



# Hawai'i KIDS COUNT E-Bulletin

## March 2018 Issue

Center on the Family | University of Hawai'i at Mānoa-CTAHR

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## FAMILY LEAVE INSURANCE FOR HAWAII'S WORKING FAMILIES

When family members are sick, hurt or too frail to care for themselves, loved ones step up to provide the needed care. Most workers will need to take time away from the job at some point to care for a seriously ill parent or spouse, or to care for a new child. Yet, employees in Hawai'i have no legal right to paid family leave. Current family leave policies only guarantee unpaid leave for a limited pool of eligible workers, and most cannot take unpaid leave and still maintain financial stability given the high cost of living in our state.

The Hawai'i State Legislature is currently considering a measure that would create a family leave insurance program in Hawai'i that allows for job-protection with wage replacement when workers have to take time off to care for a loved one. Research from other countries and a handful of U.S. states with paid family leave programs provides clear evidence that access to job-protected leave that includes wage replacement not only promotes family economic stability, but also supports the overall well-being of working families. According to studies:

- Parents who have access to paid family leave are more likely to return to and remain in the workforce and are less likely to rely on public assistance following the birth of a child.

### FAMILY LEAVE INSURANCE: SUPPORTING WORKING FAMILIES

**Family leave insurance**, or paid family leave, provides job protection and wage replacement when employees need time off work to care for new children or other family members. The United States is the only industrialized country without guaranteed family leave insurance for the working population. Nationwide, only 13 percent of workers have access to paid family leave through their employers. Employees in Hawai'i do not have any legal right to paid family leave. Current policies, including the federal Family and Medical Leave Act and the state's Hawai'i Family Leave Law, only provide access to unpaid leave and eligibility restrictions exclude many workers.

In the absence of a federal policy, a handful of states have implemented their own paid family leave programs. Data from U.S. states and other countries that guarantee paid leave for working families demonstrate that family leave has positive impacts on family economic security as well as the health and wellbeing of people of all ages. Paid family leave:

**Improves family economic security.** Family leave insurance programs promote labor force attachment, especially for new mothers; reduce reliance on public assistance after the birth of a child; and are linked with increased wages and work hours. In California, low-income families benefit most from access to paid family leave. Research indicates that returning to work after paid leave reduces new parents' dependence on food stamps by 40%.



**Benefits family health and wellbeing.** Evidence shows that universal paid leave increases the chances that children are breastfed longer and receive regular checkups and immunizations, which improves child health. In California, paid leave doubled the median duration of breastfeeding of working mothers. Paid leave also supports the mental and physical health of new mothers and increases fathers' involvement in children's lives.



**Supports the aging population.** As the population of older adults in Hawai'i continues to increase, so does the demand for family caregiving. In Hawai'i, 1 in 5 people is 60 years and over, which is slightly higher than the national average. Family leave insurance can alleviate financial strain and pressure associated with taking care of a parent or older relative with a serious illness.



For information on the data presented in this fact sheet, contact: HAWAII KIDS COUNT,  
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Phone: (808) 956-4132  
Email: [cof@man.hawaii.edu](mailto:cof@man.hawaii.edu)



- Child health improves when parents can take the time needed for bonding with and caring for a new child without worrying about reduced income. Increased access to paid family leave is linked to improved birth weight, longer periods of breastfeeding, and reduced infant mortality.
- Paid leave is associated with better physical and mental health of new mothers and increased involvement of fathers in children’s lives, which benefit parents and children over the long run.

Despite growing consensus in support of paid family leave, opposition often centers the claim that such a program would be harmful to businesses. However, initial research from states with paid leave programs suggests that they can:

- improve employee retention and reduce turnover, thereby saving businesses money;
- boost employee morale and promote productivity; and
- even the playing field for small businesses.

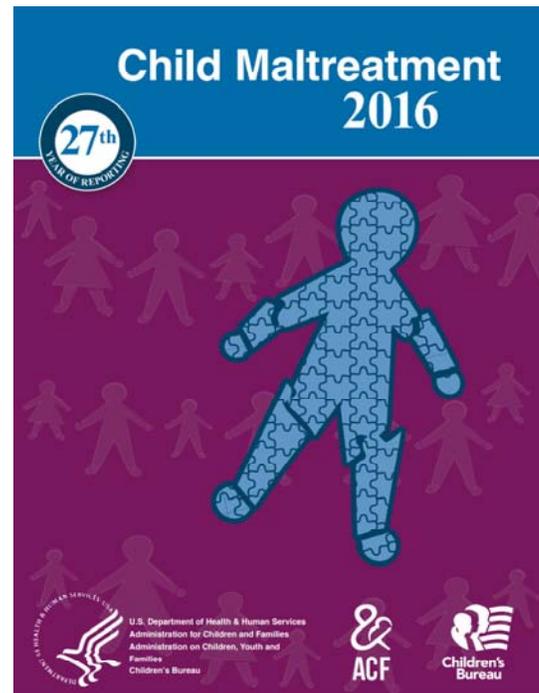
Hawai‘i KIDS COUNT has prepared issue briefs and fact sheets summarizing paid family leave research and its benefits to children, families, businesses and the economy. Find them and our latest factsheet on how [family leave insurance supports working families](#) at the [Hawai‘i KIDS COUNT Publications Page](#). We encourage you to use these materials to learn more about paid family leave and for your testimony and advocacy work. Currently, Hawai‘i’s legislators are considering two measures regarding family leave, Senate Bill 2990 and House Bill 2598. Visit the [Hawai‘i State Legislature Website](#) to track the bills’ statuses and to submit testimony.

The Hawai‘i Working Families Coalition will be hosting events for the public to learn more about paid family leave. For more information visit the [Hawai‘i Working Families Coalition Website](#) and the [Hawai‘i Working Families Coalition Facebook Page](#).

## CHILD MALTREATMENT 2016

The 27<sup>th</sup> annual *Child Maltreatment* report was recently released by the Administration for Children and Families. The report presents national and state-level data on child abuse and neglect known to child protective services (CPS) agencies in each state and the District of Columbia. According to the report, there were approximately 676,000 victims of child abuse and neglect across the country during the 2016 federal fiscal year (the most current year for which data are available), a 3.0% increase from five years earlier. The report also includes data on: referrals and reports of child maltreatment; characteristics of victims and non-victims; fatalities that occurred as a result of maltreatment; perpetrators of maltreatment; services to prevent maltreatment and to assist children and families’ and additional research related to child maltreatment. The following are key findings for the state of Hawai‘i:

- In 2016, there were 1,491 victims of child abuse and neglect, an increase of 6.7% since 2012.



- Children younger than 1 year had the highest rate of victimization at 15.1 per 1,000, but lower than the national rate of 24.8.
- First time victims rate was 4.1 per 1,000, lower than the national rate of 6.5.
- The average number of days to initiate services after receipt of a report was 19 days, compared to the national average of 47 days.

The entire report can be downloaded here: [Child Maltreatment Report 2016](#).

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## WHERE DOES YOUR CHILD CARE DOLLAR GO?

The Center for American Progress recently released the report, *Where Does Your Child Care Dollar Go? Understanding the True Cost of Quality Early Childhood Education*. The report explains the inadequacies of the current revenue streams available to early childhood educational programs, and The Center for American Progress also developed an accompanying interactive tool that estimates the cost of high-quality child care in each state.



It is common for child care tuition to be one of the largest household expenses for families, sometimes costing more than mortgage or rent. At the same time, early childhood teachers are among the lowest-paid professionals and many early childhood programs operate on tight budgets. With child care educators being paid so little and early childhood programs struggling to make ends meet, it is justified that parents wonder why child care cost so much. To address this, the interactive tool calculates the monthly cost per child in a center-based program and includes a breakdown of the main expenses that contribute to that cost, including child-to-teacher ratio, teacher salaries and benefits, classroom and materials. Users can select different options to design a high-quality child care center and view the impact on monthly tuition. Programs are considered high-quality if they pay educators higher salaries and benefits and go above licensing standards.

In Hawai'i, annual high-quality :

- infant care cost \$24,900, which is less than the national average at \$27,100.
- toddler care cost \$19,200, compared to the national average of \$20,800.
- preschool cost \$14,500, slightly less than the \$15,800 nationwide.

The report concludes that significant new public investments need to be made in early childhood education to fully address the issues of affordability, accessibility, and quality. The investments need to provide support to all low- and middle-income families, while ensuring that early childhood educators are compensated fairly.

The interactive tool and full report can be accessed here: [Where Does Your Child Care Dollar Go Interactive Tool and Report](#)

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# THE CENTER ON THE FAMILY BROWN BAG SEMINAR: PREPARED FOR A RAINY DAY? A REFINED MEASURE FOR EMERGENCY SAVING ADEQUACY OF HOUSEHOLDS

The University of Hawai'i Center on the Family will host the third seminar in its spring brown bag series on Friday, March 23, from noon to 1 pm in Room 2 of Miller Hall at the UH Manoa campus. *Prepared for a Rainy Day? A Refined Measure for Emergency Saving Adequacy of Households* will be presented by Dr. Hua Zan, the Center's family economist.

Having enough savings is important for the financial resiliency of families as it provides a cushion when emergencies occur. Financial experts suggest setting aside enough savings to cover at least three to six months of living expenses for emergencies, such as large out-of-pocket medical costs, car repairs, and job loss. However, research on emergency saving adequacy is often limited by the lack of quality savings and expenditures data. This presentation focuses on a review of existing studies, the estimation method, the study's relevance to Hawai'i, and implications of the study.

Please bring your lunch and join the discussion.

If you have any questions about the brown bag presentations, please contact Dr. Hua Zan at [hzan@hawaii.edu](mailto:hzan@hawaii.edu) or Dr. Jenjira Yahirun at [jyahirun@hawaii.edu](mailto:jyahirun@hawaii.edu).



**The Center on the Family**  
**BROWN BAG SERIES**  
Spring 2018, Fridays 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.  
Miller Hall Room 2

*This seminar series brings together scholars, policy-makers, and members of the public who are interested in fostering the health and well-being of families. Please bring your lunch and join us.*

	<b>Barbara Dellaryshe</b> , Ph.D., Center on the Family "Hawaii's early learning programs for children birth through 5: Creating the system our children and families deserve" January 26, 2018
	<b>Sarah Yuan</b> , Ph.D., <b>Javandulam Azuma</b> , Ph.D., and <b>Ji-Yeon Kim</b> , Ph.D., Center on the Family "Good to be home: A pilot study examining changes in health care utilization among chronically homeless adults in a Housing First program" February 23, 2018
	<b>Hua Zan</b> , Ph.D., Center on the Family "Prepared for a rainy day? A refined measure for emergency saving adequacy of households" March 23, 2018
	<b>Marianne Berry</b> , Ph.D., Center on the Family "Innovative strategies to improve foster care outcomes in Hawaii" April 20, 2018

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## **ARCHIVE OF E-BULLETINS:**

PDF versions of our monthly e-bulletins are available at: <http://uhfamily.hawaii.edu/projects/kidscount/ebulletin.asp>

Hawai'i KIDS COUNT is funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. We thank them for their support, and we acknowledge that the findings and conclusions presented in the E-Bulletin are those of the authors alone and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Foundation.

## CENTER ON THE FAMILY

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