

FAMILY CARE OFFICE: 2018 HR & EQUITY REPORT

FAMILY CARE OFFICE

214 College Street, Toronto ON M5T 2Z9
416-978-0951; www.familycare.utoronto.ca
M,W,R,F: 9-5 and T: 9-6
Summer Hours- M,W,R,F: 9-4:30 and T: 9-6

The mandate of the Family Care Office (FCO) is to support students, staff, faculty, and their families with any family care related issue by providing information, guidance, referrals and advocacy. Through all its functions, the office aims to raise awareness of family care issues and of quality of life issues central to the achievement of educational equity and employment equity at the University of Toronto.

Services and Programs Provided:

We support students, staff, and faculty with family responsibilities by assisting to remove barriers to their academic and work success through:

1. Casework: concerns centered primarily on issues such as childcare availability (including access, subsidies, and quality), pregnancy and pregnancy/parental leave, relocation issues, family financial planning, balancing work/study with family, counselling and mental health, and elder care and caregiver leaves. (please see Table 2 in the appendix)
2. Workshops, family events, discussion groups and a peer mentorship program.
3. Maintaining a website and a resource library comprised of practical material on topics ranging from pregnancy and infant care to lesbian, gay and trans parenting issues, bereavement and caring for elderly family members.
4. Maintaining a web-based babysitter listing service and a U of T Parents Exchange Facebook group.
5. Providing on-location drop-in hours every Thursday afternoon to students living at Student Family Housing; providing on-location office hours every 4- 6 weeks on the UTM campus for students, staff and faculty. Starting similar on-location office hours every 4- 6 weeks on the UTSC campus.
6. Outreach to departments/colleges to raise their level of awareness of students with family responsibilities and to educate on services available to students through the FCO.
7. Advocating on behalf of University families with University departments, student organizations, and government and community agencies.
8. Providing recommendations to the Director, Family Programs and Services in the Office of the Vice-President Human Resources and Equity, as it works with existing university policy, procedures and publications for their impact on individuals with family responsibilities.

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Current Staffing:

- 4 FTE staff appointed; 5 students under the Fall/Winter Work Study Program and 1 student under the Summer Work Study Program; 2 USW casual staff members
We need to hire for a new Education Advisor and Communications Project Coordinator (PB13), and in the meantime have hired a casual staff member until the position is filled.
- Provided an academic service learning opportunity in the Winter 2018 term for a graduate student in LHA1122: Practicum in Adult Education and Community Development at OISE. The student assisted with the coordination of our Women's Wellness Program that is provided to the residents of Student Family Housing. This included organizing the workshops and evaluating the program.

Significant Changes and Achievements in 2018

Talking Walls Art Installation: Every Family Belongs

The Family Care Office (FCO) curated an exhibition that captured the intersections between family responsibilities and the university experience, called *Every family belongs*. The unique family narratives from U of T staff, student, and faculty were on display (photograph and brief narrative) in Hart House from February 12 - March 16, 2018.

Family Study Space at Robarts Library opened in March 2018

Robarts Library staff in collaboration with the Family Care Office launched Canada's first academic library family study space on the 9th floor of Robarts Library. The space is for current students, faculty members, visiting scholars, and staff at the University of Toronto who have children 12 years old or under. The Family Study Space includes workstations, collaborative space, a children's play area with furniture and toys, and increased access to comfortable nursing and baby changing facilities. The Director, Family Programs & Services provided ongoing direction and advice to the Library committee members who developed this space. The Family Care Office has advertised registration, and the opening. In addition, our office provided names of users for media coverage.

Service Provision to UTM and UTSC Campuses

As a result, of a request to provide service to graduate UTSC students from the Vice Dean Graduate, UTSC, we began to offer on-location appointments on the UTSC campus every 6 weeks. Funding was provided for this year.

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Going forward, our office as part of the re-structuring we have embarked upon hope to be able to provide more service to the UTM and UTSC campuses with increased funding.

Programming Highlights for 2018

Student Family Potluck Picnic at the Toronto Islands

A potluck picnic was organized and student families were able to take a [First Story Toronto](#) interactive tour, illustrating Toronto's Indigenous presence and history of the [Toronto Island](#) from an Indigenous perspective. This family event was co-sponsored by First Nations House and the Family Care Office.

Talking with Children about Colonization

This four-part discussion group looked at what, how much and how to tell children in our lives about the history and current developments of Canada's colonization, in practical ways that are appropriate and respectful of their developmental stages. The session titles were: Identity Exercise: Our Connection with the Land; Thanksgiving and its Meanings, Reconnections – bringing it to your thanksgiving table; Current issues affecting Indigenous People/Misconceptions – how to talk with your children about it; Actions & moving forward. The facilitators of this group were Mikaela D. Gabriel, PhD Student, Clinical & Counselling Psychology at OISE/University of Toronto & Mairi McKenna-Edwards, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator, Division of Student Life.

Kairos Family Blanket Exercise

During this family event, the participants were able to Learn about Indigenous colonization as it really happened. Participants took part in a time-travelling, role-playing exercise that captured the experiences of Indigenous peoples on Turtle Island, known to most today as "Canada." Over the span of 2 hours, participants walked through the various stages of pre-contact, treaty-making, colonization and resistance. The facilitator was Dawn Maracle of the Kairos Family Blanket Exercise Community.

Strengthening Families Together on Campus

This was a four-session education program for family members and friends of individuals living with mental illness.

Mindful Parenting Group

This was a four-session group for individuals interested in Mindful Parenting-- mindfulness principles are applied to the art of parenting as a way to build a strong child-parent relationships, and increase the well-being of both parent and child.

Worrying? Anxiety in Children

This was an interactive workshop, that allowed parents and caregivers to learn more about the topic of anxiety in children. Parents and caregivers learned how anxiety can impact thoughts, feelings and behaviours and discussed signs, strategies and options to gain additional support

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and share supplementary resources. The facilitator was Rebecca Higgins, a Mental Health Educator with a Master's degree in Social Work

Expectant Parents Group – Breakfast Reunion

This was an invitation for the past participants of the Expectant Parents group with their babies to attend a relaxing get-together at U of T Innis Café. A breakfast was provided and the families got a chance to socialize with other U of T families going through the same issues, exchange tips and ideas, and expand their support network.

Bike Mechanics for Kids

This family event was for children up to 14 years old, and provided the children with the opportunity to learn how to keep their bikes in top condition, including bike mechanics, maintenance and safety. After the workshop, the children were able to have a mechanic check their bike to make sure it was safe and ready to ride.

Training, Outreach and Information Sessions

- The Director of Family Programs & Services with two librarians and the project coordinator from Robarts Library presented at the **2018 TRY+ (U of T, Ryerson, York, OCAD) Library Staff Conference** "Playtime at Fort Book: Building a Family Study Space at U of T's Robarts Library"
- The Manager attended a Faculty of Arts and Science Business Officer meeting in February 2018 to review the new maternity and parental leave policies.
- The Manager attended an HR Exchange meeting to provide an update on pregnancy/parental leave and the implementation of the Parental Transition Week in June 2018.
- The Family Care Advisor and Outreach Coordinator participated on the TYP Admissions Committee in May 2018.
- The Manager attended in late August 2018 Campus Community Connections at Residence Life Collaborative Training. In this two-hour session, the Manager shared information on the services of the Family Care Office with Residence Life Student Staff.

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Performance Indicators

Participation:

- This year the office handled **2214** cases: **655** students (142 undergraduate students and 513 graduate students), **1280** employees (706 staff and 497 faculty members, and 77 postdoctoral fellows), **197** department consultations and **82** 'other' that include visiting faculty, other institutions, alumni and members of the community. (please see Table 1 in the appendix)
- This year 70 workshops, 7 webinars, 13 family events, 3 events and 8 discussion groups were sponsored or co-sponsored by the FCO. Just over 1450 students, staff, faculty and postdoctoral fellows attended these activities.
- Our office space was used by approximately 45 students, staff and faculty for the Student Parent Lounge and/or for breastfeeding/pumping.
- The Child Care Reimbursement for Extra and Co-curricular Activities fund was accessed three times.
- There has been a steady increase in our blog users and e-newsletter subscriptions. We saw an over 80% increase in our blog users, and a 9% increase in our e-newsletter subscriptions. Over 5 years, we have seen our Twitter followers almost double and twice as many Facebook Likes.(please see Table 4 in the appendix)

Faculty Relocation Service

The Office also coordinates the **Faculty Relocation Service (FRS)**. This highly successful initiative provides deans, chairs and search committees with assistance in meeting their goals in an intensely competitive recruiting environment. The program helps newly appointed faculty and their families to relocate and transition smoothly to life within the University and Toronto communities. In its 18th year, the Office met by appointment with **226** prospective and newly appointed faculty and followed up **34** times with these individuals before they received an offer or were hired. Working in conjunction with the office of the Vice Provost, Faculty and Academic Life, the Office also assists with a welcome/orientation event for new faculty and their families.

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Testimonials/Quotes

I filled out the feedback form for the event I attended ..., but just wanted to add how great this event was. The speaker was fantastic and really helped us (my husband who works at Hart House also attended) understand where we were going “wrong” with our feeding attempts and offered some really great and useful tips which we instituted this morning for the first time, and I can already see a change and feel confident that we are now headed in the right direction.

I would highly recommend this event if it is held again to my colleagues with young toddlers!

I really appreciate all the events/seminars that the Family Care Office puts on. It is such a great benefit.

Staff U of T who attended Baby and Toddler Talks: Building Healthy Eating Habits

Thanks for all your support you guys are amazing! I’m not sure what I would do without your guidance.

Staff U of T who attended Pregnancy/Parental/Adoption and Primary Caregiver Leave Seminar

Thank you for connecting me with the opportunity to share my story, ... many people found it inspiring and encouraging. I am happy that people could connect and resonate with my experience and it somehow made them feel they can do it too. Also thank you for your support throughout and specially during the past year.”

Graduating student (mother to four children) who was profiled by U of T Media upon convocating this June 2018 with her PhD in Electrical and Computer Engineering.

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Appendix

TABLE 1: Direct Service - January 1 to December 31, 2018

Undergraduates	142
Graduate students	513
Post-doctoral fellows	77
Staff	706
Faculty*	497
Departments	197
Other**	82
TOTAL	2214

* All inquiries on behalf of an individual prospective or new faculty member are counted as one case per year, regardless of the number of contact hours.

** "Other" includes alumni, researchers, visiting faculty, media, and the general public

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TABLE 2: Types of Inquiries - January 1 to December 31, 2018

Maternity; parental leave	30%
Child care facilities; children's programs; schools; babysitting	26%
New faculty; relocation	11%
Caregiver Leaves	4%
Library	4%
Medical; health	4%
Financial aid; child care subsidy	3%
Relationships; support groups; counselling	3%
Student pregnancy	3%
Balancing work, study, family; flexible work arrangements; academic problems	2%
Elder care	2%
Housing	1%
Legal assistance	1%
Parenting	0.2%
Emergency assistance; abuse	0.2%
Other (general information and services etc.)	6%

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TABLE 3: Kit Stats - January 1 to December 31, 2018

The Office provided advice to staff and departments on maternity, parental, adoption and primary caregiver leaves, particularly on the discretionary aspects of the leaves for faculty members, and promoted best practices. The Office provides information kits to employees on the various leaves provided by the University and this year approximately 330 kits were distributed electronically.

Type of Leave Kit	Number of kits distributed
Pregnancy Leave Kits for Faculty & Librarians	39
Pregnancy Leave Kits for Staff	171
Pregnancy Leave Kits for Postdoctoral Fellows	15
Parental Leave Kits for Faculty & Librarians	29
Parental Leave Kits for Staff	64
Parental Leave Kits for Postdoctoral Fellows	10
Primary Caregiver and Adoption Leave for Faculty & Librarians	0
Primary Caregiver & Adoption Leave for Staff	5

Faculty Recruitment Booklets

The Office is the contact point for the distribution of faculty recruitment booklets. Faculty recruitment booklets continued to serve as a valuable tool with approximately 520 booklets requested from January 1 to December 31, 2018.

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Table 4: Social Media and Website Inventory of Users from 2013 to 2018

Social Media	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Twitter Followers	524	623	713	857	971	1017
Facebook Likes	156	204	257	301	321	359
FB Parent Exchange	268	340	453	501	518	522
Blog Users	2,583	3,805	5361	6065	7210	13,139
E-Newsletter Subscription	820	1282	1814	2225	2611	2852