

Family-friendly workplaces benefit employees, businesses

June 3 2024, by Neil Schoenherr



Credit: Clark-Fox Policy Institute

Paid leave and employee well-being are the focus of a [three-part policy series](#) on family-friendly business practices put together by the Brown School's Clark-Fox Policy Institute at Washington University in St.

Louis.

"Creating a family-friendly workplace benefits both employees and businesses," said Gary Parker, associate dean for external affairs and director of the institute.

"For employees, it enhances [work-life balance](#) and job satisfaction," he said. "For businesses, it leads to higher retention rates, reduced absenteeism and improved productivity. Policies such as paid leave, flexible work arrangements and affordable child care support employees in managing their [family responsibilities](#), while maintaining their commitment to their professional roles, which ultimately contributes to a more dedicated workforce."

The series focuses on paid leave, attracting good employees and the future of the workforce.

"These areas were selected based on extensive community input and research," Parker said. "For our reports, we blend existing research findings with the lived experience and voice of our community partners to develop a set of evidence-informed [policy](#) recommendations."

While the reports cover many issues, including the strong connection between access to affordable child care and increased workforce participation, one of the most pressing issues is paid leave, he said.

"Paid leave is important because it supports employees during critical times, such as caring for a new child or a sick family member, without the stress of losing income," Parker said. "It promotes better health outcomes for both employees and their families; reduces financial strain; and enhances overall job satisfaction and loyalty. For businesses,

offering paid leave helps retain valuable talent, reduces turnover costs and increases employee productivity and morale."

The Clark-Fox Policy Institute strives to provide the tools and data for those who make and influence policy, as well as the public at large. The institute views its role through the lens of racial equity, [social justice](#) and children's welfare.

"These reports provide the latest research and evidence-informed recommendations, empowering our community partners to advocate for needed change," Parker said. "They also ensure policymakers can make informed decisions that benefit children and families. Our aim is to develop reports grounded in empirical science that amplify community voices and bridge the gap between research and equitable policy."

Provided by Washington University in St. Louis

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