

News release

31% of employees in the East of England feel pressure to put work before family life

Relate Cambridge calls for employers to offer flexible working and relationship support

Research out today highlights the immense pressure felt by employees in the East of England and the rest of the UK to prioritise work ahead of relationships. More than one in three workers in the East of England (31%) say their boss thinks work should come before family life. This is according to a new report from Relate and Relationships Scotland, which concludes that overworked employees' relationships suffer as the build-up of stress at work takes its toll.

The research also found that:

- 29% of employees in the East of England say they feel pressured to work by their manager even when they are ill.
- 30% of employees in the East of England say that stress at home adversely affects them at work.
- 43% of employees in the East of England say they would like their employer to offer relationship support.

Employees struggling to balance work and family are more likely to become ill, perform less well and resign; but those satisfied with work and work-life balance are more likely to perform better and be more productive. The *Labour of Love or Love vs. Labour* report calls for employers to aspire to offer flexible working arrangements as default and to provide free relationship support as part of Employee Assistance Programmes. Relate Cambridge is supporting the report and urging employers in Cambridge to take action.

Elaine Taylor, Relationship Counsellor from Relate Cambridge said: "As this study highlights, work-life balance in this country is shockingly poor and this is hugely damaging for our relationships and overall wellbeing – as well as for productivity. That's why Relate Cambridge is calling on local employers to take more responsibility for the pressure that stress and lack of work-life balance can put on relationships at home."

As well as the impact of work pressures on relationships at home, the report also looks at workplace relationships with colleagues and bosses. The good news is that 63% of employees in the East of England say they have a good relationship with their boss and 78% reported good relationships with colleagues.

Elaine continued: "It's positive that so many people in the East have a good relationship with their boss and colleagues but there's clearly still some room for improvement. As such, we suggest employers think carefully about how they can better foster good workplace relationships."

Labour of Love or Love vs. Labour is the first in a series of reports from a major piece of research by Relate and Relationships Scotland. Over 5000 UK adults were surveyed as part of *The Way We Are Now* study, providing a unique window into the current state of the nation's relationships.

To read the report in full, please visit <http://bit.ly/2e4Ewy2> (from 25 October).

Relate Cambridge offers a range of relationship support services, including individual counselling, family counselling and mediation, which can help people to break up in the least painful way possible. Call us on 01223 357424 or visit www.relatecambridge.org.uk for more information.

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For all media enquiries contact Elaine Taylor on 01302 347712

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Relate Cambridge – supporting relationships at every stage of your life

All figures are taken from The Way We Are Now– an annual study of the relationships of over 5000 people across the UK by Relate and Relationships Scotland. The sample size for the East of England was 654. The study was carried out by YouGov. Fieldwork was undertaken between 18th June and 7th July 2016. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 16+). YouGov is a member of the British Polling Council. All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. This press release summarises information collected from online polling undertaken by YouGov of a sample of over 5,000 people aged 16 and over, weighted to account for representativeness. Any inaccuracies or errors in the further analyses of these data are the sole responsibility of Relate.

To see the national figures, please read the full report or contact the Relate media office. Statistics are available for other regions of the UK but the differences are not statistically significant.

The Way We Are Now is an annual report into the state of the nation's relationships by Relate and Relationships Scotland. This year, the report is divided into a series of mini reports covering Work, Sex, Partners, Family, Friends and Disability which will be published throughout the year. The Work report is the first to be released in 2016. For publication dates of upcoming reports, please contact the Relate media office.

Notes to editors:

- Relate and Relationships Scotland have released *The Way We Are Now* report to raise awareness of the importance of relationships for individuals and society. We are working together to let people know how relationship support can help people of all ages, at all stages of their relationships.
- Relationships are under increasing pressure – breakdown costs the UK an estimated £48bn each year.
- Relate champions the importance of strong and healthy relationships as the basis of a thriving society.
- Relate provides impartial and non-judgmental support for people of all ages, at all stages of couple, family and social relationships.
- Over a million people every year access information, support and counselling from Relate but its clear many more would benefit from Relate services.
- Relate's couple counselling work delivers an estimated £11.40 of benefits for every £1 spent.
- Relate's services extend beyond relationship counselling to family counselling, counselling for young people, sex therapy and informal courses and workshops and are offered through a network of around 1,700 counsellors across the country.
- Relate Cambridge celebrated its 70th birthday in 2015.
- For more information and advice visit: www.relate.org.uk.
- Relationships Scotland's network provide relationship counselling, family mediation, child contact centres and other family support services across all of mainland and island Scotland. Their work supports individuals, couples and families experiencing relationship difficulties. Around 20,000 people have contact with our services each year.