

## “Workshops address ‘life’ at work”

By Alexis Wise

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It is widely accepted that work-life conflict has increased over the last decade as studies continue to report that workers, both men and women, are experiencing greater difficulty in managing their many roles as employees, parents, spouses, and eldercare givers than previous generations.



**Alexis Wise, Vice President  
and founding partner of  
Parents At Work**

A recently released report by Catalyst, the first in a series on flexibility in Canadian law firms, found that the most important factor for female associates and the second most important factor for male associates in choosing to work at another firm was “an environment more supportive of my family and personal commitments”. This ranked significantly ahead of “greater advancement opportunities” and “increased compensation”.

With more women in the workplace than ever before, more families comprised of dual working parents, and longer work hours than a decade ago, it is no wonder that the intersection between work and life has hit a crisis point.

Employers that recognize the impact these trends are having on their business have taken innovative steps to assist their employees as they try “to do it all”. As Frank Maw, President of Motorola Canada Ltd. explains, “as a corporation our responsibility is to ensure that we recognize the challenges faced by our employees and create a supportive culture”.

In attempt to do just that, Motorola Canada Ltd. provides diverse resources for its employees including a new program targeted specifically at its working parents. “About 35% of our workforce are parents who need resources to help maintain a healthy and productive perspective on family-work issues”, explains Maw.

Motorola Canada Ltd., along with other industry leaders such as accounting firms BDO Dunwoody LLP and Ernst and Young LLP and law firms Borden Ladner Gervais LLP and McCarthy Téruault LLP, have partnered with Parents At Work ([www.pawcanada.com](http://www.pawcanada.com)), an annual program that brings leading experts on a diverse range of parenting topics to the workplace to conduct regular workshops for employees.



**Workshop – Parents At Work expert and registered dietician Lisa Weinberg talks about “Healthy Eating for Busy Families” during a session at Borden Ladner Gervais LLP**

Implementing the Parents At Work program supports the development of internal support networks which foster enhanced employee resilience. “Just knowing that others face the same challenges is important, says Ken Kyriacou, Senior Tax Manager at Ernst and Young LLP.

For Motorola Canada Ltd., the Parents At Work program allows the company to address the needs of an important component of their workforce while contributing to a happy and productive workplace – important qualities that help in recruiting and retaining quality employees.

As explained in a 2001 study also by Catalyst, “today’s professionals value personal and family commitments more highly than work commitments. Thus, the ability of companies and firms to offer programs that support such values will provide a competitive advantage in recruiting new generations of professionals.”

*Alexis Wise is vice president and founding partner of Parents At Work ([www.pawcanada.com](http://www.pawcanada.com)). The program is currently available across the Greater Toronto Area and will be available in Canada’s large city centres including Vancouver, Calgary, and Montreal later this year.*