



Bipartisan Policy Center

# Revisiting CCAMPIS During COVID-19:

The Untapped Potential of On-Campus Child Care

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As states consider their college re-opening plans, more attention should be made toward campus child care, which has the potential to support nearly 14 million student parents across the nation.<sup>1</sup> University child care, however, has been declining over the past 10 years while the demand for it remains high.<sup>2</sup> The average waiting list for campus child care centers included 80 children in 2016.<sup>3</sup> Further, due to the COVID-19 crisis, some campus child care centers have permanently or temporarily closed, including the University of Vermont Campus Children's School and the Utah Valley University Wee Care Childcare Center, diminishing the already inadequate supply of child care for student parents.<sup>4</sup>

The Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) program is the only federal program dedicated to meeting the child care needs of student parents.<sup>5</sup> CCAMPIS is a competitive grant program administered by the Department of Education that helps higher education institutions provide child care-related services to low-income student parents. These services include offering child care at their own institution or contracting out to a community partner, as well as providing child care subsidies for parents to use a child care provider of their choice.

As colleges and universities closed in response to the spread of COVID-19, student parents faced the two-fold challenge of child care closures and campus shutdowns, along with the rapid loss of other vital supports such as reliable housing, jobs, and health services. To offer aid, Congress allocated \$14 billion to colleges and universities in the CARES Act,<sup>6</sup> of which \$6 billion was allocated for direct emergency cash grants for students to cover the costs of "course materials, technology, housing, food, health care, and child care."<sup>7</sup> While these relief funds helped students, the lack of targeting to the neediest students, or for child care assistance specifically, limited their

ability to meet the needs of struggling student parents. Looking toward the fall, many student parents face the challenge of universities planning for an in-person curriculum, which would further heighten the need for child care. Across the country, 57% of universities and colleges plan for an in-person fall academic term, instead of a hybrid or fully online model.<sup>8</sup> In light of these challenges, more can be done to support student parents, and CCAMPIS can be a policy avenue to do so.

While CCAMPIS has the potential to bridge the child care gap for student parents, insufficient funding has limited its reach. In fiscal year 2019, it only provided 266 awards to colleges and universities from a total allocation of \$42 million.<sup>9</sup> The Institute for Women's Policy Research estimates around 11,000 student parents are currently served by CCAMPIS, which accounts for less than 1% of undergraduate parents with children under 18.<sup>10</sup> For FY 2020, the funding level was set at \$53 million.<sup>11</sup>

Last year, there was a bipartisan effort to substantially increase CCAMPIS funding. Reps. Katherine Clark (D-MA), Don Young (R-AK), and Kim Schrier (D-WA) introduced the CCAMPIS Reauthorization Act in May 2019 to increase CCAMPIS funding from \$50 million to \$200 million annually through the year 2025.<sup>12</sup> The bill has stalled in committee and there has not been revitalized efforts to champion the bill.

More recently, Clark introduced the Child Care is Infrastructure Act (H.R. 7201) in June, which includes the reauthorization of CCAMPIS at \$200 million as part of a larger package which authorizes \$10 billion for child care facility infrastructure over five years. For our nation's child care supply to recover, and for families to be served effectively, Congress will likely have to enact legislation like this.

More can be done to support the more than 14 million undergraduates who balance the stresses of school and parenting during the COVID-19 pandemic. Looking forward, as K-12 schools make their plans for re-opening, with distanced learning and rotating schedules, there will likely be an increased demand for school-age child care. Campus-based child care services can relieve this demand if more resources are invested into the CCAMPIS program. By supporting existing programs like CCAMPIS, the child care sector will build back stronger after the pandemic and better serve the student parent population going forward.

# Endnotes

- 1 Lindsey Reichlin Cruse, Susana Contreras Mendez, and Tessa Holtzman, *Student Parents in the COVID-19 Pandemic: Heightened Need & the Imperative for Strengthened Support*, Institute for Women's Policy Research, April 14, 2020. Available at: <https://iwpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/COVID19-Student-Parents-Fact-Sheet.pdf>.
- 2 Elizabeth Noll, Ph.D., Lindsey Reichlin, M.A., and Barbara Gault, Ph.D., *College Students with Children: National and Regional Profiles*, Institute for Women's Policy Research, January 2017. Available at: <https://iwpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/C451-5.pdf>.
- 3 Lindsey Reichlin Cruse, M.A., Barbara Gault, Ph.D., Jooyeoun Suh, Ph.D., Mary Ann DeMario, Ph.D., "Time Demands of Single Mother College Students and the Role of Child Care in their Postsecondary Success," Institute for Women's Policy Research, May 10, 2018. Available at: <https://iwpr.org/publications/single-mothers-college-time-use/>.
- 4 Anne Galloway, "UVM Campus Children's School closes," VT Digger, June 1, 2020. Available at: <https://vtdigger.org/2020/06/01/uvm-campus-childrens-school-closes/>.
- 5 Linda Smith and Sophie Kidd, "Addressing Needs of Student Parents through CCAMPIS," Bipartisan Policy Center, September 11, 2019. Available at: <https://bipartisanpolicy.org/blog/addressing-needs-of-student-parents-through-ccampis/>.
- 6 U.S. Congress, Senate, Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), S. 3548, 116th Congress, 2nd session, introduced in the Senate March 19, 2020, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/3548>.
- 7 U.S. Department of Education, "Secretary DeVos Rapidly Delivers More Than \$6 Billion in Emergency Cash Grants for College Students Impacted by Coronavirus Outbreak," April 9, 2020. Available at: <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/secretary-devos-rapidly-delivers-more-6-billion-emergency-cash-grants-college-students-impacted-coronavirus-outbreak>.
- 8 The Glover Park Group, "School's Out... Forever?," July 13, 2020. Available at: <https://covidincontext.gpg.com/schools-out-forever/>.
- 9 U.S. Department of Education, "Child Care Access Means Parents in School Program Funding Status," February 20, 2020. Available at: <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/campisp/funding.html>.
- 10 Elissa Nadworny, "Vital Federal Program To Help Parents In College Is 'A Drop In The Bucket,'" NPR, October 24, 2019. Available at: <https://www.npr.org/2019/10/24/772018032/vital-federal-program-to-help-parents-in-college-is-a-drop-in-the-bucket>.
- 11 Committee for Education Funding, "Final FY 2020 Funding for Selected Department of Education & Related Programs," December 17, 2019. Available at: <https://cef.org/wp-content/uploads/FY-2020-education-funding-proposals-%E2%80%93-CEF-table-for-selected-discretionary-programs-FY-2017-FY-2020.pdf>.
- 12 Office of Representative Katherine Clark, "Clark, Schrier, Young introduce legislation to Fund Child Care for Student Parents," May 9, 2019. Available at: <https://katherineclark.house.gov/press-releases?ID=44342E5B-24A9-4501-8F41-86B713F0DFE8>.

