

Title: Vision Statement for Cornell Child Care Center

Date Approved: January 13, 2009

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Topic summary: Bright Horizons is a company with a good overall approach to child care and the ability and willingness to tailor its program to specific sites. The Cornell Child Care Committee's beliefs about child care and the unique characteristics and opportunities desired at this center informed this committee's logistical decisions along the way. The committee provides this summary of our vision and philosophy to guide Bright Horizons as it moves forward creating a facility that is *uniquely Cornell*. Most local daycares and centers at other academic institutions advertise their basic philosophies on their websites and brochures, and we would like to see Cornell's center also make use of this statement as a way to communicate important information to prospective families.

Discussion summary: Themes that have come up in our discussions regarding the vision and philosophy of Cornell's new Child Care Center:

- The new Child Care center should reflect the mission of Cornell and be developed as a place of inquiry where learning is valued on many levels. It will be a place of excellence that represents Cornell's values.
- The Child Care Center is a place which honors children and celebrates families and it is the place where the University's diversity statement should be visibly and intentionally practiced.
- Cornell's present and future families deserve and will expect the highest quality day care. Knowledge of best practices in the field of early care and education should be reflected in the design and operation of the center.
- The center should draw on Cornell faculty and staff's expertise in child development theory and maintain a program that can serve as a model for others, demonstrating best practices in the field.
- The center will provide opportunities for education and research for Cornell faculty and students through facilitated observation and participation with infants and young children. Including education and research increases overall quality; it creates an environment that encourages excellence.
- Cornell recognizes that there have been insufficient child care options for our community and that cost is an exorbitant and sometimes prohibitive factor for many families. The opening of this center with its 158 new spaces for children, the creation and expansion of child care grants for use at this center and elsewhere, the policies and work of the Office of Workforce Diversity, Equity and Life Quality, and the input from the Cornell Child Care Committee all are efforts to address these needs. Cornell will continue to seek additional ways to help Cornell's families with children.

A vision statement that incorporates some of these ideas in a condensed form that could be used for a brochure or website is attached as Appendix A.

Appendix B contains links to vision statements from some local daycares and some college/university daycare centers.

Recommendations: The committee shall submit both the list of themes above and the vision statement to the Cornell Child Care Center as a reference and invite the center to collaborate with the committee to develop a statement both the committee and Bright Horizons agree upon and that will be used in future Cornell Bright Horizons publicity.

Action taken: Following committee discussions, Cornell Human Resources implemented this suggestion on their website in December 2008.

The committee invites future collaboration and communication with the Cornell Child Care Center as it addresses and looks for ways to implement any aspects of its vision and philosophy.

Appendices:

Vision statement, March 19, 2008

Other center's vision statements

Appendix 1

Vision statement, submitted by Brenda Marston, March 19, 2008
Approved by the committee,

Cornell plans to offer a unique, high quality child care on campus to serve Cornell's diverse families.

Informed by the research of early childhood experts, the approach will be child- and play-centered, tailored to the needs of individual children at their own developmental level, and will include attention to social connection, physical movement, music, art, and language. The center will invite family involvement, foster the building of community, and foster respect for each unique family. Goals include both creating a positive, nurturing environment for children and improving the work/life navigation for its students, staff, and faculty.

This facility helps meet the University's child care needs and increases child care options for Cornell staff, faculty, and students.

Appendix B

Other center's vision statements

MIT: <http://hrweb.mit.edu/mitchildcare/about/index.html>

a vibrant and supportive learning environment

The Technology Children's Centers (TCC) are developmentally based, and foster respect and appreciation for individual and cultural diversity. Surrounded by support and encouragement, each child at TCC can pursue his or her natural curiosity while undertaking age-appropriate activities and challenges. As the children work together with us to build their social and intellectual skills, they also develop independence and confidence.

a diverse and stimulating community

At TCC, our staff members are state-certified early childhood professionals dedicated to the education of young children and committed to ensuring each child's safety and wellbeing. We value the opportunity to develop strong, active partnerships with parents and families to support the children's learning experience. Our community is multicultural, and many of our teachers and families are multilingual, which enhances our programs immensely and encourages the children to learn about and enjoy the rich diversity surrounding them.

Under Cottonwood, Ithaca:

<http://www.undercottonwood.com/info.php#Philosophy>

Includes this:

At Under Cottonwood one of our goals is to create a community of children, staff and families. We believe that social relationships are the foundation of all learning. To that end we spend a lot of time and thought nurturing our relationships with the children as well as their relationships with each other. We also work hard to form strong connections with all of our families. We communicate with families on a daily basis and also have multiple opportunities for families to connect through center socials throughout the year.

Ithaca Community Childcare Center (IC3): <http://www.ictthree.org/>
<http://www.ictthree.org/programs.htm>

West Hill Educare, Ithaca: <http://www.westhilleducare.com/>

A program for 1 and 2 year olds, it has a very nice “philosophy of care” statement, as well as program information. The welcome statement includes this:

Our mission is to provide early care and education that supports the development of self-help and communication skills in the young child while emphasizing the importance of empathy towards others. We seek to enhance each child's sense of joy and wonder through observation of and interaction with the natural world.