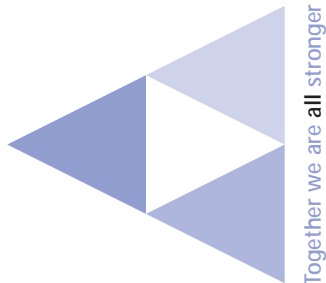


# Childcare is good for business



## In business your greatest asset is likely to be your highly skilled and flexible workforce.

The UK labour market is experiencing chronic shortages of skilled people in a range of occupational areas, so employers are competing for qualified staff.

Recruiting and retaining valuable staff costs thousands of pounds: money which could be lost once they become parents - unless childcare support is high on your agenda. The cost of replacing just one maternity leaver is approximately one year's salary - once you've taken advertising, temporary cover, training and management time for the new recruit and limited functioning for up to a year into account.

## Employers who support their staff through childcare reap high rewards.

A CBI survey in 1996 showed that the second highest cause of sick leave, after illness, was time off for family responsibilities.

Staff punctuality and commitment improves if employees have supported, planned childcare services rather than complex informal childcare arrangements that are likely to break down at any time. Alleviating the stress of organising childcare results in improved employee performance and promotes commitment to the company.

Employer supported childcare allows parents to access work they would otherwise have to refuse, leading to improved relations between you, the employer, and those who live around your business site.

If your company invests in childcare support, your business benefits from positive marketing and publicity opportunities - raising your company profile within the local community.

So, childcare support is good for the "bottom line", but how can you take advantage of this opportunity without incurring the capital and revenue costs of building and staffing a workplace nursery?

## Childminding Matters has an answer ...

According to the Labour Force Survey, 69% of women aged 16-59 were in work in the year 2000 and 38% of men of working age were fathers. The proportion of lone parents had gone up from 8% to 20%. The changing patterns of work and family means that many staff will have sole responsibility for their children and many men will be sharing the responsibility equally with their partners. Childcare is now a central component of successful Work Life Balance policies. And what is more, employee's expectations of their employers are growing... a 1999 MORI poll found that 92% of parents wanted employers to adopt more family friendly policies and 80% thought that employers should provide more help with childcare.

Just 12 days sick leave per year costs over 5% of salary for an employee earning £15,000 a year.

Employers who provide childcare referral services for their employees can save an estimated £2 for every £1 they spend on the service, reducing costs as a result of reduced sickness absences.