

## Working mums are healthier

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Now mums can return to work without sacrificing time with their children, and it seems they may be healthier because of it.

A recent study by the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health from the British Medical Journal, found that despite many mums feeling as though they are taking on too much by trying to juggle home and office demands, they may actually be improving their chances of a healthy life.

Research showed that the risk of becoming obese was found to be almost double for a stay-at-home mother than for a working mum. Launched in April, [www.workingmums.co.uk](http://www.workingmums.co.uk) aims to provide professional yet flexible work to mums who want to continue climbing the career ladder but want to care for their children too.

A mum herself, founder of [workingmums.co.uk](http://www.workingmums.co.uk) (<http://www.workingmums.co.uk>), Gillian Nissim, realized the potential in linking high profile employers with part time or project based work in areas such as PR, marketing, management consultancy and accountancy with mums who are essentially career women but want to work from home or for a limited number of hours a week. The website is already proving popular with over 800 mums all over the UK registered and over 100 employers who appreciate the benefits of flexible but experienced professionals.

There is a huge amount of data and information on the topic of mums and the work life balance which ultimately leads to more stress and anxiety about what is the best for both mother and child, but while UK maternity pay remains the lowest in the EU meaning many mums simply have no choice but to return to work for financial reasons.

A recent study by City & Guilds highlights how many organisations feel that 'returners'\* would have a constructive effect on their business, with a quarter (25 per cent) believing that they are more positive towards work." The report also found that "Mothers are the most concerned about returning to the workplace with nearly half (43 per cent) worried about going back to work after having a child." This is not a surprise to the many mums who want to return to work for a few hours a week to or who need the income but don't necessarily want to work full time.

The problem mums often face is that employers making the decision about whether their previous high powered role should be part time, flexi hours or a job share don't share their enthusiasm for returning to work on new terms. The Equal Opportunites Commission estimate that in the next 5 years 30, 000 women will be forced out of their jobs because "many employers still regard pregnant women as an expensive liability; or they view pregnancy as an illness." \*

[www.workingmums.co.uk](http://www.workingmums.co.uk)

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Notes to editors:

1 'Returners' – people who have been out of the workplace for three or more months and are planning to return to working life. 'Returners' include mothers, retired people, carers, people on a sabbatical and those who are unemployed.

2 Quote from Observer Woman Magazine May 2006.

Gillian Nissim set up [www.workingmums.co.uk](http://www.workingmums.co.uk) in response to her own experiences and frustrations as a working mum, coupled with her husband's regular struggle to find quality professionals to complete project-based tasks. Formerly a senior manager in Internal Communications at Abbey National, Gillian Nissim has also worked for Willis and the Home Office (freelance). She has a BA(Hons) in French and Philosophy from Birmingham University and is mother of two sons aged 3 ½ and 18 months.