

CHILD CARE IN THE COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

A REPORT FROM ARLINGTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Executive Summary

Over the last five years, Arlington Economic Development (AED) staff has needed to address the issue of child care when attracting prospective businesses to Arlington. Whether including on-site child care as part of a relocation deal, or simply providing information on child care options to a new business, child care has become top of mind and a key factor in a location decision for many companies. This has been especially difficult given the significant shortage of quality child care facilities within Arlington's urban villages.

To support Arlington's abilities to attract and retain top organizations, and to address the existing shortage of child care centers and workers in the commercial corridors, AED staff recommends that the following policies be adopted by the County:

1. Adopt development incentives for bonus density to facilitate new child care centers in the commercial corridors.
2. Add specificity to Arlington's current retail policy to allow for child care centers to fill appropriate retail locations in the commercial corridors.
3. Identify specific partnership opportunities in Arlington which support child care workforce development.



In addition, AED staff also proposes the following actions:

1. Change common misperceptions of child care centers with developers, building owners and brokers within the commercial corridors.
2. Include the attraction of child care providers as a strategic initiative for AED.
3. Clearly communicate and emphasize the priority Arlington County leadership places upon the development of child care centers in the commercial corridors.

These policies and recommendations are a result of a segmented study to meet the needs of Arlington's work force within the commercial corridors for child care. In the densely-built



commercial corridors, the high cost of land all but eliminates the possibility of build-to-suit child care centers; instead, child care operators must typically seek space in multi-story buildings. However, even if a building has the requisite indoor space available, finding space to meet the outdoor play area requirement – mandating 75 square feet per child (at any one time) – is often a stumbling block. This study addresses only licensed child care centers, and only those found within Arlington’s commercial corridors, for the purposes of business attraction and retention.

Following is an in-depth analysis of child care in the commercial corridors, including an overview of the scope of the AED study, constraints surrounding the development of child care centers in the commercial corridors, a review of policy recommendations, and suggestions for future study.



Child Care as an Economic Development Tool

Quality child care is a key component of a world-class community. The social benefits of early childhood education have long been recognized and promoted; now, new fiscal and economic benefits have been recently been identified. For Arlington County to remain competitive as the preeminent place to live, work, and play in the region, a focus on access to quality child care is essential.

Research shows that quality early childhood development is an issue that needs attention now. According to a 2004 study from Cornell University’s Department of City and Regional Planning, *Child Care & Parent Productivity: Making the Business Case*, professional employees rank the ability to balance work and family as the number one factor in their decision to remain with a company. The lack of available child care creating employee absences costs U.S. businesses \$3 billion annually. Many additional studies have documented the importance of quality child care and early childhood

education as they pertain to a community’s overall economic health. Children benefit through improved social skills, willingness to share, readiness for future learning environments, and practice managing difficult situations and emotions. Once these

children become adults, communities benefit from higher graduation rates, increased incidence of gainful employment, better salaries, and decreased rates of incarceration.

The expanded workforce development opportunities linked to child care are less well-known, but equally important. Demographic trends and a shifting economy suggest both a dramatic future labor shortage as well as a fundamental shift in the composition of the workforce: in addition to a higher percentage of mature employees and employees of diverse racial and ethnic identities,

There is growing evidence of the positive impact of family-friendly policies on recruitment, retention, and employee loyalty. Companies listed in Working Mother Magazine's annual report of the 100 best companies for working mothers have found a "clear link between family-friendly programs [and] corporate recruitment, retention, and productivity."

*-Work & Life 2000, Radcliffe Public Policy Institute
cited 1998 Family Matters Survey*

the workforce will consist of significantly more working women, presumably many of whom will be parents. According to *Working Mother Magazine*, 83 percent of new mothers will return to the labor force within six months after childbirth.¹ These women identify being part of an organization that "respects family-time and that has good benefits, programs, and policies, especially for flexible scheduling, time-off, and child care", as extremely important.²

Transportation and affordable housing have been hot-button issues that companies weighed when considering where they would locate; now, the discussion includes a focus on access to child care for their employees within the Washington Metro area, there is stiff competition for top employee talent, and companies know that having convenient child care and family-friendly workplaces are important benefits for working parents.

In the last five years, the vast majority of companies that AED has worked with to attract to Arlington have – at a minimum – cited access to child care as a strong factor in their location decision making. In a number of key deals, access to on-site and/or proximate child care has been a requirement for the company to relocate in Arlington. Most recently, the move of National Cooperative Bank (NCB) from Washington, D.C. to Crystal City was contingent on the inclusion of a new Bright Horizons child care center. The center also became a selling point for additional companies who moved to Crystal City after the NCB deal was complete.

The notable increase in private companies and nonprofits who make their relocation or expansion plans contingent upon the availability of nearby child care suggests that, lacking adequate child care facilities in the commercial corridors, creative talent and those who employ them will situate themselves elsewhere. AED has undertaken a segmented child care study to help determine policy recommendations that will encourage the development of child care centers in the commercial corridors for the purposes of business attraction and retention. Therefore, AED's study addresses only licensed child care centers, and only those found within Arlington's commercial corridors, for the purposes of workforce retention and business attraction.

Scope of Study

While AED staff sought to address the child care needs of Arlington's workforce and child care centers in its commercial corridors, there exists a much larger challenge of child care shortages throughout Arlington, most notably in its residential neighborhoods, that significantly impacts Arlington's citizens. In this study, AED staff addressed only full-day child care centers located in the commercial corridors with more than nine

¹ *Working Mother*, June 1999, pg 32.

² *Simmons School of Management, The New Workforce Reality: Insights for Today, Implications for Tomorrow*, 2005

children. For the County's child care needs to be fully addressed, AED strongly recommends a much larger and more thorough examination of child care demand and supply throughout Arlington, as well as a discussion of affordability and the full complement of solutions for additional child care centers in both Arlington's commercial corridors and Arlington's neighborhoods.



About Arlington

Currently, the commercial corridors (Rosslyn-Ballston and Jefferson-Davis) have 15 full-day child care centers, with a licensed capacity of 1,284 children. Of those, ten centers provide infant care for just over 300 infants. Appendix A shows the location and ages served of these child care centers, along with current capacity and associated waiting lists.

There is currently no full-time licensed child care center in the commercial corridors that is not fully enrolled, or is without a waiting list. Families can expect to wait an average of 12 to 18 months for an opening to occur for infant care – the most pertinent care required for parents to return to work. Some child care centers serving children eight weeks to two years old report having 24 to 36 month waiting lists (*Child and Family Services Division, DHS, May 2008*).

Arlington's commitment to quality child care is reflected in licensing requirements for child care providers which are even more stringent than state mandates; Arlington requires a more stringent staff-child ratio than the Commonwealth of Virginia (see Appendix B). The County also has led the way in requiring 35 square feet of indoor space per child; Virginia recently amended its regulations to meet those same standards.

Why Quality Child Care is Important

During the first five years of life, the majority of the architecture of a child's brain is determined (Shore, R. 1997) and early childhood experiences set the stage for all future learning. Positive outcomes from investments in early childhood education depend on the quality of these experiences.

“Quality is paramount if preschool programs are to have an effect on children's learning and provide the economic and financial benefits we expect from our investment. High-quality preschool is much more than custodial care; it provides children with meaningful learning and play experiences guided by qualified teachers in an enriched educational environment.”

*-Committee for Economic Development,
2006 Policy Statement*

Research typically points to two dimensions of quality: structural features and process features. Structural features in early learning settings refer to the way in which the program is organized or

structured, such as staff-to-child ratio and teacher qualifications. In 2007, Virginia implemented a voluntary quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) which uses licensing as a foundation and sets a continuum of clearly defined levels of increasing quality for child care centers. Virginia's Star Quality Initiative will be implemented by Arlington County in the near future. However, based on the current evaluation system, and given Arlington's higher standards for child-to-teacher ratios and educational requirements for teachers, it is expected that Arlington child care centers will have some of the highest Star ratings in the area.

Constraints

Working parents in Arlington's commercial corridors need convenient and accessible child care; however, finding a suitable and available facility can be challenging. There are three primary constraints limiting the supply of child care in Arlington's major employment centers:

- Arlington's urban pattern of development is characterized by higher rents and smaller lot sizes and thus more limited opportunities for sufficient indoor and outdoor child care space.
- Negative perceptions of child care centers within Arlington's development, broker and building owner community.
- A shortage of qualified teachers throughout Arlington, which is further exacerbated in the commercial corridors due to the selection of certain child care providers.

Arlington's Urban Location

In the densely-built commercial corridors, the high cost of land all but eliminates the possibility of build-to-suit child care centers; instead, child care operators must typically seek space in multi-story buildings. However, even if a building has the requisite indoor space available, finding space to meet the outdoor play area requirement –

mandating 75 square feet of outdoor space per child (at any one time) – is often a stumbling block (see Appendix B).

In addition to limited spaces, new projects in the commercial corridors often come with lease rates well above what child care center operators can pay. Based on interviews with for-profit and not for profit centers located in Arlington, lease rates range from \$20 to \$23 per square foot. With average retail lease rates in new buildings located within the commercial corridors of \$49, this can create a gap of nearly \$30 per square foot, regardless of whether the child care center is a for-profit or not for profit center.

While AED staff has encouraged developers to consider incorporating child care into their projects, there are currently no incentives to do so.

Negative Perceptions of Child Care Centers

Despite the growing trend of companies making office leases contingent upon convenient and available child care, there seems to be a disconnect with developers, brokers and building owners who perceive child care as an obstacle to the successful marketing and tenancing of Class A space. Anecdotally, these damaging perceptions include:

- Child care centers detract from and disturb Class-A office tenants. Children are noisy and the centers are messy and present a sloppy appearance to prospective tenants.
- Child care centers are not considered to be a desired amenity of commercial buildings, unlike restaurants and fitness centers, making the marketing and leasing of that building more difficult.
- Drop off/pick up areas and outdoor playgrounds cannot be retrofitted into the existing building structure/layout.

It must be noted that the above anecdotal statements are perceptions, not reality. Arlington has seen successes in child care center development in the past, most notably with Vornado, a building owner, developer and manager who has seen firsthand the benefits of including child care in a commercial building. A child care center was a necessary component to bring the National Cooperative Bank (NCB) to Arlington; the development of the center not only closed the deal with NCB but also created a domino effect, when Conservation International and KBR followed shortly behind.

Workforce Availability

When AED staff conducted interviews with five of Arlington’s child care center directors, workforce availability was one of their most oft-cited constraints. And while this particular constraint is endemic to child care centers located throughout Arlington, AED staff found that the type of child care centers that have business models which are most conducive to locating in commercial corridors and whose niche is high-quality child care services have even more stringent teacher training guidelines, further exacerbating this particular problem.

First, Arlington’s commitment to quality child care, reflected in its more stringent licensing requirements, unwittingly contributes to a shortage of qualified teachers. The Commonwealth of Virginia permits individuals with three months of experience and a one-year early childhood certificate (commonly referred to as a Child Development Associate [CDA] Certificate issued by the Council for Professional Recognition) to be licensed as “program leaders” (i.e. teachers).³ However, Arlington County’s regulations require these lead teachers to hold either a bachelor’s or associate’s degree. Therefore, child care center

staff who have not earned a bachelor’s or associate’s degree cannot become a lead teacher in Arlington. Teachers with college degrees can garner higher salaries and a wider array of benefits compared to child care center employment. In addition, neighboring jurisdictions with more lenient teacher licensing requirements beckon with advancement opportunities and better wages.

Second, the type of child care centers attractive to building owners within Arlington’s commercial corridors are typically for-profit, national child care centers such as Bright Horizons. These child care centers have even more stringent guidelines than those found in Arlington, further shrinking the pool of qualified available teachers.



What does this mean for the supply of available child care spaces? Child care center directors report that finding qualified teachers can often hamper their ability to operate their centers at full capacity, further exacerbating already lengthy waitlists. This is the case at the Bright Horizon’s Center in Crystal City, a new child care center which has a physical capacity for 150 children,

³ “Program leader” means the individual designated to be responsible for the direct supervision of children and for implementation of the activities and services for a group of children. Program leaders may also be referred to as child care supervisors or teachers. (Standards for Licensed Child Care Centers – VA DSS)

yet currently serves only 63 children. Although the center is licensed for additional infant care beyond their current enrollment, the waiting list for infants is approximately 24 months, as the gleaming new classrooms sit empty because the Center cannot find enough teachers to staff them.

Policy Recommendations

Due to the constraints imposed by the densely-built commercial areas, the development community’s aversion to child care and the shortage of qualified licensed teachers, simply allowing the market to determine the supply of child care will not meet the needs of Arlington’s workforce. Therefore, the County should consider employing alternative strategies to boost the supply of child care in the commercial corridors. These strategies include incentivizing the creation of child care centers through the development process, allowing child care centers to occupy appropriate retail spaces and supporting early childhood education at local universities.

Overall, there is also a need to address the common misperceptions of child care centers with developers, building owners and brokers, and to clearly communicate and emphasize the priority Arlington County leadership places upon child care.

POLICY RECOMMENDATION 1: INCENTIVIZE NEW CHILD CARE CENTER DEVELOPMENT WITH BONUS DENSITY

Given that developable land is at a premium in Arlington, there is little opportunity for child care operators to construct free-standing build-to-suit centers; instead, they must lease space within existing mixed-use projects. However, given the misperceptions of property owners regarding onsite child care, the County should consider using its approval authority through the Special Exception Process to provide incentives so developers that incorporate child care centers into projects. This can

be done by permitting additional bonus density in exchange for an onsite child care center.

In analyzing these incentives, the developer’s cost associated with adding a child care center must first be examined. AED calculates that the carrying cost of the child care center space would be roughly \$25.00 per square foot. (This number has been arrived at using several assumptions including 9,900 square feet of gross building space – fitted but not filled – which does not include required outdoor space: no profit margin to the developer for the bonus space; 20 year financing at eight percent interest; a total development hard and soft cost of \$250 per square foot; and no associated land costs). It should be noted that both developers and County staff must work together to find creative solutions to outdoor space requirements.

Due to the strong returns on the development costs for residential and commercial projects within Arlington’s commercial corridors, relative to the build out cost of a child care center, small bonus densities, in proportion to the child care space, are required to effectively reduce the carrying cost of the child care center to sustainable levels. The following table provides the proportionate densities.

Type of Development	Bonus Ratio Required (approx.) for Lease Rates of:		
	\$20/SF	\$10/SF	\$0/SF
Office	1.26	1.76	2.26
Apartment	1.47	2.38	3.30

Based on the above findings, and comparisons of relative returns for different types of construction, Arlington County should adopt a policy to offer bonus density in exchange for the development of low-to-no cost suitable space for child care centers in both office and apartment buildings as an alternative to retail spaces in our commercial corridors.



We further recommend that developers and child care providers work closely to develop suitable child care space, which is achievable given provider business models. In addition, we recommend that child care centers be sized to accommodate sufficient numbers of children and serve as a benefit to the community.

For the complete set of assumptions and calculations to support this recommendation, please refer to Appendix C.

POLICY RECOMMENDATION 2: ALLOW CHILD CARE TO OCCUPY APPROPRIATE RETAIL LOCATIONS

Throughout the commercial corridors, there are retail spaces along side streets or at the back of buildings whose lack of primary street frontage inhibits their tenanting. However, while a lack of prominent visibility is a major drawback for some retail, the more isolated setting would be ideal for a child care center. Currently, child care is permitted by special exception in all of the commercial zoning districts. However, centers have been de facto excluded from occupying retail space given their inability to pay steep market rents, many buildings' lack of the required outdoor play area, (where opportunities do exist for both developers and County staff to work together to find creative solutions to outdoor space requirements) and owner/broker resistance to leasing space to child care operators.

The Retail Action Plan (2001), the County's guiding policy document for retail development, provides examples of acceptable consumer and business service uses that can occupy ground floor retail space; however, the list is not exhaustive and fails to include child care. A revision of this document should specifically mention child care as a suggested alternative for appropriate consumer and business services retail spaces that might otherwise languish underutilized or vacant. Furthermore, staff should work with building owners and leasing agents to clearly communicate the County's support of child care in less coveted retail spaces.

POLICY RECOMMENDATION 3: ENHANCE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

A common theme identified among child care centers in Arlington County is the lack of qualified licensed teachers. Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC) is the area's primary provider of early childhood post-secondary education, offering a 67-credit Associate's Degree in Early Childhood Development along with several certificate programs (a complete list of available programs can be found in Appendix E.) Those who earn their 32-credit Early Child Development Assistant (CDA) certificate can apply that coursework towards the full Associate's Degree, and therefore qualify to be licensed as a teacher in Arlington.

In addition, DHS has suggested the Alexandria/Arlington School Readiness Council as an appropriate vehicle to address issues including the completion of a needs assessment, advocacy efforts, and professional development. The Alexandria/Arlington School Readiness Council has stated that one of its strategies is to *"Increase the number of high quality early childhood programs by building awareness of and promoting the use of Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals and the Early Childhood and Child Care Professional Development Career Lattice among practitioners."*

In response to the need to recruit and retain qualified staff, the Council applied for and received a State grant to, among other things, develop a professional development career lattice to complete the necessary educational requirements. In addition to participating in the Council, AED also participates in the Arlington Partnership for Children, Youth and Families, an advocacy group that works to improve the health, well-being and safety of children, youth and families in Arlington, and includes a standing committee on child care. AED recommends that we continue to work with organizations like the Alexandria/Arlington School Readiness Council and the Arlington Partnership for Children, Youth and Families to identify opportunities which support child care workforce development.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: ESTABLISH RELATIONSHIPS TO BRING TOGETHER CHILD CARE OPERATORS AND NEW BUSINESSES TO ARLINGTON

Currently, AED, Department of Human Services (DHS) and Community, Planning and Housing Department (CPHD) staff have begun working together to help create innovative solutions to some of the current child care needs. In addition, AED will expand its efforts to partner closely with developers, building owners and child care providers to bring more child care centers to new and redevelopment projects in Arlington. AED also recommends a possible expansion of these efforts with a voucher system for child care spaces as recommended by DHS.

Under the voucher concept, an employer would agree to pay for one or more guaranteed child care slots at a particular center. The employer would be responsible for guaranteeing payment to the provider, and could offer the slots to their employees at whatever rate they felt was appropriate. This would help them ensure that their employee's needs were met as well as help providers by providing assured revenues. The vouchers would be able to be returned to



the providers, given sufficient notice, and resold to other employers. AED would thus be able to attract quality providers as well as offer this incentive to attract or retain employers.

Case Studies

Staff conducted in-depth interviews with the Directors of five child care centers within Arlington's commercial corridors: Arlington Children's Center, Rosslyn Children's Center, Bright Horizons at Crystal City, National Science Foundation (NSF) Child Development Center, and First Baptist Church of Clarendon.

While the complete case studies can be found in Appendix D, summaries of the studies identified a number of common themes. First, program directors expressed difficulty in hiring and retaining qualified teachers, largely due to Arlington's strict teacher licensing requirements and the lure of the benefits offered by public school systems. Second, with the exception of the new Bright Horizons Center at Crystal City, all of the centers are at full capacity and unable to accommodate the leagues of families waiting for an opening, particularly with respect to infant care. At the National Science Foundation Child Development Center, there are nearly 500

families on the infant waitlist, creating a waiting period of up to 24 months.

The interviews also identified some interesting standouts highlighting both specific challenges as well as opportunities for child care centers in Arlington. The building which houses the Rosslyn Children's Center is poised to be redeveloped, and as a result the Center has a 365-day pullout clause which could quickly leave it without a home. The Center has already begun searching for new space, but given the gap between what it can pay and market rates in Rosslyn, coupled with building owners' hesitancy to lease space to child care centers, it may be a difficult road ahead and a good example of the problems child care centers encounter in obtaining space in commercial buildings.

On the positive side, some of the centers are using creative approaches to solve common problems. For example, the Rosslyn Children's Center and the NSF Child Development Center, both located in densely-populated commercial centers, have innovative outdoor play areas. Rosslyn Children's Center uses an adjacent balcony one floor above street level for its play area (approximately 1,500 square feet). The playground has a special cushioned surface and separate external stair access down to the street. The NSF Child Development Center uses an enclosed linear space (extending the whole length of the building and partly around) with artificial grass and a resilient surface as its playground; all the adjacent classrooms have direct access. NSF has also taken a unique approach in managing its 1,000+ child waitlist: the Center offers a shared space program to match up families who only require child care a certain number of days per week.

Conclusions

The availability of quality child care will always be a concern for parents, workers and employers. However, the constraints affecting supply and demand will continue to exacerbate an already acute problem if left unaddressed by the County.

Supply will drop as existing child care centers struggle with displacement, the costs and limited availability of new space, the challenge in finding and retaining qualified staff, and the development community's aversion to leasing space to child care operators. At the same time, demand for child care will climb as Arlington's young adult workforce population increases and employers continue to require it as an employee benefit.

Arlington County must play a role to boost supply by implementing new policies to incentivize child care in the commercial corridors. However, the recommendations in this analysis do not solve the larger problem of child care across the entire County, most notably in its residential neighborhoods. A more comprehensive study should be conducted to address these areas, rather than limiting it to the major employment areas, which includes the full variety of child care options available in Arlington. As the County tackles its child care problems, it should seek input from those most well-positioned to help arrive at solutions: County staff, citizens, developers, business leaders and our highly engaged, thoughtful and interested child care center directors. Arlington should consider ways to capture their knowledge and skills to create both immediate and long-term solutions to meet Arlington's quality child care needs.



APPENDIX A: FULL-DAY LICENSED CENTERS WITHIN THE COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

Center	Address	Licensing		Infants	Wait Lists
		Capacity	Ages Served		
First Presbyterian Church	601 N. Vermont St.	24	3 wks. – 3 yrs.	Y	Yes
Cherry Blossom Day Care Center	2612 N. Pershing Dr.	38	4 mos. – 5 yrs.	Y	Yes
Arlington Children's Center	1915 N. Uhle St.	63	8 wks. – 5 yrs.	Y	Yes
Crystal City Children's Center	1900 S. Eads St.	87	3 mos. – 6 yrs.	Y	Yes
Bright Horizons FDIC	3501 Fairfax Dr.	92	6 wks. – 6 yrs.	Y	Yes
Kindercafe	1227 N. Ivy St.	94	3 mos. – 12 yrs.	Y	Yes
Bright Horizons NSF	4201 Wilson Blvd.	112	6 wks. – 6 yrs.	Y	Yes
Rosslyn Children's Center	1401 Wilson Blvd.	140	8 wks. – 6 yrs.	Y	Yes
Bright Horizons Crystal City	2451 Crystal Dr.	150	6 wks. – 5 yrs.	Y	Yes
First Baptist Church of Clarendon	1210 N. Highland St.	185	3 mos. – 6 yrs.	Y	Yes
Clarendon Child Care Center	1305 N. Jackson St.	34	2 ½ – 6 yrs.	N	Yes
Children's International (N. Scott St.)	1227 N. Scott St.	42	2 – 6 yrs.	N	Yes
Blue Bird Day School	2401 9th St. N.	48	2 – 6 yrs.	N	Yes
Early Steps Bilingual Preschool	1701 N. Bryan St.	50	2 – 8 yrs.	N	Yes
Ballston Children's Center	3850 Wilson Blvd.	125	2 ½ – 5 yrs.	N	Yes

APPENDIX B: VIRGINIA CHILD CARE CENTER SPECIFICATIONS

	Ages	Arlington	Virginia
Staff-child Ratio Requirements	Birth-15 mos.	1 to 3	1 to 4
	16 -23 mos.	1 to 3	1 to 5
	2 yrs.	1 to 5	1 to 8
	3 yrs.	1 to 8	1 to 8
	3-5 yrs.	1 to 10	1 to 10
	4-5 yrs.	1 to 10	1 to 10
Outdoor Space Requirements	All	75 SF	75 SF per child (at least 25 SF per infant/toddler must be unpaved)
Indoor Space Requirements	All	35 SF	25 SF per infant or child, excluding cribs/changing tables, or 35 SF inclusive in the case of infants

APPENDIX C: COST ESTIMATE FOR CHILD CARE SPACE

COSTS

Gross Building Area	9,900	
Hard Costs per Space	\$2,227,500	\$225/SF
Soft Costs per Space	\$247,500	\$25/SF
Total Costs for Spaces	\$2,475,000	

LEASE PAYMENT CALCULATION

1

Total Carrying Cost	8%	\$248,423	assuming 20 yr. loan
Lease Payment/No Mark-up		\$25.09	

RENTAL	Average	New Building
R-B Office Rate - SF	\$38	\$45
R-B Res Apt Rate - SF	\$30	\$36

APPENDIX D: CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDY 1: Arlington Children's Center

Arlington Children's Center is a 3,390 square foot stand alone facility located ½ mile from the Court House Metro Station. The property is owned by Arlington County and its employees receive



admissions priority and a 25 percent discount on child care. The center is currently at full capacity with 63 children ranging in age from two months to five years. There are five groups of children: two months-1 year (9 children), 1-1½ years (8 children), 1½-2½ years (10 children), 2½-3½ years (18 children), and 3½-5 years (18 children). Most parents choose the Center because of its convenience to their jobs in Arlington or downtown D.C., rather than its proximity to their homes. About one quarter of staff (one part-time and 15 full-time teachers) live in Arlington; most of the remaining teachers live further out, many in Fairfax County.

Staff at Arlington Children's Center agree that their top concern in running the center is a lack of space. Currently, the waiting list for infant care is over 200 children, and each of the other groups has a waiting list of approximately 50 applications each. Turnover is very low, with space becoming available only in September (when the five-year olds enter school) or when job changes or other circumstances cause a family to relocate. Typically, if families do not hear from the Center within a year, they inquire about availability in the next age group or consider alternative care.

CASE STUDY 2: Rosslyn Children's Center

Rosslyn Children's Center opened in 1991 in the former Newseum space and moved into its current 9,135 square foot location inside 1401 Wilson Boulevard in 1993. At that time, a site plan condition guaranteed space in the building for child care for 15 years. When the Center tried to expand operations in 2007, it was informed the owner planned to soon redevelop the property and there could be no guarantee of future space in the building. As a result, the Center renewed only its current lease (through November 2013), but a 365-day pullout clause means they could be given notice at any time, and therefore a search for new space has already begun.

Although licensed for 140 children, Rosslyn Children's Center has found best using its space means capping enrollment at 125 children. This includes 48 children under age two (including 12 infants) and 77 children ages two-five years. There are approximately 180 families on the waitlist, with more than half of the families waiting for infant care.

The Center has some unique physical attributes to its space. Rather than having a separate uncarpeted area of each classroom set aside for eating space, the Center has a shared kitchen. There is large "green room": a flex space for art classes, dance lessons, and other activities for the children. Lastly, the Center uses an adjacent balcony one floor above street level for its play area (~1,500 SF). The playground has a special cushioned surface and separate external stair access down to the street.



Space is a major concern, but attracting and retaining qualified teachers is also a challenge for the Rosslyn Children's Center. While many in the child care profession earn Child Development Associate (CDA) certification, in Arlington one needs to attain an associate's degree to be considered the licensing equivalent of a teacher. Once hired, early childhood teachers (especially those with bachelor's degrees) are difficult to retain, often lured away by the salaries and benefits of local school systems.

CASE STUDY 3: National Science Foundation (NSF) Child Development Center *(operated by Bright Horizons)*

The National Science Foundation Child Development Center opened in August 1998 in a space off



the first floor atrium area of the Stafford Place building (conveniently located by the Ballston Metro Station). In April 2007, the Center expanded across the atrium into the 1,300 square feet space of a former travel agency. The Center is creative in the use of its indoor and

outdoor space: inside, many of its classrooms are shared suites with their own bathrooms and wash areas. Outside, NSF uses an enclosed linear space (extending the whole length of the building and partly around) with artificial grass and a resilient surface as its playground; all the adjacent classrooms have direct access.

Despite the fact that NSF is located in a busy employment center, many parents choose it because of its proximity to the Metro, their homes and the ability to conveniently juggle drop-off/pick-up of younger children along with older

siblings from neighborhood schools. A number of parents park in the Stafford Place garage, drop-off their children (the Center offers indoor stroller parking), and then take the Metro to work.

The Center is licensed for 110 children, including 99 children on a regular basis (including nine infants ages six weeks-12 months, 18 children ages 12-24 months, 20 children 24-36 months, and 52 three-five year olds) and an additional 11 preschool age children as part of a full-day summer camp. Based on a partnership with National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), children of NRECA employees receive first priority for child care, followed by children of NSF employees, then children of any federal employee, and lastly children from the community. The waitlist is over 1000 families, nearly half of whom are waiting for infant (through 24 months) care; given this demand, a child from the community would likely be on the waitlist until age 4. To offer care to more children, the Center offers a shared space program to match up various families who can only use a certain number of days per week.

CASE STUDY 4: Bright Horizons at Crystal City

Bright Horizons at Crystal City opened its 11,150 square foot facility in August 2007. While the center is licensed for 136 children and there is a two-year



waitlist of 300+ families, at present there are only 63 children enrolled (including 16 infants, 12 toddlers, 15 two-year olds, and 20 preschoolers) due to a lack

of qualified teachers available for hire. There are 17 staff members with a mixture of CDAs, associate's, and bachelor's degrees and an average level of experience of 2-3 years. Teacher retention is a challenge; Bright Horizons pays approximately \$14/hour, and hiring and retaining qualified staff is challenging given the lure of public schools and the opportunities available in other jurisdictions where the licensing requirements are less stringent.

Bright Horizons was not without challenge when it tried to locate in Crystal City, principally because the center needed to use a section of an adjacent easement (used as a popular recreational area) to create a required outdoor play area. With more and more employers requiring child care as a lease contingency, the County had to weigh the importance of child care as a workforce attraction tool and community benefit versus the wishes of a vocal minority constituency. Ultimately, a compromise was struck in which one of three volleyball courts on the site would be removed (and located elsewhere in the County) and the Bright Horizons playground would be open to the public after hours, weekends, and on federal holidays.

CASE STUDY 5: First Baptist Church of Clarendon

The First Baptist Church of Clarendon is home to Arlington County's largest child care program, with 189 children enrolled. There are 54 infants/toddlers, 31 two-year olds, 54 three-year olds, and 50 pre- and junior-kindergartners. Unlike many other centers,



the waitlist for older children, specifically the two- and three-year old groups, is longer than that of the infant group. The waitlist for infants is approximately 9-12 months, whereas for two- and three-year olds it stretches to between 12-18 months. The shortest wait, 3 months, is for children in pre- and junior-kindergarten classes.

In February 2007, the Arlington County Board approved a project called the Views at Clarendon. While not yet under construction, the project will add eight stories – 116 units – of rental housing (including 70 affordable units) above a renovated two-story church. The child care center, which operates in an adjacent three-story educational building, will be preserved. Beginning August 2009, temporary locations will be required for students and staff for 24 months. It will also provide a rare opportunity to have both affordable housing and quality child care within convenient walking distance of a Metro Station.

APPENDIX E: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROVIDERS IN THE REGION

The main provider of early childhood education in the region is Northern Virginia Community College, offering both the one year CDA certificate and a two year associate's degree. For further graduate study, some local universities, including George Washington University and George Mason University, offer Master's level programs. Private for-profit schools such as Argosy and Strayer College typically do not offer these types of programs.

Northern Virginia Community College

Classes are offered on Alexandria, Manassas and Loudoun campuses

Early Childhood Development, A.A.S.

Associate of Applied Science Degree;

two year program

The curriculum is designed for persons who seek full-time employment involving the care and direction of young children, or for those persons presently employed in these situations who wish

to update and enhance their competencies. Occupational objectives include assistants, managers and/or directors in day care and child development facilities.

Early Childhood Development Assistant

Certificate; one year program

The curriculum is designed to prepare individuals for employment in situations where care and maintenance of young children is the primary object. Occupational opportunities include aides in child development centers, day care centers, nursery school, residential facilities, and family day care homes.

Infant and Toddler Care Career Studies Certificate

Certificate; one year program to prepare caregivers, program directors, administrators, families and leaders in the field of early education to recognize and develop skills in creating the inclusive learning environments for infant and toddler programs. Completion requirements: Valid first aid and CPR Certificates must be presented at the time of completion of all course requirements in order to receive this Career Studies Certificate.

Early Childhood Development Assistant: Paraprofessional Teacher Assistant

Certificate; one year program

This career studies certificate prepares prospective and practicing paraprofessionals (Assistant Teachers, Instructional Assistants and Public Health Training Assistants) in the public school system to assist in classroom instruction in preparation for the “ParaPro Assessment” test.

George Mason University

Graduate Certificate: Early Childhood (18 credits)

This certificate is designed for early childhood professionals who work in various roles with young children and their families. It focuses on the practice and study of early childhood education, and is based on the early childhood generalist standards of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

Graduate Certificate: Early Childhood (18 credits)

This certificate is designed for early childhood professionals who work in various roles with young children and their families. It focuses on the practice and study of early childhood education, and is based on the early childhood generalist standards of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.



George Washington University

Master's Degree: Early Childhood Special Education

The Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Program offers a non-categorical program of study that prepares early childhood educators and early childhood special educators to work with children birth through eight. The early childhood special educator may work directly with children who have disabilities and their families or may work in a collaborative relationship with other professionals. Settings for service delivery include public and private school special education classes and inclusive classes, Head Start, public and private child care, the home, hospital settings and specialized agency programs. Students are offered the opportunity to train in age-related subspecialties of preprimary or primary school age.

APPENDIX F: OUTSIDE ARLINGTON: WHAT OTHER COMMUNITIES HAVE CONSIDERED

Developers Shun Child Care

In 1985, the City of San Francisco passed a zoning ordinance requiring developers either to provide space for child care on any office or hotel project of 50,000 square feet or more, or make a cash contribution. Developers who chose to make space available for child care were to provide at least 2,000 square feet or the equivalent of one percent of the project's square footage, whichever was larger. The space was to be made available rent-free to a nonprofit child care operator for the life of the building. By 1989, five projects had fallen under the child care provision, and in all five the developers opted to pay the fee instead of providing the space.

Source: Child Care Grows Up, Planning, May 1989

Espresso Tax to Support Child Care Fails

In 2003, Seattle voters rejected a controversial, proposed 10-cent tax on espresso drinks. Initiative sponsor John Burbank stated, "People will be very happy to purchase their tall double lattes and know 10 cents are going to the children of Seattle." The tax was opposed by 68 percent of voters.

Sources: New York Times; Tea and Coffee Trade Journal, Nov 2003

Zoning Bonus Works in Seattle

In Seattle, an incentive system adopted in 1985 offered developers the bonus of an increased floor area ratio (FAR) in return for providing rent-free space for a nonprofit child care operator.

Developers may pay a fee in lieu of providing space for other types of human services, but not if they want the child care bonus, which ranges from 3.5 additional FAR in a renovation to 16 FAR in new office towers—with a maximum of 10,000 square feet. Developer Wright Runstad and Company opted for the child care bonus, as well as a variety of other bonuses, when building the Washington Mutual Tower in 1988: an onsite child care center for 22 infants and toddlers run by a local nonprofit earned them an extra floor. Several other projects in the downtown area have made the same choice in the following years.

Source: Child Care Grows Up, Planning, May 1989



This study was prepared by Jennie Gordon, Jennifer Ives, Karen Vasquez and Cynthia Richmond of Arlington Economic Development.