



Mom's Job Worth Over 100 Grand



An Iranian woman buying fruits.

If mothers were paid for cooking, cleaning and caring for their families they could easily earn a six-figure salary, according to new calculations.

After asking 18,000 mothers to list their most common tasks such as cooking, cleaning and childcare, a salary compensation company determined the value of their job functions to calculate what they could earn if they were paid, Reuters reported.

In Canada the 10 most popular jobs performed by a stay-at-home mother would equate to a C\$125,000 (\$124,280) salary, including overtime, and almost \$75,000 for a working mother, in addition to her real salary.

"The most common misconception is that being a stay at home mom is easier than working. The moms are sitting home, eating bonbons and watching TV," said Lena Boltos, of Salary.com which conducted the survey and made the calculations.

"But moms are responsible for a lot. Kids nowadays lead more hectic lives than they ever did. Mom's really running the home business," she added in an interview.

The salary calculations were based on the top ten jobs mothers said they did at home and the hours they spent doing them each day. The numbers were then compared to the market value each job was worth.

The high salary calculations were due to lots of overtime hours. Stay-at-home moms reported over 90 hours in overtime while working moms said they put in 54.6 hours of overtime, on top of their paying jobs.

Without adding overtime the average base pay for both groups would be C\$41,600.

In addition to housekeeping and daycare, other jobs on the list included laundry machine operator, computer operator, psychologist, facilities manager, van driver, CEO, and janitor.

US Economic Anxiety Hits Women Harder

The US economic downturn has spread personal financial worries far and wide, but women are more worried about paying bills, losing jobs, providing for children and saving for retirement, according to a study.

The study comes as the US economy has been mired in a half-year-long period of stagnation accompanied by a shrinking job market, rising energy prices and a downward spiral in consumer confidence.

The report said women, particularly among minorities, have more financial worries than men. It was based on a survey commissioned in February 2007 by the Rockefeller Foundation and an analysis by the Institute for Women's Policy Research, Nyrimes reported.

"Since the survey was conducted in 2007, we can only imagine that economic anxiety has heightened since that time," said Barbara Gault, vice president and director of research at the Institute for Women's Policy Research.

"As our economy gets worse, women are going to feel the pain the most," Gault added. She was speaking to a news conference held for

the report's release.

The report was based on telephone interviews with 3,157 people aged 18 and over.

According to the survey, three of every 10 women were worried about their economic security, compared with two of every 10 men. Two-thirds of women fear they are not saving enough for retirement, but only half of men share this concern.

Job, marital status or education provides no protection from higher rates of economic anxiety compared to men, while women among minorities feel these insecurities more acutely.

The study said mothers were 50 percent more likely than fathers to have to pass up buying something their child needed because they could not afford it and were also at greater risk of losing jobs than fathers or women and men without children.

Women earn less during their working lives and, because of their care giving roles, are much more likely to spend time out of the labor force, which ultimately diminishes their retirement income.

Sleep Disorders Tied to Obesity

People who sleep fewer than six hours a night—or more than nine—are more likely to be obese, according to a new study that is one of the largest to show a link between irregular sleep and big bellies.

The study also linked light sleepers to higher smoking rates, less physical activity and more alcohol use, AP reported.

The research adds weight to a stream of studies that have found obesity and other health problems in those who don't get proper shut-eye, said

Dr. Ron Kramer, a Colorado physician and a spokesman for the American Academy of Sleep Medicine.

"The data is all coming together that short sleepers and long sleepers don't do so well," Kramer said.

The study is based on door-to-door surveys of 87,000 US adults from 2004 through 2006 conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics, part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

News in Brief

Migratory Birds' Decline Alarming

The United Nations Environment Program voiced concern over declining numbers of migratory birds globally, in what it said was an alarming sign of the state of world biodiversity.

"The decline in numbers is currently being recorded for many of the migratory bird species along all of the world's major flyways," UNEP said in a statement issued ahead of the May 10-11 World Migratory Bird Day, AFP reported.

"For example: 41 percent of the 522 migratory water-bird populations on the African-Eurasian flyways are declining and there are reports that numbers of migratory songbirds using the same flyways are also decreasing," it said.

Migratory birds are vulnerable to environmental changes and are considered some of the best indicators of the state of the world's ecosystems.

"The overall decline in bird numbers may be signaling a wider environmental problem linked to the loss of habitats and biodiversity worldwide," the statement said.

It added that this phenomenon was compounded by climate change, which has seen deserts expand and wetlands disappear.

Koalas at Risk

Koalas are threatened by the rising level of carbon dioxide pollution in the atmosphere because it saps nutrients from the eucalyptus leaves they feed on, a researcher said.

Ian Hume, emeritus professor of biology at Sydney University, said he and his researchers also found that the amount of toxicity in the leaves of eucalyptus saplings rose when the level of carbon dioxide within a greenhouse was increased, AP reported.

The researchers found that carbon dioxide in eucalyptus leaves affects the balance of nutrients and "anti-nutrients"—substances that are either toxic or interfere with the digestion of nutrients.

An increase in carbon dioxide favors the trees' production of carbon-based anti-nutrients over nutrients, so leaves can become toxic to koalas, Hume said.

Some eucalyptus species may have high protein content, but anti-nutrients such as tannins bind the protein so it cannot be digested by koalas.

Hume estimated that current levels of global carbon dioxide emissions would result in a noticeable reduction in Australia's koala population in 50 years due to a lack of palatable leaves.

Malawi AIDS Deaths Drop

Distributing free anti-HIV drugs in a district of AIDS-ravaged Malawi helped cut the death toll by 10 percent within eight months, according to a study.

The southern African country introduced free antiretroviral therapy from 2004, thanks to help from the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and by 2006 the drugs were reaching more than 80,000 patients, AFP reported.

Around 33 million people around the world are infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) that causes AIDS, according to the agency UNAIDS.

Two thirds of them are living in sub-Saharan Africa, where many countries, especially in the south, were hit by a long delay in securing a fall in the price of antiretroviral drugs that were rolled out in the West in the mid-1990s.

Sons See Mothers As Role Models

If a man's mother is highly educated, chances are the woman he marries will have a similar education, according to a new study.

Researchers at the University of Iowa found that nearly 80 percent of high-achieving men who were sons of mothers with college degrees married women with a similar education, reported Reuters Life.

And 62 percent of men whose mothers had graduate degrees tied the knot with a graduate degree holder.

"These young men look up to their mothers as role models. They grew up in a family where their mothers were educated women," sociologist Christine Whelan, who conducted the study, said in an interview.

"For an increasing number of these men ... when they make their own choices about someone who they think will be a good wife in the future or a good mother, they go back to their role models."