



## WOMEN'S ROLES/FAMILY POLICY

The National Council on Family Relations was founded 58 years ago as the first U.S. organization devoted to the study of women and men in their family roles vis-a-vis each other and their children. With the advent of the current women's movement, the Feminism Section of NCFR was organized within NCFR to focus on the study of gender in families, families from a feminist perspective, and the impact of gender on the profession. This section is now one of our largest, and the influential work of people in this section has influenced efforts in all sections but especially in research, pedagogy, policy, and intervention. A major effort throughout the years has been to focus on the role of gender in every day family life.

Today, improving the well-being of women and families requires changing economic, political and other social structures in ways which lead to the elimination of gender, racial, ethnic and economic inequality. Women and men should share partnership and responsibility in and for the families. Women bear the brunt of the mismatch between paid labor and family responsibilities. Existing private and public patriarchal structures and ideologies must be restructured to enable women and men to rearrange their family lives in ways that give them real options and real equality as opposed to ideological equality.

Therefore, family policies should:

- Promote women's economic self-reliance.
- Increase their access to quality education and health services.
- Eradicate violence against women in families as basic human right.
- Reinforce and support women's roles in peace-keeping and education both in society and in families.
- Promote equal pay for work of equal value and equal access to jobs and job training.
- Restructure paid work to allow the flexibility necessary for daily family living.
- Promote women's full and equal participation in policy making at community, national and international levels.
- Integrate women into the processes of sustainable development involving decision making, planning, technical management and control of environmental degradation.

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