

## AEU Women can take ACTION:

Contact your union's Women's Officer to find out about activities in your state/territory.

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### WA (SSTUWA)

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- For more information about major political parties' Federal Election policies for women;
- To find more about how the Federal Government's work laws affect women; and
- For other material about the AEU's public education campaign

go to: <http://www.aeufederal.org.au/E07/election.html>

- To get more involved with the community campaign for better rights at work;

go to: <http://www.yourrightsatwork.com.au>

Please circulate this and other flyers to your colleagues, friends, and families.

Keep the conversations happening, they are critical!



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# Unlike the Howard Government, voting women are looking to the future...



## This Government's record on: women, work and family

The Government wants women to have babies,  
"one for your husband, one for your wife and one for  
the country."

(Federal Treasurer Peter Costello, LIB, *Lateline* 11/05/2004)

## But how well do they really support families?

## Work and Family

**Despite the desire for more babies, this Government's support for working women and their caring roles is meagre.**

AEU members in public education have benefited from working entitlements pursued by the union to help them balance work and family. Many of these conditions were first awarded in the education sector and provided a benchmark for other industries to bargain for and achieve similar rights.

The Howard Government does not believe work and family conditions should be awarded universally, but rather negotiated on an individual basis at the workplace level. However, this method has proven the least successful for achieving such rights.

The Howard Government agued *against* every single one of the family flexible work arrangements being sought by unions (ACTU) in the 2004 Industrial Relations Commission test case.

John Howard also, *immediately rejected* the recommendations of his own Government's inquiry into Work and Family Balance, headed by Julie Bishop, MP, in 2006.

The Howard Government is yet to take up *any* of the 45 recommendations from the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's inquiry into women, men, work and family called "Striking the Balance," from 2005.

Despite some claims by Government ministers that their work laws would provide 'flexibility' for working families, research has found that in fact Awards and collective (union) agreements deliver far superior work/family entitlements than the new system of individual (AWA) contracts.

(NFAW, 2007)

Australia is one of only 2 OECD countries *without* a national paid maternity leave scheme.

"I'm dead against paid maternity leave as a compulsory thing... compulsory paid maternity leave, over this Government's dead body, frankly, it just won't happen under this Government."

(Tony Abbott, ABC radio PM 22/07/2002)

The AEU represents almost 120 000 women in public education, that is 71% of its membership. It strongly supports the rights of all working parents to flexible work and care options based on predictability of hours and care costs. Though some AEU members have these entitlements, many other parents do not.



## Childcare

**Estimates indicate a child care shortage in Australia of up to 250,000 places.**

Research has shown there is a direct correlation with women's workforce participation and the availability and affordability of childcare.

Australia currently has one of the lowest participation rates of women in the workforce of all industrialised countries. 57.5%

Mr Howard's tax and fertility policies show his strong belief in not giving extra benefits to women who want to go back into the workforce; he would rather the mothers "chose" to stay at home.

Family Tax Benefit Part A, Family Tax Benefit Part B, the Child Care Benefit and the Baby Bonus, have been developed so that payments for stay at home parents are not means tested, while payments for dual income families are means-tested and are worth significantly less in dollar terms.



"I am a very strong believer in the proposition that the care provided full-time by a parent is the most precious child care of all...Everytime we have increased benefits for child care, we have also increased the [non means-tested] benefit for the stay-at-home mothers."

(PM John Howard, Macquarie Regional Radio 9/05/2007)

**This Election, consider how well  
the Howard Government  
really supports families**