

# Families with men on parental leave in Czech republic

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## Introduction

- ❖ research „Families with men on parental leave“ (Gender center, Masarygue University in Brno) 2003-2006
- ❖ active fatherhood campaign – Equal project „Half on Half: equal opportunities for men and women“, NGO Nesehnuti Brno 2005-2008
- ❖ [www.european-fatherhood.com](http://www.european-fatherhood.com), international project for promoting active fatherhood among proffesionals, 2005-2006

## Parental leave in CR

- ❖ up to 3 year reservation of job position
- ❖ allowance: 2, 3 or 4 year option
- ❖ possibility of full time job
  - restriction: max. 5 days/month in daily care service (for children under 3 years), max. 4hour/day (for children over 3 years)
- ❖ share of men on parental leave: 1-2 percent

## Hero father versus Raven mother

*„There was huge adoration of my husband, maybe too exaggerated, I have to say... Of course It's very satisfying for him, that everyone admires him so much, and he also made some poses of that excellent father... I have to say I am really annoyed by this and it makes me pretty upset. I would say that people make it something special, almost kind of science if the maternity leave is taken by father who does less things that woman would be doing on that leave... Everyone totally admires him for doing something absolutely normal and plain.“* Iva (34 year-old)

## Negative response by community of mothers

*„So the most negative response, like this is really weird, I have got from the mums that had the same old children.. When Susie was two years old and I occasionally went out with them with a pram, so these mothers were all absolutely shocked. They totally adored Martin, how he is sitting at the sand-pit, yet smoking the pipe, they really liked this, but I was weird and strange to them...“*



Zuzana (30year)

## Men who mother – daily practice

*„There is lot of situations during the day, when, I don't know, we go shopping, we have to put on shoes, put on clothes, find the cap, go to store, don't take this and that, where have they got the milk?, where is the bread? Say hello! It's all these small little things that make it together and it is just different than if you are not all the day at home with the child“*

Peter (31 y.)



## Mothers in the role of secondary caregiver

*„Recently on the weekend I went with Annie (daughter) to the sand-pit playground. And she took with her these toys for the sand-pit. And I was so stupid that I didn't recognise our toys. So I always feel like an idiot among these mothers when I have to call at my child a ask her: Is this ours? Should I take these? And she of course can response yes or no, how she just momentarily likes it“*

Klara (29 year-old)

## Household chores

- ❖ fully responsibility for caregiving, not household
- ❖ great share of mother's afterwork duties
- ❖ more equal distribution of chores



## How about breastfeeding ?



## Men, child and intimacy

- ❖ suspicious reactions on too close and intimate father-child bound
- ❖ daily practice – different borders for men and women
- ❖ caring is an intimate matter



## The reasons for non-traditional model

### Fathers:

- ❖ fear of being an absentee father
- ❖ father was more competent caregiver
- ❖ negative examples (friends, colleagues)

*I felt it quite unfair that I would miss the child just because of being engaged in work..* Marek (28 year)

### Mothers

- ❖ fear of isolation, lost of freedom, losing social contact

*Your life is suddenly absolutely turned arsy versy, one might lose suddenly all the colleagues, social contacts, losing all of it.*  
(Marie, 35 years)

## Closing

„So that a child can be satisfied, mother must be satisfied firstly...“

Marta (29 years)

Thanks for the attention

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