

Mercer Case Study Working Families



Mercer Back-Up Child, Adult, and Elder Care

The initiative

The 'Mercer Back Up Care' benefits offers back-up care support for children and adult dependents of employees in the UK. It provides 15 days of care per annum, to be used when usual care arrangements are unavailable. There is a small charge to the employee of £4 per hour for in-home care, £10 per day for nursery care for one child or £15 per day for nursery care of more than one child.

Employees are given free online access to a Bright Horizons database, where they can find support that meets the ongoing care needs: nannies, elder caregivers, pet sitters, housekeepers, and more. They also enjoy a jump ahead on the waitlist at select Bright Horizons centres for full time care, plus access to exclusive discounts on tuition at participating partner centres and discounts on tutoring and test prep services, summer camps and other educational enrichment programs.

Impact:

The provision of subsidized, high quality back up care gives employees an affordable option in an emergency. It gives employees peace of mind that extra assistance is available, if and when, their usual caring arrangements are disrupted and reduces some of the stress that typically arises in these moments. The benefit reinforces to employees that Mercer is a family friendly employer and appreciates the burden that caring responsibilities can have on employees.

By way of example a member of staff recently remarked ' The services provided by Bright Horizon took the pressure off in a stressful situation and made me valued by Mercer. Had it not been for the subsidised cost of emergency childcare (which I had to put into place at 11pm the night before) I would have not been able to attend an important new business presentation.'

Obstacles:

Providing employees with access to Bright Horizons was simple to implement but awareness of the benefit is low, particularly amongst those who do not have caring responsibilities. Furthermore employees who have used the service have often only done so after a personal recommendation. Providing a platform for employees to share their experience of the service they received would improve the take up rate.



Final Word:

We introduced back up care to give colleagues that piece of mind for when the unexpected happens. As a family friendly employer, we recognise there are more important things than just working and this benefit demonstrates the support that we offer our employees to be able to balance their home and work responsibilities.”

Donna Biggs, UK HR Leader, Mercer