



Parenting in the Workplace Institute

Bringing New Life to the Workplace

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Frequently Asked Questions About Babies-at-Work Programs

Won't the babies be disruptive to other employees or to clients?

The more than 200 organizations that regularly allow babies at work have found that babies in formal workplace programs tend to be extremely quiet and content. Healthy babies cry only if their needs are not being met, and the faster their needs are met, the less they cry. Policy provisions require parents to be highly responsive to their babies, so babies' needs are met at the slightest sound of distress. Babies at work frequently have lots of physical contact with parents and coworkers, which also minimizes crying. Babies love watching other people, so interacting with parents and their coworkers provides rich stimulation that prevents babies from crying out of boredom. In the rare event that a baby cries for more than a few seconds, the policy requires parents to quickly take the baby to a separate area to ensure that coworkers are not disturbed.

How can a parent possibly work and care for babies at the same time?

As any new parent knows, having a baby is probably the fastest way to learn more efficient patterns to accomplish necessary tasks. Parents at home with a new baby rapidly learn how to get their day-to-day tasks done more quickly and effectively, and they often find that they get more done during a baby's hour-long nap than they ever did in two hours of pre-baby time. Parents who bring their babies to work are highly motivated to ensure that they are allowed to continue doing so. As a result, parents quickly learn to be more efficient at their jobs so that they can successfully complete tasks while keeping their babies happy. This increased efficiency continues and benefits the company long after the baby ages out of a program.

What if other employees play with the baby all day instead of working?

Policy provisions ensure that coworkers can only interact with the babies as long as it does not negatively impact their work. Although more attention is paid to a new baby during her first few days in the workplace, once people have gotten to know the newcomer, the normal routine of the workplace quickly returns. After a baby program has been implemented in a company, the novelty factor wears off. The presence of happy babies greatly increases morale for parents and other employees, leading to increased overall productivity. Coworkers will commonly play with or hold the babies during work breaks if they're having a bad day. This practice greatly decreases feelings of stress and tension, which improves overall productivity.

What if our customers think that we're being unprofessional by allowing babies at work?

Although this is a common concern prior to implementing a babies-at-work program, companies with these programs have received overwhelmingly positive feedback from clients and customers as a result of their baby program. Companies in which the babies are in public areas (such as being held by parent-tellers in credit unions or by a cashier in a retail store) have noticed that customers actually tend to come into the establishment more often to visit the babies, which leads to increased revenues. Customers also tend to assume that the company's dedication to its employees in having a babies-at-work program is an indicator that the company also treats its customers well. Companies frequently are able to obtain positive media coverage about their babies-at-work programs, resulting in free publicity for the organization.

WHO HAS SUCCESSFULLY BROUGHT BABIES TO WORK?

SAMPLING OF POSITIONS	SAMPLING OF INDUSTRIES
Office and Cubicle Workers	Accounting Firms
Credit Union Tellers	Baby/Family-Related Services
Lawyers and Paralegals	Book Wholesalers
Management Consultants	Chambers of Commerce and Town Agencies
Logistics Firm Employees	Consulting Firms
Call Center Employees	Credit Unions
Secretaries	Dance Studios
Retail Store Employees	Design and Manufacturing Firms
Cashiers	Elder Care Facilities
Facilities Managers	Energy Services
Executives	Financial Services
Government Employees	Food Production/Distribution Companies
Teachers and Administrators in Schools	Government Agencies
Computer Programmers	Legal Services
	Logistics Companies
	Museums
	Non-Profits
	Professional/Medical Services
	Public Relations/Marketing Firms
	Publishing Companies
	Retailers
	Safety-Related Companies
	Schools
	Software Companies
	University Departments

SAMPLING OF MEDIA COVERAGE

Business Week
The Atlantic
New York Times
Time Magazine
Wall Street Journal
People Magazine
Parents Magazine
New York Post
NBC Nightly News
Morning Edition on National Public Radio
Fantástico (Popular TV Program in Brazil)
The Today Show
Happy Hour on the Fox Business Network Inc.

Redbook
Boston Globe
USA Today
American Lawyer Magazine
Workforce Management
Associated Press
Christian Science Monitor
U.S. News and World Report
Ireland Public Radio
BBC Radio

Articles in Germany, Australia, Hungary, Denmark, the United Kingdom, Ireland, South Africa, Taiwan, and Canada, among others