

Employee Assistance and Work/Family Programs: Friends or Foes?

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SUMMARY. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of work/family programs and to indicate the similarities and differences between them and EAPs. Work/family initiatives can assist employees in garnering resources to manage the multiple and sometimes conflicting demands of work and family life. In addition to describing the history of work/family program evolution, information is also shared about the potential costs and benefits of an integrated model of service delivery between EAP and work/family programs. *[Article copies available for a fee from The Haworth Document Delivery Service: 1-800-342-9678. E-mail address: <getinfo@haworthpressinc.com> Website: <http://www.HaworthPress.com>]*

KEYWORDS. Work/family programs

INTRODUCTION

An interesting phenomena has evolved in the workplace over the last century. Companies have transitioned from a position which encouraged employees to keep all personal and family matters separate from their work, to today, where many companies have both an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and a work/family program. These

[Haworth co-indexing entry note]: "Employee Assistance and Work/Family Programs: Friends or Foes?" Herlihy, Patricia A. Co-published simultaneously in *Employee Assistance Quarterly* (The Haworth Press, Inc.) Vol. 16, No. 1/2, 2000, pp. 33-52; and: *Emerging Trends for EAPs in the 21st Century* (ed: Nan Van Den Bergh) The Haworth Press, Inc., 2000, pp. 33-52. Single or multiple copies of this article are available for a fee from The Haworth Document Delivery Service [1-800-342-9678, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (EST). E-mail address: getinfo@haworthpressinc.com].

benefit service programs are company sponsored and address personal and family issues that can distract and interfere with an employee's ability to perform at work. A company's motivation for initiating and offering such programs, is that with today's fast paced, knowledge based, competitive marketplace, firms need workers who can fully concentrate on the task at hand and not be distracted by worries about childcare, health, financial or other personal problems.

Employee Assistance Programs and work/family programs have coexisted in some large companies for the last 10-15 years with little effort expended to examine the efficiency, effectiveness or functional differences between the two approaches. In an era of corporate re-design and overall analysis and redefinition of work functions, it is somewhat surprising that, no one has seriously examined or documented the differences and similarities, that exist between EAPs and work/family programs.

There is, however, considerable debate in the field as to where to draw the boundaries between these two programs. Some feel quite strongly that they should continue as completely separate programs, others are exploring synergies between the two and whether some type of integrated service might be appropriate. What has become recently clear through research (Herlihy, 1996), is that neither benefit program has accurate knowledge of what services the other program provides. This lack of awareness has resulted in territorial skirmishes and inefficiencies in the delivery of these two services.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide EAP practitioners with a current overview of the work/family arena. This information is offered for two reasons. First, EAP practitioners can benefit from the resources available to them in the work/family field; and second, it is important to stimulate policy discussions about the potential costs and benefits of an integrated model of service delivery between the two programs.

The manuscript is divided into the following sections:

- I. Definition of work/family programs
- II. The historical development of work/family programs
- III. The similarities and differences of EAP and work/family programs
- IV. Research on integration of EAPs and work/family programs
- V. The current issues in the field of work/family
- VI. The future for EAP and work/family programs

I. DEFINITION OF WORK/FAMILY PROGRAMS

An official definition of work/family is somewhat elusive. Whereas the EAP field has official definitions (EAPA, 1998; EASNA, 1991) and a suggested core technology (Roman, 1988); the work/family field has neither. The work/family field is at an earlier stage of development and only recently has initiated the goal of setting general standards and a certification process. For the purposes of this article the following general definition will be used to address what constitutes work/family programs:

... organizational change strategies that involve a mix of policies and programs aimed at facilitating the integration of work and family roles. These include work/family and work/life programs and other initiatives aimed at integrating work and non-work demands. (Cutcher-Gershenfeld, 1997, p. 23)

To break this down further, work/family *policies* generally include areas such as: parental leave (Family Medical Leave Act), flextime, part time work, job sharing, flexible spending accounts, and dependent care accounts. *Work/family programs*, on the other hand, include a myriad of services for employees and their families which encompass the whole life span. For example, consultations, referrals and/or educational materials can be offered on topics ranging from: working during pregnancy, choosing a daycare facility, father support groups, summer camps, choosing a private school, college planning, managing money, caring for older relatives, and planning for retirement. Not every company provides all these services under the work/family umbrella. The extent of services is highly dependent on company size and the specific corporate culture. It is also important to note that various names are currently utilized to market these various services: life balance; work life effectiveness, and work/life initiatives in an attempt to reach a broader workforce population (Friedman, 1998).

According to the 1998 Survey of Work Life Initiatives (Friedman, 1998) there are 12 categories of work/family initiatives:

- flexible work arrangements
- time off policies
- child care initiatives
- elder care initiatives
- health care initiatives

- information and counseling support
- financial assistance
- training
- convenience services
- strategic alliances
- community investment
- implementation and evaluation

This list is clearly all inclusive and ambitious. Approximately 55% of the respondents from this particular survey (Friedman, 1998) related that they had no official name for these various initiatives and that they were housed in various departments throughout the company. Therefore, work/family or whatever title one prefers, seems to be an amorphous animal differing from the EAP field, which has more commonly identified services.

The more traditional work/family services such as child and elder resource and referral tend to follow casework models of identifying the issue, examining the parameters of the issue and deciding with the employee, the timing of when they need the information. Length of service can range from single session crisis intervention, to three or four months of ongoing services' receipt. The latter is most common for elder care cases. Despite variation in the nature of service delivery, follow up is an important piece of the overall service plan of most work/family programs.

In many larger companies there has been a shift to move beyond merely providing work/family policies and programs. The goal of this movement has been to develop "family friendly" cultures in the workplace. A family friendly or worker friendly culture translates into a work environment that supports and understands the outside interests and responsibilities of employees and thus, allows for flexibility and creativity in how work is done. Johnson and Johnson company is a wonderful early example of how to translate the notion of a family friendly environment into a business agenda. In 1989, the firm changed its company credo by adding the following statement: "We must be mindful of ways to help our employees fulfill their family responsibilities."

In order to fully appreciate the work/family field it is helpful to examine its historical roots, and to understand them in the context of their parallels with the EAP field. The next section will address the question of how the work/family field evolved.

II. THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF WORK/FAMILY PROGRAMS

The historical roots of the work/family movement actually date back to colonial times when the family was the most important social unit in society. During this period of history, work efforts that were required each day, were not separate from family functions. Gradually during the pre-industrial period, this changed. The place where work was performed became separate and distinct from the home. Men went off to counting houses, factories and mills and were paid for their work.

The emergence of any type of "work/family" program first appeared during the Civil War. Women were needed in the war effort, therefore, caretakers were needed for their children. Thus, the concept of an on-site child care center evolved. It is reported that it was a manufacturer of soldiers' clothing, who was the first to provide on-site child care (Friedman, 1991). "By 1910, the Association of Day Nurseries recorded the existence of 450 child care centers in working class neighborhoods. Some of these nurseries were actually sponsored by the factories where these mothers were employed" (Friedman, 1981 p. 22).

The next major development in the work/family field came around the turn of the century. Business leaders realized that wages, while necessary, were not sufficient to maintain their workforce. Workers needed to be housed and fed. They needed to be acculturated and properly trained and educated for the industrial society. Companies responded by establishing company restaurants and stores. The US Steel Company once owned more than 28,000 houses for their employees (Brandes, 1976). Schools were begun for employees and their children. By 1900, various American firms operated every form of school short of college. Toddlers could attend the company kindergarten, children the company grammar school, and even some company high schools were available (Brandes, 1976).

Taken together these practices comprise what has become known as "welfare capitalism." Brandes (1976) defines welfare capitalism as "any service provided for the comfort or improvement of employees which was neither a necessity of the industry nor required by law." Welfare capitalism was perceived by some, as businesses' attempt to co-opt the employee and his family into the belief that they were all one big happy family.

With the arrival of World War II came the transformation of the

nation, its economy, the workplace and its people for the remainder of the 20th century. Although the 1930's saw some quibbling over the propriety of women taking jobs that rightfully belonged to men, the war ended this debate. The image of "Rosie the Riveter" captured the patriotic movement of women in the workplace. Almost half of all women held a job outside the home during the war (Sidel, 1986). While women worked, there was a need for child care. Nearly 3,000 child care centers were established at or near manufacturing plants during WW II under the Lanhan Act (Friedman, 1990). The two most famous of these centers were the two family-centered child care programs at the Kaiser Shipyards in Oregon and California. These centers were open 24 hours a day, 365 days per year and remained in existence for a period of 22 months (Morgan, 1967).

The 1950's have often been referred to as the "Golden Age." After the Great Depression and World War II, the idea of a family living in suburbia with a backyard barbecue and a house full of children was quite alluring (Mintz, 1988). Families turned from the public stresses and strains of the previous two decades inward to their own private lives. Individuals married earlier and had more children, and there was a renewed emphasis on family and togetherness.

In actuality, it was during the 1950's that an increasing separation between work and family evolved. With the mass movement of families out to the suburbs, frequently came a greater geographical distance from work. Commuting husbands, became night time residents or weekend guests in the eyes of the children. Since fathers were away from home, mothers ran the household. Yet, at the same time, corporate America did an excellent job socializing the family into corporate life. There were even books to inform corporate wives how they should respond in social situations (Whyte, 1956).

The dramatic rise in marriages that prevailed after World War II and into the 1950's was accompanied by an unprecedented baby boom. During the 1950's a million more children were born each year than during the 1930's (Mintz, 1988). The baby boom peaked in 1957 when the fertility rate stood at 3.7 children per woman. While this boom continued into the 1960's, by 1970 the fertility rate had fallen below the replacement level of 2.1 (Wetzel, 1990). The cohort of baby boomers affected many aspects of American life as they grew up, and continue to have significant impacts on today's labor markets (Dychtwald, 1997).

During the Great Society of the 1960s the federal government spon-

sored the formation of county-based "child care coordinating councils." These programs were designed to coordinate child care resources for pre-school children so that Head Start centers would be located to best reach the targeted children. The "4-Cs" as these councils came to be known were the foundation on which child care resource and referral services were created in the early 1980s (Burud, 1984). The "4-Cs" created a visibility for the shortages of care, which resulted as women entered the workforce at unprecedented levels during the 1960s and 1970s.

By the early 1980s, there was a significant increase in on-site day care centers, particularly in hospitals. In 1982 a national survey documented the existence of 152 hospital base child care centers and 42 industry based ones (Burud, 1984). However, it was the creation of employer sponsored child care resource and referral (R&R) services in the early 1980s, which is credited for the beginnings of the work/family and subsequently the work/life industry. Regional networks linking county-based R&Rs quickly became national networks. By 1985 there were several private companies administering R&R networks for large multisite employers (Phillips, 1997). By offering to assist employees in finding and managing their child care arrangements, employers validated this agenda and created a new function for their human resource departments. Once this agenda was validated as a business issue, employees were able to voice their needs and concerns more openly.

One very popular benefit that arose in the early 1980s was the Dependent Care Assistance Plans (DCAP). In 1981, the Economic Recovery Tax Act made dependent care a nontaxable benefit. As a result, employees could use pre-tax dollars for their child and elder care expenses. This particular benefit continues to be the most popular work/family benefit in most corporations today (84%).

Towards the end of the 1980s, the focus of the work/family field shifted. Many employer sponsored child care referral services had expanded to include issues regarding employees' elder parents and relatives. This was a controversial development, in that many EAPs had already been providing services in the elder care arena. Thus, the debate ensued over whether EAPs or work/family programs were better equipped to handle these employee needs.

Between the early and late 1980s the child care movement had evolved into the work/family movement. Another change was the move from merely providing assistance with dependent care issues, to

the notion of finding a balance between work and family life. Some companies changed the names of these programs to work/life or work/life management in an attempt to broaden their appeal to all workers, whether single or married with children. This broadening of the target population, brought about a great deal of interest in flexible work schedules, job sharing, telecommuting and other creative working arrangements to cover other life needs of employees.

Elder care was another concern that emerged in the latter part of the 1980's. In 1986, 30 million Americans were over age 65, accounting for 12% of the population. Friedman (1990) cites that by the year 2030, senior citizens will account for 20% of the population. As a function of this burgeoning, work/family programs began developing resource and referral services for elder care. This was a controversial development as many EAPs had already been providing some form of services in the elder care arena. Thus, the debate ensued over whether EAPs or work/family programs were better equipped to handle these employee needs.

Child and elder dependent care as well as life balance interests have continued throughout the 1990's, despite widespread downsizing and worry that work/family issues might be set aside during economic hard times. Instead, the work/family field has grown from simply providing programs for employees and their families, to helping business understand the need for creating "effective" work environments. As mentioned earlier, currently there is a movement in the work/family field to facilitate a "family friendly culture" in the workplace.

This brief historical overview was presented to help EAP practitioners understand some of the influences that have shaped the work/family field. Now it is time to look at the specific similarities and differences of these two programs.

III. THE SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES OF EAP AND WORK/FAMILY PROGRAMS

At the most abstract level EAP and work/family programs share a common goal of helping employees cope with personal issues in order to enable them to be productive and effective workers on the job. The differences between these two programs revolve around the specific services provided and the qualifications of the providers.

There continues to be lively debate in the field about which pro-

grams should provide which services. Clearly, the many variations depend on company culture and business priorities. Table 1 below is a general list of the similarities and differences of these two programs.

As one can see from Table 1, EAP and work/family programs provide many similar services. The real differences regarding services arise from the overall approach taken by the company's benefits staff to the employee's presenting concern. Historically, EAPs have had a more "problem" focus and dealt with issues from a clinical perspective. Work/family programs, on the other hand, have dealt with issues from a "solutions" focus and on a cognitive, educational level.

The large majority of EAP personnel are MSWs or PhDs and frequently certified as CEAP counselors. Only within the last year has the Alliance for Work Life Professionals (AWLP) initiated a potential certification process. Early in the life of the work/family field, many professionals had strong backgrounds in early childhood education. This no longer seems to be a major criteria for working in this field. Today many of the work/family professionals come from diverse business backgrounds rather than a clinical or educational one. Staff qualifications and capabilities are important issues to be explored when examining the possibilities of linkages of these two programs.

The following case example highlights the different foci these two professions bring to employees' concerns. This hypothetical case was called into an external EAP and then subsequently called into the external work/family vendor of the same parent company.

Case Example

Male employee calls the help line (an external vendor) asking for help obtaining child care for his 5 and 3 year old children. He has a major board meeting in the morning and needs coverage ASAP. His mother who has been taking care of his children, has recently refused to continue, due to his wife's returning home from having been discharged from a psychiatric hospital. The gentleman calmly mentions that his wife is currently passed out on the floor.

The EAP professional who answered this call conducted an excellent mental health assessment and dealt very effectively with the crisis of the wife's relapse. Calls were made to the psychiatric hospital that had discharged her, and a readmission was arranged for that evening. The work/family professional who received the exact same call lis-

TABLE 1. Similarities and Differences Between EAP and Work/Family Programs

Services Provided	EAP	Work/Family
Mental Health Counseling	Assessment and Referral of Mental Health Issues	Not officially provided by W/F Programs
Substance Abuse Counseling	Assessment, Referral and Follow Up of Substance Abuse Problem	Not provided by W/F Programs
Child Care Resource and Referral	Only a few EAPs provide this and usually from a National Data Base	Specialize in this area
Elder Care Resource and Referral	A few EAPs provide this service	Specialize in this area
Consultation on Life Events	yes	yes
Lunch time Seminars on topics such as parenting, stress management, etc.	yes	yes
Provide Educational Materials about key topics	Yes--mostly in the areas regarding mental health concerns	Yes--on almost any topic around personal issues for employees
Trauma Intervention	yes	no
Organizational Consultation	Yes--historically a part of EAPs	Yes--a new development in W/F
Policy Development	Yes, particularly regarding health care issues, i.e., AIDS, & Drug testing	Yes, particularly around scheduling issues, i.e., Parental leave, flextime, & telecommuting
Strategic Player in creating a "family friendly" work environment	Not currently a focus of EAP	Main thrust of many current work/family initiatives

tened carefully to the employees most urgent request for daycare. She found an appropriate child care arrangement for both children for the very next morning, in time for the employee's board meeting.

In this particular example neither the EAP nor work/family professional dealt with the whole situation. The EAP practitioner did not help the employee with the childcare concerns, and the work/family practitioner did not address the issue of the wife's psychiatric crisis. Unfortunately, this type of narrow focus in both programs currently exists in many companies across the country. For this very reason, some companies are exploring the possibility of a more integrated form of service delivery of these two programs.

Earlier it was mentioned that EAPs and work/family programs have co-existed in corporations for the last 10-15 years with little effort expended to examine their similarities and differences. The following section will briefly present a research project that attempted to explore the nature of these two programs, and any current linkages in service and policy.

IV. RESEARCH ON INTEGRATION OF EAPs AND WORK/FAMILY PROGRAMS

In 1994 Boston University's Center on Work and Family conducted the *National Survey of EAP and Work/Family programs*. The intent of the study was to explore the range of EAP and work/family service offerings as well as the interrelationship between these two programs. Specifically, this study focused on the relationship and linkages between EAP and work/family programs of companies with over 1,000 employees. The following is the basic demographic information from this research project.

Sample. A national study group consisting of 100 Corporations with employee populations of 1,000 or more were selected from established lists of family friendly companies. The work/family manager and EAP director of 127 companies were approached to participate in the survey in the hope of obtaining a final sample pool of 100 companies. A total of 96 companies responded from either the EAP or work/family programs, giving the study an overall response rate of 76 percent. A total of 78 companies responded from both the EAP and work/family departments within the company, providing a response rate of 61 percent. A total of 176 surveys were returned.

Corporate Profiles. Employee populations at the responding companies ranged from 1,233-313,000, with the average number of employees at 51,899. A cluster analysis of the geographical spread of responding companies is as follows:

Geography:

- Eastern Region-43%
- Midwestern Region-29%
- Southern Region-15%
- Western Region-13%

In terms of the type of industry respondent firms represented, Figure 1 indicates that the largest three industrial sectors represented: (a) financial/insurance companies, (b) manufacturing and (c) chemical companies.

EAP Profile and Characteristics. The EAP sample included a slightly higher proportion of internal EAPs (24%) than the frequently quoted number of 20% (Roman, 1990). Also, there was a fairly high number of companies with both an internal and external component to their EAP (35%). Only 42% of the study population had an external EAP service, compared to the 80% which is frequently quoted in the literature. The years in existence of EAPs ranged from two to thirty-eight years, with 10 years as the median.

Work/Family and EAP Comparisons. Since work/family programs are a comparatively recent benefit, differences in length of existence between these two programs, as reflected in Table 2 below, were not surprising.

One key finding of this research was that EAP and work/family programs viewed themselves as separate programs for the most part.

FIGURE 1. Industry

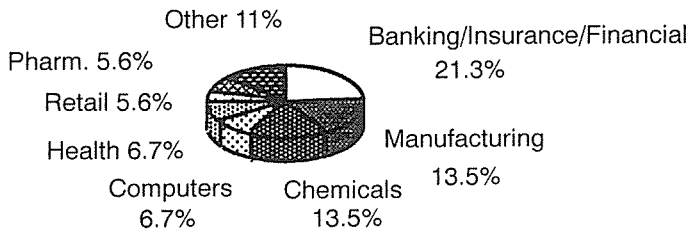


TABLE 2. Difference in Length of Work/Family and EAP Programs

Years in Existence	Work & Family	EAP
0-11 months	10.6%	0%
1-2 years	28.2	2.9
3-5 years	39.4	8.6
5 years plus	21.2	89.5

In order to understand this finding more clearly two descriptive results of the research will be presented. First, the question of extent of integration will be addressed, and then the respondents' rationales for separation of these programs will be examined.

Extent of Integration Between Work/Family and EAP. Survey respondents were asked the following questions about integration: (a) *Is there any interface/linkage between the EAP department and the work/family program in your company?* and, (b) *Are there any current plans to integrate the work/family and EAP programs in the company?* The results as summarized in Table 3 demonstrate that 76% of the EAP and 71% of the work/family respondents answered positively to the question about the existence of linkages between the two programs. However, when asked about whether they had any plans to integrate, only 28% of EAP and 26% of work/family answered in the affirmative. This result was surprising in that both programs seemed to understand a need to collaborate on some level, but were not interested in actually integrating their services. This finding was initially puzzling, until it was linked with the following survey question.

Rationale for EAP and Work/Family Practice Models. Survey respondents were asked: *If there is a separation between the EAP and work/family initiatives in your company, which of the following reasons most accurately describes the rationale for that policy?* As can be seen in Figure 2 below, the overwhelming response was that EAP and work/family programs were historically developed as separate entities (EAPs 81% and W/F 69%). Whereas EAPs were developed to keep "troubled" workers on the job, work/family programs evolved to help the new influx of working mothers stay on the job by addressing child care needs. There are both similarities and differences in how these two programs originated and evolved. The similarities revolve around

key individuals articulating the need for either alcoholism or child care services. For EAPs the most notable individual was Dr. Daniel Lynch from New England Telephone. He initiated the first program for alcoholics in industry in the 1930s. Dr. Lynch and subsequent medical directors were strong advocates for rehabilitating alcoholics and returning them to the workplace as productive workers. For work/family, several distinct constituencies with sometimes competing agendas initiated and advocated the impetus for work/family reform in the 1960s (Pleck, 1991). Their initial focus was on increasing child care opportunities. Another similarity was that both programs challenged corporations to accept a workplace role in what had been generally perceived as an individual or "family" problem.

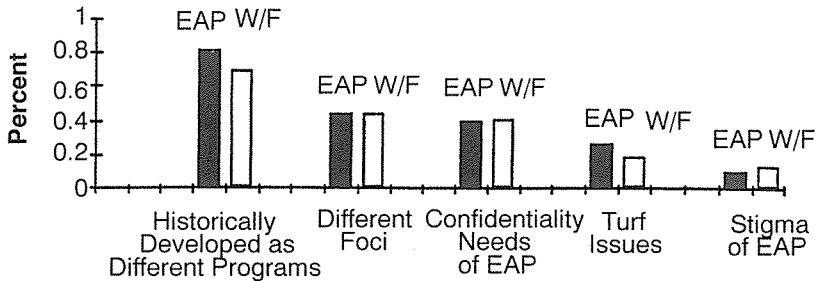
On the other hand, differences in how EAPs and work/family programs originated and evolved seem to have had an impact on program foci. As Figure 2 illustrates, different foci was the second most frequent response reported by 44% EAPs and 44% of W/F. In addition to the distinct initial foci of alcoholism and child care, both programs have continued along slightly different paths. As mentioned earlier, EAPs have remained more problem oriented and are staffed, for the most part, by clinicians. Work/family has taken a more solutions approach and tends to provide more cognitive and informational services.

The fact that these two programs were developed in different time periods (EAPs-1940s; W/F 1970s) and emerged with different foci, must be taken as only a partial explanation of the lack of integration. There was a discrepancy between the quantitative data and the qualitative data in this section of the research. Many respondents wrote comments or verbally communicated that the "real problem" with

TABLE 3. Integration Questions

Integration	No		Yes		Already Integrated	
	EAP	W/F	EAP	W/F	EAP	W/F
Linkages between EAP and W/F	24%	29%	76%	71%	-	-
Plans to integrate	72	74	16	11	12	15

FIGURE 2
Separation of EAP/WF



integration of these programs has to do with confidentiality of case information, although only 40% of respondents selected that reason. In particular, EAP professionals were more likely to see confidentiality as a barrier. This concern was highlighted by a *Wall Street Journal* article "If You Use Firm's Counselors, Remember Your Secrets Could Be Used Against You" (May 26, 1994) which reported that some companies were using information from the EAP to determine who was to be laid off. This article sent a chill through the backbone of the EAP community, particularly since a majority of firms were in the midst of major restructuring and downsizing efforts. As a researcher it is unclear whether one gives more "weight" or credence to qualitative or quantitative data. In this survey, many respondents deviated between the quantitative responses, where they needed to check the appropriate box, versus the qualitative responses which simply asked for their comments. Perhaps, because I am first a clinician, then a researcher, I tend to listen with slightly more vigor to the qualitative comments.

With that confession, the second most "talked about" reason for differentiating the EAP and work/family programs was that of social "stigma." Work/family respondents claimed that they did not want to be associated or "pulled down" by EAP stigma and preferred to address the "normal" adaptational coping issues of the everyday employee. Even though quantitatively the issue of stigma was ranked fifth at 10% and 14% in this survey, the "open ended" comments indicated that the issue of EAP stigma is deep rooted and one that creates a serious stumbling block to any integration of these two

programs. One work/family manager commented that EAPs are generally "viewed as the last resort," whereas work/family is more "a first line of defense."

Turf issues were ranked fourth and reported by 27% of the work/family respondents and 19% of the EAP respondents. Although few respondents were comfortable talking about the specifics of these turf issues, many alluded to problems. With re-organization, downsizing and layoffs being front page news, everyone including EAP and work/family professionals are wondering about the security of their own jobs. Given the corporate climate, the thought of collaborating or perhaps "giving up" a piece of one's job, however perceived, may impact an individual's openness to the question of integrating services.

After reviewing the qualitative data regarding the question about integrating EAP and work/family programs, it became clearer that the key positive indicators for integration were: a corporate culture that supported and encouraged interdisciplinary efforts; and an internal champion who was invested in providing an integrated service to their employee population. This brief overview of the BU research project was provided to assist the reader in understanding the climate regarding collaboration between the EAP and work/family fields back in the mid 1990s. Time marches on and there are continual changes in the work/family field. The following section highlights current trends in the work/family field.

V. THE CURRENT ISSUES IN THE FIELD OF WORK/FAMILY

The field of work/family has continued to forge ahead on many fronts. Three current themes of this forward movement are:

- Formation and sharp growth of the Alliance of Work Life Professionals
- Media blitz on the topic of work and family
- Strategic positioning of work/family as a major business player

In February, 1997 in San Diego, an inauguration meeting was held of the newly-merged national association for the Alliance of Work Life Professionals (AWLP). This combined the Association of Child Care

Consultants (ACCCI) from the mid 1980s and the National Work and Family Alliance from the early 1990s into one large umbrella organization. Over 325 consultants, corporate executives, academics, researchers, providers and labor leaders met to discuss the future of the work/family field. A topic of conversation that permeated this groundbreaking meeting was the need for partnerships. The range of partnerships discussed spanned managerial and worker teams, to collaborative efforts between government, corporations and communities. Relative to the EAP field, AWLP was encouraged to create strategic alliances with organizations such as EAPA. This creation of a national association for work/family professionals is a major milestone in the formal development of this field, and one that EAP professionals should watch.

The second issue revolves around the ongoing media blitz regarding the topic of work/family. In 1989 Felicia Schwartz wrote a controversial article in the *Harvard Business Review* which was later coined, the "Mommy Track." This article delineated two career tracks for women: namely, a professional career, or the "Mommy Track." Since the article's appearance, a major debate has occurred in the media over women's right to work and the consequences of this "supposed" choice. Numerous articles have appeared in academic journals, trade journals and popular magazines focusing on establishing a reasonable balance between work and family life. The *Wall Street Journal* initiated a weekly column devoted to a myriad of issues regarding work and family. For the last ten years *Working Mother* magazine has annually published a list of the top 100 best companies for working mothers. In September, 1996 *Business Week* began its own survey of the top family friendly companies. Nearly ten years after Schwartz's article, another controversial book has been published, *The Time Bind*, by Arlie Hochschild (1997), a researcher from University of California, Berkeley. The premise of this book arises from research conducted at a small midwestern company. Hochschild argues that people are escaping to work to avoid the messy problems of homelife. Some charge that this book is fueling a backlash against working women. Much like Schwartz, ten years earlier, Hochschild feels that her findings have been misunderstood. Regardless of the book's intent, it continues to fuel media attention around the priorities and balance people set between their work and family lives. The latest book in this arena, *Ask the Children* by Ellen Galinsky (1999) focuses its research on direct inter-

views with children of working parents and their reactions, feelings and thoughts about all of this.

The third theme chosen for discussion is the emergence of work/family professionals as no longer merely providers of corporate benefit programs, but legitimate players at the business table. Champions in this field have pushed to gain entrance to corporate decision making bodies in order to educate them about the role work/family can play in helping achieve crucial business goals. These professionals have encouraged decision makers to treat work/family as a legitimate management initiative comparable to quality management or process reengineering (Brown, 1997). A few companies, such as Eli Lilly, have begun to separate the work/family function into two components, strategic planning and service programs. Not everyone views these changes as positive. Some in the field are anxious about companies using this as a way to "downsize" the resources and staffing previously delegated to work/family programs and initiatives.

These three current themes in the work/family field were presented to help the EAP practitioner understand the constantly shifting sands of another field. Now let's turn to the question of the future of EAP and work/family.

VI. THE FUTURE FOR EAP AND WORK/FAMILY PROGRAMS

The future of both EAP and work/family programs remains unclear. Mergers, corporate restructuring and work redesign have become a way of life in the business world. The increasing role of managed behavioral health care, and restructuring of human resource departments (Laabs, 1996), makes it highly unlikely that these programs will remain as currently conceived and delivered. Both the EAP and work/family fields need to continually assess and evaluate their relevance and contribution to the company's bottom line.

Clearly, employees in today's fast paced, stressful world of work, continue to need policies and services that support an appropriate balance between work and non-work demands. It is interesting to note that historically there seems to be a swing back to less separation between work and family as in colonial America. Work and family spheres are less separate today than they were back in the 1950's. Thus, what is needed is an acceptance of this shift and the building of

a work culture that supports this change. The question remains, what is the most effective and efficient avenue to develop a culture which is supportive of employee needs while constantly keeping an eye on the bottom line.

EAP practitioners need to be open to new possibilities, whether this means partnering with work/family programs, wellness programs or managed care programs. Consolidation of effort seems to be the way of the future, as well as a more powerful tool in advocating for a more employee friendly workplace. For the last 50 years the EAP field has made crucial advances in the corporate world in terms of maintaining the productivity of the workforce. With the 21st century upon us, new opportunities and challenges arise. Employees and employers still very much need EAP services, but perhaps it is time to strengthen our mission by joining forces in creating a better overall work environment.

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