



Thousands of pre-school Charlotteans explore their needs. (photo Eileen Hanson) need quality day care while their parents work. The Day Care Forum Oct. 22 will

CFC, LOWV Will Sponsor

Public Forum On Day Care

by Eileen Hanson
Special to the Post

Where do the children go when mom and dad go to work?

Single parents or parents who must both work out of economic necessity — the moms and dads of some 7.5 million children — must face this question every day.

On Mon. Oct. 22 the Council for Children and the League of Women Voters will sponsor a public Forum on Day Care, an opportunity for people to speak about their day care concerns, or just listen to what others have to say.

The free forum will begin at 7:30 p.m. on the 4th floor of the Education Center, 701 E. Second St. Anyone wanting to speak should contact the Council at 372-7170 to be placed on the agenda.

Lester Strong, chairman of the Council's Day Care Committee and director of Public Affairs for WBTV, will host the forum.

"We have no preconceived notion of what should be done about day care," said Strong. "We want to study the needs and then determine what to do."

As part of the needs assessment, the Council is circulating a questionnaire about day care. Copies will be available at the forum or from the Council office located in the United Community Services building, 301 S. Brevard.

The forum will air questions concerning cost, availability and quality of day care in the Charlotte-

Mecklenburg area. However, Strong stressed that any day care issue can be raised.

"We have already found a gross discrepancy in levels of care in our area," said Strong. "Some centers provide superb care, others are not good places for little children to be."

According to Strong, the state requirements are minimal for licensing child care centers, and most of the requirements are geared to physical facilities and not to the program of care.

Another problem is that most day care centers operate only during weekdays.

"Child care at night or on weekends is non-existent in Charlotte, but parents often have to work at these times," said Strong. He's also concerned that there are not enough centers. "Where do these children go all day long? Many are just being left at home or with neighbors," said Strong.

In Mecklenburg County, almost 50 percent of women with children under 6 years old are working outside the home and are thus in need of child care. This compares with 37 percent nationally.

Because North Carolina has the lowest wages in the country, an average of only \$4.79 an hour, many women must work out of economic necessity. N.C. has the highest ratio of working women in the country - 61 percent.

Because most women are working in low-skill, low-

paying jobs — assembly line, office work, waitress or domestic work — women earn only 58 cents for every dollar earned by men.

Thus the day care problem for the female-head of household is even more acute. A mother can easily spend \$30 to \$40 a week per child in private day care. Publicly assisted day care for low-income families is in short supply. Thus many parents are forced to leave small children with friends, relatives or in unlicensed family home centers.

The Department of Social Services operates 9 centers for 387 children of low-income working parents. In addition it purchases space for another 800 children in private certified centers. Eligibility is based on income and size of family. Polly Langsten of DDS says an estimated 200 to 300 children are on the waiting list.

There are 174 licensed day care centers in Mecklenburg County with spaces for 9,917 children. Only 31 of these centers are certified, meeting federal day care requirements. An additional 122 licensed family day care homes serve another 366 children.

North Meck PTSA

The North Mecklenburg high school PTSA (Parent-Teacher-Student Association) will sponsor its annual barbecue on Friday, October 19, in the school cafeteria.

The hours are from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Day Care Survey

The Council for Children and the League of Women Voters are studying child care needs in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area.

This survey is part of that study and will help us determine the major concerns and issues about day care and day care needs.

This questionnaire is one of several ways in which information will be gathered regarding day care.

Thank you for your interest and response. To answer the following questions, please circle the number of the answer that best describes your situation (circle as many answers as apply to your situation.) There are no right or wrong answers.

Sample question: 1. What is your favorite food?
1. steak
2. ice cream
3. apples

1. What kind of day care services do you need for your child (children)?
1. Service from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.
2. Service at varied times
3. Service after 6 p.m.
4. Service overnight
5. Service before school
6. Service after school
7. Other, please specify _____

2. What kind of care services do you presently have for your child (children)?
1. Service from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.
2. Service at varied times
3. Service after 6 p.m.
4. Service overnight
5. Service before school
6. Service after school
7. Other, please specify _____

3. Where is the service provided?
1. In someone's home
2. At a church
3. At a neighborhood day care center
4. At a Child Development Center
5. At my place of work
6. At a Head Start Center
7. At a County Social Services Day Care Center
8. Other, please specify _____

4. If there is a difference between what you need and the kind of day care services you presently have; what is the reason(s) for the difference? (circle as many reasons as apply to your situation)
1. The service I need costs too much.
2. The service I need is not provided in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area.
3. Transportation is not available for my child (children).
4. The center does not operate during the hours that I work.
5. My child is handicapped and day care service is not readily available.

6. Other, please specify _____

5. If service is provided in someone's home, who is that person?
1. relative
2. neighbor
3. Other, please specify _____

6. Is the center, home, or other place your child (children) receives day care licensed or not licensed by the State of North Carolina?
1. Licensed
2. Not licensed
3. Don't know/not available

7. How did you select the day care center or home your child (children) uses?
1. Heard about it from a friend.
2. Service was available at my place of work.
3. Close to my home/convenient.
4. Saw advertisements about the center or home.
5. Older children in my family have used same day care center/home.
6. Program offered by the center or home appealed to me.
7. Cost of the service was (is) within my price range.

8. At times people have problems with day care. Below is a list of problems. If you now have or have had any of these problems in the past, please circle the number of problem.

(Circle as many problems as apply to your situation)
1. The day care center is unable to take care of a sick child.
2. Day care center operates too few hours.
3. Day care center is not open during some or all of the hours I work.
4. Day care center costs too much.
5. Transportation to the day care center is a problem.
6. Getting my child to the day care center causes me difficulties in getting to work on time.
7. There are not enough adults for the number of children at the day care center.
8. The number of children cared for at the day care center is too large.
9. Day care center will not take my school age child before and/or after school.
10. I don't have any problems with day care.
11. Other, please specify _____

The following questions are to give us background information about the respondents to the questionnaire. This information can never identify you personally from your answer.

9. What is your marital status?
1. Married
2. Separated
3. Single
4. Divorced
5. Widowed
6. I do not wish to answer

Thank you for helping with this Survey.

Mail To:
Council For Children
301 S. Brevard St.
Charlotte, N.C. 28202

10 Elected To

Student

Government Posts

Ten Mecklenburg County students have been elected to student government positions at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

David Currie, 9101 Clancy Place, Charlotte, was elected junior class president and will represent his classmates in the Student Legislature. He is a political science major.

Donna Cooper, 4500 Dawnwood Drive, Charlotte, and Michael Kemp, 1060 Tara Lane, Charlotte, were elected court justices. They will serve on the nine-member Student Court. Ms. Cooper is a senior business major, and Kemp is a junior political science major.

Scott Beddingfield, 4047 Tamerland Drive, Charlotte, was elected to represent Moore Residence Hall in the Student Legislature, the second time he's served in that capacity. He is a junior economics major.

John Aveull, 1610 Delane Ave., Charlotte, was elected graduate representative to the Student Legislature, one of two elected to represent graduate students. He is working on a master's in guidance and counseling in the College of Human Development and Learning.

Five students were elected as commuter representatives to the Student Legislature. They are:

Sharon P. Chrisholm, 1114 Sedgfield Road, Charlotte; a freshman political science major.

Phil Fleming Jr., 337-5 Orchard Trace Lane, Charlotte; a freshman history major.

Karen Hughes, 6713 Somersworth Drive, Charlotte; a freshman business administration major.

Janette A. Smith, 7301 Marlbrook Drive, Charlotte; a senior accounting major.

Bill Brannon, 9610-G University City Blvd.

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