Scheduling Savvy: Saint Joseph’s University

GENERAL FACTS
Size: 1,000 employees; 9,000 students
Women employees of childbearing age: 29%
Industry: Education
Location: Philadelphia, PA
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LACTATION PROGRAM
Time: Reasonable breaks to express milk.
Space: Private, furnished lactation room in Campion Student Center.
Flexibility: Using the internal computer system, an employee may reserve the lactation room at a time that fits with her schedule. Employees are covered by Short-Term Disability benefits (for the period of disability following childbirth) with no employee contribution.
Support: An electronic folder with breastfeeding support information is given to staff members who request maternity leave.
Equipment: Employees and students bring their own pump; employee health insurance offers $50 reimbursement for pumps and $100 for lactation consultation.
Policy: http://www.sju.edu/resources/humanresources/lactationpolicy.html
Impact: Students and staff have successfully used the lactation room, and swipe card access allows tracking of room usage. The new policy and room have been featured in in the campus-based newspaper. A second lactation room is under consideration on another part of campus for increased access.

The situation:
A large and dispersed campus where safety and accessibility are top priorities.

The solution:
Online reservations and swipe card access for efficient scheduling and security.

Saint Joseph’s University is a large university with a campus that resides in both the city and suburban Lower Merion. MCC and the Commission on the Status of Women, a group promoting women’s issues on campus, identified a centrally located lactation room in the Campion Student Center.

"Continuing to breastfeed after returning to work from maternity leave takes a lot of dedication. If we can eliminate some of the obstacles these new mothers face by providing a lactation room on campus, we’re promoting their health and the health of their babies."

Nancy DuBoise,
Director of Employee and Labor Relations

Lactation room reservations are made through the University’s internal computer system using staff or student’s access. After reservations are made, the mother gains access at her appointed time with her campus I.D. swipe card.

This method allows a mother to express milk at times that are most convenient for her while eliminating the potential barrier of a designated space not being available. Room security is maintained without the need for an old-fashioned key or a campus security guard’s presence.

Likewise, information is shared digitally: educational materials about the lactation program and breastfeeding in general are all available on the SJU staff website, making it accessible 24-7.

"Babies' immune systems are strengthened by the nutrients they get from breast milk. The longer breast milk is available, the healthier the baby, which means fewer parents missing work because their child is sick."

Alex Skolnick, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Psychology