History of child care development efforts at Harvard

January 25, 2011
Child care at Harvard
1932: work experience for Radcliffe students
1941-1945: Wartime project
1950: Veterans ➔ “lab” school
New Harvard School opens this week for students under five (News Item)

Is this what Harvard means by general education in a free society?

We just hope Coach Harlow doesn't use these fellows on the football team — we wouldn't be able to see them from back of the 10th row.

It's in keeping with President Conant's idea that men with the proper intellectual qualifications ought to come to Harvard.

These G.I. students' children should have plenty of social life, however.

We suggest a Junior Institute of 1770.

Like anyone else, the five-year olds at Harvard will receive tolerant and indifferent treatment.

Students are jammed into the Hotel Brunswick and the area near the Business School known as Tortilla Flat.

Harvard is now seeking students who won't take up much room.

Mr. Francis Dahl of the Boston Herald views the Harvard Nursery School.
1950s-1960s: Married students

Peabody Terrace
Children’s Center
c. 1963: Preschool closes

- Quonset huts are razed to make room for William James Hall
- Preschool appears to have closed
1969: Social change
1969-1970: Radcliffe alumnae

Radcliffe Child Care Center
1971: Harvard Law School students

Harvard Law School Preschool

Botanic Gardens Children’s Center
1971: Graduate Women’s Organization

Harvard Yard Child Care Center
1972: Harvard/Radcliffe Child Care Council

Oxford Street Day Care Cooperative
1976: HU child care advisor

Soldiers Field Park Children’s Center
1982: consortium of institutions

Longwood Medical Area
Child Care Center
2000: MASCO

Bright Horizons at Landmark Center
Meanwhile: Other types of care...

• Back-up and gap care
  – In-home, drop-in, school vacation programs

• Access to care
  – Nanny agencies
  – Resource and referral
Affordability

Cost has always been a major focus:

- Child care now takes up more of our budgets:
  - 1970: $30/week ($168 adjusted $)
  - 2011: $350/week

- Full time infant care = $25,000 +
Scholarships/subsidy

- In 1989, HUCTW’s first contract included a scholarship program for members of HUCTW (Harvard employees)
- Scholarship later expanded to other Harvard benefits-eligible groups, and is funded through the fringe pool
- Some school-based and affiliate hospital subsidy
Many voices ...

Many Harvards ...

- **School-specific**
- Employees
- **Benefits-eligible**
- Non-benefits eligible
  - Visiting scholars
    - Unions
    - Postdocs
- **Students**
  - Residents
  - Ladder faculty
  - Fellows
  - AFFILIATES

Many efforts:

- Needs assessments
- Surveys
- Focus groups
- Demographic analyses
- Reports
- Memos
- Strategic
- Conversations
- Conferences
Why don’t we just …

• ... form cooperative playgroups?
• ... give center employees Harvard health insurance?
• ... make everyone equally eligible?
• ... add a classroom?
• ... turn apartments into child care centers?

• Regulations have improved to boost quality and made informal care tougher
• Rules around fringe funding determine who is eligible, this is governed by federal law
• Funding conversations need to consider funding mechanism
MEMO TO: All Day Care Center Directors
FROM: Frances Howe
SUBJECT:

The Harvard Police believe it advisable for children in the centers to wear a "fig leaf" at all times. This issue arose at Currier House in its first year of operation and it has been generally understood that "fig leaves" were required. Steve Hall has reaffirmed this policy on behalf of the administration.
Themes

1. History of child care = history of space
2. Emergent strategy
3. Build on what we have: Successfully straddled children’s developmental needs and needs of 2-worker households
At day's end, three-fourths of a family leave Lusena Hall for home.