

# Welcoming Babies to Keep Employees



**Creative firm Borshoff's longstanding "Bring Your Baby to Work" program continues to be a big hit with workers and clients.**

Clients of Borshoff, an advertising and public relations agency, often have the opportunity to meet an additional team member when they arrive at the company's headquarters for meetings. Since 2000, the Indianapolis-based employer has allowed parents who work there to bring their infants between six weeks and six months of age to work with them. The "Susan F. Matthews Bring Your Baby to Work" program, named after a former managing principal who suggested the idea, is offered to all employees.

CEO and Partner Karen Alter's now 19-year-old son, Matthew, was the second of a total 17 babies whose parents have taken advantage of this offering.



**Carrie Wood and her daughter, Saylor**

***"Basically, we had a lot of women and men that are of child-bearing age," said Alter. "We asked, what's a tool that we can use to make the transition back to work easier and maybe also help with retention?"***

Parents who choose to participate in the BYBTW program are expected to provide necessary equipment and sign a legal agreement that releases the company from any liability. They also agree to go on a slightly reduced pay schedule to compensate for time spent with their child. Alter says this actually alleviates stress for the employee.



*“It gave me the option to not have to drive here in rush hour. I could arrive at nine a.m. and leave at four p.m. We know there are things parents need to do, feedings and putting the baby to sleep. If the parent ends up working closer to 100%, we’ll accommodate for that.”*  
**Karen Alter, CEO and Partner**

Mothers and fathers who bring their babies to work with them are offered a private office, to ensure adequate privacy for feeding and nap times. The company also has a designated room that provides more space for parents should they need it.

The program, which has no hard costs associated with it, has been a big win for Borshoff. Not only has it increased productivity and retention, it has garnered significant positive attention for the agency. Current and potential clients are impressed with the innovative practice, and it boosts staff morale.

*“There’s something about a baby, in terms of the environment and culture. It’s never been a burden on anyone. The baby sort of becomes everyone’s baby. We call them Borshoff babies.”*

The next Borshoff baby is due to arrive soon. Carrier Wood, a senior media planner and buyer, is preparing to have her first child in a couple of months and plans to take advantage of the BYBTW program.



*“It is a great benefit of working at Borshoff,” said Wood. “The fact that I get those extra months with her definitely makes me feel better. This is a way I get to go back to work earlier, while still be able to bond with her and not have to leave her with someone else so soon.”*

Alter also believes the program has a positive effect on the babies themselves. She attributes the fact many of them have had “very outgoing personalities” to plenty of stimulation from adults in their first months of life.