Each October provides an important reminder of the power of work-life programs and policies that attract, retain and motivate the workforce.

Make the most of this year’s National Work & Family Month by thinking about flexibility, wellness, business goals and balance.

Supervisors: how can you support the work-life flexibility needs of your employees, while meeting business goals?

Employees: take some time to reflect on how well your work and personal/family life fit together.

Think creatively about solutions.

Explore the resources, policies, and practices available at URI.

Visit our website: www.uri.edu/worklife

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October is National Work & Family Month

Our workforce is changing:

- 85% of U.S. workers have immediate, day-to-day family responsibilities outside of their jobs (U.S. Dept. Labor, 2008).
- 70% of American children live in households where all adults are employed (U.S. Dept. Labor, 2008; Williams & Boushey, 2010).
- 71% of mothers with children under the age of 18 participate in the U.S. workforce (U.S. Dept. Labor, 2007).
- 80% of married/partnered employees live in dual-earner couples, outnumbering breadwinner/homemaker households 3-to-1 (Families & Work Institute, 2008).
- 59% of those caring for an elderly relative or friend work and manage care giving responsibilities at the same time (Workplace Flexibility, 2010).
- The number of unpaid family caregivers for the elderly is estimated to reach 37 million by 2050, an increase of 85% from 2000, as baby boomers reach retirement age in record numbers (Aumann, Galinsky, Sakai, Brown, & Bond, 2010).
- Work hours have increased for both husbands and wives (couples with children work on average 91 hours/week), and so not only are there more dual-earner families today, they are working harder than ever before (U.S. Dept. Labor, 2008).
- By 2015, 20% of the U.S. workforce will be over 55, and 65% of America’s baby boomers anticipate working part-time in retirement (AARP, 2003).
- Fully 90% of mothers and 95% of fathers report work-family conflict (Williams, 2010).

Why should employers care?

- Providing ways to find work-life balance and access to a flexible work schedule is a key recruitment and retention strategy today, and ranked by employees as one of the most important job characteristics (Galinsky, Bond, & Hill, 2004; Randstad, 2008).
- The supportiveness of their workplaces and the quality of workers’ jobs are key predictors of job productivity, job satisfaction, engagement, commitment to employers, and retention (Workplace Flexibility, 2010).
- Employees with higher levels of work-life integration are more highly engaged and less likely to look for a new job in the next year, and also enjoy better overall health, better mental health, and lower levels of stress (Families & Work Institute, 2004).
- Employees who are able to effectively balance family and work responsibilities are less likely to report making mistakes or feeling resentment toward employers and coworkers (Galinsky, Bond, Kim, Backon, Brownfield, & Sakai, 2004).
- Job flexibility allows dual-earner couples to be more involved in their children’s lives, reaping myriad personal, health, family, and societal benefits (Workplace Flexibility, 2010).

For more information:
Work-Life Resources at URI: www.uri.edu/worklife