

Faculty Child Care

The statement that follows was approved by the Association's Committee on Women in the Academic Profession, adopted by the Association's Council in June 1989, and endorsed by the Seventy-fifth Annual Meeting.

The American Association of University Professors has long recognized the problems associated with combining academic careers and family responsibilities. It has developed a body of standards and guidelines to encourage sound institutional practices in this area. These include statements on *Leaves of Absence for Child-Bearing, Child-Rearing, and Family Emergencies* (1974); *Senior Appointments with Reduced Loads* (1987); and *Anticipated Medical Leaves of Absence* (1987). The Association has supported key legislation in this area.

Consistent with its recommended policies, the AAUP recognizes that, for faculty members with child-rearing responsibilities to participate successfully in teaching, research, and service to their institution, they must have access to quality child-care facilities. Universities and colleges should assume a share of the responsibility for the provision of such services to their faculties. Employers in and out of academe have found that the provision of on-site facilities has led to stronger and more contented families and increased productivity. The ability to reach parents easily in an emergency, the time and money they save in transportation, the opportunity provided them to share an occasional lunch or other daytime activity with their children, the retention and recruitment of faculty—these are just some of the benefits that accrue from child-care arrangements on campus. Faculty members derive peace of mind from knowing that their children are receiving quality care and that the operation has long-term stability. If the institution has an early-childhood-education program, the opportunity to use the facility for training students provides an additional benefit and contributes to high standards of child care.

Some colleges and universities, because of size or other considerations, cannot support on-site child care. There are alternatives: cooperative arrangements with other nearby employers, resource and referral services, and cost sharing, either as a separate benefit or as part of a cafeteria plan. As with other fringe benefits, recommendations on the extent and form of institutional support (whether through subsidized on-campus care or through a fringe-benefit plan) should be sought from an appropriate body of the faculty in consultation with other groups on campus.

The Association strongly recommends an institutional commitment to the provision of quality child care.