

Child Care Task Force Action Plan & Recommendations

N.B. These recommendations are the result of a comprehensive report. For the full report and for an appendix regarding child care at our peer institutions please see the May 9 Faculty Senate Agenda or Minutes, 2011 at www.ccsu.edu/facsenate

The Child Care Task Force, supported by work of CCW's Work-Life Balance Sub-Committee will continue to pursue these issues:

1. With CCW, CCTF will advocate for conveniently located *and* fully equipped lactation stations in all areas of the campus (provide breast pumps, supply storage bags, offer magazines to support nursing mothers). CCSU has two such stations that include only chairs and a refrigerator and which are in fairly temporary locations.

RECOMMENDATION: We ask that the University support the continued construction and renovation of fully equipped and conveniently located lactation stations on CCSU's campus and that University architects integrate space for lactation rooms in existing or proposed buildings on campus that follow the recommended best practices articulated in "CUWFA TALKS Helping New Moms: Breastfeeding and Lactation Support in the University Setting," Webinar, College and University Work Family Association, April 28, 2011.¹

2. CCTF will advocate for a **physical space for drop-in child care *on campus*** in a facility such as the library to support student parents as they study. Our current proposal for such a space is modeled on Oregon State University's campus-based drop-in child care center that serves the children of OSU's students as they study in the library.

RECOMMENDATION: We ask that the University identify possible locations where a drop-in child care center might be situated *on campus* to serve the needs of CCSU's child care needs. CCTF and CCW will advocate for a **safe, accessible space** for babysitters to watch children. Some of these designated care areas could provide gently used and donated toys and books (safe and appropriate).

3. CCTF will help promote the scholastic benefit of the expanded child care services to schools or academic programs such as Social Work, Psychology, Nursing, and Teacher Education to more closely incorporate observation and fieldwork into their curriculum. CCSU's role as an educational institution, our strategic plan's community engagement and cross-curricular initiatives, CCSU's stated goals to promote student learning (1), Increase persistence, satisfaction and success rates for students (2) enhance and sustain faculty and staff satisfaction and success (4) promote a respect for diversity (5), the CCTF

¹ College University Work-Family Association, "CUWFA TALKS. Helping New Moms: Breastfeeding and Lactation Support in the University Setting," Webinar, April 28, 2011. www.cuwfa.org.

will advocate for **expanded child care services at the ELP** as well as explore the possibility of developing a **Family Care Center** at or in addition to the ELP.

Such a center could complement the highly successful Family Resource Centers located in Connecticut's elementary schools, including Jefferson Elementary in New Britain. In the future, parents and caregivers/babysitters might enjoy educational and support services to the campus and community such as child care workshops, CPR training, lactation support and consulting, nutrition workshops, (taught by campus "experts," but staffed and/or run by a student group and sponsored by CCSU's student affairs or perhaps various relevant academic and non-academic departments). CCW will enlist the Counseling Center to establish support groups and workshops for faculty, staff, and students to address issues like time management, nutrition, breastfeeding, and health for young parents. Other support groups may include caregivers to adults as well. The Counseling, Social Work, and Psychology departments could all have a role here.

Another model for supporting student parents might be through Residential Life with the dedication of a dormitory or part of a dorm to student parents and/or families. The facility would include a child care facility at the ground level to care for the children of CCSU students, faculty and staff.

RECOMMENDATION: We ask that the University research the feasibility of creating such a center and identify possible locations on CCSU's campus where a **Family Care Center** might be housed or constructed.

4. CCTF and CCW will pursue overall family-friendly campus policies and sustainable financial support that recognize the principles of work-life balance.
 - a. CCTF will promote and support services fundamental to the university's missions of student graduation, retention, diversity, and community engagement. This includes finding creative and relevant **funding streams and grants** from areas such as Students Affairs, Academic Affairs, the Office of Diversity, Student Government, and Community Engagement. However, CCTF will also pursue funding sources outside of the university budget.
 - b. CCTF will investigate policies for children on campus including the wisdom of acquiring insurance for things like tending to **children's medical needs** on campus (see supporting materials from *United Educators*). CCW will explore ways to **expand FMLA** (Family Medical Leave Act) protections and support new parents beyond the requirements of law:
 - Work with the AAUP, DEC's, and the administration to address the "tenure vs. the biological clock."
 - Provide additional emotional support and resources for women with work-life balance issues that involve children and medical needs of older family members.
 - Workplace Flexibility. CCW and CCTF will explore viable options in

initiating workplace flexibility for staff and accommodating flexible schedules for students and faculty (including drop-off child care).

RECOMMENDATION: We ask that the University officially recognize the need and value of family-friendly policies and provide/ indicate a commitment to supporting the development and review of those policies as appropriate.

We argue that expanding resources for the families of students, faculty and staff supports the mission, goals, and vision of our university “to foster societal improvements through responsive and innovative programs.” We submit these recommendations in order to elicit administrative support to pursue these initiatives.

The primary obstacles that we see to achieving these “Top Ten” goals include acquiring physical space, addressing state requirements and regulations including licensing standards, and lastly, convincing the campus culture and administration that these programs have academic value and support the mission, goals, and vision of our university “to foster societal improvements through responsive and innovative programs.” We are also aware that our recommendations entail major legal issues and liability considerations.