



MEDIA RELEASE
MR 003 / 08

15 May 2008

NATIONAL FAMILIES WEEK 2008

WORK – LIFE BALANCE: POSSIBILITY OR PIPEDREAM?

Many families today are experiencing the dilemmas of trying to balance their working lives and the needs of family relationships and children. With the average working week now creeping up to over 42 hours at work, plus increased commuting time and the incidence of work intruding into our private lives via emails and mobile phones, it is no wonder that 88 per cent of surveyed participants in Relationships Australia's 'Relationships Indicators Survey' (2006) identified that finding and keeping a balance between work and home is becoming more difficult.

Nor is it just about time. Many workers report that increased expectations of their work roles - the pressure to perform or produce more or improved work, the 'information overload' which comes from emails and the exacting requirements of many workplace systems which leave little room for human error - cause additional stresses and strains on their lives. Even while they are at home, these issues can contribute to their being distracted or anxious, reducing the quality of the time that they do have to spend with their families.

"Many respondents to our survey indicate that they have no real choice when it comes to balancing work and family commitment" said Anne Hollonds, Vice President of Relationships Australia. "Even though many workplaces have more flexible hours or conditions of work, many people are not in a position to take advantage of these, or the corporate culture does not encourage them to do so. While there is a lot of talk about getting the balance right from government and in companies' policies, it is really up to the individual to give themselves permission to invest time and effort in the relationships with those that they love. Only then will work-life balance be a possibility rather than a pipedream", Ms Hollonds said.

Relationships Australia is committed to actively supporting families who are trying to ensure that their work life is balanced by sufficient and enjoyable time with those that they love.

- ENDS -

**For further information contact Rhonda Lawson Street, National Director,
Relationships Australia on (02) 6285 4466 (telephone) or 0429 054 194 (mobile)
or visit www.relationships.com.au**