



BOSTON COLLEGE  
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CARROLL SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

# New Parents at the Workplace: How Organizations Can Create a Culture of Support

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- American Express
- Deloitte
- Goldman Sachs
- IKEA
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# EXECUTIVE BRIEFING HIGHLIGHTS

- New parents: today's demographics
- Supporting employees as they prepare for a new family member
- Parental leave in focus
- Innovative supports for new parents



# WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

- How organizations can create a culture of support for employees who become new parents
- Managerial behaviors and organizational resources that can facilitate this transition
- Best practices from leading companies
- Recommendations for developing a parental leave policy at your organization



# DEMOGRAPHICS FOR NEW PARENTS

## Millennials Today

- Millennials (18-34 years old) = 75.4 million people (2015)
- Millennials give birth to 80% of the 4 million US babies born each year
- Older millennials (25-34 years old) = 10.8 million households with children



# DEMOGRAPHICS FOR NEW PARENTS

## Millennials Today

- Getting married later: 27 years old for women, 29 for men versus 23 and 26 respectively (1990)
- Having children later: 26 for first child (2013) compared to 23 (1980)
- 78% of women ages 40-44 with a graduate degree have children compared to 70% in 1994



# DEMOGRAPHICS FOR NEW PARENTS

## Millennials Today

- Women working later into their pregnancies: 82% work within one month of their first birth compared to 35% (1960)
- Women return to work sooner: 73% on the job six months after their child's birth compared to 21% (1960)



# DEMOGRAPHICS FOR NEW PARENTS

## Millennials Today

Fathers want to be involved and present in their children's lives

- Report more work-life conflict than mothers with more than one-third identified as “conflicted”
- 74% want to spend more time with their children
- 46% want a less stressful job to help with managing their work and family lives





# PREPARING FOR PARENTAL LEAVE

What can managers do?

- Stay up-to-date on current paid leave benefits
- Be prepared to discuss organizational policies
- Talk with new parents about their plans as early as possible including:
  - Length of leave
  - Timelines for work transfer
  - Coverage
  - Informing key stakeholders



# PREPARING FOR PARENTAL LEAVE

What can managers do?

- Reinforce the value of new parents to the organization
- Affirm your support during this transition
- Consider initiating a discussion about career goals and future plans
- Not make assumptions about career aspirations based on new parent status
- Emphasize that taking leave will not have a negative impact on career



# PAID PARENTAL LEAVE AROUND THE GLOBE

Majority of countries around the world offer paid parental leave to working parents

- Among 193 United Nations members, only the US, Papua New Guinea, Suriname and a few South Pacific Island nations do not have a national paid parental leave law
- Out of 41 OECD countries, the US ranks last for paid parental leave with 31 countries offering paid paternity leave



# PAID PARENTAL LEAVE AROUND THE GLOBE

- At least 50 countries provide six months or more of paid maternity leave
- 70 countries guarantee paid paternity leave
- For more on global leave policies, see [the International Network on Leave Policies & Research](#):



# PARENTAL LEAVE IN THE US

- The FMLA (1993) is the only parental leave support for US workers with 12 weeks of job-protected unpaid leave
- Covers about 60% of employees in organizations with more than 50 employees
- 100 million US workers don't have access to paid family leave
- Congress considering (again), the FAMILY ACT, a national social insurance program providing up to 12 weeks of partially paid leave to:
  - Care for a newborn
  - Recover from a personal illness
  - Care for a seriously ill family member



# PARENTAL LEAVE IN THE US

- 14% of private-sector employees have access to paid parental leave
- In 2016, 21% of US employers offered paid maternity leave, a 9% increase from 2014
- 25% of new mothers return to work two weeks after giving birth
- 70% of dads use 10 days of leave or less



# PARENTAL LEAVE IN THE US

- Three states – California, New Jersey and Rhode Island – have passed paid family leave laws
- Washington state has been unable to implement its paid leave program due to budget constraints
- More than 40 municipalities and counties have paid leave programs



# **BENEFITS OF PAID PARENTAL LEAVE**

For Organizations:

- Promotes employee loyalty and engagement
- Enhances recruitment efforts as employees are attracted to organizations that care about them as people
- Allows co-workers -- who cover for employees on leave -- to learn new skills and explore new career opportunities





# BENEFITS OF PAID MATERNITY LEAVE

For Mothers:

- Reduces health care costs by encouraging higher rates of breastfeeding -- promoting infant health
- Lowers rates of maternal depression
- Increases the number of women in the workforce and improves their average wages
- Promotes employee loyalty and engagement



# BENEFITS OF PAID PATERNITY LEAVE

For Fathers and Children:

- Positively affects father-child bonding
- Increases father's involvement in care taking of their children
- Leads to higher satisfaction with parenting
- Results in higher cognitive test scores, better grades, lowers the likelihood of alcohol or drugs abuse or likelihood to become teen parents (children with involved fathers)



# CONSIDERING PARENTAL LEAVE AT YOUR ORGANIZATION

Want to move forward?

- No one size-fits-all approach – keep in mind your workforce, your business objectives and your culture
- Align with other paid-time-off and other leave programs in your organization
- Work with your legal department



# CONSIDERING PARENTAL LEAVE AT YOUR ORGANIZATION

Components of a successful program to consider:

- Includes mothers, fathers, and adoptive parents
- Compensates at 100% of current salary
- Offers medical/disability leave for birth mothers to recover from childbirth (generally six to eight weeks)
- Provides gender-neutral “bonding leave” for parents (mothers, fathers, same-sex partners)
- Offers paid time off in allotments similar to peers in your industry



# CONSIDERING PARENTAL LEAVE AT YOUR ORGANIZATION

Components of a successful program to consider:

- Applies to all employees -- at all levels, in all areas of the organization
- Results in no penalties for taking leave
- Encourages senior leaders to be role models and publicize their leave-taking
- Reflects the culture and values of your organization
- Trains managers on how to successfully guide and interact with employees
- Includes metrics to track utilization and outcomes important to your organization



# WHILE NEW PARENTS ARE ON LEAVE

Managers can:

- Ask in advance for permission to contact new parents during their leave and develop a shared understanding about some key issues:
  - Best times and ways to be in contact
  - Expectations around checking and replying to email/voicemail
- Reach out to new parents to congratulate them
- Find out if new parents are encountering any work-related issues while on leave or have concerns about their anticipated return to work



# WHILE NEW PARENTS ARE ON LEAVE

Managers can:

- Keep informed about organizational policies for paid/unpaid leaves and the FMLA
- Confer with new parents to confirm their return date and discuss possible work assignments and tasks (about a month before return)
- Review anticipated work schedule and possible use of flexible work arrangements for a time-limited or on-going period, if appropriate
- Remind about organizational supports for on-site, near-site, backup childcare/ resource and referral services



# INNOVATIVE SUPPORTS FOR NEW PARENTS

- Congratulatory Gift – The Dean of Faculty of Harvard University's Arts and Sciences sends a congratulatory note and baby books
- Baby Bonus – Facebook gives a \$4,000 bonus for new parents
- Mentoring Support – PwC matches new parents with experienced working parents





# INNOVATIVE SUPPORTS FOR NEW PARENTS

- Lactation Support – EY provides access to a lactation consultant, free pumps and breast milk shipping kits
- Reduced Hours – Vodafone allows new mothers to reduce hours to 30 hours/week for six months while receiving full pay
- New Parent Coaching – MetLife offers coaching for new parents as they prepare for leave, throughout their leave and upon their return



# NEW PARENTS RETURN FROM LEAVE

Managers can:

- Welcome new parents back to work by scheduling formal and informal meetings to assist with the transition (encourage team members to do the same)
- Endorse gradual onboarding to ease the readjustment back to work
- Ask if work plans and career goals have changed since the leave
- Inquire about the adjustment back to work (at regular intervals) and offer organizational resources, if needed



# BEST PRACTICE ORGANIZATIONS

**KPMG LLP** has established the following policies and programs:

- Parents who KNOW
- Lactation Program
- Monthly Online Meeting for New Parents
- New Parent Career Coaching



# BEST PRACTICE ORGANIZATIONS

**KPMG LLP** has established the following policies and programs:

- Time Off for Primary Caregivers
- Child, Back-up Child, and Elder Care
- Alternative Work Arrangements
- Guidance for People Management Leaders (PMLs)



# BEST PRACTICE ORGANIZATIONS

Goldman Sachs offers over 35 dependent care resources through internal supports, vendor partners and benefit plan providers. Highlights of these resources include:

- Expectant Parent Coordinator (EPC) Program
- Strategies for Working Parents
- Resilience Workshop for Working Mothers
- Family Resilience Event Series



# BEST PRACTICE ORGANIZATIONS

American Express recently made a number of market-leading changes to their Parental Leave Policy and family benefits in the US

- 20 weeks of fully-paid parental leave for both mothers and fathers welcoming a child through birth, adoption or surrogacy
- Birthing mothers generally receive an extra 6 to 8 weeks for medically necessary leave
- Reimbursement of expenses to help with the cost of adoption or surrogacy and coverage of reproductive/fertility treatments



# BEST PRACTICE ORGANIZATIONS

American Express recently made a number of market-leading changes to their Parental Leave Policy and family benefits in the US

- Access to a parent concierge and 24-hour lactation consultant
- Mothers traveling for business can ship their breast milk home for free



# BEST PRACTICE ORGANIZATIONS

## Deloitte's family leave program

- Men and women receive up to 16 weeks of fully paid family leave to support a range of life events impacting them and their families
- Mothers who give birth to a child are eligible for up to six months of paid time off

Deloitte found that 88% of US workers would value a broader paid leave policy to include family care beyond parental leave





# BEST PRACTICE ORGANIZATIONS

IKEA's new Parental Leave policy ensures that all co-workers are able to have an opportunity to bond with new additions to their families

- Covers salaried and hourly workers, both mothers and fathers, and adoptive and foster parents
- Co-workers who have been with IKEA for more than one year can take up to three months of paid leave
- Co-workers with three or more years tenure can take up to four months of paid leave



# BEST PRACTICE ORGANIZATIONS

**Shawmut Design and Construction** recently launched a four-week Paid Family Leave benefit, a leading-edge offering in the construction industry

- Paid Family Leave provides both men and women up to one month of paid leave following a birth, adoption or foster care placement, or to care for a family member who has a serious health condition
- Shawmut Flex allows all employees to flex their time, condense the work week, shift work hours, work part-year, shift trade, and telecommute



# CONCLUSION

Appears to be tremendous growth in the number of organizations offering paid leave programs with continued expansion expected in the future

- Benefits of creating a culture of support for new parents
  - Positively impacts the work experience
  - Increases retention, morale and productivity
  - Creates a gender-diverse workforce with an increased chance for gender equality
- Organizations can create a culture of support by:
  - Guiding/educating managers to handle the transition
  - Offering new parents the resources to assist them



# FOR MORE INFORMATION

- [Executive Briefing](#)
- [Reference List](#)

