

**Labor's Participation in Work/Family Issues:
Successes and Obstacles**

**Nicola Dones and Netsy Firestein
Labor Project for Working Families**

2521 Channing Way
Berkeley, CA 94720
510-643-7088
www.laborproject.org

From Learning From the Past – Looking to the Future
Christopher Beem and Jody Heymann, Editors
Work, Family and Democracy Project
Racine, Wisconsin/ Boston, Massachusetts
2002

Every day, working people are forced to choose between their jobs and their families. Take the bus driver who has to get her kids to child care by 5 a.m. because she can't be even two minutes late for her shift; the home health aide who makes just above minimum wage and can't afford quality child care; the secretary who can't afford to take unpaid family leave to care for her seriously ill parent.

Current workplace practices and public policies make it extremely difficult for working people who need time and resources to care for their families. New work/family policies – policies like child and elder care benefits and subsidies, flexible work schedules, family leave, leave to care for a sick child, and the like – would make a world of difference. Achieving these new policies, however, requires organized constituencies advocating for change.

Unions are committed partners in the push for such change. In both individual workplaces and the public policy arena, unions represent a large constituency of working families. In fact, with close to 14 million members, they represent more working families than any other organization in the United States. They are, therefore, an important voice in the movement to help improve and expand the child care system, to address the growing issue of elder care as well as the need for paid family leave. Recent changes in the labor movement and strong new leadership from the AFL-CIO mean work & family issues are an even higher priority within unions today.

Problems Faced By Working Families Today

Working families today are facing several major problems: ¹ (1) quality child care services which are unaffordable for many; (2) limited availability of child care services including after hours and at weekends; (3) care workers' low wages and lack of benefits; (4) the absence of workplace policies supportive of parenting and caregiving, including paid family leave and flexible work schedules.

In a ripple effect, each of these produces problems for children, parents and society.

Uneven Quality and High Cost of Child Care Services

The current demand for child care services in the U.S. is very large. About sixty percent of women with children under 5 are in the labor force.² This means ten million preschoolers with employed mothers. There are also twenty-four million school-age children in need of care during out-of-school time.³ By the year 2001, sixty-nine percent of families will consist of single parents or two parents who work full time and nearly all will require child care.⁴ This translates into a huge demand for child care services, a demand that is likely to grow as women's

¹ In this paper, "child care" is used to mean all types of education and care for children five and under, and programs for school-age children before and after school and during vacations.

² Miles Hochstein and Neal Halfon, *Brain Development* (Sacramento, CA: California Center for Health Improvement, 1997) p. 4.

³ U.S. Department of the Treasury, *Investing in Child Care: Challenges Facing Working Parents and the Private Sector Response* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Treasury, 1999) p. v.

⁴ California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, *The 1997 California Child Care Portfolio* (San Francisco, CA, 1997) p. 1.

labor force participation increases and the trend toward a 24-hour economy and longer work hours continues.⁵

The cost of quality child care services, however, is high. After food, housing and taxes, child care is the fourth largest expenditure for families with children.⁶ Licensed child care centers provide the best care,⁷ but the average cost of full-time care for a child under 2 years old in a licensed child care center is \$135 a week (\$7,020 annually). For those who earn minimum wage, this is sixty-eight percent of their annual salary.⁸ Thus, quality care is simply out of reach for low-income parents, many of whom must “choose” low-quality care or no care at all.⁹

In the U.S., unlike in other countries, employers and government have not stepped in to help defer costs. Public investment in schooling is about \$5 per child hour of enrollment, whereas public investment in child care is about \$2 per child hour of enrollment.¹⁰ Nearly eighty percent of child care is paid for by parents.¹¹ In contrast, in Italy and France, programs are virtually free for three- to five-year-olds and parents seldom pay more than a quarter to one-third of the costs of programs for children three and younger.¹²

Limited Availability of Child Care Services

Another problem parents face is a limited availability of services for children 0-5.¹³ Fifty-six percent of mothers with children under 5 identify “finding affordable child care” as a *serious* problem.¹⁴ Half of parents surveyed said their community was a poor or only fair place to obtain quality child care,¹⁵ and a national survey of child care centers found these parents are right; seven in ten centers provided mediocre care; one in eight was so inadequate that it threatened the

⁵ U.S. Department of the Treasury, p. 7.

⁶ California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, p. 1.

⁷ Center for the Child Care Workforce, *Worthy Work, Unlivable Wages: The National Child Care Staffing Study, 1988-1997* (Washington, DC: Center for the Child Care Workforce, 1997).

⁸ California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, p. 7.

⁹ A national study found that parents with incomes of under \$15,000 spent about 25 percent of their income on child care. U.S. Census Bureau, *What Does It Cost to Mind Our Preschoolers?* Current Population Reports, Survey of Income and Program Participation, Fall 1993 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, September 1995).

¹⁰ Nancy E. Cohen and Sharon L. Kagan, eds., *Funding and Financing Early Care and Education* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale Bush Center in Child Development and Social Policy, 1997), p. 3.

¹¹ Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study Team, *Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers: Public Report* (Denver, CO: Department of Economics, University of Colorado at Denver, 1995), cited in Cohen and Kagan, p. 2. Data in this study are drawn from approximately 300 non-profit and for-profit child care centers in California, Colorado, Connecticut and North Carolina. A second source finds that between 70-75 percent of the cost is paid for by consumers: L. Stoney and M.H. Greenberg, “The Financing of Child Care: Current and Emerging Trends.” *The Future of Children: Financing Child Care* 6 (Summer/Fall 1996), cited in Cohen and Kagan, p. 2.

¹² W.T. Gormley, *Everybody's Children: Child Care as a Public Problem* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1995) and S. B. Kamerman and A.J. Kahn, *A Welcome for Every Child: Care Education, and Family Support for Infants and Toddlers in Europe* (Arlington, VA: Zero to Three/National Center for Clinical Infant Programs, 1994), cited in Cohen and Kagan, p. 3.

¹³ Little Hoover Commission, p. vii.

¹⁴ California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, p. 1.

¹⁵ Hochstein and Halfon, p. 4.

health and safety of children.¹⁶

The under supply of services, especially quality services, is particularly acute for the one in five (14.3 million) full-time workers (7.2 million of whom are mothers) who work non-standard hours -- hours, that is, outside the standard 9-to-5 arrangement. Parents also have trouble finding care for school-age children, since schools have hours and vacation schedules that do not coincide with either standard or non-standard employment schedules.¹⁷

Poor Compensation of Child, Elder and Homecare Workers

Workers who care for our children or our elderly are some of the most poorly compensated workers in the U.S. today. The average wage for center-based child care teachers nationwide is \$6.70 an hour and roughly one-third of center-based teachers are paid the minimum wage.¹⁸ In addition, most child care workers have no health insurance, sick leave, vacation, or other basic benefits.¹⁹ Given their level of education and experience, child care workers are “grossly underpaid even for women in female-dominated occupations.”²⁰ As a result, parents who do purchase child care services are getting these services from workers who are often too poor to afford child care for their own children.

Homecare workers care for elderly and disabled people in their own homes. The average salary for home care workers is \$5.75, the minimum wage. Those taking care of the elderly and house-bound often have no health insurance, sick leave or vacation. The work is often difficult but can make the difference between institutionalization and staying in one’s home. The workforce is predominately female and women of color. This care work, like child care, is unrecognized and under compensated.

The Absence of Workplace Policies Supportive of Caregiving

Changes in the workforce and in the kinds of hours people work make it increasingly difficult for working families to parent the way they want to. Parents with young children widely report that they lack sufficient time for their families.²¹ They want to be able to nurture their children at critical points in time: in the first year of life; when a child is ill or in trouble; when she is experiencing a joyous event; when her education demands special attention.

There is also the growing need to provide care for other family members. The typical family caregiver is a woman working full-time, who also spends an average of 18 hours a week taking care of a sick or ailing parent. Certain workplace policies make it possible for families to meet the needs of their children and ailing parents without threatening the income that supports their

¹⁶ Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study Team, cited in Kagan and Cohen, p. 2.

¹⁷ U.S. Department of Labor, Women’s Bureau, *Care around the Clock: Developing Child Care Resources Before 9 and After 5* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Labor, Women’s Bureau, 1995) p. 5. There are approximately 1,000 different work schedules in use in the U.S. today.

¹⁸ Dan Bellm et al, *Making Work Pay in the Child Care Industry* (Washington, DC: National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, 1997) pp. 13-14.

¹⁹ Center for the Child Care Workforce, pp. 19-20.

²⁰ Cohen and Kagan, p. 3.

²¹ K.T. Young and C. Shoen, *The Commonwealth Fund Survey of Parents with Young Children* (New York, 1996), cited in Hochstein and Halfon, p. 3.

family. These policies include various types of leave (parental, family and medical leave, use of sick leave for children, leave for school-related events) and flexible work schedules.

Balancing Work and Family – A Union Issue

Since the early days of the U.S. labor movement, family and children's issues have been union issues. As Dennis Rivera, President, 1199 National Health and Human Service Employees Union, SEIU points out, issues such as child care cannot be isolated from other issues important to labor unions. "What's important," he states, "is (that) the labor movement be a source of meaningful improvement in people's lives." The labor movement has to fight for progressive social policies and also provide direct help and assistance to working people.

A History of Advocacy

For the last century, labor unions have organized and fought for living wage and minimum-wage laws, the eight-hour day, the 35-hour week, a ban on child labor, an end to sweatshops and homework, well-paid, part-time work with benefits, family and medical leave, health insurance for families, and free public education. Unions also have a history of working specifically for family issues such as family leave and child care. In the early forties, with fathers abroad and mothers entering the workforce in record numbers, labor supported the creation of federally-funded child care centers. It also opposed their dismantling at the end of the war. Since then, labor's support for publicly-funded child care has continued uninterrupted.

Until the late sixties, bargaining for employer-funding of child care services was illegal under the Taft-Hartley Act. As a result, the ability of unions to push for employer contributions to child care was limited. This changed in 1969, when unions advocated successfully for a reform to the Act. The Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU) was probably the first union to establish employer-supported child care centers, centers which cared for over 1,800 children of union members. In 1998, a study of bargaining agreements from six international unions, found that at least 1.6 million workers were covered by some type of child care benefits through their union contracts.

While child care has been on the union agenda since the forties, a number of forces have arisen in recent decades which have helped unions become more committed and effective advocates of family issues. These include: (1) increased numbers of women in the paid labor force; (2) increased numbers of women in unions; (3) an increase in the ratio of women to men in unions, and ; (4) an increase in women's activism within unions. These changes have produced increased demand by working adults for "family concerns" in the broadest sense: affordable child care, sick time for sick family members, paid family leave, and other family-friendly benefits.

Labor Strategies

Labor has generally used three main strategies in the struggle for better conditions for working families: collective bargaining, legislation and organizing. Bargaining successes related to the direct provision of child and elder care include contracts providing for child and elder care funds,

on-site and near-site child care centers, extended hours child care, and sick and emergency care. Unions also have had success in bargaining for generous family leave and alternative work schedule policies. Some examples of union advances on family leave policies include: contracts providing for paid maternity, paternity and adoption leave; contracts allowing members to use their sick time to care for sick children; and short term leave giving members flexibility to accompany children to appointments or attend school events. Alternative work schedules won in union contracts include: flextime; compressed work weeks; telecommuting; and part-time return to work schedules for new parents after the birth or adoption of a child.

Today, due to the current economic growth and its impact on the workplace, limiting mandatory overtime has become a main focus of bargaining for many big unions. The Communication Workers of America (CWA) successfully negotiated weekly overtime limits of 7 ½ and 8 hours, depending on the job classification in their settlement with Verizon Communications. Any voluntary overtime counts towards that limit. The United Auto Workers (UAW) and the California Nurses Association (CNA) have also won similar contract provisions limiting overtime.

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) is a well-known example of a union-backed legislative triumph on behalf of working families. First championed by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) under the leadership of then-president John Sweeney, the FMLA finally became national law in 1993 as the accomplishment of a broad-based grassroots coalition with many union players. Unions continue to struggle nationwide for improvements on the FMLA. For example, in 1999, unions in California, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, and Washington were involved in public policy efforts to provide paid family leave. States are exploring various options through utilizing unemployment insurance, disability funds and other state funds. Unions were also central in promoting increases in state funding for child care in several states including California and New York.

Through successful organizing campaigns, unions have been able to raise the wages of caregivers. In California, organized homecare workers have won contracts with compensation at \$7.25 an hour, plus benefits. Unorganized workers still earn \$5.75, the minimum wage, and receive no benefits. Childcare workers are also beginning to reap the benefits of union representation.

Key Organizations Supporting Labor's Efforts

Several groups within and alongside the labor movement have helped raise work/ family issues as labor concerns. Their activism and participation around these issues can be traced through a number of their key publications.

The Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW): CLUW was founded in 1974 by union activists eager to convey to their fellow trade unionists the responsibilities and opportunities that working women posed for the labor movement. Originally an ad hoc group of union women, today it is a formally recognized “constituency group” within the AFL-CIO. In 1988 CLUW sponsored a national demonstration called “The American Family Celebration,” which brought 40,000 union members and their children to

Washington to lobby for the “American Family Bill of Rights.” CLUW also created the classic guide to negotiating work and family benefits in union workplaces, *Bargaining for Family Benefits* (1989).

Departments of International Unions: Family issues are at the forefront of many departments in several international unions such as the Work and Family Department of the United Auto Workers (UAW), the Research Department of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU) (now known as UNITE), and the Women’s Right’s Department of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME).²² Useful snapshots of the accomplishments of these unions in the area of work and family can be found in, respectively, Families in Change: A UAW Work and Family Handbook (UAW 1993), Bargaining on Women’s Issues and Family Concerns (ACTWU 1990), and Building Blocks: A Manual for Child Care (AFSCME 1990).

Working Women’s Department, AFL-CIO: The most recent and high-profile advocate of work and family within labor is the new Working Women’s Department of the AFL-CIO, established in 1996. Among the first accomplishments of this new Department was the 1999 “Ask a Working Woman” survey of over 50,000 working women. Following this survey, the Department declared child care one of its main areas of concern. The survey was repeated this year with paid family leave at the forefront of important issues for working women. (Prior to the Department’s founding, the AFL-CIO published Putting Families First (n.d.))

Labor Project for Working Families: The Labor Project was founded in 1992 to encourage the development of “work/family policies” within the labor movement and to support unions pursuing such policies in organizing, bargaining and public policy. Some of the Labor Project’s most notable publications include the Bargaining for Work and Family Fact Sheets (1997) (published by the Working Women’s Department, AFL-CIO), Labor’s Role in Addressing the Child Care Crisis (1999) written as part of the Foundation for Child Development’s Working Paper Series, and Labor News for Working Families, a quarterly newsletter.

These groups work within the labor movement to promote work and family issues as a priority within unions and to provide technical support and other assistance to unions already seeking ways to expand their commitment to these issues. They also work to advance solutions to such problems in the public policy arena.

OVERCOMING THE BARRIERS

In 1999, the Labor Project for Working Families conducted a series of interviews with labor leaders for a paper, “Labor’s Role in Addressing the Child Care Crisis”, as part of the Foundation for Child Developments Working Paper Series. The interviews identified the main barriers to union involvement in advocating for work and family – member communication, lack

²² Carolyn York, “Bargaining for Work and Family Benefits,” in Cobble, p. 132.

of women leadership, limited understanding of the issue – and ways to overcome them.

Member Communication

The majority of labor leaders interviewed identified the need for a clearly expressed mandate from members around work & family provisions. For many high-level leaders of unions, family issues like child care are issues that are not currently relevant in their own lives. For others, child care has never been an issue either because they did not have children or because their spouse or partner took primary responsibility for child-rearing while they committed most of their own energies to building their unions. Many have never had an ailing parent to find or provide care for. Morton Bahr, President of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) is an active champion of family issues for his members but admits that he himself “wasn’t born with these ideas in my head.” Without communication from the bottom up union leadership is not always aware that such issues are important to members.

This message from the “bottom up” can be delivered in several ways. A number of respondents talked about the importance of “listening to your members”—identifying their needs correctly, paying attention to what members say their needs are, and not dictating to members “from the top” what the solutions to their needs should be. Many of these leaders cited surveys for collective bargaining and other purposes as vital tools for unions to use around these issues. For Elizabeth Bunn, International Vice President, United Autoworkers International Union (UAW), the “role of leadership is to listen to workers and identify what their needs are rather than dictating what they should have to satisfy their needs.” “There is a science to the listening process, she continued, and the “survey process is very important.” Karen Nussbaum, Director of the AFL-CIO Working Women’s Department and who directed the highly successful national “Ask a Working Woman” survey, also talked about the usefulness of surveys for collective bargaining and other purposes. According to Nussbaum, these surveys help reinforce labor leaders’ belief that their constituents care about family issues such as child care, that there is interest “at the base”. What is also clearly important is that surveys be created which can elicit an accurate picture of members’ needs and also get around the prevalent attitude that issues like child and elder care are each individuals’ personal problems.

It can be very valuable to pursue strategies that personalize the balancing act between work and family with leaders who have had these kinds of life experience. Gloria Johnson, President of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), told a story illustrating this point: when her own sister died, she left Johnson’s brother-in-law with two small children, ages two and six. The brother-in-law, who had not previously taken care of the children, couldn’t work until he found care for his two kids. Suddenly, child care became his most important issue. “Maybe we need to collect more stories like this,” Johnson suggested, “to put a face on the issue for both men and women.”

Members can also communicate their need for family-friendly provisions through activism. Katie Quan is currently the Labor Policy Specialist at the Center for Labor Research and Education at the University of California, Berkeley. In her previous role as International Vice President of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) she was able to make UNITE more aware of members’ family needs and got leaders to take issues like child care seriously by building a “broad, boisterous” rank and file movement. Women on a child care

committee she organized had press conferences on the street and signed petitions in factories until their local union could no longer ignore their needs.

Lack of Women Leaders

Though the number of women holding high positions within the labor movement has increased somewhat, it is still a male-dominated area. Sharon Stiller, Assistant to the International President on Women's Issues for the United Steelworkers of America (USWA), points out that in a large, structured organization like a trade union, internal structures that serve the union well are not necessarily user-friendly to women. "If women aren't in the room there's no one there to advance the discussion" of women's and child care issues, she says, "Even if there's no specific intention to exclude women."

Stiller is actively engaged in developing a training and education program for women to help them enter the mainstream of their union. Her program will also establish women's committees in locals throughout the union. She hopes that the combination of education and local-level organizing will help women feel comfortable in leadership roles, build speaking skills, teach issues, and give them the opportunities to build alliances and develop reputations in their union and community.

The USWA recently passed a resolution on Family and Work at their national convention. They resolve to bargain for family-friendly policies, lobby for a national family policy and support adequate funding for child care and Head Start.

Understanding the Issues

Education about work & family issues for upper-level union leaders is important to give them rationales for supporting such issues rather than any of the many others that claim their attention. Currently, many labor leaders see family issues as secondary and thus receive less attention. Once leadership becomes committed to the work/ family agenda, it must be strongly communicated throughout the union. Without the full commitment of staff working under these top leaders, even the best plans are unlikely to succeed.

Some important themes on which educational campaigns with union leaders could focus include: the need for quality, affordable care for children of middle-class families; and the important role child care plays as an industry in economic development. Some labor leaders may have the perception that the good union salaries earned by the majority of their members make it possible to afford good quality care for their kids and outside care for an ailing parent. The reality is that both kinds of care are expensive and high-quality care is even more expensive. This means that while very low-income workers or unemployed people may have access to subsidized care and very high-income workers can afford whatever care they want, middle-income workers, including many union members, end up putting their children in often mediocre care and caring for an ailing parent alone.

Once top-level leaders are convinced to make family issues like child and elder care a priority, they themselves can become the catalysts for change while the mid- and lower-level leaders as

well as rank-and-file members would be their audience. The labor leaders we interviewed saw the task of motivating top union leaders to take up the cause of child and elder care as accomplishable by proving that the issue is important to members; educating about the importance of child and elder care, and personalizing family issues for leaders. Once top union leaders are committed to advancing issues like child and elder care as a key component of their union's agenda, they must then communicate this message very clearly to their staffs and must often work to secure staff buy-in.

According to Amy Dean of the South Bay Labor Council, another little-recognized fact about family issues, like child care, is the importance that it plays as part of the economy of any given region. Because union leaders should be concerned with the overall economic viability of the communities in which their members work, it is important for them to understand that child care is a workforce issue. This means that child care is an important component of the service infrastructure necessary to keep workers on the job. It also means that child care should be recognized as an industry itself, generating significant numbers of jobs and revenue for an economic region. As union leaders become more educated about the significance of child care as a component of any economy, they should also come to see the need for greater organizing of child care workers in this growing sector. As Linda Chavez-Thompson, Executive Vice President, AFL-CIO stated, "Child care workers need to be organized!" This link to organizing, which is already a priority for unions, may help to bring the issue of child care more into focus for union leaders.

Education on the issues can also come from outside the labor movement. The promoters of this kind of change could be individuals such as elected political leaders, women's leaders, or other respected "outsiders". More likely, an outside catalyst for change would be a coalition of some kind including both individuals and groups who already make work and family advocacy a priority. This coalition would then draw in labor unions as partners in a movement for improved family policies, rather than expecting organized labor to take the initiative to start such a movement on its own. The target audience for these outside voices would be mainly upper-level labor leaders, but to some extent could also be mid-level leaders or even the rank-and-file.

Karen Nussbaum described the strategy this way, "We have to demonstrate to labor leaders that there's interest at the base, that the public responds, and that there's political interest, such as from the President of the United States, First Lady, and/or U.S. Congress." For Nussbaum, this would make family issues both an interesting and viable issue to work on because it would "deliver to the base, position unions for potential members and [still be] an accomplishable goal."

Strategies to Shape New Work-Family Policies and Benefits

Public Policy and Legislation

Labor has been involved in campaigns at all levels, federal, state and local, to further public policy goals. Among the most high-profile of these was the campaign to pass the federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993.²³ Unions have also been involved in subsequent efforts to

²³ Lea Grundy and Netsy Firestein, *Work, Family and the Labor Movement* (Cambridge, MA: Radcliffe Public

expand the Act and to make it paid. At the state level, they have been players in attempts to expand family and medical leave in California, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, and Washington.²⁴ To get a close-up view of unions' involvement in public policy campaigns, following are two examples of labor/community coalitions focusing on work/family issues.

California's Work and Family Coalition

In 1998, the Labor Project for Working Families brought together a group of San Francisco Bay Area labor unions and community activists to help build a broad alliance for working families. This group quickly became the nucleus of a large and dynamic coalition of labor unions, advocacy and community groups. Together these groups designed a Coalition agenda which involved: organizing around the "Work and Family Bill of Rights"; creating opportunities for labor and community groups to build connections and alliances, and pushing a Work and Family Legislative Agenda.

The "Work and Family Bill of Rights" was originally created by the Labor Project for Working Families in cooperation with the New York Union Child Care Committee.²⁵ It is a statement of a work/family agenda for the labor movement and was created as a tool for mobilizing additional unions behind such an agenda. The document proclaims:

1. The right to quality child care and eldercare, which is affordable and accessible, [and] that provides living wages for the care provider.
2. The right to control over work hours.
3. The right to paid family and medical leave for maternity and paternity leave, caring for a family member [and for] non-emergency needs such as family medical appointments or school activities
4. The right to a living wage.
5. The right to adequate health coverage for families.

Thus far, 56 national and local unions have adopted it and pledged to include its issues as part of their bargaining and public policy agenda.

The Work and Family Coalition, comprised of unions, advocacy and community groups from the five Bay Area counties meets regularly to find ways to work together to solve a range of work/family problems. Labor groups including local unions and leadership organizations, like the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, and the Central Labor Councils, involve their membership in coalition activities such as phone banks, speak-outs, vigils and sending post cards to legislators. Community and advocacy organizations participating in the Coalition include child care and child welfare advocates, women's groups, senior advocates, immigrants rights organizations and many others.

In the year 2000, Coalition members focused on two child care issues: increased compensation for child care workers (a bill co-sponsored by the California Labor Federation) and increased

Policy Institute, 1997) p. 12; personal communication with National Partnership for Women and Families, Washington, DC, 7/20/99.

²⁴ "Strategies for Family Leave Income," *Labor News for Working Families* (Spring 1999): 1-2.

²⁵ A committee of the New York City Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO.

child care subsidies for low-income working parents. Coalition activists also coordinated efforts in the Bay Area to preserve a tobacco tax, which provides funds for early childhood programs. Over the last year, Coalition members demonstrated in Sacramento for child care subsidies and participated in postcard campaigns supporting legislation for increased compensation for child care workers. These campaigns resulted in \$15 million new dollars for retention of child care workers, and an increase of \$150 million a year for child care subsidies for low income families.

New York State: Coalition-Building for Child Care Funding.

In 1998, a coalition of New York unions came together to develop a proactive campaign on child care. Their first step was to hold a speak-out with President John Sweeney of the AFL-CIO and key labor leaders to discuss and publicize problems working people have with paying for and finding quality, affordable child care. Building from this event, the coalition joined with the New York State AFL-CIO and child care advocacy groups to mount the "Child Care That Works Campaign." The coalition's legislative goals include raises for child care workers, capital for new construction, and subsidies for child care expenses for low-income families.

The coalition has engaged in various actions, including holding lobbying days and organizing letter writing campaigns to win support for its program from state legislators. In last year's legislative session, the campaign was successful in winning over \$177 million new dollars in state funding for child care. In addition, the coalition has introduced a bill that would provide paid family leave through the temporary disability system. Paid family leave means families would be able to take time off to care for a newborn or a seriously ill child, spouse or parent without losing their job or badly needed wages. These and other actions of the New York and San Francisco Bay Area labor/community coalitions are an example of the role unions can play in advancing public policies on work and family.

Organizing of Care Workers

The unionization of child care workers is still in its infancy. Less than five percent of the child care workforce belongs to a union. Still, unionization may be picking up speed.

Issues driving the unionization of child care workers include a desire for greater dignity as a profession and the need for better salaries and basic benefits such as affordable health insurance.

Among the most notable organizing successes in the profession is the unionization of 1,000 child care workers in Massachusetts by the Child Care Employees Union (Local 1596 and 2322 of the United Auto Workers). Other smaller, successful drives have taken place among Head Start, school district, and municipal child care employees across the country.

Large, community-wide organizing campaigns have been relatively rare until recently. However, two successful organizing drives in Seattle and Philadelphia may signal an increase in larger-scale campaigns. In Seattle, teaching staff at 12 centers joined District 925 of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), while in Philadelphia over 200 teachers and child care providers joined to create the United Child Care Union, chartered by the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees/ AFSCME in May 1999.

In Philadelphia as in Seattle, a goal of the organizing drive is to create a center directors' and owners' association to recognize the union and negotiate a master contract. This strategy helps surmount one of the major barriers to organizing child care workers: the dispersion of workers among a multitude of small employers and workplaces.

Homecare workers in California have benefited greatly from the organizing efforts of SEIU. There are now close to 90,000 homecare workers represented by SEIU in California. Workers in unorganized counties earn \$5.75 an hour without benefits, though this will increase to \$6.25 on January 1, 2001, thanks to a union led effort to increase the minimum wage. Workers in organized counties receive a much higher salary AND health benefits. For example, workers in Alameda County recently won a 25% wage increase in their second contract. Compensation is \$7.25 per hour plus benefits. The organizing efforts of SEIU in California also led to Governor Davis signing the "Aging with Dignity" proposal that increased the states share of homecare workers' hourly wage and benefits.

Collective Bargaining to Offer Family -Friendly Provisions

Unions use collective bargaining to address a number of the needs of working families. Such needs include: child care services; flexible or alternative work schedules which allow for time to be with families on a regular basis; and family leave allowing working people to take time off after the birth, adoption or foster care placement of a child, or to care for a sick relative.

No systematic study has yet been done which documents the number of union contracts with work/ family provisions or the types of provisions covered in such contracts. The most comprehensive study done to date shows that, as of 1998, at least 1.6 million workers were covered by some type of child care benefit through their union contracts²⁶. An earlier, less comprehensive study, found over 860,000 workers receiving some kind of child care benefit²⁷. Both studies define child care provisions in a somewhat narrow sense. They do not, for example, count parental leave as a child care provision. Both studies also draw from only a portion of union contracts in the U.S. Hence, they undercount both the number of contracts with such provisions and the number of workers receiving child care benefits through such contracts.

A good source of data on union-won, family-friendly provisions is the "Best Contracts" database of the Labor Project for Working Families. This database catalogues union contracts in the areas of paid and unpaid family leave, short-term leave, leave to care for sick children, child care (sick, emergency, off-hours care), elder care and flexible work schedules. It currently includes contract language from over 325 bargaining agreements. The following cases, drawn from this "Best Contracts" database, profile several examples of work/ family programs, which were collectively bargained. These excellent examples of union achievements include:

- 1199 National Health and Human Service Employees Union, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and Contributing Employers;

²⁶ Labor Project for Working Families, p. 4.

²⁷ U.S. Department of Labor, *Work and Family Provisions in Major Collective Bargaining Agreements* (Washington, DC: Department of Labor, 1992).

- Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union (HERE) Local 2 and San Francisco Hotels Multi-Employer Group;
- United Auto Workers (UAW) and Ford Motor Company, General Motors Corporation and DaimlerChrysler Corporation;
- Harvard Union of Clerical and Technical Workers (HUCTW), AFSCME, and Harvard University;

A Child Care Fund for Health and Human Services Workers in New York City²⁸

In 1989, 1199 Health and Human Services Employees Union, SEIU (1199), a union representing health care workers, was preparing for contract negotiations. The union is a strong, well-organized union representing the majority of workers in the health care industry in New York City. In meetings and conversations with union leaders, many 1199 members had been complaining about the lack of services for child care in their communities due to under-funding of the public school system and crumbling parochial schools. Also, the union was constantly dealing with workers for whom they had to file grievances to defend them for arriving late to work, leaving early, or otherwise responding to household issues. A union survey found that a significant percent of union members identified child care as a priority for themselves and their families and in 1989, the union bargained for an employer-paid child care trust fund.

Today, employers from 189 institutions contribute a certain percent of their gross payroll to the fund, which is administered by a labor-management board of trustees. The fund now provides a wide range of benefits for children of all ages including:

- child care centers,
- cash vouchers for child care (\$780-\$3,900) and after-school care (\$400-\$800),
- child care resource and referral,
- summer camp programs and subsidies,
- a holiday program,
- a cultural arts program, and
- a program for teenagers.

The early childhood and education centers provide children ages 2 to 5 with a rich environment of academic, cultural and recreational activities. These run from 7:15 a.m.-6:30 p.m., Monday-Friday, 51 weeks a year. The cash vouchers provide direct financial assistance to parents to pay for child care and after-school programs. They may be used for either licensed or “informal” care. The cultural arts program serves children and teens interested in dance, music, art, theater, tutoring, SAT/PSAT preparation and physical education. This program is especially helpful for parents who must work every other weekend. In the Holiday Services program, the fund contracts with a number of organizations during the three weeks that schools are closed. These include YMCAs, religious groups, and other community based organizations. In addition to these daylong programs, the Fresh Air Fund runs a sleep away program during Spring and Winter breaks.

²⁸ Carol Joyner, 1199/Employer Child Care Fund, personal interview, 4/22/98. Lynelle Mahon, 1199/Employer Child Care Fund, personal communication, 9/3/99.

There are now 30,000 union members who have children and are, therefore, eligible to participate in these benefits. In 1998, the Fund provided program benefits to 8,427 children. The joint fund serves as a model for the provision of quality and affordable child care and children's programs.

After achieving the Fund, 1199 decided that the union should also begin to more forcefully support statewide child care legislation. This impulse came from the union's understanding that using bargaining to address child care needs has its limitations. No matter how strong the 1199 Fund might be, the majority of New York's working families would still not have access to child care benefits. Only a statewide child care policy could guarantee benefits to a wide range of families. Working in coalition with other unions, community and advocacy organizations, 1199 has pushed the New York State legislature to increase its child care budget by \$177 million.

Child and Elder Care Benefits for Hotel and Restaurant Employees in San Francisco²⁹

On the other side of the country, in 1994, the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union (HERE) Local 2 conducted a survey of members' priority issues as they prepared to go into contract negotiations with 37 San Francisco hotels employing their members. The union then went to the bargaining table and won a child and elder care fund for its members.

The 7,000 members of HERE Local 2 clean rooms, wash dishes, cook, serve cocktails and food, do bell-hopping, operate phones, and much more. They work a variety of schedules, keeping San Francisco's hotels open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They speak English, Spanish, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Korean, Tagalog, and other languages. Despite these differences, many of them share a common concern: they struggle to care for children while working, often for low wages.

The union negotiated for a fund into which employers now contribute 15 cents for every hour worked. The fund is administered by a labor/ management board of trustees. Based on a needs assessment of workers, the labor/management committee decided that the best way to address members' needs was to provide direct cash subsidies for child and elder care. They also decided that the amount of money in the fund must be enough to make a real difference; hence, the fund accumulates \$1.4 million a year. Currently, over 1,000 members are receiving financial assistance from the fund; this translates into 25% of eligible members.

Members taking care of an elderly parent or disabled adult receive a monthly cash reimbursement of \$150 to offset the costs of care. The child care benefits include \$125/ month for newborns, \$225 for licensed day care or \$125 for informal care, and \$400 for children over 13 who enroll in a licensed youth program. Resource and referral services are open to all members with work/ family challenges.

²⁹ Michael Casey, Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union (HERE) Local 2, personal interview, 3/19/98 and 5/18/98. Lisa Jaicks, HERE Local 2/Hospitality Industry Child and Elder Care Plan, personal interview, 1/22/98.

Like “1199,” the union of health care workers in New York, HERE Local 2 also realized that the success of its Fund was only a first step. Despite the Local 2 Fund, for example, the majority of California’s working families still had no access to child and elder care benefits. As a result, Local 2 is an active coalition member in the Work and Family Coalition of the San Francisco Bay Area. Through this coalition, Local 2 works with other unions, community and advocacy organizations to push the California State legislature to both increase its child care budget and expand its support of family-friendly workplace policies.

A Work and Family Fund for Auto Workers around the Country

The United Auto Workers (UAW) bargained for a fund to cover a variety of programs to meet members’ needs, including those related to balancing work and family, in national negotiations with the “Big Three” automakers -- the Ford Motor Company, General Motors Corporation, and DaimlerChrysler. This fund, established in 1982, is financed through employer contributions at the current rate of fifteen cents per hour worked by UAW members. One-third of this amount is designated for national programs, one third for local programs, and one third is allocated for a special supplemental reserve fund. The fund pays for programs for UAW members which address health and safety, job training and work and family issues. These programs are administered through three national training centers, one for each employer, and each staffed by a joint labor/management team.

Working through the training centers in collaboration with management of the Big Three, the UAW has created a myriad of child care programs and benefits that support hundreds of thousands of active and retired union members and their families. Some of these programs include:

- Child and Elder Care Resource and Referral assists members in finding quality care for children and adult dependents. For example, the Resource and Referral Programs provide information on request to employees who have latch-key children. The Resource and Referral Programs will provide them with lists of agencies, costs, and a contact person at the agency they are calling. The programs also offer educational information on general parenting topics.
- Child Development Centers provide on-site child care and summer programs for school age kids. The Child Development Center in Flint, Michigan is open 24 hours a day, five days a week, serving the children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews of union members on three different shifts. This award-winning center accommodates about 265 children, ages six weeks to 12 years.
- Expanded Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) coverage assures that the employers will comply with the FMLA. For example, members represented by UAW at DaimlerChrysler and Ford may substitute paid vacation time or excused absence allowance for unpaid FMLA leave if they choose, but are not required to use up their vacation/ excused absence time before they can take FMLA leave. Workers who take FMLA leave also continue to accrue seniority during the course of their leave.

These programs represent only a sampling of the many programs and services offered through

the joint labor/management centers of the UAW and the Big Three.

Work and Family Benefits for Clerical and Technical Workers in Cambridge, Massachusetts³⁰

In early 1989, the Harvard Union of Clerical and Technical Workers (HUCTW) had just won an historic victory organizing 3,700 employees of Harvard University in Massachusetts. Eighty-three percent of the union's membership was female, prompting organizers' decision to make the union "a model for women everywhere", as lead organizer Kris Rondeau put it. A survey of members identified work/family issues as a big priority. According to Rondeau, the union viewed them as falling into two categories: time and flexibility, and money and affordability. Securing funds to ease the financial burden of finding child and elder care was important. Real progress on these issues would also mean encouraging teamwork and allowing more flexibility in scheduling and work rules.

With this in mind, the union was determined to make both the contract and the negotiation process for the first contract participatory and flexible. Hence, HUCTW and the university administration agreed to set up collaborative bargaining tables to resolve their issues. Meanwhile, the union continued the kind of activism that had helped it win the election. They held "baby picket lines" regularly; members would turn out at lunch time with their children to draw attention to the need for child care. The union made peanut butter sandwiches, had music, provided child care and gave out balloons. "We tried to paint a picture of the whole worker, to say 'you can't take us out of context'," explained Rondeau. "It was about the quality of work and life for ourselves and our children."

At the conclusion of negotiations, HUCTW and the University agreed to set up a child care fund which provides cash grants to members based on need to pay for licensed child care providers. The fund has increased by \$10,000 over the past 12 years to \$155,000 for 1999. The funds are used to pay for child care centers, family child care, after school programs and summer camps and programs. It is used by 120 to 200 workers each year. The average amount given is \$1500 a year. While there is an income "line", there is no income ceiling for eligibility. All workers who earn under \$68,000 and who apply receive funds.

The impact of the child care fund as well as increased wages and other benefits has been enormous. Turnover had been very high at the University. Many workers could not afford to stay and left the job to go on welfare. The workforce now has stabilized. However more money is needed for child care, especially in the area of emergency care. There are sometimes funds for emergency care when another worker leaves and forfeits their grant.

Over the last ten years, the union has won many other rights for working parents: Members may use sick time to care for sick family members; biological mothers may take eight weeks of paid maternity leave and may use accrued sick and vacation time for an additional five weeks to care

³⁰ Kristine Rondeau, Harvard Union of clerical and Technical Workers (HUCTW), AFSCME, personal interview, 1/29/98, and personal communication, 9/99.

for their newborn child, all with the assurance of returning to the same position; biological fathers and adoptive parents may take one week paid parental leave with this same assurance; beyond this, they may take additional time off using accrued vacation time (if desired) and/or unpaid time, although on return to work they may not be assigned the same position. Flexible work scheduling was also won by the union. Examples include: modified work or lunch hours, compressed work weeks, part time schedules and job sharing.

Conclusion

In many ways, today's labor unions do indeed speak for America's working families. At the bargaining table and through legislation, unions are and have historically been a voice demanding affordable, quality care for children and promoting a balance between work and family. This track record of advocating for work/family needs reflects not only individual labor unions' commitment to their members, but also the commitment of the labor movement as a whole to a broad social agenda aimed at improving the lives of all working people.

Unions that have made a commitment to advance the work/ family agenda have been successful in negotiating innovative family-friendly benefits. (see Appendix) Union involvement in coalition and policy work has also helped to push legislative changes at the local, state and national levels.

The typical workplace is not a family-friendly environment. As the economy flourishes, men and women are being asked to work longer hours, creating the challenge of trying to balance work with a family life. Unions are part of the struggle to shape the workplace and to show that work-family issues are critical not just for union members but for all working families.

Appendix: Union Bargaining Strategies for Family Friendly Provisions

I. Child Care Services And Financing – Bargaining Strategies

The Strategy	About the Strategy	Model Contract Example ³¹
Resources and Referral Services	Finding high-quality, reliable, affordable care can be very difficult for working parents. Resource and referral services can help match employees with appropriate and available child care providers, taking into consideration the special needs of each family. An employer may contract with an outside agency or handle referrals in-house. Resource and referral services also can help develop child care resources in an area if no appropriate child care exists.	International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1245 and Pacific Gas & Electric.
Tax Programs	Tax Programs: A dependent Care Assistance Plan (DCAP) or Flexible Spending Account allows workers to set aside up to \$5,000 of their earnings in a tax-free account to pay for child care or elder care. The only cost to the employer for this IRS plan is its administration.	International Union of Electrical Workers and General Electric.
Child Care Funds	Child care funds offset the high cost of child care. A child care fund provides reimbursement for child care expenses or payment directly to a child care provider.	1199 Health and Human Services Employees Union, NYC, Child Care Fund and Contributing Employers.
Employer-Provided Child Care	Unions have negotiated for on-site and off-site child care centers, subsidized slots in existing centers, and networks of family day care homes. Setting up a child care center is a costly and time-consuming process. Before negotiating for a child care center, be sure to consider the needs of your members: Do they prefer in-home or center care? Are they willing to drive to an off-site center? What shifts do they work? Are their children preschool age?	International Association of Machinists District Lodge 751 and Boeing.
Back-Up & Sick Child Care	Backup care can be provided for mildly sick children, on days when normal care arrangements fall through or in other unusual situations such as snow days. Parents of school-age children may need child care during summer vacations and on holidays. Backup care can be provided through a special program, such as employer subsidies for in-home care or a backup center, or by allowing parents to use their sick time to care for sick children.	Alameda County Employees Labor Coalition/Service Employees International Union Locals 535, 616 and 790 and Alameda County, California.
Extended Hours for Child Care	Many working parents need child care before 9 a.m. and after 5 p.m., including before- and after-school hours and during extended hours when parents are working shifts.	United Auto Workers and the Tonawanda Business Community Child Care Consortium.

³¹ For actual contract language from these and other “best practices” contracts, contact the Labor Project for Working Families, 2521 Channing Way, Berkeley, CA, 94720, 510-643-0788 or view the Labor Project’s Webpage at <http://www.laborproject.org>.

I. Elder Care Services And Financing – Bargaining Strategies

The Strategy	About the Strategy	Model Contract Example ³²
Resources and Referral Services	Finding high-quality, reliable, affordable care can be very difficult for working people. Resource and referral services can help match employees with appropriate and available care providers, taking into consideration the special needs of each family. Employers either contract with an outside referral agency or handle referrals in-house.	United Auto Workers and General Motors Corporation
Tax Programs	Tax Programs: A dependent Care Assistance Plan (DCAP) or Flexible Spending Account allows workers to set aside up to \$5,000 of their earnings in a tax-free account to pay for child care or elder care. The only cost to the employer for this IRS plan is its administration.	International Union of Electrical Workers and General Electric.
Elder Care Funds	Elder care funds offset the high cost of dependent care. Funds provide direct cash payments or a reimbursement for elder care expenses.	Hotel Employees & Restaurant Employees International Union, Local 2 & San Francisco Hotel Multi-Employer Group
Family Leave	Time off to care for an elder or another dependent is a commonly-used solution for working families' elder care needs.	United Food & Commercial Workers and Gallo Wines, Distillery Wine Division
Support Services	Some unions directly provide or work with employers to provide information and support as a way of addressing members' elder care needs. This strategy can help working people with elder care responsibilities to make decisions about elder care strategies and reduce personal stress. Such services include: counseling, referral services, seminars, support groups, handbooks and videos, work and family committees, etc	Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE!)
Long Term Care	Long term care can be provided directly, either through the union or by the employer.	United Auto Workers and Michigan Blue Cross-Blue Shield
Sick Time for Sick Family Members	Unions have negotiated to allow workers to use their own sick time to care for sick family members.	Harvard Union of Clerical & Technical Workers and Harvard University

³² For actual contract language from these and other “best practices” contracts, contact the Labor Project for Working Families, 2521 Channing Way, Berkeley, CA, 94720, 510-643-0788 or view the Labor Project’s Webpage at <http://www.laborproject.org>

III. Family Leave – Bargaining Strategies

The Strategy	About the Strategy	Model Contract Examples
Family Leave	Family leave gives an employee the right to take time off from work to care for a newborn or newly adopted child, to care for a family member who is seriously ill or sometimes for other personal reasons.	United Steelworkers of America Local 12075 and Dow Chemical.
Parental Leave	Parental leave is taken by mothers and fathers to care for newborn, newly adopted or foster care children. It is very effective in reducing turnover, training costs and absenteeism. Five states provide temporary disability leave for women for pregnancy or child- birth. Some contracts also contain provisions offering this benefit. Temporary disability leave often is used in combination with parental leave. The best parental leave language provides for paid leave, but many contracts offer unpaid leave as well.	American Federation of Musicians Local 6 and the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra.
Part-Time Return to Work	Many new parents want to work part-time after children are born or adopted. Unions have bargained for part- time return to work for new parents.	No. Calif. Newspaper Guild Local 52 and San Francisco Chronicle and Examiner.
Short-Term Leave	Working families often need short periods of time off from work, such as a half day or a few hours. Unions have bargained contracts allowing time off for various personal reasons, including school-related activities and adoption proceedings.	Service Employees International Union Local 790 and the San Francisco Unified School District.
Donated Leave & Leave Banks	Some union contracts allow employees to donate their own leave directly to a leave bank or to another employee who has used all of her own leave. Leave of this sort may be reserved for workers having serious family or personal crises.	New York State Nurses Association and St. Luke's Roosevelt Hospital Center.
Expanded Definition of “Family”	The traditional idea of "family" as composed of a mother, father and children does not describe many of today's working families. The definition of family in leave clauses is being broadened to include many different kinds of relationships.	Public Employees, Local One, and the Unified School District of Berkeley.
Paid Time Off (PTO)	PTO generally combines sick and personal leave time and is separate from other vacation time employees may have. It can be used for any personal reason, such as caring for a sick child or recuperating from one's own illness.	Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Local 2 and S.F. Hotel Multi-Employer Group.
Time for Sick Family Members	Unions have negotiated to allow workers to use their own sick time to care for sick family members.	United Auto Workers Local 2324 and United Front Child Development Programs.
Leave for Special Causes	Sometimes working people need leave to deal with particular family-related issues. Unions have bargained for leave to be taken in special situations, such as for families suffering from domestic violence.	American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees, Service Employees Union and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

IV. The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) – Bargaining Strategies

The Strategy	About the Strategy	Model Contract Examples
Making FMLA Leave Paid	Many working families cannot afford to take needed time off without pay. Receiving pay while on FMLA leave can make it possible to use rights given under the law.	American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 11 and the State of Ohio.
Building FMLA Language	If an employer violates FMLA law in some way, the only recourse is to file a complaint with the Department of Labor or to hire a lawyer. Both strategies can be very time-consuming. If the employer agrees in a union contract to abide by the FMLA, violations can be settled through the union's grievance procedure.	Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Local 2850 and Concession Air, Inc., Oakland International Airport.
Expanding FMLA Coverage	Not all employers are required to abide by the FMLA. For example, employers with fewer than 50 employees need not provide FMLA benefits. Contracts can assure the right to FMLA benefits for all members, regardless of whether or not the members or the employer meet eligibility guidelines of the FMLA.	Service Employees International Union Local 535 and the Labor Project for Working Families
Expanding Reasons for FMLA	FMLA leave can be taken only for an employee's own serious illness; for the birth, adoption or foster care placement of a child; or to care for a seriously ill spouse, parent or child. By defining family in a contract as including, for example, grandparents, domestic partners and in-laws, unions expand the instances in which an employee can take FMLA leave.	Public Employees Local One and the Unified School District of Berkeley
Increasing Length of Leave	In some cases, 12 weeks is not enough time to deal with some family or medical situations. The length of FMLA leave can be increased through bargaining.	United Auto Workers Local 2324 and United Front Child Development Programs.
Limiting Employer's Rights	Bargain to limit your employer's right to designate what kind of paid leave will be used for FMLA.	Service Employees International Union Local 1877 and Apcoa Inc.
Continuing Benefits During Leave	Under the FMLA, employers must continue to provide health benefits on the same basis as before the leave, but they are not obligated to provide any other benefits or to help an employee who becomes unable to afford to pay his or her share of health insurance premiums.	United Auto Workers and Ford Motor Company.
Accruing Seniority During Leave	Under the FMLA, seniority accrues during leave only for the purposes of vesting and eligibility in pension and retirement funds. Unions can bargain for accrual of seniority for other purposes as well, such as for vacation time or scheduling.	Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Local 2 and San Francisco Hotel Multi- Employer Group.
Returning to Work After Birth	Intermittent leave is allowed under the FMLA only for a serious health condition of the employee, or employee's spouse, child or parent. Unions can expand this provision to allow new parents to work reduced or intermittent schedules.	American Federation of Teachers Local 3695 and the University of Connecticut.

V. Alternative Work Schedules – Bargaining Strategies

The Strategy	About the Strategy	Model Contract Examples
Flextime	Flextime agreements allow employees to start and end work during some range of hours. All employees may be required to be present during a core period.	Communications Workers of America and BellSouth Telecommunications.
Part-Time Work with Benefits	Part-time work can give people flexibility to take care of family needs. However, a part-time schedule may be unworkable if it does not come with health care and other benefits. Unions have bargained to provide part-time employees with benefits.	International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1245 and Pacific Gas & Electric.
Telecommuting	Telecommuting means working from a site other than the central work site, usually at home. Unions have traditionally opposed this because work done at home is difficult to regulate and can easily become "sweatshop" labor. Also, workers who telecommute can become isolated and are difficult to organize. However, telecommuting can offer workers a great deal of flexibility and many union members favor it.	Service Employees International Union Local 660 and Los Angeles County.
Job Sharing	Under a job-share agreement, two part-time employees share one full-time job. The employees divide the full-time salary according to hours worked. Benefits and seniority often are prorated according to hours worked, although in some job-share situations both may receive full benefits and/or seniority. Union contracts can protect employees' right to enter into a job-share arrangement and can establish standards for job sharing.	American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 2505 and Executive Department of the State of Oregon.
Compressed Work Week	Compressed work schedules allow full-time workers to work all their hours in fewer than five days per week. Common examples of these schedules allow workers to work four 10-hour days for an extra day off per week, or eight 9-hour days and one 8-hour day for an extra day off every 2 weeks.	International Brotherhood of Teamsters Local 830 and Philadelphia Coca-Cola Bottling Company.
Making Overtime Voluntary	For many working families, being forced to stay at work past the regularly scheduled end time can be very stressful, particularly for working parents who do not have backup arrangements for child care. Provisions in union contracts making overtime voluntary protect employees from this loss of power over their daily schedules.	Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild Local 35 and Bureau of National Affairs.
Shift Swaps	A shift swap provision in a union contract allows workers to exchange shifts or workdays voluntarily to accommodate family needs, such as attending school events or medical appointments.	Association of Western Pulp & Paper Workers and Longview Fibre Company, Longview Mill.
Shorter Work Week	Unions have bargained for shorter work weeks for their members with full compensation. Some unions also have used shorter work week provisions with less compensation as an alternative to layoffs.	Office and Professional Employees International Union Local 3 and S.F., Marin, & Sonoma Trade Union Health and Welfare & Pension Fund Offices.
Voluntary Reduced Time	Voluntary reduced time allows an employee to reduce the number of hours she or he works in a week in order to have extra time to take care of personal or family needs.	Service Employees International Union Local 715 and Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties, California.

