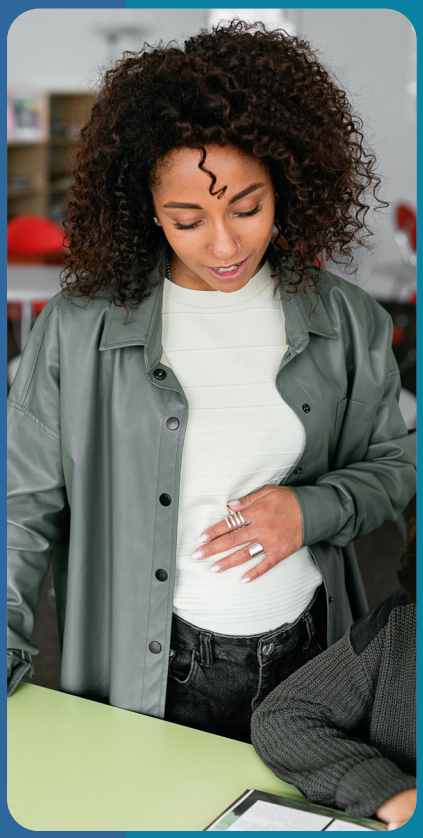
Guide to Family-Friendly Workplaces in Florida

When Businesses Support Families, Everyone Wins.













The Children's Movement of Florida

BOSSES FOR BABIES



Executive Summary

Bosses for Babies is a statewide initiative of **The Children's Movement of Florida**, designed to meaningfully engage business leaders in boosting their workforce and contributing to community prosperity through **family-friendly policies**.

The initiative's overarching goal is to improve kindergarten readiness rates in the state. Higher readiness rates translate into better life and health outcomes for children and lower crime rates in our communities – they also keep Florida businesses and workplaces competitive.

To achieve this, Bosses for Babies works with business leaders from the Panhandle to the Keys to help them develop tailored, family-friendly policies—big and small—that support their business needs and objectives.

We are powering employer-led change with research-based policies and practices that improve workplace productivity, recruitment, and retention– with the added benefit of supporting strong economic growth and the health and well-being of our state's current and future workforce.

Wins for Businesses

Family-friendly workplaces provide a competitive advantage in attracting and retaining talent, increasing productivity and employee loyalty, and decreasing turnover costs.

Wins for Families

Employees who work in family-friendly workplaces are more satisfied with their jobs, more engaged with their work, and less likely to leave the workforce. On top of that, family-friendly benefits have a direct, positive impact on the health and well-being of children and parents.

Wins for the Future

Family-friendly business practices decrease employee stress and enhance well-being, empowering parents with the time they need to support their children's healthy development. This increases economic security of families across the community and builds a strong foundation for future learning at a critical time in childhood development. When we support young children in their earliest years, they grow into healthy kids who are ready for school and for life—and our communities, workforce, and economy become stronger and more productive.



Our vision for Florida:

Workplaces are family-friendly.

All children have a strong start in life and in school.

Florida businesses are competitive.

The next generation workforce is successful.

Business owners, CEOs, human resource professionals, and employees can use this guide as a reference to start conversation and action within their organizations. The guide has been designed for use in its entirety or by individual section, so you can choose the information that best meets your needs.

When you update your policies or practices using this guide, we want to recognize you as one of our Bosses for Babies!

Ways you can stay engaged

To sign up for Bosses for Babies, share your story, or learn more about our upcoming events, visit www.bossesforbabies.com.

Sign up
to become a Boss for Babies

Meet
our network of Bosses for Babies all across the state

Share
your family-friendly policies and practices with us so we can write a case study about your company or organization

Participate
in our Bosses for Babies LIVE webinars to ask questions and learn from experts and peers



Thank you to Florida Blue for supporting this guide and our Bosses for Babies initiative.

Florida Blue

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The guide has been designed for use in its entirety or by individual section, so you can choose the information that best meets your needs.

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SECTION ONE

Overview



About Us

About Bosses for Babies

Bosses for Babies is a statewide initiative of The Children's Movement of Florida, designed to meaningfully engage business leaders in boosting their workforce and contributing to community prosperity through family-friendly policies.

Our vision for Florida:

- Workplaces are family-friendly.
- All children have a strong start in life and in school.
- Florida businesses are competitive.
- The next generation workforce is successful.

We are building a network of Florida business leaders who are champions for early childhood. These "Bosses" have a range of ways they can make an impact for children. From offering family-friendly policies in their company to advocating for early learning and supporting local early learning/child care centers, Bosses can choose the commitment that works for their business.

Regardless of a company's size, available resources, or needs, it is able to make meaningful change through one of our three pillars:

Support

Bosses for Babies guides business owners in assessing their needs for implementing or updating family-friendly policies, which support different family structures. Supporting employees also means sharing available community resources with employees related to children's well-being, access to quality child care, subsidies for health insurance, early intervention, and questions about children's development.

Advocate

Our business leaders can engage local officials, community leaders, state legislators, board members, and their peers in dialogue about the importance of the early years and why programs and investments in young children are so important for the workforce of today and tomorrow. Bosses for Babies offers opportunities for business leaders to share their stories, highlight their success, and inspire others via webinars, chamber events, the media, and other public forums.

Give Back
Bosses for Babies helps organizations identify opportunities for greater impact in their community–perhaps adopting an early learning center in their neighborhood or sponsoring a community event promoting early health and literacy. We also help identify volunteer opportunities for employees.

About The Children's Movement of Florida

The Children's Movement of Florida is the state's leading voice on early childhood: championing policies and investments in high-quality early learning opportunities, health care access, and parent support. We believe that when children have a strong start in the 0-5 years and their families are supported, we will all thrive.

About the Guide to Family-Friendly Workplaces

Our goal is to meaningfully engage business leaders throughout Florida and help them develop tailored family-friendly policies that support their business needs—ultimately boosting their workforce and contributing to community prosperity. We believe our state can be a national leader in building community prosperity through practices that support families, help businesses recruit and retain top talent, and help children thrive.

This guide details research-informed benefits that positively impact child health and well-being and provide a positive return on investment for employers. In addition to information about each policy and its impact, we've provided case studies from Florida employers and concrete steps for how to get started when implementing new policies or enhancing existing ones.

How to Use This Guide

Throughout the guide, we've highlighted steps that businesses of all sizes and in all industries can take to make their organizations more family-friendly.

Not all policies within this guide are right for every employer; however, the variety of options provides something for everyone. We encourage CEOs, business owners, human resources professionals, and employees to use this guide as a reference to start or continue conversations and action within your organization. Perhaps that's a survey of employees to determine what benefits they would value most. Perhaps it's a review of existing policies to ensure they are based on best practices and research. Perhaps it's a commitment to consider (or reconsider) a paid parental leave policy or a lactation room to support breastfeeding mothers. Whatever it is, we encourage you to take the next step to support your employees and see the results in your bottom line.

Access the Guide Online

This guide is also available on our website, with new case studies posted regularly. You can find the guide at www.bossesforbabies.com.



Letter from the CEO



When Businesses Support Families, Everyone Wins!

If you are reading this, it's probably because you are looking to implement family-friendly practices or are looking to enhance existing policies at your organization. Perhaps you're looking for ways to attract the best talent to your organization, or perhaps you're driven to do what's right in support of families and early childhood development. Either way, you've found the right resource.

The Children's Movement of Florida has been on this journey, too. Several years ago we found ourselves at a crossroads with no paid parental leave benefit in our employee handbook and an employee who needed one (me!). This was happening at a time when larger companies around the country were beginning to make paid leave accommodations standard for all their employees. The question became how these accommodations could be matched by small organizations like ours.

For us, it was also a question of values. Because of our focus on early childhood development, we know that the first two months are critical for relationship development, and one-on-one attention is the way to get that right. We also know that in the first three years of life, more neurons are firing than they ever will again: With positive adult-child interactions, children will learn and grow exponentially well before they enter kindergarten. We wanted our policies to honor the role parents play as their children's first and best teachers while also making sure all our objectives are met in the organization. We made paid leave and flexibility the cornerstones of our policies because we were thinking of families and young children, but we found that all employees benefited and felt more supported and productive.

That is when Bosses for Babies was born: We wanted to help Florida businesses of any size navigate and implement family-friendly practices that would support working parents and also strengthen their businesses. It's about acknowledging the impact employers have on the adults most important in a child's life: their parents. It's about providing solutions that positively affect lower waged and part-time workers to the same degree as upper level management — all while helping children thrive.

Our vision is to help shift the conversation on family-friendly policies, with a research-based approach that shows these lead to business prosperity. A stronger, more productive workforce today also supports the future workforce being ready for kindergarten on Day 1 — and poised to succeed in school and in life.

Join us as part of Bosses for Babies and make a change in your organization today.

With gratitude,

Madeleine

Madeleine K. Thakur
President and CEO

Advisory Council Members

We are grateful to the individuals who advised us on the content in this guide to ensure it is relevant and helpful for the Florida business community.



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SECTION TWO

The Case for Family-Friendly Workplaces



A Snapshot of Working Families

Families have changed.

But family-friendly policies have lagged behind. In the US, public and private policies that affect working parents are based on an outdated model: a two-parent household, with one parent who works outside the home for pay.

That means the vast majority of families must work in a system that was created for a bygone era. Here's what that looks like for working parents and employers across the country.

As parents struggle to balance work and family obligations, employers are losing out.

In 2016, nearly two million parents of children age five and younger had to quit a job, not take a job, or greatly change their job because of problems with child care.[1]

75%
of US mothers



50%
of US fathers

say they've passed up work opportunities, switched jobs, or quit to care for their children[2]

Nearly 40% of parents nationwide
say they've left a job because it lacked flexibility[3]

The struggle is real, and working parents are in a bind in Florida.

A majority of working families in the United States do no have access to paid parental leave through their employers.

In Florida, 78 percent (about 8.4 million workers) do not have access to paid family leave through their jobs[4]; **69 percent do not even have access to unpaid leave under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act[5].**

Only **13%** of private industry workers nationwide have access to paid parental leave[6], and nearly a quarter of moms return to work just two weeks after having a baby.[7]

1 in 3 families nationwide spend 20% or more of their annual household income on child care.[8]

$5.4 billion dollar loss annually for Florida's economy due to child care issues.[9]

68% of children in Florida today live in families where all parents work.[10]

60% **of working parents** **had issues with child care** that impacted their ability to participate in the workforce or affected career advancement

&

43% **of working parents** **say they left a job because it interfered with their ability to care for their family** or affected career advancement[11]

Hourly and low-wage workers are impacted the most.

Hourly workers make up 59 percent of the workforce[12] and one in five children live in low-income families. Low-income workers are:

- less likely to have access to family-friendly benefits,
- less likely to be able to afford unpaid leave or child care, and
- more likely to drop out of the labor force after giving birth.[13]

Roughly six million American parents work in jobs that pay $10.50 or less per hour.

Low-wage employees have the least access to family-friendly policies, which has significantly and disproportionately affected their health and economic security.[14, 15]

Working families struggle → declining birth rate → smaller future labor force

The US birth rate has dropped to an all-time low, which economists warn will affect long-term economic growth.[16]

Why are Americans Having Fewer Babies?[17]

64% of adults say it's because child care is too expensive.

77% say it's because they have no access to or not enough paid leave.

Up to five million more workers would join the labor force

if US businesses offered more family-friendly benefits like paid parental leave.[18]



The Case for Family-Friendly Workplaces

Wins for Businesses

Family-friendly workplaces have a competitive advantage. They attract and retain more top talent, and their employees are more productive and more committed.[19] Plus family-friendly employers benefit from reduced employee health care costs,[20] a healthier work environment, and fewer employee absences.[21]

Employers of all sizes across Florida see family-friendly policies as an effective way to grow a more prosperous company. **Working parents in Florida surveyed in 2020 rated paid time off, flexibility, insurance, and child care stipends as the most desired benefits.**

Without paid leave, Florida's economy and families are faced with making tough choices between their work and families.

86% **of US millennials**, who now make up the greatest percentage of the workforce,[22] **say they are less likely to leave an employer that offers paid family and medical leave**.[23]

Of more than 1,500 human resources officers surveyed by Ernst and Young in 2016, **71% said paid family leave positively impacted productivity, and 82% reported improved employee morale.**[24]



Wins for Families.

For children and families, the benefits of family-friendly workplaces are numerous and long-lasting.

Children whose parents have access to family-friendly benefits receive much-needed support and time with their parents during the most critical years of human development. This leads to positive health outcomes, higher education attainment, and future career success. Parents who have access to family-friendly benefits also have improved health outcomes and are happier and more productive at work.

Family-friendly benefits increase positive outcomes and decrease negative outcomes for children and families.

Babies born to mothers with paid parental leave are:

- less likely to be born prematurely
- more likely to be born at a **healthy birth weight**

Parental leave of at least six months for mothers and two weeks for fathers:

- significantly **lowers a mother's risk** of postpartum depression and anxiety
- **increases paternal engagement** in caregiving throughout a child's life[25]

Children whose parents have paid parental leave, paid sick leave, and other family-friendly benefits are more likely to have:

- well care visits and immunizations, especially for measles and polio.[26]
- **better test scores in school**
- **fewer behavioral or mental health problems**
- regular school attendance

Mothers who are able to breastfeed for at least 13 months in their lifetime have a 63 percent lower risk of ovarian cancer.[27] Breastfeeding also lowers a woman's risk of:

- breast cancer
- high blood pressure
- type 2 diabetes

When their employer offers child care reimbursements or child care on site—either full-time, part-time, or on a backup basis—low-wage workers are more likely to be able to afford child care and are less likely to drop out of the labor force after giving birth. Predictable scheduling allows hourly workers to better plan for child care needs.

Wins for the Future.

To prepare our future workforce for success, we have to start in early childhood. Bosses for Babies focuses on family-friendly policies that impact young children and their families and is rooted in research on brain development and future success. During children's earliest years, their experiences are built into their bodies—shaping the brain's architecture and creating the foundation for future learning and health. In other words, everything a child experiences from birth impacts that child's ability to fulfill his or her potential.[28]

The early years are so defining that a child's third-grade reading outcomes can predict future academic achievement and career success. Decades of research have established what children need to build strong brains in the birth-through-age-eight period: health and development on track from birth, supportive and supported families and communities, and regular attendance in high-quality early learning environments.

> *"American business depends on a strong workforce, now and in the future, to compete and succeed globally. But America is facing an unprecedented workforce crisis: a large growing shortage of skilled workers. One root of this problem is that we've underestimated the importance of the earliest years of life."*
> *—US Chamber of Commerce Foundation.*



Right now across the country, there are more jobs open than people looking for work.

This includes Florida, which has a low unemployment rate of 2.6% as of August 2023 according to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.



On top of that, Florida and the country are facing a growing skills gap. Sixty-four percent of jobs in Florida require post-secondary credentials in the future, only 40 percent of Floridians meet this requirement.

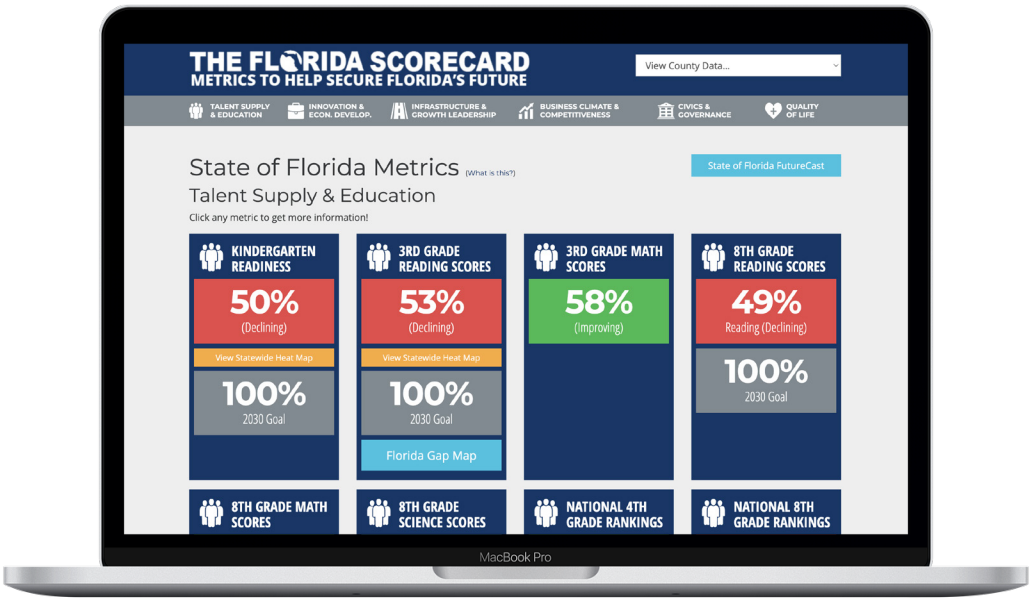


Currently, the majority of Florida children are not meeting key predictors of future academic success and higher education attainment.

As of 2022, only 53 percent of Florida third graders scored at or above reading proficiency as measured by Florida Standards Assessments results.

Only 50 percent of children are kindergarten ready as measured by Star Early Literacy Assessment.

The Florida Chamber of Commerce tracks these metrics in real time on The Florida Scorecard[29], enabling decision-makers to measure progress at the state and community level.



"The foundation for school, career, and life success is largely determined through the development of cognitive and character skills beginning in children's earliest years."
—Nobel Laureate Economist, Professor James J. Heckman



SECTION THREE

Family-Friendly Policies



What Makes a Workplace Family-Friendly?

Each policy recommended in this guide is based on research that shows positive business impact for employers and a positive impact on children's health and well-being.

This section describes each policy in detail, including the benefits to employers and to employee and children's health and well-being, along with examples of how employers have incorporated these practices into their workplace.

Policies in this guide fall into five categories:

Paid Leave	For the purposes of this guide, we focus on paid leave only, as it has more positive impacts on employers and employees versus unpaid leave. Types of leave included are parental leave (for birth, adoption, or foster placement), sick leave, and family and medical leave.
Flexible Work and Scheduling	Flexible work includes flextime, working from home or telecommuting, job sharing, part-time work, and predictable scheduling and advanced notice of shift scheduling.
Health and Wellness Benefits	Health insurance, wellness benefits, and flexible spending accounts are featured here.
Child Care	Child care solutions included are backup and emergency care, child care referrals, on-site child care, child care consortiums, and subsidized or reimbursed care.
Accommodations and Support	This category includes support for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers and babies-at-work initiatives.



Paid Leave

Parental Leave

Paid leave for the birth, adoption, or acceptance of foster placement of a child that is separate from vacation or sick leave.

Benefits to Employers[30]	Benefits to Children[31]	Benefits to Parents/Families[32, 33]
• Increases or does not decrease productivity • Improves recruitment • Increases likelihood that new mothers will come back to work (and to same employer) and stay employed • Increases likelihood that new fathers will stay employed • Reduces turnover costs through increased retention • Improves morale and job satisfaction	• Increases birthweight • Reduces infant mortality • Improves health care • Increases well-baby care • Increases immunization rates • Supports child development • Increases educational attainment • Increases IQ test scores • Reduces behavioral/mental health problems • Improves regular school attendance • Reduces teen pregnancy rates • Increases wages as adults	• Improves family incomes • Increases initiation and length of breastfeeding • Decreases maternal depression and stress • Increases paternal engagement in caregiving • Increases job satisfaction • Builds healthier parent-child relationships • Reduces wage gap between women and men • Reduces wage gap between mothers and childless women • Reduces stigma of taking leave • Increases gender equity and women's advancement at work • Workers are more likely to remain in the workforce, increasing family economic security

Research or Recommendations from National Organizations

The American Public Health Association, the Society of Maternal-Fetal Medicine, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Pediatric Policy Council recommend a minimum of 12 weeks of paid leave.

The American Congress of Obstetrics and Gynecology recommends a minimum of six weeks of paid leave.

The Better Life Lab, a program of the nonpartisan think tank New America, recommends a minimum of six months of paid maternity leave for maternal health and well-being and one year of paid leave, evenly split between parents, for infant health and well-being.[34]

Range of Practices in the United States

Though the number of employers offering paid parental leave has steadily increased over the last five years[35], only **14 percent of private sector workers and 17 percent of public sector workers have access to any paid leave following a birth, adoption, or foster placement**.[36]

For low-wage workers, the percentage is much lower — **just four percent for workers in the lowest 10 percent income bracket**.[37] Access to leave also varies widely by industry. Thirty-seven percent of workers in the finance and insurance sectors have access to paid leave, but paid leave is available for only 19 percent of education and health care workers and six percent of restaurant and hospitality workers.[38]

The United States is the **only developed nation in the world** and one of only a small handful of countries with no national paid leave policy. The other countries are Papua New Guinea, Suriname, and a few small South Pacific island countries.





Parents Say They Want More Paid Leave, Feel Pressured to Return to Work Too Soon

Offering family-friendly policies is a great first step toward becoming a family-friendly workplace. But ensuring your workplace culture allows parents to take advantage of the policies you offer is equally important.

In a 2018 survey of more than 1,100 current and prospective parents, the majority of working parents say they contend with a lack of paid leave, pressure to return to work soon after a baby is born, and stress over career consequences for taking time off.[39] Furthermore, in a 2020 survey of more than 900 working parents in Florida, paid leave and flexibility were rated one of the most desired workplace benefits.[40]

Even with paid leave policies in place, parents say they feel pressure to return to work and suffer career consequences from taking leave.

Both mothers and fathers who have access to paid parental leave take an average of four weeks off. Major medical associations in the US recommend a minimum of six to 12 weeks of paid parental leave.

Parents who make $100,000 or more are able to take nearly double the leave of parents who make less than $100,000. On average, women making less than $100,000 per year took an average of 17 days following a birth or adoption, and women making more than $100,000 took an average of 30 days. On average, men making less than $100,000 per year took an average of 15 days following a birth or adoption, and men making more than $100,000 took an average of 25 days.

More than half of mothers (53 percent) and 36 percent of fathers surveyed say the leave offered by their employer is insufficient.

One in three parents feel they've been overlooked for a promotion as a result of taking parental leave.

One in five parents feel pressured to return to work early or not to take all the leave their employer offers.

For parents without paid leave, quitting their current job or leaving the workforce altogether is a real consideration.

More than one in four mothers (27 percent) and one in ten fathers (10 percent) who do not have access to paid parental leave plan to quit their job as soon as their child is born.

Fourteen percent of soon-to-be parents plan to quit their job for a new one with leave benefits.

Sick Leave

Sick leave refers to paid leave for employees to care for themselves or a family member during a temporary, short-term medical issue, such as illness; or for preventive health care, such as an annual well visit or a prenatal doctor appointment.

While many companies offer "paid time off" (PTO) and/or vacation days for all employees — and those could be used for caregiving or sick time — it is important to highlight the additional leave policies that support these needs specifically. Research shows better health and well-being outcomes for children and families when parents and caregivers have access to sick leave and caregiving leave in addition to PTO. Additionally, such benefits are proven to impact morale and productivity across the workforce as a whole — not just working parents.

Benefits to Employers[41]	Benefits to Children[42, 43]	Benefits to Parents/Families[44, 45]
• Increases productivity • Does not lower profits or harm employment • Increases retention, reducing turnover costs • Reduces employee absenteeism • Provides healthier work environment • Reduces health care costs • Workers recover from temporary disability, illness, or injury more quickly and are less likely to relapse or be reinjured • Increases loyalty • Reduces likelihood of dangerous injury or death on the job	• Encourages use of preventive health care • Children recover more quickly from illness and injury when parents are available to care for them • Lowers risk for flu and other illnesses by encouraging children to stay home until they are well	• Encourages use of preventive health care • Workers recover from disability, illness, or injury more quickly • Lowers risk for flu and other illnesses by encouraging parents to stay home until they or their children are well • Reduces financial strain from chronic illness or injury.

Research or Recommendations from National Organizations

Workers with 10 or more paid sick days are more likely to access preventive health care services.[46]

While it does not provide a recommended amount, the American Medical Association strongly encourages private employers to offer paid sick and medical leave and allow employees to use that leave to care for children when they are sick.[47]

Range of Practices in the United States

Nearly one in three workers — and seven in 10 low-wage workers — do not have access to paid sick leave through their employer.[48]

A 2017 Bloomberg BNA survey shows that 37 percent of employers who offer sick leave have policies that include safe leave for victims of crimes, domestic violence, assault, or stalking.[49]

Ten states have enacted paid safe leave laws. Florida has a "Domestic Violence Leave Law" that requires employers with 50 or more employees to offer up to three days of leave in a twelve-month period if the employee or any family or household member is a victim of domestic violence.[50] The employer must provide leave for employees seeking an injunction for protection against domestic violence, obtaining medical or mental health care for the employee or household member, finding a safe or new home, and seeking legal assistance. The employer may decide whether the leave is paid or unpaid.

As of 2015, federal contractors must provide at least seven days of paid sick and family medical leave to employees for preventive care, an existing health condition, illness, or injury.

The US is one of the few developed, industrialized nations that does not require paid sick leave by federal law.

Eleven states, along with 33 jurisdictions and the District of Columbia, have a law requiring employers to offer paid sick leave to employees. Other states, such as Georgia and Minnesota, have a "kin care law" that requires employers who offer paid sick leave to their employees to allow employees to use that time to care for family members. Such laws do not exist in the State of Florida.

Family and Medical Leave

Family and medical leave allows employees to take paid time off to care for a long-term medical issue for themselves, their children, or a loved one or to address needs during a long-term absence from work, such as a military deployment.

Benefits to Employers[51]	Benefits to Children[52]	Benefits to Parents/Families[53]
• Increases productivity • Does not impact profits • Increases retention, reducing turnover costs • Reduces employee absenteeism • Provides healthier work environment • Reduces health care costs • Workers recover from disability, illness, or injury more quickly • Increases loyalty	• Encourages use of preventive health care • Children recover more quickly from illness and injury when parents are available to care for them	• Encourages use of preventive health care • Workers recover from disability, illness, or injury more quickly

Research or Recommendations from National Organizations

While it does not provide a recommended amount, the American Medical Association strongly encourages private employers to offer paid sick and medical leave and allow employees to use that leave to care for children when they are sick or injured.[54]

The duration of paid leave that is necessary for employees to care for themselves, their child, or a loved one during a long-term illness or injury varies greatly, according to the World Policy Center:[55]

- **For personal medical leave, six months is important to cover severe illnesses**, such as cancer that requires chemotherapy and/or radiation treatment. However, some workers may be able to return to work part-time or intermittently while undergoing treatments, and leave can be shorter for less serious injuries or illnesses.
- **For children, parental presence is important for the full duration of the illness; however, during periods of recovery, this care can be split between parents or other close caregivers.** Employers should work with employees to determine an optimal schedule of paid time off based on the child's illness or injury.

Range of Practices in the United States

Just 15 percent of workers have access to paid leave to care for their own long-term illness or the long-term illness of a child.[56]

As of 2015, federal contractors must provide at least seven days of paid sick and family medical leave to employees for preventive care, an existing health condition, illness, or injury.

The US is one of the few developed, industrialized nations that does not require paid family and medical leave by federal law.

Twenty-eight percent of private industry workers and 70 percent of state and government workers have access to employer-provided paid military leave.[57]

Parental Involvement Leave

Short-term paid leave that allows a parent to take an afternoon or a day off to attend a school performance or athletic event, volunteer at a child's school, or otherwise take care of a child's needs.

Benefits to Employers[58]	Benefits to Children[59]	Benefits to Parents/Families[60]
• Improves productivity • Increases retention • Reduces complaints of discrimination toward employees with caregiving responsibilities • Improves workplace climate	• Improves regular school attendance • Improves grades and test scores • Reduces behavioral/mental health problems • Earlier identification of learning problems • Improves likelihood of high school graduation • Improves likelihood of attending college	• Decreases stress • Increases engagement in children's education

Research or Recommendations from National Organizations

According to the National Education Association, children whose parents have time to support their social, emotional, and academic development:

- **earn higher grades and test scores**, and enroll in higher-level programs;
- **attend school regularly**;
- **have better social skills**, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school;
- **are more likely to graduate** and go on to post-secondary education.

Range of Practices in the United States

Nationwide, 51 percent of small employers (50 to 99 employees) and 33 percent of large employers (1,000 employees or more) allow workers to take time off during the day to attend to important personal or family needs without losing pay.

Case Study

Florida Blue

Location: Florida
Number of Employees: 9,000
Policies Highlighted: Paid Leave, Child Care, Flexible Work Scheduling, and Accommodations and Support



President and CEO Patrick Geraghty

At Florida Blue, competitive benefits programs are designed to support employees and recognize their "whole self." **"Our practices support and value our employees to be their best selves at every season of their lives," said Patrick Geraghty, President and CEO of GuideWell Mutual Holding Corporation and Florida Blue.** "Our benefits programs throughout the organization enable us to support our employees in ways that matter most to them, which allow us to retain good talent while promoting creativity, innovation, and productivity."

Paid Parental Leave is one of those attractive benefits with up to eight weeks off to care for their newborn. **"The paid eight-week leave enables new parents to bond with their child in ways that are intrinsically important in child development," said Tracy Gallo, LiveWell Program Manager at Florida Blue.**

For new parents, the idea of returning to the office can be daunting but Florida Blue has made the transition a whole lot easier. New moms who work on or come to campus have access to more than 15 dedicated Wellness/ lactation rooms across their multiple campuses throughout the state. Each room is equipped with a variety of amenities which may include: comfortable chairs, mirror, cleaning supplies, table, mini fridge, and sink – a quiet and nurturing space during their pumping or other wellness breaks.

Another great benefit for new parents that supports their work at the office or at home is the backup child care services managed by one of their certified providers, Bright Horizons. The program is a resource available to employees in the event their child or elder care falls through. Backup child/elder care services at Florida Blue are subsidized so employees pay only a small amount ($15 per child or $25 for multiple children) for up to 10 days of backup care each year.



Supervisor of Member Contact Center Shatavia Eady with her children.

For many parents, flexible scheduling is yet another invaluable benefit that supports the family-friendly workplace. **For Shatavia Eady, a mother of three and a supervisor of the Member Contact Center, "Flexibility enables me to be present at school functions and important doctor visits."** Eady's son was diagnosed with autism at an early age, and the flexibility helps her to manage his many doctor and therapy appointments.

"We promote a healthy work-life balance with our time off and the wellness day. I love how the company not only wants to help the community with better health but the employees as well," added Eady.



Mom (left) pictured with daughter and Provider Consultant Meredith Ulino (right).

Provider Consultant Meredith Ulino has never regretted her decision to join the team and has been with Florida Blue for 10 years. The ability to work from home has significantly helped her care for her ailing 72-year-old mother who lives with her at home. “These accommodations enable me to care for my mom and tend to her needs – it is truly a blessing to work at Florida Blue!”

Indeed, the company has a long history of offering benefits to meet the diverse needs of their employees and families as part of their continuous talent strategy.

With support from an employee-led group, The Values Council, the company receives direct feedback on what is working well and what needs to be changed through one-on-one conversations and discussion forums. This serves as an opportunity for the members of the council to influence an action or behavior from senior leaders and to be sounding boards for administrators to test new ideas.

Sample Benefits at Florida Blue:

- Paid-time off (parental, FMLA, adoption, and sick)
- Flexible work scheduling and remote/hybrid work
- Health insurance (medical, dental and vision) and health
- Savings and flexible spending accounts
- Wellness benefits
- Breastfeeding spaces
- Back up care (child and elder care — subsidized)
- Elder care support

Case Study

Nicklaus Children's Hospital

Location: Miami, Florida
Year Founded: 1950
Number of Employees: 4,000
Policies Highlighted: Flexible Work and Scheduling, Accommodations and Support, and Community Impact

Within the colorful and whimsical walls of Nicklaus Children's Hospital is an entire organization focused exclusively on supporting the welfare of every child. Even outside those walls, Nicklaus Children's goal is to help children and their parents thrive. The welfare of each child inside the hospital and in the community is embedded in the organizational culture and evident across a range of family-friendly practices.



Beckett (left), patient, alongside President and CEO Matthew Love (right).

The last two years urged Nicklaus Children's to redefine what a traditional workplace would look like post-pandemic. **"The workplace as we know it changed," said Matthew Love, president and CEO of Nicklaus' Children's Health System, parent organization of the hospital. "Our employees are the heart of the organization. We had to make changes that would support them and their respective families — we could not afford not to."**

A newly implemented benefit that emerged amid the pandemic was flexible scheduling and working from home for nonclinical workers.



Senior Manager for Outpatient Centers Jenny Cruz (center) with her family.

For Jennifer Cruz, senior manager of outpatient centers, being able to pivot from an employee to mother-of-four and caregiver of her mother-in-law has been challenging. Cruz and her husband, who works in retail, both have demanding work schedules and life requires plenty of coordination. "Knowing that I can care for my son when he is sick is a blessing," said Cruz. "The trust they have in me and knowing I will get the job done, encourages me to be the best employee that I can be at Nicklaus Children's."

Working parents of the health system can count on several benefits that aid and support a work-life balance and relieve some concerns regarding their children and their transition back to work. For new parents, Nicklaus Children's provides access to three employee lactation pumping rooms across the hospital grounds for complete privacy. In addition to the lactation or mothers' rooms, new parents can take advantage of discounted child care assistance through their employee perks and benefits program. Nicklaus Children's has negotiated reduced rates with several child care providers so its employees have one less worry as new parents.

Another great benefit is the Employee Assistance Program. This program extends access to help beyond the Human Resources Department. With just one phone call, an employee experiencing a challenging situation is able to quickly access services ranging from a mental health professional to even a dog sitter – just as if they were asking a friend or family member for help.

Going beyond the employee benefits program, Nicklaus Children's keeps a pulse on the community and their needs. For some time now, the health system has had a strong commitment to early literacy. Reading is one of those critical activities for early child development and a great way for parents to bond with their child, according to Love.

One way the organization empowers parents, caregivers, and educators in the community is through the ENRICH Literacy Program that promotes early literacy rates from birth and beyond. The program stands for Engage, Nurture and Read to Infants and Children, and was created initially for hospital patients in collaboration with clinicians. Today, employees' children who are part of the health system family also receive a box filled with bilingual books, helping to foster in them the importance of early literacy.



A box with bilingual books from the ENRICH Literacy Program.

In addition to their literacy program, the health system also created a mobile dental unit that has administered approximately 30,000 treatments for children in the last four years; and partnered with other organizations like the **Safe Kids Coalition** working to provide practical ways, from car seat checkups to water safety tips, that help decrease the number of preventable childhood injuries.

"Community efforts like these are successful because of our employees, they are a vital part of our outreach efforts." added Love.

Case Study

Directions for Living

Location: Clearwater, Florida
Year Founded: 1982
Number of Employees: 250+
Policies Highlighted: Flexible Work and Scheduling

Every day the staff at Directions for Living (DFL) walks through their front door with one goal in mind: provide children and families in the Tampa Bay area with the needed support to end the cycle of trauma in their lives. Since 1982, Directions for Living has provided trauma-informed and often life-saving social services to children and families in the community. Over that time, the company has grown to more than 250 employees, as a result of their innovative approach to delivering results-oriented treatments/services coupled with a growing demand for their social services program.



President and CEO
April Lott

For DFL, their own critical need emerged when the company began to experience a high staff turnover rate due to the pandemic, job fatigue, and employee caregiving responsibilities at home. **"That's when the epiphany happened," said April Lott, LCSW, President & CEO of Directions for Living. "We knew we had to take a deeper look at what our employees were feeling and the different reasons driving them to leave their positions."**

It quickly became clear when they began to meet with their employees. A direct result of these employee huddles, surveys, and town halls, Lott affirmed what she believed was taking place, saying, "We learned that in order to keep our staff happy, healthy, and productive we needed to ensure they received above-average opportunities for self care and family time. They needed family-friendly employment policies."

Directions for Living implemented their first set of family-friendly policies in 2007 and added additional policies in 2016 and 2020. "We believe it starts with the staff. If they are happy, healthy, and respected, then they will also be passionate, productive, and drive positive outcomes for the clients we serve," added Lott.

The staff at Directions for Living participate in employee engagement surveys several times a year and hold monthly town halls with the CEO. This provides the staff with an opportunity to share ideas, make suggestions, and ask questions. "There is complete transparency about policy decision-making," explains Lott. For example, they heard from several employees how they had not seen their families during the Christmas holiday season in several years due to the brief paid company holidays (only Christmas Day and New Year's Day were official days off). Lott also pointed out saying, "Two days was simply not enough for them to see their loved ones."

This prompted Lott to propose a new company-wide holiday policy to the DFL board: a week off that would ensure her employees would get the much-needed paid time off during a special time of the year.

"We know from experience that our amazing staff can't do incredibly hard work if they don't first know their own families are taken care of. We are always asking questions and learning from our employees about what they need to be able to be their best selves, personally and professionally. It is a constant evolution. I am so proud of the work we continue to do to improve family-friendly practices at DFL," emphasized Lott.

When implementing these types of policies, a company the size of DFL faces several challenges, including how to provide increased employee benefits and still continue to deliver the same client services at cost.

The biggest challenge faced by Directions for Living was funding. Additional approved paid time off can have a financial impact on the company. But through creative initiatives such as fundraising events and grants, they triumphed over these challenges.

During the pandemic, transitioning to hybrid schedules and the implementation of telehealth became more prevalent, making it easier for funders, partners, and clients to embrace these dynamics.

In a span of 10 years, different policies have been implemented, which have resulted in a decrease of employee turnover by 15 percent. Lott affirms, "You can't exactly quantify happiness, but you can certainly reduce turnover. **Holding onto employees longer, keeping them happier, ensures our long-term success and most importantly, the clients we are missioned to serve are more supported and successful than ever."**

Sample Benefits at Directions for Living:

- Paid-time off rollover
- Wellness holidays and gifts
- Breastfeeding spaces
- Remote work
- Flexible schedules



Flexible Work & Scheduling

Flextime

A flexible work schedule allows employees to choose when they work, as long as they put in their hours every week.

Benefits to Employers[61]	Benefits to Children[62]	Benefits to Parents/Families[63]
• Increases productivity • Improves the bottom line • Improves recruitment • Increases retention, reducing turnover costs • Reduces employee absenteeism • Improves relationships with co-workers • Increases morale, loyalty, commitment • Increases overall job satisfaction	• Improves physical and social emotional health, through parental stress reduction • Reduces obesity • Improves education, through increased parental engagement	• Improves health • Increases happiness and job satisfaction • Reduces stress • Allows employees to care for sick or elderly family members • Improves family economic security

Research or Recommendations from National Organizations

A significant amount of research indicates that **flexibility in all forms is one of the most beneficial policies to help employees balance family and work**. Having some control over when or where to work allows workers to juggle the demands of long hours and care for children, according to the National Council on Family Relations.[64]

Research in the Journal of Health and Social Behavior shows that employees at Best Buy headquarters who could change their schedules based on their individual needs and job responsibilities reported getting **more sleep, felt less obligated to work when sick, and felt more likely to seek medical help**. Employees reported better sleep quality, higher energy levels, lower emotional exhaustion, physiological stress and work-family conflict, and better overall health.[65]

In a 2020 survey of working parents in Florida, flexibility was ranked #1 for benefits that promote productivity and #3 for benefits that are most valued and promote loyalty."[66]

Nearly 40 percent of parents nationwide say they've left a job because it lacked flexibility.[67]

Range of Practices in the United States

Availability of workplace flexibility has grown slightly over the last five years. A 2022 survey found that 63 percent of employers offer most of their workers the opportunity to adopt a hybrid work model, which involves a combination of working both remotely and in person.[68]

As of this year, just over half of all workers (55 percent) have flexibility during core business hours, and 27 percent have flexibility outside of core business hours.[69]

Part-time workers have less access to flexibility overall (39 percent), as do less skilled and low-wage workers.[70] This can be extra stressful for low-wage workers, who are just as likely to have responsibilities for child care as high-wage employees, but have fewer financial resources and are less likely to have a partner or spouse who can share family work.[71]

Working from Home/Telecommuting

Telecommuting allows employees to work from home or some other remote site some or all of the time.

Benefits to Employers[72]	Benefits to Children and Parents/Families[73]
• Increases productivity • Reduces real estate and overhead costs • Increases retention, reducing turnover costs • Increases employee loyalty • Employees can work more hours before experiencing work/family conflict • Reduces employee absenteeism • Saves money during emergencies and weather-related disruptions	• Saves employees time • Increases job satisfaction • Reduces reports of physical and mental fatigue • Offers large benefits for disabled or temporarily disabled workers

Research or Recommendations from National Organizations

A significant amount of research indicates that **flexibility in all forms is one of the most beneficial policies to help employees balance family and work**. Having some control over when or where to work allows workers to juggle the demands of long hours and care for children, according to the National Council on Family Relations.[74]

Research suggests that **telecommuter job satisfaction is maximized when telecommuting occurs at moderate levels — about two days per week**. However, each employee is unique, so employers should work with individuals to find the right fit.[75]

Range of Practices in the United States

More than double the number of employers offer telecommuting on an occasional basis than in 2005 (68 percent today, up from 34 percent).[76]

However, **only 33 percent of workers consistently telecommute on a part-time basis, and only 23 percent telecommute on a full-time basis**.[77]

Part-time workers have less access to flexibility overall (39 percent), as do less-skilled and low-wage workers.[78] This can be extra stressful for low-wage workers, who are just as likely to have responsibilities for child care as high-wage employees but have fewer financial resources and are less likely to have a partner or spouse who can share family work.[79]

Job Sharing and/or Part-Time Work

In a job share, two or more employees share a single position, each working a portion of the necessary time. Job sharing allows employees to hold a position and still have time to spend with children or take care of other family responsibilities. A full-time employee might be allowed to shift to part-time — either as part of a job share, or simply as a reduction in working hours — and still continue in the same position. This shift can be temporary or permanent.

Benefits to Employers[80]	Benefits to Children and Parents/Families[81]
• Increases productivity • Increases net worth • Increases retention, reducing turnover costs • Increases job satisfaction	• Increases job satisfaction • Provides more time to meet family needs

Research or Recommendations from National Organizations

A significant amount of research indicates that flexibility in all forms is one of the most beneficial policies to help employees balance family and work. Having some control over when or where to work allows workers to juggle the demands of long hours and care for children, according to the National Council on Family Relations.[82]

Keys to making a job share work, according to the Harvard Business Review:[83]

- **Choose partners who can easily communicate and collaborate.**
- **Decide a model for dividing the work** — by task, or by day.
- **Communicate often and clearly.**
- Make sure **management is on board**.
- **Manage expectations** and be prepared to battle bias that employees who job share are less committed.
- **Give the process time** to work out any issues.

Though part-time workers have traditionally had less access to family-friendly benefits, more employers are recognizing the value of including part-time and hourly workers in their policies, especially paid leave.[84] Additionally, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) **recommends giving part-time workers proportionate wages and benefits compared with full-time workers**, along with proportionate credit for relevant experience needed to qualify for promotions, training programs, or other employment opportunities.[85]

Range of Practices in the United States

Nine percent of employers have a job share policy — a percentage that's held relatively steady for the past five years.[86]

Just under 18 percent of American workers are part-time, defined as working fewer than 35 hours per week.[87]

Part-time workers have less access to flexibility overall (39 percent), as do low-wage workers.[88] This can be extra stressful for low-wage workers, who are just as likely to have responsibilities for child care as high-wage employees but have fewer financial resources and are less likely to have a partner or spouse who can share family work.[89]

The State of Florida has a voluntary employer program called The Short-Time Compensation program, which is designed to help employers maintain their staff by reducing the weekly working hours during temporary slowdowns instead of temporarily laying off employees.

If your employer provides this program, you may meet the requirements for a partial reemployment check to supplement your reduced wages. For more information on this program, visit this **https://www.floridajobs.org/**.

Predictable Scheduling

Predictable scheduling involves ensuring that employees have some control over their scheduled working hours, not changing work schedules without employees' consent, and/or giving employees advanced warning about changes to their work schedules.

Benefits to Employers[90]	Benefits to Children and Parents/Families[91, 92]
• Increases productivity • Increases retention, reducing turnover costs • Reduces employee absenteeism • Increases morale, loyalty, commitment	• Allows employees to plan for child care, school activities, health care visits, and transportation • Leads to better child development outcomes because of more stability for child care arrangements, which improves cognitive and behavioral outcomes and language development • Lowers stress for parents and improves overall healthy behaviors • Increases family economic security, due to predictable pay • Allows employees to care for sick or elderly family members

Research or Recommendations from National Organizations

The National Women's Law Center, a nonprofit that advocates for equality and opportunity for women and families, recommends:[93]

- **Allowing employees to have input into their work schedule.**
- **Providing at least two weeks' notice of work schedule.**
- **Discouraging last-minute schedule shifts.**
- Expanding opportunities for part-time workers, including a **minimum hour guarantee and opportunity for promotion**.

In 2017, Oregon became the first state to pass a "fair scheduling" law, which ensures predictable scheduling for workers who are employed by large companies (those with 500 or more employees worldwide) in retail, hospitality, or food services industries.[94] Those employers are required to have all employee schedules completed in writing and posted in a clearly visible location at least 14 days in advance of the first scheduled workday. Any change made to the schedules without advance notice would result in the employer paying a penalty. Among other key points in the law, employees also have the right to provide input regarding their schedules as well as the right to rest between shifts.

Parents with fluctuating or nontraditional schedules, which encompasses about half of low-wage workers, have difficulty accessing high quality, affordable, licensed child care. Child care providers are typically unable to accommodate last-minute scheduling changes or variable hours and are much less likely to operate during evening and weekend hours.[95]

Parents who face job scheduling challenges are more likely to use multiple child care arrangements. Experts agree that stability in child care arrangements is important for child development.[96]

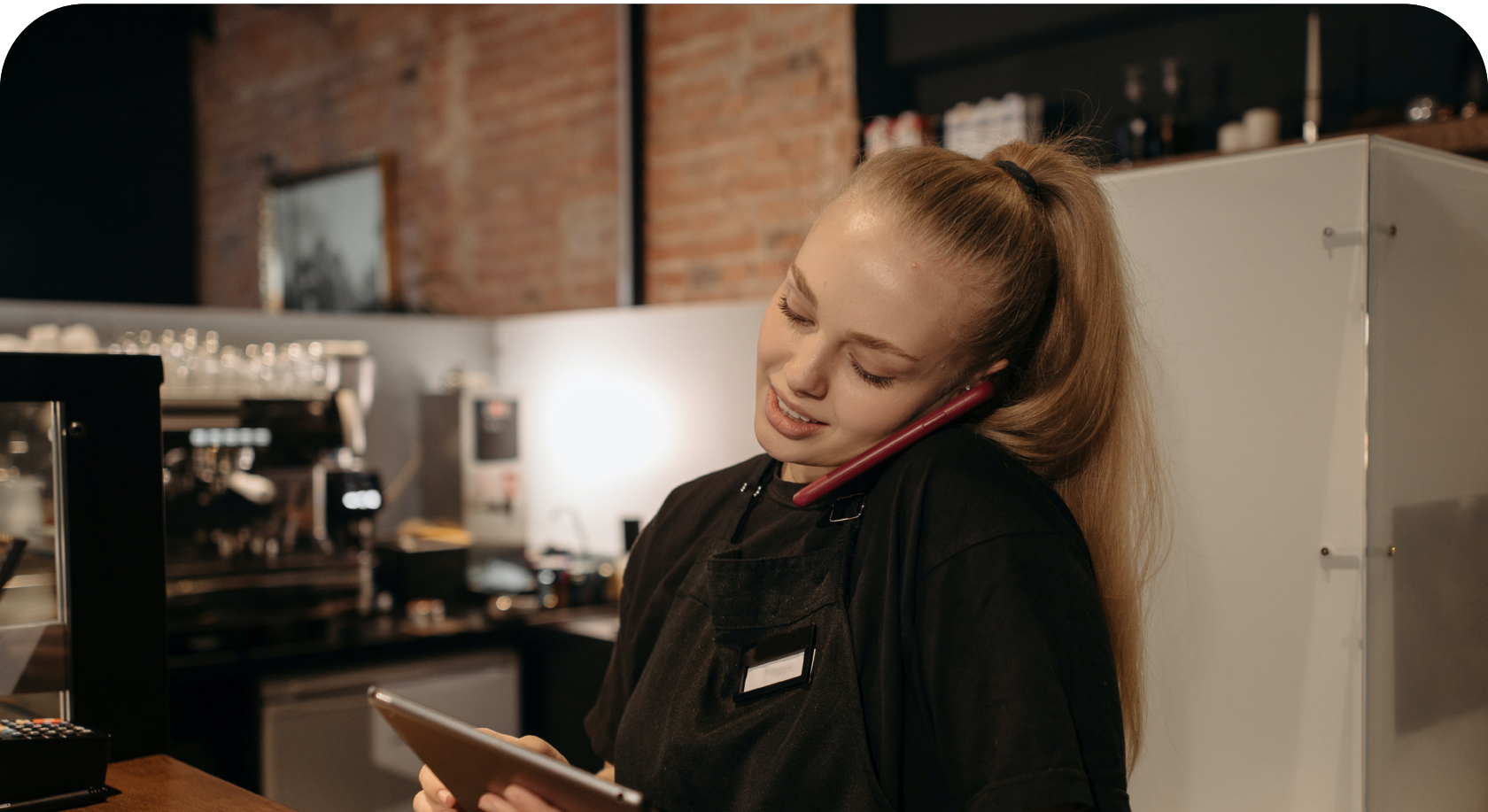
Range of Practices in the United States[97]

Almost three-quarters of hourly workers ages 26–32, who are more likely to have young children at home, report that their work hours fluctuate each month.

Forty-one percent of adults working in hourly jobs say they know their work schedule **one week in advance or less**.

About half of low-wage workers **have little or no control over the timing of their work hours**.

Part-time workers experience even more variability in hours and receive even less advance notice of their work schedule than full-time workers.



Case Study

Ruvos

Location: Tallahassee, Florida
Year Founded: 2008
Number of Employees: 100+
Policies Highlighted: Flexible Work and Scheduling and Child Care

Ruvos is on a mission to leave the world and the communities it serves better than it found them. They do that by delivering innovative and efficient technology solutions as leading cloud services providers, and experts in information security and data intelligence. Their core team consists of engineers, data integrators, and cyber security professionals around the world who continuously design and implement high-performing health care technology solutions to meet their clients' needs.



Chief Executive Officer
Eddie Gonzalez-Loumiet

The company was poised for a normal growth year in 2020, but a surge in demand for their services brought on by the global pandemic required them to go into overdrive. The rapid spread of COVID-19 led companies around the world to quickly pivot to a remote work environment. Scores of companies turned to Ruvos because of their unique approach to tailored data services to public health organizations. While the increased demand was a good problem to have, their workforce was stretched thin, working day and night to make sure critical COVID-19 data was getting in the hands of the companies and government agencies they serve.

"We were forced to double our employee count overnight to meet the increasing demand," said Eddie Gonzalez-Loumiet, Chief Executive Officer of Ruvos. The unprecedented growth, coupled with the spread of the virus and complications for everyday life among Ruvos's working families, led to the implementation of a new experiment to ensure employee well-being: an unlimited paid time off (PTO) policy. Ruvos understood how important it was to take care of its staff and their families during the pandemic and beyond. The new normal for employees became remote work while caring for young children, homeschooling, or looking after a sick family member. Family life and work could no longer be neatly separated. "Our team is a critical part of our growth and success, and without them Ruvos would not be the company it is today," adds Gonzalez-Loumiet.

In addition to the paid leave policy, flexibility became increasingly important to their staff, enabling them to fit in health appointments and family needs as necessary. For families with children under five, flexibility meant they could spend more time with their COVID lockdown-induced homebound kids to support their early learning development. For school-age children this also meant supporting their homeschool learning needs.

> *"Our employees' family is an extension of them and what affects them affects us."*

For all these policies to work effectively, continuity planning is key. It requires clear goal setting and accountability, which allows Ruvos to offer these benefits. The operations team always assigns backup roles in the event of an unexpected situation. This enables the employees the flexibility and support they need during challenging times.

At Ruvos the family-friendly practices apply to all, no matter the job title. "We made sure our entire team felt they were part of a bigger family. It is that flexibility that fuels their individual passion and dedication for the work they do at Ruvos," adds Gonzalez-Loumiet. He also points out that when creating family-friendly policies there is not a one-size-fits-all approach.

The key to creating an effective policy is simple: Get to know your employees and their cultures, listen to their needs, and understand their family dynamics. After all, employees are often the agents of change within a company.

Since these two policies were implemented, Ruvos has experienced zero percent attrition. As the company continues to grow, they are relying on employee feedback in order to adapt current family practices to the needs of their employees.

> *"We want to make sure our employees know we are listening and that our existing policies reflect their current needs."*

During the last two years the company experienced record revenue growth, new customer acquisitions, and the addition of 50+ jobs, while also helping to modernize public health. The end result was a close knit and mighty team. "We have 100 employees that are part of our success. We stayed together during tough times and were able to overcome significant challenges. That's what I call a family," emphasized Gonzalez-Loumiet.

Flexibility is especially important to Candice Theron, Human Resource and Operations Specialist, a proud wife and mother of three young children. Theron, based in South Africa, has been with the company for two years, onboarding at the height of the pandemic. Her entire work is remote. Finding just the right life-work balance during these times was challenging enough. "Unlimited paid time off and a flexible schedule enables me to care for my kids when they are sick and support them in school activities whenever possible without the worry of losing wages."



Human Resources and Operations Specialist Candice Theron with her family.

Theron added, "The entire staff at Ruvos operates as a family. We share in everyone's joys and support each other through those difficult seasons of life. It is heartwarming to know they have your back."

Meet Juan Vasquez, a single father of two handsome boys and project manager at Ruvos based out of Tallahassee, Florida headquarters. Vasquez, a hands-on father dealing with the everyday challenges of parenting, calls the opportunity to work for a local company who values both professional growth and family, "priceless". He adds, "There is an understanding that life happens and children matter, and joining Ruvos was the best decision I ever made."



Project Manager Juan Vasquez with his two sons.

The company's headquarters features a kid-friendly area where children can feel free to jump around, play games, or do homework while at the office.

Gonzalez-Loumiet also believes that investing in children and their families is not limited to the company walls. Ruvos actively supports various community efforts in the Tallahassee area including a book donation drive for The Early Learning Coalition, a newborn screening program that helps detect genetic disorders early on, an all-year-round internship program available to high school students in the area, and participating in local 5K events in support of different causes.

For Ruvos, supporting families, children, and their community makes business sense.

Sample Benefits at Ruvos:

- Unlimited paid-time off
- Health insurance
- 401K retirement plan
- Wellness holidays and gifts
- Remote work
- Flexible & predictable scheduling
- Community impact

Case Study

Concept II Cosmetics + Miami Growth Machine

Location: Miami, Florida
Year Founded: 2008
Number of Employees: 17
Policies Highlighted: Flexible Work and Scheduling

At Concept II Cosmetics (CIIC), a bath and beauty products manufacturing plant, and Miami Growth Machine (MGM), a cosmetic startup incubator in Miami, employees will not get their paychecks docked if they have to miss an hour or even a day due to a family emergency or doctor's appointment. Both companies offer their staff, including temporary and hourly, the flexibility they need to make things work.



CEO
Andrea Cid

"It is how I have always wanted to run the company. We understand that our employees have lives outside of work, and we have to be ready to support each other," said Andrea Cid, CEO of Concept II Cosmetics and Miami Growth Machine.

In 2016, Cid and her brother acquired Concept II Cosmetics, and a few years later created Miami Growth Machine, the cosmetic beauty incubator. The staff–more than 60 percent women–work across the two companies and Cid has seen many of their children grow up before her very own eyes.



Plant Supervisor Dayme Brito on the left with Cid.

A manufacturing plant that must operate during specific hours, runs a tight production line, and requires timely deliverables found a way to make flexibility work by implementing a cross-training program. The program fosters a collaborative environment where not everything depends solely on one person. It creates a positive attitude toward stepping in and supporting one another at any given time.

Dayme Brito, plant supervisor, joined the team in 2008 upon arriving from Cuba and had no idea what to expect. Looking for a better future for her family, she found what she calls her "second home" at the plant. Over the last 14 years, because of the flexibility offered, Brito has been able to attend most of her daughters' preschool and school activities and was able to bring them to work when she needed to.

From field trips to graduation ceremonies and from sick days to school closures/ holidays, work flexibility enabled Brito to be present in the good and in the unprecedented times like the pandemic.

As the girls got older, the family's needs changed. Both of her daughters had the opportunity to obtain work experience while in high school and college, taking on part-time work at the companies.

“Andrea is a strong and empathetic leader and recognizes that we all have personal circumstances that may require time or support during working hours,” said Brito.

“Successful implementation starts with an understanding of the employees and their family dynamics,” added Cid. “We want everyone throughout our company to feel supported by their colleagues.”

Nurturing the workplace environment with transparency enables them to show up for work as a whole person. Thus, it removes some of the weight off them thinking they won’t get paid for time off. The company’s flexible approach around their employee’s work schedules and personal circumstances, whether sick or injured, acts as a catalyst for better work performance when they return.



Brito with her daughters and family members.

Part of their employee benefits package also includes two weeks of paid time off, plus a week-long company-wide Christmas break to get much-needed rest.

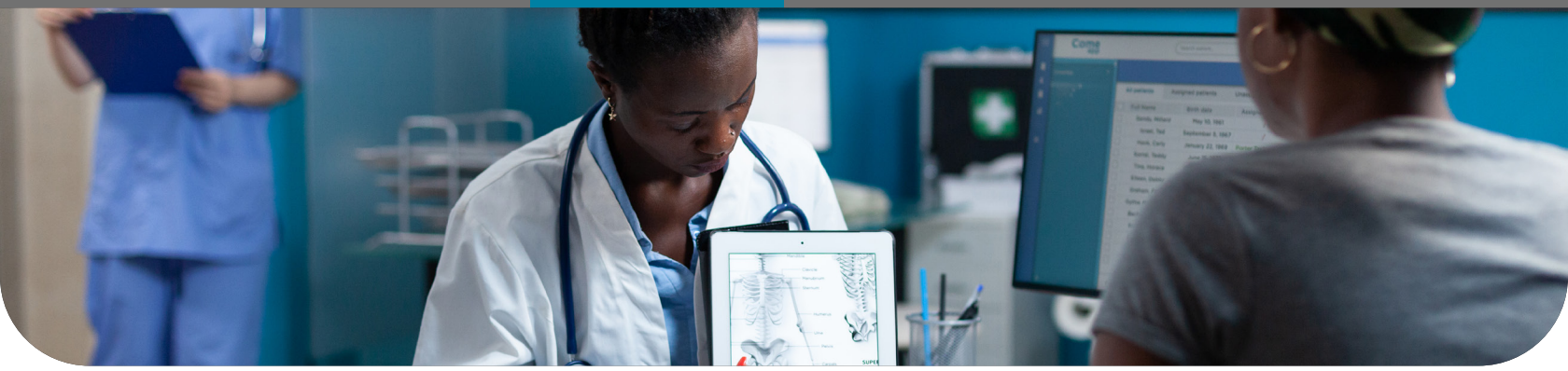
Today, both companies enjoy a low employee attrition rate. “While you can’t measure the impact of flexibility to the dollar, you can see the positive impact it has on your company culture as well as employee retention,” Cid shared. “The way I manage things, I want to see results, get orders and fulfill them for our clients, and I am flexible on how we get it done as a team.”

Cid believes that large-scale health and economic crises are challenges we are unable to control, but as a leader she can do her part in nurturing and retaining talent within her company that can think creatively and problem-solve and help move the business forward during difficult times.

“It is not always about the money but more about how you are being treated, the flexibility combined with competitive pay,” Cid stated. “Our employees spend more than half of their time at work, so the support they receive from us is very important.”

Sample Benefits at Concept II Cosmetic:

- Flexible work
- Paid and sick leave



Health and Wellness Benefits

Health Insurance and Wellness Benefits

Health benefits can include health and dental insurance, as well as on-site wellness centers, on-site fitness centers, subsidies for joining a gym, and/or health- and fitness-oriented programs for employees' children or spouses.

Benefits to Employers[98]	Benefits to Children[99]	Benefits to Parents/Families[100]
• Reduces payroll taxes and workers' compensation premiums, and employer contributions are tax-deductible • Improves recruitment • Increases retention, reducing turnover costs	• Improves health through increased access to health care, including primary care, dental care, needed health care services, mental health care, prescriptions, preventive care, treatment for chronic conditions, and prenatal care (for mothers)	• Improves health through increased access to health care, including greater access to primary care, preventive screenings, ambulatory care, prescription medications, and chronic disease care; greater medication adherence; and higher rates of diagnosis • Reduces depression • Improves self-reported health • Improves family economic security

Research or Recommendations from National Organizations

Uninsured newborns are **more likely to be born at a low birth weight and are more likely to die** than insured newborns. Uninsured women are **more likely to have poor pregnancy and delivery outcomes**.[101]

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends quality, **affordable health insurance for all children up to age 26** that includes coverage of essential pediatric benefits, such as prenatal and newborn care, postnatal home visits, preventive and wellness services, and urgent and emergency care, along with services for dental treatments, behavioral and mental health care, reproductive health, and treatment of substance abuse disorders.

In the 22nd Annual Best Practices in Health Care Employer Survey, insurance brokerage and advisory firm Willis Tower Watson says employers who are "best performers," or employers who have lower than average health care costs, do the following:[102]

- **Take a broad view of health and well-being and design their workplace environment** to make it easier for employees to stay healthy and make healthy decisions.
- **Encourage employees to take advantage of higher value/lower cost health care delivery models** such as telemedicine.[27,28]
- **Analyze data** to evaluate programs and assess performance.
- **Offer their employees an account-based health plan**, which gives employees more accountability for their care decisions.

Range of Practices in the United States

Nearly all private employers in Florida with 50 or more workers (96.2 percent) offered health insurance to at least some of their employees in 2020. But only about one in five (23.6 percent) of private employers with fewer than 50 employees offered health insurance in the same year. The majority of firms offering health benefits allow employees to enroll dependents, including children.[103]

In March 2022, private employers with fewer than 500 employees paid an average of 65 percent of health care premiums for their employee family coverage, and state and local governments with fewer than 500 employees covered an average of 72 percent of family coverage premiums. Private employers with 500 workers or more paid an average of 74 percent of health care premiums for employee family coverage, and state and local governments covered an average of 70 percent of premium costs.[104]

Relatively few employers (20%) offer health insurance benefits to part-time workers.[105]

Health care costs are prohibitively expensive for many American workers. A 2020 survey of the Federal Reserve Board showed that 47 percent[106] of Americans could not cover an emergency expense of $400 or more. A 2018 survey found that only about half of people[107] with incomes less than 250 percent of poverty ($30,150 for an individual) were confident they could afford care if they were to become very sick, down from 60 percent in 2015 and about 20 percentage points lower than the rate for adults with higher incomes.

In 2019, 56 percent of employers with fewer than 50 workers offer dental benefits, and 92 percent of employers with 50 or more employees offer dental benefits to their employees. Of those, 63 percent contribute toward the cost of the coverage.[108]

Forty percent of firms with fewer than 50 employees and 83 percent of firms with 50 or more employees offer vision benefits to their employees. Of those, 47 percent contribute toward the cost of the coverage.[109]

In 2021, 58 percent of firms with less than 50 employees and 83 percent of firms with 50 or more employees offered access to wellness resources and/or a general wellness program.[110] Access varied widely by industry and was lower for lower-wage workers, who are typically concentrated in smaller firms. With less accessibility to comprehensive health promotion programs at their worksite, lower-wage employees are reportedly less likely to engage in preventive care or health promotion.[111]

Flexible Spending Accounts

A Health Flexible Spending Account (FSA) is a pretax benefit account that employees put money into and can be used to pay for certain out-of-pocket health care costs, tax-free. A Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account (DCFSA) or dependent care reimbursement account is a pretax benefit account used to pay for eligible dependent care services, such as child care, preschool, and before-or after-school programs.

Benefits to Employers[112]	Benefits to Children[113]	Benefits to Parents/Families[114]
• Increases productivity • Reduces payroll taxes • Improves Recruitment • Increases retention, reducing turnover costs • Eases administration • Improves morale	• Increases health through increased access to health care, including primary care, dental care, needed healthcare services, mental health care, prescriptions, preventive care, treatment for chronic conditions, prenatal care (for mothers)	• Increases health through increased access to health care, including primary care, dental care, needed healthcare services, mental health care, prescriptions, preventive care, treatment for chronic conditions, prenatal care (for mothers) • Reduces depression • Improves Morale • Improves family economic security through reduced out-of-pocket medical costs from using pre-tax dollarsnomic security

Research or Recommendations from National Organizations

Employers who want to set up a health Flexible Spending Account should:[115,116]

- **Understand the benefits and the risks.** Tax savings and the ability to write off some administrative costs as normal business expenses make FSAs attractive to employers. However, employers should understand rules around reimbursing expenses, which can bring some risk.
- Get help. **Employers should use a third-party administrator** to establish and manage accounts. Record-keeping requirements can be extensive, and third-party administrators are relatively low cost. Plus, having an external administrator protects potentially sensitive employee health information by keeping that information away from co-workers.

There are four options to help you set up FSAs for employees:

- **Use an online software that also offers FSA benefits.** This is best if you're currently only doing payroll and want to add benefits with little additional expense.
- **Contract with a professional employer organization,** which allows you to give your employees benefits similar to those of a large company.

- **Work with a private insurance broker** that offers FSAs along with health insurance. This is best if you're already working with a broker and don't mind doing administrative work. Brokers likely won't manage enrollment paperwork and payroll deductions.
- **Use a large insurance carrier** who also can help manage FSAs. This works best if you use a large health care company to provide your health insurance. You can ask your carrier to add on an FSA option.

Often, employees who do not sign up for a flexible spending account or dependent care account do not participate because they are confused about the benefit or unaware of it. Below are some resources to help educate employees on the benefits of each account.

- **For FSAs:**
  - **Healthcare.gov:** https://www.healthcare.gov/have-job-based-coverage/flexible-spending-accounts/
  - **WageWorks:** https://mybenefits.wageworks.com/FAQS/FSAFAQ/CONEXIS_Health_FSA_FAQs.pdf
- **For dependent care accounts:**
  - **WageWorks:** https://www.wageworks.com/employees/dependent-care-fsa/dependent-care-flexible-spending-account/
  - **Investopedia:** https://www.investopedia.com/articles/pf/09/dependent-care-fsa.asp

Range of Practices in the United States

Forty percent of all workers have access to an FSA. Only 11 percent of workers in the lowest income bracket have access to an account, whereas 70 percent of workers in the highest income bracket do.[117]

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 41 percent of all workers have access to a dependent care reimbursement account. But that includes only 13 percent of workers in the lowest 10 percent wage category, compared to 66 percent of workers in the highest wage category.[118]

Per federal law, employees can contribute up to $5,000 to dependent care accounts. Currently, employees can contribute up to $3,050 for health FSAs.



Child Care

Backup or Emergency Care

Backup and emergency child care programs are offered at an employer's work site, in centers, or in an employee's home, and allow employees to continue working despite temporary disruptions in normal caregiving arrangements or when a child is mildly ill. Employers can negotiate rates with local child care facilities.

Benefits to Employers[119]	Benefits to Children and Parents/Families[120]
• Increases productivity • Improves recruitment • Increases retention, reducing turnover costs • Reduces employee absenteeism • Reduces "fill-in" costs	• Reduces stress • Improves work-life balance • Emergency or backup care may reduce risk of spreading illness when a child is mildly ill by encouraging parents to keep the child out of normal daycare or school • Reduces financial burden when employer negotiates a lower rate

Research or Recommendations from National Organizations

Employers who need extra support getting started may want to **enlist a child care resource and referral agency**. To find an agency near you, search Florida's Division of Early Learning: https://www.floridaearlylearning.com/parents/family-resources/child-care-resource-referral

Agencies can help by offering:

- On-site classes for employees who are parents.
- A review of employers' organizational work-life culture and guidance developing family-friendly policies and procedures.
- Guidance on employer-sponsored subsidies to help employees afford the cost of child care.
- Assistance setting up and implementing on-site child care.

- Assistance developing an emergency plan for on-site child care in the case of inclement weather, natural disasters, or other emergencies.
- Help with child care referrals for parents.

Employers considering child care benefits should explore the tax benefits. Providing child care can be expensive, but many of the costs can be taken as a deductible business expense or as a tax credit.[121]

Employers who are ready to get started can:

- **Provide employees with a list of emergency child care facilities** in the area.
- Offer employees access to care through **an online membership service**.
- Contract with a child care company to put a **backup child care facility on site**.
- **Offer access to a local child care facility** with reserved emergency spots or an in-house child care coordinator who can find emergency care.

Range of Practices in the United States

Ten percent of workers had access to any workplace child care benefit in 2017.[122]

Four percent of more than 3,000 US Society of Human Resources Management members offered access to backup child care in 2018.[123]

Low-wage workers, who often have the greatest difficulty finding and paying for high-quality child care, are less likely to receive child care benefits at benefits work. Only two percent of workers whose wages were in the bottom 10 percent had access to any child care benefit in 2017.[124]



American parents have serious trouble finding and affording high-quality child care

1 in 3 families spend 20% or more of their income on child care.

In Florida, the average annual cost of care for...



an infant is
$8,376 in a child care center
$7,449 in a family child care home



a four-year-old is
$6,647 in a child care center
$6,325 in a family child care home

The average annual cost of infant center-based care is 132% of the cost of tuition and fees at a 4-year college.

Even with the high cost of care, the majority of early childhood teachers — even those with college degrees — earn unlivable wages.[145]

The lack of affordable, high quality child care has a direct impact on business.

Employers nationwide lose $4.4 billion each year due to employee absences or loss of productivity related to child care issues.[146]

10% decrease in availability of early childhood education → reduces employment of mothers by **3-6%**[147]

On-Site or Consortium-Sponsored Child Care

On-site child care is located at an employers' workplace. For consortium-sponsored child care, employers join forces to finance child care, often run by a contracted operator. Employers can subsidize the cost of care so employees can pay below-market rates, or employers can ask employees to pay full cost for care.

Benefits to Employers[125]	Benefits to Children[126]	Benefits to Parents/Families[127]
• Increases retention, reducing turnover costs • Allows tax credit of up to 25 percent of facility expenditures, plus 10 percent of any resource and referral expenditures, up to $150,000 in a calendar year; business expense tax deductions for remaining child care facility expenses • Improves employee performance and reduces absenteeism compared to when using off-site child care • Increases employment of women • Increases employee loyalty	• Improves overall health • Access to quality child care improves high school graduation rates, overall educational attainment • Access to an on-site facility may increase breastfeeding duration, which offers health benefits for children and mothers	• Improves family economic security • Saves employees time • Highly ranked as a benefit, even by employees who do not have children • Access to an on-site facility may increase breastfeeding duration, which offers health benefits for children and mothers

Research or Recommendations from National Organizations

Employers who need extra support getting started may want to enlist a child care resource and referral agency. To find an agency near you, search Florida's Division of Early Learning https://www.floridaearlylearning.com/parents/family-resources/child-care-resource-referral

Agencies can help by offering:

- On-site classes for employees who are parents.
- A review of employers' organizational work-life culture and guidance on developing family-friendly policies and procedures.
- Guidance on employer-sponsored subsidies to help employees afford the cost of child care.
- Assistance setting up and implementing on-site child care.
- Assistance developing an emergency plan for on-site child care in the case of inclement weather, natural disasters, or other emergencies.
- Help with child care referrals for parents.

Employers should consult with legal counsel to understand the regulations surrounding a child care facility on-site.

For a consortium-sponsored child care arrangement, employers should set clear policies and procedures that ensure equity among co-workers and a location that works for the group.[128]

Employers who want to establish an on-site child care facility should:[129,130]

- **Start by talking with employees.** Employee input is vital to ensuring that child care options meet employee needs with regard to availability, affordability, and accessibility.
- **Explore the tax benefits.** Providing child care can be expensive, but many of the costs can be taken as a deductible business expense or as a tax credit.
- **Identify a high-quality child care vendor** to provide the care.
- **Consider connecting with a provider currently operating an employer child care facility** to gain an understanding of operational costs.

Range of Practices in the United States

Only 10 percent of workers had access to any workplace child care benefit in 2017.[131]

Just three percent of more than 3,000 US employers surveyed by the Society of Human Resources Management offered access to a full-time child care facility (subsidized or unsubsidized) in 2018.[132]

Low-wage workers, who often have the greatest difficulty finding and paying for high quality child care, are less likely to receive child care benefits at work. Only two percent of workers whose wages were in the bottom 10 percent had access to any child care benefit in 2017.[133]

More than eight in 10 working parents say they wish their employer offered some sort of child care benefit, and more than seven in 10 parents say their work has been impacted by child care falling through.[134]



Subsidized/Reimbursed Child Care or Child Care Referral

Employers who reimburse or subsidize employees' child care pay all or part of approved arrangements and/or reserve slots at particular facilities for employees' children. Through child care referral, employers offer resources to parents to help them find child care in the area.

Benefits to Employers[135]	Benefits to Children[136]	Benefits to Parents/Families[137]
• Increases retention, reducing turnover costs • Reduces employee tardiness and absenteeism • Increases employment of women • Increases employee loyalty	• Improves overall health • Improves education	• Improves family economic security • Provides an option for summer care for school-aged children

Research or Recommendations from National Organizations

Employers can contribute up to $5,000 to the cost of each employee's child care without the subsidy being added to the employee's taxable income.

Employers considering child care benefits should explore the tax benefits. Employers can deduct the amount of total subsidy provided to employees during the tax year.[138]

When determining the amount to reimburse, employers should research the total cost of care in their community. The average annual cost of an infant at a child care center in Florida is $8,376, and for a four-year-old is $6,647. Child care is one of the biggest expenses for families: Infant care is more than double the cost of in-state tuition for a four-year public college in Florida.[139]

Child care can be subsidized in a number of ways. Examples include:

- Subsidizing the cost of care at an on-site center.
- Paying membership fees for an online emergency or backup care service.
- Contributing to employees' dependent care reimbursement accounts.
- Establishing relationships with child care providers and offering a discount to employees who use providers from the network.

Employers who need extra support getting started may want to enlist a child care resource and referral agency. To find an agency near you, search Florida's Division of Early Learning https://www.floridaearlylearning.com/parents/family-resources/child-care-resource-referral

Agencies can help by offering:

- On-site classes for employees who are parents.
- A review of employers' organizational work-life culture and guidance on developing family-friendly policies and procedures.
- Guidance on employer-sponsored subsidies to help employees afford the cost of child care.
- Assistance setting up and implementing on-site child care.
- Assistance developing an emergency plan for on-site child care in the case of inclement weather, natural disasters, or other emergencies.
- Help with child care referrals for parents.

Range of Practices in the United States

Ten percent of workers had access to any workplace child care benefit in 2017.[140]

Three percent of more than 3,000 US employers surveyed by the Society of Human Resources Management offered subsidized child care in 2018.[141]

Low-wage workers, who often have the greatest difficulty finding and paying for high-quality child care, are less likely to receive child care benefits at work. Only two percent of workers whose wages were in the bottom 10 percent had access to any child care benefit in 2017.[142]

More than eight in 10 working parents say they wish their employer offered some sort of child care benefit.[143]

Child care is unaffordable for seven in 10 families in the US, according to the US Department of Health and Human Services' definition of affordable care.[144]

Case Study

PGT Innovations

Location: Venice, Florida
Year Founded: 1980
Number of Employees: 5,500+ Nationwide (2,200 in Venice, Florida)
Policies Highlighted: Paid Leave, Child Care, Health Benefits, and Flexible Spending Accounts

INVENT. BUILD. DELIVER.



Senior Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer Debbie LaPinska

Founded in 1980, PGT Innovations is one of the nation's leading manufacturers and suppliers of impact-resistant windows and doors across five locations, with nine brands, hundreds of products, and eight manufacturing facilities across the United States. **PGT Innovations' business philosophy since its inception has been focused around integrity, safety, innovation, and sustainable growth in all aspects of the workplace.** The large-scale manufacturing company, headquartered in Venice, Florida, enables higher retention through a diverse employee benefits package in a sector that often involves strenuous work.

Companies in the manufacturing industry like PGT Innovations come with the pressing challenges of employee turnover as a result of work-related stress, time commitment, and purpose. Therefore, the benefits used to recruit and retain talent are based around what is most important to the employees.

"What is happening outside of the job for them is also important to us. We implement different solutions and modify existing ones based on what is affecting our team members," said Debbie LaPinska, Senior Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer for PGT Innovations. "We want to make our team members feel valued and create a space of opportunities for growth."

Because of the nature of the work performed at PGT Innovations, one of the common issues the company needed to address for their employees was child care services: The manufacturing facility opens well before most child enrichment or early learning centers do. Employees were struggling to find quality child care services where they could drop off their children as early as 5:30 a.m. to get to work on time. Understanding this challenge for employees, PGT Innovations was able to acquire a parcel of vacant land directly adjacent to their headquarters as the beginning of a solution. What was an empty piece of land 10 years ago is now a fully operational early learning center, run in partnership with the YMCA of Southwest Florida.

On-site Child Care

The child care services at the YMCA are available at a discounted rate for PGT Innovations employees because of direct subsidies from the company. The center takes children as young as a few months old, allowing PGT Innovations employees to return to work with peace of mind that their child is being cared for just a five-minute drive away from their workplace. The company also follows the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) guidelines, which grant eligible employees with up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave per year. The company also recently extended paid time off up to six weeks for all of their employees.

For David Wilson, parental leave for working dads is very important. Wilson, now a supervisor, joined the company eight and half years ago looking for career growth opportunities, financial stability, and work-life balance for his growing family.

"When my now five-year-old son Landon was born, the paternal leave benefit enabled me to have good quality bonding time with my newborn, as well as support my wife during the first five weeks after his birth," said Wilson.

He stated the workplace culture at PGT Innovations is "truly family-oriented." As a department leader, Wilson instills in his team the importance of getting to know all of their team members on a personal as well as professional level.

"This shows our team members that we care and support them, and this includes the challenges they face at work and at home," Wilson stated.

"As a relationship-focused business, we always understood that taking care of our team members would result in taking care of our customers," LaPinska added. "Finding the right partners who understand our philosophy of caring for our team members is critically important to the success of our business."



YMCA Early Learning Academy at PGT Innovations campus in Venice, FL.

On-site Health and Wellness

Additional PGT Innovations benefits support family wellness and professional development–which research has shown has a positive impact on parental stress and child outcomes, including readiness for school.

That is why PGT Innovations ensures benefits offered to help alleviate some of the stress employees face at work and at home. Some of the additional on-site benefits offered include a wellness clinic, fitness center, and physical therapy available to all employees at all times. According to LaPinska, utilization reports showed many employees do not have a designated primary care physician. The on-site primary care clinic is easily accessible and affordable for employees and their dependents, providing them access to high-quality care. They also receive the flexibility of a medical benefit plan through a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) in which they can use their funds toward deductibles, helping to minimize any of their family expenses.

"The on-site clinic has been instrumental in helping identify some of the health issues possibly before any of their symptoms show up," noted LaPinska. "Our efforts go toward encouraging our team members to maintain a healthier lifestyle and enjoy their workplace. In turn, they typically stay longer with us."

Part of the company's overall employee value proposition includes professional mental health and development services. An on-site life coach and corporate chaplain who act as an employee sounding board help employees cope with life and workplace difficulties. What's more, PGT Innovations offers financial literacy programs to help employees achieve their financial goals and learn how to reduce some of the burden that may come with unforeseen expenses.

Additional Benefits

The manufacturing leader also helps its team members and their dependents pursue their educational goals through its tuition reimbursement program and Inspire the Future scholarship program. Through these two programs, the firm has contributed close to $1.2 million in funding since 2018. The tuition reimbursement program is available to eligible team members across the country and allows up to 100 percent reimbursement based on grades achieved in the course. The Inspire the Future scholarship program is offered solely to dependents of PGT Innovations employees and offers $2,000 annually toward any secondary education pursuit, including college degrees and technical certifications, until the education program is complete.

"You can't run a business without your team members," LaPinska states. "Your company is based on the people that work for you, and we want them to grow with our company. It's the right thing to do."

Sample Benefits at PGT:

- Health insurance
- Paid sick leave
- Maternity and paternity leave
- Financial literacy program
- On-site child care
- On-site clinic
- Chaplain services
- Professional development



Accommodations & Support

Support for Breastfeeding Mothers

Support for breastfeeding mothers includes a range of benefits:

- Writing corporate policies to support breastfeeding women;
- Teaching employees about breastfeeding;
- Providing designated private space for breastfeeding or expressing milk;
- Allowing flexible scheduling during work;
- Providing high-quality breast pumps; and
- Offering professional lactation management services and support.

Other policies outlined throughout this report also help to support breastfeeding mothers, including giving mothers flexible options for returning to work, such as teleworking, part-time work, and extended paid parental leave; and providing on-site or near-site child care.

Benefits to Employers[148]	Benefits to Children[149]	Benefits to Parents/Families
• Increases retention, reducing turnover costs • Provides a three-to-one return on investment, largely from health care costs savings • Reduces employee absenteeism	• Reduces infant mortality • Breastfeeding lowers child's risk of ear infections, respiratory infections, diarrhea, dermatitis, gastrointestinal disorders, asthma (young children), obesity, certain childhood cancers, and types 1 and 2 diabetes • Increases parent-child bonding • May increase IQ • Reduces doctor and hospital visits	• Breastfeeding lowers mother's risk of breast and ovarian cancer, high blood pressure, and type 2 diabetes[150] • Improves family economic security[151]

Research or Recommendations from National Organizations

The American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Association of

Family Physicians, and the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommend exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months, and breastfeeding with complementary foods through at least the first year. All three recommend that breastfeeding continue as long as mutually desired by mother and child.

Under the Break Time for Nursing Mothers provision of the Affordable Care Act, employers who fall under the Fair Labor Standards Act must provide all non-exempt and some exempt workers with a private place to express milk that is not a bathroom. Employers must also provide break time to express milk. The law does not require employers to have a dedicated, permanent lactation space or provide payment for expressing milk breaks.

In *The Business Case for Breastfeeding: Steps for Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Worksite*, the US Department of Health outlines four ways to support women who are breastfeeding while working.[152]

- **Offer privacy to express milk.** If a permanent, dedicated lactation room or a private office is not available, a small, private space can be set up for a temporary lactation room. Women who are breastfeeding must express milk approximately every three hours to maintain a healthy supply for their infant, relieve discomfort, and prevent mastitis, an infection in the breast. Milk must be stored in a refrigerator or cooler. Many companies provide a small refrigerator and/or a hospital-grade electric breast pump that makes expressing milk quicker and more efficient. In addition, electrical outlets should be readily available. Employees should never be asked to express milk or breastfeed in a restroom.
- **Provide flexible breaks.** Milk expressing sessions usually takes around 15 minutes plus time to get to and from the lactation room. Breastfeeding employees typically need no more than an hour per work day to express milk. If milk expression takes longer than expected, which can happen for a variety of reasons, many employers allow employees the flexibility to come in early or stay late, or to use a portion of their lunch period to make up time.
- **Offer education and expert guidance.** Providing breastfeeding employees with access to resources and a lactation consultant can help them feel more prepared to breastfeed and allow them to address any issues they have while trying to initiate or continue breastfeeding.
- **Provide ongoing support.** Supportive policies that enable women to successfully breastfeed while working send a message to all employees that breastfeeding is valued. Leaders should encourage supervisors to work with breastfeeding employees in making reasonable accommodations to help them reach their breastfeeding goals. Management should encourage other employees to exhibit a positive, accepting attitude.

Range of Practices in the United States

Approximately **49 percent of workplaces have a dedicated lactation/ mothers' room**, and 11 percent of workplaces offer lactation support services, including counseling and education.[153]

Breastfeeding Mothers Face Lack of Workplace Support, Stigma, Career Worries

Lack of workplace support for breastfeeding mothers leads them to face stigma about their choice, worries about career opportunities, and the pressure to stop before they're ready, leading to possible negative health consequences for both mothers and babies.

8 in 10 women in the US breastfeed their infants at birth **BUT ONLY** **25%** breastfeed exclusively for the first six months of their baby's life, which is recommended by major medical organizations[154]

Approximately 60% of US mothers stop breastfeeding earlier than they would like.

A top reason is lack of workplace supports such as schedule flexibility or accommodations to express and store milk, along with concerns about support from employers and colleagues.[155] In a 2018 survey of more than 700 expecting mothers,[156] 62 percent said they believe there's a stigma associated with moms who breastfeed at work.

49% **said they are worried that breastfeeding could affect their career growth.**

Women in low-wage jobs are more likely to return to work earlier and to be engaged in jobs that make it more challenging for them to continue breastfeeding.[157]

More than 1 in 3 women surveyed said they've had a negative interaction with a co-worker because of breastfeeding and milk expression.

And nearly HALF of the moms said they've considered a job or career change because of their need to express or breastfeed at work.

Pregnant Worker Accommodations

Pregnant worker accommodations are work adjustments, such as more frequent breaks or light carry duty, that allow pregnant women to do their jobs safely, without jeopardizing their health or the health of their babies.

Benefits to Employers[158]	Benefits to Children[159]	Benefits to Parents/Families[160]
• Increases productivity • Provides benefit to employee at no or low cost to employer • Improves recruitment • Increases retention, reducing turnover costs • Reduces employee absenteeism • Reduces health care costs • Reduces litigation costs • Increases diversity • Increases safety • Increases employee commitment and satisfaction	• Improves unborn baby's health and safety, including lower risk of preterm birth, low birthweight, or miscarriage	• Improves mother's health and safety and lowers risk for miscarriage • Improves family economic security

Research or Recommendations from National Organizations

According to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists:

- It is **generally safe for a woman with an uncomplicated pregnancy to work** without adverse health effects to her or her infant.[161]
- There is a slight to moderate **increased risk of miscarriage for women who do extensive lifting** for their jobs.[162]
- Accommodations may be needed for women who are exposed to toxins such as pesticides and heavy metals, or in jobs that have an increased risk of falls or injuries.[163]
- **Women with complicated or high-risk pregnancies also may need accommodations** for the health of themselves or their infant.[164]

Most often, women need minor accommodations during work to protect their health while pregnant, according to a national survey of more than 1,000 US women who have given birth.[165]

The survey, conducted by the Childbirth Connection program of the National Partnership for Women and Families, found that:

- Seventy-one percent of women surveyed said they needed **more frequent breaks** during their pregnancy.
- Sixty-one percent of those surveyed said they needed a **schedule modification or time off to obtain critical health care**.
- A **change in job duties**, such as less lifting or more sitting, was needed by 53 percent of women surveyed.
- 40 percent said they needed some other type of workplace adjustment as a result of a pregnancy-related condition.
- Pregnant women who hold part-time, lower-wage, lower-skilled, or more physically demanding jobs are more likely to need some kind of minor accommodation at work. When requests for adjustments are denied, **low-wage workers are more likely to be forced to choose between their job and the health of themselves or their child**.

Range of Practices in the United States

The federal Pregnancy Discrimination Act prohibits workplace discrimination on the basis of pregnancy and requires that employers **treat pregnant women the same as other employees who receive accommodations for health-related reasons**. For example, an employer that provides light duty to other employees cannot deny light duty to a pregnant worker.

Employees with serious health conditions related to pregnancy also may have legal protection under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). For example, a woman who develops gestational diabetes, a temporary condition triggered by pregnancy, may be entitled to take breaks to check her blood sugar or have a snack, just as someone with diabetes outside of pregnancy would.

Or a pregnant woman who cannot stand or lift because of severe back pain should be provided a chair or light duty assignment just as other employees suffering from severe back pain due to injury are accommodated.

Florida is one of 22 states that have passed laws further protecting pregnant workers. The Florida Civil Rights Act bans pregnancy discrimination and applies to organizations with 15 or more employees.[166]

Despite federal and state laws, the National Partnership for Women and Children estimates that **nearly one-quarter of a million women are denied their requests for pregnancy accommodations each year**,[167] and the number of pregnancy discrimination claims filed annually with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has been steadily increasing for the past 20 years.[168]

Babies at Work

A babies at work program allows parents to bring infants to work with them — generally up to about six months of age or crawling.

Benefits to Employers[169]	Benefits to Children[170]	Benefits to Parents/Families[171]
• Increases productivity • Lowers health care costs from increased breastfeeding rates • Improves recruitment • Increases retention, reducing turnover costs • Increases customer loyalty • Improves morale • Increases teamwork and collaboration	• Facilitates better-socialized babies • Increases parent-child bonding • Provides health benefits of breastfeeding	• Lowers child care costs • Improves family economic security • Creates social network/ support for parents • Reduces stress • Provides more options for women • Facilitates easier breastfeeding • Enables working fathers to be more involved with their babies

Research or Recommendations from National Organizations

The national Parenting in the Workplace Institute (PIWI) says the key to a successful babies at work policy is to treat it as any other workplace policy — anticipating potential issues, addressing them ahead of time, and adjusting as needed.

According to PIWI, employers who want to implement a babies at work policy should:

- Make sure their babies at work policy **sets up specific guidelines for parents and co-workers**, such as designating a location where parents can go to breastfeed, a place for parents to take their baby if he or she cries for more than a few seconds, and a place where diapers can be changed and disposed of.
- **Clearly outline expectation of parents' work while babies are present**, along with expectations for work environment (for example, co-workers can't play with babies for long periods while ignoring their own work). Consider creative ways to keep the work environment professional. For instance, some employers ask parents to choose "designated alternate care providers," or one or two co-workers who volunteer to watch the baby for brief periods if the parent can't.
- **Consider where babies will spend their time with their parents.** At most organizations, babies stay with their parents in their regular work area.
- Typically, **parents will bring whatever equipment is most useful for their baby and job situation**, such as a portable crib for babies to nap in, although some employers limit the number of big pieces of baby gear. Parents can also make use of baby carriers.

Though PIWI says babies at work programs can work at most workplaces and with most jobs, locations or jobs that are physically unsafe for babies, such as a laboratory or construction site, will not work. However, some employers have temporarily moved parents away from physically risky locations or job responsibilities to allow their babies to come to work.

Range of Practices in the United States

Though 27 percent of US employers allow employees to bring their children to work in the event of an emergency, a true, formal babies at work program is relatively rare. Just three percent of employers have one.[172]



Case Study

Delores Barr Weaver Policy Center

Location: Jacksonville, Florida
Year Founded: 2007
Number of Employees: 24
Policies Highlighted: Paid Leave, Flexible Work and Scheduling, Accommodations and Support

Gender equity is part of the mission work at the Delores Barr Weaver Policy Center. Since its inception in 2007, the Policy Center's long list of accomplishments has promoted greater well-being for girls and created safer, more equitable communities where they can thrive. Their commitment to "See the Girl" and advance justice for all girls has also been instilled into the team. Without a doubt, the organization's core values honor each employee for who they are and who they can become, despite their current circumstances.



Chief Operating Officer Stacy Sechrist, LCSW

"We understand the demands that work, raising a family, caring for loved ones, and one's own health can have on a person and their overall well-being," said Chief Operating Officer Stacy Sechrist. "All of this impacts our mission work from the inside out."

Sechrist says the urgent need for a new policy emerged from new parents struggling to balance work and taking care of their newborns, which consequently created a huge stressor for those who could not afford to take unpaid time off. This is how the Baby at Work Program started at the agency 10 years ago. The program enables new parents to bring their baby up to six months old to the office. Once maternity/paternity leave and the Baby at Work program are fulfilled, other policies fall into place. Flexible work scheduling and sick leave donations are other benefits that can provide employees with the necessary flexibility and paid time off depending on their personal circumstances.

"Our policies ensure employees feel less pressure as they juggle the demands of everyday life. It also encourages a transparent workplace culture where employees feel comfortable enough to share what they are going through, enabling leaders to create or adapt policies helping to reduce employee stress and turnover," added Sechrist.

For Vinessa Gordon, a research and grants analyst, joining the Policy Center three and half years ago matched her purpose to find a job that creates a safer community for her children and helps change the lives of girls locally and across the state. Given her background as a military spouse of an active-duty partner, a workplace that understands her unique challenges of spousal deployment, single-parent household, and children's educational needs is priceless.

Sechrist's other take is that, **"People are feeling more pressured than ever before and if their work**

environment adds to that tension, the cost of employee attrition and the impact on those being served will lead to the inevitable downfall of an organization. It takes time to understand the benefits of taking care of your employees, so they can take care of others well; so be patient."

Gordon has participated in the Baby at Work Program twice during her tenure with the agency. The program enabled her to spend more time with both of her boys during those critical stages of early childhood development. "They will never be this little again and the foundation you build with them now will last a lifetime," said Gordon.

The advantages of an organization with family-friendly practices are countless. Gordon thinks it is worth it for both interested parties. "You shouldn't have to choose between being a parent and an employee; you can be both and show up in an authentic and meaningful way that benefits your child and your employer."

While the Policy Center's tagline is "See the Girl," meaning to see her in the context of her lived experience, Gordon shares that they "also see the employee: meaning that when I show up to work, I am an employee but I am a parent first and everyone understands and is supportive of that."



Research and Grants Analyst Vinessa Gordon with her son Caleb.

Sample Benefits at See the Girl:

- Health insurance
- Paid, parental, and sick leave
- Accommodations



SECTION FOUR

Going Beyond Policies

Start With Culture

Many executives and managers say that family comes first, but forget their responsibility to be role models in the workplace. When leaders are vocal about their own choices to prioritize family, it helps others to know it's part of your culture.

> *"I ran a business with $300 million in revenue, an 18 percent operating margin and more than 2,500 employees. I learned from experience that you will make more money, and have a happier and more productive workplace if you embed the following in the way you run the business: If employees feel we care about them, and if we really do, they will work harder, be more loyal, more eager to learn new skills, get along much better with their fellow employees, go home happier and raise children who, in turn, will be the high-talent, extra-skilled employees we will need for the next generation of this ever-faster-changing world."*
> *—David Lawrence Jr., former publisher of The Miami Herald and chair, The Children's Movement of Florida*

Lead By Example

Activate culture change by using simple language choices that contribute to the family-friendly culture you want to create.

I have an appointment this afternoon; I'll be back around 2 p.m.	I am taking a late lunch to go to my son's recital; I'll be back around 2 p.m.
I have a personal emergency I need to take care of.	My son is having a fever and I need to pick him up from child care.
Please text me if you need me before 10:30 a.m. tomorrow as I'll be late to the office.	I'll be in late tomorrow as I have to take my daughter for her well-check at the doctor. Just text me if you need me.

Changing the culture also involves the willingness to understand your employees and their needs. Ask about employees' families and their child care choices. Listen.

If you start by changing the culture, that might help you find the right policies to fit your business. Or you can start by implementing the policies, and with them, bring new culture to the workplace!

Give Back

Big picture: An organization's family-friendly approach can go beyond internal policies and include giving or volunteering in the community. Because of all that we know about brain development, this is critical even before the elementary school years and beyond any academic settings: Children must be healthy to be ready to learn.

What research tells us

- **Children who arrive prepared in kindergarten** are more likely to be reading by grade 3.
- **Children who are reading proficiently by grade 3** have better outcomes in school and in life. They are:
  - more likely to graduate from high school and become economically successful in adulthood.
  - 50 percent less likely to need special education.
  - 70 percent less likely to be arrested for a violent crime.
  - 50 percent less likely to become a teen parent.
- **Eighty percent of a child's brain is developed by age three.** These first few years are critically important in building a foundation for learning, health, and success. The right care and enrichment environment is key in ensuring children have a healthy start.

Giving back in support of early learning contributes to greater kindergarten readiness rates that translate to better life and health outcomes for children and lower crime rates in the community.

Ways to give back for young children and families:

- **Sponsor a community event or initiative** that promotes family health and wellness, particularly for new parents.
- **Adopt an early learning center** that needs a facilities upgrade or business support.
- **Invest to support high-quality child care/early learning programs**.

Advocate

Spreading the word – in your own networks or with elected officials – is another way to make a greater impact in the community. The more people understand the preventive magic of investing in young families, the better off we all will be.

First steps for advocacy:

- **Meet with your Early Learning Coalition CEO** to understand how they help families to find and pay for child care.
- **Use your voice to elevate community** issues and influence decisions in Tallahassee.
- **Share what you know** about early childhood development.
- **Visit the Florida Scorecard** to find local data on kindergarten readiness and third-grade reading scores.
- **Assign a champion** to spearhead these issues internally.
- **Join Bosses for Babies** to build the network of leaders who care about the link between early investment and Florida's future.

Consider the power of language:

- **Spread the word** that "literacy" begins with "language."
- **Stop using the word "daycare."** The child is being cared for, not the day. "Early learning center" is the best alternative.
- **Babies are born learning, and their teachers are not babysitters, they are early childhood educators.**

Bosses for Babies can help connect you with the right local partners to get started, whether you're interested in volunteer opportunities, advocacy opportunities, and/or advice on where your investments might have the biggest impact.

Taking an active role in the community can help business leaders, their company, and their employees build corporate culture and trust while contributing to community prosperity: supporting the next generation of Florida leaders.

Case Study

John "JB" Birney, Community Early Literacy Program

Location: Flagler Beach, Florida
Year Founded: 2010
Number of Employees: 5+



Owner and Financial Advisor John "JB" Birney

In the finance world, people generally invest their money to increase wealth in the form of income or price appreciation over time. Flagler Beach-based financial advisor **John Birney**, known as "JB", says the best financial return on investment is a no-brainer for him: It's investing in early learning childhood programs as a business owner and community member.

With more than 37 years of experience helping clients meet their financial goals, JB's work at JBirney Financial focuses on making sure he is setting them up for a successful future through proper planning. His company offers a personalized roadmap of financial services through fee- and non-fee-based investment platforms including retirement savings plan, insurance for various situations, college tuition preparedness and estate planning.

JB is well known as a local radio personality as host for the last 20 years of "Good Morning Americana" on Flagler College Radio and has served as a board member for the Flagler County Chamber of Commerce. He and his wife Gail Birney, who reside in Palm Coast, have three adult children and presently three grandchildren.

This executive leader wears many hats in his community, but his work does not stop there. JB's involvement stems from a burning desire to help reach the unreachable.

> *"The idea of planting a seed to grow a tree where you will not enjoy the shade is not the case here," he said. JB believes helping your cause is helping the common good only if people are really invested in the first five years of a child's development.*

A past gubernatorial appointee and current interim chair of the local Early Learning Coalition, JB has served his community for decades. His deep understanding of the community impact on early learning led him to take up a leadership opportunity with his local chamber. Only to figure out that the project for Leadership Flagler assigned by the Flagler County Chamber of Commerce turned into a lifetime initiative.

What started as a leadership project 12 years ago, placing books into the hands of a few children, has now grown: More than 1,500 children under the age of five receive books every month through the Dolly Parton Imagination Library of Flagler County. It costs as little as $30 to sponsor/donate a year's worth of reading per child. Once a child is registered, high-quality books are then mailed to them at no cost regardless of the family's income.

“Thanks to a nucleus of caring people and alumni from the Flagler Leadership class who help sustain the legacy of this program,” he says, “more than 2,500 children have graduated from the program, that is, approximately more than 100,000 books have been delivered to date.”

The national book-gifting program created by the American country music star and children’s advocate is one tool adopted by a small county but will not do all the work, according to JB. This is a down payment for the school system and a head start to learning readiness.

“People need to make connections to the issues they care about,” said JB. “If we did a full court press helping zero to five-year-olds to have the healthiest brains and be the best they can from that standpoint, we would give the system the slack it needs to deal with bigger issues.”

JB continues to be an advocate for early learning in the state Legislature and created a call-to-action for other leaders and chambers to take on similar initiatives throughout the state of Florida.



JB and his team at a networking event for Dolly Parton Imagination Library.



SECTION FIVE

Getting Started



For Employers

Are you interested in expanding your family-friendly benefits but unsure of how to get started? Below are practical steps you can take.

Know the law.

The first step is to understand federal and state laws that apply to pregnant workers or workers with caregiving responsibilities. See page 79 for a brief overview and links to more resources. Consult with your legal advisors to ensure compliance with federal and state obligations.

Assess your current benefits and consider best practices.

Check your current policies to make sure they are relevant and competitive (see page 77 for a worksheet to help get started.)

- Consider the research outlined throughout this guide on practices that offer the best business and health outcomes and determine whether your current benefits meet those guidelines.
- Research “best places to work” lists (such as INC, Fast Forward, Florida Trend, or your local business journal) to see what benefits those workplaces offer.

Determine who your employees are and what they want.

Family-friendly workplace policies are not “one size fits all.” Take stock of your employees’ needs and tailor your policies to fit what works best for you and them.

- Consider employee demographics—both for current employees and those you want to hire.
- Conduct a survey of employees to determine which benefits they would most value. Make the survey anonymous to respect employees who may be pregnant or considering pregnancy and don’t yet want to tell their managers (see page75 for a sample of an employee survey).
- Create a committee or review panel of employees and ask them for feedback on potential policy changes.

Consult online and organizational resources for help.

The following online and organizational resources offer help for determining what benefits to offer and how to implement them:

- Membership associations such as the Society for Human Resource Management (www.shrm.org) and Capital Associated Industries (www.capital.org) offer a variety of articles and resources, including articles and sample policies that can help craft a family-friendly workplace strategy. Both have membership fees. The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) has several chapters throughout the state of Florida that offer more local resources, workshops, and gatherings.
- The Florida Breastfeeding Coalition and MomsRising created a resource for offering a breastfeeding-friendly workplace: https://www.momsrising.org
- Pregnant at Work (https://www.pregnantatwork.org/employers/) was created by the Center for WorkLife Law at the University of California Hastings College of Law. The website includes free webinars for employers, model policies, and accommodation ideas for common pregnancy complications.
- The Job Accommodation Network (https://askjan.org/disabilities/Pregnancy.cfm?cssearch=1928761_1) provides information on pregnancy accommodations.

Consider all costs, including the cost of doing nothing.

For many family-friendly policies, particularly paid leave, cost is cited as the top concern for employers. When factoring costs, consider:

- Some policies, such as accommodations for pregnant workers or babies at work, have no or very little associated costs.
- For policies such as paid parental leave, the benefits have been shown to outweigh the costs for businesses of all sizes.
  - A 2017 Boston Consulting Group study of 250 employers with paid leave policies found that paid parental leave helped or had no effect on the bottom line, Companies studied reported a positive return on investment, particularly related to other benefits they could provide.[173]
  - A 2016 Ernst and Young survey of more than 1,500 employers with paid leave benefits, including parental and family medical leave, showed that employers of all sizes saw positive business outcomes as a result:[174]
    - 82 percent reported better employee morale;
    - 71 percent reported lower employee turnover;
    - 63 percent reported increased profitability (including nearly half of employers with 100 employees or fewer);
    - 71 percent reported improved productivity.
  - Fifty percent of US fathers and 75 percent of US mothers have turned down work opportunities, changed jobs, or quit altogether to care for their children.[175]
  - The cost of replacing an employee who leaves is approximately 33 percent of an employee's salary, or $15,000 for a worker who makes $45,000, according to The Work Institute's *2018 Retention Report*.[176]

Below are three different cost calculators that can help employers estimate the costs of providing new benefits.

1. **Intuit:** This calculator shows how much an employee currently costs an employer beyond wages, including taxes and current benefits offered. https://quickbooks.intuit.com/r/employee-cost-calculator/

2. **Humana:** Humana has two calculators. The first gives you an overview of baseline monthly expenses, and the second helps an employer understand what benefits will cost for health, vision, and dental. https://www.humana.com/employer/resources/budget-planning/cash-flow-calculator and https://www.humana.com/employer/resources/budget-planning/benefits-cost-calculator

3. **TSheets:** This calculator gives an employer a true cost for an employee and provides an overview of labor costs, payroll taxes, and overhead. https://www.tsheets.com/resources/determine-the-true-cost-of-an-employee/

Make sure employees understand what your policies are and how to use them.

Many times, employees are not fully aware of all the family-friendly policies that they have access to. Help educate employees by:

- Offering thorough and frequent tutorials or sessions that inform employees about ways to facilitate work-life balance.
- Creating HR manuals that are free of jargon. Spell out policies in layman's terms to encourage increased knowledge and use of current family-friendly policies.
- Writing down policies that aren't currently written. Doing so will clear up confusion, and it will help with any employee misconceptions that policies aren't available or are subject to change based on individual manager preferences.
- Providing educational resources to help employees determine how benefits can help them financially.

Create a family-friendly workplace culture.

Having family-friendly policies in place only goes so far if your workplace culture does not encourage employees to use those policies. To create a family-friendly workplace culture:

- Make sure leaders understand the value of family-friendly policies and communicating your commitment to being family-friendly to employees at all levels.
- Set clear expectations for managers and ensure that leaders throughout your organization:
  - Understand how family-friendly policies fit into your organizational mission.
  - Offer support and respect for employees who take advantage of workplace policies. If a new father asks to take paternity leave, his manager should support that decision without giving the employee a tough time about being out of office. If an employee works a flexible schedule and does not come into work until 9 am, a manager should not routinely set meetings at 8 am and expect the employee to attend.
  - Model behavior by taking advantage of family-friendly policies when they need them.
- Celebrate your family-friendly policies both internally and externally.



For Employees

Are you an employee who wants to start a conversation with your employer about becoming more family-friendly? Below are steps for how to get started.

Know your rights.

A first step is to understand federal and state laws that apply to pregnant workers or workers with caregiving responsibilities. See below for an overview, or visit the following websites to learn more. For legal questions specific to your circumstances, consult legal counsel and/or your HR representative.

- **For pregnant workers:** https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/publications/pregnant_workers.cfm or https://www.pregnantatwork.org/pregnant-women
- **For workers who are breastfeeding:** https://www.womenshealth.gov/supporting-nursing-moms-work/what-law-says-about-breastfeeding-and-work and https://www.healthcare.gov/coverage/breast-feeding-benefits
- **For workers who need time to care for themselves or a child or family member:** https://www.dol.gov/whd/fmla/employeeguide.htm

Make sure you understand your current benefits.

Review your current benefits with your HR representative or manager to make sure you understand everything your employer currently offers and how the details of each policy affect you. Some paid parental leave policies, for example, require employees to use vacation or sick time for a pre-determined period before the parental leave benefit kicks in.

- Ask for help to clarify policies that are unclear.
- Determine when you are eligible for policies. For instance, many employers require one year of employment before you are eligible for paid parental leave.
- Explore the financial benefits your employer offers, such as a Flexible Spending Account, which allows you to spend pre-tax money on health care and other costs.

Talk with your manager or HR representative.

Approach a HR representative, manager, or a company leader who you think would be supportive. Have a conversation with him or her about the policy changes you think could benefit both employees and your employer.

Build a business case of support.

If you want to encourage change or new policies within your own workplace, come prepared with data and support for why the policies you suggest will benefit your employer as well as you and your co-workers.

Employer Resources

Sample Employee Survey

Editor's Note: This survey is meant as a starting point and can be customized as needed.

We recognize the value of our employees and want to ensure that we offer the best workplace we can. To be most effective, we want to hear from you about which benefits work well for you and your family and where there may be gaps that our company should understand and seek to address. We want to ensure the best fit for the people who work here! Please take a few minutes to answer the survey.

1. **What is your job title?**
2. **What is your age?** ☐ 18–25 ☐ 26–35 ☐ 36–45 ☐ 46–55 ☐ 56–65 ☐ 65+
3. **If you have children, please share their ages:**
4. **Do you consider our workplace "family-friendly"?** ☐ Yes ☐ No
5. **Please tell us why you think that. How can we provide a workplace that promotes work-family balance?**

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

6. **What are three things that our company does for employees that you love?**

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

7. **How satisfied are you with the current benefits offered?**
   ☐ Very Dissatisfied
   ☐ Dissatisfied
   ☐ Somewhat Satisfied
   ☐ Satisfied
   ☐ Very Satisfied

8. **Which of the benefits offered do you use or have you used in the past? Note: Employers should list all benefits offered. Examples are parental leave, sick and safe leave, dependent care spending account, telecommuting, job sharing, lactation room, on-site gym, backup or emergency child care.**

_____

_____

_____

_____

9. **Of the benefits you listed in Question 8, please rank them in priority to you and your family, with 1 being the most important.**

_____

_____

_____

_____

10. **Are there benefits not listed in Question 8 that you would use if offered?** ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, please explain:

_____

_____

_____

11. **Is there anything else that you would like to share?**

_____

_____

_____

_____

12. **Which best describes your race?**
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Hispanic or Latino
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- ☐ White
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

13. **What is your highest level of education?**
- ☐ Less than high school
- ☐ High school or equivalent
- ☐ Some college
- ☐ College degree
- ☐ Graduate degree

14. **What is your marital status?**
- ☐ Married
- ☐ Single
- ☐ Divorced
- ☐ Other

Current Policy Assessment Worksheet

Editor's Note: Federal and state regulations apply to several of the benefits listed. An overview of requirements is included on page 79, Understanding the Requirements of Federal and State Law. Employers should seek legal counsel to understand their obligations. The information provided here is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice.

Family-friendly benefit	Current benefits offered (describe details of the benefit offered)	Are there federal and/or state laws and regulations?	Benefit cost per employee	Number of employees expressing interest in the benefit (use survey results)	Next steps
Maternity Leave		Yes			
Paternity Leave		Yes			
Sick and Safe Leave		Yes, in certain circumstances			
Family and Medical Leave		Yes			
Parental Involvement Leave		Yes			
Flextime					
Telecommuting					
Job Sharing and/ or Part-Time Work		Yes, for nonexempt workers			

Current Policy Assessment Worksheet (continued)

Family-friendly benefit	Current benefits offered (describe details of the benefit offered)	Are there federal and/or state laws and regulations?	Benefit cost per employee	Number of employees expressing interest in the benefit (use survey results)	Next steps
Predictable Scheduling					
Support for Breastfeeding Mothers		Yes			
Babies at Work					
Pregnant Worker Accommodations		Yes			
Health Insurance		Yes			
Wellness Benefits					
Flexible Spending Accounts		Yes			
Backup/ Emergency Child Care		Yes, as related to the child care facility itself			
Child Care On-site		Yes, as related to the child care facility itself			
Subsidized/ Reimbursed Child Care		Yes			
Child Care Referral Services					

Understanding the Requirements of Federal and State Law

When it comes to family-friendly benefits, employers and employees should understand the policies and worker protections that are required by state and federal law. Outlined below is a quick overview. Employers should consult legal counsel to determine their federal and state obligations. Information provided within does not constitute legal advice.

Leave

Federal

Family Medical Leave Act

Employers are most likely familiar with the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which requires private-sector employers with 50 or more employees, public sector employers, and public or private elementary and secondary schools to provide 12 weeks of unpaid leave in a 12-month period for one or more of the following reasons:

- The birth of a child or placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care.
- To care for a spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition.
- For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the essential job functions.
- Other qualifying emergencies arising out of the fact that a spouse, child, or parent is a military member on covered active duty or called to covered active duty status.

Employees may be able to take 26 weeks of unpaid leave during a 12-month period to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness when the employee is the service member's spouse, child, parent, or next of kin.

To receive FMLA, employees must have worked for an employer for at least 12 months and for at least 1,250 hours of service during the 12-month period immediately preceding the leave. For more on FMLA, visit https://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs28.pdf

FMLA is unpaid leave; there are no federal laws requiring paid leave following a birth or adoption. Similarly, there are no federal laws requiring paid medical leave (for an employee or a child) or parental leave.

Covered employers are required to notify workers about the FMLA,

including displaying an FMLA poster, as detailed here: https://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/posters/fmla.htm

Since October 2020, under the Federal Employee Paid Leave Act, certain categories of federal civilian employees have access to 12 weeks of paid parental leave for birth, adoption, or foster care. https://www.commerce.gov/hr/paid-parental-leave-federal-employees

State

Five states currently offer paid caregiver leave policies, which cover workers following a birth or adoption, and 11 states plus Washington, D.C. offer paid sick leave policies. However, Florida does not require employers to give mandatory paid vacation, sick or medical leave (for an employee or a child), or parental leave.

Flexible Work

Currently there are no federal or state policies that address flexible work.

Accommodations

Federal

Fair Labor Standards Act

Under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), employers must provide reasonable break time for an employee to express breast milk for her nursing child for one year after the child's birth, but employers are not required to pay an employee during that break time. Employers must also provide a place, other than a bathroom, for the employee to express breast milk. If these requirements impose undue hardship, employers with fewer than 50 employees may not be subject to these requirements.

For more, see: https://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs73.htm

Pregnancy Discrimination Act (PDA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Both the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, which is part of The Affordable Care Act, address pregnancy.

Under the PDA, employers with 15 or more employees may not discriminate against an employee who is pregnant, may become pregnant, or has been pregnant. Employees are also protected from harassment at work because of pregnancy.

Additionally, employees may have legal rights to work adjustments that will allow them to do their job without jeopardizing their health or the health of their baby:

- Employers must accommodate pregnant workers under the PDA and similar accommodations are given to other employees who have similar limitations that were not caused by pregnancy.
- Employers may be required to offer an accommodation under the ADA if an employee has a pregnancy-related medical condition such as cervical insufficiency, anemia, sciatica, preeclampsia, gestational diabetes, or depression, that meets the ADA definition of "disability."

For more resources, see:
https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/publications/fs-preg.cfm

State

Florida does not have additional laws that address pregnancy discrimination or accommodations. Florida does have a law allowing women to breastfeed in public and private locations—including government buildings—but does not have a separate law to address breastfeeding or expressing milk in the workplace.

Heath Benefits

Federal

Affordable Care Act

Though the Affordable Care Act (ACA) does not require employers to provide health benefits to employees, employers with more than 50 workers may face penalties if they don't make affordable coverage available. Employers are penalized if they do not offer coverage or do not offer coverage that meets minimum value and affordability standards.

For a flowchart of how employer responsibilities work under the Affordable Care Act, visit: https://www.kff.org/infographic/employer-responsibility-under-the-affordable-care-act/

State

There are no additional state laws addressing health insurance for workers.

Child Care

Though both federal and state requirements exist for licensing and maintaining child care facilities, neither federal nor state law addresses whether employers are required to provide child care of any kind.

See https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/child-care/laws-and-requirements.shtml for an overview of Florida's child care laws and licensing requirements.



SECTION SIX

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Last Updated 9.26.23

We are grateful to our partners in North Carolina who provided much of the research base for this guide.

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