

MARCH OF THE MUMMIES

Demands cheat sheet



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THEN SCREWED**

March of the Mummies demands

Need ammo for speaking about our demands?

We've got your back. Here are some stats to help you make your case! Take what you need, and let us know how you get on!



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Good quality, affordable childcare for all children

We have the second most expensive childcare in the OECD, and yet despite the high costs, the system isn't working for parents, children, providers or the wider economy.

High quality, affordable childcare is vital social infrastructure.

1.7 million women are prevented from taking on more paid hours of work because of the cost of childcare

Every £1 invested in early years education saves £13 in later interventions

Parents pay more for childcare than they pay for housing

Employers miss out on a pool of brilliant, talented parents because we can't afford the childcare that would enable us to do more paid work. Of course, that also means that the Treasury is missing out on the taxes we would pay if we could work more.

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Other countries with similar economies to the UK have recently invested in their childcare sectors.

Canada has invested \$30 billion in childcare meaning that parents will pay no more than \$10 per day. They have done this because, following a successful test case in Quebec, they found that for every dollar they invested in childcare they got between \$1.50 and \$2.80 back into the wider economy through increased employment. Australia, New Zealand, Switzerland, Ireland and Portugal have also recently increased Government investment in childcare and the early years sector.

Analysis estimates that if women had access to adequate childcare services, and were able to work the hours they wanted, they would increase their earnings by between £7.6bn and £10.9bn per annum.

Our research with over 20,000 parents in March 2022 found that almost half are considering leaving their job due to childcare costs and government data from 2018 found that there were 870,000 stay at home mums who want to work but can't due to childcare costs and availability (that is half of all out of work mums)

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Flexible working to be the default for all jobs

Current flexible working laws do not go far enough to support employees in managing their work and home lives. Neither do they support labour market participation among parents, disabled and older workers.

Previous analysis by the TUC found that, prior to the pandemic, 30% of flexible working requests were turned down by employers. More than half (58%) of the workforce had no access to flexible working, increasing to 64% for people in working-class jobs.

The minimum six-month employment period means that employees taking up new roles are not able to request the flexibility they need. This has consequences for a broad range of workers including those living with disabilities or long term illness or older workers looking for flexibility as they approach retirement.

Further research by the TUC found that two in five mothers did not request the flexible working they needed for fear of being discriminated against.

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Our restrictive flexible working laws mean that employers are missing out too. Flexible working is linked to lower staff absence and increased levels of staff retention, engagement and wellbeing.

One in three workers say the lack of flexible working available to them is one of the reasons they have considered leaving their job.

Research by Sir Robert McAlpine and campaigner, Anna Whitehouse, estimated that rejecting flexible working requests was costing employers in the region of £2bn in staff absence and turnover.

To increase take up of flexible working and to create a cultural shift in how flexible working is viewed by employers. We want to see an advertising duty which would mean employers have to state the types of flexible working available in a job advert, unless they had a good business reason not to.

We call on the government to bring forward primary legislation through an employment bill to strengthen rights in a way that makes genuine flexible working the default for workers in the UK.

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Properly paid parental leave for all parents

Parental leave in the UK is poorly paid and reinforces mothers as the primary 'natural' caregiver. Currently, an employed pregnant woman is entitled to take up to 52 weeks of maternity leave. However only 39 weeks of that is paid: six weeks paid at 90% of salary and the rest paid at a meagre £156.66 per week.

Self-employed women have even less entitlement. If you qualify, you can get between £27 to £156.66 a week for 39 weeks. Adoption leave is paid at the same rate – £156.66 for 39 weeks – but only for one parent.

Employed fathers receive just two weeks of statutory paternity pay at £156.66 per week. The numbers of employed dads taking paternity leave fell from 213,500 in 2017/18 to 170,000 in 2020/21

There is currently no paid leave available to self-employed dads and partners or to adoptive parents of either sex who are self-employed.

To date, the Government's solution to equal parenting has been the Shared Parental Leave system which allows mothers to share up to 50 weeks of her maternity leave and up to 37 weeks of her maternity pay with her partner.

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Currently uptake sits at about 3-4%. In most relationships the dad will be the higher earner and so it is not financially viable for him to share leave that is paid at £156.66 a week.

There is a dad-shaped hole in our parental leave system, and consequently in the lives of our children. Existing parental leave policies frame fatherhood as dispensable and reinforce gendered stereotypes about who performs care.

They also fail to recognise the different ways in which people come to parenthood and the diversity of families in present-day Britain. All of this results in mothers taking more time out of work to care for their children because fathers can't, leading to an embedding of the gender pay gap.

Want more?

We've got even more stats and research on our website PregnantThenScrewed.com/march-of-the-mummies-demands/

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