

## EFFECTIVE WORKPLACE SERIES

## WORK-FAMILY INFORMATION ON: TODAY'S DIVERSE FAMILIES

SUPPORTED BY:  
THE ALFRED P. SLOAN FOUNDATIONCOMPILED BY:  
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## WHY ARE TODAY'S DIVERSE FAMILIES AN IMPORTANT WORKPLACE ISSUE?

"SAS has a 30-plus year culture of deliberate inclusion and demonstrated regard for each and every one of our employees and their families. Our programs and policies are grounded in the basic, unassailable contention that by actively anticipating, regarding, and responding to the unique needs of employees and their families, we are directly impacting their ability to generate innovative ideas and products. Whether an employee is a single parent of an adopted child, a grandparent raising his grandchild, a domestic partner, or a divorced boomer knee-deep in the sandwich of caring for a teen and a parent, we know they will feel better and do better when we show regard for their whole life, not just the skills they drive in the front gate every morning. It is simply good business." **Jeff Chambers; Vice President, Human Resources; SAS**



## DEFINITION OF FAMILY DIVERSITY

"...[F]amily diversity refers to a broad range of characteristics or dimensions on which families vary, along with a recognition that there are a multitude of different family types that function effectively..." (Eeden-Moorefield & Demo, 2007).

## Want more related DEFINITIONS?

[http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic\\_extended.php?id=15&type=6&area=business](http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic_extended.php?id=15&type=6&area=business)

## SOME EXAMPLES OF FAMILY DIVERSITY

- Single parents (mothers or fathers)
- Same-sex partnerships or marriages
- Cohabiting couples (with or without children)
- Multicultural households (different religions, races, or cultures within one family)
- Blended families (with stepchildren)
- Non-relative families (unrelated but living together)
- Multigenerational households
- Adoptive families



## WORKPLACE SUPPORTS FOR FAMILIES

- Some 16% of large companies (500 or more employees) reported some form of parenting in the workplace (Secret, 2005).
- More than 50% of Fortune 500 companies offer partner benefits for same-sex couples (Human Rights Campaign: State of the Workplace, 2006–2007).
- About a third (34%) of employers report that they offer elder care resource and referral services (Bond, Galinsky, Kim, & Brownfield, 2005).
- Ten percent of employees have access to adoption assistance (National Compensation Survey, 2006).
- More than half (56%) of responding organizations offer domestic partner benefits to some or all of their employees (Hewitt Associates, 2005).
- Thirty-one percent of employers provided more than 12 weeks of job-guaranteed leave for new mothers, and 20% provided more than 12 weeks for new fathers (Bond et al., 2005).
- In 2008, just over one in four women (26%) living in dual-earner couples had annual earnings at least 10 percentage points higher than their spouses/partners, up from 15% in 1997 (Galinsky, Aumann, & Bond, 2007).

## STATISTICS ON TODAY'S FAMILIES

- Some 21.7% of American households consist of married couples with their own children under 18 (U.S. Census Bureau: American Community Survey, 2005).
- Six million households contain cohabitating couples (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007).
- "Four out of 10, or approximately 2.5 million opposite-sex unmarried couples, lived with at least one biological child of either partner. In contrast, 26.8 million married couple families had children living at home" (United States Census Bureau, 2007).
- Fully 10.4 million households are headed by single mothers, and 2.5 million households are headed by single fathers (U.S. Census Bureau: Families and Living Arrangements, 2006).
- Some 1.6 million or 2.5% of householders' children (under 18) are adopted. An additional 473,000 adopted children of householders are 18 and over, again representing 2.5 percent of all householder children in that age group (U.S. Census Bureau: Special Report, 2004, [http://www.census.gov/PressRelease/www/releases/archives/facts\\_for\\_features\\_special\\_editions/002683.html](http://www.census.gov/PressRelease/www/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/002683.html)).
- Of the 6 million grandparents who live with their grandchildren, 2.45 million of them have the primary responsibility of caring for the grandchildren (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007).

## Want more STATISTICS or the full references for above statistics?

[http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic\\_extended.php?id=15&type=1&area=business](http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic_extended.php?id=15&type=1&area=business)



## REPORTS WITH MORE INFORMATION

- Luther, S. (2006). *Domestic partner benefits: Employer trends and benefits equivalency for the GLBT family*. Washington, DC: Human Rights Campaign.
- Jones, J. (2009). *Who adopts?: Characteristics of women and men who have adopted children*. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db12.pdf>
- Employment Policy Foundation. (2005, January 12). Single parents and the challenge of work and family balance. *The Balancing Act Newsletter*. Washington, DC: Author
- Galinsky, E., Aumann, K., & Bond J. (2007). *Times are changing: Gender and generation at work and at home*. New York: Families and Work Institute.

## Want more OVERVIEWS AND BRIEFS or the full references for these reports?

[http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic\\_extended.php?id=15&type=7&area=business](http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic_extended.php?id=15&type=7&area=business)



## SUGGESTED READINGS

- Coleman, J., & Coontz, S. (Eds.). (2007). *Unconventional wisdom: New data, trends, and clinical observations about American families*. Chicago: Council on Contemporary Families. Retrieved May 25, 2007, from [http://www.contemporaryfamilies.org/docs/unconventional\\_wisdom-final.pdf](http://www.contemporaryfamilies.org/docs/unconventional_wisdom-final.pdf)
- Sherif-Trask, B., & Hamon, R. R. (Eds.). (2007). *Cultural diversity and families: Expanding perspectives*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Muraco, A. (2006). Intentional families: Fictive kin ties between cross-gender, different sexual orientation friends. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 68, 1313-1325.

## Want more READINGS?

[http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic\\_extended.php?id=15&type=2&linktype=suggested&area=business](http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic_extended.php?id=15&type=2&linktype=suggested&area=business)

The Effective Workplace Series provides a summary of the Changing Definitions of Families Topic Page.

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