



How to Advocate for Child Care at your Work

And the research to support it.

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Let's face it: working parents need child care.

They need it to be productive, they need it to explore growth opportunities, and they need it to simply show up and work.

And yet, most working parents still lack the necessary child care benefits to feel supported in the workplace. [According to new research](#), 78% of parents have needed backup care during their career; just 8% have child care subsidies.

While child care issues are nothing new for working parents, the pandemic finally gave us license to talk about them – and to demand better; [82% of working parents](#) say spending more time at home with their children over the past year has made employer-provided child care benefits even more important to them.

The good news is, companies are starting to realize the impact of affordable, accessible child care for working parents, and they're increasingly open to exploring employer sponsored child care benefits. So, your employer might be more receptive to a conversation around it than you think.

We're here to help. We created this worksheet to help you advocate for your child care needs to your employer, with useful stats and research to support your case.

Here's 6 Steps for Success:

- 1 Find Allies to Advocate with You
- 2 Do Your Research
- 3 Build Your Case
- 4 Be Ready for Objections
- 5 Present a Plan
- 6 Follow up

Step 1: Find your allies.

If you're experiencing child care issues, you're certainly not the only one. And you don't have to advocate alone! Join forces to make your case stronger, and share the workload.

List 5 parents at your company that could benefit from child care (include men and women, and an expectant parent too!):

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____

Does your company have an Employee Resource Group (ERG)?

Who leads it?

Are they already talking about parenting issues?



** Don't have an Employee Resource Group? Don't worry! Remember you can always start small and grow. As people see the potential impact, they'll join in the conversation.

Step 2: Build your case.

Share how child care is an investment in greater success for you, and as a result, your company as a whole. Choose at least one of the questions below (whichever feels most compelling to you) to answer and bring into your conversation. Or you can answer them all!

Studies show that working parents with child care have [increased concentration and productivity](#) on the job. **If I had child care I would be able to:**

Studies show that child care struggles often force parents to [take on fewer responsibilities at work](#). **If I had child care, I would pursue these growth opportunities at work:**

Studies show that employed parents are [experiencing severe burnout](#) due to child care stress. **If I had child care, I would be less burnt out because:**

Studies show that when [parents help other parents](#), the company benefits. **I would pay it forward to other parents by:**

Share how child care can have an ROI not just for individuals, but for the entire company.

You can use any of the stats below in your presentation to help make your case!

Child care enables companies to attract and retain talent.



[93% of employees](#) say child care is an important factor in considering a job change.



[85% of employers](#) report that providing child care services improves employee recruitment.

Child care results in cost benefits in terms of retention, recruiting and absenteeism.



[45% of parents](#) report being absent from work due to child care breakdowns an average of 4.3 days every 6 months.



Child care [reduces turnover by 37-60%](#).



[The cost of replacing an individual](#) ranges from 50% to 200% of the employee's annual salary.

Child care offers a cultural benefit of showing employees you value them as a person, not just a number.



Offering employees child care can make them [more loyal to your company](#) and incentivize them to stay longer.

Share examples of companies that can demonstrate the ROI of child care benefits.



[Patagonia](#): When Patagonia introduced on-site child care, they saw 100% of working moms return to work after maternity leave.



[Clif Bar](#): 98% of employee parents whose children attend the company day care said they were more likely to stay working there.



Find one organization that's similar to your organization to share as an example.

Step 3: Do your research.

Make the case for the impact of employer-sponsored child care at your company. Gather up this information and bring it into your conversation.

Share the scope of impact.

How many parents currently work at your company or organization?

How many departments or teams currently have a parent on them and could be impacted by the absence of that parent?

How many parents have left your company in the last year?



** If you don't know the answers to these questions, try connecting with other parents or contacts in Human Resources or who are involved in your company's ERG who might have more information. It's ok to estimate or to stick with stats in your department only if that makes you feel more confident in making your case.

Spell out the potential cost savings.

If you're comfortable talking numbers, calculate:

Your company's cost of replacing you if you left due to child care issues. (Studies show that employers spend **one-half to two times** the employee's annual salary)

Annual Salary _____ Multiplied by .5 _____ Multiplied by 2 _____

FOR EXAMPLE:

1 Replacing an employee that makes \$35,000 a year costs between \$17,500 and \$70,000.
Annual Salary: \$35,000 Multiplied by .5: \$17,500 Multiplied by 2: \$70,000

2 Replacing an employee that makes \$60,000 a year costs between \$30,000 and \$120,000.
Annual Salary: \$60,000 Multiplied by .5: \$30,000 Multiplied by 2: \$120,000

Your company’s potential lost investment on days that you might need to miss work due to child care issues. ([A recent study showed that 45% of parents](#) reported that child care breakdowns caused them to miss an average of 4.3 days every 6 months.)

Annual Salary _____ Divided by 250-day work year = Daily Salary _____
Multiplied by 8.6 days lost per year = _____ in losses

FOR EXAMPLE:

1 Annual Salary: \$35,000 Divided by 250 day work year: \$140
Multiplied by 8.6 days lost each year: \$1,204 lost each year due to child care issues

2 Annual Salary: \$60,000 Divided by 250 day work year: \$240
Multiplied by 8.6 days lost each year: \$2,064 lost each year due to child care issues

Share your benefits knowledge.

What are other benefits currently being provided to parents (think: fertility, paid leave, mental health care):

What benefits are currently being provided to parents after they return from parental leave?

What child care benefits are your competitors offering to employees?



Step 4: Be ready for objections.

Have a response planned out to counter any negative feedback from your employer.

Your boss says: *Offering child care as a benefit is too expensive.*

YOU SAY

There are plenty of options that are flexible and can be tailored to meet our needs. The cost of burnout, turnover and absenteeism is far greater than the cost of providing child care. Also, did you know that we can get federal and state reimbursements? The federal [government reimburses](#) 25% of qualified child care facility expenditures paid or incurred and our state offers [these tax credits](#).

Your boss says: *There's not enough parents at our company, so there would be limited impact.*

YOU SAY

Parents are a key part of many departments and teams (fill in from Step 2!) and their work impacts everyone else. There are also employees here that aren't yet parents but may be thinking about becoming parents, and offering this kind of benefit shows that our company is the kind of place where they can grow their family. Finally, many care benefits are not just for parents, but also for caregivers of aging parents and other members of their family.

Your boss says: *We're more focused on DEI initiatives right now.*

YOU SAY

Child care affects women disproportionately and especially women of color. If we are trying to get to a place where we have diverse voices and attract the best talent, we need representation of all genders, races and family structures.

Step 5: Present a plan.

Be a part of the solution with research at the ready. Don't leave space for your employer to procrastinate.

Here are next steps your employer can take:

- 1 Find a benefits broker
- 2 [Survey company employees](#) to understand their caregiving needs.
- 3 Learn about what other companies have done.
- 4 Contact the National Business Coalition for Child Care to meet experts and innovative child care providers, and join a community of practice.

Step 6: Follow up.

Recap the conversation in writing. Include a call to action, such as asking: What can I do to help support you as you search for the right child care provider for our company?

Share your resources. Offer to connect your manager or benefits department with others that have already gone through the process. Remove potential obstacles (or excuses!). Keep talking to other parents at your company about the conversation. Share this worksheet and ask them to have the conversation too!

Be sure to reach out and let us know how it goes!

Reach out to Moms First! We're here to support you as you navigate this journey, help you fill in the blanks, and even advocate for child care with your HR on your behalf. We also would love to hear how it went, learn from your experience pitching your employer, and celebrate your wins, whether big or small!



Connect with us at ShowUsYourChildCare@MomsFirst.US to get the conversation started!