

Helping families balance home and work life needs

The Virginia Tech Graduate School supports three child-care and family-support focused programs for graduate and undergraduate students associated with the university's commitment to a work-life friendly atmosphere. The programs comprise a parent support group, a babysitting clearinghouse, and a cooperative play group for children ages 2-5 called Little Hokie Hangout. They are open to all graduate and undergraduate students.

Dean and Vice President for Graduate Education Karen P. DePauw has been a strong advocate for finding ways provide support for students with children for several years. A large percentage of the graduate school population includes students who must juggle child-care needs with studies and work as graduate assistants, graduate teaching assistants, or graduate research assistants. Additionally, more undergraduate students are balancing family needs with studies.

Child Care Coordinator Marin Riegger directs the programs and is working with the university to expand offerings and serve more students and their families.

Little Hokie™ Hangout: Cooperative Play Group

Little Hokie™ Hangout is a parent-run cooperative playgroup for children between the ages of 2 and 5 with a paid on-site program director. The program operates 3 group sessions daily.

The mission is to provide a welcoming, safe and creative environment for children ages 2 to 5 to socialize and grow through loosely structured, play-based activities and programs.

Babysitter Clearinghouse

The Graduate School's Babysitter Clearinghouse is a frequently updated list of qualified babysitters in the Blacksburg area.

All sitters and parents involved in the program go through a brief orientation process, agree to a set pay scale, and understand the limitation of liability from Virginia Tech.

Parents can use a web-based forum to review and comment on their experiences with sitters on this database.

The Babysitter Clearing House is a place for Families at the Graduate School to come and find short-term child care solutions. This is a database of current VT students/staff who have expressed an interest in being a part of this program. All potential sitters and families must watch an orientation slideshow as a part of this program. This database is maintained as a service to families, but the Graduate School assumes no liability for its use.

The database is coming in September 2017.

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