



Healthy Mothers Workplace Coalition

Promoting Health and Equity for Working Parents and Their Children



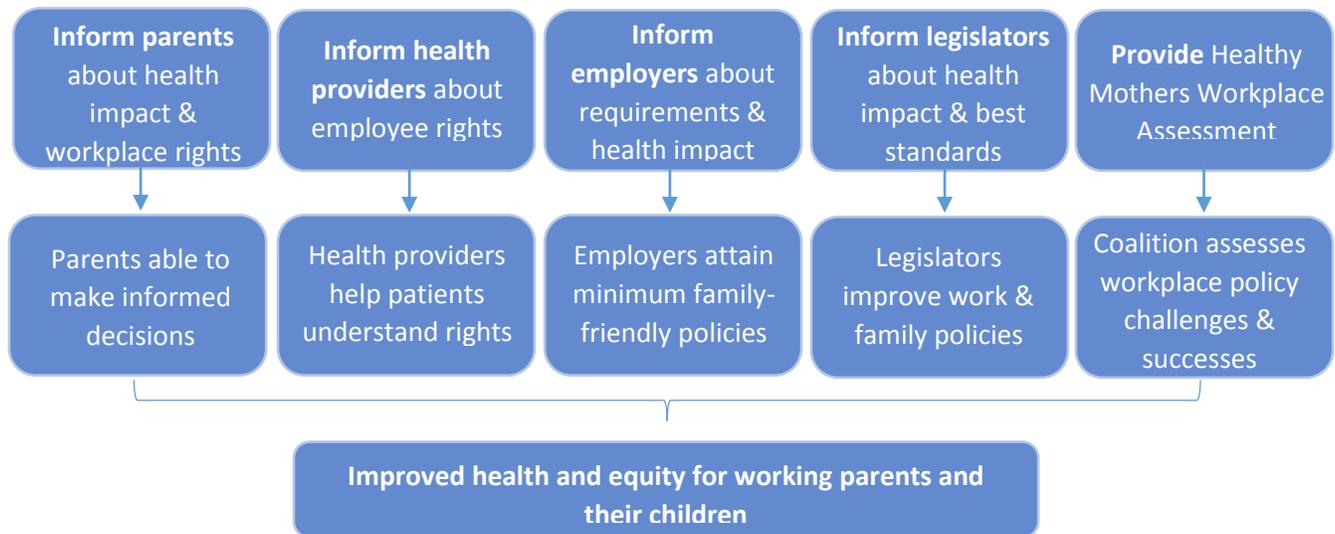
BACKGROUND:

The **Healthy Mothers Workplace Coalition** of community organizations, government agencies, and employers collaborate to promote the health of new parents and their children by improving working conditions and perinatal healthcare practices. Employment and workplace conditions are important determinants of physical and mental health of pregnant women, new parents and their young children.

Employer policies related to **lactation accommodation**, **pregnancy and parental leave**, and **work-life balance** can affect critical health outcomes for women, new parents and infants. For example, longer pregnancy-leave, particularly prior to birth, directly impacts birth outcomes. Yet, there is a lack of awareness of laws and vastly different employer policies, which can lead to disparities in health outcomes such as postpartum depression, psychological stress, breastfeeding duration, and childhood development. The Healthy Mothers Workplace Coalition was formed to address these inequities and gaps in policy.

Initiated by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors Taskforce, the **Healthy Mothers Workplace Coalition** coalesces the commitments of elected officials, county departments, universities, community based organizations, employers, and others to improve workplace practices and conditions for pregnant and parenting workers through public education, public policy development, and a countywide award program that recognizes “excellence in health and gender equity” in three areas: parental leave, lactation accommodation, and work-family balance.

KEY ACTIVITIES:



www.HealthyMothersWorkplace.org





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COALITION STRATEGIES & SUCCESSES:

Since its creation in 2012, the Coalition has developed, implemented, and revised strategies to:

1.) Inform & Educate Employers:

- **Maternity Leave & Return Toolkit:** The Coalition provides a Healthy Mothers Workplace Toolkit with model policies, a comprehensive checklist for employers and workers to complete prior to leave and after returning, sample forms, and links to information about breastfeeding.
- **Healthy Mothers Workplace Assessment Tool:** Through an intensive community engagement process, the Coalition developed a workplace tool to assess policies related to parental leave, lactation accommodation, and work-family balance. The tool assesses policies using three levels: bronze (meets requirements), silver (exceeds requirements), and gold (sets a gold standard).
- **Healthy Mothers Workplace Award Program:** Each year the Coalition recognizes San Francisco employers with policies that community leaders have found are integral to health and equity for working parents. The Coalition has given **116 Healthy Mothers Workplace Awards of Excellence** to **62 unique employers** over the last 4 years, positively impacting over **34,000 employees**. At least **6 employers improved their policies** to move up an award level since participating in the Healthy Mothers Workplace Award Program. The Mayor selected this initiative as a **top 10 innovation** for SF at the 2015 US Conference of Mayors.

2.) Inform & Educate Pregnant & Parenting Workers:

The Coalition offers informational handouts and videos for employees regarding pregnancy and parental leave rights, lactation accommodations, caregiving, and work family balance.

3.) Build Capacity of Health & Service Providers:

The Coalition has developed a Medical-Legal Partnership with the Women's Clinic at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital. This partnership between legal professionals and health providers serves to:

- Provide **trainings and technical assistance** (including sample certification letters) to prenatal care providers on their patients' employment rights.
- **Create and disseminate factsheets**, posters and postcards in every exam room, in multiple languages, informing patients of their rights.
- **Screen pregnant patients** for employment concerns, and **refer** to Legal Aid.
- Hold a **legal clinic on-site** to provide legal advice to patients and families.

4.) Inform Public Policies for Working Families:

The Coalition was instrumental in passing San Francisco's Family Friendly Workplace Ordinance and new Paid Parental Leave Ordinance, which elevated principles from the award program to the public policy level. These policies already had the support of many business leaders that received the Coalition's award. The coalition has also informed state and federal work-family policies, including paid family leave, paid sick leave, and lactation requirements for nursing parents.

COALITION PARTNERS & STAKEHOLDERS:

San Francisco Breastfeeding Promotion Coalition, Boys & Girls Club of San Francisco, Child Care Law Center, San Francisco Department on the Status of Women, San Francisco Department of Public Health, San Francisco WIC, San Francisco Small Business Commission, UCSF National Center of Excellence in Women's Health, U.S. Dept. Health & Human Services – Office of Women's Health, and the Legal Aid Society – Employment Law Center.

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