



## Flexible working and flexible fatherhood – paternity leave or shared care?

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## New horizons for fathers?



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## More paternity leave: the Coalition proposals

- Deputy Prime Minister launched consultation in January 2011 to develop policy for introduction 2015
- CBI cautiously welcoming
- Small business hostile although only 1% affected

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## Paternity and Family leave – what is it?

Until now:

- Paternity leave first introduced in UK in 2005 as 2 weeks to be taken within 56 days of birth of child
- Statutory Paternity Pay is £124.88 per week (£128.73 from April 2011) or 90% of average earnings if lower

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## Paternity leave from April 2011

- Fathers can take any leave not taken by mother up to 52 weeks
- Fathers can receive balance of Statutory Maternity Pay (33 weeks following 6 weeks on 90% pay) due if mother returns to work after 20 weeks
- Parents can take up to 13 weeks unpaid leave for each child up to 5<sup>th</sup> birthday and reasonable amount of emergency leave
- Parents can request flexible working if they have at least one child below 6 years

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## Proposed Reform of Paternity Leave

- Parents can divide the 52 weeks between them after the first 2 months taken by the mother.
- Parents can divide leave as they wish including taking leave together

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### Aims of policy are to:

- Enable fathers to play a larger role in childrearing
- Make it more acceptable for men to take a caring role
- Reduce the burden of childcare on women
- Enable women to return to work sooner, thus reducing negative impact of maternity leave on women's careers
- Benefit children who would be able to develop stronger bonds with father

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### Men can have nurturing roles too



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## Expected outcomes based on research

- Fathers who take more than 2 weeks leave become more involved and stay more involved in infant and childcare when they return to work than other fathers
- Involvement of fathers helps the cognitive and social development of children
- When fathers take up paternity leave, women return to work sooner

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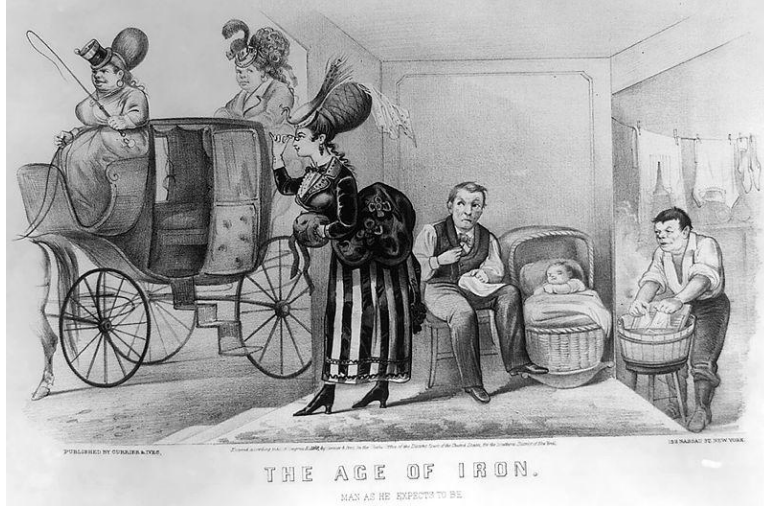
## Fathers can help in the cognitive and social development of their children



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But this is not accepted by everyone!



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