



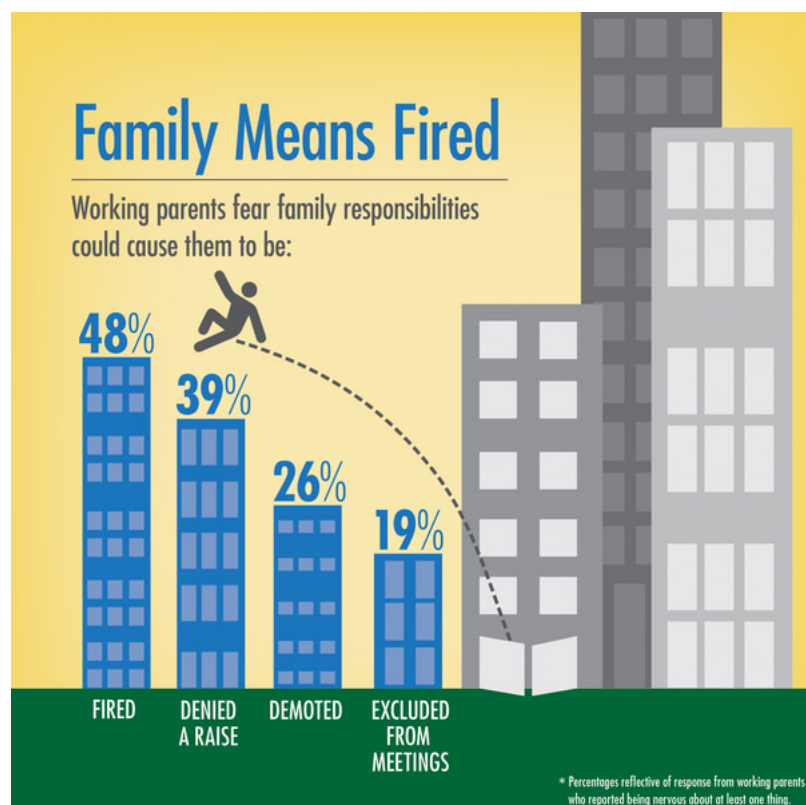
## New Study Reveals Working Parents Fear Family Responsibilities Could Cost them their Job

June 24, 2014

### Modern Family Index shows Employees Struggling; Feel They can't always be Honest with Supervisors

WATERTOWN, Mass., June 24, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- A new study of working men and women across the U.S. reveals that while progress has been made over time, many working moms and dads still fear that their family responsibilities may cause them to experience significant challenges at work. Those who do feel supported by their employer report strong loyalty to their employer.

To view the multimedia assets associated with this release, please click: <http://www.multivu.com/mnr/7227551-bright-horizons-modern-family-employees-struggling-responsibilities>



The *Modern Family Index*, commissioned by Bright Horizons Family Solutions® (NYSE: BFAM), explored what it means to be a working parent today and revealed that while much has changed about how parents approach family obligations and commitments, many employees still feel like they can't be honest with their supervisors about family responsibilities.

#### Key findings, outlined below, include:

- Even in 2014, working parents fear family responsibilities could get them fired
- Work/family balance is not only a women's issue; fathers are just as stressed and insecure about work and family conflicts as mothers
- Working parents are willing to give up valuable pay and health benefits for reliable, quality child care
- Working parents are almost never on vacation, most using paid time off for family responsibilities instead of taking a trip or relaxing
- According to the survey, 80 percent of modern families have two working parents in the home, 55 percent have two or more children, almost a third of families are caring for an elderly relative or expect to be in the next five to 10 years, 13

percent are caring for a child with special needs, and seven percent are parenting in a committed same-sex relationship.

"For more than three decades now, there has been an ongoing dialogue about the need for family-friendly workplaces, and so many leading employers have worked to create cultures that foster a healthy integration between work and life," said Bright Horizons® CEO David Lissy, who joined President Obama at this week's White House Summit on Working Families. "However, it is clear that working parents throughout the U.S. are still struggling to manage all of their responsibilities, and many still feel that they cannot be honest with their supervisors about needing to be available and active in their family lives. This is causing undue stress on mothers and fathers alike and ultimately hurts productivity."

The Modern Family Index uncovers the challenges working parents in America face today as they try to meet employer expectations and family obligations. According to the survey, working parents are looking to their employers as a main source of support so they can be their best at work and at home. In fact, more than four in ten (41 percent) don't feel they can be a successful working parent without a supportive boss – a factor second only to a spouse/partner who shares in the household duties (49 percent).

When employees are worried or distracted, factors key to organizational success like employee productivity, retention and engagement suffer. Research shows when employers can eliminate sources of distraction for employees, they benefit from engaged and committed workers. Employers who do this best are those that recognize their employee's obligations both in and out of work, and help them to fulfill those commitments.

#### **DOES FAMILY MEAN FIRED?**

**According to the *Modern Family Index*, working parents admit they have feared that their family responsibilities could negatively impact their career and could actually get them fired or demoted.** They also worry that because they have family obligations, they will not be assigned key projects and that they will not be invited to important meetings, hampering their ability to grow professionally.

Six in ten (60%) working parents have at least one work-related concern caused by family responsibilities:

- 48 percent of working parents admit one of their concerns due to their family responsibilities is that they could get fired
- 39 percent fear being denied a raise because of family responsibilities
- 37 percent fear they will never get promoted again while 26 percent worry about a demotion because of family responsibilities
- 22 percent worry that family commitments will cost them key projects at work
- 19 percent believe they won't be invited to important meetings because of family obligations
- To make sure family responsibilities don't creep into the work day, working parents report spending more than half (51 percent) of paid time off dealing with family responsibilities instead of taking a trip or relaxing at home

#### **WORKING PARENTS SOMETIMES MAY LIE TO GET BY**

While many would argue family responsibilities and work/life balance are accepted and commonplace, employees today remain as nervous to bring up family-related issues as work-related issues with their employers and in some cases are even more hesitant to talk about family obligations. Because of this, **working parents admit to not being truthful about their family obligations.**

- Employees today remain just as nervous to bring up a number of key family-related issues (51 percent) as some important work related problems (52 percent) with their employers
- Nearly a quarter (23 percent) of working parents admit to lying or bending the truth to their boss about family responsibilities that get in the way of work
- Almost one-in-three (31 percent) have faked being sick to meet family obligations
- Close to four-in-ten (39 percent) admit that one of the things they would be nervous to tell their boss is that they need to miss a work event for a family commitment
- More than half (56 percent) report that one of the topics they would hesitate to ask their boss about is reducing hours, working remotely or placing boundaries on responding to calls or emails.

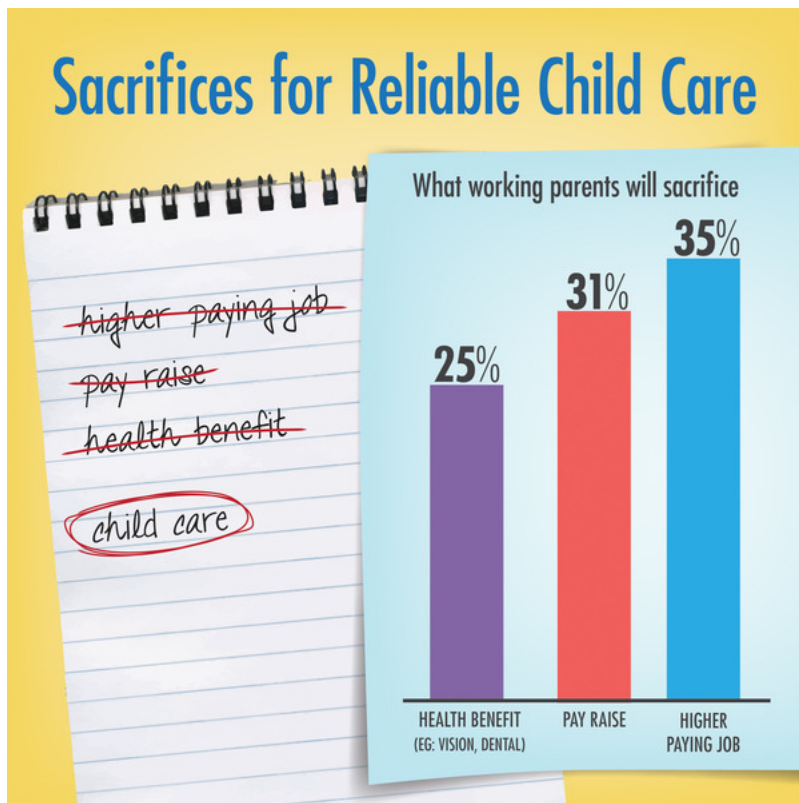
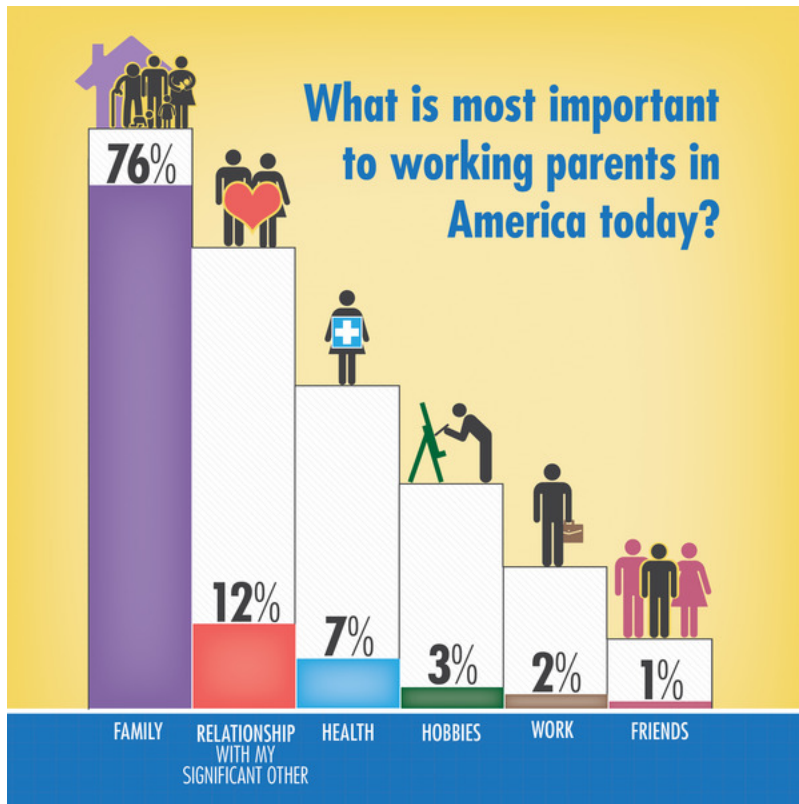
#### **DADS: NO LONGER A WOMEN'S ISSUE**

The struggle to successfully manage a career and a family is no longer a stress primarily felt by women. **Men surveyed admit to being stressed out by child care needs during the work day as well as their ability to achieve a good work/life balance, and are just as likely as women to say that family responsibilities could jeopardize their career.**

- Nearly half (46 percent) of dads say that one of their daily stressors is child care needs during the workday (vs. 52 percent of moms)
- Nearly 1 in 3 dads (29 percent) have faked being sick in order to meet a family obligation (vs. 32 percent moms)
- Close to 1 in 4 men (22 percent) have lied to their boss about family responsibilities (vs. 23 percent moms)
- Almost two-thirds of dads (63 percent) are nervous to tell their boss about some of their big family commitments (vs. 68 percent moms)
- Fathers are just as likely to be nervous to tell their boss they need time off for a family matter (39 percent) than that they made a mistake on a work project (36 percent)
- 42 percent of working fathers say trying to achieve "work/life balance" today is stressful, similar to the amount who say saving for retirement (46 percent) and managing personal health (37 percent) is stressful
- More than one-in-three dads (34 percent) have asked their employer for more flexibility or modification with their work schedule to meet obligations to their children (vs. 42 percent moms.)

#### **THEY'D TRADE IT ALL FOR QUALITY CHILD CARE**





# ONE-IN-FIVE

working parents worry  
that caring for their own  
parents will be a reality  
in the next 5-10 years.



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