

The MAHMifesto

A voice for mothers wanting the choice to be primary carers



**mothers
at home
matter.**



Mothers at Home Matter too!

Mothers at Home Matter is the voice for the many mothers who want to be at home to bring up their children yet who are rarely represented in public debate or in policy circles. One freedom the average mother no longer has is to choose to be at home to care for her children.

Established over 30 years ago in response to increasing pressure on mothers to return to the workplace, before either they or their children were ready, our aims today are much the same:

1

PROMOTE

A better understanding of children's developmental need for loving and consistent care.

2

CAMPAIGN

For an economic level playing field for parents who stay at home.

3

ENHANCE

The status and self esteem of mothers at home, representing their voice in policy debates.



What is the impact & cost of long hours for children in external settings?



Why does the UK not recognise the family in its taxation system?



Loving maternal care has a positive long-term impact on child health & well being.

1. Needs of the child

Consistency, attention, time and love are key in a child's development.

Mothers wish to be with their children, very young children are designed to be with their mothers. Yet nearly all government and party policies on the 'family' have focussed on separating mothers and infants at an earlier age and for much longer hours.

Growth of the economy, unburdening mothers from the shackles of care or plugging the family income gap have been the drivers for increasing subsidised third party childcare.

It is essential that we consider what children actually need to thrive.

'Significant advances have been made in neuroscience research on infant brain development which confirms the infant's need for early attachment to at least one primary caregiver.'
Society for Research in Child Development, Dec 2014

'A secure primary attachment relationship has a protective effect on the developing brain. When a child's first 3 years are right, it brings huge benefits not just for the child but for the whole of society. The context of early care is critical for it can literally shape the brain's architecture.'

www.whataboutthechildren.org.uk



The decline of the mother at home and the addiction to being busy is a leading factor in the rise of depression and anxiety in our children. Could these hectic lifestyles be depriving young people of something they need as much as oxygen: attention & time?

Esther Rantzen, Founder of Childline 2017

'Our earliest relationships, environments and experiences can profoundly shape the developing brain, which is characterised by exceptional plasticity during this period. This in turn influences the adults we become and also how we parent the next generation.'

Royal Foundation - Centre for Early Childhood

For further research please see:

Mothers Matter Podcast - Mothers and Guilt: bit.ly/3rT8dJ8

Royal Foundation - Centre for Early Childhood Report: bit.ly/3fV1icT

MAHM Report for the Early Years Commission bit.ly/3rMTCyZ

RESEARCH INTO EFFECTS ON CHILDREN

The more hours a child spends in childcare, away from their mothers, the greater the negative effect on emotional development and behaviour.

(Jay Belsky's Emmanuel Lecture: Developmental risks (still) associated with early Child Care.)

Hearing their mother's voice helps children manage their emotions, reduces their stress, increases their feelings of well-being, helps babies recognise emotions in others, helps babies learn language etc, and so

ON. (Beauchemin et al: Mother and stranger: an electrophysiological study of voice processing in newborns; Grossman et al: The developmental origins of voice processing in human brains; Abrams et al: Neural circuits underlying mother's voice perception predict social communication abilities in children.)



2. Economic Justice

The average mother no longer has the freedom or choice to be based at home to care for her child.

Treating the family as a unit should be the first principle of taxation. Individual income is not a measure of how well off the family is as it does not take into account the number of dependants. Net household income is a better measure.

MAHM campaigns for:

– An **economic level playing field** for parents who stay at home with the option of a transferable tax allowance.

– **Fair taxation** for those who stay home to care and those who are in paid employment.

– **Childcare subsidies to follow the child**, with parents able to choose whether they use it to stay home, or give it to a grandparent, childminder or external setting for care.



– **Child benefit to be distributed fairly.**

The UK is one of the only countries in the world ignoring the dependent nature of the family in its taxation system.

The income tax system has not taken proper account of families since the 1960s but the problems families face today stem from the introduction of “independent taxation” in 1990.

www.taxandthefamily.org

Current anomalies & unfairness from the UK tax system include:

– Households on £30k, where a parent stays at home, are taxed double the amount as those where both parents are in paid work.

– Some families are financially better off separated than together by £12k.

– Some families who have to pay Child Benefit Tax Charge are in the poorer 50% of the population while some of the richest families (in the top 10%) continue to receive child benefit.

– Our taxation system, together with the welfare system, catches over half of all families with children in a tax trap. It is almost impossible for primary earners to bring home extra disposable income, which in turn forces the mother into paid work to plug the income gap.

For further research please see:

Tax - Who Cares About the Family: bit.ly/3tYfCK0

Tax and the Family: taxandthefamily.org

Mothers Matter Podcast - Tax: bit.ly/33QOr1o

MAHM's Taxation Inquiry Report: bit.ly/3IDq4e8

Chart showing extra tax paid annually (& mthly) by Single Income Families

Total Household gross income	Annual tax & NI paid by Single Income Family (SIF)	Annual tax & NI paid by Double Income Family - 2 equal earners	Higher rate Child Benefit tax charge (2 children)	Extra tax paid by SIF annually	Extra tax paid by SIF monthly
£	£	£	£	£	£
20,000	2,862	328		2,534	211
30,000	6,062	2,524		3,538	295
40,000	9,262	5,724		3,538	295
50,000	12,462	8,924		3,538	295
60,000	16,660	12,124	1,788	6,324	527
70,000	20,860	15,324	1,788	7,324	610

3. Valuing Care

As a society, we undervalue the role of care and undermine the role of the mother at home.

MAHM aims to enhance the status and self esteem of mothers choosing unpaid care; we represent their voice in policy debates.

Mothers who are, or who would like to be, at home are **radical and progressive by wishing to make a conscious choice to raise our own children**. We believe this is in the best interest of our families and our own fulfilment.

We challenge the notion that gender equality is achieved simply through a narrow income measurement.



The ONS calculates the value of informal childcare as £343 billion per year — 23% of GDP.

We believe that:

– Equality also lies in **valuing the role of caregiving**, which is a key priority for many mothers.

– Raising the next generation is an **important contribution** to society.

– We **save remedial costs to the economy** in minimising the adverse mental & emotional health of children.

For further support and research please see:

Mothers Matter Podcast - Family Policies: bit.ly/3G0yZEG

FaceBook Group: bit.ly/3H2FMz0

To join one of our local support groups please go to: www.mothersathomematter.com/our-community.



MOTHERS AT HOME MATTER: WHO ARE WE?

We are ordinary mothers with enquiring minds who are firmly grounded in the 21st century. We expect to re-join the workforce when this becomes compatible with the needs and the size of our families. But whilst we are needed at home we want government to recognise the social and economic value of our work and reflect this in a fairer family taxation system. Surveys show consistently that many "working" families share our views, but feel that the financial obstacles and societal pressures are too great.

All our committee members are volunteers, with many of us fitting campaigning work around our main task of raising children. Follow us online via our website or on social media to find out more.

www.mothersathomematter.com