

Working Families Committee

Final Report

January 2015

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Working Families Committee (WFC) REPORT

January 2015

Section I: Introductory and Summary Information

Background:

The challenge of work-life balance and work-related issues faced by pregnant women, parents/caregivers who have recently welcomed a child into their family, and parents with young children of school-age is not new to NTID, to universities at large, or to society in general. However, in recent years there seems to be a growing awareness and sensitivity to considering the short-term impact of possible “accommodations” vs. the long-term gain in productivity and retention of valued employees. In order to probe concerns expressed by NTID faculty and staff, in May 2014, NTID President Gerry Buckley asked Marianne Gustafson, Associate Dean for Curriculum and Special Projects to chair a group who would be convened in the Fall. Of initial concern was retention of mothers who faced decisions about returning to work after maternity leave, and there was interest in pressures faced by all families with babies and young children. Dr. Buckley put out a call for self-nominations to what was called the “Working Families Committee” in his August 2014 President’s Update:

This year we’re gathering a group of faculty and staff together to review the current environment for working parents at NTID, especially those with young children. The group will solicit input from the community, discuss challenges and issues parents face that impact work, and brainstorm solutions that can benefit themselves, their families and the college. They’ll document the supportive benefits, policies and practices already offered by RIT/NTID and make further “family-friendly” recommendations for the college and HR to consider.

Please consider volunteering for this important committee. NTID values each employee’s contributions and wants to learn more about your unique challenges in balancing family and work obligations. This will be an interesting short-term commitment that should conclude with a report in December. The group will tentatively meet on Friday afternoons (time tbd) starting in mid-September and will conduct much of its work electronically. To self-nominate or for more information, contact Marianne Gustafson, associate dean for Curriculum and Special Projects.

The Working Families Committee Charge included the following:

- Discuss challenges and issues parents face that impact work
- Solicit input from the community
- Review the current environment for working parents at NTID, especially those with young children
- Document the supportive benefits, policies and practices already offered by RIT/NTID
- Brainstorm solutions that can benefit parents, their families and the college
- Recommend further “family-friendly” policies and practices for the college and RIT/HR to consider

The response to the call was impressive, with over 40 self-nominations. This was indicative of the high level of interest in the topic. In assembling the group, diversity was considered important, e.g., male and female caregivers; primary and secondary caregivers; caregivers of children of varying ages; faculty who were tenured, pre-tenured and lecturers; staff who were exempt and hourly; staff who had a range of

student contact; staff with positions that varied in their tie-ins to the academic calendar. This broad array was deemed essential so that the committee could unravel common as well as role-specific challenges. Ultimately 14 NTID faculty and staff were selected/able to serve. An Ad Hoc member from RIT's Human Resources was added to the group to advise it.

Working Families Committee members included:

Bonnie Bastian, Communication Studies and Services
Nicole Crouse-Dickerson, Access Services
Heather Eaggleston, Govt. Relations/NTID President's Office
Bonnie Jacob, Science and Mathematics
Astrid Jones, Student Life Team (withdrew due to conflicts)
Erin Kane, Admissions
Vicki Liggera, Counseling and Academic Advising
John Mannara, NTID Client Services
Andrea McNeill-Zuchegno, Visual Communications Studies
Mistie Munton, SAISD
Scott Wolff, Engineering Studies
Cliff Edington, RIT Human Resources, Ad Hoc member
Marianne Gustafson, Academic Affairs, Chair
Patty Hezel, Academic Affairs, Notetaker

Process:

Over the course of several months, the Working Families Committee thoroughly explored and discussed issues, challenges, the current environment at RIT/NTID, as well as possible solutions to NTID community members' concerns. Some of their efforts included:

- Brainstorming within the committee regarding issues, concerns and possible recommendations for addressing them
- Interviewing self-nominees who could not serve or were not asked to serve
- Meeting with representatives from the AdvanceRIT team
- Posting documents in myCourses and conducting online discussions of issues
- Creating and administering a Working Families Survey to solicit concerns and recommendations from NTID faculty/staff
- Conducting Open Forums to solicit input from NTID faculty/staff
- Reviewing numerous articles and websites related to topics of NTID community concern
- Consulting with the RIT Human Resources representative regarding policies

After brainstorming, the WFC categorized the primary issues and concerns affecting parents/caregivers into seven primary categories. These were used as organizing topics for the WFC Survey and Open Forums, as well as conversations with community members who requested to meet with the WFC chairperson. Other issues surfaced and were addressed, but with less detail. The overarching theme of the need for flexibility was probed via the Survey and incorporated into the other issues. (See Appendix A for a copy of the Working Families Committee Survey.)

Primary Issues Addressed by WFC:

1. Parking
 - a. Expectant mother safety related to weather, incline, distance from building; width of parking spaces; number of handicap spots; parking on return from child-related visits or appointments
2. Paid leave
 - a. The number of weeks of paid parental/caregiver leave upon the birth or adoption of a child or placement of a foster child
3. Transition to full-time hours and responsibilities
 - a. Expected to immediately resume a full schedule or offered to return with reduced hours/responsibilities during transition back
4. Breastfeeding after return to work
 - a. Lactation rooms: size, cleanliness, proximity; availability of refrigerator; paid time off to pump or go to childcare site to nurse baby
5. Childcare
 - a. Costs, especially at Margaret's House; location; "emergency" babysitting; hours
6. School calendar
 - a. Mismatches with RIT and children's schools
7. Family-friendly events
 - a. The number of organized opportunities for family involvement on campus

When possible, the WFC sought to understand whether concerns varied based on employees' job categories (e.g., lecturer, tenured or pre-tenured faculty, exempt or non-exempt/hourly staff) or whether they were more universal in nature. Similarly, the committee considered challenges and recommendations from the nuanced perspectives of those with different ages of children, varying levels of student contact, and the degree to which job responsibilities were tied to the academic calendar and/or needed to be completed on campus.

Significant Findings:

- Over 220 members of the NTID community provided feedback to the WFC.
- 199 RIT/NTID faculty/staff completed the WFC Survey, which was directed to those who were raising child/ren at some point while employed by RIT.
 - 43% were hourly staff, 32% were faculty, and 24% were exempt staff.
 - 74% were faculty and hourly& exempt staff with high student contact.
 - 54 had children ages 0-5 years old; 153 had children ages 6-18 years old; 83 had children over age 18 at the time they completed the survey.
 - 75% reported that flexibility was an important or high priority concern when their children were of school age, 59% during their child's first years, and 45% during pregnancy/pre-adoption.
 - Overall, approximately 80% of faculty staff were satisfied/extremely satisfied with RIT, NTID and department/unit as a family-friendly workplace; 40% were extremely satisfied with their department/unit, 23% with NTID, and 16% with RIT.

- Pregnant women had issues with proximity to buildings and the width of some parking spaces, particularly in bad weather and near the end of term. They and other caregivers returning from appointments had problems with the availability of parking spaces.
- A majority of Survey responders and the members of the WFC thought that six weeks of paid leave (classified as an eligible medical event) following giving birth was not sufficient, and that adoptive parents and secondary caregivers should have benefits equal to those afforded birth mothers. The 12 weeks provided by RIT based on the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) is appreciated, but not considered adequate because it is unpaid leave.
- Faculty/staff are appreciative of the understanding and flexibility afforded to them by their immediate supervisors/chairs/team leaders. However, there is no RIT policy supporting flexibility in work responsibility, hours, location, etc., or the opportunity to transition back to full-time/full responsibility after a leave due to childbirth/adoption. Because it is dependent on who someone's supervisor is at the time the flexibility is needed and the particular constraints of the caregiver's job category and relationship to the academic calendar, it is often an uncomfortable request to make.
- Many mothers were passionate about their need for support in continuing to breastfeed their babies after they returned to work. A good deal of confusion and frustration was expressed regarding the lack of quantity and quality of lactation rooms as well as adequate time for pumping/breastfeeding.
- The cost of childcare, especially at Margaret's House on the RIT campus, is a major issue for many in the RIT/NTID community. There are also frustrations related to mismatches between childcare, school and RIT calendars, and the consequent need to make alternate arrangements. Additional challenges are faced when children are ill and need alternate care.
- RIT/NTID faculty and staff expressed more concern about school calendar issues than any other area probed by the WFC. It is often, if not always, a challenge to find care for their school-age children during EYF, SVP, August classes, school holidays, February and April breaks, and other days off. Some employees are able to use vacation time, while others are not, and even those who *can* use vacation time do not have days left for "real vacations."
- Some faculty/staff desire more family-friendly events on campus, particularly if they are also "Deaf-friendly."
- It is not easy to find RIT policies and resources, e.g. regarding leave following birth or adoption, returning to work, lactation rooms/time policies, parking for expectant mothers, FMLA guidelines or family events.
- Several employees expressed frustration that they are not afforded the same flexibility or choice in hours as they perceived were afforded to some of their colleagues with children. There are also challenges faced by faculty/staff who are caring for elderly or ill parents or siblings.
- Some specific issues and ideas that were brought forth need more attention from a follow-up group.

Primary Recommendations from the Working Families Committee:

Based on its own deliberations, consideration of the WFC Survey, Open Forums and interview results and comments, a review of current RIT policies and other RIT proposals, and reading of relevant references, the Working Families Committee is making recommendations under each of the seven

primary categories it addressed. WFC is also suggesting ways that RIT/NTID can improve communication about existing and future policies, benefits, and other relevant information for parents/caregivers. Finally, WFC recognizes the need for follow-up, not just to pursue approval and implementation of its recommendations, but also to address additional issues that surfaced through its outreach to the RIT/NTID community. More detailed recommendations and information about the recommendations can be found in the section of the WFC Report devoted to each of the seven issues, access to policy information, and follow-up.

1. Parking
 - a. Improve communication and website information so pregnant women know their needs fall under RIT's "Parking for People with Disabilities" policy, which has an application process and requires a statement from their physician.
 - b. Consider adding additional spaces designated specifically for Expectant Mothers.
 - c. Consider widening spaces, especially in L lot and near Margaret's House.
2. Paid Leave
 - a. Provide 12 weeks of paid leave for *both* caregivers of a newborn *or* newly adopted child.
 - b. Better educate/inform employees and managers about FMLA, paid leave for birth or adoption of a child, and how all of that can impact income.
3. Transition to Full-Time (Following Maternity/FMLA Leave)
 - a. Offer all faculty/staff returning from leave up to a six-month transition plan with the options of a gradual increase to full requirements and/or flexibility in responsibilities, hours and/or location of work.
 - i. Transition options might include reduction in days per week/hours per day worked, flexibility in time of day worked and number of breaks, job sharing, working from home, reduction in responsibilities or reduced teaching load.
 - b. Offer full benefits during this transition period with pay in proportion to the percentage of time/responsibilities worked.
4. Breastfeeding
 - a. Designate and publicize additional private lactation rooms across campus, specifically in areas most frequented by NTID employees: two rooms each in/near LBJ/SDC/Rosica Hall (east campus); 7A/B (central campus); and bldg. 14 (west campus).
 - b. Lactation rooms need to be warm, clean, private, secure and appropriately equipped.
 - c. Provide all nursing mothers with paid break time and flexibility in their schedules and workload expectations for a period up to one year while nursing an infant.
5. Childcare
 - a. Explore possibilities for reducing costs at Margaret's House and nearby daycare centers or offering financial assistance related to childcare.
 - b. Explore the possibility of Margaret's House expanding to accommodate more children of RIT employees.

6. School Calendars

- a. Give employees the flexibility to work from home or use flex-time when their children are off on secular holidays (e.g., MLK Day, Presidents' Day).
- b. Explore options with Margaret's House or campus organizations to provide reasonably priced, fee-based programs after school and during their child/children's school days off and school break weeks.
- c. Allow those who are not currently able to use vacation time when RIT classes are in session to do so, especially when options for childcare are exhausted.

7. Family-Friendly Events

- a. Increase the number of family-friendly activities offered on campus.
- b. Host an annual event for RIT/NTID employees and their families.
- c. Reestablish Take your Child/ren to Work Day at NTID with the assistance of student volunteers.

8. Improving Access to Resources and Policy Information

- a. Create and publicize a dedicated website that contains all RIT family-friendly policies and resources.
- b. Offer Parental Benefits Training workshops twice a year.
- c. Develop a Facebook or internal group for parents to chat and share ideas with each other to create a community as well as help communicate RIT/NTID's family-friendly policies and events.

9. Follow-up

- a. Establish a smaller committee to pursue the following goals:
 - i. Share this report with the NTID community, estimate costs, and pursue implementation of approved recommendations.
 - ii. Share this report with relevant RIT administrators, groups and the other appropriate RIT colleges/organizations and collaborate with them to establish family-friendly policies campus wide.
 - iii. Review additional challenges and suggestions identified in this report, such as issues specific to grandparents, caregivers of older adults or siblings, and employees without children who feel negatively impacted by flexibility afforded to those with children.

The committee's draft recommendations were reviewed by Cliff Edington, Human Resources (HR) Ad Hoc member of the WFC, who consulted with the HR team including Bobby Colon, RIT General Counsel. He advised the WFC that most of their recommendations are HR and benefits-related and fall under the auspices and review of HR and RIT Legal Affairs, in consultation with appropriate constituency groups, such as the Provost, Academic Senate Chair, and Staff Council Chair. He also advised that some of the WFC recommendations can and should be handled at a more local level, such as supervisor/employee or college. WFC believes this applies to some of the suggested flexibility, parking, lactation rooms, communication, and family-friendly activities recommendations. The Working Families Committee also recognizes the challenge of finding the resources to implement many of its suggestions and wants to minimize the potential impact on RIT/NTID employees who might not benefit from the adoption of some of its recommendations.

Section II: Community Feedback

The Working Families Committee decided that one significant mechanism for soliciting information from the NTID community would be through an online survey. In addition, the committee recognized that some faculty/staff might prefer to share their concerns and recommendations in a group setting or one-on-one, rather than providing input through a structured online survey. To that end, two Open Forums were held and meetings/e-mail exchanges were conducted with several faculty/staff who requested them. (See Appendix A for a copy of the Working Families Committee Survey.)

Open Forums

The WFC hosted two Open Forums during the month of November 2014 to share the issues included in the WFC Survey and to solicit comments, recommendations and additional issues.

- Both one-hour forums were held in the CDS Student Development Center, on different days and times during the last week the WFC Survey was conducted.
- The audience was faculty and staff in the NTID community.
- The primary issues addressed were parking, paid leave, transition to full-time, breastfeeding, childcare, school calendars and family-friendly events on campus.
- To notify the NTID community of the Open Forums, several strategies were used:
 - Mass email notifications to all NTID faculty and staff
 - Announcement in the NTID President's November 2014 monthly update publication
 - Notifications by WFC committee members via department meetings
 - Communication through "word of mouth."

Open Forum Objectives

The main objective of the Open Forums was to collect feedback from the NTID community in a face-to-face format and use this data when providing recommendations for the college and HR to consider. The WFC shared the main issues via a Power Point presentation and engaged participants in dialogue about these and any other concerns or recommendations they might want to offer.

Open Forum Results

The WFC Open Forums were attended by 14 NTID employees who were faculty, professional (exempt) staff, and hourly (non-exempt) staff, some of whom had children and others who did not. Their comments were transcribed live and projected onto screens in the front of the room to ensure they were accurately captured. The various sections of this report include comments and recommendations made by Open Forum participants.

The Working Families Committee Survey

The WFC created a brief survey, appropriately named the "Working Families Committee Survey" (WFC Survey), using RIT's Clipboard online survey system through the Wallace Center.

- The audience for the survey was the NTID community.
- The primary issues addressed were parking, paid leave, transition to full-time, breastfeeding, childcare, school calendars and family-friendly events on campus.

- The survey consisted of eight questions.
- The survey was comprised of various question types (“Likert scale”, “Fill-in-the-blank” and “Multiple Choice”).
- The survey was designed to be anonymous so respondents would be in no way associated with their responses.
- The survey was available online for a total of 21 days.
- To motivate the NTID community to fill out the survey, there was a prize drawing after the survey closed with various gift cards.
- To notify the NTID community of this survey, several strategies were used:
 - Mass email notifications to all NTID faculty and staff;
 - Announcement in the NTID President’s August 2014 monthly update publication;
 - Notifications by WFC committee members via department meetings;
 - Communication through “word of mouth.”

Survey Objectives

The main objective of the survey was to collect as much feedback as possible from the NTID community and effectively use this data when providing recommendations for the college and HR to consider. The WFC generated the survey questions from compiling issues/feedback from committee brainstorming sessions. One of the primary objectives was to determine the level of importance or concern for each issue, plus details and recommendations from respondents relating to these main issues. In addition, the survey solicited feedback about workplace flexibility and overall satisfaction with various entities (RIT, NTID, individual departments), and it asked for some demographic information. The WFC’s initial target was 50 respondents.

Survey Results

The WFC survey was completed by 199 members of the NTID community, which is 38% of faculty/staff employed at the time. In addition to answering Likert scale and multiple choice questions, 136 of the 199 respondents, or 68%, provided comments on the issues raised. After the survey closed, the data was exported from RIT’s clipboard survey system to an Excel spreadsheet. The data was then organized and thoroughly reviewed/analyzed by members of the WFC committee.

Section III: Survey Results Overview

Survey results, comments and recommendations about each of the seven main issues will be detailed in separate sections below in Section IV of this report. To provide a context for that data and the WFC Survey participant comments, results related to respondents' job category/role, the age(s) of respondents' children, the importance of flexibility at different stages of parenting, and their overall satisfaction with RIT/NTID/department will be summarized apart from the main issues.

Survey Results - Job Category/Role

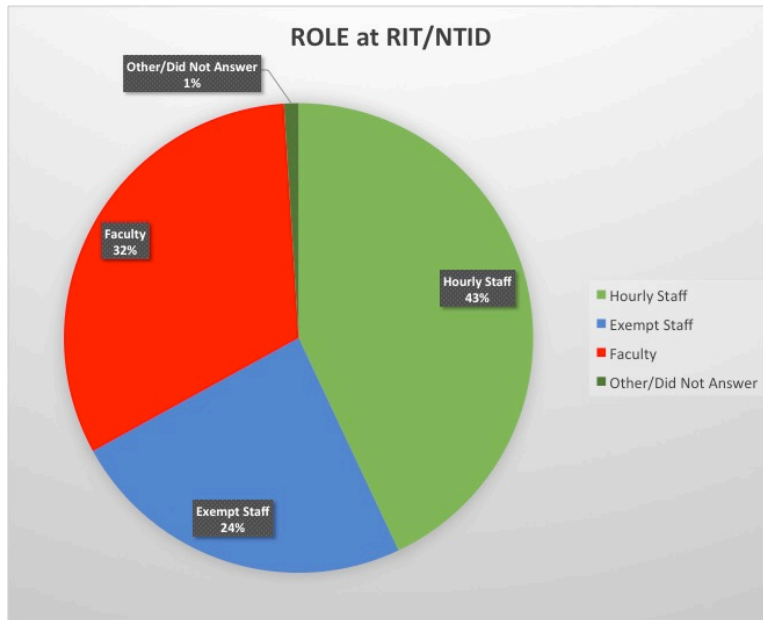
The WFC had a sense that at least some of the issues and concerns expressed by parents/caregivers would vary because of differences in RIT policies for RIT/NTID faculty, staff who were exempt, and staff who were non-exempt (hourly), as well as by how much student contact each person's position involved. Job categories/roles are important to keep in mind when reviewing results shown in the issues section of this report. There are differing policies for non-exempt/hourly staff than for exempt staff or faculty, particularly related to taking time off. For example, hourly staff have specific requirements for keeping track of their time, including punching out for required 15 minute breaks and at least a half-hour lunch, and initially they have fewer vacation days than exempt staff. Vacation time is accrued for hourly workers, but nine sick days are available at the beginning of the fiscal year. Faculty and exempt staff don't have a specific number of sick days per year. Exempt staff begin with three weeks of vacation and faculty don't have allocated vacation days.

7. Please identify your role at RIT/NTID:

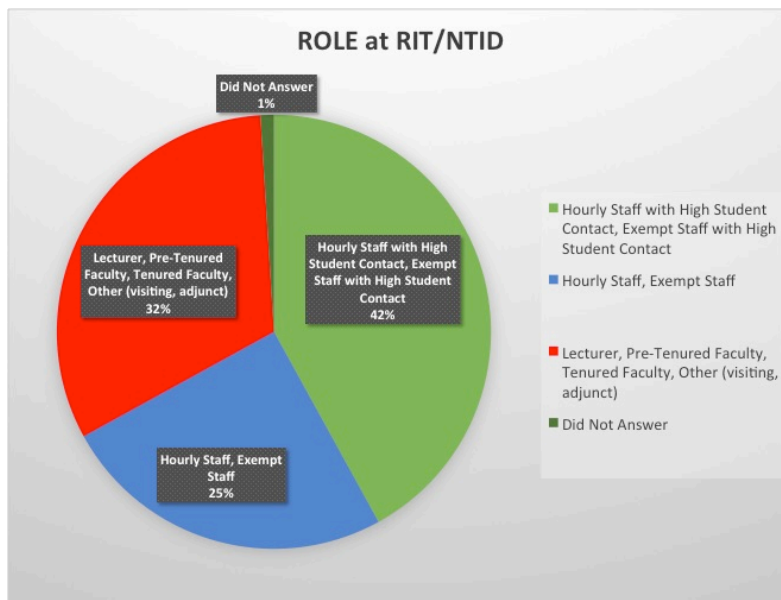
64 - Hourly Staff with High Student Contact
22 - Hourly Staff
20 - Exempt Staff with High Student Contact
28 - Exempt Staff
27 - Lecturer
1 - Pre-Tenured Faculty
36 - Tenured Faculty
0 - Other (visiting, adjunct)

1 user did not answer

To get a clearer picture of the WFC Survey data shown in the table above, the WFC grouped the data by just job category, and then by job category plus student contact. Looking at Survey results in this way WFC found that 43% of participants (86 out of the 199) were hourly staff, 32% (64 out of the 199) were faculty, and 24% (48 out of the 199) were exempt staff. These percentages are generally consistent with the makeup of NTID employees: 46% (241 out of 521) of NTID employees are hourly staff, 33% (109 out of 521) are faculty, and 21% (109 out of 521) are exempt staff. There's no way of knowing for sure what positions the hourly staff who completed the Survey were in at the time, but it is likely that many were interpreters or C-Print captionists working in the Department of Access Services (DAS). Of the 241 hourly staff at NTID, 172, or 71%, are captionists and interpreters.




A final breakdown that helped WFC look at Survey data was related to student contact. Here, all faculty were assumed to have high student contact and thus formed one group. Staff were regrouped to show both exempt and hourly staff with high student contact as a second group, and the rest of the exempt and hourly staff as a third group. Looking at the results this way, WFC found that 42% of staff completing the Survey (84 out of the 199) had high student contact, 25% (50 out of 199) did not have high student contact, and 32% (64 out of the 199) were faculty. In total, 74% (148 out of the 199) NTID faculty and staff completing the WFC Survey had high student contact. This is important to bear in mind as it impacts the flexibility that can be afforded faculty/staff as they balance work and family demands on time. Typically, those with high student contact must follow the academic calendar and often cannot take vacation when classes are in session or perform their work functions away from campus.



Survey Results - Ages of Children

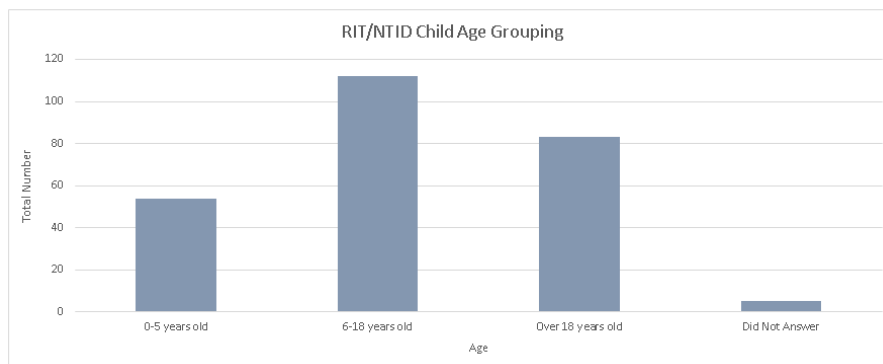
To gain another point of context for understanding Survey data and comments, participants were asked to identify the age ranges of their child/ren: 0-2 years old, 3-5, 6-10, 11-18 or over 18 years old. Participants with more than one child could check multiple age ranges, but couldn't specify the number of children they had in each category. The largest age grouping was children over the age of 18, and there were smaller numbers for ages 0-2 and 3-5.

8. Please identify the current ages of your child(ren).  (hide answers)

28 - 0-2 years old
26 - 3-5 years old
41 - 6-10 years old
71 - 11-18 years old
83 - Over 18 years old

5 users did not answer

To get a better understanding of participants' concerns that might be age related (e.g., breastfeeding, childcare, school calendars and family-friendly events), the WFC Survey age data was regrouped to determine the numbers with children currently of pre-school ages, school-ages, and post-secondary ages. For the 199 survey respondents, there were 54 who indicated they had child/ren ages 0-5 years old, 153 who had child/ren ages 6-18 years old, 83 who had child/ren over 18 years old. Given the number with post-secondary ages of child/ren, it is important to keep in mind that the participants were asked how important each of the Survey issues "have been" to them. That is, respondents could answer the Survey questions based on current or past concerns.



The following survey comments demonstrate some of the challenges experienced by those employees with young/school-aged children:




"I would feel like a much more successful mom were I able to be at my children's after school events and performances, be waiting for them even a few days a week when they get off the bus, be able to help them with homework instead of hurrying through night time routines after mommy gets home so late from work, to be able to take a breath and maybe get some things done during the week that I am usually too tired to even attempt (such as making and eating a meal with my family). This is NOT how I envisioned being a mother would be. But it is hard to give up the benefit of working full time and getting the tuition reimbursement."

*"It's a challenge to schedule doctor's appointments because in my job, it's not always possible to get a replacement to fill in for me. I feel torn between going to the appointments and getting my work done. My department is supportive when I *have to* take time off but there's always that unspoken expectation to arrange doctor's visits during my vacation time. I'm lucky to have a husband who can take the kids to many appointments but not all of us have a partner who can do that."*

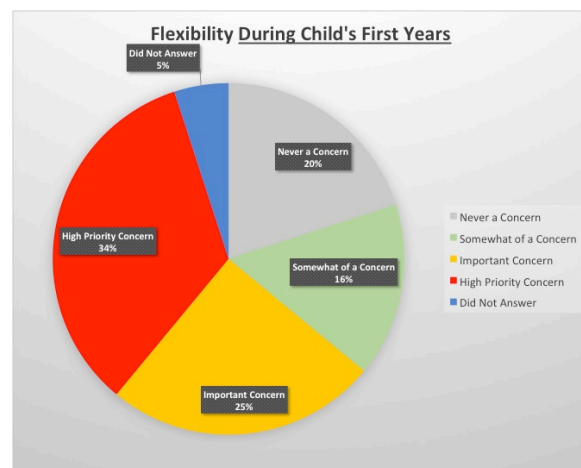
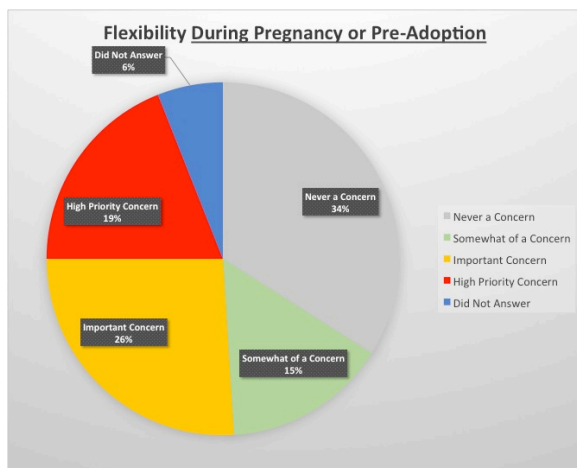
Survey Results - Flexibility

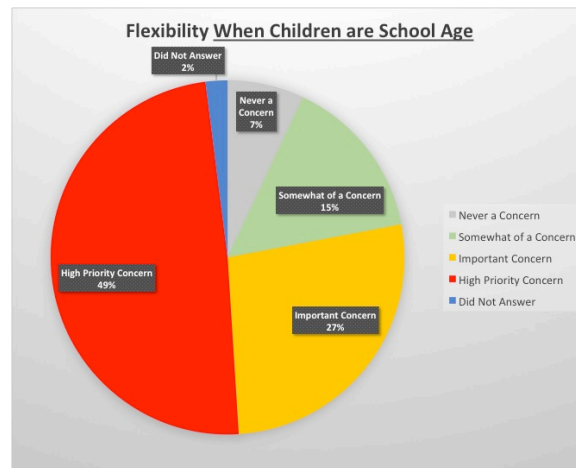
An overarching issue raised by WFC members during brainstorming sessions was the need for flexibility at work to help them, as parents/caregivers, balance the competing demands on their time. The WFC wanted to get a sense of how important this might be to the greater RIT/NTID community and whether the importance varied from pregnancy/pre-adoption through a child's infancy/pre-school years and into school attendance.

3. During the following stages, please let us know how important workplace flexibility (use of paid time off, ability to work offsite, adjusted work schedule when needed) is to you:

	Never a Concern	Somewhat of a Concern	Important Concern	High Priority Concern	did not answer
 During pregnancy or pre-adoption (e.g., missing work due to prenatal visits; foster/adoption prep visits)	67	31	52	37	12
 During the child's first years (e.g., well child visits; numerous illnesses babies get their first year; long-duration health concerns)	40	32	50	68	9
 When the children are school age (e.g., working earlier hours to attend after-school sports and activities; parent-teacher conferences; long-duration illnesses)	13	30	54	97	5

Review of the Working Families Committee Survey revealed that 45% (89 out of 199) survey respondents considered flexibility an important or high priority concern during pregnancy/pre-adoption. 59% (118 out of 199) valued flexibility during their child's first years. An overwhelming majority of respondents (75% or 151 out of 199) told the WFC that workplace flexibility was important or a high priority concern when their children were of school age. These data, shown in the charts below, certainly influenced WFC's decisions to make the recommendations detailed in this report.





The following survey comments demonstrate the importance of flexibility and the impact it can have on workplace morale and retention:

"I cannot emphasize how much it helps to have an understanding and flexible boss. I work harder because I feel cared for. Because I feel well cared for, I can focus on taking care of my son -- and when he goes to bed/on the weekends, I have newfound energy to get work done because I am grateful for the flexibility given to me as a working mom. This lessens the guilt of being away from my son, which keeps "leaving my job" thoughts at bay because my workplace isn't forcing me to "choose" my priorities."




"I recognize that RIT, and NTID in particular, work diligently to provide an environment where a positive work-family life balance is possible. This is one of the primary reasons I choose to work at RIT/NTID. I am grateful for Institute leadership in this regard."

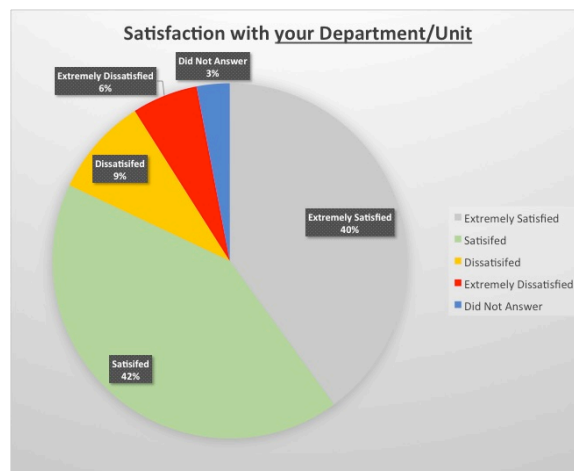
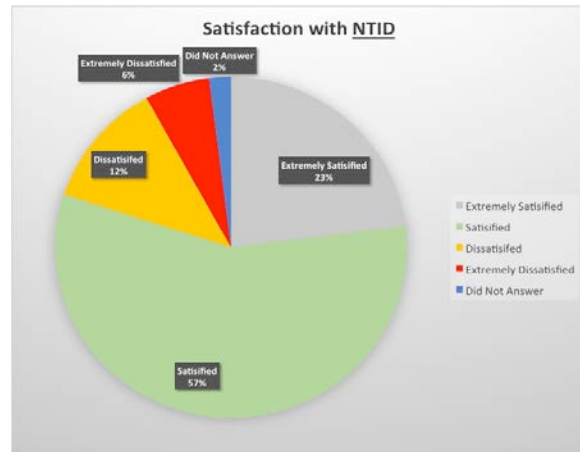
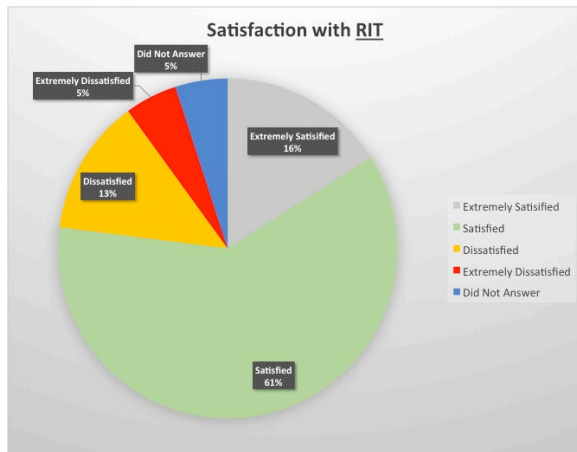
Survey Results - Overall Satisfaction

The Working Families Committee was interested in seeing if there was any variation in participants' overall satisfaction with the university (RIT), compared to the college (NTID), compared to the department/unit as a family-friendly workplace. Most employees who answered the Working Families Survey during fall semester 2014 indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the support they received while working here and raising a family at RIT/NTID. Review of the survey results showed slight variation in participants' levels of satisfaction. In all, 77% (154 out of the 199) were satisfied with RIT, 80% (160 out of the 199) were satisfied with NTID, and 82% (162 out of the 199) were satisfied with department/unit. The higher level of satisfaction at the department level was more notable when considering just the extremely satisfied category.

It was clear that participants were more satisfied with their departments (40% or 79 of the 199) than they were with RIT (16% or 32 of the 199) or NTID (23% or 46 of the 199). Also, the data showed that about 18% of faculty/staff were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with RIT (35 of the 199), NTID (35 of the 199), and their department (31 of the 199). Based on data and comments described later in the Issues and Recommendations section of this report, it may be that satisfaction is highest at the department/unit level because faculty and staff appreciate the flexibility extended to them by their chairs and supervisors but would like to see greater flexibility built into RIT policies.

4. What is your overall satisfaction with RIT, NTID, and your department as a family-friendly workplace?

	Extremely Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Extremely Dissatisfied	did not answer
 RIT	32	122	25	10	10
 NTID	46	114	23	11	5
 Your department/unit	79	83	18	13	6



The following survey comments demonstrate the range of experiences for NTID employees – from departmental-level frustrations to departmental-level satisfaction and institutional-level frustrations:

"I shouldn't have to worry about my employers' disappointment if/when I need to be with a sick child...If a change to hours is requested, again it is met by an unspoken disappointment (as though such requests label you – 'Not a Team Player')."

"Overall, I've found that working at RIT has been quite family-friendly. I feel that my administrators are very flexible and understanding. The problems I've encountered arise at a structural level in the institute – i.e., calendar, parking, paid leave etc."

Section IV: Primary Issues and Recommendations

As mentioned elsewhere in this Report, the Working Families Committee probed seven main issues: 1) parking, 2) paid leave, 3) transition to full-time, 4) breastfeeding, 5) childcare, 6) school calendar and 7) family-friendly events. This section of the Report describes each issue, the current RIT environment or policy related to it, WFC Survey results and comments, Open Forum comments and suggestions, and committee recommendations. Because of the number of concerns raised by the NTID community, this section also includes recommendations for: 8) improving access to resources and policy information, and 9) follow-up to the work of the WFC.

1. PARKING

In committee discussions, several issues related to parking on the RIT campus surfaced. These revolved around safety, availability of parking, width of parking spots, distance from buildings and process for obtaining special parking permits.


Parking: Current Environment or Policy

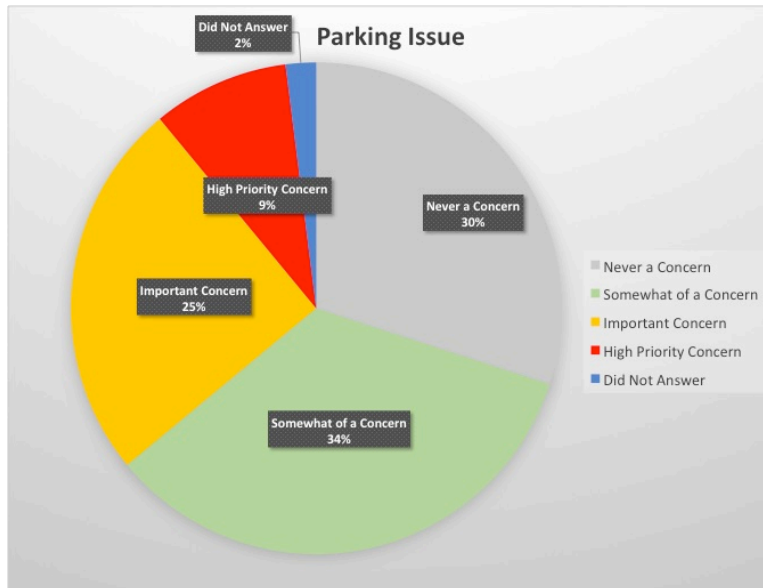
Winter season is the biggest concern for pregnant mothers. The typical distance to a building, especially from non-reserved spots, is far and, in icy conditions, walking can be treacherous. The timing of clearing snow and putting salt down for ice is often after people have arrived at work. Even when snow and ice have been cleared or treated, parking lots and sidewalks can still be slippery and dangerous. There are limited Reserve parking spaces, which could provide parking closer to buildings, but not everyone can afford them.

RIT's Parking & Transportation Services website (<http://www.rit.edu/fa/facilities/pats>) does not have information specifically about parking options for expectant mothers. The WFC learned from Cliff Edington, RIT Human Resources, and from the AdvanceRIT team, that RIT follows the federal law that treats pregnancy as a disability. Because of this, RIT advises pregnant women to obtain a temporary Handicap parking tag which can be requested by obtaining a note from the employee's physician and completing an application. There have been requests for designated spots for "Expectant Mothers" but RIT has not created these due to what might be unfairness of parking arrangements compared to those with other disabilities. There are typically 35-45 pregnancy/maternity disabilities each year and the current process of handling parking requests on an individual basis seems to RIT to be a better approach.

Parking: Survey Results

1. Please let us know how significant the following issues have been to you:

	Never a Concern	Somewhat of a Concern	Important Concern	High Priority Concern	did not answer
 a. PARKING (e.g., expectant mother safety related to weather, incline, distance from building; width of parking spaces; number of handicap spots; parking on return from child-related visits or appointments)	59	68	49	18	5



Review of the Working Families Committee Survey revealed that 34% of survey respondents (67 out of 199) considered the topic of parking to be of High Priority or Important Concern.

The issues most people have are with parking lot conditions in the winter, the narrowness of parking spaces and the lack of availability of parking spaces when returning from child-related appointments.

The following survey comments represent some of the common themes related to parking:

“Also, have designated parking for expectant mothers with wider spaces. Towards the end of my one pregnancy, a car was parked so close since parking spaces are tight, that I couldn't open my car door to get in. Had to enter through passenger side and climb over center console.”

“Parking was a concern towards the end of my pregnancy, as it was winter and I did not feel safe or fully capable of walking across snowy parking lots when I had to park far from the buildings. However, parking services was great about giving me a temporary handicap pass to use on campus for the duration of my pregnancy, which made it much easier! If there was expectant mother parking in every lot, that would be great, or if expectant mothers were told about the temporary handicap passes, I think a lot of them would feel more comfortable, especially in the winter months.”

“Parking lot maintenance, especially in winter, is a great concern. I fell in L lot while pregnant, fractured my wrist and have been overly cautious since then. It's important to ensure everyone's safety; especially those who are pregnant or have mobility issues, to keep the parking lots cleared and salted properly, not just the walkways. Ice can be everywhere!”

“It is very difficult to find parking after 9am. I am not sure what a solution would be..I don't feel that this is only an RIT thing. I have noticed many empty spots require a reserve parking pass. I have a general parking pass. Maybe designate more spots ‘general’.”

“Parking is awful. As a rushed mother, I was often made embarrassingly late by parking problems. Not sure why administrators have preferred parking. Students are waiting for me. A ‘mothers’ parking spot or two would sure be nice!”

For additional quotes from the survey related to parking, please see Appendix B.

Parking: Open Forum Comments and Suggestions

During one open forum, one participant noted how much farther caregivers with children at Margaret's House have to walk now since the construction of Rosica Hall. Icy and slippery conditions are also a concern for people who are carrying children to and from Margaret's House.

Parking: Committee Recommendations

After reviewing current RIT policy and considering relevant reference documents, committee discussions, survey responses, open forum comments, and interviews/communications with members of the NTID community, the WFC proposes the following recommendations regarding parking:

1. Improve the Parking & Transportation website so pregnant women are aware they can receive a handicapped parking tag (with physician approval) under the "Parking for People with Disabilities" policy and incorporate this information in all general communication efforts geared toward pregnant women.
2. Consider adding additional spaces designated specifically for Expectant Mothers.
3. Consider widening spaces, especially in L lot and near Margaret's House.

2. PAID LEAVE

"Out of 185 countries and territories in the world surveyed by the International Labor Organization, the United States is one of only two that does not offer paid maternity leave. Papua New Guinea is the other." (Wheeler, 2015) As President Obama put it in his State of the Union address on January 20, 2015, "Today, we're the only advanced country on Earth that doesn't guarantee paid sick leave or paid maternity leave to our workers."

Clearly, the United States is lagging behind in support of the majority of its citizenry. This issue is critical to the retention of an experienced work force. Time away from work allowing a parent(s) to bond with their newborn or newly adopted child is critical not only to the employee's health and wellbeing but to the child's (Gault, Hartmann, Hegewisch, Milli & Reichlin, 2014). President Obama in 2014 stated at the Working Families Summit that paid parental leave, among other flexible workplace policies available to both caregivers, "are not frills, these are basic needs." (Carmen, 2014). The President is calling for at least six weeks of paid sick leave for federal employees when a new child arrives and proposing that Congress offer an additional six weeks of paid administrative leave (Jarrett, 2015). Ray, Gornick and Schmitt found that only 60% of employees in the United States are eligible for 12 weeks of unpaid leave as provided by the 1993 Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). After reviewing 21 countries' policies regarding parental leave they suggest that a best practice is "generous paid parental leave, quotas for leave for each parent, and scheduling flexibility." (Ray, Gornick & Schmitt, 2008)

Often the argument is made that it is not financially feasible for U.S. businesses to be required to provide paid leave for the birth or adoption of a child. Research shows that women who receive paid maternity leave are significantly more likely to return to the same employer after giving birth. A study of highly effective employers by the Families and Work Institute found that many reported a series of economic benefits from their flexible policies, such as employee engagement and retention, reduced

absenteeism/sick days, higher customer satisfaction, higher productivity, enhanced innovation and creativity. (Earle, Mokomane & Heymann, 2011). According to *Forbes* magazine, when faced with the difficult choice between career and family, regardless of the financial burden that may result, employees will most often choose family. Experts estimate that replacing a “professional staff person” can cost up to 200% of the wages that person earns in one year. This figure is staggering and should give administration pause when considering making paid parental leave a workplace mandate (Yost, 2012).

Because the U.S. maternity leave programs are linked to the medical disability categorization of childbirth, caregivers who do not give birth do not have access to paid leave. This puts in opposition the critical bonding time needed between caregiver and child and the need to remain financially solvent).

Paid Leave: Current Environment or Policy

RIT/NTID’s policy regarding parental leave follows the Family Medical Leave Act of 1993:

<http://www.rit.edu/fa/humanresources/content/statutory-benefits>

FMLA mandates that a caregiver is able to take up to 12 weeks unpaid leave due to the birth of a child, or placement of a child in the home for adoption or foster care within any one 12-month period. Absent in the policy are the words “maternity leave,” which makes finding the policy a difficult task. Employees who give birth are eligible for six-to-eight weeks of paid leave dependent upon a doctor’s authorization, referred to as “short-term disability” by RIT and the insurance companies. Information on short-term disability is found in another location within the Human Resources website. The Institute does not allow for any paid leave afforded to adoptive parents. An adoptive assistance program is offered to employees for up to \$2,000 for specific expenses incurred in the process of adopting a child.

Further support of the critical nature of this issue is the number of people employed by RIT who are actively investigating RIT’s leave policies and advocating for changes. The WFC reviewed a memo drafted by faculty of the College of Liberal Arts that had a recommendation of 16 weeks paid leave in the event of birth or adoption of a child (RIT College of Liberal Arts, April 2014). This memo included a draft from the Women in Science (WiSe) group who were recommending that parents who are primary caregivers be allowed 12 weeks paid leave (WiSe at RIT, 2014). About the time the WFC concluded its work, they learned that the CLA faculty had approved a revised recommendation which was not for paid leave but rather a request for course releases with commensurate release from service and scholarship expectations following birth or adoption (RIT College of Liberal Arts, November 2014). The WiSe group also modified their proposal for parental leave and return, but this has not yet been approved in the College of Science. The Provost discussed these proposals with the Council of Deans in December 2014 and would like to see a uniform policy across the university.

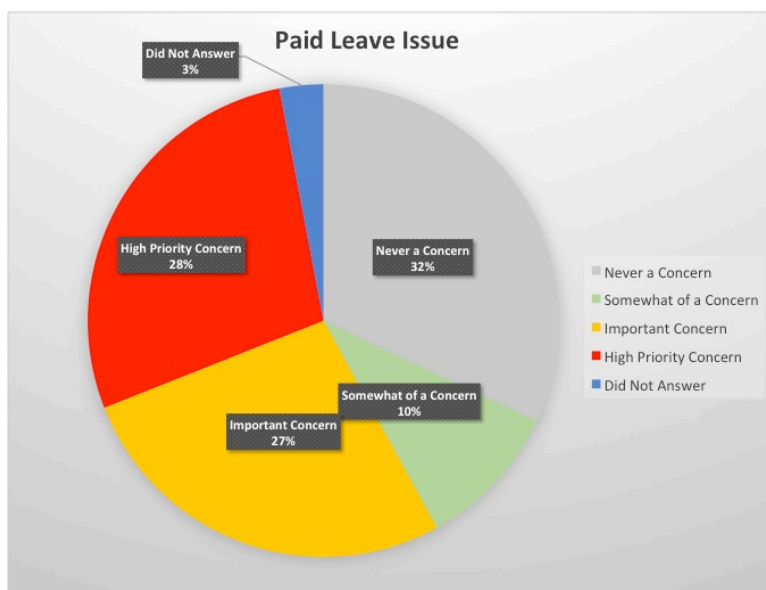
AdvanceRIT, funded by NSF, has undertaken a number of efforts related to paid leave and other issues. One activity was a review of RIT’s 25 benchmark institutions on this issue (AdvanceRIT, 2013a). While 17 of those 25 schools have evidence of a maternity leave, the terms and lengths of the leave varied and only five provide what could be categorized as forward-thinking parental leave policies. The RIT Academic Senate Faculty Affairs Committee has been charged with reviewing and clarifying RIT’s family leave policy, particularly as it relates to parental leave for faculty, with the goal of bringing the RIT policy more in line with benchmark institutions. [Note: The complete benchmarking documents are contained in Appendix C in a binder with a hard copy of this report. Electronic or binder copies are available upon request.]

Currently at RIT much of the workplace flexibility afforded to employees depends upon an individual's department, supervisor and job category (e.g., faculty, exempt staff or non-exempt/hourly staff). This variation of experience with an issue as critical as childrearing often leads to perceptions of unfair treatment.

Paid Leave: Survey Results

1. Please let us know how significant the following issues have been to you:

	Never a Concern	Somewhat of a Concern	Important Concern	High Priority Concern	did not answer
b. PAID LEAVE (the number of weeks of paid parental/caregiver leave upon the birth or adoption of a child or placement of a foster child)	64	20	54	55	6



According to the WFC survey, 109 out of 199 respondents (55%) labeled the issue either an important or high priority concern. Respondents in general are calling for more paid leave after the birth or adoption of a child. As policy now stands, birth and adoption are not afforded the same leave benefit, which causes undue hardship for those pursuing adoption. Many of the respondents to the Committee's survey characterized this fact as a glaring injustice and want to see parental leave equity between those who give birth and those who adopt. Parents are concerned about having to hand their newborn or newly adopted child over to a day care provider as early as that baby's sixth week of life.

The following are just a sampling of responses from the NTID community:

"Women are forced to use short term disability, which is only 6 weeks, to be paid for leave. This is a countrywide issue, not only with RIT, that true paid maternity leave is no longer offered. Women feel forced to come back to work quickly, when their infants are not yet sleeping through the night, as they cannot afford to take time off without pay. This leads to instructors being less productive and effective, due to exhaustion and distraction. Furthermore, STD is not provided to women who adopt a child. It is discriminatory to not offer ANY paid time off, other than personal vacation time, to women who are not able to have their own children. It is horrible that a woman who chooses to adopt is ONLY offered FMLA, which is time without pay, or must deplete her personal vacation time, leaving her in a lurch when needing to take time off for well-visits with

the child later. The lack of true maternity leave is severely discriminatory against adoptive parents.”

“As a father, when my children were born I was able to take 5 days of sick time and then allowed to use my vacation up, with the option of unpaid leave after that. Both times I took almost a month off and it was so important that I did so. I know that my department and RIT are more generous than some other employers, but still I wish our state/country would provide more paid time off for new parents.”

“While I was on maternity leave our financial situation was difficult - it was hard to piece together enough time off from maternity, vacation, and other leave time. I didn’t feel I had enough time home with either of my kids when they were born - had to return to work after 8 weeks right back to full time. I’m thankful my supervisor and department were flexible and supportive, otherwise it would have been really difficult.”

“6 weeks paid to be on maternity is simply not enough time and if you opt for the 12 weeks you have to figure out how to save/budget the remaining 6 weeks. In my opinion, 12 weeks is a very short time to be on maternity leave and trying to raise a newborn and trying to get settled into being a parent. I think it would help to have 12 weeks paid maternity leave and it would be nice too to have the option of working part time to transition back into work without having benefits become affected with the change in hours.”

Paid Leave: Open Forum Comments and Suggestions

The attendees to the open forums echoed the survey results in that more paid parental leave is desperately needed by those giving birth to or adopting children.

Paid Leave: Committee Recommendations

RIT/NTID wants to be known as a family-friendly workplace. It is critical to have equivalent paid parental leave for those giving birth or adopting. Not providing this equity is tantamount to discrimination against those whose circumstances do not allow for pregnancy and childbirth. NTID should *not* depend on the insurance companies to dictate the amount of paid leave afforded an employee. A newborn or newly adopted child needs both caregivers at home for more than six weeks for bonding purposes.

After reviewing current RIT policy and other RIT proposals and considering relevant reference documents, committee discussions, survey responses, open forum comments, and interviews/communications with members of the NTID community, the WFC proposes the following recommendations regarding paid leave:

1. Provide 12 weeks of paid leave for *both* caregivers of a newborn *or* a newly adopted child.
2. Better educate employees and managers about FMLA, paid leave for birth or adoption of a child, and how all of that can impact income (e.g., through publication on an internal RIT web page and a bi-annual training offered to those who are considering conceiving or adopting children).

3. TRANSITION TO FULL-TIME (AFTER MATERNITY/FMLA LEAVE)

Giving birth to or adopting a child, whether for the first or fourth time, is a major life event, requiring a complete restructuring of a family's priorities, routines, finances and responsibilities. If the child is an infant, there are months of sleepless nights, and regardless of age, there is a steep learning curve for familiarizing one's self with a child's individual quirks. Though adding a new member to the family is a joyous occasion for most, it can also bring a profound amount of stress and fatigue, particularly for working caregivers. If the child is healthy, eventually caregivers settle into a rhythm, get more rest as the infant/child starts sleeping through the night, and hopefully, gain confidence in their ability to juggle work and family. However, some working caregivers, particularly if they are primary caregivers, find that they cannot balance work and family successfully if their workplace does not offer any flexibility and choose to exit the workplace for that reason.

Despite the acute demands and stress on employees with a new infant/child to care for, many employers expect employees to return to work assuming their full responsibilities. Returning to work after six weeks of providing 24-hour care to a new baby can be physically overwhelming and emotionally traumatic. Many employees have identified that a transitional period of a modified workload that gradually increases to their previous full-time work responsibilities and/or additional flexibility in how they resume their previous work responsibilities would reduce the stress of returning to work and improve employee retention.

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) put forth a document in 2011 that highlights the added worker productivity that results from allowing flexibility in the workplace for women who have children under the age of 6 and supports flexible work policies. Examples detailed include: job sharing, telecommuting, career flexibility, individual control over start and end times, schedule adjustments, and part-time parity in wages, benefits and government protections. (Balancing Work and Life, 2011)

Transition to Full-Time: Current Environment or Policy

Flexibility in transitioning after a leave seems to be granted on an individual basis, in consultation with an employee's supervisor. As noted earlier under the Survey results related to Satisfaction, RIT/NTID faculty and staff were *most* satisfied with their department/unit as a "family-friendly" workplace, and less satisfied with RIT than with NTID. Even at the department level there is variation and no "guarantee" that flexibility or a transition to full-time, full-responsibility will be granted. Based on information shared with the WFC, it seems that for faculty and some professional (exempt) staff, transition seems to be dependent on when in the academic year they return from their leave. For staff in the Department of Access Services, captionists can sometimes return part-time initially while interpreters typically cannot.

Currently, RIT does not have policy on faculty or staff returning to work part-time or with a modified workload as part of their transition after leave related to the birth or adoption of a child. Cliff Edington, HR ad hoc representative on WFC, advised the committee that changes to faculty or staff return-to-work flexibility would need to go through RIT Human Resources and Legal Affairs since they would be benefits-related policies. Faculty policies would likely be reviewed by Academic Senate, and any staff policy would benefit from support by Staff Council. WFC learned that RIT's Provost Jeremy Haefner, at a December 2014 Council of Deans meeting, said that he will not support individual college policies or

pilot programs for faculty, preferring instead a campus-wide policy. Changes to RIT Benefits would also apply to the entire university, not just NTID or other individual colleges or divisions.

Despite the lack of policy, and the potential difficulty with establishing or changing policy, there is significant interest in this topic. RIT's College of Liberal Arts drafted a policy proposal for faculty, which faculty approved, entitled *Administrative Policy on New Parent Course Release and Commensurate Release from Service and Scholarship Expectations (November, 2014)*. This proposal states that a primary caregiver whose full-time teaching load consists of five courses per year shall be entitled to three course releases related to a birth or adoption. Secondary caregivers would be permitted one course release related to a birth or adoption. In addition to the course releases both primary and secondary caregivers shall be entitled to release from service and scholarship expectations commensurate with their course release.

RIT's Women in Science (WiSe, 2014) have also proposed parental leave and return guidelines for faculty with the goal of increasing the quality of faculty scholarship and teaching, increasing faculty retention, improving faculty recruitment of high quality candidates, and enabling the success of students in the classroom through instructional continuity. In order to support breastfeeding and provide a more flexible schedule after a primary caregiver returns to work, they recommend a reduced teaching load for one semester to be taken within one year of the birth/placement of the child.

There is a lack of clarity in the RIT policies for extended part-time positions, particularly related to faculty, which some employees have requested upon return to work after a leave following birth of a child. In the College of Engineering, one faculty member wrote a proposal that went to RIT Academic Senate (DeBartolo, 2013) which reviewed policies of RIT and benchmarking universities. The Academic Affairs Committee of Academic Senate has recently been charged with clarifying the processes and rights and responsibilities associated with extended part-time faculty appointments.

AdvanceRIT, a project aimed at increasing the representation of women STEM faculty at RIT and increasing their representation among campus leaders, has also devoted attention to this issue. Looking at faculty policies only, they conducted a benchmarking study of 25 institutions similar to RIT on several issues of importance to working families (AdvanceRIT, 2013b). These included a modified workload, flexible/alternative work schedule (e.g., early or late start/end times vs. traditional 8-to-5 schedule), compressed work week (e.g., ability to work four 10-hour days and have one day off per week), job sharing and telecommuting. Of the 25 institutions, seven had a modified workload for faculty. Thirteen of the 25 universities had *some* policy that could be used to ease the transition back to work. For those institutions, common themes emerged: there cannot be a one-size-fits-all approach; everything is subject to the individual employee, the manager, and the nature of the job in question; and changes to work schedules or location should be piloted first with an opportunity to make adjustments as necessary. Because this benchmarking review was focused on faculty and not staff, AdvanceRIT agreed to assist NTID's Working Families Committee by researching policies for staff at these institutions. Their preliminary findings indicate that most colleges do not have published policies related to staff. They have requested that RIT's Human Resources Department contact HR at those institutions to find out if there are any staff-related policies concerning child-related leave and return-to-work issues.

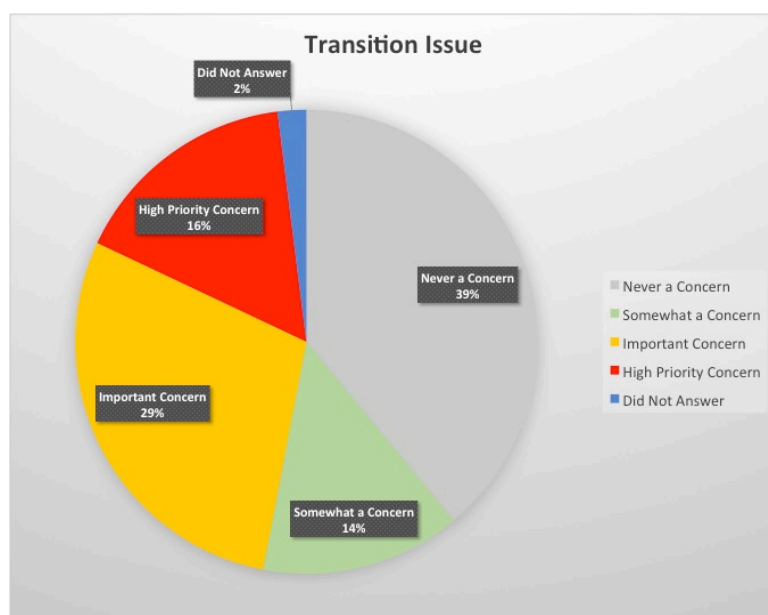
The WFC also reviewed the one staff-focused initiative at RIT related to a flexible work environment: the *Finance & Administration Pilot Program: Flexible Work Arrangement Policy*, which was initiated in November 2011. This pilot for exempt and non-exempt staff is not specifically targeted to flexibility

following caregiver leave. However, it does provide guidelines for flexibilities such as: flexible hours; compressed workweek; alternate workweek; telecommuting; reduction in hours without job restructuring that does not result in added headcount; job-sharing; and other arrangements. If a college or department wants to implement a Flexible Work Arrangement program, the program has guidelines, forms and processes that need to be followed and used. Not everyone at RIT is in a position that would allow working remotely from home, but other options could be considered, such as a compressed work week (e.g. four 10-hour days).

Transition to Full-Time: Survey Results

1. Please let us know how significant the following issues have been to you:

	Never a Concern	Somewhat of a Concern	Important Concern	High Priority Concern	did not answer
c. TRANSITION to full workload upon return to work (e.g., expected to immediately resume a full schedule or offered to return with reduced hours/responsibilities during transition back)	78	27	58	31	5



Review of the Working Families Committee Survey revealed that 45% of survey respondents (89 out of 199) considered the topic of transition to full-time work to be of High Priority or Important Concern. Faculty commented on the awkwardness of returning to teach classes mid-semester and the importance of not being penalized in the promotion process if a short-term reduced workload is offered. Some respondents cited flexible work hours or teleworking as helpful options for transitioning back to work. Others suggested that a reduced schedule or reduced responsibilities with a gradual ramp up to a full schedule/workload should be offered to caregivers returning to work.

The following survey comments represent some of the common themes related to transitioning back to a full-time workload:

"I would recommend that different work arrangements be looked at for flexible work schedules and locations and then be encouraged on an institute-wide basis."

"For faculty/staff returning mid-semester, it is extremely daunting to expect to pick up a class in the middle of the semester, without knowing the students or where in the curriculum the class is."

"Allow new parents to return at part time instead of full – let them ramp up to get used to being a new working parent."

"Transitioning back to a full-time schedule would also be appreciated. Come back 2 days a week, then 3, then 4, etc. until back to full-time. Mothers and children need time to adjust to a new routine."

"Transitioning back is extremely difficult. Many babies are not sleeping through the night when we are expected to return to work so we are returning to a full work load while being sleep deprived. I think a reduced workload for the first 6 months should be considered."

For additional quotes from the survey related to transitioning to full-time, please see Appendix B.

Transition to Full-Time: Open Forum and Interview Comments and Suggestions

During the open forum, comments were made about the need for an established policy. A concern was raised about what happens when a manager is not supportive. One person has had different managers so the flexibility offered after returning to work varied, depending on the job and manager. It was not clear who someone can appeal to if they do not feel supported. [Note: the person was not aware they could go to the Ombuds office or HR with concerns, reinforcing the need for greater communication about RIT policies and resources.]

A three-to-four-month transition to full time was recommended, with the proposal that departments plan to hire someone for an interim position if necessary. There was recognition that the timing of maternity and post-birth/adoption leaves and the subsequent need for return-to-work flexibility was sometimes complicated when it did not coincide well with the academic calendar.

Transition to Full-Time: Committee Recommendations

Respecting the Provost's desire for a uniform policy across the university, the WFC supports the recommendations regarding faculty made by CLA, WISE and AdvanceRIT for reduced workloads upon return to work after parental leaves and applauds the change in policy which adds time to the tenure clock after birth/adoption leaves. WFC would like its recommendations to also be considered at the university level.

After reviewing current RIT policy and other RIT proposals, relevant reference documents, committee discussions, survey responses, open forum comments, and interviews/communications with members of the NTID community, the WFC would like to add the following recommendations regarding transition after a maternity/FMLA leave:

1. Offer all faculty/staff returning from leave a transition plan up to six months, with the options of a gradual increase to full requirements and/or flexibility in responsibilities, hours and/or location of work.

- a. Each employee should work with his/her supervisor on this plan prior to the leave taken, which will necessarily vary for employees in different positions, with different responsibilities, and different return-to-work times relative to the academic year.
- b. Options for transition might include, but are not limited to, reduction in the number of days worked per week or hours worked per day, flexibility in start-stop-break times, job sharing, working from home, reduction in responsibilities, or reduced teaching load.
- c. Full benefits should continue during this transition period.
- d. Pay should be in proportion to the percentage of time/responsibilities worked (e.g., if there is a 10% increase per month in responsibility/hours, then there would be a 10% increase in pay per month until full-time, full responsibility is reached).
- e. RIT Human Resources and Academic Senate need to build this six-month flexibility into staff and faculty policy.
- f. Breastfeeding mothers should receive up to an additional six months of flexibility for the purpose of nursing an infant for the first year (see the next section for more information).

4. BREASTFEEDING

RIT employees who are also breastfeeding mothers need to pump their breasts in order to produce milk for their babies during the working day, and also to maintain a milk supply to continue breastfeeding. Breastfeeding provides numerous documented physical, emotional and economic benefits for baby as well as mother, some of which also positively impact a working mother's job performance (Workplace Breastfeeding Support, 2002). Reduced infant illnesses (e.g., acute ear infections, respiratory diseases, type 2 diabetes) and decreased maternal health risk for both breast and ovarian cancer translate into less time needed for an employee to be absent from the workplace due to medical visits and ultimately leads to further healthcare cost-savings (The Surgeon General's Call, 2011). The World Health Organization (WHO), American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) as well as the United States Surgeon General support breastfeeding through an infant's first year or longer (The Surgeon General's Call, 2011).

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) requires that employers (meeting conditions described in the ACA) provide employees who are nursing children under 1 year of age with a place other than a bathroom to express milk as well as sufficient time to do so. The time need not be paid, but if the employee is using break time that is normally paid (such as her own lunch time), then it must be paid (Breastfeeding State Laws, 2014). Scheduling time to express breast milk during the workday can be challenging. Planning pumping sessions ahead of time is important, as is having the support of the employee's supervisor (Micco, 2014).

If working mothers are required to use unpaid time during the day on pumping, their productivity decreases since they are left with little time for other personal needs such as eating lunch or using the bathroom, and may fall behind in their work duties. Providing a period of transition time with reduced responsibilities to breastfeeding mothers returning to work after maternity leave allows them to resume job duties and breastfeed successfully.

In order to successfully express breast milk, working mothers need a clean, secure place that is easily accessible, as well as a sanitary place to store pumped breast milk.

Breastfeeding: Current Environment and Policy

RIT has a Nursing Mothers Accommodation Policy that is applicable for all regular RIT employees as well as temporary/adjunct faculty and staff and student employees. The policy is posted on HR's website at: <https://www.rit.edu/fa/humanresources/policies/procedures/nursingmother.html>.

The policy outlines RIT's support for nursing mothers for up to three years following the birth of the employee's child, which includes allowance of reasonable time away from work to express breast milk and reasonable efforts to provide a private room or other location in proximity to the work area. Break time used to express milk is unpaid, although non-exempt (hourly) employees may substitute paid vacation or sick/personal time. Reasonable break time generally allowed is up to 30 minutes, including walking time, no more than three times per day, although the required duration may vary, depending on individual needs and the proximity of the designated space to the employee's work location.

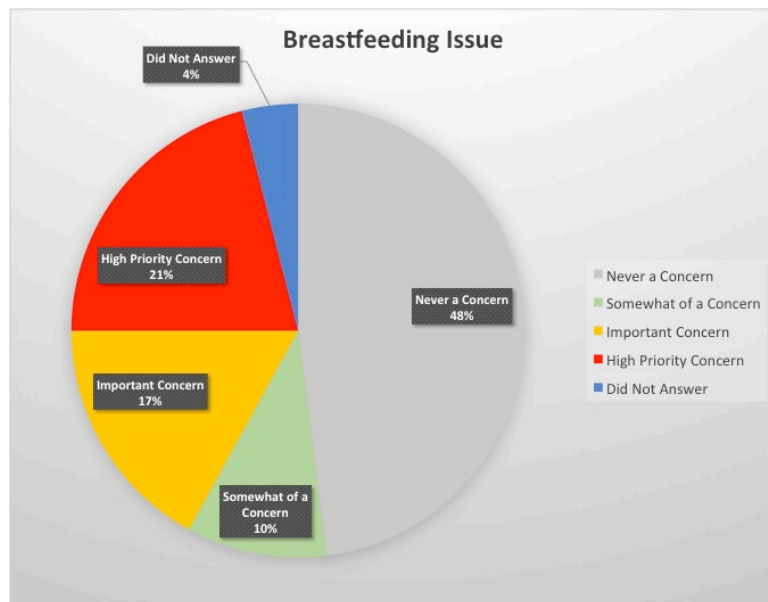
To support all NTID nursing mothers equally, realistic accommodations for expressing milk must be improved. Many NTID faculty and exempt staff members do have private offices; however, most non-exempt staff members do not. Furthermore, a substantial number of faculty members share their offices with others. Creating accessible, private rooms in convenient locations for RIT/NTID employees would be well-received and help remove physical roadblocks to mothers who wish to continue nursing their infants beyond their return to work.

By word of mouth, the Committee learned that there is only one designated lactation room on the entire RIT campus. This "Nursing Room" is located on the far west side of campus in the new Sustainability Institute Hall (SUS - Building 81). The location and designation of this room are currently not well-publicized to the RIT community, however. After a few investigatory phone calls and e-mails, the Committee learned that this room is located on the second floor of SUS in room #2138 and is used on a first-come, first-served basis. Currently, Lori Sykes, HR Compliance Manager in RIT's Human Resources, should be contacted if assistance is needed in finding an alternative location for nursing mothers who will not find this location to be accessible for their needs. Traveling to GIS to pump one-to-three times per workday is not feasible for the majority of NTID employees, who largely spend their workdays in LBJ (Building 60), Carey (Building 14) or Booth (Building 7A). Overall, committee discussions and survey responses revealed that many NTID nursing mother employees do feel a sense of support (e.g., from their supervisors), but that initiatives in this area could be improved and expanded upon, beginning with an increased provision of appropriate space for expressing breast milk.

Breastfeeding: Survey Results

1. Please let us know how significant the following issues have been to you:

	Never a Concern	Somewhat of a Concern	Important Concern	High Priority Concern	did not answer
Issue d. BREASTFEEDING (e.g., lactation rooms: size, cleanliness, proximity; availability of refrigerator; paid time off to pump or go to childcare site to nurse baby)	96	20	34	41	8



Review of the Working Families Committee Survey revealed that 38% of survey respondents (75 out of 199) considered the topic of breastfeeding to be of High Priority or Important Concern.

Survey respondents conveyed a resounding plea for RIT/NTID to significantly increase the number of comfortable, well-equipped and conveniently located lactation rooms for nursing mothers across campus. While many nursing mothers reported feeling supported in this area in the past (e.g., supervisors allowed the time and some even offered up their personal offices for pumping use), most also reported a lack of appropriate physical accommodations for milk expression. Based on conflicting survey comments, it can be concluded that not all employees are even aware that the Golisano Institute for Sustainability's lactation room exists. Many respondents also specifically commented that restrooms should not be considered appropriate locations for pumping due to sanitary concerns. Overall, respondents reported a general feeling of high demand for an increased number of lactation rooms in various locations on campus, for these rooms to be well-equipped to accommodate nursing mothers and for consideration of schedule flexibility/workload in order to make working mothers' efforts to breastfeed possible.

The following sampling of comments reported on the survey help portray the current environment on the RIT/NTID campus regarding support of breastfeeding mothers:

"There is nothing more sustainable than breastfeeding. This should be supported in every way possible and imaginable. RIT should be the example in this."

"I felt well supported in all areas, except breast-feeding/pumping. We could definitely benefit from facilities in various academic buildings to support this."

"I used to pump in the bathroom toilets. Ridiculous. Provide a private room on both sides of campus for anyone who needs time to be alone in a comfortable private room."

"It can be hard to return to work and expect to manage a full caseload while trying to pump/breastfeed, especially those of us that have 25 or more DIRECT contact hours with students each week. Trying to schedule time to pump or breastfeed is a logistical nightmare, and often forces women to skip lunch or prep time. I fortunately have an office where I can privately pump, but I know many others do not have the same benefit. At least one area in each building should be dedicated to this function, and should be set up comfortably for women to provide nourishment for their infants."

"The biggest challenge I faced when returning to work after giving birth was a place to comfortably pump, though my manager offered his office any time, a lactation room would be a much better solution."

For additional quotes from the survey related to breastfeeding, please see Appendix B.

Breastfeeding: Open Forum Comments and Suggestions

Several attendees of the open forums brought up suggestions regarding breastfeeding. One suggestion was for lactation rooms equipped with a sink and refrigerator in both LBJ and Carey Hall, buildings that house NTID employees and are located on opposite ends of campus.

Other suggestions included more publicity about existing lactation rooms, as well as other support provided to breastfeeding mothers. One attendee mentioned that NTID Facilities Services and Sustainability Department loans a refrigerator to lactating mothers, but that she was unaware of this option until after she was finished breastfeeding, and had purchased a refrigerator herself. No one else at the open forums had heard of such an accommodation.

In addition to the suggestion of more publicity about benefits for nursing mothers, there was a suggestion that RIT/NTID provide more encouragement and support of breastfeeding in general.

Breastfeeding: Committee Recommendations

After reviewing current RIT policy and considering relevant reference documents, committee discussions, survey responses, open forum comments, and interviews/communications with members of the NTID community, the WFC proposes the following recommendations regarding breastfeeding:

1. Designate and publicize additional private lactation rooms across campus, specifically in areas most frequented by NTID employees:
 - a. Two rooms in/near LBJ/SDC/Rosica Hall (East campus)
 - b. Two rooms in/near 7A/B (central campus)
 - c. Two rooms in/near bldg. 14 (West campus)
2. Ensure lactation rooms are *not* bathrooms and are warm, clean, private, secure, and equipped with:
 - a. One sink

- b. One full-sized refrigerator
 - c. One comfortable chair
 - d. One garbage can
 - e. Paper towels
 - f. Available electrical outlets
 - g. A confidential means of checking room availability and reserving the room
- 3. Establish an effective means of informing employees of the location and use of lactation rooms (e.g., adding an active link on an appropriate RIT/Human Resources website for nursing mothers that would inform employees of the location and availability of these facilities).
- 4. Amend the Nursing Mothers Accommodation Policy to provide all nursing mothers with paid break time to pump, in addition to lunch/breaks regularly scheduled.
 - a. These breaks should be both feasible and paid for all employees, in an effort to promote equality across all employee job categories (faculty/exempt staff/non-exempt (hourly) staff, etc.) and as a means of promoting and encouraging breastfeeding and sustainability efforts of all nursing mothers.
 - b. Non-exempt (hourly) staff should no longer be required to punch in/out for pumping breaks.
- 5. Grant flexibility to all employees in their schedules and workload expectations for a period of up to one year while nursing an infant.
 - a. The employee and her supervisor should discuss and agree upon the details of such flexibility upon the employee's return to work.

5. CHILDCARE

Childcare (or "child care", "child minding", "daycare", or "preschool") is the caring for and supervision of a child or children, usually from age 6 weeks to age 13. Childcare is the action or skill of looking after children by a day-care center, babysitter or other providers (Child care, 2014). RIT employees who maintain full-time or part-time status need to provide care for their children during their employed time; whether it be early morning, all day, after school hours or evening. Childcare has become an increasing issue among working families who struggle to make ends meet, especially financially. New York families spend a higher proportion of their income on childcare than in any other state, or about 16% (Guggenmos, 2014; Wallace, 2014). Employees with children often reach a point where they may leave their job to become stay-at-home caregivers.

As excerpted from ChildCare Aware of America's report:

How expensive is child care? ³	New York	United States
Average annual fees for full-time care in a <u>center</u>		
Infant	\$14,508	\$5,476 – \$16,549
4-year-old child	\$12,280	\$4,515 – \$12,320
School-age child (before-/after-school care)	\$11,352	\$1,070 – \$10,962

New York has consistently had one of the highest costs of childcare in the country (DeSilver, 2014).

Childcare also overlaps with the flexibility issue as there may be hours needed at home in order to avoid additional childcare costs (e.g., arriving at work at 9 AM instead of 8 AM so that the caregiver can be at home for the 8:30 AM bus pick up).

Childcare: Current Environment and Policy

RIT employees have such benefits as having access to “on-site day care at Margaret’s House at competitive rates.” This committee found that Margaret’s House has an extensive waiting list, but it is not out of line with other local daycare centers in terms of costs. It is important to note, however, that Margaret’s House provides full day care for children beginning at eight weeks of age, not at the usual six weeks offered by most local childcare centers. Having to wait until a child is eight weeks old moves employees past the six weeks of paid short-term disability leave after giving birth.

RIT also offers a Beneflex Dependent Care Spending Account to employees contributing up to \$5,000 per year on a pre-tax basis. This can provide minimal financial relief.

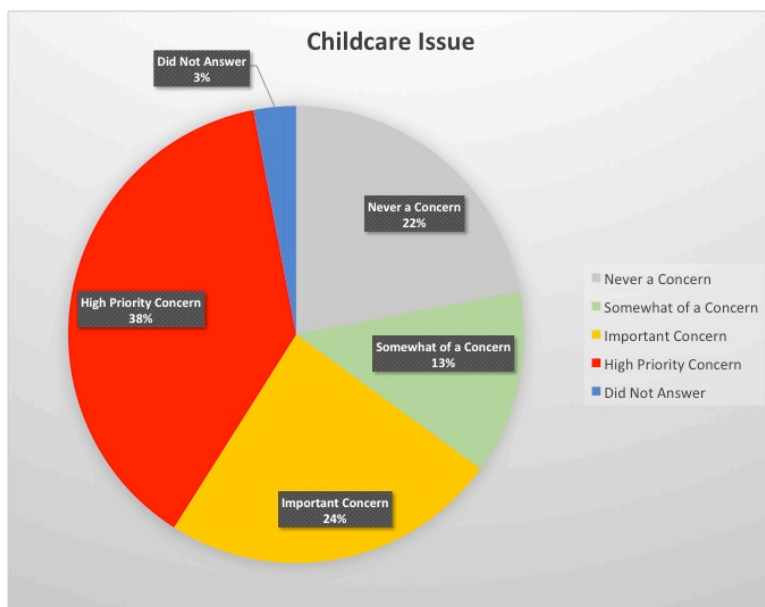
While cost is an overwhelming issue for childcare, childcare with regard to children’s school calendars is also of concern for RIT/NTID employees. RIT/NTID employees have expressed an interest in being accommodated calendar-wise. Please refer to the School Calendar section for further information.

There are concerns regarding the holidays and breaks when faculty/staff are reporting to work and daycare centers are closed.

Childcare: Survey Results

1. Please let us know how significant the following issues have been to you:

	Never a Concern	Somewhat of a Concern	Important Concern	High Priority Concern	did not answer
e. CHILDCARE (e.g., costs, especially at Margaret’s House; location; “emergency” babysitting; hours)	44	27	47	75	6



Review of the Working Families Committee Survey revealed that 61% of survey respondents (122 out of 199) considered the topic of childcare to be of High Priority or Important Concern.

Survey respondents conveyed significant dissatisfaction with the rising or expensive cost of childcare, especially at Margaret’s House. In fact, one person reported not having children due to childcare costs.

Some respondents suggested that RIT subsidize Margaret's House so that employees can receive a discount or give out loans to help with childcare. Despite its costs, there were also calls for expanding Margaret's House so that more children can be enrolled there.

Many comments were geared towards difficulty in finding alternative care during the early morning hours before bus pick-ups, after-school drop-off, break weeks and other times when they are required to work. Examples of these times include summer programming, such as Explore Your Future (EYF) in July and the Summer Vestibule Program (SVP) for incoming students in August.

The following sampling of comments reported on the survey help portray the current environment on the RIT/NTID campus regarding childcare:

"Allow kids to sit in classes with parents as long as they are not disruptive to the students only on emergency basis where childcare is not available. Margaret's House was more expensive and I chose alternate childcare when my kids were very young."

"For those of us who work during SVP and other break weeks, we must find childcare outside of MH in order to be at work. This is not only an added stress, but an added cost to the already outrageous prices of MH."

"Working for NTID, during intersession/break weeks we are required to work day hours to attend professional development events, even if our normal semester schedule is evenings. This creates a challenge finding daycare."

"As far as child care is concerned, it would be very helpful if Margaret's House fees were discounted further for employees, perhaps being subsidized the same as tuition waivers, for those whose income is under \$50K."

"Another area of concern is the fact that I start work mid-August. Finding daycare is of utmost priority for those last two weeks, and it conflicts with the schedule that most schools offer. I would like my child to attend a proper preschool, yet I have to keep him in daycare because of the timing of when we return to work. If Margaret's House could offer temporary placement for children/students during those transition times, that would be helpful, or a welcome alternative. Thus, I am limited with my choices for daycare/school due to the timing at which we return to work for the academic year in August. This situation (i.e., having to stay in daycare and not participate in a formal preschool) is not necessarily to the developmental advantage of my child."

For additional quotes from the survey related to childcare, please see Appendix B.

Childcare: Open Forum Comments and Suggestions

At the first open forum, several comments were made related to childcare. Specifically, the extensive waiting list at Margaret's House and the prioritization of the children of RIT students over the children of RIT employees mean that many RIT employees have to look at other childcare options. Care-A-Lot was discussed as a reasonable alternative to Margaret's House, given its proximity to the RIT campus and its comparable price. Care-a-Lot also offers before- and after-school programs, whereas Margaret's House does not. Before and after-school programs are costly, so the flexibility to be able to put children on the bus and/or be home when they get off the bus would be helpful.

Childcare: Committee Recommendations

After reviewing current RIT policy and considering relevant reference documents, committee discussions, survey responses, open forum comments, and interviews/communications with members of the NTID community, the WFC proposes the following recommendations regarding childcare:

1. Explore possibilities for reducing costs at Margaret's House and nearby daycare centers or offering financial assistance related to childcare.
 - a. RIT could waive or decrease rent to MH so they could pass the savings onto RIT employees.
 - b. RIT could provide assistance in the form of a sliding scale or tiered costs similar to parking fees.
2. Explore the possibility of MH expanding to accommodate more children of RIT employees.

6. SCHOOL CALENDARS

RIT's calendar does not match up with school calendars, especially during secular holidays and winter and spring breaks. Concerns about the mismatch of days when RIT is open and schools are closed are related to the use of vacation time, expenses for additional days of childcare, and burden of finding alternate care when schools are not in session. As will be seen in both survey results/comments and open forum comments, there is a strong sentiment that better alignment of calendars would be of great benefit.

School Calendars: Current Environment and Policy

Currently, parents/guardians have to use vacation time or personal/sick leave if they opt to be home during children's days off from school. Occasionally, some employees are granted permission to work from home if such a plan is approved by the supervisor. This is department specific and is effective if the employee's position allows for this without disruption to workplace productivity. Not all employees are allowed to use vacation time during the academic year due to their position, especially for high student-contact roles.

According to the Time Off Benefits on the RIT website, (http://www.rit.edu/fa/humanresources/sites/rit.edu/fa.humanresources/files/docs/Time_Off_Benefits.pdf), RIT observes 11 paid holidays per year: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas and four RIT-designated holidays (used between Christmas and New Year's Day). These dates coincide with school closings; however, the following holidays/events do not: secular holidays (Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, Columbus Day [except for faculty]; Good Friday; February and April school breaks; Wednesday before Thanksgiving [again, except for faculty]; Superintendent's Days; professional development days for teachers; and parent-teacher conference days. This translates to roughly three weeks that children are off from school when faculty and/or staff are not.

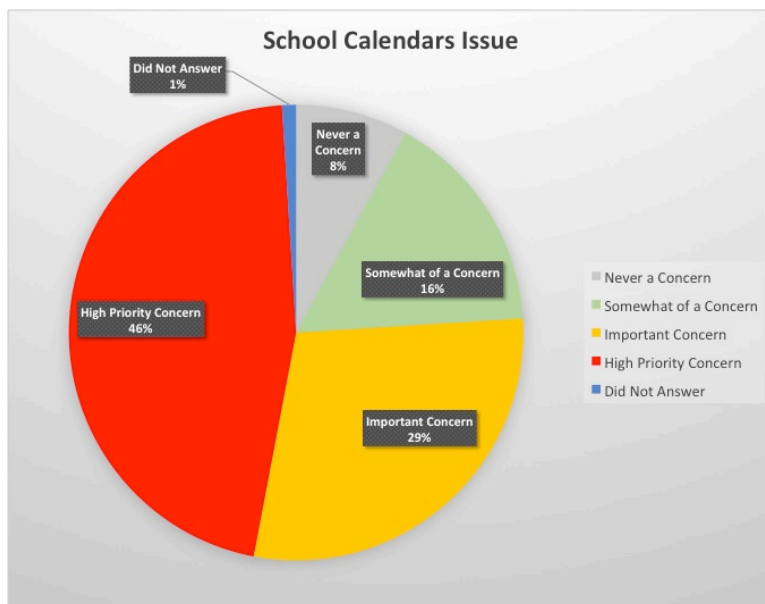
Benefits vary according to an employee's job category. Depending on their length of employment at RIT, exempt employees are eligible to receive three-to-five weeks of vacation time per year while non-exempt (hourly) employees are eligible for two-to-five weeks of vacation time per year. Faculty on twelve month contracts have four-five weeks, while those on 9.5 month contracts follow the break

schedule for the academic year and do not have vacation. Upon employment, non-exempt (hourly) employees earn one personal/sick leave day per month, up to nine days, which is tracked via time-keeping in Kronos. After the first year, they receive nine days per year. Exempt employees receive a salary continuation in lieu of using sick/personal leave when out for five consecutive business days or less. This information can be found in the Human Resources Sick/Personal Leave and Short-Term Disability page: <https://www.rit.edu/fa/humanresources/content/sickpersonal-leave-and-short-term-disability#2a>.

School Calendars: Survey Results

1. Please let us know how significant the following issues have been to you:

	Never a Concern	Somewhat of a Concern	Important Concern	High Priority Concern	did not answer
f. SCHOOL CALENDARS (mismatches with RIT and children's schools)	16	32	57	92	2



In looking at the responses taken from the Working Families Committee Survey, significant portions of respondents have concerns regarding the mismatch of school calendars with the RIT Calendar. Out of 199 responses, 149 respondents, or 75%, listed this issue as either an Important Concern (57) or High Priority Concern (92). This is not surprising considering the ages of the children of respondents. As described in the summary section of this report, 77% (153 out of 199) have children in the 6 to 18 age range. The high level of concern regarding school calendar issues demonstrates the strong desire for better flexibility when children are off from school during secular holidays, Superintendent's Days, professional development days, parent teacher conferences and breaks.

Survey respondents suggested strong, logical ways for RIT/NTID to accommodate faculty, exempt and non-exempt (hourly) staff schedules when children are off from school:

- Allow an employee to work from home - this could apply to those with little student contact and to those whose responsibilities can be accomplished effectively from home; however,

consistency across roles is worth noting, as this option would likely not be feasible for many employee roles.

- Establish a week-long camp during the winter and spring breaks, either through Margaret's House or the Center for Campus Life - background checks and liability would be important considerations.
- Allow employees who are not allowed to use vacation time during the academic year (faculty and staff with high student contact) to do so, if all efforts to find alternate care for their child/children is not successful.
- Provide flexibility in bringing children to work.

In analyzing survey results, several areas of concern with the school calendars became apparent: calendar alignment, on-site childcare, flexibility to use vacation and general flexibility during days off. Comment summaries and several quotes help illustrate these concerns. See Appendix B for the full set of survey respondent quotes about this issue.

Alignment of RIT and school calendar

Summary: If the calendars were more in sync with one another, RIT employees could spend more time with their children when they are off from school. There would be less stress on parents trying to keep their budgets balanced if they did not have to worry about child care costs and what to do with their children on their days off. It would be easier to plan family vacations without conflicting schedules. If the calendars cannot be changed, the option of being able to bring children to work would help tremendously in these situations.

RIT academic calendars are often out of sync with the children's school calendars. It is rough to find ways to cover those days, work, and keep the budget balanced. Not much probably can be done about that, however if the bring the children to work idea could be worked out where there were fun activities that the kids could participate in while parents are working it might ease the challenge, even if it was only for 1/2 day or something like that.

Having to be at work when the kids are off of school is a working mother's nightmare. While snow days cannot be avoided, the school calendar matchup is important. The Christmas break matches pretty well but that February break for the schools is a killer! RIT's spring break never matches up.

On-site school-age childcare

Summary: Many respondents asked about the possibility of Margaret's House or another child-care facility on campus as temporary solutions for school and work conflicts due to holidays and other days children have off from school. The same question came up regarding half-days and snow days. The biggest challenge is finding child care that will be open when RIT is in session but schools are not – especially in August when the school year has not even begun yet.

My only concern is where can I bring my kids when I have to work and my kids have a day-off (teacher conference day/half-days/snow days)? Could Margaret House provide half price days when school situations occur?

I think a child-care facility on the RIT campus that would take in children during official school holidays would be embraced by a good number of employees. I will pay fees toward this.

Flexibility to use vacation during school days off

Summary: The general consensus is to offer parents with children in K-12 settings calendar support, especially in February and April when children have a week off but RIT is in session. Some employees are not allowed to take vacation while RIT is in session, which is a huge challenge especially for those who do not have close family members or a support system in the area.

Returning in August can be problematic for those of us with children still in school; also not being able to use vacation time when kids are off of school for breaks (February and April recess). It would be nice if RIT's spring break fell in line with at least one of these school break weeks.

Let us use our vacation time when our children have days off or week long breaks from school. It is a financial burden to put children in day camps (especially when there are no close family members/support system in the area) during their winter recess or spring breaks. We have to use vacation during other weeks of the semester when we really need vacation time to match the school district's calendar. Please change this!

Flexibility during days children have no school

Summary: Giving flexibility in using vacation/personal time or being able to work flexible hours would help while children are off from school. Being able to work from home was suggested as well as asking NTID to develop an official telecommuting policy. Individual departments have shown flexibility while others have not been offered the same luxury. Allowing employees to bring their children to work is not always ideal but is helpful in some situations.

Flexibility in using vacation/personal time during child's school vacation or working flexible hours is greatly appreciated. Also, maybe during these times (ex: summer or spring break) there could be a work from home option with a cap on how many hours per week (to control it).

I'd like to see NTID develop an official telecommuting policy. This would enable parents to work from home on days when they need to take their children to the doctor or in similar situations.

For additional quotes from the survey related to school calendars, please see Appendix B.

School Calendars: Open Forum Comments and Suggestions

The issues raised during the open forums were found to be in alignment with the survey, further presenting the issue RIT/NTID employees face with the school calendar. Again the discussion about Margaret's House being able to provide programming was brought up, the idea of working from home, the use of vacation time, flexibility in work hours, the burden of childcare costs, and being allowed to bring children on campus were emphasized. In discussion with DAS employees, the WFC learned that Days such as the Tuesday after Columbus Day, which follows a Monday class schedule, present a particular problem for some hourly employees, such as captionists who work different hours on different days of the week.

School Calendars: Committee Recommendations

The WFC believes the productivity of employees is critical to the health of RIT as is the need for flexibility during the days children are off from school.

After reviewing current RIT policy and considering relevant reference documents, committee discussions, survey responses, open forum comments, and interviews/communications with members of the NTID community, the WFC proposes the following recommendations regarding school calendars:

1. Give exempt and non-exempt employees, when their children are off on secular holidays (MLK Day in January, Presidents' Day in February, Columbus Day in October and Veteran's Day in November), the flexibility to work from home or make up hours at another time. Faculty and other staff (e.g., Access Services) involved in classes scheduled on secular holidays would need to be on campus during the times their classes meet.
2. Explore the possibility of working with Margaret's House or another campus organization (e.g., Student Life, RIT Campus Center) to provide reasonably priced, fee-based child-care programs during school days off and school break weeks as well as after-school programs (for Henrietta residents). A model to follow might be what's described in the Town of Brighton's Department of Recreation and Parks Newsletter and Brochure 2015. Brighton offers School Break Recess Camps in February and April for a nominal fee of \$25.00 per day/per child from 8:45am-5:00pm. Activities include games, sports, arts and crafts and special events. This would generate increased work productivity and reduce the need to grant vacation during the academic year when employees are needed on campus. This would also reduce the need to bring children to the office.
3. Allow those who are not able to use vacation time during the academic year to do so, especially when options for childcare are exhausted.

7. FAMILY-FRIENDLY EVENTS

This issue is connected to all the others in this report and the idea that RIT and NTID could be a family-friendly place to work. With that in mind, WFC wanted to survey people and find out about family-friendly events on campus and see what they thought of what RIT and NTID offered each year.

Family-Friendly Events: Current Environment or Policy

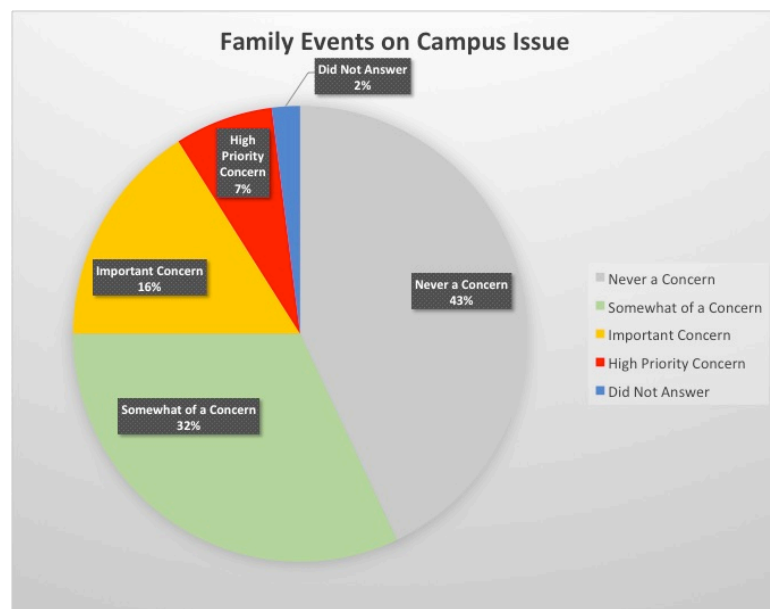
RIT provides some family-friendly events, such as ImagineRIT, Father-Daughter Dance, Easter Egg Hunt, Halloween Trick-or-Treat and Holiday Family Portrait Days. Advertising for these events is done primarily over e-mail.

On the other hand, NTID does not typically provide college-sponsored family activities. A good number of employees have children who are Deaf or Children of Deaf Adults (CODAs), i.e., they have Deaf parents, or Deaf caregivers, or at least one parent who is Deaf. There are no events specifically offered for this group or intentionally Deaf-friendly.

Family-Friendly Events: Survey Results

1. Please let us know how significant the following issues have been to you:

	Never a Concern	Somewhat of a Concern	Important Concern	High Priority Concern	did not answer
g. FAMILY EVENTS ON CAMPUS (number of organized opportunities for family involvement on campus; e.g., Take Your Child to Work days; child photo services; ImagineRIT; Easter Egg Hunt)	86	63	32	14	4



Review of the Working Families Committee Survey revealed that 23% of survey respondents (46 out of 199) considered the topic of childcare to be of High Priority or Important Concern. The results show that employees do find family events imperative for campus community involvement with their children.

A big concern among some respondents is that NTID does not offer as many family-friendly activities as RIT and it seems that the activities have decreased over the years.

The following survey comments gave some suggestions for family-friendly events on the RIT/NTID campus:

"How about partnerships with local kid friendly establishments (Strong Museum of Play, Seneca Park Zoo, Chucky Cheeses', any theatre groups on campus or in the community) for a reduced rate for RIT employees to send their kids (transportation from RIT would be helpful for families who live outside of the area)? Another idea, mini camps for kids to come to work with mom and dad during weeks of school breaks (robot camp, computer camp, sport themed camp like soccer, swimming, tennis, basketball, volleyball... could be all part of one week with a different sport each day)."

"I would like to bring my son to the field house to exercise but is limited to 5 or less visits during one semester."

"I am a proud alumni, but RIT doesn't support well having families in the workplace. Once a person becomes a parent, their role completely changes and understanding of that should take place."

Some of the other written comments were about making the RIT gym/recreation center/pools more family friendly and not so expensive. (Even spouses can enter only a few times.) Childcare at the gym was also suggested. Another comment requested that Bring Your Child to Work Day be brought back to the college.

Family-Friendly Events: Open Forum Comments and Suggestions

One parent was concerned that he could not bring his child into the smaller pool at the Field House because she was too young, but that pool would be great for younger kids.

Employees need some kind of confirmation about whether it is appropriate to bring their children to work, when they able to bring their children to the gym on campus, and so forth.

Other ideas brought up were to invite employees and their kids to campus to: weed the community garden and make sundaes after, have a family open-skate and serve sno-cones, host a Saturday matinee at NTID's Panara Theatre that is kid-friendly.

Family-Friendly Events: Committee Recommendations

After reviewing current RIT policy and considering relevant reference documents, committee discussions, survey responses, open forum comments, and interviews/communications with members of the NTID community, the WFC proposes the following recommendations regarding family-friendly events:

1. Increase the number of family-friendly activities offered on campus.
 - a. Pursue new opportunities for family events and CODA-friendly events with help from Margaret's House
 - b. Ensure that existing RIT events (e.g., the Easter Egg Hunt, Juggle In, Halloween party) are Deaf-friendly (e.g., more participation of Deaf faculty, staff and students organizing and volunteering at the events).
 - c. Change the Father and Daughter Dance to a more inclusive Family Dance.
2. Host an annual event for RIT/NTID employees and their families.
3. Reestablish Take Your Child/ren To Work Day at NTID with the assistance of student volunteers.

Section V: Additional Recommendations

IMPROVING ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND POLICY INFORMATION

The Working Families Committee found a recurrent theme emerging about RIT policies and resources related to the issues it addressed. In its own discussions, the WFC Survey and Open Forums comments, and proposals developed by other RIT groups, RIT/NTID faculty, staff and their supervisors often lacked information and had difficulty finding it on RIT websites and print resources. This problem is mentioned in the sections of the report dedicated to individual issues such as parking, paid leave, transition to full-time, and breastfeeding. Because it affects so many issues, the WFC believes improving access to resources and policy information needs to be improved at RIT and should be addressed in a concerted fashion.

RIT *does* post policies online for some issues. For example, there are policies for parental leave based on the Family Medical and Leave Act (FMLA), time-off policies for faculty and staff, as well as a summary of their adoption policy. However, these are found on different webpages spread through the RIT Human Resources website, and sometimes on other sections of the RIT website. One Working Families Committee member said that when she was going through pregnancy and birth herself, she had to gather information from the different webpages and then she still had to contact her HR representative with questions to fill in the gaps and make sure they were doing everything correctly. Women in Science (WiSe)'s proposal of 2014 *Parental Leave and Return to Work Guidelines for Faculty, A Pilot* mentions the "difficult-to-navigate RIT parental leave policy website" as an inadequacy as information is in two separate places on the RIT website.

The WFC believes it would be helpful to create a website/webpage where all communication to **all** RIT employees related to pregnancy, birth, caregiver leave, adoption and other family-friendly information could be accessed in one location. A dedicated website could help RIT faculty and staff find policies about parking during pregnancy and parental leave, childcare resources, and family-friendly events. Having the information in the same place would also facilitate educating managers and chairs about the rights and needs of their employees who will be or are parents.

Types of information that should be described and/or linked from a centralized webpage might include:

- Family Medical and Leave Act (FMLA):
[https://www.rit.edu/fa/humanresources/content/statutory-benefits \(FMLA\)](https://www.rit.edu/fa/humanresources/content/statutory-benefits (FMLA))
- Time Off Benefits Manual:
https://www.rit.edu/fa/humanresources/sites/rit.edu.fa.humanresources/files/docs/Time_Off_Benefits.pdf
- Faculty Leave of Absence:
https://www.rit.edu/fa/humanresources/sites/rit.edu.fa.humanresources/files/docs/Time_Off_Benefits.pdf
- Staff Leave of Absence:
<http://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/sectionE/E29.html>
- Medical Coverage:
 - <https://www.rit.edu/fa/humanresources/content/medical-and-prescription-drug-coverage>
 - https://www.rit.edu/fa/humanresources/sites/rit.edu.fa.humanresources/files/docs/SP_D_Medical_and_Rx.pdf

- Health and Wellness, including Summary of Adoption Policy:
<https://www.rit.edu/fa/humanresources/content/benefits-health-and-wellness>
- Insurances – Life, Accidental Death & Dismemberment, Business Travel Accident:
 - https://www.rit.edu/fa/humanresources/sites/rit.edu/fa.humanresources/files/docs/Life_ADD_Travel_Accident_Supplement.pdf
 - https://www.rit.edu/fa/humanresources/sites/rit.edu/fa.humanresources/files/docs/SPD_Life_and_ADD.pdf
- RIT Professional Development Workshops:
 - Absence Reporting <https://www.rit.edu/fa/cpd/absence-reporting>
 - Disability Supervisor <https://www.rit.edu/fa/cpd/development/disabilitysupervisor>.
- Some of the other issues that could be incorporated into a new website are parking for expectant mothers, lactation rooms, Margaret’s House childcare, Care-A-Lot childcare (near RIT), family-friendly events on campus and the Facebook parents/caregivers’ group link (if such a group was created).

To publicize the website and to further enhance access to information the WFC would like to see Professional Development Trainings where employees could learn about policies related to birth, adoption, caregiver leave and childcare. Finally, to support working families, it would be useful to create a Facebook group or establish an internal email group for parents on campus to share information and ideas with each other.

Access to Resources and Policy Information: Committee Recommendations

After reviewing current RIT policies and considering relevant reference documents, committee discussions, survey responses, open forum comments, and interviews/communications with members of the NTID community, the WFC proposes the following recommendations regarding communication about resources and policies:

1. Create a dedicated website where faculty and staff can access all RIT family-friendly policies and resources, and publicize it through multiple print and electronic means.
2. Request that RIT offer a Parental Benefits Training workshop twice a year via RIT’s Professional Development covering maternity/paternity/caregiver leave, policies on nursing/pumping, benefits related to children (medical coverage, RIT tuition), and deadlines for what forms need to change related to dependents (e.g., W-2s, life insurance).
3. Develop a Facebook or internal group for parents to chat and share ideas with each other to create a community as well as help publicize RIT/NTID’s family-friendly policies and events.

FOLLOW-UP

Whether directly solicited through the survey/open forums or offered confidentially via email or conversation, many members of the NTID community raised issues that do not fall within the committee’s formal charge or were deemed to be beyond the scope of this committee, given its short duration. Other issues were raised via the survey/open forums that *do* fall within the committee’s charge but, since the survey and forums were held in November, they could not be addressed before the deadline for the committee’s report in January.

The survey asked respondents to identify other issues or challenges the committee should address and invited them to leave any additional comments. Most of the issues mentioned had been raised already

by the committee, but there were some specific topics not yet examined – like the importance of the tuition benefit, school closures related to weather, and some of the specific concerns of faculty and Access Services staff. The desire for flexibility in one’s schedule and conflicts between RIT’s academic calendar and children’s school calendars continued to be major themes. Many respondents expressed gratitude to RIT/NTID for being supportive to them during their child-rearing years and for the opportunity to weigh in on these issues. Others shared that they do not feel supported when they miss work due to family issues because they are “made to feel guilty” or feel it will be held against them in some way.

Challenges and Suggestions Requiring Follow-Up

Below are some challenges and/or suggestions that were identified in the survey, open forums or conversations with committee members and warrant further review:

- **Tuition benefit:** Offer the option of “banking” years of service and allow caregivers to work part-time while children are school-age without losing tuition reimbursement.
- **Dealing with boss on these issues:** Establish a clear process for caregivers when their supervisor/chair is not sensitive to family demands and the need for flexibility. Establish guidelines on supervisors’ rights to dictate when employees can take paid time off. Incorporate work/family balance discussion as part of annual appraisal/performance review discussion and ensure that this discussion is open and free from repercussions.
- **Inclement weather issues:** When schools close due to inclement weather and RIT is open, caregivers have to arrange daycare or take the day off, which some respondents felt is frowned upon. Sometimes, daycares are closed as well, leaving caregivers with few options other than staying home. In other cases, RIT and Margaret’s House remain open despite numerous school and daycare closures, leaving some RIT employees with the choice of risking the safety of their young children to drive in dangerous road conditions. With respect to these challenges for caregivers and all employees, RIT’s decision to close or remain open on such days should be posted as soon as possible.
- **Concern about policies only applying to some employees:** Although there is no one-size-fits-all approach, there are concerns that faculty already have more flexibility than part-time faculty, exempt staff have more flexibility than hourly staff, etc. Some form of flexibility should be offered to all employees.
- **Faculty concerns:** There should be a restriction on the number of hours faculty work (estimated average of 55-60 is too high). There should be a “mommy track” available for professors (delayed tenure/promotion track) – “lecturer jobs are NOT it”. If you cannot teach because of a sick child needing you to be out a few days, there should be a plan for a substitute teacher.
- **Grandparents as backup or primary caregivers:** Grandparents need flexibility as well. There is pressure to retire to help care for grandchildren.
- **Caring for aging parents, siblings or other family members:** Elder care has similar needs for time off and flexibility. There should be paid leave for caring for elderly parents or a partner home for extended illness/health issues.
- **Work from home:** There should be an official NTID telecommuting policy so parents can work from home on days when kids are sick, have appointments, etc. Most challenges can be solved with the ability to work from home – NTID should be a model for family policy changes.

- **Access Services concerns:** It is tough for Access Services to not use vacation time during the semester but that is part of the job expectations. Many captionists do not have to work any evenings and sometimes they have less tenure than captionists working evenings. During intersession/break weeks, Access Services staff have to work day hours to attend professional development events, even if their normal schedule is evenings, so they have to find daycare just for those times. Interpreters cannot use vacation to attend children's events when classes are in session, which forces them to use sick time when they are not sick. Because of the heavy equipment they need to carry, captionists sometimes have to go on disability leave early.
- **Older children:** Any changes in policy should apply to the challenges of child-rearing regardless of child age.
- **Burden on coworkers:** When coworkers call in because a child is sick, it increases the workload for other employees. When faculty with children are allowed to choose their class schedules, faculty without children are sometimes required to teach more of the 8 am and 4 pm or evening classes. Family-friendly policies should not impact negatively those employees who do *not* have children. Flexibility that would be afforded to employees with dependents should be afforded to those without dependents, particularly those caring for elderly or ill family members – as long as the work is done and the departmental needs are met.
- **Reduced schedule:** There should be an option of working a reduced 10- or 11-month schedule based on department need – it would not mean that you have to be off in the summer.
- **After-hours events:** Hard to do professional development activities or improve ASL skills by attending NTID events outside of work hours to socialize when a parent. Some employees feel looked down on by colleagues who do not have dependents for not attending evening or weekend events.
- **Acquiring extra time off:** Some employers allow employees to “buy” extra time off. Other employers allow employees to donate unused sick leave time to a sick leave “pool” that other employees can draw from when they reach the end of their sick leave allotment, subject to supervisor approval. RIT/NTID could explore these options.
- **Establishing a mentorship program for new caregivers:** This would connect new or first-time caregivers (adoptive or natural) with those who have been through the process and can provide advice and guidance. This would provide a more personal experience, rather than always having to go through HR for answers or support.
- **Making leadership roles more accessible to caregivers of young children:** RIT/NTID appoints Chairs/Department Heads permanently, and many seasoned Chairs are leaving. Caregivers of young children are faced with perhaps a once-in-a lifetime opportunity to move into leadership roles during the time when they are needed most at home. The leadership roles pass them by, making them feel their future career advancement is now limited and giving them less incentive to stay at RIT/NTID. RIT/NTID should institute a two-to-three-year appointment for Chairs/Department Heads to allow for rotation of interested employees and to incentivize caregivers of young children to stay at NTID and pursue leadership opportunities when the time is right for their family.
- **Rewarding employees for going above and beyond:** Whether for the hard-working caregiver who takes on an extra project or a colleague without caregiving responsibilities who takes on evening assignments so that colleagues with children can be home, Chairs/administrators could offer “extra effort” rewards – either in the form of monetary bonuses (e.g., \$2,000 to each

department annually for this purpose) or an extra leave (e.g., eight hours) once an academic year.

- **Providing better health coverage and more flexibility for people undergoing infertility treatment.**

Follow-Up: Committee Recommendations

After reviewing current RIT policy and considering relevant reference documents, committee discussions, survey responses, open forum comments, and interviews/communications with members of the NTID community, the WFC proposes the following recommendations regarding follow-up:

1. Establish a smaller committee, featuring members of the current WFC and/or new members, to meet twice a semester, or as needed, to pursue the following goals:
 - a. Share this report with the NTID community, estimate costs, and pursue implementation of the WFC's recommendations that are approved by NTID President Gerry Buckley and *can* be implemented by NTID (e.g., adding a lactation room in an NTID building).
 - b. Share this report with relevant RIT administrators and groups, such as Human Resources, the Provost, the RIT Benefits Advisory Group, RIT Staff Council, RIT Academic Senate, and the other appropriate RIT colleges/organizations; and collaborate with them to estimate costs and establish family-friendly policies campus wide (e.g., increasing the amount of paid leave for caregivers).
 - c. Review the additional challenges and suggestions identified in this section that the current WFC did not address, such as issues specific to grandparents, caregivers of older adults or siblings, employees with supervisors who are inflexible, etc., and determine if additional recommendations should be made.
2. The WFC recommends that service on this committee be supported by supervisors through acknowledgement on participants' Plans of Work and/or a work release.

In summary, the Working Families Committee would like to see flexible solutions for families of all shapes and sizes while respecting others' needs. The WFC recognizes that this is quite a challenge at the university, college and department levels, but believes it is a worthwhile goal that will contribute positively to RIT/NTID's retention and the ultimate productivity of its valued faculty and staff.

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Appendix A: Working Families Committee Survey

Working Families Committee Survey

The **NTID Working Families Committee**, established by President Gerry Buckley, is soliciting your input via this survey on issues and challenges parents/caregivers face that impact their work/life balance. The committee will review the current environment for working parents/caregivers, document current supportive benefits, policies, and practices at RIT/NTID and peer institutions, and make recommendations for the Institute to consider.

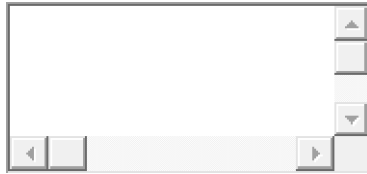
Who should take this survey: Anyone who has raised children while an employee of RIT/NTID. As you respond to survey questions, please reflect on past or current experiences you had while raising any children under the age of 18.

1. Please let us know how significant the following issues have been to you:

	Never a Concern	Somewhat of a Concern	Important Concern	High Priority Concern
a. PARKING (e.g., expectant mother safety related to weather, incline, distance from building; width of parking spaces; number of handicap spots; parking on return from child-related visits or appointments)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. PAID LEAVE (the number of weeks of paid parental/caregiver leave upon the birth or adoption of a child or placement of a foster child)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. TRANSITION to full workload upon return to work (e.g., expected to immediately resume a full schedule or offered to return with reduced hours/responsibilities during transition back)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. BREASTFEEDING (e.g., lactation rooms: size, cleanliness, proximity; availability of refrigerator; paid time off to pump or go to childcare site to nurse baby)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. CHILDCARE (e.g., costs, especially at Margaret's House; location; "emergency" babysitting; hours)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. SCHOOL CALENDARS (mismatches with RIT and children's schools)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. FAMILY EVENTS ON CAMPUS (number of organized opportunities for family involvement on campus; e.g., Take Your Child to Work days; child photo services; ImagineRIT; Easter Egg Hunt)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. Share RECOMMENDATIONS for what NTID could do to make you feel better supported in all or some of the areas listed above (a. Parking, b. Paid Leave, c.

Transition, d. Breastfeeding, e. Childcare, f. School Calendars, g. Family Events on Campus).



3. During the following stages, please let us know how important workplace flexibility (use of paid time off, ability to work offsite, adjusted work schedule when needed) is to you:

	Never a Concern	Somewhat of a Concern	Important Concern	High Priority Concern
During pregnancy or pre-adoption (e.g., missing work due to prenatal visits; foster/adoption prep visits)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
During the child's first years (e.g., well child visits; numerous illnesses babies get their first year; long-duration health concerns)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When the children are school age (e.g., working earlier hours to attend after-school sports and activities; parent-teacher conferences; long-duration illnesses)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. What is your overall satisfaction with RIT, NTID, and your department as a family-friendly workplace?

	Extremely Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Extremely Dissatisfied
RIT	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
NTID	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your department/unit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. Are there additional ISSUES or CHALLENGES the Committee should address?

6. Is there anything else you want to share with the Committee?

7. Please identify your role at RIT/NTID:

- ☐ Hourly Staff with High Student Contact
- ☐ Hourly Staff
- ☐ Exempt Staff with High Student Contact
- ☐ Exempt Staff
- ☐ Lecturer
- ☐ Pre-Tenured Faculty
- ☐ Tenured Faculty
- ☐ Other (visiting, adjunct)

8. Please identify the current ages of your child(ren).

- ☐ 0-2 years old
- ☐ 3-5 years old
- ☐ 6-10 years old
- ☐ 11-18 years old
- ☐ Over 18 years old

Submit

Appendix B: Additional Comments from the WFC Survey

The following comments submitted by the NTID Community in response to the WFC Survey were selected by WFC members as significant and representative of the feedback received on the survey. However, their sentiments are echoed by other quotations and summaries in the main body of the report, so they have been included here.

WFC ISSUE #1. PARKING

"I don't think expectant mothers should have front row parking. But a spot that is closer than most to the buildings. It was very hard for me in the winter walking to my car."

"I pay for a parking pass since leaving campus and returning is ALWAYS an issue until I paid for reserve."

WFC ISSUE #3. TRANSITION TO FULL-TIME

"Transition period needs to be a priority – each dept manager should come up with a plan that works best for their dept so that the parent/caregiver gradually eased [sic] into their work mode."

WFC ISSUE #4. BREASTFEEDING

"I admire RIT/NTID for allowing moms a place for lactation; that is a great benefit for working moms who choose that option for feeding their babies."

"For breastfeeding, there should be an appropriate place for this to happen for those faculty and staff who have shared office space, or no office space at all. The bathroom is not an option."

WFC ISSUE #5. CHILDCARE

"Childcare: COSTLY! I would love to send my children to Margaret's House, but had to look for a more affordable daycare off campus."

"Childcare costs continue to soar, my labor cost wasn't meeting its budget. I am on a tight budget for expensing on cost of living expenses, such as housing, food, utilities, and others..."

"Childcare- the costs are extremely high. My husband and I cannot even begin to consider MH as an option, as we would be using more than my whole salary..."

"It would be ideal if can come up with a salary-based payment like RIT parking system."

"Get more of a reduced cost for daycare at Margaret's House, maybe work with Care-A-Lot (on John Street) in establishing some sort of discount with them."

WFC ISSUE #6. SCHOOL CALENDARS

Alignment of RIT and School Calendar

It would be nice if the school calendars could match the RIT calendars and vice versa so that we can spend that time with our kids especially for faculty who don't have the option of choosing

their vacation time. Our kids complain that other families get to go on vacation and our families can't because of conflicting schedules.

RIT academic calendars are often out of sync with the children's school calendars. It is rough to find ways to cover those days, work, and keep the budget balanced. Not much probably can be done about that, however if the bring the children to work idea could be worked out where there were fun activities that the kids could participate in while parents are working it might ease the challenge, even if it was only for 1/2 day or something like that.

*I wish our breaks and the kids' school breaks coincided. **Because they don't match, we are limited to taking vacation trips during Christmas break or the summer.** For people with younger kids, they have to pay for daycare when the kids are out of school but they have to work.*

Having to be at work when the kids are off of school is a working mother's nightmare. While snow days cannot be avoided, the school calendar matchup is important. The Christmas break matches pretty well but that February break for the schools is a killer! RIT's spring break never matches up.

I would appreciate if we could have the whole week of Thanksgiving off. I would trade that for having Columbus Day off! Especially now that my kids are in school, the Monday and Tuesday of Thanksgiving are times to meet with teachers for conferences.

On-site school-age childcare

I think it's good to ask about holidays and other days that conflict with work schedules. Getting someone to watch my child when I have to be at work, but the general Rochester population (including the daycare) has a holiday is a challenge. Another area of concern is the fact that I start work mid-August. Finding daycare is of utmost priority for those last two weeks, and it conflicts with the schedule that most schools offer. I would like my child to attend a proper preschool, yet I have to keep him in daycare because of the timing of when we return to work. If Margaret's House could offer temporary placement for children/students during those transition times, that would be helpful, or a welcome alternative. Thus, I am limited with my choices for daycare/school due to the timing at which we return to work for the academic year in August. This situation (i.e., having to stay in daycare and not participate in a formal preschool) is not necessarily to the developmental advantage of my child.

My only concern is where can I bring my kids when I have to work and my kids have a day-off (teacher conference day/half-days/snow days)? Could Margaret House provide half price days when school situations occur?

I think a child-care facility on the RIT campus that would take in children during official school holidays would be embraced by a good number of employees. I will pay fees toward this.

Flexibility to use vacation during school days off

There should be calendar support for parents with children in K-12 settings. In DAS, this would be a tough thing for the Institute to do, but it would be enormously helpful

Returning in August can be problematic for those of us with children still in school; also not being able to use vacation time when kids are off of school for breaks (February and April recess). It would be nice if RIT's spring break fell in line with at least one of these school break weeks.

My family's school calendar and my work calendar NEVER line up. This has always been an issue. Not only because of child care needs but also for vacation. I am not allowed to take vacation while RIT is in session which limits my time with my family. Is there any way RIT can allow interpreters to take vacation during the semesters or try to align the RIT schedule with local schools?

I have an hour commute one way so my local district might not match with RIT's. That means I have to figure out daycare for those full days my kids are off (sometimes a day here and there, sometimes full weeks) b/c our school breaks happen when classes are in session here at RIT and those ineligible for vacation requests in my department.

Let us use our vacation time when our children have days off or week long breaks from school. It is a financial burden to put children in day camps (especially when there are no close family members/support system in the area) during their winter recess or spring breaks. We have to use vacation during other weeks of the semester when we really need vacation time to match the school district's calendar. Please change this!

Flexibility during days children are off

Flexibility in using vacation/personal time during child's school vacation or working flexible hours is greatly appreciated. Also, maybe during these times (ex: summer or spring break) there could be a work from home option with a cap on how many hours per week (to control it).

As a faculty with some financial restriction, I cannot afford to send my kids to a full day at a daycare center during their no school day (either planned or emergency closure). So I have to bring my kids with me to my classes.

In the past, my department has been VERY accommodating when I've had to bring one or both of my sons with me to work. That is MUCH appreciated. They tend to just hang out in my office, but the fact that I was able to do this was significant to me.

I'd like to see NTID develop an official telecommuting policy. This would enable parents to work from home on days when they need to take their children to the doctor or in similar situations.

Open forum comments and suggestions

School-age after school program to be offered at MH? This is offered through Care-a-Lot.

Depending on nature of work, not everyone can work from home (i.e., interpreters, TIS, high student contact positions)

DAS – can't use vacation time during academic teaching days, unless coverage can be found (difficult to do).

*Flexibility for times school buses pick up children as parents can't leave for work until then.
Families have to pay for after school care due to not being able to be at home when children arrive home.*

Bring kids to campus to interact with college students for a planned event (similar to dog therapy day), such as a camp, with exposure to sign language and deaf culture.

Should be allowed to bring kids as long as behavior is on par.

Appendix C: AdvanceRIT Documents & RIT Proposals Reviewed by WFC

These documents are in a binder with a hard copy of the Working Families Committee Report. Electronic or binder copies are available upon request from Marianne Gustafson msgnecs@rit.edu.

AdvanceRIT. (2013, December 12). *Human Resources, Emergency Babysitting Service Benchmarking*. NSF Grant no. 1209115.

AdvanceRIT. (2013, December 12). *Human Resources, Maternity Leave and Return Workload Benchmarking*. NSF Grant no. 1209115.

AdvanceRIT. (2013, December 12). *Human Resources, Return Workload Benchmarking*. NSF Grant no. 1209115.

AdvanceRIT. (2014, February 15). *Maternity Leave, Return to Work, and Emergency Childcare Benchmarking*. NSF Grant no. 1209115.

AdvanceRIT. (2014, May 19). *Work-Life Integration Committee Paper*. NSF Grant no. 1209115.

RIT College of Liberal Arts. (2014, November 18). *Administrative Policy on New Parent Course Release and Commensurate Release from Service and Scholarship Expectations*.

RIT College of Liberal Arts. (2014, April 21). *Parental Leave Memorandum*.

Women in Science at RIT (WiSe). (2014, December). *Parental Leave and Return Guidelines for Faculty: A Pilot*.