Childcare and Other Undervalued Work

Gender expectations add to women's stress levels.

March 4, 2019 By Kate Ferguson

Last year, the American Psychological Association's Stress in America Survey announced that women are more likely than men to report money and family responsibilities as significant sources of stress.

What's more, females are held accountable for keeping a household running smoothly. Essentially, women are unpaid servants who are expected to feel honored by these gender expectations, which adds to their emotional distress, suggests Silvia Federici, author of the book Revolution at Point Zero: Housework, Reproduction, and Feminist Struggle.

"Many of us still have the illusion that we marry for love," Federici writes. "A lot of us recognize that we marry for money and security; but it is time to make it clear that while the love or money involved is very little, the work that awaits us is enormous."

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) notes that, in the United States, women spend almost 243.2 minutes each day performing unpaid household work. This uncompensated time women spend toiling at home includes transporting and caring for family members, cooking, cleaning and many other household chores.

"Women typically spend disproportionately more time on unpaid care work than men," notes an OECD overview about this issue. "This is in addition to their paid activities, thus creating the 'double burden' of work for women."

Wouldn't this stress you out?

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.