As keiki prepare to learn via distance learning, some parents are struggling to find child care

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Distance learning is part of most plans with schools scheduled to re-open and it's bringing on more problems caused by COVID-19. Parents are struggling to find child care. For some, the answer is flexibility.
Group director of Express Employment Professionals calls it a common problem among employers and employees. Possible solutions he says include pushing back lunch breaks, adjusting start and end times or working on weekends.

As the father of two boys, Les Daijo understands the need for childcare.

"A lot of us had people to take care of our kids, or they were at school. Now they're at home, we have to make arrangements, and if we can't, then we have to somehow take off work and be at home," he said.

Daijo's work is job placement. He says with businesses simply trying to survive during the COVID-19 pandemic, child care concern often limits staffing.

"I think that makes it hard because the businesses are fluctuating on their hours and days, which of course, is changing the schedule of employees. I think it's kind of two sided," Daijo said.

Lisa Kracher is president of Staffing Solutions Hawaii, she built a play area at the office so employees could bring their keiki to work. To her, it provides a boost in morale, productivity and work balance.

Results from a new poll conducted by the Hawaii Afterschool Alliance shows 61-percent or parents surveyed report employers are not flexible and do not make accommodations for child care.

"We know we work better when we know that our kids are safe. We have a peace of mind, knowing our kids are not getting in trouble, they're learning and taken care of. If you're constantly thinking about what your kids are doing, you can't be an effective worker," Paula Adams, Hawaii Afterschool Alliance executive director, said.

A+ by YMCA is the biggest after school provider for the DOE on Oahu but programs with individual campuses are not yet finalized. For parents interested to sign up, visit ymcahonolulu.org/youth-programs/after-school-care