ONCAC
OHIO NETWORK OF CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTERS

614-578-8029 | www.oncac.org | oncac@oncac.org

90 Northwoods Blvd. Suite B14, Columbus, OH 43235

Paid Family Leave, How It Affects Child Maltreatment

Paid family leave is a program that grants employees partial or full salary replacement while they spend time taking care of and bonding with their newborn children. It is not currently a federally funded program, but 13 states have created mandatory paid family leave programs while 9 more have voluntary ones.

Ohio does not currently have any paid family leave program, however, Senate Bill 396 was formally introduced to the Ohio Senate on March 23rd by Senators Louis W. Blessing III (R) and Beth Liston (D), which would solve this problem by giving Ohio workers with newborn children 85% of their weekly wage for up to 14 weeks.

Research shows that passing Senate Bill 396 and implementing paid family leave in Ohio should be a priority for Ohioans and legislators, from both a moral and an economic standpoint.

Studies have found that children under the age of 1 experience the highest victimization rate for child maltreatment of any age group. By giving parents time to care for their children without having to worry about income, significant improvements were found in infant health, infant mortality, vaccination rates, and time spent with children, according to a research article published in Sage Journals.

Additionally, reports of child maltreatment for infants under 1 to Child Protective Services in states with paid family leave were 14% lower than those without. Substantiated reports were also 22% lower in states with paid family leave programs compared to those without.

Perhaps the biggest finding was that there was a reduction in infant removals from home by 46% in states with mandatory paid family leave. This substantial difference points to a key economic impact of this research, as foster care and court processes can be incredibly expensive for state governments.

Not only are these processes incredibly expensive in the short term, but according to an article published in the National Library of Medicine, the lifetime estimated cost of non-fatal child maltreatment is $210-831 thousand per person.

In conclusion, we urge you to speak with your local representatives about passing Senate Bill 396, not only for its moral implications on child maltreatment, but also for its short and long term economic impacts.

Below are links to the previously mentioned research articles, as well as a link that will provide info on how to contact local state senators.

Danielle M. McCament, CEO

