



02/20/13

Testimony: Subject, the proposed elimination of After School Care

St. Marks Day Care Center has been providing Before and After School care for approximately 20 years. On occasion, our enrollment has had high and low points through out the 20 years. Due to local Public Schools providing 6 to 6 services and the Light House After School Program which extended school facilitation or other access to some school services our enrollment decreased by one third or approximately 30% in the Before and After school population. However, we have experienced rises in our Before or After school care due to the uniqueness of our service role, servicing 25 to 30 families through out the year.

The center opens at 6:15am, five days a week Monday to Friday allowing parents (families) to meet required work schedule designation and or assignments.

Parents can leave their children with our program staff who can place children safely on school buses from our facility and we walk children to school daily ensuring that each child reaches his assigned classroom in a timely manner.

When schools are closed beyond the regularly scheduled holidays, closed half days and on some minor bad weather days, we are open to all families enrolled and can accommodate families when schools cannot. St. Marks Before and After School activities serve as a needed buffer, so that families can have an option.

Our Before and After program service includes a nutritious breakfast, lunch (when appropriate) and an after school snack as indicated in the USDA guidelines.

The afternoon is filled with every type of activity appropriate to each child ages 6 to 12 years old. All activities are planned for children to learn. There are reading, math and science projects including recycling, gardening, animal (critter) care and cooking. Most of these activities are implemented year round.

During the Summer School break, St. Mark's Day Care Center is open 6:15 to 5:30pm, Monday through Friday.

St. Mark's provides a comfortable environment designed to increase children's confidence, self-esteem, character, and social skills. Children arrive home feeling confident, comfortable and safe. Emphasis is placed on developing leadership and communication skills through activities with their peers and staff.

Children are encouraged to express themselves, lead activities and work cooperatively with other children while social skills continue to develop. Children are encouraged to talk about issues they may encounter such as bullying, appropriate dress code, and their interest. Children learn to problem solve as they are exposed to experiences with adult support and supervision.

With a program filled with, Tutoring, Economics, Computer Science, Music, Gardening, Story Telling, Writing, Field Trips to Culture and Science Centers, including swimming at the local YMCA, the Before and After School Program is needed to support children, and parents who work each day.

Eliminating resources to support the many Before and After School programs through out the State of Connecticut would be devastating for the families in need. Parents who utilize our after-school care services have come to rely on our availability and program activities.

Submitted by:
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