

SHOULD JOB INTERVIEWEES ADMIT TO HAVING KIDS?

It's illegal in most places for a job interviewer to ask if you have children, or if you plan to have children. And although this question would be as pertinent with a male employee as a female one, it's women who have to worry that a recruiter will have a bias against employees with children. Although today's fathers are often as involved (in a non-obstetric sense) with their children as mothers, employers still think that male employees will be more reliable and will



work more hours than women.

Managers with large firms and corporations may tend to be more modern in their outlook on hiring women who have, or intend to have, children, simply because they have programs in place to deal with the issue. But a particular manager may still have a bias, and small employers may go so far as to violate the law and quiz you on your personal family plans. So what should you do if a recruiter asks about children? That's a tough call. You can't lie -- never lie. You can explain to the recruiter that the question is illegal -- this could lead to a contrite apology from the recruiter, or they may become annoyed. Neither is good for your hiring prospects. Or you could walk out. While this may be the most satisfying response (and who wants to work for a firm whose recruiters or managers don't know standard practices?), in this economy it may not be very practical. My advice is to be honest and answer the question. Don't talk about future plans -- that's your business, and could change anyway. Mention that you have children, and if it's true then say they are in a reliable daycare, or are looked after during the day. Just be aware that a firm that asks these questions in an interview is likely to cause problems for employees who are parents, both women and men. On a side note -- a tip for managers, and for employed parents. The personal lives of parents are not necessarily more or less important than those of non-parents. Try not to make concessions for parents that you would not make for non-parents. It breeds dissatisfaction over perceived favoritism. And a 22-year-old's emergency involving an elderly relative, for example, is no more or less important than a 42-year-old's emergency involving a child. What do you think? Let us know in the [comments!](#)