

CHILD CARE SURVEY RESULTS

FPSE Local Faculty Associations, 2009

Summary

The purpose of this survey was to gather information regarding the child care facilities (or lack thereof) that currently exist at the various post-secondary educational institutions in BC that are part of the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators (FPSE). In order to gather this information, the Status of Women Committee (SWC) representatives of those locals that do have a SWC representative were contacted to provide this information from their respective locals. There are a total of 14 locals that do indeed have a SWC representative, and 13 of these local representatives provided responses to this survey. A total of 9 of these 13 locals reported that they do have a child care facility at their respective institutions. These facilities varied greatly in regards to a variety of issues which will be discussed in this report under the following headings: financial details; capacity and accessibility; staff; and other. This report shall inform efforts we make here at Kwantlen Polytechnic University to develop a child care facility that will meet the needs of our students, faculty, staff, and surrounding communities. The figures in this report may need to be verified for accuracy and are to be considered as primarily anecdotal in nature.

Financial Details

There were two primary issues addressed in the survey that deal with finances: cost of childcare for those using the facility and funding for these facilities. With regards to cost, there was variation depending primarily on the age of the child. The cost of childcare for children under 3 years in age was substantially higher than the cost of childcare for children over 36 months. The majority of institutions with a childcare facility did allow for infants with the exception of one institution, where the youngest age admitted is 2.5 years.

The way in which cost is calculated also varied by institution, with some childcare facilities offering a half-day or full-day option, and others only specifying a monthly option. For infants, the monthly cost ranged from \$700 to \$995 per month per child, while the 3-5 year age cost ranged from \$425 to \$750. For the one institution whose SWC representative provided daily rates, the rate ranged from \$21-\$23 per day for half-day care for children over 3 years and children under 3 years, respectively. The full-day rate for this same institution was \$35-\$45 per day for children over 3 years and children under 3 years, respectively.

With regards to funding, there was a great deal of variation regarding who provides the monies to fund these facilities. Many of the facilities receive funding from more than one source. Overall, the sources included the fees paid by the users themselves, government subsidies (provincial and/or federal), the respective university or college, the respective student association, as well as some fundraising proceeds. Some facilities also received monies from the respective faculty association or other staff unions within the institution (such as CUPE).

Capacity and Accessibility

Those survey questions that fall under this category address issues such as who is able to utilize the facilities, the extent of the usage, waitlists, hours of operation and number of children permitted.

Many of the facilities give priority to students first, followed by employees. Many were also open to the public after student needs and then faculty/staff needs are met. While students are given priority in many of the facilities, no one institution's childcare facilities exclusively served students. Having said this, one institution's childcare facility in fact has a mandate to attempt to have close to 70% of the children be children of students, followed by faculty and then lastly by community families.

Each of the SW representatives of the 9 institutions with childcare facilities reported that the facilities were very well used and all of them also indicated that there were waiting lists of varying length, some as long as 2 years.

With regards to hours of operation, the earliest opening time is 7:00 a.m. and the latest opening time is 8:00 a.m. The earliest closing time is 4:30 and the latest closing time is 5:30. Two of the respondents specifically state that the childcare facility is closed during summer months.

Finally, with regards to childcare spaces, there was a tremendous amount of variation across institutions. At the smaller facilities, the capacity was as low as 18 spaces, while the highest number of spaces was 89. Of those respondents who provided a numeric response to this survey question, the average number of spaces is 47.

Staff

One issue that was discussed by the various SW representatives was whether or not their respective institutions have an early childhood education (ECE) program. The purpose for exploring this topic is to explore the role that the students/faculty in these programs play in the operation of the institution's childcare facilities.

Interestingly, all those institutions with childcare facilities also have an ECE program, with some of the ECE students working with the children in the respective childcare facility, and with other institutions having no connection between the ECE program and the childcare facility.

The pay for the staff at these childcare facilities varied greatly as well. At the lower end of the hourly wage, one institution's childcare staff earned \$12 per hour, while a \$26 per hour wage was the highest reported wage, with the exception of one respondent indicating that a \$40 per hour wage was the highest within that one institution's childcare facility. However after further investigation, it was revealed that in fact one manager received that wage and there were no staff in that wage category.

Other

There was an opportunity for respondents to provide any additional comments in regards to the childcare facility at their respective institutions. In one institution, the SW representative discovered that there was a concern amongst the childcare staff that the teachers were being referred to as 'workers' and that they did not receive adequate professional recognition.

One other additional comment that was of interest addressed compensation of the childcare staff and indicated that a bonus structure was in place in this one institution. This bonus is available twice per year and is calculated based on hours worked and amount of childcare operating funding monies that the facility receives annually.

Compiled by Shereen Hassan (Local 5)