



TAKE BACK YOUR TIME DAY

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FROM: TAKE BACK YOUR TIME DAY NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE

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WHAT AMERICAN MOTHERS REALLY NEED IS MORE TIME

What mothers all across America need most this Mother's Day is a respite from their overworked, over-scheduled lives, and a new national campaign is underway to give it to them—and to all Americans. More mothers with small children are part of the paid U.S. labor force today than ever before. And they're toiling longer hours, according to a recent AFL-CIO survey of working women.

"Two in three working mothers—66 percent—work 40 or more hours every week, compared with 60 percent of women without children," says the AFL-CIO's Karen Nussbaum, former director of the Women's Bureau at the U.S. Department of Labor.

But their need for more time doesn't stop there. "When they aren't working, America's Moms are rushing from place to place to keep up with schedules that only CEOs used to follow," adds Barbara Carlson, co-author of *Putting Family First*. "They once got some quiet time and a little relaxation while their children were involved in unstructured play. But now the kids are enrolled in activity after activity, hour after hour, and Mom is expected to chauffeur them," says Carlson.

In the meantime, there's really little time left for real family life. "The number of families that eat dinner together has dropped by a third since the late 1970s, and the number of families taking vacations has fallen by 28 percent," says family therapist Bill Doherty of the University of Minnesota. One study found that dual-income couples with kids spend only 12 minutes a day talking to each other. "In all of our talk about family values, we often forget that time may be the most important family value of all," adds Doherty. "It takes time to keep a family together and raise healthy, happy children who will grow up to be good citizens."

Nussbaum, Carlson and Doherty are all active in the "TAKE BACK YOUR TIME DAY," campaign, a new non-partisan national initiative. On October 24, 2003, concerned Americans all across the country will participate in teach-ins and other events to challenge time poverty—from over-work and over-scheduling—in America. TAKE BACK YOUR TIME DAY falls nine weeks before the end of the year, symbolizing the fact that Americans now work 350 hours—nine weeks—more each year than Western Europeans do.

"Over-work and over-scheduling threaten our families, health, communities and environment," says Take Back Your Time Day national coordinator John de Graaf. "The goal of Take Back Your Time Day is to get all Americans talking about our lack of time and what we can do to reclaim our frenzied lives. There's no present like the time."

More information about TAKE BACK YOUR TIME DAY can be found at: www.timeday.org.