8. LIMITATIONS

There are several limitations to the current study. First, several meaningful demographic and maternal employment variables were not assessed, including parental marital status, length and continuity of maternal employment, and respondent's age when mother began working outside the home. Because maternal employment is clearly related to divorce, as mothers are more likely to work outside the home when their marriages end (Chase-Lansdale & Hetherington, 1990), distinguishing between single-parent and dual-earner families is important in examining consequences for adolescent and young adult offspring (Duckett & Richards, 1995). In addition, as the current study and previous research on children indicate differences in effects of maternal employment based on whether mothers worked full- or part-time (Richards & Duckett, 1994), it seems important for research to examine how length and continuity of maternal employment are related to outcomes for offspring. Previous research also suggests that maternal employment beginning earlier in childhood may be particularly meaningful in affecting young adults' attitudes (Barnett et al., 2003). Young adults with mothers who worked consistently throughout their entire childhoods perhaps have different work-family attitudes compared to young adults with mothers who worked sporadically or for shorter periods of time.

As the population of young adults with employed mothers grows, and as dual-earner families increasingly represent the modal American family, the dominant sex-role attitudes and work and family concerns in our society are likely to change. As such, knowledge concerning sex-role attitudes and sex role related educational, career, and family goals may become fairly outdated rather quickly. In addition, research indicates that conflicts between work and family are related to a variety of negative outcomes for workers and families, including decreased self-esteem (Pearlin, 1983), higher negative affect (Paden & Buehler, 1995), and marital withdrawal and withdrawal from the family (MacEwen & Barling, 1994). With the continuing focus of both popular and scientific
observers on the negative work, family, and mental health outcomes associated with high work-family conflict (Frone, 2000), it is becoming increasingly important to understand how individual attitudes toward work and family are developed, and how they can be changed. Attitudes toward employed mothers in the workplace are often negative, as they are viewed as less professional and less committed to their jobs than men and women without children (Sobkowski, 1989). As young adults with employed mothers enter the workforce themselves, their attitudes are likely to be influential in changing organizational attitudes toward working mothers. As they begin their own families, their attitudes toward work and family issues will become increasingly important in changing societal sex-role expectations and beliefs.

The message is simple. If you are an employer in 2016 who expects that your staff sit down at their desk at 9:00am and don’t leave until 5pm apart from their designated breaks, I’ll tell you now, you will have a difficult time finding top quality staff. Even if you do attract them, you will have a tough time engaging and ultimately retaining them which will end up costing you a heck of a lot of time, money and headaches. Not to mention the diversity of talented individuals, such as the above story, who you may be missing out on having in your business because of a poor culture around workplace flexibility.

“Work-life balance” is no longer on the wish list, it is now an expectation. If you don’t like it, go back to your V8 petrol sedan whilst the rest of us enjoy a relaxing drive in our automated cars! Bring on 2018