



REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE ON CHILD CARE

WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY

NOVEMBER 14, 2007

**(APPENDIXES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST
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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Washington and Lee University seeks to recruit and retain a highly talented and diverse faculty and staff. One way to promote and prominently position itself in the employment marketplace is for the University to join the ranks of our peer institutions such as Williams College and Amherst College and progressive, elite universities like Stanford University and Harvard University by creating a work/life program that attracts the most gifted job candidates. Part of this work/life program and the charge of this task force is to address the child care needs of Washington and Lee University employees.

In 2007, the task force on child care surveyed University employees, interviewed the local licensed child care facilities, and broadly surveyed our peers at 40 top liberal arts colleges and six larger research universities.

Based on the results of surveys and interviews, as well as the personal experiences and interactions of the task force with other Washington and Lee employees, the identified problems with child care in the community were cost, availability, and quality in the areas of daycare, after-school care, summer care, and emergency care.

After careful consideration and discussion, the task force on child care makes the following recommendations to the University:

- Hire a full-time Work/Life Coordinator and appoint a long-term ad-hoc advisory committee on child care
- Establish on-campus summer youth programs and an after school program
- Offer flex days to employees
- Resolve scheduling conflicts created by undergraduate class schedule and faculty meetings
- Support local child care providers by providing human and financial resources
- Provide financial assistance to employees for child care

The implementation of these recommendations is best for the entire University community; it promotes increased productivity for everyone at the University and is a powerful recruitment and retention tool. As an institution whose employees dedicate their lives to the education of youth, Washington and Lee must ensure that its families have available the best possible care and work/life balance in order to serve the University's mission.

II. BACKGROUND

In February 2007, President Ruscio appointed a "Presidential task force on child care", chaired by Elizabeth Knapp, Associate Dean of the College. The task force was charged with assessing the current practices, employee needs and potential future University responses related to child care at Washington and Lee University. The members of the President's task force on child care are:

Kim Austin (Human Resource Specialist)
Kelly Brown (Assistant Manager, Board Operations)
Elizabeth Outland Branner (Associate Director of Law School Advancement)
Leslie Cintron (Assistant Professor, Sociology)
Fran Elrod (Coordinator of Co-Curricular Education)
Lisa Greer (Assistant Professor, Geology)
Elizabeth Knapp (Associate Professor, Geology; Associate Dean of the College)
David Leonard (Dean of Freshmen)
Jerry Myers (Associate Director of Choral Activities; Instructor, Music)
Margaret Swisher (Administrative Assistant, Geology and Psychology)

The full charge to the committee is in Appendix 1. A brief statement of our charge was to 1) summarize the University's current approach and extent of its commitment; 2) summarize the current supply and demand relationship (especially as it relates to University employees); 3) characterize different possible approaches and strategies the University might consider (e.g. subsidies based on income; direct support to parents; direct support to provider(s); other forms of partnerships with providers); 4) identify a set of guiding principles that will shape our strategy and choice of options for the future; 5) recommend an approach (using the current level of resource support as a guideline, identifying and justifying any reallocation or addition of resources); and 6) recommend an assessment strategy that will guide us in future analysis of achievement of our goals.

For the purposes of this report, the types of care are defined. Daycare is referring to all-day care provided for children before they enter school, generally ages 0-6 years. After-school care refers to the care provided to school-age children from the time school lets out at the end of the day to the time the parents are finished with their regular work day as well as the scheduled days off school for teacher workdays, parent conferences, and holidays when parents are not off work. Summer care refers to the care given to school-age children in the months between the end of one K-12 school year and the beginning of the next. Emergency care encompasses both preschool and school-age children and covers the unscheduled days when children have no care such as an ill child or an inclement weather closing for daycares and schools.

Current University Commitment

In recent years, the only substantial financial commitment by the University to the issue of child care was a \$50,000 capital campaign gift made in 2007 to Yellow Brick Road in exchange for 32 spaces over seven years held for a period of time each year for children

of W&L employees (memorandum of understanding with YBR and legal documents available in Appendix 2). Unfortunately, this agreement has not yet been announced or publicized within the University community.

Committee approach

The committee gathered data for this study in several ways. First was a survey to all University employees in which the needs for child care were assessed (summarized in section IV.A. and detailed in Appendix 3). The committee also summarized current data from Rockbridge area child care providers, including the numbers of Washington and Lee children, the costs, and the waiting lists for those facilities (summarized in section IV.B.). We undertook a large compilation of peer and national data from 40 prestigious liberal arts institutions and six larger research universities (summarized in section IV.C. and detailed in Appendix 4). We talked with and obtained a proposal from Bright Horizons Family Solutions Company. While the study was not adopted (the cost for the external study would have been \$17,500 for its initial phase), it could be considered for the assessment of future needs. We have read and referenced a vast number of articles and discussions in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and other higher education publications discussing current programs and initiatives at institutions nationwide.

Guiding principles

The sheer volume of material included in this report is but one indication of the importance of this employer-provided benefit. As has often been heard, there is no doubt a need; in doubt is the solution. It is time for the University to take action. Doing so, accommodates the wishes of current employees and places the University in a strategic position to attract and retain qualified young professionals. Doing so, indicates in a tangible way the University's commitment to the family-friendly values of long ago. Doing so, recognizes the University's ongoing commitment to support its local community. Doing so increases productivity for all. Doing so, simply put, is the right thing.

This task force summarizes the many problems mentioned with regard to suitable, adequate and affordable child care. With each problem, the task force outlines potential solutions. We recognize that there is not one solution to one problem, but many solutions to many problems. This will not be an easy fix. Instead, it is an investment, and as such will need a consistent commitment to nurturing along the way.

III. IDENTIFIED ISSUES AND POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

III. A. Centralized source of information for work/life

Problem: There is a need for consistent and updated information about resources for employees. There is no current person in charge of work/life or child care issues at the University. There is a need for a dedicated professional to foster and oversee the meaningful initiatives suggested in this document.

Solution: The task force recommends the creation of a full-time position of Work/Life Coordinator. The Coordinator's duties would be to devise, implement, and evaluate plans related to the need for child care. The Coordinator would be a full-time employee in Human Resources and could also tackle broader employee work/life issues including elder/partner care, housing, spousal hires, schools, and wellness programs. The person would be charged with developing summer and after school programming. This person would also maintain updated information (including a website) about the state of care within the community. This coordinator could also help lower-income employees identify financial assistance and programs that are available to them through the state or private organizations for child care. The Coordinator could help faculty/staff with emergency care by creating and maintaining a referral list of caregivers who can be called upon should someone need last-minute care. This referral list would have students as well as community caregivers, the days and times they are available, as well as ages of children for which they can provide care. Also, anyone on the list would have a background check and be CPR-trained. This background check and life-saving skill would allow parents to be able to work with some peace of mind about the care their child is receiving. The Work/Life Coordinator can maintain this list as well as perform the background checks and arrange for an on-campus organization to hold CPR classes. This person, along with an advisory committee, is critical for the sustainability of the recommended child care solutions and for the assessment of future needs for our employees. A more detailed job description for this employee is available in Appendix 5. The cost for this solution would be estimated at a minimum of \$35,000 for salary and benefits and a \$25,000 annual operating budget.

III. B. Affordability of existing programs

Problem: For Washington and Lee University employees, one of the biggest issues concerning child care was affordability, specifically the high cost. Based on a report by the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA), across the nation, child care is one of the largest expenses for households with young children. It is an expense that can sometimes exceed a mortgage payment and in most states is higher than tuition at a public college. In the state of Virginia, single parents on average spend 37% of their income on infant care (www.naccrra.org).

In 2005, faculty member Leslie Cintron and the students in her SOC 264: Work and Family course studied child care in the Rockbridge County area. They found that for

2005 in Lexington, a two-parent family with the local median annual family income of \$58,529 and two children in licensed daycare would spend a little more than 25% of the family annual income on child care. Rockbridge County and City of Buena Vista families in these same circumstances would be spending 35% and 37% of their annual family income on child care, respectively. Infant care tends to be more expensive than preschool tuition due to the higher ratios of caregiver to infant required by state law (full report in Appendix 6).

When answering the task force's survey, of those that have experienced problems with child care, 42% reported that high cost was a problem. The most an employee reported spending on child care is \$2150 per month for three kids. The least an employee reported spending on child care is \$0. However, for some \$0 meant that a spouse left a job outside of the home to become the primary caregiver, and as one survey respondent said, "The spouse is very expensive."

In addition to regular costs of childcare, many respondents stated that they had to pay extra for babysitters or other caregivers at times when daycare or schools are closed, but Washington and Lee is still open or when they must work late or attend business events. Many employees use substandard care, shuffle children from friend-to-friend, or leave children unattended because of the cost of the existing child-care programs and/or their salary relative to the cost of such programs.

Solutions: The task force proposes that the University offer financial support to all benefit eligible University employees to help pay for the cost of child care including daycare, after-school care, and summer care – any care provided for the dependents of the employee during the employee's work hours. The University committed itself to affordable health insurance last year when it instituted the health insurance premium subsidy so that no full-time employee will have to spend more than 10% of his or her gross family income on health insurance. We suggest one of three options to ensure that no Washington and Lee employee spends an extraordinary portion of pay for child care: a similar policy for child care expenses, a sliding scale subsidy, or a scholarship program. In a February 2006 memo to the Benefits Committee, former Vice President Joe Grasso outlined the costs to the University of a sliding scale subsidy or a subsidy based on a percentage of income. The estimate at that time was an annual cost to the University of approximately \$47,000.

III. C. Space and quality of existing programs

Problem: Existing community programs, including Woods Creek Montessori, Yellow Brick Road, and YMCA are in need of programming funds and volunteers (data in Table 1, section IV.B.). All are space limited and have ongoing wait lists. Currently in Lexington, all of the full day providers have a wait list for care. When Washington and Lee employees were asked what problems they have experienced with child care, 92.8% had problems with availability (specifically, no space or long wait list, hours of operation, no part-time care, or no summer care). In the Washington and Lee employee survey, of the 181 respondents to the question "What problems with child care have you

experienced?”, 50.3% had problems with quality (specifically, poor or no curriculum, high student to teacher ratio, lack of activities, facility cleanliness, and program not licensed).

Solution: The task force suggests that Washington and Lee University, as a good community citizen, commits some of its human and monetary resources to these existing programs. Donations of time by students through the Service Learning Program and Teacher Education programs, and donations of monetary resources will enable these existing programs to grow and flourish. Existing programs should be supported financially based on need through their annual fund or capital campaign drives.

The task force recognizes that it would be a huge undertaking for Washington and Lee to open its own daycare facility. Moreover, the committee believes that doing so will undermine University / community relations by threatening enrollment at existing child care facilities and would limit the engagement of University employees and their children with the general public. It could also negatively impact the current facilities in the community by taking away children and tuition dollars. By providing grants to local providers for operating expenses (such as materials and caregiver training to enhance the care given to the children) and/or capital expenditures (such as program or facility expansion), the University would be strengthening its community partners who are vital to Washington and Lee employees. This local provider fund could provide, as the capital contribution to Yellow Brick Road did in 2007, an opportunity for program enhancement to the facilities and provide space for children of University employees (agreement in Appendix 2). We envision annual fund contributions in the range of \$1,000-5,000 as requested by licensed childcare facilities; while not a large commitment by the University, it is a meaningful contribution to providers.

III. D. Emergency care and sick care

Problem: Currently the University’s sick leave policy extends only to illness of the employee and doctor’s visits. Though very generous in time, it does not help those employees who are out more often with sick children or ailing partners and parents or any other people for whom they are the caregiver. It also does not cover the days when parents must be home with their children, such as when schools are closed due to inclement weather and Washington and Lee is still open. Under the current policy, these employees must use their vacation time to care for their loved ones. Employees have few alternatives when these situations occur. Flexibility is currently NOT consistent across all University divisions.

Solution: The task force suggests the University institute Flex days that would be paid time off given to all staff and administrators who qualify for benefits. It can be used to take care of a sick child, spouse or parent as well as attend doctor’s appointments for those whom the employee is the caregiver. These days can also be used when children are home from school for inclement weather or any type of emergency care. The Flex days could also extend to those employees who are not responsible for the care of

anyone, but would like time off to perform community service. The recommended number of days off would be three to five days per year. These would not carry over to the next year or be paid upon termination of employment. If an employee runs out of Flex days before the end of the year, then they would have to use vacation days. Currently vacation days are tracked by individuals and supervisors, and flexible days would be tracked the same way until the business office implements their new tracking system.

III. E. Summer programming

Problem: There are many holidays during the school year when schools and day care centers are closed and Washington and Lee is in session. Local summer programming is spotty and does not offer complete coverage for children of employees. Based on the responses given in the employee survey, summer care is usually a patchwork of summer camps, family, and babysitters carefully put together by parents every year. As one respondent states, “Too many moving parts to the plan. One sick babysitter, and the plan [falls apart]. In other words, it is not as solid and predictable as I’d like it to be.”

Solution: The task force recommends that the University sponsors an on-campus summer camp offering a full day of programming including fine arts (art, music and theater), language, sports, sciences, and other activities that would interest children aged 5 – 10. Once the program is underway, it can be expanded to include older children. The leaders and counselors could be Washington and Lee instructors and coaches as well as students. Based on CARE Rockbridge Area After School Project conducted by Leslie Cintron and Nancy Margand in their respective Spring 2007 term courses (Appendix 7), school age children prefer programs with “fun” young adults as leaders and programs that offer good experiences. Models of programs at peer institutions are located in Appendix 8.

For these summer programs, the University would have to hire a full-time staff member to create and run the programs. This Coordinator of Youth Programs would work under the direction of the Work/Life Coordinator. This coordinator would also hire counselors, arrange for spaces for the programs, and promote the programs to the Washington and Lee employees. The Coordinator of Youth Programs would be responsible for maintaining a high standard of care and programming. The cost of the summer program is difficult to estimate due to the varied costs of space and start-up, however, the task force hopes that the program can be self-sustaining by charging tuition based on a sliding-scale with employees that can afford it paying more to balance out the lower costs to those that can least afford it.

III. F. After school and anticipated care gap programming

Problem: There is a significant community-wide gap in available care after school and many Washington and Lee employees are not satisfied with the options that are currently available. In the University employee survey, of the 181 respondents to the question “What problems with child care have you experienced?”, 50.3% had problems with

quality (specifically, poor or no curriculum, high student to teacher ratio, lack of activities, facility cleanliness, and program not licensed). Many respondents to the survey specifically commented on the poor quality of the local after-school and summer programs.

Solution: The task force proposes that Washington and Lee maximize its facilities and programmatic strengths to offer an after school program for the children of its employees. This program would run from 2 p.m.– 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, and would also be available on days local schools are scheduled to close during the school year. We recommend that the program be designed initially for children ages 5 -10, and expanded to include older children in the future. This program would be self-sustaining as parents would be required to pay fees. The fee should be on a sliding-scale so that all employees could afford to have their children participate. An ideal program would include transportation from area elementary schools to campus. Models of peer institutions are in Appendix 8.

The program would utilize some of the resources already available within the University. The program would seek active student participation, allowing students with expertise in languages, arts, sciences, and sports, as well as those with experience in child care to gain real-world experience in their field of choice. For instance, the program could provide language instruction, music and art instruction as well as homework help and free play time.

The implementation of a University-sponsored after school program would be mutually beneficial for employer and employee. At present, Washington and Lee loses untold employee hours to pick-up, drop-off, and early closing hours due to after school care options that have been cobbled together. An on-site program (particularly one that included transportation) would increase employee productivity and create peace of mind for parents troubled by current after school options.

III. G. Undergraduate Scheduling

Problem: The new undergraduate block schedule poses significant obstacles to those with child care responsibilities. In terms of the current academic work day, the data collected from individual conversations and survey data from the Childcare Committee indicate dissatisfaction with the length of the current academic work day (these concerns were expressed for the undergraduate calendar and here do not address issues that may arise in the law school). The change from a 5 minute to a 10 minute interim between classes has officially extended the teaching schedule from 8:00 a.m. -5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.-5:35 pm. The 8:00 a.m. beginning and 5:35 p.m. termination of the block schedule allows an academic schedule that is not comparable to daily schedules of our peer institutions. Many employees feel that a University endorsement of an 8:00 a.m. to 5:35 p.m. workday is not supportive of families or a healthy work/life balance in general. Our work day is in direct conflict with some Lexington child care options (Table 2; section IV.B.). For example, the Woods Creek Montessori school, currently the most popular licensed child care option for Washington and Lee employees opens at 8:15 a.m. and

closes by 5:15 p.m., making teaching during the A or I block impossible without a partner who is able to drop off and pick up children at this facility. Even if child care options are available from 7:45 a.m. to 5:45 p.m. (necessary to account for transition between Washington and Lee and nearby child care providers), the University should question whether it wants to be known as an employer who thwarts a healthy work/life balance by lengthening the work day. In fact, the lengthening of the work day does not demonstrate support of a healthy work/life balance for any employee, regardless of family situation.

In terms of the current faculty meeting time, it precludes those with families to participate fully, thus disrupting the overall function of this governing body. Besides being a child care issue, it has also become an issue for effective meetings. Often the exodus of faculty can cause issues to be unresolved if there is not a quorum for a vote. If a vote can take place, it potentially excludes a specific group – young faculty with children. While a 4:00 p.m. faculty meeting time allows at least partial involvement (albeit an early exit), the 4:30 p.m. meeting effectively excludes many parents from participation.

Solution: Charge the Faculty Executive Committee to review current practices. If Washington and Lee wishes to be recognized as an employer of choice and an institution that promotes a healthy work/life balance, the academic day should be shortened. Not only is this the right thing to do, it would clearly be a policy in line with peer institutions. It should be noted that transition to a new, or return to an old schedule is best accomplished quickly. The longer the wait, the more difficult the adjustment. We ask that the University act quickly in support of a healthier work day. Options for this transition are offered in Appendix 9. We recommend adoption of options 1, 2, or 3.

If Washington and Lee wishes to empower all faculty members in the governing of official business, the faculty meeting times should take place within an academic work day that officially ends at 5:00 p.m. The present system, which includes College faculty meetings that begin at 4:30 p.m., contributes to a disenfranchisement of faculty members with children in child care. The task force recommends the adoption of one of the options listed in Appendix 9.

IV. DATA AND FINDINGS

To follow in four sub-sections are summaries of our findings from the child care survey final report and our survey on local and national programs (full data and answers to open ended questions provided in Appendix 3).

IV. A. WASHINGTON & LEE UNIVERSITY CHILD CARE SURVEY

Child care survey methodology and respondent demographics

Task Force members constructed a 41 question survey over the course of several meetings in February 2007.

The confidential and anonymous survey was administered in March 2007 using the Survey Monkey online survey system. All employees with Washington and Lee email addresses were emailed a letter introducing the survey, assuring them of their anonymity and confidentiality, and providing the link to the online survey. Paper surveys were also distributed to employees least likely to have access to email. All employees were given the opportunity to complete a hard copy of the survey if they preferred.

A total of 480 surveys were taken, representing a response rate of 41.5% of the 787 full-time, benefit eligible employees and 369 temporary workers and adjunct faculty. The strength of employee response itself points to the resonance of the topic amongst Washington and Lee employees.

In terms of the demographic profile of University employee survey respondents, 59.2% are female and 40.8% are male. A large proportion (75.6%) are married, with smaller percentages single or divorced/separated (10.5% and 10.5%, respectively). The vast majority of respondents (90.1%) are full-time workers. In terms of their employment status, 36% of those who took the survey are faculty, 30% salaried staff, 18.5% hourly staff and 12.3% administration. Most respondents are long-time Washington and Lee employees, with 59.4% working at the University for six or more years. Smaller proportions of respondents are relatively new to Washington and Lee with 21.3% working two years or less and 19.3% working between three and five years.

Profile of Washington and Lee employee families and their child care needs

Over two-thirds of the respondents (69.8%) have children. Of those who do not have children (30.2%), approximately 23% are expecting to have children in the near future. Employees at Washington and Lee have an average of two children. The largest number of employees (43.8%) currently have two children, although a fairly large minority (25%) have three or more children.

Thirty percent of University employees report needing care for children six years old or under or anticipate needing care in the next year. A smaller proportion, 20% of employees, need or anticipate needing care for their children over six. The weekdays

(Monday – Friday) are the most important days for care giving needs with the most critical times of day starting at 7 a.m. to about 6 p.m.. 70.1% of respondents report feeling extremely strongly or very strongly about the issue of child care. Of the sample population, 64.8% agree or strongly agree that Washington and Lee is a good place to work if you have children.

Child care use and satisfaction

During school-time

The variety of options people use for child care, other than adult family members, are diverse. The most commonly used source of child care, other than adult family members, are licensed facilities. A total of 60 respondents report using care either from child care centers or licensed care in someone's home. Twenty-one employees utilize unlicensed care in someone's home. A significant number of people report bringing their children to work with them at least occasionally (39 people). Sixteen respondents report having children in self-care, that is, looking after themselves for a period of time at least four or five days per week.

Most people (46.3%) report they are only "somewhat satisfied" with their current child care situation. A fair proportion of employees are extremely (18.4%) or very (25.9%) satisfied with their current child care situation. A much smaller percentage of employees are not very (8.2%) or not at all (1.4%) satisfied with their current child care.

For those who are not satisfied, employees report it is because care is too expensive, there are a lack of child care options and they experience difficulties surrounding having to negotiate inconsistent arrangements due to the lack of affordable quality options.

One respondent reports the difficulties: *"I am shifting the kids around all the time. I can't afford a regular child care center and they are all full anyways. They are mostly stuck with whomever I can get for that day, no consistency."*

Another discusses how the family handles child care: *"It is too expensive. I cannot afford a day-care center on my salary so I must rely on friends and family and even bringing them to work occasionally."*

Quality was also an issue, with Washington and Lee employees with children finding it difficult to locate quality affordable care, particularly after school care: *"The YMCA after school program is affordable but lacks structure and, in my opinion, adequate supervision. My daughter strongly dislikes it - I believe because of the chaotic atmosphere that mixes very young children with significantly older ones, which can create a lot of anxiety, and the gloomy physical space."*

Even those who are happy with their facilities still find the hours problematic: *"I like my preschool, but it is mornings only. I desperately need something part-time in the afternoons for a 3-4 year-old. MWF afternoon group activities would be great."*

During summer-time

There are somewhat more mixed levels of satisfaction with summer care arrangements, with more than one-fifth (21.7%) of respondents reporting being not very or not at all satisfied with their summer child care arrangements and about the same proportion (20.4%) being extremely satisfied with their summer care arrangements.

However, compared to school-time care, more than twice the number of employees wrote comments about summer care, indicating they feel strongly enough about summer care to write (sometimes lengthy) text responses about their experience.

Much like their school-year arrangements, Washington and Lee employees use a variety of care options during the summer. The most commonly used source of summer care is camps. A total of 50 respondents report putting their child in day camp and 23 report using overnight camps as a summer care option. Employees still utilize licensed care in either facilities (36) or in someone's home (7). Fourteen respondents use unlicensed home-based care during the summer months. As they also do during the school year, a significant number of employees bring their children to work with them at least occasionally (38 people). Sixteen respondents report having children in self-care, that is, looking after themselves for a period of time during the day, at least four or five days per week.

Many parents prefer to have their children doing interesting activities during the summer—activities that differ from the school year. The summer care problems cited by employees with children focus on fewer summer options, facilities that do not remain open for the whole day and programs that do not run for the whole summer. Parents report juggling different activities that are patch-worked together in what sometimes amounts to an expensive and harried set of arrangements.

One employee put it: *"I don't feel there are many quality programs to choose from in Lexington ... I also feel, with the two colleges in town, that we should have more camps of higher quality. Also, there is virtually nothing in August which is extremely frustrating since the Law School is in session then."*

"It's such a patchwork of care and hardly predictable. I have a difficult time focusing on work b/c the home schedule becomes very complicated."

"Camps don't cover the whole summer...a lot of driving and early pick-ups. Daycare closed for 1.5 weeks no substitute."

"I have a thirteen-year old who may only be eligible for one daycare program locally, and thus he prefers to stay home by himself. I would prefer more choices."

"Preschool programs in town follow the Lexington school schedule, so we are without preschool all summer. There is no good substitute."

“There are no decent programs in the Lexington area (that I know of) that provide a fun, safe place for children over 5 to be for a whole work day. There are several nice summer programs, but they last between 2 hours to a half day, leaving parents to pair part-time programs with babysitters, other part time programs etc - making transitions during harried "lunch breaks" etc. It is distracting for parents and unfulfilling for children and piecing together several options gets extremely expensive.”

One employee sums the summer care situation up very clearly: *“I don't have a good answer to them being out of school, me working.”*

Costs of care

The costs of child care during the school year range from those who pay nothing--either because adult family members look after the children or because they receive subsidies/scholarships for the child care facilities--to \$2150 per month for those with three children in daycare. The average cost for child care during the school year is about \$800 per month for the family of a Washington and Lee employee with care needs.

For the summer months, costs for care range from nothing (again, for those with family or friends who look after their children) to \$1900 per month for families whose children go to camps. The average is somewhat higher for summer month child care expenditure, with families averaging about \$900 per month. One respondent whose spouse decided to stay home due to the excessive costs of child care said that while they do not have any cash outlay for summer care, *“It costs money to "not work".”*

Problems with child care

Washington and Lee employees report their biggest problems with childcare are the high cost (42%), inconvenient hours of operation (33.2%) and no space/long waitlists (23.8%).

Thirty-eight respondents writing text responses cite a myriad of problems ranging from limited choices, high costs and lack of availability--particularly for infant care--and a concern about how to manage child care during after school times, snow days and when their children are sick:

“Choice? Is there a choice in this area in terms of full-time pre-school age daycare? The two that exist get by admirably on abysmal buildings. It must seem ridiculous to anyone that moves to this area that those are the physical conditions of the two options for licensed daycare facilities.”

“No child care alternatives available for snow days (weather related daycare closures) or sick days (when child is sick)”

“Very few full-day offering in the summer except for the YMCA; while they provide good care for the children I don't like that all the age groups are mixed together”

“Snow days and vacation days are completely out of sync with W&L, which only celebrates the holidays of the Confederacy. On these days I’m really crazy.”

“Montessori holidays (spring break, etc.) follow Lexington City Schools and do not match W&L holidays. This leaves us without child care during those times, and we have to hire a babysitter at an hourly rate on top of the normal tuition cost. It is also difficult to find a sitter for those times, because most students are in class. This problem is even more difficult for snow days. Lexington schools (and therefore Montessori) close often for snow, but W&L never closes. This leaves us struggling, often at the last minute, to find someone to care for our child on snow days.”

“When I became a single parent and came to work full time at W&L my children were 9 and 12. There was nothing reliable for them after school, and if there had been I would not have been able to begin to afford anything. Leaving them on their own was a very bad “solution” for several reasons but we had no choice.”

“Looked into mcc and ybr and both were too expensive based on my income. most people working at w&l have to put too much of their paychecks toward child care, because there aren’t many alternatives.”

“Simply feel that the University needs to provide better day care opportunities for our employees.”

Important features for child care providers and potential benefit options

The majority of Washington and Lee employee respondents rank staff quality (99.5%), program quality (97.3%) and facility quality (94%) as essential or very important components when selecting a child care provider. A smaller majority of respondents (67.2%) find it essential or very important that their child care is close to campus.

In terms of the University benefits employees would like to see offered, emergency child care for school closing and/or sick children at Washington and Lee ranked the highest with 64.1% of respondents of this question choosing this option as either essential or very important. 58.2% selected an after-school program at Washington and Lee as being either essential or very important as a potential benefit option. A majority (54.3%) also viewed an onsite facility at Washington and Lee as essential or very important and a slightly larger percentage (55.6%) calling subsidies for child care facilities in community as either essential or very important. When asked to rank the most important option overall, 31.2% of employees chose an onsite facility as the most important, with an afterschool program and subsidies to employees chosen as the most important option by 17.5% and 17.5%, respectively.

When asked if there was anything else they’d like to add about the issue of child care we received 93 responses (just less than 25% of all respondents). The following responses

suggest a broad-based support for the University taking action on this issue, even from those employees never likely to use these benefits:

“As I have indicated in my previous responses, I believe it is of utmost importance that W&L provide financial support for current child care facilities in the community. Additionally, having child care options for sick and snow days would also be very helpful. Lastly, I think it should be a University policy that parents who must stay home from work due to a child's illness should be able to use their sick days to cover these absences from work. Thank you for your consideration of these suggestions.”

“I think the University should subsidize child care facilities to ensure adequate child care is available, i.e. adequate in size, curriculum and available hours. Once adequate facilities are established, subsidies for employees would make employment at W&L more feasible for those with families.”

“One complaint I've heard is that faculty with children have to pick them up by 5pm; this means missing faculty meetings for example. Generally the burden falls more heavily on women.”

“Though I may never need child care (as much as others with much younger children) I am strongly in favor of having an on-site daycare at W&L.”

“Please help with child care! It would help me so much. I am a single mom, trying to work and stay off welfare but I make just over the limit to receive gov't assistance, but not enough to pay for full time care for 4 children.”

“It is no longer an extra benefit, but a necessary benefit for competitive organizations in corporate America. It is long overdue here.”

IV. B. ROCKBRIDGE AREA CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

The committee contacted local area licensed child care providers. Data were gathered on the hours of operation, age range of children accepted, cost, capacity, scholarship dollars available and numbers of children of Washington and Lee employees currently enrolled. The data below represent numbers in July 2007. A more comprehensive study of the child care options in the area was done by Cintron, et al. in 2005 and is provided in Appendix 6.

There are several identified issues surrounding the current state of child care in this area:

1. Cost – too expensive for many.
2. Hours – limited; not open early or late enough; limited (if any) summer care.
3. Quality – programs lack rigor, creativity.
4. Available spaces – limited; especially for infant care.

TABLE 1: Summary of Local Providers (July 2007)Current full day providers:

Name	Hours	Ages	Cost/ hour	FT Cost/ month	Licensed Capacity/ Enrollment	Children of W&L empl.	Waiting List?
Atkinson's	7am-4:30pm	2-5yrs	\$1.89	\$360	12/12	0	Yes
Laura & Jessica	8am – 5pm	6wks-12yrs	\$3.89	\$700	12/12	2	Yes
Woods Creek Montessori	8:20am-5:15pm	3mo-6yrs	\$3.93- \$4.30	\$688-\$796	91/61 (but will take no more than 75)	35	Yes
Yellow Brick Road	7:15am-5:45pm	3mo-6years	\$2.48- \$3.28	\$520-\$689	90/80	11	Yes

Current half-day programs:

Name	Hours	Ages	Cost/ hour	Cost/ month	Capacity	Children of W&L employees
Providence II	9am-12noon	3-5years	\$3.83	\$230	30	2
Shenandoah	9am-12noon	2-5years	\$3.17	\$190	57	8
St. John's	9am-12noon	3-4years	\$3.06-3.13	\$75-\$110	45	0?; doesn't really know
St. Patrick's	9am-12noon	2.5-5years	\$3.68	\$221	n/a	0

Current after-school providers:

Name	Hours	Ages	Cost/month	Children of W&L employees
Buena Vista Schools	2-6pm	5-12 years	\$156	not available
YMCA	3-6pm	5-10 years	\$160	3
Lexington Office on Youth	3-5pm	5-19 years	free	0

Providers of scholarship assistance:

Name	Approximate Dollars Available/ School Year	# Assisted
Montessori	\$16,000	5
Providence II	\$4,000	4
Shenandoah	\$2,000	2
YBR	\$50,000	15
YMCA	\$7,000	12

IV.C. CHILD CARE BENEFITS STUDY OF PEER INSTITUTIONS

The task force researched child care benefits information from approximately 40 prestigious liberal arts colleges, including those affiliated with the Associated Colleges of the South (ACS), as well as six larger, selective universities. A detailed view of the child care benefits for the institutions is located in Appendix 4.

Summary of Peer Institutions

The information obtained from the colleges and universities was compiled through a search of institutional websites and dozens of phone calls. The task force members charged with this portion of the report were pleasantly surprised that the majority of people with whom we spoke about child care issues shared that their respective institutions were grappling with very similar issues and concerns.

One of the most striking similarities among institutions was the fact that it was difficult to ascertain with whom to speak about child care needs. Committee members were often transferred from human resources staff to deans to a variety of faculty and administrative staff who were either current or former committee chairpersons regarding these matters. It was evident that at many, if not most schools, no one person or department truly “owns” child care issues. However, it was also apparent that many of the colleges and universities assessed were gathering momentum in terms of determining purpose and direction on child care issues.

Approximately 60% of the colleges and universities in the study have not addressed the issue of child care; however, the majority of colleges and universities have flexible spending accounts that provide employees the opportunity to contribute to child care. Requirements to qualify varied in terms of the age range for children (typically up to thirteen years) and terms of employment appointment (i.e. number of hours worked per week and/or full-time or part-time status of employee).

Preschool Programs

Bryn Mawr College (PA) has a preschool program and is currently considering a day care option. They would like to, at the very least, prioritize faculty meetings and summer care issues. Claremont McKenna (CA) hosts and manages a preschool program. Scripps College (CA) participates in the Claremont McKenna program with 20 spaces reserved for faculty and staff.

Day Care Programs

Amherst College (MA) owns a day care facility on campus, but uses an outside provider to manage the program. Barnard College (NY), Bowdoin College (ME), and Bucknell University (PA) have on-site child care centers. Carleton College (MN) attempted a day care facility about 10 years ago and it folded due to lack of interest. Colorado College (CO) manages its own day care center for infants through kindergarten and has 42 spaces for children. All spaces are taken and people are wait-listed. An endowment has been promised if the center is expanded and additional spaces are created.

Davidson College (NC) has received board of trustees approval for a planning phase for day care. They are hopeful that a day care center will be operational in two years. Davidson's needs have been reviewed by Bright Horizons. They have decided to serve the campus employees, not the town. The new center will hold a capacity of 40 children. Duke University (NC) has its own five-star rated children's campus managed by Bright Horizons. Georgetown (D.C.) manages the Hoya Kids Learning Center, a program that closely follows the University's closing schedule. Hamilton College (NY) also has its own day care center. Smith College (MA) hosts its own center of early childhood education and provides a separate site during days of inclement weather. Spelman College (GA) also has an on-campus program. Trinity College (CT) also has a child care center on campus, but it is not managed by the college. Williams College (MA) also has a day care center on campus. After school programs and babysitting services are available through students.

Subsidies for Employees

Stanford University provides the most generous subsidy program whereby junior faculty receive a \$21,000 subsidy for child care. Bates (ME) and Bowdoin (ME) provide small subsidies for faculty and staff in need. Colgate University (NY) provides a scholarship fund for an offsite center and the funds are distributed to families based upon need. Georgetown University (DC) provides subsidies for those making less than \$60,000 per year. Harvey Mudd College (CA) subsidizes most of the premium for in-home or public care.

Contracted and Referral Services

The College of William and Mary (VA) contracts with a non-profit organization. Pomona College (CA) has special relationship with a local church for 20 day care spaces. Boston University, George Washington University, Haverford College and Rollins College provide referral services.

Promising Child Care Initiatives

The majority of institutions queried about child care issues are in a somewhat similar position as Washington and Lee University. However, there are clearly some college and university initiatives worth highlighting and possibly exploring further.

Stanford University (CA) recently announced a new program to provide financial assistance up to \$21,000 per year in child care reimbursement for junior faculty. Smith College (MA) and Colorado College (CO) have been two of the forerunners on child care needs. Both institutions serve as positive models for the implementation of such programs. Several other institutions offer day care programs.

IV. D. LENGTH OF ACADEMIC WORKDAY OF PEERS

Informal data* were collected from colleagues at several small liberal arts schools to ascertain whether the W&L teaching day is anomalously long. Data show that of the 14 schools polled, no institution officially supported a regular (not optional as desired by individual faculty with specific requests) teaching schedule beyond 5:00 p.m. Several schools have optional evening classes but in all but a few cases informal data indicate that evening classes are rare and scheduled at the request of individual instructors. Responses are paraphrased in Table 2.

Table 2: Do you have class periods that extend beyond 5:00 pm?

Amherst College	No, only by instructor request.
Colgate	No, all classes end by 4:10 to support student athletics. Rarely, evening labs can be scheduled.
Carleton College	No
Cornell College	No
Mary Washington	Labs and classes end by 3:50 but some evening classes may be scheduled (unknown if these are in exceptional cases).
Pomona	No, but some evening classes may be scheduled (unknown if these are in exceptional cases).
Dickinson	No.
Beloit	No, but some evening classes may be scheduled at instructors discretion.
Colorado College	There are no set class periods but most are over by 5:00.
Smith College	No, and 3 days a week classes end by 4:00. Some evening classes may be scheduled (unknown if these are in exceptional cases).
Williams	No, all classes end by 4:00. Classes may be scheduled on Monday evenings at instructor's request.
Whitman College	No, and classes end by 4:00. Some evening classes may be scheduled (unknown if these are in exceptional cases).
Union	No, except some education and engineering classes.
Wesleyan University	No, only by choice.

** An informal 5 question email survey was sent to colleagues at the institutions listed above. The relevant question reported here was, 'Do you have class periods that extend beyond 5:00 pm?' The survey is informal and incomplete (start time was not addressed) and was meant only to get a general idea of whether our academic day is anomalously long. The data are paraphrased in Table 2.*

V. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED APPROACH

Prioritization and timeline

Our recommendations include several solutions to problems outlined previously working in tandem. Where possible, we provide an estimate of costs related to a project.

- We first recommend a clear statement via action by the University in support of employee work/life issues and balance. The hiring of a Work/Life Coordinator and the establishment of an ongoing advisory committee is a critical first step toward the success and sustainability of any other implemented programs. The cost to the University would be the salary and benefits of the Coordinator, approximately \$35,000 (minimum, plus benefits) and an annual operating budget of \$25,000.
- With the appointment of a Work /Life Coordinator, plans can be initiated to develop a summer program; and following an assessment period, an after school program. Some projected costs for starting these programs are approximately \$15,000-\$18,000 per academic year to run the after school program and \$25,000-\$35,000 to operate a summer camp (based on YMCA data). In the long run these programs can be revenue generating.
- As the University engages in an analysis of University benefits and a total rewards package, we encourage the addition of Flex days for employees.
- We ask for an analysis of conflicts with regard to the childcare issue resulting from the undergraduate block schedule and faculty meeting time. A discussion should be initiated (with additional feedback from other University constituents) of the issues this new schedule has posed and action should be taken before many more school years pass.
- Support of local providers' programming should be established through the mobilization of students through the volunteer network or teacher education to share their expertise in the surrounding school system. In order to be good citizens of our local community, the University should continue to make contributions to the campaigns (both annual and capital) of our local providers and augment the quality of these programs using the resources readily available in our rich academic environment. The University should establish a local provider assistance fund and make contributions when appropriate.
- We ask the University to establish grants/subsidies/scholarships (perhaps capped annually at \$50,000) targeted to lower income employees for child care expenses.

Assessment and Sustainability

The biggest step toward ensuring the sustainability and progress of this committee work is the hire of the full-time, professional Work/Life Coordinator and the appointment of long-term ad-hoc advisory committee. In addition to providing resources to current employees, this will ensure the maintenance of future supply and demand data. The committee would also recommend surveying employees in three to five years to assess the success of instituted programming.

We recognize that the work is not finished; the task is just beginning. The issues raised here have a complex set of dimensions that will be addressed and evolve over time. We hope that by providing clear and public support for some of these initiatives, it will validate the goals of this committee and the importance of these issues to the University as a whole.