

*American Business Collaboration  
for Quality Dependent Care*



*10th Anniversary Report  
1992 - 2002*

## **The American Business Collaboration for Quality Dependent Care - - Reporting the accomplishments**

---

Over the past 20 years, American business has seen an increase in the number of employees who must arrange care for family members young and old in order to be fully productive at work. This has led to an unprecedented demand for high quality child and elder care options. In 1992, a groundbreaking corporate initiative was launched to respond to that need, the *American Business Collaboration for Quality Dependent Care* (ABC).

Based on the simple belief that “working together we can accomplish what none of us can afford to do alone,” the effort was led by 12 Champion companies with the objective of improving the quality and supply of child and elder care in the communities where their employees lived and worked.

In the last 10 years, the American workforce has experienced dramatic demographic changes - -

- 85 percent of the U.S. workforce now live with family members and thus have daily family responsibilities.
- 62 percent of mothers with infants and toddlers are employed, as are 68 percent of mothers of preschoolers and 77 percent of mothers of school-age children.
- 59 percent of mother’s with infants (under age 1) are working.
- Of men in the U.S. workforce who have children under 18 and wives or partners, 67 percent are in dual-earner families; in fact, 69 percent of all men are married or living with wives or partners who are employed.
- 25 percent of employed men and women have elder care responsibilities.
- Dual-earner families are now the predominant family type in the workforce.

In the last 10 years, the ABC has - -

- Created and funded more than 1,500 innovative programs for dependent care. Those programs impacted more than 135,000 children and elders.
- Developed innovative curricula to train caregivers and improve the quality of childcare, school-age care and elder care programs and services.
- Supported the development of national accreditation standards for child care centers, family child care providers, school-age programs, and elder care programs.
- Began funding at \$25.4 million, now grown to \$136 million.
- Expanded the focus of activities to include a study of tele-remote work entitled “*When the Workplace is Many Places: The Nature and Extent of Off-Site Work Today.*”

## **ABC's Purpose**

A statement signed by the CEO's of the Champion companies, committed the companies to do together what none of them could afford to do alone.

*“We believe that supporting the diverse dependent care needs of our employees is critical to our success as it enables our companies to attract and retain a productive, competitive, and motivated workforce.*

*We support these needs because the availability of quality dependent care and work/life program—particularly those involving infants, children in school, and the elderly—enables our employees to do their best at work by helping them manage the demands of their work and personal responsibilities.*

*We therefore agreed to broaden the scope of the American Business Collaboration for Quality Dependent Care, which was established in 1992, by incorporating innovative work/life efforts while continuing to increase the supply and enhance the quality of dependent care programs in many communities where employees live and work. Through collaboration we are affirming our belief that by working together we can do more to meet the dependent care and work/life needs of our employees than if we worked alone.*

*We believe the needs of our employees and their communities demand a major collaborative commitment.*

*We invite others to consider collaboration and join us as we work together to address the dependent care and work/life needs of our employee, families and communities.*

These Champion companies are considered some of the leading corporate citizens of our time. This statement not only expresses their commitment, but speaks to the premise that businesses operate successfully in society when they respect and are responsible to stakeholders and that vision and values can result in distinctive competencies that lead to value-added for companies of the 21st century. These Champion companies go even further - -

**The ABC was established by the Champion companies as a way to - -**

**Demonstrate the business case**—Goals are addressed as a business issue; companies are engaged in these initiatives not just because they *should*, but because it is good business. The companies view their investments in dependent care in the community not as charity, but as sound business practice. The Champion companies are familiar with the research that has found that increased job satisfaction, productivity, commitment and retention are predicted by companies' supportiveness of employees. They also know that community well-being can affect the success of key business

strategies. Many companies recognize that the success of their recruitment strategies in a tough labor market, for example, are affected by the presence of a vibrant local economy, the quality of educational institutions, and access to important support services. The Champion companies recognize the interdependence between company profits and sustainable communities. For ten years, the ABC has been demonstrating the business case for work/life initiatives.

**Bring business leadership** to community issues—lead through vision and innovation. The Champion companies bring the business concepts of planning and development to their projects. Business practices and business language represent operating principles that led to the success of the ABC’s projects. The steady focus on the needs of the customers, in this case, their employees, is one aspect of leadership. This customer service orientation had an impact on service providers, where concepts of total quality management had rarely penetrated before. Vision and innovation come from a dynamic view of the community - - where something good existed; they built on it and replicated it. Where nothing existed, they created it.

**Model collaboration**—The ABC is a model for how large, often competitive companies can meet their individual goals and the needs of their employees’ through collaboration. Each company has the power to decide how much to invest, for what projects, and in what communities. In some cases, when issues are pervasive throughout the country, ABC companies collaborate on a national level to institute change and implement solutions. Over the years, the core group of Champion companies has successfully demonstrated the value of local partnerships and larger collaborations. Based on issues facing their employees throughout the U.S., the ABC has successfully collaborated on innovative research and consequent action to implement solutions. Programs such as *“Summer of Service”* and *“Citizen Schools Apprenticeship Programs”* are two examples of innovative models for middle-school youth.

**Improve quality**—Improvement in child and elder care programs is a goal for every service provider receiving business dollars from the ABC. Quality is an area about which business companies have a high degree of expertise within their core business and the Champion companies have set and demanded new standards for providers to achieve continuous improvement in service delivery. While program quality varies throughout the U.S., the goal of the ABC Champion companies is to improve the quality of service in communities they have targeted. The strong customer orientation that characterizes ABC was not always a part of the vision of quality of community programs. Through the ABC’s efforts, quality improvement initiatives have changed to include a focus on improving the “family friendliness” of the programs that receive funding. When high quality community services are available to them, employees can commit themselves to work without fear for their loved ones well-being.

**Make sustainable investments**—The companies build quality service systems in communities where employees live and work. The companies continue to be committed

to developing and funding projects that will survive and continue after the start-up funding period expires. One way the companies measure their success is by whether the community system or infrastructure is influenced by an ABC initiative, to make sustainable changes in the quality of services that community members receive. They want models that are cost effective and replicable, as well as producing results. One advantage for new companies joining the ABC is the ability to take innovative, sustainable models and implement them immediately.

### **Three key measures and the reasoning behind them**

**Leadership**—This benchmark measures the recognition that the ABC has received for its efforts including awards from the Association of Work-Life Professionals (AWLP), Working Mother Magazine, the Boston College Center for Corporate Community Relations and Catalyst. It is important to the companies that the ABC receives public attention for their initiatives because their goal is to raise awareness of work-life effectiveness through the development of innovative programs and implementation of creative solutions that serve both their employees and the communities where their employees live and work. Public recognition increases utilization. Impact is measured by how many employees are aware of and/or use the programs as well as how many community children or elders are able to benefit. Broad recognition for the company's participation in the ABC contributes to their desire to be "*employers of choice*" and their recognition as an "*employee and family-friendly*" company.

The companies measure their leverage by their ability to share the cost among their fellow collaborators, as well as the magnitude of dollars that come from sources other than ABC. By 1998, their investments had encouraged a 30 percent additional non-ABC investment.

**Employee impact**—This benchmark measures how many employees have actually used the programs and services. Over the years, as communication strategies improved, utilization grew. More than 135,000 children and elders living in communities where ABC companies' employees live and work have been impacted by these initiatives.

In 1998, the companies also measured the productivity of parent employees through an independent survey conducted by Abt Associates, Inc. of Cambridge, MA. This survey confirmed that employee satisfaction and productivity were improved due to ABC commitment to dependent care programs and services.

**Community impact**—This benchmark measures the increase in the supply of services available to employees in the communities in which they live and work. Changes in the available supply are measured by the creation of new "slots" or the expansion of the hours a program or service offers. The ABC also measures success by whether community systems are influenced by the initiative, to make sustainable change in the quality of care that children and elders receive. More than 60,000 new "slots" have been developed in programs such as child care centers, vacation/holiday programs, back-up

care programs, middle school youth programs, elder care assisted living programs, and year-round and summer camp programs.

## The ABC accomplishments

The accomplishments of the American Business Collaboration over the past 10 years are impressive. Equally impressive is the fact that they are able to collaborate and that they have built a workable system that has allowed companies some control of their investment decisions. The following facts illustrate how successful the collaboration has been - -

---

<b>Purpose</b>	To make the <b>BUSINESS CASE</b>
<b>Why?</b>	<p>A multitude of studies have made the business case for work/life programs and services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Work/life programs reduce stress and increase job satisfaction and loyalty. <i>Johnson &amp; Johnson 1993</i></li><li>-Employee retention is higher (93 percent vs 81 percent) for employees using work/life programs.</li><li>-Higher employee satisfaction is equated to higher customer satisfaction – an increase of 7 percent of customer retention-- \$106 million profit over 2 years</li><li>-Employee satisfaction impacts the service profit chain - increase employee satisfaction, increase customer retention, increase profit. <i>First Tennessee Bank 1996</i></li><li>- Integrating the needs of business with the needs of people is essential for business success. <i>Ford Motor Company 1997</i></li><li>-Quantitative and qualitative measures show a positive relationship between improving business outcomes and quality of life outcomes. <i>Fleet 1998</i></li><li>-Research has consistently found the following seven workplace drivers to be correlated with employee commitment - - communication, diversity and inclusion, job satisfaction, flexibility, management effectiveness, work-life support, and career advancement. <i>WFD, Inc. 1998</i></li><li>- The quality of employee's jobs and supportiveness of their workplaces are predictors of job satisfaction, retention and commitment to employers. <i>Families and Work Institute 1998</i></li></ul>

*-Off-site work experience varies widely, from remote workers who are very satisfied with their arrangement to customer site workers who are the least satisfied of any employee group. Companies that correct the weaknesses in managing off-site work and draw on its strengths will find clear advantages: heightened employee commitment, increased retention of key talent, reduced stress levels, and even improved management effectiveness.*

*WFD, Inc. 2002  
Study commissioned by the  
American Business  
Collaboration*

**Program** The statement issued by the CEO's of Champion companies show that there is a dynamic understanding by these companies of the importance of the relationship between work and personal life. They know it requires focusing on culture, values, and strategic responses that will support both the employees and the business.

**Accomplishments** Since 1992, ABC companies have participated in the collaboration in order to attract and retain a productive, competitive and motivated workforce. These companies all believe that the needs of their employees and their communities demand a major collaborative commitment to innovative work/life efforts and to increasing the supply and enhancing the quality of dependent care programs in communities where their employees live and work. These companies also know that undertaking this endeavor alone would never accomplish what they could do together.

---

**Purpose** To bring **BUSINESS LEADERSHIP** to communities

**Why?** - Two-thirds of respondents in a survey of employees whose dependents (elders or children) benefited from ABC funded projects reported increased productivity.

*Abt Associates, Inc. 2000*

- 81 percent of the same respondents viewed their employers more favorably because their company supports their dependent care needs through their participation in the ABC.

*Abt Associates, Inc. 2000*

- Corporate need for human capital, social capital and reputational capital has spawned innovative perspectives about strategic relationships with stakeholder groups. Connections or partnerships are flexible assets that help open doors to new opportunities in today's competitive market.

*Boston College, Center for  
Corporate Citizenship, 1998*

- IBM and AT&T began their Fund Initiatives at about the same time. Many other companies have joined or partnered with the current ABC companies over the past ten years such as Aetna, American Express, BPAmoco, Bank of America, Chevron Corporation, Citigroup, Chubb & Sons, Eastman Kodak Company, Hewlett-Packard, Lucent Technologies, Texaco Inc., and Xerox Corporation. Others have invested in significant community initiatives as local partners, motivated by the ABC. These include America West Airlines, American Home Products (Wyeth), Bausch & Lomb, Baxter International, Boise Cascade Corporation, Charles Schwab & Co., Chase Bank, Dell Computer Corporation, Dow Jones & Company, Inc., Ford Motor Company, Genentech Inc., JP Morgan, Marathon Refinery, Merck & Company, Merrill Lynch & Company, NationsBank, Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corp., Pfizer, Prudential Financial, Salt River Project, Shell Oil Company, St. Paul Companies, and more.

*WFD, Inc. 2002*

## **Program**

“Championship models” or “core projects” created dependent care solutions where there were none. ABC research on dependent care quality, middle school youth, and elder transportation programs have led to the development of program Accreditation, Child Care Director Credentials, Elder transportation, Citizen Schools, Summer of Service, and Vacation/Holiday camps. In late 2001, the companies expanded their collaborative efforts to fund a national tele-remote study released in August 2002, “*When the Workplace is Many Places: The Extent and Nature of Off-Site Work Today.*”

**Accomplishments** The Champion companies identified gaps in service that were most pressing in communities where employees lived and worked. In most communities the gaps were felt by everyone, and the community benefited as well as employees. Use of business concepts such as sustainable investments, customer orientation, customer needs, measurable results and above all, quality led to innovative solutions and model developments. The efficiency and cost/benefit of these initiatives were enhanced as they were

developed in collaboration with community-based organizations and other companies. The companies helped community-service agencies build strong business models for sustainable programs and investment.

---

**Purpose** To model **COLLABORATION**

**Why?** Partnerships are neither philanthropy nor volunteerism. Partnerships and collaboration are not easy, and those using business dollars are especially difficult. Each partner has a mission and purpose, and wants accountability for the funds to be spent toward the mission. Collaborations are uncomfortable. Collaborations are formed when a problem cannot be solved alone by any of the collaborators, and the benefits gained are worth the giving up of a degree of autonomy.

*Dr. Sandra Waddock, Boston  
College Carroll School of  
Management 2000*

-Employees believe a company's community image is important. This study showed that eighty-four percent of employees felt that a company image was "important" and fifty-four percent believed it was "very important." Researchers also found that "a company's reputation in the community affects employee loyalty."

*Boston College, Center for  
Corporate Citizenship 1997*

-Corporate social performance is a dimension critical to a firm's overall reputation. A reputation enhanced by corporate social performance can significantly improve a company's ability to attract and retain investors, customers and employees.

*Charles Fornbrun, 1998*

- ABC's success is, in part, due to excellent and reliable management. WFD, Inc. has maintained momentum and focus for more than ten years as administrators of the ABC.

**Program** ABC is an “action think tank.” “Working together we can accomplish what none of us can afford to do alone.” This is an unprecedented sharing of expertise, information and leadership to make a greater impact on the needs of a changing workplace and workforce.

**Accomplishments** As the ABC entered its third phase (2001-2003), 9 companies are participating as Champions, three of which have participated since the ABC’s inception in 1992. In addition, more than 47 companies have participated in local community efforts as part of the ABC. From 1992-2002, more than \$139 million has been invested in 67 communities where employees live and work.

**Purpose** To improve **QUALITY**

**Why?** Child care at most centers in the United States is poor to mediocre, with almost half of the infant and toddler rooms having poor quality. Only one in seven centers provides a level of quality that promotes health development. *Helburn, 1995*

“The positive relationship between child care quality and virtually every facet of children’s development that has been studied is one of the most consistent findings in developmental science. While child care of poor quality is associated with poorer developmental outcomes, high-quality care is associated with outcomes that all

parents want to see in their children, ranging from cooperation with adults to the agility to initiate and sustain positive exchanges with peers, to early competence in math and reading.”

*From Neurons to  
Neighborhoods 2000*

-Young adults who received early educational intervention had significantly higher mental test scores from toddlerhood through age 21 than did untreated controls. Averaged over the age span tested, the mental test score effect size for treatment was moderate and considered educationally meaningful. The importance of high quality, educational childcare from early infancy is now clear. The Abecedarian study provides scientific evidence that early childhood education significantly improves the scholastic success and educational attainments of poor children even into early adulthood.

*The Abecedarian Project  
2000*

-Research indicates that children who attend high quality programs have better peer relations, emotional adjustment, conflict resolution skills, grades, and conduct in school compared to their peers who are not in after school programs.

*Posner & Vandell 1999*

**Program**

The major quality initiatives of ABC include technology, accreditation and training. There are several commonly cited problems with child care in the U.S. - - much of it is of low quality, some types of care are unavailable, high-quality child care is expensive and in short supply, child care providers receive low earnings and consequently programs experience high turnover, and consumers lack knowledge and awareness of important aspects of child care. ABC quality initiatives aim to raise the bar of dependent care (child and elder) quality by focusing on caregivers.

**Accomplishments**

ABC investments have helped more than 59,800 caregivers participate in training across America. The ABC developed a product catalogue that highlights many of the successful training models that have and continue to be implemented throughout the country and in some cases, around the world. Projects include:

Family Child Care CORE Training	T.E.A.C.H. Plus
Advanced CORE Training	Leading the Change
Family Child Care Mentor Training	Caring for Infants and Toddlers
Family Child Care Observing & Responding Course	NAEYC Facilitated Accreditation
Family Friendly Practice for Family Child Care Providers	Adventures in Peacemaking
Home is Where the Heart Is	Mildly Ill Conference
Family Child Care Accreditation Readiness Tool	So You're Caring for School-Age Kids?
Global Games	Real World Connections
By Design	Summer of Service
Theme-Based Activities for Holiday/Vacation Programs	Hands on Science

**Purpose**

To make **SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENTS**

## Why?

-Definite shortages of child care exist in specific areas; for infant and school-age care, for children with disabilities or for children who are ill, for children in rural areas and for those who need care during non-standard hours. *Raikes, 1998*

-80% of employees miss work because of child care problems. On average, employed mothers lost 8.5 days a year, whereas fathers lose 5 days per year.

*National Conference  
State Legislatures, 1998*

-Child care related absences cost U.S. companies an estimated \$3 billion annually.

*Child Care Action  
Campaign, 1998*

-Productivity lost to elder caregiving costs U.S. businesses an estimated \$11.5 – 29 billion a year. Nearly one in four households care for an older family member and 64% of caregivers are employed.

*National Alliance for  
Caregiving, 1999*

## Program

The companies' emphasis on the sustainability of their investments influenced them to try to impact the community infrastructure of programs, and laid the groundwork for future investments. They legitimized change efforts already in the community. Community investments supported parent choice and responded to parent concerns.

**Accomplishments** ABC created and implemented more than 1,530 programs for dependent care (child, school-age, in-home, and elder). Programs include - -

Adult Day Care  
Backup Care Programs  
Child Care Program Expansion  
Citizen Schools  
Close to Home Care  
Elder Care Information Fairs and Support Groups  
Family Child Care Recruitment  
Family Child Care Quality Networks  
Grandparents Raising Grandchildren  
Homework Enrichment and Homework Helpers  
Infant/Toddler Recruitment and Training

Kindergarten Wrap-Around Program  
Meals on Wheels Extension  
Middle School Summer and School Year Programs  
New Child Care Center Development  
Respite programs  
Science & Technology Camp Programs  
Summer Camps  
Summer of Service  
Vacation/Holiday Programs

---

The ABC is proud of its record of innovation and leadership. **But more remains to be done.** As the workforce evolves and changes, the ABC remains committed to the benefits of collaboration, to defining the emerging dependent care and work/life needs of working caregivers, and to continuing its commitment to quality in everything it does.

The ABC's vision and leadership has touched the lives of thousands of employees of collaborating companies, creating a ripple effect that has improved the quality of life for hundreds of organizations and thousands of other Americans in communities where the ABC has a presence. The ABC is strengthening what exists and is building dependent care where none existed before.

### **What is happening today?**

The ABC continues to bring together companies dedicated to creating real solutions to critical workforce issues. By pooling resources, ABC companies have an impact on their employees, families, and communities that is greater than what could be accomplish alone. Participation in the ABC gives companies;

- The collaborative power to leverage work-life investments to address issues of national significance,
- Development of strategic work-life objectives to achieve business results,
- Recognition as employers of choice and as corporate leaders committed to creating a better workplace,
- Networking opportunities in a work/life "action think tank",
- Creation of innovative, customized solutions that have direct impact to ABC employees, and
- National programs that broadly replicate ABC programs to impact employees in communities that impact smaller numbers of ABC companies' employees.

For more information about how your company can join the ABC to support work-life effectiveness and maximize business results please call or email to:

Debbie Phillips  
(p): 617-673-3117  
Email: deb.phillips@wfd.com