

## Module 12: The Changing Times – The 2000s to the Present

### Topic 5 Content: The Changing Role of Women

#### Introduction

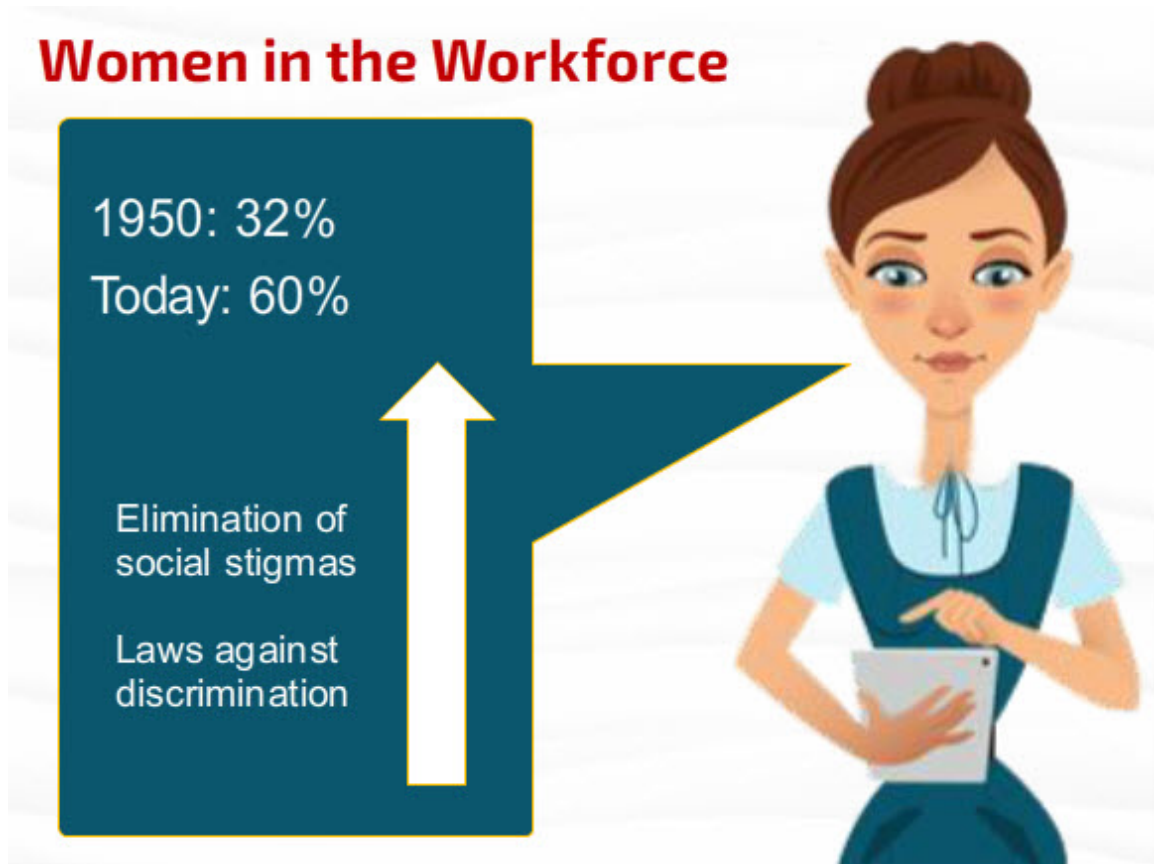


Click NEXT to learn more about the changing role of women in the United States.

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#### Women in the Workforce



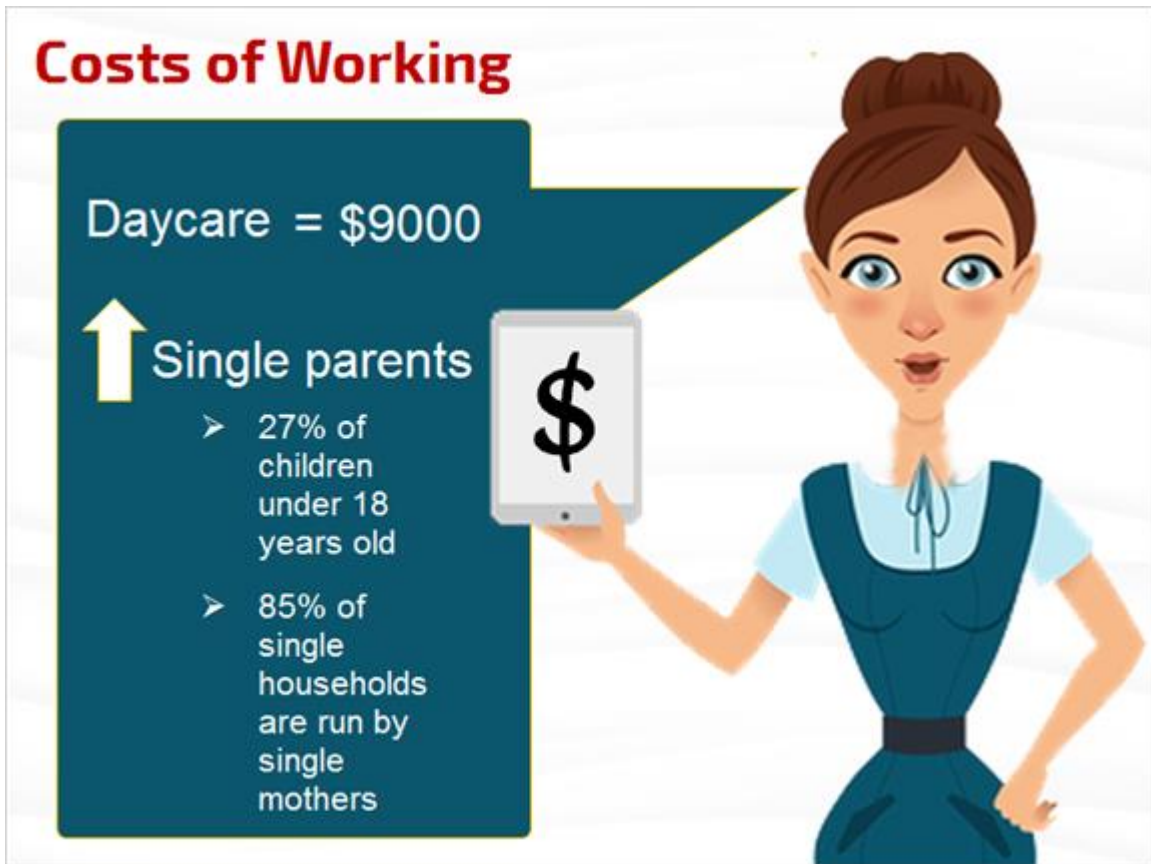
In 1950, only thirty-two percent of working-aged women were in the workforce. Because more jobs have since opened up to women, this number has steadily grown to about sixty percent. Various factors have contributed to this increase. For example, social stigmas preventing women from doing certain work have disappeared as brave women began taking jobs in nontraditional fields, setting the example for others to follow. The court system also helped provide opportunities for women by preventing people from discriminating based on gender.

As women have gained ground in the workforce, their roles have shifted, and their concerns are being heard. In particular, women have greater influence in today's society than they did in the 1950s. Even with these positive changes, however, women still face some challenges.

## Module 12: The Changing Times – The 2000s to the Present

### Topic 5 Content: The Changing Role of Women

#### Costs of Working



The lack of affordable daycare in the United States holds families back, and particularly women, from working in the ways they want. In 2016, the average cost of full time daycare for a child under the age of four was over \$9000 a year, which puts a significant strain on many families' budgets. While there are decreasing expectations that women stay at home and care for their children, it still remains more common for women to do such than men. This financial childcare burden is also felt more strongly by single parents. In the United States, around twenty-seven percent of children under the age of eighteen live in single parent households. Eighty-five percent of those households are run by single mothers.

## Module 12: The Changing Times – The 2000s to the Present

### Topic 5 Content: The Changing Role of Women

#### Salaries



Furthermore, women do not receive the same salaries as men. Specifically, women earn only eighty cents for every dollar men make. While efforts exist to address this issue, the pace for change has proven slow. One potential reason for inequitable wages is the glass ceiling effect. The glass ceiling is the perception that career advancement for women is not equal to men. It has this name because, while there is no official barrier, a culturally based invisible barrier prevents women from attaining top leadership positions in companies and in the government.

## Module 12: The Changing Times – The 2000s to the Present

### Topic 5 Content: The Changing Role of Women

#### Conclusion



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