

Supporting Parents and Carers Spotlight Day – 18 May 2022

Usdaw Speaking Up For Parents & Carers



What do I need to know?

Not sure what Spotlight Day is all about? Wondering how to get involved? Read on...

This year on Wednesday 18 May Usdaw is organising a campaign day to celebrate the amazing work being done by Usdaw reps and officials to win a better deal for working parents and carers.

The campaign day is called a 'Spotlight Day'. The Union has held a Spotlight Day every year for over fifteen years. Each year the theme of the day changes.

The campaign day this year has the theme 'Speaking up for parents and carers'.

The aim of the day is to highlight the work Usdaw reps and officials put in, day in day out, to support members with caring commitments at work and negotiate better workplace rights for parents and carers.

Every year hundreds of reps get involved on Spotlight Day. If you are new to organising campaigning activity you might be wondering what steps you can take to get involved on Spotlight Day.

You can choose to do as much or as little as you like.

First of all talk to your manager or shop personnel manager to agree how the Spotlight Day campaign could be run in your workplace.

Running a campaign stand

- You could set up a campaign stand in the canteen, a staff area or on the shop floor. You'll need to agree the location with your manager. If you come up against any problems get in touch with your Area Organiser.
- Try and agree a day and time when there will be plenty of colleagues for you to talk to about the campaign.
- Tick the box on the order form telling us that you are organising a stand and we will send you everything you need including leaflets, posters and free 'giveaways' like pens.
- Talk to members and non-members about the campaign. Take a look at the key messages in this campaign pack for some ideas about how you might start the conversation.

- Ask colleagues to fill in the enclosed survey. This raises awareness of the Union's campaign. Hand out the leaflets too. You can get extra copies of the survey from the Union's website. Send the survey back to the freepost address listed on it.
- Ask colleagues to fill out the 'pledge card' (which looks like a postcard). Tear the pledge card in two. Give one section back to the member / non-member who has pledged their support for the campaign and return the signed section to Usdaw.
- You can get extra copies of all the campaign materials for free by using the enclosed order form or visiting Usdaw's website: www.usdaw.org.uk/spcorder

Theming your noticeboard

If you are not able to commit time to the campaign, but still want to get the message across to members in your workplace, you can cover the Union noticeboard in your workplace with campaign information.

This is a great way to run a visible campaign if you are not able to commit time-wise.

If you think this may be the best option for you, please tick the enclosed order form for a 'Noticeboard Pack' and we will send you a pack of materials to enable you to quickly and easily take part.



Campaign Briefing

This year's Spotlight Day is all about celebrating the amazing work being done by Usdaw reps and officials to win a better deal for working parents and carers.

Day in day out reps are supporting and representing members who need the help of their Union.

Very often this is about finding hours of work that fit around family life, or needing time off when someone in the family is ill. Without the help of their rep many more members would struggle to get the right support at work.

This support was particularly important over the last 18 months when so many parents and carers needed time off work to cope with school closures in lockdowns or to be able to care for relatives who were isolating at home.

But we weren't just there for when things went wrong for members; we have also been working to try and improve the rights that working parents and carers rely on. And we really are making a difference.

Statutory Maternity Pay and Paternity Pay is way too low. 9 out of 10 of our members have to cut their family leave short because they run out of money. That's why the Union has made improving maternity and paternity pay such a high priority.

Here are just a few examples of what Usdaw reps and officials have negotiated.

- Maternity Pay in the big four retailers is now paid well above the statutory rate.
- Paternity pay paid at 100% pay and extended beyond 2 weeks in many agreements.
- Adoption Leave paid above statutory rate by many employers.
- Additional support for foster carers and adoptive parents.

Key Messages

There are three key messages we want to get across on this year's Spotlight Day:

1. If you are a parent or carer being in the Union makes sense – and not just because things can go wrong at work and you need to know the Union has got your back.

As well as having better pay and conditions members in workplaces where there is a trade u

nion are more likely to have a better work/life balance and face less discrimination at work than those in non-unionised workplaces.

2. Unions are good news for young parents and carers as well as for all parents whose child is a young worker. Union

- Paid time off for fertility treatments.
- New domestic violence agreements across five national companies giving our members access to support at work when they need it.
- The right for parents and carers to have their caring commitments taken into account when hours of work are being changed.

To find out more about what support your employer offers to parents and carers take a look at your staff handbook or online policies or speak to your Usdaw rep.

If you are a parent or carer being in the Union makes so much sense – and not just because things can go wrong at work and you need to know the Union has got your back.

Union members have better pay and conditions and safer workplaces than workers in unorganised workplaces.

Very often parents and carers' are working part time to enable them to juggle work and family life. TUC research shows that part time workers working in unionised companies have an average of 5.5 more days of paid leave (20.4 days compared with 14.9 days) each year compared to non-unionised workers.

Members in workplaces where there is a trade union are likely to have a better work/life balance and face less discrimination at work than those in non-unionised workplaces.

Union membership brings the greatest financial benefits for young workers: 16 to 24 year old union members earn 33 per cent more than their non-union counterparts. Usdaw has worked tirelessly to remove youth rates across all of our major agreements and will continue to push elsewhere until they are a thing of the past. 1 in 3 young workers is a parent and so removing youth rates is a major win for them and their families.

So the focus for this year's Supporting Parents and Carers Spotlight Day is to celebrate what Usdaw reps and officers have won for parents and carers and to show that we are not just there for when things go wrong at work.

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3. Usdaw has made a big difference to members who are parents and carers by negotiating improvements to statutory rights and payments. For instance in many of our agreements maternity, paternity and adoption pay are paid way beyond the statutory minimum rates.

But we need Government to do more by giving all workers the right to family and carer-friendly rights at work from day one of employment and improving protection for parents and carers from less favourable treatment at work.

