

Modern family

School lunches, ballet lessons and grocery shopping are all in a day's work for these dads

WORDS EMMIE DOWLING

ADRIAN Miles has forgone a six-figure annual income and put his career on hold for his children.

He is a stay-at-home dad who has cared for Ethan, 10, and Angelle, 7, for the past six years after leaving his job as business analyst at SA Water. He had previously worked at energy company AGL.

His wife, Alessandra, is the breadwinner. In their Kensington Park home,

Adrian is the parent who looks after the children if they are sick, and gives them a lift to ballet lessons or football training when mum has work meetings.

Alessandra is the primary earner and director of special projects at Mercedes College, Springfield.

Adrian, 41, decided to stay at home when his second child was born, because he regretted missing many of Ethan's childhood when

working full-time. "You get home, get the kids to have a bath, read them a bedtime story and that's it," Adrian says.

"You miss out on a lot because you don't get enough quality time with them."

The couple is at the vanguard of a generational change in family gender stereotypes.

Adelaide University adjunct professor Ray Broomhill says there are more women in



Adrian Miles is a stay-at-home dad caring for his children Ethan, 10, and Angelle, 7. PHOTOGRAPH KERYN STEVENS

the South Australian labour market than 20 years ago.

For example, 55 per cent of women in the Burnside Council area were working full-time or part-time in 2011, up from 49 per cent in 1991.

The percentage of working men in this area dipped from 67 per cent in 1991 to 65 per cent in 2011.

"There seems to be a bigger change in those higher socio-economic areas in terms of women's participation in

work," Prof Broomhill, of Millswood, says.

"There is some sort of role swapping in households and it probably means we're slowly moving towards greater gender equality."

Flinders University gender relations expert Alison Mackinnon says more and more wives are trading places with their husbands.

"Women today hold professional jobs - we're able to have an egalitarian

society, and it's happening prominently in those well-educated families you find in the eastern suburbs," Prof Mackinnon says.

"But there's still a long way to go. There's a lack of acceptance of men as carers, especially in the workforce."

Adrian Miles knows all too well about the stigma of being a stay-at-home dad.

"You almost dread that icebreaker question - 'what do you do for a living?' - at

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