

PARENTS 'CAN'T BE BOTHERED' TO CLAIM CHILDCARE SAVINGS

Millions of working parents can't be bothered to claim financial help which could save them up to £1,195 a year.

Only two out of every hundred working parents have signed up for their entitlement of childcare vouchers, according to new research.

The research, carried out by childcare voucher specialist Childcare Choice (www.childcarechoice.co.uk/findoutmore.html), reveals that most parents who pay for childcare and have access to a childcare scheme at work, haven't signed up to the scheme because they either believe that applying for the savings would cause them too much hassle or they think they do not have time to apply. This is despite the fact that if both parents are working, they could be saving as much as £2,400 a year – the equivalent of a two week family holiday to the Canary Islands.

Iain McMath, managing director of www.childcarechoice.co.uk said: "It takes just fifteen minutes to apply for childcare vouchers online – time well spent when you're effectively signing up to save money."

Most parents who pay for childcare are entitled to childcare vouchers following their introduction in their current form by the Government in 2005. However, the research also reveals that parents have no idea how much money they could be saving, with a quarter believing the vouchers would save them less than £500 a year .

"With most working parents unaware of the savings available, it's no wonder they don't make the time to sign up to the scheme," explained Mr McMath. "Childcare vouchers don't cost anything for employers or employees to set-up and, using our website, it couldn't be easier to apply."

Symon Easton, a father from Hampshire, has been impressed by Childcare Choice since he and his family started using the scheme. "It was quick and simple to set up and our childminder was quite happy with the direct payment arrangements. Most importantly, it saves my family almost a third of our childcare costs every month."

Find out how much of your childcare costs you could save by logging on to www.childcarechoice.co.uk/findoutmore.html. The website also outlines

everything managers need to know about setting up and managing a childcare voucher scheme.

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Notes to editors

About Childcare Choice

Childcare Choice is provided by Sodexo Pass UK – a leading provider of voucher services in the UK.

In September 2001 the company launched 'Childcarepass', bringing fresh innovation and much needed customer service to the childcare voucher market. In November 2004, the company launched Childcare Choice – a second childcare voucher scheme aimed at small to medium sized companies.

Sodexo Pass UK was voted 'Childcare Voucher Provider of the Year' at the annual Employee Rewards and Benefits Magazine gala dinner in February 2006. The award was given in recognition of Sodexo Pass UK bringing innovation and customer focussed development into the childcare voucher industry.

About childcare vouchers

Childcare vouchers which allow parents to save money on their income tax and National Insurance Contributions were introduced by the Government in 2005. Childcare vouchers offer significant savings to both employers and employees. The maximum each parent can now save is £1,195 per year. Employers operating the scheme pay reduced Employer National Insurance Contributions, resulting in savings of up to £373 per year for every employee who is signed up to the scheme.

About the research

The research was conducted by TNS, the world's largest research agency, using their face to face Consumer Omnibus service and gained from a sample of 1189 working parents.

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