

*This message is being sent on behalf of the Graduate Student Association*

To whom it may concern:

On behalf of the graduate student body, the Graduate Student Association opposes the proposed shift by the university administration from university-run childcare to a for-profit corporation, Bright Horizons, as part of the privatization of the maintenance of the new Family Student Housing.

At present, Early Education Services (EES) is operated by UCSC as a Title V (California subsidized preschool) for undergraduate and graduate students. About 50 undergraduate and graduate students' children utilize the center; many of these student-parents live at Family Student Housing. If the plan goes ahead as proposed:

- UCSC will have no control over the costs of the childcare, which will be determined by Bright Horizons, in accordance with market value rates. At present, childcare ranges from \$100 to \$875 a month, depending on the child's age. **Market rates are \$2000-3000 per month.** UCSC has *not made a commitment* to assist with childcare costs.
- UCSC will have no control over the educational qualifications of teachers and the childcare director. Bright Horizons does not require a Bachelor's degree for its teachers.
- UCSC will have no control over teacher-to-student ratios; Bright Horizons currently averages more students per teacher than university-run childcare.
- UCSC will have no control over the availability of childcare spots for graduate and undergraduate students, which would instead be determined by Bright Horizons. While we support faculty and staff's access to childcare, the administration has made no guarantee that student-parents would retain access after privatization.
- UCSC will have no say over the aspects of the contract with Bright Horizons that would alleviate any of the above concerns about quality and access.

In light of these proposed changes, we as a student body fear for our peers' capacity to live and prosper at UCSC. Lack of quality and affordable childcare is a social justice issue; its absence denies access to education for women, trans parents, and students from wider ranges of income, which disproportionately affects people of color. The proposed shift to privatize childcare is just one instance of a broader move by the university administration to a corporate model, which will make services unavailable and inaccessible to the graduate student community, and the wider Santa Cruz community.

To ensure the success of a diverse and healthy student body, we, the Graduate Student Association, demand quality and affordable childcare for graduate students, and also for undergraduate students, staff, and faculty. The administration has failed to be transparent throughout this process, and properly involve student-parents, whose judgments must be central to the decision-making process. Education is and must be a public good and these changes restrict our capacity to imagine it as such. We therefore oppose the contracting of Bright Horizons.

Please consider signing a petition if you also oppose the contracting of Bright Horizons - <https://goo.gl/forms/v41vQxF11tVgNMFw2>

Contact [igsc@ucsc.edu](mailto:igsc@ucsc.edu) for more information and to get involved.

In solidarity,  
The Graduate Student Association