



ENGLISH SPEECHES

WITH BIG SUBTITLES



ANNE HATHAWAY

PAID FAMILY LEAVE

<https://youtu.be/gkr57P0fwbI>

When I was a young person, I began my career as an actress. Whenever my mother wasn't free to drive me into Manhattan for auditions, I would take the train from suburban New Jersey and meet my father — who would have left his desk at the law office where he worked — and we would meet under the Upper Platform Arrivals and Departures sign in Penn Station. We would then get onto the subway together and, when we surfaced, he would ask me "Which way is north?" I wasn't very good at finding North at the beginning, but I auditioned fair amount and so my Dad kept asking "Which way is north?" Over time, I got better at finding it.

I was struck by that memory yesterday while boarding the plane to come here. Not just by how far my life has come since then, but by how meaningful that seemingly small lesson has been. When I was still a child, my father developed my sense of direction and now, as an adult, I trust my ability to navigate space. My father helped give me the confidence to guide myself through the world.

In late March, last year, 2016, I became a parent for the first time. I remember the indescribable—and as I understand a pretty universal — experience of holding my week-old son and feeling my priorities change on a cellular level. I remember I experienced a shift in consciousness that gave me the ability to maintain my love of career and cherish something else, someone else, so much, much more. Like so many parents, I wondered how I was going to balance my work with my new role as a parent, and in that moment, I remember that the statistic for the US's policy on maternity leave flashed in my mind.

American women are currently entitled to 12 weeks' unpaid leave. American men are entitled to nothing. That information landed differently for me when, one week after my son's birth I could barely walk. That information landed different when I was getting to know a human who was completely dependent on my husband and I for everything, when I was dependent on my husband for most things, when we were relearning everything we thought we knew about our family and relationship. It landed differently.

Somehow, we and every American parent were expected to be "back to normal" in under three months. Without income. I remember thinking to myself, "If the practical reality of pregnancy is another mouth to feed in your home and America is a country where most people are living paycheck to paycheck, how does 12 weeks unpaid leave economically work?"

The truth is, for too many people it doesn't. One in four American women go back to work two weeks after giving birth because they can't afford to take any more time off than that. That's 25 per cent of American women. Equally disturbing, women who can afford to take the full 12 weeks often don't because it will mean incurring a "motherhood penalty" — meaning they will be perceived as less dedicated to their job and



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will be passed over for promotions and other career advancement. In my own household, my mother had to choose between a career and raising three children - a choice that left her unpaid and underappreciated as a homemaker - because there just wasn't support for both paths. The memory of being in the city with my Dad is a particularly meaningful one since he was the sole breadwinner in our house, and my brothers and my time with him was always limited by how much he had to work. And we were an incredibly privileged family — our hardships were the stuff of other family's dreams.

The deeper into the issue of paid parental leave I go, the clearer I see the connection between persisting barriers to women's full equality and empowerment, and the need to redefine and in some cases, destigmatize men's role as caregivers. In other words, in order to liberate women, we need to liberate men.

The assumption and common practice that women and girls look after the home and the family is a stubborn and very real stereotype that not only discriminates against women, but limits men's participation and connection within the family and society. These limitations have broad-ranging and significant effects, for them and for children. We know this. So why do we continue to undervalue fathers and overburden mothers?

Paid parental leave is not about taking days off work; it is about creating freedom to define roles, to choose how to invest time, and to establish new, positive cycles of behavior. Companies that have offered paid parental leave for employees have reported improved employee retention, reduced absenteeism and training costs, and boosted productivity and morale. Far from not being able to afford to have paid parental leave, it seems we can't afford not to.

In fact, a study in Sweden showed that every month fathers took paternity leave, the mothers' income increased by 6.7 per cent. That's 6.7 per cent more economic freedom for the whole family. Data from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey shows that most fathers report that they would work less if it meant that they could spend more time with their children. And picking up on the thread that the prime minister mentioned I'd like to ask: How many of us here today saw our Dads enough growing up? How many of you Dads here see your kids enough now?

We need to help each other if we are going to grow.

Along with UN Women, I am issuing a call to action for countries, companies and institutions globally to step-up and become champions for paid parental leave. In 2013, provisions for parental leave were in only 66 countries out of 190 UN member states. I look forward to beginning with the UN itself which has not yet achieved parity and who's paid parental leave policies are currently up for review. All you're going to see a lot of me. Let us lead by example in creating a world in which women and men are not economically punished for wanting to be parents.

I don't mean to imply that you need to have children to care about and benefit from this issue — whether or not you have — or want kids, you will benefit by living in a more evolved world with policies not based on gender. We all benefit from living in a more compassionate time where our needs do not make us weak, they make us fully human.



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Maternity leave, or any workplace policy based on gender, can—at this moment in history—only ever be a gilded cage. Though it was created to make life easier for women, we now know it creates a perception of women as being inconvenient to the workplace. We now know it chains men to an emotionally limited path. And it cannot, by definition, serve the reality of a world in which there is more than one type of family. Because in the modern world, some families have two daddies. How exactly does maternity leave serve them?

Today, on International Women’s Day, I would like to thank all those who went before in creating our current policies—let us honour them and build upon what they started by shifting our language - and therefore our consciousness—away from gender and towards opportunity. Let us honor our own parents sacrifice by creating a path for a more fair, farther the reaching truth to define all of our lives, especially the lives our children.

Because paid parental leave does more than give more time for parents to spend with their kids. It changes the story of what children observe, and will from themselves imagine possible.

I see cause for hope. In my own country, the United States—currently the only high-income country in the world without paid maternity let alone parental leave—great work has begun in the states of New York, California, New Jersey, Rhode Island and Washington which are currently implementing paid parental leave programs. First Lady Charlene McCray and Mayor Bill de Blasio have granted paid parental leave to over 20,000 government employees in NYC. We can do this.

Bringing about change cannot just be the responsibility of those who need it most; we must have the support of those at the highest levels of power if we are ever to achieve parity. That is why it is such an honor to recognize and congratulate pioneers of paid parental leave like the global company Danone. Today I am proud to announce Danone Global CEO, Emmanuel Faber as our inaugural HeForShe Thematic Champion for Paid Parental Leave. As part of this announcement, Danone will implement a global 18 weeks gender-neutral paid parental leave policy for the company’s 100,000 employees by the year 2020. Monsieur Faber, when Ambassador Emma Watson delivered her now iconic HeForShe speech and stated that if we live in a world where men occupy a majority of positions of power, we need men to believe in the necessity of change, I believe she was speaking about visionaries like you. Merci.

Imagine what the world could look like one generation from now if a policy like Danone's becomes the new standard. If 100,000 people become 100 million.

A billion. More. Every generation must find their north.

When women around the world demanded the right to vote, we took a fundamental step toward equality.

North.

When the same sex marriage was passed in the US, we put an end to a discriminatory law.



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North.

When millions of men and boys when millions of men and boys and prime ministers and deputy directors of the UN, sorry, the president of the General Assembly. That's what happens when I go out of the script. When men like the men in this room and around the world. The ones we cannot see. The ones who support us in ways we cannot know but we feel. When they answered Emma Watson's call to be HeForShe, the world grew.

North.

We must ask ourselves, how will we be more tomorrow than we are today?

The whole world grows when people like you and me take a stand because we know that beyond the idea of how women and men are different, there is a deeper truth that love is love, and parents are parents.

Thank you.