

Report: Child care helps parents succeed

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on need, said Dennis Reynolds, director of the University's EMU child care and development centers. The ASUC currently provides \$212,000 a year in subsidies for as many as 200 University families. Rates will be different for the 1996-97 school year, he said.

The ASUC has set a cap of 200 for the number of families that can participate in the program. This helps administrators prepare the budget for each school year in advance, Hunter said. Currently, the subsidy program is not filled to capacity, she said.

Hunter said it is difficult to determine how many University students need child care because the University application does not ask potential students whether they have children.

"There is no record at the University of who is a parent," she said. "We really don't know what the capacity is, nor do we have a good way of communicating with [students who have children]."

The ASUC child-care program will pay for 15 to 45 percent of a student parent's child-care costs based on each family's need for financial assistance, Reynolds said. To determine the amount of money a student will receive, the student's estimated cost of living is deducted from the sum of his or her income and assets. Any student parent who will not be able to make ends meet is given a child-care subsidy.

"If our most educated, our most well-paid citizens cannot buy goods, this does not bode well for the economy as a whole."

— Tamara Dykeman
legislative assistant
for Oregon Student Lobby

Students who have a financial gap of \$10,000 or more receive the maximum subsidy amount, Reynolds said. ASUC requires student parents to provide proof of their financial status with financial aid forms or with a documentation of assets, he said.

"The greater the need, the greater level of assistance they get," he said.

According to the OSR report, parents with children through age five can receive up to \$200 a month, and parents with school-age children may receive a maximum of \$70 a month.

Student parents are not required to take their children to the seven child-care centers associated with the University; they have the option of using the subsidy at private child-care centers, Reynolds said. This flexibility allows students to choose the type of child care they feel is best suited to their children and their individual circumstances, he said.

University child-care officials emphasized that the University's child-care program pro-

vides flexible hours that regular child-care centers cannot. Parents can choose the exact amount of time their children spend in day care instead of paying for child care services by full or half days, Reynolds said.

Student parents who can find appropriate child care have a better chance of succeeding in school. The OSR study reported that student parents who receive child care assistance are able to study more and finish school faster than those who do not.

Students can also get financial aid to help pay for their child-care costs, but it usually does not cover the entire cost of child care.

The University's subsidy program helps student parents get through school without incurring heavy loans, said Tamara Dykeman, a legislative assistant for OSR. Students who don't have heavy debts can more easily buy consumer goods, improving their own quality of life and contributing to the economy.

"If our most educated, our most well-paid citizens cannot buy goods, this does not bode well for the economy as a whole," she said.

In addition, statistics show that children whose parents went to college are more likely to go to college themselves, she said.

"If we can get the student parents through school, chances are their children will go to college, so it pays to help these students out," she said.

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