



**FAMILY WORKS**

Navigating earning and parenting using non-standard employment

The illustration features two families on the left. The first family consists of a man and a woman holding hands. The second family consists of a man, a woman, and two children. To the right of the text 'FAMILY WORKS' is a green spiral line that winds upwards and then downwards. The word 'WORK' is written in small capital letters at the top and bottom of the spiral, with small icons of buildings or structures next to the text.

By Julie Sommerfreund

Submitted to OCAD University  
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Design in Strategic Foresight and Innovation

Toronto, Ontario, Canada, April, 2017

© Julie Sommerfreund, 2017

## **AUTHOR'S DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this MRP. This is a true copy of the MRP, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I authorize OCAD University to lend this MRP to other institutions or individuals for the purpose of scholarly research.

I understand that my MRP may be made electronically available to the public.

I further authorize OCAD University to reproduce this MRP by photocopying or by other means, in total or in part, at the request of other institutions or individuals for the purpose of scholarly research.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## ABSTRACT

Gender inequality persists in Canada. Canadian women are more likely to work part-time, take on more household chores and earn less than men. Overall fewer women work than men in Canada; with the largest gaps in urban centres with high costs of childcare. This gender inequality exists within a regulatory system and public social programs that reinforce gender stereotypes; and, a labour market that is rapidly shifting towards non-standard employment.

This project had two goals. First, to support a human-centred design approach to developing gender equality through developing public policy, workplace practices, and social innovations. And second, to extend the understanding of how and why parents are constructing their earning and parenting roles in a variety of non-standard employment relationships

Seven heterosexual couples and one single mother who are working in non-standard employment arrangements were interviewed to understand their motivations and decision factors regarding paid employment, domestic and parenting activities; what they are looking for in earning arrangements; the challenges and benefits of their current arrangements; and, future aspirations and concerns.

The qualitative data from those interviews were used to identify to identify implications, an overall problem challenge, a set of innovation opportunities, design principles and a set of future research areas.

The parents interviewed in this project are using non-standard employment relationships to meet their own earning and parenting goals of maximizing their time with their children and both being involved parents while doing gender differently.

These parents' choices are consistent with a shifting view of domestic sharing, gender equality and a revaluing of caregiving activities in society. They could reflect a new model of earning; however, they also highlight the significant risks borne by earners in non-standard employment relationships because of a mismatch of the social safety net and shifting values.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This adventure called a Major Research Project has been a journey of exploration into a complex challenge facing society and a journey of self-discovery and personal practice development.

I want to thank all the people in my life for supporting me every step along the way.

Dean, thank you for your unending patience and support to always stay focused.

To my parents, thank you for always being there and helping me navigate this journey.

Thank you to my SFI friends – Lorraine, Marta, Adrienne, Kevin and Sean - for your coaching, guidance and friendship and for making me feel like anything is possible.

To my supervisors, Helen Kerr and Donna Lero, thank you for helping me grow through this project.

Thank you to my colleagues for your patience and trust. Thank you to Erika for always being there for me to talk through my project. Thank you to Simon for helping me transform my drawings into visuals.

Without all of you, I would not have been able to achieve this accomplishment.

Thank you.

## DEDICATION

To my grandma, your story has been a guiding light in my life and you unknowingly sparked this project a long time ago.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION .....	ii
ABSTRACT .....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
DEDICATION.....	v
LIST OF TABLES .....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	viii
CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION .....	1
CHAPTER 2 – THE CONTEXT IN WHICH PARENTS TODAY ARE CONSTRUCTING THEIR EARNING AND PARENTING ROLES.....	8
CHAPTER 3 – METHODS .....	22
CHAPTER 4 – FINDINGS .....	35
CHAPTER 5 - INNOVATION OPPORTUNITIES.....	67
CHAPTER 6 – CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH AREAS .....	75
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	81
APPENDIX A – ORTHODOXIES AND OPERATING PARAMETERS.....	91
APPENDIX B – EXPERT INTERVIEWS .....	94
APPENDIX C – PARENT INTERVIEWS .....	99

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Summary of interview participants .....	32
Table 2 Pains and gains of parents working in non-standard arrangements .....	69
Table 3 Historical orthodoxies and operating parameters of the 1940's and 1960's that are the foundations of Canada's social programs .....	91
Table 4 A comparison of historical orthodoxies and today's emerging orthodoxies	92

# LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Unbundling of work (Policy Horizons Canada 2016)..... 13

Figure 2 Simplified human centred design process (IDEO.org, 2015) ..... 23

Figure 3 The analysis synthesis bridge model (Dubberly & Evenson, 2008) ..... 23

Figure 4 Overall project approach expanding the analysis synthesis bridge model. 24

Figure 5 Personal economy mode (adapted from (Thompson, 2013))..... 28

Figure 6 Data Information Knowledge Wisdom (DIKW) Model ..... 28

Figure 7 Colour coding of participant data for synthesis and clustering of transcripts  
..... 29

Figure 8 The journey of parents engaged in non-standard employment..... 36

Figure 9 Influence of role models and rejection of role models ..... 39

Figure 10 Illustration of a participants’ families and all the people who provide care  
for their children ..... 41

Figure 11 Goals and needs of families in non-standard employment..... 43

Figure 12 A comparison of going back to standard employment compared to non-  
standard employment after having a baby ..... 52

Figure 13 The narrative journey of how families (who participated in the interview)  
arrive in non-standard employment ..... 59

Figure 14 The tensions of the ideal parent and ideal worker needs..... 63

Figure 15 Comparison of standard employment and non-standard employment  
earner and organization responsibilities ..... 64

Figure 16 Future scenarios ..... 79

Figure 17 Recruitment through social media ..... 101



# CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

## SETTING THE EMPLOYMENT AND CARING CONTEXT

Gender inequality is a worldwide focus. Since 1947, The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women has been dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women across the world. Most recently, in 2017, the Commission focused on “Women’s economic empowerment in the changing world of work”. This focus recognizes that actions to promote gender equality need to consider the rapidly changing world of work (Commission on the Status of Women, 2017). Gender equality varies around the world. Gender disparities in health, education, employment opportunities, and political participation indicate a loss in potential human development with consequences for individuals and families as well as for nations’ economic and social development (United Nations Development Programme, 2016).

## GENDER INEQUALITY PERSISTS IN CANADA

Despite significant progress and commitments by governments, gender inequalities persist within Canada’s workforce and the distribution of caregiving responsibilities. In 2017, Statistics Canada conducted a detailed analysis of current gender inequalities and shifts over time in “Women in Canada: A Gender-based Statistical Report” by Statistics Canada (Moyser, 2017). A high-level summary of those statistics is included here.

Since the post-World War II period, there has been a dramatic increase in women in the labour force, however women still participate in Canada’s labour market at a lower rate than men. In 2015, the gender participation gap in Canada was 8.9 percentage points, with 82.0% of women in the labour market, compared to 90.9% of men. The participation gaps vary across the country with the highest gaps in census metropolitan areas with high day-care fees such as Toronto, Ontario where the gap is 12.6%. Additionally, women perform fewer hours of paid work per week on average than men (Moyser, 2017).

Generally, women spend more time on housework and childcare than men. The analysis found that the rate of participation of women in the labour market and the number of hours worked by women was associated with the presence and age of the youngest child in the household, while the linkage was not found with men. Since 1976, the association has weakened but still remains (Moyser, 2017).

Women are more likely than men to work part-time. In 2015, three quarters (75.8%) of those working part-time were women. Of those who worked part-time, 67.2% did so voluntarily and “caring for children” was the top reason for that choice (Moyser, 2017).

Women’s careers are also more frequently interrupted than men’s and for longer durations. In 2015, more women were absent from work than men, and were more likely to be away for involuntary reasons such as their own illness, disability or familial reasons (Moyser, 2017). Additionally, women take the majority of parental leave in Canada. Although Canada’s parental leave program (excluding Quebec) allows both men and women to take parental leave, uptake by men has been limited. In 2013/14 fathers (excluding those in Québec) accounted for 13.3 % of parents who claimed biological parental leave benefits and approximately 20 % of parents who claimed parental leave benefits following an adoption (Lero, 2015). There are many factors that influence which parent chooses to take parental leave, such as family finances, workplace cultures and parenting interests. Social policy also plays an important role. In Canada, outside of Quebec, parents are required to make a choice about whether and to what extent both parents might formally share parental leave, while in Québec, the Québec Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP) includes leave that is exclusively for fathers. Additionally, the Québec program offers a far more generous income replacement rate than the rest of Canada. This has made a dramatic difference in participation by fathers. Since introduction of the program in 2006, fathers’ participation has nearly tripled there, increasing from 27.8 % to 83.0% in 2013 (Lero, 2015).

Women are concentrated in industries that reflect traditional gender roles at more than double the rate of men. The same three industries that had the greatest share of women in 1987 also did in 2015 – namely healthcare assistance (74.1% women), accommodation and food services (59.1%) and educational services (52.1%) – making up 41.0% of total women working. In comparison, 18.4% of men worked in three industries with the greatest of share of men - namely construction (88.3% men); forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction (80.5%); and utilities (77.8%) (Moyser, 2017). Most women are employed in traditionally-female occupations – around 56% of women were employed in occupations involving the “5 Cs”: caring, clerical, catering, cashiering and cleaning. Little has changed since 1987 when 59.2% of women were employed in these occupations. Little change has also been noted in men, in 2015 – 17.1% of men were employed in traditionally female occupations compared to 15.7% in 1987. In contrast, women’s representation in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields is much lower – in

2015, 24.4% of people in professional scientific occupations were women. In recent years, STEM has been a particular focus because these occupations are well-paid (Moyser, 2017).

Within all industries, women are typically employed in occupations at lower levels than men, even in industries dominated by women. For example, in the accommodation and food services industries, most chefs and cooks were men while the majority of servers, attendants, kitchen helpers and support personnel were women (Moyser, 2017).

Additionally, women earn less than men. Specifically, women earn \$0.87 for every dollar earned by men. The gender pay gap is the result of a combination of factors – including differential allocation of female and male workers across occupations; the difference in how female-dominated occupations are valued, relative to male-dominated jobs at the same skill level; wage discrimination and within occupation selection of jobs that allow for caregiving activities. An analysis by Goldin (2014) found that the gender pay gap is distributed across sectors, but also within domains. Most notably, women are drawn to temporal flexibility while men are drawn to earning. She argues that since women continued to predominantly be the primary caregiver in families, they are drawn to work arrangements within companies that allow them to do social reproduction activities alongside earning. However, these arrangements are more often found in positions with lower wages than in positions where the time expectations are less flexible and the workplace culture requires workers who are available always.

## **GOVERNMENT FOCUS ON GENDER EQUALITY**

Despite years of efforts on these issues, these statistics paint a picture of persistent systemic gender inequalities across Canada. As a result, Canada's Federal Government and provincial governments have committed to reducing gender inequalities and recognize the intersecting identity factors such as ethnicity, age, income, and sexual orientation that compound inequalities.

In the Federal Government's 2017 budget, several commitments were made to reduce the gender wage gap, encourage greater workforce participation among women, and help to combat poverty and violence. Additionally, a gender-based analysis of the budget was completed to assess if other commitments would affect men and women differently (Government of Canada, 2017).

Similarly, in 2014, the Ontario Government's launched a Steering Committee to develop a strategy to reduce the gender pay gap. Activities are now underway through a working group to implement the strategy (Government of Ontario, 2016).

The activities focus on:

- Shared parental leaves
- A gender workplace analysis tool
- A social awareness strategy to help understand the effects of gender bias, the gender wage gap, and the importance of closing the gap
- Reviewing pay equity legislation

Many advocacy groups, however, stress that these initiatives do not go far enough to address gender inequality and that more action is required (Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action (FAFIA), 2016).

## **ADDRESSING GENDER EQUALITY IN A RAPIDLY CHANGING WORK WORLD**

As Canadian governments work to address this challenge, they will need to consider the systemic structures, policies and cultural norms that contribute and reinforce gender inequities, and better understand the motivations and drivers for individual decisions around earning and caring. Ultimately, the system level statistics are a sum of these individual decisions.

Additionally, as recognized by the United Nations, governments will need to develop interventions within the context of a rapidly changing work world that is shifting both the nature of work and the employment relationship (Commission on the Status of Women, 2017).

The nature of work is shifting due to several economic and technological shifts that are underway. Overall, the nature of work is shifting towards a virtual worldwide marketplace and from standard employment relationships to non-standard employment relationships.

Non-standard employment encompasses a broad spectrum of earning arrangements outside of continuing full-time employment by a single employer, and includes temporary employment, casual employment, contract employment, self-employment without paid help, part-time employment, part-time employment where workers want more hours, "involuntary part-time", and holding multiple jobs but earnings fall below median wage (Government of Ontario, 2015).

During the 1940's to 1970's, most earners in Canada were in standard employment relationships with employers where they earned a wage that would cover their family expenses and have sufficient benefits to cover unexpected events and retirement savings. However, over the last several decades, the number of people not in standard employment relationships increased. From 1997 to 2015, non-standard employment grew at an average annual rate of 2.3% per year, nearly twice as fast as standard employment (Mitchell & Murray, 2016). Statistics Canada reported there was a 57% increase in the prevalence of temporary workers and part-time workers in Canada's workforce (Johal & Thirgood, 2016).

In addition to increasing non-standard employment, precarious work is also on the rise. Precarious work is defined as work for remuneration characterized by uncertainty, low income, and limited social benefits and statutory entitlements (Mitchell & Murray, 2016). In the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area over the last two decades, there was a 50% increase in prevalence in precarious work (PEPSO, McMaster and United Way, 2013).

## **THE NATURE OF EARNING AND CARING ACTIVITIES WITHIN FAMILIES IS CHANGING**

Not only is the nature of work changing, but so is the nature of earning and caring within families. Since the post-World War II era with the large increase of women in the workplace, the nature of earning and caring roles within families has shifted. Despite the lower participation of women in the workforce, in Canada, dual-earner households have become the norm. Since 1976, the proportion of dual-earners has increased from 36 % to 69 % in 2015. In most families, both parents are working full-time. In 2015, among dual-earner couples with children, 75 % had two full-time working parents, compared to 1976 when it was 66%. Correspondingly, there was a decline in couples with full-time working husbands and part-time working wives (Statistics Canada, 2016b). Additionally, men and women are increasingly supportive of domestic sharing and shifting away from the belief that domestic work is solely the domain of women (Lyonette & Crompton, 2015). Attitudes have been shifting through generations as they are shaped through examples and role models over time (Marshall, 2011).

Gender equality plays out at the intersection of these shifting earning and caregiving activities, and is negotiated within families. Parents are constructing their earning and caregiving roles within the opportunities, constraints and resources that they have. For many families, despite increasing work demands, there has been little

reduction in parents' time and involvement with their children. Intensive mothering and engaged/involved fathering are emerging patterns of caregiving choices made by Canadian parents (Daly, Ashbourne, & Hawkins, 2008). At the same time, many workers feel overloaded and burnt out trying to meet the demands of their workplaces and home responsibilities (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2016; Statistics Canada, 2016a).

Much research has explored gender equality as it relates to earning and parenting roles within heterosexual couples. Studies have explored the effects of the dual-earner model on work-family conflict, within-couple conflict, gender roles and sharing of domestic duties, and attitudes of scarcity and abundance as it relates to women working and the effects of motherhood on career progression (Korabik, Lero, & Whitehead, 2008). Most of this research has focused on families in which parents are both earning in standard employment relationships which reflects most circumstances of Canadian families. However, as the nature of earning shifts, it is important to grow the understanding of experiences of parents in non-standard employment relationships. Few studies have focused on parents in a broad spectrum of non-standard employment relationships. Hillbrecht and Lero (2014) studied experiences of self-employed parents while Pagnan *et al* (2011) focused on parents in shift-work.

## **PROJECT PURPOSE**

The purpose of this project was to support a human-centred design approach to addressing gender equality through developing future public policy, workplace practices, and social innovations.

Specifically, this project seeks to extend the understanding of how and why parents are constructing their earning and parenting roles in a variety of non-standard employment relationships. The variety of non-standard employment relationships include self-employed, temporary contracts, freelance, seasonal workers, gig workers and selling through an online marketplace. This variety enables comparison of values and attitudes across employment types.

The project was conducted using a human-centred design approach focusing on the first phase of the design process – building empathy and understanding of the human at the centre of the design process. This was achieved through a literature review to capture the current context in which parents are constructing their

earning and parenting roles. Qualitative interviews with parents working in non-standard employment were used to capture the lived experience of parents.

Qualitative interviews with parent couples with at least one parent in non-standard employment were used to capture the following participant experiences:

- Decision factors and motivations regarding paid employment, domestic and parenting activities;
- What participant parents are looking for in earning arrangements;
- The challenges and benefits of participants' current arrangements; and
- Future aspirations and concerns

The insights from these interviews were then used to identify implications, an overall problem challenge, a set of innovation opportunities, design principles and a set of future research areas.

## **REPORT STRUCTURE**

The report is structured as follows. Chapter 2 summarizes the broader context in which parents find themselves and are constructing their earning and parenting activities. Chapter 3 describes the qualitative research methods used in this project. Chapter 4 summarizes the project findings and implications. Chapter 5 lays the foundation for a human-centred design approach and identifies innovation opportunities. Chapter 6 concludes the report by summarizing the project outcomes, study limitations and future research areas. The report is followed by a series of appendices documenting the research tools and extended analyses.

## **CHAPTER 2 – THE CONTEXT IN WHICH PARENTS TODAY ARE CONSTRUCTING THEIR EARNING AND PARENTING ROLES**

Parents are constructing their earning and parenting roles within the broader financialized capitalist society that diminishes capacity for activities outside of earning, shifting societal values and norms related to earning and parenting, and the shifting nature of work. They are also operating within a public policy and social programs' context that reflects an old model of earning and caring that is based on, and reinforces, traditional gender roles. This public system is currently being challenged and disrupted. It is within this context of an unfreezing system that parents are constructing their earning and parenting roles. An unfreezing system occurs when the predominant system is challenged and there are desires for a new future (Lewin, 1947).

### **DIMINISHING CAPACITY FOR SOCIAL REPRODUCTION**

Today's financialized capitalistic society diminishes the capacity of individuals to contribute to social reproduction activities, and has resulted in a current crisis of care (Fraser, 2016). Social reproduction as defined by Fraser (2016) is a set of social capacities: birthing and raising children, caring for friends and family members, maintaining households and broader communities and sustaining connections. Similarly, Bezanson (2006) defines social reproduction as the diverse everyday tasks required to regenerate and maintain the working population.

Historically, social reproduction was considered through the lens of heterosexual couples where social reproduction was considered women's work and typically performed without pay, while production was paid work undertaken by men. However, with the rise of the dual-earner family and increasing expectations from workplaces, the ability for individuals to contribute to social reproduction activities has been significantly diminished. In Canada, the majority of families are dual-earner families in which both parents work for pay full time (Statistics Canada, 2016b).

Fraser (2016) argues that the tension between earning and social production is inherent to capitalist society, but the form of the tension has been addressed in different ways through history.



Fraser (2016, p. 100) states:

***“every form of capitalist society harbours a deep-seated social-reproductive ‘crisis tendency’ or contradiction: on the one hand, social reproduction is a condition of possibility for sustained capital accumulation; on the other, capitalism’s orientation to unlimited accumulation tends to destabilize the very processes of social reproduction on which it relies.”***

Social reproduction has shifted from exclusively the role of women, to being socially supported by the State (such as subsidized childcare), to the current period in which social reproduction has been commodified for those who can afford it and often provided by those who cannot in exchange for low wages (Fraser, 2016). An example of how social reproduction has been commodified can be found in the proliferation of online on-demand services such as Handy for your house cleaning, TaskRabbit for your household chores, Urbery and Grocery Gateway for grocery delivery services, Simply Laundry for laundry delivery services and others to support the social capacities of raising children and maintaining households.

The diminished capacity for social reproduction through the dual-earner model and the externalizing of the State of social reproduction activities through disinvestment in social welfare is challenging how parents construct their earning and caring roles. For example, parents are faced with limited options for childcare services for infants and toddlers and before and after school care for school-age children. In Canada, there is an inadequate supply of affordable, high quality childcare. Childcare affordability in Canada remains a persistent challenge for many parents. According to the OECD, Canada has the highest childcare costs amongst 35 OECD countries with costs varying across the country (OECD, 2016). In Toronto, childcare can cost up to \$1676 per month (Moyser, 2017). Additionally, the availability of childcare spots presents a challenge to many parents with wait lists for regulated childcare facilities in almost all cities surveyed in 2016 (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2016).

It is in this context of competing pressures for earning and social reproduction that parents are constructing their earning and caring roles.

## SHIFTING SOCIETAL VALUES AND NORMS

Parents are also operating within shifting societal values and norms related to earning and parenting. These values, norms and attitudes are influencing decisions and setting expectations for Canadians.

### **Shifting gender roles**

Gender roles are changing and many parents are trying to adopt a norm of egalitarianism. Since the 1970s, there has been a shift away from the belief that domestic work is solely the domain of women to a belief that it is a shared activity between men and women (Lyonette & Crompton, 2015). Expectations of a more egalitarian division of labour and roles continues to evolve and are linked to generational changes (Marshall, 2011).

### **Value of caregiving**

The overall value of caregiving activities in society, however, is under debate. The push for women in the workplace and liberal-individualism, has created an unintended consequence of diminishing the value of caring and domestic activities. Liberal-individualism ideology places the needs of each persons above the needs of the community.

Fraser (2016, p. 114) argues,

*“The dominant imaginary is liberal-individualist and gender-egalitarian—women are considered the equals of men in every sphere, deserving of equal opportunities to realize their talents, including—perhaps especially—in the sphere of production. Reproduction, by contrast, appears as a backward residue, an obstacle to advancement that must be sloughed off, one way or another, en route to liberation”.*

The value of caregiving activities by society is also reflected in the low wages paid to workers in caregiving activities such as family care providers, personal services workers, and other female-dominated industries (Moyser, 2017). Often these jobs are delivered by immigrant workers who have emigrated through state programs to fill the gap for care workers. This creates a chain of care gaps as lower paid women perform the caring labour previously performed by the wealthier women.

At the same time, there is a growing movement across North America to increase the value of caregiving activities as a means towards gender equality and to support the aging population (Fast, 2015). The movement seeks to increase the value of social reproduction activities through advancing workers' rights and increasing wages for those who provide social reproduction activities within the paid market. The movement also seeks to increase the value of social reproduction activities that are unpaid in the home. In the United States, the "Who Cares" coalition was launched by Caring Across Generations, Care.com and New America to redefine the social and economic value of care and caregiving (Caring Across Generations, 2016).

The increased value of caring activities in society is also demonstrated by the increasing involvement of fathers in parenting, and the growing involvement of Canadians in providing care and support to aging and disabled family members. Recent research by Fast (2015) found that 30-35% of the Canadian work force is involved in providing care and support to an aging or disabled family member and that 80-85% of all caregiving is done by family members. Despite the mounting evidence for support to care for the elderly, there is still no comprehensive strategy to support caregivers. Eligibility requirements for support from the few programs that exist are quite tight and limit the ability of caregivers and families to access them. As the population ages, increasingly Canadians will be providing care to family members and taking on the associated economic, social and health costs. The combination of increasing pressures that are stretching families' abilities to undertake social reproduction activities and the increasing demand for elder care is leading to a growing demand to value and recognize caregivers' contributions and their right to support (Fast, 2015).

### **Societal expectations of men and women**

There are also expectations set upon parents either explicitly or implicitly through societal norms of the 'ideal worker', the 'ideal mother', the 'good provider' and the 'engaged father' (Daly et al., 2008). These too are shifting, but persist in society. Along with these norms is the growing trend towards intensive parenting and increasing expectations of workplaces for employees to work longer hours and/or more unpredictable hours. Intensive parenting is based on a parental view that family ought to be organized around caring for children, with full participation from both parents (Hertz, 2006).

The ideal worker norm sets out the expectation that workers are always available, totally committed to their jobs and prioritize work over family. The ideal worker expectations originate from an organizational theory of jobs being filled by a

disembodied worker who exists only for work who does not have external priorities that may impinge on work (Acker, 1990). The closest to this ideal originated in industrial capitalism when the (male) worker's life focused on his job while his wife took care of his needs and his children's needs. Although this reality was hard for many to meet, the concept of the ideal adult worker persists today in organizational theory. The ideal worker is expressed through cultural workplace expectations of always being available, committed to work and willing to sacrifice family for work (Williams, 2000). The blurring of work and home life through technology further enables the expectations of being always available (Glavin, Schieman, & Reid, 2011).

Ideal worker expectations play an important role in an individual's experience of work-life conflict and integration as it can conflict with other norms and expectations. For example, women experience distress and guilt as a result of contact from the workplace outside of work hours as it blurs into family life (Glavin et al., 2011). The guilt may be linked to the persisting belief that the "ideal mother" is the primary caregiver (Borelli, Nelson, River, Birken, & Moss-Racusin, 2016). Expectations of women as the primary caregiver include undertaking the majority of domestic duties and selecting earning opportunities that provide flexibility to support the unexpected demands of child raising. Men also experience work-life conflict and are shaped through shifting expectations for men as fathers. The initial social construction of men was through the "good father" and the "good provider" or "good worker" role that provides economic provision, and is now shifting towards the "involved father" who contributes to the emotional wellbeing and physical needs of their children (Daly et al., 2008; Thebaud & Pedulla, 2016).

## CHANGING NATURE OF WORK

### **Shift towards non-standard employment and virtual work**

As parents construct their earning and caring roles they are making earning choices within a shifting labour market. Although most Canadians today are engaged in full-time standard employment relationships, non-standard employment is the fastest growing part of the economy. From 1997 to 2016 there was a 57% increase in part-time and temporary workers in Canada. In 1976, part-time workers accounted for 8.6% of Canada's workforce and in 2016 they account for 13.5%; while temporary workers have increased from 12.5% in 1976 to 19.6% in 2016 (Johal & Thirgood, 2016).

In addition to the employment relationship, the nature of earning is changing for both skilled and low skilled earners across the labour market. Earning is likely

becoming more virtual with non-standard schedules. The emerging digital economy is creating a dramatic increase and drive towards virtual workers who will compete through an online global digital labour marketplace. According to Policy Horizons Canada (2016), virtual earning is likely to be part of most Canadians work experience by 2030. Canadians will be competing in a borderless marketplace through their internet connections advertising their skills to find contracts with employers all over the world.



*Figure 1 Unbundling of work (Policy Horizons Canada 2016)*

Companies are breaking down jobs to their task level, moving away from career employment through full time and part time jobs into contracts, projects, tasks, micro tasks and subsequently automation (see Figure 1). By unbundling work, companies can adapt to changing skill needs. It also allows them to cut costs and realize operational gains (Johal & Thirgood, 2016; Policy Horizons Canada, 2016).

Over 145 online work platforms have emerged over the last several years. These platforms act as intermediaries for buying and selling labour for all types of work across the economy. Freelancers can find projects through platforms like Upwork and

Toptal while task-oriented work like graphic design is exchanged through platforms like Fiverr. Microtasks like “clickwork” in the cloud are exchanged on sites like Amazon Mechanical Turk. Online platforms for physical services, such as domestic services and ride hailing are also growing on platforms such as Handy, TaskRabbit and Uber. Online marketplaces for goods have also grown such as Etsy – an online marketplace for crafts and clothing (Smith, 2016).

The acceleration and proliferation of online platforms that support the exchange of labour that crosses geographic boundaries have dramatically shifted how people secure earning opportunities. The technology enables people to provide labour to more than one company or “boss” (Policy Horizons Canada, 2016).

Today, a small portion of individuals earning in non-standard employment arrangement are operating through these online marketplaces. McKinsey Global Institute estimates that 15 % of independent workers are using the platforms (Manyika et al., 2016); however, this digital transformation is expected to grow rapidly.

Parents are constructing their earning and caring configurations within the context of the current shifting options for earning and the emerging opportunities. Women, were historically and are also today being encouraged into non-standard employment relationships as a way to earn and care more easily (Luckman, 2015; Schwarz, 2016; Slaughter, 2015). Historically, the iconic “Kelly Girl” campaigns constructed a narrative of temporary office work as a way for women to supplement the family income. The company’s advertisements depicted white women who were doing work for a little extra spending money or to find an activity to inspire them outside the home (Hatton, 2008). Today, blogposts, popular media and online marketplaces like Etsy and terms like Mompreneurs encourage women to use non-standard employment to earn and provide care (Schwarz, 2016). The gendering of the non-standard employment option reinforces the “women as primary caregivers” norm and encourages the move out of the standard employment system.

In the midst of the shifting labour market and shifting social norms, parents are also influenced through the gender equality movement that is calling for women and men to ‘do gender’ (and work) differently (Luckman, 2015). Researchers, such as Lyonette (2015), emphasize the need for men to take on more domestic tasks to enable women to assume greater responsibility in the workplace. She argues that the pressure of full-time employment is incompatible with the domestic responsibilities of parents and adults more generally.

### **Emerging strategies to support earning and caring activities in standard employment**

In addition to the broad shifts towards non-standard employment, the options for parents within standard-employment is shifting. Some standard employment workplaces including governments are wrestling with how to support earners in standard employment to support earning and caring activities. This includes salary top-up’s for parental leave, programs for flexible work schedules, telecommuting and compressed work weeks (Canada’s Top 100 Employers, 2017). In response to the increasing challenges of earners and carers, Canada’s federal government launched a review of flexible workplaces (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2016). In the 2017 budget, the federal government committed to “give federally regulated employees the right to request more flexible work arrangements, such as flexible start and finish times, the ability to work from home, and new unpaid leaves to help them manage family responsibilities” (Government of Canada, 2017).

## **CULTURALLY LAGGING PUBLIC POLICY AND SOCIAL PROGRAMS SYSTEM**

Parents are also operating within a public policy and social programs context that does not yet account for shifting values and the shifting labour market. It reflects an old model of earning and caring that is based on, and reinforces, traditional gender roles. This is a common social phenomenon known as culture lag that can create social conflicts (Ogburn, 1922). In this case, the mismatch between public programs and the shifting labour market and cultural values creates gaps for people who do not fit within the old value system (Johal & Thirgood, 2016).

Canada's social programs such as unemployment insurance, employment standards and public pensions were developed during the 1940's to 1970's when the majority of earners (mostly men) in Canada were in standard employment relationships with employers. They earned a 'family wage' that would cover their family expenses and have sufficient benefits to cover unexpected events and retirement savings (Johal & Thirgood, 2016). Most earners were men in the 'ideal adult worker' role and women were responsible for running the household, taking care of the children and supporting the needs of the worker to be an ideal worker. Although many families, mostly people of colour and people with lower levels of education, were unable to live up to this expectation (Fraser, 2016), Canada's social programs were developed based on this model (Vosko, 2011).

***“The one-two punch of feminist critique and deindustrialization has definitely stripped ‘the family wage’ of all credibility. That ideal has given way to today’s norm of the ‘two-earner’ family”***

*(Fraser, 2016, p. 112).*

Today we are in a different reality: the 'family wage' has been replaced by the norm of the 'two-earner' family, and standard employment with long-term security and potential for advancement is quickly becoming a thing of the past. A more detailed analysis of the shift in orthodoxies that led to mismatch in the social programs can also be found in Appendix 1.

This mismatch leads to two important dimensions that influence parents – public programs that reinforce traditional gender norms (Nichols, 2014; Vosko, 2011); and gaps in both labour protections and benefits for earners in non-standard employment (Johal & Thirgood, 2016; Mitchell & Murray, 2016).

### **Canada's Social Programs reinforcing traditional gender roles**

Gender analysis of Canada's social programs including employment insurance, childcare programs, and parental leave have found that structural elements that reinforce traditional gender roles of men participating in the paid labour market and women as primary care givers (Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action (FAFIA), 2016). For example, Nichols (2014) and Vosko (2011) found that gender role ideologies are entrenched into the employment insurance system and have structured women as caregivers not in need of protection from labour market fluctuations. The employment insurance program has been designed for workers (mostly men) who follow a set life course of discrete segments of education, work, and retirement while being sustained by the (unpaid) social reproduction activities done by women. It is not designed for workers (mostly women) who move in and out of the labour market or work in non-standard work arrangements to support social reproduction activities such as child raising and providing elder care.

The EI system has not kept pace with the shifts in values and earning and caring roles (Vosko, 2011).

*“Research to date demonstrates that full EI coverage still hinges on the full-time job where the worker has one employer, expects to be employed indefinitely and works on the employer’s premises under direct supervision—an employment model long dominant among mid-aged male Canadian-born workers following a life-course divided into discreet segments of education, work, and retirement and sustained outside the labour force by (largely unpaid) female care-giving” (Vosko, 2011, p. 1).*

Subsequently, there is a mismatch between social programs and today's way of earning and caring and society's shifting values.

The unemployment insurance system was first created in 1941 to support a compromise between labourers and business owners. Specifically, it was designed to support families when male workers who were providing a family wage were unable to work. This focus excluded workers who were not in these types of jobs such as women working in temporary jobs. Subsequently, women were made invisible in the social welfare system. Unemployment insurance requirements were



based on the number of hours worked and attachment to the labour market. The subsequent shift to employment insurance in the 1990s, increased these requirements, further privileging workers in secure-long term work. As eligibility is decreased and less money is paid out, more Canadians are forced into precarious work to secure any wage available. These increased requirements were consistent with the neoliberal ideology of the time that the social welfare system should be minimized and that all workers could access the labour market and avoid social assistance. As a result, the employment insurance system does not protect people who may take time away from the paid labour market or work in flexible arrangements for the purposes of social reproduction activities such as child raising. As a result, the program reinforces traditional gender norms as women are most often in part-time flexible work to support caregiving activities and if they are ineligible for EI they are relegated to dependence on their partners (Nichols, 2014).

Layered on top of the Employment Insurance system is Canada's (excluding Quebec) parental leave program. The parental leave and income replacement program in Canada is delivered as a Special Benefit under Employment Insurance and allows parents to divide up to 35 weeks leave. Eligibility requirements vary across the country and include number of hours worked and attachment to the labour market. On average 40% of employed mothers are consistently excluded from maternity or parental benefits under the federal program (Lindsey McKay, Sophie Mathieu, & Andrea Doucet, 2016). The values embedded in the parental leave criteria mimic those of the broader employment insurance system creating system level inequities across gender and income level. For example, labour market attachment criteria does not reflect the reality for many people, currently mostly women, who need to leave the labour market for many reasons to support social reproduction. In Canada's 2017 Federal Budget, the government announced that parental leave program will be extended to provide an option for extending the time off to 18 months; however, the income supplement will not be increased. This will increase the length of time of job protection for parents who go on leave.

Similarly, Canada's patchwork of childcare policies perpetuates gender inequality through an inadequate supply of affordable childcare spots for pre-school age children and before and after care for school age children. Although women's participation rate in the labour force is increasing, a gap remains in comparison to men. High childcare costs have long been associated with women's ability to access employment due to the gender norm of women as primary caregiver (Moyser, 2017).

### **Gaps in protections and benefits for earners in non-standard employment**

In addition, the nature of the employment relationship – standard employment or non-standard employment – affects the eligibility of earners for Canada's social policies and programs such as employment insurance and training programs, public pensions, supplemental health benefits, and employment standards. A detailed analysis was completed by the Mowat Centre (Johal & Thirgood, 2016), a summary of which is provided here.

Employment insurance is linked to full-time employment (as described above) and as a result the proportion of Canadians who do not qualify for regular benefits is growing with only 39% of unemployed Canadians receiving regular benefits in 2016, compared with 82% in 1978. Additionally, many employment training and skills upgrading initiatives are tied to Employment Insurance benefits, as a result, making people ineligible for these programs (Johal & Thirgood, 2016).

Public support for retirement savings for Canadians is achieved through the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and equivalent Quebec Pensions Plan (QPP), which are contributory schemes; Old Age Security that is paid out through general federal revenues and the Guaranteed Income Supplement for low-income seniors. In addition, Canadians can save for retirement through private and voluntary schemes, in some cases provided by workplaces, and in other cases saved directly by the individual. Workplace pensions are on the decline and non-standard employment does not provide workplace pensions leaving more Canadians depending on public pensions. Additionally, CPP rules treat non-standard workers differently from those in standard-employment. Self-employed individuals are required to contribute both the employer and employee contributions. This is also true for contractors, temporary workers, and multiple job holders, unless the employer contributes on their behalf. However, this could disadvantage workers on the payout of the pension because the earnings are based on an average over a contributor period. As a result, temporary periods of earnings can lower overall pensions.

Canada's publicly funded healthcare program covers hospital and physician services while all other residual services including pharmacare are covered through a mix of public and private funding. Canada is the only country globally that provides universal healthcare without providing drug coverage. Earners in standard employment typically have access to benefits from their employers that cover these services. In contrast, earners in non-standard employment relationships typically do not have access to these benefits from employers and often find it difficult to

privately purchase insurance plans that make up for the gap in the public system (Johal & Thirgood, 2016).

Finally, Canada's labour laws are also designed around earners in standard employment relationships. Earners who serve several clients rather than a single employer are not considered employees and instead are considered independent contractors; as a result, they are at risk of unfair treatment. For example, if the earner is considered an independent contractor, employers are not required to pay vacation pay, public holiday pay, termination pay, severance pay and premiums for employment insurance and CPP. In some cases, employers may voluntarily pay earners in non-standard employment relationships or contractors a higher hourly wage to compensate. However, this is not required (Freelancer Union and Elance-oDesk, 2015). Additionally, other components of provincial employment standards legislation, such as those in Ontario's Employment Standard Act (ESA) would not apply to these workers, such as minimum wage, hours of work and overtime and pay intervals (Johal & Thirgood, 2016).

**“If benefits to sustain well-being continue to stay tied to full-time jobs, too many people will find themselves falling through the increasingly wide gaps in our ill-fitting social architecture”**

(Johal & Thirgood, 2016, p. 25).

The relationship between companies like Uber and Handy and their labour (for example drivers) provide examples of the challenges of the employee definition. These companies consider the earners that provide services, for example –drivers– as independent contractors rather than employees. The companies define themselves as technology providers and not employers. As a result, workers and advocacy groups are responding with lawsuits and countries across the world are revisiting their employment legislation to address this change in work. Court cases are currently in process in many jurisdictions to determine if these workers meet the legal definition of employees or independent contractors. In other jurisdictions, regulators are considering developing a new employment classification for this group of workers (Aloisi, 2016; Colby & Bell, 2016; David P. Ball, 2016; Hempel, 2016).

To address the mismatch, governments across Canada are reviewing their programs and policies but movement has been slow. For example, the Ontario Government is currently reviewing its labour legislation more broadly (Government of Ontario,

2015) and the Federal Government identified the shifting nature of work as a priority in the 2017 budget (Government of Canada, 2017).

Parents are constructing their earning and caregiving roles within the current resources available to them, including Canada's social programs.

## **SUMMARY**

Taken together – shifting cultural norms and attitudes; a shifting labour market and a culturally lagging social system – there is an unfreezing of the systems in which parents find themselves. System unfreezing occurs when the predominant system is challenged and there are desires for a new future level. Lewin (1947) described unfreezing as the destabilizing of the quasi-stationary equilibrium of a given system in which the status quo is challenged. The unfreezing is required so that an old behaviour or approach might be discarded for a new behaviour.

Systems undergoing unfreezing provide the opportunity for innovations and change to occur (Lewin, 1947). Innovations can occur throughout the system, whether they be regulatory, public programs, private sector initiatives, or within the very social fabric a society is built upon – the family. As innovations are introduced, there is an opportunity to learn about the problems and challenges people are trying to solve and the motivations behind those choices and the gaps in the ecosystem that the innovations are pointing towards.

This project focuses on the innovations occurring within the family unit as parents construct their own earning and caring roles are operating within this unfreezing system and trying to find solutions that work for them. There is a wide spectrum of configurations that parents use to construct their earning and caring roles. The most dominant arrangement in Canada is the dual-earner couple with both parents working full-time. In many of these arrangements, mothers continue to take on the majority of the caring activities (Moyser, 2017). There are also families that have a single earner in standard employment with the second parent providing care in the home. In most cases, this arrangement is split along traditional gender roles, however stay-at-home dads are becoming more common (Doucet, 2016). There are also families with one earner in standard-employment and a second earner in non-standard employment; and families with both earners in non-standard employment. As non-standard employment relationships are expected to grow in Canada, these last two arrangements will likely become more common.

With an employment and social support system unfreezing, it is important to understand the experiences and motivations of parents in these arrangements to provide insights into the design of the future system so that it reflects the values and needs of today and not the past

This project includes interviews with seven heterosexual couples and one single mother who are working in non-standard employment arrangements to understand their motivations and decision factors regarding paid employment, domestic and parenting activities; what they are looking for in earning arrangements; the challenges and benefits of their current arrangements; and, future aspirations and concerns.

This report will demonstrate that the parents interviewed in this project are using non-standard employment relationships to meet their own earning and parenting goals of maximizing their time with their children and both being involved parents while doing gender differently.

These parents' choices are consistent with a shifting view of domestic sharing, gender equality and a revaluing of caregiving activities in society. They could reflect a new model of earning; however, they also highlight the significant risks borne by earners in non-standard employment relationships because of a mismatch of the social safety net and shifting values.

## CHAPTER 3 – METHODS

The project was conducted using a human-centred design approach focusing on the first phase of the design process – building empathy and understanding of the human at the centre of the design process. This was achieved through contextual research across academic literature, grey literature, popular media and expert interviews, and primary research with parents working in non-standard employment arrangements.

Qualitative interviews were used to capture the following participant experiences:

- Decision factors and motivations regarding paid employment, domestic and parenting activities;
- What participant parents are looking for in earning arrangements;
- The challenges and benefits of participants' current arrangements; and
- Future aspirations and concerns

The insights from these interviews are then used to develop implications and design principles for future policy and workplace design, identify innovation opportunity spaces and future research areas.

### HUMAN-CENTRED DESIGN APPROACH

Human-centred design is a creative approach to problem solving that creates solutions to meet the needs of the people at the centre of the problem. There are many conceptual models to describe the phases, attributes and mindsets of the approach to human-centred design or “design thinking”. There are simplified models such as Acumen/Ideo’s popularized “Discover – Ideate – Prototype” or “Understand – Create – Deliver” (IDEO.org, 2015) (Figure 2) and more detailed models such as the Analysis-Synthesis Bridge model (Dubberly & Evenson, 2008) (Figure 3).

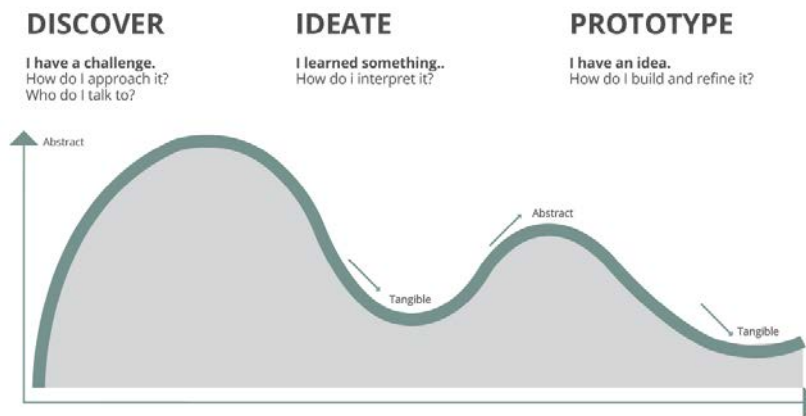


Figure 2 Simplified human centred design process (IDEO.org, 2015)

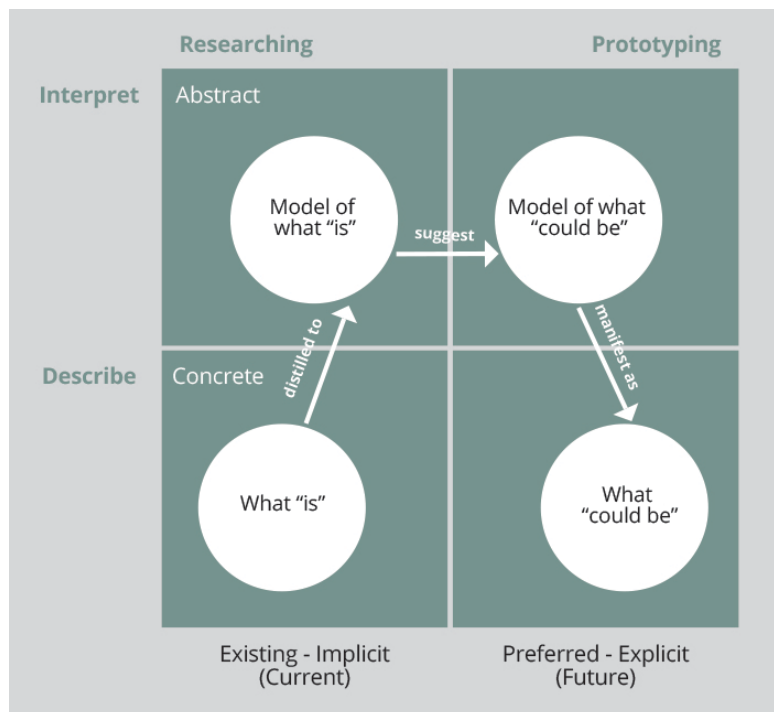


Figure 3 The analysis synthesis bridge model (Dubberly & Evenson, 2008)

The human-centred design process moves through phases of activity in the concrete tangible contexts and in the conceptual abstract; ultimately concluding in the concrete through the creation and delivery of new innovations which can take a variety of forms including products, services, programs, policies and even legislations.

This Major Research Project executes the first phases of the design process to develop a deep understanding of the needs and motivations of people through observation of – “What is” and then distill those observations into meaningful insights into a conceptual model of “what is” that can be used to inform the creation of “what could be” through an iterative process. Figure 4 outlines the overall project approach through the phases of the analysis synthesis bridge model (Dubberly & Evenson, 2008).

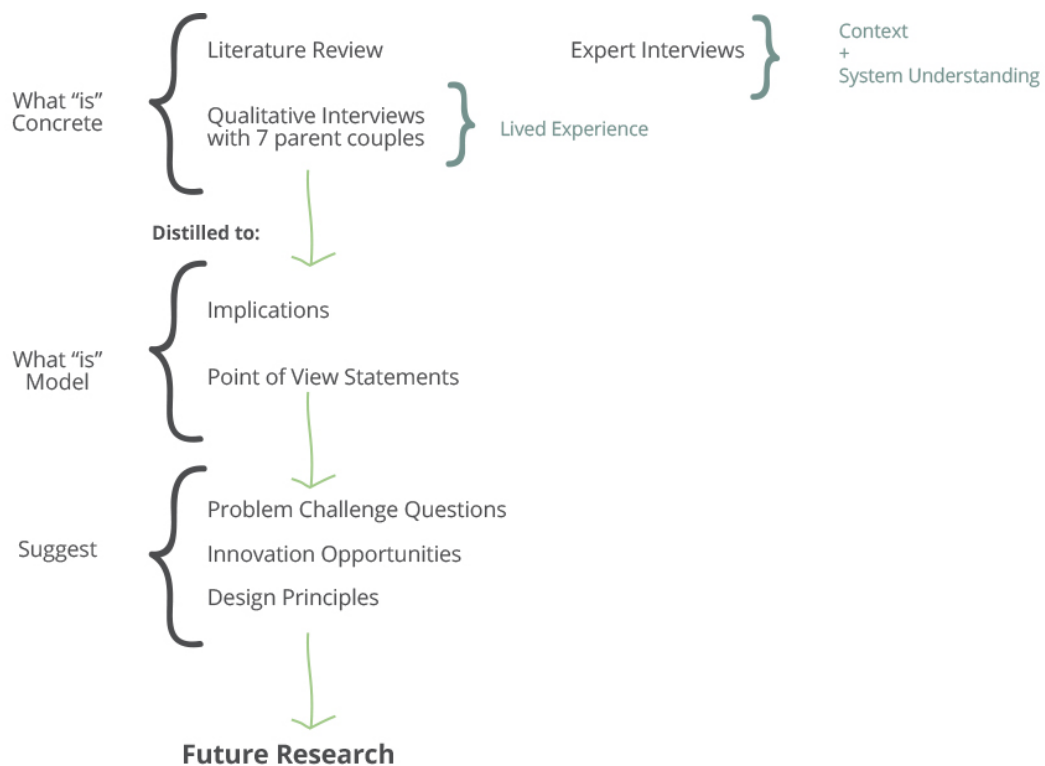


Figure 4 Overall project approach expanding the analysis synthesis bridge model

The What "is" was developed through two domains - the context parents are operating within (Chapter 2) and the needs and motivations of parents (Chapter 4). A literature review and a series of expert interviews were used to explore the context while ethnographic interviews with parents were used to understand their needs and motivations.



## LITERATURE REVIEW AND EXPERT INTERVIEWS

The literature review and expert interviews were used to ground the ethnographic interviews in the context the parents are operating in. The literature review and expert interviews were conducted in parallel allowing, each to inform the other.

The literature review included a broad scope of literature types including peer-reviewed academic research such as ethnographic studies of self-employed women; grey literature such as publications from think tanks and Harvard Business Review, popular published literature such as FastCo and popular social literature such as blogs and medium articles by thought leaders and individuals.

The expert interviews were conducted as semi-structured interviews using substantive frames. The list of interview participants and the interview guide can be found in Appendix 2.

The topics covered by the literature research included, but were not limited to:

- Gender, work and parenting
- Work family conflict
- Parental leave
- Organized labour movement history and theory
- Economic theory
- History of women in the workforce
- Emerging research on the “on-demand” economy, gig economy and precarious work
- Labour market patterns
- Future of work
- Canada’s social programs and labour protections

The topics covered in the four expert interviews included, but were not limited to:

- Gender, work and parenting
- Organized labour

The expert interviews were also used to inform the design of the interviews with parents.

## **ETHNOGRAPHIC INTERVIEWS WITH PARENTS**

The purpose of the interviews was to capture parents' experiences with parenting and working; what drives their decisions regarding paid employment, domestic and parenting activities; what they hope for in their lives when it comes to work and parenting; and what their dreams are for their children. Additionally, the interview focused on what gets in the way of parents being able to achieve their goals.

### **Recruitment**

The researcher recruited parent couples in which at least one parent is in a form of a non-standard employment. Participants were recruited through the researcher's network's network via email and social media and using snow-ball recruitment. Additionally, the researcher used public social media groups to recruit participants outside the researcher's network's network. Namely the researcher posted information in the following groups:

- Urban Worker Project
- Bunz Parents Zone Toronto
- Toronto Mommies
- Toronto Ultimate Club
- Open Ideo

The target participants were parents working in non-standard employment. Specifically, recruitment was seeking couples with children below the age of 15 years in which at least, one parent is currently working or has recently worked in non-standard employment such as:

- contract or freelance work,
- contract household cleaning,
- work through an online platform as an independent contractor (e.g. Uber or Handy)
- work through a shopping marketplace platform (e.g. Etsy),
- work through self-employment product marketing (e.g. Stella and Dot)

Participants were advised that they would receive a groceries gift-card as a thank you for participating. The recruitment tools can be found in Appendix 3. Recruitment occurred during the month of January, 2017.

### **Interview Design**

Interviews lasted approximately one hour with each parent individually and were conducted in-person at a time and location in Toronto of convenience to the

participant (for example, their home, local library or coffee shop). If in-person interviews could not be arranged, then the interviews were done through an online video call that allowed for interactive activities. Interviews were conducted during the weeks of January 8 to January 31, 2017.

The interview was designed as a semi-structured interview that included generative design activities. Semi-structured interviews allow the interviewer to explore topics of interest in more detail, depending on how the conversation is going. This allows the interaction between interviewer and interviewee to be a conversation rather than a one-way interrogation (Ladner, 2014).

Generative design activities were also included to help participants make sense of their environment and connect more deeply with their motivations, thoughts and actions. Sanders & Stappers (2013) describe generative design research and “Make Tools” as a method to enable participants to connect with their tacit and latent knowledge to be able to share what they know, feel and dream.

To dig into the benefits and challenges of the parents’ current earning and caring arrangements, the researcher built a generative design activity using two conceptual frameworks – work-life fit (Hilbrecht, Lero, Schryer, Mock, & Smale, 2105) and the personal economy model (Thompson, 2013). Work-life fit builds on the more commonly used concept of work-life balance which simplifies experiences to put earning and caring activities in opposition or tension between each other. Work-life fit in contrast acknowledges that individuals have their own definition of what is the ideal configuration for themselves based on their interests, needs and the resources available to them. The personal economy model is a further elaboration of this to recognize that individuals have multiple activities in which they spend their time and energy and that the intent of these activities are not necessarily mutually exclusive. The model distinguishes activities in three modes or intentions – work for love of the family, work for money, and work for self. Thompson (2013) presents the personal economy model as a visual activity for individuals to map how they currently spend their time in these circles and how they would ideally like to spend their time (Figure 5). This activity was included in the interview as a tool to engage participants in a conversation around the advantages and disadvantages of their current earning and parenting arrangements. The interview guide can be found in Appendix 3.



Figure 5 Personal economy mode (adapted from (Thompson, 2013))

### Synthesis and Analysis Approach

The researcher used the Data Information Knowledge Wisdom model (Figure 6) to guide the synthesis and analysis process to make sense of the data collected through the interviews to develop information and knowledge (Sanders & Stappers, 2013). The researcher then combined the knowledge gained from the interviews with parents with expert interviews and literature review to create an understanding of the big picture and generate wisdom.



The researcher conducted an analogue synthesis process to code and cluster the data collected from the interviews (Figure 7). The data was colour coded for gender and work arrangement:

- non-standard employment women (6)
- non-standard employment men (4)
- standard employment women (2)
- standard employment men (3)

Figure 6 Data Information Knowledge Wisdom (DIKW) Model



Figure 7 Colour coding of participant data for synthesis and clustering of transcripts

The colour coding was used to enable comparison across groups to identify differences and similarities. The researcher first coded and clustered the women working in non-standard employment, followed by the men in non-standard employment, then women in standard employment and men in standard employment.

After theming the interview findings, the researcher analyzed the findings through mapping the journey of families in non-standard employment from prior to having children through their decision-making process and their subsequent experience

working in non-standard arrangements. To summarize the experience, the researcher used the value proposition canvas to map the pains, gains and jobs-to-be-done of the parents to summarize the findings into point of view statements. Finally, the researcher further synthesized the findings into actionable insights through design principles, a refined overall problem statement and a series of innovation opportunities.

These actionable insights represent the abstract of the model of What “is” from the analysis-synthesis bridge model (Dubberly & Evenson, 2008) or the completion of the Discover phase of the human-centred-design process (IDEO.org, 2015) to develop deep understanding of the needs and motivations of parents.

## DESCRIPTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Seven heterosexual parent couples and one single mother participated in the interviews. The respondents were mostly Caucasian, similar age (early thirties to mid-forties) and university educated. Additionally, all participants were Toronto, Ontario residents except for one couple who resides in Edmonton, Alberta. A summary of the sample is presented in Table 1.

The attributes of the parents were as follows:

- predominantly Caucasian (14 out of 15 participants)
- age range of 32 to 42 years
- university educated
- one to two children per family with an age range of 1 to 11 years
- knowledge workers in private companies (6)
- knowledge workers in not-for-profits and charities (3)
- healthcare worker (1)
- creative industry workers (3)
- landscaping industry workers (2)

The nature of the earning arrangement of the individual parents and couples also varied. They included:

- couples where both partners are in non-standard employment (3)
- couples where the husband is in non-standard employment and the wife is in standard-employment (1)
- couples where the wife is in non-standard employment and the husband is in standard-employment (3)
- single parent in standard employment (1)

The non-standard work included:

- seasonal work
- contract work
- freelance in knowledge economy
- clothing maker who sells through an online marketplace
- gig work (musician)
- self-employed without employees

Several participants had multiple earning arrangements.

Table 1 Summary of interview participants

Participant Code	Gender	Number of children	Age of children	Nature of Work Relationship	Work Type	Work Category
A1	M	2	6 and 9	non-SER seasonal, contract, self-employed	Certification	Landscape
A2	F	2	6 and 9	SER	Consultant	Knowledge
B1	F	1	3 and 5	non-SER - online marketplace	Clothing production	Creative
B2	M	1	3 and 5	SER	Pharmaceutical consultant	Knowledge
C1	F	1	11	SER	HR	Knowledge
D1	F	1	3	non-SER - contract and part-time	Healthcare equipment fabricator	Creative
D2	M	1	3	non-SER seasonal, contract, self-employed	Landscape maintenance	Landscape
E1	F	2	9 and 11	non-SER - freelance	Advertising	Knowledge
E2	M	2	9 and 11	SER	Consultant	knowledge
F1	F	1	3	non-SER - contract, part-time and freelance	Managing a social enterprise and teaching	Not-for-profit Knowledge not-for-profit
F2	M	1	3	non-SER contract full-time	Advocacy	Knowledge
G1	F	1	1	non-SER self-employed and freelance	Occupational Therapist	Healthcare
G2	M	1	1	non-SER self-employed and contract	Music industry	Creative
H1	F	1	1	Non-SER contract work	Administrative work and writing	knowledge Not-for-profit
H2	M	1	1	SER	IT	Knowledge



## LIMITATIONS OF INTERVIEW SAMPLE

The research project consisted of interviews with a limited sample size of 15 parents who were recruited through the researcher's network's network and through local groups such as a not-for-profit that is working on behalf of workers who are not in standard employment relationships. Thus, the sample could be biased towards people with similar backgrounds and mindsets. The recruitment process was an open call that did not exclude diverse groups; however, recruitment did not include intentional efforts to recruit for diversity. As a result, the diversity was quite low, missing significant groups within the population who likely experience the construction of earning and parenting roles differently.

The following demographics of parents were not included in the primary research:

- Low-skill workers
- Same sex partners
- Transgender parents
- Racially diverse
- Newcomers to Canada
- Younger parents (<30 years old)
- Non-university educated
- Lower-income (including below the LICO)

The following parenting and earning arrangements were also not included:

- Parents who are providing elder care in addition to child care
- Parents without retired parents and/or without family nearby who can provide support
- Parents with children over 11 years old
- Divorced parents
- Second marriage parents
- Dual-earner family both with standard employment
- Single earner family with one parent staying home and not earning
- Self-employed with employees
- Shift-working parent
- Earners that are independent contractors through online on-demand platforms (e.g. Handy or Uber)

The limited diversity in the sample was likely due to the small sample size and the recruitment techniques that relied heavily on the researcher's network. Both the sample size and recruitment techniques were limited due to the time constraints of

this Major Research Project. Future research should include a larger sample size and recruitment techniques that extend beyond the researcher's network's network, for example, working with organizations that are regularly engaged with a variety of populations.

## CHAPTER 4 – FINDINGS

The analysis of the qualitative interview data yielded a deep understanding of the motivations and needs of parent couples in which at least one parent was engaged in non-standard employment. A summary of the findings is presented here followed by a detailed description of the findings.

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The dual-earner family model with parents in full-time standard employment relationships is not working for the parenting and earning goals of the parent couples interviewed; specifically, they are trying to find an earning and caring model that increases their time with their children, provides income security and predictability, and is not gender based. Parents are also looking for sustainable earning opportunities that can ebb and flow around parenting demands on a weekly- and long-term basis. Parents interviewed are using non-standard employment relationships to meet their parenting and earning goals. However, earning in non-standard employment relationships has resulted in several challenges, including sacrifices to financial stability, safety net protections, and the parents' mental health. Additionally, because of the unpredictability of their incomes and schedules they depend on their families and friends for flexible childcare support.

Notably, these people are trying to determine what works for their families and are constructing their earning and parenting roles through a value set that privileges earning and caring activities equally. Both parents expressed an interest in being involved parents. Their perspectives on how they viewed their earning trajectories or how their careers would unfold over time also played into their approach. The perspectives of some of the interviewed parents align more closely with a pattern of education, earning and retirement with earning occurring within one domain and with an extended length of employment relationship with employers. Other parents indicated that they viewed their earning trajectory as fluid with time that would ebb and flow around parenting, but also amongst domains as the future of work is rapidly changing.

## DETAILED FINDINGS

The families that participated in this project are all unique with their own types of jobs, number of children and interests. However, they all had a common thread; at least one parent was in non-standard employment. The journey to come to that arrangement and the subsequent lived experience including the benefits and challenges of those lived experiences followed a similar pattern from which we can learn about the motivations and needs of these parents (Figure 8).

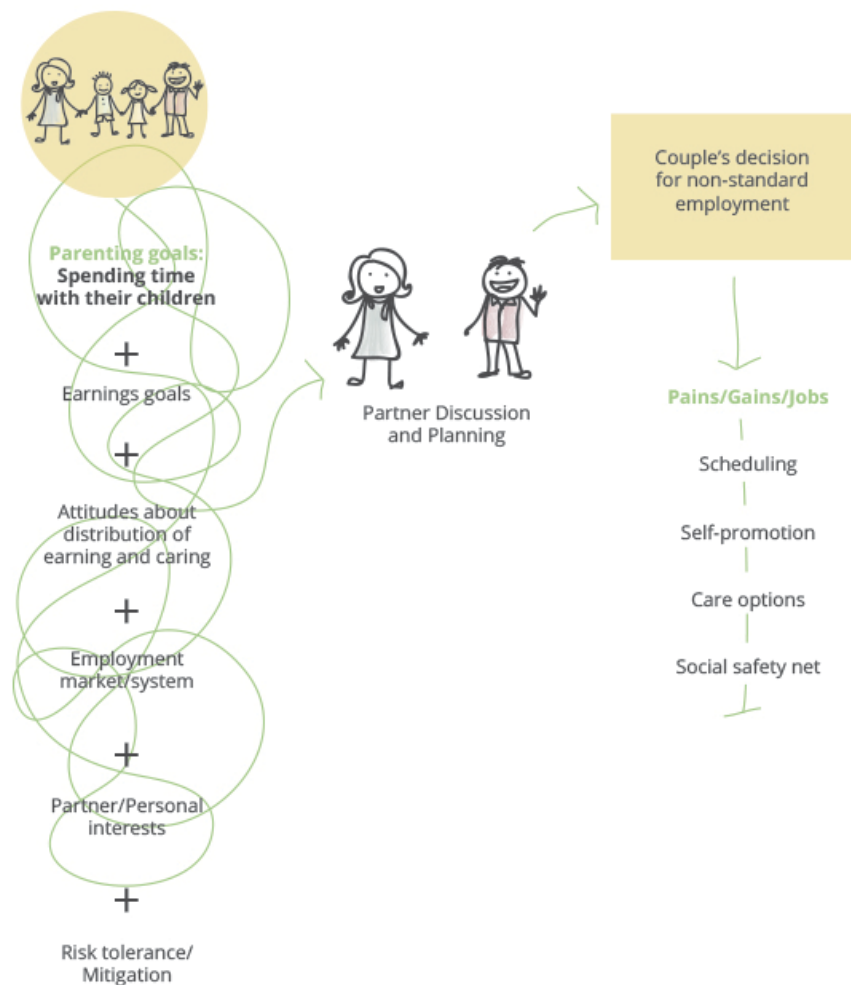


Figure 8 The journey of parents engaged in non-standard employment

## JOURNEY OF PARENTS TO NON-STANDARD EMPLOYMENT

In half (4) of the parent couples, both parents were in standard employment prior to their decision to have children and subsequently selected non-standard employment when they decided to become parents. Non-standard employment provided them with the opportunity to create a sustainable earning plan to ebb and flow around parenting activities on a day-to-day basis and as the children age. In the remaining (3) couples, the parents in non-standard employment were in non-standard employment prior to their decision to have children and decided to continue that path after deciding to have children.

**“I wanted something that would be sustainable around parenting.  
Right now, I can control how much work I do and plan for it to grow  
as my kids grow”**

– Mother of two, non-standard employment

The decision to switch to or to continue non-standard employment was the result of a myriad of considerations, including goals, expectation and potential sacrifices. The considerations and influencers beyond their primary parenting goals included:

- earning goals and needs
- attitudes towards earning and caring activities
- employment market and regulatory system challenges
- partner and personal interests and desires
- risk tolerance and family support

### Parenting Goals and Needs

All parents interviewed indicated that a strong attractor to their earning and caring arrangements that included non-standard employment, was how it suited their goals of being highly involved parents and their desire to maximize the amount of time spent with their children. Even with their current arrangements, most parents reported wanting to spend more time with their children, especially those parents who were in standard employment. These two parenting goals were central to how the parents structured their earning and caring arrangements.

The desire to have both parents as highly involved parents was a result of many influences. Many participants were committed to rejecting the gender roles of the past. Many mothers interviewed did not want to reinforce the stereotype that women should stay home by default but did want a parent at home with their children.

“I’m in the reject camp: I grew up with a mom who didn’t work outside of the home for 10 years and then went back to school and worked part-time. My dad had an all ambitious, challenging career. I wasn’t able to see the amount of work my mom was doing, I was like ‘I’m not going to be in a relationship where someone told me what to do’. I definitely rejected the gender dynamic there. In retrospect, I might go too far on that end, it might have led to decisions that aren’t most stable, I’m less likely to compromise”

– Mother of one, non-standard employment

“I think we both looked at our families and they provide the blueprint for us: His mom was stay at home for a long time and then back to work. My parents both worked but we had my grandmother at home. So, in both cases, we knew that one of us would stay home. It was just because he had a full-time position and I was already freelance that we were already in that position that I would take care of things [at home].”

– Mother of two, non-standard employment

For many fathers, they didn’t want to be like their fathers who were away a lot and less involved in their childhood years.

“I rejected the setup of my parents; my dad wasn’t nearly as hands-on as I wanted to be; my wife’s dad is more of a role model that way”

– Father of one, non-standard employment

Some participants grew up in households who were very thoughtful about gender equality in the home. When asked about their involvement in parenting, one father responded:

**“Obviously, it would be shared... My parents weren’t always a perfect split but they were both thoughtful about sharing responsibilities and showing me and my brother that”**

– Father of one, non-standard employment

The desire for parents to increase their time with their children by being at home and available to participate in their children’s lives appeared to be a response to a number of different experiences in their own lives: growing up with a parent who travelled and worked late hours, or growing up with a parent at home; observing their friends and colleagues trying to parent in dual-earner households who are struggling and constantly running to juggle all of life’s demands; and observing colleagues working late and not connecting with their children. Additionally, some parents loosely adhered to attachment parenting that is based on nurturing the connection that parents can develop with their children. One principle is to provide constant love and care which involves the near constant presence of a parent (Attachment Parenting International, n.d.). To meet their desire, these parents were looking for new ways of combining earning and caring (Figure 9).

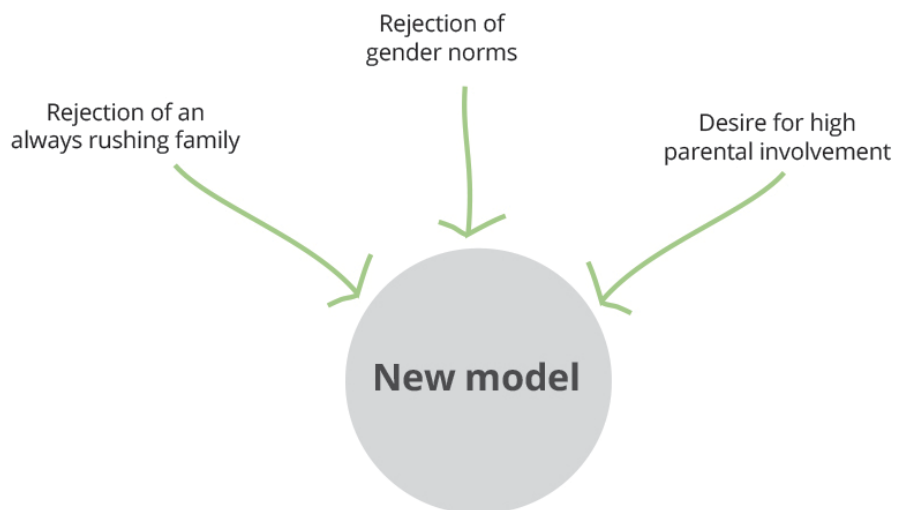


Figure 9 Influence of role models and rejection of role models

**“Many women in the office that didn’t inspire me, like it was late and she would still be working and not with her family, super successful but not what I wanted. I felt empowered as a woman to do what I set my mind to”**

– Mother of two, standard employment

**“We recognized an opportunity for us to do this differently than our parent peers have done (staying home and freelancing vs working full-time and getting childcare). It has to do a bit with role modeling. My mom stayed home with us and for me that’s part of what moms do, but obviously being born in the 80s it was a totally different economic climate. For us not working wasn’t an option if we were staying in Toronto.”**

– Mother of one, non-standard employment

**“Mom was a stay-at-home mom and dad was away, so thought it was important to have someone stable, around for my kids. My mom trained to be a neo-natal nurse and never worked in that field, then when I started highschool, she started a chain of coffee shops – inspiration – she showed me you can do what you want and then be a success!”**

– Mother of one, non-standard employment

For these families, maximizing time spent with their children meant one of the parents would step back partially or completely from earning in the early years of their child’s life, and then managing the family’s earning schedule around their children’s schedules as they age. Many parents referenced wanting more time with their children; whether having more time before and after school (before bed); being available for school events and trips, and breastfeeding very young children. Additionally, many parents rejected the idea of having someone outside the family provide care for their children.



**“We didn’t want to outsource the child raising, it’s why we became parents”**

– Mother of two, standard employment

**“We’d probably do a better job than daycares anyhow, they don’t love her as much as we do”-**

Father of one, non-standard employment

Having at least one parent in a non-standard employment has allowed these families to meet their desire to be involved parents and have significant time with their children. However, participants acknowledged their arrangements would not be possible without the support of family and friends who provide childcare on a consistent basis (Figure 10). Although the families attempt to build their schedules around their children’s needs, they have dedicated times during the week for working. As a result, there is a lot of schedule coordination required.

**“It’s really complicated to figure it all out, we’re now working that my husband can say yes to any work except during the blocks I’ve put in the calendar to work. It’s really hard to co-ordinate everything; all the schedules to minimize my time away. It takes hours to do and that largely falls on me”**

– Mother of one, non-standard employment



Figure 10 Illustration of a participants’ families and all the people who provide care for their children

For most, paid childcare was not an option due to the financial commitment and the fixed schedule. For parents in non-standard work, their ability to predict their income is limited and so making a commitment to a yearlong childcare spot would not suit their needs. Additionally, they do not require a full time daycare spot because of the nature of their schedules.

**“The cost of childcare is exorbitant, the stress of managing a relationship with a childcare provider – finding a provider, subsidies, finding what’s in the neighbourhood – all of the logistics of putting our son in someone else’ care. Those were not challenges that I was eager to take on, it was kind of simpler to do it this way”**

– Mother of one, non-standard employment

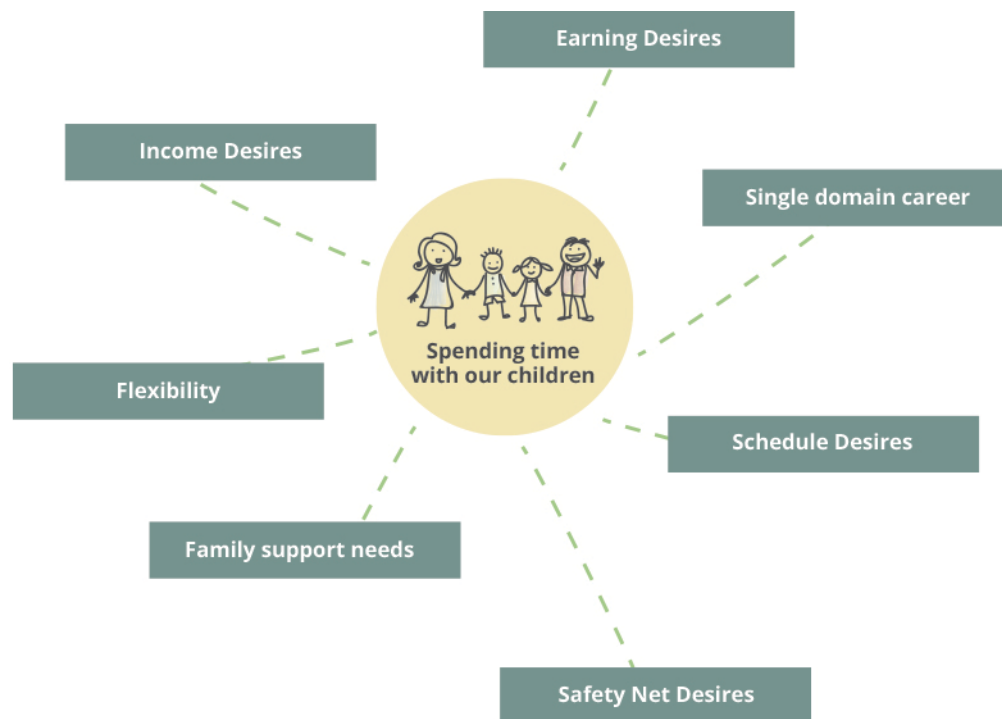
Many of the parents in non-standard working arrangements do their earning activities around their children’s schedules. For pre-school age children, this means working during their children’s naps and in the evening when children are asleep. For school-age children, this means working between 9am and 3pm when the children are at school. Sometimes weekend work is also involved and the other parent takes on the childcare activities on the weekend.

Parents in standard employment relationships also sought work arrangements to increase time at home through temporal flexibility at work. Several of the parents who were interviewed indicated they waited until they were established in their careers to have children. Their seniority and credibility created the conditions for them to have flexibility in their standard employment jobs. For some this meant they could come home early for the dinner hour and then finish emails in the evening; for others, it was to work at home from time to time or reduce their hours to 90%.

Overall, for these parents, there were two driving factors leading to at least one parent in non-standard work arrangements – highly involved parenting and increased time with their children which led, in some cases, to what families felt was a less pressurized lifestyle that was different from how their friends were approaching earning and caring.

## Earning Goals and Needs

In addition to these central parenting goals, the parents interviewed also had earning goals and needs. During the interviews, the earning goals seemed to be secondary in terms of the overall family decision, but were top of mind considerations for each individual parent (Figure 11). They were concerned with both their own professional goals and their partners and were looking for a solution that would fit for the couple together.



*Figure 11 Goals and needs of families in non-standard employment*

## Earning trajectories

There were two primary points of view on earning trajectories: a linear career within one domain and a more variable career that shifts across domains.

The linear career path within one domain viewpoint was more common amongst parents in standard-employment. They viewed their career as a path to financial security, but also as the path that aligned to the type of work they were doing. They felt longevity within a company or a domain would enable their best work to occur because objectives of their work require a long-time horizon to achieve success.

Additionally, they indicated that seniority is one of the reasons they could have flexibility and it protected their opportunities for growth when they returned from parental leave.

The more variable career path with shifts across domains viewpoint was more common among parents in non-standard employment arrangements. Parents are building new earning arrangements that can increase and decrease around changing parenting demands throughout the life of their child. They viewed it as a path that could be sustainable before, during and after parenting. One mother spoke of leaving her permanent job in event planning for parental leave and staying home for the first few years, but she said,

**“I’m still an ambitious person”**

- Mother of two, non-standard employment

She started making children’s clothing and selling through an online marketplace. She sees her business as an opportunity for her next career and hopes to grow the business as the children age. Other parents suggested that the more variable career is also what is needed to succeed in the rapidly shifting labour market. Jobs that exist today may not exist in ten years and vice versa.

Some parents reject the nature of modern work entirely.

**“I feel like I was born in the wrong era. If I had been working in the fifties, I would’ve been a dress maker, but now people don’t appreciate quality.”**

- Mother of two, non-standard employment

**“If I didn’t have to work, I wouldn’t work mostly because I think work is kind of bullshit. What do I do? Send emails all day.”**

-Mother of one, non-standard employment

Others are seeking the opportunity to be creative and innovative. They feel that the workplace culture of many standard employment opportunities would prevent them from operating independently and creatively.

### **Schedule desire, flexibility and control**

Parents in the non-standard work arrangements feel freed by the realization that earning does not have to happen between nine to five and from Monday to Friday. They want some control to structure their day to accomplish specific needs and the ability to take time away from earning, if they desire.

**“I like to control the structure of my day. Fit work in during nap time and in the evenings”**

-Mother of one, non-standard employment

**“I don’t have typical weeks in terms of deadlines. I have time to do work between 9 and 3:30 and do what the day demands. I’m proud of what I’ve been able to build”**

-Mother of two, non-standard employment

Parents in the standard employment relationships arrangements enjoy the structure these jobs provide, but actively seek opportunities for flexibility, such as working from home, flex times in their days, or conducting work in the evening hours to allow them to come home in time for dinner.

**“I was scared to leave my old job. It gave me so much flexibility in timing to do pick up and drop off”**

-Mother of one, standard employment

**“I work in the knowledge economy in standard employment but I can work from wherever / whenever so that allows me to be home more”**

-Father of two, standard employment

### **Income desires**

All parents are seeking a reasonable compensation that is predictable and paid on time. Many parents in the non-standard work arrangements found it challenging to predict what their income will be (sometimes less than a month prior) due to the unpredictability of new projects. In addition, others experience delayed payments.

*“Saying no to jobs sometimes is very hard. As a freelancer, you are always thinking if I say no, are they going to get somebody else and then they won’t call in the future. I have been doing this for 11 years, and I still worry, but sometimes it’s hard to say no, and end up over booking. It is ironic, people are trying to achieve work-life balance but there’s definitely high periods in the year, when I can ride it out – busy times and slow time”*

- Mother of two, non-standard employment

*“I have stress and anxiety from not knowing where we’d be working, not knowing how much money we’d be bringing in. But often you don’t know when the money is going to come in - when you are going to get paid. Money is a huge stress, unpredictable, taking on credit card debt.”*

- Mother of one, non-standard employment

### **Administration of earning**

Another element that comes into play, but was not at the forefront of parents’ decision making, were the administrative elements of earning in non-standard employment such as marketing, promotion, business development, project scheduling, office space, and taxes. These elements were not mentioned when participants were asked about their decision for their earning arrangements; however, they were identified when participants were asked what was hard about working in non-standard arrangements.

**“Getting started was more than I expected. I had to develop patterns from scratch, set up a website, took a lot of time and some money too. I also need to do social marketing but word of mouth is working really well right now. I am not really into social marketing though.”**

- Mother of two, non-standard employment

### **Attitudes towards earning and caring**

Attitudes and values associated with earning and caring influenced behaviours and choices both in terms of the large scale of earning arrangement selection and in daily interactions of distribution of household activities.

Participants in this study were very adamant about breaking gender norms. Although at first glance the patterns within many of the families divided along gender lines, further discussion with the parents provided a more nuanced understanding about the choice of their activities.

They see the domestic activities as a task that must be completed by the parent team; the division of the labour, for the most part, was determined through practicalities of time and task enjoyment. For example, in one household, the mother does most of the household activities (e.g., cooking, cleaning, child care) because she is a freelancer and can structure her day around these activities if needed. She says, **“You can tell how well my freelancing is going by how messy the house is.”** She expressed frustration that her friends judged her for not having her husband do more, such as cooking dinner, they would say it’s not fair. But she asks –

**“What is fair? Is it fair that my husband has a two-hour commute?”**

- Mother of two, non-standard employment

In another family, the woman initially felt quite insecure by her choice to stay home with her children when they were young. She felt judged, but for her it wasn’t about gender.

**“I am not trapped in some sort of gender role but it suits me. I like to cook, I like to sew. I’ve had people talk down to me because I stayed at home. I think they think I don’t know anything. But I have two master’s degrees and I’m an ambitious person. I don’t think it’s been a waste. I felt insecure about my decision for a while.”**

– Mother of two, non-standard employment

In many of the families interviewed, both partners were content with the division of activities. For example, the men in non-standard employment were content to take care of the children and perform domestic labour. In one family, the father reported being very particular about tidiness so he took on the chore while in another family the mother reported being very particular so she took on tidying up after her full day of work. She mentioned that she was working on not doing that because her husband is willing to do it. She also indicated that he does the overwhelming majority of domestic activities and child care, including hustling around to the kids’ extracurricular activities. Her 70-hour work week wouldn’t be possible without her husband. She says,

**“I can do it [70 hour work week] because I have my husband”**

– Mother of two, standard employment

In a couple of families, both partners reported that they were unhappy with the division of the domestic labour that was occurring across gender lines. The women were frustrated that the men were not contributing more, and the men indicated that they wanted to contribute more. Both families had recently transitioned into new working arrangements and were trying to overcome the patterns established during parental leave.

**“It seems like we are falling into gender patterns even though we don’t want to”**

– Mother of one, non-standard employment



Lyonette (2015) argues that the division of household activities consistent with traditional gender norms is common and limits the potential for gender equality.

**“The pressures on women to take responsibility for housework remain considerable, despite the increase in women’s ‘breadwinning’ capacities. However, the pressures of full-time employment, particularly professional and managerial occupations, are incompatible with domestic responsibilities for both men and women. If men continue to work long hours, and many women are effectively forced to work part-time, even those couples who want to share will find it impossible to do so. At the same time, until all men are willing to take on more domestic tasks, so allowing women to take on greater responsibility within the workplace, any hoped-for progress in gender equality is likely to stall.”**(Lyonette & Crompton, 2015, p. 38)

This argument emphasizes the importance of men to be willing to take on more domestic tasks to create gender equity. In contrast the parents interviewed in this project emphasized the challenges of the full-time employment, rather than gender stereotypes, that limit their ability to deliver household activities. They have selected non-standard employment as an alternate arrangement to manage domestic tasks. Perhaps this is an evolution of a shifting attitude from agreeing that it is a shared responsibility to do domestic activities, but that these domestic activities are a part of social reproduction that have their own value.

The attitudes of individuals are also shaped by their community. The responses of the community to the choices made by the fathers and mothers in this study varied across gender lines. Men who chose to take a step back from their earning received mixed responses. Other women celebrated the man’s choice to take a step back while their male peers and fathers were surprised by their choice. Subsequently, however, their peers began exploring similar opportunities for themselves and their fathers grew to accept it.

Women who chose to take a step back from earning felt judged by their female peers, and were often assumed to be “less than”, that they lacked ambition and intelligence. In contrast, the mothers of women who chose to continue in standard employment expressed concern to their daughters of missing out on raising their children. There was an expectation that the mother should be the flexible one.

However; they grew to understand the choice because of all the hard work their daughters had put in throughout their lives for their careers.

### **Challenges in employment market and regulatory system – stark choices**

Parents also considered the expectations of the current working opportunities available to them in the dual-earner model in standard employment. The expectations in some cases were connected specifically to parenting, while for others, constraints were related to the overall work environments and expectations.

A major friction point for participants was when they were new parents returning to work following the births of their children. This was the case both for parents in standard employment and for parents in non-standard employment.

Many of the parents in this study commented that parents in standard-employment are forced to make a series of stark choices, when they would have preferred more flexibility. The first decision is parental leave. These parents in Ontario and Alberta felt forced to make a choice between the father or mother staying home for parental leave. Parental leave decisions were based on several factors – breastfeeding, income comparison and eligibility for income supplement. For most of these couples, the mother took parental leave; however, several fathers did as well. They found it challenging however to have to make a stark choice between the two parents instead of an option where both parents could be off at the same time.

The next stark choice came at the end of parental leave. They felt limited to two options – go back to work full-time or stay at home. For some, their preference would have been to work part-time initially; however, that was not available to them. For those who did go back to work, they described the re-entry as a very painful experience with very little support from the workplace to transition back to work. One participant referenced “Back to Work” programs that support people returning from disability leave as an example of the type of support they would like to have had. In addition, for mothers who were continuing to breastfeed, there was limited possibility to pump (i.e., lack of appropriate space, time allocated) and inability to store milk when at work. Fraser (2016) argues that the mechanization of breast feeding is a symptom of the contradiction between social reproduction and production. For these mothers, the lack of ability to pump at work created a barrier to participate in production because of the stark choice that they faced within a parental leave program that does not match their parenting, and in this case, breastfeeding goals (12 months in Canada outside of Quebec).

**“When I look at our situation positively, I realize that I wasn’t forced to make a stark decision – for example my friend who is a teacher took maternity leave and then at 12 months she had to decide to go back full-time or lose her job; part-time wasn’t an option. I think she would’ve preferred to go part-time.”**

- Mother of one, non-standard employment

Finally, their decision to go back to full-time in standard employment or stay at home also was tied to their partner’s earning arrangement decisions. Families had to decide whether to be a dual-earner family in standard employment and accept the associated pressures and workplace expectations and conflict with their domestic priorities, or to manage on a reduced income with one parent in non-standard employment. The workplace expectations for many of these parents were quite irreconcilable with their parenting goals, because the workplace expectations were based on the ideal worker norm (described in Chapter 2).

Parents engaged in non-standard employment prior to having children were faced with a different set of choices. Do they participate in the self-funded employment insurance option (Government of Canada, 2016)? When do they start working again? One mother in this study decided to participate in the self-funded program; however, became pregnant before the 12-month waiting period ended and was not able to make a claim for parental leave. She started working 4 weeks after her child’s birth to ensure she would keep her clients. Her husband took parental leave for five and a half months to take over the childcare.

**“The EI thing really burned me – so mad about that for so long! You can claim after your kids are 3 months. The 3 months are bullshit with a baby, I was feeding him 8 hours/day nursing him, no one paid me for the time.”**

-Mother of one, non-standard employment

Parents in non-standard employment do not have job protection for parental leave; as such, the decision to stop their earning activities was quite high risk because they

were unsure if their work would be available when they decided to return to work. One parent compared the two experiences of a parent in standard employment returning to work with a parent in non-standard employment returning to work. She described a slow rebuild to previous income levels for herself, in comparison to someone who goes back to their standard employment job where the salary is the same (Figure 12).

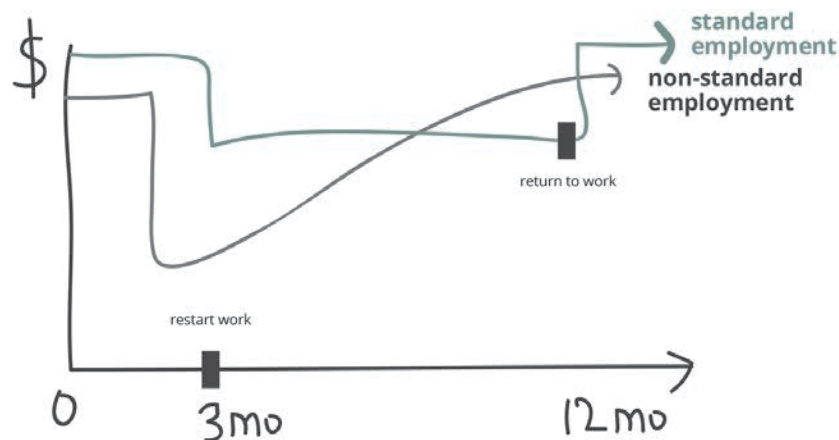


Figure 12 A comparison of going back to standard employment compared to non-standard employment after having a baby

Echoing many previous studies (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2016), the parents interviewed lamented the cost of full-time childcare. They also felt that the structure of the childcare system was stacked against them, both in terms of the times of day that child care is available and the commitment required.

**“We’re doing ok relative to people, we have gaps in employment but contracts are ok. But if you don’t know if you have a contract coming up you can’t commit to childcare for a year. So we ended up looking to family for support and freelance work”**

– Mother of one, non-standard employment

Non-standard employment yielded an unpredictability on a weekly basis for when child care would be needed and on a longer-term basis, what their income would be. The unpredictable nature of their employment (i.e., income and time worked)

made it very difficult for parents to make a long-term commitment to one year of childcare, five days per week.

**“I would like to tap into childcare on an on-demand basis but most daycares are set up to support a 9 to 5 job. Again, it’s so black or white. If I wanted say take 1 day off, it would be a lot harder to get a spot”**

– Mother of one, non-standard employment

Some of the parents were also skeptical of the value of the childcare because they felt they would be more loving to their children than the care providers, and that they would be “outsourcing” raising their children.

Prevailing workplace cultural norms (i.e., long hours and expectations that the work be completed at the workplace rather than remotely) were also referenced by some parents as posing challenges to parenting. For parents in standard work arrangements, this resulted in selecting roles or staying in companies where flexibility was supported. For many of the parents in non-standard employment, these aspects of current work life were motivators for finding earning opportunities outside of standard employment.

### **Partner and personal interests and desires**

The personal preferences of both parents also informed their decision of who would engage in non-standard work arrangements. In several families, there was one parent who wanted to take a step back from their earning because of their interest in being with the children. In other families, the parents were both following their passions and the type of work arrangements suited the type of work they were doing. When asked about their setup, most would reference their partner’s arrangements as part of their consideration. However, many also would be happy to switch roles with their partners.

**“I have to do what I love and earn for my family”**

– Father of one, non-standard work arrangement

## **Risk tolerance and family support**

Ultimately the decision to work in non-standard employment introduces more potential risk into the family in comparison to standard employment.

Workers in non-standard employment relationships typically do not have benefits (e.g., extended health, dental, vision, insurance), pensions/retirement plans, access to employment insurance and training programs, the right or ability to collectively bargain, safety standards, etc. Analysis of 2011 rates found that 74.3% of workers in standard employment had medical insurance, 75.7% had dental coverage, and 68.1% had life or disability insurance, and 53.8% had a pension plan. In comparison, only 22.8% of workers in non-standard employment relationships had job benefits such as medical insurance or dental coverage while less than 20% were covered by life and/or disability insurance or had an employer pension plan (Johal & Thirgood, 2016). Earners in non-standard employment in Ontario also typically earn lower hourly wages. In 2015, earners in non-standard employment relationships earned \$15 real median hourly wage those in standard employment earned \$24 (Mitchell & Murray, 2016).

*“I’m concerned that we don’t have health and dental. At the not-for-profit we get paid in lieu of that but we don’t qualify for traditional plans, we’d have to opt-in. There are only a few plans that would make sense but they aren’t affordable. There are good things about this type of work but if we don’t have a floor through government or places that are employing people, then it’s very difficult”*

– Mother of one, non-standard employment

*“No benefits, we haven’t figured that out yet, might have to pay out pocket. I think we’re unique because most relationships have one partner with a stable job and benefits”*

– Mother of one, non-standard employment

Another risk identified by parents was the inability to save for a rainy day or for retirement. Some expressed concern over something going wrong and wiping out the little savings they had while others talked about their own expectations of continuing to work and not retiring.

**“We used to talk about retirement a lot – but he didn’t want to talk about it because he didn’t want to stop working or be the person counting down the days.”**

– Mother of one, non-standard employment

**“Would like to see retirement saving opportunities extended to non-permanent jobs; right now I only have RRSP and it’s my own savings would love to see some sort of matching from the government, not sure how it would work with fluctuating incomes”**

– Mother of one, non-standard employment

In families where one parent is in standard employment many of these are covered by their employer. These families feel like the protections from the standard employment parent provides them the opportunity for the other parent to take a step back to have those risks covered. However, for families where both are in non-standard employment, the safety net is not available to them. Some indicated they currently do not have a plan to address these risks however they did indicate that they are lucky because their parents have offered to help if something happens.

They have chosen however to enter these non-standard arrangements despite these risks because of the benefits it provides their families and the work they do.

**“I wish other families could live the way we are without having to take on these risks. I worry that we are moving to a time where this is becoming normalized and we are moving to a less supportive work culture. Governments and businesses are downloading these**

**responsibilities to parents.”**

-Mother of one, non-standard employment

In terms of managing risks, two patterns emerged in the families interviewed. In families where only one parent works in non-standard employment, the risks were offset by the parent with standard employment. When asked what would happen if they were to divorce or if the parent in standard employment were to die, most expressed concern over how they would manage their family's security and finances. The options that were identified included alimony and return to standard employment.

Couples who were both in non-standard employment felt the system was against them and created an unfair risk for people working in non-standard employment. They all expressed concern about the possibility of one of them getting sick, or their child getting sick, and not being able to provide for their families. These couples acknowledged that they were comfortable with the risks because extended support (financial) would be available from their families if they needed it.

**“I wish more families could do this but the risks are too high for many people, we're lucky that if anything should happen, I think our family would be able to help us out”**

- Mother of one, non-standard employment

**“The system is rigged against families and punishes us. Just because we're not in a regular job doesn't mean we should be looked down on.”**

- Mother of one, non-standard employment

One mother described the tension she felt as she was considering shifting away from contract work to running her own business:



**“Right now, maybe I should make as much money as I can while it’s good. I’m a bit scared about the future and war. Is it selfish of me to think about self-fulfillment or should I be more like grandparents and do what is good for the family but I also want my daughter to look up at me and say ‘my mom is so cool and look at all the things she’s done to inspire her, rather than just give money and things”**

- Mother of one, non-standard work employment

For many of the parents, there was tension between the attractors of non-standard work (e.g., creativity, passion and flexibility) and the security provided through standard work, which they felt had many detractors.

**“I’d be interested in knowing about measures of happiness. Who’s happier? Someone who is in an on-demand job or that person who wakes up dreading going to a 9 to 5?”**

- Father of one, non-standard work employment

Presently, this tension manifested itself as a choice for some of these parents. As the workforce is shifting to more non-standard work, the option to find standard employment and its associated benefits is rapidly decreasing (Johal & Thirgood, 2016; Policy Horizons Canada, 2016). Recently, McKinsey Global Institute (Manyika et al., 2016) found that of independent workers surveyed in US and Europe, 30% undertook independent work out of necessity, while for 70% it was their preferred choice.

## **DECISION MAKING**

Couples are working as a unit and their individual earning and parenting arrangements are explicitly linked to their partners. Together, they are creating an arrangement that works for them. Study participants discussed their options with their partners and made decisions together, with the parenting goal as a central part of the discussion. Additionally, some parents planned to build a work arrangement that can ebb and flow with parenting responsibilities; both on a day to

day basis and as their children age. They often made the choice to switch out of permanent work in advance of having children so they could build credibility and a (client) base prior to taking leave.

**“I planned ahead, like years ahead, I sold part of the business in advance so that I would be able to create a new arrangement in time for when we had kids”**

– Father of two, non-standard employment

Figure 13 visualizes the narrative journey of how families arrive in non-standard employment.

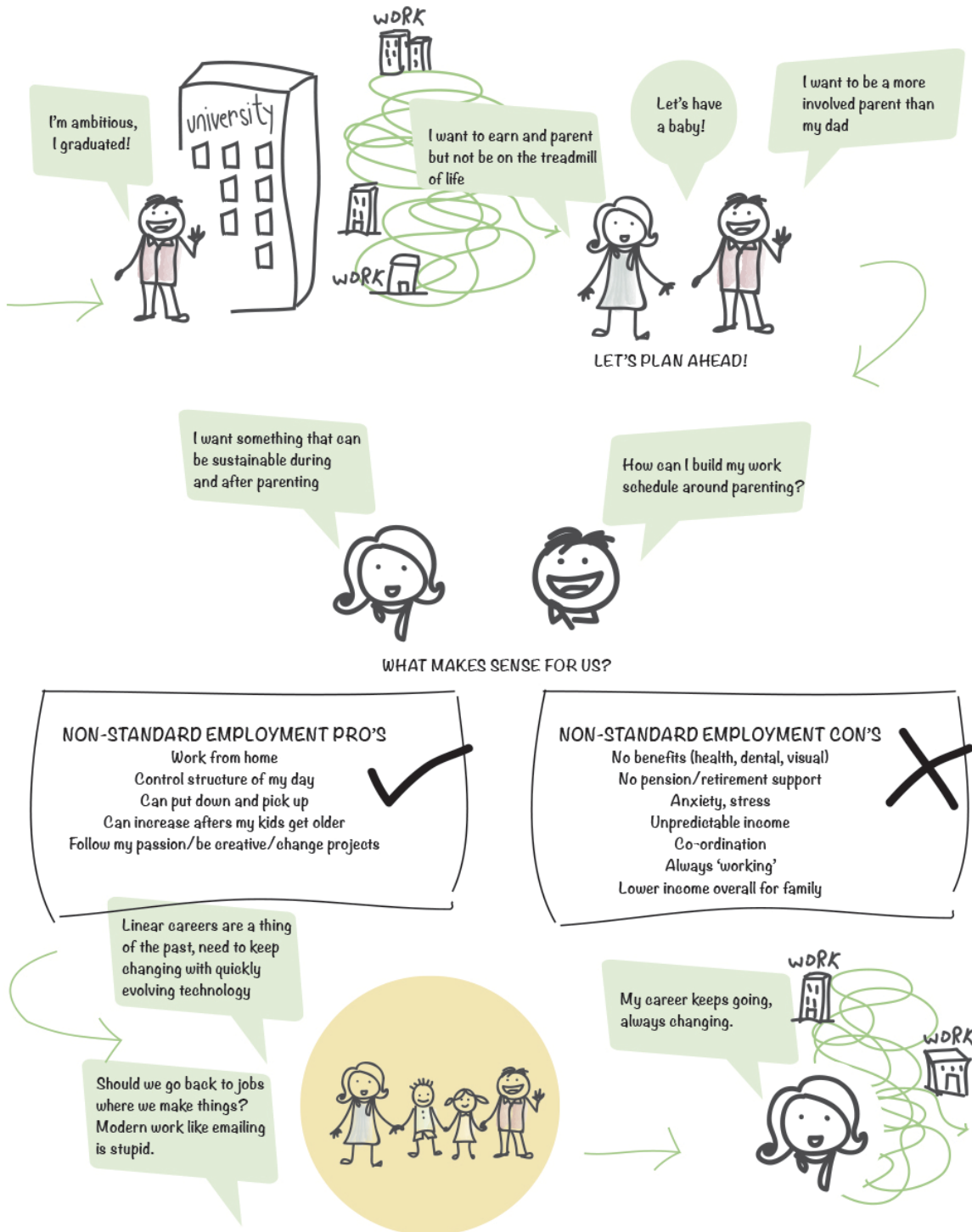


Figure 13 The narrative journey of how families (who participated in the interview) arrive in non-standard employment

## EXPERIENCES IN NON-STANDARD EMPLOYMENT

Ultimately, even with the challenges that the parents identified in their current earning and caring arrangements, most, when asked if given the choice, would they change their family arrangement, said no, they would not change it. Several parents indicated that their work and parenting arrangements simply make sense for each of them and their children.

**“Why would we change? This works for all four of us”**

– Father of two in non-standard employment

Couples with one parent in non-standard employment and the other in standard employment appreciated the lifestyle they had created for their family and that they could increase or decrease their work around parenting demands. They also appreciated not being on what they called the “treadmill of life”, constantly running and rushing their children from one thing to the next.

**“Our life is less pressurized”**

– Father of two in standard employment

However, the couples with lower incomes and younger children expressed concerns about their mental health, and their ability to maintain the current load. The partners in standard employment expressed concerns for their partners in non-standard employment. At the same time though, the partners in non-standard employment indicated they would still want to continue in this arrangement because of the control over their schedules to enable them to be around for their kids and their dislike of the permanent work environments available.

**“There are things about this set-up I really really like but I’m burning out, I’m not sure if I can maintain this level of paid work indefinitely, something would have to give but I don’t know what that looks like.**

I never have any down time because I work when he's asleep, I'm always working. When he's up I have to be active, engaged and hold space for him and then when he sleeps, I have to switch and work for other people. It's really hard to find focus and bear down on a project. It's also hard to feel like I have any kind of free time or me time”

- Mother of one, non-standard employment relationship

Couples with both parents in non-standard employment who also had non-standard schedules (i.e. outside of the 9 to 5 schedule) also indicated that they want to continue their current set-up to share the parenting load.

“Now with our co-parenting plan, I schedule my work around her work blocks. It has really helped us prioritize the type of work we take on”

- Father of one, non-standard employment

In contrast, couples who were both in non-standard employment with one partner in a nine-to-five schedule were struggling with the unpredictability of the workload of the non-standard employment and the unpredictability of income. The parent in the nine-to-five schedule was seeking standard employment opportunities and encouraging his partner to as well.

“My wife's work has been inconsistent in how much time it requires weekly – some weeks where she's worked 70 to 80 hours in a week and others 25 hours per week. It's hard to predict when things are going to be really intense – a lot of her work ends up in the evening and weekends, so that's hard. Precarity of her work and mine, has been tough – not knowing where you're going to be, what you'll be doing, where your income is going to be coming”

- Father of one, non-standard employment

**“It’s hard always being the go-to person for the kids. I have to do all the pick up, shuttling of kids, dinner time, bed time and it gets exhausting. I feel like I lose patience more than I would like. I’m not the patient of a person in comparison to my partner but I also get the brunt of tantrums”**

- Mother of one, non-standard employment

## **THEMATIC FINDINGS**

In addition to the analysis of the journey of parents towards non-standard employment, a thematic clustering was completed to extract overall themes from the interviews. Those are summarized here. The findings fall into three areas – attitudes towards gender equality, earning arrangements and the social system.

### **Attitudes towards gender equality**

*Values and norms associated with caregiving and earning are continuing to shift towards equality*

Parents interviewed in this project value earning and caring equally; however, as evidenced through the experiences of these families the current earning and caring options available to them and social safety net do not exist to support this value system. Importantly, both men and women interviewed shared this perspective.

*Gender equality within a family unit is defined by the parents through their individual interests and capabilities.*

Importantly, these families are experimenting with different earning arrangements that are not based on gender norms, but rather, a shared desire for involved parenting. However, some gender normative behaviours persist. For these families, there is a wide range of distribution of domestic activities – the common pattern, however, is that they are based on what works for the family. Women who are taking a step back from earning want their choice to be valued and respected by their peers. Equally, men, who take a step back want to be valued and respected by their peers.

*Gender equality requires the cultural acceptance and validation of all choices*

The women interviewed in this study were adamant that they chose to take a step back from standard employment and viewed it as an opportunity. This does not suggest that all women who are in non-standard employment feel this way but what is important is that there is a desire for the choice to be accepted.

## Earning arrangements

*The dual-earner ideal is not working for families*

The experiences of the parents interviewed in this project reflect the argument made by Fraser (2016) that the dual-earner model diminishes capabilities of families to contribute to social reproduction. Figure 14 illustrates the tensions experienced by individuals trying to meet both ideal parent and ideal worker norms.

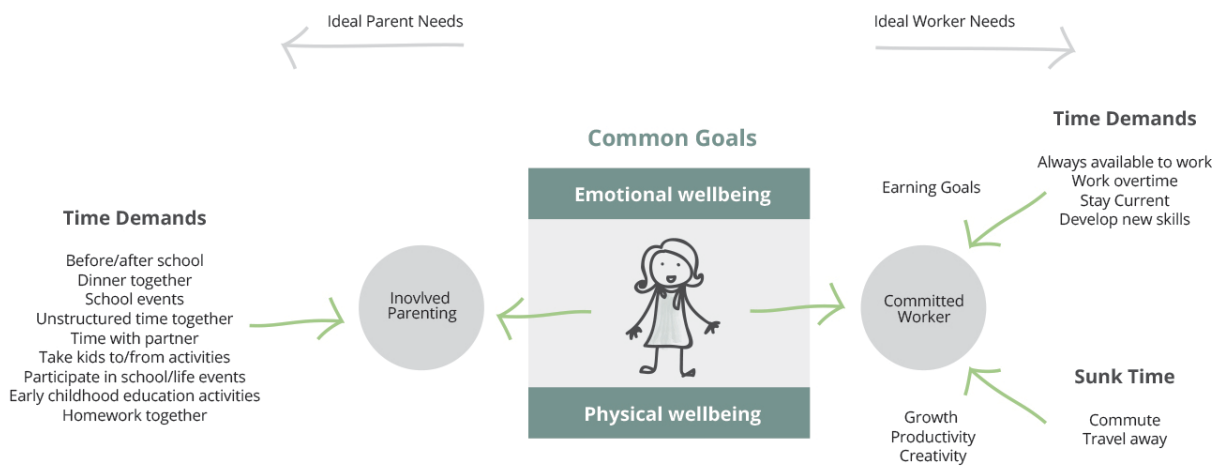


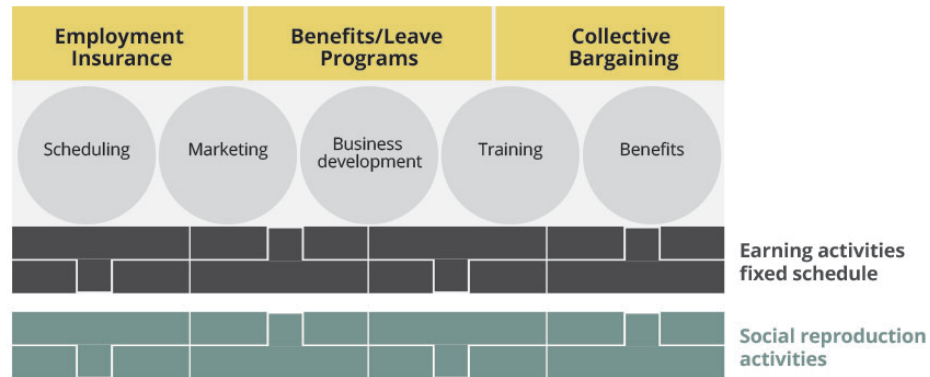
Figure 14 The tensions of the ideal parent and ideal worker needs

The families interviewed in this project are experimenting with a new model to earn and provide care beyond the modern ideal of the dual-earner family (both working in full-time standard employment).

*Non-standard work arrangements unbundle activities that were typically done by employers for workers*

One of the key challenges is addressing the activities that have been unbundled from the employer and shifted to non-standard workers as they seek to achieve their parenting goals and businesses seek to meet their cost-cutting goals. This includes activities such as marketing and promotion, finance and administration. The differences are illustrated in Figure 15.

### Standard Employment



### Non-standard Employment

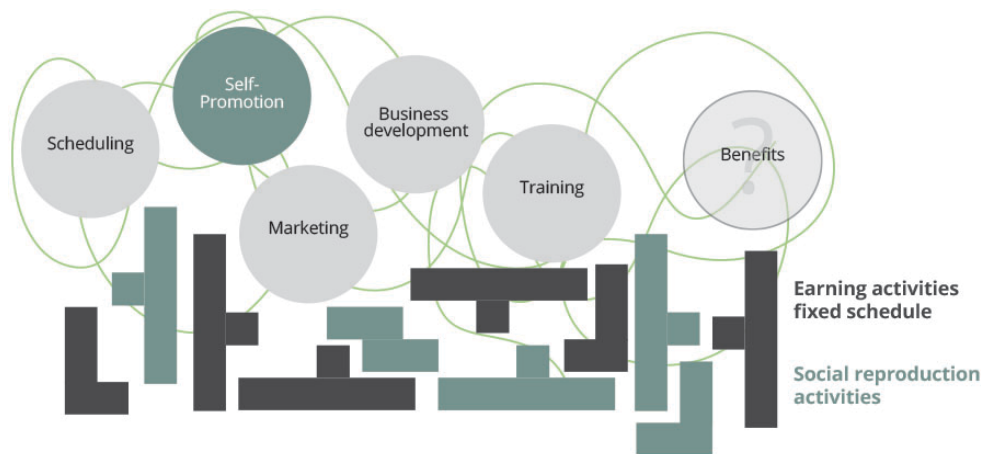


Figure 15 Comparison of standard employment and non-standard employment earner and organization responsibilities

*Parents in non-standard employment are failed by the current social support system*  
 The risks taken by these families are quite substantial, yet they could take them because of the supports provided by their partner’s employment or extended family. Parents in non-standard work arrangements do not have access to extended health benefits, pensions, job protections, leaves (parental, bereavement, care for a family member), and employment insurance.



## **“The system has gaps and people fall through gaps”**

– Mother of one, non-standard employment

In addition, parents spoke about the challenges of the surrounding social programs that do not match their needs. They felt that childcare is currently designed to meet the needs of parents in 9 to 5 jobs. They felt as though the system was punishing them for their choice and that they were looked down upon.

### **IMPLICATIONS**

The experiences of these parents have important implications for policy makers, public program designers, employers and social innovators seeking to address gender equality.

First, policy makers, public program designers and employers need to embrace the growing reality that earners are parents and that parenting is a shared responsibility between a couple. Taken more broadly, earners are members of the broader society with social reproduction obligations. The era of one parent (mothers) undertaking most, or all the child raising activities, and by extension social reproduction activities is disappearing. This has substantial consequences for earners who are trying to meet the demands of an employer who considers earners through the lens of the ideal worker without obligations outside of work. This will only grow as demand for elder care rises with the aging population (Fast, 2015).

Second, non-standard employment relationships result in earners having multiple earning sources, as well as earning gaps over time, creating a substantially different model than earners in standard employment. Since, the social safety net and labour regulations were developed on the standard employment model, many benefits are tied to the employer as opposed to the earner. This creates gaps in the system for earners in non-standard employment and privileges earners in long-term standard employment (Johal & Thirgood, 2016; Manyika et al., 2016; PEPSO, McMaster and United Way, 2013). Government programs and labour policies need to consider this shifting earning pattern in their redesign of programs such as the Ontario Government’s Workplace Review currently underway.

Third, parents in non-standard employment relationships expressed challenges to their mental health, feeling burnt out and always on to support their parenting and caring goals, in addition to the anxiety of unpredictable income. Although they

would continue in these relationships, the continuing mental health stress posed a challenge to them. The parents interviewed in this study had good family supports, which would suggest that parents without those supports would likely have increased effects on their mental health.

Fourth, non-standard employment creates irregular earning schedules and unpredictable income limiting parents' ability to engage with current childcare offerings that require long term commitments and consistent weekly enrolment. The scheduling experience for parents with unpredictable schedules could be imagined as a Tetris game with variable pieces and sizes of earning blocks around which care needs to be scheduled.

Fifth, non-standard employment, rapidly shifting technologies, and the need to develop earning opportunities that can ebb and flow with the demands of child rearing require earners to shift across sectors. These shifts are often referred to as a portfolio career in place of the linear career trajectory (Templer & Cawsey, 1999). Although, the career portfolio has been an emerging pathway for some time, it is largely under-supported by educational institutions, career development programs and higher education funding incentives.

And finally, the parents interviewed in this study point to an emerging value system that values earning and caring equally; in contrast to privileging earning over caring. This value system is based in gender equality; however, it challenges the prevailing value system. Gender equality advocates may consider how to shift these values from a precarious nature to an established nature.

## CHAPTER 5 - INNOVATION OPPORTUNITIES

Interviewing parents provided a deep understanding of the motivations and needs of these parents who are constructing their earning and caring roles within a rapidly changing complex context. They are operating within the broader financialized capitalist society that diminishes capacity for activities outside of earning, shifting societal values and norms related to earning and parenting, and the shifting nature of work. They are also operating within a public policy and social programs' context that reflects an old model of earning and caring that is based on, and reinforces, traditional gender roles. This public system is currently being challenged and disrupted. It is within this context of an unfreezing system that parents are constructing their earning and parenting roles.

The thematic findings described in the previous sections provide a rich contextual understanding of parents' motivations and decision criteria. The implications provide a summary of the challenges facing parents, policy makers, employers, and social innovators.

To support a human-centred design approach to address these challenges, these findings are further synthesized into actionable insights in the form of summarizing parents' experiences using the customer profile of "pains, gains and jobs-to-be-done" from the value proposition canvas (Osterwalder, Pigneur, Bernarda, & Smith, 2014); point of view statements (Ideo, 2009), and problem challenge questions.

The customer profile is used to identify the challenges (pains) and the benefits (gains) of parents in their current earning and caring roles and what they are trying to achieve (jobs-to-be-done).

Point of views are used to further distill these observations into a statement capturing the experience of people at the centre of the problem you are trying to address to focus future design. They are also known as User Need Statements (Ideo, 2009). The point of view is a succinct capture of a new finding that can provide inspiration for a new design. Point of view statements help designers reframe the problem from the system perspective to the perspective of the people experiencing the problem.

Point of view statements are then converted into problem challenge questions in the form of “How might we” questions to invite a broad number of stakeholders into the design process to support development of innovations.

Design principles are then created to guide the design process to ensure the complex and nuanced experiences of parents are addressed in the solution.

The following section outlines these actionable insights.

## **CUSTOMER PROFILE**

### **Jobs-to-be-done**

Jobs-to-be-done are what people are trying to get done. It could be the tasks they are trying to perform and complete, the problems they are trying to solve, or the needs they are trying to satisfy. These jobs can be functional, emotional and social.

#### **Functional**

- Maintain our work life fit
- Schedule multiple people’s activities and responsibilities to deliver care and earn
- Participate in our children’s lives and increase time spent with them:
  - Before and after school
  - Pick up and drop off
  - School events
  - Time together before bed
  - Unstructured time together
  - Helping with homework
  - Have dinner together
- Run a household such as cooking, cleaning, groceries, laundry, repairs and garbage
- Earn enough to support my family
  - Make it on my own outside of standard employment
  - Self-promotion and marketing
- Raise our children to value caring activities and earning equally

#### **Emotional**

- Not being on the treadmill of life
- Happy and present with my children

- Seeking fulfillment in my work
- Expressing my creativity and passion in my work
- Manage the anxiety of unpredictability of our finances, future stability and schedule
- Overcome my own insecurities around going out on my own

### Social

- Find something that fits my family and not be judged by others
- Trying an earning and caring arrangement that is different from my friends
- Create role models of something different and more equitable for my children
- Inspire my children

### Pains and Gains

Pains describe the negative emotions, undesired costs and situations, and risks that your customer experiences or could experience before, during, and after getting the job done. Gains describe the benefits people expect, desires or would be surprised by. This includes functional utility, social gains, positive emotions, and cost savings (Osterwalder et al., 2014). In the context of this study, the pains and gains focus on the challenges and benefits resulting from at least one parent in non-standard employment (Table 2).

*Table 2 Pains and gains of parents working in non-standard arrangements*

Pains	Gains
Financial uncertainty	Increase time with the children
Anxiety over where to work next	Shared parenting
Lack of stability and security	Work at home
Poor mental health	Decreased commute
Co-coordinating care and schedules	Control over schedule
Hard job market	Flexibility
Being judged	Don't have to pay for childcare (do themselves or rely on family and friends)
Saying 'no' to request for projects	Entrepreneurial spirit
Self-promotion/chasing projects	Ability to be creative in earning and outside of work
Burnout and overload	Family does not have a rushed lifestyle
Always working (paid and unpaid)	Something that can grow and change with parenting

Not always able to be 'present' with family because of the bleed of work into home	Don't have to make stark choices
No benefits, pensions, leaves of absence or job protection	
Different earning schedules between parents	
Unpredictable work surges	
Not a lot of time with each other	
Slow increase in business if taking time off when baby was born	

## POINT OF VIEW STATEMENT

The problem from a system perspective was grounded in statistical documentation of gender inequality in Canada for earning and caring activities, and a labour market shifting towards non-standard employment. Through interviewing parents working in non-standard employment to deeply understand their motivations and needs, a new understanding of why and how these parents are constructing their earning and caring roles emerged. These parents are seeking a new earning and caring arrangement outside of standard employment to meet their goals.

This leads to the first "Point of View" statement:

*A loving parenting couple wants to find an earning and caring model beyond the dual-earner model that increases their time with their children and is adaptable as their children age, provides income security and predictability, and is not gender based.*

The second point of view describes parents once in the non-standard relationships:

*A loving parenting couple in non-standard work arrangements is trying to control their schedules to increase time spent with their children but are sacrificing financial stability, safety net protections, and their mental health while relying on their families for flexible childcare support.*

## PROBLEM CHALLENGE QUESTIONS

### Overarching problem challenge question

An overarching problem challenge question was developed to provide a high-level focus for the design challenge. Based on the Point of View statements, the overall problem challenge from the point of view of the parents interviewed in the study is:

*How might we help parents to control their schedules and increase time spent with their children while increasing financial stability, safety net protections, and their mental health and decreasing their reliance on friends and families for flexible childcare support?*

### **Innovation opportunity spaces and inspiration**

The question is then broken into several innovation opportunity spaces that could be addressed to create an ecosystem that supports parents who are also earners. Innovation inspirations are also included to outline the activities already underway to support these challenges. The innovation opportunities are as follows:

#### *Opportunity 1: Temporal Flexibility*

How might we create temporally flexible earning arrangements that support earners in spending more time with their children (or elders) while delivering quality work?

However, there is opportunity for other standard-employment relationships and potentially new configurations to fulfill this need. Organizations like responsive.org and OpenWork are working to address the changing needs of earners. Responsive.org is aiming to “create a fundamental shift in the way we work and organize in the 21st century”. Similarly, OpenWork is “a new nonprofit inspiring companies to continuously improve how, when, and where work is done for the mutual benefit of employees and employers”. Governments are also trying to address this challenge, for example the Government of Canada recently launched an initiative to support flexibility in workplaces within federal jurisdiction (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2016). Another common approach is a shorter work week – the four-day work week has been experimented with in the public sector in various jurisdictions like Utah State and in companies like Basecamp and Reusser (Open Work, 2017). Other organizations are increasing the use of telework, work from home and from remote sites to better serve clients while providing employees with more flexibility.

#### *Opportunity 2: Career Switching*

How might we support earners to successfully career switch or re-enter earning after an earning gap?

As the nature of work and technology shifts, there is a growing need to support people who may need/want to shift from one career to the next as jobs disappear and new ones appear. Currently, most post-secondary education and government funded professional development programs focus on students graduating high-

school, college and university. Many government programs have a cut-off age of 30 limiting the options for older adults to continue to gain the skills they need to contribute to the economy. In response to this emerging need, there are a variety of new education options available such as coding and technology programs offered by independent private companies like Brainstation that provide hands-on training for working professionals, freelancers and entrepreneurs.

### *Opportunity 3: Earner Protections*

How might we create earner protections such as employment insurance, benefits and leaves that are tied to the individual and not the employer?

As people earning in non-standard employment relationships do not follow the same earning pattern as standard employees, they are ineligible for many social programs such as employment insurance and paid leaves, and, are unable to participate in benefits programs like those offered by single employers. However, earners still need these benefits and protections. This may require a fundamental shift in how programs are developed – shifting away from the employer to the earner; for example, creating pooled benefit programs that multiple employers could contribute to (care.com, 2016). Care.com is piloting this approach through their peer-to-peer benefits platform for caregivers. Multiple employers, in this case individual parents, pay for their services through care.com and a percentage of the transaction is added to the payment to fund Care.com Benefits to create portable benefits allowing the worker to switch employers or have multiple employers. Another example is The Coworking Health Insurance Plan (COHIP) launched in 2013. COHIP is available to workers in collaborative working spaces that are participating. COHIP provides options for health, dental, disability and term life insurance; along with prescription drug benefits and extended health coverage for singles, couples, single parents and families. They are targeting earners in non-standard employment ((Proctor, 2014).

### *Opportunity 4: Flexible Childcare*

How might we help parents make use of childcare when they need it?

Current childcare services operate on a business model that requires long-term commitment to full-time spots for children on an annual basis. This provides consistency for the service, consistency of pay for their employees, and security of spots for families. However, as the nature of work shifts, there will be an increasing demand for childcare in the moments where parents find themselves without care.



Private companies are emerging to support these parents; for example, Datenight provides baby-sitting services on an as needed basis.

#### *Opportunity 5: Mental Health*

How might we construct earning and parenting roles that improve the mental health of people?

Mental health is an increasing challenge in Canada and across the employment spectrum of non-standard and standard employment. The parents interviewed in this study indicated that overall they were content with their earning and parenting roles, however some identified negative effects on their mental health. Creating an earning and parenting construction that improves mental health provides an opportunity for workplace innovations and regulatory innovations to support earners' needs to have sufficient capacity to commit to their earning and parenting goals.

Some companies are experimenting with approaches to providing time for people to contribute to their social reproduction activities and their own mental health. One example is iBeat's initiative to give its employees paid Fridays off twice a month (Open Work, 2017).

## **DESIGN PRINCIPLES**

Through the qualitative research and literature research a set of design principles were developed to capture the rich qualitative context required to address the innovation opportunities.

#### *Beyond the 'ideal adult worker':*

Earners should be considered as earners and parents or care providers instead of the 'ideal adult worker'.

#### *Parents as earners*

Parents should be considered as earners instead of only the 'ideal mother' or 'engaged father.'

#### *Cultural acceptance*

Cultural values and symbols support and respect diversity of earning and parenting choices by men and women.

*Social safety net*

Control and flexibility over one's schedule should not be used as a rationale for business and governments to not support the social safety net.

*Multiple income*

Earners should not be punished for having multiple income providers.

*Protected non-earning time*

Protected non-earning time is needed for all earners to support social reproduction.

## CHAPTER 6 – CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH AREAS

This research project studied fifteen parents (seven couples and one single parent) living in Toronto, Ontario and Edmonton, Alberta, Canada to support a human-centred design approach to developing public policy, workplace innovation and social innovations to support Canadians who are earners and parents. Through the analysis and synthesis of the qualitative data, common themes emerged including the key insight that these parents are constructing their earning and caring roles to support their parenting goals of maximizing the time spent with their children and being involved in their lives. The experiences of these parents also pointed toward emerging innovation opportunities that will support Canadians in their earning and parenting goals.

This project contributes rich qualitative insights to the growing knowledge base of the lived experiences and motivations of people working in non-standard forms of employment and the experiences of constructing earning and parenting roles in this shifting economy (Hilbrecht & Lero, 2014; Pagnan et al., 2011). This research expands upon the previous studies to include the experiences of parents in multiple non-standard earning arrangements and inspects the decision-making criteria and influencers in their selection of their earning and caring roles within a parent couple. The findings from this study suggest an emerging value shift and point towards several future research areas:

- Future Research Area 1: How common is the point of view and experiences of these parents?
- Future Research Area 2: What are the needs of the other stakeholders in the system - employers and governments?
- Future Research Area 3: Will non-standard employment with flexible virtual work create the new model beyond the dual-earner family that will decrease the caring crisis and increase gender equality?
- Future Research Area 4: How do we measure progress on gender equality goals in the context of families defining gender equality differently for themselves?

Research areas 1 and 2 provide an expanded understanding of the current problem statements through qualitative research with a broader range of parents and

stakeholders. Research areas 3 and 4 identify two distinct project areas to frame a broader discussion on a desired future and how we measure progress towards that future of gender equality.

## **FUTURE RESEARCH AREA 1**

### **How common is the point of view and experiences of these parents?**

The diversity of the parents who participated in this study is limited to university-educated parents who are performing high skill work in the creative and knowledge sectors recruited through the network of the researcher and a not-for-profit group representing workers in non-standard employment. As a result, motivations and mindsets of this group may be biased towards a similar outlook. Additionally, their lived experiences may not reflect the broader population of parents working in non-standard employment, for example those working in low skill areas or through the on-demand economy. The on-demand economy is a quickly emerging set of services that help people get what they need when they want it. As discussed previously, there are on-demand app based services for everything from dry cleaning to groceries. The business models are two-sided creating network effects to serve each of its customers – the user and the service provider. The current business model focuses on the customers and service providers are working in even more unpredictable patterns than the parents interviewed in this study (Hempel, 2016).

Furthermore, the value system may be biased towards the cultural background of the participants specifically their systems of beliefs, values and behaviours and not representative of other cultures that are represented within Canada's multi-cultural society. The parents who participated in this project referenced 'choice' when it came to their earning arrangement, this choice however is potentially linked to the privilege associated with the participant's backgrounds and educations. Recent studies have found that there is an increasing number of people participating in non-standard employment out of necessity (PEPSO, McMaster and United Way, 2013).

Future research should include an expansion of the sample to include a broader diversity of parents and earning arrangements to examine as to whether the viewpoints and experiences are consistent with other parents.

## FUTURE RESEARCH AREA 2

### **What are the needs of the other stakeholders in the system - employers and governments?**

This project focused on a deep understanding of the needs of parents earning in non-standard employment. However, to address the innovation opportunities identified in the previous section, an understanding the needs of the broader range of stakeholders implicated is required. A stakeholder analysis through qualitative research should be conducted to understand the needs of employers and governments.

## FUTURE RESEARCH AREA 3

### **Will non-standard employment with flexible virtual work create a new model beyond the dual-earner standard employment model that will decrease the caring crisis and increase gender equality?**

The experiences of the parents interviewed in this study contribute to the growing evidence that we are undergoing an unfreezing of the labour market towards non-standard employment and that a new future of earning is emerging. Coupled with advances in automation, digital communication, and robotics (and a changing economy), the future nature of earning opportunities is expected to rapidly shift. Artificial intelligence, cognitive computing and robotics technologies are rapidly advancing, leading to potential displacement of jobs across the economic spectrum. Advances in material sciences, manufacturing, machine vision technologies, sensors, cognitive computing and controls are giving engineers the tools to create machines that could replace a growing number of human tasks. For example, emergence of technologies like driverless cars have the potential to eliminate millions of truck driver jobs across North America (Ford, 2017). Cognitive computing is expected to eliminate knowledge sector jobs like legal assistants and medical assistants and eventually lawyers and doctors (Policy Horizons Canada, 2016).

In addition to the shifting labour market, public policy debates are currently underway and new innovations are emerging to support this future; however, what continues to be unclear is what value system this future will be based on. What is our collective desired future and what are the future models of earning and caring models for families?

Foresight study teaches that the future is unknowable and there is a broad cone of possible futures. Systems change theory teaches that to bring about a desired

future an important element of change is the ability to imagine and hope for a new future.

Currently, discussions on non-standard employment and the future of work focus on earning arrangements and the myriad of risks that are faced by workers in these arrangements. Many of these discussions leave out gender and a more nuanced understanding of earners outside of the “ideal worker” norm. This study suggests non-standard employment provide benefits to earners that could be amplified to create new earning arrangements that allow earners to also achieve their parenting goals. These parenting goals are a signal of an emerging value shift to value care and earning equally.

However, most of the discourse on the future of work leaves out this value shift. To broaden the discussion and create a shared vision of a desired future, next steps would include the development of a futures study that creates scenarios of potential futures. Through analysis and discussion of the scenario set, people will be able to identify the advantages and disadvantages of the scenarios and being work towards developing a desired future.

The findings from this study suggest a set of critical uncertainties to provide the foundation for the futures exercise – value system and employment model (Figure 16). The value system dimension would range from the continuation of the current prevailing value system that privileges earning over caring and the emerging value system of valuing earning and caring equally. The employment model dimension would range from non-standard employment to widespread automation.

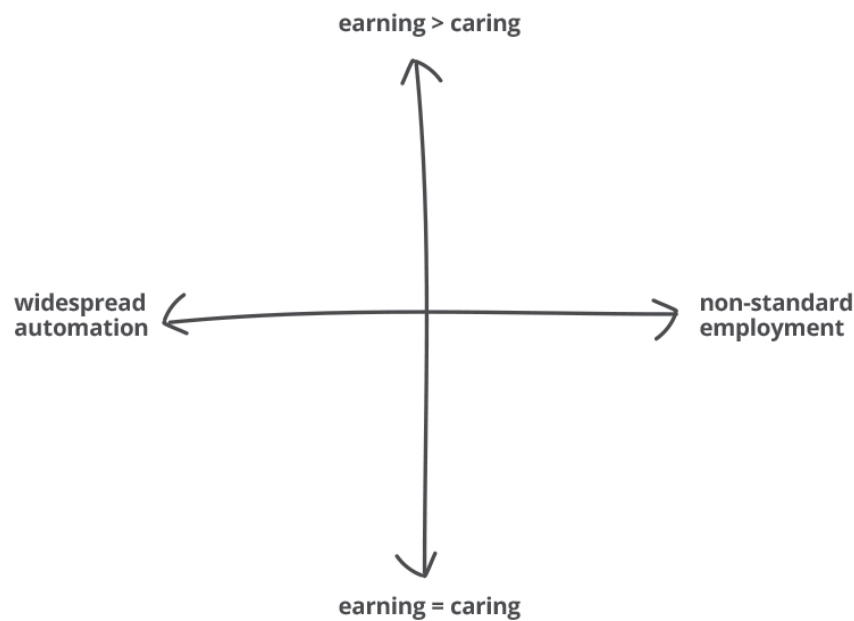


Figure 16 Future scenarios

To begin working towards creating the desired future, the scenario exercise could be followed by a Three Horizons model process to connect the present with the desired future (Curry & Hodgson, 2008).

## FUTURE RESEARCH AREA 4

### **How do we measure progress on gender equality goals in the context of families defining gender equality differently for themselves?**

The parents interviewed in this project demonstrated that gender equality within a family or a couple might be defined differently from how statistics measure gender equality. For example, how do we measure gender equality in the context of what is “fair”? Participants in this study referenced that doing what works for their family might not always be viewed as gender equality – for example a husband has a two-hour commute and the wife does more of the domestic duties around her earning arrangement that allows for greater flexibility and to work from home – is this considered gender equality and if so, how do we measure it?

Said another way, interpreting statistics aimed at measuring gender equality such as workforce participation rates and distribution of household activities is challenging

given the diversity of arrangements within families that are being constructed to meet earning and parenting goals.

Future research should explore how to combine qualitative studies such as the method used in this project with quantitative statistics such as those collected by Statistics Canada as a tool to interpret the behaviours and motivations underlying the statistics. The qualitative studies will also provide insights into emergent behaviours that might be disguised or hide emergent behaviours such as those captured by this research study.

## **NEXT STEPS**

The findings from this project highlight the need for government policy makers, workplaces and social innovators to develop a deep understanding of the people for whom they are solving problems. Statistics do not necessarily show the nuance of how and why individuals are making the choices that make up their lives. The parents interviewed in this study point to an emerging trend of adults looking for alternative approaches to construct their lives outside of the norm of earning in standard employment workplaces that are ever increasing the demands on the worker. The focus of this project was on parenting as the specific element of social reproduction. However, there are many other activities that adults are struggling to conduct within social reproduction such as caring for seniors, contributing to their extended families, local communities and participating in democratic life.

The project findings will be disseminated to ongoing government reviews of workplace legislation and gender equality such as Ontario's Workplace Reviews; to policy organizations that are focused on the future of work and gender equality such as the Broadbent Institute; to workers group such as the Urban Worker Project; to employer groups and parenting groups.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Acker, J. (1990). Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies -- A Theory of Gendered Organizations. *Gender and Society, 4*(2), 139–158.
- Aloisi, A. (2016). Commoditized Workers: Case study research on labour law issues arising from a set of “On-Demand/Gig economy” platforms. *Comparative Labor Law & Policy Journal, 37*, 653–690.
- Attachment Parenting International. (n.d.). Attachment Parenting International. Retrieved January 5, 2017, from <http://www.attachmentparenting.org>
- Bezanson, K. (2006). *Gender, the State, and Social Reproduction: Household Insecurity in Neo-Liberal Times*. University of Toronto Press.
- Borelli, J. L., Nelson, S. K., River, L. M., Birken, S. A., & Moss-Racusin, C. (2016). Gender Differences in Work-Family Guilt in Parents of Young Children. *Sex Roles, 76*(5), 356–368. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-016-0579-0>
- Canada's Top 100 Employers. (2017). *Canada's Top Family-Friendly Employers (2017)*. Mediacorp Canada Inc. Retrieved from <http://www.canadastop100.com/family/>
- Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. (2016). *A Growing Concern: 2016 child care fees in Canada's big cities*. Retrieved from [https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/National%20Office/2016/12/A\\_Growing\\_Concern.pdf](https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/National%20Office/2016/12/A_Growing_Concern.pdf)

Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action (FAFIA). (2016, October). Reply to Issues 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 12 & 13: Report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on the Occasion of the Committee's Eighth and Ninth Periodic Review of Canada. Retrieved from <http://fafia-afai.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/FAFIA-Coalition-report.pdf>

care.com. (2016, September 14). care.com introduces groundbreaking peer-to-peer benefits platform for caregivers. Retrieved March 30, 2017, from <https://www.care.com/press-release-carecom-introduces-caregiver-benefits-platform-p1186-q81381650.html>

Caring Across Generations. (2016, June 14). Announcing the "Who Cares" coalition. Retrieved from <https://caringacross.org/announcing-who-cares-coalition/>

Colby, C., & Bell, K. (2016, April 14). The On-Demand Economy Is Growing, and Not Just for the Young and Wealthy. Retrieved July 11, 2016, from <https://hbr.org/2016/04/the-on-demand-economy-is-growing-and-not-just-for-the-young-and-wealthy>

Commission on the Status of Women. (2017, March). Women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work. Retrieved from [http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/csw/unw\\_csw61\\_brochure\\_en.pdf?vs=2057](http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/csw/unw_csw61_brochure_en.pdf?vs=2057)

- Curry, A., & Hodgson, A. (2008). Seeing in multiple horizons: connecting futures to strategy. *Journal of Futures Studies*, 13(1), 1–20.
- Daly, K., Ashbourne, L., & Hawkins, L. (2008). Work Life Issues for Fathers. In *Handbook of Work-Family Integration* (1st ed., pp. 249–264). Academic Press.
- David P. Ball. (2016, March 7). How Do Workers Organize When Their Boss Is an App? *TheTyee.ca*. Retrieved from <http://www.thetyee.ca/News/2016/03/07/Organizing-Workers-App/>
- Doucet, A. (2016). Is the Stay-At-Home Dad (SAHD) a Feminist Concept? A Genealogical, Relational, and Feminist Critique. *Sex Roles*, 75, 4–14. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-016-0582-5>
- Dubberly, H., & Evenson, S. (2008). On modeling: The analysis-synthesis bridge model. *Interactions*, 15(2), 57–61.
- Employment and Social Development Canada. (2016). *Flexible Work Arrangements: A Discussion Paper*. Retrieved from [http://www.esdc.gc.ca/en/consultations/labour/flexible\\_work\\_arrangements/discussion\\_paper.page](http://www.esdc.gc.ca/en/consultations/labour/flexible_work_arrangements/discussion_paper.page)
- Fast, J. (2015). *Caregiving for Older Adults with Disabilities* (No. 58). IRPP Study.
- Ford, M. (2017, February 16). Driverless trucks: economic tsunami may swallow one of most common US jobs. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/feb/16/self-driving-trucks-automation-jobs-trucking-industry>

Fraser, N. (2016). Contradictions of Capital and Care. *New Left Review* 100, (July Aug), 99–117.

Freelancer Union and Elance-oDesk. (2015). *Freelancing in North America. A National Survey of the New Workforce*. Retrieved from [http://fu-web-storage-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/content/filer\\_public/c2/06/c2065a8a-7f00-46db-915a-2122965df7d9/fu\\_freelancinginamericareport\\_v3-rgb.pdf](http://fu-web-storage-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/content/filer_public/c2/06/c2065a8a-7f00-46db-915a-2122965df7d9/fu_freelancinginamericareport_v3-rgb.pdf)

Glavin, P., Schieman, S., & Reid, S. (2011). Boundary-Spanning Work Demands and Their Consequences for Guilt and Psychological Distress. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 52(1), 43–57.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022146510395023>

Goldin, C. (2014). A Grand Gender Convergence: Its Last Chapter. *The American Economic Review*, 104(4), 1091–1119(29).

Government of Canada. (2017). *Budget 2017: Building a strong middle class*. Retrieved from <http://www.budget.gc.ca/2017/docs/plan/chap-05-en.html>

Government of Ontario. (2015). The Changing Workplaces Review. Retrieved July 9, 2016, from <https://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/about/workplace/>

Government of Ontario. (2016). *Gender wage gap strategy consultation*. Retrieved from <https://www.ontario.ca/page/gender-wage-gap-strategy-consultation>

Hamel, G. (2006). The why, what, and how of management innovation. *Harvard Business Review*, 84(2), 72.

- Hatton, E. (2008). The Making of the Kelly Girl: Gender and the Origins of the Temp Industry in Postwar America. *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 21(1), 1–29.
- Hempel, J. (2016, January). Gig Economy Workers Need Benefits and Job Protections. Now. *Wired*. Retrieved from <http://www.wired.com/2016/01/gig-economy-workers/>
- Hertz, R. (2006). A Typology of Approaches to Child Care - The Centerpiece of Organizing Family Life For Dual-Earner Couples. *Journal of Family Issues*, 18(4), 355–385. <https://doi.org/10.1177/019251397018004001>
- Hilbrecht, M., & Lero, D. S. (2014). Self-employment and family life: constructing work–life balance when you're "always on." *Community, Work & Family*, 17(1), 20–42. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13668803.2013.862214>
- Hilbrecht, M., Lero, D. S., Schryer, E., Mock, S. E., & Smale, B. (2105). Understanding the association between time spent caregiving and well-being among employed adults: testing a model of work–life fit and sense of community. *Community, Work & Family*, 20(2), 162–180. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13668803.2015.1112254>
- Ideo. (2009, May 18). POV Statements. Retrieved February 5, 2017, from [https://dschool-old.stanford.edu/groups/k12/wiki/41a18/POV\\_.html](https://dschool-old.stanford.edu/groups/k12/wiki/41a18/POV_.html)
- IDEO.org. (2015). *Field Guide to Human-Centered Design*. IDEO.org. Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca/books?id=-T3urQEACAAJ>

- Johal, S., & Thirgood, J. (2016). *Working Without a Net* (Mowat Research No. 132). Mowat Centre. Retrieved from <https://mowatcentre.ca/working-without-a-net/>
- Korabik, K., Lero, D., & Whitehead, D. (2008). *Handbook of Work-Family Integration* (1st ed.). Academic Press.
- Ladner, S. (2014). *Practical ethnography: A guide to doing ethnography in the private sector*. Left Coast Press.
- Lero, D. S. (2015, June). Current stats on paternity leave and fathers' use of parental leave and income support in Canada and Quebec. Centre for Families, Work & Well-Being; University of Guelph. Retrieved from [https://worklifecanada.ca/cms/resources/files/731/CURRENT\\_STATS\\_ON\\_PATERNITY\\_LEAVE\\_AND\\_FATHERS.pdf](https://worklifecanada.ca/cms/resources/files/731/CURRENT_STATS_ON_PATERNITY_LEAVE_AND_FATHERS.pdf)
- Lewin, K. (1947). Frontiers of Group Dynamics: Concept, Method and Reality in Social Science; Social Equilibria and Social Change. *Human Relations*, 1(1), 5–41.
- Lindsey McKay, Sophie Mathieu, & Andrea Doucet. (2016). Parental-leave rich and parental-leave poor- Inequality in Canadian labour market based leave policies. *Journal of Industrial Relations*, 0(0), 1–20.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022185616643558>
- Luckman, S. (2015). Women's Micro-Entrepreneurial Homeworking. *Australian Feminist Studies*, 30(84), 146–160.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/08164649.2015.1038117>

- Lyonette, C., & Crompton, R. (2015). Sharing the load? Partners' relative earnings and the division of domestic labour. *Work, Employment & Society*, 29(1), 23–40. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017014523661>
- Manyika, J., Lund, S., Bughin, J., Robinson, K., Mischke, J., & Mahajan, D. (2016). *Independent work: choice, necessity and the gig economy*. McKinsey Global Institute. Retrieved from <http://www.mckinsey.com/global-themes/employment-and-growth/independent-work-choice-necessity-and-the-gig-economy>
- Marshall, K. (2011). *Generational change in paid and unpaid work* (Component of Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 11-008-X No. 92). Statistics Canada. Retrieved from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2011002/article/11520-eng.htm>
- Mitchell, C. M., & Murray, J. C. (2016). *Changing Workplaces Review SPECIAL ADVISORS' INTERIM REPORT*. Ministry of Labour. Retrieved from [https://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/about/pdf/cwr\\_interim.pdf](https://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/about/pdf/cwr_interim.pdf)
- Moyser, M. (2017). *Women and Paid Work* (Women in Canada: A Gender-based Statistical Report No. 89-503-X). Statistics Canada. Retrieved from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-503-x/2015001/article/14694-eng.htm>
- Nichols, L. (2014). Employment Insurance in Canada- The Gendered Implications. *Journal of Finance and Bank Management*, 2(1), 49–76.

- OECD. (2016). *Society at a Glance 2016: OECD Social Indicators*. Paris: OECD Publishing. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264261488-en>
- Ogburn, W. F. (1922). *Social change with respect to culture and original nature*. BW Huebsch, Incorporated.
- Open Work. (2017). Working less means engaging more at the firms bucking the traditional workweek. Retrieved March 27, 2017, from <http://www.openwork.org/blog/nontraditional-workweek/>
- Osterwalder, A., Pigneur, Y., Bernarda, G., & Smith, A. (2014). *Value Proposition Design: How to Create Products and Services Customers Want*. Wiley. Retrieved from <http://ca.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-1118968050.html>
- Pagnan, C. E., Lero, D. S., & MacDermid Wadsworth, S. M. (2011). It doesn't always add up: examining dual-earner couples' decision to off-shift. *Community, Work & Family*, 14(3), 297–316.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13668803.2010.520843>
- PEPSO, McMaster and United Way. (2013). *It's more than poverty: Employment precarity and household well-being. Prepared for Poverty and Employment Precarity in Southern Ontario (PEPSO)*. Retrieved from <http://www.unitedwaytyr.com/document.doc?id=91>
- Policy Horizons Canada. (2016). *Canada and the Changing Nature of Work* (Monograph No. PH4-160/2016E-PDF). Policy Horizons Canada. Retrieved



from [http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection\\_2016/hpc-phc/PH4-160-2016-eng.pdf](http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2016/hpc-phc/PH4-160-2016-eng.pdf)

Proctor, A. (2014). History of COHIP. Retrieved April 6, 2017, from <http://www.cohip.ca/en/history/>

Sanders, E. B. N., & Stappers, P. J. (2013). *Convivial design toolbox : generative research for the front end of design*. Amsterdam: Publishers Group.

Schwarz, V. R. (2016, March 30). Redefining work to create gender parity. Retrieved July 17, 2016, from <https://medium.com/@VRavivSchwarz/redefining-work-to-create-gender-parity-a8b47d483f73#.mia347mkl>

Slaughter, A. M. (2015, October 23). The Gig Economy Can Actually Be Great for Women. *Wired*. Retrieved from <http://www.wired.com/2015/10/unfinished-business-women-men-work-family/>

Smith, A. (2016). *Gig Work, Online Selling and Home Sharing*. Pew Research Centre. Retrieved from [www.pewresearch.org](http://www.pewresearch.org)

Statistics Canada. (2016a). *Satisfaction with work-life balance: Fact sheet* (Spotlight on Canadians: Results from the General Social Survey No. 89-652-X2016003). Statistics Canada.

Statistics Canada. (2016b, May 30). Canadian Megatrends: The rise of the dual-earner family with children. Retrieved from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-630-x/11-630-x2016005-eng.htm>

- Templer, A. J., & Cawsey, T. F. (1999). Rethinking career development in an era of portfolio careers. *Career Development International*, 4(2), 70–76.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/13620439910254669>
- Thebaud, S., & Pedulla, D. S. (2016). Masculinity and the stalled Revolution: How Gender ideologies and norms shape young Men's Responses to Work-Family Policies. *Gender & Society*, 30(4), 590–617.
- Thompson, J. R. (2013). *Resilient Woman: Weaving Together Work, Family, and Self*. ResilientWoman Inc.
- Tuff, G., & Wunker, S. (2014). *Beacons for Business Model Innovation*. Dublin Deloitte Consulting. Retrieved from  
[https://www.doblin.com/dist/images/uploads/Beacons\\_Article\\_vf7\\_single.pdf](https://www.doblin.com/dist/images/uploads/Beacons_Article_vf7_single.pdf)
- United Nations Development Programme. (2016). *UN Gender Inequality Index* (Human Development Reports). United Nations Development Programme. Retrieved from <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii>
- Vosko, L. F. (2011). *The Challenge of Expanding EI Coverage* (p. 46). Mowat Centre for Policy Innovation. Retrieved from [https://mowatcentre.ca/wp-content/uploads/publications/23\\_the\\_challenge.pdf](https://mowatcentre.ca/wp-content/uploads/publications/23_the_challenge.pdf)
- Williams, J. (2000). *Unbending gender: Why family and work conflict and what to do about it*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

# APPENDIX A – ORTHODOXIES AND OPERATING PARAMETERS

## HISTORICAL SYSTEM ORTHODOXIES AND OPERATING PARAMETERS FOR CANADA’S SOCIAL PROGRAMS

To illustrate the connection of the historical context of the construction of Canada’s social programs, the researcher has mapped the orthodoxies of the 1940’s to the 1960’s and the resulting operating parameters (Table 3). The mapping was done as a sense making activity based on literature review and expert interviews. Orthodoxies are commonly held beliefs within a system that are understood to always be true, these are often what are most challenged through innovation and system change (Hamel, 2006). Operating parameters are how the system orthodoxies or beliefs are operationalized within a system (Tuff & Wunker, 2014). Government programs, policies and regulations are good examples of operating parameters that reflect system orthodoxies.

*Table 3 Historical orthodoxies and operating parameters of the 1940’s and 1960’s that are the foundations of Canada’s social programs*

Historical Orthodoxies (1940’s to 1960’s)	Operating Parameters
Single (male) bread winner; family wage	Employment Insurance Program Labour laws and unions focus on standard employment relationship
Household produces ideal worker	Workplace not involved in household life Worker does not contribute to running the household Workers are always available Overtime by default Evening work like email that blur the lines between work and home
All individuals are seen not only as capable of work but also obliged to do so	Economic policy strives for an ever increasing workforce University/college education is subsidized by government Social assistance policies focus on shortest route to employment
Women are primary caregivers	Women do more housework and childcare than men Women are expected to take parental leave and often extended leave

	<p>If needed, women are expected to modify their earning schedules to accommodate the children</p> <p>Men are rewarded if they 'help out' at home</p> <p>Women are heavily judged for their earning and caring decisions</p>
Men work by default	<p>Parental leave in Canada delineated as maternity leave and parental leave which can be split</p> <p>No designated paternity leave (other than Quebec)</p>
Work is a higher priority and more highly valued than caregiving	<p>Work is paid and caregiving in the home is unpaid</p> <p>Domestic workers are paid low wages</p> <p>Caring professions are paid low wages</p>
School day is 9 to 3, five days per week	<p>Parents are available for pick up and drop off</p> <p>Extended childcare programs lacking</p>
Freelancing is flexible and fantastic because workers have control	<p>Freelancers don't receive benefits or worker's rights</p> <p>Women are encouraged to freelance and not return to work</p>

To understand the mismatch in today's system, historical orthodoxies were compared with the emerging orthodoxies of today (Table 4). The bolded text indicates which orthodoxies have shifted.

*Table 4 A comparison of historical orthodoxies and today's emerging orthodoxies*

Historical Orthodoxies (1940's to 1960's)	Today's Emerging Orthodoxies
Single bread winner	<b>Dual-earner family</b> <b>Increasing non-standard work arrangements</b>
Household produces ideal worker	<b>Earners are the household, the household is made up of earners</b>
All individuals are seen not only as capable of work but also obliged to do so	<b>Rising unemployment rates</b>
Women are primary caregivers	<b>Men and women support sharing domestic duties</b>
Men work by default	Men work by default
Work is a higher priority and more highly valued than caregiving	Work is a higher priority and more highly valued than caregiving
School day is 9 to 3, five days per week	Parents are available for pick up and drop off Extended childcare programs needed, but under-developed

Freelancing is flexible and fantastic because workers have control

**Freelancers don't receive benefits or worker's rights**

**Women are encouraged to freelance and not return to work**

---

## APPENDIX B – EXPERT INTERVIEWS

### PARTICIPANTS

Expert	Expertise	Affiliation
Dr. Jane Thompson	Gender role in the workforce and caregiving force	Author of Resilient Woman: Weaving Together Work, Family and Self in the Twenty-First Century
Dr. Sarah Reid	Gender role in the workforce and caregiving force	Doblin, Insights Formerly, Adjunct Professor at Rutgers university and University of Toronto
Dr. Donna Lero	Gender role in the workforce and caregiving force	Professor Emeritus, Dept of Family Relations Jarislowsky Chair in Families and Work Centre for Families, Work and Well-Being University of Guelph
Andrew Jackson	Labour Policy	Broadbent Institute's Senior Policy Advisor. In September, 2012 he retired from a long career as Chief Economist and Director of Social and Economic Policy with the Canadian Labour Congress.

## INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR EXPERTS IN GENDER ROLE IN THE WORKFORCE AND CAREGIVING

### INTRODUCTION TO PARTICIPANT

Hi, my name is Julie Sommerfreund. Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview with me. Before we get started, I would like to tell you a bit about myself and the intent of this research project. We will also go over your consent form before starting.

I'm a Master's student at OCAD University in the Strategic, Foresight and Innovation program and this research project forms the basis of my Major Research Project. The purpose of my research project is to develop new social innovation opportunities to support parenting and working as employment goes under massive change.

I am interviewing experts from a diverse range of fields to establish a solid foundation of the current context in which men and women find themselves and in which these social innovations would exist. An important dimension is understanding the current body of knowledge as it relates to gender issues and work and what signals of change are emerging as new employment relationships such as contingent work begin to take hold. That is why I am interviewing you. I am also conducting research with parents in Toronto to understand the drivers and motivations behind their decision making as well as their needs.

Do you have any questions about this research?

### CONSENT

### INTERVIEW

I'd like to spend some time talking about three key areas:

- How does society and individuals value social reproduction or care?
- Shifting employment relationships - increasingly non-standard and how that affects this perception and decisions
- Trends (STEEPV) that provide opportunity and risk for parenting and employment have the most potential for negative effects in the future?

Then we can follow up with a further discussion about undertaking this type of research, advice, etc

HOW DOES SOCIETY AND INDIVIDUALS VALUE SOCIAL REPRODUCTION OR CARE?  
So to get started, let's talk about the 'value' placed on social reproduction in society.  
Currently what do you think is the status of how society and individuals place value on 'work-for-love'  
How does that influence decisions, if at all?  
How does the shifting employment relationships influence how people place value on caregiving? Are there new opportunities?  
How do we increase value of caregiving as viable choices for men and women?

SHIFTING EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIPS  
Now let's talk about Shifting employment relationships - increasingly non-standard and how that affects this perception and decisions  
What have you seen in your research and experience  
How do the types of employment relationship opportunities influence individual decisions about parenting and work?  
Have you seen patterns in your research?

TRENDS (STEEPV)  
Now let's talk about the future,  
Trends (STEEPV) that provide opportunity and risk for parenting and employment have the most potential for negative effects in the future?  
In your professional opinion, what emerging trends as it relates to parenting and employment have the most potential for negative effects in the future?  
In your professional opinion, what emerging trends as it relates to parenting and employment the most potential for positive effects in the future?  
  
How has your thinking and or research changed since your book?

OPTIONAL TOPICS:  
PARENTAL LEAVE  
What is the role of parental leave in the emerging forms of non-standard employment?  
What influences the decision to take parental leave?  
Intersectionality  
How does the intersectionality of identity influence the decisions regarding parenting and work?

RESEARCH TACTICS:



Can I get your advice on recruitment and research tactics to make parents feel more comfortable sharing their stories?

If you were to meet with parents, what is one question you would ask them?

## **INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR EXPERTS IN THE LABOUR POLICY DEBATE**

### INTRODUCTION TO PARTICIPANT

Hi, my name is Julie Sommerfreund. Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview with me. Before we get started, I would like to tell you a bit about myself and the intent of this research project. We will also go over your consent form before starting.

I'm a Master's student at OCAD University in the Strategic, Foresight and Innovation program and this research project forms the basis of my Major Research Project. The purpose of my research project is to develop new social innovation opportunities to support parenting and working as employment goes under massive change.

I am interviewing experts from a diverse range of fields to establish a solid foundation of the current context in which men and women find themselves and in which these social innovations would exist. An important dimension is understanding the very current debate underway in Canada on employment relationships and worker protections. That is why I am interviewing you. I am also conducting research with parents in Toronto to understand the drivers and motivations behind their decision making as well as their needs.

Do you have any questions about this research?

### CONSENT

### INTERVIEW

#### CURRENT EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIPS IN CANADA

Are there new types of employments relationships emerging in Canada or are they a return to forms we have had in the past?

Why is non-standard employment work becoming more common and in new sectors than before?

## FUTURE OF EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIPS IN CANADA

What signals and trends are you seeing in regards to employment relationships in Canada?

What could future employment scenarios look like?

In professional opinion, what elements of the future employment scenarios could be problematic in the future or change in the negative?

In professional opinion, what elements of the future employment scenarios could provide opportunity in the future or change in the positive?

## IMPLICATIONS FOR PARENTING AND GENDER EQUITY

With these shifts in employment relationships how does it affect gender equity?

How are decisions to parent and work affected by non-standard employment relationships?

## POLICY DEBATES

The Government of Ontario has undertaken the "Changing Workplaces Review", what other policy discussions are currently underway?

What are the key policy directions that represent potential negative implications and how should they change?

## UNIONS

What are the role of the unions in supporting workers who are in non-standard forms of employment?

## APPENDIX C – PARENT INTERVIEWS

### RECRUITMENT MATERIAL

#### Email to Researcher's Network

Hi!

I'm writing to ask for your help in recruiting parents to participate in an interview on an issue that I'm very passionate about -- read on to find out more!

Do you know parents who are working in new forms of employment beyond full-time permanent? For example, do you have an aunt who is an Uber driver or a friend who sells their products through Etsy? A cousin who works freelance contracts or a neighbour who does domestic work through platforms like Handy? A friend who works contract to contract?

As part of my Masters in Strategic Foresight and Innovation at OCAD University, I am conducting a major research project focused on gender equity, parenting and the shifting forms of employment in Canada with the goal to develop social innovations to support gender equity in the workforce and in caregiving roles such as parenting.

Through this project, I am recruiting couples to participate in an interview about their experiences with different forms of employment and parenting. Each parent would be interviewed separately.

So, I have a simple request. Please forward this email and information to friends and family who are parents and who are working in new forms of employment. (Only one parent needs to be engaged in non-permanent employment). If they are interested in participating or have any questions please ask them to email me and we can go over all the details and set up the interview.

Thank you so much for your help. It is very much appreciated!

Julie

More information is included below:

Purpose: The purpose of the interviews is to capture couple's experiences with parenting and working; what drives their decisions regarding paid employment, domestic and parenting activities; what they hope for in their lives when it comes to work and parenting and what their dreams are for their children. Additionally, the

interview will focus on what gets in the way of parents being able to achieve their goals. Input from these interviews will be used to design social innovations to create a future economy that will support parents in reaching their goals. The final paper will be shared as a submission to the Ontario government as it reviews employment legislation in Ontario.

Eligibility: Interview participants are couples with children below the age of 15. At least, one parent is currently working or has recently worked in non-permanent employment such as:

- contract or freelance work,
- contract household cleaning,
- work through an online platform as an independent contractor (e.g. Uber or Handy),
- work through a shopping marketplace platform (e.g. Etsy),
- work through self-employment product marketing (e.g. Stella and Dot)

Interview Details: Interviews will last approximately 1 hour with each parent and will be conducted in-person at a time and location in Toronto of convenience to the participant (for example their home, local library or coffee shop). Interviews will be conducted during the weeks of January 8 to January 22, 2016. Participants will receive a groceries gift-card as a thank you for participating.

## Social Media Postings

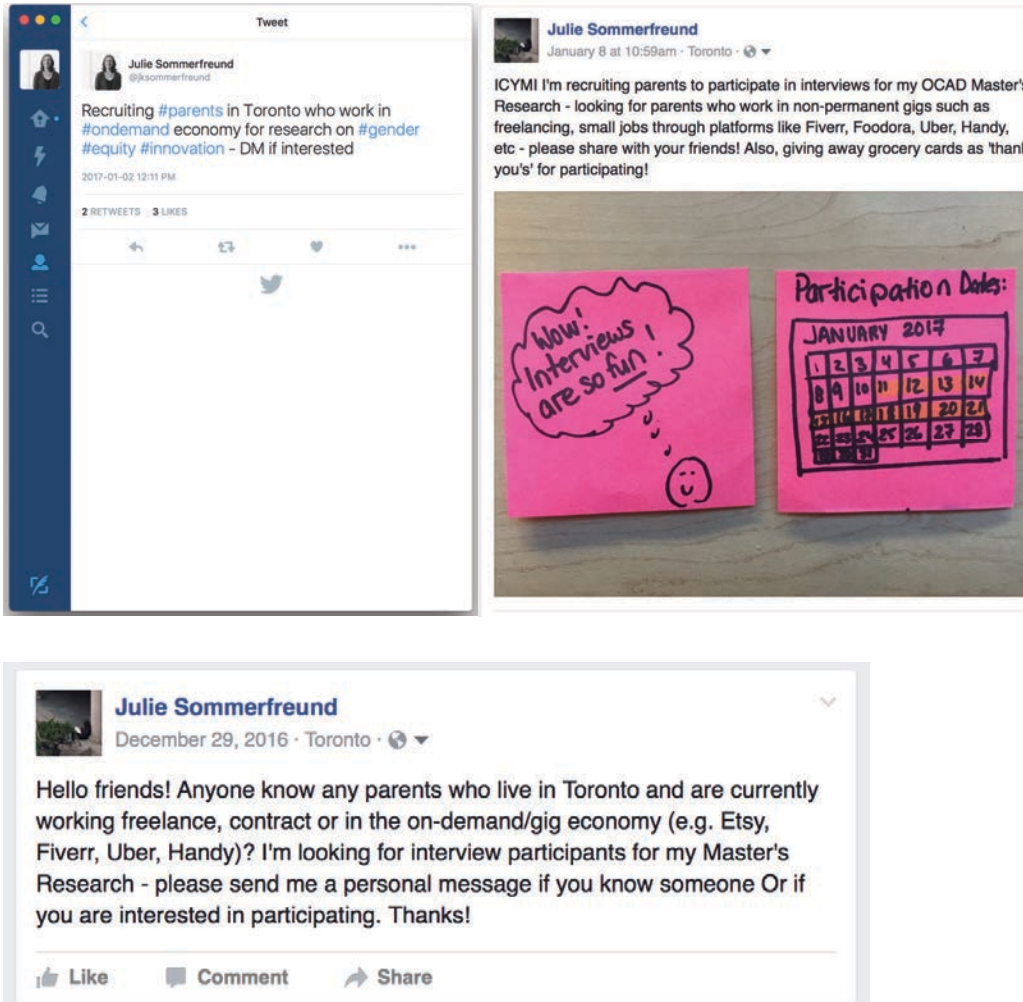


Figure 17 Recruitment through social media

## INTERVIEW GUIDE

January 2017

Participant Code: xx

Date: xxx

---

### INTRODUCTION TO PARTICIPANTS

Hi, my name is Julie Sommerfreund. Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview with me. Before we get started, I would like to tell you a bit about myself and the intent of this research project. We will also go over your consent form before starting.

I'm a Master's student at OCAD University in the Strategic, Foresight and Innovation program and this research project forms the basis of my Major Research Project. The purpose of my research project is to develop new social innovation opportunities to support parenting and working as employment goes under massive change.

The purpose of the interviews is to capture couple's experiences with parenting and working; what drives their decisions regarding paid employment, domestic and parenting activities; what they hope for in their lives when it comes to work and parenting and what their dreams are for their children. Additionally, the interview will focus on what gets in the way of parents being able to achieve their goals. Input from these interviews will be used to design social innovations to create a future economy that will support parents in reaching their goals. That is why I am interviewing you.

Do you have any questions about this research?

### CONSENT

### INTERVIEW

Let's think of this interview as a conversation, of me getting to know you and your experiences.

### FAMILY MAKEUP

Getting to know you

So to get started, let's talk a little bit about your family and the important people in your life. To help with that, could you draw a picture of your family and introduce them to me. Paint me a picture of you, your partner and your kids.

Tell me a little bit about your family - how many children do you have? How old are they? What are they interested in? What kind of activities do they participate in/outside of school?

Tell me a bit about yourself - how old are you? Are you working? What type of job do you do? How long have you been working there?

What does a typical week look like in terms of work and family?

Why?

#### WORK ARRANGEMENT

What type of work arrangement do you have (such as part-time, contract, full-time, etc)?

What attracted you to the work arrangement you are in?

Did you consider alternate arrangements? (such as part-time, contract, full-time, etc)

Did you make a change when you had kids?

What type of working arrangement does your partner have? How does that play into your work arrangement?

#### WHAT'S GREAT ABOUT YOUR CURRENT WORK ARRANGEMENT?

#### WHAT'S HARD ABOUT YOUR CURRENT WORK ARRANGEMENT?

#### INFLUENCERS

What influenced your decision?

Goals?

How did having children influence your decision?

Was your thought process different before you had kids?

Your partner?

Your parents?

#### DECISION FACTORS

What factors did you consider? Why? (Card Deck)

#### FUTURE WORK ARRANGEMENT

Would you consider different factors today?

Given the choice, would you continue in this work arrangement today?

#### IMPLICATIONS OF SEPARATION

Are you concerned for your work potential if you were to split up from your partner?

#### PARENTAL LEAVE

Tell me a bit about when the children were first born, who took parental leave?  
Why?

#### DECISION MAKING PROCESS

How did you make the decision for your current work arrangement and/or parental leave? (Was it implicit or explicitly discussed/negotiated?)  
Do you remember having conversations with your partner involved in that process?  
How did that process feel for you?

#### ROLE MODELS

Tell me a bit about the role models in your life, who did you want to be like?  
Has that influenced how you've made decisions over time?

#### WORK-LIFE FIT (PERSONAL ECONOMY)

Let's talk a little bit about how life looks for you today. To help us do that we are going to use a model to help us understand how we spend our time and how we might want to change it. We're going to use 3 circles - work for love of the family, work for money and work for self - three modes of activities for different purposes. For some of us these circles don't overlap, when I'm doing work for the family it's just about being home and present and doing chores and spending time with the family and work is entirely separate for (two examples: working mom with a nanny, clear separation; or works in home garden with kids there). It is different for each of us, for some it is around how our time is spent and others it's having the resources needed to do everything

#### CURRENT:

What's yours?  
What activities overlap?

#### IDEAL:

What would be your ideal? Why?

#### FUTURE DESIRES WORKING AND PARENTING

Would you continue in this arrangement given the choice? (why)  
What is your ideal future for working and parenting? How does it change as the kids get older? (why)  
What do you hope for? Why?  
What are you concerned about?



Does the increasing trend of non-permanent employment worry you? Why?

#### FUTURES DESIRES FOR YOUR CHILDREN

What values are important to you over the long-term in building a life for you and your family?

What do you want to keep from today's work world?

What excites you about the future opportunities for your children?

What gives you pause/concern?