

## *JCSA Networking Parents*

Conference Call • November 17, 2004

**Topic:** Ann Hartman Luban's article, *Sequencing* and 60 Minutes Segment, *Staying Home*

**★Overview:**

Highlighted our group name change to "JCSA Networking Parents" in order for us to get recognition as a group; Brenda Gevertz, Exec Dir. of JCSA is looking for funding opportunities for group. With support from JCSA (the Jewish Communal Service Association), we will have a formal website and a location to ultimately develop links to part time job opportunities, telecommuting info and /or job sharing and professional growth. In addition we hope to add other relevant links and be a resource for parents in the same situation. There is tremendous opportunity for this group to grow and to become an advocacy body.

**★Responses to 60 Minutes Transcript:**

- We talked about the glass ceiling and the expectation that we would break it, but instead we're opting out. Do we feel guilty about this? Our group helps to validate our choice.
- Commented on the women in the 60 minutes transcript who seemed very self-centered, i.e. did not say that they wanted to be home because it was best for their children, but because they wanted to experience their children.
- Disagreed with the notion raised in the 60 minutes transcript that women who leave the workforce made it more difficult for those who stay
- Agreed with the idea that the Feminist movement is about choice, choosing either to work or to stay home (provided one has the financial wherewithal to choose).

**★Responses to Sequencing Article:**

- Article focused on issue of staying 'out of work' and did not focus on issue of 're-entry'
- Seems like the issue of 'taking a break' is getting more attention as the 'DETOUR' (along with other terminology—'sequencing', 'detours' etc)
- What do the parents who decide not to leave the workplace b/c of desire or other obligations feel?
- Are we getting reassurance about our decision when people say "If you are a good professional there will be a job waiting for you" ?
- If you re-enter the work force, you will need to show what you have done while taking 'time away' and not be defensive about it.

**★Questions:**

**Employer Backlash**

Will employers not want to hire young women again for fear of them leaving?

Who thought of the idea of women taking time off anyway?

What about the men leaving their positions?

Do men have support from other dads and / or networks for dads who feel isolated?

**Family Friendly Work Environments**

How do we create meaningful high quality - yet part time job opportunities?

Job-sharing is a good option in our field when there are lots of night and weekend hours expected of us.

Is 'family friendly policy' only about flex time, shorter work weeks, paid maternity leave, more sick/leave time?

Being family friendly is both a male and a female issue.

Why aren't organizations more open to family-friendly policies?

Maybe they're afraid that they will cost them more or because of the fear that if they give an inch, we'll take a mile.

Are there various needs among professionals taking time off to raise their children?

- a. level one, new families, young children w/o burden of Jewish educational costs
- b. level two, families with young and/or multiple children with the burden of Jewish educational costs.

**Work Place Evolution**

How can we get organizations to understand ideas of part time work and job-sharing?

Employers need to think about options for their employees; especially when they are highly valued. It's difficult to find part-time positions, especially out of one's home community. We have to get organizations to think outside of the "geographic box" and be open to telecommuting. This is especially true for organizations in New York.

We need to cultivate people in positions of power to create part-time, telecommuting and flex-time jobs. Maybe we can highlight some examples of success in these areas in a future issue of the Journal.

On the Flip-Side?

There may be economic impacts working in our favor. As organizations have less capital to spend on training and benefits, hiring former full-time professionals who are already well trained for part-time work may be more appealing.

**★Additional Thoughts:**

- Talked about the Sulam manual that JCPC (Jewish Communal Professionals of Chicago) is in the final stages of producing and how this might be helpful in highlighting success models for women.

- Those who attended the GA shared information about their experiences. One professional shared a conversation she had with a fellow executive who detailed the lengths to which he would go in order to keep one of his top employees, yet – the female professional (after being offered various options) still managed to ‘opt-out’
- What we advocate for (in the workplace) may set the stage for the future.
- It was important to have the ‘Sequencing’ article in the Journal, but how else can we keep this issue in people’s consciousness?
- How can we stay on the radar screen of former colleagues when we are at home full-time? Talked about attending JCSA local group events, at least in some communities.