

**FAMILY  
FORWARD  
NC**



**Building Strong and Resilient Businesses, Families, and Communities**



# We are driven by a bold vision.

**Each North Carolina child has a strong foundation for life-long health, education, and well-being supported by a comprehensive, equitable birth-to-eight ecosystem.**

**Our mission: To marshal North Carolina's great people, ideas, and achievements to ensure equitable access to opportunity and success for every child by the end of third grade.**

# Family Forward NC



**Family Forward NC is an innovative initiative to improve children's health and well-being and keep North Carolina's businesses competitive.**

It is employer-led change to increase access to research-based, family-friendly, industry-appropriate practices—big and small—that increase workplace productivity, recruitment and retention; grow a strong economy; and support children's healthy development.

Business Smart. Family Friendly. Future Ready.



### **Business Smart:**

- Recruit and retain talented workers;
- Increase productivity;
- Reduce tardiness and absenteeism;
- Encourage workforce participation



### **Family Friendly:**

- Improve job satisfaction;
- Reduce parent stress;
- Support health and economic security



### **Future Ready:**

- Increase a child's IQ;
- Support higher high school graduate rates and educational attainment

# Engage & Inspire



- Published and updated Guide to Family Forward Workplaces, informed by an Advisory Council and employers and employees across the state
- Published **38 case studies** to date
- Directly reached more than **8,000 employers**
- COVID-19 resources shared with 190,000 employers
- With the NC Dept. of Commerce, **trained 200 business counselors** from the SBTDC, the NC Community Colleges' SBC, the EDPNC and NCSU's Industry Expansion Solutions

# Children's Health and Well-Being

## Brains are built, not born.

- The most rapid period of development happens from **birth to eight**.
- End of third grade outcomes **predict academic achievement and career success**.
- Early experiences are **built into a child's body**, shaping brain architecture. Every experience forms a neural connection at a rate of a more than **one million synapses per second**.



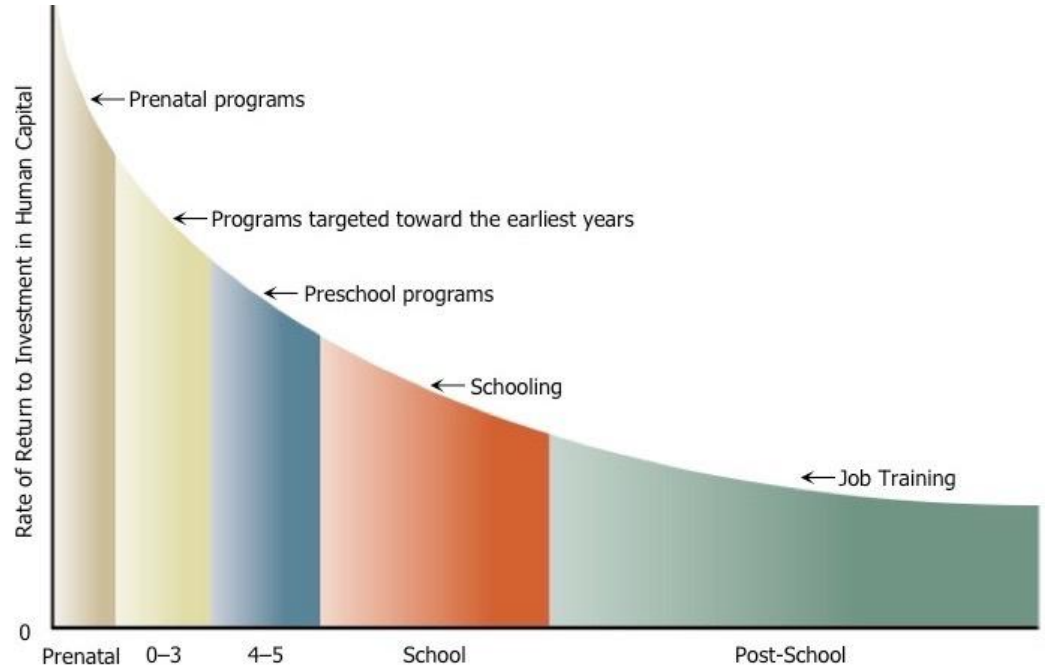
# Human capital creates economic capital

“The foundation for school, career and life success is largely determined through the development of cognitive and character skills beginning in children’s earliest years.”



Nobel Laureate  
Professor James Heckman

## 13% Return on Investment



# 32%

of NC 4<sup>th</sup> graders in  
2021/2022 scored  
at proficiency or above  
in reading as  
measured  
by NAEP

# 18%


of NC high school  
graduates met all  
four ACT college  
readiness  
benchmarks  
in 2020-2021

Disaggregated by race for 4th grade reading:

- White 44%
- Black 17%
- Hispanic 21%
- Asian 56%







Only **3.4%** of all NC families have a stay-at-home parent who cares for children full time.

Parents and caregivers are passing up work opportunities, switching jobs, quitting, and interrupting their education.

# Lack of Supports Contributes to the Disruption



- Just **one in five** NC workers have access to paid family leave
- NC families with one infant and one toddler spend **one third of their income** on child care
- Forty-one percent of adults in the US working in hourly jobs say they know their work schedule **one week in advance or less**

# Caregiving is not only about children

- By 2040, North Carolinians 65+ will be 24% of our population
- In the US, 68% of families headed by people 55 and over are burdened by debt
- Three out of four Americans providing care to an adult work at the same time
- 47% of all middle aged Americans are sandwiched between care for an elderly parent, and a young child or adult child



# The Good News Workplace Policies Deliver Results

[The Opportunity](#) ▾

[Workplace Guide](#) ▾

[Employer Certification](#) ▾

[Resources](#) ▾

[The Latest](#) ▾



**Family-friendly  
workplaces  
strengthen our  
state**

# 19 Research Based Workplace Policies

## Wage and Paid Leave Policies

Parental Leave

Sick and Safe Leave

Family and Medical Leave

Parental Involvement Leave

Family Sustaining Wage

## Scheduling

Flextime

Working from Home/  
Telecommuting

Job Sharing/  
Part-time work

Predictable Scheduling

## Accommodations and Support

Support for Breastfeeding Mothers

Babies at Work

Pregnant Worker Accommodations

## Child Care

Backup or emergency care

On-Site or Consortium Child Care

Subsidized/  
Reimbursed Child Care

Child Care Resources Referral

## Health and Wellness Benefits

Health Insurance and Wellness Benefits

Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA)

Employee Assistance Plan (EAP)



# Paid Family and Medical Leave

## Workplace Policies that **Deliver Results**



### Benefits to Employers<sup>1</sup>

- Increases productivity
- Does not impact profits
- Increases retention, reducing turnover costs
- Reduces employee absenteeism
- Provides healthier work environment
- Reduces health care costs
- Workers recover from disability, illness, or injury more quickly
- Increases loyalty

### Benefits to Children<sup>2</sup>

- Encourages use of preventative health care
- Children recover more quickly from illness and injury when parents are available to care for them

### Benefits to Parents/Families<sup>3</sup>

- Encourages use of preventative health care
- Workers recover from disability, illness, or injury more quickly

# Employee Assistance Program



## Workplace Policies that **Deliver Results**

### Benefits to Employers<sup>12</sup>

- Increases productivity
- Results in fewer absences
- Improves engagement
- Creates a safer workplace by lowering the risk of violence and a reducing workplace accidents
- Lowers healthcare costs
- Develops managers' and employees' ability to manage workplace stress
- Lowers turnover costs

### Benefits to Children

- Improves mental health and lowers stress<sup>3</sup>
- Improves overall health and well-being<sup>4</sup>
- Improves school performance and test scores<sup>5</sup>
- Lowers behavioral challenges<sup>6</sup>
- Lowers violence within families
- Supports children experiencing violence within their family.<sup>7</sup>

### Benefits to Parents/Families

- Improves financial stability<sup>8</sup>
- Stabilizes child care<sup>9</sup>
- Reduces absences from work<sup>10</sup>
- Lowers stress and alcohol and substance abuse<sup>11</sup>
- Improves mental health
- Improves overall health and well-being
- Supports employees experiencing violence within their family<sup>12</sup>

# Business Smart

## R. Riveter Leather Handbags



38 Full Time Employees  
39 Contractors

### Paid Leave

- Sick, Vacation and Holiday

### Flexible Work

- Flexible Schedules
- Telecommuting

### Impact

- Retention
- Engagement
- Employee Loyalty







Lisa Bradley, CEO, R. Riveter, FFNC Certified Employer

# Family Forward NC Guidance and Tools



# Resources for employers



- ✓ Employee survey
- ✓ Child care needs assessment
- ✓ Current Policy Assessment
- ✓ Cost of doing nothing
- ✓ Sample Policies



\*You can find these resources here: <https://familyforwardnc.com/for-employers/>

# Employer Workbook



- Reflect on Current State of Employer's Family-Friendly Workplace
- Initial Readiness Assessment of People First Culture
- Growth Opportunities for People First Culture
- Communications Planning Checklist
- Goal Setting and Implementation Planning
- For Manufacturing, Hospitality, Small Business

<https://familyforwardnc.com/returntowork/>





Family Forward NC Employer Certification

# Family Forward NC Employer Certification



- Designation for employers that offer policies and practices that support the health and well-being of working families and children
- Provides employers with **public recognition** for offering family-friendly workplace benefits
- **Differentiate** business in a tight labor market
- Especially for employers with high turnover and those that are growing

# BECOME A FAMILY FORWARD CERTIFIED EMPLOYER

## HERE'S HOW



### Step 1: Apply Online

The first step is to fill out our online application, which helps us determine if your policies meet our certification requirement thresholds.



### Step 2: We Verify Your Policies

To verify your application, we will review your written policies and conduct a quick, 30-minute phone call with your HR leader (or the staff member in charge of HR). We'll also ask you to share a short survey with employees that asks about the policies and your company culture.



### Step 3: We Welcome You to Our List of FFNC Certified Employers

Once we've verified your policies, you'll be granted a certification. Certification will be good for two years from the date we notify you about the final certification.

# Levels, Size Categories, Fees



Engaged • Established • Leader

## Two Year Certification

- 5 to 49 employees \$200
- 50 to 99 employees \$450
- 100 to 499 employees \$750
- 500 employees + \$1,500

*There is also a one time, nonrefundable application fee of \$50 to apply.*

Access to **exclusive resources and programs** to help employers continue their journey

A listing in our **online directory** of certified employers

Summary of **employee feedback**



# What's Next?



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Go to [familyforwardnc.com](https://familyforwardnc.com) to sign up to receive our newsletter



Certify your business or organization  
[familyforwardnc@buildthefoundation.org](mailto:familyforwardnc@buildthefoundation.org)

Ask us to speak to organizations  
Host workshops and panels  
Be an advocate - ask me how!  
[lfinaldi@buildthefoundation.org](mailto:lfinaldi@buildthefoundation.org)



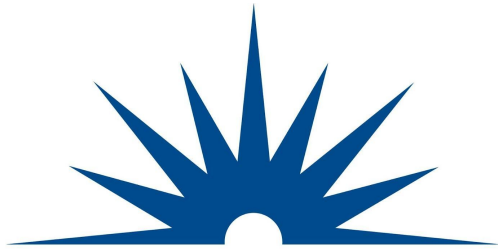
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