FORMING FAMILIES

June 2022



ON THE FRONT LINES OF FERTILITY MEDICINE

FERTILITY BENEFITS POWERING DIVERSITY

FERTILITY MEDICINE AFTER COVID

OFFERING AN EMPLOYEE FERTILITY BENEFIT

FACING INFERTILITY IN YOUR 20S

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Intro

Welcome to Forming Families, a new quarterly newsletter that shares ARC Fertility's perspectives on the latest news and trends in fertility medicine. Infertility affects millions of Americans, and many of them suffer in silence. **They don't have to.** Our mission is to provide compassionate care for people who are trying to form and grow their families. We believe that this is a basic, universal right, and for more than 25 years our mission has been to empower individuals and couples to achieve their dreams.

For our inaugural newsletter, we decided to focus on aspects of fertility that aren't often discussed in the mainstream. Much of the dialogue around fertility focuses on women in their late 30s and 40s, but women can experience difficulty becoming pregnant and sustaining a pregnancy at any age. That's why we are excited to feature an article by Katie Hurst, a California woman who was diagnosed with fertility issues in her 20s and went through a lengthy fertility journey before having her daughter last year. Her perspective is illuminating and reveals a side of fertility medicine that is often ignored.

We are also happy to share our thoughts on how fertility benefits in the workplace can improve diversity and make employers more attractive to prospects – as well as to their current teams. Infertility is often thought of as an individual issue, but it has direct effects on productivity and presenteeism in the workplace. In many ways, fertility benefit packages are the new frontier in HR.

Another area that has been talked about a lot over the last two years is how the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting fertility. This has many facets, from misgivings about vaccines to access to non-emergency fertility medical care. Our hope is to provide insight that will be useful for people who are still unsure of what the new normal looks like.

Finally, we want to salute some of the outstanding fertility medicine specialists around the country who are providing care to people dealing with infertility. They are truly the unsung heroes, as they continue to provide care in a medical climate dominated by the pandemic. These incredible doctors have faced many challenges – including an almost complete pause in fertility medicine in 2020 – and have continued to provide high levels of care for their patients.

Thank you for being part of the ARC Fertility family and for supporting our mission.



David Adamson, MD
Founder and CEO
ARC Fertility

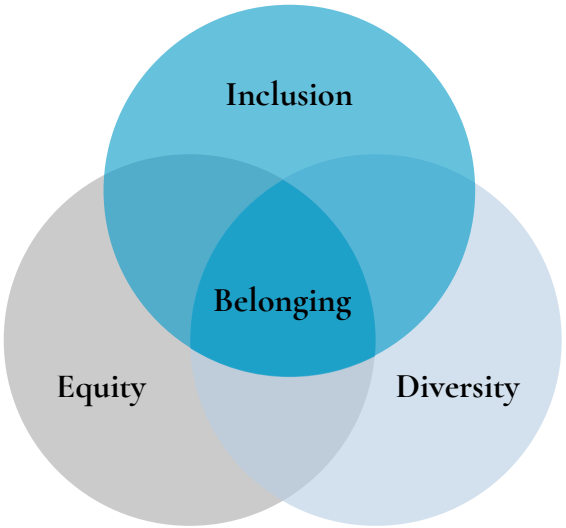




Fertility and Diversity

It is almost impossible to have a conversation about business without the subject of diversity coming up. That is not a new concept, of course, but in the last five years organizations in every industry have doubled down on their efforts to build workforces that include as wide a swath of society as possible. 98% of American companies now have diversity initiatives, which fall under the category of DEIB (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging), but the reality is that most of these programs are not really working. This is where creative approaches to healthcare benefits can help forward-looking companies move the needle when it comes to broadening the demographic representation of their workforces.

Here's a look at how offering fertility benefits can help companies improve their workplace diversity and become employers of choice for everyone.



Facing Infertility in Your 20s



Katie Hurst was diagnosed with fertility issues in her 20s and received treatment that allowed her to give birth to a daughter last year. She shares her thoughts about her journey and the journey that millions of women often take in silence.

We all have images in our heads of what infertility looks like. For many of us, it's something that happens to other people. I didn't think it would happen to me. Because I had always been healthy in all aspects of my life, I just assumed that I would be able to conceive naturally, but that isn't the way it happened. As the negative results piled up, my optimism waned. I began to feel something I'm not proud of- resentful of the other couples who seemed to have it so easy. I became more and more desperate for answers, but at the same time I just wanted to retreat into myself because I was afraid of what I might learn. Eventually I had no choice.

Throughout the testing, the poking, and the prodding I tried to channel my trepidation into my breathing. Inhale, exhale, and take it one day at a time. I felt like I was holding my breath just waiting for the pain or relief to wash over me. Thinking back on hearing that there was something identifiable, something with a name that could be preventing me from getting pregnant, I'll never forget that moment. I was in the car on my way home, my husband and I in total silence except for the radio playing. The song on the air was Big, Big Plans by Chris Lane. He sang "bet we'll take our kids down there one day" and the tears came flooding. I gave into the feeling that I may never experience any of that with my husband.

As I began my fertility journey, my emotions came in waves and shifted on a monthly basis. I remember being terrified. I was hopeless and hopeful at the same time. I was confused. I felt alone. Then came my resolve. I had to fight for the family that I wanted. No one can know what this feels like until it happens to them, but in trying to unravel my own memories of what it was like, I can also appreciate what it meant for me. Today, medical science has advanced to the point where, when I heard that I had fertility problems, it wasn't the end of the road. Instead, it was the beginning of a journey. That journey wasn't without hardships and pain, but ultimately it led me to my family.





> "There are no fertility-related reasons for a vaccine exemption."

Fertility + COVID

There has been a lot of misinformation about COVID over the last few years – and people who are looking to grow their families have been particularly affected. But the bottom line is that prospective parents should get vaccinated, and they shouldn't delay their fertility treatments.



People who are undergoing or considering fertility medical treatments should receive vaccines for COVID-19 as quickly as possible and ignore unsubstantiated rumors about potential problems related to fertility and pregnancy. ARC's recommendations are based on recent guidelines from the American Society for Reproductive Medicine about COVID and fertility, which state that "there are no fertility-related reasons for a vaccine exemption."

There is a lot of misinformation about COVID vaccines out there, but all of the reputable medical research is showing that inoculations have no impact on the ability to conceive, to stay pregnant, and to deliver healthy babies. It is critical for people to base their decisions on sound medical evidence rather than unproven theories and things they read on social media. Unless there are issues where a woman is immunocompromised or there may be other contraindications, getting vaccinated is not only safe, but essential to promoting individual and community health, and ensuring a healthier and safer pregnancy.

In addition to supporting vaccinations for men and women who are considering having children, ARC Fertility is also encouraging all patients to observe COVID-19 mitigation protocols. It is imperative for people to do whatever they can to remain safe and stay free from infections, and that includes taking all necessary precautions to avoid illness. Whenever possible, people should speak with their physicians and fertility experts remotely, and of course all clinics are following the most stringent safety standards to ensure that their patients remain healthy when they come in for treatments.

Offering an Employee Fertility Benefit

Company Spotlight: Picsart

With its diverse range of employees and future-oriented strategy, Picsart is dedicated to remaining at the cutting edge of employee benefits. This is especially important for a company of their size, as larger employers are more capable of affording broader and more robust benefits packages. Attracting and retaining the best personnel means competing with the Apples and Googles of the world, not just in salary and prestige, but in ways to make each employee's life easier.

Read the whole case study here.


How Picsart Integrated Family Building Benefits with ARC® Fertility

picsart

Client Background

Picsart is a privately held software developer whose self-named product is the #1 creative platform and social editing app in today's creator economy. Picsart serves more than 150 million monthly active creators who present, remix, and share nearly 1 billion images a month, using one of the largest open-source collections of content worldwide, featuring stickers, free-to-edit photos, and more.

Founded in 2012 and headquartered in San Francisco, Picsart provides a progressive, diversity-forward environment to professionals in cities around the world, including Los Angeles, Miami, Beijing, Tokyo, Berlin and Yerevan, Armenia. Picsart is proud to count Sequoia Capital, Softbank, DCM Ventures, Insight Venture Partners, and Siguler Guff & Company among its backers.

Overview

With its diverse range of employees and future-oriented strategy, Picsart is dedicated to remaining at the cutting edge of employee benefits. This is especially important for a company of their size, as larger employers are more capable of affording broader and more robust benefits packages. Attracting and retaining the best personnel means competing with the Apples and Googles of the world, not just in salary and prestige, but in ways to make each employee's life easier.

As Director of People Operations at Picsart, Elizabeth Maddick knows from experience that some essential benefits are just easier for big firms to provide. "Five years ago I began my journey to start a family when I didn't have anything like ARC Fertility," she says, "and I had to come off my insurance to go on my husband's, who worked at a very large company. Larger companies obviously have an advantage when it comes to insurance."

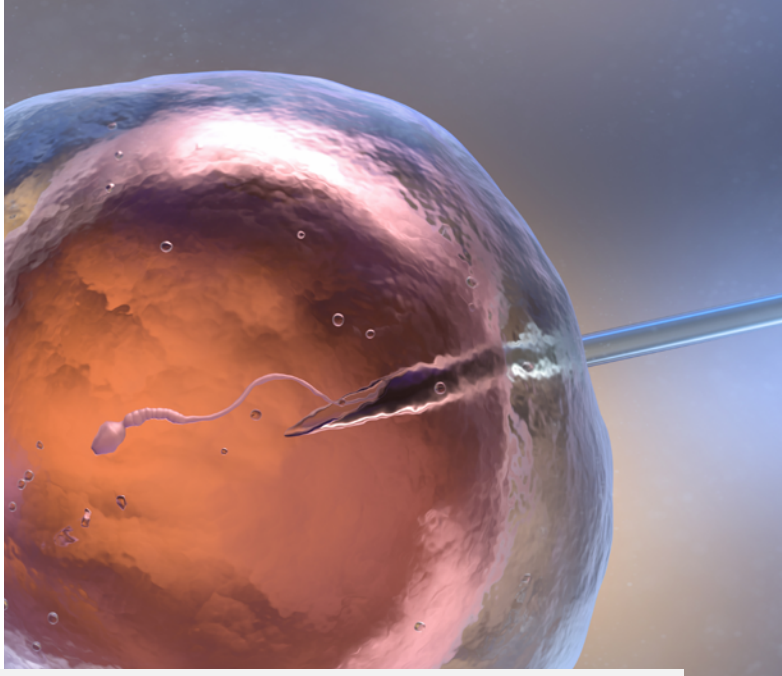
Maddick and her team understood that fertility benefits are more than just a moral imperative for companies. Important quality of life programs can help create a better, more stable workforce. People are more likely to show long-term devotion to companies that anticipate their needs, including the need to safely and affordably have a family. "Satisfied employees lead to retention, and help you compete against companies with richer benefits," Maddick says.



Dedicated to remaining at the cutting edge of employee benefits.

On the Front Lines of Fertility Medicine

ARC Fertility is proud to work with some of the top fertility medical practices in the country. Here are some of the clinicians who are leading the way in helping Americans form their families.





Dr.Samuel Brown

At Brown Fertility, you can rest assured that you're getting exceptional advice, cutting-edge yet affordable treatment, and success rates among the highest in the nation.

"It's our privilege to partner with ARC as ARC shares many of the same values and mission as Brown Fertility. ARC is a patient-focused organization, like Brown Fertility, that offers every patient the value of experience and trust by helping tens of thousands of patients get pregnant."



Dr. Dan Gehlbach

Midwest Reproductive Center, under the leadership of Dr. Dan Gehlbach, has been providing compassionate, comprehensive, cutting-edge fertility treatment to patients in the Kansas City area for the past 18 years.

"We appreciate the tremendous service that ARC provides to our patients to help them pursue their dream of parenthood."



Dr. Fernando Akerman

The Fertility & IVF Center of Miami is South Florida's leader in providing Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ART); we work as a team to provide exceptional and compassionate care for our patients.

"We can count on ARC to provide our patients with the utmost care and expertise, as they alleviate some of the financial burdens IVF treatments can incur."



For more information about ARC Fertility's Family Forming Benefits, please contact ARC directly at **info@arcfertility.com** or **888-990-2727**.