

MEDIA RELEASE

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Work, chores and after-school activities take a toll on family time

More than half of parents feel they aren't spending enough quality time with their families - an eight per cent increase from 2009, according to The Alannah and Madeline Foundation's new survey.

The online survey of 500 parents nationwide, released for the Children365 initiative, found 54 per cent of parents want more quality time with their children.

Work commitments (62 per cent), housework (19 per cent) and afterschool activities (9 per cent) were seen as the main factors impacting family time.

The Alannah and Madeline Foundation CEO, Dr Judith Slocombe, said the survey revealed families are under increasing pressure to juggle jobs, housework, social events and family commitments.

"In addition to housework and work demands, parents told us children's after-school activities - ranging from sport and dance, to music and art classes - are also impacting the time they spend together as a family," she said.

And despite spending nearly four hours together a day, only six per cent of parents reported the time spent as a family was 'more than enough.'

As a mother of nine children, Dr Slocombe knows first hand the challenges parents face.

"Parents need as much support as possible because finding the time to spend together, let alone making the time for yourself, can be extremely difficult," she said.

According to the survey, conducted by Sweeney Research, 74 per cent of men said work commitments reduced their family time, compared to 47 per cent of women.

Women also cited housework (33 per cent) as the main barrier to spending quality family time together, compared to eight per cent of men.

"Our research shows traditional roles are still very much a part of family life in Australia," said Dr Slocombe.

"We also found that despite the increasing popularity of technology, parents said the activities they enjoy most with their children are the traditional ones, such as reading, playing games, talking, cooking and going to the park."

As part of its Children365 initiative, the Foundation is releasing a free downloadable 2011 calendar, providing ideas for simple, inexpensive and fun ways for families to spend time together. To download the calendar or sign up for the Children365 eNewsletter, visit amf.org.au

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To coordinate a media interview or for a full copy of the Sweeney Research report, please contact:

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About the survey:

Sweeney Research conducted the 5-minute internet survey between 18 and 20 October 2010. The survey was conducted with 500 parents nationwide (250 men, 250 women). To be eligible for participation, all respondents were parents with children aged 0-15 years. The survey aimed to investigate quality family time and activities families enjoy together.

Children365:

In its second year, Children365 encourages Australians to celebrate children every day of the year. The concept for Children365 was developed after the tragic death of Darcey Freeman in January 2009. Following the loss of their little girl, Darcey's mother and her family suggested an annual day to cherish all children. The Foundation has worked closely with the family to help make this important initiative a reality.

The Alannah and Madeline Foundation:

The Alannah and Madeline Foundation is a national charity protecting children from violence and its devastating effects. The Foundation cares for children who have experienced or witnessed violence and run programs that prevent violence in the lives of children. Visit amf.org.au for more information.