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Come back to work mums!

BY IAN HORNER

WOMEN and mothers haven't always been welcome in the workplace, often treated more as a liability because of all the family demands on them at home. Smithfield's Zifam Pinnacle pharmaceutical company sees otherwise.

Zifam recognises the value of mums returning to the workforce and is so keen to tap into this resource that the company offers flexible hours and shifts to entice them.

The company has 98 staff - 72 of whom are women, 54 of whom are mothers.

One of them, Laura Yang (pictured, second left), has been with the company for almost five years.

She has two children, Hayden, 2 and a half, and

Elly, who's 6 months.

"The company makes it really easy to be a working mum," she said.

"I was working in the lab, which they open at 8am and close at 6pm.

"I have a choice of coming in early so I can leave early as well. And that can vary a bit

- depending on what the kids are up to.

"They were especially flexible after I had Elly, letting me do three days in the lab and two days at home.

"It was my manager's idea, you know, and it's still ongoing to this day."

When Laura fell pregnant her manager changed her job so she wouldn't be handling chemicals while carrying a baby. "He moved me from working with the chemicals to doing -- cu-

The company's flexibility

allows Laura to continue working around her family's needs.

Her husband's demanding job means he's out at 6am to 8pm or 9pm each day.

"It'd be good for + husband to get that flexibility as well! I'm really grateful to

my company. I have friends with kids but they can't work because of all the demands with the kids. We have so many working mums here. The company has made it really great for us to work here." ■ We asked Zifam if they were hiring and they said:

Zifam has a number of positions in various stages. They are now interviewing for three positions. They will also have more positions in the new year when they expand. In March they will look to add five or six staff.



NOT 9 TO 5: 54 of the 98 staff at Smithfield's Zifam Pinnacle plant are working mums. And the company works hard to have them on board.