“Well son, if you put it that way, I’ll sign the SRC petition.”
The response to the Wits Student 'Child Care' feature (Vol 35 No 3) has been positive. Over 200 people have returned the questionnaire and many others have sent supportive letters urging 'further action'.

Wits SRC president, Lloyd Vogelman told Wits Student: 'The time for 'further action' is now: Wits is poised to move into the Milner Park showgrounds, and the SRC is hoping that at least 5 000 students, staff members and workers will be demanding a building on that site for a day-care centre.'

The road toward the establishment of a day-care centre on South African campuses has been a long and arduous one.

At Cape Town University as well as at Wits, the SRC's came close to getting a university child care centre established in the mid-1970s. Professor du Plessis quashed the already well-mapped out plans at Wits when he became Vice Chancellor in 1977, and UCT students came up against powerful 'too much money: it's not our duty' type arguments - arguments which have not changed in 13 years.

The UCT SRC decided to go it alone: they started their own day-care centre in an unused university building. The SRC project went from strength to strength, eventually moving into an SRC building and housing 45 children with 5 staff members.

Although the centre was unofficial and probably illegal, the university administration actually advertised the existence of the centre in their overseas recruitment pamphlets. This year the UCT SRC persuaded their administration that this was in their interests - and it was their duty - to provide a university day care centre.

The UCT administration has agreed to run the centre, at a cost of approximately R18 000 a year.

At Wits, various staff and student associations have been banging their heads against a brick wall over the day care centre for years now - the wall of the 11th floor Vice Chancellor's office.

Professor du Plessis has made it clear that in his view, the crèche is not only 'a low priority', but also a financial, legal and administrative problem too complex for the university to handle. Various ad hoc groups have systematically gathered evidence to refute all the problems posed by the administration, but to no avail.

The SRC is now synthesizing all previous research into a lengthy document which will, together with the petition, be handed to administration at the end of this campaign.

Terry Shakinovsky, SRC member holding the Women's portfolio told Wits Student: 'In the past, child care centres have failed simply because they have not mobilized and organized the students, staff and workers in one massive campaign designed to show our collective strengths and our determination to have our rights recognised. Day care centres are integral to all British, American and Australian and most European universities. Day care centres are crucial to attracting and keeping staff and students (especially postgraduate students).'

Terry concluded: 'A day care centre is an inviolable right of every employee and every student. We need it NOW.'

**CALL FOR A CHILD-CARE CENTRE**

**Mass Meeting**

with Selma Browde  Lecturer, Faculty of Medicine

**Thursday • SS2 • 13.30**