

viewpoint

THE PAY OFF

It would be invaluable to have more visible role models of men taking their full entitlement [of paternity leave] within businesses, as it would help to create changes within organisational culture and generate wider support for fathers that feel pressurised not to take time off. But, as highlighted in the Equality and Human Rights Commission's report, many men aren't stepping up to the role model challenge for fear of negative impact on their career and because rates of paternity pay are not financially viable.

Where campaigns to increase maternity and paternity pay continue to rage on, businesses should be stepping in and encouraging men to take leave whilst assuring them their career progression won't be affected. This will also help to ensure that talented employees remain engaged and working at their best.

Recent changes to paternity legislation are a step toward helping working parents share parental leave in the most appropriate way for their family, whether this means it is shared equally or one partner returns to work sooner. Mothers and fathers should feel as though they can make a decision that suits their situation — rather than bowing down to organisational and recessionary pressure, as we are currently hearing about. On the whole, these steps are essential in addressing equality and diversity in the workplace.

In practice, there are many benefits to men taking a more active role at the beginning of their child's life; generally we see improvements in family relationships as both parents are there to support each other through caring for a newborn and fathers feel more included in caring for the child. By the time they return to work, they will be more comfortable

dealing with things like having less sleep, and more able and confident in minimising the impact on their work. The Scandinavian model for paternity leave shows the positive effects of this on the performance of new fathers at work.

CHRIS PARKE, MD OF TALKING TALENT

Email cathy.heys@cch.co.uk to share your views



the Pay-poll

Last month's question:

Do you expect take-up of additional paternity leave to be high at your organisation?

You voted...

Yes: 52% No: 48%

This month's question:

Was the government right to leave the introduction of equal rights for agency workers to the last minute?

Cast your vote at: paymagazine.com