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*Listening, learning, and living together: it's the science of life.*

## **Double Day Work: How Women Cope with Time Demands<sup>1</sup>**

*Suzanna Smith and Diana Converse<sup>2</sup>*

In the last 30 years women have entered the work force in record numbers, yet even as they have taken on employment outside the home, their household duties have usually remained the same. Several expressions have been coined to describe this double duty—double day, second shift, or double burden (Beaujot & Liu, 2005; Berk, 1985; Hoschchild, 1990). Men and women do seem to be sharing tasks more, especially when they both work outside the home and have young children (Beaujot & Liu, 2005; Baxter, Hewitt, & Western, 2005). However, across all families, women still carry out most of the unpaid work, including housework and household management, child care, and elder care (Baxter, Hewitt, & Western, 2005; Lee & Waite, 2005; Shelton, 1996), putting in anywhere from 5 to 13 hours more per week than men on these activities (Lee & Waite, 2005).

As women face the demands of combining work and family, they develop strategies for organizing their lives and accomplishing many tasks (Shriner, n.d.). For example, while paid employment takes priority in scheduling time, women do

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2. Suzanna Smith, associate professor, Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, and Executive Producer, Family Album Radio; Diana Converse, Extension Agent III and Family Life Educator, Hillsborough County, Cooperative Extension Service; Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida; Gainesville 32611.

negotiate with their employers and adapt their work hours when necessary to make themselves available for their families.

Working mothers often use weekends to catch up on household chores from the previous week and prepare for the coming week. Sometimes they lower their expectations of what absolutely must be done and reduce their housework so they can spend free time with their families, and they ask their partners and children to share with the load. Double day work provides many time management challenges for women. However, by using various strategies, women can successfully meet the demands of their busy lives.

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