



## Families

*Families are still struggling after Labour's recession. It's unfair: many parents have lost their jobs and balancing the demands of daily life with caring for young children is a real struggle. Getting time off work is difficult and finding quality, affordable childcare can be impossible. The Liberal Democrats believe in a fair society, parents should be supported so they can spend meaningful time with their young children, and given more help so childcare is affordable. We will allow parents to share leave between them so they can arrange family life in the way that suits them best. We will cut taxes for families on low and middle incomes. And, to make life easier for families, we will change the way tax credits are paid so you can rely on them and don't face the nightmare of having to pay back thousands of pounds.*

**Cutting taxes for people on low and middle incomes.** There will be no income tax on the first £10,000 you earn – meaning 3.6 million working people and low income pensioners will no longer have to pay any income tax at all, while millions more will have an income tax cut of £700. Pensioners will get up to £100 extra. The change will be paid for by introducing a mansion tax on properties worth over £2m, closing loopholes that benefit the wealthy and making sure polluters pay for the damage they cause.

**Shared and flexible parental leave.** When a baby is born, the mother gets a year's leave and the father currently gets just two weeks. That's unfair: it means the mother has to take the lion's share of responsibility, even if she and her partner would rather share things equally. We will allow parents to share leave between them in whatever way suits them best.

**Flexible working for all.** Families support each other in different ways, whether it's with babysitting or picking the kids up from school – grandparents often play a particularly important role. We want to make it easier for everyone, not just parents to change their working arrangements to fit in with the demands of family life. We will therefore extend the right to request flexible working to all employees.

**Tax Credits you can rely on.** Families should be able to sleep easy knowing that they can spend the money they receive without worrying it will be clawed back by the Treasury. We will fix the payments of tax credits for 6 months at a time so payments are stable and predictable for families – though of course there will be cases where exceptions are made on an emergency basis where needed, like if someone loses their job or has their hours drastically cut.