

CLIENT STORY

Childcare that powers *performance*

Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation (SMBC) is a Japanese multinational leading bank with a 400+ year legacy. They are committed to building an inclusive, high-performing workforce, with a strong emphasis on wellbeing and diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI).



SMBC's Ambition

Like many employers, SMBC recognised a critical gap in how organisations support working parents—not just during parental leave, but throughout their careers.

Recognising that the needs of working parents extend far beyond the point of parental leave, SMBC set out to provide ongoing, practical support across the employee lifecycle which enables employees to balance work and care at every stage.

At the core of this ambition are clear objectives:

Create the conditions where employees can fully contribute at work whilst managing realities of family life

Navigating wellbeing, productivity and talent retention, particularly among women

Making caring a shared, non-gendered responsibility



“If we want people to be present and thoughtful at work, we need to help them meet the realities of childcare. Flexible working is a powerful enabler—but on its own, it’s not a solution. To truly support working parents, organisations must go beyond flexibility and combine practical childcare support with a culture that enables people to perform at their best.”

Rebecca Ormond
Head of DEI & Wellbeing

1,300⁺

days saved from
childcare absence
in 2025

10

sessions
of Back Up Care per
employee, per year

10⁺

years
partnership

91%

say Back-up Care
improves focus
at work

Bright Horizons Partner of choice

Recognising that flexibility alone wasn't enough, SMBC moved beyond relying on one or two 'pillars' of support to build a more complete framework — one that supports employees in both the everyday and when the unexpected happens. By partnering with Bright Horizons, they have created a more layered, forward-thinking approach to working parent support.

Back-Up Care is central to SMBC's offering, providing both emergency and planned childcare, alongside School Holiday Clubs for more structured, forward planned support.

“If you're supporting your people less than your competitors, you will lose talent. Investing in supporting carers and parents helps retain institutional knowledge and reduces the cost of attrition.”

Rebecca Ormond
Head of DEI & Wellbeing



Employee Impact

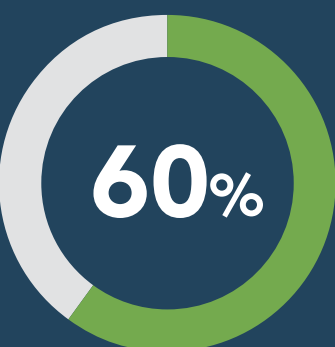
Employee feedback highlights the meaningful impact of Back-Up Care.

- 92%** would have missed work without Back-Up Care
- 100%** makes them more committed to SMBC
- 100%** reduces the amount of stress faced in work/life responsibilities

SMBC recognises **School Holiday Clubs** as a practical way to address predictable challenges. With more weeks of school holidays than annual leave, employees often had to juggle work alongside childcare, split time off between partners, and manage increased stress and reduced focus; impacting both productivity and wellbeing, as well as talent retention.

- Improved productivity and performance
- Stronger employee engagement
- Increased retention of key talent
- Reduced attrition costs

By encouraging proactive planning and providing structured support, SMBC helps reduce disruption and enables employees to stay focused during this period.



School Holiday Clubs usage was over 60%, which is 900+ sessions used in 2025.

Shared Caring Responsibilities

Equal parenting support sits at the heart of SMBC, and central to their integrated diversity, equity & inclusion approach. Helping to challenge and reduce long-standing gender-based assumptions about who should provide care. With Back-up Care, SMBC is addressing key barriers that impact both genders:

-  Caring responsibilities continue to fall disproportionately on women, limiting career progression
-  Men are less likely to engage in caregiving due to limited visibility of support and barriers

// **We can't just ask whether women return to work—we have to ask whether they're able to progress. Making Back Up Care available to everyone helps create the conditions for men to play a more active role in family life. The more we make caring a shared responsibility, the closer we get to true gender balance."**

Rebecca Ormond
Head of DEI & Wellbeing

Winning solution

// **Back-Up Care isn't just for emergencies; it's a critical tool for planned gaps like summer holidays. The reality is the numbers don't add up – school holidays simply exceed the leave employees have available."**

Rebecca Ormond

Back-Up Care with us

Be the Employer of Choice for your working parents and carers. From strategy to delivery and ongoing optimisation, Bright Horizons helps protect productivity while supporting wellbeing across every stage of life.

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