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Support Networks for New Mothers in University Faculty

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Demands and Challenges

- Tenure Track
- Research
- Balancing Work and Family Time

Sources of Support

- Academic Department
- Other Mothers
- Husbands
- Family

Deciding Factors in Career and Family

- The “Right” Time
- Academic Fulfillment
- Being a Better Mother

The tenure track was designed by men for men. It doesn't fit with the biological clock. In fact it actually works against it.

I always wanted to be a mother. We did not actually start trying to have a child until about 2005. I was 35 then. And then, you know, it took some time.

As these things go, I'm very, very lucky. I'm lucky to be in academia where I can have control over my schedule.

One of the things that I've done in the last couple years is I have sort of tried to figure out what was non-negotiable for me and my boundaries.

I knew I wanted to have a baby, but I didn't want to be pregnant and on the job market.

Summary

- An important part of motherhood is having a network of support. For women in university faculty, this is especially important but also especially challenging due to the nature of their work and the general circumstances of working in a field dominated by men. Through firsthand accounts of mothers on the University of Dayton's faculty, this paper explores the experiences of new mothers and the importance of establishing a support network in raising a family and succeeding in their careers. Through these experiences, opportunities to improve the circumstances for mothers in a university faculty setting and to provide them support can be examined.