



Innovation in Child Care Coming from Private-Sector Employers

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Here's a problem most working parents have faced: You've found a good sitter or daycare center for your children, but on a day when you absolutely need to be at work, your sitter is ill—or maybe it's your child who is ill, and the daycare center won't let you bring her in. It's hard enough to find one trustworthy childcare provider. Having a backup plan for emergencies is even tougher.

It's a common problem that can cause real difficulty for anyone whose job demands aren't always flexible, but do we need the government to fix it? Here are how some employers have chosen to deal with the issue: Companies including [General Mills and Starbucks](#) now offer a backup childcare benefit, and [Best Buy recently began rolling out a new program](#) that helps parents by giving them 10 days of subsidized childcare a year that they can access quickly through Care.com. The only cost to parents is a \$10 a day co-pay.

Such programs can help both companies and their employees: The company doesn't lose productivity from workers having to stay home, and employees don't have to use up valuable vacation or sick days to attend to their kids when other plans fall through.

It's a win-win scenario—a private-sector solution based on a voluntary, mutually beneficial

arrangement. And it doesn't require government intervention in the form of subsidies, which would require a decision about whether to pay for them in higher taxes or to reduce spending elsewhere. Best Buy specifically cited the lower federal corporate taxes as helping make this new backup childcare benefit possible. Wouldn't it be better for Missouri policymakers to take a similar approach by simply making it easier for companies meet the needs of their workers?

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[4] https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2018/12/17/meet-best-buy-employee-who-inspired-companys-new-child-care-benefit/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.122245eca0db

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