Balancing Act: Parenthood, Work, & Life

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Learning Outcomes:

After today’s workshop you will be able to:

• Recognize the challenges of balancing parenthood, work, and life.
• Hear from a panel of STEM women/mothers who will share their experiences.
• Identify some strategies for achieving balance.
History of Sexism & STEM

Structural exclusion of women from science can be traced back to the 18th Century

Maria Goeppert-Mayer
Beatrice Hill Tinsley
Pipeline Leaks

Labor Force participation rates for married women, by age of youngest child
INTRODUCTION: 2ND SHIFT
Mean Number of Hours Spent on 9 Household Tasks per Week by Dual-Earner Spouses
Panel Question:

When did you decide you wanted to be in SCIENCE?

DID YOU HAVE PRECONCEIVED NOTIONS OF WHO A SCIENTIST WAS?
DID YOU HAVE ROLE MODELS FOR THE SCIENTIST YOU WANTED TO BE?
Panel Question:

When and how did you decide you wanted to be a parent?

DID YOU HAVE TO THINK ABOUT YOUR CAREER AND/OR STEM PATHWAY?

DID YOU CONSIDER NOT HAVING CHILDREN?
Panel Question:

Do you think there is a different set of expectations in how you balance work, parenthood, and life?

FROM THE MICRO TO MACRO: YOUR COLLEAGUES, DEPARTMENTS, LABS, INSTITUTIONS, LARGER STEM COMMUNITY, NATION, WORLD?
Panel Question:

How have you balanced your various roles and was it different in different stages of your life?

Have you ever had to "choose" or prioritize a role?

What were some of the "choices" you had to make? And how did you make them? Would you have done anything differently?
Strategies for Balancing:

- Set Priorities!
- Use resources to free up time/energy
- Connect with others who share similar challenges
- “Done is better than perfect!” (Sheryl Sandberg)
- Avoid comparisons, guilt! BE KIND to yourself!
- Challenge the norms, policies, and processes that were designed historically during a time where men worked and women were at home.
- Change normatives and the “science culture”
- Find role models and mentorship from successful STEM
- Seek out campus resources (see handout!)
- [https://diversitycenter.caltech.edu/Education/DD8](https://diversitycenter.caltech.edu/Education/DD8)