

# Investing in Parents Pays off.

Four ideas to  
support your  
employees  
with children.





## COVID-19 has impacted the mental health of children and working parents. Without intervention the costs to you and your client will continue to grow.

Even before the pandemic hit there was a mental healthcare crisis facing children. After more than a year of experiencing the direct and collective trauma of the COVID-19 pandemic, the need to support children has only expanded.

Understanding their children's mental health is one piece of the larger puzzle parents are facing. From managing their own self-care, to navigating finances, to the increased burn-out of remote, hybrid or in-person work during a pandemic, parents are struggling. And to top it all off, a lack of childcare options has caused many parents to cut their hours or leave the work force completely.

Research has shown that when employers invest in their people, they see significant dividends. For every dollar spent towards treatment for common mental illnesses, there is a return of four dollars in improved health and productivity.\* When employees have access to affordable and comprehensive care for their family they are far less likely to miss work and are more likely to be productive.\*

Perspectives, a top-tier employee assistance program (EAP), has seen the success of comprehensive solutions for parents first hand. In a recent, pandemic related case, a parent reached out because they were worried about their daughter, which was distracting them from their work. Their daughter was feeling unmotivated, having sleeping issues and had stopped doing regular activities she enjoyed. Less than two days after an intake conversation with a Perspective Access Center counselor, the parent and daughter were connected with counselors and within 2 sessions they both reported feeling better.

By having the EAP available the company provided a solution for an employee who was struggling to focus on their job. The employee received the immediate and longer-term support they needed, allowing the parent to worry less and the child to find ways to cope with the stress and anxiety of the pandemic.

When an employee's mental health suffers, it affects the bottom line.

# PROVIDE INTERVENTION ACCESS 24/7

Crises don't happen on a nine-to-five schedule, but they will affect nine-to-five work. Full-service or top-tier employee assistance programs (EAPs) offer 24-hour support to employees and their children and eliminate barriers to access care by providing phone, in person, virtual, chat, email support as well as web and app based immediate assistance.

## If you are evaluating or recommending an EAP, consider the following:

- Do they have licensed masters-level counselors doing the initial assessment so they can quickly connect individuals to the appropriate resources or deliver “in-the-moment” support?
- Can they secure an appointment within 24 to 72 hours?
- Do they have an efficient online intake process that helps identify the right resource for the issue?
- Do they have an extensive network of practitioners that will be available when your employees and their families need them?



## CREATE CONVENIENCE THROUGH IN-PERSON AND REMOTE MENTAL HEALTHCARE OPTIONS

The pandemic accelerated the already growing trend of accessing therapy via video, text, chat and apps. Flexibility in how a patient accesses mental health services doesn't only provide convenience but can also be more comfortable for young participants that feel more comfortable with formats like texting. Especially in living situations that don't afford them the privacy for sessions via phone or video.

While telehealth and other forms of access are important tools, they are not conducive for all types of mental health conditions. This means that a hybrid in-person/virtual model and alternative approaches may improve the ability to reach children who still need additional support or don't have regular access to the internet.

**If you are evaluating or recommending an EAP, consider the following:**

- Do they have both in-person and telehealth options?
- Does it cover both the employee and their family?
- Does it cover pre-existing mental health challenges?
- Do they have practitioners in the cities, states and countries where your employees reside so they can access in-person counseling if required?



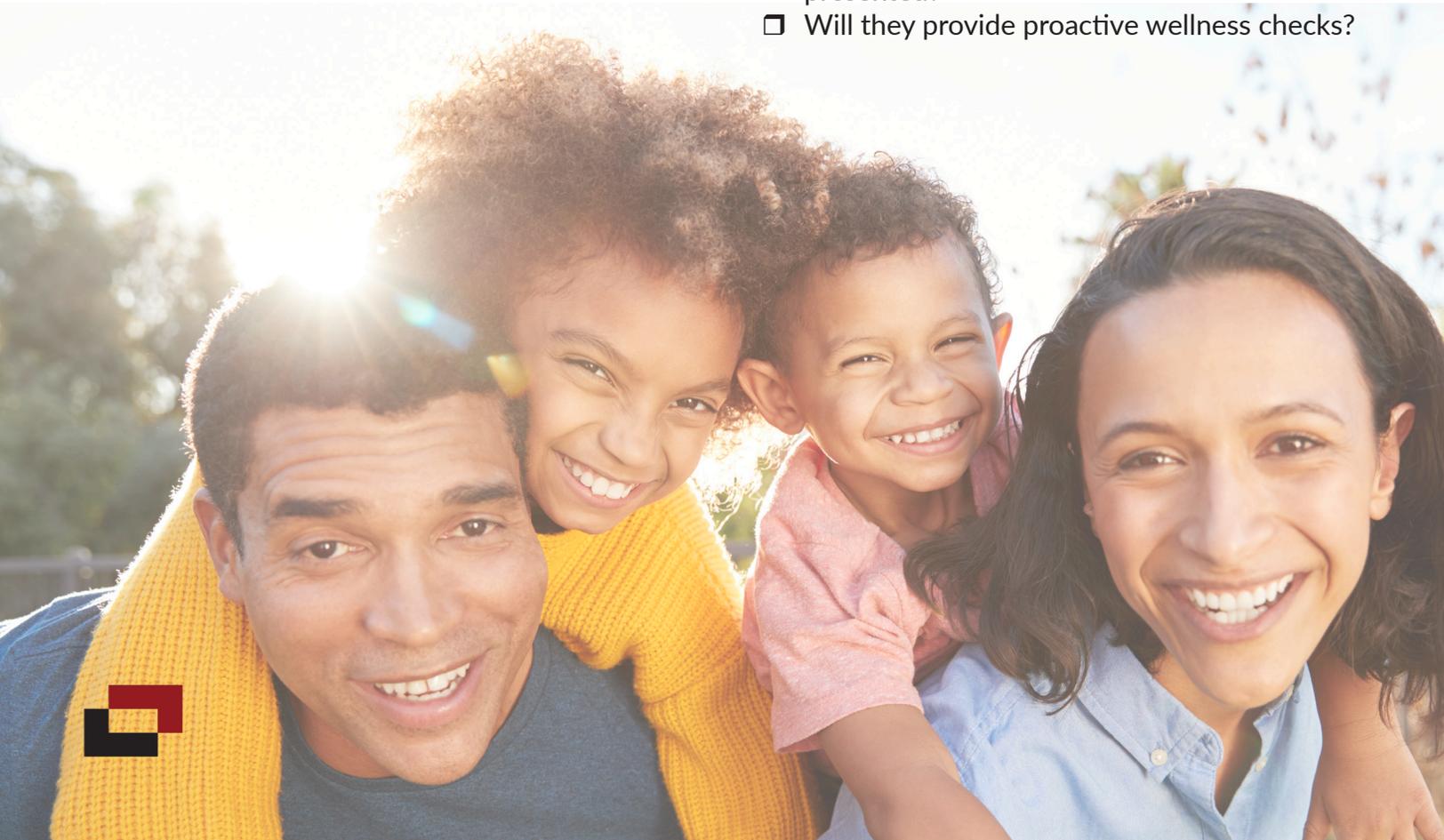
Treating one specific problem in isolation ignores the reality that the entire family dynamic may be in jeopardy. Addressing a child's depression won't solve other issues that might include financial issues, addiction, divorce or even inadequate childcare options. An effective psychosocial program for employees should triage the situation and develop appropriate solutions on all fronts.

Additionally, implementing proactive wellness checks with employees, especially caregivers, can address potential burnout before it affects productivity. These meetings are an opportunity to confirm employees have access to the tools for self-care that they need to be good employees and caregivers.

## COMPREHENSIVE AND ON-GOING APPROACH TO RESOLVING PROBLEMS

**If you are evaluating or recommending an EAP with work/life support, consider the following:**

- Do they have the ability to triage incoming requests for both employees and children to determine a holistic mental health plan?
- Do they provide comprehensive childcare resources?
- Do they have self-care resources and tools beyond therapy that they can recommend as part of the goal in resolving the issue(s) that are presented?
- Will they provide proactive wellness checks?



## FLEXIBLE WORK OPTIONS

Needs of working parents can vary greatly depending on their situation. Allowing flexible work gives employees freedom to fulfill their work and caretaking obligations in a way that works for their situation. Flexible work can mean flexibility in location and time and may include teleworking, compressed work week or protected long-term leave.

Employees and managers may need help adjusting to a new flexible work option. Organizations can prepare for this by providing resources like informational trainings or webinars or management coaching.

**If you are evaluating or recommending an EAP with WorkLife support, consider the following:**

- Do they provide timely resources based on trends in work and society?
- Will they customize resources for their clients?



01

**Provide Intervention Access 24/7**

02

**Create convenience through online and remote mental health care**

03

**Comprehensive and on-going approach to resolving problems**

04

**Flexible Work Options**

**Whether 24/7 access or flexible work options, an important first step is starting a conversation with your team about how to support the parents in your company. By focusing on parents and their children, employers can:**

- ✦ Keep more care givers in the workforce, who are more adversely affected by the pandemic, as this will be important for our economic recovery.
- ✦ Allow all parents to stay more engaged and productive in their professional roles.
- ✦ Improve employee retention, satisfaction and engagement
- ✦ Reduce the cost of absenteeism, turnover, hiring, training and related personnel costs

Start the Conversation now.

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