

Temple finally closes day care center



Mothers and children who frequent the Temple Day Care facility have engaged in numerous protests and demonstrations. *Abdul Shyqman photo*

By Robin Leary
Tribune Staff

Ignoring childrens' advice to "pick on somebody your on size," Temple University won its battle Tuesday to close its day care center at 1500 N. Broad St.

Despite protests, lawsuits and negative portrayals in the news, Temple shut down the center within hours of a favorable Superior Court decision which denied a request by students and parents to keep the center open until their lawsuit could be resolved.

While Temple executive vice president James S. White said of the decision, "There are no winners today." Lauren Kellner, the students' attorney, said of the loss, "My clients now have to choose between their education and their children, and from all indications they will choose their children. This is a choice no one should have to make."

Temple has joined a number of schools getting out of the day care business, explained Amy Saia, program director of the Beaver College Children's Center. While surprised by the swiftness of Temple's decision to close its 25-year-old center — they announced the closing on

June 9 and closed it Aug. 1 — Saia sees this as a disturbing trend.

"This seems to be the wave of the future," Saia said. "Schools are either getting out of the day-care business or contracting the services out to private child-care services."

sity who were laid off."

This closing is just one of the steps that had to be taken to keep university costs and students' tuition down, according to White.

The University of Pennsylvania doesn't have any plans to get out of

toddler and pre-school age groups, some officials at Temple point to Penn's higher tuition rates and the fact that it doesn't offer much of a discount to students and faculty.

Temple may lose more than just children. With the center's closing, they could lose the children's parents who attend the university. One student-parent involved in the lawsuit against the university is already considering transferring to Beaver College in Glenside, which has its own on-site day care facility.

Karen Baker said even though she might lose credits, she has no choice but to choose a college with day care. Like many students, Baker said she felt cheated and bewildered by the Superior Court's decision to let Temple close the center.

Saia said that Beaver College's Children's Center gives students a chance to put their education and psychology studies to practical use by working at the center.

"You'd be surprised by what role practical applications play when education and psych majors are choosing a school," said Saia.

Despite the Temple center's closing, Kellner said the students will still follow through with the lawsuit and seek monetary damages.

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Temple said that closing the center and the building would save the university \$3 million and claimed there are more than adequate area child-care facilities available for the displaced children.

Following the course of area colleges Drexel University, Chestnut Hill College, Cheyney University and even Beaver College, Temple's White said in a statement, "This entire process has been difficult for all of us, including the 12 day care center employees and 78 other staff members at all levels of the univer-

the day care business yet, according to Anju Chawla, director of the Penn Children's Center (PCC). In existence for 22 years, PCC is located on campus and is administered by the school's business department. Like Temple's former program, PCC is open to the community as well as students, faculty and employees, and it takes children from 12 weeks to 5 years of age.

While the PCC program looks good with its interactive programs and developmental approach to child-care for each of its infant,