Working mothers are left behind in today’s hot labor market

While workers in general are taking advantage of the tight labor market, caregiving responsibilities are preventing working mothers from benefiting.

A majority of mothers in the workforce are not comfortable taking a new job that aligns with their career interests but would have:

Caregiving prevents mothers from advancing their careers and starting their own businesses, leaving them unable to take advantage of today’s historically hot labor market.

53% of mothers in the workforce who would like to start their own business cite caregiving for children as a barrier to doing so.

41% of Hispanic mothers with young children say that discrimination due to gender, pregnancy, or raising children is a barrier to switching jobs.

The COVID-19 pandemic compounded these challenges, forcing mothers to scale back their work — especially Hispanic women with young children.

As a result, mothers in the workforce face heightened financial insecurity.

Many mothers would quickly struggle to meet their family’s needs if they had to live without a paycheck.

26% can’t go a week without a paycheck
59% can’t go more than a month without a paycheck

Caregiving responsibilities forced over half of working mothers to make difficult decisions for themselves and their families.

Flexible Work Hours

62% say flexible work hours would help them achieve work-life balance and improve their mental health.

Access to Affordable Childcare

56% say key flexible work hours would help them achieve work-life balance and improve their mental health.

Emergency Savings Accounts

59% say an emergency savings account would help them keep the financial insecurity preventing them from making career changes.

Paid Family Leave

53% say they would be more likely to stay in the workforce if they had access to paid family leave benefits.

Solutions targeted at providing working mothers with more financial and caregiving support would have outsized benefits.

Reduced spending on everyday essentials like groceries and transportation

66%

Reduced spending on non-essential activities like going out to eat

62%

About the experience of mothers in the workforce

Methodology:
This poll was conducted between April 19-29, 2022, among a sample of 2,500 working mothers. The interviews were conducted online, and the data were weighted to approximate a target sample of working mothers based on educational attainment, age, race, ethnicity, whether they were self-employed, and region. Results from the full survey have a margin of error of +/-2%.