



# U.C. Santa Cruz Faculty Association

An Independent Senate Faculty Union since 1975

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## **Proposal for Childcare Subsidies in the Absence of Childcare at Student Housing West, and Additional Support for New Parents**

### **I. Context**

UC Santa Cruz is currently the only UC campus that does not offer onsite childcare to faculty. This hardship for faculty parents is compounded by the lack of childcare facilities, particularly for children under 2 1/2 years old, in Santa Cruz County, and by the cost of housing, which already stretches most families to their financial limits. Additionally, professional sitters in Santa Cruz County currently charge between \$54,000-70,000 a year for childcare, making this option unavailable to most faculty parents.

The lack and unaffordability of childcare options means that faculty parents, and particularly untenured faculty and faculty mothers, experience physical, psychological, and career-related hardships. These hardships are attested to in detail by an internal survey conducted by the Academic Mothers Faculty Community Network, administered in 2023, "[Experiences with Childcare in Santa Cruz County for Children Under Two and a Half Years](#)," and by a recent, February 2024 article in Lookout Santa Cruz, "[UC Santa Cruz Faculty Mothers Say Lack of Childcare is Hurting Their Academic Careers](#)."

The lack of support for childcare for faculty mothers is a career equity issue. And it affects UCSC's ability to recruit and retain faculty, particularly faculty mothers and parents of young children.

The Academic Mothers and SCFA look forward to the construction of a childcare facility at Student Housing West. We also appreciate recent steps taken by UCSC's administration to lessen the impact of the lack of childcare in the absence of Student Housing West, namely by trying to secure spots in daycare centers in the area. Still, following the Senate's latest CFW recommendation, we emphasize the need to provide short-term solutions to respond to "the urgency of the topic, and the fact that it particularly affects new hires, assistant professors and women-identified faculty" (see [2022-2023 CFW Report](#), p.7).

### **II. Proposal**

- A. At a minimum, faculty parents of children 5 years old or under at UCSC should receive the same subsidy offered to UCSC graduate students (effective October 1, 2024) or

\$1400 in reimbursements per quarter, while the daycare at Student Housing West is under construction. In other words, we propose extending UCSC's [Childcare Reimbursement Program](#) to faculty parents for childcare for children 0-5 years old.

- B. Increased teaching relief for faculty parents with children under 2 1/2 years old, because of the inconsistency and lack of available in childcare options in Santa Cruz county, and more clarity on the ASMD policy, as expecting mothers often receive confusing and at times different information from division HR specialists, and because interpretation of ASMD can vary by department (see this UCSB website, "[FAQ: Family Friend Policies, Senate Faculty - Leave and ASMD](#)" as an example of the kind of information and clarity faculty need).

### **III. Details of Proposed Childcare Reimbursement Program**

- A. Eligible faculty parents may be reimbursed up to \$1400 per quarter under this program for qualified childcare expenses, including summer.
- B. An eligible faculty parent includes all Senate faculty with (a) qualified dependent(s).
- C. For the purposes of this program, qualified dependents refer to children in the custody of a faculty parent, who are 5 years old or under at the start of the specified quarter.
- D. Allowable receipts and allowable childcare providers will be the same as specified by the [Childcare Reimbursement Program](#) for UCSC Graduate Students.
- E. The reimbursement process will also be the same as the Childcare Reimbursement Program for UCSC Graduate Students, with the exception that faculty parents will fill out a different form and will submit their receipts to a different university office.