



Promoting Equity with Family Friendly Workplace Policies

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Assistant Professor of Pediatrics

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Who am I?

- General pediatrician
- Educator
- Researcher
- Advocate
- Mom to former 27-week premature girl

Objectives

- Examine background and labor workforce
- Describe economic and health disparities across race/ethnicity, sex, and income status
- Outline the evidence for enacting family friendly policies to promote health equity
- Illustrate advocacy opportunities

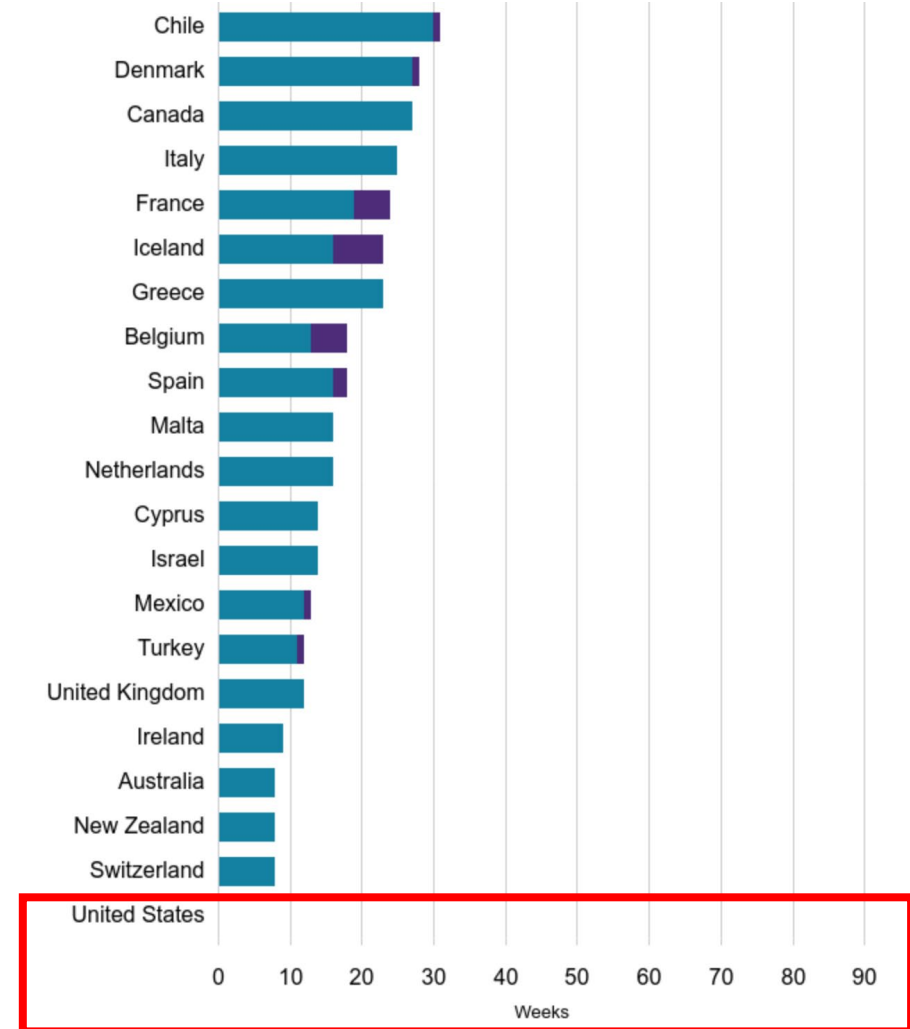
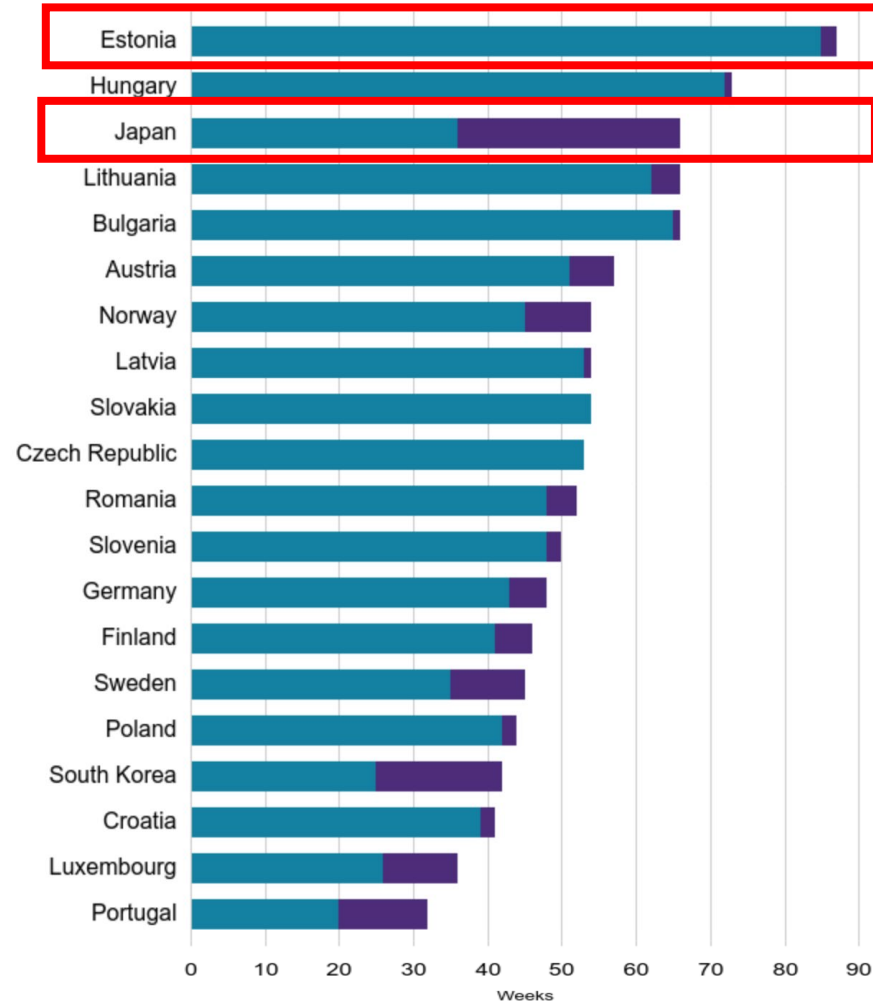


**Raise your hand if
you have ever
needed work
accommodations
to care for yourself
of a loved one**

Background

Current Policies

Paid Parental Leave Across Countries



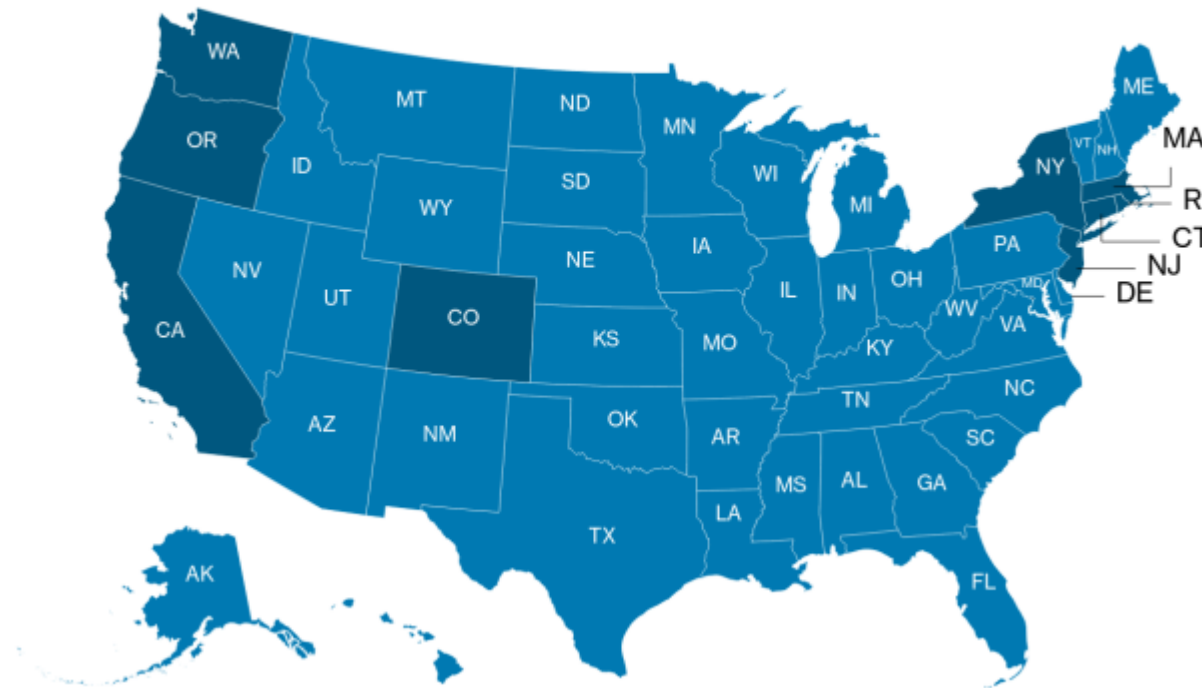
Source: OECD, EU

■ Weeks of leave available to mothers, full-pay equivalent
■ Weeks of leave reserved for fathers, full-pay equivalent

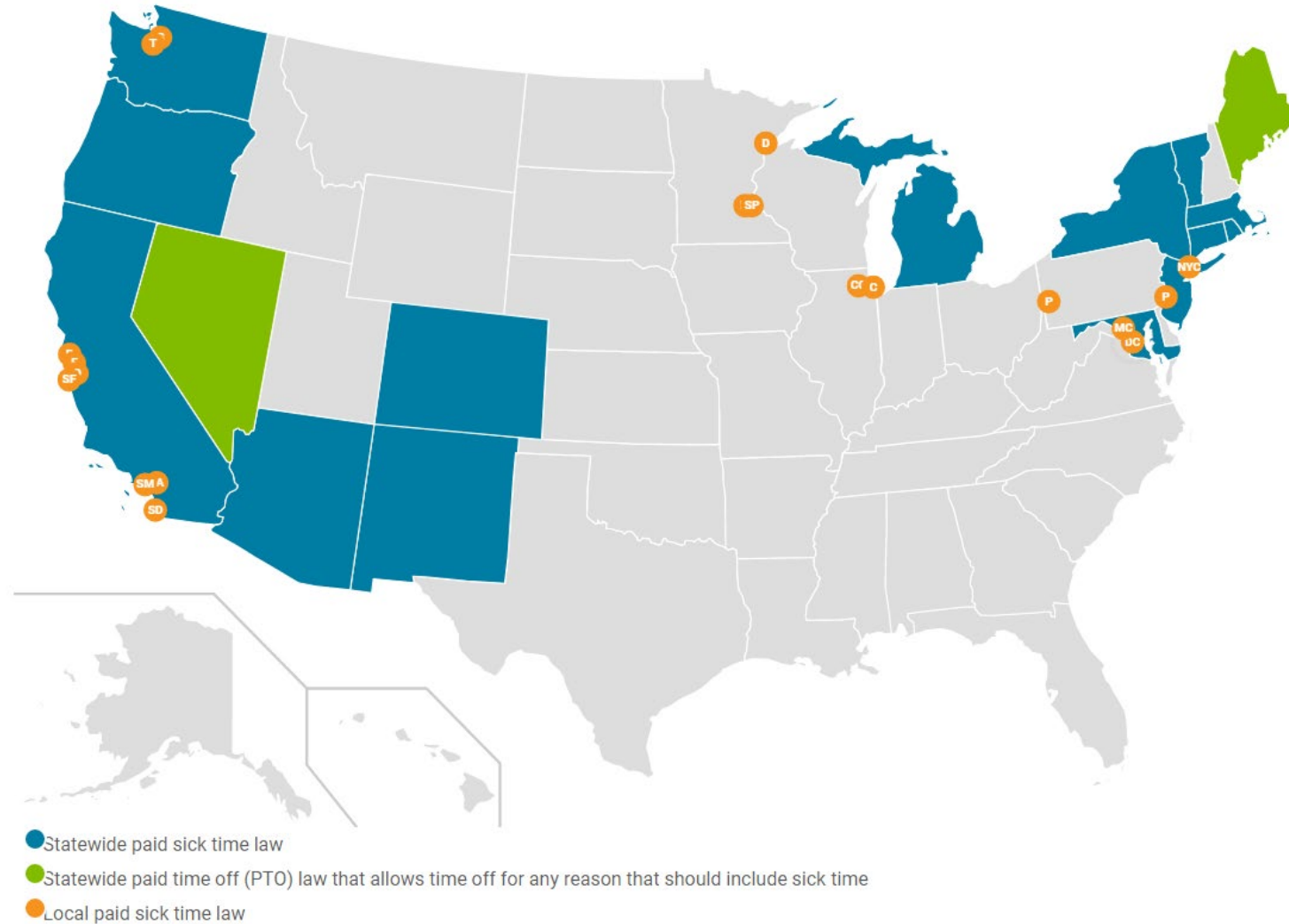
Paid Family Leave Across States

Nine states and the District of Columbia have enacted their own paid family and medical leave laws, independent of federal legislation.

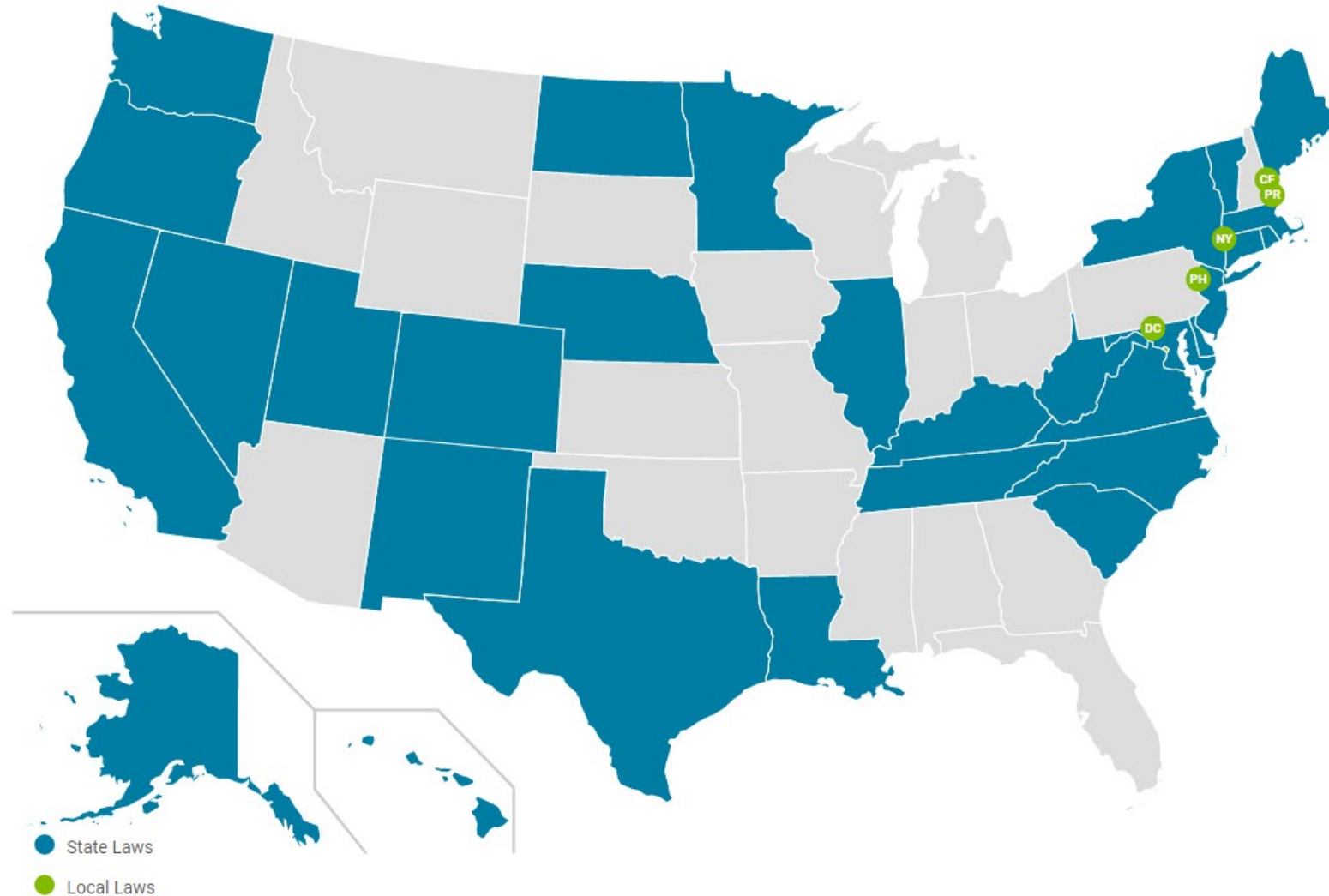
■ Paid leave law ■ No paid leave law



Paid Sick Leave Across States



Pregnant Workers Protection Laws



Background

Labor Workforce

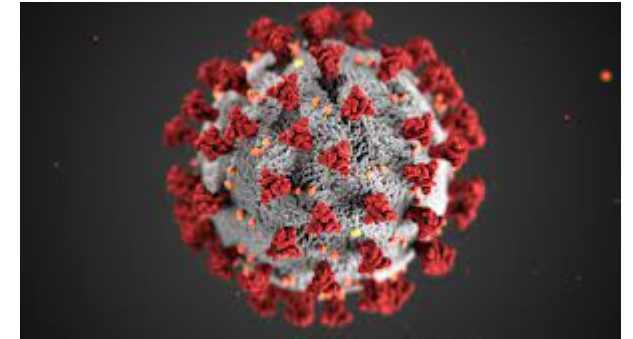
Modern Family Structures Have Changed

- Policies based on outdated family structures
- US: Less than 70% families include 2 parents
- NC: 44% of mothers are sole/primary breadwinner
- NC: 28% of women and 15% of men work part-time
- US: 75% of mothers passed up work opportunities



COVID-19 Impact on Workforce

- ~4.5 million child care slots could be lost
- Disproportionate caregiving falls on women
- 4-5x as many women dropped out of labor force
- ~\$64.5 billion in lost wages

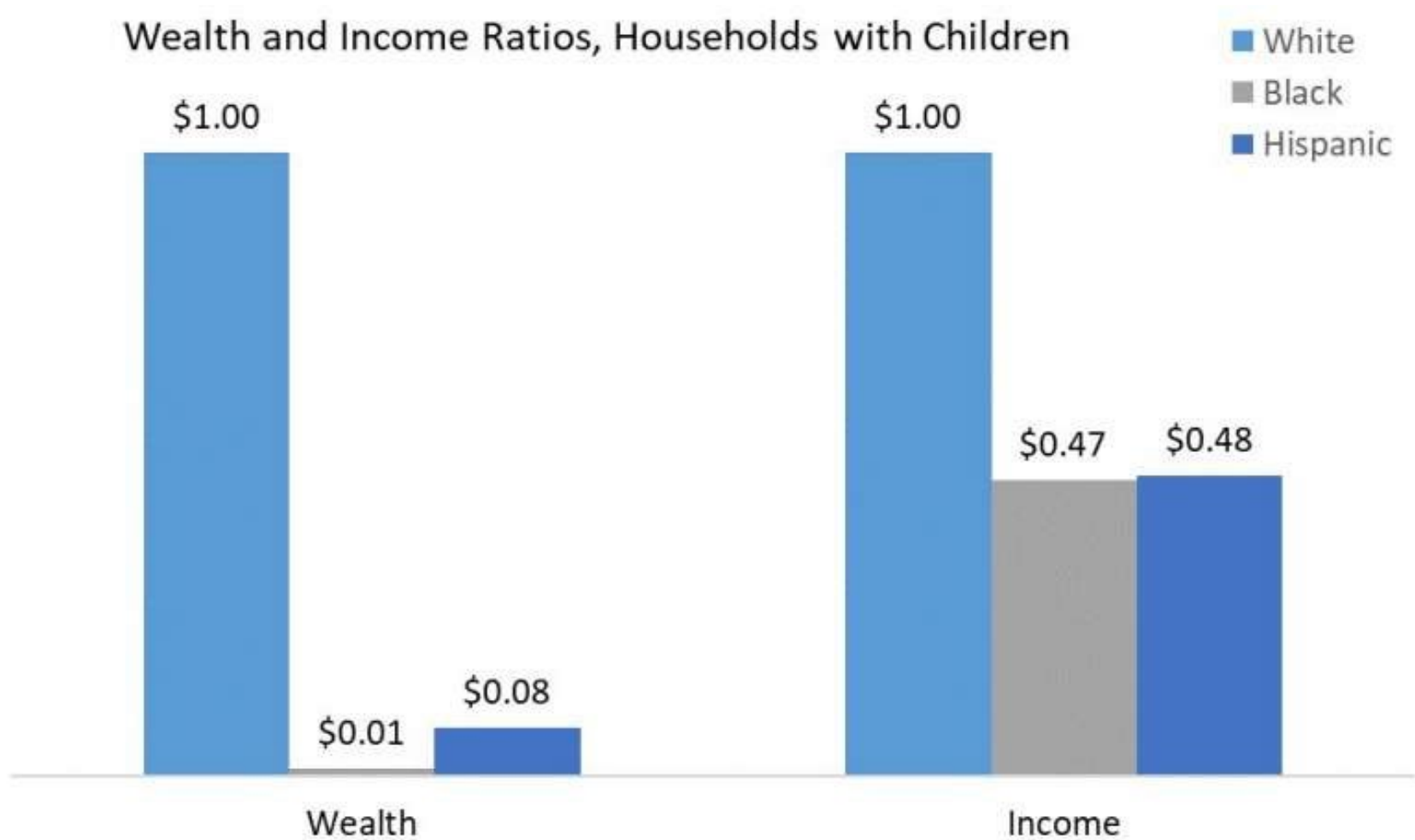


Economic Disparities

Racial/Ethnic Income and Wealth Gap

Example

- Slave
- Restr
- Destr
- Segre
- Redli
- Disin
- Public
- Empl
- Lack



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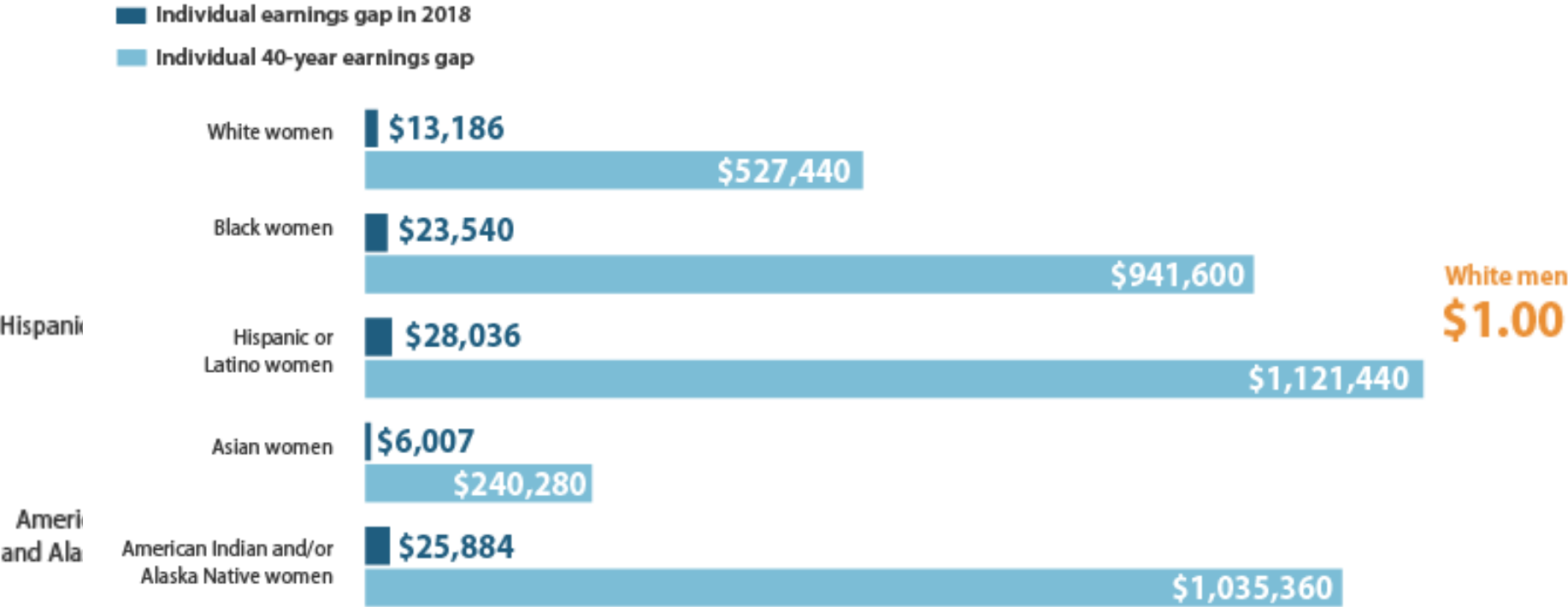
<https://phys.org/news/2020-06-racial-wealth-gap-worse-families.html>

Christine Percheski et al. A Penny on the Dollar: Racial Inequalities in Wealth among Households with Children, *Socius: Sociological Research for a Dynamic World* (2020).

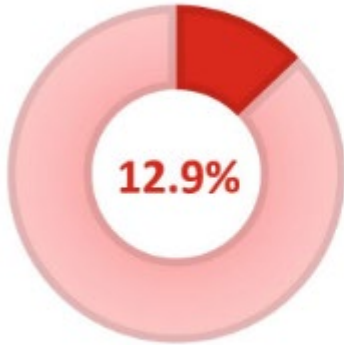
Gender Wage Gap

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The average 2018 earnings gap for a woman balloons over the course of 40 years
Examining the gaps between 2018 median earnings for women and men working full time, year round, and extending the gaps over 40 years



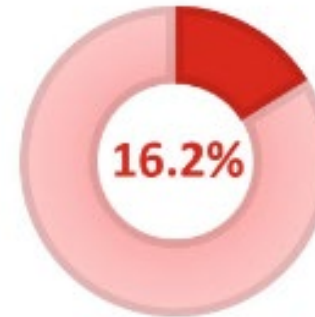
Poverty Varies By Demographic



Women



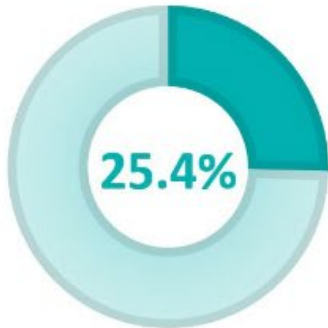
Men



Children



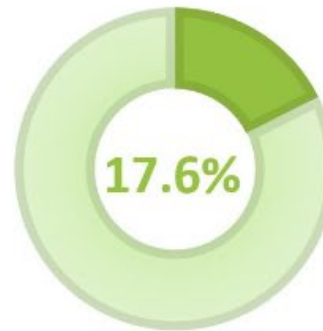
Seniors



Native American



Black



Hispanic



White



Asian

Health Disparities

The Role of the Social Determinants of Health



Maternal Health Disparities

- Late or no prenatal care
- High rates violence for women of color
- Lack of follow up for postpartum depression
- Maternal suicide post-delivery: 20%
- Black mothers: 3x maternal death



Child Health Disparities

- Higher preterm and low birth weights
- Black babies: 2x mortality rate of white babies
- Lower breastfeeding rates
- Lower vaccination rates
- Higher risk of child maltreatment



Disparities in Access to Family Friendly Workplace Policies

Disparities in Unpaid Leave Access

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Source

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% of fathers/mothers saying they have done each of the following in order to care for a child or family member

Fathers Mothers

Reduced work hours
28 42

Taken a significant amount of time off
24 39

Quit job
10 27

Turned down a promotion
10 13



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their children.

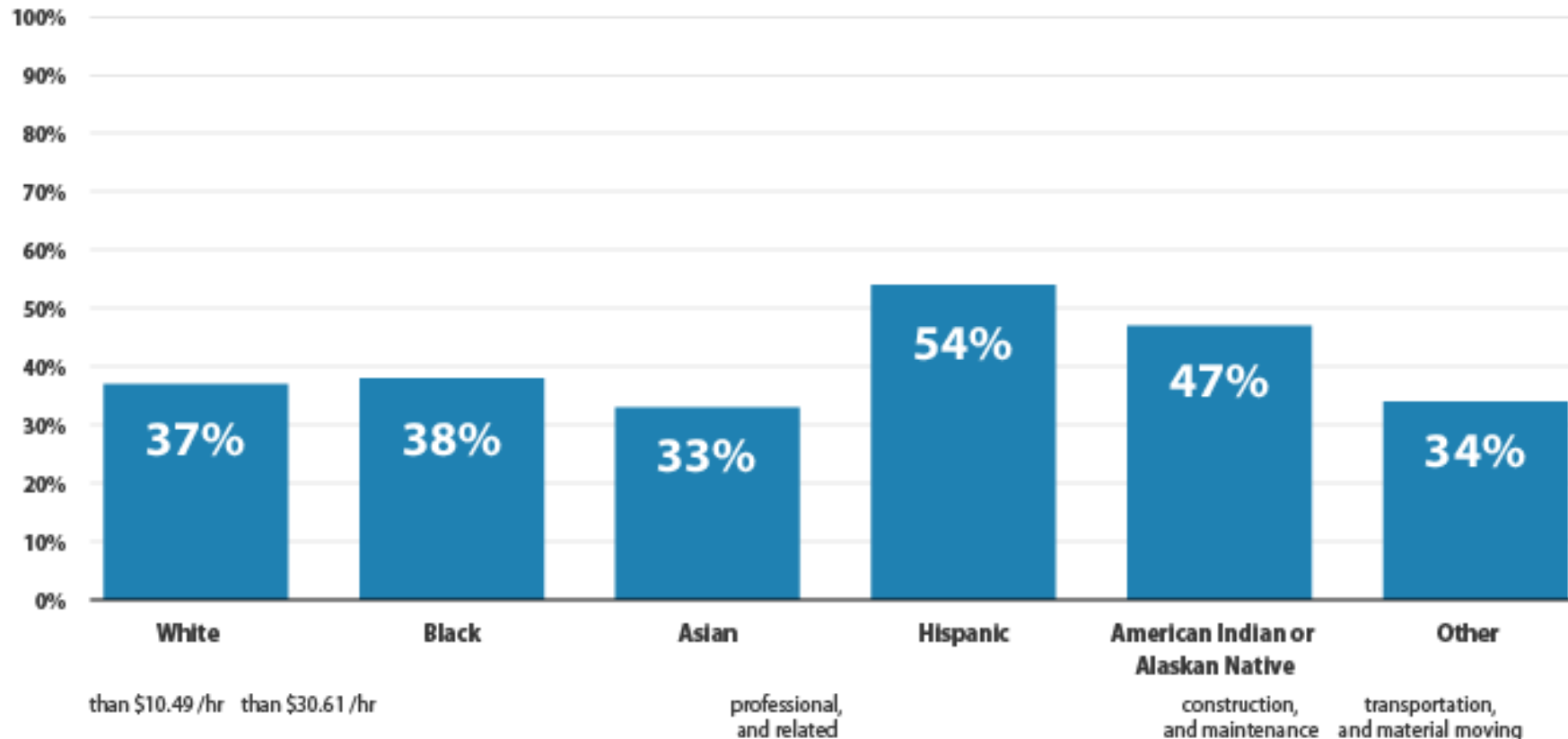
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DAYS

Disparities in Sick Leave Access

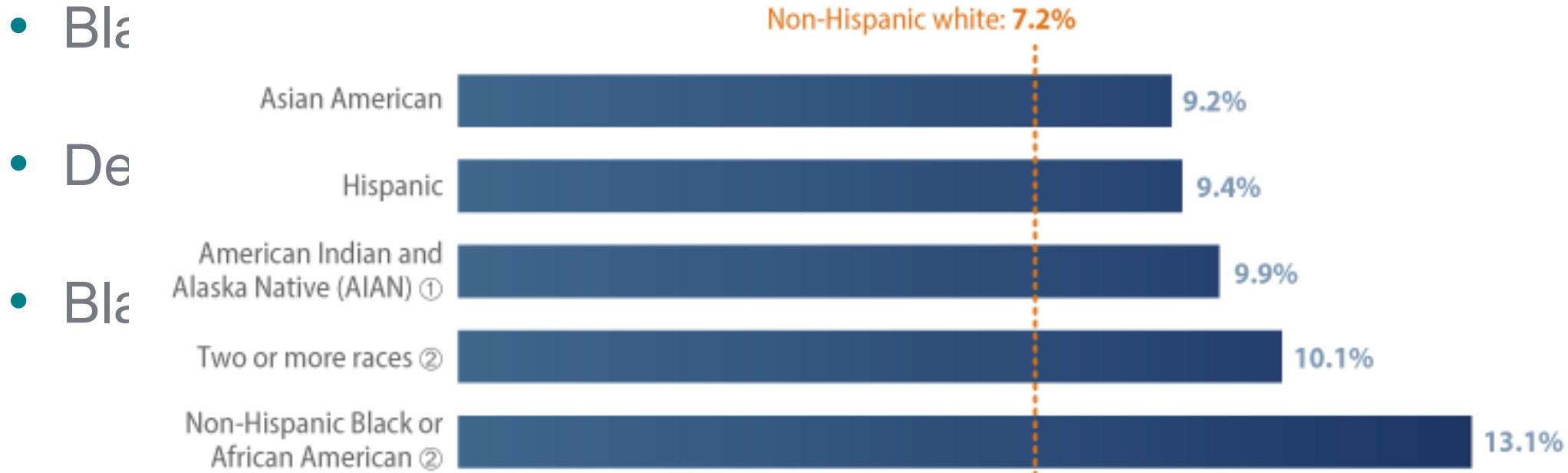
Access to paid sick leave is unequal across race and ethnicity

Percentage of employed individuals who did not have paid sick leave in 2014, by race and ethnicity



Disparities in Child Care Access

- **Ch**
Inc Black and multiracial families are more likely than white families to experience job disruptions due to child care
Estimated percentage of parents who quit a job, did not take a job, or greatly changed their job due to problems with child care, by race and ethnicity



Evidence for Promoting Equity with Family Friendly Policies

Evidence Shows Improved Parent Health

Physical

- Increase in use of postpartum care
- Lower likelihood of returning to hospital
- Increase in use of preventive services
- Higher likelihood engaging in exercise
- Lower risk of infection transmission
- Recovery from illness more quickly

Mental

- Lower rates of postpartum depression
- Lower rates of depression and anxiety
- Improved infant and child bonding, positive relationships

Psychosocial

- Lower likelihood of intimate partner violence
- Decreased household food insecurity
- Decreased divorce rates for fathers
- Equitable division of household chores
- Increased economic stability

Evidence Shows Improved Child Health

Physical

- Decreased rehospitalization
- Increased initiation and duration of breastfeeding
- Higher rate of infant vaccinations
- Higher rate of well child visits
- Decreased infant deaths
- Decreased child deaths

Mental

- Improved attachment, empathy
- Improved infant and child bonding, positive relationships

Psychosocial

- Improved later academic success
- Improved cognitive testing
- Decreased household food insecurity
- Higher likelihood of being cared for safely
- Reduction in child maltreatment

Evidence Shows Improved Economics

Employers

- Increased productivity
- Increased retention, reducing turnover costs
- Reduced employee absenteeism
- Healthier work environment
- Reduced health care costs
- Increased loyalty
- Workers recover faster

Women

- Increased labor force participation
- Increased job protection
- Decreased gender wage gap
- Less likely to use public benefits

Low Wage Workers

- Increased access to leave and leave taking
- Increased household income
- Reduction in poverty
- Increased economic security
- Decreased household food insecurity

Policy Solutions

Recent Policy Wins

Nationally

- Families First Coronavirus Act
- American Rescue Plan
- Federal Employee Paid Leave Act

North Carolina

- Executive Order 95
- 20 counties offer paid parental leave

Policy Solutions

Nationally

- Permanent Paid Family and Medical Leave (FAMILY Act)
- Healthy Families Act
- Pregnant Workers Fairness Act
- Universal child care and pre-kinder
- Raise the Wage Act (incr min wage)
- Paycheck Fairness Act

North Carolina

- NC Healthy Pregnancy Act
- Enact KinCare and Safe Days
- North Carolina Paid Family Insurance Act
- North Carolina Healthy Families & Workplaces/Paid Sick Days Act
- SmartStart Funds

Advocacy Opportunities

Dr. Kimberly Montez: Paid family leave puts babies' lives first

By Dr. Kimberly Montez Guest columnist Jun 13, 2019

Op-Ed



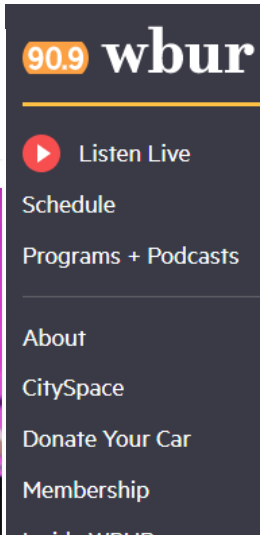
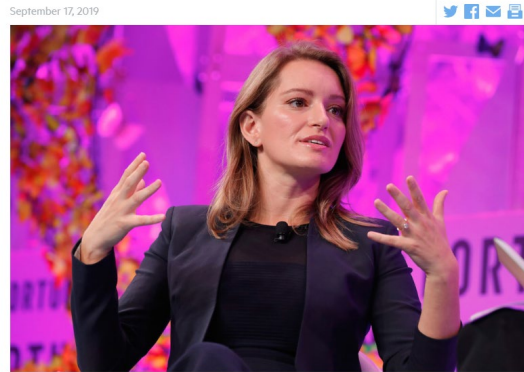
My daughter was born three months early – at 27 weeks of gestation. She had to stay in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) for 109 days. We visited her in the NICU twice a day -- my husband went in the evenings after work, and I went before work every day. As a pediatrician, I was keenly aware of the importance of breastfeeding, reading, singing and talking to my daughter and holding her skin-to-skin. All of these things have immense developmental benefits for newborns, especially preterm infants, who are at higher risk of health problems. That was a scary time for our family, and as much as I wanted to spend all my time in the NICU, I couldn't -- because I had to keep going to work every day.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends 12 weeks of paid family leave after the birth or adoption of a child. This recommendation is based on the vast amount of evidence demonstrating the health benefits to mothers, fathers, and babies (<https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/pages/FAMILYLeaveAct.aspx>). However, even as a pediatrician, I was unable to take my own advice because I needed to work to pay off my loans.



My Advocacy Journey

-  **MSNBC Anchor Katy Tur Slams 'Shameful' Lack Of Paid Family Leave**



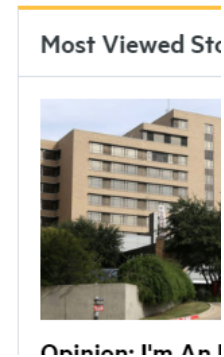
With [Meghna Chakrabarti](#)

MSNBC's Katy Tur blasts lack of federal paid family leave upon her return to work. She's with us.

Guests

Katy Tur, NBC News correspondent and anchor on MSNBC. She is also a new mom, giving birth in April to a boy named Teddy. ([@KatyTurNBC](#))

Dr. Kimberly Montez, pediatrician practicing in Winston-Salem, N.C.



- Contacted by NPR's On Point

My Advocacy Journey

- Attended advocacy conference
- Connected with advocacy group, Mom
- Op-Ed assistance
- Contacted by NPR's On Point
- Invited as a guest on WFAE Charlotte Talks

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90.7 Charlotte 93.7 Southern Pines
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Charlotte Talks: Paid Parental Leave Policies And Finding A Work-Life Balance

By WENDY HERKEY • SEP 25, 2019

PROGRAM
Charlotte Talks with Mike Collins

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49:28

Wednesday, Sept. 25, 2019

Our special week-long examination of the elusive work-life balance continues with a look at attitudes and the reality of paid family leave.

My A

- Invitation
- Another
- Invitation
- Invitation
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Paid leave and paid sick days bill introduction press conference



NC Families Care was live.

6 hrs · 🌐

Legislators and working North Carolinians from across the state will gather to speak about the importance of paid family and medical leave and paid sick days, throughout the duration of the pandemic and beyond.

662 Views



Atrium
Wake forest baptist

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- Scholar
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An Opportunity to Promote Health Equity: National Paid Family and Medical Leave

Kimberly Montez, MD, MPH,^{a,b} Sharon Thomson, HBSc,^a Vicki Shabo, JD, MA^c

When my daughter was born prematurely at 27 weeks, I was faced with the agonizing choice of staying with her in the neonatal intensive care unit or going back to work at my federally qualified community health center. Even as a pediatrician who is familiar with the enormous benefits of kangaroo care and singing, talking, and reading to newborns, I returned to work within two weeks of her birth because of my own economic situation. At the time, the state I lived in, Massachusetts, did not offer paid family and medical leave (PFML), and the clinic I worked at offered unpaid leave options. As a physician, I am enormously privileged with respect to job protection and income. However, the families I care for are particularly vulnerable to the adverse impacts of unpaid leave. I have come to recognize PFML as a health equity crisis that requires an urgent national policy solution.

Dr Kimberly Montez

The United States is the only developed nation that fails to guarantee any kind of paid leave to workers. We lack a national paid family and medical leave (PFML) policy that encompasses: (1) paid parental leave, which would apply to both mothers and fathers after the birth of a child, adoption of a child, or fostering a child; (2) paid family leave (PFL), which would apply to caregivers of a hospitalized child, a medically complex child, or a family member such as a declining parent; and (3) paid medical

^aSchool of Medicine, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, North Carolina; ^bDepartment of Pediatrics, Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center, Winston-Salem, North Carolina; and ^cNew America, Washington, District of Columbia

Dr Montez, Ms Thomson, and Ms Shabo conceptualized the study, drafted the initial manuscript, and reviewed the manuscript; and all authors approved the final manuscript as submitted and agree to be accountable for all aspects of the work.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2020-1122>

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