my work at school. This meant rethinking my ideas as to how important it is to grade everything. I also looked at my work and got rid of a lot of busy work, packets, etc. and went to a more authentic work environment. I **only assign now what I think I want to grade.** It may not sit well with parents and principals at first, but if you show them that the important part is the learning and that fewer good grades mean more than a lot of busywork grades then then eventually understand.

Occasionally I have had to step away from a work responsibility for parenting reasons, but I think the depth of understand that parenting has brought to my work as an educator far outweighs the other.

Unfortunately, I often put my work requirements ahead of my family needs. However, my family does help keep me in check to some degree, meaning, if I didn't have to pick up my daughter from preschool by a certain time, I might easily stay at school till 6 or 7pm... something I don't advise.

I actually feel that being a parent has made me a better teacher. I am able to see things from both a teacher and parent side. It has shown me how big an impact we have on students and has made me more sensitive to their emotional needs. For example, I am teaching 6th grade this year and I remember how difficult it was for my child when she was in 6th grade. The transition to middle school, coupled with hormones and typical girl drama can be tough. I have become a great listener for my students who just need to vent and a source for those who need advice on how to handle the culture of middle school.

Since becoming a parent, I've become much more organized in the classroom and consistent with discipline. Learning how to parent a toddler taught me a lot about disciplining high school students, believe it or not. It's things

like: if you say it, you have to follow through on it. Or I said no, so no matter how many times you ask me the answer is still going to be no.

My whole life is task overload - at home and at school. And when people are over-scheduled, sometimes tasks get overlooked or completed late. My desk is a never-ending pile of to-do!

We have been lucky to avoid any major sickness at home so far this year. It's very hard to manage my classroom when the kids are sick and I am staying home or when I am sick. There are times when my whole household is ill.

There was one week that my husband had to be out of town. That, of course, is the week that my 3 year old came down with influenza and had to be out of daycare for a week. I was out most of the week with my daughter and my work suffered. Teaching is a job that can't go on the best without you. I have a friend, who is a single mom, and her son came down with influenza that week after my daughter (you have to love daycare!). She was able to be away from her job with very little stress.

There is ALWAYS more to do...even when you are keeping up with or on top of the basics of your job, there is more added to the plate...sometimes I add extra things that I WANT to do, and other times it is added for me by changing standards or administration. As far as teaching my students, I am solid, but I do suffer somewhat keeping up on the secretarial and financial aspects of my job. (I need a personal secretary!)

Before my children were born, I worked on preparing lessons at night, on the weekends and stayed at school late working as well. Now I get all of my work done during my prep time and I leave school as soon as I am able to. When I am at home I want to spend time with them not working.

I have become amazingly efficient with my time: when I am at school, I work every single minute, and when it's over, I'm done.

Sometimes but not really. Adds more STRESS. My energy dramatically decreases by the time I get home. I get whatever I need to do DONE no matter what time it is when I go to bed. Lack of sleep gets hard.

Of course, in the case of emergencies, work will always suffer. Sometimes my kids are sick or have appointments, and I need to tend to my family. I always do my best to schedule regular appointments after school or during breaks, but life doesn't always happen on schedule. As a teacher, I do the best I can in these situations to get a substitute teacher who I trust and leave assignments that are not busy work, but exactly what I would teach if I were

in class. However, sometimes the best laid plans do not work out!

There are times when I just have to walk away, turn it off, shut it down. Say no to my classroom and all the extra that it entails to be with my family.

I am extremely empathetic at school because of what I deal with at home. Special education seems to sabotage our teaching efforts with paperwork and standards demands, but it's also very hard to be a kid nowadays. As a speech Pathologist, I have to be able to teach kids to "play the game" in order to help them help themselves. Some kids are not yet in that space to get it.

Sadly, I usually put this first: it's easy to say 'it's my job and it's where the money comes from' (single mom) and it's also easier to justify the 90 minutes per class which has a specific start and end time.....as opposed to parenting which never ends

I didn't have the luxury of staying after school as long as my childless colleagues. This limited my capacity to take on a leadership role at school. I learned quickly that I wasn't going to be perfect at everything.

Always needing to leave meetings etc early because need to pick kids up; days off to attend kids school activities; different priorities to teachers without children.

For me, I haven't really been able to come to terms with the idea of cutting corners in my work. There are certain aspects I've had to let go of in order to adapt to my changing role as a parent of a child in his early years of school. I know I need to be more present, ensure that his school life is monitored and supported by me, and to let him see that I care very much about his success. I have had to come to terms with handing back marking after a longer period of time than I typically would allow for. I rely upon previously made lessons more than I have in the past. I also do not stay up as late as I used to when he was younger in order to get my work done for the next day, in part because of the demands of the day with my son but also because I am pregnant again, and require much more rest than I did before. As a result, I do find myself cutting what I would call corners off my work load in order to do the best I can at home, and for my students at school. But it is hard not to be precious about everything, because both parenting and teaching are so important, and often such in-the-moment endeavours.

My family sacrifices so I can meet work obligations. Rarely is it the other way around. **I force myself to acknowledge the permanence of the job relative to the flux of my family and growing children, but work usually wins.**

My children are high school age and are nice people who often help with dinner or home chores without being asked. (I am so lucky to have such thoughtful kids!)

Parenting through the developmental stages of my own three children has made me a better teacher and advocate for my students. I feel that being a parent/teacher has benefitted me as well as many of the families I've worked with the past 15 years. It's also true that many of the families I've worked with have blessed me in different stages of my parenting journey - reciprocity.

I can't stay late at work because I have to go pick up my kids from day care. **Back-to-school nights and open houses are nightmare because I have to arrange babysitting.** I have a lot of sub days because I have to stay home when my kids are sick.

It is always hard to balance both "jobs" and I am concerned about my children, I will take time from work to get it taken care of. Then I'm rowing upstream to catch up.

I have a firm time I must leave my school building each day and there are some days where there are things at work that just cannot be completed before that time. **My role as a parent ends up setting work boundaries as my school's culture doesn't have any such boundaries of its own.**

I would be able to do a better job communicating with parents and colleagues if I wasn't feeling the pull of my heart to get home early every day to have those precious 4 hours with my own sweet children.

It's hard to grade at night and make lunches and clean house etc. There is no time during the school day to get the paperwork done so you have to do it home

As a nursing mom I have to use my lunch and prep period to pump, therefore making me not available to work with my students and work in my classroom. I also have a lot less patience with my students. Especially when they are off task or misbehaving.

I am sometimes late, or barely on time, because of morning disruptions at home.

I can never keep up with the assessing, so my plans don't take into consideration how they did on a particular assignment or exit ticket. When I get home it's all about my 4 kids, so I plan on the weekend only and almost never look at the day to day performance of my students and adjust accordingly.

When I called in or left due to a sick child. I always told my husband "Your work will sit on your desk and wait for you. My "work" may throw my desk out the window." I taught in a rough school.

I am too exhausted to work after my children go to bed. Half the time, I end up falling asleep with them. The work I need to complete gets shoved aside.

Before I had a child I would take papers home to grade. I can no longer do that because my toddler wants to be right in the middle of everything I do at home.

With three young children who need all my attention at home, it definitely suffers. I use all my sick leave each year to get them to various doctor appt and attend an occasional school function. Preparing for and then returning from a substitute is more work.

I don't volunteer for anything that might happen before or after school because I need to get home. The amount of hours I dedicate to work at home has gone from 3-4 hours a night to almost 0. Prep work is pretty much all done during my prep period

I try as much as possible not to bring work home. This means I spend less time than I used to on providing students with practice opportunities and feedback. However, it also means I have developed more strategies to have students self- and peer-assess effectively.

If anything, being a parent helps me as a teacher. I treat my students as I want my children treated. It also helps me empathize with parents of struggling students.

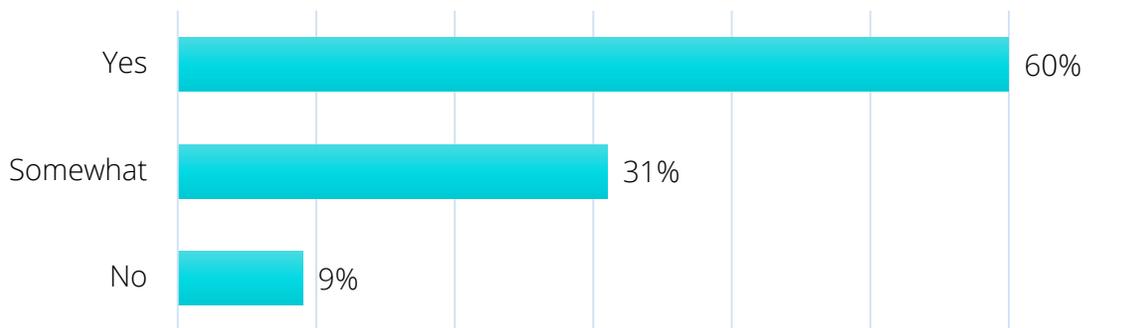
My kids' activities sometimes prevent me from supporting my students in sports and arts performances.

It's difficult to juggle the needs of an infant & toddler with a full-time teaching position. I've missed more days this year than ever before, and you can't make up lost time in the classroom.

I like where I work - a high needs urban school, but I love where I live - a more rural, high parent involved, high performing district. The commute adds up.

I've been in it long enough to have my lessons down pat, so at this point it's just polishing, not reinventing the wheel. Also, my kids are older now and that helps. **When they were babies I was just bringing a hollow shell of myself to work.**

Question 3. Do you feel that enough of your colleagues are understanding and supportive of your parenting responsibilities?



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Most colleagues are very supportive. However, I feel pressured to volunteer more with committees and out of classroom activities which are bonus points earned for the school's grade.

Teachers are undoubtedly parents, even if they don't have biological children of their own.

Every teacher in my department has a young family. We support each other as best we can.

Often I think they only know me in the capacity of my job and expect my full attention to be on that aspect of my life.

We all have something...kids, aging parents, health issues, etc. If it's not one thing, it's another.

My boss is supportive of me. Not much understanding from my colleagues that are single "lifers" as well as parents of grown-up children (who are now adults, or near-adult age)

People are very flexible when I ask them to be. I ask nicely of course.

YES! Nearly all of my colleagues have or have had kids, and it's a culture at my school that we all work hard AND family is important and takes precedent.

My team teacher will sometimes tell me "I don't know how you do it" or "you have kids to tend to; I'll stay late and get these copies done."

If they are near the same stage of life as myself (a preschooler and a grade-schooler), they are. I feel like

colleagues far removed from this stage or those without children think I am over-stating my being overwhelmed.

We have faculty meetings at least once a week over an hour before school starts. **When teachers with small children mentioned that it was impossible for us to drop our children off at school and still be on time for the meetings, we were told to "figure it out--" meaning, be on time for the meeting or else.**

There are times I have to leave early, or times I have to be gone because of sick children, but my administration and fellow teachers are very understanding. The guilt I feel is self-imposed, but I deal with it fairly well, knowing how much I put into my teaching. One factor that may help in my situation is that I am raising my granddaughter (step-daughter's child) and my grand-niece. Most people I work with are very understanding and positive about the fact that we are raising two eight-year old girls who need us.

Many colleagues are in the same situation so they understand and we are able to talk about it and provide moral support for each other. We help each other out when there is a pressing issue at home.

I used to think I was alone with this dilemma--many staff members have older kids or none at all. I got over feeling guilty leaving 'early' when another teacher expressed their relief to be teaming with another teacher who had kids the same age as hers.

Colleagues and administration are great about supporting families. But that doesn't get the work done, it just means I don't feel pressured about it.

Yes, my boss understands that family comes first. My other colleagues that do not have children are willing to take on things that we have scheduled outside of the normal work day if we are unable to do it.

I say somewhat because all my colleagues complain about the excess of work we have.

I have two children with special needs and no support outside of my spouse, so I feel like some colleagues are empathetic about my need to be present with my children and miss a meeting at school. **Some colleagues judge without knowing anything about me.**

Most of the teachers at my school are also parents, but I don't think they were parents of a toddler and pregnant their first year teaching! My husband and I made that choice because we wanted to start our family right away, but it has made my first year of teaching even more difficult than I thought it would be.

I happen to be in a school that supports each other and understands how important family is to the well-being of any human. If my own student does not have school, I can bring them with me to school. My last school did not allow that and I would have to take a day off to stay home.

The first principal who hired me in an admin role said "I understand - you are a mom first."

They have children too so we're in it together. However, I notice that most female administrators have adult children so that they can be on campus for long periods of time without it interrupting family. **The male administrators who are parents of young children don't take on the primary role as a parent in the household so they don't seem as stressed about time away from the kids.**

Teaching staff try to help one another out so they can get the balance. For example, one of our staff brings her children to the staff room for breakfast every morning. Another has a standing arrangement that her class joins another at 2:30 once per week so she can collect her children. 4 teachers at our school also enroll their children at our school (public/govt school, but children "out of area"), one staff member enrolls her grandchildren to help make the balance work. All of these children play together after school while teacher /parents attend meetings, etc.

At my school my principal just recently became a parent so I feel he has changed his outlook from previous years. I'm so glad he understands my occasional requests to leave a bit early without taking a half day for an appointment for my daughter.

Amount of meetings made lacks respect for my personal/family time (i.e. often have meetings before AND after school on the same day, multiple days a week, that last at least an hour)

When I had children most others did not so it was hard for them to fathom what I was experiencing. Now they are in the position I was and they are starting to comprehend.

I am very fortunate to teach in a district where we have k-12 grade in the same building. Overall, I feel my administrators and colleagues are supportive. But, it's still a juggling act and I feel there is always one side suffering. I have constant stress that I am lacking in one area (teaching or parenting). We are a small school, so everyone has plenty of extra duties, too. That adds to that stress.

My boss has been amazingly supportive. She allows me to leave early to go pick up my sick children and take them to the doctors. She understands that our children should come first before school. She has also allowed me to use her office to pump breast milk, when my classroom is unavailable.

I have four children; I collaborate mostly with a single woman and a woman who has grown children. I think it is very difficult for them to understand all the demands placed on me each day.

But that's NO EXCUSE for lax teaching! Or parenting! Got to make BOTH work or stop working!! I didn't return to teaching until I had kids in high school. I refused to be a hypocrite-MY kids came first.

I have younger colleagues; many do not have kids, so they spend lots of time at school.

The other teachers in my school have either been in the same situation or they are very understanding. It's a great feeling!

Some colleagues put school so far ahead of their children, I feel their personal children suffer.

We are all in this boat together, so to speak, and colleagues support one another. I once applied for a stipended position and was asked by administrators if I could balance the needs of my family with the demands of the additional work. A single person with no children was ultimately given the job and he resigned at the end of the year. Administration shows support for some teachers who are balancing work and family more than others.

I don't think that my colleagues should really have to take into consideration my responsibilities as a parent. That said, when I speak about the demands of teaching relative to my

duties as a parent, I feel that (and this may be viewed as a sexist comment) women can comprehend this to a greater extent than my male colleagues, and certainly women who have children are more aware of these challenges than anyone else. I do not like to have to reference any challenges with balancing my parenting demands or home life demands with my work load demands when I'm at work. I feel that it is something that is judged, and questioned. So, as much as possible, I keep my parenting out of my work as a teacher when speaking with my colleagues. In part because I think a lot of people are in the same boat, so it renders my challenges as moot, but also because I think some colleagues would have a less than favourable reaction to me placing a limit on what I can and cannot do because of my need to parent my child in my way.

Colleagues, yes. Leadership, no. **We get platitudes about "work-life balance" right before they introduce new initiatives and administrative busywork that takes up even more time.**

Yes, so long as I they don't infringe too much upon my work responsibilities. When they do, the understanding disappears.

I work with many working parents. I have one administrator who seems to lack empathy and compassion in this area, but I know to go to the other administrator. :o)

Yes, they do understand the importance of parenting. I am so fortunate that my Principal always, always puts parenting first for us teachers. She truly "gets it". I also feel that my colleagues that are parents understand that parenting makes us better teachers.

I have 3 colleagues right now that are taking time out of their classes to pump breast milk. I don't understand why they can't schedule this during lunch and planning periods.

My current principal has children the same ages as mine, so he fully understands.

I didn't go to the latest union meeting and definitely felt looked down on.

All the teachers with children are wonderfully understanding and helpful. Unfortunately those who have grown children often forget about the juggling act involved.

I receive totally different support from teachers who are parents than from single teachers without parents.

Very much so. We can email each other lesson plans, copies to be made, help keep an eye on each other's subs.

I have a lot of support at my school, which is a blessing, but I don't feel that my students and their parents are always understanding of the balance.

There is a continuous support network within my school. We are passionate about teaching and raising responsible, compassionate kids.

All of the people I work with have children and are understanding. The teacher across the hall from me has grown children and he reminds me every once in a while that we our family should come first!

Co-ops want you to get your stuff turned in on time. So do college professors. They tell me not to sleep, but I would be totally worthless with a huge lack of sleep.

There's always someone in a district that I find it hard to "turn off." This year it's a C&I director in a newly formed position who is demanding an inordinate amount of paperwork, time away from classes, and time away from our families.

Sometimes they put things on me last minute without any regard of how long it might take me or take time away from my family. I'm a perfectionist so I check things a million times before I finish or use it.

Administration doesn't bat an eye if I need to call out to take care of my sick kid(s).

I am on the back end of this, but there were times when my kids wore their bathing suits under clothes because the laundry was not finished!! I just bought more underwear and the laundry PILED HIGH!!!LOL BUT...I know as a MOM I def take my young teacher's situation to heart! If there is a coverage and a new mom is pumping but it is her turn...I will do it...take the coverage...BUT NOT ALL FOLKS do this. Sometimes principals cannot make the connection or understanding that what you give is what you get. If you extend kindness and understanding you will most likely get wonderful commitment and professionalism back.. It is a two way street!

My administration has children that are grown and married. She thinks that raising kids today is just like when hers were kids 15 years ago. She thinks it's fine to stay at school until 6 every day.

It is marginally acceptable to cite child care issues or being with the family as a reason to not be at a work-related event, but if I were to do so more than once in several months, it would be a problem. Other parent teachers are understanding, but the rest or the people whose children are already grown tend to be less compassionate about child care issues.

Question 4: Rank the following challenges faced by full-time teaching parents in terms of how much difficulty they cause you.

Challenge	Rank	Weighted Rank*
Feeling as if I don't devote enough time to my own child(ren)	1	2.52
Taking insufficient care of my own health (sleep, diet, exercise)	2	2.89
Taking insufficient care of my household (cleaning, bills, maintenance)	3	3.65
Feeling as if I don't devote enough time to my teaching practice	4	3.97
Dissatisfaction with my own disposition: a short temper, depression, anxiety, or distraction	5	4.12
Friends or family members who do not understand my workload	6	5.16
Feeling pressured by colleagues or administration to spend more time or pull more weight at school	7	5.44

Note: The weighted rank is calculated as (sum of (position * count) for each choice / total responses) + 1. Some respondents reported being unable to rank items, so these numbers may be somewhat skewed.

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Question 5: Please elaborate on your response to the previous question. If you feel something was missing from the options, talk about that here.

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Personal interests that helps define my identity is nearly obsolete during the school year. My children benefit seeing my husband and me model beyond daily routine and work. Data analysis takes an enormous amount of time that's not considered. It's supposed to drive instruction, but to read it and work on the item analysis is demanding of more attention than figured. Another is my faith, which should be first and foremost.

Both time at work and time at home are tied for #1. I am only in my third year, and this is my first as a parent, so I know I will get better at this, but it's difficult to find that balance.

Balancing friendships outside of school and family time is difficult and often left as a low priority but not because I don't care. I'm exhausted and it's hard to put energy into one more thing.

I feel like it's impossible to do my job completely and efficiently. **Our administration often places too many responsibilities on the classroom teacher that could be handle by office personnel, such as collecting and receipting money for various fundraisers.**

My daughter called me a "workaholic" the other day. Yet she loves to tell her friends I am a teacher and has mentioned wanting to teach someday. I feel stuck in the middle of both lives.

On weekends, it would be nice to have the energy to see a movie or go to lunch with a friend rather than trying to catch up on all of the housework, laundry, grocery shopping, bill paying, AND get caught up on correcting papers.

This is my second career. When I worked in the Business world, my job stayed at work and the lines rarely crossed. (Yes, I traveled, but I never felt like I was taking too much time away from my children) **I love teaching, but I might be one of many that will burn out in five years.**

Everything is a priority - above myself. It's difficult to take the time to care for myself when I know I should but there are so many urgent issues. Weekends fly by with little time to rest. Breaks are full of appointments and such that you can't get to during a regular school day. Taking a day off of work is more work than it's worth (preparing for a sub, cleaning up after a sub).

Distraction, planning lessons in my head or mulling over a classroom issue, never being fully present with my family.

There seem to be a lot of people who still believe teaching is a 9 to 3 job. I guess there are actually some teachers who work that way (My kids have occasionally had one of those teachers!) But there are a lot of teachers who work really hard but people focus on how many weeks holiday we have. None of those people would ever want to be a teacher though, when I suggest that to them!

In Western Australia there are no 'permanent positions' for new teachers, so I [and many colleagues] find the stress of each year finishing and the possibility of no contract each year quite stressful! The education department is a big government body that treats teachers as 'numbers only' in their system. Principals have to jump through hoops to get a teacher that has 'proved their worth' [by agreeing to relief/sub work in their school] into 12 month contracts. We feel undervalued in our profession. This stress is shared by the family each year.

I feel guilty about not spending enough time with my kids. Teaching is practically a 24/7 job which does not fit perfectly with an already 24/7 parenting job. There is also added stress of my feeling as if administration thinks I'm a horrible teacher.

My partner constantly tells me that I need to be doing more work at school, but he doesn't/won't understand that I get about 30 minutes a day to do any grading or planning. There simply isn't any time to do any actual work at school. At one point, I was finding myself waiting until everyone was asleep and working until 1am. Then, I would wake up at 5am, an hour before everyone else was awake, to do more schoolwork. My hair was falling out, my skin was gray, and I was making everyone around me miserable with how cranky I was. Now I have resigned myself to giving up an entire weekend day with my family just to stay afloat.

I devote enough time to both my teaching and my parenting. That doesn't mean that I don't lay awake at night

thinking about all of the things I'm not teaching or doing well enough as a teacher. This is my 29th year. I think I preferred the first ten years, when I was unaware of everything I was not accomplishing.

As for parenting, even though I feel I do enough, I'd sure love more energy so we could do more things. It seems most nights I help my girls with their homework, make dinner, read with them, and get them to bed... then I start in on my homework. Perhaps a challenge missing from your above question would be spending enough quality time with my spouse. Another challenge is finding the time for pursuing my own learning interests, or even having some time ALONE.

I think they should all have been ranked "#1" except the one about family and friends. At this point, every single one of those challenges is significantly affecting my feelings of adequacy in both my personal life and my career. That's not a fun place to be.

Since the majority of my time during the week is with my students, I feel like I don't devote enough time to my family. Evenings are full of dinner, homework, and miscellaneous items and the weekends are a whirlwind. I feel like my students get the better "me" than my family gets. To have quality time and to get it all done, I put myself on the back burner. I don't get enough sleep, I don't exercise like I should - - I go for 7 months without a haircut!

My family resents the time I spend on work.

I have enough time to finish the bare necessities in all the areas of my life, but nothing is ever really completed. It took me 4 months to schedule a haircut because I couldn't justify taking time from school or my son.

It seems that no amount of explaining helps friends and family understand the dilemma.

While at work I am very focused on my job regardless of what else is going on in my life. At times, it has actually been an escape for me when something in my personal life is not going well. I have never felt as though I short change my students due to being a parent, however I do feel at times that my family gets placed on the "back burner" and I have to work hard at not neglecting my family. The longer I teach, the better I am becoming at putting my family first and not feeling guilty when I need to be away from school. My husband has been very understanding over the years, but a few times he's become frustrated with how much I work and I've had to work at balancing things better.

Teachers without parenting responsibilities don't understand that you can't just spend the whole weekend working or just stay back every night preparing lessons

I am tired and do not feel like vacuuming and cleaning...

I always feel that I should spend more time on the people I love and the things I love to do, but it just doesn't happen. Work just sucks me up.

My principal is super gung ho and believes everyone else should be as well, he means well but...

I think the most important aspects I suffer are covered, just something regarding the professional development in reality there is not time to spend doing that.

My own health suffers, especially during the school year, when there is not enough time in the day to be a parent and a teacher and a colleague and a friend and still find time to take care of myself.

My biggest concern is my disposition and how I treat my son and husband when I get home. My students wear me out. They take every ounce of patience that I have so I feel like I have nothing left to give to my own family. **I hate that I come home to a messy house and a huge to do list, but that is always the thing that gets pushed aside because there are more important things.** I feel that my administration is very understanding and has never asked me to do more than I can handle, and my family and friends are completely understanding about my exhaustion at the end of the day. Even though everyone is so understanding I still don't like the feeling of letting things slide through the cracks or not giving 110% in all areas of my life.

Teaching used to be the "parent-friendly" profession-it is no longer feasible to get to your child's school without taking part of the day off. In my state, this means at least 1/2 a day (so you can have a sub), and you pay for your sub. (personal time)

Teaching is demanding and difficult, but it's what I signed up for. Each profession has demands placed on those who fulfill those positions. I find using technology, e.g., flipping classrooms, on-line apps and personal tablets for students really helps with managing a stressful job.

Missing is the added pressures when you attempt to study and/or are a single parent (or have an absent eg travelling spouse). I take my hat off to families with one adult! Extra curricula activities of your own children suffer as you're attending to extracurricular for your school!

Friends and family members just do not understand - and I lack the energy or care to try to educate them anymore.

Sleep definitely suffers, as I'd rather stay up late preparing for class than go to bed and worry about my plans for the next day.

I feel I can only do ONE job WELL; either be a parent or be a teacher. One always suffers for the other. In order to be the best teacher I can be, my parenting suffers. In order to be the best parent I can be, my professional duties suffer. I can never do both, BEST.

The least important thing was my health. The most important was giving time to my child. I did a lot of rethinking about what educational aspects were most important. I have realized that there doesn't have to be an assignment or homework every day. The house was a weekend thing and wasn't a factor in my weekly time crunch.

The most important thing we did was have dinner together as much as humanly possible with no tv etc at table. We talked about our days all 6 of us took turns.

I struggled with ranking these - because they are all very concerning. I feel like I have really done myself a disservice - I don't take good care of myself because I just don't have time. And if you can't take good care of yourself, how can you take care of anyone else?

I feel that I suffer the most personally. I am always struggling to make time for myself. I do not have much downtime at all. I struggle often to find a balance, but when I "fix" one thing, something else goes. It is truly a matter of where your priorities lie at that given time.

It is not just my children who suffer, **it can be hard to maintain a healthy marriage** as a MS Lang Arts teacher. I feel as though Lang Arts teachers have a higher amount of grading and more pressure put on them because of the content. **There are weekends when I can easily spend 8-12 hours on school work.**

I get burnt out with every evening have to do school work all night after I get the family fed. It also frustrates me that I put time into creating lessons and the students don't complete the assignments then I have to deal with unhappy parents when it comes to students grades, when I could have been doing something fun with my own family.

There were times when I was overwhelmed, stressed out, and depressed.

My husband gets tired with all the time I put into school in the evenings instead of spending time with him.

In general, I think that something I struggle with is the amount of homework my children are given. In my opinion, homework should be minimal, necessary, and students should be able to complete it self-sufficiently. Some of the assignments my children have are obviously busy work with no real purpose (that can take hours), some of that homework requires that I teach them a skill that was not taught or reviewed in school. Just the other day, my 5th grader came home with 2 pages of math practice, a grammar skills review sheet with 20 questions, and he had to read two passages and write a multi-paragraph essay in response to the passages. I questioned if this was classwork he had not completed or homework, and when I checked the website it was actual homework. It's ridiculous. He spent over 2 hours on it. This impacts our family life. Sometimes teachers forget that kids have other activities and families, and they need to relax, too! (Sorry, not sure if this is the place for my rant - but there you have it!)

The emotion that is missing from your list is guilt. I'm always condemning myself for my shortcomings - only because it is so impossible to do everything that is expected. The recent teacher evaluation system only added to my anxiety because the expectations were so high.

I have been an overachiever for all of my teaching career. With the birth of my son, I have stepped back. I can still be a good teacher, though I know that I'm no longer as diligent as I used to be, but I also have realized that many people do the minimum. I'm not saying that's okay and I'm not saying I'm that type of person, BUT, I can do less, and I can do it all at school, and I can spend the time with my kid and not feel guilty about it. Plus, Dave Stuart Jr. offers some really good advice.

The one that stuck out to me was not taking care of my own health. That is definitely true. If I feel like I don't have enough time to spend with my kids, then I absolutely don't have time to exercise. And when the workload becomes really overwhelming then I don't sleep as well. I've had 8 or 9 colds this winter between getting bugs my kids bring home from daycare and germs I bring home from school. I can only imagine that if I were taking better care of myself, this wouldn't be a problem.

Veteran teachers have a completely different mindset about such matters than new teachers. The same is true of gestational teachers and teachers who have grown children. Perhaps a question about how long you've been in the field would help tease out some variance.

It's the issue again with not feeling like I have the time to be innovative with new materials. We just went 1:1 with Chromebooks, and I don't feel like I've had time to create materials like some of my single colleagues.

It's not that my friends/family don't understand my workload, it's just that I don't have any friends outside of teachers (due to time constraints)

My children are in high school and we chose to relocate to live in the district where I teach which makes it more possible for me to attend their athletic events, etc. I missed most of these opportunities when they were younger. Administration tells us to assess less so we have less to grade (but that conflicts with teacher assessment which requires us to assess more and crunch more data).

It is hard to separate not taking care of self and not liking own disposition because they go hand in hand and become a vicious cycle. I ended up being on anxiety meds for a while because my life work balance has been so out of whack

I always put myself last and my family first, even though I have conflicting feelings about doing so. When I spend time with my family I feel guilty thinking of the work I need to do, and when I work I feel guilty about missing out with my kids. It's a vicious cycle. I also just finished the National Board process then went right into my Masters, so there is literally no time for anything. It just seems like there is never enough time in the day to be the best mom, teacher, wife, and me that I can be so I end up settling.

Communicating to non-teachers about why I can't attend a social activity, or am limited in social time is extremely difficult; they just don't get it. And it is very difficult to find the energy or time to exercise.

I stretch myself too thin because I don't feel like I can ask for help at school or at home. Quite honestly, I don't know what to ask for in terms of help. When I get home from a long day at school, I'm exhausted. But the day isn't over because I have a toddler to care for. I have a hard time focusing at work because my students need so much and I cannot focus at home because my son deserves my time too.

My usual strategy in trying to balance an impossible workload is to short myself. I don't like doing so, but don't want to let others (kids, school) down.

I feel that the load on teachers makes it hard for someone to feel like they are a good teacher and a good parent. I could work hours on school work every night, but don't so I can spend time with my family.

Teachers are not respected in my family- especially my extended family (in-laws). My spouse sees her job as more important and harder, therefore I have more responsibilities at home and less time for my work.

I know that I do not take care of myself, and I know I would be a better parent and teacher if I did. But there are only 24 hours in a day, and there are 26 hours' worth of things to get done, I need to out myself ahead of teaching - that is where the time needs to come from for the next few years, but it is very hard to do.

I would write more but I do not have the time. This survey is the perfect example of every day - would like to do more, but have to trade things off.

I take medication to deal with anxiety and depression, which is why that one is at the bottom of my list. Perhaps I would need to anyway - I am genetically predisposed to these conditions, but my lack of self-care definitely does nothing to help.

I teach in elementary school, so I do bring my kids to work with me on the weekends. They do enjoy having the school to themselves - so that is a way to cope!

I feel that because of the balance I try to maintain between parenting and teaching my household suffers. (Does that mean that, by default, my parenting suffers?????) My children need me more the older they get--I realize that my time with them living at home is half way over and this makes me pressure myself to get the balance right, as well. I don't want to look back and wish I did more with and for them. I am driving more than ever before getting to practices and games and events for my children (not complaining, it's just a reality) and it's taking a small toll on my own health. I wouldn't trade it but it's tough. My son and daughter are my world. Having said that, I need to make sure I am a person, too, so that I'm not a mess when I become an empty nester! :)

The EET process, evaluating effective teachers, puts so much more pressure on teachers that we always feel inadequate. Also, if you aren't involved in extra committees and volunteer for after school activities then you won't score high in areas of the evaluation tool.

My job is what's causing me to feel the dissatisfaction with myself because if all the frustration I feel daily over things that I really cannot change or control.

The largest issue I faced last year was how everyone took it for granted that of course I would work 2-3 hours every night after the clock, and often all Sunday, just to keep up with what was "expected" of me. As if I wasn't allowed to question that perhaps we were getting the short end of the stick with no pay but excessive workloads or that I should find a different profession. Really? Or that there was zero mentorship or guidance from anyone, yet I was just supposed to "figure it all out". My daughter, 7th grade last year, said when I decided to take a year off and sub this

year that she felt as if I had been gone in both the physical and mental sense the entire last year. That she missed me as if I had been on a trip or something. My son felt bad that I was so unsupported that he really tried to help out to the point that he hated how it was affecting all our lives, despite the fact that I was really successful as a high school teacher. All in all, I have learned quite a bit that I will do differently, but I'm saddened how the Common Core and Tpeps are just one more way to make our jobs so much harder than they have to be.

It's actually a very hard ranking activity. At different times of the year the pressures are enormous. Ask any teacher and they will report getting sick in the holidays - it's clear that teaching is an unhealthy occupation!

It was difficult to rank them as they are all at the forefront of my mind. Almost all equal.

Everything is balanced at mediocre. If I'm doing better in one area, the other is sure to slide.

Do I have to work extra jobs in order to compensate for my income as a teacher? YES

I could barely rank the items above. They are all significant problems. I would add that I don't cook healthy foods for my family because I'm always busy. It is also tough on my marriage. I'm always exhausted.

I feel that in general, the wonder woman syndrome causes confusion on either side of the spectrum. On one hand, we are expected to do all of the work, multitasking and caring and on the other side of the spectrum, we, ourselves have unrealistic expectations of how much of a work load we can handle.

I am fortunate to have two of my children on campus with me, and one actually in my class. That being said, I am often at school very late in the evenings, and even though my kids are with me they (we) are not at home at a decent hour, cooking supper, doing laundry, and caring for the household.

I feel the main thing that misses out is time with my partner. We are both full time teachers and it has changed our relationship,

My health is suffering currently because I pushed myself to the brink of exhaustion.

Vicious health cycle: less time for health = less energy for family and personal life.

Can be quite hard to keep up with any problems the rest of the family have. No time to talk to the childrens' teachers!

Feeling pulled in so many directions causes me to do all of them poorly. I can't give anyone area of my life the time and attention it needs to do it truly well. This really affects my attitude, and I often find myself feeling irritable and resentful of the time my school work takes from what I sometimes think of as my "real life."

It seems that with all the new and challenging junk that our county keeps heaping on us, from training for CCSS and evaluation rubrics and their pie - in - the - sky lesson plans/pacing calendars that have to be deciphered, it will NEVER be all done!

I'm drowning in dishes and laundry because I'm too tired to do them at night. Weekends are recharge times so only part of that job gets done then.

I think I'm very good at self-care; in fact I feel a little guilty about prioritizing that. I'm beginning menopause, twenty-plus years into my career and with teenage kids, I sometimes feel as if I am coming undone.

There is never enough time to prep and plan for the students who need differentiation. I also have a principal who is very understanding of our family obligations.

I feel stress about the amount of work because of the new evaluation process, plus DDM, NEASC requirements... Please just let me create engaging lesson plans, teach and correct so I can determine what is the next step to improve my teaching. Not enough time in the day and not enough knowledge about how to use all the new technology. From websites, to google docs, to Kahoot, Edmodo, Socrative, etc.

Ofentimes family and friends ask why I can't finish work at school. **I sleep very little and counter the effects with excessive amounts of caffeine.**

The disposition one causes me the most anguish. Politics in school causes me much worry and stress, I constantly worry about who I have said what to or if I went about something the wrong way and if I will be 'on the crap list' for it. (Not that I am doing things wrong) I have just been in situations where a teacher has ticked off a principal or superintendent and then been harassed and targeted until they were driven to quit. Keep in mind that these are good hardworking people I am referencing, not someone not doing their job.

Principal used to be difficult calling in sick but hasn't any longer. Older my kids are, more experienced I am and my husband is, the better we are as a family at managing the house, sick days, time, it all. Taking care of myself (something moms rarely do, I don't sleep well, have migraines), having the best relationship with my kids before they go off to college becoming a master teacher, those are my goals.

I tend to rush from one thing to the next. I make breakfast and pack lunches for the family, but often don't feed myself and then ending up snacking emergency style on all the wrong things. My sporty colleagues get up at 4:30am (school daily meeting is at 7:30 am) to run or go to the gym, but all I manage on a good day is a walk up and down the street after. I get about 7 hours sleep, but would probably function best on 8. **Most of my colleagues sleep 6 hours only.**

I often go through spells, usually around report card time, where I doubt my teaching practice. This leads to anxiety and bouts of depression. This generally happens around students who are not meeting the outcomes. I know that with some extra support they could improve but there just hasn't been the time. When you have a class of 28 and 13 are on some sort of adaptations or individual plan, it is impossible to give every child what they need and deserve. Then factor in parents who want the best for their child and an administration that has forgotten what it's like to be in the classroom and you have yourself a perfect storm.

I absolutely feel as if I don't have enough time to devote to my children. They ask me not to do school work some nights. This year, I am working in a mentoring role and am not in the classroom and they have commented that I am not as 'cranky' as I used to be. I wish people understood that being a teacher requires the support and sacrifices of an entire family!

Feeling helpless about the ridiculous amount of testing that my students have to take. Assessments add a whole new level of stress because 50% of my evaluation is based on their performance, but the standardized tests that will be administered are in English, and my bilingual students are only beginning to read and write in the English language.

I feel better about short-changing myself before my children or my job. It's easier on a weekly basis not to vacuum the house or deal with lawn care and to put it off for a while. You never really feel caught up though.

I experience enormous amounts of guilt because I feel as though my children and their education are not getting nearly enough attention as I focus on my educational goals.

The biggest thing is my health. **I do not get any exercise. Some of the school work would have to be cut down in order for me to get exercise and I haven't been able to get to that place yet.** (And I've been teaching for 18 years -- it seems as if the work I put in keeps growing, not getting less).

The biggest stress is lack of time and energy for self-care. Teaching and parenting are both time-consuming and are

"giving" activities. It's hard to remember to take care of myself, especially when things are busy.

I taught for 11 years before having children - 2 of those years I had my first child and was pregnant with my second. I then stayed home for 8 years. I have been back at work for 6 years. At the beginning of the time back, my family definitely suffered as I tried to learn how to balance everything and learn new things in my career. I had to work harder returning to teaching as I had to learn all the new technology and testing. I felt like I had to prove myself and compete against the younger teachers. The economy was in a bad place and jobs were being cut so the pressure to perform at work was incredible. I feel very guilty for that.

I wish I had time to go to the gym, daily after work, take my child out to play after work each day, time to grade papers, plan lessons, communicate with parents about a child's behavior, have time for going to get a massage, mani and pedi once in a while.

Can I put them all as #1? Is like you read my mind!
Those are all so difficult!

You have to take care of yourself first to be strong enough to deal with to all. Deal with short temper it can blind you to finding the results needed. All parents should reflect on the care they are giving their children...no matter what! All good teachers question themselves...(still do it kids are 32 and 30) FRIENDS and family can actually help ...they need to be included and asked to help if possible! Start a help group at school. Create ways to help each other...find one person you can be honest with and work from there. Let's face it... there are some teachers who like to "stir the pot"...AVOID

THEM at all costs! Find a true heart (has to be some ...that is the root of our profession) and make an ally!!!

As an eighteen year educator whose first child was born after my tenth year, I have a strong basis for comparison between my teaching before and after I had kids. It has been difficult to choose not to get papers graded and thus not give students needed immediate feedback because I'm needed at home. Additionally, planning for class suffers as well for similar reasons.

I adjust my focus depending on needs at the moment. I am always delinquent on household demands because I put time with family and time to maintain my needs as a human and teacher first. **I frequently fall behind on tending to my own needs, medical, dental, but I try to prioritize regularly rather than get stuck.** I have a great husband who is supportive and helps with the workload at home so I can focus on my desires to actively participate as a parent.

Pursuit professional goals would be one challenge that I would add. (advanced degree or certification)

Thanks for asking these questions. It feels nice to know that teachers around the globe are grappling with the same dilemma as I am.

My relationship with my partner suffers quite a bit in this balancing act. While I can always find time to be a great mother, a good teacher, and mostly take care of myself, the time that I devote to my main relationship certainly falls by the wayside. Thankfully, my partner is very supportive of me and he is quite busy with his own things, but setting aside time for us is usually relegated to the summer!

Question 6: What is already working well? What solutions have you, your family, your colleagues, or your school come up with to make it easier for you to manage your responsibilities?

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Not assigning me specific duties helps. I don't have my children in many activities outside of school; otherwise it compacts the situation more. Of course, who hasn't taken their children to school on the weekends occasionally to work?

I just know that "it" will never be all done. There will always be something to do, manage, maintain, assess, track, everywhere I go...just take it a half day at a time.

My husband and I have instituted no work policy at night. Sunday afternoons I typically plan for the week, and once a grading period I will work late to get last minute grading done.

Try to work during planning period and lunch...something that doesn't always happen.

Schedule time in the day to do your administrative work. It's unrealistic and unfair to be expected for every single moment to be with students. They need to see that a teacher's responsibilities isn't just face time with them.

Setting firm boundaries around the amount of after school time I work.

My grade level colleagues and I share the responsibility for planning and preparing work and activities each week.

A helpful husband and an understanding principal.

My spouse cooks on nights I am tied up with work or come home right at dinnertime. He makes me take time for myself, at the gym or even a relaxing bath or cup of tea.

My colleagues and I are very understanding of each other, and insist that family comes first.

All of us in our district, especially my school are feeling the same way. We do build each other up! We take heart in that we are here to serve and teach children

I'm thankful that I have a spouse that is an equal-player with child-rearing, and can take a day off if one gets sick. I'm also thankful that I have an understanding and reasonable administrator. Without those two things, I would be way more stressed about both my parenting and my work life.

I am able to work part time, and I have been able to increase the days as my children have grown older.

I try to outsource as much as possible. Cleaning help when needed. Babysitters to go to the gym. Prepared meals from the grocery store. My time and energy is my most important commodity - it is way more important to me than money right now.

At work, I am ruthlessly efficient. I don't eat lunch with my friends. I changed my email settings so new messages are not pushed to me, I go and retrieve them when I am ready. I set a timer at the end of the day and do as much as I can, and leave when it goes off. I plan one afternoon to be my late afternoon, so I can dig deep into planning or copying. I close my door when I am working, to minimize disruptions.

My husband and I explicitly discussed what responsibilities he needs to take over to help our family run smoother.

My boss let me cut back my coaching. He said not to make myself a martyr for someone else's children and that I should be focused on my own family first. This, from a near-retirement age, childless, unmarried man who is singularly devoted to his work.

I car pool with a friend to get our children to and from school on work days. I require my boys to help with chores [folding laundry, putting it into the washing machine, unstacking the dishwasher, packing their own lunches etc] to share the workload at home. I have a home office to go to [where I am unavailable when the door is shut] to efficiently work through take home work and programming. Friends take my boys for 'play dates' during term weekends and I return the favour by taking their children for 24 hour sleepovers during school holidays. My husband ferries the boys to and from sport practice so I can do school work or do housekeeping.

I join coworkers at a fitness class one night a week, so I can still build relationships with them and meet my physical fitness needs. I started wearing a pedometer to push myself to walk more.

My husband and I try to support each other. I can't imagine teaching and caring for kids as a single parent.

My husband helps me grade, doesn't give me crap about staying late, and occupies the children as much as I need him to. He is extremely supportive of both careers

Throwing money at the problem, where possible, is nice. Someone to occasionally do a deeper clean at your house, or to pick up and help make dinner 1x/week. Having lovely and amazing neighbors who will join the chaos and make it all seem reasonable. It is a poorly kept secret that teachers occasionally take a "mental health" day - to grade, catch up, etc. - and it's supported by our administration if/because it's not abused.

No solutions, just hanging on by my fingernails and living for those great vacations when I really try to lavish time and experiences on my kids and do some planning in the evenings after bedtime. The elementary years were the hardest because they needed so much more of my energy. They still need me at the upper grades, just in a different less physically taxing way.

If I am to get any work done at all, I have to completely avoid my colleagues. I can't leave my room, because even the short walk to the teacher's lounge to use the microwave eats up 10 minutes of my time.

My parents and in-laws have become used to watching my children a few times a week so that I can do work.

My husband is the one who gets the girls ready for school since I have to leave early. I'm on my own in the evening, but sometimes he will do the bedtime story. My mother-in-law lives nearby and the girls walk to her house on early release days. My neighborhood friends know that I'm not interested in any Friday night activities, but we always get together on Sunday nights for dinner and a favorite tv show or football.

The solution that has worked in my home is to try to separate work from home. They have a different focus.

My husband takes on a lot more of the household tasks, even though he works longer hours than I do. My parents help by taking the kids on Saturdays every now and then so I can work at school the whole day. I work over a lot of my lunch breaks so I don't have to bring so much home. I could really use some more ideas...

I compartmentalize my day. When I am at school I focus thoroughly on school. I make piles of things that must be done at school and those things I can take home and work on. When I am at home, I focus on home and family. When my child goes to sleep, I switch gears again and work on the schoolwork that I brought home. I make lists to keep me on track with the various things that need to get done at home and at school.

Grade during naps. My husband helps with A LOT of housework.

Dad is taking kids more often to school and picking up. They are riding the bus more often.

Having an understanding spouse and a principal that respects and values the importance of family is key. While I have never had a principal make me feel guilty for putting my family first, I certainly have worked for principals that are more supportive and understanding than others. **I try to pick one day a week that I stay late to do work at school. During certain times of the year it ends up being 2 days, but overall it helps.** I still take things home each night, but I try to spend time with my family and then work on school stuff later in the evening. My school gives us "comp" time for workshops we attend during the summer that we are not paid for. We can use these days anytime the students are not at school. I have used mine on snow days when it was an optional teacher workday.

I get to work with a great group of teachers at school--very much like a family. I work at the same school my kids attend. One-stop shopping! My husband is a teacher too, we all get the schedule and do our best to support each other.

This year I share an assistant, but the responsibilities seem to have increased as well. It would be much easier if my classroom was empty during my planning time. Also, to have a full time assistant would be better. Also, more meetings with my colleagues and planning cross-curricular in the beginning of the year would be awesome. Spending less time on administration, grades, emails, reports, and other communication and teaching and planning more would improve my teaching.

I realize I can't do it all or be it all in either area. I won't have the most Pinterest-worthy classroom or child's birthday party, and that's ok. I cut myself some slack and realize I'm doing a pretty good job managing my responsibilities by writing things down and asking my spouse and colleagues for help.

I have made better use of my prep times at school. I do the most important things first, then move on to getting things accomplished that take less priority. I have also started buying things on teacher websites instead of trying to create them myself which saves me so much time and energy.

I teach middle school and high school. Since I am interacting with this level of student, I am better able to understand my own child who also is at this age level. My empathy has increased and that makes me a better parent.

I can't really say that anything is working well. The tides rise and fall and I adapt to each season of the year as best I can. I am almost always reacting to the latest crisis (at home or at school) which is not a great way to exist.

We use cell phones to keep ourselves organized. **A lot of professional development is done online which allows me to be home instead of a workshop.**

- * enroll your (grand) child/ren in your school
- * bring kids breakfast with you
- * band teachers' children together after school while meetings etc take place
- * combine classes to allow ones other to get away for their kids
- * bring kids to school to volunteer (older kids on different term breaks etc)

Flexible scheduling (I teach at the community college level).

I don't bring work home! BUT, I stay late at school to get work done.

I try to "work" when I know my children will be busy with friends or practice (not home), I often bring papers to grade to games and grade them before it starts (children usually need to arrive an hour ahead of game time ... I quickly set up shop and knock some of the grading out!) Once the game starts ... I'm Mom again! The children understand and thankfully don't care that the house is sometimes in a disarray ... (I think I'm the only one that bothers!) I've learned to let go of some of that. My husband helps by doing the grocery shopping for me ... we share laundry duty too!

Balance. When I was with my children and spouse the focus was on them. When they were at their activities I did school work. Like when sitting at ballet practice I graded papers. Between games, halftime, etc...I graded papers. Pre laptop era so wasn't able to do lesson planning etc but now I could. When my children were younger and at home we all did our homework together at the table.

Learned later that I need to take at least an hour for myself for exercise like a run. It made me more relaxed and ready for the next part of my day.

Also prioritize what needs to get done first! Plan ahead, pack bags lunches the night before.

I have found that **not being involved in as many school activities and allowing others to pull some of the weight** have helped. I owe a lot of thanks to my mother because without her I don't know what I would do.

I feel like I have a super-supportive group of colleagues. We discuss our workloads, parenting, curriculum and try to problem solve. I have a very supportive administrator - she is very understanding about finding the work-home balance. I have a very supportive spouse - who is pulling his weight and then some. I also have my aunt come to my house and watch my youngest - so she helps out around the house. During the week, I think she does more laundry than I do. I really feel - and I'm not being melodramatic - that if I lost any one of these supports, I could not manage.

We have a policy (at school) that if you miss less than 2 periods from school, you can have it covered in house and not get docked on your pay (or have to take a sick/personal day). It doesn't always work to find someone to cover, but this policy helps. One thing that has helped me, I keep a stash of snacks and toys in my classroom for my 3 year old. I often (ok, about daily) go and pick her up from daycare and then return to school to work. My family is supportive and understanding.

Communicating frequently and deeply about why we are doing what we are doing is the way to build trust that helps us navigate the inevitable conflicts.

When I need to prep for creative activities, my kids help me. We do the project together. It's fun & time with them while I'm doing my teaching prep.

My school is amazingly supportive. (It is an alternative school--So we're already more informal in some ways.) Sometimes before school, by sons come with me. Or on a day we're doing cool projects. It's been good for my relationships with students: they show a more caring side while playing a game with by child & they see me as more of a whole person.

I hired a house cleaner that comes every 2 weeks, and now that my own children are getting older, I have assigned them chores to help around the house (and they can earn allowance!) I also make a list of dinners for the week realizing the upcoming week's schedule....what days we will all be home or when meetings, concerts, games etc are scheduled and we will need to have an alternate plan or a crock pot dinner! I also try to do a load of laundry every 2 days in order that it does not build up too much...it doesn't always get folded, but it's clean! I also give myself permission to sometimes let things go...for example, the dishes will still be there to clean tomorrow morning.

I don't feel that this has been adequately addressed at my school. I usually take 1-2 personal days a semester to catch up on grading and planning.

My administration is understanding when it comes to taking care if the family verses missing something at school.

Otherwise it is staying up late or getting up early to get everything done during the school year.

Hired a housekeeper so I don't have to clean. My family creates a menu & then my husband & I go shopping together which decreases the time if I were alone. I prepare lunches & set out my clothes & everything that needs to be ready for the next day the night before. Helps the morning go smoothly. My husband has stepped up his help—he gets the coffee prepared, usually starts supper & often does it all alone since he knows the menu. I clean up & help kid with school work. Then we both do our work at the kitchen table together. Sundays I do school work & stay home-going no where-usually do laundry & invite my mom over for a good supper. Friday after supper we do our grocery shopping or Saturday morning. Picking up kid from college on Thursdays & returning her on Sunday has become a bit easier. My husband & I trade based on my workload.

I try my hardest to only do school work at school; however, I am at work around an hour and half earlier than my start time. I drop off two of my three children at high school, and I immediately go to work. I stay focused and work (instead of socialize) while I'm at work. Sometimes, I eat lunch at my desk. It's not ideal, but it allows be to be HOME and a mom and wife when I am home. It's been working for me for the last 4 years.

My school offers on-site day care. No discount, but it's small and in the same building. That is a benefit. Also, I hired a housekeeper, which alleviated the stress on the weekends when I was hate-dusting and hate-vacuuming. That's time I'm able to get back for things I love. I read when my students read, so I'm able to conference with them and also model a love of reading. I grade less but conference with them more, so I'm familiar with what they're doing. I also dropped down a level, so I teach fewer honors classes and more college prep: more in-class, on-demand work, but fewer things to grade, too. Most importantly, I take nothing home anymore. When I'm at school, I do school, and when I'm not, I'm not. That means not checking email, either.

I stay at school 1-2 nights a week for an extra 2-3 hours in order to stay caught up on my grading. Either my mother or my mother-in-law picks up the kids from daycare until I come to get them. This cuts way down on the amount of grading and planning I have to bring home. But I do feel bad about not spending much time with my kids days.

Our principal is living this too and is very supportive of family coming first. I am definitely managing my responsibilities but wish I had more time to come up with supplementary materials.

Routines help incredibly! I also take a day off for each child every year to either go to a field trip or spend the day in some way with my own children at their school with celebrations.

For me, it was even more complicated as I was also attending Grad school while teaching full time and raising two children. The one saving grace was that **my ex-husband would take the kids on the weekend so I could get caught up. Sometimes, divorce can actually make it easier...**

Voluntarily covering classes for one another when someone needs to leave to pick up a sick child from school or day care, etc.

I try to lower my expectations for how clean and neat my house should be.

My friends essentially force me to get out for personal time. Taking sleeping meds.

I have to schedule my days to the minute and I do most of my work at night after the kids are in bed. This makes for a tired me, but at least I get time with the kids.

Pretty much it's "just keep swimming". The school system is unwilling to make any real change that would alleviate many of these issues. I generally just get up earlier and stay up later to get the work done so that I can spend at least some quality time with my family.

My husband and son will often come into work on a Sunday afternoon with me so I can get a blitz of work done while they play in the gym for several hours. Alternatively, they may drop me off and go and do something while I work for several hours. (We are a one-car family, which slightly complicates our weekends when I want to go in to work.) In the past, before I became pregnant, I would go into work on Sunday nights, after my son was in bed, so that I could get my work accomplished for the week; this is now not the most healthful solution, so Sunday afternoons are the key. Also, my husband will take our son to school once or twice a week by bus so that I can go into work an hour or two earlier.

We've made it through the sick days that came with parenting little children. That was the toughest part for us. My husband is also a teacher, and it was difficult to call our principals in the early morning hours to secure a sub- again. Our current school is very family friendly and encourages us to be involved parents as well as dedicated professionals.

I get myself and my child to bed early each evening to ensure that I get 8 hours of sleep/rest

I do most of my school work between 4am and 6:30am. **I have a Dropbox so I can lesson plan at home and access that work at school.**

I haven't come up with any solutions yet, except being on Zoloft to manage my depression and anxiety.

My wife & I both teach...a good thing and a bad thing. We understand and support each other well, but it is a stressful & time consuming job that puts pressure on us & our kids.

On top of having a family of my own, I also have a sick, elderly mother. M/W/F after class, I go visit her, but make sure I am home in time for my son getting home from school. T/Th is stay at school later and work on things, but still make sure I am home in time for my son.

My husband has a more flexible work schedule and handles the kids' daytime commitments. I leave school to handle the evening routine and get back to work as soon as my kids are in bed.

I make time for my family. I have found what does and doesn't need to be done for work. **What has helped me the most is letting go of the guilt of not doing school work all the time and instead spending time with my family.**

I go to school for a few hours on weekends every once and a while. I need quiet and focus.

The most important piece of the striving for balance (I strive for it, but do not expect to get it - more of a pendulum than a balanced scale) is good child care. My husband and I have decided that we are willing to pay over half of what I make for childcare, but in doing so, I have paid for sanity. I am missing my children more than they are missing me.

We just keep staying positive, putting one foot in front of the other and do the best we can. Snow days have been a godsend. Vacations and summers are absolutely vital, also. I haven't come up with other solutions other than chocolate and humor!

Using my pln via social media
Caving in & buying what I need

Setting up dedicated consistent blocks of time is helpful

House cleaner, husband takes care of LO in the morning and does the daycare drop off so I can go into work early and workout. Colleagues and administrators generally support my pumping needs/ time/ lactation room to use with sink and fridge.

I often do freezer meals so I don't have to cook every night when I get home. I take 30 almost every day to exercise before I leave school. ..this gives me time to help myself physically and mentally to switch gears between teacher mode and mom mode. I am also blessed with a lot of family nearby to help take care of my children when they are sick so I don't have to miss as much school.

Question 7: What changes could be made at your school to make things more satisfying, healthy, and comfortable for you?

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Cited by multiple respondents:

Fewer meetings

In house daycare or help with child care

Less paperwork

More planning time

Fewer preps

Smaller class sizes

Built in days to work on report cards, fewer evening events.

Having a family focus in the school system. Another is creating a less is more policy instead of always thinking what more can we do. Instead what can we do better, not more. Setting the expectation that pulling overtime means you are doing more than necessary, not that it is "what we expect" in the first place. Many teachers need autonomy to freely create and feel constrained from the micromanagement. I'm all for accountability, but also think of the cost.

Lower class size! Less teacher turnover so you have an increased number of experienced teachers to sit on various committees.

I am fortunate enough to have three 45 minute periods off during the day, so that is one way my school has enabled the teaching staff to have time to grade and plan.

Someone to cover class for an hour so I don't have to take a half day off to go to son's activities or beg someone to watch my class and feel guilty.

I feel that teachers know what they need to be effective in the classroom. If our administration would listen to us and value our concerns I think we could eliminate many obstacles in teaching and learning.

Breathing room and some flexibility with my schedule, as well as some help in organizing my class. Workshops about time and classroom management.

Positive feedback. I wouldn't feel like I needed to try so hard if I felt like I would still have a job next year. I know everything I'm doing wrong and hardly anything I'm doing right as a teacher.

Less assessment of students, more time during school day to plan and/or grade student work.

Having faculty meetings in the afternoon would help a great deal, because my children are already in childcare after school. Additionally, having one or two faculty meetings a month would help tremendously.

Different school hours! Our school is 9:10-4:00, making it nearly impossible to get a doctor appointment without having to take a 1/2 day off.

More time to plan and prepare. We are always in meetings or teaching. I know PD is important but there is no time to implement things and there is always several new things.

Every year we seem to be asked for more from people who have not been in a classroom for a very long time. Perhaps they could stop adding to our workload, or remove a requirement when they add another one to the list.

I suppose, my only beef is that committee meetings run long. **I feel it is disrespectful to set a time constraint and then go past it. There are sitters, partners and children counting on me to be true to my word about when I will be home.**

I have had many principals who have been supportive of families. 3 out of 4 in my career have been like that. It's the colleagues who often don't get it. 3 types of coworkers who don't get it: unmarried singles who are completely dedicated to their work, parents whose (ex)spouses or children hate them, and moms who took a leave from work for their families because they have rich husbands. These people have been able to dedicate themselves fully to their work and have to concept of living both lives at once.

I'd like to see more time off for Maternity Leave.

Effective behaviour management programs at school would mean less of an emotional toll. Teachers spend a good deal of teaching time dealing with poor social [cooperation] skills. I'd be mentally more healthy!

Nothing. I feel supported and appreciated. There is just not enough time in the day for the standard I have set for myself as a teacher and a parent.

Time outside the classroom for planning, less paperwork, fewer "boxes to be checked." In place of the check marks, plan, implement, and evaluate best practices.

I think language arts teachers should have one class that is a no-brainer with very little correcting. Consider the difference in homework for teachers of different subjects. Ridiculous. It would also be nice to have language arts as a two hour class. How can anyone imagine teaching reading and writing WELL in one hour a day? I haven't even mentioned listening, speaking, thinking, grammar, etc. This might cut down on the amount of time I lay awake stressing out on what I'm not accomplishing.

More staff! We need specialists like Title 1 teachers, Interventionists, etc, at our school. Right now, our elementary gets all of that extra support, but our middle school (where I am) gets very little. The regular classroom teachers are left to do all of the interventions and tutoring whenever we can figure out how to fit it in.

Lessen the silly paperwork we must complete for our Student Learning Objectives and for our evaluations. Too much time is spent on forms and not the actual teaching/planning/reflecting.

More planning time, less data, etc.

Smaller or fewer classes for language arts teachers. Everyone knows that it takes far longer to assess writing well, but we have no more time built in for that than other disciplines.

More staff so we don't have 8 jobs to do.

Central office personnel need to understand how little time we have to accomplish non-teaching tasks throughout the school day. Most of my planning occurs after school and on weekends. While we are asked to do things that are valuable, it is too much. I feel like we are constantly being asked to do more and rarely hear appreciation for what we already do. My principal is wonderful, but her bosses are very unrealistic with their expectations.

Some nearby schools take one week mid-term as "family friendly week" - everyone out by 4, no meetings. I admire this.

I would like to see the central office staff show more appreciation and give more praise. I also think if someone has been out of the classroom setting for more than 2 years they need to find some time to come in to classrooms and teach a lesson or 2. I took a year off at one point in my career and it was amazing how much changed in just that year. I feel like administrators, superintendents, etc. quickly forget what it is like to be in our shoes and only see things from their own perspective.

Some time to plan with colleagues during the day.

Later start in the morning would allow for me to exercise and be to work with my kids. Being to work with my two kid by 7:15 am having already exercised is too much for me after staying up late attending to the work I brought home.

More assistance, less distractions, quiet rooms for planning, time set aside to observe other teachers, group planning, eliminating some extracurricular activities.

NO MORE MANDATES! The underlying source of a significant chunk of the overwork is crazy overdone testing and mandates from above (I don't mean my district, I mean the state).

Having an organized curriculum would be very helpful. My colleagues and I have to search through books, internet (TPT, RWT, etc), and come up with ideas to teach every single day. Developing what to teach every day is exhausting. I would rather have a structured curriculum that I could adjust to my student's needs instead of wondering if what I'm teaching is really helping them meet the standards.

Since I am a special education teacher some of our Professional Development days have nothing to do with me, or I can not really participate in at all. **I would love to be told by my administration that I can work on my own stuff during those times instead of sitting in on meetings that have nothing to do with me.** The paperwork always seems to pile up and unfortunately gets pushed way down on my to do list. That extra time would be so helpful!

Planning period should be just that, and nothing else added to that time. Teacher training should be done on teacher training days. I don't like it when I loose 4-5 planning periods a month.

Drop administration pressures - we're in an accreditation AND validation cycle which both come due this year. The paperwork pressure has tripled!

My school is great. Really, it's me that creates the "problems." I just put too much pressure on myself I think. Also, I just really, really enjoy my work.

Most of the work stress doesn't come from my school but rather the demands from outside forces (State and Federal mandates).

Healthy food and snack options for free like Google corporate offices :-)

A discount for day care would be great. I also had first block off last semester so I could get settled into the day.

The biggest change that helped me was years ago when my school district allowed me to use a sick day for family. What was frustrating was that my husband's school district did not so it was on me to miss school every time family was sick.

I think our school could totally benefit from using flex time. We don't currently - and our days off are classified - sick, school business or personal.

To me, when you are mothering small children - sick days are personal days and personal days are sick days. I always feel guilty taking a sick day to stay home with sick kids but I am not personally ill. I wish they would change the classification and just make them "days off"...

I have switched teaching assignments quite a bit the last few years. I really hope to stay in the same assignment for a while. I think that would make a difference. There are some teachers who go the extra mile and some that do not. It would be helpful if everyone would be called on equally.

Support groups, even at a very small level would be nice. So would a prayer group.

For me, I think the changes that need to be more are more on my side of things. I need to find a better balance of when lesson planning needs to happen vs. when to play Legos with my kids.

I have given myself a set time to work after school. I try to leave school each day by 4:30 p.m. unless I have a concert or special event. I try not to bring school work home (as I really can't devote time to it there). However, with the advance of technology, if I need to do some school work at home, I have access to email, Google Drive and my grade book online.

Changing school districts. I live forty-five minutes away, in another state, from the school I teach at and it would be easier if I worked closer to home. I love my district though and don't want to leave.

Fewer demands on the number of grades that need to be put in the grade book per week. A system that makes the grading more manageable.

Short of redefining what constitutes a full-time timetable, which is of course a much broader policy discussion at a much higher level than school-based decision making, I think it boils down to a personal decision that I will be faced with, particularly after I return to work from my maternity leave, about whether full time teaching is reasonable in the context of two children, one car, and my own standards for both parenting and teaching.

Allow more time to get things done there instead of giving up lunch for meetings, or making meetings after school that last 1.5 to 2 hours for IEP meetings etc. and not being compensated. If we worked for a business the meetings would happen during your normal work day, not on your own time.

I have a three year old and a one year old at home. Our school policy says that mothers may only use sick leave after a child is born for the first six weeks. If you choose to take more time off than that, it is unpaid. For both of my children, I was forced to take many unpaid days in order to stay home with them after birth for the time I felt necessary. **It would be nice if I were able to use those banked sick days in order to have more "paid" maternity leave.** Another teacher (male) is expecting his first child to be born any day now. He will only be able to use sick leave on the days his wife and child are actually in the hospital. It would be really nice if our district would offer some kind of paid paternity leave for him, even if that meant using banked sick days.

I could have ONE school instead of teaching at 2 different schools, so I don't have to travel with all my stuff each day & I don't have to remember to bring certain things at different schools.

My classroom is used all day long, even during my preps. My department does not have an office. I could use a space where nothing is distracting me.

Compensation for having to work after hours: like gates for sports, or evening open houses/stem outreaches to parents.

Flex schedule, job shares

Smaller class sizes so I can give more attention to individual students (of course, this is a budget issue). When extra duties, committee assignments and visionary work are assumed by teachers voluntarily, the fruit of those efforts has to be dignified rather than dismissed as "too expensive" or not a priority right now, etc.

Having more parking spaces available at school so I don't have to worry about whether I will be able to park in the parking lot or not. The snow could be cleared differently so it doesn't take up any extra spots.

Paperwork and responsibilities need to be reassessed. There is more pressure on teachers by the non teaching expectations than the teaching component

System for acknowledging teachers' efforts, less on our plates = more respect of our time

1 prep, 4 sections, 20 students per section. That would help a great deal, and bring us closer to the teaching load enjoyed by teachers in other OECD countries.

My classroom computer is horrible and slow and makes lesson planning in my classroom a nightmare. We used to be able to access shared files (i.e. shared math department files) from home but an "upgrade" to the computer system made by the district a few years put an end to that.

Less meaningless endless meetings and talk of interventions/data. More support given to teachers during the day to help them manage students. More respect given to what a teacher actually does (it's more than deliver a lesson).

I doubt there are any changes I could actually make. To be paid more so that my wife could work less (or the other way around)? To have more planning/non-student-contact time so that I wouldn't have to work so many hours outside of my contracted hours? Those ideas would be great & consistent w/ how the profession is treated in other 1st world countries.

Reduce the expectation that teachers be present and involved in after school activities each day.

Honor the need of parents to be able to actually use their leave.

More teaming planning time given during pd day and 'meeting times', - designated time to meet.
Fewer bandwagons (i.e. - learning every new 'great' thing that blows through education)

I believe that being joyful about what I do makes up for the busy-ness. I know people less busy than me, but are less present with their jobs or families because they are doing things they like less. It is busy - often too busy, but I do say no to things that will drag me down. I have decided that everything does not have to be my best work. I do not need to impress everyone, just myself by being able to focus on what is important to me. My kids will only be little for a little while, and I have time after that to devote more time to teaching. If I am teaching so 'well' that I am bitter about it, than I am not doing my job. Yes, this means big breaths, medication and lots of trade off - it is hard. But I am blessed in my struggles, and it really does help me to focus on what I love and what I am grateful for, rather than my disorganization, the parent letter I did not get sent home, the piles that pile up and all the things that just become too much. Thanks for listening.

Provide resources vs expecting us to find them.

More structured playing time and grading time in the day.

A true "duty-free" lunch.

Later starting time. Less classes to teach, I have 19 at the moment and that is a lot of marking.

Real mentoring. Dept meetings that were teacher-directed. Email staff stuff vs. wasted staff meetings. A more friendly and supportive administration - this is everything. God, say thanks once in a while, or come into my class to be a part of things. Know me as a teacher inside the class rather than only after a parent has complained. Give room to try new things without recriminations from old-school thinkers who can't get behind the idea that teaching is more guiding and less about "we've always done it this way". Stop allowing sports to override education goals. (I have been asked by administrators to change grades so more than one student could play sports because they "needed him/her" - not because of the students' desire).

Less pressure to attend training.
Less pressure to stay beyond 4.30pm ish!

I truly think we should have some kind of access to career breaks. Teaching is an exhausting and stressful profession, and it's hard to keep up with the latest updates and to take the time to reflect on our teaching practices and make changes. I think we should be able to get paid at .75 of our wage over four years so that we can access a paid year off for renewal and recovery. That way some of the young teachers coming through who might otherwise not get work straight out of uni would get some work opportunities and help revitalise some very tired teaching staff.

It's not really the school's responsibility. My head teacher ensures I am able to attend school events where possible and puts no pressure on to come in for extra hours but she is a mum too. I chose to do this job and have a child so it's my responsibility to organise myself. The changes need to happen at policy and national level to ease my workload, not from my school.

Administration is supportive but the school system requirements for lesson planning is excessive and curriculum is flattened so searching online for information is extensive and time consuming.

I think my school administration tries, but quite often the expectations and extra administrative tasks are instigated by those higher up than the principal.

Time shared job positions, more permanent part time positions, extend RFF for planning and prep and have professional development in school time and weekends as an option.

As an English teacher I have 160 students a day. (Not including my home room and study hall). Grading is out of control. Giving real and helpful feedback can take hours and hours outside of contract hours. I cannot realistically do it in a timely fashion. Cut my student load in half or give me grading time during the day in addition to prep time.

Let my planning periods be planning periods--stop dumping additional duties on me.

More planning time during school hours - with other teachers at same levels

Sharing of ideas and materials, repetition of classes on timetable; less teaching time; more autonomy to get on with things as a professional.

A more understanding head teacher, who appreciates the hard work done in my department and stops piling on the pressure for me to do even more

Enjoying more teamwork activities at school. Fellowship get-togethers.

Being able to work part time.

Getting in shape and being better-disciplined about health, but that's up to me. I actually have it quite good right now because of my timetable -- better than when I was 100% full time and spent more evenings and weekends working.

More realistic expectations for what teachers should be doing outside of the classroom. It is impossible to complete all of the classroom prep, communication with parents, grading, collaboration, continuing education, research and reading during prep periods. Schools expect it to be done outside of the school day yet the pay and respect doesn't reflect this expectation.

Fewer duties and responsibilities! I already teach 10th grade English, 12th grade English, and AP Literature & Composition, along with being a Senior advisor, National Honor Society advisor, Writers' Club advisor, and attending one extra-curricular school event a month.

More so for the county, but not everyone needs to be an over-achiever, whether it is the teachers or the students!

Inservice days that allow us to work in our rooms.

I wish we had a prep period each day. The days my students have specials helps.

Could use another prep time. Currently there is a new schedule and the school committee does not understand why we need two prep time. They believe we are just going

to chat and do nothing. Should people on school committee have some knowledge about teacher's workload.

Longer planning periods, grade level receptionists to make copies, type letters to parents, etc. I have a parent who helps a lot.

Exercise classes would be great. Also it would help if our administrators focus on the positive and build from our strengths rather than beat us up for what we are not doing well. They might observe one student off task in a lesson and ignore the fact that the rest of the students were on task and successful. That's so hurtful and frustrating to me!

To be honest, life is what you make of it. The poisonous testing environment needs to go in order for teaching to completely feel satisfying, healthy and comfortable. I cannot do much about the requirements of standardized-test taking, however, I can control the learning environment within my own classroom. I work hard to ensure that it is satisfying, healthy and comfortable for my students as well as myself despite testing demands, student apathy and other numerous obstacles.

Scheduling fewer staff meetings after school hours or on holidays when my kids are off. This creates a lot of stress as I have to find childcare for them every time.

Respect my time. Offer to take over the class for 15 minutes.

Nap time ;-)

I would ban homework. Most of it is futile. I would encourage greater exploration of formative assessment. **I would have fruit and chopped veggies on offer in the staffroom in addition to sandwiches.** I would limit evening meetings and functions and only expect staff to attend 2 of these per term.

Less administrative work. I wish I could spend more time just teaching or preparing for teaching.

The administration at a school makes or breaks the school climate. Unfortunately, many of the principals I have worked with over the past 20 years are poor managers. Better training for administrators is key to making schools healthy places for children and staff.

More time to plan built into regular work day, time that is truly sacred and not interrupted with meetings. Get paid for hours worked.

More time to be able to assess students' writing and more time to plan

Wow! Just having healthy options in the cafeteria for lunch. A salad bar would be so great! I don't have time to pack a healthy lunch and a lot of teachers end up not eating or eating junk. Clean restrooms and the time to use them!! Adequate time to plan lessons, spend time with needy students, meet data demands, and foster parent communication would reduce so much stress!

Lower the demands that do not directly affect student instruction. At my school we have a classroom environment checklist that details what we should have and even points out how and where anchor charts can be placed.

Administrators who are tolerant and patient about time that needs to be taken away from the job. I've worked in schools where administrators don't respect your need to take a day off. The pressure and guilt for taking a day of leave is tremendous and very stressful. When taking a day off is accepted and even encouraged, you feel free to take care of personal responsibilities and then when you return to work, you feel more engaged when you're there.

No idea. Maybe make my prep time at a time that biologically works for me. I currently have first period prep and I am not at my most productive at 7:30 in the morning. I tend not to get as much done.

All this testing stuff is just crazy for EVERYONE - it puts unreal stress on students and their teachers. Teachers feel they have to put in the time to perform well to save their jobs and meanwhile, their own children are growing up without them.

I teach in a small county and they are supportive of parents. They allow us to attend parties, ceremonies, etc. during the day if we get coverage without having to take time off. **Our personal kids are welcome at the schools before and after hours, as well as teacher work days - this is huge!**

Paid time if my son gets sick and I have to be absent
Paid maternity leave with benefits

Wish list: less students per class, more planning and collaboration time, teacher work days once a month where I can work in my classroom without students or meetings or emails or phone calls interrupting me.

Bottom line issues need to be in the open in a kind and nonjudgmental climate! Does this happen often...NO... but why can't we create this? Child care and family are the

MOST important things in our lives! Can you imagine if we could create a program where Moms and their children's needs are considered and put first?

The realization that we have lives outside school would be a start. Giving more than 2 personal days a year to spend time on field trips and our own kids' school activities within the day.

Slow down the pace. You can still have rigor without frenzy. Give everyone (adults and kids) a chance to take in, practice, and reflect before steaming ahead to the next thing.

Schools are much better at finding new cool initiatives to add in than they are at ever acknowledging that some things must be chosen for removal.

I wish it had on-site day care. I wish there was a better gym or other self-care options on campus (students have them, but I'm not working out with students and there's no faculty-specific options). I wish I didn't need to go to campus quite as often other than to teach and meet with students

Allow teachers to have input in the classes they teach, keep us in the same course for a few consistent years so we can perfect our content knowledge and pacing, keep us in the same classroom so we don't have to pack up and move annually, eliminate initiatives and excessive meetings about those initiatives, allow teachers to attend professional development, stop making it personal and take the time to know teachers and their routines, assume good intentions.

Let us know about deadlines sooner so work can be fitted around family plans. Allow parents to attend some events at their children's school during day time.

Maybe just one new prep per year rather than three? Free membership to the campus gym would be nice too, but we currently have to pay. Professional development/mentoring on work/life balance.

If I had an administrator that knew anything about breastfeeding & was involved in securing a place for myself & my coworkers to pump, that would have made us feel supported as well as kept us all healthier & at work more often.

If more is going to be added to my plate, it would be nice if some things could be taken off. Catered lunches (LOL).

Question 8: Single Parents Only (define this however you like): What challenges do you face that parents with active partners do not?

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Parent meetings at night. Weekend and after school extra curricula activities - what do I do with my own kids while I am looking after everyone else's? I'm tired - I need to get some sleep but have too much to do every day.

Sometimes I feel like a single parent because my husband doesn't get home most days until after my son is in bed, and he is still sleeping when I leave for work in the morning. All of the parenting responsibilities fall to me, even on the weekends. The biggest challenge is just how exhausting that can be. There is literally no time to think about what I want or need until after my son has gone to sleep.

Financial was my biggest, which is related because of childcare, also flexibility, especially last minute. (before school, after school, work days, sick days (even being able to make sub plans while someone else took care of my sick child), evenings and summer for continuing ed., IEP meeting running late)

Everything is a challenge. Organizing my finances and taking care of my health are my biggest challenges. I pray a lot! Also, **people really don't understand how difficult it is, and personally, I feel that they really don't want to know.** It's great when someone "gets it", but I don't expect many people to be enlightened.

I was a single mom for 8 years while my son was tiny ... thankfully there were other teachers with children his same age at the school ... they became best buddies and thankfully LOVED to hang out after school while we worked! They thought it was cool to run thru the empty halls, have the entire playground to themselves ... It was hard ... but we made it! I have an amazing don who was very understanding!!!

We "live life" in the summer months! A couple of really tough years I also gave each of them a bit of my "seniority pay" for helping grade papers, etc, and for being so understanding of my time and talent! That was fun to see the look of surprise on their faces when I could do that!!! None of my children (step or real) want to go into the education field however! ;)

I have to do everything by myself. I don't have an extra hand to make a bottle or change a diaper while I eat dinner. I lose a lot of sleep because I have to wait until my daughter goes to sleep to do anything for myself.

There's only one of me: for these evening meetings (parent-teacher conferences, open houses, etc.), I have to hire a babysitter, which is expensive.

Offering childcare for faculty would be nice for that (our on-site day care is not open for that). I'm also relatively independent (it seems, though internally I could be falling apart), so people assume everything is fine. I'd love it if someone just gave me a few hours off to do something, or even offered an extra set of hands to hold my kid so I could breathe for a moment. Time. More time to do the things I would like to love again: running, doing nothing...those things.

I am not a single parent, but my husband just got a new job last year, and has had to travel several times in the past 6 months for job training, conferences and meetings. He used to work 5 minutes from home and now has a 45 minute commute each day. I have really noticed the difference in him not being around in the evenings to help with the kids, pets, and house maintenance. Several times he will have meetings at night, so will not even get home until after 9:30 p.m. He also has to leave earlier in the mornings now, so I had to adjust my schedule in order to drop our youngest child off at daycare each morning, causing the whole family to have to be up and out the door earlier. It has been a strain and I have often thought..."How do single parents survive???" I surely notice a difference when my husband is home and when he is not...and like I said before, I have family in the area to help out too. I honestly don't know what I would do without them!

We have to do everything. I actually found it was easier to get stuff done when I was a single mother. I did not have another adult whining about their time being cut short because of my child or work. I could organize things the way they worked for me and my child. It was actually easier than being married.

My children have had to spend an inordinate amount of time in my classroom waiting on me. Or at their after school activities waiting until I can get to them. Financially we have had to do without a lot since we are a one income family on a teacher's salary (year 8)

When children are sick, there is only one person who can stay home with them.

No one else is ever on call. Need to set up networks of neighbors who can help each other.

Rarely getting a break results in getting burnt out or stressed out quicker and often on edge (emotionally) because rarely getting help with family work load while trying to keep up with teacher work load.

I have to do everything myself. Like back-to-school night, or required football games, or chaperoning: I don't just have a partner I can leave my kids with while I do these things that fall outside the school day (and outside of daycare hours). If my kids are sick, I have to stay home with them - there is no one else. **My kids' school has daytime events parents are supposed to go to, and I have to take sub days to do them.** I don't have a partner with a regular day job who could just handle it on their lunch hour, for example.

All the responsibility falls on me. The work day is never over. The precious little time I do get to myself, I want to rest. It's really hard to be a single parent and a teacher.

Feeling overwhelmed because I cannot seek help with laundry, driving kids, cooking, bills...and I get paralyzed by the overwhelm.

Less backup when children are sick.

Getting to all the appts for my kids.

I spend time with my children in the evening and continue to work on school work after they go to bed at night. No time to exercise or just relax. No partner to help with cooking, cleaning, homework, drop off & pick up of children

Absolutely no help at home. If kids are sick and u get sick at the same time nothing happens, no pay comes in and you get no time for yourself (because someone is always with you, even in the toilet or shower! And you can't afford to do anything either :/)

Doing too much, sacrificing time with my children, sacrificing my health to my work, being out of sorts, stressed and not being able to focus serenely on the tasks at hand.

It's all me. There's no one to pick up any slack, so there can't be any slack. Coupled parents think they understand, and their seemingly innocent comments DO NOT HELP.

Without a partner to share the responsibilities of parenting, I am the only one who can take my son to the doctor, or stay home with him when he's sick. It's especially hard when my son is having a rough morning, and there isn't anyone to help me get him ready for daycare. We both end up crying all the way there.

I am married but always plan as if I am single parent as my husband is unpredictable.

I have a fantastic husband. However, for the days he is on shift (24+) I must be the -everything, after a full day of emotional taxation. This is especially challenging with children who range from 18mo to 13... Some days I think a physical job would be a reprieve!

Coming home on time to cook dinner, eat and put everyone to bed before 6:30-7pm. Don't usually get home till 5:30.

i am married but my husband is a chef and leaves home at 8:30 and arrives home after midnight many days. I wish my son could see him more than just on Sunday afternoons

You're alone at the end of the day. You have to be both mum and dad.

The most difficult part is making important decisions alone! NOT having someone with the same vested interest to talk through a problem or a decision is the toughest for me.

Sharing the load of housework, cooking, general daily tasks that build up.

I have been a single parent until my older daughter turned 8. I have my husband as a partner and our youngest is now 8. I know both sides intimately. Both have challenges. Single parents are challenged financially and are encumbered by responsibility. A married parent faces contention from the spouses differing opinions. Parenting and teaching are hard, regardless of marital status.

Being the one who has to get them to school and stay home with them when they're sick, I find that missing school all together is a big worry. Moreover, spending enough time with each child or having to split time is also a strain on parenting. For example, helping a seven year old with homework is difficult with a four year old nearby because there is always the potential for distraction from my focus on the seven year old and helping her with her work.