

## Today's Family On the Run

### Where are they going? What are they doing? What are they keeping track of?

Everyone knows that today's families are busier than they have ever been. With more than 70 percent of mothers with children older than one year in the workforce, the numbers of meetings, appointments, sporting events and school functions can be overwhelming. Although the number of hours in the day hasn't changed, there are certainly fewer unscheduled hours available for most.

The following statistics offer a glimpse as to why family calendars are so jam-packed:

- ❶ The average high school student spends 10 to 15 hours per week on extracurricular activities, including sports, band, orchestra, drama and other clubs.
- ❶ More than 30 million high school children participate in sports.
- ❶ About two-thirds of U.S. high school students hold part-time jobs, working an average of 15 to 20 hours per week.
- ❶ 55 percent of American high school seniors work three or more hours daily.
- ❶ In the past 25 years, children's structured sports time has doubled.
- ❶ In the past 25 years, time spent on the sidelines watching siblings and other play has increased five-fold.
- ❶ Children ages three to 12 have lost 12 hours per week of free time in the last 25 years.
- ❶ From 1973 to 2000, the average U.S. worker added 199 hours to his or her annual work schedule.
- ❶ In 2002 Americans gave back 175 million days of paid vacation to employers – days that they had already earned. This year that figure is estimated at 574 million days.
- ❶ The Girl Scouts recently added a "Stress Less" merit badge for today's harried young girls.
- ❶ As the population ages, more and more people are providing elder care for relatives. In 2002, 35 percent of workers, *men and women alike*, say they provided regular care for a parent or in-law over 65 in the past year, helping them do things that they could not otherwise do themselves.
- ❶ The Take Back Your Time movement began in 2003 with Take Back Your Time Day on October 24, encouraging families to challenge the epidemic of overwork, over-scheduling and time famine.