



THE WORKING FAMILIES AGENDA

FACT SHEET: Balancing Work and Family

It is time to adopt workplace policies to help workers achieve a better balance between work and family life. The world has changed a lot in the last 30 to 40 years, but the workplace has not.

- In more than 60 percent of households with children, all adults are working. But the United States has failed to adopt federal workplace policies that reflect this reality.
- The U.S. remains the world's only wealthy nation that does not mandate a minimum of paid sick leave, vacation leave or parental leave.
- Nationally, nearly 4-in-10 private sector workers – or 39 percent – do not have access to any sick leave at all. This amounts to more than 43 million workers across the country.
- Among early career workers, 41 percent of hourly workers receive their schedules only 7 days in advance.
- More than one-third of parents believe they've been “passed over” for a promotion, raise, or a new job due to the need for a flexible work schedule.
- Without basic protections like paid sick days, paid family leave, and flexible and predictable schedules, many working parents are one illness or accident away from losing their jobs.
- The average cost of center-based daycare in the United States is \$11,666 per year. Too many families simply cannot afford the cost of child care, and are forced to leave their children in the cheapest care available, putting their well-being at risk.
- Only 29 percent of America's 4-year-olds were enrolled in a state-funded preschool program in 2014. Less than half of eligible low-income preschoolers are actually served by Head Start, and less than 5 percent are in Early Head Start. Meanwhile, only about 25 percent of low-income families with children under the age of six who are eligible to get childcare subsidies actually receive them.

The Working Families Agenda includes legislation to achieve *a better balance between work and family life* so that people never have to choose between their income and their health or their children.

- The **Healthy Families Act** guarantees workers the right to earn up to seven paid sick days to care for themselves or a loved one who is sick, or to take time off to address domestic violence.
- The **Family and Medical Insurance Leave Act** ensures that workers can take paid family and medical leave when they need it to care for a new child or for themselves or a relative with a serious health condition.
- The **Schedules that Work Act** provides flexible, predictable and stable work schedules.
- The **Strong Start for America's Children Act** gives working families access to high-quality, early-learning opportunities, and more affordable, stable child care.

If we want strong families, we need to address the realities that working families face today. Congress has the power to enact responsible policies that would help Americans achieve a better balance between work and family life.