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Stay-at-home moms: Stop pretending you're better. Signed, working moms

MARINA ADSHADE

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Last week, the Guardian bravely [asked](http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/nov/18/sorry-but-being-a-mother-is-not-the-most-important-job-in-the-world) [http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/nov/18/sorry-but-being-a-mother-is-not-the-most-important-job-in-the-world] the question: Is being a mom the most important job in the world? The controversial answer being, obviously it's not and please stop suggesting that it is. This new piece comes hot on the heels of an article at Salon titled: [Stay-at-home mom, bullied at the bus stop](http://www.salon.com/2013/11/06/stay_at_home_mom_bullied_at_the_bus_stop/) [http://www.salon.com/2013/11/06/stay_at_home_mom_bullied_at_the_bus_stop/] in which the author detailed the harrowing experience of having once been asked what she does with her day (her answer, in summary, being "Very little, but at least I make it to my kid's dance class.")

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The dialogue about how mothers talk to, and about, each other is long overdue.

While mothers everywhere are simmering over the suggestion that theirs is not the toughest job in the world and the audacity of others to wonder if they find their roles rewarding, I would like to suggest a few more revisions.

More specifically, on behalf of working mothers everywhere I respectfully ask that stay-at-home mothers please stop making the following comments to us on the rare occasions that we meet parent-to-parent.

Please stop asking us how we do it. As in "I think about how much I do every day for my family, I don't know how you do it!" I get it. You are proud how well you take care for your family. But you will be surprised to know that we are also proud of how well we take care for our families. We are able to "do it" because many of the quality goods and services you provide your family, we can easily purchase on the market and because machines have replaced much of the work traditionally done women in the home. If you don't want us to tell you that, please do not ask.

Please stop telling us that your title is "full-time mom." Parenting for us is not a hobby that we pick up on the weekends to amuse ourselves. Just as you do not stop being a mother during the hours your child is at school, we do not stop being mothers when we are at work. There are no part-time opportunities in parenthood.

Please do not say that, unlike us, you work a fourteen-hour day. What exactly do you think we do when we get home from work? Or before we go to work for that matter? I am not arguing that we put in more hours per day than you do, but it is a little rich to be told that because we are employed outside of the home that we have more time for leisure pursuits. Let me assure you, while you are making dinner, helping with homework and putting the kids to bed we are doing exactly the same things.

Please do not thank us for making you look good. I sincerely hope that I am the only working mother who has heard this directly (as in, "You always arrive so late for the group violin lesson, you make the rest of us moms look good!"). But even if you do not say it directly, it is often inferred in our conversations. Know that quality of parenting is not a relative measure; your child is not receiving a better childhood because there are more constraints on my time.

And finally, yes please stop saying that being a stay-at-home mom is the toughest or most important job in the world. The service provided by all parents is equally important and your job is not any tougher than mine.

Marina Adshade is the author of Dollars and Sex: How Economics Influences Sex and Love. She teaches at the University of British Columbia's Vancouver School of Economics. She tweets @dollarsandsex

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