

Campus Kids Nurtures Children and Learning

Stacey Murray
Reporter

Campus Kids, founded in 1998 by Lynn Hogan, has become just as much a part of UPEI as the Duffy building. While it opened a new facility in the fall, it still has many plans for the future.



Campus Kids not only serves as a daycare, but also as a facility that offers learning opportunities for students. Students from many faculties volunteer time to learn about the daycare, early childhood education, and children's health. Nursing students frequent the daycare to learn about the normal stages of development, and they hold a teddy bear clinic for the kids annually. Psychology 101 students have the opportunity to go to Campus Kids to learn about child behavior. Nutritional Science students also visit to evaluate the meal plan and study the costs behind it. This helps not only the university students, but the daycare also benefits from their input.

The Campus Kids meal plan is unique in the sense that it is child directed. While they serve no junk food, they do allow kids with some freedom to choose what they want to eat, as well as portion sizes. This can result in some strange meals. Hogan recalled one child requesting a jam, tuna, and ketchup sandwich. When asked if the child ate it, she said, "If they build it, they'll eat it."

The children at Campus Kids also benefit from being on a university campus. They have bike runs in the spring within the campus and away from the normal Charlottetown traffic. They also make use of the Sports Center regularly, and are often seen putting chalk to pavement outside of the Duffy Building.

Campus Kids is hoping to become more inclusive in university life. Project Love, an idea in the works between the Seniors College and Campus Kids, is an example of one way to bring children and students together, for a more constructive learning environment for all.

Campus Kids are made up of roughly 80% of the university population's children, including students and staff, with a high proportion coming from AVC. While there is preference given to university

students, Hogan stressed that the waiting list is a year and a half long. This means that if someone wants a spot, they need to plan in advance. "Sometimes we know someone is pregnant before

the family," she said in the interview.

Upcoming plans include building up the outside of their facility into a nature themed play area. While most of their money to fund projects comes from tuition, they try to raise about \$1500 a year to go towards extra projects. Their fundraisers include 2 musicals: one at Christmas and one in the spring.

Even with Campus Kid's success, Hogan is concerned about changes Stephen Harper announced surrounding the childcare program.

While Paul Martin wanted to implement a government-funded public day-care system, Harper has proposed giving parents \$100 a month for each child under six to put toward daycare. Hogan says that without the funding promised by Martin, it could result in raised tuitions for children.

"Our [daycares] voices aren't strong enough, so we're trying to get parents to speak up."

UPEI Celebrates National Co-operative Education Week

Stephen Turner
Contributor

March 20-24 is national Co-operative Education week in Canada and will be celebrated by Universities and Colleges from across Canada who offer co-op programs. This annual week of celebration is co-ordinated by the Canadian Association for Co-operative Education (CAFCE), the national group dedicated to ensuring the growth and quality of co-op programs across Canada.

Co-operative Education is an exciting opportunity where it allows students to acquire valuable work experience while attending university and completing their degree. Students acquire skills and confidence in themselves through the co-op program by alternating between academic semesters and periods of employment. UPEI offers co-op programs to students in Business Administration, Physics and Computer Science. This optional program offers a world of

opportunity to anyone who pursues it as part of their degree. UPEI Business Co-op coordinator Ernie Doiron emphasizes "the experience gained by co-op students will assist them in the transition from post-secondary studies to full-time employment. Future employers will value the 16-20 months of work experience and skills students have acquired. Students graduate with confidence and are ready to face a demanding and rapidly changing work world."

UPEI has had a very successful co-op program since 1996. Students have performed work terms not only on Prince Edward Island but also across Canada and many international venues. Places like Ottawa, Toronto and Calgary have been popular places to do work terms and employers are consistently pleased by the work ethic and determination of UPEI students. The international component to the UPEI Co-op program allows students the chance to live and work abroad which can truly be the opportunity of a lifetime. The School of Business has been very successful on the international front with students working for companies in Scotland, Ireland, New Zealand and Australia just to name a few. UPEI has a reciprocal co-op exchange agreement with Sir Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen Scotland whereby students can work in Scotland for a work term and in return a student from that University can work on Prince Edward Island. There is also a strong entrepreneurial flavour to the co-op program, allowing students to set up small businesses and get a taste of the world of entrepreneurship by doing an entrepreneurial work term.

UPEI greatly appreciates the employer support to the co-op program. Many employers participate in this great program from both the public and private sectors. The true benefit to employers is that they acquire highly motivated new employees that are eager to learn and contribute.

This truly is a great opportunity to allow students to showcase their true potential and realize their goals. UPEI is truly a great University with a great Co-operative Education program.

For further information about the co-op program, please visit www.upei.ca/co-op

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