



Study: Sandwich Generation Struggling With Dual Caregiver Responsibilities

Employers Offering Back-Up Care Maintain Engagement and Productivity

[WATERTOWN, Ma., December 17, 2008] A new study released today by The Consulting Practice at Bright Horizons indicates that members of the sandwich generation -- those with child and elder caregiving responsibilities -- are increasingly concerned about the balance of work and responding to the additional caregiving needs of older relatives. However, the same study confirms that employers who provide back-up child and elder care are helping to maintain productivity and commitment for those employees during times when there is a breakdown in care for loved ones -- children, parents, or in some cases, spouses.

One survey respondent said, "When a child or family member needs care and there is no one but you who can give it, it is impossible to focus on work. The stress and worry about care for your child or the elder who needs care is all-consuming. Without the availability of both the child care and the elder care I would have been unable to work. It is hands down, the most important benefit my company provides and is one of the many reasons I love my job. Without it, my productivity would be significantly affected."

The U.S. Census Bureau reports that approximately one of every eight Americans between the ages of 40 and 60 can be considered a part of the sandwich generation, and experts expect those figures to grow. Seventy percent of the survey respondents who reported having caregiving responsibilities for an adult/elder and for a child were between 31 and 45 years old and one third were with their employer for more than 10 years, placing them in a subsection of the workforce critical to employers because of the knowledge and leadership they bring.

Sandwich generation respondents say that they place a huge value on back-up care and that it has a direct impact on how engaged they are in their jobs and how they feel about their employer. Of the sandwich generation respondents:

- 77 percent are more productive because back-up care is available to them
- 77 percent are more likely to continue to work for their employer because back-up care is available to them

- 85 percent would be more likely to recommend their employer because of the back-up care benefit

The study is the latest in a decade-long series focused on work-life issues and surveyed more than 5,800 employees at approximately 400 organizations that offer back-up care to their employees. Employees who answered the survey used either well-child care (in a child care center or in the home), mildly ill child care (in the home), or adult/elder care (in the home).

Other key findings include:

- Respondents who have used adult/elder back-up care within the past six months saved an average of 10 work days
- 86 percent of respondents reported that in the last six months, back-up care enabled them to work on a day they otherwise would not have been able to and on average, back-up care enabled them to work four days during that time
- 87 percent of survey respondents said that back-up care reflects favorably on the company image
- 67 percent are more likely to stay with their employer because of access to back-up care

“Employees across all industries at all levels are faced with challenges as they try to integrate their personal and professional lives and as family members age and school schedules change, even the best laid plans can breakdown from time to time,” said Bright Horizons CEO Dave Lissy. “Benefits like back-up child and elder care truly ‘save’ both the employee and the employer. Back-up helps employees to manage the responsibilities of caring for loved ones and helps employers to limit losses in productivity and disruptions in the work routine.”

For more information visit: www.brighthorizons.com/lastingimpact.

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About Bright Horizons

Bright Horizons (www.brighthorizons.com) is the world’s leading provider of employer-sponsored child care, back-up care, education, and work/life solutions. The company operates more than 600 child care and early education centers across the U.S., in Europe, and Canada. Bright Horizons serves more than 70,000 children and more than 700 clients worldwide, including more than 95 of the FORTUNE 500 and 75 of the “Best Companies to Work for in America” as designated by *Working Mother* magazine.

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