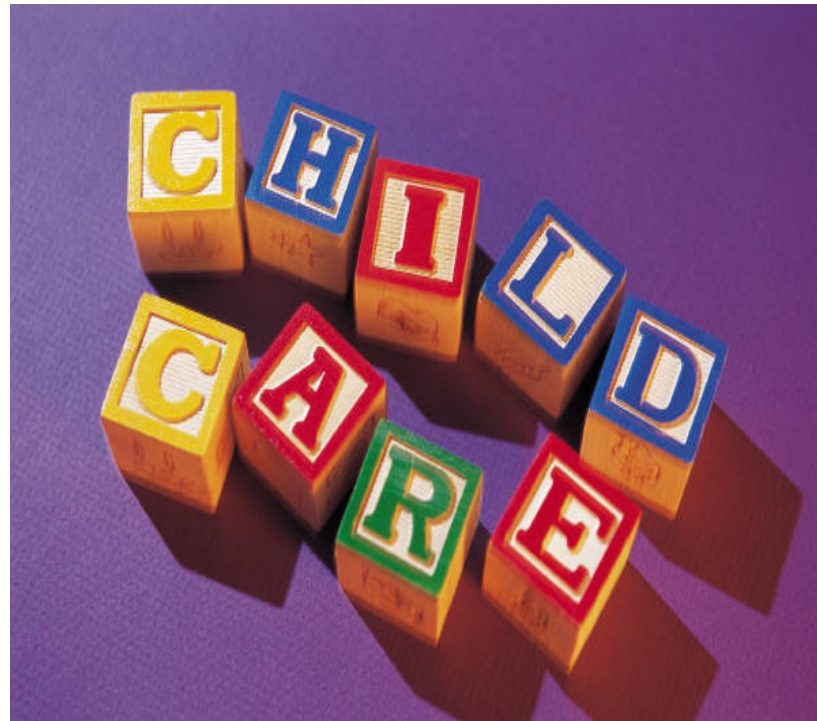


**Results of the
2008 Social Security Administration
Parent Satisfaction Survey**



**Center for Employee Services
Office of Personnel
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Executive Summary

Methodology

OHR asked 596 current (354) and former (242¹) parents and guardians who have used either the Woodlawn or Metro West child care centers since November 2006 to complete a confidential web-based parent satisfaction survey. The overall purpose was to obtain parent feedback and information about the delivery of child care services at both child care centers. The survey was composed of 35 questions which addressed the following areas: demographics, parent expectations, staff and management performance, curriculum, facilities, tuition costs, safety and overall satisfaction. We received responses from 252 parents or guardians during the survey period of January 7, 2008 through January 21, 2008 resulting in a 42% response rate. 75% of respondents currently utilize SSA child care services. 80% of the respondents utilize(d) the Woodlawn child care center; 20% of the respondents utilize(d) the Metro West child care center.

To assist in the interpretation of the survey results, the response percentages were compared to determine what are considered to be notable results. For survey purposes, a “positive” satisfaction rating combines “strongly agree” and “somewhat agree” survey responses. A “negative” satisfaction rating combines “somewhat disagree” and “strongly disagree.” We established an arbitrary threshold of 65% to distinguish “positive” and “negative” satisfaction responses.²

¹ Summer Day Camp parents and guardians included as “former”

² The survey results which have been calculated by the Select Survey Program allow for a margin of error of +/- 4%. Respondent percentage totals will not always total 100% when added together. This is because of a small technical glitch in the program. This is a slight percentage discrepancy that falls within the margin of error.

General Observations

The survey results showed a prevailing theme – parents identified the need to improve the governance of the Child Care Centers. Specifically, the parents expressed concern over, among other areas, the lack of communication between child care management and parents, the vendor’s lack of accountability to the parents, the quality of services based on existing tuition rates, and high staff turnover. A thorough analysis of the survey results is summarized below; however, a list of the highest and lowest rated items is summarized below.

Highest Rated Items

The items receiving the highest positive satisfaction ratings were selected from responses to questions 7 – 35. The positive response items demonstrate that parents and guardians are satisfied with the conditions of the child care facilities and their assigned teachers.

Parents and guardians generally agree that...

- Security guards consistently check bags and badges of persons entering the building;
- Classrooms and buildings are properly cleaned and maintained;
- They have adequate contact and communication with their child’s teacher;
- They have not been late or missed work because of staffing issues in their child’s room;
- Teaching staff express warmth through behaviors such as physical affection, eye contact, tone of voice and smiles; and
- Adequate safety measures exist in parking lots outside the child care center.

Lowest Rated Items

The items receiving the lowest satisfaction ratings were selected from responses to questions 7 - 35. These response items identify areas in which management must improve including, but not limited to, effectively hiring and retaining qualified staff and providing a collaborative and enriching environment for teachers and parents.

Parents and guardians generally disagree that...

- There is an atmosphere of trust, collaboration and participation exists between management, parents and teachers at center;
- Management provides teaching staff a supportive and respectful environment;
- Management responds satisfactorily to parental concerns;
- Management actively seeks parental input on ways to improve the child care program; and

- Management has demonstrated the ability to attract and retain qualified teaching staff; and
- Rate of teaching staff turnover is acceptable.

Child Care Survey Category Summaries

The purpose of the survey was to obtain feedback from current and former parents and guardians regarding services they received while utilizing the Woodlawn or Metro West child care centers. The response items will be summarized in one of the following categories: expectations, age groups, staff performance, management performance, curriculum, facilities and tuition rates.

Expectations

Question 6 asked, “What services do/did you expect the child care center to provide?” The results clearly demonstrate the expectations of parents and guardians of the SSA child care center programs: 97% of respondents expect child care services and an age appropriate educational program.

Age Groups & Center Comparisons

Both Woodlawn and Metro West provide the following programs: Infant, Toddler, Two’s, Three to Four’s and Summer. The current enrollment at Woodlawn is 149 students. The current enrollment at Metro West is 72 students.

The table below provides a breakdown of age group responses for each child care center.

Age Groups and Center Comparisons Survey Results			
Program	Woodlawn	Metro West	Totals
Infants: 4-18 months	40	17	57
Toddlers: 18-24 months	30	8	38
Two’s: 24-36 months	39	8	47
Three to Four’s	92	25	117
Summer: 5 to 9 year olds	30	4	34
Totals	195	56	251³

³ One survey participant skipped this question

Question 7 asked participants to rate their level of satisfaction with the overall care that their child(ren) receives at the child care center.

Overall Satisfaction Woodlawn and Metro Survey Results						
Question	Topic	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	No Opinion
7	Satisfied with the overall care that children receive at the center	37%	42%	16%	5%	0%

Overall, 79% of all respondents are satisfied with the care that their child(ren) receive at the center. There definitely appears to be room for improvement as only 37% of all respondents are “very satisfied.” As noted in the chart below, however, there is a notable difference in the percentage of respondents “very satisfied” with child care services dependent upon which center the respondent utilizes. Respondents utilizing Metro West resulted in significantly higher positive percentages than Woodlawn.

Overall Satisfaction Woodlawn and Metro Separated Survey Results						
Question	Topic	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	No Opinion
7	Woodlawn: Satisfied with the overall care that children receive at the center	28%	47%	19%	7%	-1%
7	Metro: Satisfied with the overall care that children receive at the center	70%	26%	4%	0%	0%

Staff Performance

The survey contained eight questions pertaining to staff performance. Participants were asked to rate their satisfaction with their teacher's skills in communicating with children and parents, nurturing characteristics, supervising children indoors and outdoors and following proper protocol if accidents/injuries occurred. The table below shows the results of how the parents rated the staff.

Staff (Teachers) Performance Survey Results						
Question	Topic	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
8	Adequate contact and communication	54%	33%	10%	2%	1%
9	Staff expresses warmth through behaviors such as physical affection, etc...	52%	33%	9%	4%	2%
10	Teachers teach my child social, communication and emotional skills	46%	37%	6%	6%	4%
11	Adequately supervise children while indoors	43%	32%	15%	6%	5%
12	Adequately supervise children while outdoors	37%	29%	13%	11%	11%
13	Respond to challenging behaviors in a calm respectful manner	39%	35%	9%	6%	12%
27	Adequately explained any accidents/injuries my child sustained...	43%	23%	15%	9%	10%
28	Properly handled treatment of my child's accidents/injuries	42%	25%	12%	7%	15%

Staff performance received notable positive result percentages of 65% and above in response to every question. The feedback received demonstrates that parents and guardians are generally satisfied with the teaching staff. Notwithstanding, areas for improvement are demonstrated in the ratings provided for questions 12, 27, and 28, which pertain to proper supervision of children outdoors (66% positive result), adequate explanation of accidents/injuries (66% positive result), and properly handled treatment for accidents/injuries (67% positive result).

Management Performance

The survey contained 12 questions pertaining to child care center management including personal experiences with management; established procedures; availability of management; interaction of management with staff and parents; ability to assess staff performance; ability to hire and retain qualified staff; and ability to seek parental input on programs at the centers.

The table below provides a breakdown of response results:

Management (Administration) Performance Survey Results						
Question	Topic	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
14	Mgmt. provides teaching staff a supportive and respectful work environment	27%	25%	20%	13%	15%
15	Mgmt. has demonstrated how to attract and retain qualified, well-trained teaching staff	16%	22%	23%	25%	14%
16	Believe atmosphere of trust, collaboration and participation exists between Mgmt., parents and teachers at center	24%	29%	20%	21%	7%

Management (Administration) Performance Survey Results

Question	Topic	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
17	Mgmt maintains correct staff to child ratios	36%	28%	20%	12%	4%
18	Never missed work due to ratio issues	54%	12%	14%	8%	12%
19	Rate of teaching staff turnover is acceptable	13%	18%	16%	36%	17%
20	Comfortable expressing concerns to Mgmt.	39%	21%	17%	17%	6%
21	Mgmt. responsive and respectful when parents raise concerns	32%	23%	18%	15%	12%
22	Mgmt. aware of what is happening in classrooms	25%	30%	18%	15%	11%
23	Mgmt. actively seeks parental input on ways to improve program	19%	23%	24%	23%	12%
24	Mgmt. responds satisfactorily to parental concerns	27%	24%	22%	15%	12%
25	Satisfied with center discipline procedures	40%	23%	8%	8%	20%

Responses to the management questions resulted in 1 notable positive result with an approval percentage of 65% or higher (e.g., 66% of respondents “never missed work due to ratio issues”). Compared to the staff satisfaction percentages, the management satisfaction ratings submitted by parents and guardians were notably lower. Interestingly, 63% of respondents are satisfied with the center’s discipline procedures. We presume the approval rating will increase if the governance model is changed.

Respondents clearly identified areas for improvement as evidenced by positive satisfaction ratings below 65%:

- Management maintains correct staff to child ratios (64% positive result);
- Satisfaction with center discipline procedures (63% positive result);
- Management is approachable by parents wanting to express concerns (60% positive result);
- Management is responsive and respectful when parents raise concerns (55% positive result);
- Management is aware of classroom activities (55% positive result);
- Believe atmosphere of trust, collaboration and participation exists between management, parents and teachers at center (53% result);
- Management provides teaching staff a supportive and respectful environment (52% positive result);
- Management responds satisfactorily to parental concerns (51% positive result);
- Management actively seeks parental input on ways to improve the child care program (42% positive result).
- Management has demonstrated the ability to attract and retain qualified teaching staff (38% positive result); and
- Rate of teaching staff turnover is acceptable (31% positive result).

Respondents identify high staff turnover and attracting and retaining qualified staff as their main concerns with the current child care management. This is consistent with additional comments provided by participants.

Curriculum

Question 29 asked parents if they were confident that the current program would adequately prepare their child for kindergarten. The responses were distributed among the five choices.

Curriculum Survey Results						
Question	Topic	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
29	Confident that the current program will adequately prepare my child for kindergarten	27%	25%	13%	13%	20%

Curriculum Survey Results

Question	Topic	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
31	Teaching staff effectively implements the daily lessons	28%	22%	9%	9%	33%

Question 31 referred to the implementation of the daily lessons which correlate to the set curriculum. 33% of respondents chose “no opinion.” This is to be expected as 23% of responses were from parents with infants. The infant program does not have a structured curriculum, but is dictated more by a developmental philosophy. 22% strongly agree that staff implements daily lessons and 33 parents skipped this question.

Facilities

There were three questions in the survey pertaining to the facilities. This category received the most overwhelming positive results:

Facilities Survey Results

Question	Topic	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
32	Classrooms and building are properly cleaned and maintained	57%	31%	8%	3%	1%

**Facilities
Survey Results**

Question	Topic	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
33	Security guards consistently check all bags and badges	60%	22%	10%	7%	2%
34	Safety measures exist in the parking lots outside the center	52%	25%	12%	6%	5%

Tuition Rates

Parents were asked if they would be willing to consider an increase in child care tuition if the quality of child care services increased. The responses were:

**Tuition
Survey Results**

Question	Topic	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
35	Willing to consider an increase in tuition rates if the quality of service increases	19%	27%	15%	25%	13%

Many respondents provided additional comments regarding Question 35. In essence, parents are not willing to consider an increase in tuition rates because, with the current vendor, the tuition consistently goes up but the quality of services and teachers do not.

Comment Summaries

The Parent Satisfaction Survey consisted of 35 questions. The survey also provided an “Additional Comments” section that participants were encouraged to utilize. A total of 252 respondents participated in the survey. Of those respondents, 122 (48%) provided additional comments.

Participant comments have been assigned to one of seven categories. Each comment has been placed into an appendix according to category. These appendices are attached to this report.

General summarizations for each comment category have been provided in this section.

Management

The majority of the negative comments provided by respondents addressed specific concerns with management. Some of the concerns were:

- Lack of communication with parents and staff
- Condescending and patronizing behavior on the part of management
- Inability to attract and retain qualified teaching staff
- Increases in tuition were not passed onto staff salaries as communicated to parents
- Disrespectful treatment of staff
- Fear of retaliation by management towards staff for voicing concerns
- Management rarely available or in classrooms
- Ineffective management
- Concerns with lack of consistent behavior management procedures
- Unresponsive to parental concerns
- Mismanagement of funds which is keeping staff from getting raises