



**FIRST 5 SANTA BARBARA COUNTY  
EARLY CARE & EDUCATION DIVISION**

# **Child Care & Work / Life Needs Assessment Report**



**First 5**  
SANTA BARBARA  
COUNTY

## **Downtown**

## **Santa Barbara 2009**

Full report plus comments section and focus group report

**REPORT PREPARED FOR:**  
The Downtown  
Santa Barbara Employer  
Child Care Partnership

**UNDER ADVISEMENT FROM:**  
Summa Associates

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### **First 5 Santa Barbara County**

First 5 Santa Barbara County Children and Families Commission invests Proposition 10 tobacco tax revenue in health, education, and services that help families of children prenatal through age 5 across Santa Barbara County. We also deliver direct services to the community through the Office of Early Care and Education. First 5 provides leadership and works in partnership with our community to increase support for our youngest children.

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For additional information about the Downtown Santa Barbara Employee Child Care Study please go to: <http://www.countyofsb.org/ceo/ece/survey>

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# **Downtown Santa Barbara** **Employee Child Care Study**



# Table of Contents

Acknowledgements . . . . . 4

Section I- Project Overview . . . . . 5

    Purpose . . . . . 7

    Methodology . . . . . 7

    Participating Employers . . . . . 8

Section II- Study Sample . . . . . 9

Section III- Key Findings . . . . . 13

    Support for Additional Child Care Services . . . . . 14

    Challenges Working Parents Face Regarding Child Care . . . . . 15

    Impact of Child Care Challenges on Business Bottom Line . . . . . 17

    Key Findings Conclusions . . . . . 18

Section V- Study Results . . . . . 21

    Child Care Arrangements . . . . . 22

        Child Care Challenges . . . . . 23

        Child Care Arrangements for Children younger than 24months . . . . . 27

        Child Care Arrangements for Children Ages 2-3 . . . . . 30

        Child Care Arrangements for Children Ages 4-5 . . . . . 33

        Child Care Arrangements for Children Ages 6-9 . . . . . 36

        Child Care Arrangements for Children Ages 10-12 . . . . . 39

    Impact of Child Care Issues on the Work Place . . . . . 42

        Impact of Child Care Issues on Business Bottom Line . . . . . 44

        Work Life Effectiveness . . . . . 48

        Child Care Services Parents Would Use . . . . . 51

    Conclusion . . . . . 55

Appendix A - Definitions . . . . . 57

Appendix B - Survey Questionnaire . . . . . 59

Appendix C - Focus Group Report . . . . . 71

Appendix D - Comments Section . . . . . 83

Appendix E - Map of Downtown Santa Barbara . . . . . 121

## Acknowledgements

This study could not have been conducted without the support, encouragement, and leadership from the following people and organizations:

County of Santa Barbara\* - Supervisor Salud Carbajal, Susan Paul, Melissa Grisales, Mary Ellen Wylie

First 5 Santa Barbara County\* - Pat Wheatley, Eileen Monahan

Project Manager\* - Holly Goldberg, PhD(c)

Summa Associates\* - Karen Woodford, Cindy Winkleman

### Participating Employers and Partners

Aldo's Italian Restaurant - Mark Sherman

Antioch University\* - Rich Loebel

Armstrong Associates Inc. - Dominique Gaspar

Bartlett, Pringle and Wolf\* - Kim Cowles, Danna McGrew Britton

Brown and Brown Inc. - Cynthia Acosta

Brownstein, Hyatt, Farber, & Shreck - Kaylyn Scott

City of Santa Barbara\* - Mayor Marty Blum, Roger Horton, Sarah Hanna, Barbara

Barker, Helene Schneider

Commission Junction Inc. - Sonia Villareal, Francis Avila

Cottage Health Systems\* - Keyo Russell

Fielding Graduate University - Susan Love

Franciscan Inn - Debbie Neer

Holiday Inn Express/Hotel Virginia - Kay Morter

Hollister and Brace - Dorothy Griffin

Hotel Santa Barbara - Tamara Erickson

Lobero Theatre - David Asbell

Metropolitan Paseo Nuevo - Tammy Steuart

Mission Linen Supply - Leann Tovar

MTD - Gabriel Garcia

National Center for Ecological Analysis & Synthesis, UCSB - Ginger Gillquist

Sansum Clinic - Twilight Robin

Santa Barbara Chamber of Commerce\* - Steve Cushman

Santa Barbara County Child Care Planning Council\* - Valerie Kolstad

Santa Barbara Family Care Center, Children's Resource & Referral Program\* - Jennifer Bergquist

Santa Barbara School Districts - Noemi Vazquez

Sonos\* - Valerie Janssens

Zona Seca - Diana Banales

\* Downtown Santa Barbara Employer Child Care Partnership Steering Committee Members

## Section I - Project Overview



## Project Overview

Throughout the United States, child care is a part of daily life for millions of families. According to recent research, it is estimated that over 85% of the workforce lives with family and has daily family related responsibilities<sup>1</sup>. In order for parents to be productive workers, they need high quality, consistent, affordable child care. Working parents rely on child care in order to get to work and earn the income necessary to support their families.

All children deserve the best start in life. In the first years of a child's life, critical connections are made in the brain that impact lifelong learning<sup>2</sup>. How we nurture and support our children today will impact their success in school and in life. Research demonstrates that high quality early care and education environments that offer safe, stable and developmentally appropriate care in a stimulating environment can dramatically impact a child's future health and success<sup>3</sup>. Early experiences directly impact the way a child's brain circuitry is "wired" which provides the foundation for future cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development<sup>4</sup>. For this reason, high-quality child care is paramount to a child's healthy growth and development.

When working parents face challenges with child care it can affect children's health and development, the home, and also the work place. The US Department of Labor estimates 72% of absenteeism is due to child care related issues<sup>5</sup>. In addition, recent research indicates that 55% of workers who were offered a child care subsidy were better able to concentrate at work and 48% were more likely to stay at work<sup>6</sup>. The impacts of child care issues on productivity, absenteeism, retention, stress and the business bottom line have been the focal point of various business articles, empirical research, as well as government and private initiatives.

Despite the increase in national data on how child care affects business bottom line, the implications of this issue in our local community have yet to be thoroughly explored. After repeated reports from employees about the challenges related to balancing child care and work life, a group of private and public downtown Santa Barbara employers became interested in the impact child care issues have on Santa Barbara's workforce.

Through the efforts of First 5 Santa Barbara County, a public-private partnership of downtown Santa Barbara employers was established to investigate this issue. First 5

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<sup>1</sup> 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce by the Families and Work Institute

<sup>2</sup> Siegel, D.J. (2001). Towards an interpersonal neurobiology of the developing mind: Attachment relationship, "mindsight," and neural integration. *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 22 (1-2), 67-94.

<sup>3</sup> National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. (2000). *From neurons to neighborhoods: The science of early childhood development*. Committee on Integrating the Science of Early Childhood Development. J.P. Shonkoff & D. A. Phillips (Eds.), Board on Children, Youth, and Families, Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

<sup>4</sup> Siegel, D.J. (2001). Towards an interpersonal neurobiology of the developing mind: Attachment relationship, "mindsight," and neural integration. *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 22 (1-2), 67-94.

<sup>5</sup> Retrieved from [http://www.workoptionsgroup.com/workplace\\_impact.html](http://www.workoptionsgroup.com/workplace_impact.html)

<sup>6</sup> Work & Family Connection. 2005. *The Most Important Work-Life-Related Studies*. Minnetonka, MN Retrieved from <http://www.awlp.org/awlp/library/html/businessimpact.jsp?nodeid=827305&vernum=0>



Santa Barbara County and the Partnership contracted with Summa Associates, a work-life consulting and dependent care services firm, to complete a workforce demographic and child care study. Employers throughout downtown Santa Barbara were encouraged to join the effort. Each participating employer made a financial or equivalent non-monetary contribution to the project. The County of Santa Barbara took the lead in the survey by providing much needed direction, support, and a one time financial contribution to support the collection of this critical data.

### **Project Purpose**

The goal of this study was to find out directly from parents how child care responsibilities impact the work-life and work-effectiveness of Santa Barbara downtown employees and determine the need, desirability and direction of support from employers. The study was developed to specifically examine the demand for and feasibility of a near-site child care center and to identify other potential child care solutions for downtown employees. The project was also designed to determine the extent to which the Santa Barbara downtown workforce is personally affected by child care issues (their own or that of a co-worker) and to gather a variety of related information about Santa Barbara employees including basic demographics. The study also included questions about elder/adult care giving responsibilities as many employees are “sandwiched” between child and adult care giving.

As part of this study, individualized reports will be generated for each participating employer in addition to the overall downtown Santa Barbara report. Local data indicates the impacts of child care issues on the workplace are not isolated to downtown Santa Barbara. In fact, according to recent research child care is only available for 34% of working parents throughout the County<sup>7</sup>. For this reason, the project’s next steps will include conducting this study throughout the rest of Santa Barbara County.

### **Methodology**

Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were utilized to collect data for this study. A group of 23 private and public downtown self-selected employers, representing various industries, including the County of Santa Barbara and Santa Barbara City, participated in this study (see below for a complete list of participating employers). Quantitative data was collected via a written survey questionnaire which was available both online and in print, in English and in Spanish to employees (parents and non-parents) of the participating 23 employers. Qualitative data was collected via an open-ended comment section of the survey and through three parent employee focus groups.

Employee participation in the survey and focus groups was voluntary and confidential. All efforts were employed to obtain a comprehensive sample of participants. Although the study sample is large and diverse, because it was not randomly selected, the survey results are not generalizable to a larger population. Despite this, the sample obtained was sufficient to adequately address the impact child care issues have on the

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<sup>7</sup> Annual Report 2006-2007, First 5 Santa Barbara County

downtown Santa Barbara work force. In addition, various other studies and resources support the findings of this report and are referenced herein.

**Participating Employers**

Aldo's Italian Restaurant  
Antioch University  
Armstrong Associates Inc.  
Bartlett, Pringle and Wolf  
Brown and Brown Inc.  
Brownstein, Hyatt, Farber, & Shreck  
City of Santa Barbara  
Commission Junction Inc.  
Fielding Graduate University  
Franciscan Inn  
Holiday Inn Express/Hotel Virginia  
Hollister and Brace  
Hotel Santa Barbara  
Lobero Theatre  
Metropolitan Paseo Nuevo  
Mission Linen Supply  
MTD  
National Center for Ecological Analysis & Synthesis, UCSB  
Sansum Clinic  
Santa Barbara County  
Santa Barbara School Districts  
Sonos  
Zona Seca

**Report Outline**

This report is organized into 4 main sections. Following this *Project Overview* is a description of the *Study Sample* including demographic details of the study population. A *Summary of the Key Findings* is then presented followed by a detailed examination of the *Study Results*.

## Section II - Study Sample



## Study Sample Overview

Of the potential 9,041 employees within the participating 23 employers, 2,718 employees completed the survey questionnaire, resulting in an overall 30 percent response rate. Several of the participating employers have office locations outside of the downtown area. In order to accurately assess the impact child care issues have on the downtown Santa Barbara work force for this report, analysis was conducted on a subset of 2,015 respondents who work in the five downtown zip codes: 93101, 93103, 93105, 93109, and 93110. See Appendix D for a map of the downtown Santa Barbara area. Data from the 21 parent employees who participated in one of three focus groups is also included in this report.

### Demographic Overview

- Total Respondents = 2,015
- Total Parents = 697
- Total Children = 1,202 (average 1.72 children per parent)
- Total Parents with Children Age 5 or Younger = 452
- Total Children Age 5 or Younger = 626
- Total Parents with Children Age 6 to 12 = 426
- Total Children Age 6 to 12 = 576
- Total Elder/Adult Caregivers = 149

Of the downtown survey respondents (herein referred to as respondents), 697 (35%) are parents who reported information about 1,202 children age 12 and younger (626 children age five and younger; and 576 children age 6 to 12)<sup>8</sup>. An additional 18% of respondents are either currently pregnant or adopting, or expect to have children in the next five years. One hundred and forty-nine parent and non parent respondents (7%) currently have elder/adult care responsibilities and an additional 22% expect to have elder/adult responsibilities within the next five years. Furthermore, over a quarter of the 149 respondents who currently have elder/disabled care responsibilities also have children, and about half of these children are preschool age.

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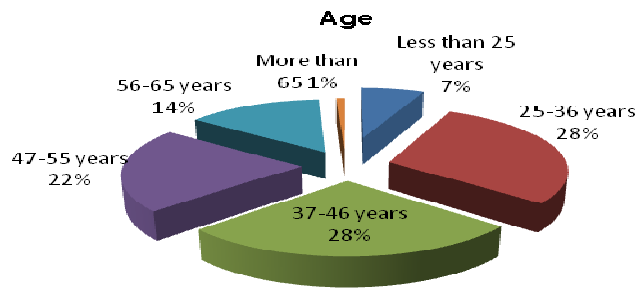
<sup>8</sup> The word “parent” or “parents” in this report herein refers to parents of children ages 0-12.

The majority (66%) of respondents are female, and two thirds of the respondents (63%) are younger than 46. Eighty-six percent of all parent respondents fall into this age group.

**Age of Parent Respondents**

	Parents	Children	Children Age 5 or Younger	Children Age 6-12
Less than 25 years	24	34	29	5
<b>25-36 years</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>186</b>
<b>37-46 years</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>541</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>291</b>
47-55 years	71	105	24	81
56-65 years	18	24	14	10
More than 65 years	1	2	0	2
No response	2	5	4	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>697</b>	<b>1202</b>	<b>626</b>	<b>576</b>

**Age of All Respondents**



Over half of the respondents work in zip code area 93101, and about 51% of respondents both live and work downtown in the downtown Santa Barbara area (zip codes 93101, 93103, 93105, 93109 and 93110). Another 12% of respondents commute to downtown Santa Barbara from zip codes 93117 (Goleta), and 10% commute from mid and north Santa Barbara County (Buellton, Guadalupe, Lompoc, Los Alamos, Los Olivos, Santa Maria, Santa Ynez, and Solvang, with the majority of this subgroup commuting from Lompoc). In addition, 6% of respondents commute from Carpinteria and 12% from Ventura County.

**Respondent Work Place Zip Codes**

	Total	Percent	Parents	Children	Children Age 5 or Younger	Children Age 6-12
<b>93101</b>	<b>1133</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>314</b>
93103	258	13%	83	150	81	69
93105	265	13%	92	168	93	75
93109	48	2%	18	30	17	13
93110	311	16%	131	232	127	105
Total	2015	100%	697	1202	626	576

*The majority (56%) of respondents work in zip code area 93101. The table shows the number and age of children according to zip codes. The children in the age 5 or younger category are the most likely participants for a near site child care center located in the downtown area.*

Seventy-two percent of respondents work for either: Santa Barbara County (30%), City of Santa Barbara (20%), Sansum Clinic (13%), or Santa Barbara School Districts (9%). Twenty-eight percent of the respondents work for the remaining 19 participating businesses. Although employers from a variety of business sectors participated in this study, over a third of the respondents hold positions in office and administrative support (22%) or management (16%).

The majority of all respondents (86%) and parents (88%) hold regular, full-time positions. Most of the respondents (93%) work a daytime shift; and 70% work weekdays only. Over 50% of respondents reported an annual *household* income of less than \$80,000. The average annual salary for individual parents who participated in this survey is \$49,003<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> Average annual salary is derived from the job category respondents selected and matched with the US Department of Labor Occupational Employment Statistics annual salary data.

## Section III - Key Findings



## Support for Additional Child Care Services

The majority of respondents (parents and non parents) are very supportive about the prospect of additional child care services for working parents. Many respondents made the point that child care issues affect the whole workplace by increasing absenteeism and stress while simultaneously reducing productivity and retention, and are therefore not issues isolated to parent employees.

Parent employees are enthusiastically supportive of additional child care services, particularly a child care center. When parents were asked if they would actually use a quality child care center in a convenient location and at a fair market rate, 60% of all parents said “yes” (457 preschool age children). Eighty percent of parent employees who have considered quitting their job due to child care issues reported that a full service child care center would improve their productivity and 75% of parents who have considered quitting indicated that a full service child care center would be a retention factor. Both the percentage of parents indicating interest and the number of children make the concept of a near-site child care center worth noting.

Additionally, 62% of parents indicated they would use a drop-in child care program (354 preschool age children). Over a third of parent respondents would use a family child care system (243 preschool age children), and over a third of parents said they would use a mildly-ill child care program (214 preschool age children).

Respondents were also in favor of other possible child care options such as lactation rooms, pre-parenting education programs regarding the cost and availability of child care options, and a more extensive, up to date local child care referral system. Support for the need and desire for child care solutions are exemplified in the following survey comments:

*Even though I don't have any young children, I am strongly supportive of employer supported child care.*

*If my children are in a safe place while I'm working, my performance at work is above and beyond what is expected.*

*It would be great to at least have a safe place to have your child looked after for those times when child care issues come up. This would be of great help in reducing the amount of time missed from work, especially when you are a single parent and have an hour commute.*

*I have seen my own co-workers affected by child care responsibilities and it is nice to see that they are responsible to their children but it does affect their work and pay when they are gone. Child care is a huge issue in Santa Barbara and it is very hard to find care and find good care for that matter. Santa Barbara needs to get a good child care facility in place so that everyone can benefit from it.*



## **C**hallenges Working Parents Face Regarding Child Care

Challenges regarding availability and cost of child care in the downtown Santa Barbara area were reported as a primary concern in the survey questionnaire, comments and focus group remarks.

### **Availability of Child Care**

Three fourths of parent respondents and half of all non-parent respondents indicated that there is a shortage of quality care at affordable rates in downtown Santa Barbara. Lack of available care for infants was echoed throughout the study. The following comments illustrate the opinions about availability of child care.

*Lack of available and affordable quality child care in this community is a huge issue and I am grateful that it is being researched. I strongly believe that a cooperative solution, such as group contribution and participation in child care through a large employer or group of employers is one possible solution.*

*Child care is an extremely important issue. As more and more families have two working parents, the need for quality, affordable, reliable child care also rises. While the lack of affordable child care may not cause me to leave my job, it is definitely a source of stress which has many far-reaching repercussions. Another important consideration of child care is location. Child care at or very close to work would have many benefits.*

This study demonstrated that parents have many complicating issues related to child care. Finding care for short notice situations such as a child illness is challenging for parents. Over 70% of parent respondents agree that care for a sick child is challenging; 56% find emergency or short notice child care to be challenging; 42% of all parents (and about 75% of parents with children age 6 to 12) find care during school breaks; and nearly half (46%) of all parents feel that having to juggle more than one care arrangement is challenging.

### **Cost of Child Care**

Parent respondents reported the cost of care to be prohibitively expensive, particularly for infants and toddlers. In fact, 72% of parent respondents report that the cost of child care is challenging. Several focus group parents disclosed that nearly their entire salary goes towards covering the cost of child care and the only reason they work is for the benefits. This issue is even more pronounced for single parents and parents of children under three. According to focus group participants there is little financial assistance available to middle income families. This exacerbates the stress for working families.

The following comments illustrate the stress related to the cost of child care:

*Child care is so expensive that it nearly defeats the purpose of working for some families. An affordable program would be a blessing.*

*It's close to impossible to find child care that we can pay for. Cost of living is very high in Santa Barbara and we can barely make ends meet with both our incomes. It would be great if our employer had some type of daycare center for the employees who have kids.*

### **Additional Child Care Challenges**

Parents are concerned about the quality of care provided for their children. In fact, focus group participants expressed that quality is a primary deciding factor in selecting child care arrangements. However, many parents are forced to take what they can get, sacrificing quality for availability due to waiting lists of two or more years. Many Santa Barbara parents struggle with finding quality care at an affordable price and in a location that is even somewhat convenient. This is exemplified by the following respondent comments:

*In my search for quality care I found that the excellent programs have a wait list of 1-2 yrs and the not so quality have spaces available.*

*Child care providers for children under 12 months are scarce and very pricey. When seeking a licensed home base day care, I was very displeased with the quality. Frankly, it was scary! We decided our best option for now is to have dad stay home with our 2 and 1 year old and not spend over \$1,000 a month in net income for daycare. It has been a financial burden not to be able to get ahead with two household incomes, but the ease of knowing both children are cared for in the upmost loving/quality care from home and daddy is most pleasing. I wish there were more child care centers available nearby work for mid-low income earners on a sliding scale or scholarship basis with the opportunity for parents to volunteer. This would invest in our new generation to be well prepared and ready for pre-school with social/interactive skills. It would be awesome if something positive came out of this survey to help many parents ease their concerns about quality day care for our new generation.*

## Impact of Child Care Challenges on Business Bottom Line

Challenges regarding the care of children regularly impact working parents. In fact, 50% of all respondents indicated their work place is negatively impacted by a co-worker's child care responsibilities. According to the study results, child illness and breakdowns in child care arrangements lead to employee absenteeism which impacts productivity and adds cost to employers.

In fact, nearly 66% of all parents missed at least one day of work last year due to a breakdown in child care arrangements in the past 12 months - 4.06 days each on average. This sums to a combined total of 1,870 days (374 weeks or 7 years collectively) and cost employers who participated in this study over **\$335K** in just one year due to lost productivity<sup>10</sup>.

Employee turnover is another factor that impacts business bottom line. This study indicates that over 36% of all parents have seriously considered quitting their jobs because of child care issues. When parents were asked if their work environment was supportive of their efforts to balance their work and personal life, those who had considered quitting were nearly twice as likely to indicate "no". Parent respondents of children under 24 months are at highest risk of quitting their jobs. They are 13% more likely to have considered quitting than parents of children ages 10-12.

If the employees who have considered quitting actually did, the turnover cost to employers participating in this study would be over **\$6 million**<sup>11</sup>. It is also of interest to note that this figure is slightly higher than a similar Ventura County study completed by Summa Associates in 2005; and significantly higher than a comparable study done for the Metropolitan Government in Nashville and Davidson County where 21% of parents had considered quitting. Focus group participants agreed that additional child care services in downtown Santa Barbara would be seen as an excellent benefit to retaining current employees as well as an effective recruiting tool.

Other issues such as increase work-life stress, tension with co-workers, missed opportunities for promotion, tardiness, and inability to work overtime were also reported as major factors related to child care problems.

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<sup>10</sup> This figure is calculated by multiplying the amount of days missed (7 years) by the average salaries (\$47,000) of these parents.

<sup>11</sup> To calculate turnover for the 247 employees who have considered quitting, Summa uses a conservative industry standard turnover cost calculation of 75% the annual salary, which in this case is \$34,327 for these 247 respondents.

## Key Findings Conclusions

Increasing the capacity, quality and availability of child care provides numerous benefits to children's health and development, family stability, the overall workplace, as well as the community. Study results indicate that increasing child care support and spaces for downtown Santa Barbara employees will positively impact employee efficiency at work, decrease absenteeism, increase employee retention, and therefore affect business bottom line.

The purpose of this study was to find out directly from employees the impact child care issues have on the downtown Santa Barbara work place. Employers have an opportunity to address the results of this study through a consortium model and do together what can not be done alone. A consortium based action plan has the power to transform downtown Santa Barbara into a family friendly community, while increasing recruitment and retention of top workers. The respondents indicated that the following options (listed in order of greatest demand) would be the most effective ways to positively impact issues related to child care and the work place. A comprehensive action plan that integrates a combination of strategies is recommended for consideration.



1. **Increase the number of high quality child care spaces** by increasing current capacity, quality, and developing additional child care options. It is recommended that child care programs have hours of operation Monday through Friday from approximately 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and include care for infants and school age children during school breaks. The following are options that could be implemented in layers to address the need for increased high quality child care capacity.
  - a. **A near-site child care center or centers** - The majority of parents (60%) reported they would use a quality child care center (parents of 724 children - 457 of these children are less than five years old), in a convenient location, and at a fair market rate.
  - b. **Back-up child care options** - The majority of parents (62%) indicated they would use a drop-in child care program (parents of 712 children - 386 of these children are less than five years old).
  - c. **Family child care network.** A third of parents indicated they would use a family child care system (parents of 413 children - 243 of these children are less than five years old). Additional research is recommended to determine the quality and capacity of existing family care services in downtown Santa Barbara as a foundation for a family care network.
  - d. **Mildly ill child care options.** A third of parents reported they would use a mildly-ill child care program (parents of 388 children - 214 of these children are less than five years old).
  - e. **Improvement of current child care service quality** will increase availability of child care spaces for working parents.
2. **Address the high costs of child care** by exploring financial assistance options for working parents. These might include connecting employees to additional resources, a county wide scholarship program, or employer subsidy programs.
3. **Investigate integration of work-life effectiveness strategies** into Santa Barbara business culture. Top priorities according to the study results are:
  - a. **Promote and implement flexible work schedules.** Study results indicated that the reduction of absenteeism and employee consideration of quitting, as well as an increase in employee retention is connected to flexible work schedules that accommodate child care needs.
  - b. **Create lactation support services** that include appropriate spaces for breaks from work to breastfeed or pump breast milk. This addresses the potential need of the nearly 20% of all respondents who are either pregnant or expect to have children in the next five years.
  - c. **Work with local child care resources** to offer child care referral services, pre-parenting education programs, and instruction on how to choose high quality care through each employer.
  - d. **Investigate the elder care needs of employees and provide national resources and referrals.** Nearly a third of all respondents indicated they have or expect to have elder care responsibilities in the next five years.



## Section IV- Study Results

As stated, the results of this study are a compilation of quantitative and qualitative data. To clearly differentiate where the data is derived from a simple format will be used in the following section. The results from the qualitative analysis (the focus groups and comment section of the survey) will be presented in a box labeled “*What Parents Say...*” and will precede the related quantitative data. On occasion, supplemental research will be integrated into the results section to provide a larger context for the data. Research from outside the parameters of this study is clearly indicated. The study results are subdivided into two major categories: *Child Care Arrangements* and the *Impact of Child Care Issues on the Work Place*.

The first section, *Child Care Arrangements*, details the findings associated with the type of child care parents currently use per child age group, as well as the associated challenges and costs.

The second section, *Impact of Child Care Issues on the Work Place* examines missed work due to child care issues, employee productivity, tension with co-workers and opportunities for promotion, as well as factors that influence parent employees to have considered quitting their job. This section concludes with respondent input regarding ways to improve work-life effectiveness, including improving job productivity and retention, as well as an examination of the kinds of child care services parent employees would use.

## Child Care Arrangements

Of all of the respondents, 697 are parents who reported information about 1,202 children age 12 and younger (626 children age 5 and younger; and 576 children age 6 to 12). This section of the report focuses on these parents and their children by age group. Because there are several major factors that influence parents' options and decisions regarding child care arrangements, this section will begin with a review of the challenges parents face and will then examine the kind of care parents use, the associated costs as well as the frequency of parents who have considered quitting their job due to child care issues by five age subcategories: parents of children under 24 months of age, 2-3 years of age, 4-5 years of age, 6-9 years of age, and 10-12 years of age.

### Summary of findings from this section

- Child care availability is the number one issue focus group participants report facing regarding child care challenges.
- Over 70% of parents report a shortage of child care within downtown Santa Barbara.
- Cost of care, sick child care, emergency or short notice care, finding care during school breaks, and location of care are other primary child care challenges.
- Many focus group parents are dissatisfied with current child care arrangements.
- Parent respondents of younger children (under 3) report paying more for child care than parents of children 4 and up.
- Parent respondents of children under 24 months are more likely to have considered quitting their jobs than parents of children ages 2-12.
- Parents who rely on a spouse or partner for the majority of their child care needs are less likely to have considered quitting their job than other parents. This is especially pronounced for parents who have children under 5 years old.
- Parent respondents of children under 3 have their children in care for more hours per week than parents of children 4 and up.
- Parent respondents of children under 24 months report less use of child care subsidies than parents of children of all other ages.



# Child Care Challenges

## Availability of Child Care

### *What Parents Say...*

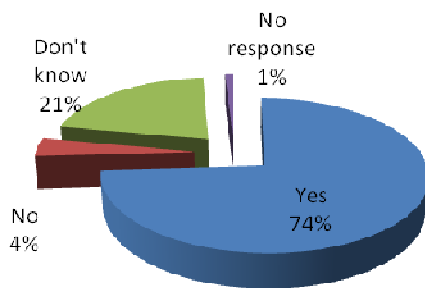
Parent respondents report use of a patchwork of child care arrangements ranging from child care centers, family child care providers, relatives, friends, and babysitters. Numerous focus group participants expressed dissatisfaction with current child care arrangements. However, due to the lack of available options in downtown Santa Barbara, feel there is no other solution, especially for infant care.

According to focus group participants and the survey comments, availability is a primary child care challenge for working parents. When asked if there is a shortage of high quality, affordable child care within the downtown Santa Barbara area, focus group parents unanimously responded that there is.

Many parents reported that they are forced to “take what they can get,” sacrificing quality for availability due to waiting lists of two years or more. New parents are often unaware of how problematic the lack of child care can be in Santa Barbara and are ill equipped to find and manage the care of their children while returning to work. In fact, focus group participants and respondents commented that the lack of available care makes them feel like they have no other option than to consider quitting their jobs.

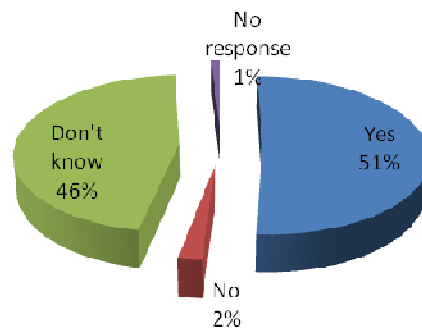
Seventy-four percent of parent respondents, plus 51% of non-parent respondents reported there is a shortage of high quality, affordable child care in downtown Santa Barbara.

**Shortage of Child Care  
Parent Respondents**



n=697

**Shortage of Child Care  
Non-Parent Respondents**



n=1,318

The data collected in this study related to the lack of available child care is supported by the recent Santa Barbara Child Care Capacity Survey (2007)<sup>12</sup>, conducted by First 5 Santa Barbara County which determined that there are 3.4 children of working parents for every available full-day licensed child care center space in the City of Santa Barbara.

### **Cost of Care**

Another primary concern and challenge for many working parents is the cost of child care. Significant financial strain from the expense of child care was a major theme in the focus group discussions and comments section of the survey.

#### ***What Parents Say...***

Given the cost of living in Santa Barbara, many of the parents who participated in this survey reported great difficulty being able to afford market rates for child care services. In fact, several parents disclosed that nearly their entire salary goes towards covering the cost of child care and the only reason they work is for the benefits. Parents of dual income households report being forced to have one parent not work due to the high cost of child care, indicating that is it “just not worth it.” The stress and frustration related to not being able to get ahead financially because of child care fees was shared by many focus group attendees and survey participants.

Focus group participants and survey comments indicated that although subsidy programs are available for low income parents, there is little assistance available to middle income families. This creates stress for working families. Several parents reflected on how they make too much money to qualify for assistance and yet not enough to cover the cost of child care, which amplifies the strain of balancing work and family.

Parent respondents reported the cost of care to be prohibitively expensive, particularly for infants and toddlers. In fact, 72% of parent respondents feel that the cost of child care is challenging. Parents who are at highest risk of quitting report earning less than other parents (an average of \$29,000 a year compared to the overall average surveyed parent salary of \$49,003) thus amplifying the financial strain associated with child care.

Data collected in this study indicates that Santa Barbara parents, on an average, pay more per year for child care than state averages, except for family care for preschool children. The National Survey of State Child Care Resource & Referral Networks indicates that in 43 states, the average annual cost of child care for an infant in a center is higher than a year’s tuition at a public college. In fact, California rates as the 7<sup>th</sup> most expensive state for infant care in a center and the 9<sup>th</sup> most expensive state for preschool care in a center in the United States<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> An update to this study was conducted in December 2008. Little variation was found to the original findings even with the opening of two additional downtown child care centers. Only one center did report a significant drop in current enrollment and attributed this to parents having a more difficult time paying for care.

<sup>13</sup> National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies. (2007) Parents and the high price of child care. Retrieved from: <http://www.nacccra.org/news/pricereport.php>

The average cost of center-based preschool care reported by respondents within the downtown Santa Barbara study was nearly a thousand dollars a year more than the state average. The chart below compares the average annual cost of care from study results with state averages

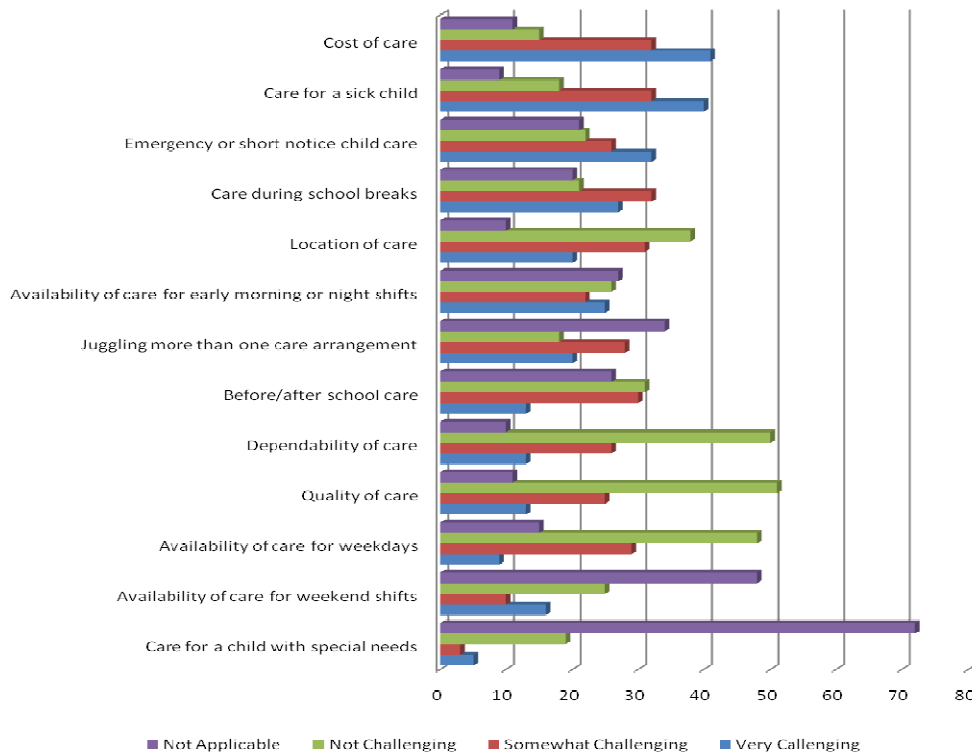
**Survey vs. State Comparison of Average Costs of Child Care**

	Infant and Toddler	Infant and Toddler	Preschool	Preschool
Average Annual Cost:	Survey Average	State Average	Survey Average	State Average
Center Based Care	\$11,492	\$10,745	\$9,776	\$7,477
Family Care in Home	\$7,228	\$7,069	\$5,616	\$6,504

**Top Child Care Challenges**

The survey results indicate that the top five child care challenges are: cost of care, sick child care, emergency or short notice care, finding care during school breaks, and location of care. The chart below ranks the most challenging child care issues parent respondents have faced over the past year.

**Ranked Order of Child Care Challenges for All Parent Respondents**



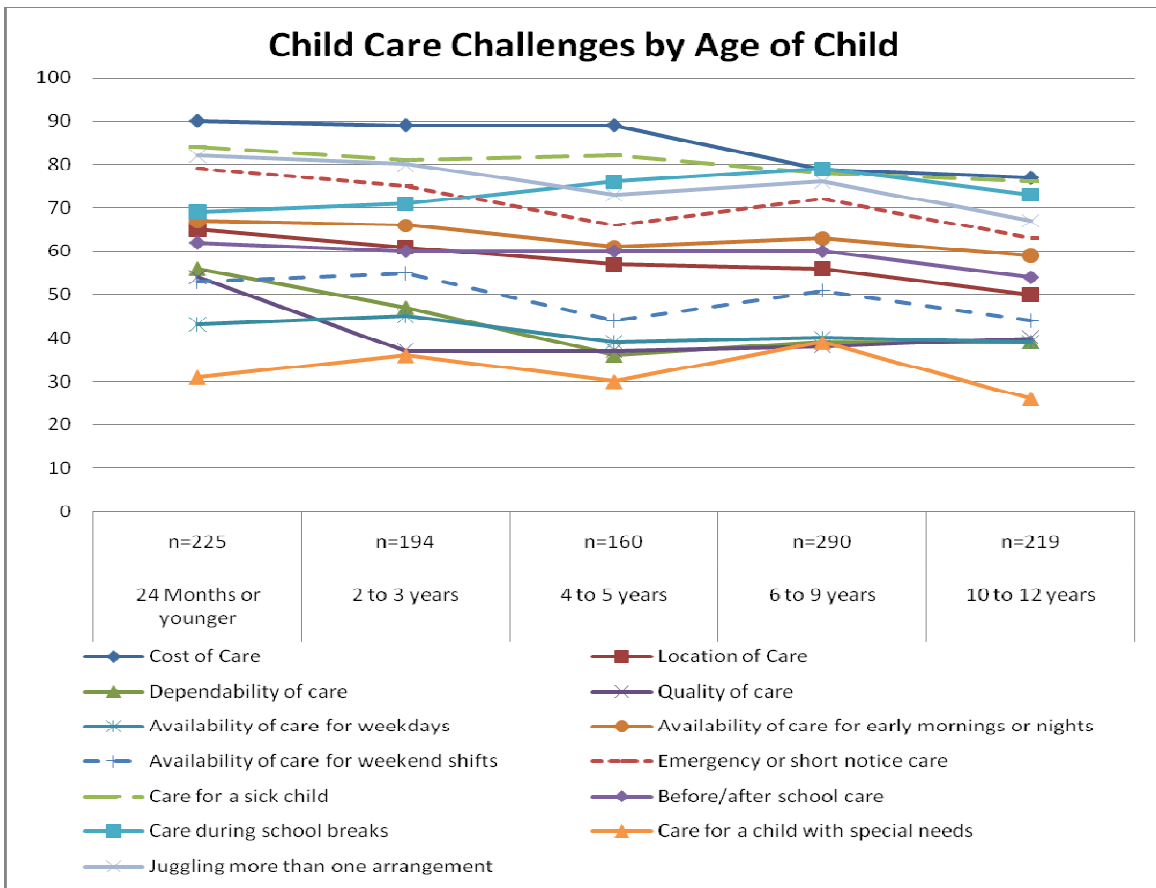
n=697

The cumulative percent of “very” and “somewhat challenging” child care issues was cross analyzed with 12 different annual household income groups that range from

“\$20,000 or under” to “\$250,000 or more”. Additional analysis failed to find any significant difference across the income groups, therefore indicating that the various child care challenges parents face tend to be irrespective of their income. However, focus group participants and survey comments reported financial stress related to the cost of care, especially for middle income families who qualify for little assistance.

Additional analysis displayed in the following charts indicates that many child care challenges tend to lessen somewhat as children get older, except when it comes to finding care during school breaks which becomes more difficult; and finding emergency/short notice care, early morning or night care, and care during weekend shifts. The data demonstrates that parents face challenges related to special needs care at every age. It is expected that a low percentage of parents would report challenges related to care for a child with special needs, as only a subset of parents are faced with this issue. This should not minimize the importance of this issue, as it is paramount for these parents.

This chart summarizes the cumulative percent of the “very” and “somewhat” child care challenges for each of the five age groups assessed in the survey.



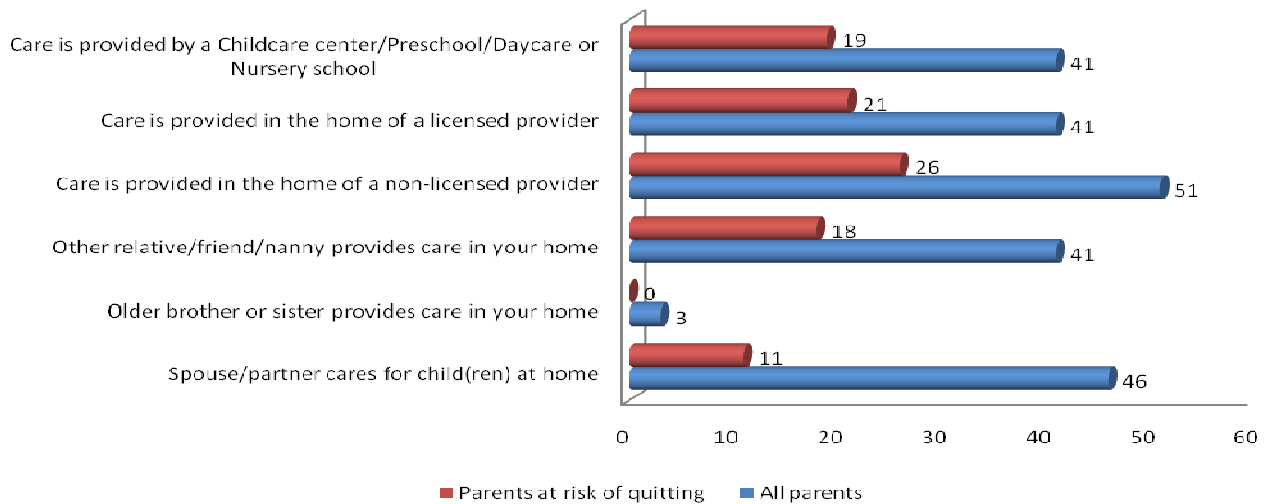
**Child Care Arrangements - Parents of Children Younger Than 24 Months of Age**

There are 225 parent respondents who have 252 children younger than 24 months of age. The majority (89%) of these parents have only one child. Parents of infants and children up to age 24 months utilize a variety of child care options for their children while they are at work. However, parent respondents within this group rely most heavily on non-licensed care providers and spouses/partners for the majority of their child care needs. It is important to note that focus group respondents reported that infant care is extremely difficult to find in downtown Santa Barbara as well as other areas in the County. Most parent respondents (79%) of children younger than 24 months use child care for more than 20 hours each week for their children. Parents of children under 3 report having children in care for more hours per week than parents of children 4 and up, which is likely related to school enrollment.

Parent respondents of children younger than two are slightly more likely than parent respondents of children of any other age group to consider quitting their job due to child care responsibilities. Nearly half (43%) of parents of children under two indicated that they have considered quitting their job because of child care issues, which is 13% higher than parents of children ages 10 -12. Parents of children in this age group who rely on a spouse/partner were less likely to consider quitting than parents who rely on licensed or non-licensed home providers, other relatives or a child care center.

The following chart depicts the number of parents who use each kind of child care service as well as the number of parents within each service subgroup who have considered quitting their job due to child care issues.

**Types of Child Care/Risk of Parent Quitting – Parents of Children Age 24 Months or Younger**



**Cost of Care for Children Under 24 Months**

Only three percent of parent respondents with children up to 24 months in age reported that they receive a subsidy to supplement the cost of child care. For parents of children within this age group who pay for child care, the median cost is \$151 to \$200 per week for care. Twenty-eight percent of parents of this age group pay more than \$200 a week for child care. It is important to note that this figure is based on parents' report of all kinds of care - full time and part time. The following chart summarizes parent reports related to average cost of child care per week.

**Cost of Care per Week for Children 24 Months or Younger**

Cost of care per week used for children age 24 months or younger:	Parent Count	Percent	Total Children in Age Group
I pay nothing for child care	44	20%	50
Less than \$50	6	3%	6
\$51 to \$100	34	15%	39
<b>\$101 to \$150</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>\$151 to \$200</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>35</b>
\$201 to \$250	26	12%	28
\$251 to \$300	12	5%	15
\$301 to \$350	10	4%	11
More than \$350	15	7%	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>252</b>

Additional analysis was conducted to determine if there is a variance in cost of care for parents who live in the downtown area versus parents who live outside of the downtown area. This was done in effort to respond to local data<sup>14</sup> that indicates that the cost of child care is higher in South Santa Barbara County compared to the rest of the County.

The average cost of care for the majority of child care options was only slightly higher for parents who live and work downtown. This may be related to the number of parents who use child care in South Santa Barbara County versus the number of parents who commute. Care provided in the home of a non-licensed provider was about \$50/week more expensive for parents who live outside of downtown Santa Barbara and Goleta area (zip codes 93101, 93103, 93105, 93109, 93110, 93111 and 93117). The chart below details the average cost parents who work and live downtown pay for full time and part time care.

**Cost of Care for Children Under 24 Months for Parents Who WORK & LIVE Downtown**

n=83 Parents	Parents who pay \$75 or more for care per week for children under 2		
	Count	%	Avg. Weekly Cost per Child
<b>Parents who WORK Downtown &amp; LIVE Downtown:</b>			
Spouse/partner cares for child at home	5	6%	\$115
Older brother or sister provides care in your home	1	1%	\$175
Other relative/friend/nanny provides care in your home	15	18%	\$220
Care is provided in the home of a non-licensed provider	27	33%	\$153
Care is provided in the home of a licensed provider	14	17%	\$198
<b>Care is provided by a child care center/preschool/daycare or nursery school</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>\$227</b>
Total	83	100%	-

*According to data from Children’s Resource and Referral, a program of Santa Barbara Family Care Center (R&R, SBFCC), the average cost of weekly child care for children under 24 months in South County Santa Barbara is \$234 for center based care and \$195 for care provided by a licensed home provider. Parent employees reported paying average market rates for child care for this age group as demonstrated by this chart.*

\* Average weekly cost per child is derived from the mid point of a pre-selected range.

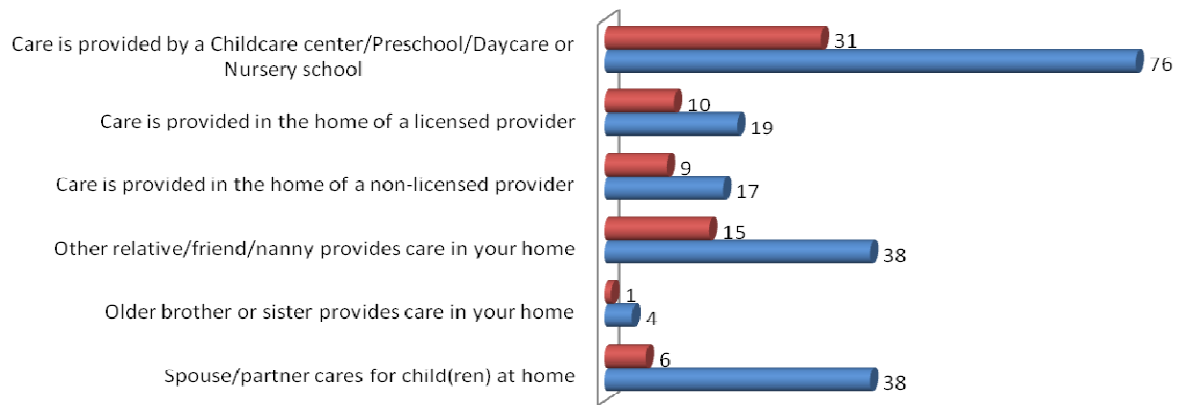
<sup>14</sup> Children’s Resource and Referral, A Program of Santa Barbara Family Care Center

**Child Care Arrangements - Parents of Children 2-3 Years of Age**

There are 194 parent respondents who have 209 children 2-3 years of age. The majority (93%) of these parents have only one child. Although many parents report patch-working a variety of child care options together, according to the survey and focus group responses, center based child care is more available and more utilized with children ages 2-3 than younger children. Similar to parents of children under 24 months, the majority (80%) of parents in this group use child care for more than 20 hours each week.

Over a third (37%) of parents of children ages 2-3 indicated that they have considered quitting their job because of their child care responsibilities. This is 6% lower than parents of younger children, yet, 7% higher than parents of children ages 10-12. Parents of children ages 2-3 who rely on a spouse/partner for the majority of their child care needs were less likely to consider quitting than parents who rely on licensed and non-licensed home providers, other relatives or a child care center. The following chart depicts the number of parents who use each kind of child care as well as the number of parents within each care subgroup who have considered quitting their job due to child care issues.

**Types of Child Care/Risk of Parent Quitting - Parents of Children Age 2 or 3 Years Old**





**Cost of Care for Children Ages 2-3**

Ten percent of parents with children age 2 through 3 years receive a subsidy to supplement the cost of their child care. The median cost of care for children ages 2-3 is \$151 to \$200 per week. Thirty-one percent of parents pay over \$200 a week for child care. It is important to note that this figure is based on parents' report of all kinds of care, full time and part time. The following chart summarizes parent reports related to average cost of child care per week.

**Cost of Care for Children Ages 2 - 3**

Cost of care used for children age 2 or 3 years	Parent Count	Percent	Total Children in Age Group
I pay nothing for child care	39	20%	39
Less than \$50	7	4%	7
\$51 to \$100	31	16%	34
\$101 to \$150	29	15%	33
<b>\$151 to \$200</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>32</b>
\$201 to \$250	25	13%	25
\$251 to \$300	13	7%	15
\$301 to \$350	8	4%	9
More than \$350	13	7%	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>209</b>

Additional analysis was conducted to determine if there is a variance in cost of care for parent respondents who live in the downtown area versus parents who live outside of the downtown area. Again, this was done in effort to respond to local data<sup>15</sup> that indicates that the cost of child care is higher in South Santa Barbara County compared to the rest of the County.

Overall, the average cost of care for the majority of child care options was slightly higher for parents who live and work downtown with two exceptions; care provided in the home of a non-licensed and licensed care provider was more expensive for parent respondents who live outside of the downtown area. In fact, parents living in 93108, 93111, and 93117 reported paying an average of \$75 more a week for licensed providers.

The chart below details the average cost parents who work and live downtown pay for full time and part time care.

**Cost of Care for Children Ages 2-3  
Parents Who WORK & LIVE Downtown**

n=68 Parents	Parents who pay for care \$75 or more per week		
	Count	%	Avg. Weekly Cost per Child
<b>Parents who WORK Downtown &amp; LIVE Downtown:</b>			
Spouse/partner cares for child at home	6	9%	\$83
Older brother or sister provides care in your home	1	1%	\$175
Other relative/friend/nanny provides care in your home	16	24%	\$239
Care is provided in the home of a non-licensed provider	7	10%	\$125
Care is provided in the home of a licensed provider	3	4%	\$125
Care is provided by a child care center/preschool/daycare or nursery school	35	51%	\$215
Total	68	100%	-

*According to data from R&R, SBFCC, the average cost of weekly child care for children 2-5 years old in South County Santa Barbara is \$137 for center based care and \$179 for care provided by a licensed home provider. Surveyed parents of children ages 4-5 report paying more for center care and less for licensed home providers than average market rates. However, comparing two age groups could partially account for this. See chart.*

\* Average weekly cost per child is derived from the mid point of a pre-selected range.

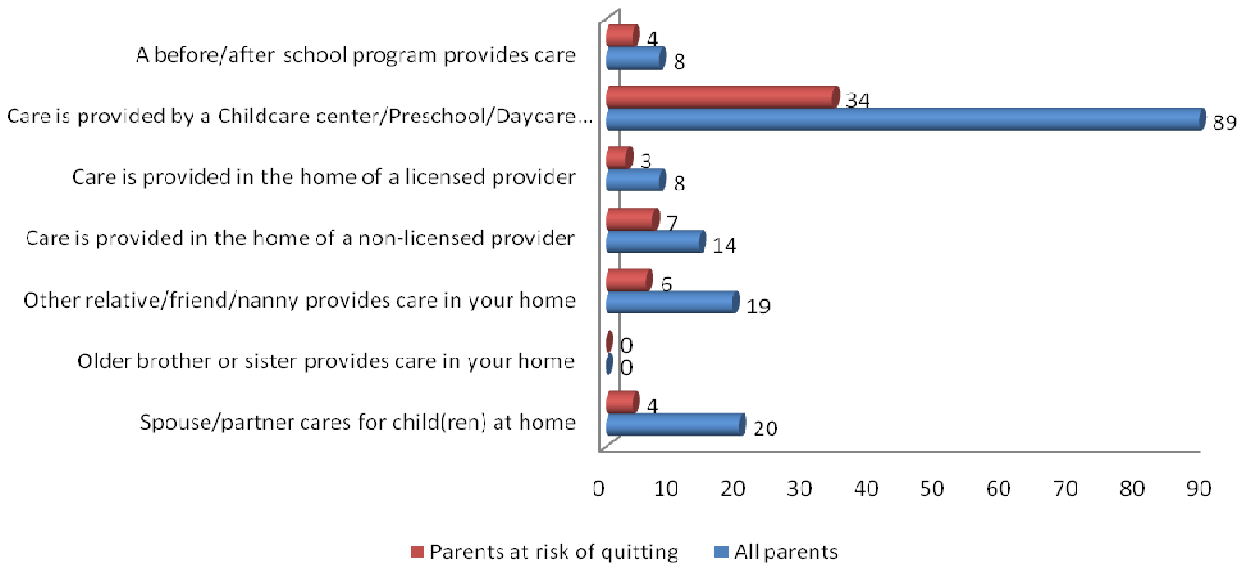
<sup>15</sup> Children’s Resource and Referral, A Program of Santa Barbara Family Care Center

**Child Care Arrangements - Parents of Children 4-5 Years of Age**

There are 160 parent respondents who have 165 children 4-5 years of age. The majority (97%) of these parents have only one child. According to the survey and focus group responses, center based child care is more available to children of this age group than to younger children. Over half of the parents in this group use center based care for the majority of their child care needs. Children of this age group are reported to be in child care for less time compared to younger children, which is most likely due to kindergarten enrollment. However, a majority (68%) of parents use child care for more than 20 hours each week for children in this age group.

Over a third (36%) of parent respondents of children ages 4-5 indicated that they have considered quitting their job because of child care issues. Again, parents who rely on a spouse or partner for the majority of their child care needs were less likely to consider quitting than parents who rely on other child care options. The following chart depicts the number of parents who use each kind of child care service as well as the number of parents within each service subgroup who have considered quitting their job due to child care issues.

**Types of Child Care/Risk of Parent Quitting -  
Parents of Children Age 4 or 5 Years Old**



**Cost of Care for Children Ages 4-5**

Eleven percent of parent respondents with children 4-5 years of age reported that they receive a subsidy to supplement the cost of child care. For parents of children within this age group who pay for child care, the median cost is \$101 to \$150 per week for care. Twenty-one percent of parent respondents of this age group pay more than \$200 a week for child care. It is important to note that this figure is based on parents' report of all kinds of care, full time and part time. The following chart summarizes parent reports related to average cost of child care per week.

**Cost of Care for Children age 4 or 5**

Cost of care used for children age 4 or 5 years:	Parent Count	Percent	Total Children in Age Group
I pay nothing for child care	25	16%	26
Less than \$50	13	8%	13
<b>\$51 to \$100</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>\$101 to \$150</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>28</b>
\$151 to \$200	32	20%	32
\$201 to \$250	13	8%	14
\$251 to \$300	2	1%	2
\$301 to \$350	4	3%	4
More than \$350	14	9%	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>165</b>

Again, additional analysis was done in an effort to respond to local data<sup>16</sup> that indicates that the cost of child care is higher in South Santa Barbara County compared to the rest of the County. The average cost of care for the majority of child care options was reported as slightly higher for parents who live downtown compared to parents who live outside of the downtown area. The chart below details the average cost parents who work and live downtown pay for full time and part time care.

**Cost of Care for Children Ages 4-5  
Parents Who WORK & LIVE Downtown**

n=50 Parents	Parents who pay for care \$75 or more per week		
	Count	%	Avg. Weekly Cost per Child
<b>Parents who WORK Downtown &amp; LIVE Downtown:</b>			
Spouse/partner cares for child at home	5	10%	\$150
Older brother or sister provides care in your home	0	0%	\$0
Other relative/friend/nanny provides care in your home	5	10%	\$185
Care is provided in the home of a non-licensed provider	3	6%	\$108
Care is provided in the home of a licensed provider	2	4%	\$225
<b>Care is provided by a child care center/preschool/daycare or nursery school</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>\$188</b>
A before/after school program provides care	2	4%	\$238
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>-</b>

*According to data from R&R, SBFCC, the average cost of weekly child care for children 2-5 years old in South County Santa Barbara is \$137 for center based care and \$179 for care provided by a licensed home provider. Surveyed parents of children ages 2-3 report paying more for center based care than average market rates. However, comparing two age groups could partially account for this. See chart.*

\* Average weekly cost per child is derived from the mid point of a pre-selected range.

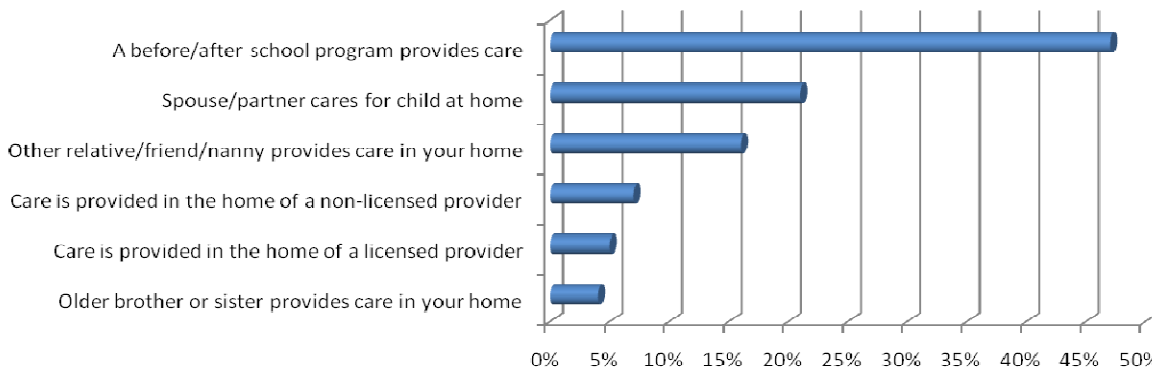
<sup>16</sup> Children’s Resource and Referral, A Program of Santa Barbara Family Care Center

### Child Care Arrangements - Parents of Children 6-9 Years of Age

There are 290 parent respondents who have 331 children 6-9 years of age. The majority (86%) of these parents have only one child, 13% have two children. The majority of parents within this group report using before/after school care services. Because of this, parents utilize child care for children in this age group significantly less than parents of younger children. Only 28% of parent respondents use child care for more than 20 hours each week for children in this age group.

A third (37%) of parents of children ages 6-9 indicated that they have considered quitting their job because of their child care responsibilities (this is a similar rate to what parents of children ages 2-5 reported). The following chart depicts the number of parents who use each kind of child care service.

**Types of Child Care Used by Parent Respondents of Children Age 6 through 9 Years Old**



n=290

**Cost of Care for Children Ages 6-9**

Eight percent of parents with children age 6 - 9 receive a subsidy to supplement their before/after school care costs. Nearly 75% of parents pay less than \$100 per week for the care of children in this age group. This is most likely due to the shorter hours of before and after school care needed, and the availability of less expensive care. Parent respondents pay considerably less for child care for older children than they do for younger children. It is important to note that this figure is based on parents' report of all kinds of care, full time and part time. The following chart summarizes parent reports related to average cost of child care per week.

**Cost of Care for Children Age 6 to 9**

Cost of care used for children age 6 to 9 years:	Parent Count	Percent	Total Children in Age Group
I pay nothing for child care	89	31%	99
Less than \$50	46	16%	50
\$51 to \$100	77	27%	85
\$101 to \$150	38	13%	48
\$151 to \$200	13	4%	15
\$201 to \$250	10	3%	13
\$251 to \$300	8	3%	9
\$301 to \$350	3	1%	4
More than \$350	6	2%	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>331</b>

Again, additional analysis was done in an effort to respond to local data<sup>17</sup> that indicates that the cost of child care is higher in South Santa Barbara County compared to the rest of the County. Overall cost of child care is only slightly higher for parents of this age group who work and live in the downtown area compared to parents who live outside of the downtown area. The chart below details the average cost parents who work and live downtown pay for full time and part time care.

**Cost of Care for Children Age 6-9  
Parents who WORK & LIVE Downtown**

n=70 Parents	Parents who pay \$75 or more per week for care		
	Count	%	Avg. Weekly Cost per Child
<b>Parents who WORK Downtown &amp; LIVE Downtown:</b>			
Spouse/partner cares for child at home	6	9%	\$121
Older brother or sister provides care in your home	2	3%	\$100
Other relative/friend/nanny provides care in your home	12	17%	\$165
Care is provided in the home of a non-licensed provider	3	4%	\$183
Care is provided in the home of a licensed provider	3	4%	\$175
<b>A before/after school program provides care</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>\$122</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>-</b>

*According to data from R&R, SBFCC, the average cost of weekly child care for children 6-13 years old in South County Santa Barbara is \$86 for center based care and \$152 for care provided by a licensed home provider. The variation in what parents report below is likely due to the difference in age groups. See chart.*

\* Average weekly cost per child is derived from the mid point of a pre-selected range.

<sup>17</sup> Children’s Resource and Referral, A Program of Santa Barbara Family Care Center

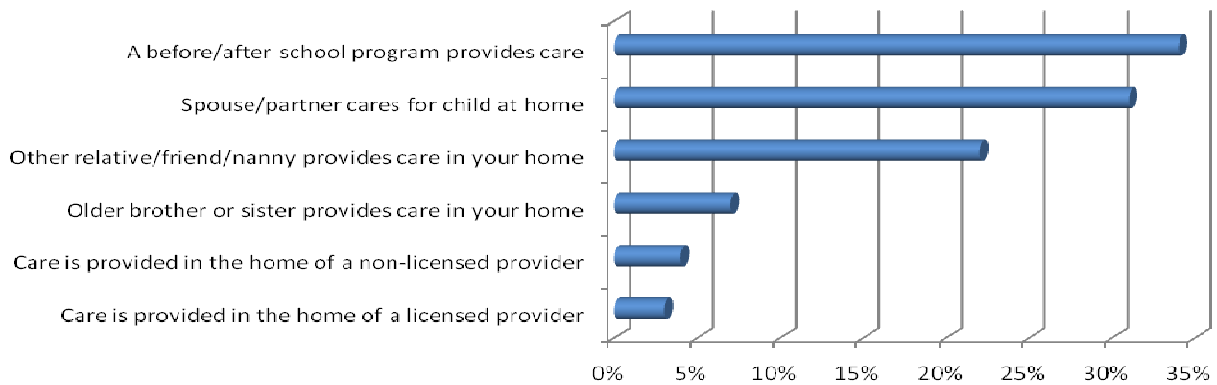


**Child Care Arrangements - Parents of Children 10-12 Years of Age**

There are 219 parent respondents who have 245 children 10-12 years of age. The majority (90%) of these parents have only one child, 8% have two children. Again, many parent respondents of school age children use before/after school care services. However, about a third of parents of this group also rely on a spouse/partner for care. Only 23% of parent respondents use child care for more than 20 hours each week for children in this age group.

Almost a third (30%) of parents of children ages 10-12 indicated that they have considered quitting their job because of their child care responsibilities. Parents who have considered quitting are slightly more likely to use before/after school programs for child care than rely on a spouse/partner to help care for children. The following chart depicts the kind of child care services parents use for children in this age group.

**Types of Child Care Used by Parents of Children Age 10-12 Years Old**



n=219

**Cost of Care for Children Ages 10-12**

Only 8% of parents with children age 10 through 12 years receive a subsidy to supplement their before/after school child care cost (similar rate to other age groups). Almost half of the parents pay nothing for the care of their children in this age group; another third pay up to \$100 per week. It is important to note that this figure is based on parents' report of all kinds of care, full time and part time. The following chart summarizes parent reports related to average cost of child care per week.

**Cost of Care for Children Age 10 to 12**

Cost of care used for children age 10 to 12 years:	Parent Count	Percent	Total Children in Age Group
I pay nothing for child care	104	47%	114
Less than \$50	28	13%	31
\$51 to \$100	46	21%	49
\$101 to \$150	26	12%	32
\$151 to \$200	5	2%	8
\$201 to \$250	5	2%	5
\$251 to \$300	0	0%	-
\$301 to \$350	0	0%	-
More than \$350	5	2%	6
Total	219	100%	245

Again, additional analysis was done in an effort to respond to local data<sup>18</sup> that indicates that the cost of child care is higher in South Santa Barbara County compared to the rest of the County. Parents pay approximately the same amount for care despite where they live. However, parents who work downtown and live in zip codes 93108, 93111, 93117 reported paying an average of nearly \$30 more a week for care in a child care center than parents in the downtown area. The chart below details the average cost parents who work and live downtown pay for full time and part time care.

**Cost of Care for Children Ages 10-12  
Parents who WORK & LIVE Downtown**

n=36 Parents	Parents who pay \$75 or more per week for care		
	Count	%	Avg. Weekly Cost per Child
<b>Parents who WORK Downtown &amp; LIVE Downtown:</b>			
Spouse/partner cares for child at home	4	11%	\$88
Older brother or sister provides care in your home	0	0%	-
Other relative/friend/nanny provides care in your home	14	39%	\$139
Care is provided in the home of a non-licensed provider	0	0%	-
Care is provided in the home of a licensed provider	3	8%	\$92
<b>A before/after school program provides care</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>\$120</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>-</b>

*According to data from R&R, SBFCC the average cost of weekly child care for children 6-13 years old in South County Santa Barbara is \$86 for center based care and \$152 for care provided by a licensed home provider. The variation in what parents report below is likely due to the difference in age groups. See chart.*

\* Average weekly cost per child is derived from the mid point of a pre-selected range.

<sup>18</sup> Children’s Resource and Referral, A Program of Santa Barbara Family Care Center

## **I**mpact of Child Care Issues on the Work Place

The following section demonstrates the impact child care issues have on the work place by examining missed days at work, employee productivity, tension with co-workers, and opportunities for promotion due to child care issues, as well as other factors that influence parent employees that have considered quitting their job. This section is followed by parent respondent input regarding ways to enhance work-life effectiveness, including improving job productivity and retention. The results chapter will conclude with an examination of the kinds of child care services parent employees would use.

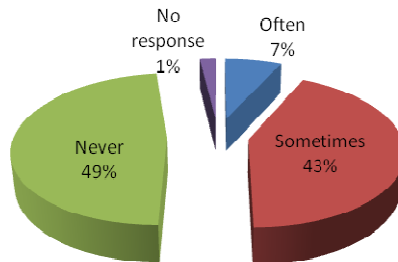
### **Summary of findings from this section**

- 50% of all respondents think their work place is negatively impacted by a co-worker's child care responsibilities.
- Parent respondents missed an average of 4.06 days of work last year due to breakdown in child care arrangements and an average of 4.31 days of work due to child illness.
- Absenteeism due to breakdown in child care arrangements costs participating downtown employers an estimated \$335,000 in lost productivity last year alone.
- Increased stress, loss of productivity, tension with co-workers, missed opportunities for promotion, tardiness, and inability to work overtime are associated with employee child care issues.
- 36% of parent employees have considered quitting their jobs due to child care issues. Using a conservative estimate, the cost of turnover would be approximately six million dollars.
- Perceived lack of support in the work place nearly doubles employee consideration of quitting their job due to child care issues.
- Parent employees are supportive of additional child care services. The majority of parent respondents indicated they would use a full service child care center (61%), a back up child care program (62%), mildly ill child care services (41%), and a family care network (37%).
- The majority of parent respondents reported that additional child care services would enhance employee productivity and retention.
- 80% of parent employees who have considered quitting reported that a full service child care center would improve their productivity.
- 70% of parents who have considered quitting indicated that a full service child care center would be a retention factor.

**Impact of Child Care Issues on the Work Place**

In order to accurately assess the overall impact child care issues have on the work place, both parents and non-parents were asked if their work place was ever negatively impacted by the child care responsibilities of a co-worker. Half of all respondents reported that it has been. This figure is five percentage points higher than a similar study done in Ventura County.

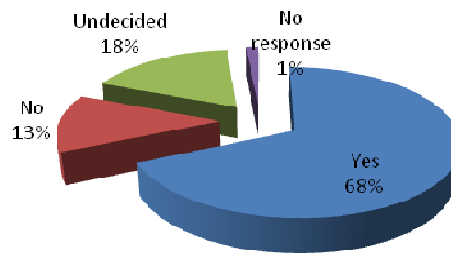
**Co-worker Negative Impact from Child Care  
All Respondents**



n=2,015

Sixty-eight percent of all respondents believe their work environment is supportive of their efforts to balance their work and personal lives.

**Supportive Work Environment – All Respondents**



n=2,015

## Impact of Child Care Issues on Business Bottom Line

### Employee Absenteeism

The impact of child care issues on employee absenteeism was echoed throughout the survey and focus groups.

***What Parents Say....***

Focus group participants agreed that the majority of employee absenteeism is due to parents staying home with their sick children and a result of child care arrangements falling apart. Due to a lack of available mildly ill child care and back up care options in Santa Barbara, parent participants report commonly saving and using their personal sick days for when their child or their child care provider is sick or when child care arrangements fall apart.

Summers and school vacations present additional child care challenges for many parent employees according to focus group participants and survey comments. Lack of available child care requires parents to take personal vacation time or sick leave, to take care of their children, thus increasing employee absenteeism.

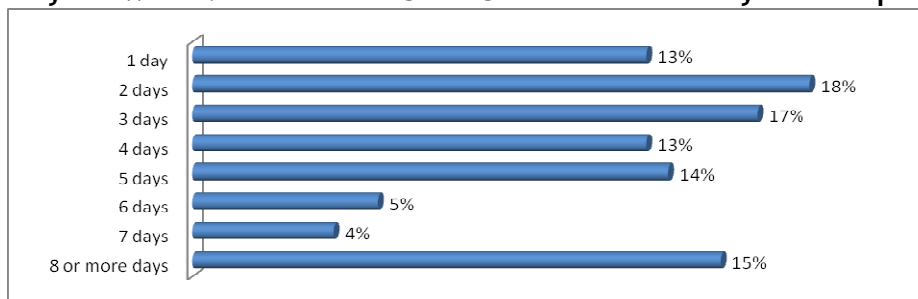
According to focus group participants, when parent employees are sick, they have little choice but to go to work because they have used up their personal sick time. Not only does this add stress to parent employees, it negatively impacts the workplace.

The survey assessed missed days from work based on two factors: breakdown in child care arrangements and child illness.

### Breakdown in Child Care Arrangements

Nearly 66% of all parents missed at least one day of work last year due to a breakdown in child care arrangements - 4.06 days each on average. This sums to a combined total of 1,870 days (374 weeks or 7 years collectively). The average salary data for these parents (approximately \$47,000) multiplied by the number of work days missed, **sums to a lost productivity cost of over \$335K in just one year**. The following chart details parents' reports of the number of work days missed due to breakdown in child care arrangements.

**Days of Work Missed Due to Child Care Breakdowns by % of Response**

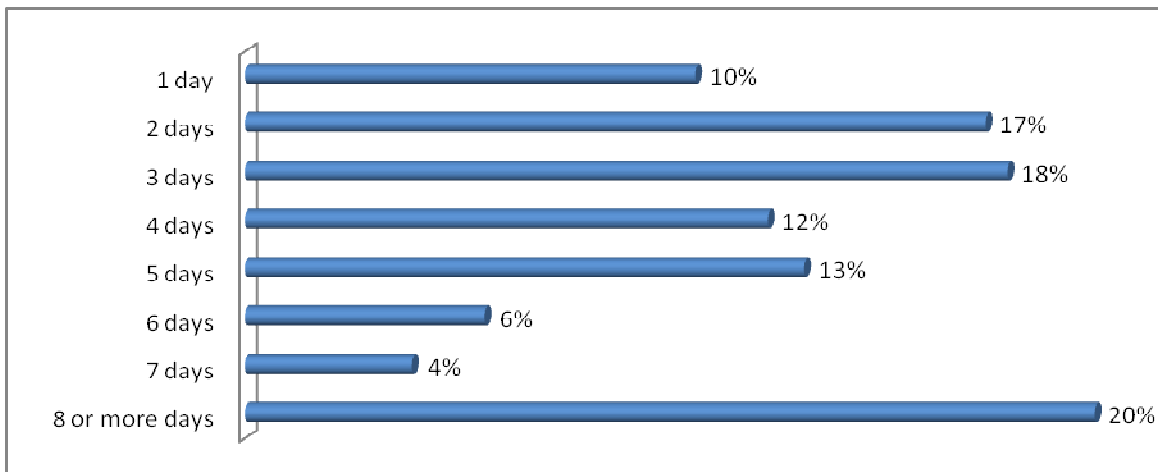


n=460

**Child Illness**

Respondents were asked about the number of days missed due to child illness to assess the potential need for a mildly ill child care program. Eighty-five percent of parents (591 out 697) missed an average of 4.31 days over the past year, equaling a total of 2,549 days (509 weeks or 9.8 years collectively). Twenty percent of parents missed 8 or more days due to child illness. Based on an average annual salary of approximately \$47,000 for these parents, the **potential total lost productivity sums to over \$460K in just one year**. The following chart details parents’ reports of the number of days missed at work due to child illness.

**Days of Work Missed Due to Child Illnesses by Percentage of Response**



n=591

**Based ONLY on the responses of those who work in the five downtown zip codes and who participated in this survey, it was discovered that absenteeism due to breakdowns in child care arrangements and child illnesses collectively cost downtown Santa Barbara employers an estimated \$795,000 in lost productivity in *just one year*.**

The impact child care issues have on the work place goes beyond employee absenteeism. According to the results of this study, issues related to stress, productivity, tension with co-workers, and missed opportunities for upward mobility, coupled with tardiness, inability to work overtime or different shifts are some of the many negative repercussions to the work place.

**What Parents Say.....**

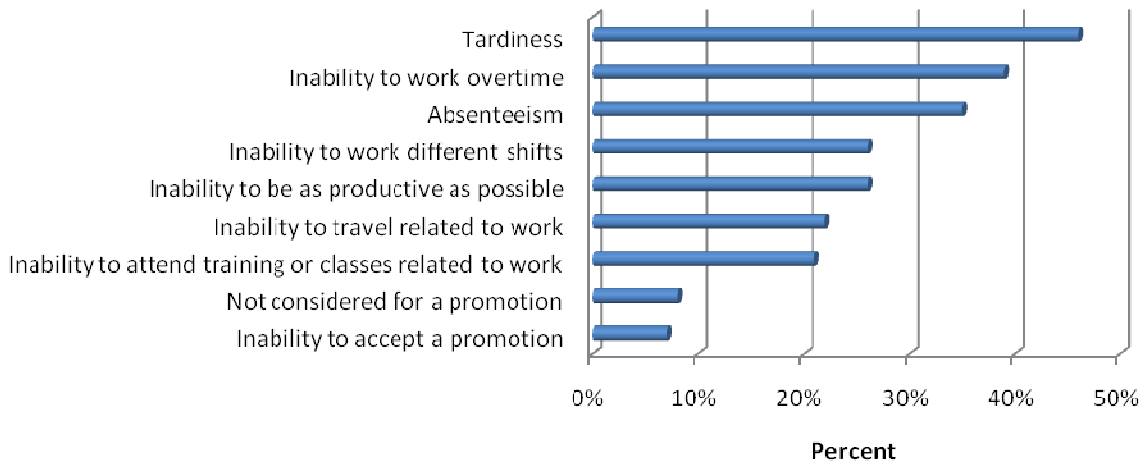
Focus group and survey comments underscore the stress related to coordinating child care and work schedules. The majority of child care providers have set drop off and pick up times that require parents to come to work late or leave work early. Juggling child care with work schedules reduces parent employee’s ability to work overtime and stay late to finish work. At the same time, parent employees often have to make requests for special accommodations for child care issues. All of these factors amplify parent employee’s stress at work. Single parents report additional strain in these situations related to the stress of juggling the high cost of care and parenting alone.

Although focus group participants reported that many employers are supportive of the balance between work and family, co-workers who do not have children often do not understand the reason for special schedules. Focus group participants reported feeling like they have to constantly justify their actions and schedules. This creates added strain in the work place.

Focus group and survey comments indicated that child care responsibilities often negatively impact parent employee opportunities for job advancement. Time and schedule restraints due to child care issues are felt to undermine perceived dependability and reliability, thus resulting in lack of job promotions.

According to the survey, tardiness, an inability to work overtime, and absenteeism are the greatest difficulties experienced by most parents related to their work. However, as the focus group and survey comments demonstrated, all other challenges affect employee productivity. The chart below shows the frequency at which parent employees have experienced the following impacts at work as a result of personal child care responsibilities.

**Child Care Impacts on Parents at Work**



n=697

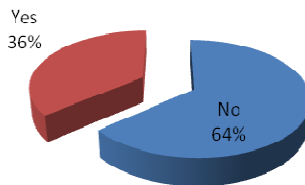


**Consideration to Quit Due to Child Care Responsibility Problems**

As previously stated, a third of parent employees (36%) have considered quitting their jobs due to child care issues. Parents with younger children report being most challenged by child care responsibilities. It is important to note that this data is slightly higher than a Ventura County study completed by Summa Associates in 2005; and significantly higher than a comparable study done for the Metropolitan Government in Nashville and Davidson County where 21% of parents had considered quitting.

Of the employees surveyed, a quarter of those who have considered quitting hold office/administrative support positions (average annual salary \$32,932). Another 23% hold healthcare support positions (average annual salary \$25,272) or education, training and library positions (average annual salary \$51,228).

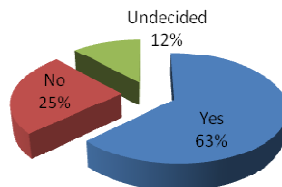
**Parents Who Have Considered Quitting**



n=697

Furthermore, when parents were asked if their work environment was supportive of their efforts to balance their work and personal life, those who had considered quitting were nearly twice as likely to indicate “no”.

**Believe Work Environment is Supportive of Work/Personal Life Balance (parents who have considered quitting)**



n=179

To calculate turnover for the 247 employees who have considered quitting, Summa Associates uses a conservative industry standard turnover cost calculation of 75% the annual salary, which is \$34,327 for these 247 respondents. If the employees who have considered quitting actually did, the turnover cost to employers participating in this study would be over \$6 million using this standard.

## Work Life Effectiveness

Parent respondents were asked which, if any, child care services would improve their ability to perform their job efficiently and would keep them in their job. Increasing available, high quality, affordable child care services was consistently reported as a way to improve employee productivity in the focus groups and survey comments.

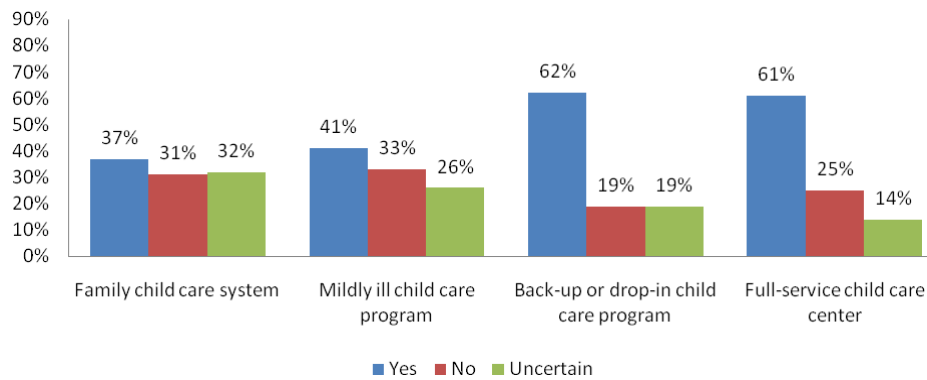
### *What Parents Say...*

According to focus group participants and survey comments, the elimination of the stress related to insufficient child care arrangements would make parent employees happier and more efficient workers. This would in turn increase productivity and allow parent employees to have greater capacity to fulfill their work tasks, which would therefore decrease stress on co-workers and supervisors and help create an overall positive impact on the workplace.

According to the survey results, over 60% of parents indicated that a full service child care center would improve their ability to perform their job efficiently. This figure was even higher (nearly 80%) for parent employees who have considered quitting. In addition, nearly 90% of parents with children age 5 or younger, who have considered quitting, indicated that a full-service child care center would improve their ability to perform at work.

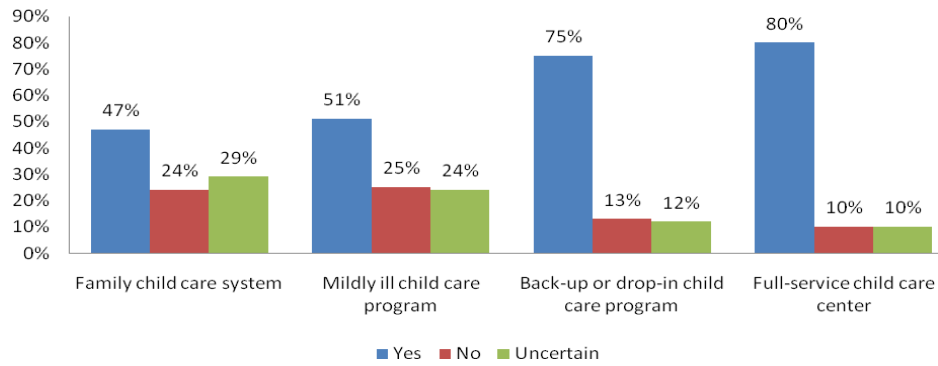
The charts below detail parents' responses regarding the potential impact various child care services would have on their ability to perform efficiently at work.

**Potential Impact Child Care Services Would Have on Productivity- All Parent Respondents**



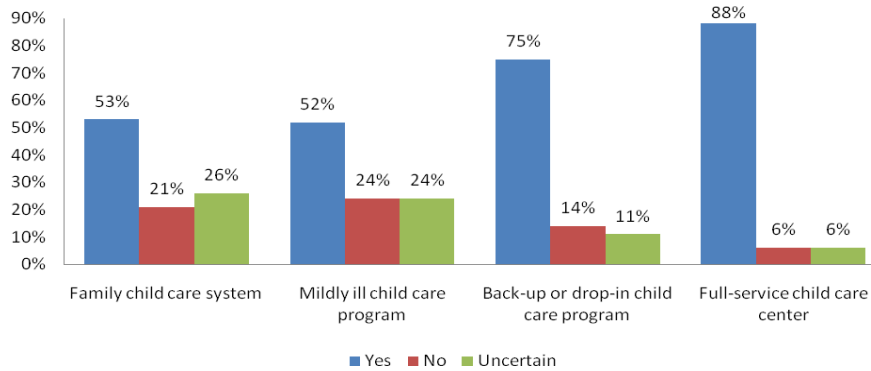
n=697

**Potential Impact Child Care Services Would Have on Productivity- Parents Who Have Considered Quitting**



n=247

**Potential Impact Child Care Services Would Have on Productivity- Parents with Children Age 5 and Younger Who Have Considered Quitting**



n=179

**Increase Employee Retention**

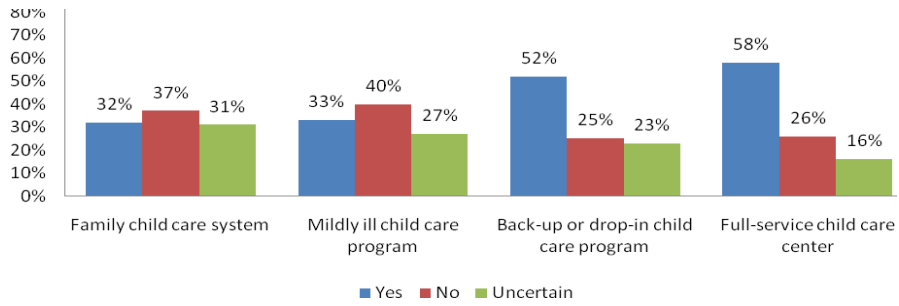
Focus group participants and respondents agree that additional child care options would positively impact employee retention.

***What Parents Say...***  
 Focus Group participants reported that additional downtown child care services, offering high quality care at affordable rates, would be seen as an excellent benefit to retaining current employees as well as an effective recruiting tool. Participants commented that child care options are one of many factors that parent employees will consider when deciding to work in downtown Santa Barbara.

According to the survey results, over half of all parents indicated that a full-service child care center would be a factor in retaining them. Again, this figure was even higher for parents who have considered quitting (75%) and parents with children age 5 or younger who have considered quitting (83%).

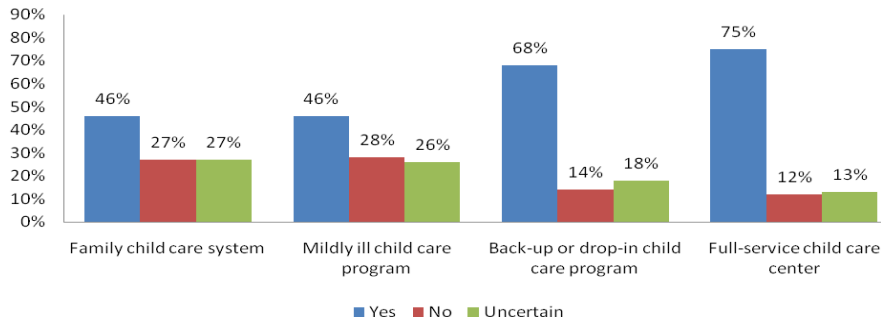
The charts below detail parents' responses regarding the potential impact various child care services would have on employee retention.

**Potential Impact Child Care Services Would Have on Retention - All Parent Respondents**



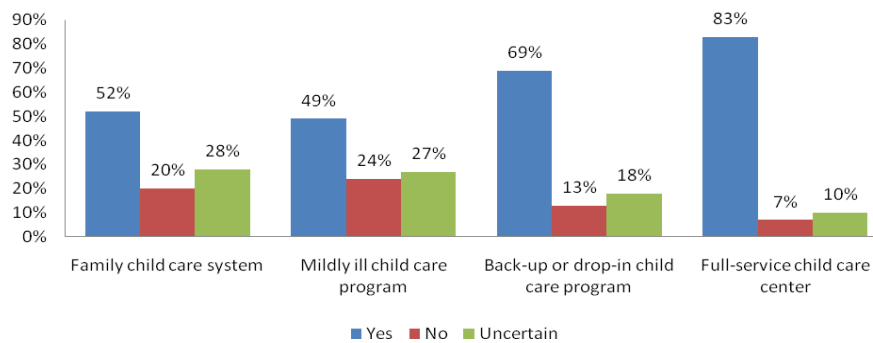
n=697

**Potential Impact Child Care Services Would Have on Retention - Parents Who Have Considered Quitting**



n=247

**Potential Impact Child Care Services Would Have on Retention - Parents with Children Age 5 and Younger Who Have Considered Quitting**



n=179

## Child Care Services Parents Would Use

Parent employees were asked to indicate what specific child care services<sup>19</sup> they would use if a quality child care program, in a convenient location, and at fair market rates was offered near work.

### *What Parents Say...*

Focus group participants and survey comments reported enthusiasm and relief regarding additional downtown child care options and stated that they would feel added comfort and peace if their children were close to them while at work.

Parent participants reflected on the emotional and psychological benefits (for parents and children) related to having children in care close to work. Many employees discussed the likelihood of being more focused and present at work by just knowing that their children are close by and accessible in the event of a problem or emergency.

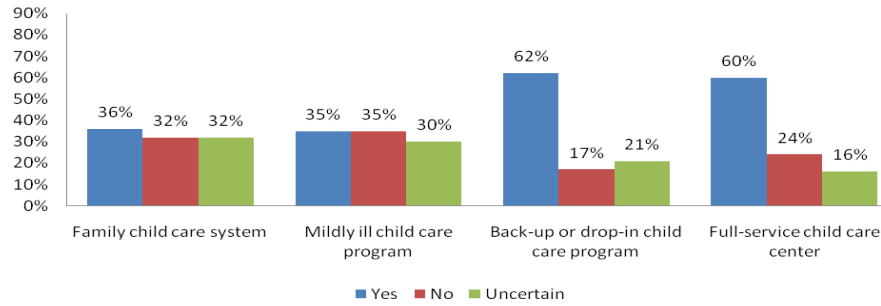
Focus group comments and survey responses indicated that full service and back up care are the most attractive child care options for parents seeking child care. These two care options become even more compelling for parents who have considered quitting because of child care responsibilities. This is especially true for parents with children age 5 and younger who have considered quitting, as demonstrated in the third chart where 86% of these parents said they would use a full service child care center.

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<sup>19</sup> Summa Associates compiled a list of child care services from evidence based research and best practice data.

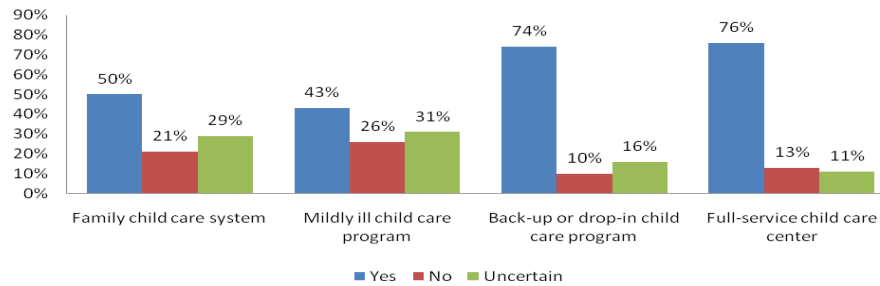
The following charts detail which child care services parent employees reported they would use.

**Which Child Care Services Parents Would Use - All Parent Respondents**



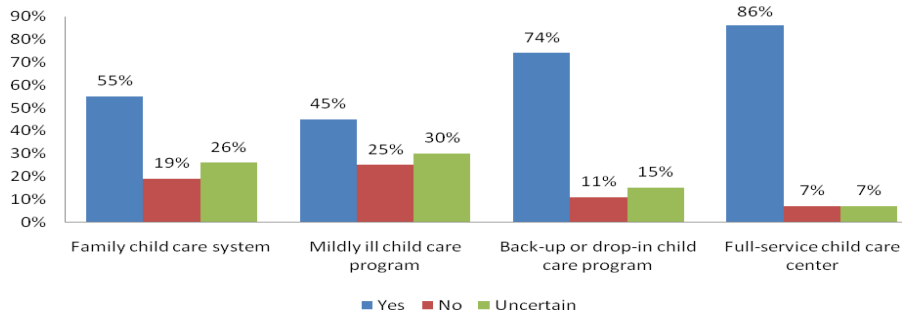
n=697

**Which Child Care Services Parents Would Use - Parents Who Have Considered Quitting**



n=247

**Which Child Care Services Parents Would Use - Parents with Children Age 5 and Younger Who Have Considered Quitting**



n=179

***What Parents Say...***  
 The addition of a downtown, high quality child care center was enthusiastically supported by focus group participants and within the comment section of the survey. Parent employees described the ideal center as an affordable, high quality, learning environment where children would be engaged in developmentally appropriate, age-separated activities.

In addition to a downtown child care center that offers extended hour care, an after school program, a summer care program, drop-in care for breaks, holidays, vacations and school closures, and a mildly ill care program, parent employees discussed the desire for part-time child care options.

When parents were asked if they would actually use a quality child care center, in a convenient location, and at a fair market rate, 60% of all parents said “yes” (457 preschool age children). Sixty-two percent of parents said they would use a drop-in child care program (386 preschool age children). A third of parents said they would use a mildly-ill child care program (214 preschool age children), and a third of parent respondents would use a family child care network (243 preschool age children).

The following charts illustrate the number of children (by age) whose parents indicated they would potentially use the following quality programs (full-service child care center, mildly ill child care program, back-up child care program, and family child care network), offered at a fair market rate in a convenient location.

**Children of Parents Who Indicated They Would Use a Full-Service Child Care Center**

	Children up to 24 Months	Children Age 2 to 3	Children Age 4 to 5	Age 5 & Younger CURRENTLY enrolled in a Center Care*	Children Age 6 to 12	Total Children Age 12 and Younger
Number of Children	197	148	112	237	267	724
Avg. Cost for Child Care Center/After School Care	\$215	\$193	\$160	Avg. Cost \$194	\$95	\$88

\* These parents have an average household income of from \$80,000 to \$100,000

**Children of Parents Who Indicated They Would Use a Mildly Ill Child Care Program**

	Children up to 24 Months	Children Age 2 to 3	Children Age 4 to 5	Total Children Age 5 and Younger	Children Age 6 to 12	Total Children Age 12 and Younger
Number of Children	88	73	53	214	174	388

**Children of Parents Who Indicated They Would Use a Back-Up or Drop-in Child Care Program**

	Children up to 24 Months	Children Age 2 to 3	Children Age 4 to 5	Total Children Age 5 and Younger	Children Age 6 to 12	Total Children Age 12 and Younger
Number of Children	157	132	97	386	326	712

**Children of Parents Who Indicated They Would Use a Family Child Care Network<sup>20</sup>**

	Children up to 24 Months	Children Age 2 to 3	Children Age 4 to 5	Total Children Age 5 and Younger	Children Age 6 to 12	Total Children Age 12 and Younger
Number of Children	121	75	47	243	170	413

<sup>20</sup> The lower percentage of parent preferences for licensed family care providers compared to other child care services may or may not be a result of recent negative media reports of family child care services. Various local organizations are currently involved in efforts to educate parents about high quality, licensed family care and to expand awareness regarding the benefits of licensed family child care.



***What Parents Say...***

Although the majority of focus group participants were supportive of a downtown child care center, less were excited about a licensed family child care system. Concern was expressed about quality control measures, provider dependability, and issues regarding stability and structure for children.

However, some participants liked the idea of having children in a licensed home environment and found that their children got sick less in a family child care program compared to a center. Many participants commented that if the same level of quality, availability and convenience were available within a licensed family care network, they would consider it a good option.

**Additional Child Care Suggestions**

The survey only collected data on the previously mentioned child care options. However, focus group participants suggested several other solutions to help parent employees manage work-family stresses. Participants were interested in the development of lactation rooms, pre-parenting education programs regarding the cost and availability of child care, and a more extensive, up to date local child care referral system. Participants also discussed the need for assistance transporting children from school to after school programs.

## Conclusion

In summary, study findings along with child care capacity data confirm there is a critical shortage of available, high quality, affordable child care in Santa Barbara. The extensive and problematic impact this has on parent employees and businesses is thoroughly demonstrated throughout the study. The data collected substantiates the need to move forward and address these issues. The Downtown Santa Barbara Child Care Partnership's next steps include the development of an action plan based on the study's key findings that integrates a combination of strategies to address workforce child care.



## Appendix A - Definitions

**Back-up Child Care** - Safe, high quality child care that is available when alternative, supplemental, or emergency care is needed due to a gap in daily, primary arrangements.

**Child Care Center** - A public or nonprofit facility where educational, social, health, and nutritional services are provided to children through age 14 (or as prescribed by State law) and that is approved or licensed by the State or other appropriate authority.

**Family Child Care Network** - A group of licensed family child care providers who are associated through a system including professional training, advocacy activities, and/or a referral list.

**Infants** - Children 0-24 months of age.

**Licensed Family Child Care** - Child care in the home of a provider who is licensed by the state Community Care Licensing Division.

**Mildly Ill Child Care** - Child care services available to children who are recovering from or have symptoms from a common, short-term, non-contagious, non-progressive illness.

**Preschool Age Children** - Children ages 5 and younger.

**School Age Children** - Children 6 to 12 years of age.

**Toddlers** - Children 24 to 36 months of age.



## Appendix B - Survey Questionnaire

**WORKFORCE OPINIONS & DEMOGRAPHICS SECTION**

**Please place an “X” in the box to indicate your best response. All responses are completely confidential.**

1. What is your gender?       Male       Female
  
2. What is your age?       Less than 25 years       47-55 years  
     25-36 years       56-65 years  
     37-46 years       More than 65 years
  
3. Who is your employer?
 

<input type="checkbox"/> Aldo's Italian Restaurant	<input type="checkbox"/> Franciscan Inn	<input type="checkbox"/> National Center for Ecological Analysis & Synthesis
<input type="checkbox"/> Antioch University	<input type="checkbox"/> Holiday Inn Express/Hotel Virginia	<input type="checkbox"/> Sansum Santa Barbara Medical Foundation
<input type="checkbox"/> Armstrong Associates Inc.	<input type="checkbox"/> Hollister & Brace	<input type="checkbox"/> Santa Barbara Bank and Trust
<input type="checkbox"/> Bartlett, Pringle and Wolf	<input type="checkbox"/> Hotel Santa Barbara	<input type="checkbox"/> Santa Barbara County
<input type="checkbox"/> Brown & Brown Inc.	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent	<input type="checkbox"/> Santa Barbara Elementary School Districts
<input type="checkbox"/> Brownstein, Hyatt, Farber, and Shreck	<input type="checkbox"/> Lobero Theatre	<input type="checkbox"/> Sonos
<input type="checkbox"/> City of Santa Barbara	<input type="checkbox"/> Metropolitan Paseo Nuevo	<input type="checkbox"/> Zona Seca
<input type="checkbox"/> Commission Junction Inc.	<input type="checkbox"/> Mission Linen Supply	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Fielding Graduate Institute	<input type="checkbox"/> MTD	

What best describes your position?

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Management                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Education, Training and/or Library            | <input type="checkbox"/> Sales and Related Occupations        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business and Finance Operations    | <input type="checkbox"/> Art, Design, Entertainment, Sports and Media  | <input type="checkbox"/> Office and Administrative Support    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer and Mathematical          | <input type="checkbox"/> Healthcare Practitioners and Technical        | <input type="checkbox"/> Farming, Fishing, and Forestry       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture and Engineering       | <input type="checkbox"/> Healthcare Support                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction and Extraction          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life, Physical, and Social Science | <input type="checkbox"/> Protective Service                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Installation, Maintenance and Repair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community and Social Services      | <input type="checkbox"/> Food Preparation and Serving Related          | <input type="checkbox"/> Production                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Legal                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation and Material Moving   |

4. Out of which zip code is your **job primarily** positioned?

- |                                |                                |                                |                                      |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 93013 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93109 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93429 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93455       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 93101 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93110 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93434 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93456       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 93103 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93111 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93436 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93457       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 93105 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93117 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93437 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93458       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 93106 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93199 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93440 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93460       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 93107 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93254 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93441 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93463       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 93108 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93427 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93454 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

4. Which best describes your job?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regular Full-time | <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Full-time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regular Part-time | <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Part-time |

5. What is your **typical** shift schedule?

- Days                       Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Evenings

6. Do you **routinely** work weekends?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, every weekend              | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I <u>only</u> work weekends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, every <u>other</u> weekend | <input type="checkbox"/> No, I do not work weekends       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, some weekends              |   |

7. What is your **approximate annual household income**? Please include the income of all who contribute financially to your household. Indicate which category **best represents your estimated gross (before taxes) household income** for 2007. *Select one.*

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under \$20,000    | <input type="checkbox"/> \$80,000-\$99,999   | <input type="checkbox"/> \$160,000-\$189,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20,000-\$39,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100,000-\$119,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$190,000-\$219,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$40,000-\$59,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$120,000-\$139,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$220,000-\$249,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$60,000-\$79,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$140,000-\$159,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250,000 or more   |

8. What is the zip code for your **home residence**?

- |                                |                                |                                |                                      |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 93013 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93109 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93429 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93455       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 93101 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93110 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93434 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93456       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 93103 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93111 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93436 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93457       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 93105 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93117 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93437 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93458       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 93106 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93199 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93440 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93460       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 93107 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93254 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93441 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93463       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 93108 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93427 | <input type="checkbox"/> 93454 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

9. Do you **have or expect to have** responsibility for an **elder or disabled adult** within the next **five** years?

- I **currently** have responsibility for an elder/disabled adult(s).
- I **expect to have** responsibility for an elder/disabled adult(s) within the next five years.
- I **do not have** nor expect to have responsibility for an elder/disabled adult(s).

10. Is your work ever negatively impacted by the **child care** responsibilities of a **co-worker**?

- Often
- Sometimes
- Never

11. In your opinion, is there a shortage of high quality, affordable child care within downtown Santa Barbara?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

12. In your opinion, is your work environment supportive of your efforts to balance your work and personal life?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

13. Do you **currently have** responsibility for a **child(ren) age 12 or younger**?

- Yes**, I **currently** have responsibility for a child/ren age 12 and under.

*Please proceed to the Child Care Section – next page.*

- No**

**If no: do you expect to have a child(ren)** sometime in the future?

- Yes, I am currently pregnant or expecting to adopt a child(ren) sometime in the next nine months.
- Yes, I hope to have a child(ren) within the next five years.
- No, I do not currently have nor do I expect to have responsibility for a child(ren) age 12 or younger within the next five years.

***Please proceed to the Comments Section – last page.***

**CHILD CARE SECTION** (for those with responsibility for children age 12 and younger)

If you have a child **younger than 24 months in age**, please answer the following questions. *If not, please skip to the next page – Question 17.*

16a. How many children do you have that are **younger than 24 months** in age?

- 1
- 2
- 3

16b. Please select **the ONE type of child care you use the majority of the time** for your child(ren) in this age group **while you are at work?**

- Spouse/partner cares for child(ren) *at home*
- Older brother or sister provides care *in your home*
- Other relative/friend/nanny provides care *in your home*
- Care is provided *in the home of a non-licensed* provider
- Care is provided *in the home of a licensed* provider
- Care is provided by a Childcare center/Preschool/Daycare or Nursery school

16c. Approximately **how much do you pay on average per child/per week for this care?**

- I pay nothing for child care
- Less than \$50
- \$51 to \$100
- \$101 to \$150
- \$151 to \$200
- \$201 to \$250
- \$251 to \$300
- \$301 to \$350
- More than \$350



16d. Do you receive a tuition discount, subsidy, or scholarship to help pay for this care?

- Yes       No

16e. How many **hours per week** does this child(ren) **receive *this care***?

- 20 hours or less  
 More than 20 hours

If you have a child **2 or 3 years in age**, please answer the following questions. *If not, please proceed to the next page – Question 18.*

17a. How many children do you have that are **2 or 3 years** in age?

- 1  
 2  
 3

17b. Please select **the ONE type of child care you use the majority of the time** for your child(ren) in this age group **while you are at work**?

- Spouse/partner cares for child(ren) *at home*  
 Older brother or sister provides care *in your home*  
 Other relative/friend/nanny provides care *in your home*  
 Care is provided *in the home of* a **non-licensed** provider  
 Care is provided *in the home of* a **licensed** provider  
 Care is provided by a Childcare center/Preschool/Daycare or Nursery school

17c. Approximately **how much do you pay on average per child/per week for *this care***?

- I pay nothing for child care  
 Less than \$50  
 \$51 to \$100  
 \$101 to \$150  
 \$151 to \$200  
 \$201 to \$250  
 \$251 to \$300  
 \$301 to \$350  
 More than \$350

17d. Do you receive a tuition discount, subsidy, or scholarship to help pay for this care?

- Yes                       No

17e. How many **hours per week** does this child(ren) **receive *this care***?

- 20 hours or less  
 More than 20 hours

If you have a child **4 or 5 years in age**, please answer the following questions. *If not, please proceed to the next page – Question 19.*

18a. How many children do you have that are **4 or 5 years** in age?

- 1  
 2  
 3

18b. Please select **the ONE type of child care you use the majority of the time** for your child(ren) in this age group **while you are at work**?

- Spouse/partner cares for child(ren) *at home*  
 Older brother or sister provides care *in your home*  
 Other relative/friend/nanny provides care *in your home*  
 Care is provided *in the home of a non-licensed* provider  
 Care is provided *in the home of a licensed* provider  
 Care is provided by a Childcare center/Preschool/Daycare or Nursery school  
 A before/after school program provides care

18c. Approximately **how much do you pay on average per child/per week for *this care***?

- I pay nothing for child care  
 Less than \$50  
 \$51 to \$100  
 \$101 to \$150  
 \$151 to \$200  
 \$201 to \$250  
 \$251 to \$300  
 \$301 to \$350  
 More than \$350

18d. Do you receive a tuition discount, subsidy, or scholarship to help pay for this care?

- Yes                       No

18e. How many **hours per week** does this child(ren) **receive *this care***?

- 20 hours or less  
 More than 20 hours

If you have a child **6 through 9 years in age**, please answer the following questions. *If not, please proceed to next page – Question 20.*

19a. How many children do you have that are **6 through 9 years** in age?

- 1  
 2  
 3

19b. Please select **the ONE type of child care you use the majority of the time** for your child(ren) in this age group **while you are at work**?

- Spouse/partner cares for child(ren) *at home*  
 Older brother or sister provides care *in your home*  
 Other relative/friend/nanny provides care *in your home*  
 Care is provided *in the home of* a **non-licensed** provider  
 Care is provided *in the home of* a **licensed** provider  
 A before/after school program provides care

19c. Approximately **how much do you pay on average per child/per week for *this care***?

- I pay nothing for child care  
 Less than \$50  
 \$51 to \$100  
 \$101 to \$150  
 \$151 to \$200  
 \$201 to \$250  
 \$251 to \$300  
 \$301 to \$350  
 More than \$350

19d. Do you receive a tuition discount, subsidy, or scholarship to help pay for this care?

- Yes                       No

19e. How many **hours per week** does this child(ren) **receive *this care***?

- 20 hours or less  
 More than 20 hours

If you have a child **10 through 12 years in age**, please answer the following questions. *If not, please proceed to the next page – Question 21.*

20a. How many children do you have that are **10 through 12 years** in age?

- 1  
 2  
 3

20b. Please select **the ONE type of child care you use the majority of the time** for your child(ren) in this age group **while you are at work**?

- Spouse/partner cares for child(ren) *at home*  
 Older brother or sister provides care *in your home*  
 Other relative/friend/nanny provides care *in your home*  
 Care is provided *in the home of a non-licensed* provider  
 Care is provided *in the home of a licensed* provider  
 A before/after school program provides care

20c. Approximately **how much do you pay on average per child/per week for *this care***?

- I pay nothing for child care  
 Less than \$50  
 \$51 to \$100  
 \$101 to \$150  
 \$151 to \$200  
 \$201 to \$250  
 \$251 to \$300  
 \$301 to \$350  
 More than \$350

20d. Do you receive a tuition discount, subsidy, or scholarship to help pay for the care of this child(ren)?

- Yes                       No

20e. How many **hours per week** does this child **receive *this care***?

- 20 hours or less
- More than 20 hours

**Please be assured that your responses are held in strict confidence by Summa Associates.**

**Related to work**, during the past year, how challenging have the following child care issues been for you? *Please respond to each issue.*

	Very challenging	Somewhat challenging	Not challenging	Not applicable
Cost of care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Location of care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dependability of care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality of care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of care for weekdays	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of care for early morning or night shifts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of care for weekend shifts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency or short notice child care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Care for a sick child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Before/after school care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Care during school breaks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Care for a child with special needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Juggling more than one care arrangement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

21. Approximately how many **days during the past 12 months** have you **missed work** due to:  
*Combine partial days and round up to the nearest whole day.*

**Breakdown in child care arrangements?** *Number of days missed in the past year.*

- 0 day
- 1 days
- 2 days
- 3 days
- 4 days
- 5 days
- 6 days
- 7 days
- 8 or more days

**Sick child(ren)?** *Number of days missed in the past year.*

- 0 day
- 1 days
- 2 days
- 3 days
- 4 days
- 5 days
- 6 days
- 7 days
- 8 or more days

22. Which of the following, if any, have you experienced as a result of your child care responsibilities? *Select all that apply.*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inability to work different shifts                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Inability to be as productive as possible |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tardiness   | <input type="checkbox"/> Inability to accept a promotion           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Absenteeism   | <input type="checkbox"/> Not considered for a promotion            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inability to attend training or classes related to work | <input type="checkbox"/> Inability to travel related to work       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inability to work overtime                              |  |

23. Have you ever seriously considered quitting your job due to child care problems/responsibilities?

- Yes                       No

The Downtown Santa Barbara Employer Child Care Partnership is assessing the need for child care services. Assuming that a **quality child care program, in a convenient location, and at fair market rates** was offered in the area you work, what specific services would you use and how would they impact you as an employee?

24. Which, if any, of the following child care services **would you use?**

- |   |                              |                             |                                    |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| a. Full-service child care center?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain |
| b. Mildly ill child care program?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain |
| c. Back-up or drop-in child care program?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain |
| d. Family child care system? (a network of licensed family child care providers who provide care in their home) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain |

25. Which, if any, of the following child care services would improve your ability to perform your job efficiently?

- |   |                              |                             |                                    |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| a. Full-service child care center?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain |
| b. Mildly ill child care program?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain |
| c. Back-up or drop-in child care program?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain |
| d. Family child care system? (a network of licensed family child care providers who provide care in their home) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain |

1. Which, if any, of the following child care services **would be a factor in retaining you as an employee?**

- |   |                              |                             |                                    |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| a. Full-service child care center?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain |
| b. Mildly ill child care program?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain |
| c. Back-up or drop-in child care program?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain |
| d. Family child care system? (a network of licensed family child care providers who provide care in their home) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain |

**COMMENTS SECTION**

We value your feedback! Please share any additional thoughts or comments with us (continue on back of page):

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**Thank you for your participation.**





## Appendix C - Focus Group Report

The objective of the focus groups was to offer employees the opportunity to openly discuss their concerns about child care responsibilities and to gain insight into if and how these responsibilities impact their careers in downtown Santa Barbara. The focus groups were designed to supplement the information gathered through the survey by identifying and elaborating on specific needs, problems and work/life issues related to caring for children.

The topics discussed in the employee focus groups included:

- Current child care arrangements
- Difficulties employees experience with their child care arrangements
- If and how child care difficulties affect employees' work and personal life and the options they have available when a child care emergency arises
- The level of difficulty related to being a working parent in downtown Santa Barbara
- If child care difficulties affect job growth or advancement
- Opinions on level of supportiveness of work environments
- If the Downtown Santa Barbara Child Care Partnership were to build a near-site child care center or develop a family care network, would employees use it for their children
- What employees expect from a child care center including environment, program, and cost for service
- How a near-site center or family care network would affect employee work/life balance
- Opinions on whether a center or family care network would increase recruitment opportunities for downtown employers
- Suggestions for additional child care programs the Partnership should consider

### Methodology

Parent employees of participating employers in the Downtown Santa Barbara Employee Child Care study were informed about the focus groups via print and email flyers (in English and Spanish) within the work place. Six focus group times (five in English and one in Spanish) were available for parent employee participation. Focus group slots were offered on a first come basis. Focus group participants each signed up for one focus group. A total of three focus groups were conducted in English.

All focus group participants attended voluntarily and represented various departments, job classifications and places of employment. Each focus group session lasted approximately one-and-a-half hours and was digitally recorded to accurately document comments.

The participants were informed of the recording prior to the start of each session. In addition, they were assured that all conversations were completely confidential and were made to feel as comfortable as possible in order to solicit honest answers and information. Each participant provided informed consent prior to the commencement of the focus group session. Karen Woodford, President of Summa Associates, led the first two focus groups and Holly Goldberg, project manager, led the third focus group. A semi-structured format was utilized to promote and optimize parent employee participation.

### Focus Group Sample

A total of twenty employees took part in the focus groups representing seven of the twenty-three participating employers. Seventy-five percent (15) of the participants were female and 25% (5) were male. Fifty-five percent (11) of the participants currently reside in downtown Santa Barbara, 35% (7) in Goleta and 10% (2) reside over forty minutes outside of downtown Santa Barbara.

### Focus Group Results

The focus group notes and transcriptions were analyzed to identify general trends, concerns, expectations and interests of the given sample of downtown Santa Barbara employees. The summary of these findings is below.

#### Current Child Care Arrangements

Many of the focus group participants reported use of a patchwork of child care arrangements ranging from child care centers, home based providers, relatives, friends, and babysitters. Parents using informal child care providers often find themselves scrambling for backup care when their relative, friend or babysitter needs unanticipated time off, takes vacation or gets sick. Several participants expressed dissatisfaction with current child care arrangements. However, due to the lack of available options in Santa Barbara, feel there is no other solution.

*“I just wish there were more choices of quality, affordable child care. If child care was available near work or at the work site, it would be even better!”*

Parent Comment

*“My current child care arrangements are convenient, but by no means ideal.”*

Parent Comment

According to participants, availability is the number one deciding factor in selecting current child care. Other determinants included dependability, quality, cost, and convenience. When asked if there is a shortage of high quality, affordable child care within the downtown Santa Barbara area parents, without hesitation, unanimously responded that there is.

*“My wife and I have a three month old baby and we are just starting to consider child care options. We are now getting scared that one of us is going to have to stay home because there will be no other option.”*

Parent Comment

#### Challenges Balancing Work & Family

Parent employees face many issues related to their child care arrangements. The task of balancing work and child care responsibilities is compounded for single parents who must bear sole responsibility as parent and provider. According to participants, the greatest challenges parent employees face related to child care are the cost of care and availability of quality care. These issues impact focus group participants' work life by increasing absenteeism, decreasing productivity, increasing tension with co-

workers and contributing to missed promotion opportunities. The following sections summarize parent responses to these child care challenges.

*“I feel guilty when I’m not with my kids and I feel guilty when I am not at work.”*

Parent Comment

### **Cost of Child Care**

The cost of child care is a prime concern and challenge for many working parents. The majority of participants expressed significant financial strain from the high expense of child care. Several parents disclosed that nearly their entire salary goes towards covering the cost of child care and the only reason they work is for the benefits. The stress and frustration related to not being able to get ahead financially because of child care fees was shared by many focus group attendees.

*“I am considering moving to Oxnard or Ventura because the cost of living and child care is so much cheaper there.”*

Parent Comment

Participants concurred that although subsidy programs are available for low income parents, there is little assistance available to middle income families. Several parents reflected on how they make too much money to qualify for assistance and yet not enough to cover the cost of child care, which amplifies their stress of balancing work and family.

*“My wife wants to work but we have to balance if it is worth it because of the high cost of child care. It just doesn’t make financial sense.”*

Parent Comment

### **Availability of Child Care**

Many parents experience difficulty trying to find available child care in Santa Barbara and are forced to “take what they can get,” sacrificing quality for availability due to two plus year waiting lists. New parents are often unaware of how problematic the lack of child care can be in Santa Barbara and are ill equipped to manage the care of their children while returning to work.

*“There is a severe shortage of available child care in Santa Barbara as it is, so it is even harder to find quality care here.”*

Parent Comment

*“You have to make decisions to sacrifice quality for availability and convenience - and that is hard to take.”*

Parent Comment

Long wait lists require parents to prepare for their child care needs years in advance. A few participants discussed how lucky they were to have been informed about this

problem before their child was born and subsequently took action to sign up for child care while they were pregnant.

*“Even to get on a wait list you have to know what you want two years from now. It is ridiculous. It is not college. It is preschool.”*

Parent Comment

*“It took a year and four months to get my daughter accepted to her child care program!”*

Parent Comment

Because of the lack of child care options, some employees purposely work an opposite schedule from their spouse or significant other, or work while their spouse stays home so a parent can care for the children. This situation can cause major stress for the entire family, which affects the employee both at home and on the job. This scenario, where parents only see each other briefly between shifts, can put great strain on the family system.

#### **Employee Absenteeism**

Participating parent employees agreed that the majority of employee absenteeism is due to parents staying home with their sick children and a result of when child care arrangements fall apart. Due to a lack of available mildly ill child care and back up care options (which is used when the provider is sick) in Santa Barbara, participants commonly save and use their personal sick days for when their child or their child care provider is sick. According to focus group participants, when parent employees are sick, they have no choice but to go to work. Not only does this add stress to parent employees, it negatively impacts the workplace.

*“Being in the position I am in now as a single father, I always use my personal time and sick days when my kids are sick. This past year my kids were sick so many times that I maxed out all of my sick leave. I can definitely see this being an issue for an employer when deciding to promote someone who has kids or someone else who doesn’t have kids - especially when both people have the same qualifications.”*

Parent Comment

In many instances, when employees’ children get sick, they have to be picked up from their regular care arrangements or school in the middle of the day causing unexpected interruptions in the workplace. Participants confirmed that this juggling act of responsibilities causes tension and added stress. In addition, most child care centers and family child care homes enforce a 24 to 48 hour rule, which means parents not only miss work for the day or two their child is sick, but also for one to two days following the illness.

According to participants, any break in child care arrangements typically results in employee absenteeism. Summers and school vacations present child care challenges for many parent employees. Sometimes child care providers follow school schedules and are closed on holidays and/or take time off for vacations leaving parents with a

gap in care for their children. Lack of available child care requires parents to take personal vacation time or sick leave to care for their children.

*“I recently missed a full week of work because of no child care.”*

Parent Comment

### **Stress and Productivity at Work**

Focus group participants explained how the coordination of child care and work schedules creates significant stress. The majority of child care providers have stringent drop off and pick up times that require parents to come to work late or leave work early. Juggling child care with work schedules reduces parent employee’s ability to work overtime and stay late to finish work. At the same time, parent employees often have to make requests for special accommodations for child care issues. All of these factors amplify parent employee’s stress at work. Single parents are especially vulnerable in these situations.

*“Balancing work and child care is a juggling act and a schedule nightmare. I am constantly worrying about logistics.”*

Parent Comment

Many focus group parents expressed worry about leaving work on time to pick up their children from child care. The cumulative effect of this constant worry combined with the stress of balancing work and family schedules causes parents to feel distracted and unable to concentrate on the job and consequently reduces productivity.

*“It is a struggle to try to continue to do a good job at work while at the same time asking for a lot of accommodations. The demands of the job don’t change just because you have a child.”*

Parent Comment

### **Tension with Co-workers**

As stated, parent employees often require special work schedules to manage their child care responsibilities. Although participants reported that many employers are supportive of the balance between work and family, co-workers who do not have children often do not understand the reason for special schedules. Focus group participants reported feeling like they have to constantly justify their actions and schedules. This contributes to added and unnecessary strain in the work place.

*“Co-workers just don’t understand that my special schedule is because of my child care needs.”*

Parent Comment

*“When I come in late to work, even though my supervisor has approved it, my co-workers look at me funny.”*

Parent Comment

### **Decrease in Promotion Opportunities**

Participating employees agreed that child care responsibilities often negatively impact their opportunity for advancement. Time and schedule restraints due to child care issues are felt to undermine their dependability and reliability, thus resulting in lack of job promotions. In addition, participants spoke about feeling frustration in their current position. However, they felt unable to do anything about it because they do not think any other employer would offer the same level of accommodations for their child care needs.

*“You miss promotion opportunities. You fit the job qualifications but you cannot fit the hours so you are disqualified.”*

Parent Comment

### **Parent Employee Feedback on Potential Downtown Child Care Options**

In addition to discussing the challenges working parents face in balancing child care and work responsibilities, the focus groups provided a format to collect parent employee feedback on various potential child care solutions such as the addition of a downtown child care center or family care network. The following section summarizes participant feedback regarding the impact of various potential child care options.

Overall, participants expressed enthusiasm and relief regarding additional downtown child care options and explained how they would feel added comfort and peace if their children were close to them while at work. They discussed the emotional and psychological benefits for parents and children as a result of having children in care downtown.

*“If I could have high quality, affordable child care near my work, it would be a dream come true.”*

Parent Comment

Parents agreed that having additional downtown child care options is necessary especially since downtown Santa Barbara child care centers have more than two year waiting lists. Additional downtown child care options will help relieve some of the guilt parent employees feel about putting their children in child care and help them be more productive while at work. Many employees discussed the likelihood of being more focused and present at work by just knowing that their children are close by and accessible in the event of a slight problem or emergency.

According to participants, the elimination of stress from dealing with insufficient child care arrangements would make parent employees happier and more efficient workers. This would in turn, decrease stress for co-workers and supervisors and would create an overall positive impact on the workplace. Participating employees suggested that a downtown child care program would increase employee morale while simultaneously decreasing employee absenteeism and tardiness due to sick children and unreliable child care arrangements.

*“There are not that many child care providers in downtown Santa Barbara. There are a lot more in other areas, but then you can’t work a full day because you spend so much time commuting.”*

Parent Comment

Parents also discussed how the addition of downtown child care options would positively impact mothers’ ability to breastfeed rather than pump while at work. In addition, several participants reported that mothers would most likely return to work sooner if lactation rooms were more available downtown.

*“I am still breastfeeding so I have to find a place to pump because I don’t have a private office, three times a day which takes away from my break and work time. I have to miss lunch because it takes about an hour and a half a day to pump.”*

Parent Comment

### **Downtown Child Care Center**

The majority of focus group participants expressed great enthusiasm regarding the addition of a downtown child care center. Parent employees described the ideal center as an affordable, high quality, learning environment where children would be engaged in developmentally appropriate, age-separated activities. Participants recommended the inclusion of care for infants through school age children with qualified, experienced caregivers in a clean environment including an outside play area.

Parent employees expressed interest in a program that provides extended hour and summer care with hours of operation from 6:30am to 6:00pm. According to participants, the addition of a child care center that offered a mildly ill program as well as a back up care program would effectively reduce absenteeism, increase productivity and allow parent employees to have greater capacity to fulfill their work tasks.

Participants’ primary concern regarding the care of their child is the availability of high quality care. Affordability is another key consideration for many of the focus group participants. In consideration of the cost of living in Santa Barbara, some participants suggested a sliding scale based on household income. Other participants recommended basing fees according to national child care cost averages or creating a co-op so parents can volunteer or bring in snacks to help decrease the cost of care.

*“A downtown child care center would help me perform better at my job. If I know where my son is I can focus on what I am doing and work better. My life would be more peaceful and would consist of less running around.”*

Parent Comment

In addition to a downtown child care center that offers extended hour care, an after school program, a summer care program, drop-in care for breaks, holidays, vacations and school closures, and a mildly ill care program, parent employees discussed the desire for part-time child care options. Many child care providers do not provide

parents with the flexibility to select the days and hours their child will attend. This creates added financial and scheduling stress for some of the participating parents.

### **Family Child Care System**

Although the majority of participating employees were supportive of a downtown child care center, less were excited about a family child care system (a network of licensed home based child care providers). Concern was expressed about quality control measures, provider dependability and issues regarding stability and structure for children. However, some participants liked the idea of having children in a home environment and found that their children got sick less in a home based program compared to a center. Many participants commented that if the same level of quality, availability and convenience were available within a family care network, they would consider it a good option.

### **Additional Child Care Suggestions**

Focus group participants suggested several different solutions to help parent employees manage work-family stresses. These included: lactation rooms, pre-parenting education programs regarding the cost and availability of child care options, and a more extensive, up to date local child care referral system.

*“High schoolers are educated about college options by 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Parents should be thinking about child care options before they get pregnant.”*

Parent Comment

Participants also discussed the need for assistance transporting children from school to after school programs. According to focus group participants, the addition of this kind of service would help parents stay focused on work and reduce interruptions in the workday.

### **Family Friendly Work Environments**

Parents believed that additional child care support and options in downtown Santa Barbara would positively impact business bottom line and contribute to the local economy. According to focus group participants, it makes good business sense to support the balance of work and family life and the creation of additional child care options would be advantageous to both employees and employers.

Employees agreed that a downtown child care program, offering high quality care at affordable rates, would be seen as an excellent benefit to retaining current employees as well as an effective recruiting tool. Participants commented that child care options are one of many factors that parent employees will consider when deciding to work in downtown Santa Barbara.

Focus group participants reported a range of responses to whether or not they felt their employer is supportive of work life issues. Although many employees expressed that their employer was generally supportive, they experienced varying degrees of support from different managers and co-workers. Despite this, the majority of participants reported gratitude for the level of flexibility and understanding their



employers currently offer and excitement and gratitude that their employers are investigating the implications of child care on the work place.

*“If whoever is high up has a good attitude toward child care issues, well, that makes a big difference. People at the top drive the employer philosophy about work life issues.”*

Parent Comment

According to the focus group findings, the lack of available high quality child care in downtown Santa Barbara is serious and affects employee productivity, retention, dependability and reliability. It often results in increase absenteeism, tardiness and additional stress and tension in the work place. Focus group participants were grateful to have had the opportunity to share their experiences and thoughts regarding the balance of child care and work.

In summary, participants suggested the following as potential benefits and programs that could help parent employees balance their work and family lives:

- Downtown child care center
- After school program
- Summer programs for school-age children and preteens
- Drop-in and back-up child care
- A mildly ill child care program
- Part-time and extended hour child care options
- Family Child Care System
- Lactation rooms
- Pre-parenting education programs regarding child care options
- Local child care referral system

## Focus Group Guide

### ***Focus Group Leader Guidelines***

- Set up tent cards for participants to write their names in big letters. Bring markers for them to use for this task.
- Have participants face the name cards toward you so you can easily call them by name
- Start session on time.
- Ask open-ended questions.
- Actively seek responses from each individual at the table.
- If you wish to make a comment, keep it brief.
- If there is little response to a question, suggest probe items under question one at a time.
- Always ask for other input before moving on to the next question. (If time allows).
- End session on time.

#### LEADER SAYS:

These focus groups are meant to investigate the child care needs of employees. Several businesses in downtown Santa Barbara as well as First 5 are trying to gather information and understand child care needs in order to decide whether or not to implement child care programs including a possible child care center. The fact that we are doing the focus groups and conducting the survey mean that Partnership members are interested in finding out the impact of child care on Santa Barbara's working parents. This focus group is not a guarantee of anything to come but rather an important part of the planning process.

This discussion will be recorded and transcribed so that we will be able to later write a report. All comments will be used anonymously, and will only be used for the purpose of writing the report.

Before we start, I would like to know your names, a little bit about your family - how many members - their names and their ages, etc. Additionally, please tell me about your job, who you work for and how long you have worked in downtown Santa Barbara.

Thank you for coming today and being willing to share your experiences about child care and how it affects your work life. Again, your comments will not be shared with your employer on any personal basis so feel free to be very candid.

Now we can move on to our discussion of child care needs.

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Employer: _____
Date of Focus Group: _____ # Attending: _____
Specific Group: _____

1. What type of child care arrangements do you currently use?
2. On a personal note, what problems, if any, do you experience with your current arrangement?
3. What were the deciding factors in selecting your current arrangement?
  - Cost
  - Location
  - Quality
  - Convenience
4. Do child care difficulties affect your work life? If so, how?
  - Tardiness
  - Absenteeism
  - Ability to travel
  - Ability to take a promotion
  - General productivity
5. Do you think your employer is supportive of employees’ family and personal responsibilities? Is your work environment a “great place to work”? Why or why not?
6. What are the greatest problems working parents face related to balancing work and child care responsibilities?
7. For people with child care responsibilities, do you think it is more difficult to work in downtown Santa Barbara as compared to other communities? Why or why not?
8. Do you think there is a shortage of high quality, affordable child care within the downtown Santa Barbara area? If yes, what experiences caused your opinion?
9. If the Downtown Santa Barbara Child Care Partnership were to offer a near-site child care center, would you use it for your children? If yes, what would you look for in such a program? If no, why?
  - Hours of Operation
  - Program Features
  - Cost
  - Expectations for program offerings and quality
  - Backup program
  - Mildly ill program
10. What do you think is a “fair market rate” for a downtown child care center?

11. Would it be convenient for you to bring your child to a downtown child care center?
12. What would be the best hours of operation? Do you think there a need for extended hour care?
13. How would such a center affect your work/life?
14. Would a family child care system be of interest to you? Would you use it? Why of why not? What would make such a system appealing to your family?
15. Do you think the creation of a near-site child care center would help draw employees to downtown Santa Barbara? Do you know someone personally you would refer for employment in downtown SB if a near-site child care center were available?
16. Do you think the downtown Partnership or your employer should offer child care benefits or policies and if so, what programs would best help you balance your work and child care responsibilities?
  - Referral
  - Sick child care service
  - Backup child care
  - Flexible work schedules
  - Lactation room
  - Family child care system
17. Why do you think the Partnership or your employer should add these programs? Do you think that adding them makes good business sense? Why or why not?

LEADER: These groups give you a real opportunity to send messages to community leaders as well as employer management about the importance of child care as it relates to employees ability to be productive at work. Is there anything else you would like to say?

LEADER: Thank you for your participation today. Your contribution helps us better understand the child care issues of working parents in downtown Santa Barbara. This information will help the Santa Barbara Child Care Partnership plan for the future. Although today's session, as well as the needs assessment, does not promise anything, it will help provide a "roadmap" for future planning and hopefully, good things will happen as a result. Again, thanks for your participation today!

## Appendix D- Survey Comments

### ***Expressions of Gratitude for the Survey***

- Thank You!
- Gracias!
- Thank you so much.
- Thank you for doing this survey.
- Thank you for your efforts!
- Thank you for your concern.
- Thanks for the opportunity :)
- Thanks for looking further into these important issues.
- Thanks for your care; I hope mothers get supported in this area.
- Thank you for conducting this survey. As child care is approximately 35% of my earned income, it is a real challenge to justify coming to work.
- Thank you for offering this survey! There are so many working parents whose needs aren't being met and getting some statistical data would really help both employers and employees!
- Thank you for taking the time to consider such a needy service. "If my children are in a safe place while I'm working, my performance at work is above and beyond than expected." I can focus without a worry and while my children are learning I'm giving my something back to the community by giving my work the best. Thank you.
- Thank you for taking the time to think of us parents, hoping you can meet the needs.
- Thank you for the inquiry and your interest in the good of the children.
- Thank you for your efforts in surveying the populace re child care in Santa Barbara.
- Thanks for doing this. Anything you can do to help with regard to child care would be great!
- I appreciate you preparing this survey. I know that this is an issue for many of my co-workers. I think that it is important to support the personal needs of our workforce. Providing better child care would greatly reduce the stress of many of my co-workers and would (in a lot of cases) promote better work product. This is a great way to strengthen this community. Thank you.
- This is a great idea!! Am very happy that you people are interested in this issue, thanks a million!
- This is such an important issue. Thanks to all who are working on this issue.

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### ***Providing Child Care is a Good Idea!***

- Good idea! This is an important topic!
- Good luck, this is an important issue.
- Good quality child care close to work is critical to reduce worker concerns about their children. If workers (at all levels) are secure about their children's well-being, then they are happier, more productive employees.
- It's really nice that this is happening.

- I strongly support free to moderately priced child care access for working parents!
- I support affordable, quality child care.
- I support child and elder care services and those who take responsibility for those of us in need.
- I am a director and see the struggles that my employees have over child care issues.
- I think providing affordable child care to [employer's] employees is a great idea. Co-workers being absent due to child care issues impacts everyone concerned.
- Child care for downtown families is a great idea! To know your child is not far away is a plus. At lunch time I could check on them if needed.
- I can definitely see a need for affordable/subsidized child care in this town.
- You should've done this 20 years ago.
- As "progressive" as Santa Barbara wants to be, it does not offer enough at work child care options. UCSB offers such service and the retention of employees seems to be high. Why not offer the same for [employer's] workers?
- Downtown child care would be GREAT and relieve a lot of pressure for my staff of working mothers! :) I encourage onsite care for [employer's] employees.
- It would be a tremendous help if there was more assistance (monetary/grants) in day care centers for single mothers who make "decent" money for the Santa Barbara County area.
- It would be fantastic if there was child care within close proximity of work areas, or perhaps on worksites. For example, it would be great to have child care on some campuses around town.
- It would be great if the [employer] could provide quality, affordable child care for its employees. There are so many of us (teachers) with young children at home.
- It would be great if there could be affordable child care that was close to where I work.
- It would be great to at least have a safe place to have your child looked after for those times when child care issues come up. This would be of great help in reducing the amount of time missed from work, especially when you are a single parent and have an hour commute.
- It would be great to have a good and affordable child care center here in Santa Barbara!
- I feel this is one of the most important surveys I've had pleasure participating in. Child care in Santa Barbara is so much in demand. Also the cost for child care is very costly and for most working parents it takes a good portion of their paychecks to cover child care. I feel the community needs to focus on affordable child care for the residents of Santa Barbara. As a local Santa Barbarian, I have seen much being taken away from us and its City. Seems like who ever delegates issues are more concerned in keeping the tourist's and its fashion satisfied than the locals who were born and raised here. Santa Barbara mostly consists of hard working families and more affordable resources should be available to working families. Also the income guidelines to be acceptable for scholarships or reduced child care needs to be modified. One more thing I think teenage after school programs are also in high need. Pre-teens and teenagers who are bored often get into trouble. We want to see our children trouble free and happy. Santa Barbara is a rich city and if priorities were balanced correctly I feel this can be done. Thank you for allowing the time to express our thoughts and I hope this survey will utilize itself in the direction it needs to which is more affordable child care.
- I think this is a wonderful survey. Mid last year I had to quit my job due to child care. I've gone as far as writing the governor in regards to this matter. I was rushed off the phone and told there was nothing more they can do, and for me to keep checking the list. I've

been on the list for child care aide for a year now. I call at least twice a month to check my status on the list, I get absolutely no where. As a community I feel we need to come together and do what is necessary to fix this problem. If not for us then for our children. I've sent my 9 month old daughter to two different day care providers, both who were not licensed and had no child care experience besides having kids of their own. Now days, safety is a must. I'd give anything to send my daughter to a day care facility or a private in home daycare with someone licensed. Someone that will read to her, take her on walks, etc. Once again I think this survey is awesome. Thank you for taking the time to get our point of views on the matter.

- Child care was an issue in the past. I had two sons, at one time I decided to be a stay at home mom to care for them. I think [employer] needs to implement a child care program for its employees. The need is such an essential one. Look at companies that are leaders in this area, for example, Patagonia. I hope to see more progress in the near future for young couples with children. Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this issue!
- I do believe child care for employees greatly reduces the absence of employees.
- I just think it is important to understand that most people nowadays are parents and due to the cost of living in Santa Barbara there are HUGE hardships created in looking for and getting quality child care. A lot of people have to depend on extended family members who themselves work and cannot always be relied upon. If there was a facility for, in my case [employer's] employees, I think we would see a far less sick time and vacation being used because there wouldn't be that added stress of finding/maintaining quality child care. I hope this survey leads to something because it could potentially change the lives of a lot of people.
- Child care is an important benefit for all working people and should be provided by employers on a much more frequent basis.
- Child care is an important issue for employee's who have small children. With the support of a good quality day-care an employee could focus on their work-load.
- I am recently remarried and I have two children from a previous marriage. My husband and I would love to have a baby but the cost of daycare of an infant is at least \$600.00/month and so this has put our plans on hold and I don't know if we will ever be able to afford a child. It would be wonderful if there were more jobs in the work force that did offer day care discounts/ services! Thanks!
- Child care is definitely needed that is affordable as well as dependable.
- Child care is available at other large employers in the County (UCSB and Cottage) I hope that [employer] can help with this soon.
- Child care is so important our children mean the world and if we know that they are in a safe and comfortable environment then we can work efficiently and accurately with no worries on our minds. Thank you.
- Child care is the biggest challenge for my work-life balance; it is great that you are taking this initiative!
- I am so glad to know that somebody is looking into child care situation in Santa Barbara. It is very hard to live in this town when you have children. Cost of living is very expensive here, so both parents have to work to make ends meet. And child care is very expensive as well. I have applied for the city/county program where they can pay a part of my child care cost, but nothing has happened at all.
- I am thrilled that someone has finally made an effort to address the lack of employer child care services in Santa Barbara. I only hope more local employers follow the [employer's] lead in providing a service that is essential for all working parents.

- I feel that it would be nice to have affordable, trustworthy daycare in our community. My co-workers deserve to be able to leave their children somewhere that they can trust will take care of their children and not be afraid that they will be abused or mistreated.
- I have a five month old baby that is being cared for full-time by my mother while my husband and I both work. It's been great for the last two months, but I am anticipating that she will want/need to work less and I would like to not have to rely on her so heavily. My husband and I both work in the downtown area, and would love it if there was child care close by that we could utilize a few days a week. I love working but I have definitely considered that I might have to quit or take a different job to ease the stress of child care. I am extremely pleased that you are taking this important subject!
- I have benefited from my supervisors being supportive regarding child care and flexible work hours. It has made my work and home life much more balanced and has contributed immensely to the success of my son who was recently accepted to Cal Poly. When employers allow parents to participate in the education of their children by attending and participating in school events, then children realize it is important. If parents can't participate, it tells children that something is more important to the parent than them or their education.
- I have only seen a child in the office once, and that was during a meeting. She was well behaved, but the situation made me wonder, "If [employer] had a designated day care area, would employees be more willing to bring their kids to work?" This would be most applicable to employees who are new parents (i.e. their children are not yet in school). I think it would present an interesting option to parents who want to be more involved in their children's lives, or to at least be more attentive to their needs.
- I have seen my own co-workers affected by child care responsibilities and it is nice to see that they are responsible to their children but it does affect their work and pay when they are gone. Child care is huge in Santa Barbara and it very hard to find care and find good care for that matter. Santa Barbara needs to get a good child care facility in play so that everyone can benefit from it.
- I previously utilized the services of "Magic Years" sponsored by City, County & School & it was terrific. When it closed I was told they didn't have enough money but as far as I know, parents were never asked to pay more. Although it was very close to down town County offices, an onsite child care center would be even better! It's very difficult to leave your child with someone else so if parents could easily see their child on break, I think everyone would be happier and much more productive. If not on site, then perhaps cameras could be used to occasionally monitor your child while you are at work.
- I strongly recommend that the [employer] provide child care for its employees. This would lead to better retention and recruitment. Furthermore, this would improve bonding with employees and their children. There is a MAJOR shortage of quality child care in SB, and this is why we have a nanny, presently.
- I support the concept of employer-sponsored onsite child care programs, with most routine costs covered by employees (typical of local child care programs), subject to conditions, with reasonable daytime access between parent and child, provided job-related tasks are performed, and subject to health care issues.
- I think employers should consider child care for their employees. Employees would be more productive knowing their children were in the same building close by. They could spend their lunch time with their children. Employees would not have the pressure or extra expense if they were late picking them up after work. Daycare centers in their office buildings would improve attendance.



- I think every large work force entity should be required to provide child care for those younger than 5 years of age; they should also offer child care for ill children under the age of 12.
- I think if employees have a better system for PTO at [employer]. They would not miss so much work to care for their child. Employees have to use PTO for sick and vacation together. That does not give them much time for when a child is sick. Some child care does not want a sick child at the day care. So employees need to use their PTO time to leave to take care of their child.
- I think it is a great idea to offer and/or possibly offset the cost of child care for the working class of Santa Barbara. As we know most families have (2) working adults and more often than not (1) adult holds down (2) or more jobs to be able to live and work in Santa Barbara.
- I think it is great that an employer is concerned about the well-being of their employees' families. If an employee's children are being cared for in an adequate child care facility, the employee will be more productive. That being said, I do not think that the [employer] should subsidize child care for employees. That would be completely unfair for employees who do not have children or whose children are already grown.
- I think it is great that this issue is being studied. I hope that in the near future, affordable child care can be made more available in Santa Barbara and Goleta!
- I think it is very nice that you are concerned about the well being of those who live in Santa Barbara.
- I think it would be great for everybody if [employer] had like a daycare center.
- I think it would be much easier for people to be effective and fully present in their job if there was a reputable, affordable, on-site (or at least w/in walking distance) day-care center for City employees. The need is clearly there, and I realize the implementation is another story, but it would be great to align the community as a whole with a more 'private company' mentality by providing a career-friendly environment for parents.
- I think it would be wonderful if [employer] offered a child care program to its employees.
- I think looking into the child care problem is a great ideal. I know the pressure it can place on a person. I hope something comes out of this for all the families that could benefit.
- I think that sometimes employers should be a little more considerate when it comes down to having issues with child care. Most of the time I feel like if I have to stay home to take care of my child my co-worker or employer just think, that I won't make my child feel better by staying at home and sometimes it's hard to get that across to an employer. Most of the time it is not about making your child better but to be there to comfort our kids, which I think it is very important and to provide the attention that the child care would never provide. Sometimes patience and consideration is needed so we don't feel like everyone is mad at you when you come back to work the next day only because you decided to stay home to take care of a sick child.
- I think the Child Care Program is the best, for 2008.
- I think this is a good step towards helping solving employee's child care needs, however, it may not be as helpful when I live in Ventura and kids are both go to school in Ventura. I guess it can help people who live in SB.
- I think this program would be FANTASTIC!! We have needed this for so long! Honestly, one of the reasons that I have put off having children is that I am away from the house for 14 hours a day and that is just not fair to a child. I can't even have a dog with that schedule. Someone else would have to raise my kids. That or I would have to take a

demotion to work closer to home. If affordable child care were available here, we would only have to spend the working hours apart. That is still a long time, but much more appealing than the entire day.

- I, wholeheartedly, encourage all efforts to support families and their child care needs. Additionally, I support the implementation of a child care facility specific to the employees of the [employer] and feel employees with children are a terrific asset to the community as a whole. Our future lies in the hands of the children of the next generation. Wouldn't it be fantastic if we were able to use some of the City lots which are currently unused to develop child care centers for some of the qualified child care providers so desperately looking for space to run a child care program?
- I'm fortunate to have a mother that is retired and lives close by to handle all child care needs for my child (8 yrs. old). I'm sure this is a bigger issue to other employees that are either single parents or both parents working full time.
- I'm glad you are doing the effort to do this survey. Hope something good comes from it and families will have an affordable child care for their kids.
- Important subject - makes for better employee relations.
- In my opinion it would be very nice if there was a program like you describe here so that our children could be secure and us parents would feel good while we were at work knowing our children were well cared for. It would be beneficial to everyone. Thank you.
- It is very difficult for me to find somebody to care for my baby since I don't have close relatives.
- It would be helpful to have these options available, since my spouse stays home, and then might be able to return to the workforce.
- It would be nice to have a child care service that would take care of dropping child off at school and picking them up!
- It would be nice to have a pre-K class for children who are 5 years old but not quite ready for kindergarten.
- Personally I do not need child care; however I am aware of hardships of younger families needing to work (both parents) and paying one salary just for quality child care. It does get very expensive and causes stress on employees when they must take off work. I don't know of a simple solution, fair to the child, the parent's finances and especially the child care provided. I appreciate the idea of your group trying to find answers to this difficult situation.
- Some of these answers may have been different if my children were younger but now my youngest is happy at her preschool and we won't move her; and my oldest is in elementary school already. Our nanny provides back up care if they're sick so we're in pretty good shape. 2-3 years ago, it was very different and we may well have used many of these proposed services.
- They had a child care program in Santa Maria when my 15 yr old was 4 yrs old. It was at the Government Center. It was great. It was a relief to know that my child was close by.
- This is a great idea!! Am very happy that you people are interested in this issue, thanks a million!
- It is very important what you are doing because there are many mothers who have children that must provide care. It's a struggle to have to pay for hired care. I wish we had access to good, quality care.
- For many people anything helps.

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**Availability of Care**

- A child care service available for employees would be phenomenal!!!!
- A child care system for the [employer] would be a life-saver for many, many employees and it is about time the clinic is recognizing that....thank you!!!
- There needs to be more openings for toddlers and at affordable rates or have sliding scale. It is hard to find good child care in Santa Barbara.
- Due to the lack of child care, my wife cannot work. She has to stay home and take care of our kids. This affects the income we make.
- As a single parent to 3 older children and twins that are 8 months, my life revolves around the whole daycare issue. Especially with summer here life will not be easy. Dependable, safe and local child care for my 3 pre-teen children is hard to come by.
- Being a single, full-time working mother is very hard on my career. Not always am I able to find someone on such short notice and I think having a center is greatly needed! Santa Barbara County wide problem!!!!
- Care for infants up until the age of 3 is very limited.
- Child care is a very serious handicap for shift workers. Finding someone able to be available on short notice, 7 days a week, from approx 4:30 a.m. to after midnight (depending on the work available) is nearly a crisis for some parents.
- Child care for infants is greatly needed. Any resources would be appreciated.
- Covering nights, graveyards and weekends would be excellent.
- Have a Day Care provider that opens up as early as 7:00 a.m.
- Have child care open 6 am - 7 pm nearby employer or near different site?
- Having a 24 hour child care center would greatly impact the employees, as our center is never closed. It would enable the employees to be less restricted in what shifts they are able to work.
- I am fortunate that my husband can care for my children, but he has not been able to accept promotions or different shifts because of staying home with the children. Another issue is that when he has been forced to go to court for his job. I have had the opportunity to work from home. However, that option is not always available; if I don't have adequate staffing at my job site it could cause significant difficulties. However, if there were a drop in safe environment for my children, that would be very helpful!
- I would like to see child care available for non school times that is open normal business hours. Example... most summer camps start at 9 or 9:30 am. Who starts work at that time, Bankers???? This makes it difficult for some parents to get their children to their summer daycare. Weekly cost is outrageous! Especially if you have multiple children that need care during these breaks in school. I know my kids would love to participate in many of the weekly camps but unfortunately, I can't get them there and can't afford it.
- Having a back up, drop in center would be very helpful if it is affordable because we still have to pay the preschool, even when they are closed for vacations.
- I am a mother of two and have found it extremely hard to find child care for both of my kids. That has affected me to really succeed at a job. Due to availability and how expensive it is to pay for child care I am blessed to be a part of the "head start program" that my son attends all day for free... It has helped so much! (I just wish it had longer hours).
- Having a child drop in center would be the most beneficial.

- Hours of child care providers or schools do not coincide with 8/90 schedules, in addition 10 hours of child care a day is way too long for young children or school children, then if children are participating in after school activities, it is impossible to make arrangements for parents working until 5 pm + commute time to transport children to and from their activities. Most of child care facilities and schools start at 8 a.m.; parents have to be at work at 7 am.
- Summer months are the big problem for me. I need to find something for my 11 year old child to do.
- I would really like to have care during vacations. My son has a disability and it is a little difficult to find good care during vacations.
- Lack of available and affordable quality child care in this community is a huge issue and I am grateful that it is being researched. I strongly believe that cooperative solutions, such as group contribution and participation in child care through a large employer or group of employers is one possible solution (i.e. employees opting to contribute to and take advantage of a cooperative child care center). I believe that this would have a positive impact on employee morale and productivity in the work place.
- Lack of available child care is a problem throughout Santa Barbara County.
- Large employers like really should consider on-site child care especially with the large number of people who commute and use alternative modes of transportation. Having your child in the same location would be way more convenient. With long commute hours many times you cannot use the typical 7:30 to 5:00 hour daycares.
- Most of the people that I work with must hire private people to "sit" their children or homebound adults, take hours off and/or leave work to "sit" or for the safety of their children or ability to work during the day, juggle time with sitters, friends or relatives. This impacts the workplace and productivity negatively because they must be on the phone trying to redo existing plans (babysitter forgot she had to be somewhere else, child became ill at school, etc.). There is a lot of downtime in the workplace b/c of child/adult care issues.
- My child is four months old and I have just returned to work from maternity leave. My family is helping care for my infant, and my employer is allowing me to work from home two days a week to accommodate my needs. I will be putting my child in day care in about six months and have yet to find one that doesn't have a waiting list and that I am comfortable with.
- My husband and I are both employed with [employer] and have never made so much money. Yet now, we are struggling more financially then we ever have. If this does not improve, we have discussed relocation. I believe [employer] should have their own YEAR ROUND child care providers.
- My niece, who also works in the downtown area has 4 children - ages 14, 11, 7, and 1. They currently go to two different schools + a daycare, and as of Sept, it will be 3 different schools + daycare. Juggling the schedules as well as the cost is a tremendous burden for a single mother. They need all the help they can get for affordable child care. Best wishes and good luck!
- My son has a 3month old child and they are having problems finding someone to take care of their baby and whether it's really worth having the baby's mother go back to work because the day care rates out there are outrageous. It is also very hard to determine whether the person you find to take care of your baby is really a good person. You hear some many stories on the news regarding caregivers abusing children and adults.

- My wife recently left a supervisory position with the [employer] because we could not find child care that met our needs. Our income is about half (70k) of what it once was and we are both seriously looking to move somewhere where we can both afford the cost of living while raising our children.
- My wife recently quit our licensed child care at my home. I know from the many calls of parents frantically trying to get quality child care. It's expensive for most. It can also be good income for someone to do child care at their residence.
- Nowadays it is mandatory for women to work outside their homes, whether they are married or mono-parental. This of course creates a series of problems in the family and society in general. Having more appropriate child care facilities in SB, would make things easier and practical for the working mothers. Thank you for elaborating this survey.
- On short notice of early release in preschool or child care programs, it would be nice to have back up child care. Thank You.
- Onsite child care like SBCH would be a great job incentive for prospective employees and current employees.
- On-site child care or child care within one half blocks of [employer] would be absolutely ideal. How much better for both the child and parents could this possibly be? Breastfeeding would be much more viable, which is very healthy and moms would be happier being able to bond with their babies at lunch time more easily. Time away from the child would be minimized as there is less travel distance from the day care to the workplace and back.
- Our company staff is primarily female and child care issues are very important, the organization has not addressed the impact on our services in a proactive manner. Recruiting another female employee to this site will be impossible without providing alternative and flexible schedules. I have a wonderful niche that is not re-creatable and often not valued by my peer colleagues.
- Providing a back-up or drop-in child care facility (or providing a list of those already available) would be beneficial, also having the cost's be within means.
- Santa Barbara really needs affordable child care. We have a shortage of qualified workers in our area not only due to child care expenses but affordable housing.
- Shift work means I leave for work some days at 4:30 am. I've never found anyone outside of family who will cover a shift like that! A drop in center would only be helpful if it were in my city (Buellton) and located near a school bus stop or had other ways of taking my child to school. Then of course there is the other half of the day - after school. Day care is only open until 6 pm. As a shift worker, my shift ends at 6 pm. So, I have not found any facility that works for me - other than family care, or care in my home.
- Since my children are now in elementary school it is somewhat easier because they have an after school program. But holidays and summer are very hard and expensive to figure out what to do with my children. Summer camps are very expensive (with 2 kids it is more than I make sometimes).
- Some downtown businesses have on site care; maybe this could be opened up for people at other businesses. Any child care must be made affordable.
- Thanks to Discoveries and Girls Inc. I have what I need, but many are on waiting lists or can't afford high quality care / programs; I barely can, as a middle class citizen in Santa Barbara.
- There were no questions specific to "infant" care. This seems to be the most difficult type of care to find. I am only aware of 3 larger "day care" type solutions to this (UCSB,

Cottage, 1 church). The only other solution is to stay home or get a \*really\* expensive nanny or shared nanny.

- We need more child care services (options) available to our workforce in Santa Barbara.
- We need more child care in the Santa Barbara and Ventura counties!
- When I did have a child I had no one else at home and worked shift work. That was very difficult. If you work the "graveyard" shift you have to pay someone to let the baby sleep in their house. Then, as they get older, you have to find different arrangements so you can have someone watch them at night AND during part of the day so you can get SOME sleep. It was crazy and I don't know how we managed but we did. Good luck!
- When I was younger, and I worked full-time, I could not find quality affordable child care. Ultimately I had to quit working in order to care for my children. This was a hardship for us financially, but we made it through by cutting our expenses and not having new cars or vacations. Now that they are old enough, I am working full time. I have heard that Cottage has an excellent program and that could be used as a model for other workplaces. I do feel it is a necessity for good, safe child care, but also feel that if you change your lifestyle you can be the best parent for your children.
- With child care available in the work place I believe it would highly improve the employees attendance to his/her job. The employee would be more attentive to her responsibilities in the work place and less worried about her child/children being at a day care facility that they can't really afford and with people they really don't know very well. The cost of living alone in Santa Barbara is too great for most people that they have to commute or move away.
- Working for my employer has been great and I plan on finishing out my career here (10 +/- more years). However, child care has been one of the most difficult juggling acts due to my husband and my shift-work type schedules. In addition, the money spent between my commute and child care makes the day to day very challenging and stressful. Employers who provide on-site or like assistance with child care needs are much sought after and have shown to have a tendency to hold onto their employee workforce. Additionally, friends and acquaintances working for such employers have voiced their relief and appreciation with child care needs. I would love to see [employer] be proactive in this area. We'll keep our fingers crossed; this is the first step, right?
- Working institution with early and late shift makes it imposible to find adequate day care to fit your schedules needs. It also makes it difficult for your spouse to find a job or be promoted since some needs to be available to pick up or drop of the children.

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### ***Cost of Child Care***

- We need affordable child care.
- We need affordable child care program!
- A child care service that is inexpensive!
- We need a good day care and affordable, here in Santa Barbara.
- Affordable and quality child care would be a huge bonus!
- Would like to get trust able and affordable child care for the middle class.
- Affordable child care would be a plus.
- Affordable child-care for special needs children with appropriate services.
- Affordable child care would help so many people, and this City thrive!!
- Affordable, high quality child care would be an attractive factor for recruiting young employees.

- Good and affordable child care is hard to find in Santa Barbara. Cost is going up on everything yet we get paid the same. No raises make it hard for us to afford child care.
- Also any after school programs that are reachable, low cost will help.
- Any type of help with child care will help at this moment. Any help is needed at this time where the economy is not doing so well.
- We need an affordable child care in our area especially for the middle income families. Thank you.
- Additional affordable child care resources are definitely needed, especially for very young children (i.e. 3-6months). My work schedule is fairly flexible and I would be interested in drop-in care.
- Affordable child care in Santa Barbara is extremely hard to find for the working middle class. You're either wealthy enough to afford it hands down, or your income level is so low that you qualify for all kinds of aide. But for folks like us, right in the middle, it's very difficult to get any help financially and sometimes it seems as though you're salary simply goes to child care.
- Affordable child care in Santa Barbara would be beneficial to a large amount of workers at [employer].
- It is extremely difficult to find infant and toddler care in Santa Barbara, let alone quality care. If you can find the care, the cost is outrageous.
- We desperately need more affordable child care, including infant care, options in Downtown Santa Barbara! My wife and I are very excited that this group has formed and is exploring ways to address this pressing need.
- During these times of high mortgage and high cost of living life is hard trying to pay for child care as well. My parents help a lot if not I would not be working and on welfare.
- Affordable child care for infants/toddlers would be great. Once a child is in school it seems to be easier to find care.
- Annual income is misleading, because SB is so expensive all money goes to housing but I make too much to qualify for assistance so there is not anything left for quality child care, especially as a single parent, and there is a need for after school care for children when the parent is at work and can't leave as well as affordable pick up from school to program.
- Child care is a huge issue, my wife and me are extremely lucky with having one that we can count on. It is so hard to find someone that is one affordable, two, dependable, and three, available.
- Child care is a serious issue for us. Our provider charges \$400 every 2 weeks. We have to pay even when the baby or the provider is ill and she is unable to go to daycare. We even have to pay for holidays and vacation for the provider. My wife and I have demanding jobs and it makes it difficult for us to just take time off. I wish that the [employer] had a child care facility for employees.
- Cheaper housing would be a help for people who want to raise their own children and not use others for child care.
- It's very hard to find child care, it's so expensive and we don't qualify for scholarships, we make too much income, but we barely make it with the cost of living in Carpentry and the gas prices....Sometimes it's cheaper just to stay at home.
- Child care as well as care for an elderly person is not easily affordable in Santa Barbara. The city in general caters to upper class and high income persons and families.
- Child care is much too expensive regardless of where an individual works!

- Child care is so expensive that it nearly defeats the purpose of working for some families. An affordable program would be a blessing.
- Child care expenses should be paid or provided at low costs to employees whom are employed by State, Government & County.
- Child care costs/limitations are one of the reasons we are leaving Santa Barbara.
- Child care is too expensive. The work providers do is priceless, but I cannot afford child care on my income, so I have moved my children's aunt into my home and support her because that is the less expensive option.
- Some credit for pre-school. The school system has to take younger children that are not prepared for kindergarten.
- It would be really great if there was an affordable Day Care that wasn't so expensive for those of us that are working full time but not making enough to pay for what they are charging now days. Maybe some type of a percentage break according to family size and income but also considering the cost of living as well. Thank you.
- I am a foster parent and usually don't take infants or kids under 5 due to the high cost of daycare. If there was a low cost daycare available I would definitely help out more with this age group.
- I believe child care is very expensive. A lot of times you are better off not working or working fewer hours because a lot of your pay check goes to child care. I have two relatives that have a licensed day care and I am unable to leave my children there because they must charge all people the same fee and the fee for a licensed day care is just too high for me.
- I do miss days at work sometimes, and we can't afford fulltime preschool. It also strains my relation with my wife because we have work opposite shifts to save money on daycare.
- I feel all the child care scholarships are only for low income families and none focus on middle income families. According to the system we can afford it but the "cost of living in SB", a middle class income is nothing. It is so difficult! No program can help us; we are on our own. It is almost as if they want us to leave our job & become low income in order to qualify for help which is really sad.
- I have 2 school aged children. I have to be VERY creative in getting extra coverage for them if I need to work extra hours. My husband runs his own business and has taken time off to help when necessary, but that cuts deeply into his income.
- I have cut back my working hours to accommodate child care, which has resulted in a reduction in wages and increased costs for benefits, thus making the cost of child care more of an issue.
- I have financial help with my son's daycare which has helped me out a lot. I know of friends that are unable to get financial help because there are extremely long waits. I think there should be a lot more help financially for those who qualify. Thank you for your time.
- I have two daughters with children less than 7 year of age and they struggle child care cost, being too expensive.
- I hope to see more affordable child care in the Santa Barbara area.
- I just thought I would throw it out there about how expensive child care is everywhere in Santa Barbara. I myself as a parent have tried to seek out affordable help for child care and had a horrible experience dealing with the people that worked where I went to receive my information. It was very discouraging.



- I know this community needs affordable child care near where they work, i.e. lunch visits, med appt. more time with their children.
- I live in Santa Maria, family of seven and in need of child care for a toddler but it is expensive to even think of a daycare or preschool because their rates are too expensive for me and the family. Just because we are working family (meaning two incomes) we do not qualify for any grants or low income programs. I think if the system would make it affordable for child care/preschool services we would not have so many children growing up shy, crying, afraid, and aggressive when entering school for the first time. Our children lack the socialization with other kids their own age and this is due to us (parents) finding alternative care by family, members, and/or friends.
- I think child care is too expensive for some parents. And it just seems like when we get our pay checks half of that goes to child care. It would be so nice for [employer's] employees to have child care like cottage hospital has for their employees. They know there kids are close by and they can be to work on time instead of running across town to the babysitters.
- I think the middle income families always suffer because they make too much money to qualify for any kind of assistance.
- I was very fortunate to find decent child care when my child was born. However, it was a lot of work to find someone reasonably priced.
- I work for [employer] in North County, Santa Maria. In my situation what it comes down to is "affordable" child care. My infant daily fee is \$25-35/day, depending on part of day or all day. This child alone can make me broke. Also my infant has respiratory health issues and at the current provider I'm not sure if they do not know or ignore the needs of an infant with respiratory issues. I would like to see a full service child care center in SM that is affordable for a family size of 5, like mine. One that also provides quality care for healthy & sick children. [Employer] should open up its own child care center, open to all but allow discounts to employees, regardless of income. In these economic times and as parents one less financial worry or at least a lessened worry would be a great relief.
- I would like it if they offered services and took children for people who were not able to pay.
- I would like to see child care that's more affordable. Having three kids is very hard especially living in Santa Barbara. Thanks.
- I would like to see companies provide child care to their employees, if not free at a discounted rate where the employee can afford it. When a child is sick is when an employee has to stay at home with their child, maybe have a program for sick children so parents can make it to work for at least half of a work day.
- I would really like for the service to be low cost. My wife would like to work outside the home but with the high costs we really do not see the benefit. We really need this service during summer vacation and school breaks. My 3-year old son also needs this service until he can start going to kindergarten (pre-school is also expensive). Our household income is too high to be eligible for low cost care and too low to be able to afford regular cost care.
- I'm having trouble getting my 4 year old into preschool/daycare that is affordable as well as works with my schedule (I have to be at work by 7 am and the earliest drop off is at 7:30 am). A quality pre-school/daycare with a little bit more time flexibility would be helpful. I have been told that sometimes the in-home providers will work around these issues. Anyway, I am worried that by the time her name comes up on the list that I will have to find a new job to accommodate the school/daycare schedule.
- In my opinion, affordability is a huge issue with child care in the area.

- In this community, the less money you make and your nationality, the more sources for child care you have.
- Increased (supply) and far better and affordable child care for working families in our communities should be a very high priority.
- It is difficult enough to live in Santa Barbara with the inflation of living costs and salaries remaining the same. It would be a wonderful benefit to employees to have day care that would not take a person's whole pay check. After paying for day care, there is not much left for rent, gas, food, clothing, etc.
- It is good to have affordable child care center near work place. That is the main reason we don't get good employees to work here in our place. Good luck.
- It is very hard to get affordable child care due to being Santa Barbara high prices.
- It is very important the cost of child care be reasonable for the SB area. It is 3 times the cost for child care in SB than it is in SM - why? People in the median income range cannot afford to work if all they are making is going towards child care. Also the location and the times child care is opened are crucial for working parents. I really would like very much to see the County employ this much needed service for their employees. Staff absenteeism would go way down. Hiring a nurse or professional were staff can bring in sick children would make a huge difference in employee attendance. Also to give peace of mind as a parent at work that your child is being well cared for. There has to be something in place for middle to lower income families to be able to help hold employment with such a big expense for child care.
- It's close to impossible to find child care that we can pay for. Cost of living is very high in Santa Barbara and we can barely make ends meet with both our incomes. It would be great if our employer had some type of daycare center for the employees who have kids.
- Need more affordable child care.
- Reduced cost child care would be extremely beneficial to my family. The addition of child care to my work environment would potentially be a factor in my decision to continue employment with [employer].
- Salary's in this area are sadly very low, and the child care costs in this area are the highest I have ever seen.(I have been a parent for 14 years and have three children 3-14 yrs old, and I have lived in many cities and states before now)
- The biggest concern for our family is the high cost and the reliability of good child care.
- The child care cost for children under one year old is outrageously expensive and one can only afford unlicensed child care.
- The cost of child care is my biggest problem. I'm single and there is not financial help for people with a middle salary range. Please help.
- The cost of living so expensive here in Santa Barbara. It is very hard for couples with young children to find affordable child care. Therefore, it is very important that Santa Barbara finds a solution for affordable child care for its workers.
- The younger women and men coming in to the work force really need child care that is not so expensive and something that they can count on and know that their children are safe. We in Santa Barbara forget that not everyone is rich and the middle class cannot go to the one for the poorer people because they don't qualify as low income and that is unfair since the middle class pay the most taxes. It's time that someone tried to help the middle income people. Thank You.
- There are coworkers around me that have problems with not being able to find care while going to work. I hope when I have children of my own I will have better care and make

sure they are saving while I'm at work. I think that the children care center is very expensive and it's too hard to work more and have bills and not being able to be with our children.

- There needs to be more affordable child care for families or single parents that are trying to get ahead of them self.
- We are due to have a child in the next few months. We have been looking for child care ever since we learned of the pregnancy and are on several waiting lists. The prices for child care range from \$1,100 to \$1,700 a month for licensed day care. Many are turning to nanny services which are even more expensive. The costs of day care is prohibitive when considered with the cost of housing, it is difficult to see what incentive middle class working families have to continue living here. The current state of affairs would seem to support the idea that permanent residents are being divided into two classes, the wealthy and the service sector lower income folks who support the wealthy, and the local agriculture and tourism industries. Unfortunately, without the colleges bringing in a steady stream of students and tourists, Santa Barbara would not be a very diverse place. I hope Santa Barbara does not continue to lose its economic diversity. I would very much like to see true efforts made to retain/attract a greater range of economic activities in this region that support a healthy community's initiative locally.
- We definitely need better and affordable child care in this area. Some of the after school programs are too expensive to afford. Thanks.
- We have found it difficult to find affordable care during winter and spring breaks for school. There are lots of camps, but many of them are partial day or only a few hours. We have friends that find it very difficult to afford after-school care and school breaks.
- We have really struggled with the cost of quality care. Fortunately for us, we have had family in town to provide care for our children 3 days a week so that we could afford to hire a nanny to come to our home 2 days/wk. at a cost of \$1,000/mo. When our first child was born we interviewed numerous child care centers/home based centers and were unable to get into the ones that we thought highly of; the remaining options were not an option. Not everyone is fortunate enough to have family to help out and families would be far better served if they had quality care to rely on. Admittedly, because of our 1:2 situations with our nanny, if she is sick I have to scramble for child care and have had to miss days of work in these situations. Fortunately these instances are relatively rare, but I would really appreciate a quality back-up option. Also, there was a time when we were between nannies for approx. 4 weeks and covering child care was extremely stressful. I would say that our greatest need would be that back-up care. Also helpful would be afternoon coverage so that I could more easily stay to work late some days. Right now, I need to be home to relieve my nanny and if I ask her to stay later, I need to pay her for the additional hours; this adds up very quickly! While I do a fair amount of work in the evenings after the kids go to bed, I would feel much better about having a place for my children to go in the afternoons so that I could attend work related meetings, etc. after school. Thank you for looking into this issue; while there are some fantastic child care options in town, there aren't enough, especially at an affordable rate.
- Yes, the need for affordable child care in the area is pretty much obvious with some employees making it a factor in what, where and whom to work for. Provision of this would impact all industries in terms of employee productivity and satisfaction. I think child care eclipses other benefits for most working parents.

***Sick Child Care***

- It's very difficult when I'm sick or my children are sick or my wife.
- It would be very nice to have a place close by to drop off a mildly ill child. That is my number one absentee problem with my kids.
- A mildly ill child care program is greatly needed. I have to miss work and plan for a substitute teacher often having to drive back to Santa Barbara from Ventura, when my child is not feeling well.
- Child care should include area for ill children while need to work occurs.
- As a supervisor at [employer], responsible for approximately 30 employees, child care is definitely an issue affecting the attendance of my staff here in the North County area of Lompoc. A lack of child care providers who are willing or able to care for children when they are ill or slightly ill, is the biggest obstacle; forcing staff to take time off.
- As a teacher I see a need for child care for sick children. They are sent to school and they make us sick. Parents don't always take care of their sick children for fear of losing their jobs or income.
- I would love to have a child care center on my worksite because it would prevent me from calling in sick.
- I would never leave my sick or even a mildly sick child in the care of another person, I draw the line at having to make a decision to take care of my own sick child vs. going to work. Luckily we have a very positive environment when it comes to family and children issues.
- My employees need affordable "sick" child Day Care.
- A center on or near my job site would be a great option. I'd like to be able to have a place to drop a mildly ill child.
- Also interested in employee on-site child care. Also not quite sure what is a mild ill child care center is from the survey.

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***Quality Child Care***

- Quality child care should be a priority for this community.
- All of society benefits when the next generation is valued and well taken care of.
- The most important thing about child care is that my child receives a good education.
- There is a need of good quality and affordable child care!
- Please help! I go back to work full time in August and I am so very stressed out about finding quality child care. I am afraid this survey will go nowhere...like the workforce housing.
- Quality child care is a CRUCIAL issue in every community! Including Santa Barbara.
- In my search for quality care I found that the excellent programs have a wait of 1-2 yrs and the not so quality have spaces available.
- All programs would need to be educational, even if short term. I would not use a babysitting service. This set of questions and opportunities for response have a negative tone, and do not represent my needs.
- It would be a great option to be able to work with confidence by knowing that my children were in good hands.

- Any type of child care that does not have a strong Christian faith basis would not be considered considering that the lack of such Christian morals being provided at such an early age is having a negative impact on youths.
- I believe that quality child care is important for the safety and well being of children and it can have a negative impact on the family if children are not receiving adequate care.
- A good 24hr location maybe in one of the old juvenile hall wings w/ web camera.
- Affordable child care is a problem that affects many. However, the quality of care a child receives is equally important. Your efforts in this matter are greatly appreciated.
- I have been very blessed to have my Mom take care of my child, but in the case that she would not be able to do so, would be a very important issue to me. Because I would need to find a care program that I know my child would be VERY WELL taken CARE OF... My child's safety is extremely important to me and I would need to know and feel that the individual(s) taking care of my child are completely devoted to all of children's safety and needs.
- Child care providers for children under 12 months are scarce and very pricey. When seeking a licensed home base day care, I was so displeased with the quality, it was scary! We decided our best option for now is to have dad stay home with 2 and 1 year old and not spend over \$1000.00 a month in net income for daycare. It has been a financial burden not to be able to get ahead with two household incomes, but the ease of knowing both children are cared for in the upmost loving/quality care from home and daddy is most pleasing. I wish there were more child care centers available nearby work for mid-low income earners on a sliding scale or scholarship basis with the opportunity for parents to volunteer. This would invest in our new generation to be well prepared and ready for pre-school with social/interactive skills. Our 2 and 1 year old only socialize with each other on a daily basis and get thrilled to see a another kid to play with at the park. It would be awesome if something positive came out of this survey to help many parents ease their concerns about quality day care for our new generation.
- I hope that the care available would start from 6 weeks on since that is the only amount of time approved by [employer] maternity/paternity leave. We also need full time 7:30am -5:00pm care.
- I love the lady who takes care of my child and if it weren't for her and her being a retired Nurse, I would miss a lot of more days from work due to my child illnesses.
- I think quality child care, in my opinion, means keeping the children happy and enforcing discipline when a single child attempts to or actually does make one or more children unhappy.
- In addition to needing more child care options, Santa Barbara could do a better job monitoring in-home providers. I am extremely reluctant to consider an in-home provider because of how infrequently those providers are visited/monitored.
- My last answers reflect fact that I am satisfied with my daycare arrangements for my two kids and would not change it under the circumstances.
- No one takes in to consideration the cost of child care per child or the experience of the person or persons in the business/facility that is caring for the child. If the person in question is disable or is in the infant stage of life the care facility can/and usually doubles it's pricing. If your child is ill the daycare can/and will refuses to care for your child the parent sometime will go as far as not telling the care center because of that extra expense.(are they going to aid in more care-comfort for that child, are there going to employ more employees because they have a sick kid). It is all about the profit -the increase over the forecasted budget.

- Since in the last 2 weeks, some teachers have been given pink slips, wouldn't it be great for them to take care of children, as they are trained in all aspects to help and guide a child, and this would be a great plus to the children to make learning so much better. It is terrible how much money is wasted, and yet in some cases, are the children really cared for. Large corporations, have day care. What about the children who leave school and have nowhere else to go. This causes the problems that have plagued our cities recently.
- Thank you for conducting this survey! The reason that I wouldn't use a drop-off/backup child care service is because I want my child to have an established relationship with the caregivers that I leave my child with, and I want to know who they are myself. I wouldn't use an in-home option because I've done this in the past and feel doubtful that one person can offer quality care to children all day long. I have not had good experiences with caregivers who provide child care in their own homes. I try to be very selective about who I leave my child with during the day and seek out providers who are patient, kind, warm and loving. I am pleased with where my child currently spends the day, however, the cost is tremendous and even though I am happy with it, I wish I could afford to put my child in daycare for only half a day and stay home with my child the rest of the day. Lastly, I think the child to caregiver ratios is still too high. I think this puts pressure on the caregivers who then can potentially translate to the children, who then have to manage this stress without the security and support of their parents. In a perfect world, I would like to provide care to my child during the day. I guess the next best thing is to find a caregiver who has the qualities that I previously mentioned and who are not burdened with state or county imposed ratios that they have to meet. I truly believe that every child that is away from their parents during the day need much more loving attention than they most likely receive throughout the day. Thanks.
- The child care should be quality child care - not just babysitting but educational like Bright Start. Also, the child care should provide internet video services so parents can check in on their kids. Check out the services that are provided by Best Buy Corp in Minnesota.
- The most difficult aspect has been finding adequate and readily available quality care. The second has been actually being able to afford it. We travel 20 miles roundtrip to take our son to a quality program. It is worth it to us because we know he's in good hands, but the cost of gas, the wear and tear on our car and the extra time lost at work is definitely wearing. The waiting lists are long and tuition is extremely expensive for the most popular care centers. I wish my employer could provide a child care credit or a day care center similar to the one provided to the UCSB employees. Any kind of assistance would be appreciated greatly by not only me, but by the many working parents employed by [employer]. Thank you for taking this survey, I hope it finds itself in good hands that can make a difference.
- We had a negative experience with a family child care facility. Family child care facilities need to be monitored better and have information about past problems made more easily available.
- Would not feel comfortable leaving our child to be babysat by people we don't know well personally.

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### ***Single Working Parents***

- Single mothers need more help!
- As a single parent, I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this survey.

- A very important thing that I disagree is that in a preschool you have to work and still be under budget or as a single mom you can't be married or making good amount of money because you won't qualify I was unemployed for a good amount of time then I got a job and a result my son was taken out of preschool and placed in a different class and we had so many problems after that. Everything should be equal.
- As a single parent I do not have the option to even consider quitting my job to care for my underage child. The cost of living in Santa Barbara precludes anything but full time employment.
- As a single father of 2 it is difficult to balance the needs of my children with the type of work I do. When my kids are sick I feel like I am less productive. It is very hard finding affordable child care that is safe and dependable. With the cost of housing in SB it is even more difficult -there is a great need in this area.
- The community is in need of affordable day care centers. Most of us are single parents and with today's rents it's a struggle.
- My biggest concern with child care is the cost for a single mother. The amount they qualify you to pay for low income is not enough to live on. And if you make 1 dollar more than the lowest amount you must pay the full price which is much more than your pay check is worth. I have been unable to move forward in my job because I can only make so much to qualify for child care. It is very difficult to be a single working mother and trying to get ahead.
- Affordable child care is of utmost importance. As a mom who is separated and heading for divorce, I am extremely concerned about the cost and availability of extended child care hours. I also feel a safety factor comes into play. I often find myself literally running to my car and speeding all the way to pick up my child in time at close of daycare because I can't afford to pay penalties for late pick up. This behavior puts me and those on the street around me at risk. Implementing work at home programs, flex time, and job sharing may alleviate some of the difficulty, especially for single parents.
- Child care is a HUGE issue with many of our employees. I speak as a single parent who works with many other single parents. Even those who have both parents in the home are struggling with costs, many times one of the two parents, are opting to stay at home just to avoid the cost of child care today. Something needs to be done. It is much too costly, and it adds a stressful burden on working parents, who are just trying to survive.
- I currently pay \$800 per month for full time daycare for my 2-year old daughter. I am a single mother and find it very challenging and stressful that I cannot work overtime or come in early without being charged extra fees, etc. The child care issues everywhere are very difficult during a day in age where both parents must work just to get by. Thank you for this survey.
- I have family and friends that struggled with making ends meet and child care. I think most people work to pay child care and their spouse's paycheck pays for all the bills. Never mind what single parents have to juggle to pay for child care. There might even be fewer women on welfare if assessed quality care was available for working, single parents' downtown.

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### ***Special Needs Children***

- You should have a program for "special needs" children!

- My child has hearing loss, and requires more one on one communication to help him come up to speed with his vocal communication. This is something we consider when looking at child care options.
- My responses on this survey are specific to having one child with special needs. Therefore it's hard to say whether or not I'd be able to use additional child care options unless I knew they could provide for my special needs child.
- My youngest child has health issues at times causing me to miss some work days. My supervisors have been supportive of my absenteeism.
- This survey or any other service needs to provide for children with special needs. We need more services in the Santa Barbara area that will provide different intervals of care for our special needs population. Such as drop-in, weekends, etc.
- What about a list of child care providers in the area? Consider child care for children with chronic illness such as diabetes, seizures or immune-compromised children such as those after an organ transplant who cannot be in a regular day care.

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### ***Teenage Children***

- As my children are a little older and independent, child care issues are not as pertinent as they used to be. A few years ago, the questions may have been answered quite differently with importance of available child care being high.
- My child is 12 years, but any child care services that would help my employees maintain their schedules and free them from being overburdened by child-care responsibilities would not only benefit those employees, it would benefit morale and help me recruit and retain the best employees possible.
- The price is expensive. Even at Girls Inc. where I had my daughter attend for 7 years, the prices kept going up and the scholarships got even harder to get especially with my pay going up ever so slightly each year w/ the cost of living increase. I also feel that when they need it most, the teens are left out. BUT, the new teen center off Victoria is absolutely needed and I hope well -attended. Thank you for your time.
- My children are in school, however there's no pre-care at the school which really limits my ability to get in to work early in the mornings. Working with the local schools to make sure there is someone available for a breakfast program would allow me to drop them off earlier and get in for early meetings.
- My children are in their early 20's but from what I hear from the mothers that do have young children not much has changed. It is a struggle, particularly if one does not have family to help watch the child while the parent works. In addition, the cost is so high. I would have loved to have after school care or a child care facility where I worked. The stress is great & takes away from one's performance at work because of the constant worry.
- My children are now 16 and 19 years old, but I had to deal with child care issues when they were younger, and it was always very tough to find suitable child care for them. I hope this survey helps the process of providing good child care for the parents of young children today.
- My children are now grown but I was in need of child care over 10 years ago and found it difficult to find high quality family day care limited to 6 to 12 children in the downtown Santa Barbara area. Anything you could do to help promote this kind of day care that also maintains high safety and programming standards could be a great service to young families.



- My children are now older (10 and 13) but when they were younger having more inexpensive child care available would have been very helpful.
- My child is now 16 but I have to concur with the opinion of other parents that spaces are limited.
- My children are older and I no longer need as much child care. It would be nice for downtown workers with small children to have some of these options. I'm sure my family would have used them had they been available.
- My children are older now with the exception of my 10yr old. I faced the challenges of child care costs and missing work because of sick children. There were times it felt like I was working just to pay the high cost of child care and sometimes quitting seemed like the best option. The only thing that kept me from quitting was I needed the medical benefits!
- My daughter is too old now for after school programs. But I am currently pregnant and my big concern is child care for two babies with the cost of everything going up.
- My daughter is 17 years old, she can't walk or talk, my wife and I share duties when we're home day and night.
- My youngest child (12 years) is already past the child care stage, however, activities for after school are extremely important for this age (preteen), and activities that interest her are quite expensive, i.e. dance, gymnastics, etc. plus after school homework help; also transportation to these activities must be a consideration. Thank You.
- Need care for older children and teens too.
- Please also consider the need for after school care and related park/open space needs downtown. This would help parents with older children that need supervision, or just a place to go after school until their parents finish work.
- Quality after school care with pick up from school is critical and hours until 6:00 pm.
- Since my children will be turning 13 next year and use of a flexible spending plan will not cover child care at that time, my child will be home alone after school.
- There is a great need for quality after school activities for children over 12 years old. Let us not forget this youth!
- My kids are now older but when I started with the county any child care arrangement would have been a huge benefit.
- My kids have grown up, but when they were at the age(s) of this survey, child care was an issue.
- We're very lucky to have a great licensed day care provider, which in combination with a great before and after school program at the Routt Union School District, greatly simplify the challenges of two working parents and a young family. We both live within two miles of our workplace and, until recently did not have to travel out of our way to get the kids to school and daycare. Thanks for your efforts in trying to help other working parents.
- When my children were younger, it was very difficult to find any kind of quality care in the downtown area. The closest I could find was First Presbyterian Church on State and Constance, as they take very young children, however, it was very expensive (around \$1,800 per month for two kids not yet in school). And, I was on a waiting list for a very long time. Having someone come into my home was an even more expensive option.
- When my children were younger, it would have been nice to have accommodations like this.
- When my kids were smaller, I had difficulty finding affordable child care in Goleta. My part-time job basically paid for child care and insurance benefits.

- You have excluded responsibilities for care of teenagers and this is a big issue, too. I have a 13 year old (as well as the 9 year old) and transporting her to and from school, dealing with illness or vacations, etc. can be equally challenging, if different, as concerns about younger children.
- Affordable child care given by high caliber professionals within our place of employment will be the most desirable option for working parents. My kids are grown up now, therefore I don't think about my personal needs but those of younger co-workers.
- Having raised children before beginning work with the City, I have to say onsite care is the best for all concerned. And flexibility from employers is paramount to healthy families. As a supervisor, I do everything I can to ensure that employees have the time they need (and sometimes just want) to take time with their families be it parents or children.
- I am responsible for two college students age 18-22.
- FYI, I have a 13 year old daughter and worry about the fact that she doesn't want care and prefers to go home and is alone after school.
- I have two older children and child care in SB have always been a problem and still continue to be for my employees, especially for children not in school yet. Thank goodness for the After School programs available, like the YMCA or Girls Inc., but even then they are costly and sometimes are closed when our employees have to work, but they help a lot.
- I think that 12-18 year old boys need some child care that doesn't seem like being babysat.
- Please also consider the need for after school care and related park/open space needs downtown. This would help parents with older children that need supervision, or just a place to go after school until their parents finish work.
- I would have been excited about the interest in providing low-cost child care when my children were small. It would have really helped me.

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### ***Grandparents with Grandchild Responsibilities***

- Care available for grandparents raising grandchildren.
- Although I live in Lompoc I see the need for good child care services. I have the care of my 2 minor grandchildren when their mother is away at school or when she is on duty for the Army.
- Grand Parents that sometimes watch over the little ones...
- I am currently the grandmother of a 14 year old boy whose mother had a very hard time finding child care affordable to her while going to school. Santa Barbara needs professional, affordable child care to all children. Thank you and good luck on your efforts to provide such.
- I am a grandmother caring for my grandchild one or two days a week. I have reflected some of my daughters problems, but since I am involved in the care, they are my problems too if they fall on my days.
- I have just obtained temporary responsibility for my grandson while his dad is in Iraq. I will have him for years. All my answers have been based on this unusual situation.
- I may occasionally be responsible for a grandchild's care. Either way it is a wonderful idea!
- I might be taking care of my grandkids one day and need child care and it would be nice if it were affordable. Thanks for caring.

- The survey fails to ask questions about grandparents taking care of a grandchild. Q#15 asks about taking care of a child of one's own, but my wife and I will be taking care of our grand child in a few months. This is a major flaw in the survey.
- I noticed you did not provide specific info for Grandparents assisting in the care of their grandchildren. This is my situation.
- I watch my granddaughter occasionally so that my son can work and go to school.
- My 3 grandchildren live with me, if their mother is out of town, or at a meeting I do get called to pick them up from school if they miss their bus or are ill at school.
- My daughter and her family live with me. They have 4 children ages 11, 7, 4 & 1. Although I'm not responsible for them I do share time in caring for them after school.
- My kids have kids and I help out with child care etc. Their jobs are not too supportive. Help us with cost of living in S.B. area.
- I do not currently have any children but I help take care of my nephews who are 5, 16 months and another on the way.
- We are very fortunate in our family to have a support system of grandparents who are willing to step in when needed. Work has been supportive also when time is needed due to the elementary school being out when the high school is still in session. I'm thankful that we are able to bank our vacation and sick hours unlike my husband's employer and I have plenty of time on the books for emergencies unlike some of my co-workers who use it as fast as they earn it.
- When Mom and Dad both work and kids are not in school, either family or very close friends are with kids. Otherwise Mom would stay home.

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### ***Atypical Shifts and Juggling Care***

- I had to go part time due to lack of child care and 2 parents working shift work.
- It's hard getting weekend child care services.
- I have two boys at two different schools. We also hire a non-licensed baby sitter about 15 hours per week to care for my boys 4 days per week after school up until about 8pm some days and my husband takes care of them Monday and Tuesday mornings--as he has those days off. It is a patchwork system, and often, when the boy is sick or misbehaving, I have to come and pick them up. Taking them to work is what I have to do--but they are disruptive--at least the younger one, and so I end up having to leave early, and coming back on in the weekends.
- My husband and I work "non-traditional" hours. Extremely difficult to find trust-worthy care givers for varying/ irregular hours.
- My husband and me are both shift workers, and live in the County. It is truly unfortunate that there is not adequate child care in the County for [employer's] employees. Especially for employees who protect and serve our community.
- I work different shifts. It is hard for my spouse to work full time to add to our income, due to child care. A second income is much needed to live in SB County.
- I work weekends. The care of my children is the most important thing for me. With any change of hours, change of days or nights I must re-balance my time so that my wife can be with the children mostly, then our parents, other family relatives and caregivers - and finally, the licensed care facility.
- Ideally, I don't believe child care is to be administered except by the parents and their immediate family. I do not support universal preschool.

- I work, but it is not my primary responsibility. My children are. I arrange my schedule and found a job that is very family friendly so they never feel as though they are second.
- If I am required to work nights, would dependable and safe child care be available from 5 pm to 630 am?

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**Location of Care**

- Affordable care in the Lompoc Area. I currently have a great provider. She is the most reasonably priced, at \$25/day per child, licensed day care provider that I have found. However that is still \$1000/month for 2 children. Also, you pay full price even if the children miss days. It is expensive and often difficult to manage considering the high cost of living in Santa Barbara County.
- As many of us are being forced to commute to Santa Maria in Aug or Sept. these issues are going to be important to us and our employers!
- Child care is an extremely important issue. As more and more families have two working parents, the need for quality, affordable, reliable child care also rises. While the lack of affordable child care may not cause me to leave my job, it is definitely a source of stress which has many far-reaching repercussions. Another important consideration of child care is location. Child care at or very close to work would have many benefits.
- Hopefully you can start something in Lompoc also.
- I know you are targeting downtown Santa Barbara but those of us who live outside of Santa Barbara have the need of affordable child care near our residence. One that could pick up our children after school and bring them to the child care facilities. We have too many latch key children.
- Child care should also be thought about for our Santa Maria or North County employees. I am sure that many North County people have those issues too.
- I left the SF Bay Area and moved back to Santa Barbara to have family here help with my children.
- I live in Ventura and my child goes to school and goes to a daycare provider in Ventura.
- I think it great that this issue of child care is being looked at. As a nurse and in this age of nursing shortage, it is imperative that nurses have both safe, quality child care for their children as well as understanding and flexible supervisors/employers.
- It would be nice if Santa Maria was also considered and not just Santa Barbara.
- I don't really think I'd drive to DOWNTOWN SB for child care if I had a child. It would be helpful if ya'll would think BROADER; like Lompoc, SM, Solvang, Buellton...Even New Cayama. Also, if and when I do have a child, I may look to leaving this job anyway. The dump would be too dangerous health wise for me to be bringing home to my newborn. I'd look into parks or (groan) office work.
- It would be nice to have a center that provides child care in Carpinteria or any help for those who work in Carpinteria especially now with the way our economy is.
- It would be nice to have the option of getting child care credit like other California school districts i.e. Fresno/Clovis.
- I work in a dept. that has offices in Santa Barbara, Lompoc and Santa Maria. What about day care for cities other than Santa Barbara?
- I work in Santa Maria and having an onsite center would be wonderful - however I work at Mental Health which is away from the government center, thus I am unable to access what they have onsite. I know productivity would improve if I had that option. Right now I

have to balance expressing breast milk, work, traveling at lunch to see my child and pumping again in the afternoon, if she was onsite; the stress level would definitely go down. We could just come to work versus going away from my job to my mom's then heading back to work, etc. Hopefully this might happen for the next generation of employees, as I don't see it happening within the time frame that I would need it.

- I work in the downtown SB area because this is where the 'jobs' are. Because of the lack of affordable housing in SB, my husband and I had NO choice but to move to Lompoc 55 miles away (approx 12 hours a day away from home, 5 days a week.) Because of the lack of affordable and reasonable (in both cost and quality) of child care, we postponed having children, until the 'right time.' Well that time has not come and I am no longer able to have children. My husband and I both have well paying jobs, yet we still are/were unable to start a family due to the cost and availability of child care. It appears the less money you make, the more opportunities there are for child care. Is that fair? Families that have children are ONLY able to do so if they other family in the area to help out...they could not possibly out right afford child care...without government and family help.
- Location of child care still matters. Some families would prefer the child care be in their home city, others would prefer the child care be in the city where they work.
- Looking at child care along with affordable housing and transportation issues may yield the best result. It is not a good use of individual or community effort to allow people to carry their children 20 miles in SUV's - rather than living, working, and having their children cared for all within walking distance.
- Looking at the possibility of a child care center for Santa Maria employees.
- Many parents commute from out of town to Santa Barbara to work due to the lack of affordable or available child care. A commute question related to time parent spends away from home on a given day would be helpful.
- Most daycare programs offered through Santa Barbara County focus on a downtown location. It would be beneficial to consider a daycare campus in the Calle Real area for [employer's] employees.
- My husband and I are both employed full time with two young children in full time daycare. I commute 30 minutes each way to and from work. I am limited to my available hours of employment due to pick up and drop off limitations with our daycares. The monthly cost of daycare for two full time, young children nearly outweighs my monthly income, especially when considering commuting expenses. Together my husband and I don't make enough to afford our monthly expenses without being on a serious budget, but we make too much to get any help from the government. It was a very difficult decision to make when returning to work after my second child. My family would definitely benefit from child care assistance, in nearly any form. Scholarships for average income families, child care closer to my employer, child care with earlier drop off and later pick up without the outrageous additional fees, etc.
- Please consider the needs of north county employees as well!!!!
- Since I live in Santa Maria and I commute down, I doubt I would take advantage of a Santa Barbara solution for child care. If one were organized in Santa Maria that would be different.
- Thanks for asking. Any child care or eldercare needs at our facility would have to be located in the La Cumbre Plaza.
- The Santa Ynez valley could use affordable child care also! My daughter works and so my husband and I are called in to help often.

- Urgent need in for one parent working single mom mostly child care all over south county! Don't need a survey to see this just a set of eyes! Another waste of funds!
- Well for me one of the biggest issues is that we live in OakView/Ojai and the distance and time factors due to traffic often cause problems.
- When considering daycare services for Santa Barbara, please consider Lompoc, I am a hardworking single parent and barely make ends meet due to paying overpriced child care for 2.5 hours a day but pay as if he was there a full day.
- Why is this only being done for Santa Barbara? Lompoc needs assisted child care for employees here! We have lower paying jobs and less opportunity to promote because they keep all the higher paying jobs in Santa Barbara despite the majority of the work being needed in North County (Lompoc and Santa Maria).
- With a large workforce of young mothers we need an in-house child care facility for [employer] at Camino del Remedio.
- You should have another Orfaela Children's center but a different location.
- I mainly work in Carpentaria and here in this community I find it also very hard to find affordable child care and after school care since I am a single mother with 3 kids.
- I live in the Orcutt School district. Currently there is NO good before or after school programs for my 12 year old. The current programs for when school is out are not great either. The Orcutt Child Care is not available for my 12 year old and my 7 year old hates going because he is bored and the teachers do not help him make friends (he is shy). This will be our first year with our 12 year old during the summer and we have to use family or friends to help watch her. I am very stressed about finding care for her.
- I live in Ventura County and work in Santa Barbara and have struggled to find a quality daycare here in town. My 2 1/2 year old has been with four different daycare providers, two in SB. In my experience and listening to other parents, I have found that in SB, it is common to pay more for in-home daycare and for the providers to care for more children than allowed. At the two places my child went in SB, we parents we knew that there were too many children in the daycare so several of us were actively searching for better accommodations for our kids.
- The Plan to provide quality child care should also be considered for Santa Maria.

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### ***Transportation and Commuting***

- 1/3 of workforce commutes from Lompoc and Ventura - how can families in these areas be assisted? What can we do about #1 commuter concern - traffic!
- Child care is not an issue in my case. Commuting, and the amount of time it adds to the work day, is my issue.
- Increased bus routes between Santa Barbara and Lompoc would help ease child care issues. Reduced fees at a Nanny Locator service would help because they are expensive.
- For [employer] employees who don't live in Santa Barbara or Goleta & have to commute to work... 55 miles or more one way... would there be any workforce demographic for us? It's hard to find a daycare in town that's opened early enough in order to get to work on time. Or would you take into consideration out of town workers that do work for city & a child care facility for out-of town employees??? Thank you.
- My husband and I both commute 45 minutes to work. We plan on starting a family within the next year, but our biggest fear is not being able to find child care close to our work.

- It would help if a proposed after care program provided transportation from schools to the care center. Otherwise it involves the employee either taking off work to transport the kids, or struggling to find someone else who can transport the children on the employee's behalf. On a daily basis that can be difficult.
- Affordable and adequate child care is a problem county wide, not just in the Santa Barbara downtown area. It would be interesting to quantify the number of workers who commute into the city for work from other townships and for that matter, other counties. These workers have child care needs also.
- The biggest issue is the time to and from. I currently have my children at an after school program at the same school. I don't really like my sons program but I cannot get out of work to pick him up to take him to another program so I have to leave him in the one. In other words transportation from one program to another.
- The combination of commuting and child care makes it very difficult. Many times I send my child to school not sure if I should or not, due to a possible illness, and often times I just get to work to have to turn around and go back to pick him up. I have had an incident where my son was taken to the emergency room by the school. It took me almost an hour to get to him because of the commute and traffic. This is very frustrating!
- Because so many people commute into Santa Barbara, child care needs to be more readily available here in town.

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***Wife Stays Home to Care for Children***

- My wife does day care.
- My wife stays at home with 2 kids. Grandma lives in town and can help. The YMCA child care works well for my wife.
- My wife takes care of our toddler 95% of the time I am at work, but she is an on-call birthing assistant (doula) and sometimes it is difficult for us to find a friend who can watch our son when she needs to attend a birth. An established affordable walk in drop off child care program would be very helpful in our situation. We could use this in emergencies when we could not find a babysitter and we both needed to be at work.
- If we could afford child care services then my wife would work too but since it's so expensive is not worth for her to work or go to school.
- Even though I have not used child care during the last two years because my wife and I we decided have wife quit her job and stay with children for a short period of time. However, we are struggling financially; one income is not enough to cover all expenses. Definitely, we are going to need child care services in the near future.
- My wife works only part time while the kids are in school so we do not depend on any day care programs. Issues only arise during school holidays and summers (the kids get much more time off) and we struggle to find care during these times. That is when work is missed.
- I used to be a child care provider. I found that wages at the time were too low for the responsibility that I took caring for others' children. Parents need to have an appreciation for the care that is given to their children by caring, licensed child care providers. Parents must pay the provider a decent wage, including overtime.

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***Children are Grown***

- I have grown adult children that don't require child care.

- I did have primary child care expenses for two children in the 90's. It was very costly being at that time a single parent.
- My child-care years are behind me. I can appreciate for younger families finding child care is difficult.
- My children are 22, 23, 29 and none are married or expecting a child.
- I'm no longer raising children, but I support efforts to help my co-workers out with this need.
- Although I am not in need of child care because I do have a family member taking care of my two boys I know it is a problem for many that work here.
- My child is an adult now. When she was a child it seemed that the cost of child care made working F/T a no-win situation- as the cost was too high for low wage positions (being a single mother).
- Although I currently don't have children, I do know that child care is usually very expensive. I think it would be great for people to have the option of reliable, enriching child care at an affordable price.
- My son is now 29 but for many years I was a single parent and found it very difficult to find affordable care for my son. I am in support of affordable child care for county workers and all workers.
- Although I no longer have a small child, I remember the stress of finding appropriate child care, so I really appreciate your efforts in this project.
- Although my children are older now (14, 17) when I was working in downtown Santa Barbara child care availability and the associated cost was extremely difficult to manage. For the parents of younger children, I strongly support an effort to minimize the stress and cost of acceptable, dedicated child care.
- Although my youngest child is in her teens, I still feel it is important to provide support for families with younger children. We need to provide quality child care facilities. Providing parent support and parenting classes would be great.
- My two sons' have grown to the age of 21 & 17 and no longer need child care. When they were in need of child care we were fortunate enough to have Cottage Child care as a company sponsored child care. I am familiar with the challenge parents and employers have with the child care issue and support 100% company sponsored child care. Time and fuel are now an issue so if dropping your child off at a place close to or at work is smart. Also I always knew my wife felt lucky to visit or have lunch periodically with the boy's at child care. Cottage Care is a perfect Model.
- Though I don't currently have nor do I expect to have the responsibility of needing child care for a child. I did some years ago and I and my children would have benefiting of having affordable child care near my work location. It is so hard to find and truly hope something is done about this soon.
- Too bad this program was not started a long time ago when my child was younger. I thought they talked about this years ago too. What happened? I guess this was not a priority. It would have been nice to have my child close by. I would like to think that your rates would have been cheaper. I've put out thousands of dollars for child care over the past 5 years. Hopefully you will get this program going so new parents can get the benefits.
- I answered these questions as they pertained to me today. However, things were very different a few years ago when I did have younger children at home and had to pay (basically my whole paycheck) to daycare (especially during the summer).



- My workplace has always been caring and concerned about the family. My daughter is now 19 and I no longer need daycare. But it helped me and it helps others now to know that they are supportive. To find quality and reasonable day care is an important issue. Along with teachers. It is good to see you look at this issue.
- Although I currently do not have any children, I do believe affordable child care is important. But like anything else, it's also very important for actual parents to play an important part of the child's care. Through the years, I have seen that sometimes parents leave all the "parental" activities to child care centers.
- Even though I don't have children under my care because at my age, some of my employees do. The lack of good affordable care for their children affects their job performance. I think it would be helpful to your cause to also design a survey instrument that could capture our perspectives on this serious problem.

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### ***No Children, but...***

- I have no kids.
- I have no children.
- I feel at a loss to provide actual information, being that I do not have a child.
- I have no kids so child care is not really applicable to me.
- Because Santa Barbara is NOT family friendly, I have refrained from starting a family. High housing costs, gangs, unsafe neighborhoods, lack of child care, expensive necessities, and low pay. I am a native Santa Barbara and will remain here without children unless change in favor of a family.
- Although I do not have human children, I feel very strongly that all employers and communities should encourage easy, convenient, affordable (even free, if possible) child/elder care, especially since so many parents/guardians have to work. It seems reasonable to me to expect that any responsible society would encourage this. I suspect that many who are caregivers (to children, other humans, pets) work more to support those they care for than to support themselves (in other words, could work less for less money if not for those in their care). I believe workers in an enlightened community deserve all the help they can get. Thanks for allowing me to share my rant.
- I might have been able to be the custodial parent when I had a child if help had been there for child care for work.
- Although I have no children, I believe this is a crucial issue impacting our work-force and their families. Quality child care is costly and its availability is limited for the times needed for workers to work the shifts needed to service our patients (health care, etc.) It is stressful for everyone. The managers can't fill evening positions because of child-care issues, or everyone has to pitch in and work extra or work unpopular shifts. A common example is when an employee has to stay home with their child on a school holiday because that is not part of their usual daycare contract.
- Even though I don't have any young children. I am strongly supportive of employer supported child care.
- I am a young woman and do not yet have kids nor am I certain as to when I will be ready for such a large commitment. However, I imagine that when that time does come it will be a large factor in my life and would affect the time I have to work. I believe it would be very helpful to employees who have children to have child care programs that can assist them and allow them to continue working. I know when I was a child I was involved in

after school programs and child care systems because both my parents worked -something that would not be easy without child care programs.

- I answered the questions that I do not have responsibility for a child or elder, but in reality, loved ones around me have elders and children who increasingly present needs that impact me, i.e. helping to do an errand, giving someone a ride, or adjusting schedules to accommodate the unexpected requirements or demands for routine and thoughtful care.
- I do not currently have children. However, I have worked with many clients who do and know other individuals who have children. I know how difficult it has been for many of the individuals to find affordable, quality child care services. I believe there is a real need for these individuals and suggest efforts to establish this service downtown.
- I do not have any children- however my friends are seriously affected economically due to child and elder care issues. I am happy somebody is addressing these issues.
- I do not have children, but I do have a lot of coworkers who do and I feel child care is important for working parents.
- I do not have children so can't give opinions on the child care situation.
- I do not support child care by someone other than mom and dad. In extreme emergency-type, financially difficult cases would I ever suggest the mom to let someone "care" for HER child. Even then, it should be a close relative TRUSTED by mom, dad and/or known by the child. I know my view is "outdated." I don't care. Thank you for letting me express my viewpoint.
- I don't have a child, but I've had friends who have dealt with the trials and tribulations of the expense of child care, and the stability!
- I hope this does not result in a "program" to assist in payment of child care. Monies should be spent on the good for ALL employees and not just a few who failed to take all expenses into account before having children.
- I personally don't have children but from seeing friends with kids I realize there's a large need to affordable child care.
- I think child care is a personal issue and I don't believe that I should be asked to subsidize my co-workers decision to have children. And, I would be subsidizing it if my employer decides to fund some sort of downtown child care program without offering any sort of corresponding compensation to those of us who are childless.
- I think this an important survey, but I don't have children.
- It hard to predict whether or not I am going to have kids within the next 5 years. Currently I don't plan on it, but a lot can change in 5 years. I do plan on having children within the next 10-15 years, however.
- I've heard from people that child care is very expensive. It would be nice to have affordable top quality child care centers.
- I've heard that the child care costs are enormously expensive. Hopefully when I have children I can find some affordable child care that's good. I wouldn't want to put my child in a place that doesn't provide excellent child care just because it's less costly.
- Your general approach is amoral, because you invite individuals to pass their personal responsibilities on to the community. If such services were truly beneficial in terms of social utility firms would be filling the need.
- Child Care for working parents should include after-school programs for school aged children, K-12. Working adults also need Day-Care for their aged or ailing parents, disabled, ill or injured family members of any age. The pay for in-home care-givers will

be lowered by George Bush and Arnold Schwarzenegger. It is already abysmally low. Society cannot proceed in this fashion. We will be disposing of our beloved family members as the Chinese abandon their unwanted baby girls to State-run orphanages and the wild.

- I no longer have a need for child care. My wife works at Cottage Hospital and we used their child care, on site, while our children were growing up. But they were full, had a wait list, etc. So another county child care would have given us an option, which we could have easily used. But, don't spare anything in setting it up. Cottage uses a pretty good system and high quality child care is a must. The only drawback to Cottages was being a bit inflexible when a child became ill and could not attend-they would still charge.
- If you had asked these questions when my kids were little, I would have shared very different picture. Care for young children in SB County is costly and after school programs seemed substandard (to me).

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### ***Adult and Elder Care***

- Elder care is very limited.
- I'm much more interested in elder-care emphasis and its effects on my work day.
- One question asked if I had responsibility of an elder adult, I answered yes. The responsibility I have is mostly financial and decision making (she has dementia) as she resides in an assisted care facility Not at my home. Not sure if that skews the info or not.
- Please don't let care of the elders fall by the way side. Thanks.
- I did care for an elder parent when I worked at [employer]. I hope someday to have a grandchild.
- I think it is very important to support young families with child care concerns. I also feel that respite care for families with disabled adults is important.
- I have a disabled adult brother that I will be responsible for in 8 years.
- I've already done the older parent care responsibility and it was very hard, but we did it.
- My problem is not specifically with child care rather with child and senior care combined. I care for my 81 year old mother and 8 year old daughter and it has been an ongoing battle over my low leave balances. It has affected my health, my view of the security I once thought I had working for [employer] and I no longer feel comfortable in a department/division I have worked in for 25 years. My family is my priority but supporting them takes money and time. I'm sure I'm not the only one in this situation. As my evaluations get worse, so does my attitude and my desire to be much older than I am so that I can retire and hopefully bring some peace into my life. Counseling has not been as helpful as it should. HMO's do not give you access to many very well qualified professionals and recently one I was seeing for quite a while and felt very comfortable with left [employer] without warning as many other doctors have done. I feel lost and do not have the level of trust I once had to go speak to anyone within the [employer] structure. Times, they have changed!

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### ***Flexible Schedules***

- Allow more flexible hours such as 4/10 schedule. Onsite child care for large agencies that is reasonable would be very helpful.

- I telecommute, so child care in downtown Santa Barbara is not a concern of mine, but child care in other areas of the central coast are of concern. Thank you!
- Employers who offer Flexible schedules to reduce the number of days of work by working longer hours should realize how fair that really is if nobody with young children can take advantage of that since all if not most flex schedules start in the early morning hours and no day cares in Santa Barbara open before 7:30am. Big Issue in Santa Barbara!!!! That should be highly considered.
- Encouraging and creating opportunities for telecommuting is a very effective way to incorporate child care. Telecommuting has many advantages other than having a parent at home, such as increased employee morale, job satisfaction and employee retention.
- I have been fortunate that my employer has allowed me to work my part-time schedule flexibly, especially when my child was infant/toddler/preschool age. Otherwise, I don't know whether I could have continued in my job. Also, don't forget that for those of us with school-age children, school is the "care provider" for the majority of the work day (6-7 hours, as opposed to 3 hours for afterschool care). Some parents can only go to work at the point when their children are enrolled in public school.
- I think one glaring example of how employers could help their employees with child care is to champion flexible work schedules. It is extremely stressful every morning to prepare my children for daycare and school without having to worry about being 5 or 10 minutes late. The County pays lip service to those who need true flexible work schedules.
- I'm a new employee with [employer] and my daughter is a teenager. I'm sure it is very difficult to find affordable quality child care. I believe flexibility for parents is key to having happy employees.
- I'm able to work from home, if I cannot make it into the office. Spend about 28 hours in office and extra at home.
- I do feel we as a community, we need to provide affordable child care and or flexibility to parents in the work force. Having gone through raising a daughter with supervisors who did not have children and did not understand the importance of feeling comfortable at work leaving your son/daughter with trusted child care. And I do believe in providing parents with the flexibility to be able to arrive to work at a later time in order to take your child either to school or to the care giver. I believe parents who are in the category of child rearing age should be given as much opportunity as possible to be there for their child/children because I believe the big picture is they will raise confident and responsible adults. So my idea is, give the flexibility to parents by allowing this in their position in the work force during the early years.
- In addition to improving the availability of care, employers should also encourage job shares and other flexible schedules for their employees!!! The time is right!
- More helpful than a child care center or drop in care would be a much more flexible work arrangement. Having 1-2 days a week as a "work from home" option are the most helpful for working parents.
- My daughter is in school full time as a second grader, and my wonderful employer allows me to have a flex schedule in order to take and pick her up from school. In the summer she attends Girls, Inc. in Goleta, which is a wonderful facility. I believe more employers should adapt flex schedules so that daycare is not a problem. The owner of [employer] has always been extremely flexible even when my daughter was an infant, allowing me to bring her to work due to breastfeeding, etc. When she started to get mobile, she attended a licensed facility, and then attended Good Shepard Preschool until entering Kellogg School. He has always allowed me to have a schedule that fit her needs. Santa Barbara should have more employers like him!

- My employer offers flex-work hours and encourages tele-commuting. These HIGHLY VALUED choices make it so I don't need formal care for my school-age child. I also have family near who help with after school pick and activities. I didn't see a choice for these informal arrangements for school-age children. I'm very fortunate and couldn't be happier with the flexibility that my employer has shown... especially for school-age years.
- My work place and supervisors were very accommodating and flexible while my mother was ill and for all the f/u estate/trustee legal meetings that followed. I am most grateful to the management and staff at the clinic for their support during this difficult time.
- Please take into consideration those who work shift work (i.e. Fire, Medics, Law Enforcement, Hospital staff, etc.) We work rotating schedules and switch every 3-4months.

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### ***Employer Feedback***

- Kudos to the [employer] for showing interest.
- Child care is a great need in Santa Barbara County; it's great to see some initiative on behalf of [employer].
- [Employer] policy does not allow for flexibility in work schedule for parents. Depart. Managers and Execs. "try" to be accommodating but their IDP's include limiting lost time. Thus family is not reason to modify a work schedule. More employees quit, more institutional knowledge walks out the door, less work gets done, tax payers unhappy, Boss unhappy, Re-long to buy time, more employees unhappy, more employees quit & start the cycle over. Employee retention is not a priority of the head executives and never will be. He'll just hire another over priced consultant to tell him that he is doing all he can. [Employer] is no longer an attractive employment option in the community. Child care services would be nice, but it won't make me want to continue my career working for [employer].
- Employees need the [employer] support on quality of care with reasonable prices for child care, especially for single moms.
- I think it's a great idea to provide child care for employees of this county. Child care is very difficult to find and very cost worthy.
- I think that in the future it would benefit all employees in Santa Barbara County to have child care accessible, not just in downtown Santa Barbara.
- In an old position I held, a coworker would regularly bring her 2 older children into work after they were done at school. This would dramatically affect my work and I did not think it was right for her to be doing that. If there was a child care room for the kids to go it would have made the situation better.
- I definitely think that [employer] is way behind on this issue. [Employer] should be providing child care services for their employees.
- My direct supervisor is very understanding of child care needs, being a mother herself and former single mother. I answered the questions accordingly. However, I don't know that my department as a whole is that interested in employees "balancing their work and personal lives." I also would think that the climate may vary greatly from one department to another and from one location to another. It might be helpful in the survey to also ask employees their department and work location.
- I'm surprised that [employer] doesn't have child care solutions or any help for single moms like me... It's a huge strain on my nervous system, and it greatly reflects on my productivity and quality of work.

- Santa Barbara is probably the most expensive place to find child care. But these child care services would be helpful in Santa Maria and Lompoc. Affordable and good child care is a challenge to find. If the [employer] provided its own child care center...retention after leave from having a baby would go up.
- [Employer] should consider program similar to that of UCSB - on site child care.
- [Employer] needs to work on valuing the family. Helping mothers work a part time schedule who save them money and make for happier employees.
- [Employer] should have an onsite child care facility with fees on a sliding scale.
- The Public Health Dept. has over 600 employees and no provision for child care.
- There is much talk within the [employer] management, at least in my dept., of concern for family, etc. But in practice they get very uptight about family issues that may take you away from work at times during the day. Line staff has PSL, personal leave, but then for ailing parents or children, caution you against using it, or much of it. When you do have kids need extra care, you must document how/why you use this time, which is one of the benefits touted when they hire you. Management uses admin time, etc and no personal time. Their admin staff comes and goes as they please. We are given "family leave" brochures when we need a week or so.
- In this area, unfortunately, it is the majority kids from CalWorks, which means that they get paid child care from the county. My problem is that the county is paying more money for child care than what people who don't qualify for child care or any other program can't afford. Those licensed providers are charging regular non-welfare kids the same amount to parents who don't get any aid; it is very frustrating as a lot of times, we are only working to pay the providers as the providers want to get paid almost as much as having a regular job. If the county lowered their pay, I believe it will be more accessible for the rest of us, but unfortunately, the providers know how to get the most of the county and that's where the problem lies in.

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### ***Not My Concern***

- Although I am a parent myself, I do not believe it is the responsibility of the employer to provide child care for people. I also think it unfair to provide it as a benefit, since it only helps SOME employees based on the employee's choice to have a child. That is unfair to people who have chosen NOT to have kids.
- As a single female, no children I receive no benefits, no breaks, no assistance and no "rewards" for doing the correct thing, getting an education, not choosing to just live with one guy then another, I see little to no support for those who are making healthier choices. Instead. I work three jobs...yes three, one full time and two others part time. I did not have children. Because "I cannot afford them" and I see children as a life choice. One which will have many consequences. Not my job to take care of others needs for child care. If we can't survive here, perhaps we need to move to a less costly place where child care is available for you.
- As a taxpayer and employee, I do not feel it is the responsibility or burden of the County or taxpayer child care. It is the sole responsibility of the parent.
- I chose not to have children. I don't like subsidizing those that choose to have children. Give up your cable TV, cell phones, booze, and anything else so that you have the money to raise children that you choose to have.
- Workers with children get more perks than workers without children or workers with pet responsibility.

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**Miscellaneous**

- Hi :)
- I am 18 with no children.
- Better late than never.
- Any plans for pet care?
- If I had kids I wouldn't have had time to fill this out.
- Peace, impeach all.
- I don't use child care in this town.
- I am happy with my daughter's current preschool which she has been attending for the past 3 years.
- I am lucky that I have immediate family to care for my kids. If I didn't I wouldn't have a job that would force me to send my kids to daycare. I believe children should be raised by their parents and family, not strangers.
- Early childhood educators should be more trained and have much higher pay.
- I disagree that part-time employees do not receive holiday pay or insurance benefits.
- I work in the healthcare field and it is very difficult to cover for co-workers when child-care issues arise. There are no people to cover for others when they are out unexpectedly.
- I work in the youth department coming from [employer] and found it quite peculiar that both jobs I entered catered to children but did not have facilities that catered to employees with children.
- If there were drop in evening care, I might use that from time to time. Same w/ weekends.
- Lack of adequate parking is more of an issue than child care.
- Closer care would also be good for the environment. We drive at least 40 miles per day to take and pick up one child to and from day care.
- Currently my wife takes my daughter to work with her in the afternoons, so a lot of our arrangements revolve around her employment and ability to have my daughter at her workplace. So far we have been lucky to have her parents, as well as my daughter's Godparents, available to pick up our daughter when needed.
- I wish there would be a lot more sports/homework activities with scholarships.
- I wish this would have been available when my son was a child. It was extremely difficult to work and pay child care.
- I wonder if part of the reason there is a child care crisis is related to family planning issues. It seems as though there are very many, very young families out there who have more children than they know how to or can financially care for. Should we, as a community, be addressing family planning in conjunction with child care?
- It should be a federal law that all employers with 200 employees or more offer child care from licensed professionals on their premises. Or they should be prepared to offer more days off instead of the usual 2 weeks per year which encompasses vacation and sick time. Especially in the health care field. Employees are subject to patients who are sick which may transfer to employee and their child(ren); which equals to lost time and wages.

- Many of these issues affected me as when my child was younger, but she is now 12 and child care has gotten much easier.
- More important than child care is health insurance premiums. I am considering quitting my job so that I can qualify for Medical health services, food stamps, welfare, and section 8 services.
- My 9-yr-old is enrolled in the A-OK program at McKinley. It's wonderful & I don't know what I'd do without it.
- [Employer] should provide daycare and take the money out of our paychecks.
- Staffing restrictions based on economic times makes it very difficult to cover staff absences for child care purposes as they are more numerous in my experience than personal time off needs. This year has been a particular problem with various upper respiratory viruses going around.
- We moms have a lot in our plate. Please help us help our jobs and our children. It would be great if somehow the city could come up with more pre-school, day care affordable like (Starking, Oaks, etc.) where we can help (Co-ops).
- What does this have to do with me? I don't live here! It costs too much!
- Why is there a child care facility on the Santa Barbara high school campus that is not for the benefit of [employer] employees?
- Working for a school that provides child care for the students and not for the employees disturbs me greatly. It would be of great benefit for me and others to be able to have the convenience of a center on campus just for employees.

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### **Survey Issues**

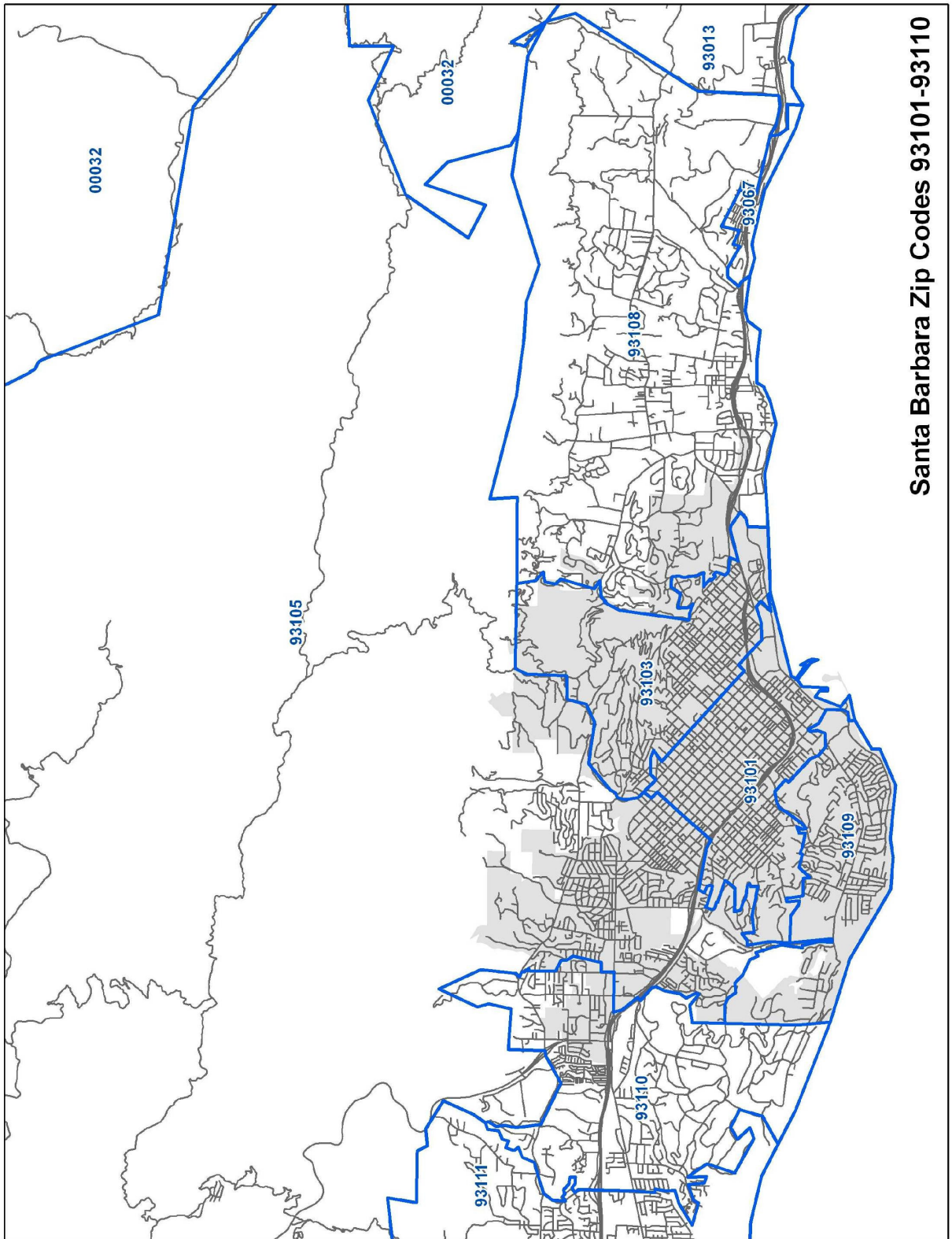
- Appreciate the format of this survey.
- #36 is not very clear to me.
- Are you going to do a survey on North County?
- Hoping you have a great turnout and that your efforts are fruitful for employees.
- I assume that the study results will be disseminated to the participants.
- I entered wrong on age of children 0-24 months was not valid. I do have a 4 year old and 12 year old that I answered right, but delete the answers in the 1-24 month category. Thank you for doing this, it is very much needed.
- I'm curious why you would have people that don't have and didn't have children in child care in SB answer a survey on SB child care facilities? I don't have a clue about what is available there.
- In the section that asks about child care for a child under the age of 24 months, you should include an "other" space. My child is cared for by a relative (my mother) in her home.
- Zip code 93102 is in Santa Barbara and is not listed. while it is nice that you are trying to help working class families in the area, I think more dialog is needed concerning the benefit(or lack) to society of parents having to leave their children to be raised by strangers, and the ills( gangs, drug abuse, truancy, etc) caused by lack of strong child-parent bond. maybe it's time to talk about paying parents to care for their children or at least pay enough so that one working parent can support a family as well as living wage, rent control, worker housing, live-work zones, etc.
- I think I answered that my work zip code was 93110, but it's 93101.



- One child care arrangement you did not offer as a choice was care by a family member outside your own home. This is arrangement my wife and I have been using with both sets of our parents for the last 8 years.
- Question #11 does not have a selection for the possibility for care beyond 5 years. I cannot say never or within 5 years. But it's a good possibility at some point I'll have to.
- Questions are a little loaded/leading.
- Please consider sharing the results of the survey with us. I'm curious to know what others experience.
- Great survey, hope it helps improve this issue.



# Appendix E - Map of Downtown Santa Barbara



Santa Barbara Zip Codes 93101-93110