



BOOKLET  
FOR STUDENTS  
WITH CHILD(REN)  
AND ALL SOON-  
TO-BE PARENTS



*Dear fellow student,*

This booklet is the result of a lengthy search and gathering of information that was preceded by several months and in some cases almost years of own experience and the sometimes bitter search for help in the labyrinth of questions. In short: this is a matter of the heart. This booklet aims to help you and the many many other students with children and all those soon-to-be parents avoid unnecessary stress. It is an attempt to bundle as much information as possible about studying with children at the University of Rostock and to present possible solutions to problems. The focus is placed on problems linked directly to studies and how they are financed. There is already sufficient material on when, where and how health-related and social support is available during pregnancy and thereafter. We would be very grateful for any questions, suggestions and requests for the further development of this booklet. Please contact [studiumkind.asta@uni-rostock.de](mailto:studiumkind.asta@uni-rostock.de). Use this address to contact the current project staff at the Students' Union.

Good luck, and don't get yourself down!

Rostock in January 2024,

Yours, *Maya* - Project Member Study & Child

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# STUDY ORGANISATION

No matter whether you are in your 1st or 13th semester - first things first, take a deep breath and then arrange a meeting with the respective academic advisor or the Student Advisory Service.<sup>1</sup> These will help you draw up your timetable for the next semester and, above all, discuss with you what you will be able to achieve realistically prior to birth. It can make sense to request a different kind of examination if the regulations allow for this. The academic advisors should have an open ear for all those kinds of questions - otherwise you can always turn to your Department Student Council for subject-specific brainstorming. Remember: students also have maternity protection rights, i.e. more specifically, they may not take any examinations within 6 weeks prior to the estimated date of birth and in the first 8 weeks after birth.<sup>2</sup> However, if you explicitly declare your willingness to take an examination, you may of course take it. Please note! You are not obliged to inform the

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.uni-rostock.de/en/study/study-organization/during-studies/consultation-during-studies/>

<sup>2</sup>[https://www.uni-rostock.de/studium/studienorganisation/im-studium/mutterschutz/ \[de\]](https://www.uni-rostock.de/studium/studienorganisation/im-studium/mutterschutz/ [de])

university (in that case the Examination Office) of your pregnancy! However, if you submit a request for recognised withdrawal from an examination at short notice and the reason for this is your pregnancy or your recently born child, it is better if you have informed the university of your condition as soon as possible so that you will not be faced with problems later on, or at this exact moment. This can save a significant amount of stress, especially if you are planning to take examinations in the last 6 weeks prior to the estimated date of birth and the child decides it doesn't want to wait that long. If the child, for example, is born during the non-lecture period, you might be able to take two courses in the following semester. As babies sleep a lot in the beginning, try taking it with you, or maybe you are able to find someone to go for a walk with it whilst you are in class and who can contact you if the baby needs feeding.



# THE POSSIBILITIES AT A GLANCE

## *Leave of absence*



...ideally, in the semester after birth

and possibly longer. The most important question for many pregnant students. First of all, you must be aware of the consequences: if you receive BAföG, it is not paid during semesters on leave of absence. On the other hand, you are entitled to benefits from the Jobcenter such as "Wohngeld" or "Bürgergeld". In many cases, you will be able to restructure



your study plan so that you won't need a leave of absence. Your BAföG entitlement is extended by one semester for every pregnancy and year of a child's life, so you don't need to worry about that. You can request a leave of absence at the Students' Registration Office.<sup>3</sup>

## *Regular continuation of studies*

...a good option, especially in the first months of a child's life for parents who are not breast-feeding - you can expect things to get livelier later on. But of course, this is completely dependent on what you are studying and in which semester! It makes sense to obtain detailed advice on this matter.

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<sup>3</sup><https://www.uni-rostock.de/studium/studienorganisation/im-studium/beurlaubung/> [de]

## *Continuation of studies at a reduced extent*

Following consultation with academic advisors in the subject areas, if you are interested you can see whether you can advance your studies at a reduced rate, even though you have a small child. Especially in degree courses with lots of self-study and coursework, it can be sensible to agree an individual study plan with the examination board to give you more planning security. This also makes it possible for you to avoid problems caused by an official part-time degree - which, for example, results in you waiving your BAföG entitlement. -> What is a part-time degree? (At this point, I would actually like to link to a university webpage with information on this, but unfortunately there is no such thing)

## *Dropping out of studies completely*

Probably the most radical option. Deregistration and the related consequences should be considered carefully, both with a view to a possible resumption of studies, as well as

organisational issues such as health insurance etc. You will also forfeit all of the other entitlements linked to student status.

Whatever you decide to do - make sure you always seek help from the corresponding contacts and information centres if you have any needs, questions, or issues. You are not alone!

**MONEY,  
MONEY,  
MONEY !?**



*Initial equipment from the  
Bundesstiftung Mutter und  
Kind*

This foundation helps pregnant women in need. 'A woman is in need if her income fails to cover the financial burden of pregnancy, birth, and looking after and raising an infant and other state benefits are not provided on time or are only insufficient.' That means that you must be able to cover your own needs with your previous income, but not the additional costs of pregnancy and the expected child. You must contact

one of the information centres prior to submitting a request. These will then roughly calculate whether you would be entitled to funding and then send on the request to the foundation. This is definitely worth it, especially for the first child. The maximum funding amount varies from year to year, but it can be as much as € 1500! Further information can be found here<sup>4</sup> and you can find a nearby information centre here.<sup>5</sup>

## *Reimbursement of semester fee due to social reasons*

If you are short of funds, you may request the reimbursement of the semester fee due to social reasons, which in fact applies to all students at the University of Rostock. Since June 2023, the full amount of the semester fee is returned. The request form can be found on the AStA's webpages.<sup>6</sup> Please note! If you live in a shared flat with your partner and you are both students,

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<sup>4</sup><https://www.bmfsfj.de/bmfsfj/meta/en/publications-en/federal-foundation-mother-and-child-86488>

<sup>5</sup><https://www.dajeb.de/beratungsfuehrer-online/beratung-in-ihrer-naehe/> [de]

<sup>6</sup><https://www.asta-rostock.de/downloads-und-formulare/downloads/>

you have to submit a joint request form, or you both need to submit your own request form, which is then calculated accordingly.

## *Maternity pay*

This is an extremely complicated topic, especially for students. The general rule of thumb is that you are entitled to maternity pay if you are in training and working in marginal employment at the same time. Furthermore, it makes a difference if you have your own statutory health insurance or you are insured in a family health insurance scheme. This has an effect on who is responsible for the payment. The family portal provides a good summary of this topic.<sup>7</sup> It is best to find out whether you are entitled as soon as possible and you should discuss with your workplace who is responsible for submitting the request!

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<sup>7</sup><https://familienportal.de/familienportal/familienleistungen/mutterschaftsleistungen/bekomme-ich-mutterschaftsgeld-wenn-ich-geringfuegig-beschaefigt-bin-zum-beispiel-minijob--125026> [de]

## *Parental allowance*

As a student, you are also entitled to parental allowance. Unlike regular employment activities, there is no limitation to the amount of hours, so you can continue to study full-time, without losing out on any money. For (marginal) employment, the limit is 32 hours. Leave yourself enough time prior to birth to consider how you would like to use the time. Ideally, you will have your request form ready and will only need to send it off. Unfortunately, the process entails much more paperwork than for child benefit, so you need to leave yourself sufficient time – especially if you want to have it calculated (hot tip – this means you won't face any reductions if you are on social security benefits!!) ... which means you would need, for example, all of your pay slips from your employer from the past 12 months. By the way: it is now possible to fill everything out online.<sup>8</sup> For further information, visit the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs' webpages.<sup>9</sup> Please pay attention: The receipt of parental

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<sup>8</sup>[https://elterngeld-digital.de/ams/Elterngeld\[de\]](https://elterngeld-digital.de/ams/Elterngeld[de])

<sup>9</sup><https://familienportal.de/familienportal/meta/languages/family-benefits>

allowance obliges you to submit a tax return! This affects all years in which parental allowance is received. You can find more information about tax returns and parental allowance on the website of the Verein für Lohnsteuerhilfe (unfortunately not in English).<sup>10</sup>

***Special conditions for international students:*** Foreign students can also receive parental allowance if they fulfil certain criteria. Citizens of EU member states, or Iceland, Liechtenstein, Switzerland or Norway, who live and work in Germany are entitled to parental allowance. However, if you come from another country and don't have a work permit in Germany, i.e. you are only here for vocational training and studies, you are not entitled to parental allowance.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.vlh.de/familie-leben/kinder/elterngeld-und-steuer-das-muessen-sie-wissen.html>



## *Child benefit*

Anyone whose regular residential address is in Germany and who is fully liable to income tax, is entitled to child benefit for their children. The benefit amount is € 250 per child, regardless of income. The payment is made every month. All you need to request the benefit is the birth certificate of the child and your own tax identification number. Claims may only be backdated by a maximum of 6 months, so it makes sense to submit the form straight after birth so you're not faced with any financial disadvantages.<sup>11</sup> It is now possible to submit the forms online.<sup>12</sup>

***Special conditions for international students:*** Parents who are foreign citizens can also receive child benefits. For citizens of EU member states<sup>13</sup>, it is sufficient for your usual residential address to be in Germany, or if you work here. For all other nationalities, there are either special regulations, or – if your

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<sup>11</sup><https://familienportal.de/familienportal/meta/languages/family-benefits> and [https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/datei/kg2-e-merkblattkindergeld\\_ba035395.pdf](https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/datei/kg2-e-merkblattkindergeld_ba035395.pdf)

<sup>12</sup>[https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/datei/kb1-e-antrag-kindegeld\\_ba014064.pdf](https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/datei/kb1-e-antrag-kindegeld_ba014064.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Including Iceland, Norway, or Switzerland

Aufenthaltstitel (Residence Permit) is only for study purposes – no child benefit. Recognised refugees and asylum seekers have an unlimited right to child benefit.<sup>14</sup>

## *Kinderzuschlag*

### *(supplementary child allowance)*

If your income is not sufficient to cover the costs of your family, you may be entitled to supplementary child allowance (KiZ) if you fulfil certain requirements. The allowance is sometimes also referred to as “Kindergeldzuschlag”. You are only entitled if your regular income does not exceed a minimum and a maximum limit - depending on the number of children. Try out the calculation tool!<sup>15</sup> It can amount to up to € 250 per child, so it's definitely worth it

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<sup>14</sup>[https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/datei/kg-en-asylberechtigte\\_ba035100.pdf](https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/datei/kg-en-asylberechtigte_ba035100.pdf)

<sup>15</sup><https://web.arbeitsagentur.de/kiz/ui/start> [de]

## *Childcare supplement pursuant to § 14b BAföG*

Students who receive BAföG payments are also entitled to a childcare supplement for every child under the age of 14 years living in their household. The supplement currently amounts to € 160 per child and doesn't have to be paid back. You can request the supplement by submitting form 4<sup>16</sup> after the child is born and with each subsequent application.



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<sup>16</sup>[https://www.bafög.de/bafoeg/shareddocs/downloads/formblaetter/v2022/formblatt\\_4.pdf?blob=publicationFile&v=5](https://www.bafög.de/bafoeg/shareddocs/downloads/formblaetter/v2022/formblatt_4.pdf?blob=publicationFile&v=5) [de]

# CHILDCARE OPTIONS

## *Crèches/Nurseries/Daycare*

At some point, most parents, in particular parents who are (still) breastfeeding, reach a point where they would like to have some time for their own lives. Luckily, in Germany parents are entitled to childcare from the age of 1 upwards. This has been completely free in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern since January 2020. If you already know when you would like to recommence studies, you can register your child in Rostock's nursery planner from birth onwards.<sup>17</sup> There you can select your preferred nursery and the age from which you require childcare. Students are covered by an agreement with the city, or more precisely with a provider, that is supposed to guarantee a childcare place in the city centre.<sup>18</sup> Depending on where you live, it can make sense to send your child(ren) to a facility near to the university - but please remember that this might leave you with a journey

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<sup>17</sup>[https://www.kitaplaner-mv.de/rostock/elternportal/de/\[de\]](https://www.kitaplaner-mv.de/rostock/elternportal/de/[de])

<sup>18</sup><https://www.uni-rostock.de/en/university/organization/university-administration/familienfreundliche-hochschule/family-office/childcare/>

to make in the non-lecture period. Experience has shown that it can often make sense to choose a nursery close to home. In the planner, you can choose from three different scopes of childcare: half-day (4 hrs.), part-time (6 hrs.), and full-time (max. 10 hrs.). As students, you are generally entitled to a full-time place - however, only if the other parent is themselves in training/a student, or in regular full-time employment. The request must be submitted to the competent council department by the end of every semester. Even if you have a full-time place, you do not have to leave your child in the nursery for 10 hours. We recommend checking the possible childcare hours before you select your preferred nursery. If you already know that your classes regularly take place until 5.00 p.m., you should choose a nursery that is open until 6.00 p.m. In many nurseries, it is now possible to arrange a tour of the premises before sending your child there.

All those of you who live in Rostock should also look at the pages from the competent department for social affairs.

## Emergency childcare

If unexpected stress arises and you can't simply miss that one block seminar, or the nursery has planned staff-study days in the middle of the semester and you have nowhere else you can "park" your child, you still have access to alternative childcare thanks to a cooperation agreement between the university and the association Elternzeit - Rostocks Familienservice. If required, get in touch asap with the university's Family Office and fill out this form.<sup>19</sup> (the association used to be called fambeki - so don't let that confuse you)



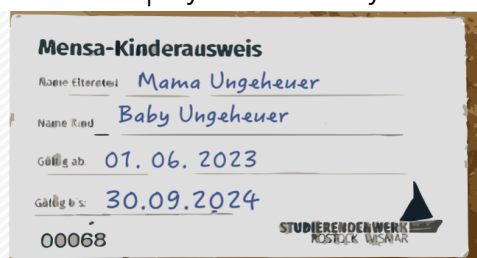
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<sup>19</sup>[https://www.uni-rostock.de/storages/uni-rostock/UniHome/Verwaltung/Antrag\\_zur\\_Betreuungsfinanzierung\\_fambeki\\_2018.pdf\[de\]](https://www.uni-rostock.de/storages/uni-rostock/UniHome/Verwaltung/Antrag_zur_Betreuungsfinanzierung_fambeki_2018.pdf[de])

# CAMPUS LIFE WITH YOUR CHILD(REN)

## Mensa (cafeteria)

Not easy to eat out comfortably with your child(ren)? It is at the Mensa! All of the Mensas in Rostock have play areas where your children can play after they have eaten whilst the grown-ups eat up or drink a cup of coffee. There are plenty of high chairs and baby changing facilities, and you can even get yourself a kids' pass. This provides free meals to students' children. Further information on requesting the pass can be found here.<sup>20</sup>



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<sup>20</sup><https://www.stw-rw.de/de/mensen-und-cafeterien/informationen/kinderteller-kinderausweis.html> [de]

## *Baby changing facilities*

Unfortunately, there is currently no comprehensive list of all of the baby changing facilities at the university. There are special sanitary or changing facilities, for example, in the University Main Building (ground floor, corridor behind the entrance hall) and in the Bebel Tower (ground floor, right-hand side). There are also baby changing facilities in the disabled WCs at the Mensas Ulme and Süd, and in the ladies' WC at the Mensa St. Georg. The changing facilities in Parkstraße 6 (ladies' WC on the ground floor) is unfortunately usually full with cleaning utensils and the building is not freely accessible anyway. A corresponding infrastructure is also available in all of the KESS rooms.



## *Library services*

Unfortunately, as not all of the library locations are currently (this will also apply to the near future) accessible and equipped with corresponding facilities, it is possible to have media



delivered to other locations (e.g. Bebel Tower to the Schwaansche Straße). It is also possible to ask members of staff to find the literature for you to save you walking through the library with your child(ren).

## *General accessibility*

In spite of all of the efforts made by the university in recent years, if you have small children it is still sensible to have a sling or carrier with you at all times, so you can leave your buggy or pram somewhere if necessary.



## **KESS Rooms**

The uni provides students and members of staff with children access to so-called “Child, Parent, Play and Study Rooms” (German acronym “KESS”) at several locations on campus. Here, the children can play, crawl around or sleep whilst the parents work. The largest and best-equipped room can be found in the Linguistics and Literary Studies Library in the **Schwaansche Straße (container building)**. The room is accessible during the library’s opening hours. It is located on the first floor. There is no lift, but leaving your pram/buggy under the stairs is not a problem.

There is a further KESS room at the **Südstadt Library**. This is accessible via a lift from the ground floor. A key card can be retrieved from the loan desk. It is much smaller than the room in the city centre, but there is a PC that you can work at. It is also not as suitable for small children due to the wall sockets.

Another KESS Room is located at **House 3 of the Ulmencampus** (Room 117, 1st floor left, accessible via lift). You can request access to this room via your ITMZ Copy-Card, which is also a key-card, by e-mail or telephone at the family

office (doreen.block@uni-rostock.de, +49 381- 498 1316). A changing table and toilet seat for children are located directly opposite.

For those studying at the Faculty of Medicine, there is another **KESS Room at the Campus Schillingallee** (Schillingallee 70, Room 414, 3th floor). You can request access to it by sending this form to the Office of the Dean of Studies at the Faculty.<sup>21</sup>

## **CHECKLIST & TIMELINE**

### **AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE**

- Clarify your study and work situation, prepare and maybe even submit some application forms.
- Find out whether you are entitled to maternity pay (the processing of such requests can take a while)

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<sup>21</sup> [https://www.med.uni-rostock.de/fileadmin/Verwaltung/studiendekanat/Studieren\\_mit\\_Kind/kess\\_zugang.pdf](https://www.med.uni-rostock.de/fileadmin/Verwaltung/studiendekanat/Studieren_mit_Kind/kess_zugang.pdf)

## **FROM 2<sup>nd</sup> TRIMESTER**

- Request initial equipment from the "Bundesstiftung Mutter und Kind"
- Prepare the parental allowance and child benefit application forms – in an ideal world, these should be ready before birth, it saves a whole load of stress
- Clarify in advance whether you are entitled to the supplementary child allowance

## **WHEN YOUR CHILD IS BORN**

- Submit the applications for parental allowance and child benefit
- if applicable, inform the BAföG Office and

request the childcare supplement.

- Register on the nursery planner and apply for places – if a place is required in the city centre, use the cooperation agreement (see section on childcare)
- Request a kids' pass for the Mensa – of course not necessary straight away, but that way you would already have it :)

# **CONTACTS**

- **AStA-Project Office Studies and Child**
  - studiumkind.asta@uni-rostock.de
  - Consultation hours during the Family Café in the Mensa Ulme, every Tuesday 2.30 to 4.00 p.m. and upon individual arrangement.
- **Social Counselling Service at the Studierendenwerk (Student Services) for Studying with Child(ren)**
  - Anja Gutzmer: a.gutzmer@stw-rw.de
  - Tel.: +49 381 4592 643
- **Family Office at the University of Rostock**
  - Doreen Block: doreen.block@uni-rostock.de
  - Tel: +49 381- 498 1316
  - Constultation hours: every Monday 9 to 12 a.m.

# ASTA FAMILIEN CAFE



**DIENSTAGS**

**Wo?**

**14:30 –  
16 Uhr**

**Mensa Ulme**

**(Kinderecke)**

**keine Anmeldung  
erforderlich**

**Kontakt: [studiumkind.asta@uni-rostock.de](mailto:studiumkind.asta@uni-rostock.de)**

