



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

Child Care & Work / Life Needs Assessment Report

County of Santa Barbara

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

UNDER ADVISEMENT FROM:
Summa Associates

REPORT PREPARED BY:
First 5 Santa Barbara County
Early Care & Education Division

**1 East Anapamu Street, Suite 200
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
Tel: (805) 884-8085 Fax: (805) 564-8586
First5SantaBarbaraCounty.org**



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.

First 5 Santa Barbara County
1 East Anapamu Street Suite 200
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Phone: 805-884-8085

Fax: 805-564-8586

Website: <http://www.first5santabarbaracounty.org>

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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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements 2

Section I- Project Overview 3

 Purpose 4

 Methodology 4

Section II- Study Sample. 5

Section III- Summary of Key Findings 7

Section V- Study Results 9

 Child Care Challenges 10

 Impact of Child Care Issues on the Work Place 13

 Child Care Services Parents Would Use 21

 Conclusion 23

Appendix A - Definitions 25

Important Note - This report is specifically drawn from County of Santa Barbara employee responses.

This is one of two reports containing data from County employees:

- This **County of Santa Barbara Employee Report** is drawn solely from County employee responses (including all County employment locations).
- The separate **Full Report** is a comprehensive analysis of all employee responses (representing a variety of participating employers) who work in the downtown Santa Barbara area (zip codes 93101-93110).

Focus group findings represent all employees (regardless of employer and employment location).

When significant, comparisons are drawn between the Full Report results and the County of Santa Barbara Employee results within this report.

Acknowledgements

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Project Manager - Holly Goldberg, PhD(c)

Summa Associates - Karen Woodford, Cindy Winkleman

Section I - 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 responsibilities¹. 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 learning². 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 success³. Early experiences directly impact the way a child's brain circuitry is "wired" which provides the foundation for future cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development⁴. 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 issues⁵. 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 work⁶. 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.

¹ 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce by the Families and Work Institute

² 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.

³ 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.

⁴ 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.

⁵ Retrieved from http://www.workoptionsgroup.com/workplace_impact.html

⁶ 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>

First 5 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 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.

Methodology

Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were utilized to collect data for this study. A group of private and public downtown self-selected employers, representing various industries participated in the larger study. 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 employers. Qualitative data was collected via an open-ended comment section of the survey and through three parent employee focus groups.

This report reflects analysis of survey responses from the 864 respondents who work for the County of Santa Barbara. This is a subset population from the 2,718 employees who completed the Downtown Santa Barbara Employee Child Care survey questionnaire.

Data from the twenty-one parent employees who participated in one of three focus groups is also included in the following findings. **Focus group findings represent all parent employees (regardless of employer and employment location).** Employee participation in the survey and focus groups was voluntary and confidential. All efforts were employed to obtain a comprehensive sample of participants.

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

County of Santa Barbara Employees

Of the County of Santa Barbara survey respondents reported on within this report (herein referred to as respondents), 357 (41%) are parents who reported information about 622 children age 12 and younger (325 children age five and younger; and 297 children age 6 to 12)⁷. Fourteen percent of total respondents are either currently pregnant, adopting, or expect to have children in the next five years. Seventy-two respondents (8%) currently have elder/adult care responsibilities and an additional 22% expect to have elder/adult responsibilities within the next five years. The majority (68%) of respondents are female and 60% are younger than 46. About half of the respondents reported an annual household income of less than \$80,000.

Demographic Summary

- Total Respondents = 864
- Response Rate = 20%
- Total Parents = 357
- Total Children = 622 (average 1.77 children per parent)
- Total Parents with Children Age 5 or Younger = 233
- Total Children Age 5 or Younger = 325
- Total Parents with Children Age 6 to 12 = 229
- Total Children Age 6 to 12 = 297
- Total Elder/Adult Caregivers = 72



⁷ The word “parent” or “parents” in this report herein refers to parents of children ages 0-12.

Section III- Key Findings

Difficulties Finding Child Care

- 64% of parents plus 45% of non-parents report a shortage of child care within downtown Santa Barbara.
- 76% of parent respondents feel that the cost of child care is “very” to “somewhat” challenging.
- Child care availability is the number one issue focus group participants report facing regarding child care challenges.
- Cost of care, sick child care, emergency or short notice care, finding care during school breaks, and location of care are additional child care challenges working parents face.
- Many focus group parents are dissatisfied with current child care arrangements.

Impacts of Child Care Issues on the Work Place

- 56% of all respondents feel their work place is negatively impacted by a co-worker’s child care responsibilities.
- Parent respondents missed an average of 4.14 days of work last year due to breakdown in child care arrangements.
- 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.
- 39% of parent employees have considered quitting their jobs due to child care issues. Based on an industry standard, if these employees actually did quit the cost of turnover for the County of Santa Barbara would be approximately 5 million dollars.⁸
- Perceived lack of support in the work place significantly increases employee consideration of quitting their job due to child care issues.

Ways to Address Workforce Child Care Challenges

- **Increase quality and capacity of child care services for working parents** - The majority of parents indicated they would use a full service child care center (59%), a back up child care program (66%), mildly ill child care services (32%), and a family care network (35%) and that these services would significantly enhance employee productivity and retention.
- **Address the high costs of child care** by exploring financial assistance options for working parents.
- **Investigate integration of work-life effectiveness strategies** into Santa Barbara business culture.

⁸ Calculations by Summa Associates, the consulting firm who conducted the study.

Section IV - Study Results

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 is used in the following section. The results from the qualitative analysis (the focus groups and comment section of the survey) are presented in a box labeled “*What Parents Say...*” and precede the related quantitative data. On occasion, supplemental research is integrated into the results section to provide a larger context of how the study results fit into the greater population. Research from outside the parameters of this study is clearly indicated. The study results are subdivided into two major categories: *Child Care Challenges* and the *Impact of Child Care Issues on the Work Place*.

The first section, *Child Care Challenges*, details the associated issues that working parents face related to child care. The second section, *Impact of Child Care Issues on the Work Place* examines absenteeism, employee productivity, tension with co-workers and opportunities for promotion, as well as factors that influence parent employees to have considered quitting their job. The results 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 Challenges

This section reviews the child care challenges parent respondents reported.

Availability of Child Care

What Parents Say...

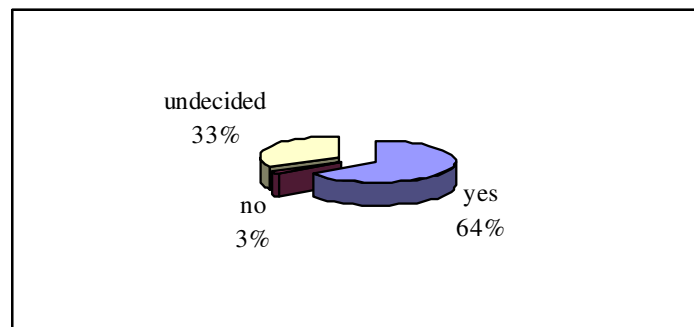
Parent respondents report use of a patchwork of child care arrangements ranging from child care centers, home based providers, relatives, friends, and babysitters. Numerous focus group participants expressed dissatisfaction with current child care arrangements. However, due to the lack of available options 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.

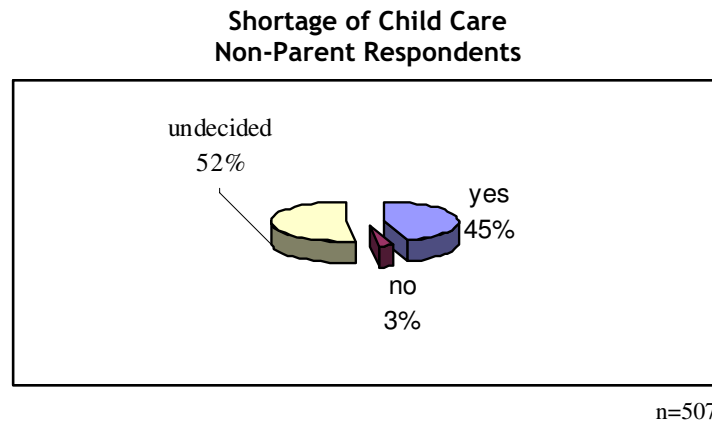
Many parents reported that they are forced to “take what they can get,” sacrificing quality for availability due to waiting lists of two years or more. New parents are often unaware of how problematic the lack of child care can be in Santa Barbara and are ill equipped to manage the care of their children 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.

Sixty-four percent of parent respondents (compared to 74% of parent respondents from the Full Report results, plus 45% of non-parent respondents (compared to 51% of respondents from the Full Report) reported there is a shortage of high quality, affordable child care in downtown Santa Barbara. The variance between County of Santa Barbara results and the Full Report results could be related to the fact that a number of County employees do not work or live in downtown Santa Barbara. This is supported by the greater number of County employee respondents who selected undecided for this question compared to the larger report.

**Shortage of Child Care
Parent Respondents**



n=357



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)⁹, conducted by First 5 Santa Barbara County. The Child Care Capacity Survey determined that there are 3.4 children of working parents for every available full-day licensed child care center spaces in the City of Santa Barbara, and all child care centers are at full capacity with waiting lists.

Cost of Care

Another primary concern and challenge for many working parents is the cost of child care. Significant financial strain from the high 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 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, 76% of parent respondents feel that the

⁹ 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 reported a significant drop in current enrollment and attributed this to parents having a more difficult time paying for care.

cost of child care is challenging. This is 4% higher than the data collected in the Full Report.

Data collected in this study demonstrates that Santa Barbara parents, on an average, pay more per year for child care than state averages. 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 7th most expensive state for infant care in a center and the 9th most expensive state for preschool care in a center in the United States¹⁰.

Top Child Care Challenges

The top five child care challenges County of Santa Barbara parent employees face related to work are: cost of care, sick child care, emergency or short notice care, finding care during school breaks, and location of care. These findings are comparable to the Full Report. The chart below shows the percent of parents who indicate that each of the following child care issues were a challenge related to work over the past year.

Top Child Care Challenges that Impact Parents at Work

Child Care Related Issues	% parents who reported challenging
Cost of Care	76%
Care for a Sick Child	75%
Emergency or Short Notice Child Care	58%
Care During School Breaks	58%
Location of Care	48%
Juggling More Than One Child Care Arrangement	48%
Availability of Care for Early Mornings or Night Shifts	44%
Dependability of Care	42%
Before/After School Care	40%
Quality of Care	38%
Availability of Care for Weekdays	35%
Availability of Care for Weekend Shifts	24%

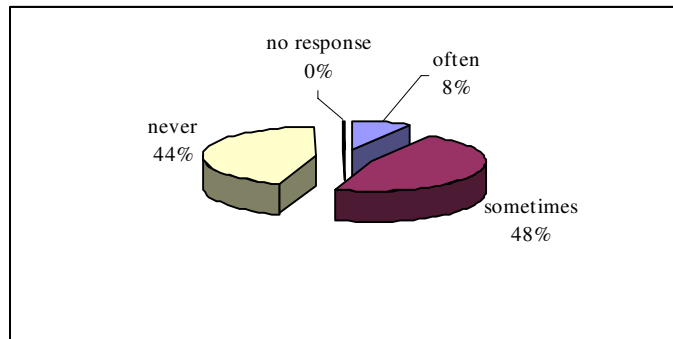
n=354

¹⁰ National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies. (2007) Parents and the high price of child care. Retrieved from: <http://www.naccrra.org/news/pricereport.php>

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. Over half of all respondents have been negatively impacted by a co-worker’s child care responsibilities. This figure is 6% higher than the overall Full Report results.

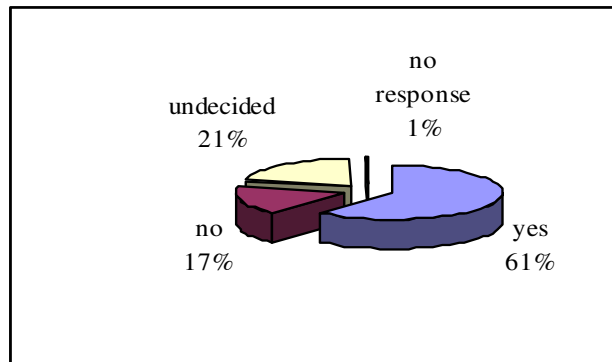
**Co-worker Negative Impact from Child Care
All Respondents**



n=864

Sixty-one percent of all respondents believe their work environment is supportive of their efforts to balance their work and personal lives. This is 7% lower than the overall Full Report results.

Supportive Work Environment – All Respondents



n=864

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 to take care of their children or sick leave, thus increasing employee absenteeism.

According to focus group participants, when parent employees are sick, they have no 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.

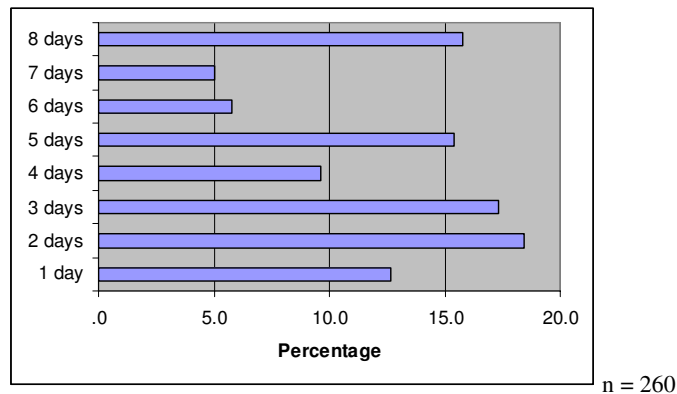
The survey assessed missed days from work based on two factors: breakdown in child care arrangements and child illness.

Breakdown in Child Care Arrangements

Seventy-two percent of all parents missed at least one day of work last year due to a breakdown in child care arrangements, 4.14 days each on average. This sums to a combined total of 1,073 days (215 weeks or 4.13 years collectively). To estimate the potential impact this had on the County of Santa Barbara as an employer last year (based only on the employees who responded to this question), Summa Associates multiplied the respondents’ average salary (approximately \$49,952) by the number of work days missed (in years). This sums to over **\$206K in just one year**.

The following chart details parents’ reports of the number of work days missed due to breakdown in child care arrangements.

Percent of Parents who Missed Days of Work Due to Child Care Breakdowns

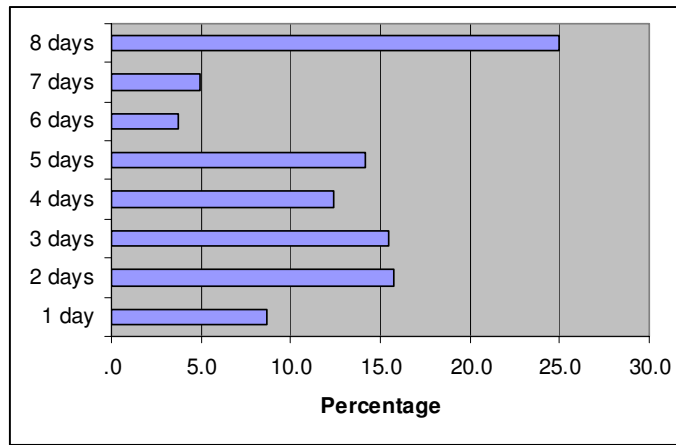


Child Illness

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. Ninety-one percent of parents (324) missed an average of 4.65 days over the past year, equaling a total of 1,456 days (291 weeks or 5.6 years collectively). Twenty-five percent of parents missed 8 or more days due to child illness.

The following chart details parents’ reports of the number of days missed at work due to child illness.

Percent of Parents who Missed Days of Work Due Child Illnesses



n= 324

The impact child care issues have on the work place goes beyond employee absenteeism. According to the survey, tardiness, absenteeism, and an inability to work overtime are the greatest difficulties experienced by most parents related to their work. These findings are comparable to the results of the Full Report. However, as the focus group and survey comments demonstrated, all child care related challenges affect employee productivity.

What Parents Say.....

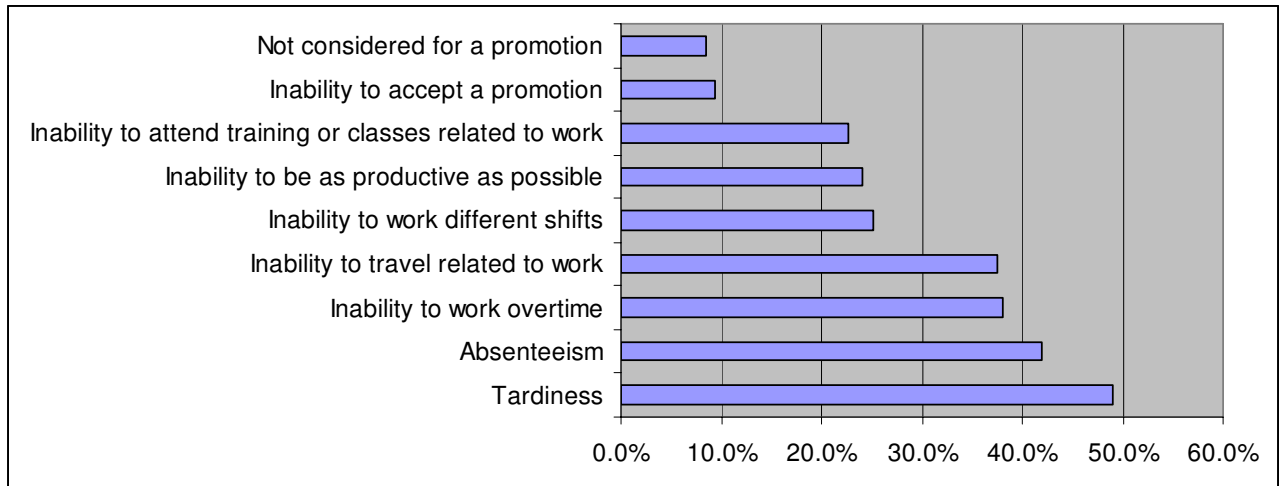
Focus group participants and survey comments demonstrated how the coordination of child care and work schedules creates significant stress. The majority of child care providers have set drop off and pick up times that require parents to come to work late or leave work early. Juggling child care with 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 contributes to added strain in the work place.

Focus group participants and survey comments indicated that child care responsibilities often negatively impact parent employee opportunity 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.

The chart below shows the frequency at which parent employees have experienced the following impacts related to their work as a result of personal child care responsibilities.

Child Care Impacts on Parents at Work

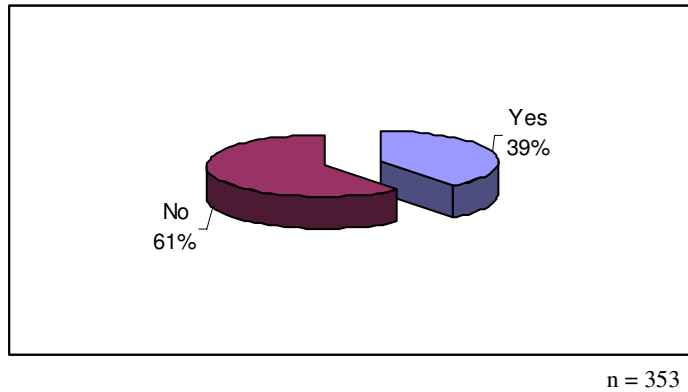


n= 354

Consideration to Quit Due to Child Care Responsibility Problems

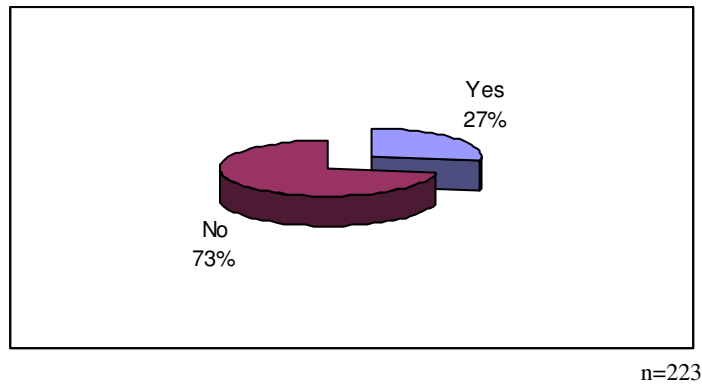
A third (39%) of parent employees have considered quitting their jobs due to child care issues. This is 3% higher than the Full Report results. According to study results, parents with younger children are most challenged by child care responsibilities.

Parents Who Have Considered Quitting



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 more likely to indicate “no”.

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



To calculate turnover for the 139 employees who have considered quitting, Summa uses a conservative industry standard turnover cost calculation of 75% the average respondent annual salary (\$37,464). If the employees who have considered quitting actually did, the turnover cost to employers participating in this study would be over \$5 million using this standard.

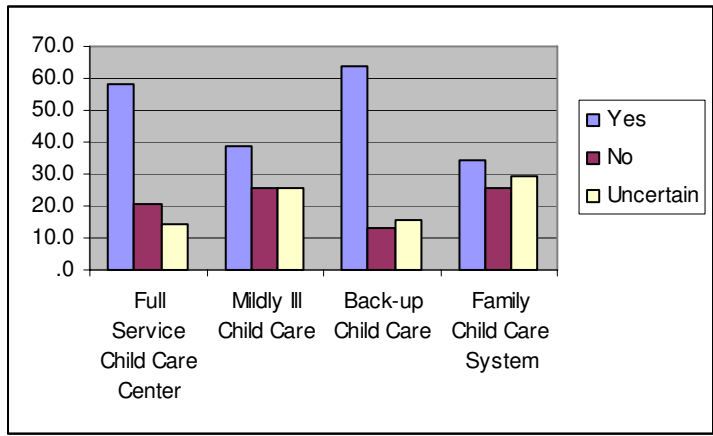
Work Life Effectiveness

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. Support for additional child care services was consistently reported in the focus groups and survey comments as a way to improve employee productivity.

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.

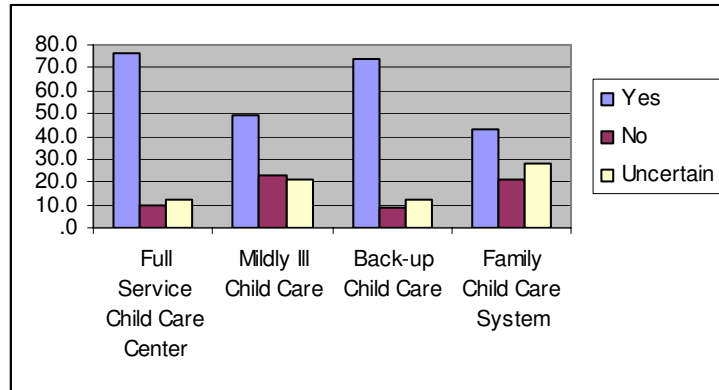
Fifty-eight percent of all parents and 76% of parents who have considered quitting indicated that a full service quality child care center in a convenient location at fair market rates would potentially positively impact their productivity. In addition, 83% of parents with children age 5 or younger, 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



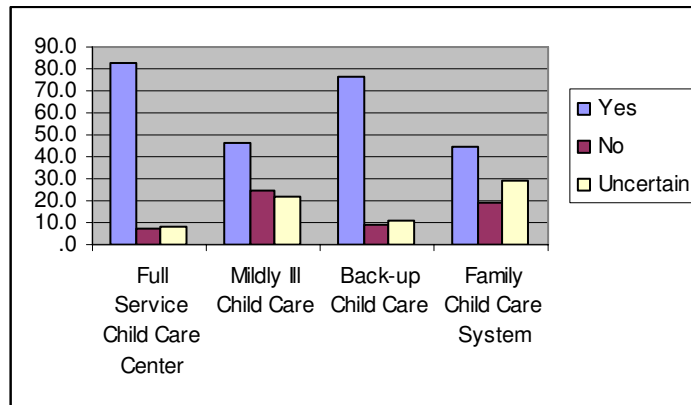
n=354

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



n=138

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



n=101

Increase Employee Retention

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

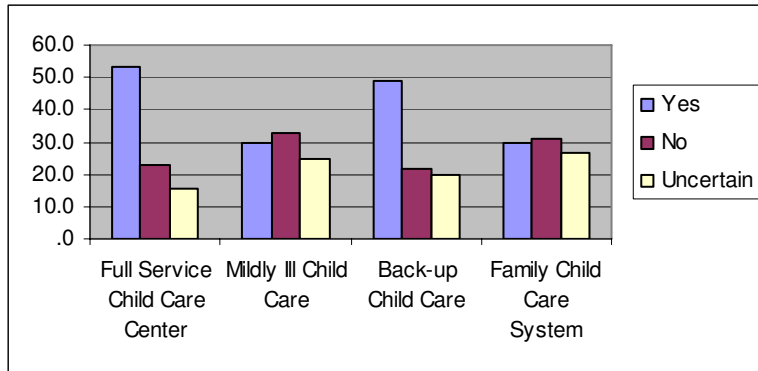
What Parents Say...

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 (53%) indicated that a full-service, quality child care center in a convenient location at fair market rates would be a factor in retaining them. Again, this was even higher for parents who have

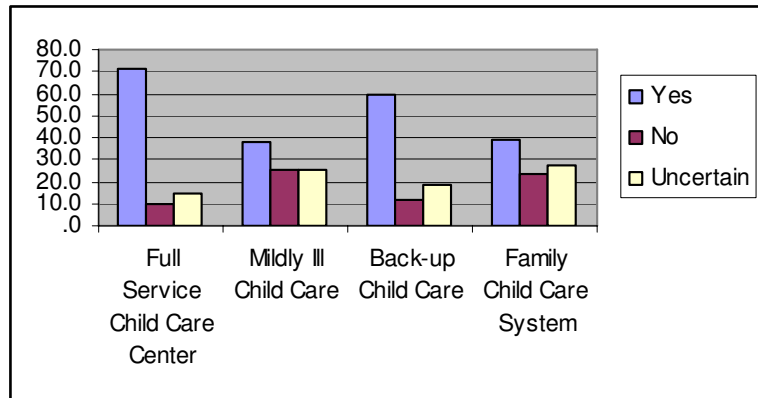
considered quitting (71%) and parents with children age 5 or younger who have considered quitting (77%). These findings are comparable to the data collected in the Full Report. The charts below detail parents’ responses regarding the potential impact various child care services would have on employee retention.

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



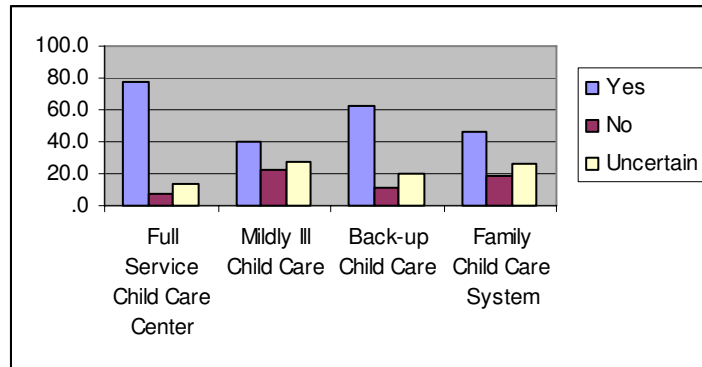
n=354

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



n=138

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



n=101

Child Care Services Parents Would Use

Parent employees were asked to note which specific child care services¹¹ they would use if a quality child care program, in a convenient location, and at fair market rates was offered near work. Focus group comments and survey responses indicated that full service and back up care are the most attractive child care options.

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.

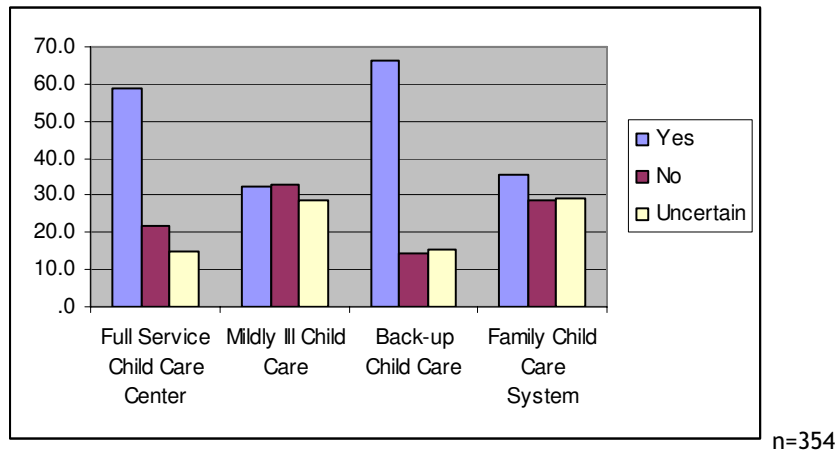
Parent participants reflected on the emotional and psychological benefits (for parents and children) related to having children in care close to work. Many employees discussed the likelihood of being more focused and present at work by just knowing that their children are close by and accessible in the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

When parents were asked if they would actually use a quality child care center, in a convenient location, and at a fair market rate, 59% of all parents said “yes” Sixty-six percent of parents said they would use a drop-in child care program, 32% of parents said they would use a mildly-ill child care program, and 35% of parent respondents showed interest in a family child care network.

¹¹ Summa Associates compiled list of child care services from evidence based research and best practice data.

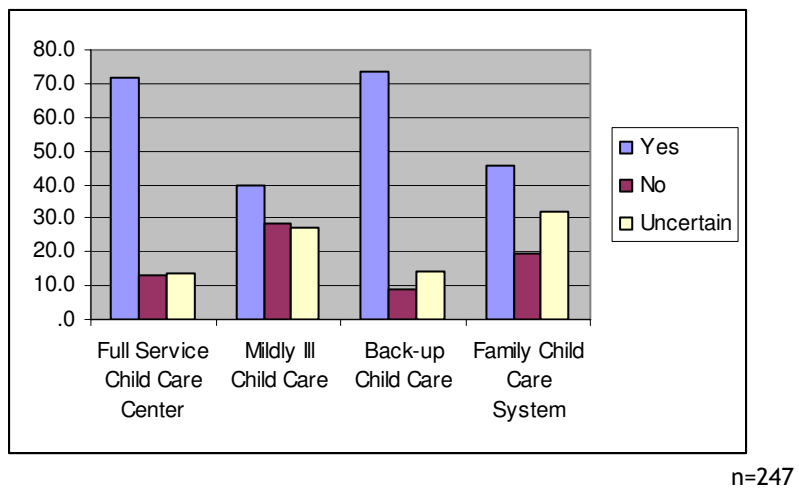
The following charts detail which child care services parent employees reported they would use. These figures are comparable to the overall Full Report results on all accounts except one, County employees report that they would use mildly ill child care services 10% less than the Full Report population.

Percent of Parents Who Would Use Each Service- All Parent Respondents

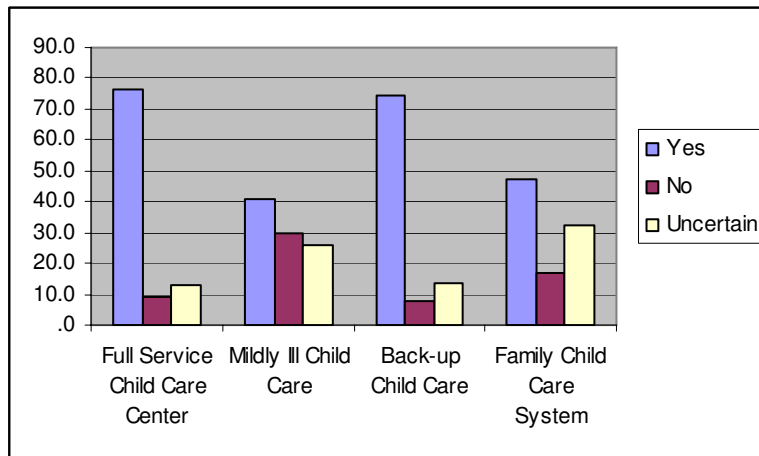


For parents who have considered quitting because of child care responsibilities as indicated in the second chart below, these two care options become even more compelling. This is especially true for parents with children age 5 and younger who have considered quitting, as demonstrated in the third chart where 76% of these parents said they would use a full service child care center.

**Percent of Parents Who Would Use Each Service
Parents Who Have Considered Quitting**



Percent of Parents Who Would Use Each Service
Parents with Children Age 5 and Younger Who Have Considered Quitting



n=101

Additional Child Care Suggestions

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.

Although the survey only collected data on the previously mentioned child care options, 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 options, 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 high quality, affordable child care available to County of Santa Barbara employees. The extensive and problematic impact this has on employees and business bottom line is thoroughly demonstrated throughout this 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.