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CHILD CARE PROGRAM SUPPORT PROPOSAL

SHALL A COMPULSORY FEE OF \$1.00 PER QUARTER BE ASSESSED TO SUPPORT CAMPUS CHILD CARE PROGRAMS EFFECTIVE FALL QUARTER 1986?

DISCUSSION

This proposal responds to growing evidence of broad-based student support for campus child care programs, including the recent petition drive for the infant care program.

Increasingly, child care is becoming an essential and visible service on college and university campuses, as well as in the broader communities, so that parents may pursue their educational objectives and employment opportunities. The number of students with young families, especially single parents, continues to increase, intensifying the need for high quality care by trained and competent care-givers in safe and supportive environments. At Family Student Housing, alone, there are over 220 children. Three child care programs currently serve the UCSC community. All programs have continual, extensive waiting lists. Specific needs vary from year to year; currently, 20 student/parents are on the infant program waiting list, and over 100 are waiting for openings in the two programs serving children ages 2 through 8.

Child care is expensive. For example, the cost of infant care that meets the licensing standards of the state is about \$5 per hour. Student-parents, particularly single parents, simply cannot afford to pay the full costs. Thus, most child care programs must be subsidized from sources beyond the fee levels that parents can afford. The current fee for a minimum 20-hour contract for the infant program is \$48 per week, or \$528 per quarter, or almost \$1600 for an academic year.

Off-campus child care alternatives in Santa Cruz are limited, and must charge fees that are beyond the reach of most student families. The not-for-profit facilities in the community are threatened with the loss of substantial operating subsidies from federal revenue-sharing funds that may result in curtailment of enrollment and fee increases.

Campus child care programs also provide direct benefits to UCSC students who are employed as teacher aides or use the centers as observation "laboratories" for course work in education, psychology, sociology, and other social sciences. Over 50 students work in the three campus programs during a typical year, and another 30 will visit the centers to observe.

If the proposed fee is approved, the income will be administered by the Student Services Office with the advice of the Child Care Advisory Committee. The income will be used to partially support the costs of caring for the children of students only. Children of staff and faculty will be supported from sources other than the proposed fee. In 1986-87 it is expected that most of the income will be allocated to subsidize the expenses of the infant program, which otherwise may have to close. Other potential uses include replacement and acquisition of needed play and curricular materials and

equipment, and providing "scholarships" for the children of those parents whose financial aid awards do not cover child care costs because of inadequate financial aid funds.

The establishment of a compulsory fee requires approval by The Regents following an election in which at least a simple majority of the required voting pool (25% of the student body) vote in favor of the fee.

OPINIONS

Supporting:

Fiat Lux! Please shed light on campus child care by voting for the \$1.00 per quarter student fee increase!

Being a student and a parent is not easy. Here at UCSC, because of the existence of three quality child care programs, parents can tend to their school work, knowing their children are in good, loving hands. Currently, 68 student families use the child and infant care centers, and about 120 are waiting for openings in the limited facilities.

The cost of child care is high, and, for some students who have children (particularly infant-aged children), the cost is threatening to become prohibitive if steps are not taken now to assure that child care is adequately funded. As an example, student families are now paying the most that can be expected for infant care (up to \$3,200 for the academic year), based on their income.

All affordable child care provided in the center environment is subsidized. Last quarter, because it received no operating funds, our campus infant program found itself in a position of being forced to charge higher fees and still being threatened with having to close. As the cost of child care continues to increase, other campus centers will also be threatened by the inability to control fee increases. At some point these fees become prohibitive and children must be turned away because their parent(s) cannot afford to pay.

Your vote for this modest fee increase will assure continued, quality, affordable child care on campus; it will illustrate your acknowledgement that our "University children" are important and deserve quality care and that our campus is a welcome home for students of all ages and backgrounds. You will be setting an important social precedent for a time when you, too, may be faced with child care needs. Campus child care centers provide jobs for students and serve as observation laboratories for the study of various facets of early childhood development.

Please don't turn your back on this important student service or on our "University children." Vote to maintain affordable child care at UCSC. Thank you!

UCSC Child Care Advisory Committee

Endorsed By:

Board of Directors, University Children Center (Granary)
Graduate Student Association
Parent Advisory Committee, Children's Center at Family Student Housing
Undergraduate Student Union Assembly
University Parents Association (Infant Program)

Opposing:

(No opposing opinion was submitted.)

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