

Helping Women to Succeed in Higher Education: Supporting Student-Parents with Child Care

Bridget Terry Long



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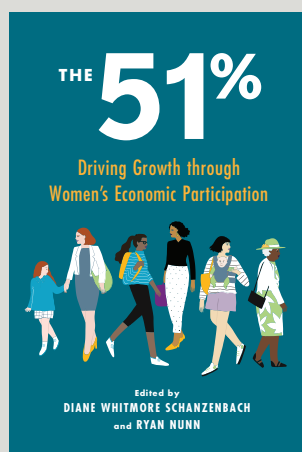
Helping Women to Succeed in Higher Education: Supporting Student-Parents with Child Care

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A CHAPTER IN THE RECENTLY RELEASED HAMILTON PROJECT BOOK



The 51%: Driving Growth through Women's Economic Participation

The U.S. economy will not operate at its full potential unless government and employers remove impediments to full participation by women in the labor market. The failure to address structural problems in labor markets—including tax and employment policy—does more than hold back women's careers and aspirations for a better life. In fact, barriers to participation by women also act as brakes on the national economy, stifling the economy's ability to fully apply the talents of 51 percent of the population. By acting to remove barriers to women's participation, we can realize stronger economic growth that will be more broadly shared by the American people.

Abstract

Women have surpassed men in college enrollment. This trend is particularly pronounced among nontraditional students, including part-time and older students—two groups that face significant challenges in higher education. For the 4.8 million college students who are parents, high-quality, reliable, and affordable child care is essential. I propose building on the Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) Program to structure an institutional grant program that better supports the availability of high-quality child care for parents pursuing postsecondary credentials (student-parents). Compared with the existing federal program, the proposed program would be larger and better targeted to address the substantial needs of low-income student-parents. Moreover, by focusing on the role of postsecondary institutions, the proposal is designed to ensure that student-parents have access to high-quality child care options that will have long-term benefits for both the student-parent and their child. The program would encourage enrollment practices and educational investments that benefit the individual as well as the overall economy.

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Introduction

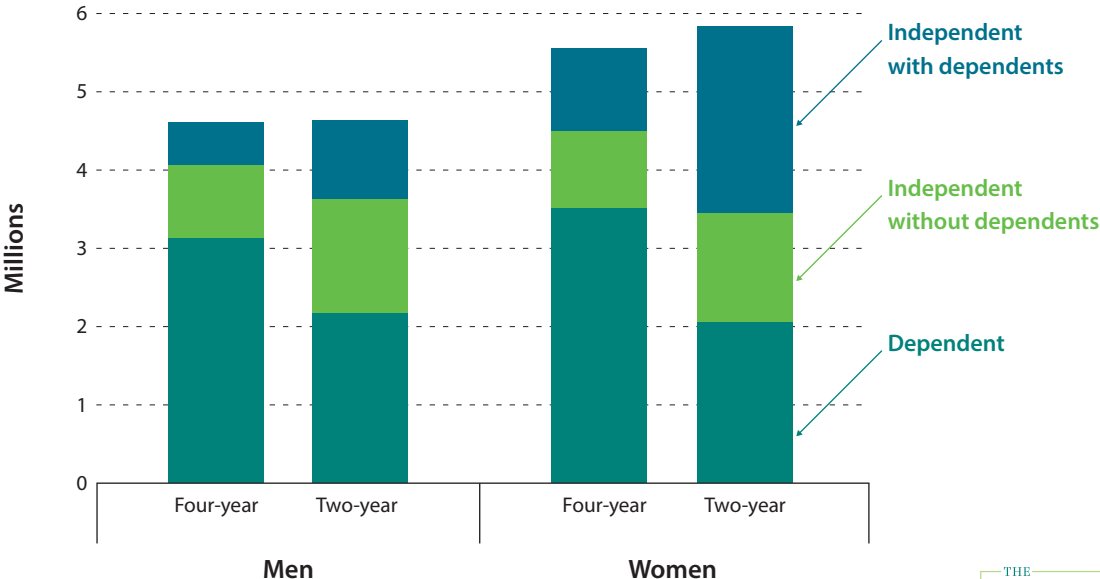
Over the past few decades, women’s postsecondary enrollment has swelled, and for the past 20 years women have outpaced men in college attendance and degree attainment (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES] 2016, table 318.10; 2017, table 303.10). At the same time, many students are older than traditional college students: almost one in five students at public four-year colleges is age 25 or older, as is about one in three students at public two-year colleges (NCES 2016, table 303.50). Older students are particularly likely to be female, with almost twice as many women as men among students over age 35 in 2010 (NCES 2016, table 303.40). Perhaps unsurprising given these statistics, the number of women with dependents enrolled in higher education is sizeable (figure 1). In 2011–12, there were more than 5 million students who had dependents of their own (NCES 2012); 3.4 million students are estimated to be mothers, with 2 million of them being single mothers (Eckerson et al. 2016).

It is vital to the nation’s economic success for adults to have opportunities to attain a higher education credential or to

retrain for a career change. Higher education yields strong labor market benefits, including increased wages and lower rates of unemployment. In addition, postsecondary education has positive spillover effects on children: it brings additional income and more stable employment to the family and a host of nonmonetary benefits that relate to children’s health and educational outcomes (Currie and Moretti 2003; Ma, Pender, and Welch 2016).

The challenges associated with attending and completing postsecondary school can be particularly daunting for student-parents, however. Key supports are often lacking, and in some cases existing supports have been reduced in recent years. For example, only 49 percent of four-year public colleges provided child care on campus in 2015, less than the 55 percent that did in 2003–4; in addition, colleges that provide child care often have long waiting lists. Together with a financial aid system that poorly serves nontraditional students, this situation presents serious impediments to the postsecondary success of these students.

FIGURE 1. Students Enrolled in Higher Education by Dependency Status, 2011–12



Source: NCES 2012.

Note: Four-year includes public and private institutions. Two-year refers to public two-year institutions. Dependent students are generally below the age of 24 unless they are married, a veteran, in foster care, or have dependents of their own.

The Challenge

Nontraditional college students face many challenges. Many are juggling a number of other commitments, such as working full time, but lack the financial support that traditional students often receive from family. Student-parents have the additional challenge of balancing child-care responsibilities with work and study. As such, many of the challenges these students face relate to issues of affordability for their postsecondary education.

Unfortunately, the federal needs analysis system—based on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), described in box 1—fails to accurately measure student financial need. This is a particular problem for nontraditional students, including student-parents.

There are several major criticisms of the way federal need analysis is applied to nontraditional students (Long 2009). First, the needs analysis system assumes that the earnings of the potential college student are relatively minor (e.g., earnings from a summer job), can be maintained during the period of enrollment, and should be largely allocated to cover college expenses. However, most nontraditional students are formally engaged in the labor market when they apply for financial aid. While the government assumes this income level will remain the same even after college enrollment, the nontraditional student is actually likely to experience a reduction in earnings

while enrolled. This assumption results in an overstatement of the income available to nontraditional students and an understatement of their financial need.

Other financial aid criteria can also penalize nontraditional students, including older students. For example, some financial aid requires students to be enrolled at least part time or even full time in a credential-seeking program. Particularly at community colleges, this requirement excludes large numbers of nontraditional students, many of whom are more likely to take classes to gain a particular skill without the goal of completing a certificate or other credential. Finally, some financial aid programs require a high school diploma for eligibility, whereas many nontraditional students have a GED or other certificate, such as a certificate of completion (Bosworth and Choitz 2002).

Existing financial aid programs are often insufficient to help nontraditional students meet the costs of college. Still, nontraditional students respond to financial aid policy, perhaps even to a greater degree than traditional students who can count on financial support from family (Seftor and Turner 2002). It is important to recognize that the financial needs of nontraditional students, especially student-parents, go far beyond tuition. Subsidies for transportation, child care, and books can have positive effects on students' academic progress.

BOX 1.

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid

Each prospective postsecondary student begins the financial aid process by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA collects information on family income and assets to determine the estimated amount a family is able to spend on higher education expenses (called the expected family contribution, or EFC). Other information that affects this calculation includes the size of the family, the number of family members in college, and the age of the oldest parent, as well as information about the prospective student's earnings and assets. To calculate need, the government subtracts the EFC from the total cost of attendance.¹ A student's financial need, in combination with their EFC, determines whether they are eligible for certain grants and loans.

The EFC formula differs if the student is independent (e.g., if they are age 24 or older), married, has dependents, is orphaned, or has served in the armed forces. Because independent students could have their own dependents and might not be able to rely on financial support from family, the federal system does not expect independent students to contribute as much as they expect from the families of dependent students.

For example, Brock and Richburg-Hayes (2006) examine the effects of giving a performance-based scholarship (\$1,000 per semester) to low-income student-parents for adequate academic performance. As long as they had met fairly modest benchmarks, students were given checks at the beginning, middle, and end of each semester. Notably, many used the scholarship money for basic living expenses, including child care and transportation, and the program had positive effects on educational persistence and college credit accumulation.

Community college and broad-access institutions are not currently funded at levels that enable them to offer those supports widely. Community colleges have far fewer resources than other institutions, and spending at community colleges has dropped to the lowest level in a decade—a period that included two recessions (Hurlburt and Kirshstein 2012). From 2001 to 2011 instructional expenditures per full-time equivalent student fell 12 percent after accounting for inflation, and expenditures on student services and academic support fell 7 and 17 percent, respectively (Long 2016). Because they have limited resources to devote to instruction and academic support, it is difficult for community colleges to improve student persistence and credential completion.

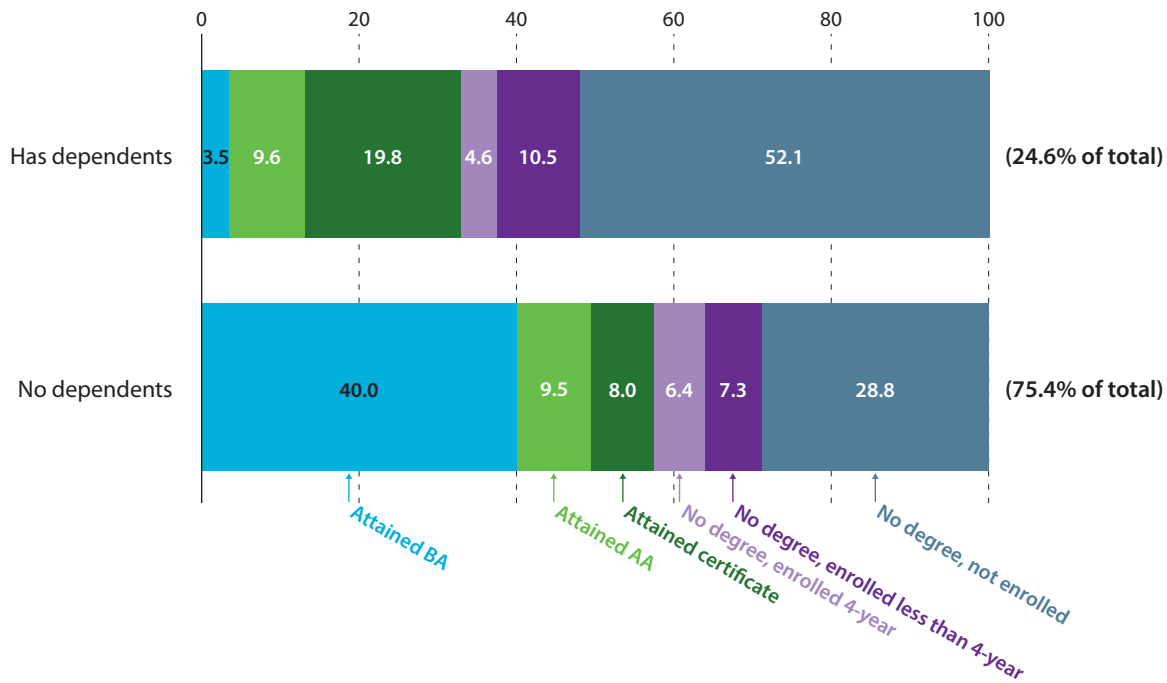
SUPPORTING FEMALE STUDENT-PARENTS

Given the substantial number of mothers enrolled in higher education—and their considerably lower rate of postsecondary credential attainment—focusing support on this group could yield large benefits. Juggling the responsibilities of parenthood with college is extremely difficult. As illustrated in figure 2, among women who entered college in 2003–04 without dependents, nearly 60 percent attained a credential (degree or certificate) within six years, and fewer than 30 percent dropped out with no credential. Among those with a dependent, the success rate was much lower. More than half of female student-parents dropped out with no credential, and fewer than one-third attained any credential at all.

A 2009 survey reported that of students ages 22 to 30 with at least some college coursework completed, 53 percent said family commitments were a major reason why they could not return to complete a credential (Johnson and Rochkind 2009). Without child care, a student-parent cannot take advantage of the support services offered by an institution, thereby affecting their academic progress (Carlson 2015). This proposal focuses on the role of child care in enabling postsecondary progress and completion.

FIGURE 2.

Educational Attainment of Female Student-Parents Six Years after Enrollment



Source: NCES 2009.

Note: students matriculated in 2003–04 and their progress was observed in June 2009. “No degree, enrolled 4-year” refers to students enrolled in a 4-year program in June 2009.

CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY: KEY FOR STUDENT-PARENT SUCCESS

The lack of dependable child care might be partly due to the fact that the FAFSA does not take child-care costs into account when calculating student need and awarding financial aid. Moreover, few campuses offer child-care centers, let alone provide subsidized child care. In fact, even with the growing need for supports for students with children, the percentage of campuses with child-care centers has been declining. About 49 percent of four-year public colleges provided campus child care in 2015, lower than the 55 percent that did so in 2003–04. The percentage was even smaller and declining faster at community colleges: 44 percent in 2015 versus 53 percent in 2003–04 (Eckerson et al. 2016). Women whose children are cared for in off-campus locations have higher transportation expenses and less time to spend on campus and studying (Duquaine-Watson 2007). As such, child-care costs and concerns are a major challenge facing many female student-parents. As summarized by Catherine Hill, vice president for research at the American Association of University Women (AAUW), “Students say that if they don’t have child care, then the other support services just don’t mean that much” (quoted in Carlson 2015).

Targeting financial support to address the lack of child care is warranted given the large public and private returns from increasing the likelihood of credential completion. Furthermore, in this case, the benefits are experienced not only by the adult but also by the student’s children. Previous efforts, whether with financial aid that aims to alleviate child-care costs or by increasing capacity in child-care centers, have been found to have promising results. For instance, in 1988–89 up to \$1,000 in child-care costs were allowed in the calculations used to determine Pell Grant amounts. Simmons and Turner (2004) examine the impact of helping students cover child-care costs through financial aid and provide suggestive evidence that the policy change resulted in increasing the college enrollment rate of women with children.

A more recent example of a government policy that targets child-care issues is found in Minnesota. The Postsecondary Child Care Grant Program aims to help low-income undergraduate students who have children age 12 or younger by paying for care while the student-parent is in class. The amount of assistance the student can receive depends on family size; the income of the student and their spouse, if married; and the number of child-care hours necessary to cover the student-parent’s education and work obligations. For 2016–17 the maximum award was \$5,125, a substantial increase from the previous year, which was only \$2,800. To access the award, students apply through the financial aid office of their college. Another example of a state-based program that supports child-care needs is funded by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education. The Career

Pathways Initiative (CPI), which is funded by the federal government through a TANF grant, pays staff and instructors to provide services, including child care. CPI provides support for a staff member on each of the college campuses it serves to help student-parents find child care (St. Rose and Hill 2013).

Tennessee is also piloting a support program for student-parents. As part of the “2G for Tennessee” initiative, which is a two-generation strategy the state is promoting to create cycles of success within families, the Tennessee Department of Human Services launched a public-private partnership with Mississippi State Community College in 2016 called Leg-Up. The program gives child-care payment assistance along with mentorship for single parents. The pilot is part of a larger state effort called “Drive to 55,” which aims to have 55 percent of Tennessee residents with a college degree or certificate by the year 2025, and a major component focuses on adult students (Stone 2016). There are also examples of targeted support for student-parents at the institutional level. For instance, the University of Memphis created the Child Development Center in 2011. This center provides subsidized, flexible child care to their many student-parents for a highly subsidized rate with extended evening and weekend hours (The Urban Child Institute 2011).

Based on these approaches and the larger literature on effective supports for nontraditional college students, including student-parents, revising policies to recognize the costs of child care for student-parents is one way to improve the current system. For example, the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), governed by the Child Care and Development Block Grant, provides formula block grants to states to provide subsidized child care to eligible low-income families. However, many states restrict student-parents’ access to CCDF subsidies for child care through rules like work requirements, limitations on credential type, eligibility time limits, and activity and academic progress requirements (Eckerson et al. 2016). Even when they meet the eligibility requirements, student-parents can be subject to long waiting periods before they receive benefits (Schulman and Blank 2015). Relaxing eligibility requirements for child-care subsidies, including eliminating work requirements and other restrictions for the CCDF, would be one way to help student-parents get much-needed support to help balance postsecondary study with high-quality child care (Eckerson et al. 2016).

One notable federal program that supports access to child care for student-parents is the Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) Program, described in box 2. While CCAMPIS aims to address the challenges described in this section, it has significant limitations as a support to student-parents. Most importantly, the program currently receives funding that is much less than would be required to meet the needs of student-parents. Strikingly, only about 2 percent of eligible postsecondary

institutions actually receive CCAMPIS grants (Federal Register 2017). Total funding for the program has been less than \$20 million in recent years, restricting the number of successful applicants and the size of the individual grants.

In addition, CCAMPIS does not include strong provisions for ensuring that grants support both high-quality child care and enrollment in high-need postsecondary programs. This constitutes a missed opportunity to improve outcomes for both children and student-parents, making better use of limited federal resources.

BOX 2.

Child Care Access Means Parents in School Program

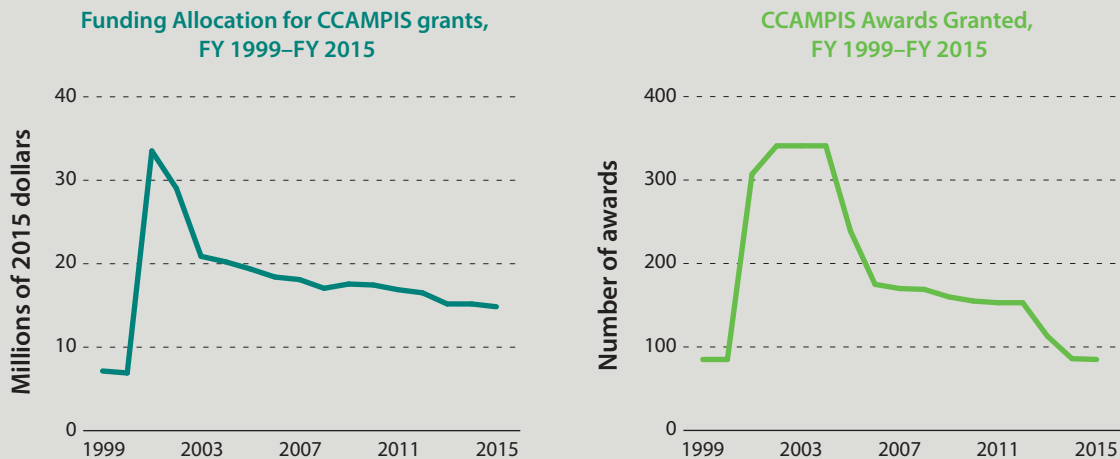
The Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) Program was created in 1998 to support low-income parents pursuing postsecondary education by providing them with access to campus-based child-care services (U.S. Department of Education 2008). Eligible institutions of higher education—those whose students collectively receive more than \$350,000 in Pell Grant funding—apply to the Department of Education for four-year grants that are used to provide child-care services to Pell-eligible students. Funding is capped at 1 percent of total Pell Grant funds awarded to students at the applicant institution in the previous fiscal year and has a floor of \$10,000 annually (Legal Information Institute n.d.). Were Congress to appropriate more than \$20 million of funding in a year, current law provides for eligibility and grants to be automatically modified. Additional institutions—those whose students are granted in excess of \$250,000 in Pell Grant funding—would become eligible to apply; the minimum grant size would also increase to \$30,000 (Legal Information Institute n.d.).

In deciding how to allocate CCAMPIS grants, the Department of Education prioritizes applicant institutions that can leverage local or institutional resources, including in-kind contributions, to support activities assisted by CCAMPIS. Successful applicants should also use a sliding fee scale for child-care services to support a high number of low-income student-parents. These institutions can use CCAMPIS funds to provide or contract for child-care services; with specific exceptions, funds are not to be used for construction projects (Legal Information Institute n.d.).

As shown in box figure 1, funding for CCAMPIS has averaged \$17.5 million since 2003 (U.S. Department of Education 2016). The number of CCAMPIS grant recipients has fallen from more than 341 institutions in 2003 to 85 institutions in 2015 (U.S. Department of Education 2015).

BOX FIGURE 1.

CCAMPIS Grants, FY 1999–FY 2015



Source: U.S. Department of Education 2016.

Currently, 3943 institutions (73 percent) whose students receive federal Pell Grants are eligible for CCAMPIS (Federal Student Aid 2017; author’s calculations). However, only 72 institutions—about 2 percent of those eligible—are expected to receive an award in FY 2017 (Federal Register 2017). The Trump administration’s proposed 2018 budget calls for eliminating the program entirely (U.S. Department of Education 2017).

A New Approach

This proposal for expansion and improvement of CCAMPIS—an institutional grant program that supports the availability of child care at postsecondary institutions—addresses a substantial challenge for student-parents: the limited availability of high-quality, affordable, conveniently located child care. While there is a range of possible approaches to helping student parents with child-care needs, this proposal focuses on the role of postsecondary institutions to address this challenge by proposing grants to colleges and universities to create or expand the capacity of on-campus child-care centers. The proposed expanded CCAMPIS would be funded at \$250 million annually. Such a level would be ten times the peak funding level of \$25 million in 2001 and would meet at least half of the demand for child care by student-parents (Young Invincibles 2015). Notably, bills were introduced in the House and Senate during summer 2017 that call for the U.S. Department of Education to reauthorize the CCAMPIS program at a funding level of \$67 million per year, a step in the right direction but far short of the needs of the nearly 5 million student-parents in higher education.²

IMPLEMENTING THE GRANT PROGRAM FOR ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS

The expanded and revised grant program would work in the following way: accredited postsecondary institutions would apply for a federal grant to increase the availability of high-quality child care for student-parents who are pursuing a valuable educational credential. As with the current CCAMPIS program, student eligibility would be tied to Pell Grant eligibility, which already requires documentation of financial need and enrollment in a program leading to an educational credential. By linking the proposed grant to the federal Pell Grant program, the government is able to adjust the size of the grant to the college or university in proportion to the number of low-income students an institution serves (i.e., based on the number of Pell Grant recipients), thereby giving priority to institutions that serve the students who would benefit most. Another advantage of linking the grant to individual student Pell Grant eligibility is that it streamlines communication and awarding of the benefit—current administrative systems already have contact information and the verification of dependents among Pell Grant recipients, especially in cases in

which tax information is submitted to the college as part of the verification process.

This proposal focuses on institutional action because colleges and universities have the best chance of designing and offering care that acknowledges the educational and parenting demands student-parents are balancing. First, providing grants to institutions gives policymakers the opportunity to press for the creation of high-quality child-care options. Because colleges and universities will be subject to the regulations required for larger child-care centers, they can be held accountable to quality standards. Indeed, a postsecondary institution would likely create and maintain higher-quality care than an individual low-income student-parent could find and monitor independently. Moreover, the proposal emphasizes on-campus child-care centers because off-campus care is much more difficult to coordinate with postsecondary study and can vary tremendously in terms of quality and availability. However, because institutions are the primary actors to apply for and use the funds, it will be important for them to do significant outreach to potential student-parents so that those parents can benefit from the services.

By providing funds to institutions and giving colleges some flexibility on the specific way they pursue expansion of child-care options, the proposal recognizes that community circumstances vary. For example, in some communities expanding existing campus-based child-care centers would be warranted. In other communities, institutions would need to initiate wholly new child-care programs. Combined with strong guidelines and shared implementation plans across institutions, the grant would prompt each institution to address an important need; at the same time, the grant would give the institution the discretion to tailor child-care offerings to the needs of their specific community.

USING CHILD-CARE AWARDS TO BENEFIT CHILDREN AND SUPPORT STUDENT-PARENTS' SUCCESS

Well-designed, high-quality child-care awards are intended to benefit children while boosting student-parents' likelihood of postsecondary success. To increase the chances of attaining the latter goal, the proposal gives institutions the opportunity

to encourage student-parents to pursue especially beneficial educational tracks or enrollment patterns.

The demand for child-care slots created by this program will likely exceed the available supply, at least in the near term as capacity is being created. When allocating those scarce slots, institutions could give preference to students pursuing studies in high-need fields, which would result in maximizing not only private returns but also the social benefits of education. Additionally, students who are enrolled full time (thus trying to complete their credentials faster) and who participate in other important college supports related to student success, such as advising sessions, could be given preference in getting

a slot in a child-care center. At the University of Wisconsin-Madison, for example, current CCAMPIS funds are limited to full-time students and provide full-time care. Analysis of participants suggests 90 percent have either graduated or are making satisfactory progress, most with GPAs above 3.0. At Pikes Peak Community College in Colorado, funding not only provides child care but also helps mothers develop a degree plan and requires career counseling, technology workshops, and tutoring sessions (Sykes, Reichlin, and Gault 2016). These examples show how CCAMPIS could be coupled with other efforts to improve student completion and address local labor market needs. Many more such programs would be encouraged with this proposal.

Costs and Benefits

This proposal would fund the CCAMPIS program at the level of \$250 million, a substantial increase above the current funding level. However, this cost is justified by the potential benefits. There are nearly 5 million student-parents, and waiting lists for campus-based child care are long. Most of these students are low income, with 88 percent living below 200 percent of the federal poverty line (Gault, Reichlin, and Roman 2014). Unfortunately, fewer than 3 in 10 currently complete a degree or credential in six years (NCES 2009). As such, there is a large population of students with great financial need and potential ability to benefit. Efforts to raise the educational attainment level of this group would produce numerous private and public benefits, from increased earnings potential to lower government dependency and higher tax contributions (Ma, Pender, and Welch 2016). Additionally, there would be benefits that extend to the second generation (as is made explicit in the approach of Tennessee’s pilot program focused on providing child care for student-parents) due to the fact that high-quality child care improves the outcomes of the child being served, and greater income would benefit the entire family.

Under this proposal, eligibility for the grant and potential award size would be related to the number of Pell Grant recipients the school serves so that institutions serving many more low-income students would be eligible to receive more in funds. The minimum grant level would be \$30,000 to help ensure that institutions have enough incentive to apply and that the funds are sufficient to create meaningful capacity for students. If the average grant is \$170,000, similar to awards levels in FY 2015, then an estimated 1,500 institutions would benefit.

To encourage institutions to also support the success of their student-parents, bonus funds would be available to institutions that average a retention rate of student-parents above 50 percent. For example, institutions that have received CCAMPIS funding for three consecutive years could apply for a 20 percent increase in their previous-year grant level if they demonstrate a year-to-year retention rate of over 50 percent for past CCAMPIS recipients. Institutions could attempt to reach this standard by instituting other requirements such as mandatory advising or tutoring for their student-parent beneficiaries, as these have been found to be effective supports at other institutions.

Questions and Concerns

1. Programs that aim to help low-income student-parents afford child care are already in place. How does this proposal improve those programs?

Although there are currently several support programs focused on child care, most are not geared toward supporting the specific needs of student-parents. Support of those needs is warranted given the public and private returns, to both the adult and the child, from investing in programs that increase the likelihood of credential completion. The current federal program that targets student-parents, the Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) Program, is small and leaves substantial unmet needs. In FY 2015, less than \$15 million was awarded to only 85 institutions. For FY 2017–18, the estimated available funds are only \$8,549,000 (Federal Register 2017). Meanwhile, a survey of 100 administrators at campus child-care centers found that 95 percent maintain a waitlist with an average of 82 children waiting for quality care (Institute for Women’s Policy Research 2016).

The proposed program aims to create a much larger program of supports for child-care expenses that is better targeted to address the substantial needs of student-parents. It helps more institutions to provide high-quality, convenient child-care options that are well integrated with postsecondary studies. Institutions will be encouraged to share implementation plans and best practices. The design also incorporates incentives for students to pursue especially beneficial educational tracks or enrollment patterns that maximize their likelihood of success.

2. Why does the proposal focus on colleges and universities as providers of child care?

By focusing on postsecondary institutions, this proposal aims to ensure the creation of high-quality child-care centers that produce benefits for the students as well as for the students’ children. Indeed, a postsecondary institution would likely create and maintain higher-quality care than a group of low-income

student-parents could find independently. Having the program work at the institutional level also increases the chances of creating a larger network that shares information about best practices and implementation strategies. This approach would still allow colleges to account for the particular needs of their environment.

3. Why not reform FAFSA or provide vouchers for private market child care rather than have institutions provide child care directly?

The current FAFSA system does not do a good job of accounting for the realities and needs of student-parents or nontraditional students in general. Simply including child-care expenses as part of the total “cost of attendance” in the need analysis calculation would not adequately address the challenges of student-parents, because the underlying formulas would still fail to provide students with sufficient financial aid. Moreover, even with the maximum need-based financial aid available, student-parents still have significant unmet financial need. This is reflected in the fact that students with children graduate with higher debt levels than students without children (Gault, Reichlin, and Roman 2014). Reforming the FAFSA to better address the needs of student-parents would require both dramatically changing how financial aid eligibility is calculated for a diverse group of nontraditional students and increasing the amount of financial aid that could be awarded.

An alternative strategy would be to give student-parents vouchers to use for child care they locate themselves. However, this has several disadvantages. The first is the difficulty of locating high-quality child care. Busy, low-income parents may have difficulty identifying and monitoring care that may also be in short supply. This proposal would instead increase the supply of high-quality care. Moreover, by focusing on on-campus child care, student-parents are more likely to be supported and have reliable care conducive to making time for their academic studies.

Conclusion

Community colleges and four-year broad-access institutions serve large numbers of female students, especially student-parents. Many of these students are teetering on the edge between success and failure, with their success depending on the resources and support available to them. It is imperative to consider ways to better target resources to this large and vulnerable potential group of college graduates. While the majority of funding for higher education comes from state and local communities, funding trends spurred by the Great Recession and competing budgetary demands have had detrimental effects on the

ability of institutions to serve students who are in most need of support. However, whether or not higher education systems are able to serve and support the female majorities on their campuses has important implications for the entire country, thereby justifying a stronger federal role; as such, this proposal would be funded and coordinated federally. The proposed grant program would address multiple financial concerns, at both the student and the institutional level, with a direct injection of funds earmarked to address a specific challenge faced by many students.

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Long is the Saris Professor of Education and Economics and former Academic Dean at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Long is an economist who focuses on education with an emphasis on college access and success. Several current projects examine the roles of information and assistance in promoting college savings behavior, the completion of financial aid forms, and the likelihood of enrolling in college full-time. Other studies by Long examine the effects of financial aid; the impact of postsecondary remediation; and the role of instructor quality, class size, and support programs on student outcomes.

Long is a Research Associate of the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) and member of the Board of Directors for MDRC. She has been a presidential appointee and served as Chair of the National Board for Education Sciences (NBES), the advisory panel of the U.S. Department of Education. Long has also been a Visiting Fellow at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, recipient of the National Academy of Education/Spencer Postdoctoral Fellowship, and she has testified multiple times before Congressional Committees on education issues. Long received her Ph.D. and M.A. from the Harvard University Department of Economics and her A.B. from Princeton University.

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Endnotes

1. Total cost of attendance, which is prorated based on the student's enrollment intensity (whether they attend full or part time), includes tuition, fees, room and board, and other costs at the institution the student attends.
2. The bill in the House was introduced by Rep. Katherine Clark (D-MA) and Rep. Don Young (R-AK). The bill in the Senate was introduced by Sen. Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA), Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Sen. Bob Casey (D-PA) and Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL).

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Highlights

Bridget Terry Long of Harvard University proposes building on the Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) Program to increase the availability of high-quality child care for parents pursuing postsecondary credentials (student-parents). Compared with the existing federal program, the proposed program would be larger and better targeted to the substantial needs of low-income student-parents.

The Proposal

Expansion of CCAMPIS. Long focuses on the role postsecondary institutions can play in addressing student-parent challenges, proposing that colleges and universities be provided with grants for the expansion of on-campus child-care center capacity. The expanded CCAMPIS would be funded at \$250 million annually.

Benefits

Efforts to improve the educational attainment of student-parents would produce numerous private and public benefits, from increased earnings potential to lower government dependency and higher tax contributions. Additionally, there would be benefits that extend to the second generation due to the fact that high-quality child care improves the outcomes of the child being served, and greater income would benefit the entire family.



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