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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION
OF YOUNG CHILDREN

The National Association for the Education of Young Children is a nonprofit professional organization of more than 90,000 members dedicated to improving the quality of care and education provided to children from birth through age 8—the critical years of development.

NAEYC administers the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs, a national voluntary accreditation system, and the National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development. NAEYC publishes the bimonthly journal, *Young Children*, and an extensive array of other materials; offers a centralized source of information sharing; provides public-policy analyses; and hosts the largest educational conference in the country.

NAEYC's primary goals of improving the professional practice of early childhood education and building public understanding and support for high-quality early childhood programs are shared and implemented by a network of more than 450 Affiliate Groups.



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION for the EDUCATION
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early years are learning years

Child Care is Education . . . and More

Millions of children spend a part of the day in child care while their parents work. These settings—in centers and in homes—are places where children can learn and grow. In 1989, the President and the nation's governors developed a set of national education goals to improve the quality of education in America. Although the first goal focused on school readiness, child care has often been viewed as falling outside that picture. The tenth anniversary of the goals is an important opportunity to redefine education and recognize that quality child care is part of a system of learning that affects child development.

We know that children's language and cognitive skills thrive in quality child care programs, with responsive caregivers who are adequately trained and supported. In poor quality programs, opportunities to stimulate development are lost or squandered. In large groups with few trained staff, in centers and homes where children have few opportunities to be read to, to be listened to, to be held, in programs where television or isolation replace human interaction and communication, children learn that they have little affect on their environment—precisely the wrong message to promote readiness and school success.

Traditionally, three "places" have been seen to affect a child's education: family, school and community. Child care is part of all three. Child care is a family support. Not only is child care often provided by relatives and other family members, but from the perspective of the child as well as the family, child care is often an extension of the home. Child care provides many opportunities to help parents succeed as "first teachers."

For young children, child care is school; just listen to any group of 3- and 4-year-olds talking about "my teacher." They have demystified the dichotomy that has fractured the early childhood field for so long. They know it is not child care *and* educa-

tion—child care *is* education. Research clearly tells us that early experiences matter. It doesn't matter *where* it happens or what the building is called, what matters is *what* happens once the children arrive.

More recently, we have come to appreciate the importance of the community to child development—both the climate in a community and the services provided. Child care is an important part of the community. For school-age children, child care is the "new neighborhood," whether sponsored by schools or by any of a wide-range of community-based organizations.

People are often reluctant to talk about child care as education. We worry that the term *education* is too limiting. We believe that somehow child care is more than education—that it is child development, that it includes health, that it should be supportive of families and their working schedules. These beliefs are not part of the traditional purpose of education, although this too is changing. Also, since child care includes babies and toddlers, traditional education terms don't seem to fit.

Despite these concerns, if we are to improve child care, it must be seen as a service for children as well as their parents—it must be seen as education and more. We must step up efforts to ensure that funding is provided to improve the quality of those places where children go before they enter school or at the end of the school day. That means providing some funds directly to child care programs to improve their educational services—funding for accreditation, teacher training and increased compensation.

Improving child care also means enhancing family child care networks, providing home visiting and literacy programs to kith-and-kin providers as well as parents, and ensuring that care that goes on after school is connected programmatically to what goes on during the school

day. We must also keep up our efforts to bring health resources into child care—particularly health consultants who can help ensure health and safety as well as health promotion. Education for young children begins with health, and these linkages must continue into adolescence.

This year states and communities will develop new plans for child care and continue their education reform efforts. By July, state child care agencies must submit a two-year plan for their share of the Child Care and Development Fund. New funds have been added that target quality. Every state must hold hearings on their state plan. At the same time, many states are expanding their preschool efforts and implementing new child-health initiatives. Additional state, federal, and private funds are needed to ensure more improvements and make child care more affordable for more families.

This is the time to take every available opportunity—from the classroom and the living room to the hearing room and the board room—to bring these efforts together in order to provide safe healthy learning environments. Parents should be encouraged to join in this effort. We have to send a message to decisionmakers that while parents work, we must make sure that child care works for children.

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early years are learning years

Making Child Care Work for *Everyone*

The High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, in collaboration with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), established the *Program Recognition Project* to identify programs offering high-quality services and above-average staff compensation, while maintaining affordable fees for families.

One hundred and four programs either applied or were nominated to be considered by the Program Recognition Project. Through initial reviews and on-site assessments, the High/Scope staff selected ten exemplary programs.

These programs represented a range of service types and reflected a diversity of affiliations. Almost all of the programs share certain features and goals that point to some keys to success for achieving high-quality care and education, good compensation for staff, and fees that are affordable to parents.

The following are the common characteristics of the selected exemplary programs that make child care work for everyone. These programs:

- ◆ Use financial resources beyond parent fees, including financial subsidies for children of low-income families, donations from individuals and foundations, and in-kind gifts.
- ◆ Create a variety of alliances to bring in additional resources, such as fundraising efforts with organizations with historical ties to the program or connections with staff and parents.
- ◆ Educate parents about the value of early childhood education and the cost of providing services. Informing parents leads to their support.
- ◆ Have directors who secure additional benefits, higher salaries, additional planning time, or support for professional development for staff. Such efforts encourage teaching staff to see themselves as professional educators.
- ◆ Establish boards of directors or advisory committees to help programs forge stronger ties to their communities and to conduct larger fundraising efforts.
- ◆ Involve parents in their children's program. Programs with involved parents are more likely to feel comfortable sharing information and to work in partnership with the caregiver.
- ◆ Recognize family needs and try to work flexibly with parents. Focusing on family needs is critical to making programs work for parents.
- ◆ Have institutional structures in place that promote quality, compensation, and affordability and that guarantee their future existence.
- ◆ Set high standards for quality that are conveyed through established policies and written standards. Firm commitment to high-quality care and education not only benefits children and families, but also may increase the interest of outside funders.

The ten exemplary programs selected by the Program Recognition Project have made significant strides toward balancing the sometimes competing interests of staff, children, and families. They have succeeded in developing high-quality child care and education services and providing above-average salaries to staff. Their achievements stem from institutional and personal commitments to

the professional status of early childhood teachers and to financial stability for early childhood programs. These programs offer promising solutions to funding and management problems and illustrate the positive outcomes of increasing funding for early childhood care and education.

Adapted from "Making Child Care Work for Everyone: Lessons from the Program Recognition Project" by A. F. Kinch and L. J. Schweinhart Young Children 54(1).

Exemplary Programs Selected by the Program Recognition Project

Bridges Family Child Care
Madison, Wisconsin

Children's [Hospital] for Children
Cincinnati, Ohio

Day Care Services Association
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

KCCA Pre-Schools of Hawaii
Honolulu, Hawaii

Kennewick Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program
Kennewick, Washington

Lakewood Avenue Children's School
Durham, North Carolina

Miami Valley Child Development Centers, Inc. (Head Start)
Dayton, Ohio

River Valley Child Development Services
Huntington, West Virginia

Sycamore Tree Preschool
Bremerton, Washington

UCLA Child Care Services
Los Angeles, California



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Decision Makers Reference Guide to NAEYC's Position Statements

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is dedicated to improving the quality of early childhood education programs for children birth through age eight. NAEYC has position statements that describe how a highly qualified, skilled, and stable professional workforce; healthy and safe learning environments; appropriate curriculum content and assessment; knowledgeable and involved parents; responsive community services; and effective financing strategies support children's healthy development and learning. This reference guide identifies key position statements that can be used for background information and to identify NAEYC recommendations in each area.

NAEYC recommends building a highly qualified, skilled, and stable professional workforce to support children's early learning.

Position Statement: Conceptual Framework for Professional Development

- discusses the diverse educational and training needs of early childhood professionals
- identifies what all early childhood professionals must know and how to support their learning with effective professional development systems
- provides compensation guidelines

Position Statement: Quality, Compensation, and Affordability

- highlights key issues that affect children, families, and early childhood professionals
- explains the link between fair compensation and quality programs
- provides the rationale for increasing investments in early childhood programs

NAEYC recommends decisions about the curriculum content and assessment techniques be based on child development principles and made by early childhood professionals in partnership with parents.

Position Statement: Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs

- explains the importance of teaching practices that are guided by knowledge about how children develop and learn
- defines the teachers role as decision maker
- provides examples of appropriate and inappropriate teaching practices with children birth through age 8

Position Statement: Learning to Read and Write

- highlights the challenges and misconceptions that prevent children from learning to read and write
- provides information about the developmental continuum of learning to read and write
- provides guidance for establishing appropriate benchmarks up through the third grade
- recommends specific public policies

Position Statement: Standardized Testing of Young Children 3 Through 8 Years of Age

- explains the multiple purposes of assessment of young children
- provides guidance on the use of standardized testing

NAEYC recommends supporting family efforts to be involved in their child's educational experience.

Position Statement: Responding to Linguistic and Cultural Diversity (Respuesta a la Diversidad Lingüística y Cultural)

- describes the growing challenge of responding appropriately to linguistic and cultural diversity in early childhood
- provides recommendations for supporting children's acquisition of English while helping to preserve their knowledge of their home language
- defines goals for professional preparation program

Position Statement: School Readiness

- provides a rationale for providing comprehensive services and family support to families with young children
- outlines key areas for school reform including increasing family support and parent involvement components

NAEYC recommends ensuring all early childhood program environments and practices enhance children's development and learning.

Position Statement: Licensing and Public Regulation of Early Childhood Programs

- explains how program regulation can protect children from harm
- outlines key barriers to effective regulation
- provides ten principles for implementing an effective regulatory system

Position Statement: Accreditation Criteria and Procedures

- describes the NAEYC accreditation process used to identify high-quality programs
- delineates and explains the rationale for accreditation standards
- provides examples of best practices

NAEYC recommends building the capacity of communities to provide responsive community services and effective financing strategies that support all families access to high-quality early childhood programs.

Position Statement: Call to Action on Behalf of Children and Families

- calls for a national commitment to children and families
- provides a rationale for increasing investments in children by both the public and private sector

Position Statement: Principles to Link By: Integrated Service Systems That are Community-Based and School-Linked

- describes basic elements of early intervention programs
- discusses the role of financing in achieving outcomes for children and families
- describes components of effective needs assessments and program evaluation
- recommends strategies for supporting coordination and collaboration

Note: These and other NAEYC Position Statements can be found at <http://www.naeyc.org>. The full set is also available for sale (order #780/\$15) through the Resource Sales Department at 800-424-2460 ext. 604.

Learning to Read and Write: Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Young Children

A joint position statement of the International Reading Association and the National Association for the Education of Young Children

Adopted May 1998

Learning to read and write is critical to a child's success in school and later in life. One of the best predictors of whether a child will function competently in school and go on to contribute actively in our increasingly literate society is the level to which the child progresses in reading and writing. Although reading and writing abilities continue to develop throughout the life span, the early childhood years—from birth through age eight—are the most important period for literacy development. It is for this reason that the International Reading Association (IRA) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) joined together to formulate a position statement regarding early literacy development. The statement consists of a set of principles and recommendations for teaching practices and public policy.

The primary purpose of this position statement is to provide guidance to teachers of young children in schools and early childhood programs (including child care centers, preschools, and family child care homes) serving children from birth through age eight. By and large, the principles and practices suggested here also will be of interest to any adults who are in a position to influence a young child's learning and development—parents, grandparents, older siblings, tutors, and other community members.

Teachers work in schools or programs regulated by administrative policies as well as available resources. Therefore secondary audiences for this position statement are school principals and program administrators whose roles are critical in establishing a supportive climate for sound, developmentally appropriate teaching practices; and policymakers whose decisions determine whether adequate resources are available for high-quality early childhood education.

A great deal is known about how young children learn to read and write and how they can be helped toward literacy during the first five years of life. A great deal is known also about how to help children once compulsory schooling begins, whether in kindergarten or the primary grades. Based on a thorough review of the research, this document reflects the commitment of two major professional organizations to the goal of helping children learn to read well enough by the end of third grade so that they can read to learn in all curriculum areas. IRA and NAEYC are committed not only to helping young children learn to read and write but also to fostering and sustaining their interest and disposition to read and write for their own enjoyment, information, and communication.

First, the statement summarizes the current issues that are the impetus for this position; then it reviews what is known from research on young children's literacy development. This review of research as well as the collective wisdom and experience of IRA and NAEYC members provides the basis for a position statement about what constitutes developmentally appropriate practice in early literacy over the period of birth through age eight. The position concludes with recommendations for teaching practices and policies.

Statement of the issues

Why take a position on something as obviously important as children's learning to read and write? The IRA and NAEYC believe that this position statement will contribute significantly to an improvement in practice and the development of supportive educational policies. The two associations saw that a clear, concise position statement was needed at this time for several reasons.

- **It is essential and urgent to teach children to read and write competently, enabling them to achieve today's high standards of literacy.**

Although the United States enjoys the highest literacy rate in its history, society now expects virtually everyone in the population to function beyond the minimum standards of literacy. Today the definition of *basic proficiency* in literacy calls for a fairly high standard of reading comprehension and analysis. The main reason is that literacy requirements of most jobs have increased significantly and are expected to increase further in the future. Communications that in the past were verbal (by phone or in person) now demand reading and writing—messages sent by electronic mail, Internet, or facsimile as well as print documents.

- **With the increasing variation among young children in our programs and schools, teaching today has become more challenging.**

Experienced teachers throughout the United States report that the children they teach today are more diverse in their backgrounds, experiences, and abilities than were those they taught in the past. Kindergarten classes now include children who have been in group settings for three or four years as well as chil-

dren who are participating for the first time in an organized early childhood program. Classes include both children with identified disabilities and children with exceptional abilities, children who are already independent readers and children who are just beginning to acquire some basic literacy knowledge and skills. Children in the group may speak different languages at varying levels of proficiency. Because of these individual and experiential variations, it is common to find within a kindergarten classroom a five-year range in children's literacy-related skills and functioning (Riley 1996). What this means is that some kindergartners may have skills characteristic of the typical three-year-old, while others might be functioning at the level of the typical eight-year-old. Diversity is to be expected and embraced, but it can be overwhelming when teachers are expected to produce uniform outcomes for all, with no account taken of the initial range in abilities, experiences, interests, and personalities of individual children.

- **Among many early childhood teachers, a maturationist view of young children's development persists despite much evidence to the contrary.**

A readiness view of reading development assumes that there is a specific time in the early childhood years when the teaching of reading should begin. It also assumes that physical and neurological maturation alone prepare the child to take advantage of instruction in reading and writing. The readiness perspective implies that until children reach a certain stage of maturity all exposure to reading and writing, except perhaps being read stories, is a waste of time or even potentially harmful. Experiences throughout the early childhood years, birth through age eight, affect the development of literacy. These experiences constantly interact with characteristics of individual children to determine the level of literacy skills a child ultimately achieves. Failing to give children literacy experiences until they are school age can severely limit the reading and writing levels they ultimately attain.

- **Recognizing the early beginnings of literacy acquisition too often has resulted in use of inappropriate teaching practices suited to older children or adults perhaps but ineffective with children in preschool, kindergarten, and the early grades.**

Teaching practices associated with outdated views of literacy development and/or learning theories are still prevalent in many classrooms. Such practices include extensive whole-group instruction and intensive drill and practice on isolated skills for groups or individuals. These practices, not particularly effective for primary-grade children, are even less suitable and effective with preschool and kindergarten children. Young children especially need to be engaged in experiences that make academic content meaningful and build on prior learning. It is vital for all children to have literacy experiences in schools and

early childhood programs. Such access is even more critical for children with limited home experiences in literacy. However, these school experiences must teach the broad range of language and literacy knowledge and skills to provide the solid foundation on which high levels of reading and writing ultimately depend.

- **Current policies and resources are inadequate in ensuring that preschool and primary teachers are qualified to support the literacy development of all children, a task requiring strong preservice preparation and ongoing professional development.**

For teachers of children younger than kindergarten age in the United States, no uniform preparation requirements or licensure standards exist. In fact, a high school diploma is the highest level of education required to be a child care teacher in most states. Moreover, salaries in child care and preschool programs are too low to attract or retain better qualified staff. Even in the primary grades, for which certified teachers are required, many states do not offer specialized early childhood certification, which means many teachers are not adequately prepared to teach reading and writing to young children. All teachers of young children need good, foundational knowledge in language acquisition, including second-language learning, the processes of reading and writing, early literacy development, and experiences and teaching practices contributing to optimal development. Resources also are insufficient to ensure teachers continuing access to professional education so they can remain current in the field or can prepare to teach a different age group if they are reassigned.

What research reveals: Rationale for the position statement

Children take their first critical steps toward learning to read and write very early in life. Long before they can exhibit reading and writing production skills, they begin to acquire some basic understandings of the concepts about literacy and its functions. Children learn to use symbols, combining their oral language, pictures, print, and play into a coherent mixed medium and creating and communicating meanings in a variety of ways. From their initial experiences and interactions with adults, children begin to read words, processing letter-sound relations and acquiring substantial knowledge of the alphabetic system. As they continue to learn, children increasingly consolidate this information into patterns that allow for automaticity and fluency in reading and writing. Consequently reading and writing acquisition is conceptualized better as a developmental continuum than as an all-or-nothing phenomenon (see pp. 14–15 for an illustration of a developmental continuum).

But the ability to read and write does not develop naturally, without careful planning and instruction. Children need regular and active interactions with print. Specific abilities required for reading and writing come from immediate experiences with oral and written language. Experiences in these early years begin to define the assumptions and expectations about becoming literate and give children the motivation to work toward learning to read and write. From these experiences children learn that reading and writing are valuable tools that will help them do many things in life.

The beginning years (birth through preschool)

Even in the first few months of life, children begin to experiment with language. Young babies make sounds that imitate the tones and rhythms of adult talk; they "read" gestures and facial expressions, and they begin to associate sound sequences frequently heard—words—with their referents (Berk 1996). They delight in listening to familiar jingles and rhymes, play along in games such as peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake, and manipulate objects such as board books and alphabet blocks in their play. From these remarkable beginnings children learn to use a variety of symbols.

In the midst of gaining facility with these symbol systems, children acquire through interactions with others the insight that specific kinds of marks—print—also can represent meanings. At first children will use the physical and visual cues surrounding print to determine what something says. But as they develop an understanding of the alphabetic principle, children begin to process letters, translate them into sounds, and connect this information with a known meaning. Although it may seem as though some children acquire these understandings magically or on their own, studies suggest that they are the beneficiaries of considerable, though playful and informal, adult guidance and instruction (Durkin 1966; Anbar 1986).

Considerable diversity in children's oral and written language experiences occurs in these years (Hart & Risley 1995). In home and child care situations, children encounter many different resources and types and degrees of support for early reading and writing (McGill-Franzen & Lanford 1994). Some children may have ready access to a range of writing and reading materials, while others may not; some children will observe their parents writing and reading frequently, others only occasionally; some children receive direct instruction, while others receive much more casual, informal assistance.

What this means is that no one teaching method or approach is likely to be the most effective for all children (Strickland 1994). Rather, good teachers bring into play a variety of teaching strategies that can encompass the great diversity of children in schools. Excellent instruction builds on what children already know, and can do, and provides knowledge, skills, and dispositions for lifelong learning. Children need to learn not only the

technical skills of reading and writing but also how to use these tools to better their thinking and reasoning (Neuman 1998).

The single most important activity for building these understandings and skills essential for reading success appears to be **reading aloud to children** (Wells 1985; Bus, Van Ijzendoorn, & Pellegrini 1995). High-quality book reading occurs when children feel emotionally secure (Bus & Van Ijzendoorn 1995; Bus et al. 1997) and are active participants in reading (Whitehurst et al. 1994). Asking predictive and analytic questions in small-group settings appears to affect children's vocabulary and comprehension of stories (Karweit & Wasik 1996). Children may talk about the pictures, retell the story, discuss their favorite actions, and request multiple rereadings. It is the talk that surrounds the storybook reading that gives it power, helping children to bridge what is in the story and their own lives (Dickinson & Smith 1994; Snow et al. 1995). Snow (1991) has described these types of conversations as "decontextualized language" in which teachers may induce higher-level thinking by moving experiences in stories from what the children may see in front of them to what they can imagine.

A central goal during these preschool years is to enhance children's **exposure to and concepts about print** (Clay 1979, 1991; Holdaway 1979; Teale 1984; Stanovich & West 1989). Some teachers use Big Books to help children distinguish many print features, including the fact that print (rather than pictures) carries the meaning of the story, that the strings of letters between spaces are words and in print correspond to an oral version, and that reading progresses from left to right and top to bottom. In the course of reading stories, teachers may demonstrate these features by pointing to individual words, directing children's attention to where to begin reading, and helping children to recognize letter shapes and sounds. Some researchers (Adams 1990; Roberts 1998) have suggested that the key to these critical concepts, such as developing word awareness, may lie in these demonstrations of how print works.

Children also need opportunity to practice what they've learned about print with their peers and on their own. Studies suggest that the physical arrangement of the classroom can promote time with books (Morrow & Weinstein 1986; Neuman & Roskos 1997). A key area is the classroom library—a collection of attractive stories and informational books that provides children with immediate access to books. Regular visits to the school or public library and library card registration ensure that children's collections remain continually updated and may help children develop the habit of reading as lifelong learning. In comfortable library settings children often will pretend to read, using visual cues to remember the words of their favorite stories. Although studies have shown that these pretend readings are just that (Ehri & Sweet 1991), such visual readings may demonstrate substantial knowledge about the global features of reading and its purposes.

Storybooks are not the only means of providing children with exposure to written language. Children learn a lot about reading from the labels, signs, and other kinds of print they see around them (McGee, Lomax, & Head 1988; Neuman & Roskos 1993). Highly visible print labels on objects, signs, and bulletin boards in classrooms demonstrate the practical uses of written language. In environments rich with print, children incorporate literacy into their dramatic play (Morrow 1990; Vukelich 1994; Neuman & Roskos 1997), using these communication tools to enhance the drama and realism of the pretend situation. These everyday, playful experiences by themselves do not make most children readers. Rather they expose children to a variety of print experiences and the processes of reading for real purposes.

For children whose primary language is other than English, studies have shown that a strong basis in a first language promotes school achievement in a second language (Cummins 1979). Children who are **learning English as a second language** are more likely to become readers and writers of English when they are already familiar with the vocabulary and concepts in their primary language. In this respect, oral and written language experiences should be regarded as an additive process, ensuring that children are able to maintain their home language while also learning to speak and read English (Wong Fillmore, 1991). Including non-English materials and resources to the extent possible can help to support children's first language while children acquire oral proficiency in English.

A fundamental insight developed in children's early years through instruction is the **alphabetic principle**, the understanding that there is a systematic relationship between letters and sounds (Adams 1990). The research of Gibson and Levin (1975) indicates that the shapes of letters are learned by distinguishing one character from another by its type of spatial features. Teachers will often involve children in comparing letter shapes, helping them to differentiate a number of letters visually. Alphabet books and alphabet puzzles in which children can see and compare letters may be a key to efficient and easy learning.

At the same time children learn about the sounds of language through exposure to **linguistic awareness** games, nursery rhymes, and rhythmic activities. Some research suggests that the roots of phonemic awareness, a powerful predictor of later reading success, are found in traditional rhyming, skipping, and word games (Bryant et al. 1990). In one study, for example (Maclean, Bryant, & Bradley 1987), researchers found that three-year-old children's knowledge of nursery rhymes specifically related to their more abstract phonological knowledge later on. Engaging children in choral readings of rhymes and rhythms allows them to associate the symbols with the sounds they hear in these words.

Although children's facility in **phonemic awareness** has been shown to be strongly related to later reading achievement, the precise role it plays in these early years is not fully understood.

Phonemic awareness refers to a child's understanding and conscious awareness that speech is composed of identifiable units, such as spoken words, syllables, and sounds. Training studies have demonstrated that phonemic awareness can be taught to children as young as age five (Bradley & Bryant 1983; Lundberg, Frost, & Petersen 1988; Cunningham 1990; Bryne & Fielding-Barnsley 1991). These studies used tiles (boxes) (Elkonin 1973) and linguistic games to engage children in explicitly manipulating speech segments at the phoneme level. Yet, whether such training is appropriate for younger-age children is highly suspect. Other scholars find that children benefit most from such training only after they have learned some letter names, shapes, and sounds and can apply what they learn to real reading in meaningful contexts (Cunningham 1990; Foorman et al. 1991). Even at this later age, however, many children acquire phonemic awareness skills without specific training but as a consequence of learning to read (Wagner & Torgesen 1987; Ehri 1994). In the preschool years sensitizing children to sound similarities does not seem to be strongly dependent on formal training but rather from listening to patterned, predictable texts while enjoying the feel of reading and language.

Children acquire a working knowledge of the alphabetic system not only through reading but also through writing. A classic study by Read (1971) found that even without formal spelling instruction, preschoolers use their tacit knowledge of phonological relations to spell words. **Invented spelling** (or phonic spelling) refers to beginners' use of the symbols they associate with the sounds they hear in the words they wish to write. For example, a child may initially write *b* or *bk* for the word *bike*, to be followed by more conventionalized forms later on.

Some educators may wonder whether invented spelling promotes poor spelling habits. To the contrary, studies suggest that *temporary* invented spelling may contribute to beginning reading (Chomsky 1979; Clarke 1988). One study, for example, found that children benefited from using invented spelling compared to having the teacher provide correct spellings in writing (Clarke 1988). Although children's invented spellings did not comply with correct spellings, the process encouraged them to think actively about letter-sound relations. As children engage in writing, they are learning to segment the words they wish to spell into constituent sounds.

Classrooms that provide children with regular opportunities to express themselves on paper, without feeling too constrained for correct spelling and proper handwriting, also help children understand that writing has real purpose (Graves 1983; Sulzby 1985; Dyson 1988). Teachers can organize situations that both demonstrate the writing process and get children actively involved in it. Some teachers serve as scribes and help children write down their ideas, keeping in mind the balance between children doing it themselves and asking for help. In the beginning these products likely emphasize pictures with few attempts

at writing letters or words. With encouragement, children begin to label their pictures, tell stories, and attempt to write stories about the pictures they have drawn. Such novice writing activity sends the important message that writing is not just handwriting practice—children are using their own words to compose a message to communicate with others.

Thus the picture that emerges from research in these first years of children's reading and writing is one that emphasizes wide exposure to print and to developing concepts about it and its forms and functions. Classrooms filled with print, language and literacy play, storybook reading, and writing allow children to experience the joy and power associated with reading and writing while mastering basic concepts about print that research has shown are strong predictors of achievement.

In kindergarten

Knowledge of the forms and functions of print serves as a foundation from which children become increasingly sensitive to letter shapes, names, sounds, and words. However, not all children typically come to kindergarten with similar levels of knowledge about printed language. Estimating where each child is developmentally and building on that base, a key feature of all good teaching, is particularly important for the kindergarten teacher. Instruction will need to be adapted to account for children's differences. For those children with lots of print experiences, instruction will extend their knowledge as they learn more about the formal features of letters and their sound correspondences. For other children with fewer prior experiences, initiating them to the alphabetic principle, that a limited set of letters comprises the alphabet and that these letters stand for the sounds that make up spoken words, will require more focused and direct instruction. In all cases, however, children need to interact with a rich variety of print (Morrow, Strickland, & Woo 1998).

In this critical year kindergarten teachers need to capitalize on every opportunity for enhancing children's **vocabulary development**. One approach is through listening to stories (Feitelson, Kita, & Goldstein 1986; Elley 1989). Children need to be exposed to vocabulary from a wide variety of genres, including informational texts as well as narratives. The learning of vocabulary, however, is not necessarily simply a byproduct of reading stories (Leung & Pikulski 1990). Some explanation of vocabulary words prior to listening to a story is related significantly to children's learning of new words (Elley 1989). Dickinson and Smith (1994), for example, found that asking predictive and analytic questions before and after the readings produced positive effects on vocabulary and comprehension.

Repeated readings appear to further reinforce the language of the text as well as to familiarize children with the way different genres are structured (Eller, Pappas, & Brown 1988; Morrow 1988). Understanding the forms of informational and nar-

rative texts seems to distinguish those children who have been well read to from those who have not (Pappas 1991). In one study, for example, Pappas found that with multiple exposures to a story (three readings), children's retelling became increasingly rich, integrating what they knew about the world, the language of the book, and the message of the author. Thus, considering the benefits for vocabulary development and comprehension, the case is strong for interactive storybook reading (Anderson 1995). Increasing the volume of children's playful, stimulating experiences with good books is associated with accelerated growth in reading competence.

Activities that help children clarify the **concept of word** are also worthy of time and attention in the kindergarten curriculum (Juel 1991). Language experience charts that let teachers demonstrate how talk can be written down provide a natural medium for children's developing word awareness in meaningful contexts. Transposing children's spoken words into written symbols through dictation provides a concrete demonstration that strings of letters between spaces are words and that not all words are the same length. Studies by Clay (1979) and Bissex (1980) confirm the value of what many teachers have known and done for years: Teacher dictations of children's stories help develop word awareness, spelling, and the conventions of written language.

Many children enter kindergarten with at least some perfunctory knowledge of the alphabet letters. An important goal for the kindergarten teacher is to reinforce this skill by ensuring that children can recognize and discriminate these letter shapes with increasing ease and fluency (Mason 1980; Snow, Burns, & Griffin 1998). Children's proficiency in **letter naming** is a well-established predictor of their end-of-year achievement (Bond & Dykstra 1967, Riley 1996), probably because it mediates the ability to remember sounds. Generally a good rule according to current learning theory (Adams 1990) is to start with the more easily visualized uppercase letters, to be followed by identifying lowercase letters. In each case, introducing just a few letters at a time, rather than many, enhances mastery.

At about the time children are readily able to identify letter names, they begin to connect the letters with the sounds they hear. A fundamental insight in this phase of learning is that a letter and letter sequences map onto phonological forms. Phonemic awareness, however, is not merely a solitary insight or an instant ability (Juel 1991). It takes time and practice.

Children who are phonemically aware can think about and manipulate sounds in words. They know when words rhyme or do not; they know when words begin or end with the same sound; and they know that a word like *bat* is composed of three sounds /b/ /a/ /t/ and that these sounds can be blended into a spoken word. Popular rhyming books, for example, may draw children's attention to rhyming patterns, serving as a basis for extending vocabulary (Ehri & Robbins 1992). Using initial letter cues, children can learn many new words through analogy,

taking the familiar word *bake* as a strategy for figuring out a new word, *lake*.

Further, as teachers engage children in shared writing, they can pause before writing a word, say it slowly, and stretch out the sounds as they write it. Such activities in the context of real reading and writing help children attend to the features of print and the alphabetic nature of English.

There is accumulated evidence that instructing children in phonemic awareness activities in kindergarten (and first grade) enhances reading achievement (Stanovich 1986; Lundberg, Frost, & Petersen 1988; Bryne & Fielding-Barnsley 1991, 1993, 1995). Although a large number of children will acquire phonemic awareness skills as they learn to read, an estimated 20% will not without additional training. A statement by the IRA (1998) indicates that "the likelihood of these students becoming successful as readers is slim to none. . . . This figure [20%], however, can be substantially reduced through more systematic attention to engagement with language early on in the child's home, preschool and kindergarten classes." A study by Hanson and Farrell (1995), for example, examined the long-term benefits of a carefully developed kindergarten curriculum that focused on word study and decoding skills, along with sets of stories so that children would be able to practice these skills in meaningful contexts. High school seniors who early on had received this type of instruction outperformed their counterparts on reading achievement, attitude toward schooling, grades, and attendance.

In kindergarten many children will begin to read some words through recognition or by processing letter-sound relations. Studies by Domico (1993) and Richgels (1995) suggest that children's ability to read words is tied to their ability to write words in a somewhat reciprocal relationship. The more opportunities children have to write, the greater the likelihood that they will reproduce spellings of words they have seen and heard. Though not conventional, these spellings likely show greater letter-sound correspondences and partial encoding of some parts of words, like *SWM* for *swim*, than do the inventions of preschoolers (Clay 1975).

To provide more intensive and extensive practice, some teachers try to integrate writing in other areas of the curriculum, like literacy-related play (Neuman & Roskos 1992), and other project activities (Katz & Chard 1989). These types of projects engage children in using reading and writing for multiple purposes while they are learning about topics meaningful to them.

Early literacy activities teach children a great deal about writing and reading but often in ways that do not look much like traditional elementary school instruction. Capitalizing on the active and social nature of children's learning, early instruction must provide rich demonstrations, interactions, and models of literacy in the course of activities that make sense to young children. Children must also learn about the relation between

oral and written language and the relation between letters, sounds, and words. In classrooms built around a wide variety of print activities, then in talking, reading, writing, playing, and listening to one another, children will want to read and write and feel capable that they can do so.

The primary grades

Instruction takes on a more formal nature as children move into the elementary grades. Here it is virtually certain that children will receive at least some instruction from a commercially published product, like a basal or literature anthology series.

Although research has clearly established that no one method is superior for all children (Bond & Dykstra 1967; Snow, Burns, & Griffin 1998), approaches that favor some type of **systematic code instruction along with meaningful connected reading** report children's superior progress in reading. Instruction should aim to teach the important letter-sound relationships, which once learned are practiced through having many opportunities to read. Most likely these research findings are a positive result of the Matthew Effect, the rich-get-richer effects that are embedded in such instruction; that is, children who acquire alphabetic coding skills begin to recognize many words (Stanovich 1986). As word recognition processes become more automatic, children are likely to allocate more attention to higher-level processes of comprehension. Since these reading experiences tend to be rewarding for children, they may read more often; thus reading achievement may be a by-product of reading enjoyment.

One of the hallmarks of skilled reading is **fluent, accurate word identification** (Juel, Griffith, & Gough 1986). Yet instruction in simply word calling with flashcards is not reading. Real reading is comprehension. Children need to read a wide variety of interesting, comprehensible materials, which they can read orally with about 90 to 95% accuracy (Durrell & Catterson 1980). In the beginning children are likely to read slowly and deliberately as they focus on exactly what's on the page. In fact they may seem "glued to print" (Chall 1983), figuring out the fine points of form at the word level. However, children's reading expression, fluency, and comprehension generally improve when they read familiar texts. Some authorities have found the practice of repeated rereadings in which children reread short selections significantly enhances their confidence, fluency, and comprehension in reading (Samuels 1979; Moyer 1982).

Children not only use their increasing knowledge of letter-sound patterns to read unfamiliar texts. They also use a variety of strategies. Studies reveal that early readers are capable of being intentional in their use of **metacognitive strategies** (Brown, & DeLoache 1978; Rowe 1994) Even in these early grades, children make predictions about what they are to read, self-correct, reread, and question if necessary, giving evidence that they are able to adjust their reading when understanding

breaks down. Teacher practices, such as the Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DRTA), effectively model these strategies by helping children set purposes for reading, ask questions, and summarize ideas through the text (Stauffer 1970).

But children also need time for **independent practice**. These activities may take on numerous forms. Some research, for example, has demonstrated the powerful effects that children's reading to their caregivers has on promoting confidence as well as reading proficiency (Hannon 1995). Visiting the library and scheduling independent reading and writing periods in literacy-rich classrooms also provide children with opportunities to select books of their own choosing. They may engage in the social activities of reading with their peers, asking questions, and writing stories (Morrow & Weinstein 1986), all of which may nurture interest and appreciation for reading and writing.

Supportive relationships between these communication processes lead many teachers to **integrate reading and writing** in classroom instruction (Tierney & Shanahan 1991). After all, writing challenges children to actively think about print. As young authors struggle to express themselves, they come to grips with different written forms, syntactic patterns, and themes. They use writing for multiple purposes: to write descriptions, lists, and stories to communicate with others. It is important for teachers to expose children to a range of text forms, including stories, reports, and informational texts, and to help children select vocabulary and punctuate simple sentences that meet the demands of audience and purpose. Since handwriting instruction helps children communicate effectively, it should also be part of the writing process (McGee & Richgels 1996). Short lessons demonstrating certain letter formations tied to the publication of writing provide an ideal time for instruction. Reading and writing workshops, in which teachers provide small-group and individual instruction, may help children to develop the skills they need for communicating with others.

Although children's initial writing drafts will contain invented spellings, learning about spelling will take on increasing importance in these years (Henderson & Beers 1980; Richgels 1986). **Spelling instruction** should be an important component of the reading and writing program since it directly affects reading ability. Some teachers create their own spelling lists, focusing on words with common patterns, high-frequency words, as well as some personally meaningful words from the children's writing. Research indicates that seeing a word in print, imagining how it is spelled, and copying new words is an effective way of acquiring spellings (Barron 1980). Nevertheless, even though the teacher's goal is to foster more conventionalized forms, it is important to recognize that there is more to writing than just spelling and grammatically correct sentences. Rather, writing has been characterized by Applebee (1977) as "thinking with a pencil." It is true that children will need adult help to master

the complexities of the writing process. But they also will need to learn that the power of writing is expressing one's own ideas in ways that can be understood by others.

As children's capabilities develop and become more fluent, instruction will turn from a central focus on helping children learn to read and write to helping them read and write to learn. Increasingly the emphasis for teachers will be on encouraging children to become **independent and productive readers**, helping them to extend their reasoning and comprehension abilities in learning about their world. Teachers will need to provide challenging materials that require children to analyze and think creatively and from different points of view. They also will need to ensure that children have practice in reading and writing (both in and out of school) and many opportunities to analyze topics, generate questions, and organize written responses for different purposes in meaningful activities.

Throughout these critical years **accurate assessment** of children's knowledge, skills, and dispositions in reading and writing will help teachers better match instruction with how and what children are learning. However, early reading and writing cannot simply be measured as a set of narrowly-defined skills on standardized tests. These measures often are not reliable or valid indicators of what children can do in typical practice, nor are they sensitive to language variation, culture, or the experiences of young children (Shepard & Smith 1988; Shepard 1994; Johnston 1997). Rather, a sound assessment should be anchored in real-life writing and reading tasks and continuously chronicle a wide range of children's literacy activities in different situations. Good assessment is essential to help teachers tailor appropriate instruction to young children and to know when and how much intensive instruction on any particular skill or strategy might be needed.

By the end of third grade, children will still have much to learn about literacy. Clearly some will be further along the path to independent reading and writing than others. Yet with high-quality instruction, the majority of children will be able to decode words with a fair degree of facility, use a variety of strategies to adapt to different types of text, and be able to communicate effectively for multiple purposes using conventionalized spelling and punctuation. Most of all they will have come to see themselves as capable readers and writers, having mastered the complex set of attitudes, expectations, behaviors, and skills related to written language.

Statement of position

IRA and NAEYC believe that achieving high standards of literacy for every child in the United States is a shared responsibility of schools, early childhood programs, families, and communities. But teachers of young children, whether employed in

preschools, child care programs, or elementary schools, have a unique responsibility to promote children's literacy development, based on the most current professional knowledge and research.

A review of research along with the collective wisdom and experience of members has led IRA and NAEYC to conclude that learning to read and write is a complex, multifaceted process that requires a wide variety of instructional approaches, a conclusion similar to that reached by an esteemed panel of experts for the National Academy of Sciences (Snow, Burns, & Griffin 1998).

Similarly, this review of research leads to a theoretical model of literacy learning and development as an interactive process. Research supports the view of the child as an active constructor of his or her own learning, while at the same time studies emphasize the critical role of the supportive, interested, engaged adult (e.g., teacher, parent, or tutor) who provides scaffolding for the child's development of greater skill and understanding (Mason & Sinha 1993; Riley 1996). The principle of learning is that "children are active learners, drawing on direct social and physical experience as well as culturally transmitted knowledge to construct their own understandings of the world around them" (Bredekamp & Copple 1997, 13).

IRA and NAEYC believe that goals and expectations for young children's achievement in reading and writing should be developmentally appropriate, that is, *challenging but achievable*, with sufficient adult support. A continuum of reading and writing development is generally accepted and useful for teachers in understanding the goals of literacy instruction and in assessing children's progress toward those goals. (An abbreviated continuum of reading and writing development appears on pp. 14-15; for more detailed examples, see Chall 1983; Education Department of Western Australia 1994a-d; Whitmore & Goodman 1995; Snow, Burns, & Griffin 1998). Good teachers understand that children do not progress along this developmental continuum in rigid sequence. Rather, each child exhibits a unique pattern and timing in acquiring skills and understanding related to reading and writing.

Like other complex skills, reading and writing are outcomes that result from the continual interplay of development and learning, and therefore a range of individual variation is to be expected in the rate and pace at which children gain literacy skills. Given exposure to appropriate literacy experiences and good teaching during early childhood, most children learn to read at age six or seven, a few learn at four, some learn at five, and others need intensive individualized support to learn to read at eight or nine. Some children who do not explore books and other print during their early years are likely to need more focused support for literacy development when they enter an educational program, whether at preschool, kindergarten, or first grade (since preschool and even kindergarten attendance is not universal). Other children who enter school speaking little or

no English are likely to need instructional strategies in their home language (Snow, Burns, & Griffin 1998).

Given the range within which children typically master reading, even with exposure to print-rich environments and good teaching, a developmentally appropriate expectation is for most children to achieve beginning conventional reading (also called early reading) by age seven. For children with disabilities or special learning needs, achievable but challenging goals for their individual reading and writing development in an inclusive environment are established by teachers, families, and specialists working in collaboration (DEC Task Force 1993; DEC/CEC 1994).

IRA and NAEYC believe that early childhood teachers need to understand the developmental continuum of reading and writing and be skilled in a variety of strategies to assess and support individual children's development and learning across the continuum. At the same time teachers must set developmentally appropriate literacy goals for young children and then adapt instructional strategies for children whose learning and development are advanced or lag behind those goals. Good teachers make instructional decisions based on their knowledge of reading and writing, current research, appropriate expectations, and their knowledge of individual children's strengths and needs.

A continuum of reading and writing development is useful for identifying challenging but achievable goals or benchmarks for children's literacy learning, remembering that individual variation is to be expected and supported. Using a developmental continuum enables teachers to assess individual children's progress against realistic goals and then adapt instruction to ensure that children continue to progress. During the preschool years most children can be expected to function in phase 1 of the developmental continuum, Awareness and Exploration. In kindergarten an appropriate expectation is that most children will be at phase 2, Experimental Reading and Writing. By the end of first grade, most children will function in phase 3, Early Reading and Writing. An appropriate expectation for second grade is Transitional Reading and Writing (phase 4), while the goal for third grade is Independent and Productive Reading and Writing (phase 5). Advanced Reading is the goal for fourth grade and above.

As fundamental as the principle of individual variation is the principle that human development and learning occur in and are influenced by social and cultural contexts. Language, reading, and writing are strongly shaped by culture. Children enter early childhood programs or schools having learned to communicate and make sense of their experiences at home and in their communities. When the ways of making and communicating meaning are similar at home and in school, children's transitions are eased. However, when the language and culture of the home and school are not congruent, teachers and parents must work together to help children strengthen and preserve their

home language and culture while acquiring skills needed to participate in the shared culture of the school (NAEYC 1996a).

Most important, teachers must understand how children learn a second language and how this process applies to young children's literacy development. Teachers need to respect the child's home language and culture and use it as a base on which to build and extend children's language and literacy experiences. Unfortunately teachers too often react negatively to children's linguistic and cultural diversity, equating difference with deficit. Such situations hurt children whose abilities within their own cultural context are not recognized because they do not match the cultural expectations of the school. Failing to recognize children's strengths or capabilities, teachers may underestimate their competence. Competence is not tied to any particular language, dialect, or culture. Teachers should never use a child's dialect, language, or culture as a basis for making judgments about the child's intellect or capability. Linguistically and culturally diverse children bring multiple perspectives and impressive skills, such as code-switching (the ability to go back and forth between two languages to deepen conceptual understanding), to the tasks of learning to speak, read, and write a second language. These self-motivated, self-initiating, constructive thinking processes should be celebrated and used as rich teaching and learning resources for all children.

Recommended teaching practices

During the infant and toddler years. Children need relationships with caring adults who engage in many one-on-one, face-to-face interactions with them to support their oral language development and lay the foundation for later literacy learning. Important experiences and teaching behaviors include but are not limited to

- talking to babies and toddlers with simple language, frequent eye contact, and responsiveness to children's cues and language attempts;
- frequently playing with, talking to, singing to, and doing fingerplays with very young children;
- sharing cardboard books with babies and frequently reading to toddlers on the adult's lap or together with one or two other children; and
- providing simple art materials such as crayons, markers, and large paper for toddlers to explore and manipulate.

During the preschool years. Young children need developmentally appropriate experiences and teaching to support literacy learning. These include but are not limited to

- positive, nurturing relationships with adults who engage in responsive conversations with individual children, model

reading and writing behavior, and foster children's interest in and enjoyment of reading and writing;

- print-rich environments that provide opportunities and tools for children to see and use written language for a variety of purposes, with teachers drawing children's attention to specific letters and words;
- adults' daily reading of high-quality books to individual children or small groups, including books that positively reflect children's identity, home language, and culture;
- opportunities for children to talk about what is read and to focus on the sounds and parts of language as well as the meaning;
- teaching strategies and experiences that develop phonemic awareness, such as songs, fingerplays, games, poems, and stories in which phonemic patterns such as rhyme and alliteration are salient;
- opportunities to engage in play that incorporates literacy tools, such as writing grocery lists in dramatic play, making signs in block building, and using icons and words in exploring a computer game; and
- firsthand experiences that expand children's vocabulary, such as trips in the community and exposure to various tools, objects, and materials.

In kindergarten and primary grades. Teachers should continue many of these same good practices with the goal of continually advancing children's learning and development (see the continuum of reading and writing development on pp. 15–16 for appropriate grade-level expectations). In addition every child is entitled to excellent instruction in reading and writing that includes but is not limited to

- daily experiences of being read to and independently reading meaningful and engaging stories and informational texts;
- a balanced instructional program that includes systematic code instruction along with meaningful reading and writing activities;
- daily opportunities and teacher support to write many kinds of texts for different purposes, including stories, lists, messages to others, poems, reports, and responses to literature;
- writing experiences that allow the flexibility to use nonconventional forms of writing at first (invented or phonic spelling) and over time move to conventional forms;
- opportunities to work in small groups for focused instruction and collaboration with other children;
- an intellectually engaging and challenging curriculum that expands knowledge of the world and vocabulary; and

- adaptation of instructional strategies or more individualized instruction if the child fails to make expected progress in reading or when literacy skills are advanced.

Although experiences during the earliest years of life can have powerful long-term consequences, human beings are amazingly resilient and incredibly capable of learning throughout life. We should strengthen our resolve to ensure that every child has the benefit of positive early childhood experiences that support literacy development. At the same time, regardless of children's prior learning, schools have the responsibility to educate every child and to never give up even if later interventions must be more intensive and costly.

Recommended policies essential for achieving developmentally appropriate literacy experiences

Early childhood programs and elementary schools in the United States operate in widely differing contexts with varying levels of funding and resources. Regardless of the resources available, professionals have an ethical responsibility to teach, to the best of their ability, according to the standards of the profession. Nevertheless, the kinds of practices advocated here are more likely to be implemented within an infrastructure of supportive policies and resources. IRA and NAEYC strongly recommend that the following policies be developed and adequately funded at the appropriate state or local levels:

1. A comprehensive, consistent system of early childhood professional preparation and ongoing professional development (see Darling-Hammond 1997; Kagan & Cohen 1997).

Such a professional preparation system is badly needed in every state to ensure that staff in early childhood programs and teachers in primary schools obtain specialized, college-level education that informs them about developmental patterns in early literacy learning and about research-based ways of teaching reading and writing during the early childhood years. Ongoing professional development is essential for teachers to stay current in an ever-expanding research base and to continually improve their teaching skills and the learning outcomes for children.

2. Sufficient resources to ensure adequate ratios of qualified teachers to children and small groups for individualizing instruction.

For four- and five-year-olds, adult-child ratios should be no more than 1 adult for 8 to 10 children, with a maximum group size of 20 (Howes, Phillips, & Whitebook 1992; Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study Team 1995). Optimum class size in the early grades is 15 to 18 with one teacher (Nye et al. 1992;

Nye, Boyd-Zaharias, & Fulton 1994). Young children benefit most from being taught in small groups or as individuals. There will always be a wide range of individual differences among children. Small class size increases the likelihood that teachers will be able to accommodate children's diverse abilities and interests, strengths and needs.

3. Sufficient resources to ensure classrooms, schools, and public libraries that include a wide range of high-quality children's books, computer software, and multimedia resources at various levels of difficulty and reflecting various cultural and family backgrounds.

Studies have found that a minimum of five books per child is necessary to provide even the most basic print-rich environment (Morrow & Weinstein 1986; Neuman & Roskos 1997). Computers and developmentally appropriate software should also be available to provide alternative, engaging, enriching literacy experiences (NAEYC 1996b).

4. Policies that promote children's continuous learning progress.

When individual children do not make expected progress in literacy development, resources should be available to provide more individualized instruction, focused time, tutoring by trained and qualified tutors, or other individualized intervention strategies. These instructional strategies are used to accelerate children's learning instead of either grade retention or social promotion, neither of which has been proven effective in improving children's achievement (Shepard & Smith 1988).

5. Appropriate assessment strategies that promote children's learning and development.

Teachers need to regularly and systematically use multiple indicators—observation of children's oral language, evaluation of children's work, and performance at authentic reading and writing tasks—to assess and monitor children's progress in reading and writing development, plan and adapt instruction, and communicate with parents (Shepard, Kagan, & Wurtz 1998). Group-administered, multiple-choice standardized achievement tests in reading and writing skills should not be used before third grade or preferably even before fourth grade. The younger the child, the more difficult it is to obtain valid and reliable indices of his or her development and learning using one-time test administrations. Standardized testing has a legitimate function, but on its own it tends to lead to standardized teaching—one approach fits all—the opposite of the kind of individualized diagnosis and teaching that is needed to help young children continue to progress in reading and writing.

6. Access to regular, ongoing health care for every child.

Every young child needs to have a regular health care provider as well as screening for early diagnosis and treatment of vision and hearing problems. Chronic untreated middle-ear infections in the earliest years of life may delay language development, which in turn may delay reading development (Vernon-Feagans, Emanuel, & Blood 1992). Similarly, vision problems should never be allowed to go uncorrected, causing a child difficulty with reading and writing.

7. Increased public investment to ensure access to high-quality preschool and child care programs for all children who need them.

The National Academy of Sciences (Snow, Burns, & Griffin 1998) and decades of longitudinal research (see, for example, Barnett 1995) demonstrate the benefits of preschool education for literacy learning. Unfortunately, there is no system to ensure accessible, affordable, high-quality early childhood education programs for all families who choose to use them (Kagan & Cohen 1997). As a result, preschool attendance varies considerably by family income; for example, 80% of four-year-olds whose families earn more than \$50,000 per year attend preschool compared to approximately 50% of four-year-olds attending preschool from families earning less than \$20,000 (NCES 1996). In addition, due primarily to inadequate funding, the quality of preschool and child care programs varies considerably, with studies finding that the majority of programs provide only mediocre quality and that only about 15% rate as good quality (Layzer, Goodson, & Moss 1993; Galinsky et al. 1994; Cost, Quality, & Child Outcomes Study Team 1995).

Conclusion

Collaboration between IRA and NAEYC is symbolic of the coming together of the two essential bodies of knowledge necessary to support literacy development of young children: knowledge about the processes of reading and writing and knowledge of child development and learning. Developmentally appropriate practices (Bredekamp & Copple 1997) in reading and writing are ways of teaching that consider

1. what is generally known about children's development and learning to set achievable but challenging goals for literacy learning and to plan learning experiences and teaching strategies that vary with the age and experience of the learners;
2. results of ongoing assessment of individual children's progress in reading and writing to plan next steps or to adapt instruction when children fail to make expected progress or are at advanced levels; and

3. social and cultural contexts in which children live so as to help them make sense of their learning experiences in relation to what they already know and are able to do.

To teach in developmentally appropriate ways, teachers must understand *both* the continuum of reading and writing development *and* children's individual and cultural variations. Teachers must recognize when variation is within the typical range and when intervention is necessary, because early intervention is more effective and less costly than later remediation.

Learning to read and write is one of the most important and powerful achievements in life. Its value is clearly seen in the faces of young children—the proud, confident smile of the capable reader contrasts sharply with the furrowed brow and sulen frown of the discouraged nonreader. Ensuring that all young children reach their potentials as readers and writers is the shared responsibility of teachers, administrators, families, and communities. Educators have a special responsibility to teach every child and not to blame children, families, or each other when the task is difficult. All responsible adults need to work together to help children become competent readers and writers.

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Continuum of Children's Development in Early Reading and Writing

Note: this list is intended to be illustrative, not exhaustive. Children at any grade level will function at a variety of phases along the reading/writing continuum.

Phase 1: Awareness and exploration (goals for preschool)

Children explore their environment and build the foundations for learning to read and write.

Children can

- enjoy listening to and discussing storybooks
- understand that print carries a message
- engage in reading and writing attempts
- identify labels and signs in their environment
- participate in rhyming games
- identify some letters and make some letter-sound matches
- use known letters or approximations of letters to represent written language (especially meaningful words like their name and phrases such as "I love you")

What teachers do

- share books with children, including Big Books, and model reading behaviors
- talk about letters by name and sounds
- establish a literacy-rich environment
- reread favorite stories
- engage children in language games
- promote literacy-related play activities
- encourage children to experiment with writing

What parents and family members can do

- talk with children, engage them in conversation, give names of things, show interest in what a child says
- read and reread stories with predictable text to children
- encourage children to recount experiences and describe ideas and events that are important to them
- visit the library regularly
- provide opportunities for children to draw and print, using markers, crayons, and pencils

Phase 2: Experimental reading and writing (goals for kindergarten)

Children develop basic concepts of print and begin to engage in and experiment with reading and writing.

Kindergartners can

- enjoy being read to and themselves retell simple narrative stories or informational texts
- use descriptive language to explain and explore
- recognize letters and letter-sound matches
- show familiarity with rhyming and beginning sounds
- understand left-to-right and top-to-bottom orientation and familiar concepts of print
- match spoken words with written ones
- begin to write letters of the alphabet and some high-frequency words

What teachers do

- encourage children to talk about reading and writing experiences
- provide many opportunities for children to explore and identify sound-symbol relationships in meaningful contexts
- help children to segment spoken words into individual sounds and blend the sounds into whole words (for example, by slowly writing a word and saying its sound)
- frequently read interesting and conceptually rich stories to children
- provide daily opportunities for children to write
- help children build a sight vocabulary
- create a literacy-rich environment for children to engage independently in reading and writing

What parents and family members can do

- daily read and reread narrative and informational stories to children
- encourage children's attempts at reading and writing
- allow children to participate in activities that involve writing and reading (for example, cooking, making grocery lists)
- play games that involve specific directions (such as "Simon Says")
- have conversations with children during mealtimes and throughout the day

Phase 3: Early reading and writing (goals for first grade)

Children begin to read simple stories and can write about a topic that is meaningful to them.

First-graders can

- read and retell familiar stories
- use strategies (rereading, predicting, questioning, contextualizing) when comprehension breaks down
- use reading and writing for various purposes on their own initiative
- orally read with reasonable fluency
- use letter-sound associations, word parts, and context to identify new words
- identify an increasing number of words by sight
- sound out and represent all substantial sounds in spelling a word
- write about topics that are personally meaningful
- attempt to use some punctuation and capitalization

What teachers do

- support the development of vocabulary by reading daily to the children, transcribing their language, and selecting materials that expand children's knowledge and language development

- model strategies and provide practice for identifying unknown words
- give children opportunities for independent reading and writing practice
- read, write, and discuss a range of different text types (poems, informational books)
- introduce new words and teach strategies for learning to spell new words
- demonstrate and model strategies to use when comprehension breaks down
- help children build lists of commonly used words from their writing and reading

What parents and family members can do

- talk about favorite storybooks
- read to children and encourage them to read to you
- suggest that children write to friends and relatives
- bring to a parent-teacher conference evidence of what your child can do in writing and reading
- encourage children to share what they have learned about their writing and reading

Phase 4: Transitional reading and writing (goals for second grade)

Children begin to read more fluently and write various text forms using simple and more complex sentences.

Second-graders can

- read with greater fluency
- use strategies more efficiently (rereading, questioning, and so on) when comprehension breaks down
- use word identification strategies with greater facility to unlock unknown words
- identify an increasing number of words by sight
- write about a range of topics to suit different audiences
- use common letter patterns and critical features to spell words
- punctuate simple sentences correctly and proofread their own work
- spend time reading daily and use reading to research topics

What teachers do

- create a climate that fosters analytic, evaluative, and reflective thinking
- teach children to write in multiple forms (stories, information, poems)
- ensure that children read a range of texts for a variety of purposes
- teach revising, editing, and proofreading skills
- teach strategies for spelling new and difficult words
- model enjoyment of reading

What parents and family members can do

- continue to read to children and encourage them to read to you
- engage children in activities that require reading and writing

- become involved in school activities
- show children your interest in their learning by displaying their written work
- visit the library regularly
- support your child's specific hobby or interest with reading materials and references

Phase 5: Independent and productive reading and writing (goals for third grade)

Children continue to extend and refine their reading and writing to suit varying purposes and audiences.

Third-graders can

- read fluently and enjoy reading
- use a range of strategies when drawing meaning from the text
- use word identification strategies appropriately and automatically when encountering unknown words
- recognize and discuss elements of different text structures
- make critical connections between texts
- write expressively in many different forms (stories, poems, reports)
- use a rich variety of vocabulary and sentences appropriate to text forms
- revise and edit their own writing during and after composing
- spell words correctly in final writing drafts

What teachers do

- provide opportunities daily for children to read, examine, and critically evaluate narrative and expository texts
- continue to create a climate that fosters critical reading and personal response
- teach children to examine ideas in texts
- encourage children to use writing as a tool for thinking and learning
- extend children's knowledge of the correct use of writing conventions
- emphasize the importance of correct spelling in finished written products
- create a climate that engages all children as a community of literacy learners

What parents and family members can do

- continue to support children's learning and interest by visiting the library and bookstores with them
- find ways to highlight children's progress in reading and writing
- stay in regular contact with your child's teachers about activities and progress in reading and writing
- encourage children to use and enjoy print for many purposes (such as recipes, directions, games, and sports)
- build a love of language in all its forms and engage children in conversation

NAEYC Position Statement on Developing and Implementing Effective Public Policies to Promote Early Childhood and School-Age Care Program Accreditation

Adopted April 1999

This NAEYC position statement is endorsed by the National School-Age Care Alliance, the National Association for Family Child Care, the Council on Accreditation of Services for Families and Children, Inc., and the National Early Childhood Program Accreditation Commission, Inc.

Children's participation in early childhood and school-age care programs is growing

In recent decades one of the most significant changes in American family life has been the rapid increase in children's participation in child care and preschool programs prior to school entry and in school-age care programs during out-of-school time. Today approximately 6.6 million children who have not yet entered kindergarten regularly attend centers, and an additional 3 million such children regularly attend family child care programs where they are cared for by a nonrelative in the provider's home (estimates are based on data from West, Wright, & Hausken 1995). School-age care is said to be the fastest growing segment of the child care arena, with estimates of approximately 2 million school-age children attending some 50,000 programs and nearly 5 million school-age children left unsupervised during a typical week (National Institute on Out-of-School Time 1997).

The programs that provide care and education to children prior to kindergarten entry and during out-of-

school time are found in many different settings under various names: child care centers, Head Start programs, family child care homes, preschools, school-age care, recreation programs, and youth programs, to name a few. No matter what the name or the setting, it is crucial that children be safe and that their development and learning be enhanced. We know that the experiences children have and the skills they develop in these programs can help or hinder their development, not just during childhood, but throughout their lifetime (Schweinhart, Barnes, & Weikart 1993; Locklear et al. 1994; Posner & Vandell 1994; Brooks & Mojica 1995; Center for the Future of Children 1995; Hart & Risley 1995; Center for Research on Women 1996; Bredekamp & Copple 1997; Kagan & Cohen 1997).

Numerous recent studies suggest that, despite the fact that the majority of America's children spend at least some of their time in child care, many programs for preschool children in centers and homes fail to provide a level of care that enhances or maximizes children's early development and learning (Lazar et al. 1982; Cryer, Clifford, & Harms 1988; Burchinal, Lee, & Ramey

1989; Whitebook, Howes, & Phillips 1989; Galinsky et al. 1994; Riley et al. 1994; Helburn 1995; Miller 1995). In addition, many school-age care programs do not effectively engage children in their program activities and operate in inadequate facilities (Seppanen, Love, & Bernstein 1993).

Programs face challenges to provide high-quality services

Early childhood and school-age care programs face many of the same challenges that make it difficult to provide high-quality services. Many programs rely heavily on parent fees for program revenue (even programs associated with public schools), and many parents are unable to afford the cost of high-quality care. Regulatory systems in some states have standards and enforcement practices that are inadequate to promote good care. Given the low compensation that characterizes the field, numerous early childhood and school-age care programs face severe problems in attracting and retaining well-qualified professionals.

These problems reflect the lack of infrastructure to support a comprehensive system of childhood care and education programs. Kagan and Cohen (1997) identify the necessary infrastructure elements as parent information and engagement; professional development and licensing; facility licensing, enforcement, and program accreditation; funding and financing; and governance, planning, and accountability. As part of a system, each of these elements is inter-related; and to maximize the effectiveness of the overall system, no element can be neglected.

Public policies promote accreditation to improve services

This position statement focuses on the role that policies related to program accreditation can play in improving the overall delivery of high-quality services for children and youth. Accreditation can be a very powerful program-improvement tool because it provides a process by which professionals and families can evaluate programs in relation to professional standards and identify areas needing improvement. Programs that complete the accreditation process make the changes necessary to demonstrate their substantial compliance with the standards and are rewarded by the public recognition they receive as an accredited program. Because it represents achievement of professional standards, accreditation is also useful as a quality-improvement benchmark and an accountability measure for policymakers, funders, and community planners.

Accreditation is used extensively in public education, higher education, and health care to assure consumers that services meet a professionally recognized level of quality (Hamm 1998). It is a relatively new phenomenon in early childhood and school-age care programs. As a result, only a small percentage of early childhood and school-age care programs are accredited. However, program interest in pursuing accreditation is growing fast, along with a proliferation of accreditation systems. These developments

have been prompted by an increased awareness in the importance of children's early learning experiences and by recent legislative action. Policymakers, especially at the state level, are promoting program accreditation in early childhood and school-age care programs as one strategy to improve learning opportunities for children of all ages and to hold agencies and providers accountable for providing quality care (Stoney 1996; Morgan 1998; Warman 1998).

Many states are designating child care quality-improvement funds to help programs pay for various costs associated with accreditation, including accreditation fees, purchase of new equipment, training expenses, and better compensation for professionals. A few states are making large investments in facilitation projects that provide direct support to those engaged in the accreditation process. Other states have concentrated on increasing public awareness of the benefits of program accreditation and increasing involvement of the private sector in funding child care initiatives as part of a comprehensive plan for building quality.

The newest trend is for states to create differential reimbursement rates, providing higher subsidies to eligible families that use accredited programs than to those using nonaccredited programs. This strategy has been used with two goals in mind: (1) to help make high-quality programs more accessible to families with low incomes and enable accredited programs to maintain the quality of services for all families they serve, and (2) to serve as an incentive to other programs to become accredited. Finally, some federal, state, and local policies tie accreditation status to ongoing funding opportunities, requiring that programs become accredited to receive funds. Some policymakers are considering developing care and education accreditation policies like those used in other fields that give accrediting bodies a quasi-regulatory role by demanding that programs become accredited not only to receive funding but also to be licensed or certified to practice (Edmunds 1998; Hamm 1998).

Key recommendations for effective public policies

In June 1998 a diverse group of leaders, including state administrators, researchers, representatives of various accrediting bodies, and practitioners, participated in a conference sponsored by the McCormick Tribune Foundation to review trends in accreditation policies and identify how policies impact on the quality of services available to children and families. The following recommendations grew out of that meeting. They are intended to ensure that childhood care and education accreditation policies are effectively developed and implemented to improve the overall delivery of high-quality early childhood and school-age services in our nation.

These recommendations are based on current knowledge about accreditation and how it operates as part of the overall infrastructure supporting childhood care and education services.

Recommendation 1

Policies promoting program accreditation should support and build on a strong regulatory system, not seek to replace regulation with accreditation.

Rationale: Program regulation and program accreditation are complementary, and both are needed to advance excellence in child care programs. An effective regulatory system sets standards and monitors programs' compliance with the standards to ensure that all children are protected from harm in early childhood and school-age care settings (see "NAEYC Position Statement on Licensing and Public Regulation of Early Childhood Programs" [NAEYC 1998]). An effective accreditation system sets high standards for professional practice and engages programs in a continuous process of improvement to provide high-quality services.

The voluntary professional standards set by accrediting bodies are designed to build on mandatory state standards, not replace them. In fact, several researchers have found that providers in states with low standards or inadequate monitoring systems

have more difficulty achieving accreditation standards (Phillips, Howes, & Whitebook 1992; Helburn 1995; Harris, Morgan, & Sprague 1996).

Recommendation 2

Policies promoting program accreditation should seek to increase public awareness about the role of mandatory regulation and voluntary accreditation systems in supporting children's healthy development and learning during the critical early years and during their out-of-school time throughout childhood.

Rationale: The public must understand the link between children's healthy development and learning and good early childhood programs to create a demand for better care. All parents want the best for their children, but many do not know that program accreditation is a sign of good programs (Morgan 1998). The more that parents demand to know whether a program is in compliance with licensing requirements and whether it has achieved program accreditation or is in the process of becoming accredited, the greater the incentive for program providers to meet state standards and pursue program accreditation. Wider public recognition of the importance of good early childhood and school-age care programs in supporting children's development and learning can stimulate quality improvements within the overall field.

Recommendation 3

Policies promoting program accreditation should identify the criteria that accrediting bodies must meet to ensure the integrity of each system and the validity and reliability of their accreditation decisions. Specifically, each accrediting body should be able to document that it meet the following criteria:

- The accreditation standards are based on research about program quality and are periodically reviewed and updated with input from diverse stakeholders and a variety of experts.
- The accreditation process includes a system for comprehensive self-evaluation by the program, on-site peer re-

view by one or more well-trained professionals, expert evaluation, a time-limited award of accreditation, and a comprehensive renewal process.

- The instruments and training procedures used in the process are proven to be reliable and valid.
- Administrative policies and system evaluation procedures are in place to avoid conflicts of interest and to reassess a program's compliance with accreditation criteria when major changes occur, complaints are filed, or deferred programs wish to appeal the accreditation decision.

Rationale: For accreditation to be meaningful, the standards must be based on research findings about the effects of program practices on the quality of services and outcomes for children and families. In addition, the evaluation process must ensure that those who are awarded accreditation are actually putting the standards into practice. Various accreditation systems have been developed to serve programs in particular settings or age groups; encouraging a choice of accreditation systems for particular forms is likely to result in greater participation in accreditation as more providers are likely to identify a system appropriate for their setting or interests. However, any eligible accrediting body must be able to document its system's compliance with all of the criteria specified in the recommendation.

Recommendation 4

Policies promoting program accreditation by providing financial incentives to those who have achieved accreditation should ensure that adequate funding is appropriated to cover the ongoing costs of maintaining high-quality services, including providing staff with equitable salaries. In addition, to be equitable, adequate public and private funding should be made available to help all interested programs make the quality improvements necessary to meet high accreditation standards and to pay for accreditation materials and processing fees.

Rationale: Given the inadequate funding and financing that character-

ize the delivery of many early childhood and school-age services, the costs associated with making improvements to meet and maintain accreditation standards can be a burden. High-quality program costs are significant and include facility improvement costs and higher personnel costs needed to improve staff-child ratios and ensure highly qualified professionals with equitable compensation. Small financial incentives to accredited programs do little to enhance accredited programs' ongoing ability to pay for the costs of providing high-quality services or to ensure that more programs will be able to achieve high standards of practice.

In addition, when financial support is limited to accredited programs and no funds are available to programs to make quality improvements to achieve accreditation, issues of equity arise as the gulf is widened between the *haves* (those programs that can readily achieve accreditation) and the *have-nots* (those programs for which accreditation is out of reach). Greater pressure is placed on programs to make temporary improvements or hide deficiencies to achieve accreditation, and while more programs may engage in the process, their success in improving services is likely to be limited.

Recommendation 5

Policies promoting program accreditation should provide a variety of resources to meet the diverse needs of teachers, directors, owners, parents, and advisory boards involved in the process of making program improvements to meet accreditation criteria. These resources can include, but are not limited to, quality-improvement grants, training workshops, facilitation projects, peer support and mentoring projects, technical assistance, and expert consultations.

Rationale: Program accreditation is often initiated by a person such as the program director or a group such as the parent advisory committee that believes it is a worthwhile activity. However, to complete the process, all teachers, directors, owners, parents, and advisory boards need to

be committed to spending a large amount of time and energy in the process. Because it is a complex process that involves lasting change and often requires significant improvements, extrinsic motivation, including financial incentives, may not be sufficient to achieve accreditation. Providers can become easily overwhelmed by the process and often need resources and training to educate and motivate all those involved, familiarize themselves with accreditation materials, conduct a self-evaluation, develop and implement a strategic plan, make necessary changes, and document their practices for peer review and expert evaluation (Goldfarb & Flis 1996). Because of the diversity of program providers, it is important to offer a variety of resources and training and allow program providers to choose the support strategy that works best for them.

Recommendation 6

Policies promoting program accreditation should be linked to an overall plan for supporting the creation of a highly qualified, stable early childhood and school-age care professional workforce. Key components of the plan should include

- strengthening teacher preparation and ongoing professional development programs;
- supporting individuals' efforts to earn related college degrees;
- developing initiatives that provide higher compensation and better working conditions for all professionals, with special incentives to support professionals who have achieved higher levels of education and training; and
- creating systems to track individuals' professional achievement such as professional licensing or career ladders.

Rationale: In areas with good professional development systems and strong regulations related to professional qualifications, caregivers, teachers, and program directors are better able to meet the high professional standards required for program accreditation. When good teacher preparation programs and ongoing

professional development opportunities are not available, or when professional qualifications are not required, providers have more trouble achieving accreditation. Closely linked to the issue of professional qualifications is the issue of compensation (Willer 1994). Inadequate compensation is associated with high rates of turnover and lower program quality (Whitebook, Howes, & Phillips 1998), antithetical to achieving accreditation. Inadequate compensation and its related turnover also make it difficult to continue to maintain the level of quality required by accreditation over time.

Recommendation 7

Policies promoting program accreditation should promote an overall plan for improving the system of childhood care and education and outcomes for children and families and use achievement of accreditation as one of many benchmarks to help track progress.

Rationale: To make improvements in the overall system of childhood care and education services, more coordinated efforts that provide for greater involvement of the private sector are needed, as well as collaboration between service agencies and organizations at all levels of government. The number of accredited programs and the number of subsidized children enrolled in them can be used to help measure a state's progress in building opportunities for children. Achievement of accreditation means that a program has demonstrated substantial compliance with accreditation standards and deserves recognition as a good program. However, it does not mean that the program has completed the process of making program improvements; accreditation is an ongoing process of striving for excellence. Similarly, programs in the process of self-study that have not completed the accreditation process may have taken significant steps to improve their quality, such as recruiting highly qualified professionals or upgrading their equipment, even though they have not yet achieved accreditation.

Conclusion

While we welcome policies to promote early childhood and school-age care program accreditation, we are concerned that accreditation may be misconstrued as a solution to all the problems facing the field. To effectively impact outcomes for children, public policies promoting accreditation must be based on an understanding of how accreditation operates within the overall system. A holistic approach to public policies promoting accreditation is critical to ensuring that children and youth have the opportunities they deserve to develop to their full potential.

The accreditation policy recommendations in this position statement are intended for all stakeholders—that is, the entire community—because everyone has a role in improving the quality of children's early experiences. However, each has a particular responsibility:

- Accrediting bodies must continue to refine their standards and practices to preserve the integrity of their system. They need to collaborate with each other, with researchers, and with practitioners to respond to the demand for new outcome-based accountability measures and to help inform the public of the benefits of accreditation.
- Policymakers must focus on integrating accreditation policies into a comprehensive plan to build an infrastructure that supports proven quality-improvement efforts, ensures the protection of children from harm, and promotes equitable access to high-quality programs. Policymakers need to significantly increase funding for child care as well as provide new funds to promote public-private partnerships to help make good programs available to all children.
- Early childhood and school-age child care professionals must view program accreditation as an ongoing process, not an end product that is completed with the award of accreditation. The professional field, in its meetings, publications, course work, and accreditation materials, should stress the importance of continuous improvement and continuously

striving for excellence. Colleges and universities must be committed to ensuring that their academic programs enable early childhood and school-age care professionals to be competent teachers.

- Teachers and program directors have the primary responsibility for continually implementing accreditation standards in their daily interactions with children and families. They must strive to meet the standards on a daily basis and should avail themselves of professional development opportunities and resources to enhance their programs.

- Parents, researchers, community leaders, and the broader public must be involved in developing creative initiatives, including public-private partnerships, to support program efforts to raise their quality and become accredited. The involvement of the broader public can help create a demand for new investments in high-quality early childhood education and school-age care programs.

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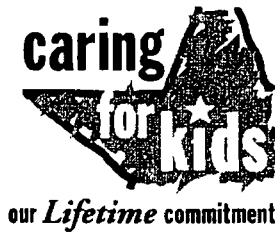
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**LIFETIME TELEVISION EXPLORES A NATION'S STRUGGLE
WITH CHILDCARE IN MOVING DOCUMENTARY
"CONFRONTING THE CRISIS: CHILDCARE IN AMERICA"**

**Documentary is Directed by Academy Award-Winner Lee Grant
and Premieres Tuesday, April 20 from 10-11pm ET/PT
as Cornerstone of LIFETIME's Childcare Awareness Efforts
Lauded by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton**

Actress and Mother Kyra Sedgwick ("Phenomenon") Hosts

NEW YORK, March 11, 1999 -- LIFETIME Television exposes the daily drama faced by millions of parents doing their most important job - caring for kids. The changes and pressures of work and family life make securing safe, affordable childcare a great challenge and a source of tension in many families.

This original documentary "**CONFRONTING THE CRISIS: CHILDCARE IN AMERICA**," is directed by Academy Award-winning director Lee Grant. Actress and mother Kyra Sedgwick ("Phenomenon") hosts this one-hour special premiering **Tuesday, April 20 from 10-11 p.m. ET/PT.**

During the past year, Grant traveled across the country and interviewed families about how they are trying to meet their childcare needs. The documentary weaves the joys, challenges and hopes of parenting with critical national childcare issues. No matter if the families were headed by single mothers or couples, and regardless of economic or ethnic status, the story was the same-- finding affordable, quality childcare is a problem. And after speaking with employers and law enforcement officials, Grant finds that childcare shortages can have a negative impact on entire communities.

Stories include:

* A single mother from Phillipsburg, NJ works as a secretary to support her two children. She receives sporadic child support and can barely pay the childcare center which provides before- and after-school care for her older daughter and full daycare for her young son.

* A Denver couple with two pre-teen sons feel they must be vigilant to keep their boys on the right track. Both boys attend an after-school program at their local YMCA.

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- * Single mothers in Marriott's Welfare-to-Work program in Boston, MA, have successfully completed training and are employed. But these young mothers, who face tremendous challenges will lose their childcare vouchers and Medicaid one year after graduating from the program. Earning little more than minimum wage, paying for childcare will be nearly impossible.
- * A widowed single father from Easton, PA works long hours and fears that his young son is growing up without him. His sister has moved nearby so she can share some of the childcare duties.
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- * Sheriff Pat Sullivan of Denver, CO explains why early childhood programs as well as after-school programs for teens are the most effective way to prevent crime.
- * A single mother from Phoenix, AZ mourns the loss of her teenaged son who was killed in a fight that took place after school.
- * In addition, the film's producers traveled to France and spoke with two families about the country's successful and popular national childcare system. Both families discuss the sense of security the national system provides for the rich and poor alike.

LIFETIME Television declared April as National Childcare Month in conjunction with the Network's award-winning public affairs campaign, "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment." The year-long campaign serves as a voice for viewers' concerns about childcare and urges national policymakers to take action.

In addition to the original documentary, LIFETIME's late night magazine series "New Attitudes," with hosts Leanza Cornett and Kim Coles, will air a five-part series on childcare beginning the week of Monday, April 19 at 11PM ET/PT as well as public service announcements.

LIFETIME kicked off "Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment" in March, 1998, when the Network partnered with leading women's and children's organizations representing more than six million women (including Families and Work Institute, the Committee for Hispanic Children and Families and the National Council of Women's Organizations, which encompasses organizations including NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund, the Childcare Action Campaign and the YWCA of the U.S.A.) and the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues to draw attention to the childcare crisis in this country.

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Throughout the year, via a toll-free number (1-800-522-0925) and Lifetime Online (www.lifetimetv.com), LIFETIME gathered thousands of childcare stories from women and families across the country and presented them to all Members of Congress, the President and the First Lady, who read one of LIFETIME's stories in a Rose Garden Ceremony. The Network and its partners also served as the catalyst for one e-mail writer to testify before the Senate Banking Committee.

In February 1999, the First Lady read one of LIFETIME's stories in a discussion on childcare. Mrs. Clinton complimented LIFETIME's efforts "to bring to a broader audience the real true-life stories," noting "the impact that one single story ... can have" versus the confusing statistics and data that too often define the nation's struggles with childcare.

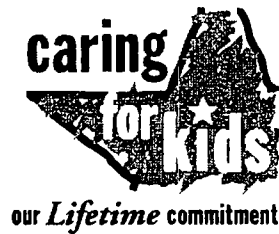
"CONFRONTING THE CRISIS: CHILDCARE IN AMERICA" is a Feury/Grant production. Lee Grant is the director and Joseph Feury is the executive producer. Virginia Cotts and Roberta Morris-Purdee are producers.

Actress Kyra Sedgwick just finished a triumphant Broadway run of Nicholas Hytner's "Twelfth Night" at Lincoln Center. Sedgwick starred as a playful and provocative "Olivia" opposite Helen Hunt and Paul Rudd. Recent film credits include "Phenomenon," "Something to Talk About" and "Critical Care."

LIFETIME Television is dedicated to providing contemporary and informative programming for women. LIFETIME is available on more than 11,000 cable systems and alternative delivery systems nationwide, serving over 73 million households. Learn more about LIFETIME Television on the Lifetime Online website at www.lifetimetv.com.

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Winnie Atterbury, LIFETIME Television, 212-424-7396



**(YOUR ORGANIZATION NAME) AND LIFETIME TELEVISION DECLARE APRIL
NATIONAL CHILDCARE MONTH AS PART OF
CARING FOR KIDS: OUR LIFETIME COMMITMENT
PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN**

**First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton Lauds LIFETIME's
Initiative for Putting Faces on National Statistics**

- Parking lot attendants earn an average \$6.38 an hour while childcare workers earn an average \$6.12 an hour. We as a nation pay people more to watch our cars than to watch our kids....
- In a poll of the nation's police chiefs, nine out of ten chiefs agreed that "America could sharply reduce crime if government invested more in programs to help children and youth get a good start...."
- Economists estimate that the cost, including crime and welfare costs, of allowing low-income children to go without at least two years of quality early childhood care and education is approximately \$100,000 per child, totaling roughly \$400 billion for all poor children now under the age of five....

YOUR TOWN, Month, Day 1999 – (Your Organization Name) and LIFETIME Television, in collaboration with over 100 non-profit women's and children's advocacy organizations, has declared April National Childcare Month to help bring attention to the need for quality, affordable childcare in this country. With this declaration, LIFETIME continues to expand its award-winning *Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment* campaign, which serves as a voice for viewers' concerns about childcare and urges national policymakers to take action.

National Childcare Month on **(Your Organization Name)** and LIFETIME features original programming throughout April, including **"Confronting the Crisis: Childcare in America,"** a one-hour documentary by Academy Award-winning actress and director Lee Grant, hosted by actress and mother Kyra Sedgwick, airing **Tuesday, April 20 from 10-11PM ET/PT**, a week of childcare segments on the Network's magazine series "New Attitudes" beginning **Monday, April 19 at 11PM ET/PT** and public service announcements.

(More)

Local Organization & LIFETIME/*Caring for Kids*: National Childcare Month

LIFETIME kicked off *Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment* in March, 1998, when the Network partnered with leading women's and children's organizations representing more than six million women (including Families and Work Institute, the Committee for Hispanic Children and Families and the National Council of Women's Organizations, which encompasses organizations including NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund, the Childcare Action Campaign and the YWCA of the U.S.A.) and the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues to draw attention to the childcare crisis in this country.

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"Our campaign is pioneering in its effort to weave the outreach of national organizations with the capacities of cyberspace and television, so that women have the opportunity -- and the power -- to have their voices heard in a new way," said Meredith Wagner, Senior Vice President of Public Affairs for LIFETIME Television. "In a recent poll, 87 percent of Americans said it was difficult to find affordable, good quality childcare. The stories we've collected are the faces behind these numbers. LIFETIME's *Caring for Kids* campaign is about amplifying these voices so that women can lead the way and make the solutions happen. Childcare is a problem we can solve, but only if we speak up --- and work together."

(Quote from your organization on the need for improved childcare in your community and your organization's commitment to helping to bring change through the campaign.)

"We applaud LIFETIME for its long-term commitment to women's issues and to the well-being of American families," said Faith Wohl, President of the Child Care Action Campaign.

"LIFETIME's *Caring for Kids* initiative is helping to amplify the voices of thousands of women who are struggling to find safe, affordable, good-quality care for their children. LIFETIME's efforts will go a long way to produce action on childcare that will benefit all families."

"I want to commend LIFETIME Television. This is a wonderful, creative way in which to engage the entire country...in legislation that is so important to their lives," said Representative Rosa DeLauro (D-CT).

"I want to thank LIFETIME for recognizing that childcare is a lifetime investment," said Representative Connie Morella (R-MD).

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Local Organization & LIFETIME/*Caring for Kids*: National Childcare Month

The Network's childcare awareness efforts are the latest in LIFETIME's rich history of national outreach on issues that matter most to women. Each October, LIFETIME conducts an annual breast cancer awareness campaign for National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Last year, a record 1,400 cable affiliates participated in the program.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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In February 1999, the First Lady read one of LIFETIME's stories in a discussion on childcare. Mrs. Clinton complimented LIFETIME's efforts "to bring to a broader audience the real true-life stories," noting "the impact that one single story ... can have" versus the confusing statistics and data that too often define the nation's struggles with childcare.

"CONFRONTING THE CRISIS: CHILDCARE IN AMERICA" is a Feury/Grant production. Lee Grant is the director and Joseph Feury is the executive producer. Virginia Cotts and Roberta Morris are co-producers.

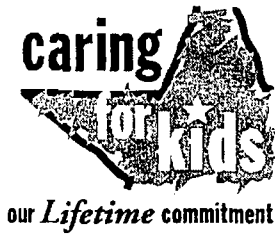
Actress Kyra Sedgwick just finished a triumphant Broadway run of Nicholas Hytner's "Twelfth Night" at Lincoln Center. Sedgwick starred as a playful and provocative "Olivia" opposite Helen Hunt and Paul Rudd. Recent film credits include "Phenomenon," "Something to Talk About" and "Critical Care."

LIFETIME Television is dedicated to providing contemporary and informative programming for women. LIFETIME is available on more than 11,000 cable systems and alternative delivery systems nationwide, serving over 73 million households. Learn more about LIFETIME Television on the Lifetime Online website at www.lifetime.tv.com.

(Your Organization's Boilerplate)

#

Contact: **Local Organization Contact** xxx/xxx-xxxx



FACT SHEET

Childcare has been a consistent high priority for women and the viewers of *Lifetime Television*. The following statistics show how some form of childcare is a reality and challenge for virtually every family.

Key Facts on Childcare and Early Education

- The median pay for dog walkers is \$6.90 an hour.
- The median pay for parking lot attendants is \$6.38 an hour.
- The median pay for childcare providers is \$6.12 an hour.

12 million children (under age six) and 17 million children (between the ages of six and 13) have both parents, or their only parent, in the workforce.

By the age of six, 84% of children have received supplemental care and education.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau in 1993, of the nearly ten million preschoolers (under age five) with employed mothers:

- 29.9% were cared for in childcare facilities (i.e., childcare centers, nursery schools, preschools).
- 25.3% were cared for by relatives either in the child's home or in the relative's home.
- 22.2% were cared for by their own parents (mothers while working at home or away from home: 6.2%; fathers caring for children at home: 16%).
- 16.6% were cared for in the home or by a non-relative provider.
- Five percent were cared for in their own homes by non-relatives.
- One percent were cared for with other arrangements.

Families with employed mothers of preschool children (under age five) spend an average of \$74 per week on childcare, or about eight percent of their annual income.

There are approximately three million childcare teachers, assistants, and family childcare providers in the U.S.

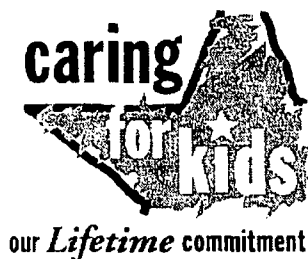
Teachers, assistant teachers, and teacher-directors working in childcare centers earn an average of \$6.89 per hour, \$12,057.50 for 35 hours/week, 50 weeks/year.

U.S. employers lose three billion dollars annually due to childcare-related absences.

CHILDCARE HOTLINES

Lifetime will take childcare stories to Washington to show policymakers what American families are facing. Write to *Lifetime* at www.lifetimetv.com or call 1-800-522-0925 and share your childcare story.

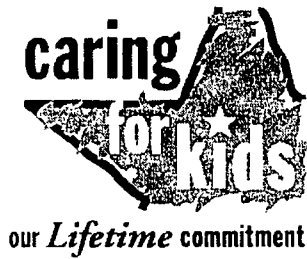
Child Care Aware/NACCRRA provides a hotline to help families find childcare resources in their communities. For assistance, call them at 1-800-424-2246.



EARLY CHILDHOOD ACTION TIPS

Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment is working to make safe, high quality and affordable childcare a reality for all American families. We can't do it without you! Here are some ideas provided by the Families and Work Institute on how to take action on this important issue.

- Use the terms childcare and caregiver, not daycare and baby-sitter.
- E-mail *Lifetime* about your childcare needs and experiences at www.lifetimetv.com or call us at 1-800-522-0925.
- Encourage your childcare providers to e-mail *Lifetime* about their needs and experiences and we'll continue to share their stories with policymakers.
- E-mail or write a letter to candidates and elected officials about your childcare needs and experiences.
- Call a radio talk show and share your childcare stories and experiences.
- Ask your employer to talk to elected officials about childcare needs and issues in the office.
- Ask religious, school or community leaders to set up a town meeting so families in your community can speak to elected leaders about childcare.
- Visit elected officials with a group of friends or neighbors to tell them your childcare stories.
- Send a letter or story about your childcare needs and experiences to your local newspaper, school, church or PTA newsletter.
- Attend or organize a community forum to talk with candidates or elected officials about childcare.



FIVE THINGS YOU CAN DO ABOUT CHILDCARE WHEN LOOKING FOR CARE FOR YOUR OWN CHILD

LOOK: Visit several homes or centers. Look for a safe environment with toys, books and materials within a child's reach. Do the teachers enjoy talking and playing with children? Are infants able to crawl and explore safely? Do providers devote time to one-on-one activities with infants and toddlers, to reading to children and to frequent conversation?

LISTEN: Do children sound happy and involved? Do they converse easily with each other and with caregivers? Do caregivers speak in cheerful and patient tones? Too much noise may signal a lack of control; too much quiet may mean not enough activity. Is TV used as a substitute for more stimulating activities?

COUNT: Count the children in the group, and the number of staff members caring for them. For each adult, there should be no more than: 3-4 infants or toddlers; 4-6 two-year-olds; 7-8 three-year-olds; 8-9 four-year-olds; 8-10 five-year-olds.

ASK: What is the background and experience of all staff? Providers trained in child development are more likely to be able to meet your child's individual needs. Ask about staff turnover. Find out if family providers are licensed, and if the center or home is accredited by a professional organization.

CHECK: Talk to other parents who have used the center or home. Call Child Care Aware to locate providers in your area, and call Child Care Action Campaign for further information on how to assess quality (for contact numbers, see Partner Directory). Even after you start using childcare, continue to drop in and check it out for quality.



FIVE THINGS YOU CAN DO ABOUT CHILDCARE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

LOOK: Is the childcare in your community of good quality? Is safe and stimulating care available for babies and toddlers? Is there care for school-age children before and after school and during vacations? How many families lack affordable, reliable care? Are there long waiting lists for childcare subsidies for working parents? Is there a formal network or organization for home-based providers? Are employers, local government and community organizations investing in childcare?

LISTEN: Talk to other parents in your workplace and in your community. What are their childcare needs? Think about what you can do together in your community to make childcare better and more affordable for all working parents.

ASK: Ask your employer, elected officials, school, union, religious, community or professional organization what they are doing to help working parents who need childcare. Contact your local resource and referral agency or one of the organizations in the Partner Directory for information and to find out who is working to make childcare better in your community. We can expand and improve childcare when everyone works together.

ACT: Get involved in the parent organization at your childcare center, or help start one if none exists. Volunteer at a local childcare center. Find out which local organizations are working to improve childcare by contacting your local resource and referral agency or one of the organizations in the Partner Directory.

CHECK: Check on the progress your community is making to meet the childcare needs of working parents. Hold elected officials to promises they make. Remind them that good quality childcare is essential for children's healthy growth and development – and it keeps America working.



GRASSROOTS OUTREACH HANDBOOK



Lifetime
Television for Women™

*From the Desk of Meredith Wagner
Senior Vice President, Public Affairs*

Sometimes a little bad weather can be a good thing. That was certainly the case in February 1998, when my flight from New York to Washington, DC was canceled and **Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment** was born.

I had been invited to a White House event about childcare and planned to catch an early shuttle down and return to New York by mid-afternoon. This was a perfectly realistic plan, one I had executed with success many times. However, this time the weather refused to cooperate.

The flight to Washington was eventually canceled due to fog and rain, so I shared a ride back to the city with several other women who had also planned to attend the White House Event -- Kathy Rodgers (NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund), Elba Montalvo (Committee for Hispanic Children and Families) and Prema Mathai-Davis (YWCA of the USA).

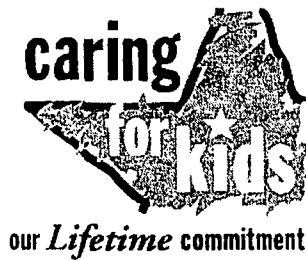
The ride back to the city was incredible. I discovered that when you fill a car with people passionate about childcare, the energy is high and the ideas fly. At this impromptu conference -- uninterrupted by phones, faxes or colleagues -- we decided to focus our collective energy and expertise on developing a national campaign to galvanize women to demand political action on childcare, so that safe, affordable and high quality childcare would become a reality for all families. This was the beginning of **Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment**.

We recognized then and continue to believe that our collaborative approach is essential to the success of the entire campaign. *Lifetime* offers a means for amplifying the voices of women and families in communities all across the country, in effect offering an electronic national neighborhood in which we can gather to share our childcare experiences, struggles and victories; a community in which we can unite our voices and demand action.

Lifetime's non-profit partners bring a wealth of expertise and perspective to this campaign, and it is truly an honor to work with them. Our partners (a coalition of over 130 organizations, including the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues, Families and Work Institute, the Committee for Hispanic Children and Families and the National Council of Women's Organizations, which encompasses organizations including NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund, the Child Care Action Campaign and the YWCA of the U.S.A.), have invaluable experience bringing campaigns like **Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment** into communities around the country, and we hope local chapters will join in our national effort to be heard by state and national legislators. Our message is simple: it is time for high quality, safe and affordable childcare to be available to all families. With your participation, we will be heard -- loud and clear.

Lifetime Television, along with our partners, has produced this **Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment Outreach Handbook** to help local organizations develop and implement effective outreach strategies to generate greater awareness of this issue and to play a vital role in the childcare debate. It contains information about how to organize and deliver effective outreach plans, valuable resources and a directory of national partners ready and willing to offer assistance with your local endeavors.

We encourage you to join the **Caring for Kids** team. There is power in numbers and the more we work together, the greater our impact.



THE CARING FOR KIDS OUTREACH HANDBOOK – AN OVERVIEW

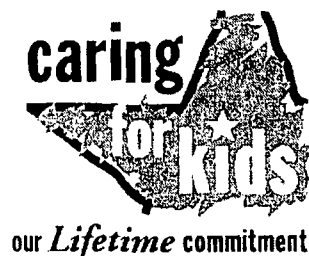
This outreach handbook is designed to give organizations and individuals the tools to bring **Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment** into communities around the country in a way that can be tailored to each community's or organization's goals. The **Caring for Kids** Campaign can be an effective way for your organization to:

- Raise the awareness of childcare issues.
- Increase your organization's visibility.
- Mobilize American women and families to demand action on childcare.
- Give women and families a voice on the issue of childcare.
- Develop strategic alliances with key decisionmakers.
- Provide educational materials.
- Generate public/private childcare partnerships.
- Draw attention to an after-school or childcare program in your community.

This handbook offers a variety of outreach ideas as well as guides to developing an action plan, choosing a community partner to help with outreach activities, obtaining publicity and measuring the results of your efforts. To help you find an outreach program that works with your budget and time constraints, all of the outreach activities or ideas presented in this section can be easily modified to suit the needs of your organization and community.

Inside you will find:

- How **Caring for Kids** can help your organization elevate awareness of the childcare issue.
- Background on the **Caring for Kids** campaign.
- An initial calendar of events that highlight childcare issues. Visit www.lifetime.com for updates.
- Community outreach steps to help you plan your activities.
- Community outreach ideas outlining ways your community or organization can use this campaign.
- Examples of successful outreach programs compiled by the Families and Work Institute.
- Publicity Tips.
- "Early Childhood Action Tips," provided by the Families and Work Institute.
- "Five Things You Can Do About Childcare," provided by the Child Care Action Campaign.
- **Lifetime** programming and website information that can be incorporated in your outreach efforts.
- A faxback form describing your organization's or community's event.
- Press releases on the **Caring for Kids** campaign and "**Confronting the Crisis: Childcare in America**," including customizable versions.



CARING FOR KIDS COMMUNITIES:

Reaching out to Educate and Mobilize Your Community On Quality Childcare

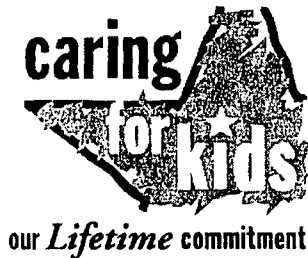
Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment is a public awareness campaign that can provide an important vehicle for your organization to draw attention to both the childcare success stories and the childcare problems that exist in your community.

Lifetime Television is dedicated to using our network and cyberspace capacity to cultivate a national commitment for quality childcare in our country. During the month of April we will feature programming in honor of *Lifetime's* National Childcare Month, including "**Confronting the Crisis: Childcare in America**," a one-hour primetime documentary directed by Academy Award-winner Lee Grant and hosted by actress and mother Kyra Sedgwick, premiering **Tuesday, April 20 at 10PM ET/PT**. We believe our programming will spark discussions from the office watercooler to church community halls on the quality of childcare. It is our hope these discussions flourish and transform into action for better childcare for all of our nation's kids.

Working with *Lifetime Television* and the **Caring for Kids** campaign affords advocacy organizations important opportunities at the local and national level. *Lifetime Television* is committed to raising awareness of the need for quality, affordable childcare by using the most powerful media-- television and the Internet--to engage millions of Americans. Encourage your members to work with their local cable television affiliates to heighten the visibility of the issue. Hundreds of local cable system operators have signed up to participate in the **Caring for Kids** campaign. If possible, local chapters of national organizations should hold screenings and discussions with participating local cable affiliates.

In addition to addressing a vital issue, participating in the campaign can provide an excellent setting to start or renew relationships with community leaders and sponsors. Cable systems and television advertisers can help you spread the word about quality affordable childcare at the national, regional and local levels. Backed by the national visibility and high production values of *Lifetime Television*, your participation in the **Caring for Kids** campaign can powerfully highlight your organization's leadership role in addressing the needs of women and families. For this reason, we not only want to give you the tools to organize events to call attention to childcare problems and solutions, but also want to know what you, your organization or your community did so that we can share your experiences with other concerned parents, providers and advocates.

Lifetime Television has a long-standing commitment to amplifying the voices of our viewers. From raising breast cancer awareness to improving the status of childcare in America, we know we can generate awareness and effect change when we work together. By turning our collective energies to childcare, we can make sure that women are heard by policymakers at all levels. We look forward to working with your organization on this meaningful campaign to make safe, affordable and high quality childcare available to all families.



Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment: Campaign Background

Childcare has been a consistently high priority for women and the viewers of *Lifetime Television*. Unfortunately, it has not been a top priority for America's policymakers. The result has been that parents create their own childcare solutions, many times forgoing the quality they want for the care they can afford.

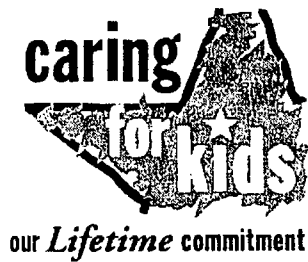
Yet, childcare is no longer a parent's private problem. We now have over two decades of reports and studies that show that childcare is a societal issue, inextricably linked to key American priorities. Childcare is a family, education, health, safety, crime prevention and even a social security issue.

In March 1998, *Lifetime* spearheaded a coalition of over 100 leading women's and children's non-profit organizations, as well as the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues, in a unique collaborative public awareness campaign to shift the cultural and political climate in the United States on childcare. ***Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment*** uses the power of *Lifetime's* network and cyberspace capabilities to give women and their families an opportunity to amplify their voices to call for better childcare in our country.

The first year of the campaign focused on gathering women's personal childcare stories using on-air public service announcements. *Lifetime* arranged for its website (www.lifetime.com) and a toll-free number (1-800-522-0925) to be a place where women and their families could share their stories, messages and photographs on childcare. *Lifetime* and its partners provided these stories to Members of Congress and to President and Mrs. Clinton.

The personal stories *Lifetime* has gathered are at the heart of the campaign's second year and will be the centerpiece of *Lifetime's* National Childcare Month programming throughout April. Included will be "**Confronting the Crisis: Childcare in America**," a one-hour primetime documentary directed by Academy Award-winner Lee Grant and hosted by actress and mother Kyra Sedgwick premiering **Tuesday, April 20 at 10PM ET/PT**, a week of segments on the series "New Attitudes," public service announcements and an aggressive outreach effort created to help get women's voices heard on this critical issue.

Lifetime's National Childcare Month coincides with many national efforts to highlight the importance of quality childcare. This handbook contains a calendar of childcare events you can use as a hook for your community event. Look for updates of our childcare calendar and links to the coordinating organizations on our ***Caring for Kids*** website at www.lifetime.com.



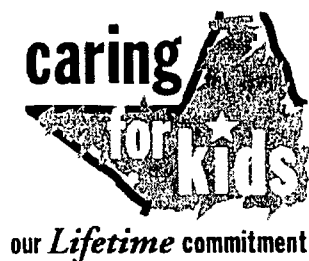
April is National Childcare Month Childcare Calendar for Early 1999

Month	Activity
April 1999	• <i>Lifetime</i> declares April National Childcare Month with special programming and national PSAs to air on channel. • NAEYC Week of the Young Child -- April 19-25
May 1999	• Worthy Wage Day -- May 1 • National Provider Appreciation Month -- May 7
June 1999	• Children Defense Fund's 'Stand for Children' -- June 1



COMMUNITY OUTREACH -- FUNDAMENTAL STEPS

1. **Make a plan:** identify realistic goals, create a timeline and determine the appropriate methods of evaluation such as increased attendance at events, publicity, etc.
2. **Choose an outreach partner(s)** with experience implementing community efforts: elected officials, women's groups, schools, churches, community organizations, childcare providers, etc. The **Caring for Kids** coalition is an excellent resource for identifying and selecting local partners with a variety of experiences, expertise and resources to offer. See the Partner Directory for contact information.
3. **Whenever possible, link to existing plans.** Many activities and events are already in place. Research the upcoming calendar of events within your own organization, tie-in to local activities and events, contact schools, places of worship and community centers that provide an appropriate venue/audience to achieve campaign goals.
4. **Plan events or activities** that will inform the community about childcare issues and options as well as your organization's commitment to community issues. In addition to linking with existing plans, your system can create events such as hosting a screening of "**Confronting the Crisis: Childcare in America**" followed by a reception or discussion panel, a town hall meeting with local policymakers or a childcare fair at a local mall.
5. **Publicize the event.** Use materials in this kit to gain exposure for your organization's **Caring for Kids** efforts. If possible, photograph each event.
6. **Use the internet.** Link your website to www.lifetime.com so your visitors can tell their childcare stories and have instant access to its wealth of resources. Use your website to promote your organization, its commitment to childcare and to promote all events and activities.
7. **Hold the event.** Be sure to invite local media, community leaders, childcare centers, schools and after-school programs.
8. **Follow-up.** Send thank-you notes to speakers and key planners. Distribute a press release highlighting your success. Post an event update on your website. Survey those who benefited from the campaign. ask your outreach partners and the general public for feedback on your event. These stories are the most difficult to elicit but are a valuable measurement tool and powerful message. If possible, follow up with individuals involved with the event. Did business XYZ use any of the suggestions offered at the forum? Did political leader ABC take action on anything she heard during the event?



COMMUNITY OUTREACH IDEAS

The following pages offer suggestions for outreach events and activities. Feel free to use the framework in this handbook to develop your own community-specific outreach event. These ideas are just a starting point: each community will have unique needs and capabilities so we encourage you to modify as needed. Keep in mind that many local and national groups will be planning events for April in which your organization may be able to participate. Whenever possible, encourage event participants to make their voices heard by telling their childcare stories at www.lifetime.com, or by calling the **Caring for Kids** hotline, at 1-800-522-0925. The **Caring for Kids** coalition includes women's and children's organizations that can offer valuable resources, information and ideas. Please refer to the Partner Directory in this kit to find out which organizations can be most valuable to your efforts.

CARING FOR KIDS: "CONFRONTING THE CRISIS: CHILDCARE IN AMERICA" SCREENING

This kit includes a copy of *Lifetime's* powerful documentary "**Confronting the Crisis: Childcare in America**," directed by Academy Award-winner Lee Grant and hosted by actress and mother Kyra Sedgwick. This country's current childcare situation is something we must change collectively, and hosting a single screening or organizing a series of screenings are excellent ways to gather people to share experiences, talk about solutions and take action. Screenings are an easy way to position your organization as a leader in the local dialogue about childcare, by reaching the general public, childcare experts, legislators and community and business leaders.

A screening can be a very simple event at a local school or library or a more sophisticated event including a reception or panel discussion. Connect with one or more of the **Caring for Kids** national partners to develop or distribute materials at the screenings. This is also an opportunity to provide brochures or other print materials promoting your organization. Use the event as a fundraiser or award program for a local childcare center or after-school program. Regardless of the complexity of the event, it can offer a tremendous opportunity for press coverage and community partnerships.

PLEASE NOTE: "**Confronting the Crisis: Childcare in America**" is the property of *Lifetime Television* and is available to partner organizations for the sole purpose of public screenings and educational efforts. No copying, exhibiting or any other distribution may be made or authorized without *Lifetime's* express written permission in each instance.

CARING FOR KIDS: "CONFRONTING THE CRISIS: CHILDCARE IN AMERICA" HOME VIEWING PARTIES

A home viewing party is a screening of "**Confronting the Crisis: Childcare in America**" done in the more intimate setting of a person's home. Have members of your organization host viewing parties and invite their friends and neighbors to watch the documentary and talk about their own childcare experiences. The parties can be very informal and optimally would occur the evening of the documentary's premiere, **Tuesday, April 20 from 10-11PM ET/PT**. Otherwise, the VHS copy provided can be screened on a day that is significant in your community or at any time desired. Invite reporters to watch the documentary with you and listen to the discussion.

CARING FOR KIDS: HOST A CHILDCARE FAIR AT A SHOPPING MALL

A “**Caring for Kids**/(Your Organization)” childcare fair provides parents and caregivers with valuable information about childcare resources, offers family fun in a carnival-like atmosphere and generates positive publicity for your organization. A mall guarantees attendance and the ability to reach hundreds of parents and caregivers. Working with the mall management, choose a Saturday or Sunday for the fair and solicit participation from stores in the mall. The event should feature fun and games for children and useful information for adults. If possible, set up computer terminal booths displaying the **Caring for Kids** website and collecting e-mail stories. This is an ideal setting for national, state and local politicians to state their views and goals for childcare.

If possible, have the event photographed and make sure local media is on hand. Ask local businesses to provide goodie bags with discount coupons and/or samples from different stores within the mall.

CARING FOR KIDS: HOST A CHILDCARE FAIR AT A COMMUNITY CENTER, SCHOOL OR LIBRARY

This is essentially the same as the shopping mall childcare fair, just simpler and smaller in scale. Providing childcare resources and “news you can use” to parents and caregivers is still the ultimate goal. Work with a library, school or community center with a large room or outside area where you can hold the event. Include activities that have been successful in childcare fairs around the country, such as pony rides, clowns, cotton candy, fire trucks on site and free ice cream. The facility could declare a “**Caring for Kids**” day and feature special programs just for kids or for children, parents and caregivers. If possible, set up computer terminal booths linking to *Lifetime’s* website and your organization’s website.

CARING FOR KIDS: STORIES AND ARTWORK

This is an easy project that can cut across many demographic groups. Your organization can work with childcare centers, schools, libraries and after-school programs, asking children to tell about their childcare-givers using words, art, e-mail, video or spoken word projects. Assemble a panel of judges comprised of employees/senior management from your organization, community leaders, childcare providers, children, teachers and others to review the entries and select the best entry in each category. There can be a variety of winners in each category or a single winner in each. This contest can also be geared toward adults by collecting the stories of parents, caregivers, teachers and others. You can determine the scope of the contest by designing a single question for each entrant to answer (i.e. “What do you like best...” or giving a wider berth, “Tell us about your experiences with childcare.”).

If possible, arrange to have winning entries and honorable mentions exhibited in your organization's lobby, on your website or in your newsletter. Encourage community organizations such as banks, libraries, grocery and retail stores to join you in displaying winning entries and “special mentions” on websites, in lobbies, publications or on the air. Better yet, literally bring the contest to their front door. Invite kids to draw pictures on store windows using washable paint. Winners can receive merchandise donated by local businesses.

CARING FOR KIDS: LOCAL AWARDS PRESENTATION

Host a **Caring for Kids** special reception honoring organizations and individuals that have helped improve childcare in your area. This will help increase visibility for your organization and could become a fundraiser. For example, has a business made an exceptional effort to provide on-site day care, flex hours or work-from-home options? Has the school board developed a before or after-school care program that really works? Has a neighborhood come up with innovative solutions for handling latch-key kids? Good ideas are not only worth honoring, they are also worth sharing. Ask parents, teachers, and caregivers in your community to speak out about what works for them on your website and at www.lifetimetv.com.

CARING FOR KIDS: CHILDCARE TOWN HALL

Partner with a local university or school to host a political forum where local, state and national policymakers are invited to hear directly from parents and caregivers. Look for a facility with a stage and enough seats to accommodate a large number of people: a lecture hall at a local college, a high school gym, etc. Invite parents, caregivers and members of the business community to tell policymakers about their experiences and describe successful solutions. Organize the town hall to follow a screening of the documentary or as a stand-alone event. Contact all forms of media. Use www.lifetimetv.com and the **Caring for Kids** hotline (1-800-522-0925) to encourage everyone to continue to speak out.

Other options include making this less of a political forum and more of a town meeting where businesses, schools, parents and concerned citizens discuss the pros and cons of flexible work hours, on and off-site care, out-of-school care and other childcare related issues. In either event, a skilled moderator is essential for success. Look for local talent to fill this role.

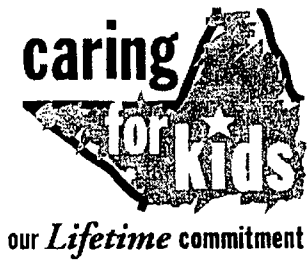


EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL OUTREACH PROGRAMS

These examples have been provided by the Families and Work Institute (see National Partner Directory). Please feel free to use or share these stories:

- In San Francisco, a partnership between business, local foundations, the Mayor's office, city agencies and childcare representatives created a Childcare Facilities Fund. This fund provides small grants to family childcare providers and low-cost financing to non-profit childcare centers, as well as technical assistance to providers in order to improve business skills and enhance the capacity to manage facilities.
- In Texas, an Employer Coalition was formed by over 600 employers and the Work and Family Clearinghouse to help employees balance work and family responsibilities. This coalition sponsors conferences on childcare, eldercare and community resource development. It also sponsors mini-grants designed to create local employer coalitions that can pool resources, share information and establish a plan of action to address dependent care concerns in their communities.
- In Boston, the United Way of Massachusetts Bay's "Success By 6" initiative brings together a high-level Advisory Committee made up of business, education, healthcare, religious, civic, government, media and law enforcement leaders. This committee serves to raise awareness and advocate for public policies that enhance the lives of children. Results of their efforts include significant new state funds for childcare subsidies and the creation of specialty license plates to raise private funds for childcare quality improvement.
- In Huntsville, Arkansas, the Butterball Turkey Company and its parent company, ConAgra, met the childcare needs of its growing workforce by creating a new childcare center for 150 children of employees and community residents through a partnership with a Head Start center, local childcare providers and the regional economic development agency. The Butterball plant partially subsidizes childcare costs for its employees out of its operational budget, recognizing this as a cost of recruiting and retaining workers.
- In Alabama, a group of employers in Lee County formed an Employers' Childcare Alliance. This alliance pooled its resources to provide enhanced childcare referral services to employees, support training and accreditation activities for local providers, after-school and summer programs for ten to 14 year-olds, and recruit additional family childcare providers for non-standard care, such as 24-hour, sick and emergency care.
- In Denver, Colorado, the Ready to Succeed Partnership is demonstrating that the quality of early care and education can be improved for the city's most at-risk children through a strategic partnership of providers, public schools, state health and education agencies, child advocates, the United Way and the Governor's office. The partnership makes training and resources available to childcare providers and public school early education programs, facilitates one-on-one partnerships between local childcare centers and public school early childhood classrooms, provides parent education seminars and supports professional development for teachers and providers.

- In New York City, the Department of Youth and Community Development initiated the Beacons of Light program, which creates school-based community centers with after-school and evening programs for children, youth and families. Already in 32 school districts in New York, the Beacons program plans to double in size in New York City and is being replicated in five other cities.
- In Georgia, the Governor directed the creation of a free, statewide voluntary pre-kindergarten program for all four year-olds, funded almost entirely by state lottery funds. To expand service capacity and ensure parental choice, state funded pre-K programs exist in a variety of locations, such as private preschools, public/private elementary schools, private and state colleges, childcare centers, Head Start, hospitals, military bases and YMCA/YWCAs.
- In North Carolina, the Governor has led a statewide initiative, Smart Start, to meet the needs of all families with young children for accessible, high-quality childcare, healthcare services for children and family support services. Through the state legislature and other public and private resources, Smart Start provides funding and technical assistance to county-level, public/private partnerships that design and implement services and programs based on their community's needs. Smart Start's locally-based services are available in every county and to every child, regardless of income, which has produced a broad base of support and a continued public will for investing in children.
- In Indiana, a Childcare Symposium Initiative has become an ongoing statewide project that provides technical assistance, mentoring and funding to local teams of business, community and childcare leaders working to identify and implement strategies to improve childcare. As a result of the broad base of support and awareness, these teams are able to: create and refurbish childcare centers, create employer-supported childcare training funds, provide family childcare loan funds, mentor infant-toddler providers, increase media coverage, increase the number of childcare slots across the state and bring together business consortiums to deliver on- or near-site childcare services.
- In Colorado, Educare, a new statewide initiative, is laying the foundation for an improved system of quality early education through parent education, public education and quality improvement. Educare is using market forces to improve the quality of early care and education by helping parents become better informed consumers of quality early education, increasing public awareness and will for increased investment to meet the demand for higher quality care and providing the tools and structure to do so.

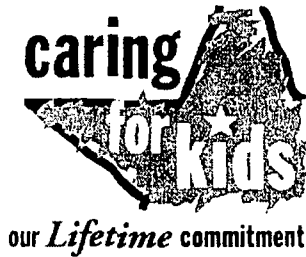


PUBLICITY TIPS

Publicity is an essential element in all campaign plans. In addition to *Lifetime*'s national press relations effort, a coordinated local publicity effort is critical to ensuring that your campaign reaps maximum benefits. This kit includes a ***Caring for Kids*** announcement release and a “**Confronting the Crisis: Childcare in America**” release to use as a reference or to distribute at local press events, and customizable versions to use when publicizing your organization's ***Caring for Kids*** activities.

Here are ways you can publicize your ***Caring for Kids*** efforts:

- Use the press releases in this package to inform media (newspapers, local magazines, TV stations and radio) about your efforts, plans and/or accomplishments.
- Ask your outreach partners and funders to support the publicity effort. They may have established contacts and relationships with local/national media and can include information about your endeavor in their newsletters and on their website.
- If local personalities and elected officials are participating in your campaign, ask them to be available for print and electronic media interviews. Make sure they are briefed on key speaking points prior to interviewing.
- Before events, invite local media and inform them that they may have the opportunity to talk to key individuals.
- Photograph the event and send photos to local newspapers, put them on your website and print them in your newsletter.
- After events/activities, provide local media with the positive results you achieved. This will help generate post-event coverage.



PROGRAMMING AND WEBSITE INFORMATION

In honor of its declaration of April 1999 as National Childcare Month, *Lifetime* will present a variety of original programming to extend the message of ***Caring for Kids: Our Lifetime Commitment***. *Lifetime* is committed to using its media reach to attain the broadest possible awareness of the ***Caring for Kids*** campaign and the issues it addresses. As you plan your organization's outreach activities, keep this information in mind.

Lifetime's on air and on-line commitment includes:

"Confronting the Crisis: Childcare in America": (Premieres Tuesday, April 20th at 10pm ET/PT, with encores)

This original documentary, directed by Academy Award-winner Lee Grant and hosted by actress and mother Kyra Sedgwick, explores the childcare concerns American families regularly face. **"Confronting the Crisis: Childcare in America"** profiles individual parents, children and caregivers, focusing on the plights of these families and how they are illustrative of families all around the country. The documentary explores the government's role in childcare, as well as the corporate role, and explores solutions and how to minimize the isolation parents feel as they try to balance work and family.

PSAs:

PSAs urging the public to share their childcare stories with *Lifetime* will be broadcast on the network throughout the month of April, and made available to our affiliates.

"New Attitudes" Segments: (Premieres week of April 19th at 11pm ET/PT)

Lifetime's magazine show, "New Attitudes," presents a week-long series on childcare. The segments explore how childcare is linked to key American priorities including education, health, safety, crime prevention, and even social security. They also provide ideas for families to improve their own childcare options, make their voices heard on the issue and mobilize our communities and our government to better serve our children.

World Wide Web Components (www.lifetime.com)

Lifetime Online features a ***Caring for Kids*** area in which visitors can find out more about the campaign; share their personal childcare experiences, stories and opinions and ask policymakers to take action on childcare. *Lifetime* will continue to forward these stories to policymakers to demonstrate the urgency of this issue. The website also includes comprehensive childcare resources, listings of *Lifetime's* childcare programming, childcare tips, facts and other information.



March 15, 1999

Dear Colleague,

Getting our voices heard is one of the greatest challenges we face.

As media attention bounces from one trial of the century to another, advocates like us continue to work to insure that the day to day challenges faced by millions of women and their families are recognized and remedied. Quality, affordable childcare, equal pay, health care and a good education for our children are just a few of the ongoing issues that impact all of our constituencies. *Lifetime Television* offers us a great opportunity to use the most powerful media—television and the Internet --- to promote quality, affordable childcare. Through its television network and website, *Lifetime Television* reaches over 73 million women, many of whom care about our issues.

During the month of April, *Lifetime Television* will feature programming that can inspire everything from discussion around the office water cooler to action in our legislatures to get better childcare for all our children. **“Confronting the Crisis: Childcare in America,”** a one-hour primetime documentary directed by Academy Award-winner Lee Grant and hosted by actress and mother Kyra Sedgwick, features real mothers and fathers who face the daily challenges of caring for their kids while they are at work and focuses much needed attention on important community solutions.

It is rare to see anything on primetime television that reflects the real lives of the millions of women we represent. We urge you to mobilize your memberships and constituencies to watch **“Confronting the Crisis: Childcare in America,”** **premiering April 20 from 10-11PM ET/PT**, and to use this documentary to inform and organize local leaders to demand quality, affordable childcare for all American families.

Please demonstrate your support, not only for childcare but also for this remarkable national partnership between *Lifetime* and advocacy organizations:

- Fill out the faxback form contained in this kit to get the documentary and the **Caring for Kids** Outreach Handbook, which is full of action steps and resources, sent to your membership or affiliate organizations.
- Link your website to www.lifetime.com and join the **Caring for Kids** campaign.

By working together, we can mobilize millions of people to demand quality affordable childcare for all children.

Sincerely,

Kathy Rodgers
Now Legal Defense and Education Fund

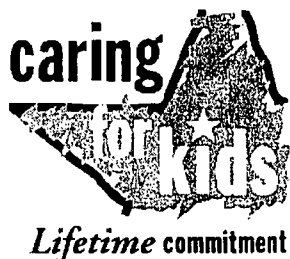
Faith Wohl
Child Care Action Campaign



THE CARING FOR KIDS TOOL KIT – AN OVERVIEW

This package provides the materials you will need to bring **Caring for Kids** into your community. It will prepare your organization for a consolidated local campaign for celebrating *Lifetime's* National Childcare Month in April. It includes:

- A VHS tape of “**Confronting the Crisis: Childcare in America**,” *Lifetime's* original documentary directed by Academy Award-winner Lee Grant and hosted by actress and mother Kyra Sedgwick. *Lifetime* premieres the documentary on **Tuesday, April 20 from 10-11PM ET/PT.**
- A Viewers' Guide to “**Confronting the Crisis: Childcare in America.**”
- A **Caring for Kids** Outreach Handbook with useful “how to” information about initiating local public affairs events and effectively publicizing your efforts for maximum exposure, as well as background information on the campaign.
- A valuable directory of influential national partners ready to assist in your local campaign.
- A reproducible childcare fact sheet.
- Three reproducible childcare tip sheets.
- Educational resources



FAXBACK RESPONSE FORM

Lifetime wants to know how your organization plans to participate in the **Caring for Kids** campaign. Please fill out this form and fax it back to **(202) 530-2901** by March 30, 1999 to get your organization's **Caring for Kids** screening activities included in the *Lifetime* national press release about the documentary. If several chapters are planning events, include a list of names and addresses where VHS copies of "**Confronting the Crisis: Childcare in America**" and the accompanying Viewers' Guide should be sent.

Name of your organization: _____

Contact Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____ Fax #: _____ E-mail: _____

Please check the appropriate items:

- ☐ I will invite my affiliates to hold screenings, discussion groups and to remind everyone in their local community to watch "**Confronting the Crisis: Childcare in America**" on *Lifetime*, **premiering April 20 at 10PM ET/PT.**
- ☐ I will hold a screening with my organization at our next national meeting, conference or convention. Please give us the date and title of the gathering:

Title: _____ Date: _____

- ☐ I will link my organization's website with *Lifetime* and the **Caring for Kids** campaign at www.lifetime.com.
- ☐ I want to stay involved with the **Caring for Kids** Campaign.



DIRECTORY OF ORGANIZATIONS AND RESOURCES



CHILDCARE RESOURCES ON THE WEB

National Network for Child Care: <http://www.exnet.iastate.edu/Pages/families/nbcc/conf.html>

Please refer to this site for all child care calendar information.

American Child Care Solutions: <http://www.parentsplace.com/readroom/ACS/>

The ABC's of Safe and Healthy Child Care: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/hip/abc/abc.htm>

Child Care Aware: <http://www.childcarerr.org/childcareaware/index.htm>

Child Care Bureau: <http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ccb/index.html>

Children's Defense Fund

1) CDF's Parent Resource Network (PRN): <http://www.childrensdefense.org/prn.html>

2) CDF's Child Care NOW National Campaign: <http://www.childrensdefense.org/ccmenu.html>

Families and Work Institute: <http://www.familiesandwork.org>

Lifetime Television: <http://www.lifetime.tv>

National Association of Child Care Resources: <http://www.childcarerr.org>

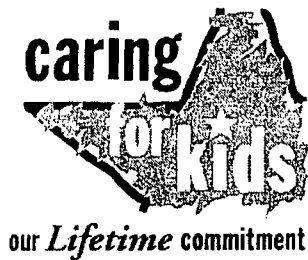
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC): <http://nccic.org>

National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies: [http://www.child care-experts.org](http://www.child-care-experts.org)

National Center for Children in Poverty: <http://cpmcnet.columbia.edu/dept/nccp>

National Child Care Information Center: <http://nccic.org>

This site contains an extensive list of other Childcare Organizations.



DIRECTORY OF NATIONAL PARTNERS

The following organizations are members of the **Caring for Kids** coalition and can be excellent partners and resources for your efforts. You may wish to collaborate with one or more of these organizations, so be sure to review their attributes in the context of your project plans and needs. They represent a variety of assets and areas of expertise. Feel free to contact these organizations to brainstorm, connect with their local chapters or identify local experts. If you'd like assistance connecting with any of these partners, call Sarah Stout at (202) 530-2900.

YWCA of the USA

Contact the Executive Director of your local YWCA (1-800-992-2871)

Rhea Starr, Special Assistant/Childcare Advocate

350 Fifth Avenue, Suite 301

New York, NY 10118

(p&f) 717-290-7362, Voicemail: 1-800-992-2871, ext. 7965

e-mail: RStarr@ywca.org

Website: <http://www.ywca.org>

Description:

Founded in 1858, the YWCA of the U.S.A. is the largest and oldest women's membership organization. With an organizational mission devoted to the empowerment of women and girls and the elimination of racism, thousands of locations nationwide provide a variety of services including housing, job training, physical fitness and childcare. The YWCA represents more than two million women and girls of diverse ethnic, economic and religious backgrounds, including more than 750,000 children and youth in YWCA childcare, after-school and youth programs.

The Executive Director of your local YWCA can provide:

- Spokespersons for local news
- Tie-ins to local events
- Assistance locating event speakers
- Printed materials
- Event facilities
- Membership opportunities

National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA)

Edna Ranck, Ed.D., Director of Public Policy and Research

1319 F Street, NW, Suite 810

Washington, DC 20004

(p) 202-393-5501, (f) 202-393-1144

Child Care Aware 1-800-424-2246

e-mail: eranck@naccrra.net

Website: www.naccrra.net

Description:

NACCRRA is a national network of hundreds of local and state childcare resource and referral (CCR&R) organizations that provides a range of services to parents and families, childcare, preschool and out-of-school programs, corporations, local and state governments and the public media. CCR&Rs are the main source of childcare supply and demand data that inform community, state and national planning and serve as a primary link among childcare centers, family childcare providers, public school preschool programs and Head Start. NACCRRA helps to develop policies that support a diverse, high-quality childcare system with parental choice and equal access for all families.

NACCRA can provide:

- Spokespersons for local news
- Tie-ins to local events
- Assistance locating event speakers
- Printed materials
- Event facilities
- Membership opportunities

9to5, National Association of Working Women

Ellen Bravo, Co-Director

231 W. Wisconsin, Suite 900

Milwaukee, WI 53203

(p) 414-274-0928, (f) 414-272-2870

e-mail: naww925@exec.pc.com

Description:

9to5 is a national grassroots membership organization which strengthens women's ability to work for economic justice. Founded in 1973 by a group of Boston clerical workers, 9to5 has grown to a grassroots force of nearly 15,000. 9to5 has made it possible for working women to win many victories over the years by providing critical resources and offering valuable training. The association has also been at the forefront of the fight for Family and Medical Leave on the state and local level.

9to5 can provide:

- Spokespersons for local news
- Assistance locating event speakers
- Printed materials at cost
- Event facilities in Milwaukee, Denver and Atlanta
- Membership opportunities

Child Care Action Campaign (CCAC)
Ellen Lubell, Director of Communications
330 7th Avenue - 14th Floor
New York, NY 10001
(p) 212-239-0138, ext. 208, (f) 212-268-6515
e-mail: ccacgen@aol.com

Description:

Child Care Action Campaign has led national thinking in defining childcare as an issue of concern for all Americans. CCAC is a national non-profit organization dedicated to strengthening families, improving education and advancing the well-being of children. CCAC builds partnerships among communities, schools and business leaders to improve childcare and early education, and to make it affordable to all working families; stimulates investment in childcare by employers, state and local governments, schools and community organizations; communicates innovative ideas for improving childcare to inspire parents, community leaders and the public to take action and advocates public policies that support families.

CCAC can provide:

- Spokespersons for local news
- Assistance locating event speakers
- Printed materials at cost
- Membership opportunities

Committee for Hispanic Children and Families (CHCF)
Elba Montalvo, Executive Director and Co-Founder
Ruth Rodriguez, Program Director
140 West 22nd Street
New York, NY 10010
(p) 212-206-1090, (f) 212-206-8093
e-mail: chcfinc@aol.com

Description:

CHCF is a New York City non-profit agency dedicated to meeting the needs of Latino families with a four-pronged approach: community education, social services, professional training and public policy advocacy. The Committee operates the only Spanish/bilingual Childcare Resource and Referral Network in New York State. CHCF may be able to assist you in reaching your local Hispanic community.

CHCF can provide:

- Spokespersons for local news
- Tie-ins to local events
- Assistance locating event speakers
- Printed materials at cost

Families and Work Institute
Robin Hardman, Director of Communications
330 7th Avenue
New York, NY 10001
(p) 212-465-2044, (f) 212-465-8637
e-mail: rhardman@familiesandwork.org
Website: <http://www.familiesandwork.org>

Description:

Families and Work Institute is a non-profit organization that addresses the changing nature of work and family life. It is committed to finding research-based strategies that foster mutually supportive connections among workplaces, families and communities. Visit the organizational website's Community Mobilization Forum area for step-by-step instructions on local outreach.

Families and Work Institute can provide:

- Spokespersons for local news
- Tie-ins to local events
- Assistance locating event speakers
- Printed materials free or at cost
- Membership opportunities

Girls Incorporated
Alex Koppelman, Director of Communications
120 Wall Street, 3rd floor
New York, NY 10005
(p) (212) 509-2000, (f) (212) 509-8708
e-mail: akoppelman@girls-inc.org
Website: <http://www.girls-inc.org>

Description:

For over 50 years, this national non-profit youth organization has provided vital educational programs to millions of American girls in after-school settings, particularly in high risk, under-served areas. Based on research, Girls Incorporated informs policy makers about girls' needs locally and nationally and educates the media about critical issues facing girls. In addition to learning how to advocate for themselves, through proactive community activities, girls learn to speak out in public arenas.

Refer to the Girls Incorporated website for a directory of local affiliates that can provide some or all of the following:

- Spokespersons for local news
- Tie-ins to local events
- Assistance locating event speakers
- Printed materials at cost
- Event facilities
- Membership opportunities

National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP)
Media - Julian Palmer, Director of Communications
Policy - Ann Collins, Associate Director, Childcare Program & Policy
154 Haven Avenue, 3rd Floor
New York, NY 10032
(p) 212-304-7117, (f) 212-544-4200
e-mail: jsp29@columbia.edu, ac261@columbia.edu
Website: <http://cpmcnet.columbia.edu/news/childpov>

Description:

The mission of NCCP was established in 1989 at the Joseph L. Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University, with core support from the Ford Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The Center's mission is to identify and promote strategies that reduce the number of young children living in poverty in the United States and to improve the life chances of the millions of children under the age of six who are growing up poor.

The NCCP can provide:

- Spokespersons for local news
- Assistance locating event speakers
- Printed materials at cost

National Council of Women's Organizations
Vicki Spence, Office Manager
1126 16th Street, N.W., Suite 411
Washington, DC 20036
(p) 202-331-7343, (f) 202-331-7406
e-mail: fairpay@aol.com

Description:

The National Council of Women's Organizations is a bipartisan network comprised of the leaders of over 100 women's organizations, which together represent more than six million women. Organizational members include grassroots, research, service and legal advocacy groups that focus primarily on promoting public policy and legislative strategies affecting women.

The NCWO can provide:

- Tie-ins to local events
- Printed materials

NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund (NOW LDEF)

Vivian Todini, Director of Communications

99 Hudson Street, 12th floor

New York, NY 10013

(p) 212-925-6635, (f) 212-226-1066

e-mail: vtodini@nowldef.org

Website: <http://www.nowldef.org>

Description:

NOW LDEF is the country's oldest national legal advocacy organization for women's rights, established as a separate corporate entity in 1970 by the National Organization for Women. NOW LDEF pursues equality for women and girls in the workplace, the schools, the family and the courts through litigation, public policy and education programs.

NOW LDEF can provide:

- Assistance locating event speakers
- Printed materials

Lifetime Television

309 West 49th Street, 17th Floor

New York, NY 10019

(p) 212-424-7000

Website: <http://www.lifetime.tv>

To find out if your local cable operator has signed on to *Caring for Kids*, please call the *Lifetime* Affiliate Administrator in the appropriate region, listed below:

Eastern Region: Faith Baldwin, 212-424-7261

Central Region: Greg Johnson, 972-458-4604

Western Region: Sandi Resendi, 310-556-7259

Description:

Lifetime Television started as a small network in 1984 and has since grown into a major television presence, broadcasting to over 73 million homes. *Lifetime's* public affairs campaigns have encouraged local and national action on issues that affect women's lives, including voting, international human rights and raising breast cancer awareness. The Network's commitment to its viewers has been recognized by leading women's and non-profit organizations, including: the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, the National Women's Political Caucus, the Susan G. Komen Foundation, the New York Women's Agenda, Women in Communications, Women in Cable & Telecommunications and the Cable Television Public Affairs Association. *Lifetime* was also the recipient of the industry's highest honor, the 1996 Golden CableACE, for its efforts on behalf of the fight against breast cancer.

STATE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL NETWORK CONTACTS

The following is a comprehensive list of childcare resource and referral contacts provided by and included in the U.S. Department of the Treasury "Investing in Child Care" report published in 1998. You may find these childcare contacts helpful when developing partnerships and resources in your respective communities:

Alabama

Mary Silbert Davis
Alabama Child Care Network
c/o Child Care Resource Network
Ft. Payne, AL 35967
(205) 845-8238

Alaska

Sharon Lattery
Child Care Connection
201 Barrow, Suite 103
Anchorage, AK 99501
(907) 279-5024

Arizona

Jacob Raskob
Child and Family Resources
1030 N. Alvernon
Tucson, AZ 85711
(520) 881-8940

Arkansas

Arkansas Department of Human Services
Division of Child Care and Early Childhood
Education
101 East Capitol, Suite 106
Little Rock, AR 72201
(800) 445-3316

California

Patty Siegal
CA CCR&R Network
111 New Montgomery, 7th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105
(415) 882-0234

Colorado

Gail Wilson
CO Office of R&R Agency
7853 E. Arapahoe Rd., Suite 3300
Englewood, CO 80112
(303) 290-9088

Connecticut

Sherri Sutera
Child Care Infoline
1344 Silas Dean Highway
Rocky Hill, CT 06067
(800) 505-1000

Delaware

Jan Rheingold
The Family and Workplace Connection
3511 Silverside Road
100 Wilson Building
Wilmington, DE 19810
(302) 479-1679

District of Columbia

Washington Child Development Council
2121 Decatur Place, N.W.
Washington, DC 20008
(202) 387-0002

Florida

Susan Muenchow
Florida Children's Forum
259 East 7th Avenue
Tallahassee, FL 32303
(904) 681-7002

Georgia

Jerry Walker
Georgia Association of CCR&R
P.O. Box 243
Tifton, GA 30309
(912) 382-9919

Hawaii

Sally Little
Patch
2850 Pa'a Street, Suite 130
Honolulu, HI 96819
(808) 839-1789

Idaho

Sharon Bixby
Child Care Connections
P.O. Box 531
Boise, ID 83303
(208) 733-9351

Illinois

Steve Bemiller
IL CCR&R Network
207 W. Jefferson St., Suite 301
Bloomington, IL 61701
(309) 827-9659

Indiana

Marsha Thompson
Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral
3901 N. Meridian, Suite 350
Indianapolis, IN 46208
(317) 924-5202

Iowa

Marla Sheffler
CCR&R of Central Iowa
550 11th Street
Des Moines, IA 50314
(515) 883-1206

Kansas

Leadall Ediger
KACCRRRA
P.O. Box 2294
Salina, KS 67401
(785) 823-3343

Kentucky

Susan Vessels
Community Coordinated Child Care
1215 South 3rd Street
Louisville, KY 40203
(502) 636-1358

Louisiana

Judy Watts
Agenda for Children
P.O. Box 51837
New Orleans, LA 70151
(504) 586-8509

Maine

Linda Elias
Child Care Connections
P.O. Box 10480
Portland, ME 04104
(207) 775-6503

Maryland

Sandra Skolnik
Maryland Committee for Children
608 Water Street
Baltimore, MD 21202
(410) 752-7588

Massachusetts

Marta Rosa/ Julie Kirrane
Child Care Resource Center
130 Bishop Allen Dr.
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 547-1063

Michigan

J. Mark Sullivan
Michigan 4C Association
2875 Northwind Drive, #200
East Lansing, MI 48823
(517) 351-4171

Minnesota

Patrick Gannon
Minnesota CCR&R Network
2116 Campus Dr. SE
Rochester, MN 55904

Mississippi

Jane Boykin
Mississippi Forum on Children and Families, Inc.
737 North President
Jackson, MS 39202
(601) 355-4911

Missouri

Andi Schleicher
Child Day Care Association
of St. Louis
2031 Olive Street, 2nd Floor
St. Louis, MO 63103
(314) 241-3161

Montana

Janet Bush
Child Care Resources
127 E. Maine, Suite 314
Missoula, MT 59802
(406) 728-6446

Nebraska

Janet Phelan
Midwest Child Care Association
5015 Dodge St.
Omaha, NE 68132
(402) 558-6794

New Hampshire

Denise Buck
Family Works of Child & Family
500 Amherst Rd.
Nashua, NH 03063
(603) 889-7189

New Jersey

Beverly Ranton
NJACCRRRA
606 Delsea Drive
Sewell, NJ 08080
(609) 582-8282

New Mexico

Nicola Baptiste
YWCA/ Carino CCR&R
7201 Paseo Del Norte, NE
Albuquerque, NM 87113
(505) 822-9922

New York

David Hunt
NY State Child Care Coordination Council
130 Ontario Street
Albany, NY 12206
(518) 463-8663

North Carolina

Mary Bushnell
NCCCR&R Network
P.O. Box 901
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
(919) 967-3272

North Dakota

Linda Reinicke
Lutheran Social Service
of North Dakota
615 S. Broadway, Suite L3
Minot, ND 58701-4473
(701) 838-7800

Ohio

Tracy Ballas
Action for Children
78 Jefferson Avenue
Columbus, OH 43215
(614) 224-0222

Oklahoma

Liz Reece
Child Care Resource Center
1700 S. Sheridan Rd.
Tulsa, OK 74112
(918) 834-2273

Oregon

Debra Orman
Oregon CCR&R Network
3533 Fairview Industrial Drive
Salem, OR 97302
(503) 375-2644

Pennsylvania

Carrie Casey
Pennsylvania Association of Child Care Agencies
411 Walnut St.
Harrisburg, PA 17101
(717) 236-0458

Rhode Island

Patricia Nolin
Options for Working Parents
30 Exchange Terrace
Providence, RI 02903
(401) 272-7510

South Carolina

Sandra Hackley
Interfaith Community Services
P.O. Box 11570
Columbia, SC 29211
(803) 252-8390

South Dakota

Pam Henning
SDSU Family Resource Network
Box 2218-HDCFS/SDSU
Brookings, SD 57007
(605) 688-5730

Tennessee

Ann Harris
Child Care Resource and Referral Center
Tennessee Dept. of Human Services
400 Dedrick St., 14th Floor
Nashville, TN 37248-9810
(615) 313-4820

Texas

Nancy Hard
Dependent Care Management Group
130 Lewis Street
San Antonio, TX 78212
(210) 225-0276

Utah

Alda Jones
Family Connections Resource and Referral Center
Utah Valley State College
800 West 1200 South
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