On Campus with Kids: Supporting Student Parents in Higher Education

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Introduction

The student parent population

The evolution of student parent programs

Title IX protections for pregnant & parenting students

Hardships, Obstacles & Challenges:

● 63% experience housing insecurity
● 14% experience homelessness
● 63% experience low or very low food security

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Research Conducted by and for Student Parents
Collaborative Action Research

- Intuitive research process beginning in direct response to a community need.
- Research process driven from beginning through dissemination by input and collaboration with student parents as project leaders and researchers.
- Researchers solicits and responds to community feedback
- Flexible and adaptive working practices leveraging technology allow national collaboration and student-parent friendly employment in their field of study
- Research is designed and implemented with intent of social impact/change.
National Family Housing Database

294 colleges or universities in the United States have family housing (10%)

Region 1 (New England) - 21 (9%)
Region 2 (Mid Atlantic) - 19 (4%)
Region 3 (South) - 72 (9%)
Region 4 East (Great Lakes) - 69 (10%)
Region 4 West (Plains/Rockies) - 65 (20%)
Region 5 (Pacific Northwest) - 33 (21%)
Region 6 (West) - 15 (5%)
National Family Housing Database

- Family housing varies from college to college
- Closings
- Why is family housing closing?
- Affordability of family housing
Find Your Way

“If I was to go to college here, what resources and supports would be available to me as a student parent?”

- Family Housing
- Childcare Centers
- Scholarships
- Women’s Centers
- Work/Life Offices
- Student Parent Centers/Programs
- Other Resources
New England

Of the 229 accredited colleges and universities in New England:

- 21 offer Family Housing (9%)
- 69 have a Campus Childcare Center (30%)
- 37 offer specific scholarships for student parents (16%)
- 34 have a women’s resource center (15%)
- 16 have a work/life center (7%)
- 16 have a student parent center or program (7%)

17.8% of New England Undergraduate Students are parents.

This reflects a 20.8% increase in this population between 2004-2012.

The Mid-Atlantic

Of the 539 accredited colleges and universities in the Mid-Atlantic:

- 19 offer Family Housing (4%)
- 152 have a Campus Childcare Center (29%)
- 37 offer specific scholarships for student parents (7%)
- 69 have a women’s resource center (13%)
- 3 have a student parent center or program (1%)

19.6% of undergraduates in the Mid-Atlantic are parents.**

This reflects an 18.2% increase from 2004-2012.**

## Preliminary Data from the South

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Florida</th>
<th>Texas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Housing</td>
<td>7 (9%)</td>
<td>34 (21%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childcare</td>
<td>30 (39%)</td>
<td>37 (23%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarships</td>
<td>18 (23%)</td>
<td>17 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Center</td>
<td>3 (4%)</td>
<td>10 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Parent Program</td>
<td>1 (1%)</td>
<td>5 (3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student parents represent 27% of undergraduates in the Southeast (Florida) and 34% of undergraduates in the Southwest (Texas). State-level data is not available. **
Limitations & Restrictions

- The existence of programs does not ensure student access:
  - Affordability
  - Capacity
  - Access
  - Many programs target faculty/staff retention over student retention
- Women’s centers and Work/Life Centers
- Added additional services to protocol (e.g. food pantries, clothing banks, emergency loans, etc.)
- Programs are being eliminated or transitioned to other models (e.g. off-campus partnerships).
- Full dataset is still incomplete but will be the first comprehensive national dataset on student parent programs.
Implications & Next Steps

● How might the shortage of supportive services for student parents across the higher education system reflect systems-wide exclusion protected against by Title IX?
● Identifying and defining best practices for higher education
● Building the case for supporting student parents
  ○ Higher Education Leadership
  ○ Policy Makers
  ○ Others
Research into Action

- Distribution of Find Your Way Guidebooks
- Special Events & Convenings
- Partnership with National Networks (IWPR, Ascend at the Aspen Institute)
- Launching new student parent programs
- Legislative Advocacy (National, State & Local)
- Regional Advocacy
- Institutional Advocacy
- Media Outreach
- Public recognition

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More Information!

The National Center for Student Parent Programs

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