



Funding Request Form FY2021

Department should complete one form for each individual request

Department:

Becky Gates Children’s Center

Program, Service or Operation Requested:

Increase the student discount amount by \$65 per student parent to offset annual increases to child care costs.

General Description:

We are asking for an increase to the current budgeted student discount amount to aid the rising costs of child care. Tuition costs continue to rise and the student discount amount has remained at \$100 per month per student. We are proposing an increase of \$65 per month, per student. The annual amount totals \$27,660 based on our average student parent enrollment of 40%. Becky Gates Children’s Center has increased tuition an average of \$62 over the last 4 years alone.

Request Type:

- Full Increase One-Time Partial/Matching

Type of Funds Requested:

- UAF Other

General Questions

How does this address an important need and/or positively impact students?

The number of student parents continues to increase. According to The Department of Education, approximately one in five students is also raising a child. For student parents, the cost of child care is very expensive. Our proposal increases the amount of support we are able to provide to student parents by \$65/month. Student parents needs high quality child care in order to be successful in school. According to the Journal of Higher Education, “Being a student parent also correlates with other ‘nontraditional’ student characteristics, many connected with a higher risk for dropout” (Wladis, Hachey, & Conway, 2018, p. 809). Wladis, et. al, 2018, also states student parents are predominately women of color, first-generation college students, over half are low-income, and half work full-time.

Clair Wladis, Alyse C. Hachey & Katherine Conway (2018) No Time for College? An Investigation of Time Poverty and Parenthood, The Journal of Higher Education, 89:6, 807-831, DOI: 10.1080/00221546.2018.1442983

What department/Division strategic plan item does this support?

Enrich Student Experience – Increased the number of opportunities for students to engage in high-impact, transformational learning experiences.

Contribute to Student Success – Equipping students with the skills and competencies desired by employers and ensure they are highly sought after for jobs and participation in significant areas upon graduation.

Develop Global Leaders – Foster environments in which students find places to belong. Expand opportunities for students to reflect on personal and multiple perspectives regarding difference, diversity, and inclusion. Enhance programs and services to reduce and effectively respond to bias-related incidents. Foster positive leadership development experiences – equipping students with skills and competencies highly desired by employers.

Support Student Wellbeing – In order for students to be academically successful, they need to be in a positive, healthy, and secure environment.

Ensure Future Effectiveness – Develop a facilities master plan for the Division of Student Affairs to accommodate the growing number of students.

Please provide data, evidence, and/or input (student faculty, staff, other) you gathered to help you determine the need for additional resources.

When asked in our 2018-2019 Annual Family Survey if they would recommend BGCC, one parent commented, “I would recommend it (BGCC) only to those friends of mine who could easily afford the fees. It might be reasonable to think about raising rates for faculty and providing rate cuts for students. Students pay approximately what faculty and staff pay even though, on average, student incomes are maybe 1/4 of faculty incomes. This means the real cost of childcare is higher for the group of people less able to afford child care. However, I am deeply appreciative of the effort the BGCC makes to address this fee imbalance.”

What actions have you implemented or discontinued internally to address the identified need?

We were awarded scholarship money from the Association of Former Students to assist graduate students in the cost of child care. This resulted from a meeting with the Graduate and Professional Student Council. They passed a resolution calling for an increase in funding for Texas A&M’s on-campus child care center. The Battalion Article is attached.

If funding is granted, what metrics will you use to evaluate success of this program/service/operation?

Graduation rates of student parents.

Have other sources of funding (fundraising, sponsorship, reserves, etc.) been considered? Please explain.

At this time, we are in the process of rebuilding our reserves. The Becky Gates Children's Center is an Auxiliary Building and we are responsible for being self-sustaining. In order to decrease the amount student parents pay for child care, we would have to increase the cost of child care which is counterproductive. If unable to fund total request, we would be happy with any increase that can be provided.

Total Estimated Cost

Funding Description	Amount
Increase student discount amount from current \$78,000 per year to \$105,660 per year	\$27,660.00
<i>Less Estimated Partial/Matching Funds (if Applicable)</i>	
TOTAL INCREASE REQUESTED	\$27,660.00

BGCC Student Discount Increase Proposal

Current Rates 2019-2020

Faculty & Staff		Student		Difference
1-year olds	\$915.00	1-year olds	\$815.00	-\$100.00
2-year olds	\$775.00	2-year olds	\$675.00	-\$100.00
Preschool	\$730.00	Preschool	\$630.00	-\$100.00

Proposed Rates 2021

Faculty & Staff		Student		Difference
1-year olds	\$915.00	1-year olds	\$750.00	-\$165.00
2-year olds	\$815.00	2-year olds	\$650.00	-\$165.00
Preschool	\$750.00	Preschool	\$585.00	-\$165.00

History of Tuition Increases and Future Proposals

	2017	2018	2019	Proposed 2020	Proposed 2021	Total Increase
1-year olds	\$870.00	\$890.00	\$915.00	\$915.00	\$915.00	\$45.00
2-year olds	\$735.00	\$755.00	\$775.00	\$795.00	\$815.00	\$80.00
Preschool	\$690.00	\$710.00	\$730.00	\$740.00	\$750.00	\$60.00

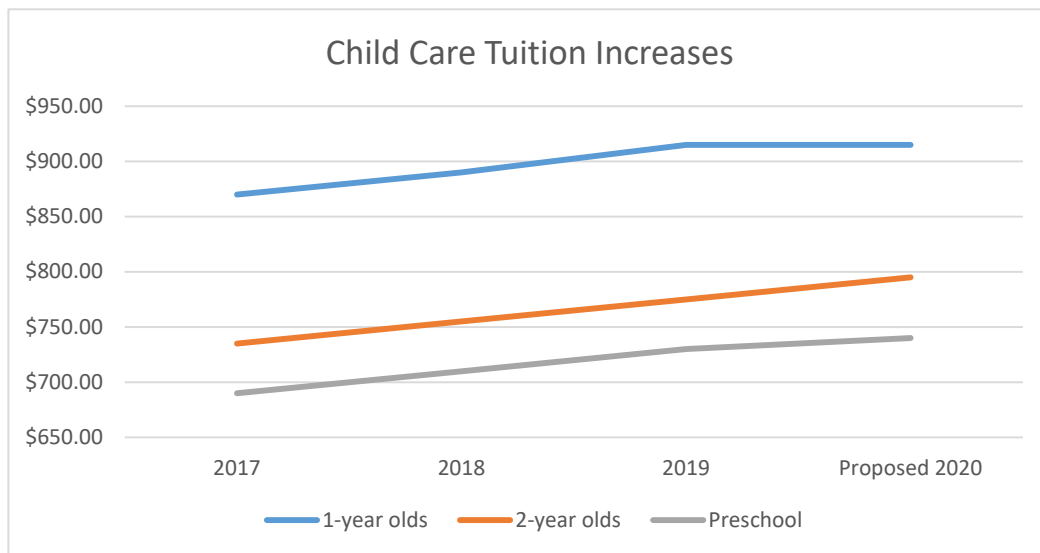
History of Annual UAF Amount

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Difference
\$78,000.00	\$78,000.00	\$78,000.00	\$78,000.00	\$105,660.00	\$27,660.00



*40% of 168

*On average our student parent enrollment is 35-40%



The cost of child care

Early education creates financial burden for student parents.

- [By Megan Rodriguez @MeganLRodriguez](#)
- Jun 11, 2018 Updated 5 hrs ago
- [0](#)

The Graduate and Professional Student Council passed a resolution calling for an increase in funding for Texas A&M's on-campus child care center, but there is still work to be done to alleviate the monetary struggles faced by parents working toward their degrees.

The resolution in support of increased funding to the Becky Gates Children's Center was presented by former GPSC president Matthew Etchells and 2017-2018 Delegate for Aggies in Science, Technology and Engineering Policy Keya Mukherjee. According to the resolution, an increase in funding could reduce the cost of child care for students while making it possible to expand the center, effectively reducing the more than 200 person wait list.

Etchells said child care is continuously discussed among various student groups he met with and the resolution was meant to let administration know of this growing concern among the student body.

"Child care is something that keeps coming up because for us it is an equity issue," Etchells said. "Why should you have to make the choice between a PhD or a family? That doesn't make sense to us as students. ... The university has grown so quickly that things like the Becky Gates center needs to grow since they haven't quite matched the rate of growth of the university."

While the resolution passed unanimously at the end of the spring semester, Associate Vice President of Student Affairs Tom Reber said action still needs to be taken before the university could increase funds for the center. Reber said the resolution would need to be addressed at the Student Affairs Advisory Board

meeting in the fall, gain support from undergraduate student government, and go to the vice president of student affairs, chief financial officer and president of the university before funds can be released.

“I think any time students support other students it’s great,” Reber said. “There are not too many times students will say, ‘I want more money to go toward this,’ just because money is tight for everybody. I think any time the grad students rally around a cause it is a great effort and it’s wonderful for the children’s center, but it doesn’t mean automatically they get more funding. There is still a lot of work to do.”

Currently, Texas A&M provides the center with custodial, utilities, maintenance and landscaping services, which averages to approximately \$170,000 a year. In addition, a \$100 dollar discount for 71 student parents is also provided according to Erica Ritter, director of the children’s center. The center can take in 165 children but would essentially need to double in size to accommodate the 220 person waitlist. Ritter said an expansion of this magnitude would require a funding increase of approximately \$8 to \$10 million.

“That is a large number but we can provide a very high quality care for children,” Ritter said. “We choose things that are research-based curriculums, theories and philosophies. Children who leave our center typically do very well in the next level of education.”

As a parent of two children under the age of five, biochemistry and biophysics research associate, Denis Odokonyero has experienced first hand how difficult it can be as a student with a family.

“The biggest challenge of course is the financial burden,” Odokonyero said. “The other thing is time. In grad school, you have to work at least 50 or 60 hours a week. You can’t get by only working 40 hours a week. You have stuff to balance and it’s tough. A lot of grad students have kids and of course when they’re young you get maybe two or three hours of sleep a night and still have to function.”

Odokonyero said he would be appreciative of any assistance that could be given to student parents.

“If somehow the [GPSC] could find ways to try to have another facility on campus just for grad students or expand the existing one and, if somehow they could subsidize the cost of it,” Odokonyero said. “It doesn’t have to be the full amount, anything would help.”

Sociology PhD student Angelique Maes is a new mother who delivered her baby this month. Maes said she was concerned about the challenges she would face as a student parent but knew her education was not something she could compromise.

“What it really came down to is if I didn’t finish my degree, I didn’t feel like I would be able to face [my child],” Maes said. “The time to graduate is now. As soon as I possibly can. I’m really making an effort to finish my dissertation and take care of the baby. I’m going to regret it if I don’t.”

Mukherjee said she hopes funds for a new child care facility will become a priority of the university administration since the cost of child care can weigh so heavily on student families.

“We want to bring an awareness to the situation,” Mukherjee said. “People don’t really think about this as an issue unless it happens to someone close to them and they see them struggling through it. I think it’s a much bigger issue than people realize. We would really like the university to provide some support to the issue at hand.”