



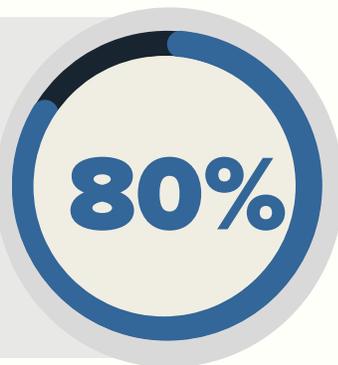
# When we support families, everyone **WINS**

## OVERVIEW

Supporting parents will bolster the health and vitality of Florida's economy now and in the future. We do this when businesses, policymakers and community leaders work together to create family-friendly policies, increase awareness of child development and provide parents with better access to care for their child. Parents make up about 80% of the workforce in the United States.<sup>1</sup> This means parents are critical for the economy. Supporting parents can increase prosperity, boost revenue and build a strong future workforce for Florida. Making a strong investment in parents will help shape the future of Florida as the best place in the world to run a business, start a family, and be safe. When you support families, families will support you.



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## SUPPORTING PARENTS INCREASES PROSPERITY

Toxic stress is an epidemic in America.<sup>2</sup> If Florida wants to increase the prosperity of its residents, more needs to be done to ease the burdens of toxic stress on children. Children's toxic stress, which is chronic stress experienced with no buffering adult relationship, can be reduced when parents are supported.

<sup>1</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics: Employment Characteristics of Families, April 18, 2019 <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/famee.nr0.htm>

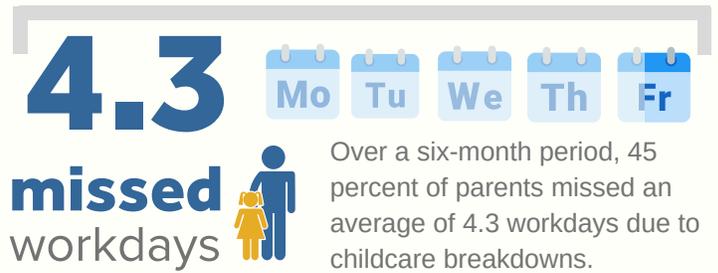
<sup>2</sup> Center for Disease Control: About the CDC-Kaiser ACE Study <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/acestudy/about.html>



Evidence shows that incarcerated individuals have a proportionally higher rate of childhood toxic stress than the rest of the population.<sup>3</sup> Currently, it costs Florida close to \$2 billion to house its inmates.<sup>4</sup> This is an economic loss and it suppresses the economic potential that inmate could be contributing to Florida's economy.<sup>5</sup> Also, children who experience less toxic stress are more likely to receive higher degrees. Those with higher degrees typically earn higher wages. Higher wage earners can increase economic output for society. When we support parents so that they know how to reduce their child's exposure to toxic stress, we generate additional tax dollars and corporate revenue around the state.

Supporting parents can increase revenue for businesses. The cost of infant care in Florida is more than the annual cost of college tuition at a four-year college, so many parents struggle to find child-care that they can afford.<sup>6</sup> Since it's a challenge to find low-cost options, parents are vulnerable to cancellations and interrupted scheduling.

Therefore, it is not a surprise that sixty-five percent of parents' work schedules are affected by child care challenges. U.S. companies lose \$3 billion annually because of childcare-related absences.<sup>7</sup> Over a six-month period, 45 percent of parents miss work for an average of 4.3 days due to childcare breakdowns.<sup>8</sup> When parents are not at work, business productivity declines, revenue is lost, and the quality of goods and services is reduced. Parents also lose income when they have to take time off work to care for children, which means they are less likely to participate in the economy.



<sup>3</sup> National Center of Biotechnological Information: Childhood and Adult Trauma Experiences of Incarcerated Persons and Their Relationship to Adult Behavioral Health Problems and Treatment. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3386595/>

<sup>4</sup> Vera: The Price of Prisons: Prison Spending in 2015. <https://www.vera.org/publications/price-of-prisons-2015-state-spending-trends/price-of-prisons-2015-state-spending-trends/price-of-prisons-2015-state-spending-trends-prison-spending>

<sup>5</sup> ELSEVIER: Science Direct: Adverse Childhood Experiences and Life Opportunities: Shifting the Narrative. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0190740916303449>

<sup>6</sup> Childcare Aware USA: <https://usa.childcareaware.org/advocacy-public-policy/resources/research/costofcare/>

<sup>7</sup> Early Care and Learning Council: Why Should Employers Care?: Relationship Between Productivity and Working

<sup>8</sup> Early Care and Learning Council: Why Should Employers Care? Relationship Between Productivity and Working

<sup>9</sup> Early Care and Learning Council: Why Should Employers Care? Relationship Between Productivity and Working

<sup>10</sup> Harvard Business Review: Most Desirable Employee Benefits: February 15, 2018. <https://hbr.org/2017/02/the-most-desirable-employee-benefits>



## SUPPORTING PARENTS HELPS BUILD A STRONG FUTURE WORKFORCE.

Businesses can increase their revenue and support parents by subsidizing quality childcare. This will allow parents to stay focused at work and be more productive. Employers report that onsite childcare services decrease employee absences by 20-30 percent and reduce turnover by 37-60 percent.<sup>9</sup> Businesses that offer childcare-related benefits like Dependent Care FSA see an improvement in employee recruitment.<sup>10</sup> The most coveted companies offer support for child care; which allows them to attract top talent.

The Florida Chamber of Commerce reported that 18% of businesses state that workforce quality is a top concern for businesses.<sup>12</sup> Businesses find it difficult to find employees that have the soft skills needed in the workforce.

These soft skills begin at home. When parents are supported, they are able to build their children’s social-emotional skills and executive functions that employers say they lack in the workforce.

In the first few years of life, more than 1 million new neural connections form every second in a child’s brain.<sup>13</sup> These connections form the basis of the child’s brain, and will act as a foundation on which they will build for the rest of their life. These connections occur when parents or adults interact with the child in a meaningful and positive way. It is these interactions that strengthen the child’s brain as it develops communication and social skills.<sup>14</sup>

Businesses that support parents are investing in themselves. Over time, businesses reap the benefits of a stronger workforce when they adopt practices that are parent conscious. These practices mean that parents can support their child’s healthy brain development, which is needed in the workforce and global economy. This means retailers stand to gain customers who can buy more and sports teams can increase customers who purchase season tickets in Florida. In the end, everyone wins and supported families help produce healthy and vibrant communities for children to learn and grow.



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Annually, 55 million U.S. workers experience reduced productivity due to the inability to concentrate on the job because a family member is ill. This means working at half capacity and equated to \$260 billion lost.<sup>11</sup> As workers take time off due to family illness, businesses risk potential earnings. If businesses invest in parents today, they are also investing in the future of their company.

<sup>11</sup> Chron: Small Business: The Loss of Productivity in the Workplace Due to Illness. <https://smallbusiness.chron.com/loss-productivity-workplace-due-illness-33560.html>

<sup>12</sup> Florida Chamber of Commerce: Small Business Index. <https://www.flchamber.com/small-business-index-survey/>

<sup>13</sup> Harvard University: Center on the Developing Child. <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/brain-architecture/>

<sup>14</sup> Center of Disease Control and Prevention: Child Development: Early Brain Development and Health: February 6, 2019. <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/serve-and-return/>



# ways to **SUPPORT PARENTS**



## **EMPLOYERS**

- Offer paid parental leave and child care subsidies for mothers and fathers.
- Create a family-friendly culture.
- Sponsor a parent resource and health screening fair.



## **COMMUNITY**

- Host a parent resource and health screening fair
- Spread the message that learning begins at birth – encourage parents to talk to their babies even before they can talk back.
- Provide outreach for health insurance enrollment.



## **POLICYMAKERS**

- Continue to invest in high-quality, educational child care for working families.
- Increase investment in VPK.
- Celebrate and support early learning teachers.
- Expand Help Me Grow.

