

The Case for Keeping In Touch (KIT)

Why its important and how to do it

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Some uncomfortable truths



Jessica Heagren: 'Careers After Babies'

✂ 85% of mothers leave the full time workforce within 3 years of having their first child

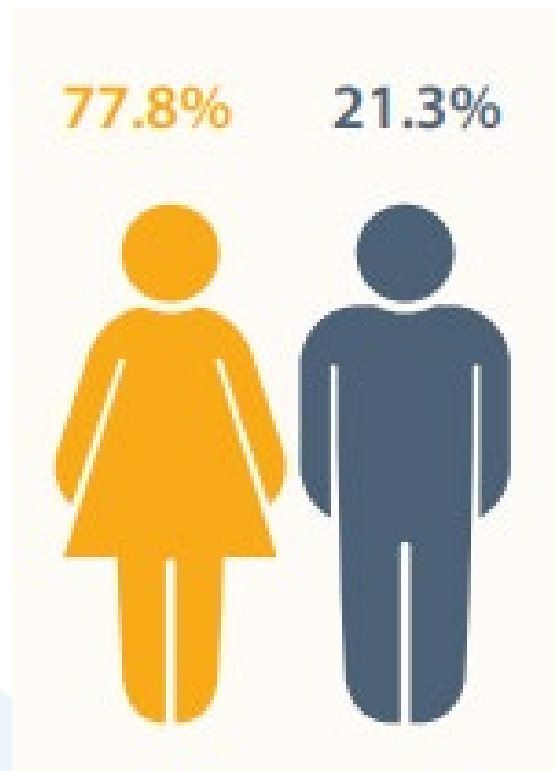
💡 52% of mothers want to work 4 days or more (but with flexibility)

💰 74% of women are earning less or the same as before they had children

📈 There are 32% fewer women in mid management roles after having children, and a 44% increase in women in admin/entry roles

All exasperated by the increasing costs of childcare.

Implications for health and care



Over 70% of employees in registered professional roles.

By age 40, 86% of women will be mothers.

What are Keep In Touch (KIT) days?



- **Voluntary arrangements that the employee may find helpful** to help her keep in touch with developments at work and, nearer the time of her return, to help facilitate her return
- **Keeping the employer in touch** with any developments that may affect her intended date of return to work, supporting employee engagement
- To enable employees to take up the opportunity to work KIT days **employers should consider the scope for reimbursement of reasonable childcare costs or the provision of childcare** facilities
- **Intended to facilitate a smooth return** to work for women returning from maternity leave

The status of KIT days



- An employee may work for up to a **maximum of 10 KIT days** without bringing her maternity leave to an end. Any days of work will not extend the maternity leave period
- An employee may **not** work KIT days **during the two weeks of compulsory maternity leave** immediately after the birth of her baby
- The KIT days **can be consecutive or not and can include training or other activities** which enable her to keep in touch with the workplace
- Any KIT days **must be agreed and neither the employer nor the employee can insist** upon it

Pay for KIT days



- The employee will be paid at their **basic daily rate, for the hours worked less appropriate maternity leave payment** for KIT days worked
- If a KIT day is worked in the full pay period, the employee receives a day of paid leave in lieu once she has returned.
- If a KIT day is worked on a day of leave in the half pay period, the employee receives a half day of paid leave in lieu once she has returned.
- The employee **will not receive additional pay in excess of either full pay or half pay** (whichever is applicable) but they are entitled to the full day or half day in lieu.
- Working for **part of any day will count as one KIT day**

Learning from experience



- **KIT days can seem a daunting prospect**, particularly if the demands of life away from work are significant
- **Change that is necessary for an organisation can feel distant, complex and more threatening** whilst on maternity leave
- Only 22.4% of those on maternity leave locally recorded KIT days during 2022. **Can't just be about Ts & Cs.**
- **Proactivity, skill and compassion from line managers** is key to help keep things in balance, and ensure that really important stuff doesn't get missed
- Providing childcare can seem an expensive add-on, but it doesn't have to be with a bit of creative thought