

# The Plight of The Working Mother

29 Marilyn Crescent.

Dear Sir:

With regard to your Editorial Comment concerning day-care centres, it is obvious that you are not acquainted with the plight of the working mother.

The idea that promotion of such a scheme might be discriminating against the stay-at-home mother is ridiculous. A woman works for one of two reasons — either she wants to or she has to. The same reasons may be applied to the housewife who stays home.

I believe that any residential area anywhere can make use of day-care facilities whether it be to relieve an over-burdened housewife or offer reliable constant day-care to the working mother.

I have needed and used housewife-babysitters for the past 6 years because that was all that was available. I would have preferred a day-care centre but they were full and the waiting list endless. While there may be many kind, understanding women willing to open their home and their hearts over a long demanding period of time, it has been my experience to learn that they are few and far between.

An invisible circle of pressure surrounds the woman who wishes to return to the work force after having started her family. The prospective employer is hesitant to hire the working mother because he knows she will inevitably put the responsibility and needs of her children ahead of her loyalty to the company, plus the fact the employer does not like to invest time and money training a new employee only to find that "another little one" is on the way.

Add this worry to the mother who must find a babysitter with similar values and sense of responsibility as herself, and you almost complete the struggle to return to work.

Add the pressure of time because it is a precious commodity and eludes a mother so easily. It takes time to soothe and say goodbye to a crying child, rhyme off a few do's and don'ts to the babysitter, and remind her of how many tea-spoons of cough syrup and when. On the other hand, time stands still when your employer greets you at the office door to remind you that you're 15 minutes late again. Shame on you, Mother.

Because you've found a person willing to babysit, no guarantee is given that your problems are over. While someone might agree to look after one child, how many women are willing to look after two or three children plus their own. So many things can and do go wrong. Johnny doesn't like the sitter or the sitter doesn't like Johnny, you're Susie is more aggressive than the sitter's daughter; your son broke three things this week; your daughter has the chickenpox so don't bring her back for two weeks, and the clincher — "I'm sorry I can't babysit anymore — my husband can't stand the mess and 3 kids all day long are too much". These are familiar lines to the working mother who again must find another "reliable" person to look after her family. And she must do it on a week's notice or a weekend, without time off from work for she must not jeopardize her job because she is a mother and duty happens to sound its horn elsewhere at the moment.

Dear people, you must give the working mother both credit and assistance because she is divided into so many pieces. She tries to maintain her jobs as wife, housekeeper, mother and employee equally at the cost of her own privacy, interests and energy. It is a heavy load to carry especially when it's compounded by guilt, worry, or frustration, and if a day-care centre can alleviate just one concern of hers, well, so be it.

Let's face it — the kids' needs are most important and if a day-care centre can offer pleasant atmosphere, qualified supervision, and a play-learn programme, shouldn't we all be for it? I would rather have my children in day-care routine than looked after by a person who would leave a baby in a wet diaper because Mommy will be home in 10 minutes, or told to shut up because a tv show can't be heard over child's play or bickering. If I want my children yelled at, impatiently slapped or ignored, I can stay home and do that. I pay hard earned dollars to have my children looked after, not just tolerated. How do you know if the town is adequately served by babysitters? I realize that you can't ask the people if they are truly satisfied with what they've got, but when that's all they've got, they're stuck with it — good, bad, or indifferent.

I believe the law requires of a parent, adult supervision of a child up to 12 years of age. A day

in exchange for a day of work at the centre. Volunteer programmes do work when the participants realize that if they will help it will be reciprocated.

Don't be too quick to shelve the idea because you cannot relate to the needs of this particular group of people. Death or divorce puts an unexpected burden on the remaining parent and just how long can one expect a friend or relative to help out without the feeling of imposition creeping in?

The town fathers have worked long and hard to gain government approval of an addition to our existing hospital. Why? The need is being filled. There are beds and doctors and sick people are at home waiting their turn to go in that they may benefit from these services. Do the Fathers look for an increase in facilities, advanced equipment and manpower because of our anticipated needs? Might I respectfully suggest that this babysitter-day-care centre is parallel and deserves the same consideration in fulfilling an anticipated need? Who is to say which is more important — the chance to make a sick person well or the chance to improve the emotional well-being of a child.

I solved my baby-sitting problems by changing over to an evening job, thus eliminating the need for a sitter on a daily basis. I don't have much spare time but at least I can cope with housework, children and a job with a lot less worry.

I would be pleased if I could be of assistance in helping get this project past the discussion stage and into reality where I am sure it is needed by more families than you realize.

Sincerely,  
— Mrs Pat Gamayger

Luther Burbank was known as the "Plant Magician".

# Ballinafad News

Mr. and Mrs. Robert McEnery moved to their new home in Acton on Saturday. Best wishes of the community goes with them.

Parents and friends attended Brisbane School concert last Tuesday evening and enjoyed the program put on by the pupils.

Miss Eileen Hurren and Mr. Sam Cotter of Toronto spent Sunday with the Marshalls.

Many snowmobiles were seen dashing around the neighborhood on Sunday. No doubt, the drivers were jubilant to see the snow.

Mrs. Bird Sr. who has been spending several weeks with her son and daughter-in-law and grandchildren left for her home in England this week in time to spend Christmas with her family there.

Mrs. Pinkerton's parents arrived from England last week to spend the holiday season with their daughter and son-in-law here.

There was a nice crowd out on Sunday at the church service, being family Sunday. The Junior choir favoured with two numbers. At children's story time

Rev. Johnston had the children sit in the front rows and many of them had a small part to play as the story of the "Birth of Jesus" was told.

After the service lunch was served in the basement. Santa arrived and presented gifts and awards to the scholars.

Just before the close of the afternoon program Rev. and Mrs. Johnston were called to the front and presented with a gift by the congregation, it being the occasion of their 25th wedding anniversary which they celebrated on the 20th of December.

The dance on Saturday night held at the Community Centre and sponsored by the ball board was a great success. A large

crowd came out to enjoy dancing to the music of Al Dermott's orchestra.

A Merry Christmas to all.  
—Willie Ed Smith

## Sideboard Buffet

For Holiday Morning

It's an old English tradition, breakfast off the sideboard. The serve-yourself informality is perfect for a holiday morning — be it after a wee-hour party or for a bright-and-early family affair before a big day of celebration. Buffet breakfasts and brunches are an unusually attractive way to lighten the load on the hostess, suited to the rather

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