

CCAMPIS Focus Group Report

1. What is it like being a student parent on this campus?

Participants generally expressed mixed feelings ranging from “feels good” and “phenomenal” to “very challenging”. Comments reflected the difficulty of being both a student and parent with the unique challenges involved in each role, but participants also reported very positive overall feelings toward the childcare center.

What were you looking for?

One person addressed the question specifically stating a place “where my daughter wouldn’t have to be away all day.” A number of responses described positive aspects of the childcare center including a good ratio of staff to children and an appropriately structured program. The staff was described as attentive, caring, supportive, patient and “enjoy their jobs”.

Do you see any benefit to the university to sponsor a childcare program?

Benefits indicated were an increase in the number of students with children able to attend the U, a reduction in student parents’ stress level and distractions by having children nearby (on campus) and in a “good place”. An increased exposure to diversity (international students) was also mentioned as a benefit to children placed in the childcare center.

2. Have you observed changes in your child’s behavior since they have been attending the ASUU Center?

Positive changes/improvements in behavior mentioned by parents included improved speech/language skills; better socialization; greater autonomy/reduced separation anxiety; familiarity with structure; reduction of negative behaviors/aggression (biting); improved stress management. No negative behavior changes were mentioned. Parents also noted good communication/collaboration between center staff and parents as well as outside professionals (speech therapist).

Has the ASUU Center been a good match with your child’s age and abilities?

Two participants reported that it has been a good match especially in terms of activity level and variety. Additional comments indicated an environment which promotes “learning is fun” and responsibility.

Any suggestions to improve quality for children?

Suggestions included smocks for children and colors that will not stain. Participants also had positive comments about the upcoming expansion and the inclusion of the transition room.

3. How did you hear about the ASUU Student Child Care Program and what has the application/enrollment process been like?

The following referral sources were mentioned: friend; banner outside of Marriott Library; Early Child Community Center; ASUU website; and BioKids.

How was the application form?

The application process was described as “pretty simple” and staff member assistance was “very helpful”.

How about the 20 hour cap? For how many of you is it too few?

Two participants indicated the 20 hours were too few. Additional comments included a comparison to Ohio which has a 20 hour limit with 20 flexible hours as well. One person acknowledged the Center’s flexibility, but suggested “set non-class hours”.

How late should the Center be open?

Participants suggested the Center stay open later to accommodate night class ending at 8:00pm and earlier to allow students to drop off children and arrive on time for 7:30am classes. One person asked about summer hours.

4. With regards to CCAMPIS funding, do you have suggestions that would make the process more efficient and understandable?

Comments addressed the application process describing it as “helpful”, “straightforward”, “easy” and “good turnaround”. One person reported being on the waiting list for one year. CCAMPIS staff were described as helpful and respondents indicated they liked the e-mail reminders, convenient volunteer hours and the chance to explain individual circumstances in the essay.

Did the change in the percentage of your subsidy have a negative effect?

Responses indicated a lack of knowledge of the changes and a perception of the change as a “big drop, but still much cheaper than other options”.

5. What impact has the combination of child care and CCAMPIS funding had on your academic progress/success as a student?

Participants reported experiencing a decrease in stress and more “peace of mind” having children in Center. An increase in time spent with children as a result of not having to work to pay for more expensive child care was also mentioned. Suggestions for improvement included an increase in the 20 hours and more flexibility during the week.

Would it help if the Center was open on Saturday and Sunday?

Saturday morning hours were suggested. One person asked about the age cap and was informed that equipment limitations make it difficult to accommodate children beyond 6.

6. Any other questions or suggestions or comments that you would like us to include?

Participant responses covered 4 general areas. They are as follows:

Center Hours –

Center/University breaks do not coincide with public school breaks.

Center hours do not match course times.

Center Schedule/Structure –

Nap time is difficult for some children and some flexibility/alternative activity would be helpful.

A separate three year old class is needed.

Not enough structure in the afternoon.

Older children could help with younger children during afternoon hours.

A piano/more music in the room.

Center policies are not convenient for graduate student schedules/responsibilities outside regular class hours which include teaching, colloquia/workshop attendance.

Center is very well run compared to others.

Center Staff –

Having men on staff is a strength, but could have more in the morning.

Some concern about training that staff members receive as afternoon staff sometimes appear to be “just hanging out” and staff in younger room may be inconsistent in behavior towards children.

Staff could be more helpful when parents pick-up children.

Staff members are good at one-on-one/personalized interaction with children.

Transition to new staff member has been great.

Language –

Language barrier between children and international students on staff can be difficult.

Writing down certain words/translations for staff has been helpful.

How many used SL (?)?

About half of the participants indicated they have.