A FRAMEWORK OF RECOMMENDED PRACTICES
IN SUPPORT OF STUDENT PARENTS AT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

This Framework is part of the Family Friendly Campus Toolkit, which provides tools for a self-assessment process designed to improve conditions and outcomes for parenting students.

You can find the Toolkit at:
familyfriendlycampustoolkit.endicott.edu
or contact PERG for more information.

Parenting Program or Services	Characteristics
A1: Goals/ philosophy	Clear goals and philosophy for services and programming for parenting students and their children
A2: Program/office	Separate office and programming specifically for parenting students
A3: Staffing	Qualified staff providing services exclusively for student parents who are trained in their issues and needs, with sufficient time to meet the needs
A4: Program/office space	Space for private conversations, group meetings, informal hang out area, nursing/feeding and changing space, child play area
A5: Social support	Easily available informal social support from staff or peers
A6: Core/priority needs	Program ensures that student parents who utilize services have access to: safe affordable housing, quality child care, sufficient food, necessary transportation, health care for their families
A7: Services provided directly to parents	Services provided by program staff directly to parenting students could include, but are not limited to: formal and informal counseling, assistance to meet child care needs, parenting help and information, special classes (i.e. life skills, transitioning into/out of college), information about wide range of topics and services, help with obtaining all available institutional subsidies, emergency grants/resources, laptop loans/ computer access, mentoring, leadership development opportunities, and referrals to additional resources.
A8: Referrals and assistance with on campus services	Referrals (and monitoring of outcomes) to other service providers on campus, including providers of academic support, financial aid, mental health services, campus safety, health, housing, financial aid, etc.; playing advocacy role when necessary
A9: Referrals and assistance with off-campus service providers	Referrals (and monitoring of outcomes) to off-campus resources, including providers of public assistance, childcare, housing, food pantries, etc.; actively helping students navigate and negotiate public assistance using a social work model
A10: Services for youngest, other most at-risk students	Youngest and other most at-risk student parents identified (least supported, most isolated, disconnected); extensive support, supervision, and tracking provided
A11: Community building	Deliberate opportunities and space(s) for student parents provided by program so they can build community with each other, including family social activities
A12: Children	Help with access to high quality early childhood and other educational options; special programs on campus that encourage future college attendance by children
A13: Advocacy	Advocacy for student parent needs on campus, with faculty and administration; support for student parents to advocate for own needs
A14: Advertising of services	Adequate publicity of services for parents through a variety of means on campus and online so that all parents know what services and activities are available and how to access them
A15: Relationship and coordination with other campus providers	Good relationships and regular communication with other campus providers of services to student parents, including parent-run organizations, childcare providers, academic support, financial aid, mental health services, residence life, campus security, etc.
A16: Data collection	Data collection that will enable tracking of usage of services, retention, academic success, numbers and demographics, etc. Administer short surveys to assess needs, student satisfaction with services and campus environment, etc.
A17: Self-evaluation	Review of data collected to assess current status of services and campus environment annually

Institutional Supports	Characteristics
B1: Program champion	Program has a champion with political clout on campus who proactively advocates for services for student parents
B2: Administrative support	Relevant administrative offices are responsive to requests and often proactive around the needs of student parents
B3: Financial aid	The institution offers additional financial aid specifically for student parents, such as for tuition, child care, or housing
B4: Academic policies	Institutional policies deliberately and specifically support student parents and take parenting issues into account, such as priority registration, accommodation for sick children in absence policy, flexible course options, ability to obtain full-time privileges when unable to take full load
B5: Policies about children on campus	Institution has a clear policy about welcoming children on campus; reasons for any restrictions are clearly explained
B6: Data collection	Institution collects and provides data points on basic information about student parents on campus that will enable reporting on student parent outcomes
B7: Faculty/staff awareness efforts	Institution initiates efforts to make faculty and staff more aware of the needs of student parents
B8: Title IX enforcement	Institution ensures that all pregnant and parenting students, as well as faculty and staff, understand the legal requirements of Title IX re pregnant and parenting students
B9: Student success	Student parents are retained and graduate at rates comparable to similar non-parenting students
B10: Family housing	Institution makes (affordable) family housing available to undergraduate student parents
B11: On campus childcare	On campus, quality child care is available and affordable for undergraduate student parents, both during the day and the evening
B12: Meal plans for children	Institution negotiates free or subsidized meal plans for children

Campus Culture	Characteristics
C1: Campus approach to parenting students	Institution and campus acknowledge unique needs and situation of parenting students, with parenting center, policies, activities, etc. that reflect this
C2: Family-friendly spaces	Campus includes spaces where parents feel comfortable bringing their children; also spaces specifically for parent and family interaction, lactation/ pumping, changing diapers, child-friendly study spaces, playgrounds, etc.
C3: Encouragement and support for campus engagement	Specific encouragement and support for parenting students to engage with college life outside the classroom, including free childcare at campus events, events open to children, evening childcare options, gym childcare
C4: On campus family activities	Sponsored activities on campus specifically for families; activities for all students that are appropriate and inviting for parenting students to attend with their children
C5: Faculty and staff	Faculty and staff are aware and supportive of the needs of pregnant and parenting students
C6: General atmosphere	Pregnant and parenting students and their children are visible, and feel comfortable and welcomed on campus

Wider Community	Characteristics
D1: Partnerships	Formal or informal relationships exist with organizations outside of the institution, such as: healthcare agencies, Head Start/other child care centers, United Way, food assistance, public assistance agency, mental health provider, mentorship organization, low-income housing providers, etc.
D2: Outreach	Programs exist for reaching out to young parents (in high schools and elsewhere) and others for mentoring, inspiration, and recruiting for college
D3: Funding	Successful, targeted fundraising efforts
D4: Connection with other student parent programs	Part of a network/community of student parent programs

Photo by Parker Fish

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