Sujet n°15

Pandemic Could Scar a Generation of Working Mothers

Working during the pandemic has meant very different things for Virginia Dressler and for her husband, Brandon.

As Mr. Dressler, a delivery driver, continued his routes near their home in Newbury, Ohio, Ms. Dressler spent her days caring for their 3-year-old twins. Only after her husband came
5 home at 6 p.m. could she turn to her job as a digital projects librarian at Kent State University, finishing her eight-hour shift from home about 2 a.m.

Later, Mr. Dressler was furloughed[1] and took over some of the child-care responsibilities. But now, with the economy reopening, the prospect of being summoned back to campus fills Ms. Dressler with more anxiety: Day care centers are just starting to reopen, with
10 restrictions, so who will take care of their children? "All of these things are spinning around in my head," she said. "We're trying to come up with Plan A, Plan B and Plan C."

As the pandemic upends[2] work and home life, women have carried an outsized share of the burden, more likely to lose a job and more likely to shoulder the load of closed schools and day care. For many working mothers, the gradual reopening won't solve their problems.

15 The impact could last a lifetime, reducing their earning potential and work opportunities.

"We could have an entire generation of women who are hurt," Betsey Stevenson, a professor of economics and public policy at the University of Michigan, said of pregnant women and working mothers whose children are too young to manage on their own.

Women who drop out of the work force to take care of children often have trouble getting
20 back in, and the longer they stay out, the harder it is.

Adapted from Patricia Cohen and Tiffany Hsu, *The New York Times*, June 30, 2020

1. *To be furloughed*: être en congé
2. *to upend: to change drastically*