



DOWNTOWN SANTA BARBARA EMPLOYER CHILD CARE PARTNERSHIP



Employers asked to help determine workforce child care needs

It's a highly competitive world out there for workers, but not just for jobs – for child care as well. For every licensed child care space, there are three children of working parents needing that space. This critical shortage of child care in the downtown Santa Barbara area could be impacting employee productivity, absenteeism and recruitment in workplaces across the city. To determine this impact, a community-wide employee child care survey is being conducted so that employers and policy makers can hear directly from those who know the most about it – working parents.

The electronic survey will be distributed in May through participating employers with 20 or more employees in the downtown Santa Barbara area. A comprehensive report will be created, complete with recommendations. Each participating employer will contribute a small amount based on employee size and will receive their own individualized survey report summarizing their employees responses.

This survey model is the brainchild of the new Downtown Santa Barbara Employer Child Care Partnership, lead by the County of Santa Barbara, First 5 Santa Barbara and other downtown employers including Antioch University, Bartlett Pringle and Wolf, Community West Bank, Cottage Health Systems, the Downtown Organization, Santa Barbara Region Chamber of Commerce, Santa Barbara County Child Care Planning Council, Santa Barbara Family Care Center and Sonos.

A Kickoff of the Employee Survey was hosted by the Chamber on Wednesday, March 26. Employers heard about the need for the survey and the importance of quality child care from speakers Steve Cushman, President of the Santa Barbara Chamber, Salud Carbajal, Chair of the Board of Supervisors from the First District, and Roger Horton, Santa Barbara City Councilmember. The speakers agreed that because child care is a community issue which affects the business bottom line, it is essential for employers to join in this effort.

To get involved, employers are encouraged to contact Holly Goldberg, First 5 Santa Barbara County, (805) 884-8062, hgold@co.santa-barbara.ca.us or go to <http://www.countyofsb.org/ceo/ece/survey/>