



Choosing to Stay at Home

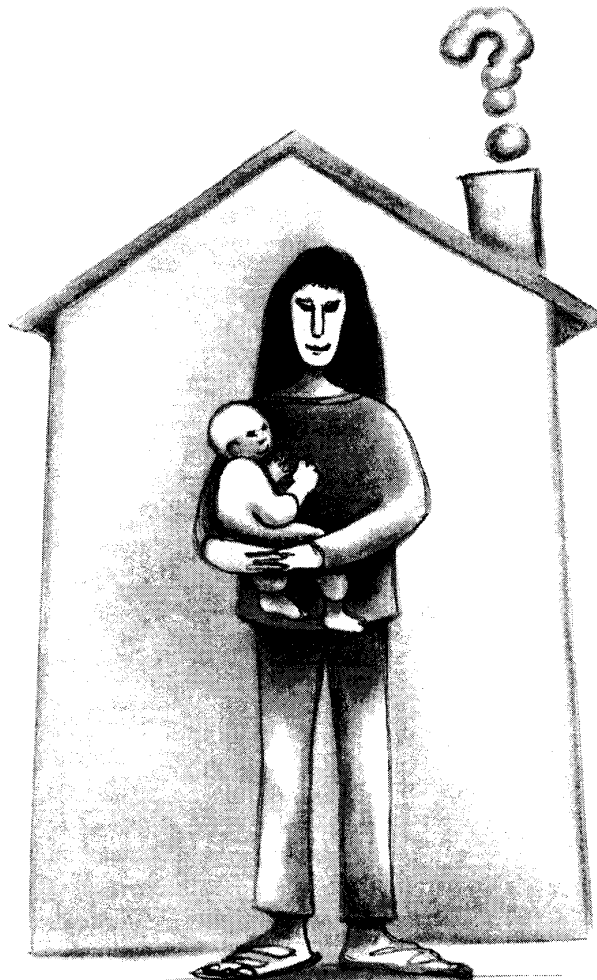
Is It for You?

There are many reasons that parents give for why they want to stay home full time to raise their children. Some of their arguments include:

- They know that childhood is a temporary time that can't be recaptured.
- They feel more committed to their families than to their jobs or careers.
- They don't want a "stranger" raising their child 40 hours a week.
- They know that the first three years of a child's development is important and believe that care and training from the parents is best.
- They feel child care is lacking.

Is It For You?

Staying at home means making sacrifices. Can you do without your income? Can you live without a new car? A larger home? Luxuries such as eating out and buying new furniture? Can you feel fulfilled without your career?



POSSIBLE RISKS OF STAYING AT HOME

- less income and medical benefits
- loss of self-esteem
- resentment from your partner
- boredom
- responsibility for virtually all of the household chores
- depression

Making It Work for You

- Make a list of expenses, listing luxuries separately.
- Cut what you can from the budget.
- Get used to clipping coupons, saving discount tickets, buying items on sale, turning off the lights when you leave a room, etc.
- Begin networking with other stay-at-home parents to help you gain ideas and self-esteem.
- Make a household management plan with your partner. Decide in advance who's responsible for what, taking into account the time you each have and your strengths.

Dads at Home

More and more fathers are taking time off from their careers to raise their children at home. Studies show that when fathers are directly involved in child rearing, their children are more socially responsible and sensitive. It has also been shown that fathers have a positive impact on the academic successes of their children.