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## Memo: News editors

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### Teenage work and care plans headed for strife

A new Australia Institute study of the attitudes of teenagers released over the weekend shows that the gender wars are set to continue into the next generation with boys and girls making conflicting plans about who will do the housework and look after the children.

The study, carried out by Associate Professor Barbara Pocock of the University of Adelaide, is based on 21 focus group interviews with teenagers in Years 6 and Year 11.

It shows that, compared to boys' plans for shared housework, girls are unduly optimistic about how much their future partners will contribute to housework and childcare.

Girls are already developing strategies to ensure their husbands do their fair share while boys are planning their own methods of evading and reducing their responsibilities.

“Working class and young country women are more likely to espouse equal sharing of housework, while women from higher socio-economic areas appear more resigned, or will do it themselves to ensure high domestic standards and feelings of virtuous accomplishment”, the report says.

In addition, many young women expect that their mothers will facilitate their paid work by taking care of the grandchildren, although many are likely to be disappointed.

Greater domestic sharing will depend heavily on whether the labour market evolves to permit more flexibility, the report concludes. If the labour market remains inflexible there will be strife at home.

A summary of the report can be found under “What’s New” on the Institute website at [www.tai.org.au](http://www.tai.org.au). For copies of the full report please phone 02 6125 1270.

**[www.tai.org.au](http://www.tai.org.au)**