

Business smart.
Family friendly.
Future ready.



The Research Basis for Business and Child Outcomes

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	EMPLOYER OUTCOMES		CHILD / FAMILY OUTCOMES	
<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 productivityImproves recruitmentNew mothers more likely to come back to work (and to same employer) and stay employedNew fathers more likely to stay employedReduces turnover costs through increased retentionImproves morale and job satisfaction		<p>Children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Increases birthweightReduces infant mortalityImproves health careIncreases well-baby careIncreases immunization ratesSupports child developmentIncreases educational attainmentIncreases IQIncreases test scoresReduces behavioral/mental health problemsImproves regular school attendanceReduces teen pregnancy ratesIncreases wages as adults	<p>Parents/Family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Improves family incomesIncreases initiation and length of breastfeedingDecreases maternal depression and stressIncreases paternal engagement in caregivingIncreases job satisfactionBuilds healthier parent-child relationshipsReduces wage gap between women and menReduces wage gap between mothers and childless womenReduces stigma of taking maternity leaveIncreases gender equality
<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 productivityDoes not lower profitsIncreases retention, reducing turnover costsReduces employee absenteeismProvides healthier work environmentReduces health care costsWorkers recover from temporary disability, illness or injury more quicklyIncreases loyalty		<p>Children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Encourages use of preventative health care	<p>Parents/Family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Encourages use of preventative health careWorkers recover from temporary disability, illness or injury more quickly
<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 productivityIncreases retentionReduces complaints of discrimination towards employees with caregiving responsibilitiesImproves workplace climate		<p>Children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Improves regular school attendanceImproves grades and test scoresReduces behavioral/mental health problemsEarlier identification of learning problemsImproves likelihood of high school graduationImproves likelihood of attending college	<p>Parents/Family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Decreases stressIncreases engagement in children's education

Flexible Work

POLICY/ PRACTICE AND DEFINITION	EMPLOYER OUTCOMES		CHILD / FAMILY OUTCOMES
<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 productivityImproves the bottom lineImproves recruitmentIncreases retention, reducing turnover costsReduces employee absenteeismImproves relationships with co-workersIncreases morale, loyalty, commitmentIncreases overall job satisfaction		<div><div>Children<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improves physical and social-emotional health, through parental stress reductionReduces obesityImproves education, through increased parental engagement</div><div>Parents/Family<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improves healthIncreases happiness and job satisfactionReduces stress</div></div>
<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 productivityReduces real estate and overhead costsIncreases net worthIncreases retention, reducing turnover costsIncreases employee loyaltyEmployees can work more hours before experiencing work/family conflictReduces employee absenteeismSaves money during emergencies and weather-related disruptions		<div>Parents/Family<ul style="list-style-type: none">Saves employees timeIncreases job satisfactionReduces reports of physical and mental fatigueOffers large benefits for disabled or temporarily disabled workers</div>
<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 productivityIncreases net worthIncreases retention, reducing turnover costsIncreases job satisfaction		<div>Parents/Family<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increases job satisfactionProvides more time to meet family needs</div>
<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 productivityIncreases retention, reducing turnover costsReduces employee absenteeismIncreases morale, loyalty, commitment		<div>Parents/Family<ul style="list-style-type: none">Allows employees to plan for child care, transportation, and budgets</div>

Accommodations

POLICY/ PRACTICE AND DEFINITION	EMPLOYER OUTCOMES		CHILD / FAMILY OUTCOMES	
<p>Lactation Support</p> <p>Lactation supports 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 costsLowers health care and insurance costsReduces employee absenteeismAllows for a quicker return to work after baby’s birthImproves public relations		<p>Children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Reduces infant mortalityBreastfeeding lowers child’s risk of ear infections, respiratory infections, diarrhea, dermatitis, gastrointestinal disorders, asthma (young children), obesity, types 1 and 2 diabetesIncreases parent-child bondingMay increase IQReduces doctor and hospital visits	<p>Parents/Family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Breastfeeding lowers mother’s risk of: bleeding, weight gain, maternal postpartum depression, cancers (breast, ovarian, endometrial), type 2 diabetes, osteoporosisImproves family economic security
<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 productivityLowers health care costs from increased breastfeeding ratesImproves recruitmentIncreases retention, reducing turnover costsAllows for a quicker return to work after baby’s birthIncreases customer loyaltyIncreases positive publicityImproves moraleIncreases teamwork and collaboration		<p>Children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Facilitates better socialized babiesIncreases parent-child bondingProvides health benefits of breastfeeding	<p>Parents/Family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Lowers child care costsImproves family economic securityCreates social network/support for parentsReduces stressProvides more options for womenFacilitates easier breastfeedingEnables working fathers to be more involved with their babiesFacilitates happier babies and parents
<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 productivityProvides benefit to employee at no- or low-cost to employerImproves recruitmentIncreases retention, reducing turnover costsReduces employee absenteeismReduces health care costsReduces litigation costsIncreases diversityIncreases safetyIncreases employee commitment and satisfaction		<p>Children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Improves unborn baby’s health and safety, including lower risk of preterm birth and low birthweight	<p>Parents/Family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Improves mother’s health and safetyImproves family economic security

Benefits

POLICY/ PRACTICE AND DEFINITION	EMPLOYER OUTCOMES		CHILD / FAMILY OUTCOMES
<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		<div><div><p>Children</p><ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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)</div><div><p>Parents/Family</p><ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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</div></div>
<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>Children and Parents/Family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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
<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		<p>Children and Parents/Family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduces stress• Improves work/life balance

Benefits *continued*

POLICY/ PRACTICE AND DEFINITION	EMPLOYER OUTCOMES		CHILD / FAMILY OUTCOMES	
<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 costsAllows 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 expensesImproves employee performance and reduces absenteeism compared to when using off-site child care		<p>Children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Improves healthImproves education	<p>Parents/Family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Saves employees timeHighly ranked as a benefit
<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 costsReduces employee tardiness and absenteeism		<p>Children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Improves healthImproves education	<p>Parents/Family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Improves family economic security

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GET STARTED

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