



Child Care Survey Executive Summary

In Fall 2020, with support from the Center for Urban Studies, the Provost's Daycare Implementation Committee conducted a campus-wide Child Care Needs Survey. The purpose of the survey was to better understand the caregiving challenges facing students, faculty, and staff on our campus. Findings from the survey will help inform the development of child care resources and guide priorities and future projects to help the Wayne State community. The survey was sent to all members of the campus community between September 15 to September 30. 5150 people completed the survey: 2,991 students, 736 faculty, and 1423 staff members.

What did we learn?

Many members of our campus community have childcare needs, and those needs are varied. Approximately one-third of respondents (33.9%) reported having one or more children under 18 living at home. This proportion was higher for faculty (44.0%) and staff (40.3%), and lower for students (28.3%).

Of the respondents with a child under 18 living at home:

- Nearly three-fifths (58.2%) of respondents identified as the mother of the child(ren), and a fifth (20.7%) identified as the father.
- 17% identified as single parents, with a majority of single parents being single mothers (91.5%)
- 12.2% indicated that at least one of their children has special needs, including speech and language impairment, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, anxiety, and specific physical impairments.
- Of our student respondents with children under 18 in their household, those children in 26% of cases were younger siblings.

Among respondents who did not have a child under 18 living at home, 15.6% said they plan on having or caring for children in the next two years.

Changing childcare needs on our campus: Given the timing of the survey with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic, the survey asked questions about child care pre-pandemic, during the pandemic, and anticipated future needs in a full back to campus scenario. Here we summarize future key results. Complete results about pre-pandemic and during the pandemic can be found in the full report available on the [Child Care Resources website](#).

Before the disruption caused by the pandemic, most of our respondents relied on school (45.0%), in-own-home care (31.1%), and center-based care (25.9%) for the children in their households.

- Students relied more on school and in-own-home care than faculty and staff.
- About half of the respondents had different arrangements for their children during the summer.

Growing childcare needs on our campus. Our survey showed a growing demand for child care support post-pandemic. Compared to pre-pandemic child care needs, respondents reported an increased need for:

- in-own-home care (increased from 31.1% to 39.0%)
- center-based care (increased from 25.9% to 31.8%)
- drop-in care (increased from 6.4% to 12.5%)
- co-op (increased from 1.2% to 4.1%)
- co-working care (increased from 0.4% to 4.1%)

67.4% of the respondents expected to need full-day care for the children in their household. Over three quarters (77.0%) of those needing full-day care indicated that they would need full-day care for the entire week. Staff reported the highest need for full-day care (73.8%)

12.5% of respondents indicated they would need drop-in care. Students reported the highest need for drop-in care (15.9%)

Of note, care is needed for children across all age groups. For example, 28.9% of respondents with children in their households indicated a need for after-school care.

Quality, affordable child care is in demand. The survey asked several questions about how much respondents were able to pay in the past/expected to pay in the future for child care. Overall, respondents anticipated greater difficulty in covering childcare costs. Specifically,

- Half of the students (50.0%) indicated that covering pre-pandemic child care costs was either a major challenge or difficult. However, this percentage increased to 61.9% when students were asked about expected difficulties after the pandemic.
- 31.8% of students indicated that covering the cost of child care will be a significant challenge post-pandemic, which is far greater than faculty (15.7%) and staff (26.4%).
- Nonetheless, more faculty and staff reported expecting difficulties in covering child care costs after the pandemic (from 27.4% to 41.9% for faculty and 41.1% to 57.4% for staff).

Caring for children because of an emergency (such as a snow day, when a care provider cancels, or when the child is ill and cannot attend school) has a tangible effect on caregivers on our campus. It causes them to arrive late and/or miss work or class and requires them to use sick leave, vacation time, or personal days.

- Over 60% of respondents with children indicated that they or their spouse/partner stayed home because of a childcare emergency in the 12 months from March 1, 2019, to March 1, 2020. When broken down by respondent role, these proportions were higher for faculty (74.3%) and staff (79.3%) when compared to students (65.5%).
- The average number of days respondents reported experiencing a childcare emergency is about seven days.

Experiences with remote work and flexible work during the pandemic may benefit the campus in the future when childcare emergencies arise.

Awareness of policies and benefits related to child and family care

There are existing federal, state, and university policies and benefits relevant to child and family care. Some of the WSU policies and benefits apply only to employees (faculty and staff). We asked respondents whether they were aware of these various resources. To utilize the resources, people need to be aware of them.

- **Childcare resources website:** 15.6% of students, 28.3% of faculty and 32.3% of staff were aware of this information-rich resource, which includes information about federal, state, and university policies and benefits and resources.
- Just over half (50.6%) of respondents were aware of the **FMLA**, but only 9.1% knew about the **WSU parenthood chronicles support group**.
- **On-campus Early Childhood Centers:** Approximately a quarter (24.8%) and a third (34.6%) of respondents were aware of the COE-ECC and MPSI-ECC respectively. Smaller proportions (3.7% and 8.6%) had used these services before.
- Just over half of respondents were aware of **federal resources** such as Child and Dependent Care Credit (52.7%) and the Child Tax Credit (58.2%), while only around a quarter (28.3%) were aware of **State of Michigan** subsidies and/or assistance.

Thus, there are untapped resources that could benefit many in our campus community.

It is essential to raise awareness of these resources to facilitate access and use. Further, it is important to examine how effectively these resources address childcare needs and expand students' access to resources.

Facilitating expanded access to quality and affordable child care for our campus will support faculty, staff, and student success, as illustrated by responses to the question, "If you had access to more childcare that you liked and could afford, would you..."

- 48.6% of faculty/staff indicated they would work more hours at their job
- 40.7% of faculty/staff indicated they would seek a promotion
- 72.8% of the students said they would "have more time to focus on studying and classes."
- 41.1% of students indicated they would be able to get their degree sooner

- 32.3% of students indicated they would take more classes per semester

In sum,

- There is a strong need for quality, affordable, accessible childcare among campus members
 - Birth to 5 years as well as for older children who require after school care and summer options
- Financial cost and flexibility are key qualities
- A variety of childcare options are needed to meet the diverse needs of campus members

Proposed Next Steps:

- Develop Wayne State's reputation as a family-friendly place to work and study
- Hire a Campus Child Care Coordinator to help caregivers figure out their options
- Work with HR to revise the Children in the Workplace policy and consider childcare needs with respect to Flexible Work Arrangements
- Create co-working and other family-friendly spaces on campus
- Connect those with need to those who can provide:
 - Maintain and enrich the Childcare Resources Website
 - Develop an app (electronic bulletin board). e.g., KOMAE
 - Partner with private care provider services
- Continue to invest in campus Childcare Centers: MPSI and COE
- Explore Woodbridge Neighborhood Development partnership for a child care center
- Work with Development to seek funds to enhance child care and family support on our campus

We welcome feedback and questions that you may have.

Feel free to contact any of us: [Loraleigh Keashly](#), CFPCA, Chair; [Nick Board](#), Student Auxiliary Services; [Sarah Doyle](#), Social Work; [Sharon Lean](#), Political Science; [Tim Michael](#), Student Auxiliary Services; Chief Housing Officer; [Anna Miller](#), Education, MPSI Early Childhood Center & COE Early Childhood Center; [Matt Piszczek](#), Mike Ilitch School of Business; [Jerry Crump](#), Student Senate Representative 2021-2022.

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