

# CLARK COUNTY BUSINESS LEADER

## Child Care Survey Findings

June 2020

### KEY FINDINGS

#### Response

**104 business leaders** responded, representing approximately 17,000 working parents

#### Impact Of Child Care On Work

Specifically because of child care issues, business leaders report these impacts:

**80% have had employees** with young children turn down a job, more work hours, or a promotion

**Half have had employees** with young children quit their job

**Half have had employees** with young children miss entire days of work in the past 6 months to a degree that it negatively impacted their business

#### Experience With Child Care

**45% of business leaders** said it was very difficult for their employees with young children to find child care

**One in seven (14%) business leaders** said it was very difficult for their employees with young children to keep child care

#### Employer Child Care Supports

##### Kudos to employers for offering these supports

Breastfeeding policies, flexible work schedules, and the Child Care Aware referral line were the most popular supports offered by business leaders' organizations

##### Opportunity to provide assistance to employers

Leaders were most interested in job sharing, flexible work schedules, and the Child Care Aware referral line and would likely be receptive to help implementing these.

##### Tread lightly with resource-intensive supports

Leaders were least interested in employer sponsored backup child care, bring your baby to work policies, onsite child care, and subsidizing employee child care costs. Leaders may not be as receptive to promoting these supports.

##### Raising awareness around little-known supports

Over one-third of leaders had never heard of the Child Care Aware referral line. Promoting awareness of this may be a good strategy.



## SURVEY INCEPTION & PROMOTION

While almost 20,000 children aged 0-5 in Clark County have all parents in the workforce, child care slots exist for only 40% of them. Early learning advocates prioritize child care as an opportunity to support children's healthy growth and development, and the business community recognizes it as an essential support system for its workforce.

Support for Early Learning and Families (SELF), an early learning advocacy organization, and the Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce (GVCC) met in the fall of 2019 to talk about engaging the community around child care issues in Clark County. They identified a survey as the first step in this work.

The business leader survey was promoted through a variety of channels, including direct emails to SELF's and GVCC's professional contacts and promotion on Facebook by SELF, GVCC, the Association of Washington Businesses, Child Care Aware, and other organizations. Email blasts were also sent out through the Society for Human Resource Management, Leadership Clark County, SELF, and GVCC. The Columbian also promoted the survey in print and online.

This survey was conducted before COVID-19, and we know the child care landscape looks much different now.

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## RESPONDENT PARTICIPATION & CHARACTERISTICS

The survey was open from the end of January to mid-March. 135 leaders began the survey and 104 were eligible to take it -- they currently had employees with young children and knew that those employees had looked for child care.

Almost all respondents were the organization's director or other leadership team member, including HR directors.

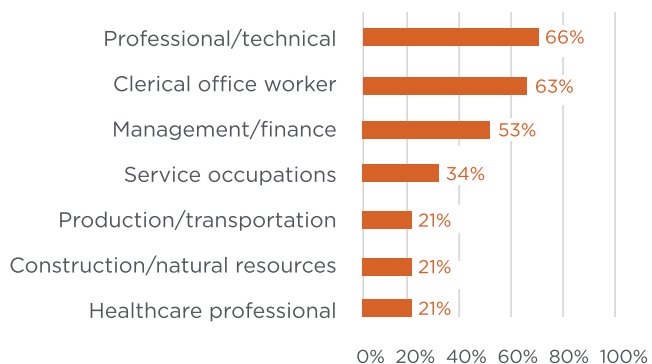
Over half (57%) of business leaders represented a private business, one-quarter (25%) led a non-profit organization, and the remaining eighteen percent (18%) led a school, government, or some other public employer.

Professional/technical employees and clerical office workers were the two most common types of employees reported by respondents (66% and 63%, respectively).

Respondents reported an average of 161 FTEs, with a median of 36. Just over one-third of respondents' organizations had fewer than 25 employees. Approximately 17,000 Clark County working parents were represented by the business leaders who responded to this survey.

An average of 30% of employees at our respondents' organizations had young children, and an average of 15% of these employees lived in Oregon. These figures should be interpreted with caution, as most respondents provided a rough estimate or left the questions blank altogether.

### TYPES OF EMPLOYEES AT BUSINESS LEADERS' ORGANIZATIONS



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*This survey was not a scientific study of the child care challenges that business leaders face. Our findings can, however, be used as a litmus test - to hear from business leaders themselves about how child care is impacting them and identify ways we can help.*

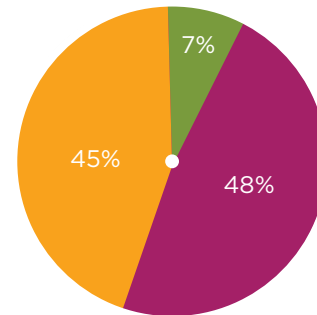
## EXPERIENCE WITH CHILD CARE

Business leaders knew that finding child care is challenging – almost half (45%) indicated that finding child care was “very difficult” for their employees with young children.

Fourteen percent (14%) said that keeping child care was very difficult for their employees.

While we did not specifically ask about the impact of the cost of child care, it was mentioned several times in comments as a major barrier for working parents with young children.

## OVERALL, HAVE EMPLOYEES FOUND IT EASY OR DIFFICULT TO FIND CHILD CARE?



- Somewhat/very easy
- Somewhat difficult
- Very difficult

“ They’ve had to quit because the cost of child care is more than they’re earning. This happens to almost every parent I’ve ever hired. - CLARK COUNTY BUSINESS LEADER ”

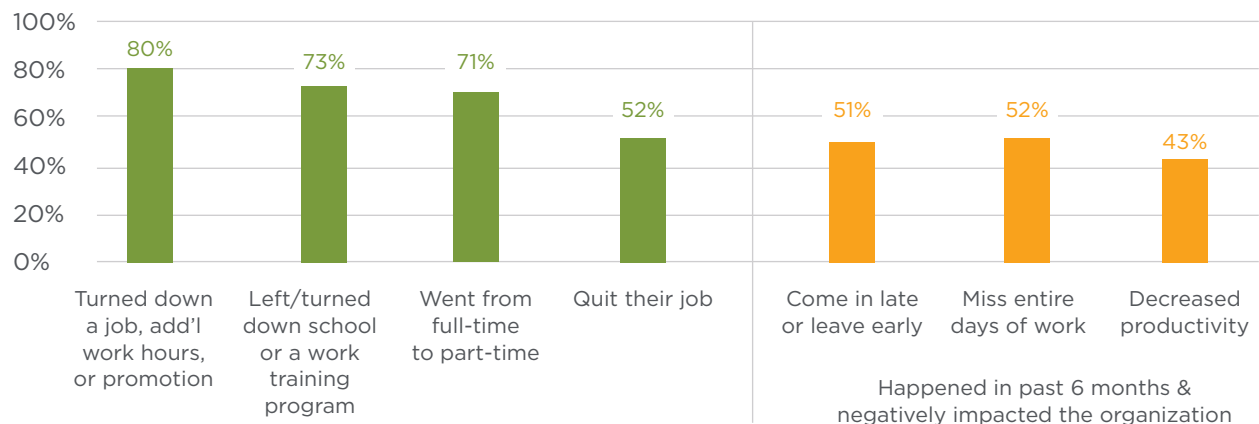
## IMPACT OF CHILD CARE ON WORK

Respondents were asked if any of their employees with young children had to make decisions about their jobs or school based on child care issues. Turning down a job, additional work hours, or a promotion was the most commonly reported impact, at 80%.

Respondents were also asked about workplace challenges due to child care issues experienced in the past 6 months. Half of respondents indicated that their employees with young children had come in late or left early, or missed entire days of work, in the past 6 months to an extent that negatively impacted their business (51% and 52%, respectively).



### HAVE ANY OF YOUR EMPLOYEES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN HAD TO DO ANY OF THESE THINGS DUE TO CHILD CARE ISSUES

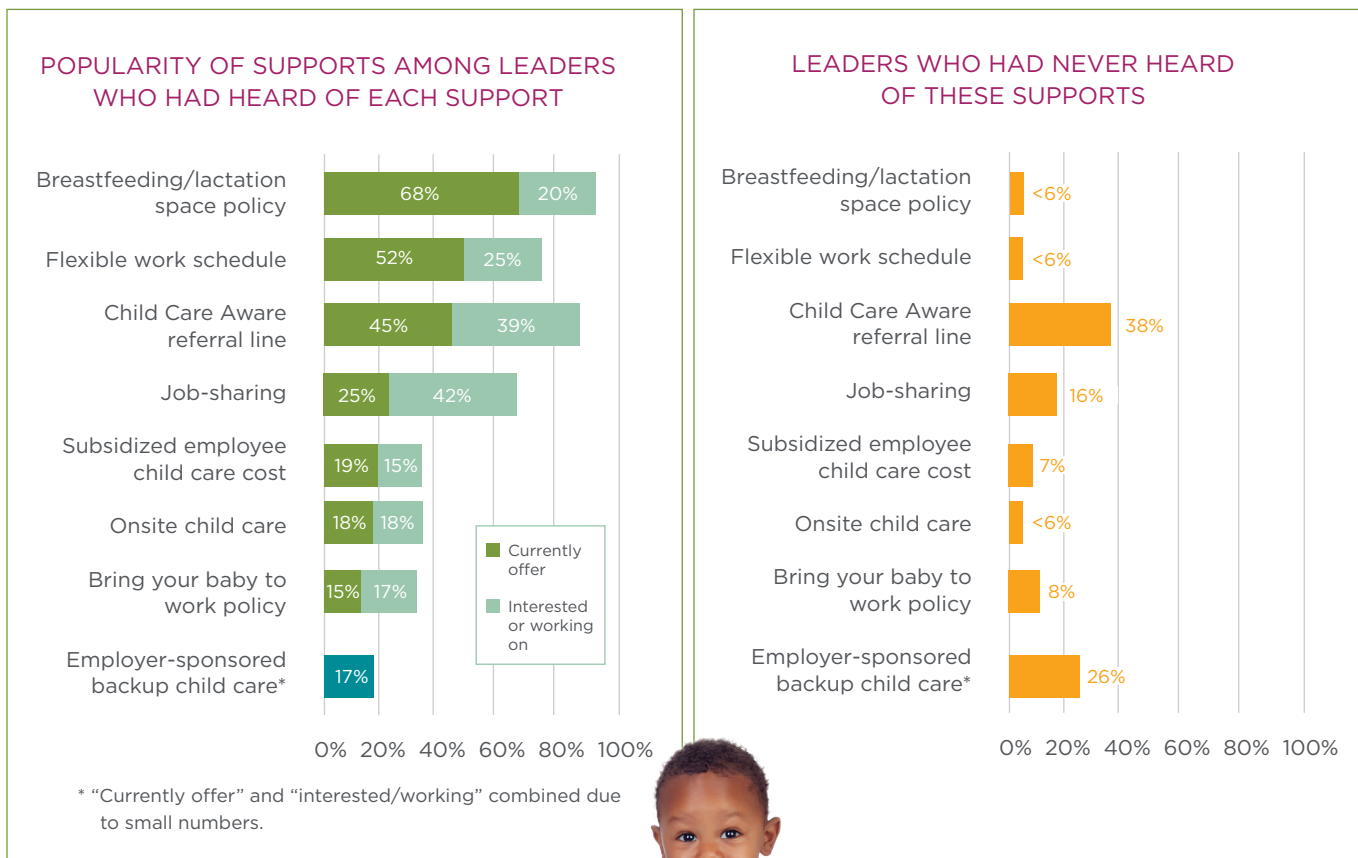


## EMPLOYER SUPPORTS FOR FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

Respondents were asked about supports for families with young children available at their organization – which they currently offered, were interested in or working on, which they weren’t interested in, and which they had not heard of.

Among business leaders who had heard about each support, providing a breastfeeding/lactation policy, a flexible work schedule, and the Child Care Aware referral line were the three most popular supports (88%, 77%, and 84%, respectively either currently offered the support or were interested in it). Resource-intensive supports, such as a bring your baby to work policy or employer-sponsored backup child care, were the least popular supports (32% and 17%, respectively).

Thirty-eight percent (38%) of business leaders had never heard of the Child Care Aware referral line, and 26% had never heard of employer-sponsored backup child care.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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For more information, including how you can help, visit [selfwa.org](http://selfwa.org)