

# Motherhood, The Most Wonderful and Difficult Job

Nicole Nuñez

**BEFORE YOU READ:** What parental leave laws does your country of origin have?

While I was living in Chile in 2020, I got pregnant. My husband and I had planned to have a baby before coming to the U.S. for his PhD. We were happy. I had a good job, and Chile has a national law that requires companies to give women seven months of paid maternity leave.

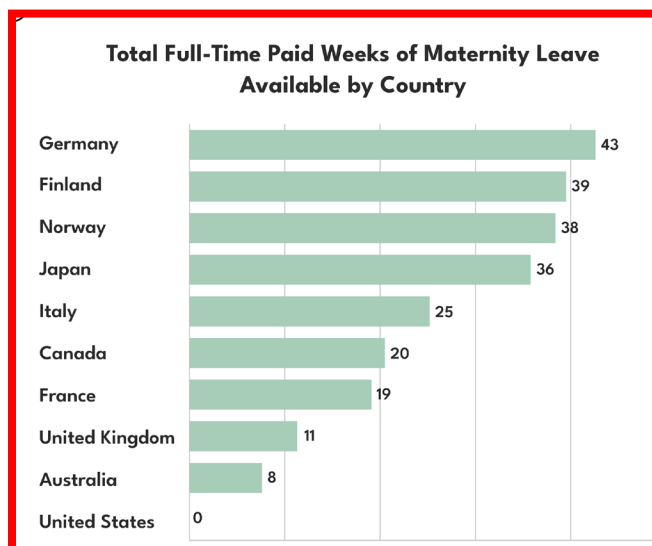
I enjoyed that time with my daughter! I didn't have to work, I still had my full income, and I had good support from my partner and my family. But when my maternity leave finished, it was difficult to return to my job. I felt frustrated. I loved my job, but I love my daughter more.

In September 2022, we came to the U.S. so my husband could get his PhD. I continued working remotely at my job in Chile, but we couldn't afford to pay for daycare. Let me tell you: working from home with a toddler as a boss is a challenge!

After a while, I noticed that my work was affected. I didn't finish my tasks on time and my team was not performing well. I had a lot of responsibility, and I wasn't doing my job properly.

I know that I am a good leader, but my priorities changed with motherhood. I needed to find a new *equilibrium*. I decided to quit my position. I never thought about being a full-time mom before because my mother always worked while she was raising me and my two sisters.

It turns out, being a mom is full-time work. You have a lot of new responsibilities. If you are a mom and you have a full-time job, then you basically have two full-time jobs! However, being a mom is the most wonderful work. When my child says, "I love you, Mom," all my stress goes away. Thinking back on my life, nothing prepared me for the challenges of being a mom. You always



Make several true statements about the data you see in this chart. The author says Chile offers seven months of paid maternity leave. Where would Chile go in this chart?

Source: [www.thirdway.org](http://www.thirdway.org)

hear how beautiful and easy motherhood is, but not how difficult it is to make it compatible with your job.

**AFTER YOU READ:** What does *equilibrium* mean? If parents feel equilibrium, who does that benefit? Should the U.S. do more to support parents? Why or why not?

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