



## **Study Links Work/Life Benefits to Employee Health and Well-Being**

*Groundbreaking Results Show How Investments in Child Care Can Cut Health Care Costs*

**[WATERTOWN, MA - - June 23, 2010]** A study of 4,000 working parents found that employees with child and dependent care supports provided by their employer report far less stress and significantly better health than employees without access to these benefits. These same employees are more engaged in their work and are less likely to report lost work productivity due to stress.

At a time when behavioral health problems cause more than 200 million missed work days each year in the U.S. at an estimated cost of \$105 billion, according to the National Business Group on Health, the results point to potentially substantial reductions in health care costs and lost revenue for organizations that promote a culture of work/life understanding and flexibility.

“The results of the study confirmed what leading employers know about the positive impact of dependent care supports on employee engagement and productivity – that engagement leads to highly motivated workers and strong business growth,” said Bright Horizons CEO, Dave Lissy. “But these new findings that highlight the impact these supports have on health and well-being are very compelling, particularly in light of rising health care costs and the continued focus on supporting employee health and wellness. Clearly, employers who offer these supports have healthier employees and in turn a healthier business.”

The study done by the Consulting Practice at Bright Horizons, in cooperation with Dr. Jamie Ladge of Northeastern University, revealed that there is a clear link between employer-sponsored dependent care supports and decreased stress and stress-related illnesses as well as decreased incidences of physical health issues such as headaches and digestive problems and more serious health issues like high blood pressure, heart disease and diabetes. Respondents with supports offered by their employer were 31 percent less likely to report lost productivity due to stress over the past month and reported 25 percent fewer personal health concerns due to stress.

Conversely, respondents without work/life supports offered by their employer:

- Were nearly a third more likely to report being down, depressed or hopeless in the last month
- Were 62 percent more likely to experience sleep issues that have an impact on their jobs
- Are three times as likely to be treated for high blood pressure and diabetes
- Spend 20 percent more time dealing with dependent care issues at work than those who do have access to work/life supports.

The study compared stress, health, and wellness outcomes for more than 4,000 working adults, one group with children under the age of 13 who do not have access to dependent care supports through their employer to another group of working adults with similar demographics who utilize employer-sponsored dependent care supports such as work-site child care, adult care, and “just in time” back-up care for well and mildly ill children.

The study also examined how work/life supports impacted employee engagement. Experts have indicated that highly-engaged employees are twice as likely to be top performers and companies with engaged employees see higher productivity and less turnover. And as the face of the workforce evolves, employers are looking to programs and tools, like work/life supports, to help them keep employees engaged.

“Respondents from organizations with dependent care supports were 45 percent more likely to agree or agree strongly with the key indicators that measure employee engagement, showing a very strong correlation between work/life supportiveness and engagement,” said Dr. Jamie Ladge of Northeastern University, whose research focuses on the intersection of careers, identity and work/life integration. “As the needs of the workforce continue to shift, to help keep employees engaged and achieving at their highest potential, organizations must create a culture that is supportive of the challenges that employees face and demonstrate that there is a shared goal of the employee succeeding at work and at home.”

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#### **About Bright Horizons Family Solutions**

**Bright Horizons Family Solutions**® ([www.brighthorizons.com](http://www.brighthorizons.com)) is the world’s leading provider of employer-sponsored child care, early education and work/life solutions. **Bright Horizons**® serves more than 800 clients across the U.S., Europe, and Canada, with programs including child care and early education, back-up care, elder care, college counseling, and work/life consulting. *The company operates more than 700 child care and early education centers across the U.S., in Europe, and Canada. Bright Horizons was recently named for the 11<sup>th</sup> time as one of FORTUNE magazine’s “100 Best Companies to Work for in America.”*

Contact:

Ilene Serpa  
[iserpa@brighthorizons.com](mailto:iserpa@brighthorizons.com)  
(617) 673-8044

Bridget Perry  
[bridget.perry@brighthorizons.com](mailto:bridget.perry@brighthorizons.com)  
(617) 673-8014