

## **WOMEN'S BUREAU CONFERENCE CALL**

**NOVEMBER 2000**

### **BACK UP CHILD CARE**

**Host:** Jackie Cooke, Women's Bureau Regional Director, Region 1

**Speakers:** Andrea Stidsen, Dir. of Employee Assistance, Partners Health Care, Boston

Barbara Marcus, Director of Parents in a Pinch. Brookline MA

Melissa Hennessy, Human Resources Specialist, Massachusetts Medical Society, Waltham, MA

### **SUMMARY OF TOPIC**

This call focuses on backup child care options for medical employers and employees in the Boston, MA area. This first option discussed is contracting with an outside vendor such as "**Parents in a Pinch**" to provide child care in the employees own home. This option would work for regular backup or mildly ill care. As part of this option the vendor also located family child care homes and child care centers that would provide backup care if the employee were not comfortable with having a provider in their home. The second option is a dedicated backup center located on-site in the corporate headquarters using an outside vendor such as "**Children First**". This center is also offering care during non-school day and holidays. Parents make a co-payment of \$15 a day to use the center and usage is capped at 20 uses per year. The third option is a consortium backup child care center; in this case one partner provided the space and multiple partners provided the capital to build the center. The consortium partners buy slots from the center on a per year basis at a cost of \$12,000 per slot per year. The user pays \$4.00 per slot on top of the purchase price to cover the cost of providing back up care.

### **KEY POINTS**

- Surveying employees and conducting a feasibility study is highly recommended before proceeding.
- Investigate current backup solutions in your area and the costs of providing that care.
- Consider the pros and cons of providing care in-house vs. hiring a vendor to provide the care.
- Research what your competitors are doing before presenting options to upper management.

- Build in a on-going marketing campaign into the operating costs to ensure the program is utilized.

### **ADVANTAGES/SUCSESSES**

- Reduces absenteeism due to break down in child care.
- Serves a broad number of employees and age groups.
- Increases visibility for the employer as being family friendly and can be used a recruitment tool.

### **DISADVANTAGES/ROAD BLOCKS**

- Utilization may be low in the beginning.
- The cost for using the care may prohibit mid level and entry level employees from using the care.
- It is difficult to meet all of the employees needs and preferences in the type of care provided.

### **SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION**

#### **RESOURCES**

- Karen Furia, Women's Bureau Regional Director, Region 10 [furia-karen@dol.gov](mailto:furia-karen@dol.gov)
- The Women's Bureau <http://www.dol.gov/wb/>
- Kelly Tyler, Child Care Resources, Business Liaison [tyler@childcare.org](mailto:tyler@childcare.org)
- Child Care Resources, King County, Washington [www.childcare.org](http://www.childcare.org)
- Washington State Child Care Resource and Referral [www.childcarenet.org](http://www.childcarenet.org)
- Children First <http://www.childrenfirst.com/>
- The Child Care Bureau <http://nccic.org>
- Child Care in Health Care <http://www.childcareinhealthcare.org/>
- Alliance of Work Life Professionals <http://www.awlp.org>
- The Fatherhood Project <http://www.fatherhoodproject.org>
- Life Work Strategies <http://www.nationalpartnership.org>
- National Partnership for Women & Families <http://www.nationalpartnership.org>
- Boston College Center for Work & Family <http://www.bc.edu/cwf>
- Child Care in Health Care <http://www.childcareinhealthcare.org/>
- Labor Project for Working Families <http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~iir/workfam/home.html>
- Blue Suit Mom <http://www.bluesuitmom.com/>
- National Network for Child Care <http://www.nncc.org/>
- Gil Gordon' Site on Telecommuting <http://www.gilgordon.com>
- The Green Commute <http://www.cleanair.org>
- Child Care Partnership Project <http://www.nccic.org/ccpartnerships>

- Woman's-Work <http://www.womans-work.com>
- Human Resources Executive/Cornell <http://www.workindex.com>
- Families and Work Institute <http://www.familiesandwork.org>
- The Life Station <http://www.thelifestation.com>
- Work Life Benefits <http://www.wlb.com>

*The Women's Bureau Region X office and Child Care Resources of King County has compiled this "Work and Family Virtual Conference Call Summary Sheets" for information sharing and does not endorse any programs or organizations included in it. These summaries include information on programs and policies that employers have tried or ideas and thoughts that work and work/life professionals have shared.*