

Baby on the board

By ROBERT RODRIGUEZ

FRESNO (CALIF.) BEE

FRESNO, Calif.

Christina Wyneken's timing couldn't have been worse. She gave birth to her first child during one of the busiest tax times of the year.

But rather than being forced to make a choice between her accountant job at DeMera DeMera Cameron of Fresno, and caring for her infant daughter, the company's senior partner suggested an alternative.

"He said to bring the baby in with me," she said. "So, for nearly nine months, I brought her in. She took naps in my office while I did my work."

That was eight years ago, and Wyneken has since purchased the company with a group of other employees. Work arrangements like Wyneken's are becoming more common as a growing number of employers are recognizing the family needs of their employees.

Called "family friendly" by some, these companies feature on-site day-care centers, flexible work schedules and employees, like Wyneken, who are allowed to bring their children into work if they need to.

Company owners say the extra effort is worth it because they get much in return, such as loyal employees, reduced turnover and increased productivity.

"What we are seeing are work-force management policies that take into account the fact that working people today have a dual set of responsibilities to attend to," said Brad Harrington, executive director of the Boston College Center for Work & Family.

"Employers aren't working under the assumption that there is someone at home that can take care of the home side of life. And as a result they try and create a culture and policies for people who have to manage both work and family."

Flexible work schedules are among the more common family-friendly work practices. Employees now work from home, while others work four days a week, or job share.

Savvy companies interested in attracting and keeping talented workers, especially women and technology workers, know they have to make changes. The cookie-cutter, 8-to-5 workday doesn't work for some people.

"If an employee views their situation as all or nothing, they will just quit and stay home," Harrington said. "Or they will go to a company that will give them options."

Creating such policies doesn't work for all companies, and not all CEOs have embraced the idea of worker flexibility. Some still hold the idea that working 40-plus hours a week in the office shows commitment.

And researchers are finding that some family-friendly policies can have the opposite effect.

A study by California State University-Fresno management professor Julie Olson-Buchanan found that some employees who use cell phones, e-mail and other communication devices to stay in touch with work while at home can create more stress in their lives.

"It can take its toll when you are trying to do two roles at the same time," Olson-Buchanan said. "It is the going back and forth between your job and your family, spouse or loved one that causes the conflict, because you can't give either your full attention."

At California Business Furnishings, accounting manager Robin Hankins worked from home for six months after the premature birth of her daughter.

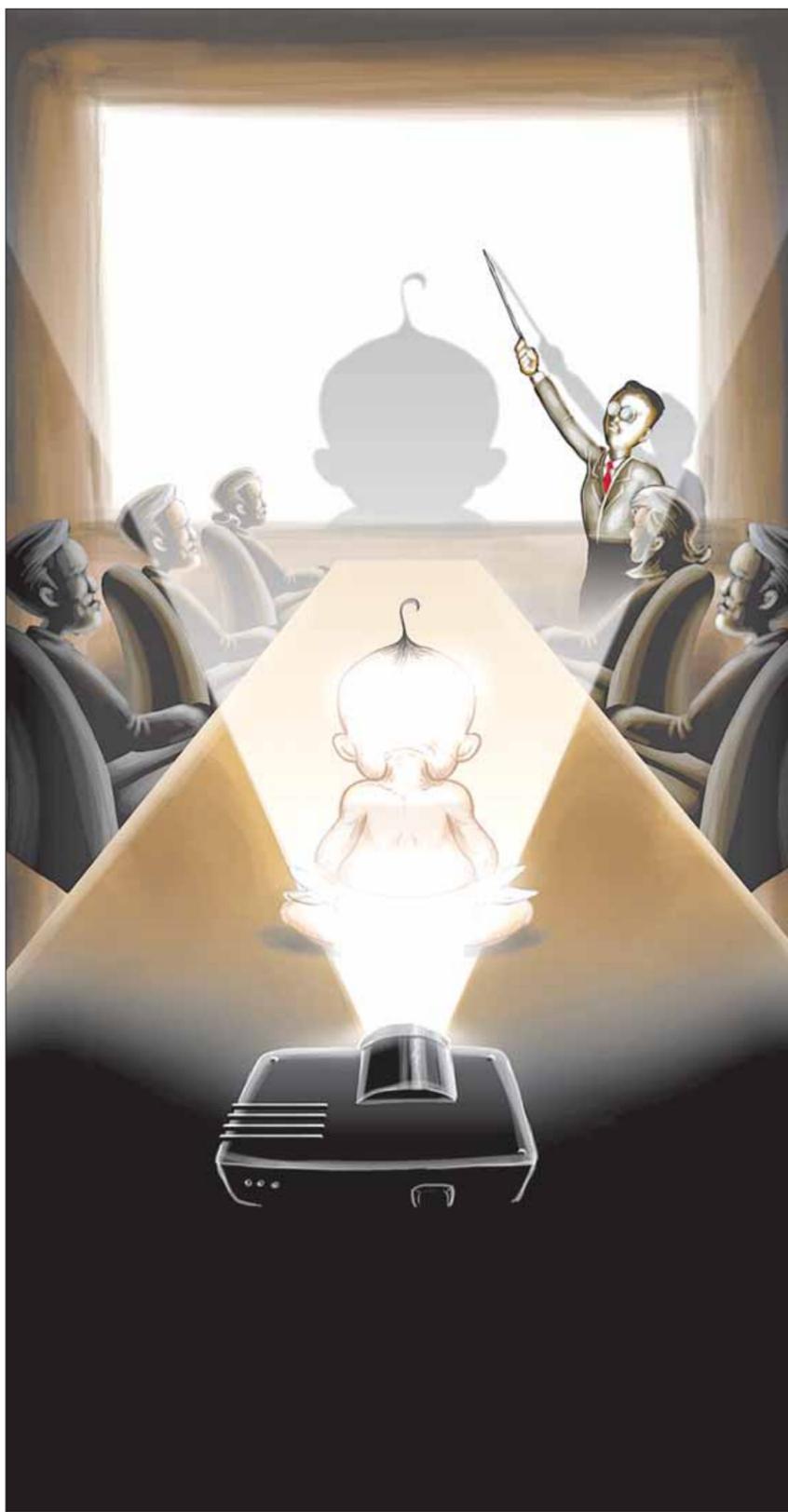
Hankins couldn't put her daughter into day care because of her fragile condition, but she also didn't want to lose her job. Many employers would not have kept a key position open for that long.

But company owner Doug Davidian and Hankins worked out an arrangement where she could come in the office for a few hours a week and also work out of her home.

"I would assume that in most other places I would have to put my job on hold or (do) something else," Hankins said. "But not here. Here it is different."

Davidian said he follows a simple rule for running a business: "If you treat people well and they understand what they are supposed to do, money and profit will always follow."

Firms warm up to family-friendly workplace policies



More U.S. companies feature on-site day-care centers and flexible work schedules to better accommodate working parents. Some even allow employees to bring their children into work if they need to.



"When my brother makes a funny face at me."

Kayla Rance, 7, daughter of Deborah and Denis Rance of Greenwood, first grade, Northeast Elementary School



"When my cats hiss at each other."

Noah Schwartz, 8, son of Kristi Swartz of Greenwood, second grade, Northeast Elementary



"When my dogs scratch each other."

Melanie Hughes, 9, daughter of Carol Hughes of Greenwood, third grade, Northeast Elementary



"When my teacher sings to the Christmas music in the hallway."

Sarah McLeod, 9, daughter of Bethann and Rick McLeod, fifth grade, Northeast Elementary



TAKE NOTES

Parenting program offered at Center Grove school

Adults can attend a free program on parenting skills.

The interactive program, "Cope Connection," will be facilitated by David Wilkerson of the Mercury Center.

Parents of children ages 3 to 12 who either attend Center Grove Schools or reside in White River Township can attend.

The program will be from 7 to 9 p.m. Tuesdays from Jan. 30 to March 6 at Center Grove Elementary School.

To register, call Walt Aldoriso at 881-9326, Ext. 1628.

Scholarship open to area college-bound students

Simon Youth Foundation will award one-time, post-secondary scholarships of up to \$1,500 to high school seniors.

Students must live in communities with Simon malls or Chelsea Premium Outlet Centers and plan to enroll in an accredited college, university or vocational or technical school.

Application information is available at syf.org. Applications, along with an official transcript and parents' most recently filed tax form, are due by Jan. 31.

Cheer clinic scheduled for February in Edinburg

The Edinburg varsity and junior varsity cheerleaders will host a clinic for students in preschool through Grade 6 from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. Feb. 3.

The clinic will be in the main gym of Edinburg Community High School. The participants are invited to perform during halftime of a basketball game that evening against Indian Creek.

Participants will be taught jumps, motion technique, chants and cheers and will receive a T-shirt.

Registration is required by Jan. 19. The clinic costs \$10. Contact varsity coach Shannon Burton (812) 371-7163 to register.



Bowlers win medals

Daily Journal staff report

Johnson County had numerous winners in a Special Olympics state bowling tournament in December.

Andrew Hommel and Eileen Siefker received a gold medal for first-place finishes in the singles division.

In second place were LaDeama Carmichael, Jamie Chapin, T. Danah Clark, Lauren Clippert, Bradley Gibson, Kevin Gumerson, Carol Starneri and Aaron Trueblood.

Third-place finishers were Dan Brown, Jack Camden, Sarah Lair, Tammy Terk-horn and Taylor Walls. Ribbon finishers were Kaylynn Bennett, Jason Bruner, Michelle Cook, D.J. Knox, Reynold Robinette and Dennis Searles.



Top: The Strikers won first place with team members, from left, Nikole Gibson, Bradley Gibson, Alex Gibson and D.J. Knox. Bottom: Team Wooden Cooks won second place with members, from left, Gayle Cook, Michelle Cook, Lezlie Wood and Crystal Wood.

FAMILY-PERSPECTIVE

FILM REVIEWS

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

'Arthur and the Invisibles'

Rating: PG
Suitable for: Children 7 and older
What you should know: Young Arthur uses magic to miniaturize himself and joins the odd-looking creatures inhabiting his back yard. This film begins as live action, then enters an animated world.

Language: Some crude language
Sexual situations and nudity: None
Violence/scary situations: Animated violence, high-action scenes of peril
Drug or alcohol use: None

'Miss Potter'

Rated: PG
Suitable for: Children roughly 8 and up, although this really isn't aimed at the younger set.
What you should know: Renee Zellweger plays Beatrix Potter. While some of the drawings periodically and briefly come to life, this is no "Night at the Museum." It's a gentle tale, told from an adult perspective, about an unmarried woman in 1902 London who found a publisher for her beautifully hand-illustrated



Princess Selenia, voiced by Madonna, is one of the Invisibles in "Arthur and The Invisibles." The film, rated PG, combines animation and real actors.

stories and became a literary sensation.

Language: None
Sexual situations and nudity: A kiss is exchanged.
Violence/scary situations: A main character dies, off-screen, and people are devastated by the passing.
Drug or alcohol use: Coffee is spiked with brandy, prompting someone to nod off, and adults drink champagne at a holiday party.

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