



Employers' Quarterly

Spring 2003

YOUR CHILD CARE RESOURCE FOR WORK/FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

What is Work and Family Balance?

Balance is experienced differently by everyone and can be identified by some or all of the following feelings:

- You have enough time for family and work
- Life "flows" and feels relatively effortless
- When something in your life breaks down (baby sitter gets sick, the car breaks) you have the resources to cope
- You are on the path you want to be personally and professionally for the future

Balance has some characteristics:

- It is not a constant, it comes and goes as things change in life
- It has to be worked at

The process of seeking balance can be stimulating and a true learning experience about what is important to you

Source: www.bluesuitmom.com



Providing Resources that Strengthen and Support Children and their Families

Franklin Templeton Investments named Family Friendly Employer of the Year

The City of Dublin and Child Care Links recognized Franklin Templeton Investments with the Family Friendly Employer Award at the Dublin Chamber of Commerce St. Patrick's Day Membership Luncheon at the Monarch Hotel on March 17, 2003.

The San Mateo based company, which has offices in Dublin, was recognized for outstanding benefits, which help their employees balance work and family life. Employee benefits include an Employee Assistance/Life Management Program; Adoption Assistance; Baby Steps Program; Baby Mutual Fund Program; Take Your Child To Work Day; Medical Insurance, family coverage available at a low cost monthly co-payment; Dental Insurance, dental coverage to full-time employees and eligible dependants at no cost; Vision Plan; Flexible Spending Plan; Flexible Work Options; Pet Insurance.

Vice President of Human Resources, Sharon Geary, accepted the award on behalf of Franklin Templeton Investments, and shared some of the company's strategies for addressing increases in health care costs.

Past Dublin recipients include Sybase, Kidango, Dublin Library and Dublin Unified School District. Awards for Livermore and Pleasanton will be presented at separate events, however you can submit nominations for those cities now. The following criteria are used to select the Family Friendly Employer of the Year:

- The employer recognizes the dual responsibilities that employees have to their families and their jobs, and offers strong support to help employees balance those responsibilities.
- The employer demonstrates a strong commitment to employees by offering benefits and/or policies that support and strengthen working families.
- The employer supports or sponsors community programs that benefit children and working families.

To be eligible, employers must have a location in Livermore or Pleasanton. Employer size and/or financial commitment are not a consideration. Nominations for the Family Friendly Employer Award should be directed to Child Care Links, Attention: Shauna Brown, 1020 Serpentine Lane, Suite 102, Pleasanton, CA 94566, or e-mail to shauna@childcarelinks.org, or call (925) 249-3925.

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Family Friendly Employer Profile

Franklin Templeton Investments

Dublin Employees: 200

Company Type:
Global Investment Management Organization

Benefits:

- Employee Assistance/Life Management Program includes
- Adoption Assistance- Adoption Assistance Plan assists employees in paying expenses incurred when adopting a child. Full-time employees (who work 30+ hours per week) are eligible for plan coverage 6 months after their date of hire.
- Baby Steps Program- Multitude of programs and services that can assist employees in welcoming a new family member. Baby Steps program is designed to explain the many details of maternity leave, the adoption assistance request process, signing up new dependents for benefits and more. The program is available to expecting parents, both mothers and fathers, in the second or third trimester of a pregnancy, as well as adopting parents.
- Baby Mutual Fund Program
- Take Your Child To Work Day
- Flexible Spending Plan
- Flexible Spending Account
- Flexible Work Options

Source:
www.franklintempleton.com

Commuter Check: Benefits to Employers

Commuter Check is a tax-free employee benefit that avoids all payroll-related taxes. To give the same after-tax value of a \$35 Commuter Check would require a raise of more than \$55, which would cost the employer \$60 when all payroll taxes are included.

Commuter Check is a fully deductible business expense at the federal level, which means an employer pays less than the full face value. For example, a \$35 voucher costs about \$24 after tax deductions based on a 30 percent company tax rate.

When Commuter Checks are purchased with employees' pre-tax salary, employers save money from reduced payroll taxes (comprised of employer-paid FICA, unemployment, workers compensation, disability pension or other payroll-driven costs), which amount to approximately 10 percent.

The program is easy to administer, and the record keeping is simple. Employers order Commuter Checks by mail and distribute them to employees. Employers maintain copies of order forms and cancelled company checks for tax purposes; no federal, state or local tax forms are required.

By offering Commuter Checks, employers enhance compensation packages, save costs of employee parking, help reduce traffic congestion, enhance company image and improve employee morale.

Excerpted from: www.mtc.ca.gov

Telecommuting Trends and Tips

According to a new survey of 2,000 adults conducted by the Kensington Technology Group, six percent of American workers now telecommute to work regularly, and the number will more than double by the year 2005. The *Kensington Telecommuting Survey* also found that nearly three-quarters of telecommuters feel more productive when working from home or on the road than in the office. And 60 per cent estimated they accomplish "at least 30 per cent more work in the same amount of time" when they telecommute rather than work in the office. According to the survey, 8.2 million Americans are telecommuters - defined as those who work from home more than three days a month or from the road more than seven days a month.

According to Dr. Charlie Grantham of the Institute for the Study of Distributed Work in Walnut Creek, CA who analyzed the survey results, the number of telecommuters will climb to 18 million by the year 2005. He attributed this to the fact the current workplace is "being driven by the increased use of technology" which is increasing productivity, improving recruitment and retention, and "creating new work styles." Dr. Grantham said the results underscore the need for employers to address the unique issues involved in telecommuting.

Kensington Technology and the Institute for the Study of Distributed Work offer the following tips for employers and the employees who telecommute:

1. There should be a written agreement between the employer and employee outlining the terms of the telecommuting arrangement so that expectations can be met.
2. Each employee should have a main contact person in the central office.
3. Employees should attempt to replicate the office workspace in their home.
4. Employers should provide formal training to employees on how to telecommute productively and provide information on how to operate computers safely and set up an ergonomically correct workplace.

Employees should be encouraged to buy a surge protector and back up files regularly to prevent loss of data.

The Advantages of Work/Family Programs

What are work/life business practices? Work/life business practices, also known as family-friendly practices, are programs that a business can implement in order to provide its employees with a greater work/life balance while strengthening the bottom line. These practices offer a full spectrum of alternatives, ranging anywhere from casual day Fridays to flexible work arrangements and childcare programs (often at no or little upfront cost).

Despite a growing awareness of the tension between the demands of work and family, every business must decide individually how to respond and what changes to make. Some managers may be unwilling or unable to make changes and resist requests from employees. Some employees hesitate asking their manager for flexibility or programs for child care issues for fear of reprisal. Your ability to successfully combine work and family will largely depend on who your manager is and your company's attitudes and policies. You may want to inform your manager that addressing employees' needs for help around child care issues can bring real business benefits:

- Rise in productivity and job performance
- Lower turnover
- Recruitment and retention tool
- Enhanced company image, become the employer of choice

Source: The Daily Parent and Montgomery Work-Life Alliance

Simplify Your Life

Give yourself an extra 10 minutes. Instead of always rushing, start out 10 minutes early instead of waiting until the last possible moment. You will find yourself with plenty of time to spare and less stressed out in the process.

Create a "selfish" ritual. When you have what you need in an emotional sense, you have plenty left over for others. Rituals can be as simple as squeezing exercise into your daily routine, browsing bookstores or having a quiet cup of coffee before work. The point is, it's your time -- a special part of the day reserved just for you.

Speak softly. When you speak too quickly and with a loud voice, the energy you send out into the world is frantic and nervous. People around you will feel pressured and slightly agitated. Speak more softly and you may discover that you begin to feel calmer and less stressed. Next, you'll discover that everyone around you will quickly start to quiet down, too.

Embrace change. Truth is, everything is in a constant state of change -- our bodies, homes, children. We can fight and resist change or surrender and embrace it. The problem with resistance is it's a losing battle -- 100% of the time. When we try to resist the inevitable, we cause ourselves great pain and sorrow and miss out on a great deal of potential joy. When we embrace change, we open the door to a far more peaceful existence. Then life becomes more of an adventure and each step seems more special and important.

Don't dramatize deadlines. A lot of deadline stress comes not from the deadlines themselves, but instead from the energy wasted thinking about them, wondering whether we'll meet them, feeling sorry for ourselves and, perhaps most of all, commiserating with others about them. Working toward your goal without the interference of negative mental energy makes any job more manageable.

Source: "Don't Sweat the Small Stuff: How to Simplify Your Life." by Richard Carlson, PhD

Top Secrets of the Nation's Chief Executives

The people who rise to the top of any organization have developed excellent skills for managing time and organizing workloads.

Communicate with subordinates without making others envious or angry.

To be fully informed about any issue, you need to gather the best information from the most knowledgeable people.

Hold regular meetings and hold staffers to promises.

Nothing is more important than thorough and accurate information. But don't let the process of fact gathering obscure its primary purpose -- to help you make good decisions.

Hand off tasks -- then monitor their progress.

The key to effective management is not knowing all the details, but knowing that the right person is taking care of them.

Use small teams to tackle big projects. Members of teams often have a hard time seeing beyond their own narrow issues and concerns.

Insist that memos be held to one page.

Information overload can wear down even the most energetic executive. If memos grow too long, you may not bother searching for the vital nuggets. Every key decision-maker needs information, but you cannot succeed if you're being crushed by trivia.

Source: Time-Management Secrets from Former Commanders in Chief William Doyle

Child Care Links Services

Child Care Links is your resource for work/family issues. As a smart business owner/manager, you know that safe, quality child care is a concern for today's working parents. Making a decision about how your company will address this issue is important.

Child Care Links, a 501(3)(c) non-profit organization, works to educate business owners/managers about how to support their employees as they balance work and family responsibilities. Child Care Links offers the following services:

- **Consulting Services:** Employee Needs Assessment, Business Assessment, Cost-benefit Analysis, Dependent Care Assistance Programs
- **Enhanced Referrals** (individual support and guidance through the child care search process)
- **"Brown Bag Lunches"** on site at your business on topics such as Choosing Child Care, Parenting, and Child Development

For more information, please contact Shauna Brown at (925) 249-3925.

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Development Issues*

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We're on the WEB!
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Child Care Links and Local Investments in Child Care (LINCC) address Dublin City Council

Child Care Links and Local Investments in Child Care (LINCC) addressed the Dublin City Council with a presentation on child care economics and land use. LINCC, a program of the Alameda Child Care Planning Council, recently published two reports entitled *The Economic Impact of Child Care in Alameda County* and *Land Use for Child Care Facilities*. These reports contain information specific to the child care industry and permitting practices in the City of Dublin, as well as all cities throughout the county.

Ellen Dektar of LINCC presented the reports' findings. Specific strategies for City of Dublin to consider were presented to help address the child care needs of its current and future residents. There are many new and innovative projects in the Bay Area that have been designed to address these demands.

Dublin has an estimated/proposed 6,000 units of housing planned for Eastern Dublin and around the BART station. Child Care Links' staff urged the city to consider the impact these new families would bring to the already stressed child care system in Dublin. The stock of available infant and school-age care is so low, that parents have little or no choice when selecting programs.

The reports are available in their entirety by visiting www.co.alameda.ca.us/childcare/reports

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