

What am I, Chopped Liver?: A Fresh Perspective on Working with Colleagues with/without Children

A bowl of oatmeal is centered in the background of the slide. The oatmeal is a light beige color and is served in a white ceramic bowl with a thin gold rim. The bowl is filled to the brim, and the oatmeal has a slightly lumpy texture.

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**It's After
Breakfast...
Wake Up &
Let's Play!**

Intros & Role Playing

Sofia Almeda

- Registrar
- Hobbies (My kids! Doctoral studies)
- Family
- Values: Equity; Fairness

Guests/Volunteer Actors

- Professional Roles?
- Hobbies?
- Family?
- Values?

The scenario: Actor A asks to leave early on Halloween to dress his/her kids up. Actor B, as the supervisor, permits it. Sofia (presenter) protests the treatment; she does not have children. What do we do?



Numbers, Anyone?

- 70% of women with children < 18 yo participate in the workforce
- 19% of women ages 40 to 44 are childless, up from 1 in 10 in the 1970s, according to a United Nations report. That drop has accelerated in recent years:
 - birth rate fell 8% between 2007 and 2010



More Numbers

- 79% of millennials said they care more about who they are outside of work
- An August 2023 survey revealed that 45% of Americans currently experience burnout (a decrease from 58% in 2020, when the pandemic may have been causing acute stress). The primary causes of burnout include workload at 51%, staff shortages at 45%, and **work-life balance at 42%**.



What not to do...if you have kids:

- Don't assume colleagues without kids want to work >40 hours/wk
- ...assume they are okay always volunteering...EVEN IF THEY SAY THEY ARE
- ...infer that colleagues without kids don't value their personal time
- ...take advantage of flexibility
- ...assume colleagues without children...
 - Want children
 - Don't want children
 - Have decided
 - Can have children of their own



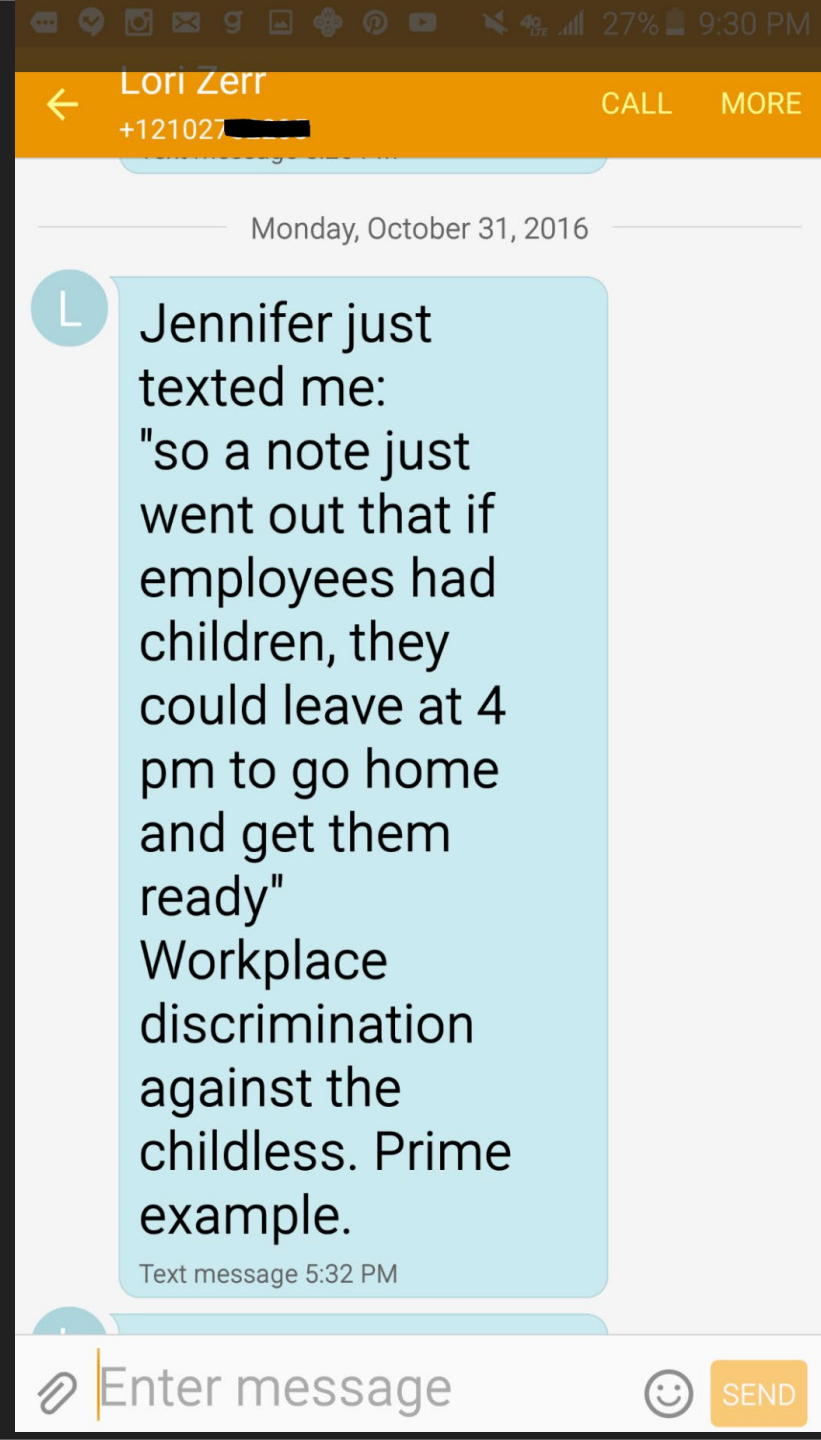
A sociologist at the University of Maine declared that for employees with no children “there’s very little that protects their time to care for themselves and their families and enjoy work-life balance.”



What to do...if you have kids:

- Do express sincere gratitude to colleagues impacted and/or that support you
- ...find ways to share the wealth
- ...consider others
- Find support with other parents (carpooling, meal sharing)
- When able, consider weekend medical appointments or first thing in the morning or last thing in the day

What's wrong with this picture?





What not to do...if you don't have kids:

- Don't make working parents feel guilty
 - Nudge gently if you think they need to gain perspective
- ...think colleagues with children LIKE being out of the office; it's hard and parents can make themselves feel guilty at times, or often
- ...assume "the other parent" should/could be doing more, or a grandparent, etc
- ...let opportunities pass you by to achieve and encourage greater equality/benefits/perks



What to do...if you don't have kids:

- Sympathize; show support if indeed you can see your colleagues stressed/guilty
- Speak up! Bottling up frustration and even anger isn't healthy and won't yield helpful change.
- Be part of the solution. Suggest ways for everyone to enjoy time off for family needs and/or self-care.
- Advocate for yourself!

Watch, Listen, Think

[https://www.cnbc.com
/video/3000215238](https://www.cnbc.com/video/3000215238)



Let's go back and discuss...

Solutions, Corrections, Perspectives

Some References

- https://www.dol.gov/wb/stats/stats_data.htm
- <http://www.cnbc.com/2013/11/06/s.html>