

# STARTING A FAMILY WITH BUSINESS BENEFITS

*Companies gain recognition when they provide benefits packages to employees who adopt children*

Businesses often tout their benefits packages when it comes to wooing new top-notch employees. Four weeks paid vacation! An in- and out-of-network healthcare plan! But your business may be overlooking one attractive employee perk that is among the easiest to implement, and doesn't require extensive resources: adoption benefits. Although the number of employers offering adoption benefits still has plenty of room to increase, it rises year after year. In Aon Hewitt's annual survey of 1,000 major U.S. employers, only 12 percent offered a financial adoption benefit in 1990. By 2013, that number had risen to 52 percent.

The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption recently released its eighth annual list of the 100 Best Adoption-Friendly Workplaces. The rankings are determined by self-reported data from companies nationwide, ranging in size from 13 employees to 300,000. The key factors considered: Paid reimbursement to help cushion expenses incurred, followed by paid leave time for family bonding and



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adjusting. "Those are the two things families need the most when they adopt," says Rita Soronen, President and CEO of the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption.

For the eighth consecutive year, Wendy's has secured the top spot on the list. (Adoptive employees receive up to \$25,300 in reimbursement or assistance and up to six weeks of paid leave.) "Having these benefits sends a very positive signal to people that we are a company that cares very much about family and personal life, along with your business life," says the company's CEO, Emil Brolick. "We find that these benefits build employee loyalty and give us a competitive edge in recruiting new talent."

The Foundation tracks the specific motivating factors for offering adoption benefits, and the reasons are reported in this order: these benefits create a family-friendly culture; offering them is simply the right thing to do; they create equity (if you provide benefits to families formed through birth, it's only fair that you also provide benefits to families formed through adoption); they give the company a competitive edge for landing and keeping top talent. "And honestly, employees are asking for them," Soronen says.

Brolick cites another reason: "The benefits are not very expensive to provide." Employers who have completed the Foundation's Adoption Friendly Workplace survey offer financial support ranging from \$1,250 to \$25,300, and one to 18 weeks of paid leave; less than half of 1 percent of employees actually take advantage of adoption benefits. "In 2008, when the economy was difficult and employers were looking at what employee benefits they could cut, this was one that didn't get cut," says Soronen. "Even during those tough years, we've had a steady increase of employers adding adoption benefits."

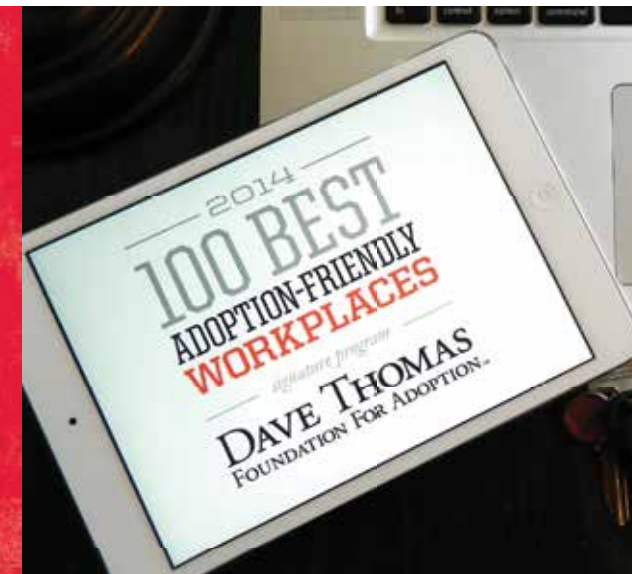


For the employees who do adopt with the help of their company, the impact is immeasurable. A staffer for 26 years, Teresa Johnson was one of the first employees at Wendy's to use the company's adoption benefits 17 years ago. After five years of very expensive fertility treatments, Johnson and her husband adopted a newborn from foster care. "If Wendy's didn't have adoption benefits, we would have had to wait because we expended our funds on fertility treatments," she says. "Who knows how long it would have taken us to actually do it—or if we would have changed our minds." A few years later, the couple used the benefits a second time to adopt toddler siblings. "We wouldn't have been able to build our family without the financial support of Wendy's and the time-off benefits. The support from the company has been amazing."

Call the Foundation at 800.ASK.DTFA to talk about your company's benefits, or visit [adoptionfriendlyworkplace.org](http://adoptionfriendlyworkplace.org) and order a toolkit to learn how to establish an adoption benefits policy. — Lisa Freedman

# IS YOUR COMPANY ONE OF THE 100 BEST?

*Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption announces the 100 Best Adoption-Friendly Workplaces of 2014*



<b>1</b> The Wendy's Company	<b>25-tie</b> Chesapeake Energy Corp	<b>54</b> Pioneer State Mutual Insurance Company	<b>78</b> ConAgra Foods, Inc.
<b>2</b> Ferring Pharmaceuticals	<b>25-tie</b> Franklin International	<b>55-tie</b> Brooks Brothers Group, Inc.	<b>79-tie</b> Nestle USA, Inc.
<b>3</b> Citizens Financial Group, Inc./RBS Americas	<b>25-tie</b> Traylor Bros., Inc.	<b>55-tie</b> Diocese of Metuchen	<b>79-tie</b> Zappos.com, Inc. and its Affiliates
<b>4</b> HanesBrands	<b>25-tie</b> Viacom Media Networks	<b>55-tie</b> Duke Realty Corporation	<b>81</b> Fellowes, Inc.
<b>5</b> Barilla America, Inc.	<b>32-tie</b> American Century Investments	<b>58</b> First Horizon National Corp.	<b>82</b> Thomson Reuters
<b>6-tie</b> Liquidnet Holdings, Inc.	<b>32-tie</b> Leo Burnett Group	<b>59-tie</b> Analog Devices, Inc.	<b>83</b> Patagonia, Inc.
<b>6-tie</b> LSI Corporation	<b>32-tie</b> New York Life Insurance Company	<b>59-tie</b> Monsanto Company	<b>84-tie</b> American Institute of Certified Public Accountants
<b>6-tie</b> UBM (LLC, Tech, Connect, Inc.)	<b>32-tie</b> Rodale Inc.	<b>59-tie</b> Premiere Global Services, Inc. (PGi)	<b>84-tie</b> America's Christian Credit Union
<b>9</b> Cambridge Family and Children's Service	<b>36-tie</b> McGraw Hill Financial	<b>62</b> Brinker International	<b>84-tie</b> Carlson
<b>10</b> Boston Scientific	<b>36-tie</b> The Phoenix Companies, Inc.	<b>63</b> Northern Trust Corporation	<b>84-tie</b> Children's Mercy Hospitals & Clinics
<b>11-tie</b> Bloomberg L.P.	<b>36-tie</b> WellStar Health System	<b>64</b> Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption	<b>84-tie</b> First Reliance Bank
<b>11-tie</b> Putnam Investments, LLC	<b>39-tie</b> Abbott Laboratories	<b>65</b> First Sun Management Corporation	<b>84-tie</b> Hypertherm, Inc.
<b>13</b> Vanguard Group	<b>39-tie</b> AbbVie	<b>66</b> Sears Holdings Corporation	<b>84-tie</b> New York University
<b>14</b> Kao USA Inc.	<b>39-tie</b> CBS Wholesale Grocers, Inc.	<b>67</b> Exceptional Software Strategies, Inc.	<b>84-tie</b> Novo Nordisk Inc.
<b>15</b> Arnold & Porter LLP	<b>39-tie</b> General Mills	<b>68</b> PwC	<b>92-tie</b> Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates
<b>16</b> Deutsche Bank	<b>39-tie</b> Hospira, Inc.	<b>69</b> Hasbro, Inc.	<b>92-tie</b> GMMB
<b>17-tie</b> Alston & Bird LLP	<b>39-tie</b> MetLife	<b>70</b> National Futures Association	<b>92-tie</b> Massachusetts Port Authority
<b>17-tie</b> BNP Paribas	<b>39-tie</b> Pearson	<b>71-tie</b> Advent Software	<b>92-tie</b> NBA (National Basketball Association)
<b>17-tie</b> JPMorgan Chase & Co	<b>39-tie</b> Prudential Financial, Inc.	<b>71-tie</b> Cornell University	<b>92-tie</b> NCB
<b>17-tie</b> KPMG LLP	<b>39-tie</b> sanofi	<b>71-tie</b> Dow Corning	<b>92-tie</b> PPD
<b>21-tie</b> Time Inc.	<b>39-tie</b> Takeda Pharmaceuticals	<b>71-tie</b> Total System Services, Inc	<b>92-tie</b> Scripps Networks Interactive
<b>21-tie</b> Turner Broadcasting System, Inc.	<b>49</b> Eli Lilly and Company	<b>71-tie</b> Wendcentral Corp/WendPartners	<b>92-tie</b> VML
<b>23-tie</b> Avon Products, Inc.	<b>50</b> Yale-New Haven Hospital	<b>76-tie</b> Domino's Pizza LLC	<b>100-tie</b> McGladrey LLP
<b>23-tie</b> Robins & Morton	<b>51</b> Johnson Financial Group	<b>76-tie</b> Moss Adams LLP	<b>100-tie</b> The Ohio State University
<b>25-tie</b> American Academy of Pediatrics	<b>52-tie</b> Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP		
<b>25-tie</b> American Express	<b>52-tie</b> Sullivan & Cromwell LLP		

See details, winners of industry, size categories, and honorable mentions and order your free adoption benefits toolkit at [adoptionfriendlyworkplace.org](http://adoptionfriendlyworkplace.org).



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