



Parents Are Not Alright – and Haven't Been for Awhile

September 24, 2024

Surgeon General's Advisory and Modern Family Index Data Shows Why Companies Must Help Ease Childcare Burden

NEWTON, Mass.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Sep. 24, 2024-- Since 2014, Bright Horizons has explored the experiences and sentiments of working parents as they've navigated balancing work with family and life responsibilities through its Modern Family Index (MFI) research report. The recent Surgeon General Advisory, [Parents Under Pressure](#), mirrors the findings of the latest MFI report published in May of this year.

The 10th annual edition of the [Modern Family Index](#), an independent study commissioned by Bright Horizons (NYSE: BFAM) and conducted by The Harris Poll, surveyed 2,000 working parents on their current state of mind and found:

- 34% feel they're working too many hours
- 63% worry they're unable to give their all to their families
- 58% report they're not giving 100% of themselves at work
- 43% feel stressed because they are not being paid well enough for the work they're doing

While nearly half of the MFI survey respondents (46%) put support with paying for child care atop their wish lists of helpful benefits/supports — even above unlimited remote work (40%) and more flexible work hours (45%) — less than a third (29%) have such assistance. The situation is most concerning for the large number of parents — more than a third (35%) — who have very little/not much support outside of work for their roles as employee, parent, and caretaker.

The Surgeon General's latest advisory details a variety of factors contributing to the state of mind and stress levels of parents today, including worrying about care for their younger children while they are at work. The Modern Family Index found that working parents are prioritizing their families, and 70% say working for a company that has benefits to support work/life balance is “non-negotiable”.

“Parental stress is nothing new — however, the obstacles facing today's parents are growing, particularly when it comes to childcare,” said Stephen Kramer, CEO of Bright Horizons. “The fact is that most Americans work in an environment where they don't receive family supports. The Modern Family Index findings, coupled with the Surgeon General's advisory, should be a stark wake-up call to all employers that they need to move quickly and substantively to offer these benefits as part of their talent retention and acquisition strategies.”

Forward-thinking companies like Bank of America, Toyota, Walmart, Goldman Sachs, Hormel, and JP Morgan Chase — to name a few — recognize the value in providing family-friendly benefits for their employees. These benefits — which can span childcare, eldercare and even pet care — help their employees reduce stress so that they can be more productive both at work and at home. These organizations are listening to their workforces and tailoring their benefits accordingly to build caring cultures where people will want to stay long term.

About the Bright Horizons Modern Family Index

The Modern Family Index is an independent study commissioned by Bright Horizons and is not affiliated with the Surgeon General's Office.

The MFI research was conducted online in the U.S. by The Harris Poll on behalf of Bright Horizons among 2,004 adults aged 18 and over who are employed with children under 18. The survey was conducted from January 25th – February 2nd, 2024. Data are weighted where necessary by age by gender, race/ethnicity, region, education, marital status, household size, employment status, household income, and smoking status to bring them in line with their actual proportions in the population.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in our surveys. The sampling precision of Harris online polls is measured by using a Bayesian credible interval. For this study, the sample data is accurate to within + 3.1 percentage points using a 95% confidence level. This credible interval will be wider among subsets of the surveyed population of interest. All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to other multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including, but not limited to coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments.

About Bright Horizons Family Solutions Inc.

Bright Horizons® is a leading global provider of high-quality early education and child care, back-up care, and workforce education services. For more than 35 years, we have partnered with employers to support workforces by providing services that help working families and employees thrive personally and professionally. Bright Horizons operates more than 1,000 early education and child care centers in the United States, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Australia and India, and serves more than 1,450 of the world's leading employers. Bright Horizons' early education and

child care centers, back-up child and elder care, and workforce education programs help employees succeed at each life and career stage. For more information, go to www.brighthorizons.com.

View source version on [businesswire.com](https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20240924802002/en/): <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20240924802002/en/>

Laura McDowell

Laura.McDowell@brighthorizons.com

Source: Bright Horizons Family Solutions Inc.