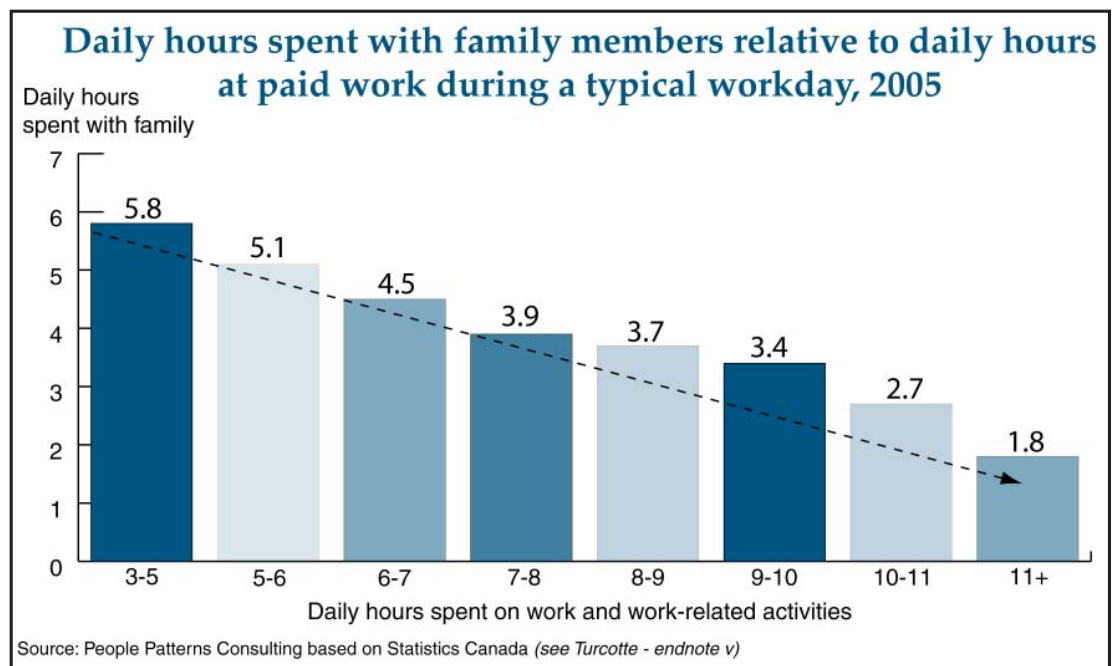


## As work time increases ... family time falls

There is a direct trade-off between work and family time. In 2005, people who spent 3-5 hours per day doing paid work and work-related activities had 5.8 hours of family time; those who spent 7-8 hours doing paid work spent 3.9 hours with their family; and people who spent 11 hours or more doing paid work had, on average, just 1.8 hours of family time. According to a recent Statistics Canada report, “it is not surprising that the amount of time spent at work is the factor that correlates most strongly with time spent with family: as work hours rise, family time falls” ([Canadian Social Trends, February 2007](#)).

The same report found that the average time spent with family on a typical working day has decreased significantly over the past two decades, from 4.2 hours per day in 1986 to 3.4 hours in 2005 - a decline of about 45 minutes per day or about 18%. On an annual basis, the reduced time with family is equivalent to about five 40-hour work weeks.



### Family Lens

Over the last 10 years, the labour force participation of families has increased to record high levels. Overtime work – both paid and unpaid - has also been on the increase according to Statistic’s Canada’s Labour Force Survey, and dual earner couples make up a growing share of Canadian families. For many families, more hours of paid work brings a welcomed increase to the household budget – to pay the rent, buy the groceries, save for a child’s education, and if lucky enough, pay down the credit card. But the “trade-off” of reduced family time has also contributed to growing difficulties in the balance between family life and work life.

This issue of *Fascinating Families* is based on a new report *Family Life and Work Life: An Uneasy Balance* by Roger Sauve, People Patterns Consulting

Also New! *Work/Family Balance: What Do We Really Know?* By Jacques Barrette, Ph.D. University of Ottawa, Telfer School of Management.