



the work and family legal center

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***A strong paid family leave bill would . . .***

## **Provide 12 Weeks of Paid Leave.**

When a new child arrives or a family member is sick, New York's workers need enough time to be with them. Supporting workers through up to 12 weeks of paid family leave meets this crucial need.

### **Providing 12 weeks of leave improves child health outcomes.**

- Children whose mothers do not return to work full time in the first 12 weeks are more likely to receive medical checkups and critical vaccinations.\*
- Mothers who take at least 12 weeks of leave are also more likely to breastfeed, with important lasting health benefits for their children.\*
- Fathers who take longer leaves experience greater engagement in their children's lives;† greater paternal engagement has cognitive and developmental advantages for children.‡
- For foster children, the first few months are a critical adjustment period in the transition to a new placement,§ during which children need time to bond with their foster parents.

### **Both mothers and fathers benefit from taking sufficient leave.**

- For new birth mothers, having less than 12 weeks of family leave is associated with increased symptoms of postpartum depression.\*\*
- For working fathers, taking longer paid family leave means increased satisfaction in their contact with their children.††

### **Medical experts recommend children not start day care until they are at least 12 weeks old.**

- Experts including the American Academy of Pediatrics recommend that healthy full-term infants should not be enrolled in child care until they are at least 12 weeks old due to rapid developmental changes and the risk of quickly developing severe undetected illness.‡‡
- The average annual cost for center-based infant care in New York is \$14,144,§§ over 75% of a minimum wage full-time worker's *total* annual income.

**Prepared by A Better Balance. For more information, visit [abetterbalance.org](http://abetterbalance.org).**

\* Lawrence M. Berger, Jennifer Lynn Hill, and Jane Waldfogel, "Maternity Leave, Early Maternal Employment and Child Health and Development in the US," *The Economic Journal* 115, no. 501 (2005).

† Maria del Carmen Huerta *et al.*, *Fathers' Leave, Fathers' Involvement and Child Development Are They Related? Evidence from Four OECD Countries* (2013).

‡ Ann Sarkadi *et al.*, "Fathers' involvement and children's developmental outcomes: a systematic review of longitudinal studies," *Acta Paediatrica* 97: 153-158 (2008).

§ Annette Semanchin Jones and Susan J. Wells, *PATH/Wisconsin-Bremer Project: Preventing Disruptions in Foster Care* (2008).

\*\* Pinka Chatterji and Sara Makowitz, "Family Leave After Childbirth and the Mental Health of New Mothers," *The Journal of Mental Health Policy and Economics* 15, 61-76 (2012).

†† Linda Haas & C. Phillip Hwang, "The Impact of Taking Parental Leave on Fathers' Participation in Childcare and Relationships with Children: Lessons from Sweden," *Community, Work & Family*, 11:1, 85-104.

‡‡ American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, and National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education, *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards*, Third Edition (2011).

§§ *Parents and the High Cost of Child Care: 2015 Report*, Child Care Aware of America.