Women have been uniquely affected by COVID-19. Prior to the pandemic, women made up 49% of the overall workforce, but accounted for 55% of job losses in April 2020.

As schools and 45% of daycares closed, families took on significant domestic labor. Since the pandemic began, women have spent an average of 71.2 hours/week handling chores and caregiving. For men, it is 51.5 hours.

For women of color, the situation is even tougher: compared to white women, Latinas and Black women are spending an average of 4-12 more hours per week on childcare. Latinas and Black women are also spend between 2-3x as many hours per week caring for elderly or sick relatives.

Time out of the workforce also has a lasting impact on a woman and her family. One year off from work makes woman's annual earnings 39% lower than women who did not take time away.

In short: COVID-19 has only worsened the stress and inequalities working women faced previously.

This is an opportunity to reimagine work and an economy that works for women.

You can start by assembling a diverse team to explore the cultural and gender norms that have shaped your corporate policies.

Women are a critical part of the workforce; companies with greater female diversity of voice are more profitable, productive, and ethical.
How can YOU support women on your team as they return to the office or work?

The WNY Women’s Foundation provides these ALL IN Recommendations to make sure all women can return to the workforce:

**CHILD CARE**
- Parents can be matched with operating child care providers through the Child Care Resource Network (716-877-6666 ext 3064).
- Child care subsidies are also available via the Workforce Development Institute.
- Visit wnychildren.org/parent-resources for available options and questions to ask a child care provider or summer camp operator.
- Child with Special Needs: Contact your school district’s Chairperson for Special Education.

**FLEXIBILITY**
- Offer and support flexible working options, including flextime, staggered shifts, job sharing, remote work, and less business travel.
- Train supervisors on how to manage flexible schedules.
- Offer "ramp-on" programs to ease employee transitions.

**FEEDBACK**
- Confirm employees feel safe and supported returning to work.
- Provide opportunities for feedback on employee satisfaction as they return to work.
- Examine and work to address unintended consequences of work from home arrangements (i.e. do those working in the office get more cases, creating an unfair promotional ladder?).

**PHYSICAL HEALTH**
- Provide information on paid leave available if an employee is impacted by COVID-19.
- Paid sick leave information is available for parents at paidfamilyleave.ny.gov/COVID19.

**MENTAL HEALTH**
- Mental health support should be readily available.
- Offer an Employee Assistance Program and ensure that information is widely available.
- Crisis Services also offers mental health support at 716-834-3131.
- New York State’s Emotional Support Hotline is reachable at 1-844-863-9314.