

Services for Students with Children

Smith Memorial Student Union
1825 SW Broadway, Suite 462
Portland, Oregon 97207



**RESOURCE
CENTER FOR
STUDENTS WITH
CHILDREN**



**JIM SELLS
CHILD CARE
SUBSIDY
PROGRAM**



**LITTLE VIKINGS
FLEXIBLE
CHILDCARE
CENTER**

March 8, 2019

Dear Legislators,

I am reaching out to you as the Director of Services for Students with Children at Portland State University. I am the head of the department that provides support and connection for students with children in Portland State. These students make up more than 1 in 5 students at PSU. Student parents have much lower retention and graduation rates nationally than students without children, and therefore need more support in order to raise their rates of retention and completion.

I have been in my position at PSU for 7 years, and one of our biggest struggles is identifying and counting student parents so that we can provide services to them. At PSU, we do not have a way to identify all or even most of these students, which makes it difficult to deliver services to them. I have tried to get Admissions to add a parenting question to the admissions questionnaire for 5 years, but I have not been successful. I know my colleagues who work with the LGBTQIA+ population have found the admissions questions for sexual and gender minorities very helpful in identifying these students to provide support and advocacy for them.

I believe collecting this data about student parents is very important and would help support the student parent population in Oregon, meaning more financially struggling, marginalized Oregonians with children would be able to achieve their goals of graduating from college, and change the trajectory of their lives and the lives of their families for generations to come.

Thank you in advance for your support of students with children,

Sincerely,

Lisa Wittorff, LCSW

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