## Daycare

(Continued from Page B14)

programs and by establishing intergenerational centers. Messiah Village, near Harrisburg, unites the elderly and the young at the Children's Family Center Retired residents assist the professionals there, becoming "special friends" with young children; the relationships are beneficial to both age groups.

Wendy Wingate, one of the group supervisors, comments, "Residents are integral to the program. Being needed makes anyone live longer.

**Employer's Programs** 

Employers, like day care providers, are facing a new and

are beginning to develop parent benefit packages that are competitive with those of more progressive employers. Benefits come in the form of paid day care hours (direct subsidies to employees), sponsorship of outside day care programs, on-site day care, referral programs, educational seminars on available options in the community, and day care center consortiums with other companies. Palombo claims that despite recent growth in this area, employer programs remain rare.

An example of an employerrelated center is the Great Valley Corporate Child Development Center, developed by Rouse and Associates in Malvern. The Corporate Center was conceived as a

volatile free market. Companies modern, campus-like area where corporations co-exist with exercise and health facilities, restaurants and other service businesses, and day care for the families of employees. A facility with space for 125 children is scheduled to open in the fall; meanwhile, one is already in operation in a temporary space. Although at the moment the Center is on a direct fee basis, director Jane Payne anticipates an employer subsidy plan in the near future. This facility is believed by the developers to be the first of its kind in the U.S.

#### For Students

A recent survey of the 14 community colleges in Pennsylvania indicated that almost all had some sort of day care facility. For instance, Montgomery County

Community College has a cooperative which functions on fees and parent hours. Butler County Community College offers "Playcare," funded by fees and the student senate. Harrisburg Area Community College Child Play Center charges parents only \$1.00 per hour - a low fee made possible by subsidies from the Student Government Association. These centers are active. At HACC, though capacity is only for 25, staff may see more than 75 children per day as parents drop off their children for one or two hours and pick them up after class.

#### **New Kinds** of Services

New breeds of companies are meeting some concomitant needs. Child Care, Inc., of Lansdale, provides an extensive referral service to its clients and corporations in the Delaware Valley area. This allows employers to match employees' needs with child care, saving employees a good deal of search time and stress.

Dr. Sydelle Mason, of Child Care, Inc., explains that through extensive data studies, the company found that parents on the average spend 10 hours finding day care change centers once a year,

and miss five work days per year because of child care problems. The firm also documents other impact on the workplace, such as whether an employee would consider resigning due to lack of day care and how much sooner after maternity leave an employee would return could she find adequate day care. This information proves to the employer that participation in a referral service not only helps the parent and improves employer-employee relations, but also saves numerous employee-related costs.

Payne believes that as more data is collected and new ideas prove cost-effective, more employers will be willing to provide benefits. More entrepreneurs may see opportunities in providing services. Palombo concludes, however, that solutions are lagging far behind mounting demands.

'An adequate supply of quality day care will contribute to the equality of women as well as to the development of children. When...the (economic and social) advantages of day care programs (are realized), this nation will be able to give day care services the priority they deserve."

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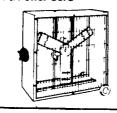
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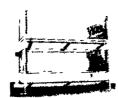
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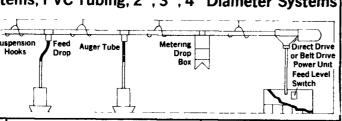
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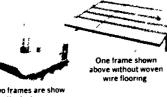
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