



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

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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>

Family Means Fired. Working parents fear family responsibilities could cause them to be: fired (48%), denied a raise (39%), demoted (26%), or excluded from meetings (19%).

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-10 (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

Even though working parents report becoming better employees in many ways since having children, **working parents continue to stress about child care needs during a typical workday and would be willing to forego higher paying jobs, vacation time and other benefits for reliable child care.**

Forty-nine percent of parents stress about child care emergencies or general commitments to their children while 85 percent of working parents say they would be willing to make at least one sacrifice in order to secure reliable child care:

- More than one-in-three of those parents (35 percent) would turn down a higher-paying job or give up their next pay raise (31 percent) in return for reliable child care
- 25 percent would give up one current health benefit, such as vision or dental
- 50 percent of working fathers and 41 percent of working mothers would give up one week of paid vacation for a year for dependable child care

"We work with hundreds of leading employers who have taken these issues seriously and have built supportive cultures. In 2014, supporting working families is not just a nice to do but rather a must do for employers looking to sustain competitive advantage within the markets which they compete," said Lissy. "Working women and men have whole lives and they have a lot of responsibilities outside of work. We know that employees who feel like they have the freedom to manage their family responsibilities and to be involved at home are more likely to be more productive when they are at work. That is good for the employee, the employer, the family and our nation as a whole."

About the Bright Horizons Modern Family Index

The Modern Family Index is an Internet-based survey conducted by Kelton Global from April 29 – May 6, 2014. The sample size of 1,005 American respondents, ages 18 and over who work at least part time and have at least one child under age 18 in the home, at the 95 percent confidence level would equate to + or – 3.1 percent margin of error had this been a random sample. **Note: Please refer to the survey as the Bright Horizons Modern Family Index.*

About Bright Horizons Family Solutions®

Bright Horizons Family Solutions® is a leading provider of high-quality child care, early education and other services designed to help employers and families better address the challenges of work and life. The Company provides center-based full service child care, back-up dependent care and educational advisory services to more than 900 clients across the United States, the United Kingdom, Ireland, the Netherlands, Canada and India, including more than 130 FORTUNE 500 companies and more than 80 of *Working Mother* magazine's 2013 "100 Best Companies for Working Mothers". Bright Horizons is one of FORTUNE magazine's "100 Best Companies to Work For" and is one of the UK's Best Workplaces as designated by the Great Place to Work® Institute. Bright Horizons is headquartered in Watertown, MA. The Company's web site is located at www.brighthorizons.com.

Working Parents Can't Catch a Break. More than half of time (51%) is spent dealing with family responsibilities while taking paid vacation.

What is most important to working parents in America today?

Sacrifices for Reliable 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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