

Mom's Life in Corporate; the Struggle is Real.

By Ilana Kearns

The odds of success are stacked high against working mothers while overcoming bias from colleagues who openly think mothers have no value to add to the business. We have to work harder and longer to prove our smarts.

As a mom, we miss out on networking opportunities after work as we rush to pickup kiddos from childcare as serious penalties if late; Employers and childless colleagues fail to understand the importance of having a place to pump milk and store it; no a restroom doesn't cut it nor does a refrigerator next to your co-workers sandwich. How many buildings in the US even offer a place to pump milk?

We are cranky from sleepless nights... day night reversal is real and fevers always seem to spike at midnight. I have had more than my share of urgent care visits.

Babysitters bail on us and how can we forget that babies are nothing more than a giant Petri dish during the first years of life.. requiring countless doctor appointments. Throw in the appointments necessary for children with special needs in the mix and career advancement is near impossible. It takes all you have to hold down a job... Not everyone is fortunate to have family to lean on.

Not all employers all flexible with PTO. I used to burn through time off not for vacation but to take care of my beautiful boys. If you work for a small business with less than 50 employees, you don't even qualify for FMLA...and worst of all, the ignorance shown by colleagues and managers alike who treat mothers like they have no value to add to the business.

During my boys' early years, I was fortunate to land a job with a leader who understood these struggles... and truly embraced my boys; we had countless dinners with my boss; he spent hours conversing with my oldest about why Pluto was not a planet and other topics of interest. And let's not forget he was a board member of the \$64 Billion dollar business we were a part of. I recognize today just how extraordinary this person is; he is one in a million when it comes to servant leadership. How many people at his level, men or women, would go through such lengths to ensure everyone felt part of the team? He set the tone for our organization.

For coming generations, the future looks brighter for moms thanks to an initiative by Ivanka Trump, an order to cover 12 weeks of paid parental leave for all 2.1 million federal employees was signed on December 2, 2019.