

Working Millennials Would Benefit from Passage of the Healthy Families Act and the FAMILY Act

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Economic Challenges Facing Young Parents

In 2014, there were approximately 20.5 million 18- to 34-year-old parents, representing nearly 30 percent of the Millennial population, and this percentage is growing rapidly. Unfortunately, young working parents in most states do not have guaranteed access to paid sick days or paid leave. Instead, young parents often make difficult choices between caring for their health and the health of their families, and working for much needed income. For the nearly 4.3 million - or 1 in 5 - Millennial parents living in poverty, leaving a job because it does not offer needed flexibility is not an option. The Healthy Families Act and the FAMILY Act would benefit young adults by establishing national guidelines for how employees can earn paid sick days and paid family and medical leave, respectively.

The Healthy Families Act would help young parents recover from illness or take care of their children when sick, without jeopardizing their families' financial security.

- Paid sick days that can be used for preventive care would encourage young adults to schedule medical appointments ahead of time and avoid the emergency room. Young adults currently have the highest rate of ER visits among any age group, except the elderly.
- For the 1 in 5 Millennial parents living in poverty, hiring a babysitter to take care of a sick child may not be an option. Childcare and education costs have grown from 2 percent of the total cost of raising a child in 1960 to 18 percent of the cost in 2013. The cost of a babysitter for when a child is too sick to attend school can be higher than what a young parent earns for that workday.

The Family and Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act would overwhelmingly benefit Millennials, who make up the vast majority of new parents but are less likely to have access to paid family and medical leave.

- 83 percent of new mothers are Millennials between the ages of 18 and 34. Yet, younger workers, particularly those in entry-level or lower-wage positions, are less likely to have access to paid family leave, at the time in their lives when they need it the most.
- 40 percent of postsecondary students who are parents also work full-time jobs. Access to paid family leave can help working students stay on track to complete their degrees and stay in the workforce.

For more on the economic challenges facing young parents, read Young Invincibles' report, *Finding Time - Millennial Parents, Poverty and Rising Costs*, available at:

<http://younginvincibles.org/report-finding-time-millennial-parents-poverty-and-rising-costs>.

