

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. memo	Neera Tanden to FLOTUS re National Campaign to Prevent Youth Violence (partial) (1 page)	09/07/1999	P6/b(6)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
First Lady's Office
Domestic Policy Council (Nicole Rabner)
OA/Box Number: 15417

FOLDER TITLE:

Violence/School Safety [2]

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RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
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Proposed Initiative

Safe Start: Children Exposed to Violence ¹

"It is appalling the number of letters I get from five- and six- year-olds who simply want me to make their lives safe; who don't want to worry about being shot; who don't want anymore violence in their homes; who want their schools and the streets they walk on to be free of terror. So, today the Department of Justice is establishing a new initiative called "Safe Start," based on the efforts in New Haven, Connecticut, which you will hear about this afternoon. The program will train police officers, prosecutors, probation and parole officers in child development so that they'll actually be equipped to handle situations involving young children. And I believe if we can put this initiative into effect all across America, it will make our children safer." - President Clinton, April 17, 1997

"A child's earliest experience, their relationships with parents and care-givers, the sights and sounds and smells and feelings they encounter, the challenges they meet determine how their brains are wired. And that brain shapes itself through repeated experiences. The more something is repeated, the stronger the neuro-circuitry becomes, and those connections, in turn, can be permanent. In this way, the seemingly trivial events of our earliest months that we cannot even later recall -- hearing a song, getting a hug after falling down, knowing when to expect a smile -- those are anything but trivial. And as we know, for the first three years of life, so much is happening in the baby's brain. They will learn to soothe themselves when they're upset, to empathize to get along. These experiences can determine whether children will grow up to be peaceful or violent citizens, focused or undisciplined workers, attentive or detached parents themselves." - First Lady of the United States, April 17, 1997

¹ Revised 4/1/98

Goal and Summary

The goal of the proposed initiative is to prevent and reduce the impact of family, school, and community violence on young children in 15 communities. The initiative seeks to accomplish this goal by integrating federal and private support to improve the access, delivery, and quality of educational/developmental, health, mental health, family support, crisis intervention and legal services for young children at risk of being or already exposed to violence, their families and their care givers.

In FY 1998, the initiative would be funded at \$10 million from the Violent Crime Reduction Trust Fund and would be allocated to the Department of Justice. The goal would be to have a three-year program based on individual site performance and availability of funding.

The initiative would provide 15 communities with grants of approximately \$500,000. In addition to grants totaling \$8 million, \$1 million would be set aside for training and technical assistance and \$1 million would be set aside for evaluation. These funds would supplement existing grant activity taking place at the federal, state and local level which will be coordinated for this initiative.

Justification Part One: Children Exposed to Violence

The need for the proposed initiative is significant. First, we know that the incidence of children's exposure to violence is high. Throughout America, millions of children are exposed to violence at home, in their neighborhoods, and in their schools. According to a National Institute of Justice survey, of the 22.3 million adolescents ages 12-17 in the United States today, approximately 9 million have witnessed serious violence. Among these witnesses to violence, 15 percent developed Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Researchers excluded from their overall calculations the approximately 30 percent of adolescents who had directly observed someone being beaten up badly and hurt -- an experience so common that had these figures been included, the prevalence of witnessing violence would have risen to 72 percent for the entire sample. Other reports show a similarly high incidence of children exposed to violence:

- In a survey of sixth, eighth, and tenth graders in New Haven in 1992, 40% reported witnessing at least one violent crime in the past year.
- In Los Angeles, it was estimated that children witness approximately 10% to 20% of the homicides committed in that city.
- In a study of African American children living in a Chicago neighborhood, one third of the school-aged children had witnessed a homicide and two-thirds had witnessed a serious assault.
- Ninety-one percent of New Orleans fifth graders and 72 % of Washington, D.C. children have witnessed some type of violence.
- It has been estimated that between 3.3 to 10 million children witness physical and verbal spousal abuse each year, including a range of behaviors from insults and hitting to fatal assaults with guns and knives.
- In a study conducted at Boston City Hospital, 1 out of every 10 children seen in their primary care clinic had witnessed a shooting or stabbing before the age of 6 -- 50 percent in the home and 50 percent in the streets. The average age of these children was 2.7 years.

Secondly, we know the adverse impact of violence on these children. Children's exposure to violence and maltreatment is significantly associated with increased depression, anxiety, post traumatic stress, anger, greater alcohol and drug abuse, and lower academic achievement. It shapes how they remember, learn and feel. In addition, children who experience violence either as victims or as witnesses are at increased risk of becoming violent themselves. These dangers are greatest for the youngest children who depend almost completely on their parents and care givers to protect them from trauma.

Third, we know that the majority of children exposed to violence are not treated. According to the National Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect, over 90 percent of children who are exposed to child abuse and neglect do not get the services they need; and too often, victims services in domestic violence and criminal investigations focus on the adult victim rather than the child. In one study of 28 child witnesses aged 1.5 to 14 years from 14 families in which the father killed the mother, delays in referrals for treatment for the children ranged from 2 weeks to 11 years. Without the increased awareness, funds for services and collaboration, training and technical assistance and evaluation supported by the proposed program, it is reasonable to believe that these children will continue to go untreated.

Fourth, the problem of children's exposure to violence is well recognized by both the research and policy making communities; and the solutions to this problem have been established by many esteemed organizations including the American Psychological Association, Children's Defense Fund, Carnegie Corporation of New York, National Research Council, American Academy of Pediatrics, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and Zero to Three/National Center for Clinical Infant Programs. According to the recommendations of a consensus of professionals in the field, child development theory, experience and evaluations from psychoanalytic and psychodynamic interventions with children, what children need when they are exposed to violence is comprehensive mental health services to help them process the violence; a sustained relationship with a caring, pro-social adult role model; protection from further risk of harm; and legal intervention.

These known solutions for treating children exposed to violence are synthesized in the proposed initiative which increases awareness in communities and among professions of the impact of violence on children; facilitates collaboration and coordination of services; improves identification, referral and interventions; provides specific training and support to deal with the psychological aftermath of children's experience with violence; assists organizational changes in the provision of police, mental health, health, educational services; produces specific protocols and procedures for responding to children exposed to violence, etc.

Justification Part Two: Interagency Multi-Site Replication

While the needs of children exposed to violence is clear, the application of knowledge at the federal and state levels as well as in local communities is one of the most critical problems we face. At the recent *White House Conference on Child Care*, the President of the United States, First Lady, Governor Hunt of North Carolina and a Program Officer of the Kellogg Foundation asked why, if the field of child services possesses evaluations of promising practices (such as Nurse Home Visitation, Multi-Systemic Therapy, mental health interventions for children, etc.), these programs are not being brought to scale to serve all children in need. The question is a critical one at this point in the Clinton Administration and in the field of children, youth and family services and portrays a dire need for more coordinated federal and private leadership, adequate resources for comprehensive planning and services, place-based program saturation, and broad scale information dissemination.

While most of the specific programmatic elements of the proposed Children Exposed to Violence Initiative are being implemented by one agency or another with positive results (see *Attachment A* for a preliminary list of more than 66 federal grants, training and technical assistance and research programs that could prevent exposure to violence, improve outcomes for children exposed to violence and advance our understanding of the issue), no one agency or combination of agencies is explicitly and comprehensively focusing on the issue, building upon the best practices of each. A 1994 Government Accounting Office audit of Early Childhood Programs indicated over 90 early childhood programs in 11 federal agencies totaling at least \$3.66 billion in federal fiscal year 1992. This patchwork of programs results in an inefficient use of resources and does not necessarily provide individuals with needed services. Further, it does not mirror the interagency coordination on the federal level that is required of communities.

The federal government must work towards specific indicators of success that can only be brought about when its various efforts are combined in a coherent targeted strategy. This strategy must include coordination of policies, joint budget planning, memoranda of understanding and protocols, and program implementation that replicates as extensively, and in as cost-effective a manner as possible, the integration of our services, the development of management information systems, and promising and effective programs at multiple points of entry for children in need.

Over the lifetime of the Clinton Administration, a number of interagency efforts have been implemented that seek to improve outcomes for disadvantaged children, families and communities. From each of these efforts, lessons about implementing these initiatives have been learned and documented. The White House Partnerships for Stronger Families effort summarized the lessons learned from many of these major initiatives, including the Oregon Option, Community Empowerment Board, Connecticut MOU, Project PACT, and others. This Administration has also gained insight from various smaller-scale interagency efforts such as Family Preservation and Support, Healthy Start, Comprehensive Communities Program, Title V Community Prevention Grants, SafeFutures, Weed and Seed, etc. Evaluation results, process summaries and preliminary findings from these and private efforts such as the Casey Foundation's Rebuilding Communities collectively form a methodology for interagency collaboration that includes the following elements:

- *A shared focused objective.* The initiative focus must be narrow enough to have an impact yet broad enough to engage the interests of multiple agencies (e.g., children exposed to violence have critical health, mental health, education, safety, housing and transportation needs).
- *Central leadership* and ongoing support from the White House and highest agency levels.
- *Dedicated administrative budget and staff* to support the initiative.
- *Implementation must be system-wide and sufficiently broad in scope* to gain sufficient

and sustained policy-level attention and impact overall Administration and agency practices, rather than be relegated to isolated “special project” demonstrations.

- *New funding*, in addition to coordination of existing federal funding, must be provided to serve as an incentive to communities as well as to support federal coordination.
- *A focus on outcomes*. Measurable progress toward planned goals/results must be tracked and this process must be a central feature of the initiative.
- An *action-orientation* that reflects *flexibility* in relation to the implementation of rules and regulations where appropriate.
- *Ongoing support* and technical assistance for federal coordination.
- *Active “field” representatives* who serve as local liaisons to the federal government and facilitators, as well as providing critical feedback to the federal process.

The goal of *Children Exposed to Violence Initiative* is to focus the lessons learned of this Administration to improve the way the federal government supports state and local government in meeting the needs of children exposed to violence, including the needs of their families and communities. The planning process for the initiative will allow the agencies to radically reshape the budget, program development and program implementation processes based upon what we know communities need and the direction the federal government must necessarily go.

Objectives

The initiative would be a public-private interagency collaboration which expands on the Department of Justice’s *Child Development - Community Policing Safe Start Initiative* and would seek to improve access, delivery, and quality of educational/developmental, health, mental health, family support, crisis intervention and legal services for young children (ages 0-6) at risk of being or already exposed to violence, their families and their care givers. This focus would include drug abuse identification and referral to treatment for parents, as this is also related to violence prevention, intervention, and family care.

The initiative would accomplish these objectives by providing funding, training, technical assistance and information in 15 communities (and, where appropriate, in their respective states) on the following:

- Coordination of services and the development of a community-wide system for responding to children exposed to violence and linking them to the appropriate services.
- Development of effective protocols and memoranda of understanding for working across systems.

- Development of a child- and family-focused violence prevention strategy that would include mentoring and conflict resolution for families, child care workers, law enforcement, juvenile justice practitioners, child protective service providers, teachers, medical personnel, community residents and community-based providers, including public housing personnel, and providers of vocational training.
- Education and training for parents, child care workers, child protective service providers, law enforcement officers, probation officers, parole officers, pediatricians, emergency room doctors, nurses, school personnel, clergy, and relevant university staff on responding to the impact of violence on young children.
- Experience in problem-solving so that these individuals and agencies can prevent violence and trauma before it happens.
- Establishment or enhancement of a broad range of local intervention and treatment services and resources for children, their families, and their young peers, including school-based, court-based, community-based, and hospital-based victim services.
- Responsive investigation and prosecution of child victimizers and defendants in domestic violence cases.
- Appropriate law enforcement protection from repeat abuse.
- Improvement of the responsiveness of drug courts to the impact of substance abuse in families on children.
- Coordination with victims assistance and victims compensation for children.

Partners and Initiative Development

Organizations contributing to the development, funding, or implementation of the grants, along with training and technical assistance, information dissemination, and assistance in evaluation could include:

- Domestic Policy Council
- President's Crime Prevention Council
- Community Empowerment Board
- Department of Health and Human Services
 - Administration for Children, Youth and Families
 - Center for Disease Control and Prevention
 - Center for Substance Abuse Prevention
 - Center for Substance Abuse Treatment

- Maternal Child Health Bureau
- National Institute on Drug Abuse
- National Institute of Health
- National Institute of Mental Health
- Office for Planning and Evaluation
- Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Department of Labor
- Department of Defense
- Department of Education
- Department of Agriculture
- Office of National Drug Control Policy
- Department of Interior
- Corporation for National Service
- Department of Treasury
- Department of Justice
 - Bureau of Justice Assistance
 - Community Oriented Policing Services
 - Drug Courts Office
 - Executive Office for Weed and Seed
 - National Institute of Justice
 - Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
 - Office for Victims of Crime
 - Violence Against Women Act Grants Office
- Regional Federal Representatives
- National Performance Review
- White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning participants
- Child Welfare League of America
- Casey Family Programs
- Child Development Community Policing Program
- Kaiser Permanente
- American Pediatrics Association
- Edna McConnell Clark Foundation
- American Psychological Association
- Zero To Three
- International Association of Chiefs of Police

A year long planning period involving these agencies and key thinkers and actors from these organizations would focus on comprehensively examining the magnitude of the problem and characteristics of children exposed to violence; how communities can implement and support these programs; and the best way for various federal agencies and private organizations to maximize their current work in this area and jointly support these efforts. Specifically, the areas where the planning group would focus its learning efforts are:

1) *Surveillance:*

What do we know about the nature and extent of the problem? Who are the children who witness violence? How often does it occur? What types of violence do they witness? Where do they live?

Many of these questions can be answered by examining health and police data sets, NCHS National Health Information Surveys, NCAAN's research, Emergency Department data and Center for Disease Control surveys such as the Youth Risk Behavior Survey administered in schools, the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System surveys for all injury, and the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System.

2) *Risk Factor Research:*

What types of children are impacted by what types of violence, and in what ways? Who are the children at highest risk of being adversely impacted when they observe violence? Are particular types of violence more damaging (e.g., witnessing domestic violence at home versus witnessing a shooting of a stranger at school; television violence versus community violence)? How do single exposures compare to repeated exposure? How do different types of violence impact children of different backgrounds, ages, different socio-economic status, and in different demographic and geographic settings?

3) *Intervention Identification and Evaluation:*

What is the range of effective prevention and intervention approaches of which we are aware (e.g., nurse home visitation, family strengthening, multi-systemic family therapy, etc.)? How should they be applied separately or in combination (simultaneously or serially) to best prevent and intervene with children's exposure to violence? How can we assure cultural relevancy in their application?

4) *State and Local Initiatives:*

What are current activities and legislation underway which support this initiative?

5) *Interagency Implementation and Program Delivery:*

How will extant services in the areas of welfare, health and human services, schools, medical care, mental health, public safety, and housing be combined and coordinated to address children exposed to violence? What is the precise nature of the interagency federal role in supporting these systems and interventions? Which programs listed in Attachment 1 are should be directly applied to supporting this initiative and which are more appropriate to leverage this initiative? Are there program solicitations that can be coordinated with this initiative? How do we create a positive and effective partnership in this area based upon our lessons learned from other interagency and public/private initiatives?

The interagency, public/private planning process would be supported by insight from regional federal representatives on resources at the local level and by a contracted literature

review and program review, including the finalization of the attached inventory of federal grants, training and technical assistance, research, evaluation and information dissemination relevant to this initiative. This inventory would be printed and placed on a web site for the public and would serve as the basis for producing joint solicitations, coordinating solicitation announcements, examining some regulations, and developing future interagency funding requests, which will substantially leverage the resources committed to this project.

This planning process would target the parameters of the initiative, including additional consideration of the number of sites and funding issues, and prepare us to write up a more detailed project description for implementation.

Costs and Grants

The ultimate cost of this initiative for a local community is dependant upon three critical variables: 1) The size of the community; 2) the level of violence and exposure to violence; and 3) the leadership of and commitment of existing or newly developed "in-kind" resources from law enforcement, education, mental health and others to the project.

In a mid-size city, like New Haven which is the seventh poorest city in the country, every week a consortium consisting of the domestic violence unit, community police, mental health workers, teachers, victims services, juvenile probation and prosecutors receive 5-10 new cases. Each of these cases represents a new family to service. With an average of 2-5 children per family and a total of approximately 400-500 cases each year, this project provides services to an estimated 1500-2500 children per year. The costs associated with providing services to these new cases is dependent on the level of existing services and whether new services need to be developed to serve the population.

Another cost of providing these services in a given community is the expense of training law enforcement officers in basic child development and victims issues, engaging police officers as trainers, and allocating police time for training and engagement in the case management process. This cost varies depending on the size of the police department, whether it is unionized or not, the extent of investment and commitment from the police chief and the in-kind contribution he or she makes to the project.

The same costs and factors apply to making a shift in the delivery of mental health and educational services to ensure that they are integrated with law enforcement and available to a broader population of children. This shift requires support for clinicians and educators to be involved in the development and provision of training with their colleagues in law enforcement; as well as increasing their availability to be on-call and involved in programming.

In each "system" or institution, the primary objective is to capitalize upon and reshape existing staff time and services; and the available resources and ability to do this work will vary from one community to another. However, there are a few expenditures that are critical and can

be quantified for purposes of gaining a better understanding of local implementation costs. For example, funds totaling approximately \$100,000 is required for shifting law enforcement and mental health practices as described above and to provide an incentive for leveraging existing staff time and services. Another \$100,000 is required to support after school programming that includes a clinical coordinator, outreach workers, and psychologists to service an average of 10-15 children at any one time. Approximately \$40,000 is required to train and support mentors and tutors for a core group of approximately 40 children exposed to violence; and another \$40,000 will cover the cost of expanding a Head Start program, quality day care program, drug court, emergency ward or domestic violence center to include the benefit of a health consultant focused on preventing the harmful effects of exposure to violence. Again, all of these costs assume that some level of activity is already taking place and can be redirected or supplemented.

In addition, funds must be available for a central coordinator of the project, program and support staff and for supporting a community's core team of providers to develop the program, be on call, be assigned to neighborhoods, work with colleagues, coordinate and increase the array of hands on services, disseminate information and, most importantly, to review and manage cases.

Federal funding for these efforts serves as an essential leverage for the in-kind support that is critical to reshaping police, mental health, educational and community services. Lessons learned from the federal interagency process demonstrate that coordination costs money and that with increased coordination comes an increased demand for services. Both of these areas must be accounted for in the grants, but their specific ratios could be adjusted during the federal planning process or in the application process based upon local need.

The total program budget for the initiative is \$10 million. Fifteen (15) communities would be provided with up to three-year grants of approximately \$500,000 per year. Given the estimates stated above, this federal contribution would support comprehensive services for approximately 1500-2500 children at \$200-330 per child as well as prevention programs and institutional improvements that would service countless other children in need.

The annual grants of \$500,000 to each community could provide an equal amount for costs related to planning and coordination and costs related to providing direct services, and would consist of funds for the following:

- 1 Director/Coordinator @\$50,000;
- 2 Program Staff @\$70,000;
- 2 Support Staff @\$50,000;
- Overhead and administrative costs @\$80,000; and
- Seed money for 2 intervention programs identified by the community assessment process as missing or requiring enhancement @\$250,000. This seed money would ensure that as communities increase their identification of children exposed to violence, they broaden the services and programs necessary to meet the needs

of those children. These programs might include crisis response centers, mental health services for children, domestic violence intervention programs, drug courts, or cross-training for police.

In addition, a local match would be required of communities in their second and third years of implementation to encourage the institutionalization and sustainability of their projects after federal funding.

Communities awarded grants would represent urban, rural and tribal jurisdictions and would be identified through a competitive process, by demonstrating:

- high rates of children's exposure to violence;
- a comprehensive, integrated, community-wide plan based on their needs, resources and steps for achieving a system of prevention and treatment of children exposed to violence;
- a range of local human resource and financial commitments for implementing and evaluating such a system;
- a strong partnership with State child welfare and justice systems, as well as an established system of addressing issues in a multidisciplinary approach.

Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities would be given competitive advantage. The goal would be to bring into this initiative communities that have a variety of different strategic partnership initiatives and are working to integrate those across agency or initiative lines.

The first year of funding for each community would be set aside for planning, finalization of the program design, and the first stages of implementation -- all of which will be conducted in close coordination with the evaluation described below. The grants would support the range of activities described on page four and would be managed by a federal interagency board, in conjunction with the administering agency, and with input and support from private partners.

Training, Technical Assistance and Information Dissemination

Training and technical assistance would focus on linking appropriate existing contracts into teams and would be supplemented with one million dollars (\$1 million). Training and technical assistance would take five forms:

- 1) Support for bench marking and outcome measurement.
- 2) Professional development provided by a team of experts from the Yale Child Study Center. The current team of experts, which is already being expanded, would include professionals experienced in working with parents, child care workers, child protective

service providers, law enforcement officers, probation officers, parole officers, pediatricians, emergency room doctors, nurses, school personnel, educators, clergy, public housing officials and university professors.

3) Training and technical assistance to communities offered through existing contracts.

4) Training and technical assistance to states offered through existing contracts.

5) Federal employees on the local level, such as U.S. Attorneys, FBI, DEA, HHS, DOL, HUD, ED, DOD, DOI, CNS, and USDA personnel could be involved in supporting program implementation on the local level.

In addition to training and technical assistance, fact sheets, training materials, curricula, posters, and information could be developed and disseminated to various audiences, again, based on the work of existing clearinghouses and campaigns. A web site would also contain this information, and a List Serv would be established to electronically link the sites, and various individuals within the sites, to one another.

Research and Evaluation

The initiative would be explicitly focused on outcomes on three critical levels: 1) policy level/systems change, including change at the federal level; 2) improvements in service delivery; and 3) outcomes for children and families. One million dollars (\$1 million) would be set aside for measuring these multiple outcomes. Specifically, the evaluation would track the individual projects and examine the impact of the overall program as well as certain projects. It is anticipated that each community would implement a range of interventions and approaches which would vary from one community to another. The initiative and its evaluation would serve to assess the effectiveness of these various interventions and approaches. In addition, existing research and evaluations focused on the range of interventions (e.g., CDC's research on the impact of interventions targeting intimate partner violence and NCAAN's research on the efficacy of various treatments for abuse and neglect) would inform this initiative and provide guidelines for the field on helping children exposed to violence.

Interim evaluation reports would be produced to assess the direction of the initiative, provide ongoing information about promising interventions in the sites, and to disseminate information on models that have proven effective.

Implementation and Leveraging

Building upon a number of interagency models, a federal interagency team would be formed around the purpose of reducing the impact of violence on young children (0-6 years old). All existing program, training, and research resources related to this goal would be identified and

become part of this team's effort to better coordinate, integrate, and improve prevention and intervention services for children exposed to violence. In addition, the team would develop a common list of effective training and technical assistance providers in this area; as well as a comprehensive list of effective approaches and evaluations.

The selected communities would build upon existing projects such as their Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community; HHS's Starting Early/Starting Smart, Head Start and Early Head Start; MCHB Leadership Education Projects; HUD's Hope VI; DOJ's Community Prevention Grants, Comprehensive Communities or Weed and Seed sites; USDA's Children, Youth and Families At Risk training; Safe and Drug Free School Community; or Community Anti-Drug Coalition and receive necessary funding support through these existing funding streams for a collaborative process focused on coordinating services and developing a community-wide system for preventing and intervening with children's exposure to violence.

Together, families, child care workers, law enforcement, juvenile justice practitioners, child protective service providers, teachers, medical personnel, mental health providers, community residents and community-based providers, including public housing personnel and providers of vocational training would develop a child- and family-focused violence prevention strategy that would include, among other components, family strengthening/parent training, domestic violence reduction, substance abuse prevention, mentoring and conflict resolution.

State health, education, justice and other relevant agencies with sites participating in the initiative would receive training through programs such as HHS's Child Care and Development Fund Training, Leadership Forums, Child Care Health Consultant Program, and Health System's Development in Child Care to facilitate system-wide reform, coordination of funding streams and the provision of family and mental health services which would benefit young children.

Intensive training across disciplines for community teams on children's exposure to violence, treatment options, and interventions in various settings (e.g., curricula for school) would be provided by the team of experts identified by the agencies, including professionals experienced in working with parents, child care workers, child protective service providers, community policing officers, probation officers, parole officers, pediatricians, emergency room doctors, nurses, school personnel, educators, clergy, public housing officials and university professors. Again, this training would build upon that available under existing contracts.

A broad range of local intervention and treatment services and resources for children, their families, and their young peers, would be established, including school-based, court-based, community-based, and hospital-based victim services. These services may require some new dollars, but would build primarily upon existing federally-funded comprehensive service delivery programs such as HHS's Healthy Start Family Resource Centers, DOJ's Safe Havens, Boys and Girls Clubs, and USDA's Community and Migrant Health Centers.

Federal employees on the local level, such as U.S. Attorneys, FBI, DEA, HHS, DOL, HUD, ED, DOD, DOI, CNS, and USDA personnel would be involved in supporting the development of effective protocols and memoranda of understanding for working across systems; including coordination with victims assistance and victims compensation for children; responsive investigation and prosecution of child victimizers and defendants in domestic violence cases; and appropriate law enforcement protection from repeat abuse.

Various audiences would receive fact sheets, training materials, curricula, posters, and information on the impact of violence on young children, the importance of prevention, and how to identify and respond to children exposed to violence. This information could be produced and disseminated through, among other channels, HHS's National Child Care Information Center, Head Start's seven national training contracts, Early Head Start National Resource Center, the National Center for Health and Safety in Child Care, Healthy People 2000, Bright Futures, USDA's Anti-Drug Education in rural housing, and DOJ's Clearinghouse.

An evaluation would track the process of implementing this system reform among individual projects, examine the impact of the overall program, and report on the impact of certain projects. HHS's research on Preventing Developmental Delays, Early Social and Emotional Development, Early Learning, Child Abuse and Neglect, Childhood Behavioral Disorders, Social Experience and Development, Mental Health Services for Young Children, and Childhood Injury Prevention; and DOJ's research on the Causes and Correlates of Delinquency and Study of Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods would inform the evaluation. The current effort by HHS to expand and coordinate research in the early childhood development area would also be linked with this initiative.

As a result of the significant increase in coordinated federal support, along with the local activity it would prompt, we would find an equally significant change in a community's awareness and involvement in addressing the problem; and its capacity for providing responsive, quality services. The following three scenarios give brief examples to this effect and are intended to help bring to life how this initiative might operate. They reflect our preliminary thinking and would be informed by the other agencies and non-federal organizations which we hope can be involved in making this initiative a reality:

Scenario #1

In one community, if a mother and two children, ages 3 and 10, are present when a relative is shot to death through the door of their apartment, the district supervisor, trained by the Initiative, offers a referral for mental health services and also provides the mother with his beeper number. The supervisory sergeant, in touch with the mental health provider, accepts daily calls from the mother, during which he provides her with information regarding the family's protection from reprisal and makes sure that her clinical support is appropriate.

Through support from the Department of Education, the youngest child is placed in a Perry Pre-School program, a model program identified and implemented through the initiative, which fosters the child's social and intellectual development and strengthens the family unit through home visits, weekly meetings with the mother, parent training and vocational assistance.

The older child's school teacher is alerted of the dramatic episode witnessed by the children. The trained school teacher, upon hearing many of the students from the neighborhood talking about the incident, is able to focus a classroom discussion on the repercussions of violence and helps the kids process the incident productively. As a result, the students form a school non-violence campaign.

With the ongoing support of the sergeant, mental health provider, and school teachers, and the involvement of the local public housing authority, the mother and her children receive intensive treatment, both children are functioning well in school and the mother is able to relocate her family to a safer neighborhood.

In addition, the ongoing Community Collaborative, consisting of the formal and informal leadership from the community, suggests that a team including law enforcement, education, mental health, and public housing providers be formed to go into the community to work with residents on an ongoing basis to address local violence-related issues and identify at-risk children in need of services.

Scenario #2

In another community, a woman is stabbed to death by her estranged boyfriend in the presence of her children. During this incident, the boyfriend also batters the woman's six year-old child in the presence of her four-year-old and her daughter, who is 16-years-old and pregnant.

An ambulance rushes the battered six-year-old to the hospital. At the hospital, the physicians treat the six-year-old's wounds and also provide clinical support. Simultaneously, law enforcement officers and mental health clinicians respond to the scene, provide acute clinical assessments of the other children, and consult with relatives and police as to how to tell the children their mother is dead.

Child protective service workers are briefed by the physician, hospital clinicians, police, and clinicians who were on the scene about the incident and the symptoms being exhibited by each child. They place the children with local family members. The police and child protective service worker are in contact with the prosecutor to stay updated on the case of the boyfriend. Police conduct follow up visits to the family, providing practical recommendations for the security of the home and information regarding the status of the prosecution.

The coordinated efforts of police, mental health, child welfare, home-based support professionals, and prosecutors allow the children to remain together, rather than be dispersed to

multiple foster homes, and to receive long term family psychotherapy. The teenager is referred to a Nurse Home Visitation program, (another model program implemented through the initiative), which helps her improve her health-related behaviors, her quality of infant care-giving, and her personal development. After a brief conference with their school principal, all of the children are able to stay in school despite a prolonged absence. The children's symptoms of anxiety, depression, and aggressive behavior have diminished.

Scenario #3

In a rural community, a sixteen year old is exhibiting delinquent behavior. Law enforcement officers bring him to the attention of the presiding juvenile and family court judge. It turns out his twelve-year old sister had recently been brought to the attention of courts because of child abuse. Their younger five-year-old sibling appears not to be abused, but during regular monthly conversations with the local school administrators, information concerning the five-year-old indicates that he is exhibiting unusual behavior at his school. The judge asks the mental health clinicians working with the twelve-year old to speak with the younger child.

The judge, child protective service worker, community-based police officers, community-based probation officers, clinicians, school officials, and case managers decide they need to provide a coordinated, comprehensive, and structured assessment and intervention for this family. The probation and police officers provide the external authority necessary to contain the older sibling through intensive supervision, frequent monitoring, and the imposition of variable sanctions for violations. In close collaboration with these figures of authority, the Department of Transportation provides a means for the children to get back and forth to the Extension Center where they participate in a model family strengthening program; and the clinicians, educators, job training specialist and case managers provide a range of educational, therapeutic, and recreational interventions, including life skills, work force development, conflict resolution training, community service projects, after school activities, wilderness experiences, and group psychotherapy, all coordinated with the children's parents.

Conclusion

The tragic consequences to children of chronic exposure to violence, and the social implications of those consequences, are considerable. This Administration has taken a strong position and leadership role on this issue through the *White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning*. The proposed initiative will ensure that we have taken the necessary follow up action to protect and help the silent victims of crime and violence.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 4, 1994

REMARKS OF THE FIRST LADY
VIA SATELLITE TO CHILDREN NOW CONFERENCE,
VIA SATELLITE

Thank you all very much. I want to thank Dr. Kennedy and Mr. Steyer, for helping organize this conference and for inviting me to be a part of it.

It is an honor to speak to such this gathering that includes child advocates, academics, journalists, and educators, as Geoff already said. I know that many of you have traveled across the country to participate in the panels over the next few days, and I want to thank you for your willingness to tackle a subject as complicated, controversial and important as children and the news media. I'm only sorry I can't be there to join your discussions in person.

As you know so well, we live in an age of great promise -- and great peril -- for our children. While we have made considerable strides in improving the health, education, and job opportunities of our young people, our children continue to shoulder burdens never encountered by children in any other civilized society before this time.

To be sure, our children today have advantages that even those of us my age didn't know: things like computers and global information networks, in some ways a more united world, and the absence of Cold War tensions. But they also have disadvantages -- disadvantages that inject cynicism, anxiety, and fear into their young lives.

On the eve of the 21st century, American children are growing up in a world where competition for jobs is more intense than ever, where health care in our country is too costly, where college tuitions get higher and higher, and where poverty and neglect are increasing instead of decreasing.

And now, adding to those burdens, comes a plague of violence, both in reality and through the perceptions that are promoted by the media, that is claiming, in realistic terms, far too many lives, but is also engendering a climate of fear because of what children see and hear every day.

American children are immersed in a culture of violence. They see violence on television. They see violence in movie theaters. They see it on the streets where they live. They see it in their schools. They see it in their homes.

In too many neighborhoods, gunfire has become a daily ritual of life. An Uzi has become a badge of honor. A bullet wound has become an emblem of adulthood. Just this last week, on Monday, I was across the country, in New York, where I visited a very large hospital in Brooklyn, a hospital that treats gunshot wounds and knife wounds every hour.

And the doctors there told me that the most discouraging part of their work is that the age of the victims gets younger and younger, and that after they finish patching up a 13 or 14-year old from a gang shooting or a drive-by shooting, or a knife fight, they anticipate they will see that same young person in just a few months or years again.

In Washington, our nation's capital, a young four-year-old girl was shot in the head when young men opened fire on an elementary school playground as a crowd watched a pickup football game.

Last summer, again in Washington, gunshots rang out at a pool as children sought relief from 90-degree heat. A young mother is dragged by the side of her car during a car jacking that had the child in the car and the mother being killed trying to hang on to the car.

I could tell you many, many stories like that, but I think you know what happens every day in every neighborhood. This horrible chronicle of malicious violence goes on and on, every day and every week, every month, across the nation.

The reason we know about these tragic incidents -- the murders, the car jackings, the kidnappings, the beatings, the rapes -- is because the news media reports about them. And I'm sure that everyone in this audience today would agree that reporting about these sorts of incidents is part of the news media's job.

I think we all agree that the public needs to know about crime and violence. I'm sure that, to some degree, news coverage of crime has heightened public support for deterrents such as gun control. And it might also help this Administration and this President get a crime bill with real possible hope for change this year.

At the same time, we have to stop and ask ourselves some very important questions:

First, has the exhaustive -- and perhaps excessive -- coverage of violence contributed to increasing alienation and dysfunctional behavior on the part of our children and youth?

And second, does the news coverage engender so much cynicism and distrust among young people that they grow up with no faith in any of our institutions and little motivation to make something of their own lives?

These are questions I hope you will explore and that I think we must answer.

Over the past few years, a lot of attention has been paid to violence in movies and in television programming, and in the records that young people listen to. And on that score, things are beginning to improve. As the President said earlier this week, the entertainment industry has -- as a result of public concerns -- become much more involved in efforts to reduce violence in network programming. Their willingness to set up a voluntary monitoring system is a step in the right direction.

In the meantime, we're only now beginning to focus on the issue of violence and the news media, and it's a very tricky issue, given that information today comes from so many different sources -- newspapers, radio, local television, network television, television tabloids. This is an issue that must be addressed, even as we recognize that these different news media sometimes go about their jobs in different ways.

Just yesterday I read about the results of a new survey put out by the Center for Media and Public Affairs. It showed that network news coverage of murder and violence had doubled last year -- even though the nation's overall crime rate had remained the same.

Some of the coverage was a result of unusual cases, like the Branch Davidians, the World Trade Center bombing, the Menendez brothers' trial, the Polly Klass case, and the murders of tourists in Florida.

But what about the rest? Were the stories really newsworthy? Or were they part of a troubling pattern of sensationalism that threatens to desensitize viewers -- particularly children -- to the point where violence is considered a normal, accepted part of life?

Children Now's recent survey reports that young people are deeply affected by news stories they read or see on television. More than half the children surveyed said they felt angry or depressed after watching or reading the news. And about 60 percent of kids between the ages of 11 and 16 said the news too often conveyed negative images of young people.

The fact is that we all want to stop violence. We all want our children to experience their childhoods without being afraid, without being vulnerable, and without being insecure.

We want them to be able to be children -- to feel safe in school, to enjoy sports and recreation, to develop extracurricular interests, and to build healthy relationships.

But those kinds of positive childhood experiences seem less and less real to children who are routinely bombarded with words and pictures that seldom portray young people living that way. Saturating children with increasingly graphic and sensational stories of violence prevents them from developing the emotional and psychological tools they need to deal with violence.

One of the biggest dangers of excessive coverage of violence is that, in a child's eye, the stories validate, sometimes even glamorize, dysfunctional behavior. Violence becomes normal -- and, in an odd way, even painless. It becomes harder for a child to distinguish between fact and fiction. The latest drive-by shooting on the evening news looks a lot like the Terminator blowing his fictional enemy to bits on the movie screen.

The second danger of excessive coverage is that children become numbed -- or, as social scientists say, "desensitized" -- to violence. Children become so habituated

to seeing and hearing about violence that shootings, beatings -- even death -- come to seem normal to them.

They develop an ironic detachment from life, a fatalism that prevents them from trusting anyone or anything. Recently I read a story about young children planning their own funerals. These children were so sure they were going to die violently that they had told their families what clothes they wanted to wear at their funerals, what music they wanted played, all with a casual detachment about what living and dying really means.

The third danger of excessive coverage of violence is that it exacerbates stereotypes. If African-American and Latino youth are usually portrayed on the news committing crimes, that stereotype is etched into the public consciousness. The same is true for women, who are often portrayed as victims.

Whether coverage of violence actually incites violent acts is one question we have to answer, and I know that researchers have debated it for years. Another equally important question is whether such coverage leaves us -- and particularly children -- with the impression that no one in our society ever does anything good or anything right.

For example, if children hear story after story about priests or clergy who molest children -- but never hear about those priests and clergy members who help children -- they are not likely to grow up trusting their churches. And yet, there are far more priests and ministers, and rabbis, in this country helping children than hurting them.

We need to ask ourselves whether some of our news coverage contributes to this lack of trust and whether it perpetuates a cynical detachment which, in turn, leads to abnormal behavior, including violence. Of course, I'm not suggesting that all news coverage of violence is bad or wrong, or that the media's treatment of violence alone accounts for our social ills. As I said earlier, the public has to be kept informed, including children.

But I think there must be balance. Judgment must be exercised, and when it comes to children, prudence is certainly called for.

In past generations, children got most of their information about the outside world from their parents, their teachers, their church, their local youth organization, from intermediary adults. Today, children get most of their information from the media -- largely from television.

And frankly, children can't cope with much of what they see. Watching indiscriminate violence and sex does not strengthen a child's emotional, social or psychological development. Watching a daytime talk show about bestiality is neither educational nor informative to a small child -- nor, for that matter, I would argue, to an adult.

I know that journalists need to treat their subjects as objectively as they can. But I think that sometimes subjectivity, remembering what it's like to be a child, or be a parent raising children, is probably okay, too, as long as it's subjectivity grounded in values.

After all, we all rely on our personal experiences and feelings -- as mothers and fathers, as brothers and sisters, as daughters and sons -- to inform our judgments as professionals. And I think there are probably times when journalists should too, especially when it comes to children.

We shouldn't have to wait for the next national survey -- some objective, quantitative analysis -- to become aware of the fear that children feel when they are chronically exposed to violence on television, at the movie theater, or in their newspapers. Think about it. When you or I see violent images or read about violent acts taking place around us, we get scared. We get anxious. And we're supposedly adults. We could even put these events in context. Children, particularly small children, cannot.

When violence is newsworthy enough to be reported, it should be balanced with stories that provide children with positive images of themselves and those around them, particularly adults in authority. Journalists should work extremely hard to avoid exacerbating negative stereotypes. And they should work extremely hard not to contribute to what social scientists call the "mean world syndrome," where children become so self-critical that they take on the attributes of the negative world they see portrayed in the media.

After all, good judgment and caution, or prudence, do not violate the journalist's First Amendment rights. They do not deny the public their right to know. But good judgment and caution, and prudence do and can make a difference to children.

This is a debate that is long overdue. And perhaps we are having it now, in our country, because we are recognizing the unintended consequences of the explosion of information, the competition among news media outlets to try to get there first and be sensational enough to keep the audience looking.

We know that as we drive down a road where there is an accident, we can't help but turn our head and watch, and perhaps say to ourselves, thank goodness we're not among them. But a steady diet, every day, of that kind of sensational violence is not how any of us were raised or live our lives on a day-to-day basis.

And what we have to try to do is to create the sort of balance that we know is difficult but imperative if we expect our children to be given a fair shot at a childhood that allows them to develop emotionally and psychologically into adults that can be productive and deal with the world in all of its good and bad, in a constructive way.

Thank you all very much.

A PARTICIPANT: Mrs. Clinton, you've been kind enough to agree to stay for a while in the conversation, and I know you're used to cream-puff questions from journalists. We have five very positive role models here of young students who, in fact -- some of them are journalists -- who want to engage in a dialog with you, as well as asking some questions.

What I want -- I think you have some brief bios on

them, but I'd like them each to introduce themselves and then to have them ask you a question or make an observation that might be helpful.

Luis, perhaps you could start.

A PARTICIPANT: You want me to ask to ask the questions?

A PARTICIPANT: I want you to tell who you are. Introduce yourselves, and then we'll come back with questions.

MR. CRUZ: Okay. Hi. My name is Luis Cruz, and I'm 18 years old. I'm a freshman at the University of California, Berkeley, and I'm a reporter for Straight Talking Teens. You might have heard of us from Mrs. Gore, who was there, and so I just want to offer you an open invitation any time you're in town.

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you.

MS. BROWN: Hi. My name is Shawntee Brown I'm 10 years old.

MRS. CLINTON: Great.

MS. BEHR: Hi. My name is Madeleine Behr (phonetic). I'm 11 years old. I go to Wood School in Alameda, and I'm a reporter at Children's Express.

MRS. CLINTON: Great.

MS. STRASSBERG: Hi. My name is Suzanne Strassberg (phonetic). I am 12 years old, and I attend the seventh grade at California Junior High School, and I have won several Young Authors awards.

MRS. CLINTON: Good for you.

MS. CHANG: Hello. My name is Lydia Chang (phonetic). I'm the student body president of Leland (phonetic) High School. I'm also the California State Junior Miss. I'll be representing California in the America's Junior Miss competition, and I am a correspondent for CNN's Real News for Kids.

MRS. CLINTON: Good.

A PARTICIPANT: Lydia, why don't you start with the first --

MS. CHANG: Okay. Mrs. Clinton, your talks about cynicism, how seeing all this violence in the news presents stereotypes, negative stereotypes of a lot of people in society, not just young people -- I'm concerned that because these images are being presented, and they're at least distorted if not inaccurate images, that adults watching the news are also garnering images that are false of young people.

And I'm really concerned about people on Capitol Hill -- legislators, Mr. President, yourself, who are all policy makers -- and if you get these images and your opinions from watching the news, then perhaps they're

inaccurate. And so I'm just wondering, where do you get your information about young people? Do you get them from the news? Do you think -- does it ever occur to you that some of those portrayals might be inaccurate?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, one thing that I can tell you is that my husband and I never watch the news. We consider that part of our mental health routine, and so we don't get our images about you or anybody from watching the news. We do it from actually interacting with people.

And my husband likes to spend lots of time with young people. We have many groups of young people coming into the White House. He goes out and visits young people in schools and other settings, and I do the same as often as possible. I really like to look at people face to face. I like to hear from them, like I'm hearing from you, because I think that your point is well taken.

There is a lot of fear among adults about children, particularly teenagers, because of the constant images of teenagers being threatening, particularly young men, particularly young black and Hispanic men. And I think that it does present a distorted view and makes it very difficult for individuals to be treated fairly and given the chance to be whom they are trying to be.

So it is important that you and other young people really keep insisting that you be seen as who you are and not filtered through some media image that stereotypes you along with other young people. And we'll do our part the best we can, in Washington, to try to make it clear that most American children and teenagers are good kids. They are working as hard as they can in school or on the job. They are responsible, they don't get in trouble, and they deserve to be treated with respect by the rest of us.

A PARTICIPANT: Suzanne?

MS. STRASSBERG: Okay. Well, my school is sort of in an upper class neighborhood, and there was a random shooting that occurred just recently, and -- sorry -- and it was covered on every news station in Sacramento. But I've noticed that if something like a random shooting happened in a sort of poor neighborhood, it's just counted as an everyday thing, like it happens every day. And what can we do to help people realize that shootings are an everyday thing everywhere?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I think that part of what we have to do is recognize that violence is no respecter of anybody, anymore. You find it throughout our country, in rural areas as well as city areas.

And one of the things that the President has tried to do in this crime bill that I mentioned in my remarks, is to put more police on the streets, to try to come up with alternative punishments, to try to get guns out of the hands of criminals -- not just the Brady Bill, which actually went into effect this week, but try to ban some of the assault weapons and other things that kids get a hold of and use against one another. So there is at least some willingness now to recognize the problem.

It's not just somebody else's problem. It affects

all of us. And so I think that once we are willing to say that, then we've got a chance to fix it. As long as it was somebody else's problem, you know, it only happened to a certain kind of people who lived in certain kinds of neighborhoods -- unfortunately there were too many Americans who were willing to ignore or deny what was happening.

Now, finally, we've got a President -- and I hope a majority of congress and the majority of the country -- who want to try to help everybody stop this epidemic of violence.

MS. BEHR: The media often covers stuff about adults without health coverage, but not usually do you hear stuff about homeless kids without education or health care. Do you think this is right? And what can we do to bring the subject up to the public?

MRS. CLINTON: Let me make sure I heard you: what can we do to make sure that people know more about homeless kids -- who are homeless and without education?

MS. BEHR: About how that affects the need for health care -- health coverage, too.

MRS. CLINTON: Right. Well, that's one of the things we're trying to do with health care reform, is to make sure that every American and every child gets health coverage. Right now, you're right, that too many children don't have health insurance, either because their parents don't work for somebody who helps provide health care, or because they're not poor enough to qualify for government health care, or because they just get lost in the system, like some of the homeless children in shelters that I have visited or seen on the streets.

Under what the President is proposing, health care will be available to every American. It will no longer matter whether you work, or where you work, or if you've been sick. Everybody will get health care. That's particularly important for children, especially children like the ones you care about, who are in terrible situations right now without health care, and they deserve to have the same kind of health care I try to give to my daughter.

A PARTICIPANT: Were you asking the question, too, Madeleine, if there was more coverage -- about children and the problems that they have with health care -- would that help to affect the public debate on health care?

MRS. CLINTON: Oh, I think it would.

A PARTICIPANT: And how much of the coverage seems to -- of course, you don't watch the news, so you may not be a good witness on this. (Laughter.)

MRS. CLINTON: People tell me about it, though.

A PARTICIPANT: How much of the coverage has focused on children and their need for health care?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, you know, it's -- this is slightly, I guess, off the subject, but I think it's related in that part of what we need is a consistent discussion about important issues like violence or like health care. And too often the news media thinks if they've done it once, then

they've done it, and they've got to move on to something else, and particularly with the debate over health care.

Most Americans are only now beginning to focus on health care, so they need constant information. And it may be boring to people who follow this closely or watch the news every night, but for most of the rest of us Americans, we want to see something covered over and over again, so we really do get information.

And her point about covering what happens to children, particularly children who are falling between the cracks, that are not getting health care, is something that I think we should have a lot of coverage about, because we are paying a very high price in both money terms and human terms because we don't take care of our children and give them decent health care.

A PARTICIPANT: Shontee, I know that much of what the First Lady said in her opening remarks about violence on television is part of what has concerned you. Do you want to maybe talk a little about your own feelings as well as asking her a question about it.

MS. BROWN: Okay. The way that I feel about violence, that kids -- kids of color is being portrayed by the media because if -- because if you go to (inaudible) to shoot -- to shoot up somebody, they won't -- they won't put that on the news. They'll put a white kid going on a rampage (inaudible) just shooting everybody. I think they -- the media -- is just judging on whites instead of blacks.

MRS. CLINTON: You know I think that the concerns that you express are ones that I really share with you, because we've got to get, in our country, to a point where we see individuals as individuals, not as members of groups. If someone does something wrong, that individual should be punished, and that individual should be held accountable.

But whether a person is black or white, that doesn't make any comment on everybody else who is black or white. We ought to just look at the individual behavior and try as hard as we can to eliminate, you know, racial and ethnic, and other kinds of stereotypes. And the news media needs to help us do that as best it can, because it has such influence over how people see the world. And I think you're right to be concerned.

A PARTICIPANT: Luis?

MR. CRUZ: Mrs. Clinton, I've noticed that there aren't too many good stories in the media about public education. How do you feel about that, and how do you feel about the fact that you seem to contribute to this perception by sending your kid to -- your daughter to a private school?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I think that's a fair question, because all during the time that we lived in Arkansas, when my husband was the governor there, Chelsea always attended public school. And we worked very hard and believed very strongly in public school. And if her father were still the governor of Arkansas, or were not the President of the United States, she would still be in public school.

But we have, unfortunately, some special considerations having to do with security and some other things, that I wish we didn't have. I mean, I wish that we could still live like former presidents lived, who could walk out their front door and go for a walk, who didn't have to be surrounded by secret service people all the time, who didn't have to have their daughter surrounded by secret service.

But the world we're living in doesn't permit us to do that. So we had to make a decision based as parents because of her father's position. But I don't think you'll find any two people more committed to public education than we are, because it works. Again, here is an unfair characterization.

Most public education works for most kids. It doesn't work for every student, and we need to do better. But it is unfair to dismiss public education the way too many people do, when it is working. And you are a result, other people are a result of good public schools, and I think we ought to celebrate the successes.

We try to do something most other countries don't try to do, to educate all of our kids, no matter what language they speak, no matter what background they come from. And we ought to be proud of that.

A PARTICIPANT: If you have a couple of more minutes, I'd love to follow up with the students' feelings about some of the points you raised in your comments and maybe give you a chance to ask a question or two of them, if you'd like to.

MRS. CLINTON: They're telling, me, Geoff, that I've got about three or four more minutes, so I'd be glad to.

A PARTICIPANT: Okay. Madeleine, you told a story this morning about your father and television news, that I think might be interesting for the First Lady to hear.

MS. BEHR: Well, at my household my parents sometimes watch the news. We don't -- we don't watch it, like, daily, every night, but my dad usually doesn't like me watching the news because he knows that almost 100 of the things on it is violence, and he doesn't want me to go to sleep with bad nightmares, that I'm going to be kidnapped right out of my household or something like that. So he doesn't -- he doesn't really like me watching the news.

MRS. CLINTON: I can understand that. You know, one of the things that the news media cannot really deal with is the range of its audience -- who turns on the TV, who sits in front of it. But it is very clear to anyone who has studied it that children of a certain age and below take very literally what they see on the news. And there are just countless stories of children becoming very anxious and concerned about what they see, and thinking it was going to happen to them.

And it used to be possible, in previous times, and certainly before television was as pervasive as it is, to protect children of a certain age from that kind of information. You know, children -- when you're growing up, you have a lot of work to do. I mean, you know, babies have to learn to walk and talk, and then you've got to learn about

how you write and you read, and you've got to figure out how the world works around you, like how you relate to the people in your family and everything.

I mean, I think a lot of adults forget what hard work it is to be growing up and to deal with the problems any child has to deal with. If you add on top of that a steady diet of violence that makes children feel frightened and scared, and anxious, it makes it more difficult for them to deal with what they have to do just as a daily part of growing up. Then you are interfering with what is or should be a kind of positive development in children's lives.

So I think your father and mother make a very good decision to try to at least act like the adults in your life, and protect you from being unnecessarily exposed to stuff that you can do nothing about, and that which only can make you anxious and block out your doing other things you should be doing and thinking about. So that's one of the problems we've got.

I mean, how do we let children be children, and grow up to be able to cope with all these things? If you get a steady diet of it too soon, it's like eating too much of anything. You get indigestion, and it interferes with your being able to deal with other problems. And I think that's happening with too many of our children.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
OFFICE OF THE PRESS SECRETARY

For Immediate Release

August 15, 1994

REMARKS BY FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
TO THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON YOUTH VIOLENCE
WASHINGTON, DC

Thank you so much, and thank you Secretary Riley, we have been friends and allies for many years and I am so grateful for his leadership on behalf of education for our entire country. I want to thank my friend Deborah Prothrow-Stith who years ago first taught me that violence is a public health epidemic. She made it very clear that if we had a disease in our country that was killing 65 people a day, this country would be mobilized. We would not rest until we had figured out how to stamp out that epidemic. Particularly when it was including in its death 7 young people a day. And now we know there is an epidemic of violence and yet there are still some among us who either refuse to accept the ravages of that epidemic or have other agendas besides the saving of lives and the reforming of people's futures. And it is imperative that conferences like this including people like all youth around this country speak out loudly and clearly to what your elected representatives know that on this issue as with many others, when it comes to violence enough is enough and America wants action now.

I want to especially thank all the cities that sent teens here to this conference. Because each of you have made a step as Secretary says starting with the first conference last year, of recognizing the problem that violence particularly youth violence poses to our society. We know we have to form partnerships among all different kinds of people in every community and we have to have partnerships at the local, state, and federal level in order to combat the ravages of violence. But I particularly want to thank the young people who are here and I want to thank Lucretia for that welcome when I came and sat down. I love that enthusiasm, I love the sound of young voices speaking out on what they care about. Truly your being here and your being willing to commit yourselves to finding solutions is very significant. And I am grateful for your accepting this responsibility.

This conference as those of you who are participants know, is about possibility and also about success. And is about never, never, giving up. I often give commencement speeches and I've heard many and I'm sure all of you in this room have. But the favorite I've ever heard about was the one Winston Churchill gave at his prep school when he strode to the podium and with very few introductory words said, "Never, never, never give up." That is the way I feel about many of the issues facing our country today. And it is also the way I feel about every single young person in our country today. Every young man or woman, every boy or girl, has a God given potential that we at our herald give up on. And it is incumbent upon us, as representatives of the adult community of this society, to recommit ourselves to youth. The young people who are here are pledging to you, "If you don't give up on yourself, we will not give up on you."

We also have to admit it is a lot harder in many ways growing up today than it was when most of us of a certain age in

this room were coming up. It is much harder. I can remember times when kids in my neighborhood would take on kids from another neighborhood. I probably shouldn't say this you'll hear more stories about my life. But I can remember and since I was kind of a tomboy I was often involved in some of those discussions that would occur. But that's what they mostly were they were discussions when we thought up the worst things we could call each other. Occasionally there be fists thrown and people rolling on the ground. Not me I was standing there trying to say, "Now, boys, now boys." For most of us of a certain age we can remember it happening. But you know, the occasional black eye, the occasional hurtful word, the occasional pushing and shoving that went on, I just thank God that given the strong emotions that accompany growing up no matter who you are or where you grow up we did not have guns, we did not have assault weapons, so when tempers got hot the most we could do to one another is yell and scream and push and shove and occasionally throw a punch.

Think of what it is like today where the young people in this room and the millions others like them are immersed in a culture of violence. A culture that in so many ways glorifies violence. We see it everyday on television, we see it in our movies, but worst of all we see it every single day on the streets and neighborhoods where children are trying to grow up. Where many, too many in effect are raising themselves. In too many neighborhoods gunfire is a daily ritual of life, and uzi is a badge of honor, instead of a mark of cowardice, which it truly is. A bullet wound is an emblem of adulthood. As I've traveled from hospital to hospital in the last year and a half, and I've gone into emergency rooms, what I heard over and over again is that the epidemic Deborah warned us about is now raging in so many of our communities. It is different when you see thirteen and fourteen year-olds brought in with bullet wounds. It is different still when they are brought in not with one bullet, but multiple bullets from assault weapon. It is different still when the techniques of medicine cannot even keep up with the carnage that is daily brought through the doors of your emergency rooms. You go to any emergency room in a medium size city, let alone a large city in our country, and you talk to the doctors and the nurses there as I have. If you do not believe violence is an epidemic, you will become quickly convinced as they tell you the stories of struggling to save thirteen and fourteen year old lives. Sometimes saving those lives only to send those young men out on the street knowing they are likely to be back in that emergency room in a relatively short period of time.

We see it everyday as we pick up our newspapers. I picked up a newspaper here in Washington today and read about another thirteen year old gunned down on the street corner. In Washington last summer, gun shots were fired at a public swimming pool packed with children trying to escape the 90 degree heat. A few months ago, a four-year old girl was fatally shot in the head when groups of youngsters opened fire on an elementary school playground. And during the past week a one year-old was grazed by a bullet from a gunfight. That thirteen year-old who died, it appears his killer is also thirteen years-old. What does it say about a society that has graduated from taunts and yells and thrown punches and raised fists--, that all of us remember from school yard fights, neighborhood fights in the past. To thirteen year-olds being gunned down on street corners, a four year olds being killed on playgrounds, and one year olds being grazed by bullets.

Over and over we see that children are not only the victims of violence but all too frequently the perpetrators. In the

1980's more than 11,000 people died as a result of homicide committed by high school age young people. Gunfire and drive by shootings and violence have become so common place that many people don't even notice it or talk about it anymore. In matter of fact ways children tell you they're not sure they will live to finish high school. It is not only the academic challenges they confront, it's the challenges to their physical safety. There is as you know, no simple answer to this epidemic of youth violence. That's why we brought federal agencies together to try to fulfill the President's pledge to begin at least to address this problem. That's why we need a comprehensive strategy that emphasizes responsibility and opportunity and community. It's why we need all the other pieces of security that the President is working on. It is important to do things like health reform, so that every young person has a good healthy start in life. It is important to do welfare reform so that we once again reward independence and self-sufficiency. It's important to have job training programs and life-long learning and the legislation that Secretary Riley shepherded through to the Congress that will make an enormous difference in how young people learn and what they learn and what they're prepared to do once they finish school.

It is also right, it is absolutely critical, that this country not walk away again from dealing with crime, as it has so many times in the past and did again last week. You know, the crime bill has been around for 6 years. The average criminal serves four years in jail. There's been a lot of tough talk about crime going back a lot of years. All kinds of rhetoric. Mostly hot air not connected to doing anything positive, to reaching out a helping hand, to make stricter and surer, neither smart nor tough, but boy a lot of talk. We're seeing it again because some people unfortunately would rather practice their own brand of partisan politics or personal advantage than to deal with the problems that are right before their eyes. Those who voted against the crime bill were willing to sacrifice all the achievements represented at this conference. Those who voted against the bill weren't listening to the voices of young people who are with us today or were with us last year. They can testify the importance of recreational facilities, education programs, family support services, and other preventive measures that nurture hope and possibility in our young people. Those who voted against that bill last week don't seem to care that our children cannot feel safe at school. A recent survey showed that fifteen percent of school children believe there are gangs in their school. Almost one in ten of students in high school reported that in the previous month they had been in at least one serious physical fight. Those who voted against the bill don't seem to care that this pattern goes on and on just as it has for the past six years, when time after time, Congress caved in to the pressures of special interest, instead of making this legislation law.

The crime bill is not perfect; no piece of legislation is. I bet every one of us would have written it slightly differently, we would have added or taken out according to what we thought was best. It is a critical, important, and necessary start. And it is for the first time a piece of legislation that lays down the twin principles of fighting crime, punishment and prevention. It is clear that we face a choice, the President and I were in church yesterday we heard a great sermon, and one of the lines from it that I will always remember is when the preacher said, "You know you can make a choice in your life, but you can't pick the consequences." I think about that a lot because every day we make choices, but we cannot be told the consequences that swell from those choices. So what are the consequences of turning down the crime bill? Well, the consequences are that once again we

would have turned our backs on the problems you are hearing discussed. Once again we will have substituted rhetoric for reality. Once again we will have seen in-action triumph over action. Now we can focus on all the things we want to change, or we can say, this is a mission we are on and this is where it starts to try to begin to deal with the epidemic of violence.

Let's look at some of these pieces of this crime bill that are so important. Things like YES, Y-E-S, Youth Employment Skills program. I think it's important to focus on young people in high unemployment areas to give them the skills they need to be able to find jobs. I think that's a goal for society and I know it will help to prevent crime. I wish the folks on Capitol Hill would agree. Things like the Community Schools Program, that will give grants to community groups to keep schools open after hours and on weekends and during the summer so that kids can have a place to go and stay out of trouble. Safe places where they can engage in learning and recreation, where there can be adult mentors and coaches. We know from the examples of such schools around our country that if schools are transformed into safe havens for youngsters, children will be safer. I'm not sure what the folks in Congress who were voting against the crime bill think we can do with our children after school when it takes both parents in a home working or when it takes a single parent working and they then live in fear about what happens to their children on the streets between the time school is over and the time they get home for dinner. I want children to have safe havens and the crime bill would be a good start to that. Programs like the Gang Resistance Education And Training Program called, G.R.E.A.T., already a proven success. I've been in a lot of neighborhoods, places where many of you come from and you know you fight a losing battle year in and year out to try to convince young people not to join gangs. Why? Because the gangs provide a, "haven", not safe but a haven. It provides a family if you will. It provides a network of people who say they will look out for each other. It fills a vacuum in the lives of thousands and thousands of youngsters. Now wouldn't it be better if we had a positive alternative a program like GREAT where youngsters can be safe in coming together and working together and learn how to resist the faults and in many ways dangerous, seductive pleasures that the gang propose in the short run which leads to death and misery for so many children. I think we should vote for gang resistance programs instead of letting more and more children end up in the gangs.

Look how programs like Police Partnerships for Children, programs where police officers will take their time to work with young people, coupling that with community policing where we again get police officers on the street. Somebody that a young person can hopefully find some support from, but if we turn on our back on these partnerships that police are offering, we lose an opportunity to transform our police officers not only into instruments of punishment but also instruments of prevention. And if we also turn our back on this crime bill we walk away from one of the most important advances on behalf of women, the Violence Against Women Act. It is time we stood up and said women should not be victimized, whether it is in the home, or on the street and we need to give our law enforcement officials the tools to protect women. It has gone on long enough, ignoring and denying the depth of the problem of violence against women this crime bill begins to turn that around. And that's another reason.

Now if you've heard all of this prevention, and I've only touched the tip of the old prevention iceberg that is in that crime bill, with the other elements: a hundred thousand more

crime bill, with the other elements: a hundred thousand more police on the streets, a ban on handgun ownership for minors. A ban on assault weapons that only lead to death and injury. A three strikes and you're out bill so that violent offenders can be taken off the street. And I see these young men clapping wildly because they know what happens in their neighborhoods. You take all of that and it adds up to a well-balanced reasonable approach that mixes both prevention and punishment. An approach that has been worked out and struggled over with lots of input from people from the grassroots level.

Those of you participating in this conference know first hand what it will take in your own hometowns to combat violence. You also know that even though a crime bill is a critical step in putting this society on the right track for combating violence it alone can't do the job either. It's not a panacea. If the President signs that crime bill it's not going to solve all of our problems. It's not going to keep families together, it's not going to get adults to give children the type of supervision, love, discipline, and attention little children need. It's not going to instill a sense of faith and responsibility in the souls of young people who have been damaged and alienated, it's not going to do those things. It is going to begin to put into place people and institutions and programs that can help lead to those outcomes. It can give people a chance once again to feel they are a part of something bigger than themselves. And to lay a line very clearly that despite all the tough talk about crime in the last decade has become obscure, and that line is, you have to know the difference between right and wrong and we're going to hold you responsible for the choices and the consequences of those choices. It begins to once again fight the violence in society. This whole crime debate, the whole issue of youth violence, is an indication of something much deeper and more profound. It is an indication of literally millions of Americans walking away from their responsibilities. And that is what we're ultimately trying to reverse. We are trying again, against tremendous odds to say the individual is responsible for his or her actions. But society is also responsible for individuals. It is not an either or, it's not a liberal and conservative, that old stuff is so out of date. That is like beyond talking about. Some people think they can answer every problem by saying, "Oh that's liberal. Oh, that's conservative." Or maybe they step further on down the road of meaningless analysis and say, "Oh, that's republican. Oh, that's democrat." An assault weapon doesn't care what political party you are. An assault weapon in a drive by shooting doesn't even care if you're a member of the National Rifle Association.

Let's just stop for a minute and ask ourselves, "Haven't we wasted enough lives, haven't we lost enough young men and women to prison instead of college? Haven't we turned our back too many times on the God given potential of every one of our young people?" I don't care what race they are, I don't care where they live, every single young person in this country, has a spark about them that we have for too long allowed to be extinguished by a level of violence, hatred, and divisiveness that still stalks this country. We can do much better than that, all you have to do is look at the faces of the young people around you today. We know we can do better. But we cannot unless we stand up and are willing to be counted. I hope you will not only attend this conference, I hope you will not only work on what needs to be done back in your own hometowns, I hope you will take the time to let your member of Congress know why you are here, what you stand for. And I hope you will say it may not be perfect, but this crime bill represents a huge first step in staking out new territories in this country. Once and for all

we're going to be both smart and tough. We're going to begin to
save a generation of young people from this epidemic of violence.
Thank you all.

END

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
(New Orleans, Louisiana)

*Announces
School Violence
Conference*

For Immediate Release

July 20, 1998

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE 75TH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF
THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

Ernest N. Morial Convention Center
New Orleans, Louisiana

11:30 A.M. CDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen of the AFT, Senator Landrieu, Congressman Jefferson, Secretary Slater. Mayor Morial, thank you for hosting this fine group of America's teachers in this wonderful city.

To President Sandy Feldman and Ed McElroy and your newly elected executive VP Nat Lacour and all the officers and people who are here. Let me say, when Sandy was up here giving her introduction, my mind was racing back over lots of events going back to early 1992 when we first went to a school in New York together.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Cardozo.

THE PRESIDENT: Cardozo, that's right, you were there, weren't you? (Applause.) Now, anytime I'm talking if I mention something that gives you an opportunity to flack for your school, you stand up and do it. (Laughter.) I won't be offended. I think you ought to be proud of what you do and where you work and the children that you're trying to help to prepare for tomorrow. (Applause.)

And when you think about where we were then as a nation and where we are now, I was so concerned because not only was the economy in the doldrums, but our society was becoming more divided, the crime rates were going up, the welfare rolls were exploding, there were tensions among our people, people were looking for racial or ethnic or religious or political reasons to blame other people for the general problems and challenges we shared as Americans.

One of the things that I always admired most about the AFT was that I felt that you have always found the right balance between being passionately devoted to public education and to the welfare and working conditions of teachers, and uncompromising -- uncompromising -- in your advocacy of high standards and accountability and educational excellence for every single American child. (Applause.)

Shortly before I came out here, your officers told me that Edie Shanker had decided to give the Medal of Freedom that I awarded to Al to the AFT for safekeeping. I love that. For it was your legacy, your values that he worked so hard to serve. So you take good care of it. He earned it, and so did you. (Applause.)

This is a remarkable time in our country's history, a time of prosperity and confidence and breathtaking change, if you think about where we are now compared to where we were on the day that I was fortunate enough to be inaugurated President. I don't say that our administration is 100 percent responsible for all the good things that have happened. That would be foolish. In a free society, the people deserve the lion's share of any change that occurs.

But I will say this, we had new ideas and new policies. We said we would take this country in a new direction. And there were consequences to those decisions, just as there will be consequences to the decisions of those who disagree with us if they hold sway.

And I think every single one of you should feel a personal measure of pride if you helped Al Gore and me win those elections in '92 and '96 because of what has happened -- every single one of you. (Applause.)

Because when you hear these statistics -- I mean, think about this. Compared to 1992, we have 16 million new jobs and the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, the lowest crime rate in 25 years, the lowest percentage of our people on welfare in 29 years, the first balanced budget and surplus in 29 years, the lowest inflation in 32 years, the highest home ownership in the history of the country, and the smallest national government in 35 years, and the biggest investment in education in our nation's history. I am proud of that, and you should be too. (Applause.)

Now, today I want to ask you to look ahead at where we are and what our challenges are. And I want to ask you to help me with a lesson plan for America's future. I know you're mildly acquainted with such things. (Laughter.) I also know that this union represents people who help you in schools who are not teachers and I thank all of them, all the support people here who are here. Thank you for your service. (Applause.)

We have to decide what to do with this moment. And I want to talk about education and the role of some other issues. But let me just back up and say, there are three things I want you to think about. First of all, all these numbers and statistics that I mentioned are very rewarding because they represent real positive changes in real peoples' lives: incomes for ordinary people are up; poverty is down, as Sandy said; 90 percent of our kids are immunized; we've virtually opened the doors of college to everyone who will work for it. I'm proud of all that.

But you know and I know that we face some big long-term challenges. And I'd just like to mention a couple of them because I want you to talk to your students and to the parents and to the people that you work with about them, because people need to understand that just because times are good, it doesn't mean we should all be relaxing -- except if you want to go out in the sun in New Orleans and relax, I'm for it. (Laughter.) But I don't want it to be a permanent condition for the American people.

Because we have big challenges facing us if we're going to go into the 21st century with the American Dream alive for everyone, with America coming together as a community across

all of our differences, and with our country leading the world for peace and freedom and prosperity. What are they? Well, let me just mention a few of them.

Number one, we have to save Social Security and Medicare for the baby boom generation. (Applause.) And we have to do it in a way that recognizes that they lift millions and millions and millions of seniors out of poverty. But that as presently constructed, it is not sustainable because -- and I'm the oldest know this baby boomer, so I can say this -- when we retire, at present birth rates and present immigration rates and present retirement rates, there will only be about two people working for every person drawing Social Security. So we have to make some changes. If we make modest changes now, we can avoid drastic changes later. We must do that and every American must support it. And we must find an American, unified way to do it.

The second thing we have to do is to recognize -- as you can see from this sweltering heat -- that the Vice President is right: the climate of our country and our globe is changing. The globe is warming. (Applause.) And our principal contribution to it, human beings everywhere, is that we're putting too many greenhouse gases into the atmosphere -- primarily because we insist on maintaining Industrial Age patterns of energy use when all the technology available indicates that you don't have to do that to grow an economy.

So we have got to take advantage of the fact that our children are natural environmentalists -- to use them, to empower them, to help us all to find a way to save our planet, to improve our environment, even as we grow the economy. I promise you it can be done, but we've got to get people to think differently. This is a huge education issue.

The third thing we have to do is to prove that we can bring the benefits of this great economic recovery to all Americans, not just to those who have it now -- in our inner cities, in our rural areas, our farming areas, on our Native American reservations. (Applause.)

The fourth thing we have to do is to persuade the American people that if we're going to lead the world for peace and freedom and prosperity, we have to be far-sighted. We have

to pay our way in an interdependent world. That means we can't walk away from our investment in the United Nations. We can't walk away from our investment in the International Monetary Fund. (Applause.)

I was just home for the weekend, and I know what a lot of folks at home think. They think, why does Bill Clinton want to spend money on the International Monetary Fund, we've got needs here at home. I'll tell you why. Because unless we help to reform and restore growth in the Asian countries, for example, they won't be able to buy our products and 30 percent of our growth -- if you like these 16 million new jobs, if you like this low unemployment, if you like the taxes that are flowing into local government for education because of the economy -- somebody has got to buy our stuff around the world and if they don't have any money, they can't buy it. And if they don't have any money, the value of their currency goes down, so their products they sell here are cheaper. So our trade deficit goes up.

If you want us to grow in America, we have to grow together with our friends and neighbors around the world. We have to be responsible partners, and we've got to teach people that. (Applause.)

Just two other quick points. We've got to be able to live together as one America across all the lines that divide us. (Applause.) Many of you teach in school districts where there are children from 20, 40, 60, 80, maybe even 100 different racial and ethnic groups, speaking dozens of different languages as their native tongues. This is a good thing for America in the 21st century and a global economy, an Information Age. (Applause.)

If we can overcome the demons of racial and ethnic and religious hatred which are bedeviling the world in our time -- from Bosnia and Kosovo to Rwanda, to Northern Ireland, to the Middle East, to the conflict between Greece and Turkey, to the difficulties between India and Pakistan. And if you want your country to lead the world away from all that, I can just say this, in order for America to do good throughout the world we have to be good at home. We have to be one America. (Applause.)

Finally, the last big challenge that I think we face

-- big challenge for the 21st century -- is providing every single child with world-class excellence in education -- every child, every child. (Applause.) No one anywhere in the world questions that we offer more rich, quality opportunities for people to go on to college than any other country in the world. We've worked very hard to open the doors of college to everybody who will work for it. But no one who is honest would say we don't have serious challenges in our elementary and secondary education. There are all kinds of different arguments about, well, what caused it or what the problems are or what the solutions are.

You and I, by and large, agree on the solutions. But the main thing we've got to agree on is that this is one of the five or six challenges that will shape the America our children and grandchildren will live in in the 21st century. If you do not want our country to continue to be divided along the lines of income, to continue to grow more unequal, if you don't want the 21st century to see an America where there are fabulously wealthy, successful people living alongside breathtakingly poor people, isolated in areas where opportunity never reaches -- we have to realize that if this is an Information Age and if the economy is growing by ideas, then it is more important than ever before that educational excellence be universal. And we have to provide that. (Applause.)

Now, I also want to say a few words today about an issue that may seem somewhat mundane to people who've never been in the classroom and faced it, but America has been thinking about it because of all the tragedies in all the schools in the last year or so, and that is the whole issue of school safety and the critical role of a safe classroom and a safe school and a safe schoolyard play in the work that teachers do. (Applause.)

Every day, you work hard to broaden young minds, to unlock their potential, to sharpen skills. You have faith in the possibilities of our children. If you didn't, you wouldn't be doing this, because just about every one of you could be making more money doing something else. (Applause.) If you weren't devoted to our children, you wouldn't be doing this. It keeps you in front of a chalkboard or a keyboard; it keeps you up late at night grading papers and making lesson plans.

We have tried to be a good partner with you, as Sandy said. I have loved working with you to raise standards, to increase accountability, to improve teaching, to give schools the tools and the flexibility they need to reach the national education goals, to try to help make sure all of our children can read and can log onto the Internet and can go on to college.

We now have, I think, a great challenge before us, because in spite of the fact that this agenda is clearly an integral part of America's economic success over the next few years, believe it or not, there are people who don't want to continue it in Washington and some who downright are committed to undoing it. But I have put before the Congress an agenda to modernize our schools, to reduce class size, to connect every classroom to the Internet, to end social promotion but provide more funding for after-school and summer school programs that work to give our children a chance-- (applause) -- to give more schools who are in disadvantaged areas the funds and the support they need to adopt the kind of comprehensive approach that Chicago is pursuing with such success -- (applause) -- to give more students in disadvantaged areas mentors and the certainty in junior high school or middle school that they can go on to college if they learn and become good citizens and succeed in school, to provide more funds to put teachers into underserved areas, to do everything I can to help to provide 100,000 more master teachers so that we can do what needs to be done in every school building in the country, and to support your efforts to improve teaching.

I salute Sandy Feldman's plan to improve teacher quality, and I want to support your efforts. I have always been impressed, I will say again, that the AFT was never afraid to say that before a teacher is certified, it is reasonable to have the demonstrated competence of the teacher. I have always respected that, and I thank you for that. (Applause.)

But I will also say that while I have strongly supported the testing of teachers before they're certified, I also have strongly supported paying them once they are certified and strongly supported having master teachers in every school building in America and doing the things that Sandy outlined in her proposal.

So, as teachers, you're stepping up to your responsibility. I have tried to preserve the gains of the last five and a half years and put forward an ambitious program for the future. And we've had a lot of success working with Congress in a bipartisan way for education. In the balanced budget bill, as Sandy said, we got this huge increase in funding for education, and we got the HOPE Scholarship, we got more work-study positions, we got big increases in Pell grants.

We have, earlier than that, got a big improvement in the student loan program to open the doors of college. We've got 1,000 colleges now participating with their kids in the America Reads program, going into your schools. We've got AmeriCorps people, almost 100,000 young people have been in AmeriCorps -- when I drove by a grade school this morning on the way here, there were the AmeriCorps volunteers out there with their kids, holding up signs, welcoming me to New Orleans. We have been able to do those things by working together. (Applause.)

Now is the time for Congress to turn away from some of these recent committee votes where they say no to smaller classes, no to modernized schools, no to AmeriCorps. They haven't yet said yes to America Reads. I am pleased that we seem to be making some bipartisan progress with the proposals to prepare teachers for the classroom.

But I ask Congress to support all these proposals. They are not my ideas. They are the ideas of educators. They are the ideas that we know work. All of them came from grassroots America. I was in Philadelphia the other day where the average age of a school building is 65 years. A lot of those buildings are beautiful, but they need rehabilitating.

I was in Florida in a little town where there were 17 -- count them, 17 -- trailers outside the major school building because the school population had grown so much. If you want smaller classes, they have to be held somewhere and there have to be teachers to walk in the classroom. We have got to do this. This is important. (Applause.)

So I ask you to redouble your efforts, to reach out to all members of Congress without regard to their party and say, look, if there's one thing in America -- even in Washington, D.C.

-- we ought to be able to put beyond partisan politics, it should be education of our children. Now, if you want to fight about whether you believe in vouchers or not, fine, let's have an argument about it. I don't mind that. But while we're arguing about it, don't forget this: over 90 percent of the people are out there in those public schools and these ideas are good on their own merit and they deserve to be implemented and passed without regard to party in Washington, D.C. (Applause.) We have the money to do it, it is allocated, and we should do it. (Applause.)

Now, let me also say that you know, better than anybody, learning cannot occur unless our schools are safe and orderly places where teachers can teach and children can learn. (Applause.) Wherever there is chaos where there should be calm, wherever there is disorder where there should be discipline, make no mistake about it, it's not just a threat to our classrooms and to your mission, it is a threat to the strength and vitality of

America.

In a recent study 81 percent of teachers said the worst-behaved students absorb the most attention in school -- not the struggling students, not the striving students, the worst behaved. Seventy-one percent of all high school students said there were too many disruptive students in their own classes. And only 13 percent of public school students said their classmates were "very respectful" of teachers.

Now, teachers can't teach if they have to fight for respect or fear for their safety. Students can't study if there is disorder in a classroom. (Applause.) And the disruption won't change unless there are clear, strict standards for behavior. You know better than anyone that we either have discipline in a classroom or we have disorder -- and too often danger. Hard experience has taught us this lesson all too well. As a nation, therefore, we must recognize that giving you the tools to have a safe, orderly classroom is central to the mission of renewing America.

There is another lesson to be learned from all this. In this case, it is from the overall decline in crime. And let

me back up and say one of the cruel ironies of these horrible killings in all these states over the last year or so has been that they have occurred against the backdrop of a dramatic drop in crime and the first drop in juvenile crime in years and years and years. Crime is dropping around the country because we're getting serious about community policing, effective punishment, and effective prevention. Crime is dropping because whole communities, like Boston, are taking responsibility for their streets and their neighborhoods and because government is giving them the support they need.

I mention Boston because they went two years and a few weeks without a single, solitary child under the age of 18 being killed with a gun. That's an amazing statistic. (Applause.)

Now, these things do not happen by accident. They happen by design at the grassroots level, but people must have the tools to do the job. That's the idea behind our efforts to put 100,000 police on the street. When I became President, violent crime had tripled in the last 30 years, and the number of police officers had only increased by 10 percent. You didn't have to be Einstein to figure out that was a mathematical equation for disaster. And the police officers told us we can prevent crime if you give us enough police to walk the streets, to be on the blocks, to know the kids, to know the parents, to know the store owners, to figure out what's going on. So that's what we did.

But if you look at what happened in community after community where the crime rate dropped, they first of all put in place a system that said we are going to have respect for the law, and here's the system we're going to have to maximize respect, hold people accountable who don't respect the law. And guess what? More and more people started to follow the law in the first place, to behave as responsible citizens, to walk away from the prospect of criminal conduct.

That's what we've tried to do with school safety. We've worked hard to tighten security, to give you the tools to do that, to strengthen prevention, to toughen penalties. We initiated this nationwide policy of zero tolerance for guns in schools. In the '96-97 school year, this policy led to the

expulsion of about 6,100 law-breaking students. It obviously prevented countless acts of violence. Yet, as we have seen from the recent acts of violence, we have to do more.

When I was in Springfield, Oregon, I was so moved by what the parents of injured children said, the parents in some cases of children who were killed. The teachers who were there talked about the necessity of doing more and developing the right kinds of intervention strategies. This is terribly important. And one of the things I came here today to do is to say that in the fall I will host the first ever White House Conference on School Safety, and I want you to be a part of that. (Applause.)

We want to bring together educators and law enforcement officers and families whose lives have been touched by these terrible tragedies to find new solutions to this profound challenge.

Again, I ask Congress also to be our partner. And again I say, this should not be a partisan issue. I have proposed a juvenile crime bill to ban violent juveniles from buying guns for life and to take other important steps to give communities much needed support. I've asked that in our balanced budget \$95 million be allocated to the prevention of juvenile crime. (Applause.) I urge Congress to invest in prevention.

You know, when we talk -- those of us who have run for office -- we all like to talk about punishment because everybody has known someone who's been hurt, who's been a victim of crime, and because we are outraged when we see children have their lives cut short. And I would point out that in our '94 Crime Bill we did more to stiffen punishment for crimes under federal law than had ever been done. But you know and I know that we cannot jail our way out of this problem; we've got to prevent more of these kids from getting in trouble in the first place. (Applause.)

Again I say, this is not a Democratic or a Republican issue. We should simply invest in prevention because the police officers tell us it works, because the teachers tell us it works, because the social workers tell us it works, because the religious leaders tell us it works, because the children themselves tell us it works. We should be investing in a summer

jobs program, in the summer school program, in the after-school program because it works. (Applause.)

We also know, by way of lessons, that the small stuff matters, the basics matter. In most schools it's not the sensational acts of violence but smaller acts of aggression, threats, scuffles, constant back talk that take a terrible toll on the atmosphere of learning, on the morale of teachers, on the attitudes of other students. (Applause.) And that's why setting strict standards and enforcing them can make a powerful difference all across America, as they are doing in many places.

And let me just give three or four examples: our first effort has to be to get kids inside the schoolhouse doors and keep them there during school hours. (Applause.) Truancy is more than a warning sign; it is trouble -- a gateway to drugs, alcohol, gangs, and violence. Our children will either sit in class or stand on the streets. They'll either learn from teachers or learn from the gang leaders on the streets. It used to be the rule that truancy laws were enforced, that local police knew kids and brought them back to school. But in too many places, that has long since ceased to be the case.

Thankfully, communities again are turning their attention to the old-fashioned remedy of enforcing the truancy laws. In Milwaukee, officers can now stop students on the streets during school hours. In Boston, where more than a quarter of the public school students were absent three weeks or more this past school year, they now have a strict new promotion policy. If you don't attend, you don't advance. (Applause.)

Other cities are forming truancy task forces, a united front of schools, social services, community police to keep our children in school and out of trouble. This is important. A teacher's day must sometimes seem very long. But we know the school day lasts precious few hours and there's no time to waste.

The next thing I'd like to say is when the kids are there they need to feel free, and they need to feel free of danger going to and from school. That's one of the ideas behind this incredible wave of enthusiasm across the country for school uniforms. When I spoke about school uniforms in my 1996 State of

the Union address -- besides making half the kids in America mad at me -- (laughter) -- it struck a lot of people as an idea long out of date. And it was just gathering steam in places like Long Beach, California.

But in the years since, I have been heartened by the flood of interest, from New York to Houston, from Dade County to Chicago, school districts are adopting school uniform policies. And they're finding ways to do it in ways that give the children and the parents and the teachers all a say in how they do it and that don't put poor kids at a disadvantage when they can't afford the uniforms.

But students have told me -- I've talked to a lot of students about this in schools that have uniform policies -- when one student is no longer obsessed by another student's sneakers or designer jackets, and where students are focused not on appearances but on learning, crime and violence go down, attendance and learning go up. (Applause.) And I am proud of the support we have given to those of you who have done this. (Applause.)

The next thing I'd like to say -- and I know you believe this, because you applauded earlier when I mentioned it -- is that the responsibility that we adults have for our kids doesn't end when the last school bell rings. After school an awful lot of children's parents are still working and there's nobody home to either supervise them there, or know where they are, or where they're going when they leave school. Well, a lot of our kids get in trouble after school and youth crime is at its peak during the unsupervised hours of 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. That's why I have said that our schools should remain open, to become community learning centers where children are safe and can learn and grow. (Applause.)

In this budget for 1999, for next year, I have proposed a significant expansion in our investments for before- and after-school programs. And for the later hours when streets become darker and more dangerous, I have often urged communities to install curfews, to follow the example of New Orleans, where Mayor Morial, who is here with us today, put in place community-based curfews with very impressive results -- in no small measure because the children are also taken if they violate

curfew to somebody who can help them if they've got a problem, and support them and get them back on the right path. But these are the things that we have to do if we expect you to have a safe learning environment.

I should also say that I think that the character education programs that our Education Secretary Dick Riley has done so much to help implement across the country are a positive force for a more disciplined school environment where the little nagging, terrible problems don't occur.

So we're going to have this conference in the fall on school violence. I want the AFT involved. I want the teachers who know what the problems are to participate. But I want to encourage everyplace to adopt anti-truancy efforts, to consider school uniforms, to look at the curfew issue, to look at character education programs, to look to a new approach to restoring discipline in our schools and order in our children's lives. We can do this. The three Rs of the AFT -- responsibility, respect, results -- that's what school discipline is all about. (Applause.)

In closing, let me say I am always struck by how every challenge in American education has been solved by somebody somewhere. Therefore, I am always frustrated that we have not yet found a way to make sure when somebody somewhere solves a problem, we cannot model that and make sure it's solved by everybody everywhere. That is one of the things that the AFT has been devoted to -- finding what works, developing a systematic approach, trying to get it done everywhere. And it's one thing America needs desperately in this area of school discipline, school order, and school safety.

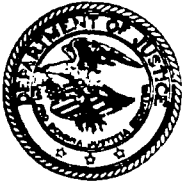
Again, I say I am very proud to be your partner, in building a 21st century America that is leading the world to peace and freedom and prosperity -- an America in which every child is a responsible citizen, with unparalleled opportunity, in a community that revels in its diversity, but is bound together in our wonderful ongoing effort to form a more perfect union.

You, the educators of our nation, are the architects of that 21st century America. Build well.

Thank you very much, and God bless you. (Applause.)

END

12:10 P.M. CDT



Department of Justice

The Administration's Anti-Gang and Youth Violence Legislation

President Clinton's "The Anti-Gang and Youth Violence Act of 1997" offers a balanced approach to gangs and youth violence -- one that is both tough and smart. The Act invests substantial new resources in after-school initiatives and other similar efforts aimed at getting or keeping young people on the track to success. It targets gangs, gun crimes and illegal gun markets, and drugs. Finally, it redesigns and refocuses the way in which the federal government provides support for state and local efforts to fight juvenile crime.

- ◆ **New laws to better safeguard against misuse of guns by requiring a lock to be sold with every gun and prohibiting violent juvenile offenders from possessing guns as adults**

- ◆ **Gangs: \$200 million over two years for 1000 new gang-fighting initiatives in prosecutors offices across the country**
 - ▶ New prosecutors for a gang unit
 - ▶ Staff support for a violent youth or gang task force
 - ▶ Equipment to keep and share information about gangs and gang members
 - ▶ Programs to get young offenders back on the right track
 - ▶ Programs to target repeat offenders

- ◆ **Youth Violence Courts: \$50 million to expedite and more effectively handle violent juveniles in the court system**
 - ▶ Unified family and juvenile courts
 - ▶ Expedited dockets for violent juveniles
 - ▶ Systems for assessment and appropriate referral for violent juveniles
 - ▶ Special courts/programs to deal with violent offenders involved with guns or drugs

- ◆ **New laws to fight gangs and protect the witnesses who want to testify against them**
 - ▶ Enhanced pre-trial detention for persons accused of gang and other violent crime
 - ▶ New offense of conspiracy to intimidate or retaliate against a witness or informant
 - ▶ New penalties for persons who cross state lines to intimidate or retaliate against a witness or informant in a federal or state prosecution.

- ◆ **New laws to more streamline the federal prosecution of the most violent juveniles**
 - ▶ Prosecutorial discretion to transfer juvenile offenders to adult criminal court
 - ▶ Expand list of serious felonies for which a juvenile can be prosecuted as an adult

- ◆ **“At-Risk Children Initiative”: \$75 million for truancy, school violence, and other, similar programs aimed at getting kids or keeping kids on the track to success**
 - ▶ Truancy prevention initiatives
 - ▶ School violence reduction programs
 - ▶ Dispute resolution training programs
 - ▶ Substance abuse programs

- ◆ **After-school programs: \$62 million for programs to keep kids off the streets and give them worthwhile things to do after school, on weekends and during the summer (Note: Program administered by DoEd and HHS.)**
 - ▶ Mentoring initiatives
 - ▶ Sports and arts programs
 - ▶ Student tutoring
 - ▶ Teen pregnancy prevention counseling

- ◆ **A complete redesign and refocusing of the federal government’s grant-making to state and local jurisdictions for the purpose of fighting and preventing juvenile crime, violence and drug use**
 - ▶ Enhance coordination and streamline operations to better focus on youth crime
 - ▶ Strengthen research and evaluation to identify effective programs
 - ▶ Assist communities in replicating effective programs
 - ▶ Assist communities in developing new strategies
 - ▶ Support improvement in state and local practices, for example, increased collaboration and aftercare
 - ▶ Greater flexibility to meet more clearly defined goals

Fighting Youth Violence

The future is now

BY ATTORNEY GENERAL JANET RENO

During the past three years, I've met throughout the country with young people and teachers, police and prosecutors to discuss the threat of juvenile crime, drugs, and gang violence. While crime rates are falling nationwide, youth crime has been growing since 1985, and all Americans have a stake in determining what programs and policies need to be in place to address the problem. In this article, I want to discuss the challenges we face, as well as the efforts we must make to fight crime and keep young people away from drugs and out of gangs. We have to be tough and smart—with more police, appropriate punishment, crime prevention programs, and community partnerships.

Since the passage of President Clinton's Crime Act in 1994, we have made significant progress in reducing crime and ensuring greater safety for all Americans. Thousands of new cops are on the beat. "Three strikes and you are out" is the law of the land. Interstate domestic violence is a federal offense. Assault weapons can no longer be manufactured, and there is a national five-day waiting period to buy a handgun. States and localities across America have more resources to build boot camps and drug courts, incarcerate criminal aliens, and upgrade criminal history records.

The violent crime rate has dropped during each of the past few years. Yet the juvenile crime rate continues to increase, as it has for the past 10 years. In 1994, 2.7 million juveniles were arrested by law enforcement agencies. Juve-

niles represented 19 percent of all violent crime arrests that year. Between 1985 and 1994, juvenile arrests for violent crime increased 75 percent. Murders committed by 14- to 17-year-olds increased 165 percent.

Current crime victimization studies



estimate that young people are responsible for approximately 20 percent of personal crimes of violence. Unfortunately, the victims of the violence are often young people themselves. The number of violent crimes committed against juveniles jumped 25 percent between 1988 and 1992. The number of juveniles murdered in the United States in 1994 was 46 percent greater than the number killed in 1980. Every day in 1994, an average of seven young Ameri-

cans were murdered.

Juvenile violence has gotten very bad, very fast, and the trend suggests that the violence will increase. In 1990 there were only 10 million juveniles in this country, age 15 to 17. That number will grow to 13.1 million by the year 2010—

a 31 percent increase. If the juvenile crime rate stays the same, the number of crimes committed by young people will increase by one-third. By the year 2010 the number of juveniles arrested for various offenses will increase to 3.5 million—if juvenile crime doesn't get one bit worse.

What the demographics and statistics show us is a road map to the next generation of crime. Unless we act now to stop youth from choosing the path of violence, the beginning of the 21st century could be dominated by violent crime that is far more prevalent, random, and vicious than anything we face today.

Demographics, however, don't have to be destiny.

Causes of juvenile crime

Like all crime and violence, the causes of youth violence are complex and cannot be reduced to slogans or bumper stickers. But

few would deny that youth violence has been exacerbated by the violence experienced in too many American homes and by the explosion of drugs, guns, and gangs among our young people.

What leads to the problems that we are seeing today? The Carnegie Foundation has recently completed a remarkable study that talks about the developmental neglect of our children. With high rates of divorce, increases in the number of families in which both par-

ents work, and the growth of single-parent families, exacerbated by the erosion of neighborhood networks and other traditional support systems, children now spend significantly less time in the company of adults than they did a few decades ago. In this environment, is it any wonder that by the age of 17, about 25 percent of all adolescents have engaged in behavior that is harmful to themselves and others; that they are getting pregnant, using drugs, failing in school? If a child doesn't have a parent, an older brother or sister, a neighbor, a teacher, a clergyman to teach what is right and wrong, where will he or she learn it? Is it surprising that if we put children in front of the television for hours at a time that they will believe that the violence they see is normal and acceptable?

We must also acknowledge that a major contributor to youth violence, yet one that is often overlooked, is domestic and family violence—one of the greatest public health problems of today. We will never find a solution to violence on the streets unless we are willing to confront the violence in our homes. Study after study has shown that children who are abused and who witness violence at home are substantially more likely to commit violent acts themselves. The simple fact is that children who learn about violence from their parents are more likely to assault others. To get to the heart of the juvenile crime problem, we must break this cycle of violence.

Young people can only take the right path if they see that it exists and they see how to get there.

Drug use by juveniles

Drug use continues to be an integral part of the problem of youth crime. Some of the news about drugs is good. Current surveys indicate an 83 percent drop over the last nine years in the number of people using drugs at least once a month, and a 23 percent drop in the last five years in the amount spent on drugs. In just the last three years, there has been a 30 percent drop in cocaine use.

Drug use among young people is also well below the levels of the 1980s. But recently, among a small segment of teens, there has been an increase. Drug abuse at any level has become one of the primary catalysts for youth violence. For many young offenders, drugs take

away their sense of right and wrong, destroy their inhibitions against violence, and replace the process of growing and maturing with a dependency on dangerous and illegal substances. Moreover, drugs provide the fuel and the daily rationale for many of the violent gangs that lead young people into crime.

Our anti-drug efforts—like all of our

The easy access to guns has contributed significantly to youth violence.

anti-crime efforts—are based on the principle that we will use any reasonable tool we have to help save our young people. There should be only two reasons for rejecting a tool—because it isn't faithful to the Constitution or because it doesn't work.

On April 28, 1996, President Clinton announced the 1996 National Drug Control Strategy, which focuses on motivating young people to reject drugs and reducing drug-related crime and violence. The strategy includes plans to reduce the societal cost of drug abuse, shield America's borders from the drug threat, and break foreign and domestic sources of supply.

In addition, Gen. Barry McCaffrey, director of the Office of National Drug Policy, joined me in presenting a National Methamphetamine Strategy to the president. Our strategy calls for stepped-up law enforcement efforts against clandestine meth labs and traffickers, new penalties for trafficking, tighter regulatory controls on chemicals used to make methamphetamine, enhanced international cooperation to stop meth smuggling, and a public awareness campaign designed to focus on at-risk persons.

Our methamphetamine strategy is designed to deal with the problem of "crank" before it spreads across America and harms our youth, as cocaine and crack did in recent years. We know the threat is there, and we need to act aggressively to avoid an even greater drug

threat in the future. Drug abuse continues to ruin lives every day in about every way possible. Like all aspects of youth violence itself, youth drug use presents special challenges.

In the past, police and prosecutors have sometimes felt pressure to treat drug arrests and prosecutions as a numbers game. Unfortunately, that strategy did little to make the problem better the next day or the next year. Our strategy is to focus resources in order to disrupt and dismantle the infrastructure of trafficking organizations operating in the United States—with a special focus on tougher cases that yield more payoff in fighting drug trafficking.

We have had some success around the country, especially in fighting drug trafficking. "Operation Zorro II" is a good example. Federal prosecutors and agents worked with state and local police around the country to simultaneously target and dismantle the drug organization that owned the cocaine and a second organization that distributed it to children and adults. Together, law enforcement agencies made over 156 arrests and seized \$17 million in cash and \$100 million in drugs.

Easy access to guns

The easy access to guns, especially handguns, has contributed significantly to increase in youth violence. From 1980 through 1994, 27,000 victims were killed by juvenile offenders, and more often than not, the weapon was a handgun. Nearly seven in 10 juvenile homicide victims were killed by firearms. A recent study by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) based on interviews of 4,000 arrestees in 11 cities found that 40 percent of the juvenile males arrested reported possessing a firearm at some time, and more than one-third owned a gun in the previous month. Twenty-eight percent said they believe that it is okay to shoot someone who hurts or insults them.

It is vitally important that every effort is made to reduce the availability of guns to young people. We are taking many steps to break up the relationship between kids and guns. As part of the president's Crime Act, Congress in 1994 outlawed the manufacture and importation of 19 types of assault weapons. In the year after the Crime Act was passed, the

number of assault weapons traced to crime has dropped 78 percent. The assault weapons ban is working, and it is saving lives.

The president also signed the Brady Law, which establishes a national five-day waiting period for handgun purchases, and the Youth Handgun Safety Act, which makes it a federal crime for any person under 18 to possess a handgun except when supervised by an adult. An estimated 60,000 illegal purchases have been foiled by the Brady Law, including juveniles who sought to purchase handguns. The Justice Department also provides money to help law enforcement conduct background checks on gun purchasers, target and prosecute gun distributors, and help states and localities develop innovative solutions to gunrunning.

As part of our commitment to place 100,000 police on America's streets, the Justice Department has made grants to 10 police departments to develop community policing efforts to keep young people and guns apart. As youthful offenders increasingly use guns as their weapon of choice, the great risk is that

as crimes increase they will become more deadly.

We need to have more programs like the federally funded Kansas City Gun Initiative, which uses special gun-intercept teams to target juveniles and adults involved in violent crimes. This effort, which involved police, prosecutors, and the community, substantially reduced gun violence and was 10 times more cost effective than regular police patrols.

The growing threat of gangs

Gangs are becoming more powerful, better armed, and more deadly, and more of them are migrating to new cities that are not accustomed to gang violence. Twenty years ago, fewer than half of our cities reported gang activity. A generation later, reasonable estimates indicate that there are now more than 16,000 gangs with half a million members on the streets of our cities. The result—more than 580,000 gang-related crimes in 1993. And all too often, these crimes are committed by juveniles who were recruited into a life of crime by older gang members.

The largest street gangs, like the Crips and the Bloods, have expanded into other states. Ethnic gangs are growing rapidly. Nearly 20 different gangs operate in our prisons, often highly organized and cutting across racial lines.

*Estimates indicate
that there are
16,000 gangs with
half a million members
on our streets.*

And loose knit groups of skinheads and other hate gangs are turning their malice into violence.

In his State of the Union Address, President Clinton announced a national strategy to fight gang violence. In Chicago, we are working to break the back of the Gangster Disciples, who openly talk of being the heirs to Al Capone's reign of terror. In Connecticut, we have sent numerous leaders of the Latin Kings away for life sentences without hope of parole. In Columbus, Ohio, leaders of the worst gang that city has ever faced were recently convicted.

Our antigang strategy is based on partnership. The FBI, our U.S. attorneys, and other investigative agencies have forged coalitions with local law enforcement to identify the most dangerous gangs and focus resources on stopping them. The federal role is to provide tools to help local law enforcement do its job.

While not every case will be federal in nature, the federal code often has tougher, longer sentences with no parole and mandatory minimum sentences where appropriate. Federal evidentiary rules are often more effective against broad racketeering conspiracies and federal jurisdiction can help localities prosecute large gangs that operated in multiple jurisdictions. Statutory tools like pretrial detention help keep the most vicious offenders locked up.

We can also offer resources that many local departments can't afford. We have resources to track gang migration (an increasing problem), surveillance equipment, and other technolo-



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gies. Federal funds are also available for hiring community police. State and local police remain the ground troops in the war against gangs, and many of the 100,000 community police now being hired can make an important contribution to the fight.

The work of a good community police officer can go far beyond the gun and the badge. They can save young lives, one at a time, by mobilizing neighborhoods, schools, churches, synagogues, and community organizations to strengthen efforts to keep kids in school and out of trouble with the law. And they can help that young man or young woman who is on the edge—who is ready to join, but is looking for a reason not to—to see a better life and as a role model to stay on the right path.

Response to youth violence: Tough enforcement

Enforcement initiatives will always be at the foundation of our efforts to fight youth violence and drug use. But today, in the face of significant increases in juvenile violent crime, the justice system and law enforcement community must work together to ensure that our resources are targeted where they are most needed. We must also ensure that juvenile offenders understand that there will be tough, fair, and appropriate sanctions for *each and every* violation of the law. Finally, we have to recognize that when juveniles are so hardened that they act like adults, they will be prosecuted and punished like adults. We are taking these steps at the federal level, and every state should do the same.

While tough law enforcement is critical to combating youth violence, we will never arrest, prosecute, and incarcerate our way out of this problem. If we are going to help keep our young people out of the cycle of drugs and crime, we simply have to do more to keep them from starting, to get them off if they start, and to keep them off once they quit.

We know that youngsters who are supervised during the critical after school hours of 3 to 5 p.m. are much less likely to get themselves into trouble. We have to create programs that will provide supervised constructive activities for children. We simply cannot wait until they are in grade school before we reach out; we must start even earlier. As extraordi-

nary as it sounds, studies have shown that children learn about right and wrong between infancy and three years old. That's when we must reach out to these children to truly make a difference in their lives.

As a prosecutor, I would often pick up a pre-sentencing report on a young person I had prosecuted. In virtually every report, I could identify four or five points along the way where if we had been able to intervene in that person's life, we probably could have kept that young

It is less
expensive to pay
for programs now
than a juvenile
facility or jail later.

person out of trouble. But we failed because we would rather invest in a crisis than make an investment up front. This isn't right, and it doesn't make sense. It is so much less expensive to pay for these programs now than it is to pay for a juvenile detention facility or an adult jail later. And it is a common sense solution to the problem.

Innovative alternatives

We know that most of the efforts to fight youth violence will—and should—take place at the state and local level. Still, the federal government can be an important partner in these efforts by financially supporting innovative model programs that make a difference, and by sharing information on what works and what doesn't. And when we find programs that work, and there are hundreds of programs working around the country right now, we will share that information with state and local officials so they can adapt these successful programs to their jurisdictions.

For example, when a young person does get on drugs, we have to help steer him or her away from a life of addiction. The 1994 Crime Act authorized \$1 billion through the year 2000 to support state and local drug courts, which re-

quire non-violent offenders to undergo mandatory, periodic drug testing; mandatory substance abuse treatment; and face penalties if they don't show satisfactory progress. In Miami, drug courts have cut recidivism by 33 percent, and a drug court in Baltimore cut expected re-arrests by 50 percent. The Justice Department has given nearly \$8.5 million to help more than 65 communities establish and expand drug courts. Experience teaches us that drug courts work, and an effort needs to be made to introduce them to more and more communities across the country.

Boot camps are another innovation that can make a difference. Though not a cure-all, boot camps with strong aftercare components can and do help young offenders get onto the right track by providing a quasi-military program similar to military basic training. Boot camps can help instill discipline, routine, and respect for authority. Under authority from the 1994 Crime Bill, the Justice Department has awarded 43 grants totaling \$21 million to states and localities to plan and build boot camps with aftercare.

Getting involved

In this country, there are more than 17,000 organizations that serve youth. Yet even they are not enough to provide support or opportunities for the third of the young people who most need our help and guidance. The time has come for all Americans to get involved in the fight against youth violence. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention at the Justice Department has developed a manual that provides information on simple and concrete actions that each of us can take to fight youth violence. The manual is called the *National Juvenile Justice Action Plan*, and it is available free of charge to anyone who wants to be part of the solution.

The problem of juvenile violence is getting worse, but we still have time to respond. I am confident that together, in partnership, we will find solutions: to hold juveniles accountable for their actions; to show the children of today a path to a more worthy tomorrow; and to reweave the fabric of society around our children. Child by child, family by family, school by school, city by city, we can make this nation safe and productive and positive for our children once again. CJ

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001. memo	Neera Tanden to FLOTUS re National Campaign to Prevent Youth Violence (partial) (1 page)	09/07/1999	P6/b(6)

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file youth violence [007]

MEMORANDUM

TO: MRS. CLINTON
FROM: NEERA TANDEN
SUBJECT: THE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO PREVENT YOUTH VIOLENCE
DATE: JUNE 7, 1999

The attached is a draft prospectus for the Campaign that offers more details on its possible activities. I have written this prospectus after conversations with Sarah Brown, Eli Segal, Pam Eakes, Amitai Etzioni, Tom Freedman, and others, and it was done in consultation with Bruce Reed. My chief concern is that the Campaign have tangible activities that can be easily understood. Indeed, I've listed a variety of activities that it could engage in, some of which may ultimately be rejected, but my hope is these suggestions will elicit your reactions. We are planning to circulate the final prospectus to Pam and Eli eventually, and then have them use it to organize others around.

I'll be talking to Bruce this week and will let you know how the conversation with Rahm went.

P6/(b)(6)

P6/(b)(6)

THE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO PREVENT YOUTH VIOLENCE

I. Statement of Purpose

The problem of youth violence is a national tragedy that requires national action. Over the past year, the school shootings that have terrorized Pearl, Peducah, Jonesboro, Edinboro, Springfield, Littleton, Conyers and the rest of the nation remind us of the horror of acts of violence by youth against youth. At the same time, juvenile violent crime remains too high, much higher than the overall crime rate. We have simply lost too many children. In the face of these tragedies, a national effort is demanded, in which all Americans come together to protect our children from violence.

We intend to create an organization that can focus the skills and energy of Americans from a wide-range of regions, occupations, and backgrounds to work towards achieving a shared goal of great national importance: preventing youth violence in our country. This campaign's chief focus will be on how each of us can take responsibility to prevent youth violence, rather than pointing fingers or assigning blame.

The organization will devote itself to achieving tangible, quantifiable goals and using a variety of means, including campaigning for Americans to work against violence in their communities, creating a national network to share effective techniques, and supporting community-based projects with promise. We recognize that while governmental action can help with this challenge, this is a campaign whose success will rely on the actions of American parents and children, businesses, spiritual and educational leaders. This organization will work to create support systems for our children so that they will turn away from violence.

II. Specific Goals

- Reduce the number of children killed by youth violence by 25% in 5 years.
- Enlist 10 million American parents and children to take a pledge to work to reduce violence within one year.
- Ensure all our children are given a healthy start.

III. General Strategies to Reduce Violence

The campaign will work on many fronts to focus on a series of issues related to youth violence: blocking children's access to guns, expanding mental health services, limiting young people's exposure to violence, and giving parents more tools to keep our children safe. The campaign will identify strategies that work, help spread promising ideas to other communities, and work with the media to send the right messages to our children.

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Identifying what works at the community level

It is critically important that the national campaign be grounded in the best information and research available, both on the causes of violence and on effective strategies that work to reduce youth violence. It will focus on strategies that are working to prevent youth violence, to reduce children's access to guns, to promote children's healthy development, to promote linkages to counseling and other services.

The national campaign will help identify promising ways to reduce youth violence at the community level by creating a web-site and publicizing programs like Boston. It will also increase the commitment of individuals, foundations and businesses to these initiatives and their evaluation.

A clearinghouse that coordinates efforts

The campaign -- as a national umbrella organization -- will also help focus on coordinating these strategies to prevent violence. Currently, there are numerous programs that focus on some aspects of youth violence (e.g., mentoring programs, crime prevention, mental health services). There are organizations and initiatives working on particular issues in particular communities across the country. The campaign will help to organize these varied strategies into one national effort in order to more effectively address the problem.

In addition, the campaign will work to disseminate the latest research on proven strategies that are working to reduce youth violence.

Working to organize parents and others at the grass-roots level

The campaign will help to organize and involve parents and others to help end youth violence. Those who are on the front lines of this problem are critical to the success of the campaign.

Supporting and stimulating state and local action

The national campaign will support and enhance existing efforts in states and communities to prevent youth violence, and stimulate more states and major cities to develop well-organized coalitions to reduce youth violence.

IV. Specific Campaign Initiatives

The problem of youth violence is a multi-faceted one, involving a range of problems -- no single strategy will work. The agenda of this campaign is to work on several fronts at once and build support across communities for action against youth violence.

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Safer Schools

While schools are still the safest place for children, the recent incidents of extreme violence on school sites tell us that we need to do more to protect our children.

The Campaign will focus on what's working and raise awareness about new strategies to make schools safer by:

- Promoting smaller schools and schools within schools, as well as smaller classes, so that children have more direct interaction with teachers and school administration. With smaller schools, children may receive more attention from adults, thereby alleviating any sense of isolation.
- Promoting effective violence prevention initiatives in the schools, including mentoring, conflict resolution, character education and after-school programs that work to reduce tensions and teach children how to address violence themselves.

Mental Health Services for Children

Too many of vulnerable children do not get the help they need: As many as one in every 33 children and one in eight adolescents may have depression. (U.S. Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS), 1996) Two-thirds of children with mental health problems are either not treated or are treated inappropriately. (CMHS, 1996) And, the rate of suicide for five to 24-year olds has nearly tripled since 1960. (AACAP, 1995)

The Campaign will work to raise awareness and help give parents and others the tools they need to address this problem by:

- Promoting successful initiatives that identify vulnerable children early.
- Increasing awareness of mental health issues by working with parents and others to spot the early warning signs of problems.
- Working with the media as well as community-based organizations to promote awareness of mental health issues amongst children.
- Focusing on counseling services in schools, including highlighting the critical role of guidance counselors and working with teachers to identify children with problems.

A Campaign to Keep Guns Out of the Hands of Our Children

Children's easy access to guns have had dire consequences: In 1996, firearms in murders, suicides, and unintentional shootings killed 4,643 children and teenagers. Gunshot wounds are the second leading cause of death for all people aged 10-34. And 20% of all gun-owning households had a loaded, unlocked gun in the home, a figure that was significantly higher among

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households that had a handgun. In addition, 26% of all guns and 55% of handguns are usually kept loaded. According to a February 1997 report by the Centers for Disease Control, the rate of firearm deaths among children 0-14 years old is nearly twelve times higher in the United States than in 25 other industrialized countries combined. Finally, according to a recent poll, more than half of all teenagers say it would be easy for them get a gun.

The Campaign will work to break the connection between children and guns by:

- Developing a national education initiative to inform parents about the need to keep guns out of the hands of children.
- Advocating for greater use of technology to block children from using guns without the supervision of their parents.
- *Issue:* Should the campaign work on legislation as Mothers Against Violence in America, and Mothers Against Drunk Driving have or is that too political for this organization?

Addressing the Culture of Violence:

Children witness 8,000 murders and 100,000 other assorted acts of violence by the time they graduate from elementary school, and an estimated 200,000 acts of violence, and 16,000 simulated murders, by the time they are teens. And study after study has found that exposure to violent media makes children more aggressive. Studies have also shown that television violence has a particularly negative effect on children who have a tendency towards aggressive behavior.

The campaign will work with the media to address the problem of violence by:

- Working with media organizations to support programs that work, e.g., public service announcements on mentoring, as well as ones to reduce youth violence more directly.
- Advocating for greater responsibility by the media -- video games, television, recordings, and movies -- to reduce the violence our children are exposed to.
- Working with the entertainment industry and retailers to enforce the ratings system so children are kept away from violent media.
- Helping inform parents about the ratings systems and the V-Chip.

Supporting Children and Families

We know that children need the support of their families and their communities to ensure that they grow up healthy. In fact, the campaign must address the sense of alienation that is plaguing too many children as they grow up without the support they need.

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The campaign will help parents address the problem of violence by :

- Focusing on initiatives and strategies that work to give parents the support they need – from parental support programs involving home visitation to after school programs.
- Advocating on behalf of more support from the business community for family-friendly policies that allow parents to spend more time with their children.
- Obtain 10 million pledges by parents to address the needs of their children by listening to them more and ensuring they are safe from gun violence (see AOL pledge).

V. Principles of the Campaign

- The campaign will be non-political and non-partisan.
- The campaign will be a private, non-governmental entity, though it will recognize that public-private partnerships and the involvement of major political leaders, including the President, are critical to its success.
- The campaign will be specifically designed to support and supplement, not supplant, the efforts of other groups and local communities. It will involve a broad diversity of people to work on youth violence, including parents, teachers, religious and community leaders, elected officials and young people themselves.
- The campaign will be built on a solid foundation of evaluation of which approaches work and which do not.