Corporate Voices Responds to Surgeon General’s “Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding”

Employers need tools and resources to close the implementation gap

Washington, DC (Vocus/PRWEB) January 20, 2011 -- Corporate Voices for Working Families has issued a response to the U.S. Surgeon General’s “Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding,” emphasizing the need for creating a broader awareness of the tools and resources that are available to both employers and employees to effectively support nursing mothers at work.

Read Corporate Voices’ response online at: www.corporatevoices.org/system/files/CV_Response_SG_Call_2011.pdf

Although the Affordable Care Act now requires employers to provide support for nursing mothers, Corporate Voices believes there is still much to be done to make tools and resources available to employers to help them implement successful and sustainable lactation programs.

Making high-quality tools, like Corporate Voices' workplace lactation toolkit, widely available to the business community will be a critical step in removing a significant barrier to breastfeeding for many mothers, helping employers comply with federal law, and in helping employers adopt successful management strategies for 21st century success.

Stephen M. Wing, President of Corporate Voices, said, “Employers that provide time and space for mothers to pump milk at work are embracing a progressive management strategy that will enhance their bottom line. Research has shown that lactation programs help improve employer recruitment and retention, and reduce absences and health care costs. Employers that recognize the business benefits of breastfeeding play a critical role in promoting economic self-sufficiency among lower-wage working families—especially vital during these tough economic times.”

Corporate Voices’ workplace lactation toolkit gives employers the practical tools they need to establish successful workplace lactation programs-- particularly to meet the needs of hourly and lower-wage workers. Corporate Voices plans to launch an updated, online version of this toolkit in early 2011, which will offer an expanded selection of free, practical, high-quality resources and information in multiple languages, as well as success stories showcasing best practices from Ernst & Young, PNC Financial Services, LifeCare, Marriott International, Inc., and McGladrey, among others. The current toolkit is available online at: http://www.corporatevoices.org/lactation.

While 75 percent of U.S. mothers initiate breastfeeding, less than 14 percent are exclusively breastfeeding six months later. Although breastfeeding promotes optimal infant health and can help protect women from breast cancer and other illnesses, one of the most common reasons mothers stop breastfeeding is that they must return to work. This is especially true for hourly or lower-wage workers, who may lack access to private and sanitary spaces to pump milk at work, flexibility in their schedules to take pumping breaks and who may have unsupportive managers and co-workers. More than 50 percent of the American workforce is composed of hourly workers, and they are the backbone of many industries on which our economic prosperity and future competitiveness depend.
Corporate Voices’ workplace lactation toolkit was made possible with generous support from Abbott Nutrition.

About Corporate Voices for Working Families
Corporate Voices for Working Families is the leading national business membership organization shaping conversations and collaborations on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we create and advance innovative policy solutions that reflect a commonality of interests among the private sector both global and domestic, government and other stakeholders.

We are a unique voice, and we provide leading and best-practice employers a forum to improve the lives of working families, while strengthening our nation’s economy and enhancing the vitality of our communities.

Publications, research studies and toolkits on a host of workforce readiness, workplace flexibility, family economic stability and work and family balance issues are available online at www.corporatevoices.org.

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Online Web 2.0 Version
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