



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Lisa Finaldi, community engagement leader**

[lfinaldi@buildthefoundation.org](mailto:lfinaldi@buildthefoundation.org), 919-522-8562

**Kathleen Linder, media contact**

[kklinder@gmail.com](mailto:kklinder@gmail.com), 919-616-4719

## **NC Employers and Employees Agree on Benefits of Family Friendly Workplaces**

*Family Forward NC's research explores benefits and challenges of family-friendly policies*

**Raleigh, NC** – Employers and employees believe family-friendly practices help businesses attract and retain talent—and keep companies strong, according to findings released today by the NC Early Childhood Foundation (NCECF). The research is part of a new initiative, [Family Forward NC](#), to improve children's health and well-being and keep North Carolina's businesses competitive.

Interviews with more than 300 NC employers and surveys with 300 employees from small, medium and large businesses also found that:

- 94% of North Carolina employees believe that family-friendly practices help businesses attract and retain talent.
- 71% of NC business leaders see family-friendly practices as being just as good for employers as they are for employees.
- Nearly half of NC employers plan on deepening family-friendly practices next year.

The research also revealed that many employers and employees have a narrow definition of family-friendly practices, something Family Forward NC will work to address. A range of practices and policies have been shown to benefit children and have a positive impact on business, including flexible schedules, lactation support, backup childcare, onsite childcare and paid parental leave. Family-friendly policies allow parents to support their children's optimal development, and the documented results of these practices show benefits including fewer behavioral problems, better grades and lower teen pregnancy rates. The benefits to children and families come back to businesses by decreasing employee turnover, improving productivity and building a strong and prepared future workforce.

Employers in North Carolina face growing challenges in hiring qualified workers due to a skills gap. By 2020 – an estimated 67 percent of jobs in North Carolina will require some post-secondary education. Only 45.9 percent of North Carolinians have that level of education today, according to a study on job growth by Georgetown University. With nearly 26 percent of North Carolinians between 25 and 44 years old, prime child-bearing and working years, companies with family-friendly practices have an advantage when recruiting new, skilled employees.

The research was commissioned by NCECF and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (Blue Cross NC). As founding sponsor of Family Forward NC, Blue Cross NC has recently invested \$475,000 to launch the initiative as part of its mission to improve the health and well-being of its customers and communities.

*Infographics illustrating Family Forward NC's research results are available:*

<http://buildthefoundation.org/FamilyForwardNC/>

*To arrange an interview with Tracy Zimmerman, NCECF executive director, contact Kathleen Linder at [kklinder@gmail.com](mailto:kklinder@gmail.com).*

### **Supporting Materials**

- [Family Forward NC Fact Sheet](#)
- [NC Employer and Employee Research Summary](#)
- [NC Employer and Employee Research Presentation](#)
- [Research Base for Family Friendly Policies](#)

### **About Family Forward NC**

Family Forward NC is an innovative business initiative to improve children's health and well-being and keep North Carolina's businesses competitive. By increasing family-friendly workplace practices, businesses, families and our state all win. Family Forward NC is an initiative of the North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation (NCECF) with founding sponsorship from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina. Family Forward NC is about being business smart, family-friendly, and future ready. Learn more at <http://buildthefoundation.org/FamilyForwardNC/>

### **About North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation (NCECF)**

NCECF has a bold vision that each North Carolina child has a strong foundation for lifelong health, education and well-being supported by a premiere birth-to-eight system. NCECF promotes public understanding of and support for policies that promote children's birth-to-age-eight years for academic and lifelong success, convenes and spearheads collaboration to bridge North Carolina's birth-to-five and kindergarten-to-third grade systems, and advances policies that create a stronger NC today and tomorrow by supporting each child's birth-to-eight development. Learn more at <http://www.buildthefoundation.org/>.

