

Turning Mother's Day Celebrations Into Action: How to Support the Working Moms on Your Team

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Today's Objectives

- Understanding the desires of working mothers who are legal professionals, including flexible work arrangements, supportive company culture, and opportunities for career advancement while maintaining work-life balance.
- Exploring the benefits that law firms can gain from retaining and attracting working mothers, such as increased diversity, improved employee satisfaction and retention rates, enhanced team collaboration, and access to a wider talent pool.
- Highlighting the correlation between supporting working mothers in legal roles and achieving overall organizational success, including improved productivity, innovation, and reputation within the legal industry.



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Caregiving in the United States: Affects So Many of Us

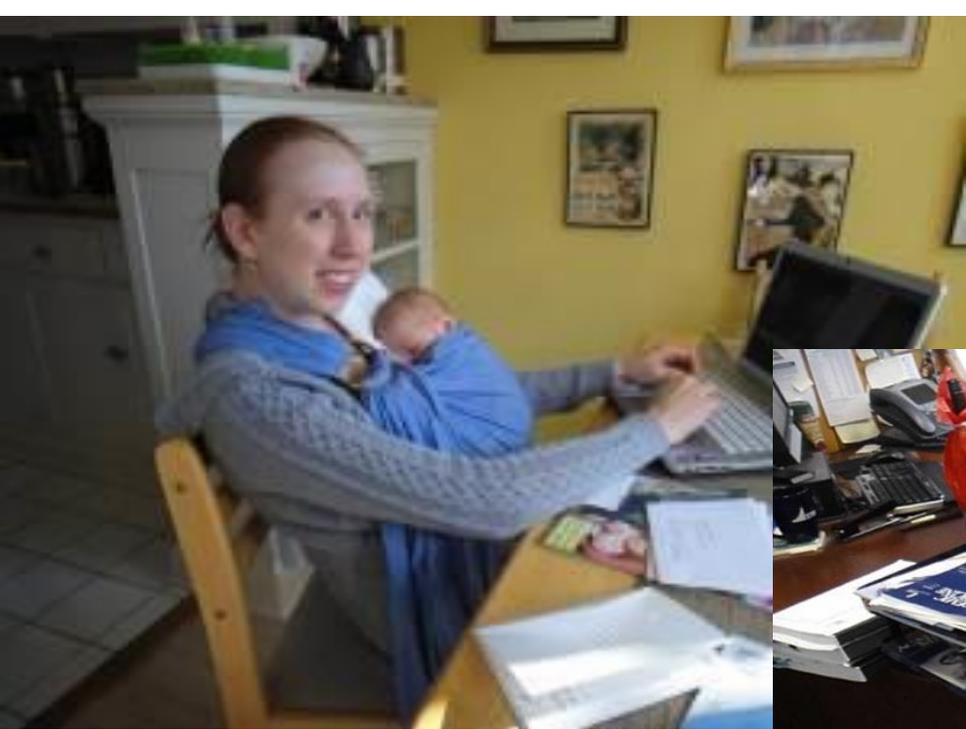
Both
Parents
Employed

- 65% of families have both parents employed (2022)

Parents
w/Kids
Under 18

- 40% of households have children < 18 years old





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BACK TO WORK AFTER BABY

How to Plan and Navigate
a Mindful Return From
Maternity Leave



Lori K. Mihalich-Levin, JD



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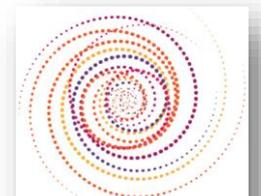
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The Maternal Context

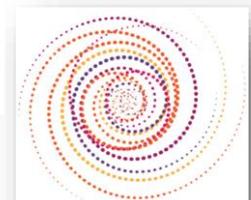
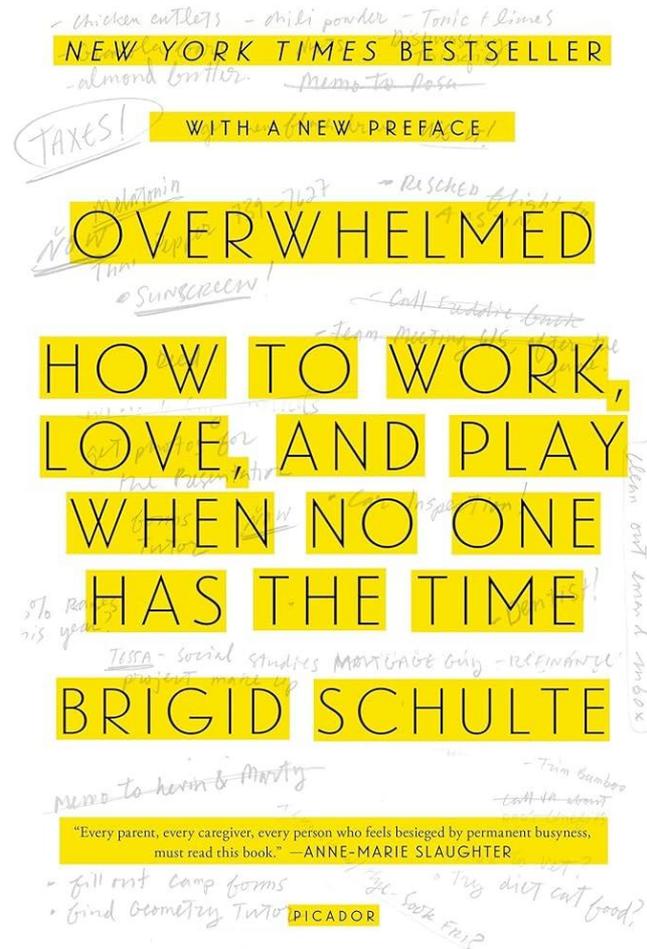


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Well-Documented Maternal Biases

“Research has found that mothers are seen as less committed to work than nonmothers. Pregnant women are perceived as less authoritative and more irrational, **regardless of their actual performance.**”



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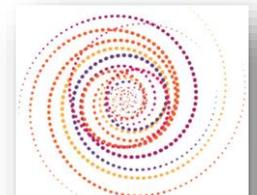
Study (by Correll, Benard, & In Paik), with Identical, Fictitious Resumes

Recommended that only 47%
of mothers be hired,
compared to 84% of the
nonmothers.

Fathers? Considered equally
competent as men without
children, but significantly more
committed to work. Held to more
lenient standard of punctuality;
considered more hireable and
promotable than men without
children.

Mothers were rated as:
significantly less competent,
less intelligent, & less
committed than women
without children.

Recommended starting
salary was \$11,000 less than
for nonmothers (and far less
than for fathers). [Equal Pay
Day for Mothers = Aug. 7!]



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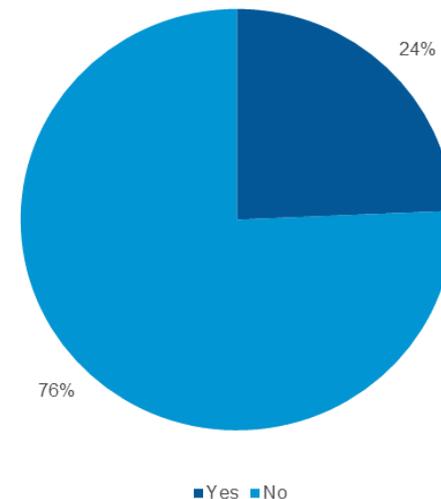
Parental Experience During Leave Affects Retention

“I left my law firm because of the way I was treated on my parental leave.”

- 25% strongly agreed
- 38% said it was a factor, but not the primary reason they left
- 38% did not agree

(i.e. it was a factor for 63% of people who left!)

Did you suffer any negative consequences or actions by the firm because of your parental leave?



In US, % of women who return to work after having a baby:

64%

And 34% of those who left indicate it was because of poor manager support.

Table 5. Employment status of the population by sex, marital status, and presence and age of own children under 18, 2020-2021 annual averages
[Numbers in thousands]

Characteristic	2020			2021		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
WITH OWN CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	63,242	28,569	34,673	62,258	27,990	34,269
Civilian labor force.....	51,063	26,361	24,702	50,308	25,902	24,406
Participation rate.....	80.7	92.3	71.2	80.8	92.5	71.2
Employed.....	47,742	24,892	22,850	48,091	24,912	23,179
Full-time workers ¹	42,008	23,796	18,212	42,253	23,802	18,451
Part-time workers ²	5,734	1,097	4,638	5,838	1,110	4,728
Employment-population ratio.....	75.5	87.1	65.9	77.2	89.0	67.6
Unemployed.....	3,321	1,469	1,852	2,217	989	1,228
Unemployment rate.....	6.5	5.6	7.5	4.4	3.8	5.0
Total married, spouse present³						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	48,799	24,511	24,287	47,140	23,645	23,495
Civilian labor force.....	39,673	22,858	16,816	38,413	22,120	16,293
Participation rate.....	81.3	93.3	69.2	81.5	93.5	69.3
Employed.....	37,542	21,760	15,782	37,188	21,432	15,756
Full-time workers ¹	33,329	20,878	12,451	33,073	20,561	12,512
Part-time workers ²	4,213	882	3,331	4,115	871	3,244
Employment-population ratio.....	76.9	88.8	65.0	78.9	90.6	67.1
Unemployed.....	2,131	1,097	1,034	1,225	688	537
Unemployment rate.....	5.4	4.8	6.1	3.2	3.1	3.3
Other marital status⁴						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	14,443	4,057	10,385	15,118	4,344	10,774
Civilian labor force.....	11,389	3,504	7,886	11,895	3,782	8,113
Participation rate.....	78.9	86.3	75.9	78.7	87.0	75.3
Employed.....	10,200	3,132	7,068	10,903	3,480	7,423
Full-time workers ¹	8,679	2,918	5,762	9,180	3,241	5,939
Part-time workers ²	1,521	215	1,306	1,723	240	1,484
Employment-population ratio.....	70.6	77.2	68.1	72.1	80.1	68.9
Unemployed.....	1,189	371	818	992	301	690
Unemployment rate.....	10.4	10.6	10.4	8.3	8.0	8.5
WITH OWN CHILDREN 6 TO 17 YEARS, NONE YOUNGER						

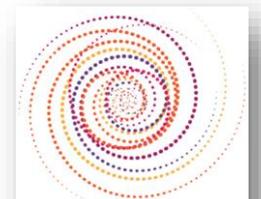


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Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics; Benefit Bump Mom Survey.

Yet Motherhood Builds Leadership Skills...



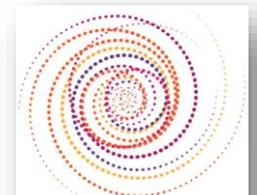
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Think, and share in chat:



What is one skill you've gained from motherhood (or that you've seen someone else gain) that is also useful at work?



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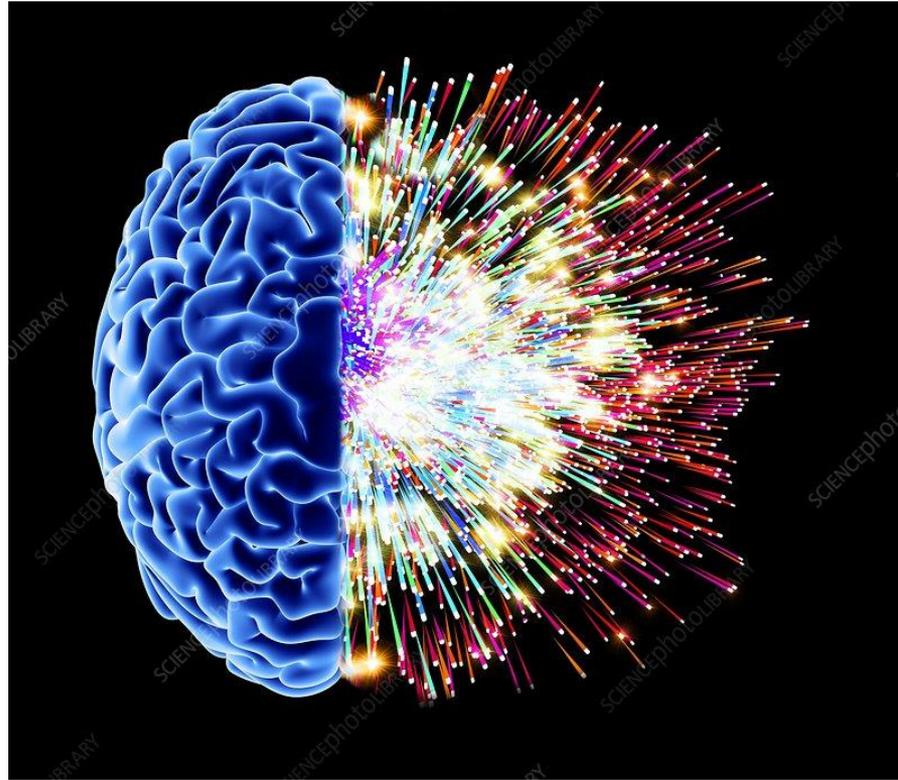
What did you observe?

How does this conversation differ from the traditional narrative about the value parents bring to the workplace?



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Parenthood = Brain Explosion (Literally)



“...the greatest potential for neuroplasticity in the adult human experience is in the year surrounding the birth of one’s child” – *Dr. Ruth Feldman (neuroscientist)*



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Amy Henderson's 5 "Career-Critical Skills" Parenthood Can Unlock

- Emotional Intelligence
- Courage
- Resilience
- Productivity & Efficiency
- Ambition & Motivation

<https://www.mothersmag.com/benefits-of-working-moms/>



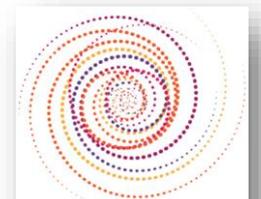
“Motherhood is a lifelong CLE.”
– Sarah Wells



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Mothers Crave 6 Categories of Supports in the Workplace



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Mindset — Celebrating a Life Event



Positive Mindset and Culture

- Manager Engagement (53% of working moms in Sarah's survey said they were never asked about their transition back to work)
- Manager Training
- Small Symbols of Recognition / Awareness
- Leadership Support
 - *Leaders* who send announcements re: ERG and parent resources
 - Presence at parent events and programs
 - Demonstration of sensitivity to working parents



Policies

Benchmark & Explore Across Employers

- Paid Leave Policy
 - Gender neutral, covers *all* parents, meaningful length
- Prorated Billable Targets
- Flexible Work
- Ramp Down and Ramp Up



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Communication

Share resources early and often!

- Conversation Guides
- Intranet
- Presentations
- Intentionality
 - *Frequency*
 - *Timing*
 - *Clarity*



68% of the moms in Sarah's survey said their employers do not communicate enough with employees about support.



Programs

Support, regardless of “manager lottery”

- Coaching (Internal & External)
- Childcare & Backup Childcare
- Lactation Support
 - Normalizing
 - Milk Shipping
 - Refrigerator
 - Curtains/frosting
 - Dedicated space



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Community & Connection

Helping employees find “their people”

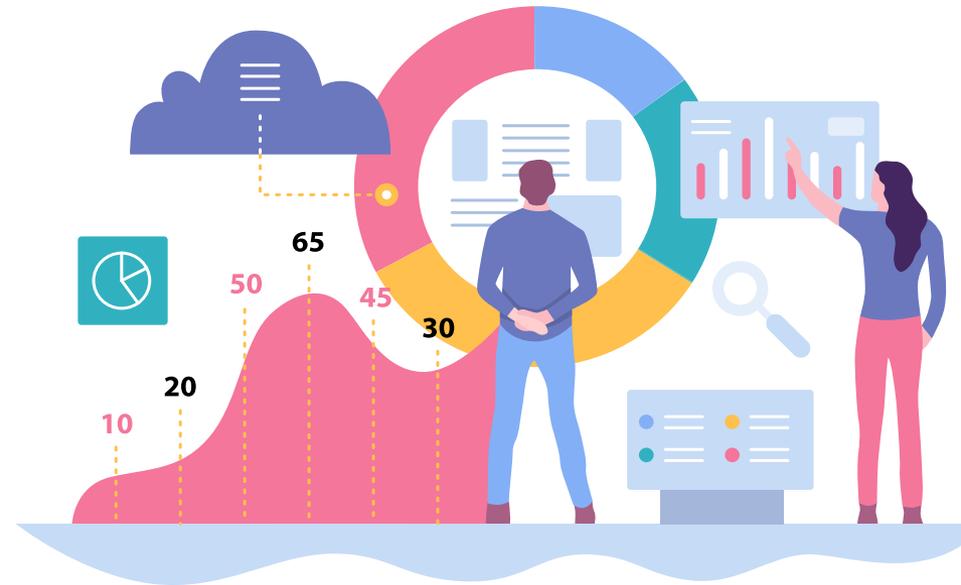
- Mentoring programs
- Parental leave transition support groups
- Affinity Groups & ERGs
 - Working Parent Group Network
 - Cross-Group Collaboration



Data Collection by HR

What gets measured matters

- Number of Weeks Taken
- Utilization of Programs Offered
- Employee Engagement
- Retention
- Promotions
- Intersectional Lens



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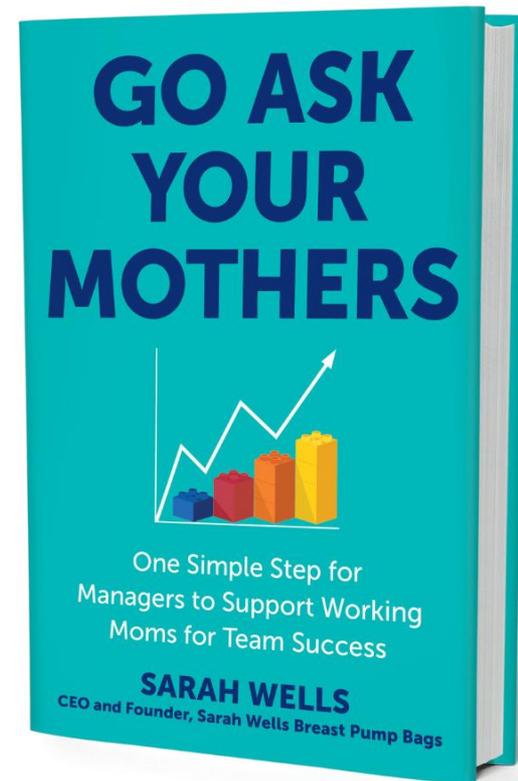
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Let's Hear From Sarah About the Employer Role - and Benefit – in Supporting Moms



Go Ask Your Mothers: One Simple Step for Managers to Support Working Moms for Team Success

Millions left the labor force in the pandemic
– but they are back. Now more than ever,
we cannot afford to lose these highly
valuable employees...
the moms.



Pre-order now online wherever books are sold

The Business Case for Supporting Working Moms

- Short-term & Long-Term Financial Savings
 - ✓ Retention
 - ✓ Reduce healthcare costs
 - ✓ Reduce absenteeism (for partners too!)
 - ✓ Competitive recruitment

The Business Case for Supporting Working Moms

- Women in Leadership
 - ✓ Diverse leadership = profitable
 - ✓ Must keep women in the pipeline through the motherhood years
 - ✓ Managers are the leadership launchpad

The Business Case for Supporting Working Moms

- Sarah's Key Research Findings
 - 💡 68% of moms say their manager does not communicate enough (or at all) about support
 - 💡 50% of moms are considering leaving their job because lack of managerial support
 - 💡 30% of moms had an interaction (often just one conversation or referral to HR) about support

The Business Case for Supporting Working Moms

- Lori Shared What Managers Can Do to Support Moms...How & What Do We Train Managers to Do?
 1. Understand the Challenges Faced by Working Moms
 2. Understand Parent Rights in the Workplace
 3. Communication and Empathy Skills
 4. Flexible Work Arrangements (and how to thrive)

The Business Case for Supporting Working Moms

- More Training...
 5. Creating a Supportive Work Culture
 6. Career Development and Advancement to Leadership
 7. Managing Workload and Stress
 8. Building a Peer Support Network

The Business Case for Supporting Working Moms

When moms thrive,
businesses thrive.

Thank you!

Questions?



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