

## Key Working Practices for the Post-COVID Age

PiPA's [latest research report](#), published in February 2021 highlights the devastating impact of the COVID pandemic on parents and carers working in the performing arts. Mothers and female carers, D/deaf and disabled people with caring responsibilities and solo parents are particularly impacted.

- One in four women had to provide full time childcare during the last year, making it impossible to access work opportunities.
- 72% of parents and carers in the performing arts are now considering leave the industry, highlighting the urgent need for supportive working practices to retain talent.
- Over one third of women with caring responsibilities are experiencing a mental health crisis. They are more likely to class themselves as 'really stressed' or in 'fight or flight' (36%.) For D/deaf and disabled parents and carers and solo carers almost half (45%) are 'really stressed' or in 'fight or flight' mode.

This resource outlines key considerations for ensuring talent retention and working practices fit for a post-COVID age to deliver a robust and future-proof framework for the sector.

All PiPA interventions and strategies are underpinned by rigorous research, practical trials and best practice studies in partnership with performing arts organisations participating in the PiPA Charter Programme.

### Support Practices

#### Monitoring

##### BENEFITS

Including questions on caring responsibilities in monitoring data enables organisations to respond to strengths and weaknesses in recruitment and retention.

##### CONSIDERATIONS

- Identify how many parents and carers work for your organisation, and how many are leaving, to inform your **recruitment and retention strategy**.
- Monitor how many parents and carers apply for opportunities to help identify **gaps in provision** or communication.

#### Recruitment

##### BENEFITS

A clear and accessible recruitment process will ensure that people do not self-select out of opportunities and empower a more diverse talent pool, inclusive of parents and carers, to apply for the role.

##### CONSIDERATIONS

- Advertise opportunities as open to job shares and/or flexible working
- Communicate your family friendly ethos and available support and/or practices to prevent potential talent self-selecting out of opportunities.
- Offer remote interviews as standard.

## Finances

### BENEFITS



Ringfencing a PiPA budget line to support with additional costs will strengthen business resilience by enabling your company to react appropriately and effectively to need.

### CONSIDERATIONS



- Advanced scheduling, remote access to meetings, homeworking and shorter days/weeks can support parents and carers in avoiding additional costs.
- Establish a budget line to be able support with caring related access needs and emergencies.

## Policy and Communication

### BENEFITS



Review parental and caring related policies and develop a clear procedure to enable all staff to respond to situation with clarity, as they evolve.

### CONSIDERATIONS



- Policies to review could include Working from Home, Children in the Workspace and Time Off For Dependents.
- Establishing a central point for all information relating to parent and carer support will allow easy access to what is needed (this could be Welcome Packs, Staff Handbooks, Staff Intranet).

## Flexible Working and Job Shares

### BENEFITS



The ability for parents and carers to return to work and maintain their careers will rely on flexibility provided within work opportunities.

### CONSIDERATIONS



- Assess new and existing roles for their suitability for different types of flexible working. This can include remote working, truncated hours, flexibility in start and finish times, job shares, hybrid job-shares or splits.
- Ensure flexible working policies and procedures are clearly communicated and signposted throughout all departments.
- Job shares are key for retaining the parent and carer workforce. Job shares also increase the resilience of organisations by providing instant cover during the current COVID crisis, when self-isolation, travel restrictions and school-bubble closures are still a high threat.

## Talent Development

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### BENEFITS



Addressing the mental health crisis, loss of self-confidence and connection with the industry experienced by parents and carers, through professional development opportunities and supportive return to work provisions will ensure there is a diverse talent pool engaged with the organisation and its work.

### CONSIDERATIONS



- Accessible Professional Development Opportunities will support your organisation to reconnect with the freelance parent and carer workforce as well as redressing the impacts of COVID for a more diverse talent pool.
- Coaching, mentoring and buddying provisions can support talent development as well as address the mental health crisis currently being experienced within the parent and carer workforce.

## We are here to help

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Developed with leading performing arts companies, the [PiPA Best Practice Charter Programme](#) is an industry-led framework which will provide your organisation with the tools, resources and policies you need to start implementing family-friendly working practices.

Joining the Charter Programme enables organisations to implement bespoke strategies to strengthen business resilience and attract, and importantly retain, a talented and flexible workforce. The extensive Members Toolkit includes over 50 case studies, sample policies and how-to-guides for better ways of working. Regular seminars and live events underpin delivery of organisational action plans and provide opportunities for shared learning from over 45 leading performing arts organisations in the network.

Please contact [Matt@pipacampaign.com](mailto:Matt@pipacampaign.com) for more information on how to join.

## Useful Links

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About PiPA's Best Practice Charter Programme: [pipacampaign.org/charter-programme](https://pipacampaign.org/charter-programme)

PiPA's COVID Research Report: [pipacampaign.org/research/covidreport](https://pipacampaign.org/research/covidreport)

PiPA's COVID Support Hub: [pipacampaign.org/covid-support-hub](https://pipacampaign.org/covid-support-hub)

Any further questions: [Matt@pipacampaign.com](mailto:Matt@pipacampaign.com)