

Unpacking the Diaper Bag: Navigating Maternity Leave and Parenthood as a Training Director

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There are many unique elements in navigating a medical leave process and parenthood while leading a training program

Introduction: Who am I?

- Counseling center training director, 4 interns and 1 postdoc
- Recently returned from maternity leave in April 2016
- Formerly an assistant training director and supervisor who has also previously taken maternity leave (May 2010, Dec 2011)
- Mother of 3, partnered/married

Planning Phase: Getting Ready

- Talk to HR
- Consider signing up for disability coverage in advance
- Arranging appropriate supervisory and administrative coverage
- Processing the experience with interns and trainees
Losses? Gains?
- Change in supervisors?
They will bond with a new training director figure while you are away
- Interfacing with administration
- Planning for the experience of both leaving and returning

Active Phase: Are you Due During Interviews?

- Flexibility—is there any good time to be gone?
- My due dates have been in Dec. and Jan. as a TD
- Spend time re-organizing dates, update APPIC directory, consider alternatives
- Make a number of alternative schedules and be ready to implement
- Keep your team up to date

Sudden Departure? Planned Absence?

- Hard to predict, due dates are not set in stone
- Contingency planning important
- Work up until labor or time off in advance?
- Planned birth or nature's timing?
- Trusted colleague who can step in
- Cross training important
If new training class starting, consider being present for part of orientation

While I am out...

- How long is your leave? How firm is your return date?
- Set the stage: Texting? E-mails? Visits?
- Surprises
 - Trainee medical emergencies
 - Hiring a new position
 - Letters of reference
 - Where do you keep...
 - "But the training director said..."
- Communications with APA and APPIC, including bills
- Checking e-mail regularly
- Do you have a self-study coming up?

Personal reflection and resolution:

- What can I be ok with giving up?
- How do I prioritize time after work? How firm are my commitments?
- Who can I turn to at work and at home for help?
- Who can I talk to when I need extra support?

Generalizability of maternity leave experiences to other forms of leave or family leave

- Permanent versus temporary
- FMLA

Balancing personal and professional self-care needs

Self-care: tailor to your needs

- Working Parents may have some different needs than Stay-At-Home-Parents on weekends
- Balancing friendships and other interests
- Time with spouse or partner
- How helpful is your spouse or partner?
- Are you and a trainee parents of small children at the same time? From the same or different generations?

Ethical considerations, and setting appropriate limits and boundaries

- Unwanted attention and questions?
- Topics and appropriateness for workplace
- Family status of trainees

Returning to Labor

- Childcare arrangements
- Negotiating adjustment and overlap: meeting with your replacement
- Trainees will be developmentally different/may have a new class of trainees