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(AN EVALUATION OF LATCH KEY DAY CARE)

by

BARBARA GARRETT SKORNEY

A report submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF
SOCIAL WORK

Portland State University
1974

Approved

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Acknowledgements.	ii
List of Tables.	iv
Introduction.	1
Historical Perspective.	5
Fiscal Arrangements	7
Organization and Structure.	9
Latch Key Program Description	13
Budget and Finance.	28
Performance to Date	30
Summary	34
Recommendations for Programs For Children and Latch Key	37
Footnotes	39
References.	40

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. Types of Families in School Areas.	19
II. Latch Key Center Profile	20
III. Family Profile	23
IV. Monthly Income Profile	24
V. Payment Profile.	25
VI. Reasons For Day Care	26
VII. Monthly Program Summaries.	27

INTRODUCTION

This evaluation of the Multnomah County Community Action Agency (MCCAA) Latch Key Child Care Program was undertaken at the request of the Multnomah County Planning and Evaluation Department. Latch Key is one of three day care programs classified as "developmental programs for youth" for which Multnomah County is the fiscal agent. The other two are Littles, a full-day pre-school day care program, and Head Start, an educational and developmental program for pre-school children. Littles and Latch Key comprise what is known as Programs for Children, a comprehensive child care program which serves children of low-income working parents who live in the East County area east of 82nd Avenue, plus the Arleta, Errol Heights and Lents Districts which lie within the Portland city limits. With the exception of Mt. Hood Community College, which operates a small day care program, Programs for Children provides the only publicly-supported child care services in the above area, which was designated as a "poverty" area by the Office of Economic Opportunity in 1970. This report will evaluate the Programs for Children administration and Latch Key centers only.

The name Latch Key originated at a time when working parents had no alternative but to tie the house (latch) key around the child's neck so he could get in the house after school. While these "latch key" children had a place to go, they were unsupervised until the parents returned home from work. The Latch Key program takes its

name from these children, but it offers an alternative to unsupervised home care by providing developmental care for elementary school children.

With more women entering the work force, the demand for child care is increasing. Figures show that in 1948 only 10 percent of American mothers worked, but by 1971 the percentage of working mothers had increased to 43 percent.¹ At the same time the extended family is breaking down and parents must look outside the family for child care. While child care services in this country are expanding, the focus has been on the pre-school child. Yet figures show that about 70 percent of the children whose mothers work are between the ages of 6 and 15 years.²

According to Mary P. Rowe in testimony before the United States Senate Finance Committee, the most critical factors for parents when choosing child care are care they can afford, either free or inexpensive, and child care that is near their homes for the hours in which they need it.³ The type of care (in their own home, another person's home, or a center) is not as important as the other considerations since to most parents the first priority is having child care. Amounts parents are willing to pay for day care range from nothing to the actual cost of the care, estimated to be as high as \$55 per week per child. Generally, poverty families cannot pay more than \$2 - 3 a week, and median income families cannot afford more than \$6 - 12 a week per child. The location of the child care is also important to parents. Statistics in Rowe's testimony reveal that 80-90 percent of child care is in the child's home or within a few blocks of home.⁴

One study indicates parents would prefer to pay high fees for care near their home than travel 1/2 hour to a child care arrangement.

The third important consideration for parents is the time. Recent studies revealed that at least half of all child care arrangements with someone other than the immediate family occur outside the normal daytime working period.⁵ Child care is needed nights and on weekends for millions of parents, with many making multiple arrangements for their children. While the type of care was less important than the other three factors, many parents did indicate that they would choose a center for child care if it were conveniently located. They liked their children to have the opportunity to play with other children and participate in the planned programs of a center.

Since child care programs should strive to meet the needs of the users, this Latch Key program will be evaluated as to whether or not it meets the needs of the users based on cost, location, and hours. The other consideration in the evaluation is the program's stated goals and operational efficiency.

The stated goal of the MCCA A Latch Key program is "to release low-income parents from the cost of providing day care for their children so that they may become more securely financially independent."⁶ Census data justify the poverty designation for the MCCA A area, and point to the need for day care services. The following table, compiled from 1970 census information as reported in the 1972-73 MCCA A Programs for Children grant proposal, described family characteristics and composition.

Census Data for the East Multnomah County Target Area

Population	181,781 or 34% of county population
No. of families	42,400
No. families with income below \$3000 per year	7,020 or 16.5% (of these, 913 have incomes below \$1000 per year)
No. children in low-income families	6,143
Percent of children receiving ADC	13.7%
No. of children under 5 years	15,067
No. of children under 14 years (incl. above)	50,495
No. female head families	5,275 or 32% of county total
No. female head families below poverty level with children under 6 years	670 or 31% of county total
Percent families with children headed by single female parent	10%

These figures indicate that there are a number of low-income and one and two parent families who may have need for child care services to allow them to continue to work, to seek work and to train in preparation for work. Since the cost of private care is estimated to be about \$80 per month per child (figure from Metropolitan 4Cs), some form of subsidized child care would be needed.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

With the exception of some OEO programs, there were no federally financed, state-administered child care programs in Oregon prior to 1970. However, when federal funding became available for child care through Title IV-A of the Social Security Act, 4-Cs Councils voluntarily organized to establish day care centers in their localities. In 1971 the governor named Children's Services Division to administer a child care program and act as a conduit for federal funds. At the outset federal funds were "open-ended"--as long as local money could be raised the federal government would match it on a three to one basis. During this period child care programs grew rapidly.

MCCAA launched its child care program in the spring of 1971 with the opening of two Latch Key Centers in the David Douglas School District. These model programs were designed to demonstrate the feasibility of expanding the number of centers. By early 1972, five centers had been opened serving a total of 140 children before and after school and on holidays. Proposed in the request for Title IV-A funds for the fiscal year 1972-73 was a greatly expanded operation:

- . seven new Latch Key Centers for a total of 12,
- . two new pre-school age full day Littles Centers,
- . four additional Early Child Development (ECD) Centers,
- . a central administrative staff,
- . an information and referral system, and
- . social services for all families and children participating in

the programs.

The proposed budget was for \$1,147,616 of which \$849,320 was federal share and \$348,296 was local share in the form of supplies, space, maintenance, salaries, and wages. The total number of children to be served by the proposed operation was to have been 420. By August 30, 1972, MCCA was operating 10 Latch Key Centers and had operated six ECD Centers during the 1971-72 school year. Just prior to the proposed full expansion, Title IV-A funds were cut from \$9.5 million to \$7 million, with further reductions threatened. Today only seven Latch Key Centers and two Littles Centers, as well as a central administrative staff, remain in operation.

FISCAL ARRANGEMENTS

Multnomah County is involved in children's day care programs through its role as fiscal agent for MCCA's Programs For Children. Federal funds are allocated to the programs according to state regulations. Title IV-A of the Social Security Act, Child Welfare Services, is the authorizing federal legislation for day care programs and is administered under HEW, Social and Rehabilitation Services. Children's Services Division is the state level regulator of child care programs as authorized by Oregon law. Metropolitan Area 4-C Council is the broker for state child care programs in the Portland metropolitan area. As such, it is the funding agency responsible for budget supervision and staff training for the various provider agencies. 4-Cs receives monies from the state which it then allocates to local programs, i.e., MCCA, on cost reimbursement basis for reported expenses. This year, for the first time, some state general funds were used for child care programs. 4-Cs operates solely on local contributions matched with federal dollars. MCCA is the provider of services and the administrator of Programs for Children. Multnomah County is the fiscal agent responsible for accounting and receiving and disbursing funds. No county hard dollars are involved in the Programs for Children operation.

Funds raised on the local level are sent to CSD and matched with federal dollars on a 3 to 1 ratio. The David Douglas, Parkrose and Portland School Districts provide in-kind contributions in the form

of building space, maintenance, utilities, supervisory time and equipment. This in-kind contribution is documented by the school district and sent to CSD where it is matched with federal funds on a 3 to 1 ratio.

Programs For Children is required to submit a budget to 4-Cs by June 1 for the next fiscal year. This budget is reviewed in turn by the Programs For Children Parent Policy Council (East Multnomah Child Policy Council), 4-Cs staff, joint program-finance committee of the Metropolitan Area 4-C Council, and the executive committee of the 4-C Advisory Council. Final approval must come from the full board of the Metropolitan Area 4-C Council before the budget is sent to CSD.

The 1973-74 Programs For Children budget was rejected, because it did not have an adequate line item break-down of expenses. A new budget was submitted in January, 1974, and is in the process of being reviewed by 4-Cs. In the interim, Programs For Children is being reimbursed by 4-Cs on the basis of actual expenditures which are generally based on the previous year's expenditures.

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

Administrative offices for Programs For Children are located in a small apartment at 4624 S. E. 64th Ave., Suite 5. On February 15, 1974, a second suite was relinquished and rental expenses for the remainder of the year will reflect this saving.

Administrative staff consists of program director, program supervisor, bookkeeper, program secretary and receptionist/statistical clerk. Although the records may not be completely accurate, it appears that there have been at least six program directors since the program started in March, 1971. The current director was hired February 1, 1974. The program supervisor is also new, having been hired in November, 1973. Internal changes in administrative leadership has tended to weaken program operation.

Each Littles and Latch Key Center is almost an autonomous operation. They must comply with state and federal regulations, but the actual program planning and center administration is in the hands of the center director. Although each center has the same basic program, how this program is carried out depends to a large extent upon the center director and the center facilities. This center independence seems to have evolved, in part, from the personnel turnover and lack of direction from the Programs For Children administration.

Programs For Children administrative services can be divided into the general areas of record-keeping, budgeting, coordination with

related agencies, and program supervision.

Record-Keeping

The bookkeeper keeps records of revenue and expenditures. She sends all bills to the Multnomah County Office of Fiscal Management for payment. She keeps personnel records and submits the payroll bi-weekly.

The program secretary processes and keeps a file of the parents' declaratory statements. When parents apply for their child's admission into the program, they must fill out a declaratory statement, stating their gross monthly salary and their reason for needing day care services. CSD then approves or rejects the application. The program secretary also bills parents who pay fees, and does general typing and filing.

Each month the center directors submit attendance records. These reports are compiled into a monthly program summary by the receptionist/statistical clerk. The statistical clerk keeps records of the in-kind contributions on a monthly basis, submitting them to the County Office of Fiscal Management. Each month the statistical clerk submits billings for child care to 4-Cs and CSD for reimbursement.

Budgeting

The general budget is prepared by the director. She works with the bookkeeper, the program supervisor, Centers' staff, and the Parent Advisory Council to develop the budget, generally based on the previous year's expenditures and estimated projections.

Two of the Latch Key Centers, Earle Boyles and Lincoln Park, get

U. S. Department of Agriculture funds for food in the amounts of 10¢ for snacks, 40¢ for lunch and 10¢ for breakfast for each child. In addition, abundant foods are available from USDA with the only expense being shipping costs.

The program supervisor allots a monthly amount to each Littles and Latch Key Center. She has arranged purchase agreements with Fred Meyer, Discount Fabrics, Handyman Stores and Tony's Crafts and Hobbies. Each Center's staff may purchase materials and food at these stores, up to total expenditures of \$115 per month for Latch Key Centers and \$237.50 per month for Littles Centers. The children's snacks, as well as breakfast at the Knott Latch Key Center and handi-craft materials, come from these funds. The program supervisor does purchase some craft materials in quantities, and this material, as well as abundant foods, are available at the Programs For Children office.

Coordination with Related Agencies

The program director works with other 4-C providers through the Confederation of Provider Agencies, with this group serving in a policy-making capacity. She also coordinates the services of MCCA, Multnomah County and the school districts with the child care program. By being aware of the many community services available, she can offer assistance to the staff and families. She is beginning to coordinate some of the Programs For Children's activities with private day care centers to develop workshops that will benefit all day care providers.

Program Supervision

A staff training program for center directors was initiated

recently. Bi-weekly meetings are held in different Latch Key Centers, with the program supervisor presenting training sessions on such things as nutrition, better snack menus, use of center space and discipline. The program director will give orientation sessions on administrative policies and day care regulations. The center directors should, in turn, work with their aides.

Parent Policy Council

This council serves as the policy-making body for Programs For Children. The council is composed of one parent representative from each child care center, two school representatives, three public agency representatives and three citizens. However, at the present time only nine of 21 positions available are filled. This council is responsible for setting policy, screening, interviewing and hiring personnel, including center directors, and budget approval.

There seems to be a great deal of parent apathy. A new chairman was recently chosen, and she hopes to increase parent participation by convincing them they can have a voice in the decision-making process.

LATCH KEY PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Programs For Children has operated seven Latch Key Centers for the 1973-74 fiscal year, with facilities to provide care for 210 children, ages 6 to 12. The program operates 176 partial and 88 full days per year. In addition, Clark School was part of the Latch Key Program until September when they negotiated their own arrangements with the metropolitan 4-C council. During the summer the centers are open from 7:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., and school year hours are from 7:00 to 9:00 a.m. and from 2:00 to 6:30 p.m. The children are served breakfast, lunch and a snack in the summer, and breakfast and a snack during the school year. Each child is required to have a physical examination before entering the program, and fees are based on ability to pay.

Generally, only low-income parents who work or are enrolled in training programs are eligible for the program. Parents fill out a declaratory statement, giving their total monthly income. Eligibility is determined on a sliding fee scale, with some children participating in the program at no cost, some paying partial fees, and some paying full fees. CSD makes the eligibility determination.

The program in all the Latch Key Centers is similar. Staff members supervise and in some centers prepare breakfast for the children. After breakfast, children play games and watch television until time for classes. In the afternoon, the children may engage in such activities as arts and crafts, cooking, sewing, building, story telling,

sports and quiet games. Some centers take frequent field trips to roller skate, visit museums, the zoo and other places of interest, while others only have field trips on full-day sessions such as school vacation days when the center is open. Directors and aides usually work together to plan the week's activities. Whenever possible, staff members help children with their homework and provide tutoring. Many directors counsel both children and parents, working closely with school officials and counselors.

During the summer, children enjoy outdoor activities of swimming, picnicking, hiking and sports. Each center goes camping for at least one week in a state park.

Facilities available to the Centers vary from school to school. One center does not have a permanent room, while others have large, spacious rooms with cooking facilities. Programs For Children has a policy of not placing a Latch Key program in a school that cannot provide a permanent room. However, the two Centers with the poorest facilities (Lane with no permanent room, and Arleta with a small room) appear to be located in areas that need the program most.

Only two centers (Prescott and Knott-Sacramento) have regular parent meetings. Since many of the families are single-parent families, the parents do not like to go to Center meetings, or Parent Advisory Council meetings, in the evening. However, most Centers report that the parents support the program, will help when called upon, and will attend special events at the Centers.

Most Centers have had recruitment problems, and some are under-enrolled. Center directors attribute this to stricter eligibility

requirements on the federal level. Although these federal regulations were recently eased, state regulations had been adopted to conform with the previous federal requirements, thus the eligibility situation has not changed. Many families have had to drop out of the program because they could not afford to pay for their children's care under the new fee scale. Should the state regulations be eased, all centers feel their enrollment problems will be solved.

While recognizing that eligibility requirements are important in recruitment problems, comparison of the centers shows that no one factor stands out as contributing most to under-enrollment. The elementary school enrollment is a factor in the Earl Boyles Center recruitment problems. Earl Boyles school has 290 students in grades one through six, whereas the other six schools have at least 100 more students. On the other hand, low school enrollment does not appear to be the reason for Knott-Sacramento and Arleta Centers' recruitment problems. Arleta has 442 students and the combined enrollment of Knott and Sacramento Schools is 561. One explanation for Arleta's recruitment problems is that the school is located in a highly transient area where people move in and out frequently. Children often transfer to other schools, leaving the program after a few months. When the family has several children in the Latch Key program the result is a large percentage drop in enrollment. However, Lane School is also in a transient area, yet it does not have enrollment problems.

Census information indicates that the eligibility situation is no doubt a factor in the Knott-Sacramento area (see Table No. 1 for census data). The mean income of \$11,848 for the two census tracts

in which these schools are located is the highest of all the areas. At the same time, this area is among the lowest in actual numbers and percentage of female-headed households. In contrast, Earl Boyles, Arleta and Lane Schools have the lowest mean incomes and highest percentage of female-headed households. Arleta has the lowest mean income (\$8,996), followed by Lane (\$9,019) and Earl Boyles (\$9,906). When percentages of female-headed families is calculated, the area in which Earl Boyles School is located has 10 percent of the families headed by females with 10 percent of the children living in female-headed families. The percentages are highest in the Lane area, which has 15 percent of the families with female heads and 17 percent of the area's children in these families. Arleta is next with 12 percent female-headed families and 13 percent of the area's children in these families. These figures imply that the Lane, Arleta and Earl Boyles areas have the greatest need for subsidized child care, and that the Knott-Sacramento area is less likely to need it. However, eligibility is not the only factor in enrollment problems, because the Gilbert Park Center does not have enrollment problems, yet their mean income is relatively high (\$10,913) and their percentages of female-headed families and numbers of children in these families are lowest (8 percent each). And Arleta does have enrollment problems, but their mean income is low and female-headed household percentage is high.

Other factors that contribute to a Center's success are adequate facilities and a good program. Unfortunately, Arleta School only has a small room available for the Center. The children at Arleta do not have the space for diversified activities, as well as quiet space, that

is found in some of the suburban schools. Lane School also lacks facilities available to the suburban schools. While the children have space for many activities in the cafeteria, it places an extra burden on Center personnel who have to set up and take down activity material each day. Further, the children do not have a place for personal belongings, on-going projects or wall exhibits.

Although it is difficult to evaluate the Centers' activities in one or two visits, it is apparent that a variety of activities are needed that will appeal to all age groups. Special attention needs to be given to the 11 and 12-year-old children. One center has the 12-year olds supervise activities of the younger children. Even though the 12-year-old children are enrolled in the program, by serving as volunteer help they are made to feel important, they help the directors, yet they are in a supervised setting and are included in enrollment figures. Another plus in most of the Centers is the presence of male personnel. Seventy of the 90 families using the Latch Key program are mother-headed families. Male personnel gives the children opportunity for positive interaction with males, in what for them is too often a female-centered world.

Parent involvement is not a necessary condition in high center enrollment, but it is important in the Centers that have fewest enrollment problems. The parent involvement can take several forms. At Prescott Center, for example, parents regularly have short meetings. In addition, the director meets periodically with each parent to discuss the child's progress, and frequently counsels both parents and children. The parents must come into the Center to pick the

child up in the evening, thus enabling parents and staff to become better acquainted. On the other hand, Gilbert Park Center has not had successful parent meetings, but the director keeps in close touch with parents through periodic visits to their homes. She also sends a weekly activity schedule home with the children so parents know what activities and field trips are planned. The key to good parent involvement seems to be communication between the Center staff and the parents, regardless of whether this is accomplished through parent meetings or individual contacts.

In reviewing information on the seven Latch Key Centers, no single cause for high enrollment and Center success was found. It does seem, however, that Centers will have fewer enrollment problems when they are located in high need areas, in schools with high enrollments, and when the Centers have good facilities, enthusiastic personnel, a diverse program and active parent involvement. Even though one or two of the factors are not present, the Center may still have capacity enrollment, but when several factors are missing, Centers will have enrollment problems.

Table No. 1 - Types of Families in School Areas (1970 census figures)

	<u>Arleta</u>	<u>Earl Boyles</u>	<u>Gilbert Park</u>	<u>Knott- Sacramento</u>	<u>Lane</u>	<u>Lincoln Park</u>	<u>Prescott</u>
Census tracts	4.02	6.01	85	80.01	87	90	78
	5.01	83	89	80.02	88	91	79
		85				92.01	
All families	1976	3405	1496	1807	2104	3821	1629
No. Children	2050	4361	2139	2204	2430	5106	1631
Female-headed Families	243	359	122	167	319	321	165
No. Children	272	456	185	219	429	484	154
Percent of Female-headed Families	12%	10%	8%	9%	15%	8%	10%
Percent of Children in Female-headed Families	13%	10%	8%	9%	17%	9%	9%
Median income of all families	\$8732	\$9532	\$9934	\$11,467	\$8443	\$10,147	\$10,368
Mean income of all families	\$8996	\$9906	\$10,913	\$11,848	\$9019	\$11,227	\$11,787

Following is a profile of each Center:

Table No. 2 - Latch Key Center Profile

	Arleta	Earl Boyles	Gilbert Park	Knott- Sacramento*	Lane	Lincoln Park	Prescott
Location	5109 SE 66th Ave.	10822 SE Bush St.	13132 SE Ramona St.	11400 NE Sacramento	7200 SE 60th Ave.	13200 SE Lincoln St.	10410 NE Prescott
School District	Portland	D.Douglas	D.Douglas	Parkrose	Portland	D.Douglas	Parkrose
School Enrollment	442	290	428	Knott-284 Sacra.-277	513	470	388
Available Space	Perm. rm. (small) use of gym home ec rm.	Perm. rm. storage & woodwork- ing rm, use of gym	Perm. rm. use of gym & 4 class- rooms	Perm. rm. use of gym	No perm. rm. ex- cept summer. Use of cafeteria, gym, home ec, teach- er's lounge	Perm. rm. use of gym & kinder- garten rm.	Perm. rm. use of gym
No. Children	22**	19	31	25	28	31	30
No. Families	10	10	17	16	15	15	20

Table No. 2 - Latch Key Center Profile (continued)

	Arleta	Earl Boyles	Gilbert Park	Knott- Sacramento*	Lane	Lincoln Park	Prescott
No. Served Breakfast	100 to 150	24	35	10 to 12	101	80	none
No. Staff	2	1½	2½	2½	2½	2½	2½
Volunteers	1 work- study student	Aide volun- teers halftime	Yes	Sometimes	Work- study student	No	Sometimes
Parent Participation	Medium	Low	Low	Medium	Low	Low	High
Recruitment Problems	Occasion- ally	Yes	Waiting list	Yes	No	No	Occasion- ally

*This Center serves children from both Knott and Sacramento schools. The Center location alternates between the two schools (one block apart) and is in Knott School this year.

**Arleta Center's enrollment is down because several children moved from the area and declaratory statements for new enrollees were being processed when these statistics were compiled.

To learn more about the Centers' population and the families that use Latch Key, information from the parents' declaratory statements was tabulated and compiled into tables according to family profile, income profile, payment profile and reasons for child care. Since some averages are used in the profile, a few examples will give a clearer picture of the families in the program and their income range. The number of children from one family in the Centers range from one to six, with several families having three or four children in a Center. The lowest monthly gross income is \$155 for a single-parent mother being educated by welfare. The highest monthly gross income was \$1560 from a two-parent family paying the full fee of \$93.94 for their child's care. Twenty-four families have less than \$400 gross income. Family size ranges from single parent with one child to a single parent who is incapacitated and has seven children. Many families have five or six people in the household. Generally, when the single-parent providing the income is the mother, the gross income is lower than families with incomes provided by the father.

Table No. 3 - Family Profile

	<u>Arleta</u>	<u>Earl Boyles</u>	<u>Gilbert Park</u>	<u>Knott-Sacramento</u>	<u>Lane</u>	<u>Lincoln Park</u>	<u>Prescott</u>
No. Families	10	10	17	16	15	15	20
Avg. No. Child. per Family in Center	2.2	1.9	1.8	1.5	1.8	2	1.5
Avg. No. Child. in House per Family	2.7	2.5	2.1	2.3	2.1	2.6	4.6
No. 2-Parent Families	3	2	6	1	4	0	5
Father Only in House	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Mother Only in House	7	8	9	10	10	15	12
Avg. No. People in Each Family	4	3.7	3.6	3.8	4.5	3.1	3.9

Table No. 4 - Monthly Income Profile

	<u>Arleta</u>	<u>Earl Boyles</u>	<u>Gilbert Park</u>	<u>Knott-Sacramento</u>	<u>Lane</u>	<u>Lincoln Park</u>	<u>Prescott</u>
No. Families	10	10	17	16	15	15	16
Avg. Gross Income	\$469.	\$537.	\$528.	\$543.	\$543.	\$539.	\$543.
No. Families Father Income Only	1	0	2	1	0	0	1
Avg. Amount	\$630.	-	\$410.	\$520.	-	-	\$520.
No. Families Mother Income Only	8	8	9	11	9	14	11
Avg. Amount	\$413.	\$349.	\$392.	\$411.	\$471.	\$486.	\$411.
No. Families Father Pays Support	4	5	2	7	5	7	7
Avg. Amount	\$52.	\$107.	\$177.	\$164.	\$118.	\$108.	\$164.
No. Families ADC/Welfare	0*	0	1*	1	3	2	1
Avg. Amount	-	-	\$250.	\$350.	\$259.	\$256.	\$350.

*Plus one in which welfare pays education.

**Two families pay full fees and their income is not calculated in the averages.

Table No. 5 - Payment Profile

	<u>Arleta</u>	<u>Boyles</u>	<u>Earl Gilbert Park</u>	<u>Knott- Sacramento</u>	<u>Lane</u>	<u>Lincoln Park</u>	<u>Prescott</u>
No. Families							
Pay Partial Fee	0	1	5	1	0	5	2
Avg. Amount Per Month	0	\$20.	\$28.	\$60.	0	\$24.	\$40.
No. Families							
Pay Full Fee*	0	0	0	2	0	0	0

*\$4.67 per day.

Table No. 6 - Reasons For Day Care

	<u>Arleta</u>	<u>Earl Boyles</u>	<u>Gilbert Park</u>	<u>Knott-Sacramento</u>	<u>Lane</u>	<u>Lincoln Park</u>	<u>Prescott</u>
Single Parent Employed	5	6	10	9	8	14	8
2-Parent, 1 Employed, 1 Incapacitated	1						
2-Parent, 1 Employed				1			
2-Parent, Both Employed		2	4	4	3		5
1 Parent Employed, 1 Seek Employ- ment	1						
2-Parent, Father Employ- ed Marginally			2		1		
Single Parent Training/Educ.	1		1	1	1		
1 Parent Employed, 1 Training/Educ.	1			1	1		
Single Parent Incapacitated					1	1	
2-Parent, Both Incapacitated							1
Single Parent Employed and In Training		2					2
Single Parent Seek Employ- ment							3
Other	1						1

Programs For Children compiles monthly statistical reports based on the Latch Key Centers' attendance records. The number of children served per month has gone from a high of 214 in July to a low of 155 in December. It is also interesting to note that there have been no children on the waiting list for the past three months.

Table No. 7 - Monthly Program Summaries

	<u>July</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>Sept.</u>	<u>Oct.</u>	<u>Nov.</u>	<u>Dec.</u>	<u>Jan.</u>
4-C Children	198	207	167	173	171	155	175
Other CSD	10	2	2	0	0	0	0
Private Placements	8	6	4	4	4	2	3
No. Children Served Month	216	215	173	177	175	157	181
No. Days Care	3429	3636	2776.5	3828	3323	2892	3524
Avg. Daily Pop.	163.3	170.8	146.2	166.3	158.2	144.2	160.2
No. Children Last Day of Month	187	193	168	174	169	152	169
No. Applications	25	38	64	19	8	12	20
No. New Starts	20	19	42	6	2	5	18
No. Leave Care	18	20	23	7	9	3	9
No. Waiting List	28	22	29	9	0	0	0
Avg. Staff Ratio, 1:	6.68	6.68	7.7	10.	10.	10.	10.

BUDGET AND FINANCE

According to the Latch Key budget, total funds allotted to the program for the 1973-74 fiscal year are \$265,956.45. Income, such as parents' fees, is subtracted, leaving a net budget of \$249,094.65. Included in the Latch Key budget are 80% of the administrative and supportive services expenses for Programs For Children. The other 20% of these expenses are charged to the Littles budget. Total budgeted amount for administrative and supportive services for the 1973-74 fiscal year is \$54,313.25, or 14% of the Programs For Children budget. In addition, Multnomah County Office of Fiscal Management receives 2% of the budget for accounting costs.

For the first six months of the fiscal year, Latch Key has spent \$93,833.56. By averaging the number of children enrolled per month, then multiplying this figure by the number of days care per month (21), the total number of days of care can be calculated. The number of days of care is divided into the amount spent for the same period to determine the cost per child per day. Since the children receive full-day care in July and August, these two months are calculated separately from the other four months. The cost for summer care is \$4.68 per child per day. Child care during the school year is \$3.66 per child per day. These figures do not reflect the 2% charged by Multnomah County for accounting services; however, the daily amount would not be increased more than a few cents per day.

The expenditures to date are considerably less than the total

budgeted for the first six months. Should the total amount budgeted for the year be spent as anticipated, the cost of care per child per day would be \$6.53 if the centers are at 100% of capacity and \$7.25 per child per day if the centers are at 90% of capacity.

1973-74 Latch Key Budget

Salaries	\$179,411.16
Professional fees	1,620.00
Supplies and materials	31,593.23
Space and utilities	1,856.76
Travel and expenses	4,934.98
Equipment rental and repair	70.00
Insurance, taxes and depreciation	420.00
Other	40,835.49
Indirect costs (2% Multnomah County)	5,214.83
	<hr/>
Total budgeted amount	\$265,956.45
Less other income	17,498.34
	<hr/>
Net budget totals	\$248,458.11

PERFORMANCE TO DATE

Program performance will be measured against the program objectives as outlined in the funding proposal and the POPS program Worksheet.

Objective No. 1: To provide sound management and fiscal control over all components of programs.

Outcome: Budgeting and expenditures have been the most loosely controlled aspects of the program. No expense records have been kept by center. The County Office of Fiscal Management provides a monthly statement of expenditures, but several items are combined under supplies and materials so there is no way to determine how much has been spent on food and how much on activity materials. Neither is there a way to compare the per center cost, nor the per child cost in each center.

Note: With the help of Pong-Kanchanaranya, Multnomah County Office of Fiscal Management, Programs For Children is in the process of establishing a comprehensive monthly internal fiscal report to keep financial records of individual centers expenses and administrative expenses. Program Director, Mary Lou Timme, has only been with PFC since February 1, but in this short period of time she has spent many hours in an attempt to establish more

orderly budgeting and financial accounting procedures. She is providing the administrative leadership that has been needed in this program.

Objective No. 2: To protect the child's health, safety and welfare, and to enhance his opportunities for developing his physical, emotional and intellectual capacities.

Outcome: Instruments to measure the development of the child's physical, emotional and intellectual capacities have not been developed for the program, thus this objective can only be measured by activities. Each center provides flexible activities including quiet and active play, individual and group projects, recreational and educational activities. The children acquire social skills by participating in group activities and have the opportunity to learn about their community through regular field trips. The child is closely supervised at all times, rather than being left alone before and after school while his parents work.

Objective No. 3: To provide continuity and linkage between the child's total environment of home, school, day care and the community...(utilizing) community resources which benefit the child and/or his family to deal with any long range needs of the family.

Outcome: The center directors work closely with the children and their families, providing counseling as needed.

Referrals are made to school counselors and other community agencies.

Objective No. 4: To insure that each child is free from communicable disease, receives referral for treatment of any physical disorders, and has access to emergency care during center operation.

Outcome: Each enrollee must have a physical examination, and each child's immunization history is monitored. Center staff are trained to recognize signs of illness.

Objective No. 5: To insure that children receive at least 1/3 of the minimum nutritional requirements while in attendance.

Outcome: Most children eat breakfast at the center where they get 1/3 of their daily minimum nutritional requirements. The centers make a conscious effort to provide nutritional snacks, rather than sweets. Nutrition training sessions are conducted by Programs For Children staff.

Objective No. 6: To foster strong parent, child, staff and community relationships.

Outcome: While some centers have strong parent participation, most do not. Only Knott-Sacramento and Prescott centers have regular parent meetings. Arleta reported good parent participation at monthly dinners, and other centers have had cooperation from parents on center projects. However, it is often difficult for

center staff to get to know the parents and acquaint them with the children's activities. Parent representation on the Parent Policy Council is poor.

Objective No. 7: To acquaint children with their community and environment and to expand cultural, educational and recreational horizons.

Outcome: Most of the centers have regular field trips, although some do not take many trips during the school year.

SUMMARY

The Latch Key program was established with the expressed goals of first releasing low income families from the expense of providing day care for their children so they can become more financially independent, and secondly, providing quality day care for the children of low income families. As the income profile indicates, Latch Key Centers are serving low income families, the majority of whom are mothers head of single parent households. Most of the two-parent families in which both parents are employed have relatively low incomes. A number of parents are in training and educational programs. More importantly, the child is closely supervised at all times, rather than being left alone before and after school while his parents work.

At the same time, Latch Key is not simply custodial day care, but is instead quality developmental day care. The child is provided with educational, as well as recreational experiences. The only child has an opportunity to play with children his own age, while children from large families receive the personal attention that is so often lacking in their own homes. Staff members are warm and affectionate with the children, yet do not hesitate to exert discipline when needed.

The Latch Key program is also providing two services that parents deemed important in a day care arrangement: inexpensive care that is near their home. The Centers do not have night and weekend hours that some parents needed. However, the Centers do open at 7:00 a.m. and provide care until 6:30 p.m. five days a week, including school

holidays and summer vacation. Since the center is located in the elementary school which the child attends, no one has a great distance to travel, and some children can walk to the center. Many parents leave the child at the center in the morning on their way to work and pick them up on their way home. Most families do not pay fees for the care. Of the 99 families with children in the centers, only 14 families pay partial fees which range from \$20 to \$60 per month. In addition, two families pay full fees of \$4.67 per day or \$98.07 for a full month.

Despite its worthy purposes of permitting low-income people to work while providing developmental child care for their children, Latch Key is not an inexpensive form of child care. Daily costs of \$7.25 per child seem high for four to six hours of child care. Since most expenses are fixed, one possible solution would be to increase the number of children served in each center to the maximum capacity of 30 children.

Another area that could stand a close scrutiny is Programs For Children administration. Does it really take an administrative staff of five or six people to administer a program for fewer than 250 children? By the time 4-Cs takes a percentage of the child care funds, Multnomah County accounting takes its percentage, and PFC administrative expenses are deducted, how much money gets to the Centers that are serving the children? These kinds of questions need to be answered when future child care needs are assessed. The Latch Key program enables low income people to work, while providing their children with a developmental program in an enriched environment. However, only a

small number of Multnomah County residents have benefited from the dollars spent on this child care program.

This evaluation recognizes that Latch Key is but one alternative to day care for school age children. Many children are cared for by other members of the family. Mary Rowe states that nationally, 70 to 80 percent of working mothers do not pay for child care services, and that 10 percent of the children 0-14 years of age care for themselves while their mothers work.⁷ Working mothers who pay for child care frequently make arrangements with neighbors to care for their children. It is also recognized that little research has been done in the Portland area to justify the program on the basis of the target population: what percentage of the target population needs school-age day care, what percentage are actually using the Latch Key program, and what day care arrangements are made by families in the target population who do not use the program.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN AND LATCH KEY

1. Programs For Children should keep an accurate break-down of all expenses by Centers. This should include separate categories for such items as salaries, food, supplies, field trip transportation and telephone. All food and supplies taken from the central office should be charged off to the Center's account. The PFC administrative expenses should also be separated from Centers' expenses.
2. The possibility of quantity purchasing through wholesale outlets should be investigated. The saving would need to be weighed against the inconvenience of having Center directors go to a central place to pick up supplies.
3. Programs For Children should keep longitudinal records on each child in order to assess the length of stay and reason for termination; this for the purposes of evaluating program effectiveness. (This information can be indicated on the application for assistance for day care, required of each parent.)
4. The Parent Policy Council should be functioning as the policy-making body it was designed to be, and all centers should have representatives on this council.
5. Recognizing that it is difficult for single parent families to participate in night meetings, Center directors should seek other ways to involve parents in Center activities. Perhaps a parent coffee corner would encourage parents to visit a few moments before

and after school. An awareness of the need for parent-staff communication should be established when the child is admitted to the program. All Centers should require the parents to come into the room in the evening before taking the child home. This will enable the staff to at least become acquainted with the parents.

6. Programs For Children administration should work with the Centers to help them with their recruiting problems.
7. Lincoln Park Latch Key Center should have a telephone. Parents may need to call the Center for emergency situations and should be able to reach them quickly.
8. All staff members of the Centers should be included in the staff training sessions. Some sessions should be devoted to an exchange of ideas among the Center personnel.

FOOTNOTES

¹Mary P. Rowe, "Economics of Child Care," Testimony before U.S. Senate Finance Committee, September 23, 1971. (Cambridge, Mass.: ABT Associates, Inc.).

²Gertrude L. Hoffman, School Age Child Care: A Primer for Building Comprehensive Child Care Services (Washington, D. C.: U.S. Dept. of HEW, 1972).

³Rowe, pp. 4, 5.

⁴Rowe, p. 8.

⁵Rowe, pp. 9, 10.

⁶MCCAA Programs For Children, A Proposal For Child Care Services In East Multnomah County, Latch Key (Portland: May 18, 1973).

⁷Rowe, p. 5.

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