

Prescription For Reading
Wednesday April 16, 1997
Roosevelt Room

List of Participants

Commitment

First Book:

Peter Gold
Chairman of the Board, First Book
Washington, D.C.

Donating 100,000 books.

Kyle Zimmer
President, First Book
Washington, D.C.

Christine Benero
Chief Executive Officer, First Book
Washington, D.C.

Scholastic:

Mr. Richard Robinson
Chairman & CEO, Scholastic Inc.
New York, NY

Donated 1 million books to America Reads, 100,000 of which will go for this effort. Will match donations with additional books.

Steve Cohen
Managing Director, Scholastic Inc.
New York, NY

Dr. Ernest Fleishman
Senior Vice President, Director of Education
Scholastic Inc.
Old Greenwich, CT

Reach Out and Read:

Barry S. Zuckerman, M.D.
Founder of Reach Out and Read
Boston Medical Center
Boston, MA

Will train 10,000 pediatricians and pediatric residents by the year 2000 to implement Reach Out and Read programs.

Dr. Robert Needlman
Co-Founder of Reach Out and Read Program
Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital

Perri Klass, M.D.
Reach Out and Read
Boston Medical Center
Boston, MA

Also a novelist.

Elaine Grossman
Reach Out and Read
Department of Pediatrics, Boston Medical Center
Boston, MA

Daniel R. Hawkins, Jr.
Vice President
Government Relations
National Association of Community Health Centers
Washington, D.C.

950 health centers will implement
Reach Out and Read programs,
reaching 1 million parents and
children by the year 2000.

Trude A. Haecker, M.D.
Medical Director and Pediatrician
National Association of Children's Hospitals and
Related Institution
Philadelphia, PA

Will challenge its 150 member
hospitals to serve as training sites,
goal of tripling the number of early
reading programs in children's
hospitals by the year 2000.

Joann Jaxtimer
Vice President
Mellon Trust
Boston, MA

\$100,000 grant to Reach Out and
Read program.

Susan Roman
Executive Director
Association for Library Service to Children
American Library Association
Chicago, IL

Will work with 16,000 public
libraries to establish Born to
Read programs which link libraries
with health providers.

Oren J. Teicher
American Booksellers Association
Tarrytown, NY

Will recruit 50,000 reading tutors and
volunteers for the America Reads
Challenge.

Robert Hannemann M.D.
President, American Academy of Pediatrics
Lafayette, IN

Will provide its 53,000 members with a specially designed prescription pad to promote daily reading and activities to stimulate early learning.

Joan Abramowitz
Division Vice President of Marketing
Random House Children's Publishing
New York, NY

Will contribute 5,000 books a month for 12 months, totaling 60,000.

Kathryn Kuhn
Vice President, Communications
National Community Pharmacists Association
Alexandria, Virginia

Will distribute reading tips and suggested book titles to parents in pharmacies.

Phillip L. Schneider
Vice President for Public Affairs
National Assistant of Chain Drug Stores
Alexandria, VA

Same as above.

Rosemary Wells
Author, Illustrator for Children
Briarcliffe Manor, NY

Famous children's author who has written a book to be published by Scholastic that will be distributed for free to doctor's offices.

Carolyn Staley
Deputy Director, National Institute for Literacy
Washington, DC

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Draft, 7 p.m., 4/16/97

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
OPENING REMARKS
WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON
EARLY CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING
APRIL 17, 1997**

I want to begin by thanking our First Lady, my wife, Hillary, for bringing together the scientists, doctors, sociologists and other experts whose work is the basis for our discussion today. And because our subject will have enormous impact on the lives of all Americans, we are also being joined by satellite by thousands of people at more than 80 sites around our country. Today, we have brought a village to the White House.

There have been many White House conferences, but this one is different. It's about helping America's future by giving our youngest children the opportunity to develop their fullest potential. And it's about supporting, in every way we can, the efforts of parents. We've begun that job, with the Family and Medical Leave Act, and with our proposed expansion to allow parents time to attend parent-teacher conferences, find child care or care for an elderly relative. We gave parents the V-chip and a TV ratings system so they could better control what their children watch. We took on the tobacco industry to stop their ads from reaching children. We're working to bring down juvenile crime and violence. Government doesn't raise children. Parents do. But these actions show we can and must do more to support families and relieve some of the stress on parents.

Now, we can help parents by sharing what we have learned from new scientific research about how very young children learn and develop. We are devoting this entire day to this project -- but this is only a start. We must look at the practical implications of this research for parents, care givers, policy makers and others who can have an impact in the lives of children. And we must continue to work in this area in the months and years ahead.

Make no mistake: What we are undertaking is exciting and enormous and important to America's future. The research that brings us here has opened a new frontier. Great exploration is not new to America; we have always sought to expand our horizons, but that has usually meant looking outward, far away from home. This great exploration takes us as close to home as we can be, to examine a mystery that we hold in our very arms -- our babies.

Thanks in large part to federally funded research, we are discovering that the earliest years of life make the biggest difference, that they are also a critical window of opportunity for developing peak emotional and intellectual potential. Every child needs proper nutrition and access to health care and a safe home and environment. And every child needs teaching and touching, reading and playing, singing and talking. How we care for our youngest children affects how they will do in school and in life.

My Administration has been committed to supporting this research and to build on it -- to take concrete steps to move toward optimum development for America's children. Today, I want to share with all of you some steps that we are taking now.

First, we want to improve the quality of child care. That is a great challenge, and it will take years to accomplish. We must consider carefully a range of proposals to make sure that child care is both high-quality and affordable. I look forward to working with the Congress on this effort, which might include a proposal for additional tax credits to make child care better and more available to everyday Americans.

It might surprise some people, but the model for child care is the military's system, which many experts consider to be the best in the country. But we should not be surprised, because we know that anything the American military undertakes, it can do well. The man responsible for administering the Navy's child care system, Rear Admiral Larry Marsh, is here today. The military should be proud of its achievement: a child care system with high standards, including a high percentage of accredited centers; a strong enforcement system with unannounced inspections. Parents have a toll-free number to call to report concerns they may have. Training is mandatory. Wages and benefits are good, so staff tends to stay on. I am proud that the military places such importance on helping the families of the men and women who serve our country.

We want this kind of quality to extend beyond the military. So today, as just one step in addressing the scarcity of good and affordable child care, I am issuing an executive memorandum, asking the Department of Defense to share its success. I want the military to partner with civilian child care centers and help them to improve quality and become accredited; provide training to civilian child care providers; share information they have on how to operate successfully; and work with State and local governments to give on-the-job training in child care to people moving from welfare to work.

[Child care is vitally important. With so many two-worker families, parents should feel secure in knowing that their child is the best set of hands next to their own. For that reason, this fall, we will be holding another White House conference, devoted to child care.]

Second, we are working to boost our children's development by extending health care to as many as 5 million uninsured children by the year 2000. We can do that with our Children's Health Initiative in my balanced budget proposal. It would strengthen Medicare for poor children, provide coverage for working families through innovative State programs, and continue health coverage for children of workers between jobs. I am very pleased that the Association of American Medical Colleges announced today that they are supporting our initiative.

Third, we place a great importance on early education. So, today, I am announcing an expansion of Early Head Start enrollment by one-third next year. Early Head Start is something we created in 1994, and it has been a great success in bringing Head Start's nutritional, educational and other services to families with children age 3 and younger and to pregnant

women. Today, we are requesting new Early Head Start programs to accomplish this expansion.

And, to help parents and care givers to teach the very young, we have developed a tool kit. It's called the "Ready, Set, Read" Kit -- part of our America Reads Challenge. It gives tips on stimulating activities for young children. It's going out to early childhood programs across our country and we'll have a hotline number to call for anyone else who wants a kit.

Fourth, we must protect the safety of children where they live, play and go to school. And in particular, we must do more to help young children who are victims of abuse and violence. Today the Department of Justice is establishing a new program called Safe Start, which is based on efforts in New Haven, Connecticut, which you will hear about this afternoon. This program will train police officers, prosecutors, probation and parole officers and mental health professionals in child development, so that they will be better equipped to handle situation involving young children. This will go a long way toward keeping our kids safe.

It will take a partnership across our national community to help our kids reach their full potential. But the toughest job will always belong to parents. They are the first teacher and the main nurturer. Being a parent is a joy, but the challenges never quit. It is not a job you can walk away from, it is not one you can show up late for, and you dare not fall asleep on this job. The world moves too fast, and that means more worry for parents. Work demands compete with family demands. Finding a balance has never been more difficult. Parents need and deserve our help. We need to come together to help them.

There is so much science to be discussed today that I want to come back to the bottom line. The more we understand, think about and focus on the earliest years, the more we will really assist children and our whole society. These are the years that count.

A generation ago, a child development pioneer, Selma Fraiberg, said: "The experiences of the first 3 years of life are almost entirely lost to us, and when we attempt to enter into a small child's world, we come as foreigners who have forgotten the landscape and no longer speak the native tongue." It's true that a small child doesn't speak our language yet. But a child, no matter how young, understands a gentle touch, a smile, a loving voice. Babies understand so much more than we have understood about them. Now, we can begin to close the gap.

Today America takes a bold step across the threshold to the next century. This conference is about doing the best by our children, by giving every child the opportunity to develop to the fullest of their God-given potential, by using teaching and nurturing to lift up the very young. Together we are venturing into a new field of wonder and reason. And what we begin today may affect generations of Americans to come.

Thank you all for being a part of this great effort.

Prescription For Reading
Wednesday April 16, 1997
Roosevelt Room

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✓ Daniel R. Hawkins, Jr.
Vice President
Government Relations
Washington, D.C.

NC Community Health Centers

Marilyn H. Gaston
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Department of Health and Human Services
Washington, D.C.

Jeanne Simon
United States National Commission on Libraries and Information Science
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Robert S. Willard
United States National Commission on Libraries and Information Science
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✓ Trude A. Haecker, M.D.
Medical Director and Pediatrician, Reach Out and Read program
National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions
Alexandria, VA

Lisa M. Tate
Vice President, Public Affairs
National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions
Alexandria, VA

✓ Mr. Richard Robinson
Chairman & CEO, Scholastic Inc.
Scholastic Inc.
New York, NY

✓ Steve Cohen
Managing Director
Scholastic Inc.
New York, NY

7 Dr. Ernest Fleishman
Senior Vice President, Director of Education
Scholastic Inc.
Old Greenwich, CT

Betty King
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Annie E. Casey Foundation
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✓ J. David Officer
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Boston, MA

✓ Joanne Y. Jaxtimer
Vice President of Corporate Affairs
Mellon Trust
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✓ Christopher M. Condron
President and Chief Executive Officer
The Dreyfus Corporation
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✓ Patrice M. Kozlowski
Vice President, Corporate Communications
The Dreyfus Corporation
New York, NY

✓ Barry S. Zuckerman, M.D.
Boston Medical Center
Boston, MA

✓ Perri Klass, M.D.
Boston Medical Center
Boston, MA

✓ Dr. Robert Needleman
Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital
Cleveland, Ohio

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Department of Pediatrics
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Susan Roman

✓ Executive Director, Association for Library Service to Children
American Library Association
Chicago, IL

Maria Salvadore

D.C. Public Library
Washington, D.C.

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✓ Chief Executive Officer
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Washington, D.C.

Joan Abramowitz

✓ Division Vice President of Marketing
Random House Children's Publishing
New York, NY

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Random House Children's Publishing
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Alexandria, Virginia

Kathryn Kuhn
Vice President, Professional Affairs
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Judith Platt
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Association of American Publishers
Washington, D.C.

✓ Rosemary Wells
Author, Illustrator for Children
Briarcliffe Manor, NY

✓ Marjorie Kaplan
Executive Vice President
Lancit Media Entertainment
New York, NY

Diane B. Frankel
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Washington, D.C.

Sandra Cuzzi, M.D.
Pediatrician
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✓ Phillip L. Schneider
Vice President for Public Affairs
National Assistant of Chain Drug Stores
Alexandria, VA

Elizabeth J. Noyes
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Washington, D.C.

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

4-15-97

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

April 11, 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Bruce Reed
Melanne Verveer
Elena Kagan

*See all work
done*

SUBJECT: White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning

As you know, on Thursday, April 17, you and the First Lady will host the *White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning: What New Research on the Brain Tells Us About Our Youngest Children*. This memorandum provides an overview of the Conference, as well as summarizing recommended policy announcements.

Conference Overview

The Conference will spotlight new scientific findings about how children develop, and explore how we can make the most of this information to give children what they need to thrive. The Conference will provide an opportunity to showcase what your Administration already has accomplished in this area, such as increasing investments in scientific research and creating or improving programs like Early Head Start and WIC.

The Conference will consist of two roundtable discussions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, with a luncheon in the State Dining Room (optional for you) in between the two.

Morning session: You and the First Lady will make remarks to open the Conference. Yours will discuss the importance of the issue to be addressed, note past Administration accomplishments in the area, and discuss new initiatives, principally for improving child care and children's health (detailed below).

A panel of experts will then present an overview of the emerging knowledge, gained from neuroscience and behavioral science, on early childhood development. Dr. David Hamburg, President of the Carnegie Corporation, will moderate brief presentations by:

- Dr. Donald Cohen, Director of the Yale Child Study Center, who will discuss what the behavior of children shows about their cognitive, emotional, and social development;
- Dr. Carla Shatz, a neuroscientist at the University of California, Berkeley, who will explain how children's brains develop in the earliest years of life; and

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- Dr. Patricia Kuhl, Chair of the Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences at the University of Washington, who will discuss how children learn language.

Following these presentations, three more experts will join the panel to discuss what the scientific research suggests about protecting children's health and providing good child care:

- Dr. Ezra Davidson, Drew University of Medicine, who can address the importance of prenatal and perinatal services;
- Dr. T. Berry Brazelton, Harvard University, who can discuss the pediatrician's role in early childhood development; and
- Dr. Deborah Phillips, Institute of Medicine, who can address how child care can affect early development.

These experts also will respond to a series of questions posed by the First Lady and Mrs. Gore. Some of these questions will come from a poll conducted by Hart Research for Zero to Three (an early development advocacy group) that tried to discover what parents most want to know about early childhood development. Other questions will tackle the tough issues raised by the new research -- for example, "does this research mean that women should not work outside the home?" or "does this research suggest that adopting an older child is a bad idea?"

Afternoon Session: The purpose of the afternoon session is to highlight model efforts that communities are undertaking to support parents and enhance early childhood development. This panel will be action-oriented and will give you an opportunity to highlight Administration accomplishments and initiatives. Participants in the discussion will include:

- Dr. Gloria Rodriguez, Avance Family Support Program, San Antonio, TX.
Avance is a widely acclaimed family support and education program serving predominantly Hispanic communities.
- Harriet Meyer, Ounce of Prevention, Chicago, IL.
Ounce of Prevention is a statewide program in Illinois that develops innovative early childhood programs and runs model Early Head Start and child care programs.
- Melvin Wearing, Chief of Police, New Haven, CT.
Wearing will discuss a pioneering initiative that trains community police officers to use child development principles in their work.
- Arnold Langbo, The Kellogg Company CEO, Battle Creek, MI.
Kellogg launched a community-wide effort last fall to provide practical early brain development information to every Battle Creek parent and caregiver.

- Prescription for Reading:** On April 16, the First Lady (and perhaps you, depending on the status of budget negotiations) will announce an initiative to encourage pediatricians to “prescribe” that parents read to their children. As part of this initiative, the American Academy of Pediatrics will announce that prescribing reading to infants and toddlers should be part of standard pediatric care. In addition, several book companies have committed to donating hundreds of thousands of books for distribution to children through community health centers and other medical offices across the nation. This initiative reinforces the Parents as First Teachers portion of the America Reads program.

4-15-97

Executive Order on Environmental Health and Safety Risks: You currently have under consideration a proposed Executive Order that would require agencies to consider and explain the effects of certain major rules on children. This order, if you decide to approve it, would serve as an excellent lead-in to the Conference, and we recommend issuing it on April 16. The order gives meaning and effect to your Administration's commitment to protect children in making regulatory decisions.

Conference Policy Announcements

The biggest news from the Conference should be the Conference itself -- that you and the First Lady hosted a day-long meeting on this subject and that scientists, community leaders, parents, and other experts communicated ideas and information on this issue to each other and the American public. The Conference also should provide a vehicle to remind everyone of your Administration's accomplishments in this area, such as increasing funding for research related to children, expanding and improving Head Start and creating the Early Head Start Program, raising childhood immunization rates to an all-time high, and launching a major new effort to eliminate childhood lead poisoning.

In addition, the Conference -- especially your opening remarks -- will give you an opportunity to discuss new and pending policy initiatives that show a continuing commitment to this set of issues. We recommend that your comments focus principally, but not exclusively, on child care and children's health and that you make the announcements discussed below.

Child Care: Child care experts believe the Defense Department's child care system is now the best in the country and possibly the world (in large part because of legislation enacted in the late 1980s). DoD child care is characterized by: high standards, including a high percentage of accredited centers; a strong enforcement system with four unannounced annual inspections and a 1-800 hot line for parents to report concerns; a wage structure that is tied to training and an "up or out" personnel policy requiring completion of training requirements; relatively generous wages and benefits, which reduce staff turnover; a system of linking up individual home care providers to give them needed support; and sufficient funding to make quality child care affordable (though there still are waiting lists).

✓ We recommend you hold up the DoD child care system as a model for the nation and issue an executive memorandum directing the Secretary of Defense to use the Department's resources and expertise to improve child care across the nation. In particular, you would direct that (1) military bases partner with state and county governments to provide on-the-job training in child care to welfare recipients; (2) each military child development center partner with a civilian child care center and work with it to improve quality; (3) DoD establish regional "Child Care Masters Programs" that civilian child care managers could attend for two weeks to learn best practices; (4) DoD publicize its model designs for child care facilities and playgrounds; and (5) DoD issue benchmarks in the areas of standards, enforcement, compensation, and cost against which civilian child care programs could evaluate themselves. Most civilian child care systems

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will come up short against DoD's benchmarks, particularly in terms of compensation and affordability, but such a comparison might help build public support for greater investment in child care. DoD fully supports the idea of issuing such a directive.

You also might want to float some trial balloons on more ambitious -- and costly -- proposals. For example, some have suggested making the Child and Dependent Tax Care Credit refundable (at a cost of \$2-4 billion), so that families with little or no income can benefit from it. The Blue Dog budget makes the credit refundable, but pays for it by eliminating the tax benefit for families with incomes over \$100,000. Another legislative proposal would provide a tax credit to private companies and institutions to encourage them to build quality child-care centers on-site. Given our budget, you cannot endorse any of these proposals, but you might want to use this opportunity to suggest your openness to further discussion of such legislation.

Children's Health Initiative: We also recommend that you discuss in your opening remarks the importance of insurance coverage for children's health and development, highlighting the Children's Health Initiative in your 1998 budget proposal. Your proposal will extend coverage to up to 5 million uninsured children by the year 2000. You can announce at the Conference that the deans of academic medical centers -- important legitimators within the medical community -- have endorsed your proposal.

We are also planning a follow-up children's health event, where you will release a study showing the links between insurance coverage, health status and development and learning for children from 0 to 18 years old and talk in more detail about your health proposal. Either at the follow-up event or at the Conference itself, you can announce a project by Kaiser Permanente to spend \$100 million over the next 5 years to provide health insurance to uninsured children.

Child Victims of Violence Initiative. You can announce that the Department of Justice will establish, with FY 97 discretionary funding, a Child Victims of Violence Initiative through the Yale, New Haven Child Development-Community Policing Program. This program, which Chief Wearing will speak about, trains police officers in child development, so that they can better respond to situations arising in the field. The new initiative will extend the program to other sites and also broaden it to include people other than police officers -- such as prosecutors, probation and parole officers, and mental health professionals -- whose work would benefit from knowing about early child development.

Head Start Funding: You can announce the launch of a new competition for Early Head Start grants, which will highlight this Administration's creation of the program.

America Reads Early Childhood Kits: You can announce the release of the America Reads Early Childhood Kits for Families and Caregivers. The kits include a developmental growth chart and suggestions about developmentally appropriate activities for children ages 0 to 5. Everyone who looks at these kits loves them. The kits will be distributed to early childhood programs across the nation and to individuals who call the Department of Education's 1-800 line.

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CHILDREN'S HEALTH

**KEY FINDINGS FROM A NATIONWIDE SURVEY AMONG
PARENTS OF ZERO- TO THREE-YEAR-OLDS**

CONDUCTED BY
PETER D. HART RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

FUNDED BY THE
HEINZ FAMILY FOUNDATION



National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families

APRIL 1997

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