

Business Smart.
Family Friendly.
Future Ready.



The Research Basis for Family-Friendly Workplaces

Family Forward NC is an innovative business initiative designed to improve children's health and well-being and ensure our state's business climate is competitive. It is business-led change to increase access to family-forward workplaces partnering with small, medium and large businesses to identify and implement policies that will generate long-term benefits.

83% of millennials would leave their jobs in favor of those with more family-friendly benefits.



Business Smart.

Family-friendly workplaces provide a competitive advantage in attracting and retaining talent, increasing productivity and employee satisfaction, and reducing absenteeism.

Family Friendly.

Increasingly, working parents consider family-friendly offerings a priority when it comes to choosing or staying in a job. In fact, 83 percent of millennials would leave their jobs in favor of those with more family-friendly benefits. Workplaces that support parents have a direct impact on their children's health, well-being and future academic and career achievement.

Future Ready.

North Carolina faces a growing skills gap. By 2020, 67 percent of jobs in the state will require some post-secondary education. Family-friendly business policies help children build a strong foundation for future academic and career success through improved access to high-quality health care, education, and family economic security. These benefits all come back to business by building a strong future workforce.

Family-friendly workplaces provide an immediate payoff and long-term gains. Promoting family-friendly practices that are within reach of all North Carolina businesses is a win-win.

This fact sheet lays out the research base for family-forward workplace policies, including leave, flexible work, accommodations, and benefits. Working definitions are provided for each policy, along with research-based outcomes for young children, for parents and families, and for employers. Sources are listed.

Family Forward NC is an initiative of the North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation supported by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina as the founding sponsor.

Leave Policies

POLICY/PRACTICE AND DEFINITION	RESULTS FOR EMPLOYERS
<p>Maternity/Paternity Leave</p> <p>Maternity/Paternity leave is paid leave for the birth, adoption, or acceptance of the foster placement of a child.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases or does not decrease productivity • Improves recruitment • New mothers more likely to come back to work (and to same employer) and stay employed • New fathers more likely to stay employed • Reduces turnover costs through increased retention • Improves morale and job satisfaction
<p>Family Medical Leave</p> <p>Family Medical Leave is paid leave to take care of a child with a long-term illness or for an employee's own chronic or temporary medical issue.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 re-injured • Reduces likelihood of dangerous injury or death on the job • Increases loyalty
<p>Parental Leave</p> <p>Parental Leave is short-term paid leave that allows a parent to take an afternoon or a day off to pick up a sick child at school or tend to one at home, attend a school performance or athletic event, or otherwise minister to a child's needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves productivity • Increases retention • Reduces complaints of discrimination towards employees with caregiving responsibilities • Improves workplace climate

RESULTS FOR CHILDREN/FAMILIES

Children

- Increases birthweight
- Reduces infant mortality
- Improves health care
- Increases well-baby care
- Increases immunization rates
- Supports child development
- Increases educational attainment
- Increases IQ
- Increases test scores
- Reduces behavioral/mental health problems
- Improves regular school attendance
- Reduces teen pregnancy rates
- Increases wages as adults

Parents/Family

- 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 maternity leave
- Increases gender equality and increases women's advancement at work

Children

- Encourages use of preventative health care

Parents/Family

- Encourages use of preventative health care
- Workers recover from temporary disability, illness or injury more quickly
- Reduces financial strain from chronic illness or injury.

Children

- 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

Parents/Family

- Decreases stress
- Increases engagement in children's education

Flexible Work

POLICY/PRACTICE AND DEFINITION	RESULTS FOR EMPLOYERS
<p>Flextime</p> <p>A flexible work schedule allows employees to choose when they work, as long as they put in their hours every week.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<p>Working from Home/Telecommuting</p> <p>Telecommuting allows employees to work from home or some other remote site some or all of the time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases productivity • Reduces real estate and overhead costs • Increases net worth • 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
<p>Job Sharing and/or Part Time Work <i>temporary or permanent</i></p> <p>In a job share, two or more employees may share a single position, each working a fraction 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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases productivity • Increases net worth • Increases retention, reducing turnover costs • Increases job satisfaction
<p>Predictable Scheduling</p> <p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases productivity • Increases retention, reducing turnover costs • Reduces employee absenteeism • Increases morale, loyalty, commitment

RESULTS FOR CHILDREN/FAMILIES

Children

- Improves physical and social-emotional health, through parental stress reduction
- Reduces obesity
- Improves education, through increased parental engagement

Parents/Family

- Improves health
- Increases happiness and job satisfaction
- Reduces stress
- Allows employees to care for sick or elderly family members
- Improves family economic security

Parents/Family

- Saves employees time
- Increases job satisfaction
- Reduces reports of physical and mental fatigue
- Offers large benefits for disabled or temporarily disabled workers

Parents/Family

- Increases job satisfaction
- Provides more time to meet family needs

Children

- Reduces stress on children
- Reduces behavior problems
- Impacts cognitive development in language and math

Parents/Family

- Allows employees to plan for child care, school activities, health care visits, and transportation
- Allows employees to care for sick or elderly family members
- Increases family economic security, due to predictable pay

Accommodations

POLICY/PRACTICE AND DEFINITION	RESULTS FOR EMPLOYERS
<p>Support for Breastfeeding Mothers</p> <p>This could include writing corporate policies to support breastfeeding women; teaching employees about breastfeeding; providing designated private space for breastfeeding or pumping; allowing flexible scheduling during work; giving mothers options for returning to work, such as teleworking, part-time work, and extended maternity leave; providing on-site or near-site child care; providing high-quality breast pumps; and offering professional lactation management services and support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases retention, reducing turnover costs • Lowers health care and insurance costs • Reduces employee absenteeism • Allows for a quicker return to work after baby's birth • Improves public relations
<p>Babies at Work</p> <p>A Babies at Work program allows parents to bring infants to work with them—generally up to about six months of age or crawling.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases productivity • Lowers health care costs from increased breastfeeding rates • Improves recruitment • Increases retention, reducing turnover costs • Allows for a quicker return to work after baby's birth • Increases customer loyalty • Increases positive publicity • Improves morale • Increases teamwork and collaboration
<p>Pregnant Worker Accommodations</p> <p>Pregnant worker accommodations are work adjustments that allow pregnant women to do their jobs safely, without jeopardizing their health or the health of their babies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

RESULTS FOR CHILDREN/FAMILIES

Children

- Reduces infant mortality
- Breastfeeding lowers child's risk of ear infections, respiratory infections, diarrhea, dermatitis, gastrointestinal disorders, asthma (young children), obesity, types 1 and 2 diabetes
- Increases parent-child bonding
- May increase IQ
- Reduces doctor and hospital visits

Parents/Family

- Breastfeeding lowers mother's risk of: bleeding, weight gain, maternal postpartum depression, cancers (breast, ovarian, endometrial), type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis
- Improves family economic security

Children

- Facilitates better socialized babies
- Increases parent-child bonding
- Provides health benefits of breastfeeding

Parents/Family

- 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
- Facilitates happier babies and parents

Children

- Improves unborn baby's health and safety, including lower risk of preterm birth and low birthweight

Parents/Family

- Improves mother's health and safety
- Improves family economic security

Benefits

POLICY/PRACTICE AND DEFINITION	RESULTS FOR EMPLOYERS
<p>Health Benefits</p> <p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces payroll taxes and workers' compensation premiums, and employer contributions are tax-deductible • Improves recruitment • Increases retention, reducing turnover costs
<p>Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA)</p> <p>A Health Flexible Spending Account is a pre-tax benefit account employees put money into that can be used to pay for certain out-of-pocket health care costs, tax-free.</p> <p>A Dependent Care FSA (DCFSA) is a pre-tax benefit account used to pay for eligible dependent care services, such as preschool, summer day camp, before or after school programs, and child care.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases productivity • Reduces payroll taxes • Improves recruitment • Increases retention, reducing turnover costs • Eases administration • Improves morale
<p>Backup/Emergency Child Care</p> <p>Backup and emergency child care programs are offered either in centers or in-home, and allow employees to continue working despite temporary disruptions in normal caregiving arrangements. Employers can negotiate rates with local child care facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases productivity, including working outside official job responsibilities • Improves recruitment • Increases retention, reducing turnover costs • Reduces employee absenteeism • Reduces "fill-in" costs

RESULTS FOR CHILDREN/FAMILIES

Children

- Improves 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)

Parents/Family

- 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

Children and Parents/Family

- Health FSAs have similar employee and family outcomes to health insurance (see above)
- Dependent Care FSAs have similar employee and family outcomes to subsidized or reimbursed child care (see below)
- Improves family economic security, through reduced out-of-pocket medical costs from using pre-tax dollars

Children and Parents/Family

- Reduces stress
- Improves work/life balance

Benefits *continued*

POLICY/PRACTICE AND DEFINITION	RESULTS FOR EMPLOYERS
<p>Child Care Onsite</p> <p>Child care onsite takes place in facilities where parents are on the premises, like at their place of employment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases retention, reducing turnover costs • Allows tax credit of up to 25% of facility expenditures, plus 10% 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
<p>Subsidized or Reimbursed Child Care</p> <p>An employer can subsidize employees' child care, paying all or some part of approved arrangements and/or reserving slots at particular facilities for employees' children. 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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases retention, reducing turnover costs • Reduces employee tardiness and absenteeism • Increases employment of women • Increases employee loyalty

RESULTS FOR CHILDREN/FAMILIES

Children

- Improves health
- Improves education

Parents/Family

- Saves employees time
- Highly ranked as a benefit

Children

- Improves health
- Improves education

Parents/Family

- Improves family economic security
- Provides an option for summer care for school-aged children

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LET'S GET STARTED.
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