



# Campaign 2010: Paid Sick Days for Vermont

## Paid Sick Days Support Family Economic Security

Far too many families are struggling to make ends meet while juggling work and family. Losing a day's pay, or a job, to recover from illness or to care for a sick child or other family member could mean being unable to put food on the table or falling deeper into debt. Paid sick days help to provide families a much needed measure of security.

Parents should not have to worry about losing pay or even their job when they are forced to take time off from work to recover from illness or to care for a sick family member.

Working parents with paid time off are over five times more likely to stay home to care for their sick children than those without paid time off.<sup>6</sup>

**Join Campaign 2010:  
Paid Sick Days  
for Vermont** and help us to ensure all working Vermonters are guaranteed paid sick days.

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### Key Facts:

- Since no state or federal law sets a minimum standard that requires paid sick days, workers at all wages are at risk of not having a single paid sick day. Low-wage workers, however, are the least able to go without pay. **Two in five working parents (41%) with household incomes below twice the federal poverty level do not have paid time off of any kind<sup>1</sup>**
- Everybody gets sick – children are certainly no exception. **Children can also spread illness as easily as adults:** to their playmates, their classmates, their teachers, or caregivers.
- Women are still most likely to have significant family care-giving responsibilities. The majority of low-wage workers are women, and three out of four do not get paid when they take time to care for a sick child.<sup>2</sup>
- Studies show that children recover from illness faster when their parents are able to care for them.<sup>3</sup> Working parents with paid time off are five times more likely to stay home to care for their sick children than those without.<sup>4</sup>
- As baby boomers age, more working families must increasingly care for elderly relatives. According to one study, 35% of American workers have significant elder-care responsibility, and more than 1/3 of this group was forced to reduce work hours or take time off to provide care.<sup>5</sup>

1 Katherin Ross Phillips, Getting Time Off, Urban Institute, [www.urban.org/url.cfm?ID=310977](http://www.urban.org/url.cfm?ID=310977).

2 Wyn, Roberta, and Ojeda, Victoria. 2003. Women, Work, and Family Health: A Balancing Act. Melona, CA: Kaiser Family Foundation.

3 Jody Heymann, *The Widening Gap: Why America's Working Families Are in Jeopardy—and What Can Be Done About It*.

4 Jody Heymann, *Forgotten Families: Ending the Growing Crisis Confronting Children and Working Parents in the Global Economy*, 2006.

5 Families and Work Institute, Highlights of the 2002 National Study of the Changing Workforce.

6 Jody Heymann, *Forgotten Families: Ending the Growing Crisis Confronting Children and Working Parents in the Global Economy*, 2006.

### Vermont Paid Sick Days Coalition

Vermont Livable Wage Campaign -  
Peace and Justice Center • Kids Are  
Priority One Coalition • Vermont  
Commission on Women • Working  
Vermont: The Coalition of Vermont  
Labor Unions; United Professions  
of Vermont/AFT; VT AFL-CIO •  
Vermont Network Against Domestic  
and Sexual Violence • Green  
Mountain Chapter - Older Women's  
League • Vermont Workers' Center  
• Voices for Vermont's Children