

**Annual Assessment Report Template**  
Academic Year: 2013-2014

**Name of Department: Adult, Veteran and Commuter Affairs**

**Name of Contact Person: Haydee Nunez**

**Name of Person(s) completing report or contributing to the project: James Stewart, Noe Valdovinos**

**A. Abstract**

Adult students face unique circumstances that call for unique resources and support. Many adult students assume multiple roles, such as student and parent. With such diverse demands on time, inter-role conflicts may occur. Adult, Veterans and Commuter Student Affairs developed a daylong-conference to specifically engage students who have children, now in its second year. The office aimed for learning to take place related to exposure to resources, advocating for self and child, and networking between other students with children, and we again collaborated with over ten DePaul departments for a series of workshops, a keynote speaker, and a resource guidebook distributed to each student.

To assess the effectiveness of the Conference, we distributed pretest and posttest surveys to the actual conference attendees. Based on the learning outcomes to be measured, the responses were scored and success of learning at the Conference for Students with Children was determined. Most items had an increase in self-reported learning or comfort with an area assessed. One challenge in the second year of execution noted is we had repeat attendees who may still be benefiting from a higher pre-test.

Overall, the office believes the data supports the Conference for Students with Children's methods of delivery of information on resources, self-advocacy, and networking as successful.

**B. Introduction and context for this year's report**

**1. What is the question being asked? What learning outcomes are being assessed?**

Learning outcomes to be measured from the Conference for Students with Children:

- Students will be able to advocate for themselves and/or other adult students who are caregivers to (a) child/children.
- Students will navigate the specific university resources for adult students and students with children.
- Students will be able to identify and network with a community of students with children.
- Students will connect with community support services.

**2. What is the relevance of the question as it relates to the work of the department and/or division?**

The learning outcomes associated with the Conference are within these Divisional/Departmental Learning Outcome Domains:

- Persistence and Academic Achievement-Students that participate in Adult, Veteran and Commuter Student Affairs Programs will utilize appropriate resources when needs arise.
- Persistence and Academic Achievement-Students that participate in Adult, Veteran and Commuter Student Affairs Programs will find peers with which they can relate.
- Knowledge Acquisition, Application, and Integration – Students that participate in Adult, Veteran and Commuter Student Affairs programs will gain useful knowledge that applies to their lives.

Achievement of the learning outcomes would also promote the mission of Adult, Veteran and Commuter Affairs. The department mission is so assist adult students in their transition into higher education and provide resources to help them achieve their academic goals. This Conference provided information that addressed some of the unique barriers students with children may face when pursuing their degree. By attending the Conference sessions, the student attendees now have knowledge and strategies to combat

difficulties they may encounter throughout their DePaul experience especially relating to their multiple roles as both a student and a student with (a) child/children.

**3. How does answering this question help your department?**

Answering these questions and achieving the learning outcomes we have set for the Conference speaks to mission of the Office. We provided the students who attended with resources and information that will assist them in achieving their academic goals.

In addition, this is the second year of this assessment and this program. A second year of results can assist in supporting past results or provide new insights.

**4. How is the question linked to the Student Affairs Strategic Plan (2010-2013) and Vision Twenty18 goals? (Please be as specific as possible.)**

The development of this Conference coincides with the first of the VisionTwenty18 Goals, enhance academic quality and support educational innovation. More specifically, it speaks to the objective that focuses on the entire university community on student learning and success. We focused on critical transitional resources that would assist any student with a child in higher education. We also hope this strengthened the connection between students across different academic studies. We developed this Conference to reduce barriers student with children may face and enhance the DePaul community in general.

**5. Provide any relevant research and/or literature that informs or contextualizes this project. Please summarize and cite this information. Do we know anything theoretically or empirically about this question?**

Usually, adult students assume multiple roles, whether it is student and spouse, student and caregiver, full-time employee and student, or countless other variations. This complexity of one's identity can cause stress and conflict because the multiple responsibilities may not coincide well (Dyk, Patricia A.H., 1987). Since various roles create competition for time, energy, and resources, the author suggests re-defining the "normal" responsibilities; by doing this with a reliable source, tasks associated with each role can be better managed and balanced (Dyk, Patricia A.H., 1987). One thing this author identified as an ineffective way to cope, which is very common among people who assume multiple roles, is to attempt to complete everything with no regard to self-care (Dyk, Patricia A.H., 1987). This is not only physically unhealthy, but will most likely result in a lower potential for academic success. The Conference we developed helped students with children cope with stress, make an effort to care for themselves, and become acquainted with other students with children.

Most four year universities do not have programs geared specifically toward students who have children. However, we believe that this population's needs are so unique that they would greatly benefit from such resources. In fact, "Facing the Baby Blues? Serving Student Parents on Campus", a book published by affiliates of Northeast State University, says there is a gross need for university programs that cater to students who are parents specifically (Gasser, H.S. & Gasser, R.F., 2008). One important initiative is to have a campus support system to serve as a place where students can get their questions answered and network with other students similar to them (Gasser, H.S. & Gasser, R.F., 2008). Another proclaimed advantage is to conduct further research and collect more data about what barriers caregivers in individual universities encounter (Gasser, H.S. & Gasser, R.F., 2008). Our Conference speaks to both of these essential aspects and addressed some of the stressors students with children may face.

**C. Methodology**

**1. On what group(s) of individuals did the question focus (were particular groups intentionally excluded)?**

All student attendees and their guests were given both the pre-test and the post-tests. Only students completed pre-tests, and a different version of a post-test assessment (not included here in results) was given to guests.

**2. What steps were taken to ensure consent of participants? How did you inform participants of their role in this assessment project? Was participation optional?**

The assessment was optional, but connected to random prize drawings to encourage participation. All students still present at the end completed a post-test. Some students did leave early, thus giving us more pre-test assessments than post-tests. The pre-test was completed upon check-in, the post-test was paper and done on site upon conclusion. All were told to be optional.

**3. Was any identifying information about individual participants collected through this assessment? If so, what precautions were taken to keep this information secure (i.e. kept in a locked file).**

None of the responses were tied to identifying information.

**4. Describe the methods used to answer the question, as well as a description and size of the group initially invited to participate in the project.**

All attendees of the Conference for Students with Children were invited to participate. Because we did not link a pre-test responder to a specific post-test responder, we cannot say for certain that the same students who completed the pre-tests were exactly the same as the post-test participants. We had 11 completed post-tests and 15 pre-tests.

**5. Please include a copy of the assessment instruments (surveys, focus group questions, interview questions, etc.) and consent forms or written requests to complete instruments.**

See attached appendix.

**D. Findings/Results and Discussion**

**1. Describe the results**

11 individuals participated in post-tests and 15 in pre-tests. 19 students and guests attended the conference.

The following demographic information was collected based on returned post-tests (some responses were left blank):

- 1 male and 9 females completed evaluations; 1 No response
- 1 sophomore students, 5 junior student, 2 senior students, and 3 graduate students
- Students came from the following schools:
  - College of Business 2
  - College of Education 2
  - College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences 3
  - College of Science and Health 2
  - School of New Learning 1
  - No response 1

The assessment was setup pre-test/post-test fashion gauging the above learning outcomes. The main learning outcomes were assessed in a Likert scale with 1 indicating Strongly Disagree, 3 being Neutral, and 5 being Strongly Agree.

|   | <i>Pre-test</i>   |                 | <i>Post-test</i>         |             |
|---|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-------------|
|   | <i>Mean</i>       | <i>Mode</i>     | <i>Mean</i>              | <i>Mode</i> |
| Knowledge of resources within DePaul that supports role as student.                             | 2.5               | 3               | 3.8                      | 4           |
| Knowledge of resources within DePaul that supports role as parent.                              | 1.9               | 4               | 3.4                      | 3           |
| Knowledge of community resources that support role as student with child(ren)                   | 2.3               | 2,3             | 3.8                      | 4           |
| Comfort with practicing self-advocacy on issues that affect student and/or student as a parent. | 3.8               | 5               | 3.8                      | 5           |
| Students' awareness of other students with children on campus.                                  | 1.5               | 2               |                          |             |
| <i>Post Test question for networking was Yes/No:</i>  | <i>Post-test:</i> |                 |                          |             |
| I had the opportunity to network with other students with children.                             | <i>Yes</i><br>83% | <i>No</i><br>8% | <i>No response</i><br>0% |             |

To demonstrate the knowledge would go some use, the post-test assessment asked students to rate if they planned to use information gained at the conference and to give an example. Rating information is below:

|  | <i>Post-test only</i> |             |
|--|-----------------------|-------------|
|  | <i>Mean</i>           | <i>Mode</i> |
| I got information from the conference which I plan to utilize in my role as a parent.  | 3.7                   | 5           |
| I got information from the conference which I plan to utilize in my role as a student. | 3.1                   | 5           |

Some specific examples of information planned to be utilized included:

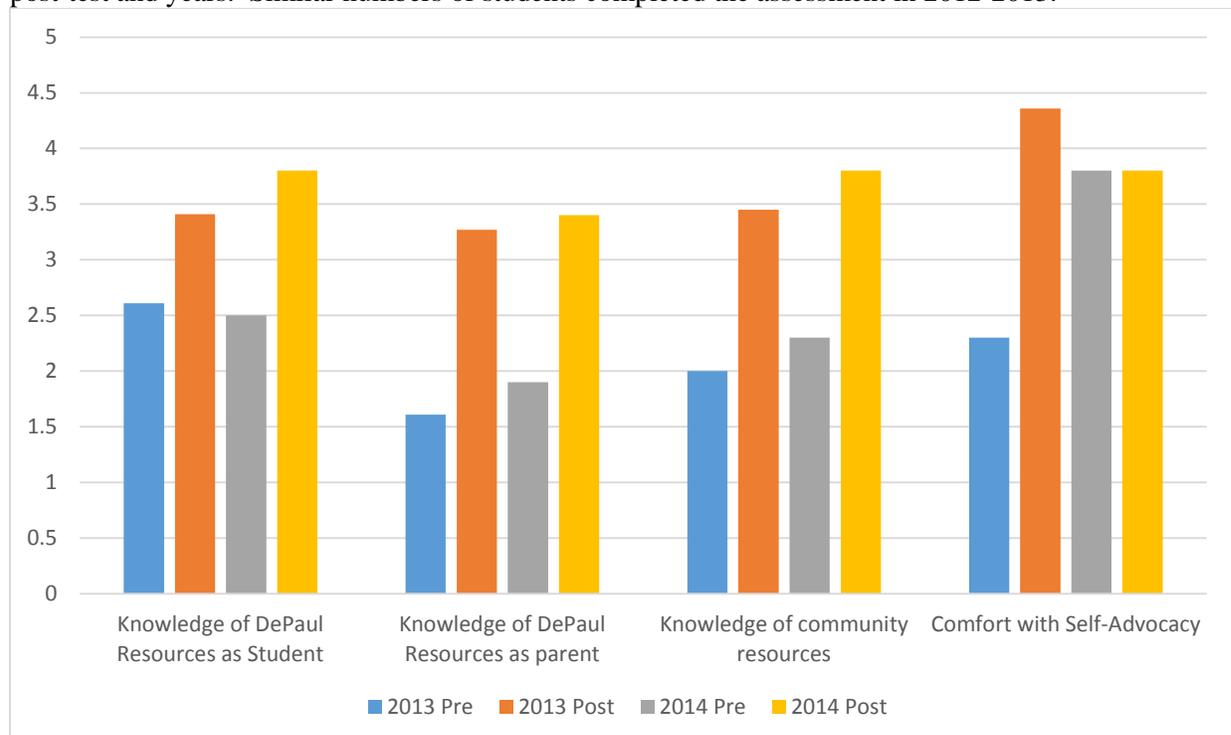
- “Enriching your child’s life with words helped me to incorporate more learning based games with my son.”
- “How to deal with your son when they worry too much.”
- “Parenting and Spirituality”
- “Teaching my child resiliency”
- “How to look for the right school for my child.”

Students general comments included praise on overall conference (“I really enjoyed the conference in general, It provided a nice selection of resources available for non-traditional students”), information on favorite sessions, least favorite sessions, and compliments on the ability to network (“I liked the speakers and the networking, Thank you”). Negative feedback mostly related to having to select only one session in time slots and the amount of time in sessions (“Some topics simply need more time”).

## 2. What did you learn from the assessment?

Students increased knowledge of resources available, both within DePaul and in the community during the time between the pre-test and post-test assessment. The highest average rate knowledge in pre-test (Comfort with practicing self-advocacy on issues that affect student and/or student as a parent at 3.8) did not change; however, it started very high.

This is the second year of utilizing this assessment and this program. We had repeated attendees who could have started at higher pre-test causing the change to be less significant. The chart below shows the pre-test, post-test and years. Similar numbers of students completed the assessment in 2012-2013.



As visible in chart form, the changes, while less dramatic, are similar between years with the exception of Comfort with Self-Advocacy.

Here are the percentage changes in mean from pre-test to post-test in the major categories:

- DePaul resources for role as parent increased 78%
- Community resources knowledge increased 72.5%
- DePaul resources for role as student increased 51%
- Comfort with practicing self-advocacy as issues arise increased 0%

In addition, there was a significant increase in awareness of other students who had children. In the pre-test, 1.5 (lowest of any category) was the average response. The post-test had 83% of student respond they had the opportunity to network with other students with children.

The results are encouraging that the Conference for Students with Children provided significant knowledge of resources to the students. A challenge of the project is the relatively low numbers surveyed and the inability to know if all included in pre-test are the same students in post-test. In addition, tracking repeat attendees and how the long-term effect of the information is contributing to their success.

**Advancement toward Learning Outcome:**

| <b>Learning Outcome</b>  | <b>Number of Students Assessed</b> | <b>Number of Students with Acceptable or Better Performance</b> |
|--|------------------------------------|---|
| <i>Students will navigate the specific university resources for adult students and students with children.</i> | 11                                 | 8   |

**E. Implications**

The results indicate the methods of presentation of resources (a guidebook, presentations, keynote, and implications throughout that presentations connected to available resources) were successful in encouraging self-advocacy and awareness of resources, both within DePaul and in the community. Students also networked with other students in their multiple roles of being both a student and also a parent.

Adult, Veteran, and Commuter Student Affairs has already modeled another program, the Thesis/Dissertation Conference for new Graduate Students following this conference model of delivery of resources and networking with other like students (graduate students across the university working on a dissertation or thesis).

Out of the conference a student group, POLO (Parents of Little Ones) continues to form. The results of this survey will be shared with that group. In addition results will be distributed to presenters and stakeholders in the conference.

An opportunity for future study exists to go deeper into analysis of what resources the student has knowledge and of the students specific skills in practicing advocacy. In addition, data on the overall experience of students with children at DePaul is limited, so interviews or more qualitative data on this population could greatly aid future program development and what macro and micro needs these students have.



CONFERENCE FOR  
**Students with Children**

*Your feedback below will aid us in planning for future events for students with children. Remember those who completed the pre-conference survey and the post-conference evaluation are eligible to enter a prize drawing. Please provide your email address below if interested in entering the contest.*

Select one of the following:

What is your status?

- First-year
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Grad./Prof.
- Other

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

Please select your college:

- College of Business
- College of Communication
- College of Computing and Digital Media
- College of Education
- College of Law
- College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences
- College of Science and Health
- School for New Learning
- School of Music
- The Theatre School

How did you find out about the Conference for Students with Children?

- E-mail
- Flier/Poster
- Newspaper Article
- Social Media
- Word of mouth
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

What expectations do you have for the conference?

|  | Strongly Disagree<br>1 | 2                     | Neutral<br>3          | 4                     | Strongly Agree<br>5   |
|--|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| I feel comfortable raising issues that affect me as a student or as a student with a child.      | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I am aware of resources within DePaul that support me as a student.                              | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I am aware of resources within DePaul that support me in my role as a parent.                    | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I am aware of community resources, outside of DePaul, that support me as a student with a child. | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I feel I know other students at DePaul with children.  | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

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DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

*Adult, Veteran and Commuter Student Affairs*

CONFERENCE FOR

# Students with Children

## Evaluation

*Your feedback below will aid us in planning for future events for students with children. Remember those who completed the emailed survey (before the conference) and this post-conference evaluation are eligible to enter a prize drawing. Please provide your email address below if interested in entering the contest.*

Select one of the following:

What is your status?

- First-year
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Grad./Prof.
- Other

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

Please select your college:

- College of Business
- College of Communication
- College of Computing and Digital Media
- College of Education
- College of Law
- College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences
- College of Science and Health
- School for New Learning
- School of Music
- The Theatre School

How many children do you have?

What are the ages of the children? Please separate multiple children by commas.

What was your favorite and least favorite session and why?

|  | Strongly Disagree<br>1                         | 2                     | Neutral<br>3          | 4                     | Strongly Agree<br>5   |
|--|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| I feel comfortable raising issues that affect me as a student or as a student with a child.      | <input type="radio"/>                          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I am aware of resources within DePaul that support me as a student.                              | <input type="radio"/>                          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I am aware of resources within DePaul that support me in my role as a parent.                    | <input type="radio"/>                          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I am aware of community resources, outside of DePaul, that support me as a student with a child. | <input type="radio"/>                          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I got information from the conference which I plan to utilize in my role as a parent.            | <input type="radio"/>                          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
|  | <i>If applicable, please share an example:</i> |                       |                       |                       |                       |
| I got information from the conference which I plan to utilize in my role as a student.           | <input type="radio"/>                          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
|  | <i>If applicable, please share an example:</i> |                       |                       |                       |                       |

|  | Yes                   | No                    |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| I plan to follow-up with an office/department/presenter as a result of today's Conference. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I had the opportunity to network with other students with children at today's Conference.  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

What would you change and what would you keep about the conference if held again?

Please provide your email address to enter raffle for prizes! Winner will be emailed next week!

\_\_\_\_\_@\_\_\_\_\_



CONFERENCE FOR  
**Students with Children**

Select one of the following:

How did you find out about the conference?

- DePaul Student What is your relationship to them? \_\_\_\_\_
- Email
- Poster/flier
- Newspaper article
- Social Media
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

How many children do you have?

What are the ages of the children? Please separate multiple children by commas.

|  | Strongly Disagree<br>1                         | 2                     | Neutral<br>3          | 4                     | Strongly Agree<br>5   |
|--|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| I am aware of resources within DePaul available for students with children.                      | <input type="radio"/>                          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I am aware of community resources, outside of DePaul, that support me as a student with a child. | <input type="radio"/>                          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I got information from the conference which I plan to utilize in my role as a parent.            | <input type="radio"/>                          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
|  | <i>If applicable, please share an example:</i> |                       |                       |                       |                       |
| I had the opportunity to network with others like me at today's conference.                      | <input type="radio"/>                          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

What was your favorite session and why?

What session was your least favorite and why?

What would you change about the conference if held again?

Why did you attend the conference?