CHILD CARE SOLUTIONS FOR THE MODERN WORKFORCE

A CORPORATE BACKUP CARE GUIDE



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UNDERSTANDING THE VALUE OF CORPORATE BACKUP CARE

INTRODUCTION

Forward-thinking employers are increasingly focused on supporting working parents who face the challenge of balancing family commitments with professional responsibilities. In response, many organizations are recognizing the importance of offering family-friendly benefits—ranging from flexible work schedules and hybrid policies to comprehensive health coverage and child care support. Among these, Corporate Backup Care is one of the most impactful and trending offerings, steadily gaining popularity as more companies integrate it into their employee benefit packages.

This guide demystifies Corporate Backup Care by outlining the key considerations for incorporating it into a company's employee benefit package. It provides decision-makers with a comprehensive understanding of its strategic advantages and practical implementation, serving as an indispensable resource for organizations aiming to build a resilient and adaptable workplace.

This eBook includes

- Valuable case studies showcasing successful implementations
- A clear breakdown of how Corporate Backup Care works
- Key factors to consider when selecting a provider for administering the benefit

Additionally, the FAQs section offers tailored insights to help organizations confidently navigate the complexities of implementing Corporate Backup Care.

WHY IT MATTERS

THE HIGH COST OF MISSED WORK DUE TO CHILD CARE

In August of 2024, roughly 69,000 parents reportedly missed work due to issues with child care, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported. One day of missed full-time work can cost employers \$340^b per missing employee, per Circadian^c. Thus, the cost of missed work due to child care problems could be estimated at a roughly \$23,460,000 loss for American companies in one month alone.

THE UNSPOKEN IMPACT OF CHILD CARE GAPS IN THE WORKFORCE

Child care gaps can lead to significant monetary losses for businesses, but the impact extends far beyond financial concerns. These gaps often occur when parents are forced to stay home with their children or work a modified day while juggling coverage, leading to:

- Increased absenteeism: When reliable child care is unavailable, parents may be forced to miss work, leading to higher rates of absenteeism.
- Work Disruptions: Unplanned absences and child care-related distractions can interrupt workflow and weaken overall job performance.
- Morale Impact: Frequent absences not only frustrate colleagues but also lower team spirit, creating a ripple effect that can diminish overall productivity.
- Fragmented Workday: When employees must work only part of the day due to child care challenges, it disrupts their focus and interferes with team collaboration, impacting overall team productivity.
- **Reduced Employee Satisfaction:** With family-friendly benefits increasingly expected by today's workforce, the absence of such support can lead to growing dissatisfaction and make it harder to attract and retain top talent.



8 OUT OF 10

employees say caregiving responsibilities affect their productivity at work.

SURVEY RESULTS AS PROOF

Despite the widespread nature of these challenges, many employers remain unaware of the full extent to which child care gaps affect the workforce. A recent survey revealed a notable disconnect: while only 24% of employers recognize that caregiving responsibilities impact performance, 80% of employees with such responsibilities report that these challenges do affect their productivity. Given this reality, employers must consider solutions that bridge child care gaps—such as when a child's regular school, daycare, or babysitter is unavailable—ensuring that employees remain engaged and effective throughout the workday. Corporate Backup Care is a mutually beneficial solution that empowers employees to balance work and caregiving responsibilities, ultimately enhancing overall organizational performance.

DON'T BE LEFT BEHIND: FAMILY-FRIENDLY EMPLOYERS ARE GETTING AHEAD

In 2023, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that nearly 92% of families with children under the age of 18 had at least one working parent. Pew Research Center reports that "29% of adults who have ever worked say they have reduced their work hours in order to care for a child or other family member." Today's top talent values family-friendly benefits, and companies that prioritize family-friendliness in their culture outpace less inclusive competitors in hiring, retention, and overall growth. Failing to keep pace with this trend risks being left behind. Investments in a supportive culture yield high ROI through improved productivity, greater job satisfaction, and stronger retention. Offering Corporate Backup Care can be far less costly than enduring losses from reduced productivity, a tarnished brand reputation, or increased turnover.

92% of families have one or more working parents.

29% of adults have missed work to care for family.

WHAT IS IT?

Corporate Backup Care is a child care solution, offered as an employee benefit by forward-thinking employers.

It ensures that parents have access to care when their regular arrangements—whether it's school, daycare, or a babysitter—fall through due to illness, closures, or scheduling conflicts. By bridging these gaps, Corporate Backup Care helps maintain employee focus and productivity, keeping workdays on track during both planned and unforeseen child care challenges.

A WIN-WIN SITUATION

Corporate Backup Care creates a win-win scenario for both employees and employers. For working parents, it delivers reliable access to child care during emergencies, planned events, or last-minute needs—helping them maintain a healthier work-life balance and perform at their best. This support not only enhances individual well-being but also cultivates an employee's own contribution to a positive and stable workplace culture.

On the employer side, offering Corporate Backup Care translates into higher productivity and improved attendance by minimizing workday disruptions and distractions. By investing in this solution, companies demonstrate a commitment to family-friendly policies that attract top talent, boost employee morale, and drive overall organizational growth.

THE ROI STRATEGIC ADVANTAGES

Corporate Backup Care not only alleviates child care-related challenges but also delivers measurable returns on investment. By providing a reliable solution for care disruptions, organizations can achieve cost savings through reduced recruitment expenses—thanks to decreased turnover—improved operational efficiency as workflows remain uninterrupted, and lower overtime costs incurred when colleagues cover for absent team members.

Offering Corporate Backup Care also reinforces a company's reputation as a forward-thinking, family-friendly employer. A study by Ovia Health^e revealed that:

-94% OF RESPONDENTS LIST FAMILY BENEFITS AS A TOP PRIORITY IN THE WORKPLACE

73% WOULD GLADLY LEAVE THEIR CURRENT EMPLOYER FOR A COMPETITOR WITH BETTER BENEFITS AND A FAMILY-FRIENDLY CULTURE.

OVIA HEALTH

Although Corporate Backup Care is growing in popularity, studies estimate that only between **4% and 12% of employers currently offer this solution**—leaving a significant competitive advantage for early adopters. This progressive image not only attracts top-tier talent but also cultivates stronger customer loyalty and differentiates the organization in a competitive marketplace.

Furthermore, 77% of parents utilizing backup care report enhanced concentration at work, enabling them to perform their duties with greater efficiency and effectiveness. Ultimately, investing in Corporate Backup Care turns an unavoidable challenge into a strategic asset that supports long-term growth and builds a resilient, efficient workforce.

HOW IT WORKS



EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED

Corporate Backup Care is designed to ensure that unexpected child care gaps don't derail the workday. A typical trigger occurs when regular child care falls through—whether due to a child's mild fever, a caregiver's need for a day off, scheduled daycare or a school closure—employees can quickly secure reliable care and not miss work.



QUICK AND SEAMLESS RESPONSE

Employees initiate the process by submitting a care request electronically to the benefit provider. In response, a qualified, vetted nanny is promptly assigned to the employee's request, to show up at the home for the workday. This streamlined solution covers both emergencies and planned disruptions, allowing parents to work with confidence and focus.



PROVIDER TRACKING AND REPORTING

Tracking and reporting systems monitor utilization of the service.

Providers track each instance of care, generating detailed reports on usage and performance. Invoicing for services rendered is handled with regular statements provided to employers for straightforward integration into existing payroll and accounting systems.



EMPLOYER-SPONSORED SIMPLICITY

As an employer-sponsored offering, Corporate Backup Care is integrated into the employee benefits package, with costs managed through full coverage or a co-pay system. This seamless arrangement not only supports workplace productivity but also reinforces a family-friendly culture.

CASE STUDIES POSITIVE OUTCOMES

Companies who offer Corporate Backup Care often report a high return on investment due to many factors, including:

- Added productivity
- Increased attendance
- Higher job satisfaction and retention
- Family-friendly reputation that attracts candidates and investors
- Subsidy to the high cost of child care

BOSTON CONSULTING GROUP FINDS HIGH ROLON MAJOR COMPANIES' BACKUP CARE

A study by Boston Consulting Group ^f followed major companies' child care benefit offerings. These companies are:

- Etsy
- Fast Retailing
- Steamboat Ski Resort
- Synchrony
- UPS

In partnership with non-profit women's workplace equality group Moms First, Boston Consulting Group conducted research that "encompassed financial analysis, survey responses from approximately 1,000 employees, and personal interviews."

Their findings revealed that all of the companies included in the study achieved an excellent return on their investment in Corporate Backup Care, ranging from 90% up 425%.

THE HOME DEPOT ESTABLISHES A FAMILY-FRIENDLY REPUTATION

One such case study by U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, Center for Education and Workforce, highlights Corporate Backup Care ROI in the case of The Home Depot. The Home Depot initially attempted to implement on-site child care in order to support working families, but realized that this solution would be untenable long-term. As an alternative, the company implemented a Backup Care solution that included:

- Access to the benefit for employees of 1+ years
- 24/7 access with up to 10 days of care each calendar year.
- To maximize support, care benefits were extended to circumstances covering the self, spouse, dependent children, parents, grandchildren, and grandparents.
- Provided via discounted care through a partnering agency (see Assisted Child Care Search1) and an FSA with a generous limit of \$5,000 per year contributed toward care.

As a result of this implementation, Home Depot improved their reputation as a family friendly employer and set employees up for success with policies that cater to their needs and empower their attendance and productivity.

TRENDS IN CORPORATE BACKUP CARE

Though adoption of the Corporate Backup Care benefit is increasing across industries, few employers offer this benefit, despite compelling data that underscores its value. According to Ready Nation, lost productivity costs companies almost \$13 billion per year. In contrast, companies save an estimated \$3 for every \$1 invested in backup care. According to The Best Place for Working Parents, an advocacy and research group, subsidizing child care can save an average company with 250 employees \$75,000 per year in lost work time.

Despite the current low popularity of Corporate Backup Care, many companies are beginning to realize the value of family friendly benefits, and a higher rate of adoption across industries is sure to follow.

ACTIONABLE STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTING

HOW AND WHEN TO IMPLEMENT CORPORATE BACKUP CARE

In today's competitive environment, family-friendly benefits are essential for attracting and retaining top talent. Signs that it's time to implement Corporate Backup Care can include:



The company is experiencing a loss of productivity.



Attendance is lower, especially among working parents.



The company's turnover rate is climbing.



Employee satisfaction has decreased.



Projects are delayed due to absenteeism and distractions.



Employees are requesting more family-friendly policies and actions in the workplace.

Keep in mind that Corporate Backup Care benefits the entire workforce—not just working parents. If these issues are prevalent within an organization, it's time to consider a Corporate Backup Care solution.

Implementing Corporate Backup Care can be a straightforward process when the right steps are followed. On the next page, we will discuss how to choose a program, what to look for in a provider, and steps for launching the Corporate Backup Care benefit.

TACTICAL ROADMAP

1. ASSESS EMPLOYEE NEEDS

Begin by evaluating the child care challenges the workforce faces. Make it clear that the company is willing to help employees find solutions that add value to their lives. Use surveys, focus groups, or informal discussions to gather data on:

- The frequency and impact of child care gaps
- Specific pain points and needs for child care support
- Actionable Step: Launch a brief survey or conversations to capture insights on recent child care issues and their effect on work performance. Ensure the survey
 - Respects Confidentiality and Anonymity: Design the survey so responses are aggregated or anonymous, protecting individual identities.
 - Encourages Voluntary Participation: Clearly state that participation is optional and that there are no penalties for opting out.
 - Clearly Communicates Its Purpose: Inform employees how the data will be used to improve workplace policies and benefits.
 - Meets Legal Requirements: Consult with HR and legal teams to confirm that the survey complies with all applicable local, state, and federal regulations.

2. DEFINE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Determine which employees will qualify for Corporate Backup Care. While broad availability maximizes ROI, establish guidelines based on:

- Tenure with the company
- Department or job level
- Employment type (full-time, part-time, or contract)
- Compliance with company policies
- Actionable Step: Review existing benefits policies to align eligibility criteria while ensuring compliance with local, state, and federal regulations.

3. SET BENEFIT PARAMETERS AND LIMITS

Just as with other benefits like sick leave or vacation, define clear usage limits for Corporate Backup Care. Options include:

- A set number of days or hours per month, quarter, or year
- An accrual system that allows for unused hours to roll over
- Actionable Step: Analyze current benefit utilization data to establish realistic and sustainable limits. Add in data for potential utilization gathered during the assessment step.

4. DETERMINE BUDGET AND PAYMENT STRUCTURE

Establish a proposed budget for the Corporate Backup Care benefit program. Forecast two scenarios, whether the company will fully cover the costs or implement a co-pay/stipend system.

Actionable Step: Conduct a cost-benefit analysis comparing the investment in backup care with potential savings from reduced absenteeism and improved productivity.

5. RESEARCH AND SHORTLIST PROVIDERS

With clear requirements established, begin researching potential providers. Evaluate candidates based on their service offerings, ability to meet specified criteria, and proficiency in managing provider tracking, reporting utilization, and handling invoicing seamlessly. Additionally, ensure that the provider possesses a robust internal infrastructure in both human capital and technology—essential for delivering and scaling the benefits efficiently.

Actionable Step: Develop a checklist of key provider attributes, including internal staffing capabilities, technological systems for benefit administration, and comprehensive service delivery models. Request proposals or case studies from shortlisted vendors to confirm their ability to support the Corporate Backup Care program effectively.

BY FOLLOWING THESE ACTIONABLE STEPS, organizations can strategically implement Corporate Backup Care, turning child care challenges into an opportunity for enhanced productivity and a supportive, resilient workplace culture. Next, we will explore how to select the right provider to service and manage this critical benefit.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT PROVIDER

Selecting the right partner is essential to the success of your Corporate Backup Care program. After assessing the company's and employees' needs, employers should evaluate potential providers based on several key criteria.



STABILITY AND RELIABILITY

Selecting a dependable partner begins with ensuring the provider is a reputable child care staffing company with a proven track record in delivering backup care services. Look for a provider that demonstrates consistent performance and has significant experience specifically in the Corporate Backup Care space. Evaluate factors such as the number of years in operation, the expertise of the leadership team, and documented success in servicing companies similar in size and structure to your organization.

A key indicator of stability is if the provider employs caregivers as W2 employees rather than independent contractors. This arrangement not only streamlines administrative responsibilities and transfers liability—ensuring that all aspects from payroll to insurance coverage are professionally managed—but also guarantees that caregivers are properly trained in the specific policies related to backup child care. It is essential that the provider maintains a sufficiently large caregiving team to meet demand, as a benefit is only effective if the provider can consistently deliver reliable care.

Additionally, verify that the provider holds all necessary state and local licenses, and look for industry recognition, positive reviews, and success stories or case studies that underscore their reliability and capacity to serve your organization's needs.

Conducting thorough due diligence in these areas will help guarantee that the chosen partner is equipped to deliver a high-quality, reliable Corporate Backup Care program that supports your organization's long-term success.



SAFETY AND COMPLIANCE

When selecting a Corporate Backup Care provider, safety and adherence to regulatory standards are paramount. Look for an agency that demonstrates a commitment to rigorous hiring practices and transparent vetting processes. This should include comprehensive local, state, and national background checks, national sex offer registry, identity verifications, and thorough reference checks from previous employers. The provider should clearly articulate the steps taken to evaluate each caregiver's experience and capabilities in delivering quality child care.

In addition to stringent hiring standards, ensure that the provider maintains all necessary licenses and certifications required by local and state authorities. Verify that they hold adequate insurance coverage, including liability policies that protect both the caregiver and your organization. An agency that prioritizes safety will be forthcoming about its processes and documentation, providing you with the assurance that every caregiver is not only qualified but also compliant with all applicable regulations.

By selecting a partner that excels in safety and compliance, organizations can confidently implement a Corporate Backup Care program that supports employees while effectively managing risk.



RANGE OF SERVICES

Select a provider that offers a comprehensive suite of services tailored to the unique needs of your organization. Look for flexibility in care models to ensure that the solution can be aligned with both your budget and operational requirements. Options may include:

- In-Home Care: Agency-dispatched, nanny employees who provide care at the employee's home.
- **Employee-Selected Providers:** A model where employees source their own trusted caregiver, with the employer covering all or a portion of the associated costs.
- **Supplementary Services:** Additional offerings such as more long term child care hiring subsidies or agency-assisted child care searches that further support employees in managing child care needs.

A provider with a broad range of services is well-equipped to handle varying child care challenges as they arise, ensuring that your organization's needs are met regardless of the specific circumstances.

This flexibility not only addresses immediate child care gaps but also supports evolving workforce requirements over time. Additional offerings, such as child care subsidies or agency-assisted searches, can further enhance the overall support system for employees, ultimately contributing to the long-term success and sustainability of your Corporate Backup Care program and benefit strategy.



SCALABILITY

As organizations evolve, a Corporate Backup Care solution must seamlessly scale to meet shifting demands. Choose a provider that not only adapts to increased service requirements but also possesses the infrastructure to support employees across diverse geographic locations. The ideal partner will offer flexible service models that can adjust to fluctuations in employee numbers and varying care needs, ensuring consistent, high-quality support as the company grows. Look for a provider with proven experience in managing scalable programs for organizations of different sizes, ensuring that the Corporate Backup Care solution remains robust, effective, and responsive over time.



CUSTOMER SUPPORT

Effective and accessible customer support is crucial to the success of a Corporate Backup Care program. The provider should offer multiple channels of communication—such as phone, email, and text—ensuring that employees can reach a dedicated support team at any time. This team should be well-versed in the intricacies of Corporate Backup Care, ready to assist with quick care bookings, prompt resolution of issues, and any other benefit-related inquiries. Robust customer support not only enhances the user experience but also maximizes the overall value of the benefit for both employees and the organization.



COST EFFECTIVENESS

Transparency in pricing and billing is key. Engage providers who offer clear, detailed breakdowns of costs and flexible payment structures that fit within your budget. A cost-effective solution should deliver a strong return on investment through reduced absenteeism and enhanced productivity.

BY CAREFULLY CONSIDERING THESE FACTORS, organizations can select a provider that not only meets operational requirements but also enhances the overall value and impact of the Corporate Backup Care program. This strategic partnership ultimately supports a resilient, family-friendly workplace culture and drives long-term organizational success.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What screening process should a company look for when evaluating an agency to provide Corporate Backup Care?

A: A robust screening process is essential for ensuring high-quality care. Look for agencies that:

- Conduct Multiple Interview Stages: Start with an initial phone screening followed by a detailed application review and an in-depth, documented formal interview.
- Verify Experience and Credentials: Ensure the agency rigorously checks references through comprehensive conversations.

Utilize Accredited Background Checks: The agency should partner with a background screening vendor accredited by the Professional Background Screening Association (PBSA). This screening should include checks such as Social Security Trace, reviews of national and county criminal records, verification against the National Sex Offender Registry, Department of Motor Vehicles records, OFAC checks, and, where applicable, child abuse clearances.

Q: Is it common for employers to provide backup care benefits?

A: Although backup care benefits were once rare—only about 4% of employers offered them according to a 2018 SHRM study—recent trends indicate growing adoption. A May 2020 SHRM survey noted that 9% of employers provided or considered child care subsidies and 7% offered onsite child care services. Driven by the challenges of the pandemic and a shift toward family-friendly workplace cultures, Corporate Backup Care is becoming an increasingly popular employee benefit.

Q: How much does Corporate Backup Care cost, and who pays the associated fees?

A: Costs vary depending on the provider and the specific benefit model chosen. Common pricing components include:

- Program setup and employee registration fees
- Management fees
- Hourly or per diem rates by usage or retainer
- Predetermined subsidies or reimbursements (including co-pay models)
- Agency fee percentages

Typically, employers cover these fees either in full or through shared-cost models with employees. It's important to review each provider's pricing structure to ensure it aligns with the organization's budget and benefit goals.

Q: How can an organization efficiently educate employees about child care and answer questions?

A: Effective education is crucial for program success. Organizations can:

- Distribute clear, accessible documentation that explains the benefit and the process to initiate care requests.
- Host seminars or webinars to provide in-depth training and address employee questions.
- Develop engaging training videos that demonstrate how to use the service and navigate any associated technology.
- Utilize multiple communication channels—such as emails, benefits meetings, and inclusion in benefits packages—to ensure the information reaches everyone.
- A comprehensive communication plan helps maximize program uptake and ensures employees fully understand how to access the support available.

A provider should be able to help facilitate employee education.

Q: How do organizations typically manage the cost of this benefit?

A: Organizations manage costs by setting clear spending limits or reimbursement caps for Corporate Backup Care, tailoring the program to accommodate different tiers of utilization. This might include:

- Establishing monthly, quarterly, or annual limits on usage
- Customizing benefits for different employee groups or usage levels
- Partnering with providers who offer flexible, scalable pricing options

This approach allows companies to integrate backup care benefits into their existing budgets while delivering significant value to employees.

Q: Can employees use backup care for sick children? What limitations can be expected regarding illness and injury?

A: Policies on caring for sick children vary by provider. Generally:

- Most providers allow care for mildly ill children (e.g., low-grade fevers or minor sniffles).
- Many providers restrict care for highly contagious conditions (such as COVID-19, Hand, Foot, and Mouth disease, pinkeye, or the flu) to prevent disease spread.

It is critical for organizations to review and communicate each provider's specific illness and injury policies to ensure that safety protocols are clearly understood by employees.

Q: Is there a tax implication to an employee receiving Corporate Backup Care benefits?

A: In most cases, Corporate Backup Care benefits have minimal or no tax implications for employees. However, as individual circumstances may vary, it is advisable for employees to consult with a tax professional to assess any potential impacts specific to their situation.

Q: What is a typical billing or invoicing process for Corporate Backup Care services?

A: Billing processes should be transparent and streamlined. Expect that:

- The provider tracks service utilization, reporting detailed line items such as employee names, dates, and total hours of care provided.
- Fees are typically based on hourly rates or predefined service charges.
- Invoices clearly outline the services rendered, facilitating easy review and prompt processing.

Partner with a provider that can streamline the process and integrate seamlessly with existing payroll and accounting systems for efficient benefit administration.

Q: Can employees' dependent care accounts be utilized to cover potential co-pays?

A: Yes, employees can often use their dependent care accounts to cover copays, provided the partnering agency is an incorporated business with a valid Federal Tax Number. This ensures that reimbursements for child care expenses comply with IRS regulations.

These FAQs are designed to help organizations make informed decisions about implementing and managing Corporate Backup Care, ensuring a robust and effective benefit program for their workforce.



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

WENDY SACHS is an industry trailblazer and the visionary founder of Philadelphia Nanny Network, bringing over 40 years of expertise in connecting families with exceptional child care professionals. Renowned for her innovative approach, Wendy has consistently elevated standards in recruiting, screening, and hiring top talent, ensuring that every caregiver meets the highest benchmarks of quality and reliability.

Under her leadership, Philadelphia Nanny Network has become a leading provider of Corporate Backup Care, serving the employee benefit needs of more than 1,000 companies. With over 20 years of specialized experience in backup care, the organization has built a dependable network capable of delivering trusted, high-quality child care solutions across the United States. The company's success is underscored by prestigious accolades, including recognition on the INC5000 Fastest Growing Companies list, certification as a Woman Owned business, the INA Meritorious Award, the APNA Innovative Award, the Enterprising Women of the Year Award, and the Philly 100 Award.

Wendy's insights have reached millions through more than 500 interviews on major networks—including CNN, CNBC, NBC, and The Oprah Winfrey Show—and features in leading national publications. As a founding member of the International Nanny Association, she has held multiple leadership roles, including four terms as President and two as Co-President, further establishing her as a respected authority in the industry.

Currently serving on the board of the Association of Premier Nanny Agencies, Wendy champions the advancement of professional standards by actively participating in task forces to refine standards and service quality, and by delivering presentations that educate agencies on building and scaling their businesses for sustained industry growth. Her unwavering commitment to innovation and excellence makes her a trusted thought leader and the go-to expert for organizations looking to integrate Corporate Backup Care into their employee benefits strategy.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CORPORATE BACKUP CARE, CONTACT WENDY SACHS AT WSACHS@NANNYAGENCY.COM OR BOOK A MEETING.



SOURCES AND CITATIONS

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