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001. list	White House Women's Office Child Care Advocates Meeting (partial) (2 pages)	12/12/1997	P6/b(6)
002. list	[participants] (partial) (1 page)	nd	P6/b(6)

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FOLDER TITLE:

Child Care Focus Group Meetings

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RESTRICTION CODES

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CHILD CARE

A summary of focus groups

"This is a point in history...a critical one"

In April, the President announced that a White House Conference on Child Care would be held in the fall of 1997. In June, six focus groups were held to gather ideas to help plan the conference and overall strategy. More than 65 child care experts, representatives of national organizations, foundations and corporations participated in these discussion sessions.

Participants were asked a series of questions including:

- What was your initial reaction to the conference announcement?
- What is the most important outcome we should seek from the conference?
- What is the one thing that the Administration could do to help promote affordable, quality care?

The following is a summary of the key messages, outcomes and conference program ideas suggested by the focus group participants. Notes from each of the six sessions are also attached.

Messages about child care

"This is not a women's issue, it is a workforce issue"

"Education is a journey, but we send kids out without gas in the car"

Three or four themes emerged from the focus groups about the overall child care message.

- **Child Care is one of the central issues of our time.** In a fully employed society of the 21st Century, we must address the issue of caring for children while parents work. **Poor quality care, unreliable child care arrangements are experienced as a silent, personal crisis by many families, rather than a societal crisis.**
- We need to recast the child care issue. **Child Care is about economics and education-** it is about workforce development and child development. One participant put it this way, *"Child care is a competitive edge issue in the global market place...good child care is competitive business."* Many suggested that we build upon the brain research to **advance the image of child care as crucial to school readiness and long-term academic achievement.**
- **Child care is important to all families.** Child care is a universal need-not a welfare issue. Without child care the country cannot work. **A quality, affordable child care system benefits everyone.**

Outcomes

"We need a Marshall Plan for child care"

- **This must be more than a one-day conference.** It should launch both **short-term actions** to build momentum and a **long-term process** for moving child care forward, including federal policy changes and legislative commitments for **new investments.**
- **We must have a clear vision of the goal:**

"Every community should have a continuum of quality care from infancy through adolescence to meet the needs of children of working families."

- **Governors, mayors and the private sector must be challenged to help meet the goal in every State and community.** Child care is everyone's responsibility. Neither parents nor the federal government can do it alone. **Everyone should leave the conference with something specific that they can do.**
- **The federal government should set an example** by looking at the opportunities to enhance and expand child care across agencies.
- **Parents must learn to recognize quality child care and to demand it,** to create demand-side pressure for change. However, the conference must be sensitive to the fact that quality is both expensive for some parents and in short supply in many communities. Parents should not be made to feel terrified or guilty about the arrangements that they can provide for their children.
- The most critical issue is how we can finance a high quality, affordable accessible system for all children who need it. **A long term plan must be established to finance the full cost of quality** so that families can afford good care and child care providers do not have to subsidize the cost of quality through low wages. As one participant put it, *"Let's finally wrestle the finance bear to the ground."*

General Conference Program Ideas

- **Nontraditional allies with new resources should be invited,** rather than the usual child care constituency. As one participant put it, "The conference will accomplish nothing if it merely preaches to the converted." Participants should include civic leaders, educators, law enforcement, health professionals, religious leaders and the business community. Parents should be included in the presentations. *"Child care is everyone's business and everyone must own it."*
- **The conference should be made accessible to the general public with viewing throughout the country.** The conference needs to reach a broad audience of parents and providers, as well as targeting a private sector audience. There should be satellite hook-up all across the country.
- **The conference should emphasize strengths and solutions,** but should avoid advancing very specific models that may be difficult to replicate due to expense or varying community circumstances. Models should be used where they point to universal principles that are essential for a successful child care system anywhere.

White House Conference Focus Group
June 18, 1997

Participants:

Helen Blank, Children's Defense Fund
Jeannie Brooks-Gunn, Columbia University
Ellen Clippinger, National School Age Care Alliance
Lynn Kagan, Yale University
Tonlee Rich?, National Head Start Association
Claudia Wayne, National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce
Janet Wise, National Indian Child Care Association

First Thoughts Upon Hearing of the Conference:

- "This better be more than an event."
- This is a good opportunity for the nation to think systemically and consider the infrastructure required to support quality
- This should have a durable impact. It is a "kickoff" of something larger and not an end in itself.

Message Recommendations:

- The current lack of high quality, affordable, accessible care is a societal problem; it is not an individual consumer problem. Parents are not alone in their struggles with their child care arrangements.
- Early care and education occur at every moment in a child's life. Although not every child is in a child care setting every child receives care. Every person has a stake in all of the children of the society and the care that is given them.
- Frame the initiative/challenge/expenditures as a "Downpayment on America's Future," which encompasses the idea that spending money, time, and effort on children early has positive outcomes for the country later.
- Child care is not just a problem for poor people. People of all income levels struggle with child care arrangements.
- Quality matters. Quality has an impact on both short-term and long-term outcomes for children.
- Quality child care is synonymous with quality early care and education.
- Providing quality child care is a professional skill. America must value the work of caregivers and pay them a

living wage. Quality cannot be ensured until we reach this goal.

- Resources are required to bridge the gap between what parents are able to pay and the full cost of providing quality child care.
- Child care encompasses the need for care from birth through adolescence. "It's not just preschool."
- High quality, reliable child care arrangements improve the productivity of parents in the workforce, while investing in the development of the workforce of the future.
- American children have a right to a safe and healthy environment.

Strategy Recommendations:

- Make this a White House/Presidential acknowledgment of a major societal problem upon which he intends to launch a vision for the future and extensive plan of action. [Participant cited the recent race initiative as example.]
- Assemble the best minds to envision the universal, integrated early care and education system that our nation should have twenty years from now. It should include diversified funding streams and delivery systems.
- Have the President "show good faith" with an immediate action (such as more Federal dollars) and challenge the Governors to do likewise (see below), while announcing an initiative to examine and address the larger issues with a larger, long-term focus (e.g. a Commission).
- Have the President issue a challenge to the Nation's Governors to address this issue with resources and 10 year strategic plans. Have a few Governors "buy in" early and announce their commitments at the conference. Also enlist tribal leaders and mayors. [Noted tie to the National Education Goal #1.]
- Follow the one-day White House conference featuring the President and First Lady with a think tank conference to more fully hash out the issues.
- Provide satellite downlinks for people to watch around the nation, followed by local, on-site panels to further address the issues. [Participants cited " WH Brain Conference" example.]
- Maximize media coverage. Time it to coincide with an event that will garner more media coverage (i.e. Back-to-School, Thanksgiving's family focus, another announcement or event).
- Use regional conferences throughout the country to follow up on the WH conference.

- Pilot a completely comprehensive model that would install all of the pieces that have been proven to work into one community or State.

Conference Program Recommendations:

- Do not focus on models. There is no comprehensive American model that addresses all parts of the need. Large initiatives, like statewide or citywide commitments of resources should be cited, but they should be presented in the context of a larger vision. [NC, IL, and Kansas City were mentioned. International models were mentioned.]
- Focus on caregivers. The conference should address training (tied to compensation), wages and benefits, turnover, and professional recognition. Recognize that all of these elements are linked: trained entrants into the profession often leave quickly because there are few wage and benefit incentives to remaining in the child care field. This cycle makes it difficult to build a skilled, stable, professional workforce.
- Include a panel with a center-based provider, a home provider, a relative provider, etc. and ask them to speak about their experiences.
- Build credibility with parents by focusing on their needs and including them in the program (e.g., on a panel or in dialogue with caregivers and employers). Strong parent involvement is necessary to have buy-in and the commitment of resources from multiple sectors of society.
- Focus on helping parents understand the elements of quality (e.g. through parent education, consumer education, and peer mentoring). Help parents feel ownership of their child care arrangements, learn to partner with caregivers, and learn to pursue high expectations of caregivers and settings.
- Include employers and the business community, but recognize that most working women are employed by small employers who do not have the resources to provide on-site child care. Be flexible and avoid a "one size fits all" approach for business participation. Encourage them to advocate for child care resources with their local, State, and Federal governments. Encourage them to think strategically about how child care impacts them and how they can contribute to improvement.
- Explore the connection between child care and the global economy.
- Emphasize that child care is a community problem that requires active community participation to address.

Recognize, however, that every community is different and have different levels of resources to address the problem.

- Focus on the importance of regulations and standards. Participant noted that we expect barbers to be licensed, but millions of children are in unregulated child care.

Concerns:

- Several participants expressed concern over the narrow connotations attached to the term "child care." They wanted a broader term that encompassed child development, early care and education, the inclusion of children with disabilities, cultural diversity issues, and a recognition of care needs from infancy through adolescence.
- Do not terrify parents and families about the current poor quality of many child care settings or the unavailability of quality, affordable care.
- Do not make parents feel guilty about the kind of care that they are currently able to provide for their children. Emphasize that this is a systemic breakdown, not a personal failure.
- Some of the ambivalence around child care is rooted in societal ambivalence about mothers in the workforce. We need to be careful about the message that may be sent (or perceived to have been sent) about this issue.
- Some Welfare to Work initiatives are eroding the value of caregiving as a profession by implying that anyone can do child care and that it requires no special skills or training.
- Some States are allowing TANF dollars to be spent on child care without standards, which removes part of the incentive for providers to be licensed and puts some providers in financial jeopardy because parents are choosing cheaper, unregulated care.

White House Conference Focus Group
June 20, 1997

Participants:

Ellen Galinsky, Families and Work Institute
Melinda Green, Child Care Connection, Trenton, NJ
Barbara Kamara, District of Columbia Dept. of Human Services
Roberta Malavenda, Save the Children
Carole Porterman, Detroit CCCC
Nancy Sconyers, National Association of Child Advocates
Tutti Sherlock, Minnesota Resource & Referral Network
Gail Solit, Gallaudet University Child Development Center
Barbara Willer, NAEYC
Alice Walker-Duff, Crystal Stairs, Los Angeles, CA

First Thoughts Upon Hearing of the Conference:

- "They can't really be serious-this Fall! It's about time."
- Curious about target audience and outcomes.
- "Wouldn't it be wonderful if the highest level of government embraced child care?"

Message Recommendations:

- Educated consumers are needed to help drive quality.
- Parents must understand the importance of their choices.
- We must respect the diversity of families.
- Accessible, affordable, quality child care is vital to economic stability and long-term productivity.
- Our current subsidy system is not even meeting the need to fund the poor quality system that we currently have, let alone the quality system that we should aspire to.
- Avoid any messages that seem to imply that government should "take over raising kids."

Strategy Recommendations:

- Develop new funding streams. Although the public sector must do more, it cannot realistically do everything. Use Presidential leadership, tax credits, collective financing strategies, and incentives, to get more people to the table with resources.
- Make the event a launching pad for action with a major Presidential initiative around resources and quality.
- Use the event to build the political will for money and quality.

- Follow a Renaissance Weekend type of format to foster creative thinking. Avoid simply bringing together the standard group of child care constituents who already regularly speak with and "lecture" one another.
- Establish community child care mobilization and planning money for local organization. Model it on the Empowerment Zones.
- Have every Cabinet agency examine its programs' interaction with child care.
- Launch a task force on financing with a Presidential commitment to follow-up on recommendations.
- Institute a Marshall Plan for child care.
- Disseminate widely on videotape the parts of the program that are relevant to parents to be used in Head Start, child care consumer ed, and parent ed programs.
- Consider expanding the CCDF, because it provides a strong, pre-existing legislative framework with a streamlined approach to child care.
- Build on the wave of devolution to the States to challenge and inspire the governors and mayors to sign on. Stress intergovernmental linkages.
- Get more quality money to the States, because the quality set-aside was reduced in CCDF.
- Parallel the need for and future development of early childhood education with universal public education. Note that some participants felt that this was a real danger politically and doesn't resonate with parents when tested in focus groups.
- Have a webpage in conjunction with the conference.
- Issue an Executive Order to institute National Child Care Professional Recognition Day. One participant expressed that parents have often requested a provider recognition day. Another expressed concern that it might simply be a token day.
- Have breakfast on the WH lawn for parents and providers.
- Build on the brain conference with a second round of media attention and local implementation and awareness work.

Conference Program Recommendations:

- Build a strong foundation with a clearly articulated Presidential vision.
- Bring people together to figure out how to generate the \$100 billion that we need for child care.
- Use a two-pronged approach: one part for parents, one part for policy makers.

- Take exceptional care about HOW we talk to parents. Use language that reflects the way that they think and talk about child care (cited brain conference, Child Care Aware focus groups.)
- Focus on resources. Even if parents have adequate consumer information about quality, they cannot purchase it if it is not affordable and the resources are not available.
- Use parents' voices. They are often ahead of the field in "militance and dissatisfaction with the child care status quo." They also describe quality most eloquently.
- Highlight principles from around the country. Look for pockets of excellence.
- Avoid small, narrow models that might be bound in a particular community's circumstance.
- Celebrate and promote community-based solutions. Don't advocate a one approach which may not fit all communities' needs.
- Focus on building a number of child care constituencies. Don't simply rely on the private sector.
- Focus on the early childhood workforce issues, including training tied to compensation, wage issues, benefit issues.
- Be mindful of the full range of providers, including family child care and Head Start.
- Look at the issue from the perspective of children, families, providers, business, and communities and examine how the needs are similar or different.
- Address the huge infant need.
- Ground content, recommendation, and actions in the context of data and information.
- Focus on accreditation to build and recognize quality. Think about national standards.
- Address racism and gender issues in child care. Have presenters and invitees who represent the diversity of people affected by child care. Consider language issues and the need for the program to be culturally sensitive to a variety of groups.
- Highlight the Federal government as a model employer on child care issues.

Concerns:

- "If you say the word 'quality' to policymakers, their eyes glaze over."
- The fact that child care programs have been administered by human services agencies, rather than education agencies, has reinforced the idea that child care is just for poor people.

- Be careful about addressing affordability issues, mindful of the fact that TANF and working families with low-incomes compete for the limited resources.

White House Conference Focus Group
June 23, 1997

Participants:

Joyce Butler, National Child Care Association
Deborah Eaton, National Association for Family Child Care
Abbey Griffin, Zero to Three
Janice Gurney, American Academy of Pediatrics
Bruce Hershfield, Child Welfare League of America
Charlene Mohamed (for Billie Young)
Evelyn Moore, National Black Child Development Institute
Billie Osbourne-Fears, Starting Point for Child Care & Early Education
Carol Phillips, National Council on Early Childhood Professional Recognition
Julie Quaid, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation
Susan Russell, Day Care Services Association, NC
Michelle Seligson, School Age Child Care Project, Wellesley
Heather Weiss, Harvard Family Research Project

First Thoughts Upon Hearing About the Conference:

- "This should be about quality, not quantity"
- What will be achieved? There had better be an outcome.
- We need to generate "a clearer idea of what child care is and how it fits into the American landscape."
- We should change the nature of the discourse on child care by looking at it from the child's point of view.
- Hope it is more substance and not a few flashy models that will not be able to play out in other communities, because of different community characteristics.
- "It's about time. We can't do it alone. We have nothing to deal with training and supply in a real way."

Message Recommendations:

- Public investment in children needs to start earlier.
- Child care and early education are synonymous.
- Child Care is an investment with great returns in both the short and the long-run.
- Child care is about self-sufficiency and taking care of yourself and your family.
- The working poor are left out of the system.
- Parents should not feel guilty about child care. People should be able to feel good about working.
- Child care supports families' and parents' role in child development.

- The current healthy economy is a rationale for why we can make this is a good time to make an investment in capacity building. The healthy economy also can be cited for driving child care demand, by virtue of high employment rates.
- If we decide as a Nation that every able-bodied person must work, we must consider who will mind the children. If we don't we will pay for it in the child abuse and neglect system, the foster care system, and the juvenile justice system.

Strategy Recommendations:

- Parlay the conference into more than a one day event.
- Use technology to create a real-time broadcast. (See CNN's "Talk Back Live.")
- Don't preach to the converted. Address the whole population, including people without children. Engage parents who haven't yet gotten the message and bring in business leaders and State and local public officials who haven't yet embraced a child care agenda.
- Establish a commission to push the agenda on a powerful level.
- Introduce a specific legislative package. Use a "disaster relief" approach in the short run, in conjunction with a long-term strategic plan, including legislation and outcome measures.
- A legislative package might include: training scholarships; links to higher education; recommended voluntary health, safety, and quality standards; incentive money to build capacity via grants or loans; revision of the Dependent Care Tax Credit with expansion and refundability. Build in different funding streams include funds and incentives to parents, businesses, and providers.
- Examine current regulations and funding guidelines in the housing and community development arenas to remove barriers to using those funds for community child care.
- Use the bully pulpit to market the message and raise the dialogue through town hall meetings, hearings, etc., on the State and local levels.
- Open a high quality child care center with comprehensive services in the most economically depressed neighborhood in America and call it the "President's Child Care Center."

Conference Program Recommendations:

- Put child care in the context of the larger economy of women, families, work, and welfare reform, so it no longer conjures up babysitting in people's minds.

- Place this in the historical context of the WH decennial conferences on children.
- Include the both the economic and child development aspects of child care.
- Link provider education and training to compensation. Keep quality linked to supply; push for good child care, not just more child care.
- Focus on the most critical things to be done, because there are so many dimensions to the current child care situation.
- Focus on building infrastructure. There is inadequate infrastructure to support the current inadequate supply, much less to grow the system, improve the quality, or accommodate increased need from welfare reform.
- Highlight the most important infrastructure issues which are the development of human and financial resources. Look at the Making the Most of Out-of-School Time Initiative (MOST) for insight into how communities can build infrastructure.
- Approach the issue from a strengths perspective. Balance current issues and concerns with historical context and successful models, and the strengths of the profession.
- Do not highlight models without a broad-based frame of vision that can be expressed as legislation and a sense of movement toward a larger goal.
- Push toward universal child care in America, to unify us and produce a broader base of care. Until we do, resources will remain in jeopardy. Another participant expressed concern about the political unfeasibility of a "universal" focus.
- Don't leave parents hanging with no follow-up. After the brain conference, parents were eager to seek advice and follow-up, but too few mechanisms existed for it.

Concerns:

- Supply issues are more critical than ever. As people come off of welfare, the competition between the lower income people and the working poor for child care resources is going to intensify. When people leave welfare and join the working poor, will they lose the ability to pay for quality child care?
- Quality disparities may come to a head between people with very low incomes and the working class. As Head Start institutes performance measures and Early Head Start, there is not enough quality in the child care system to supply the working poor and wrap around Early Head Start.
- Some participants expressed concern that any attempt to establish national performance standards would lead to the demise of a legislative package or major strategic plan.

White House Conference Focus Group
June 25, 1997

Participants:

Randy Botnick, Benton Foundation
Kathleen Christenson, Alfred P. Sloan Foundation
Deanna Gombey, David and Lucille Packard Foundation
Mary Larner, David and Lucille Packard Foundation
Michael Levine, Carnegie Corporation of New York
Luba Lynch, A.L. Mailman Family Foundation
Marge Petrusca, The Howard Heinz Endowment
Linda Rich, Pew Charitable Trusts
Pam Stevens, Dewitt-Wallace, Reader's Digest Fund
Ruby Takaneshi, Foundation for Child Development
Dee Topol, Traveler's Foundation

First Thoughts Upon Hearing of the Conference:

- "Send me the money. If a program could be initiated to bring the needed resources, that would be the top priority. We need to help families pay for quality, rather than have the Early childhood workers subsidize it. [This is the] one main thing that has escaped us as funders. We have put a lot of money on the table together, but it hasn't reached the core problem."
- "Great opportunity to get the point across that quality matters and there is going to be an economic imperative because of welfare reform."
- "This is bigger than a women's issue. It's a workforce issue."
- "It's the money, stupid."

Message Recommendations:

- The President should lay out the following facts for the American people: Women are going to work. Millions of children and adolescents have no care and supervision. We must do something about the situation.
- We must do a number of things simultaneously to address workforce development, child development, and current workforce needs.
- It is a travesty that, while our economy requires two parents to work to support a family, we haven't taken responsibility for the healthy care and development of working people's children.
- Working people are the most disadvantaged in the system.
- The difference between success and failure in community

experiments has been the availability of adequate resources. Subsidy alone will not beget quality unless an infrastructure is in place to support quality.

Strategy Recommendations:

- Bring more broadly-based constituents to the table than the traditional child care constituents. Give air time to the nontraditional players.
- Recognize that it is critical that the efforts be bipartisan. Enlist both Democratic and Republican governors, many of whom are already doing extraordinary things.
- Introduce legislation to shift the Federal, State, and local funding to realign the current funding structure so that costs are shared between 10-20% private, 10-20% parents fees, business contribution. Currently, too much is paid by parents and subsidized by child care workers via their low wages.
- Assemble the best economic and public policy minds to address the following question honestly: "Where do we get the money that child care workers currently subsidize?"
- Encourage systems reform and structural change so that communities can institute coalition-building and integrated systems. Provide planning money and use community leaders to let communities take charge and drive designs to increase quality and supply.
- Spark public private partnerships that focus on three or four primary aspects of quality.
- Launch a national campaign like the teenage pregnancy prevention campaign.
- Launch a BIG IDEA like the New Deal or the War on Poverty. Don't get so lost in details that the thread of the big picture is lost.
- Establish a commission funded with blended public and private resources. One participant suggested that the research has been and is being done already and should be assembled BEFORE the conference and analyzed before or during the conference, in lieu of a commission to perform this function afterwards. Another participant expressed that commission recommendations are often not implemented, due to changing political climates and/or administrations.
- Advocate two or three big strategies like universally funded Head Start, universal pre-K education with wrap-around child care, and the mobilization of the business community.
- Analyze the entire picture of Federal child care support, including tax credits, and determine to whom the money is flowing for what purposes. Determine if the results reflect

strong priorities and most appropriate distribution of Federal funds.

- Build a quality infrastructure by linking with welfare to work initiatives, the National Service movement, workforce development programs, and higher education.
- Examine Federal regulations to determine how they can be tightened to support quality. Link funding to quality standards. Several participants, though, expressed concern about national standards, and suggested using the private early childhood organizations to promulgate standards.

Conference Program Recommendations:

- Broaden the message to include pre-adolescents and adolescents who are spending more and more time unsupervised. Demographics will lead to a large cohort of adolescents in the near future.
- Focus on the economics of child care, like increased productivity and workforce development. One California county cost out the economic benefits of child care to the community and they were equal to the largest agricultural crops in the county.
- Validate the issue and take it out of the realm of the "soft issues." In the brain conference this was done by lending the import of scientists. Consider business representatives, economists, scientists, and parents.
- Focus on the outcomes of poor supervision and care.
- Talk about quality in a way that does not employ too much professional jargon.
- Focus on the plight of the child care worker and the degree to which early childhood is valued (or undervalued) as a profession. Discuss the women's business aspect of child care (e.g., microlending and microenterprise).
- Combat the perception that child care is only about poor children and families. The public perception is that child care only has to do with a small portion of the population.
- Explore the intersection between child care and Head Start.
- Explore the intersection between child care and family leave.

Concerns:

- It may be too difficult to send one coherent message if we focus on two vulnerable populations at once: young children and youths. One participant proposed that it deal specifically with younger children. Another participant responded that infancy through adolescence should be viewed as a continuum.

- The President and First Lady should convey specific messages, yet not segment the audience and the topic too much. Be broad without being too generic to generate interest; specific without being so narrow that it segments people and increases competition for limited resources.
- Policymakers need to understand the effects on the working poor, as well as the welfare recipient transitioning welfare recipient. For instance, is exempting people with infants from TANF requirements fair when working people cannot afford time off to spend with their infants?

White House Focus Group
June 27, 1997

Participants:

Margaret Browning, Mentor Graphics
Ted Childs, IBM
Michael Day, Bright Horizons
Madeline Fried, Fried & Sher
Dana Friedman, Corporate Family Solutions
Rosemary Jordano, Children First, Inc.
Chris Kjeldsen, Johnson and Johnson
Donna Klein, Marriott International
Mary Kay Leonard, Work Family Institute
Barbara Reisman, Schumann Fund
Charles Romeo, Con Agra

First Thoughts Upon Hearing about the Conference:

- This could be an important next step after the brain conference to "do something serious in this country about child development and parent education."
- Need to have a bold initiative on public policy.
- Are we ready for this after 30 years of talking about it? Can we air our dirty laundry in public? Can we build the public will to do what we need to do?
- What we've been doing and how we have been talking about it has not worked. How can we position the issue differently?

Message Recommendations:

- The President could build on his message of two more years of post-secondary ed, by emphasizing two more years of education before children enter elementary school.
- We must get the schools ready for the child and the child ready for the schools. Education is a journey and setting the child out on the journey without good early care and education is like trying to start without gas in the car.
- We must resolve to move toward a national system of affordable child care for the masses. However, a national system does not equal a national delivery system.
- It is unacceptable for an American child to come to Kindergarten not ready to learn. This is a war and we're going to win it.
- "Good child care is competitive business." We must view this as a part of America's competitive spirit and a

necessity to give us the competitive edge in the global marketplace.

- One of our country's fundamental principles is that we must educate our people to have an informed, responsible citizens in our democracy, yet we fail to build on our principles when we neglect the education of children from infancy.
- Child care is not babysitting. All providers, from relatives to center-based providers, are teachers.

Strategy Recommendations:

- Establish a process out in the field to prepare for the conference by running focus groups all over the country, lining up partners in communities, etc.
- Position the President as the "Working Family President" and link this initiative with the Family and Medical Leave Act, EITC, etc.
- Work with the Cabinet Secretaries (Daley, Shalala, and Hermann were mentioned) as a group to act on the cross-cutting issues around work, family, and child care. Have them lead the way by streamlining Federal child care activities and setting an example for the private sector.
- Use the Presidential bully pulpit to maximal effectiveness by building public will to support related legislation.
- Focus on employers, large, small, and ambivalent. Recognize that they fall on a continuum with regard to how far they have addressed the child care (work/family) agenda. Don't just focus on the employers who are already partners.
- Use CEO's who were in child care as children to deliver the message. Dollars tend to follow business leaders.
- Focus on funding. Don't be shy to talk about funding as an issue.
- Establish a child care investment fund, using the administrative skill and investment knowledge of the private sector. Make it a public/private partnership possibly through matching of community investments.
- Encourage business leaders to integrate their current programs into a multilateral approach to the work/family/child care issues. For instance, have the priorities of the corporate foundation in line with the employee initiatives in the human resource area and family-focused public relations campaigns.
- Leverage off of K-12 involvement and support programs already underway in the corporate sector. Incorporate child care into the various programs like "Adopt-A-School" programs.

- Have a concrete product that comes out of the conference.
- Provide earmarked student loans for early childhood education and training. Provide loan abatement or lower interest rate incentives to those who remain in the field 3-4 years.
- Maximize the use of our infrastructure by mandating that school buildings remain open full day/full year. Provide state and local governments with strategies to finance the extra hours (e.g., allowing community groups to use the space.)
- Change the perception of providers by recognizing leading teachers in the field, especially young teachers, to showcase quality and change the professional image.
- Link every other Presidential initiative to young children and working families.

Conference Program Recommendations:

- Link early childhood to K-12 education agenda.
- Focus on how to build a more cohesive system with partners in a variety of sectors.
- Explore ways to recruit and retain good people in the field. It gets harder every year to attract talented people and harder to retain them.
- Focus on child care as a continuum from infancy through adolescence.

Concerns:

- If you preach to the converted, you will accomplish nothing.
- The private sector models that are currently underway are primarily for families that can afford to pay. The private sector needs better strategies for dealing with low-wage workers.
- The military model does not work in the private sector because it relies too heavily on universal subsidy and lacks the element of competition that is central to the private employer.
- When linking with other systems, be aware that many delivery systems, especially school systems, are ineffective with families because they fail to understand cultural/linguistic diversity.
- Don't advocate a one-size-fits-all approach. Some communities may have strong school/educational systems on which to build, while others have a strong network of community-based organizations.

- Be aware of the potential to increase tension between those who can afford to pay and those who cannot.

White House Conference Focus Group
June 30, 1997

Participants:

Larry Aber, National Center for Children in Poverty
Judy Appelbaum, National Women's Law Center
Doug Baird, Associated Day Care, Boston
Barbara Bowman, Erikson Institute
John Brooks, YMCA of the USA
Barbara Clinton, Vanderbilt Center for Health Services
Angela Crowley, Nat'l Assoc. of Pediatric Nurse Associates & Practitioners
Jerlean Daniel, Univ. of Pittsburgh & NAEYC
Elaine Ferish, Parents United for Child Care
Nancy Kolben, Child Care, Inc., New York
Anne Mitchell, Early Childhood Policy Research
Patty Siegel, Calif. Child Care Resources & Referral Network
Sandra Skolnik, Maryland Committee for Children
Rhea Starr, YWCA of the USA
Bernice Weissbourd, Family Focus and Family Resource Center
Lynn White, National Child Care Association

First Thoughts Upon Hearing About the Conference:

- " How do we go from dialogue to action?"
- " An opportunity will be missed if it is just a conference. There must be a strong follow-on plan."
- " Will he include school-aged children?"
- " How will he sell it to the country?"
- " This is a point in a long history, but a critical one."

Message Recommendations:

- Working families in America use child care every day. But what do they currently have access to and how do we build to meet their needs?
- "The strength of the current system is diversity. The weakness of the current system is how ad hoc it is."
- Access to quality is a national priority.
- Child care is not just of concern to the child care community. It is everyone's concern.
- Child care is a piece of the bridge to the twenty-first century.
- Partnerships are necessary to get the job done. There must be solutions on various scales.

Strategy Recommendations:

- Use the following frame: The President and First Lady articulate a vision of good child care across America. List the essential elements that are required to fulfill the vision. Emphasize that there is a lot of work to do and give people direction on the first steps. Check up on progress periodically.
- Obtain pledges and commitments (perhaps in advance) and then track and follow-up to ensure that they are carried out, like with the volunteer summit. Force accountability.
- Use child care as one mechanism through which the President can accomplish his other literacy and education goals.
- Launch a commission to investigate financing and ask the large companies to ante up into a huge public/private investment fund. The President must put money on the table, but use it to leverage other funds.
- Spawn similar conferences on a State and local scale with Governors and their spouses and local leaders.
- Place the exorbitant cost of quality child care in the context of the cost of higher education, to which people already relate.
- Foster the support of the middle class.

Conference Program Recommendations:

- Confront the issue of resources, which is central and lacking. The child care system that we talk about is expensive and we shouldn't pretend that it is not, however it saves money in the long run. Without a solid infrastructure and a 10 or 20 year roadmap, we won't get there.
- Cost out a real, comprehensive, quality system. If you had accurately predicted for people five years ago the level of the current new investment, they would have been happy, but now they feel it is still inadequate, because we lack an understanding of the actual scope of the need and a sense of what is required to address it.
- Make the connection to working families, especially the working poor, and portray child care as a crucial element in keeping parent(s) in the labor force.
- Focus on the silent customer in child care, which is the employer of the parent. Recognize that corporations' understanding of and efforts to address the child care situation fall along a continuum. Do not neglect small employers.

- Bring in the governors, mayors, business leaders, school leaders, and others to sell child care to different constituencies in the country. Have police chiefs sell it to police chiefs, superintendents to superintendents, etc..
Include unlikely allies like the labor unions, religious organizations, medical professionals, law enforcement, and the banking and finance industries. People will notice the messengers and what they represent.
- Give people focused recommendations for action and homework, so that they know what they are supposed to do the day after the conference.
- Have children speak about their experiences in child care settings of varying quality.
- Consider the delivery system very broadly. No matter where children are cared for, from relative care to center-based care, quality care in the first decade of a child's life is crucial to development.
- Connect the conference to the brain research to better demonstrate why early investment in children is important.
- Help parents understand what quality child care is from infancy through school-age.
- Have working parents speak for themselves. Highlight diverse parents and have them describe what they need from employers, from schools, etc.
- Give participants pre-work to do before they attend the conference. Each participant should investigate the state of child care in his or her community.
- Highlight child care as a system with an infrastructure and infrastructure needs, like facility and staff development.
- Ask: What policies can we have to ensure that all eligible children get good care?
- Include children's health, parents' health, and parental support.
- Use data to make the point.
- Avoid highlighting models that may not be transferable to other settings. Highlight only things which have the potential to be universal- not a cookie cutter, but a blueprint.

Concerns:

- Be aware of the frustration that is building from rehashing the same problems over and over again. Rather than exacerbate the frustration, highlight potential solutions.

Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. list	White House Women's Office Child Care Advocates Meeting (partial) (2 pages)	12/12/1997	P6/b(6)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
First Lady's Office
Domestic Policy Council (Nicole Rabner)
OA/Box Number: 15414

FOLDER TITLE:

Child Care Focus Group Meetings

2012-1035-S
kc1021

RESTRICTION CODES

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

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

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

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b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

[001]

**WHITE HOUSE WOMEN'S OFFICE
CHILD CARE ADVOCATES MEETING**

December 12, 1997
5:00 PM - 6:00 PM
Room 180, Old Executive Office Building

Name/Organization	D.O.B/SS#/Country	Phone Number
Yasmina Vinci National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral	P6/(b)(6) USA	393-5501
Sammie Moshenberg National Council on Jewish Women	P6/(b)(6) USA	296-2588
Barabara Willer National Association for Education of Young Children	P6/(b)(6) USA	232-8777
Judy Appelbaum WLC	P6/(b)(6) USA	588-5180
Karen Nussbaum AFL-CIO	P6/(b)(6) USA	637-5064
Nancy Duff Cambell National Women's Law Center	P6/(b)(6) USA	588-5180
Nancy Zirkin AAUW	P6/(b)(6) USA	785-7720
Joan Entmacher WLDF		986-2600
Pat Reuss NOW LDF		544-4470
Lynn White National Child Care Association		1-800-543-7161
Nancy Granese Hogan & Hartson		637-5697
Sharon Daly Catholic Charities	P6/(b)(6) USA	

Nancy Wisdo U.S. Catholic Conference	P6/(b)(6) USA	
Nicole Poersch, surrogate for Helen Blank Children's Defense Fund	P6/(b)(6) USA	662-3545
Carabelle Pizzagatti Child Welfare League		
Mary Cooper National Council of Churches	P6/(b)(6) USA	
Faith Wohl Childcare Action Campaign		212-239-0138
Carolyn York, surrogate for Kathy Colette AFSCME	P6/(b)(6) USA	429-5090
Gloria Johnson Coalition of Labor Union Women		785-7209
Elena Kagan DPC		6-5584
Maria Echaveste OPL		6-6594
Jen Klein DPC		6-2599
Nicole Rabner DPC		6-6266
Gene Sperling NEC		6-2620
Joan Lombardi HHS/Childcare Bureau		401-6947
Audrey Tayse Haynes Women's Office		6-7300
Robin Leeds Women's Office		6-7300

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
002. list	[participants] (partial) (1 page)	nd	P6/b(6)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
First Lady's Office
Domestic Policy Council (Nicole Rabner)
OA/Box Number: 15414

FOLDER TITLE:

Child Care Focus Group Meetings

2012-1035-S
kc1021

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b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

Jennifer Klein

Donna M. Klein
Director
Work/Life Programs
Marriott International
Marriott Drive
Washington, DC 20058

Rhea F. Starr
Child Care Advocate
YWCA of the USA
624 9th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Sheryl Dicker
Executive Director
Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children
c/o Pace University School of Law
78 North Broadway
White Plains, New York 10603

Nancy Thompson
The Annenberg/ CPB Project
901 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Joyce E. Butler

P6/(b)(6)

Providence, Rhode Island 02906

Karen A. Cowles
Communications Consortium Media Center
1200 New York Avenue, NW
Suite 300
Washington, DC 20005-1754

Kerby T. Alvy, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Center for the Improvement of Child Caring
11331 Ventura Blvd., Suite 103
Studio City, California 91604

Ruby Takanishi
President
Foundation for Child Development
345 East 46 Street
New York, NY 10017-3562

Mildred M. Winter
Executive Director
Parents as Teachers National Center, Inc.
10176 Corporate Square Drive, Suite 230
St. Louis, Missouri 63132

Yasmina Vinci
Executive Director, NACCRRA
1319 F Street, NW, Suite 810
Washington, DC 20004-1106

Tutti Sherlock
Board Chair, Child Care Aware
1319 F Street, NW, Suite 810
Washington, DC 20004-1106

Giovanna Stark
Executive Director
Child Development Policy Advisory Committee
915 Capitol Mall, Room 336
Sacramento, CA 95814

Angela Crowley
Co-Chair, Child Care Special Interest Group
Yale University School of Nursing
100 Church Street South
PO Box 9740
New Haven, CT 06536-0740

Kristy Liles
Publicis Public Relations
3500 Maple Avenue
Dallas, TX 75219

Augusta Souza Kappner
President
The Bank Street College of Education
610 West 112th St.
New York, NY 10025-1120

Janet L. Mascia
Senior Evaluator
U.S. General Accounting Office
441 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20548

Carrie Wofford
200 Constitution Ave, NW, Room S3002
Washington, DC 20210

Nicole Rabner
Carey Fleming
Director of Corporate Alliances
Work Life Benefits
539 Fernwood Road
Murrells Inlet, SC 29576

Roger H. Brown
Chief Executive Officer
Bright Horizons Children's Centers
One Kendall Square, Building 200
Cambridge, MA 02139

Rosemary Jordano
President
Children First Inc.
One International Place
Boston, MA 02110

Dee Topol
President
The Travelers Foundation
388 Greenwich Street

New York, NY 10013

Claudia E. Wayne
National Center for the Early Childhood Work Force
733 15th Street, NW, Suite 1037
Washington, DC 20005-2112

Lynn L. White
Executive Director, NCCA
1016 Rosser Street
Conyers, GA 30207

Charles R. Romeo
Director, Employee Benefits
Con Agra Refrigerated Foods Companies
2000 South Batavia Avenue
Geneva, IL 60134

Anna S. Wadia
Senior Program Officer
Ms. Foundation for Women
120 Wall Street, 33rd Floor
New York, NY 10005

Ellen Clippinger
President
National School-Age Care Alliance
4720 North Park
Indianapolis, IN 46205

Madeline Fried
Fried & Sher, Inc.
465 Carlisle Drive
Herndon, VA 20170

Stacie G. Goffin

Senior Program Officer
Youth Development
Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation
4900 Oak
Kansas City, Missouri 64112-2776

Deborah Lowe Vandell
NICHD Study of Early Child Care
Wisconsin Center for Education Research
University of Wisconsin School of Education
1025 West Johnson Street
Madison, WI 53706

Martha Farrell Erickson, Ph.D.
Director of Children, Youth, and Family Consortium
University of Minnesota
12 McNeal Hall
1985 Buford Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55108

Matthew E. Melmed
Executive Director, Zero to Three
734 15th Street, NW, Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20005-1013

Margaret M. Petruska
Senior Program Officer and Director HHS Programs
The Heinz Endowments
30 CNG Tower
625 Liberty Avenue
Pittsburg, PA 15222-3115

Kathy Bonk
Executive Director, CCMC
1200 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20005-1754

Helen Blank
Director, Child Care Division
Children's Defense Fund
25 E Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20001



WHITE HOUSE MEETING ON CHILD CARE

Monday, June 23, 1997

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

✓ Carol Brunson-Phillips
Executive Director
Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition
2460 16th Street NW
Washington, DC 20009-3575
800-424-4310

✓ Joyce Butler
USA Child Care
KCMC Child Development Corporation
2104 East 18th Street
Kansas City, MO 64127-2524
(816) 474-0434

✓ Deborah Eaton
President
National Association for Family Child Care
9167 Berkview Lane
Spring Valley, CA 91977
(619) 466-8340

✓ Abby Griffin
Zero to Three
National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families
734 15th Street, N.W.
Suite 1000
Washington, D.C. 20005-1013
(202) 638-1144

✓ Janice Guerney
American Academy for Pediatrics
601 13th Street, NW, Suite 400 North
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 347-8600

✓ Bruce Hershfield
Director, Child Day Care Services
Child Welfare League of America
440 First Street, NW, Suite 310
Washington, DC 20001-2085
(202) 638-2952 x291

✓ Evelyn Moore
President
National Black Child Development Institute
1023 15th Street, NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 387-1281

✓ ***Charleen Muhammad***

**replaced Billie Young -- call for address/phone of Muhammad -- Seattle, WA
206/386-1143**

✓ Billie Osbourne-Fears
Starting Point for Child Care & Early Education
3135 Euclid, Suite 200
Cleveland, OH 44115
(216) 431-1818

✓ Julie Quaid
Director
Confederated Tribes of the Warm Spring Reservation
P.O. Box C
1257 Kot-Num Road
Warm Springs, OR 97761
(541) 553-3240

✓ Susan Russell
Executive Director
Day Care Services Association
P.O. Box 901
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
(919) 967-3272

✓Michelle Seligson
Executive Director
School Age Child Care Project
Center for Research on Women
Wellesley College
106 Central Street
Wellesley, MA 02181
(617) 283-2547

✓Heather Weiss
Harvard Family Research Project
Harvard Graduate School of Education
38 Concord Ave.
Cambridge, MA 02138
(617) 495-9108

WHITE HOUSE MEETING ON CHILD CARE

Monday, June 30, 1997

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

- ✓ Larry Aber
National Center for Children in Poverty
Columbia University School of Public Health
154 Haven Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10032
(212) 304-7100
- ✓ Gordon M. Ambach
Executive Director
Council of Chief State School Officers
1 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20001-1431
(202) 408-5505
- ✓ Judy Applebaum
National Women's Law Center
11 Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 588-5180
- ✓ Doug Baird
Associated Day Care Services
95 Berkeley Street, Suite 306
Boston, MA 02116
(617) 695-0700
- ✓ Dr. Barbara Bowman
Erikson Institute for Advanced Study of Child Development
420 North Wabash Avenue
Chicago, IL 60611
(312) 755-2250
- ✓ John Brooks
Senior Public Policy Associate
YMCA
1701 K Street, NW, Suite 903
Washington, DC 20006
(202) 835-9043

✓ Barbara Clinton
Director
Center for Health Services
Vanderbilt University
Station 17
Nashville, TN 37232-8180
(615) 322-4773

✓ Angela Crowley, MA, APRN, CS, PNP
Associate Professor
Yale University School of Nursing
100 Church Street South
P.O. Box 9740
New Haven, CT 06536-0740
(203) 737-2548

✓ Dr. Jerlean Daniels
Program in Child Development and Child Care
1717 Cathedral of Learning
University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
(412) 624-6356

✓ Elaine Fersh
Director
Parents United for Child Care
30 Winter Street, 7th Floor
Boston, MA 02108-4720
(617) 426-8288

✓ Nancy Kolben
Child Care Inc.
275 Seventh Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10001
(212) 929-7604

✓ Anne Mitchell
Early Childhood Policy Research
HCR 1, Box 77
Climax, N.Y. 12042
(518) 966-4585

✓Gail Richardson
Acting Executive Director Child Care Action Campaign
330 7th Avenue, 17th Floor
New York, N.Y. 10001
(212) 268-6515

✓Patty Siegel
California Child Care Resouce & Referral Network
111 New Montgomery Street, 7th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105
(415) 882-0234

✓Sandra Skolnik
Executive Director
Maryland Committee for Children, Inc.
608 Water Street
Baltimore, MD 21202
(410) 752-7588

✓Rhea Starr
Child Care Advocate
YWCA of the USA
726 Broadway
New York, NY 10003
(212) 614-2700

✓Bernice Weissbourd
President, Family Focus
Family Resource Coalition
310 South Peoria Street
Suite 510
Chicago, IL 60607
(312) 421-5200

✓Lynn White
National Child Care Association
1016 Rosser Street
Conyers, GA 30012
800-543-7161

WHITE HOUSE MEETING ON CHILD CARE

Wednesday, June 25, 1997

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

- ✓ Randi Botnick
Benton Foundation
1634 Eye Street, NW, 12th Floor
Washington, DC 20006
(202) 638-5770
- ✓ Kathleen Christensen
Program Officer
Alfred P. Sloan Foundation
630 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2550
New York, N.Y. 10111-0242
(212) 649-1649
- ✓ Deanna Gomby
David and Lucille Packard Foundation
Center for the Future of Children
300 Second Street, Suite 102
Los Altos, CA 94022
(415) 948-3696
- ✓ Mary Larner
David and Lucille Packard Foundation
Center for the Future of Children
300 Second Street, Suite 102
Los Altos, CA 94022
(415) 948-3696
- ✓ Michael Levine
Carnegie Corporation of New York
437 Madison Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10022
(212) 371-3200
- ✓ Luba Lynch
A.L. Mailman Family Foundation
707 Westchester Avenue
White Plains, N.Y. 10604
(914) 681-4448

✓ Margaret Petruska
Director
Health and Human Services Programs
The Howard Heinz Endowment
30 CNG Tower
Pittsburgh, PA 15222
(412) 338-2615

✓ Linda Rich
Pew Charitable Trusts
One Commerce Square
2005 Market Street, Suite 1700
Philadelphia, PA 19103-7017
(215) 575-4866

✓ Pam Stevens
Program Officer
DeWitt Wallace - Reader's Digest Fund
2 Park Avenue, 23rd Floor
New York, N.Y. 10016
(212) 251-9714

✓ Ruby Takaneshi
Foundation for Child Development
345 East 46th Street, Room 700
New York, N.Y. 10017-3562
(212) 697-3150

✗ ~~***Dee Topel***~~
~~Traveler's Foundation~~
~~388 Greenwich Street~~
~~New York, N.Y. 10013~~
~~(212) 816-8000~~

WHITE HOUSE MEETING ON CHILD CARE

Friday, June 20, 1997

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

✓ Gordon M. Ambach
Executive Director
Council of Chief State School Officers
1 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20001-1431
(202) 408-5505

✓ Barbara Ferguson Kamara
DC Dept. of Human Services
Office of Early Childhood Development
717 14th Street NW, #730
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 727-1839

✓ Ellen Galinsky
Co-President
Families and Work Institute
330 Seventh Avenue, 14th Floor
New York, N.Y. 10001
(212) 465-2044

✓ Melinda Green
Executive Director
The Child Care Connection, Inc.
2425 Pennington Road
Trenton, NJ 08638
(609) 737-9243

✓ Roberta Malavenda
Deputy Director for Programs
Save the Children Child Care Support Center
1447 Peachtree Street NE, Suite 700
Atlanta, GA 30309
(404) 479-4202

✓Carole Quaterman
Project Director
The Family Place
8726 Woodward Avenue
Detroit, MI 48202
(313) 664-0700

✓Nancy Sconyers
National Association of Child Advocates
Suite 600
1522 K Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006-1202
(202) 289-0777

✓Tutti Sherlock
Minnesota R & R Network
2116 Campus Drive SE
Rochester, MN 55904
(507) 287-2020

✓Gail Solit
Director
Gallaudet University Child Development Center
Kendall School, 3rd Floor
800 Florida Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20004
(202) 651-5130

✓Alice Walker-Duff
Executive Director
Crystal Stairs
5105 W. Gold Leaf Circle
Los Angeles, CA 90056
(213) 299-8998

✓Barbara Willer
National Association for the Education of Young Children
1509 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036
800-424-2460

WHITE HOUSE MEETING ON CHILD CARE

Friday, June 27, 1997

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

✓ Margaret Browning
Director, Work/Life Benefit Programs
Mentor Graphics
8005 SW Boeckman Road
Wilsonville, OR 97070
(503) 685-7997

✓ J.T. Childs
Director, Workforce Diversity
IBM
Route 9
Town of Mount Pleasant
North Tarrytown, N.Y. 10591
(914) 332-2000

✓ Michael Day
Brighter Horizons Children's Centers
One Kendall Square, Bldg. 200
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617)-577-8020

✓ Madeline Fried
Principal
Fried and Sher
465 Carlisle Drive
Herndon, VA 20170
(703) 435-1700

✓ Dana Friedman
Senior Vice President
Corporate Family Solutions
14 Vanderventer Avenue, Suite 145
Port Washington, N.Y. 11050
(516) 767-3957

✓ Rosemary Jordano
President
Children First, Inc.
One International Place, 7th Floor
Boston, MA 02110
(617) 330-8687

✓ Chris Kjeldsen
Vice President, Community & Workplace Programs
Johnson & Johnson
One Johnson & Johnson Plaza
New Brunswick, N.J. 08933
(732) 524-0400

✓ Donna Klein
Director, Work-Life Program
Marriott International, Inc.
One Marriott Drive, Apt. 93512
Washington, D.C. 20058
(301) 380-6856

✓ Marykay Leonard
Work Family Directions
930 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02215
800-346-1535

✓ Barbara Reisman
Executive Director
Schumann Fund for New Jersey
21 Van Vleck Street
Montclair, N.J. 07042
(201) 509-9883

✓ Charles R. Romeo
Director, Employee Benefits
ConAgra Refrigerated Foods Companies
2000 South Batavia Avenue
Geneva, IL 60134
(630) 262-4067

WHITE HOUSE MEETING ON CHILD CARE

Wednesday, June 18, 1997

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

✓Helen Blank

Director
Child Care Division
Children's Defense Fund
25 E Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 628-8787

✓Jeanne Brooks-Gunn, Ph.D
Virginia & Leonard Marx Professor
Center for Young Children and Families
Teacher's College
Columbia University
525 West 120th Street, Box 39
New York, N.Y. 10027
(212) 678-3338

✓Ellen Clippinger
President
National School Age Care Alliance
4720 North Park Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46205
(317) 283-3817

✓Townley Hritz
National Head Start Association
1651 Prince Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 739-0875

✓Sharon Lynn Kagan
Yale University
Bush Center in Child Development and Social Policy
310 Prospect Street
New Haven, CT 06511
(203) 432-9931

✓ Claudia Wayne
National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce
733 15th Street, NW, Suite 1037
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 737-7700

✓ Janet Wise
National Indian Child Care Association
P.O. Box 580
Okmulgee, OK 74447
(918) 758-1463

Mr. Larry Aber
National Center for Children in Poverty
Columbia University School of Public Health
154 Haven Avenue
New York, NY 10032

Mr. Gordon Ambach
Executive Director
Council of Chief State Schools Officers
1 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Suite 700
Washington, DC 20001-1431

Ms. Helen Blank
Director, Child Care Division
Children's Defense Fund
25 E. Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Ms. Ellen Clippinger
President
National School Age Care Alliance
4720 North Park
Indianapolis, IN 46205

Ms. Angela Crowley
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Associates and
Practitioners
566 Broadview Road
Orange, CT 06477

Ms. Elaine Fersh
Director
Parents United for Child Care
30 Winter Street, 7th Floor
Boston, MA 02108-5720

Ms. Melinda Green
Executive Director
The Child Care Connection, Inc.
2425 Pennington Road
Trenton, NJ 08638

Ms. Sophia Harris
FOCAL
PO Box 214
Montgomery, AL 36101

Mr. Luis Hernandez
Metropolitan Dade County Child Development Services Resource
and Referral
111 NW Street, Suite 2210
Miami, FL 33128

Ms. Sharon Lynn Kagan
Yale University
Bush Center for Child Development in Social Policy
310 Prospect Street
New Haven, CT 06520

Ms. Deena Lahn
Child Care Law Center
22 Second Street, 5th floor
San Francisco, CA 94105

Ms. Antonia Lopez
National Council of La Raza
111 19th Street, NW
Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20036

Ms. Evelyn Moore
Executive Director
National Black Child Development Institute
1023 15th Street, NW
Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005

Ms. Gwen Morgan
Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education
Whelock College
200 The River Way
Boston, MA 02215

Ms. Gail Richardson
Acting Executive Director
Child Care Action Campaign
330 7th Avenue, 17th Floor
New York, NY 10001

Ms. Deborah Vandell
University of Wisconsin
Department of Education
1025 West Johnson
Madison
WI, 53706

Ms. Janet Wise
National Indian Child Care Association
279 East 137th Street
Glenpool, OK 74033

Mr. Billie Young
Manager
Child Development Programs
Family and Youth Services
618 2nd Avenue, 4th Floor
Seattle, WA 98104-2232

Ms. Becky Barerra
National Latino Children's Agenda
1611 West 6th Street
Austin, TX 78703

Mr. John Brooks
Senior Public Policy Associate
YMCA
1701 K Street, NW
Suite 903
Washington, DC 20006

Ms. Barbara Clinton
Director
Center for Health Services
Vanderbilt University
Station 17
Nashville, TN 37232-8180

Ms. Martha Erickson
Children, Youth, and Family Consortium
University of Minnesota
12 McNeal Hall
1985 Buford Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55108

Ms. Barbara Ferguson Kamara
DC Dept. of Human Services
Office of Early Childhood Development
717 14th Street, NW #730
Washington, DC 20005

Ms. Nancy Kolben
Child Care, Inc.
275 Seventh Avenue
New York, NY 10001

Ms. Ellen Galinsky
Co-President
Families and Work Institute
330 Seventh Avenue, 14th Floor
New York, NY 10001

Ms. Sarah Greene
CEO
National Head Start Association
1651 Prince Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Mr. Ronald Lally
Director
Center for Child and Family Studies
WestEd
180 Harbor Dr., Suite 112
Sausalito, CA 94965

Ms. Roberta Malavenda
Deputy Director for Programs
Save the Children Child Care Support Program
1447 Peachtree Street, NE
Suite 700
Atlanta, GA 30309

Ms. Deborah Phillips
Staff Director
National Research Council Board on Children, Youth and
Families
2101 Constitution Avenue, NW
Harris Bldg, Room 156
Washington, DC 20418

Ms. Nancy Sconyers
National Association of Child Advocates
Suite 600
1522 K Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006-1202

Ms. Gail Solit
Director
Gallaudet University Child Development Center
Kendall School, 3rd Floor
800 Florida Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20002

Ms. Alice Walker-Duff
Executive Director
Crystal Stairs
5105 W. Gold Leaf Circle
Los Angeles, CA 90056

Ms. Barbara Willer
National Association for the Education of Young Children
1509 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036

Ms. Duffy Campbell
National Women's Law Center
11 Dupont Circle, NW
Suite 800
Washington, DC 20036

Ms. Billie Warford
Montana Early Childhood Project
117 Herrick Hall
Montana State University
Bozeman, MT 59717

Ms. Carole Quarterman
Project Director
The Family Place
8726 Woodward Avenue
Detroit, MI 48202

Ms. Michelle Seligson
Executive Director
School Age Child Care Project
Wellesley College
Center for Research on Women
Wellesley, MA 02181

Ms. Yasmina Vinci
Executive Director
National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral
Agencies
1319 F Street, NW
Suite 810
Washington, DC 20004

Ms. Lynn White
National Child Care Association
1029 Railroad Street
Conyers, GA 30207

Mr. Ron Areglado
Associate Executive Director for Programs
National Association of Elementary School Principles
1515 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-3483

Ms. Deborah Eaton
President
National Association for Family Child Care
9167 Berkview Lane
Spring Valley, CA 91977

Mr. Bruce Hershfield
Director, Child Day Care Services
Child Welfare League of America
440 First Street, NW
Suite 310
Washington, DC 20001-2085

Mr. Matthew Melmed
Executive Director
Zero to Three
National Center for Clinical Infant Programs
734 15th Street, NW, 10th Floor
Washington, DC 20005-2101

Dr. Robert Hannenmann
American Academy of Pediatrics
2600 Greenbush Street
Lafayette, IN 47904

Ms. Julie Quaid
Director
Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation
PO Box C
1257 Kot-Num Road
Warm Springs, OR 97761

Ms. Tutti Sherlock
Minnesota R & R Network
2116 Campus Drive, SE
Rochester, MN 55904

Ms. Rhea Starr
Child Care Advocate
YWCA of the USA
512 Bean Blossom Drive
Lancaster, PA 17603

Ms. Claudia Wayne
National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce
733 15th Street, NW
Suite 800
Washington, DC 20005

Ms. Bernice Weissbourd
President, Family Focus
Family Resource Coalition
310 South Peoria Street
Suite 510
Chicago, IL 60607

Ms. Billie Osbourne-Fears
Starting Point for Child Care & Early Education
3135 Euclid, Suite 301
Cleveland, OH 44115

Dr. James Poole
American Academy of Pediatrics- North Carolina
270 Horizon Drive
Raleigh, NC 27615

Ms. Susan Russell
Executive Director
Day Care Services Association
PO Box 901
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Ms. Patty Siegel
California Child Care Institute
California Resource & Referral Network
111 New Montgomery Street, 7th floor
San Francisco, CA 94105

Ms. Shirley Stubbs-Gillette
USA Child Care
KCMC Child Development Corporation
2104 East 18th Street
Kansas City, MO 64127-2524

Ms. Heather Weiss
Harvard Family Research Project
Harvard Graduate School of Education
Longfellow Hall
Appian Way
Cambridge, MA 02138

Mr. Norman Yee
Executive Director
Wu Yee Children's Services
831 Broadway
San Francisco
CA, 94108

Ms. Kathleen Christensen
Program Officer
Alfred P. Sloan Foundation
Suite 2550
630 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10111-0242

Mr. Larry Kirkman
Executive Director
Benton Foundation
1634 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006

Ms. Mary Larner
David and Lucille Packard Foundation
Center for the Future of Children
300 Second Street, Suite 102
Los Altos, CA 94022

Ms. Deanna Gombey
David and Lucille Packard Foundation
Center for the Future of Children
300 Second Street, Suite 102
Los Altos, CA 94022

Mr. Michael Levine
Carnegie Corporation of New York
437 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10022

Ms. Janet Levy
Annie E. Casey Foundation
701 St. Paul Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

Ms. Luba Lynch
A.L. Mailman Family Foundation
707 Westchester Avenue
White Plains, NY 10604

Ms. Janice Molnar
Ford Foundation
Urban Poverty Program
320 East 43rd Street
New York, NY 10017

Ms. Marge Patrusca
Director
Health and Human Services Programs
The Howard Heinz Endowment
330 CNG Tower
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Ms. Barbara Reisman
Executive Director
Schumann Fund of New Jersey
21 Van Vleck Street
Montclair, NJ 07042

Ms. Linda Rich
Pew Charitable Trusts
One Commerce Square
200 Market Street, Suite 1700
Philadelphia, PA 19103-7017

Ms. Pam Stevens
Program Officer
DeWitt Wallace -- Reader's Digest Fund
2 Park Avenue, 23rd Floor
New York, NY 10016

Ms. Ruby Takanashi
Foundation for Child Development
345 East 46th Street
Room 700
New York, NY 10017-3562

Ms. Dee Topel
Traveler's Foundation
388 Greenwich Street
New York, NY 10013

Ms. Valora Washington
W.K. Kellogg Foundation
One Michigan Avenue East
Battle Creek, MI 49017-4058

Ms. Wilma Wells
The Danforth Foundation
231 South Bemiston Avenue
Suite 1080
St Louis, MO 63105-1996

Ms. Caroline Zinnser
Rockefeller Brothers Fund
1290 Avenue of the Americas
Room 3450
New York, NY 10104

Dr. Stacie Goffin
Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation
4900 Oak Street
Kansas City, MO 64112-2776

Mr. Roger Brown
Chief Executive Officer
Bright Horizons Children's Centers
One Kendall Square
Building 200
Cambridge, MA 02139

Ms. Margaret Browning
Director, Work/Life Benefit Programs
Mentor Graphics
8005 SW Boeckman Road
Wilsonville, OR 97068

Mr. Ted Childs
Director, Workforce Diversity
IBM
Route 9
Town of Mount Pleasant
North Tarrytown, NY 10591

Ms. Madeline Fried
Principal
Fried and Scher
465 Carlisle Drive
Herndon, VA 20170

Ms. Dana Friedman
Senior Vice President
Corporate Family Solutions
Suite 145
14 Vanderventer Avenue
Port Washington, NY 11050

Ms. Kimberly Hains
Senior Vice President for Work and Family
Nationsbank
NCI-021-02-05
401 North Trycon Street
Charlotte, NC 28255

Ms. Rosemary Jordano
President
Children First, Inc.
One International Place
7th Floor
Boston, MA 02110

Mr. Chris Kjeldsen
Vice President, Community & Workplace Programs
Johnson & Johnson
One Johnson & Johnson Plaza
New Brunswick, NJ 08933

Ms. Donna Klein
Director, Work-Life Program
Marriott International
10400 Fernwood Road
Bethesda, MD 20817

Ms. Fran Rodgers
Work Family Directions
930 Commonwealth Avenue West
Boston, MA 02215

Mr. Charles Romeo
Director, Employee Benefits
ConAgra Refrigerated Foods Companies
2000 South Batavia Avenue
Geneva, IL 60134

Ms. Kathy Zweber
Director, Work Life and Wellness Initiatives
Motorola
1303 East Algonquin Road
Schaumburg, IL 60196

Dr. Barbara Bowman
Erikson Institute for Advanced Study of Child Development
420 North Wabash Avenue
Chicago IL, 60611

Dr. Jerlean Daniels
University of Pittsburgh
Cathedral of Learning, Room 1717
4200 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh PA, 15260

Ms. Anne Mitchell
Early Childhood Policy Research
HCR 1 Box 77
Honey Hollow Road
Climax NY, 12042

Ms. Louise Stoney
Louise Stoney Associates
10 Tillinghast Ave.
Albany NY, 12204

Mr. Doug Baird
Associated Day Care Services
95 Berkeley Street, 3rd Floor
Boston MA, 02116

Ms. Susan Muenchow
Florida Children's Forum
259 East 7th Avenue
Tallahassee FL, 32308

Ms. Bobbie Webber
CCR&R of Linn and Benton Counties
Department of Family Resources
6500 SW Pacific Blvd.
Albany OR, 97321

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 9, 1997

Mr. Larry Aber
National Center for Children in Poverty
Columbia University School of Public Health
154 Haven Avenue
New York, NY 10032

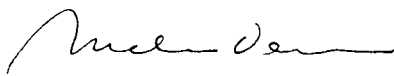
Dear Mr. Aber:

Improving the quality, accessibility and affordability of child care in our country is a priority for the President and his Administration. As you may know, the President recently announced that he and the First Lady will host a White House Conference on Child Care this fall to explore the strengths and weaknesses of child care delivery and discuss ways to improve it.

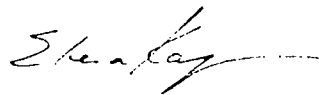
Because we know you share the President's commitment, and because of your impressive work in the area of child care, we are eager to hear your views and benefit from your experience as we develop the White House Conference. Please join us and other leaders in the child care field on June 30, 1997 at 3:00 p.m. in Room 472 Old Executive Office Building for an informal discussion. Please call Laura Emmett at 202-456-5584 with your dob and ssn if you can join us. If you cannot attend, please feel free to send us your thoughts and guidance, to Nicole Rabner, Office of the First Lady, The White House, Washington, D.C. 20502.

We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely yours,



Melanne Verveer
Assistant to the President
and Chief of Staff to the First Lady



Elena Kagan
Deputy Assistant to the President
for Domestic Policy

July 18, 1997

FIELD(Prefix) FIELD(First) FIELD(Last)
FIELD(Title)
FIELD(Organization)
FIELD(Address 1)
FIELD(Address 2)
FIELD(City), FIELD(State) FIELD(Zip)

Dear FIELD(Prefix) FIELD(Last):

Thank you very much for joining us to discuss the upcoming White House Conference on Child Care. The meeting was valuable to us both in shaping the conference and exploring policy options.

We encourage you to continue to advise us. Please send written comments to Jennifer Klein, Special Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy, 2nd floor West Wing, The White House, Washington, D.C. 20502, or feel free to call Jennifer or Nicole Rabner at (202)456-6266.

We hope that the White House Conference will make the compelling case -- which we heard from so many of you -- that making quality child care more affordable and accessible is good for the economy and central to a productive American workforce, as well as critical to our children's healthy development and ability to learn.

Thank you for your important contribution.

Sincerely yours,

Elena Kagan
Deputy Assistant to the President
For Domestic Policy

Child care focus group 6/20/97

focus: resources → audience - resource
"down payment"

exceptional care in communicating w/ parents.
how parents understand issue -
media/down links.

policy part

feedback on policy
form - creative + move field forward.

"we need parents to be better consumers"
E.O. - making Nat'l Child Care Provider
Cherries breakfast. Recog Day -

→ Pres. embracing cc.

dissatisfaction - parents - ahead of many of us -
understand & quality, &.

challenges - concrete prob.
- how to translate what qual.

parents - eloquent.

Resources of

- more info not main issue. : resources - critical.

deal w/ affordability directly.

link affordability w/ quality of staff.

- Recruitment of providers & training
 - Subsidies - cost of care.
- * fill the gap of affordability for parents.

Ellen:

1. funding / push toward community mobilization planning funding for communities
2. Task force on financing re: affordability -
(Dong price task force - COS)
3. Encouragement of state TF, as well
3. Quality & → to states gone done in
by
promote states doing spec. contrib-
tary / scholarships funds
4. ABC - coming next wk.
(getting ready to think about more than
their employers)
National public priv. collab partnership.

Look at instances of Excellence:
smart start, Teach., MN

Pres. articulate a vision for nation

→ challenge to states, countries to match the vision,
bus., higher ed, con.
Get party together - more aggressive.

cr. fits into all pieces - all dept: Labor, Ed., ...

→ continuum of care

CCDF: key commitment (don't overlook)
[cd double it]

community college -
principle of qual. universal access -
→ (how to make it happen)

→ impact on each federal agency

fed Gov: model

celebrate communities that have done innovative wk.
IL, RI → 150% of pov → universal access.
play down competition of welfare
recipients vs. low income

Need to be well grounded in data - status quo.

"Marshall Plan for CC."

Accreditation issue.

Josh
web.

Child care focus group 6/23/97 3pm

- clearer sense of what child care is, how it fits into the American landscape → big picture.
- Economy context. [still conjures "baby-sitting" context - tied to larger fam. ec. picture]
- change nature of discourse on child care depends on fam. / women in the workforce.
- perspective of both children / adults

• econ / human perspectives

France: welcoming of child into society.
(we invest in our children for later)

* watch up the profession training etc

* not focus on flashy good things that are not replicable - substance

WH Conf ev 10 yrs - used to be

→ got a dialogue going

1970 Conf - child care - top priority - a lot of building - Jackson - constituency oriented

→ supply of professionals in the field.
"It's about time" - training

infrastructure

models → highlighting
strengthen infrastructure

historical context → how ec. was developed

human resources issue: quality of a staff
dictate quality of program

If not remembered
the report.

→ move toward universal cc. (unify - toward a
broader base of care ... until we do, lower income
people will be disadvantaged. → not qual' of cd.

paying full cost of care - difficult for
lower class, middle income

Working toward a "working society" - people have to work.

As consumer of cc → has to have a better
understanding of cc & quality of cc
around the substantive, concrete consumer issues

→ Understand in real & terms the return on the
investment. * What do we get when folks
work

Society needs it / not just the individual.

audience - imp. → in room that day → business people -

* Take the guilt out of ~~the~~ needing child care

* Commission

Conf of

- even ladder / compensation
- infrastructure.

pick up on the train stuff.

intro the package →

for infrastructure dev.

create consumer demand → intro the package.

healthy economy makes the demand for cc.

→ Adopted ~~to be~~
don't talk about it.

Chambers of Commerce - key bus people...
hear the econ. issues, generate public
will (consumer groups - to hear this.
who to bring into this. → with inv.

people left out → people in the middle - working
people of Am. - leg that wd address it
closer to universality.

→ Tax Credit

Emergency leg / Marshall Plan - Disaster relief

Age 1 piece of TANF will upload → returning out there
for young children (as well as school age care)

link quality piece of supply

→ \$ for subsidies for low income
→

Gov can
look at laws &
evaluate
them.

Leg package - \$ into these five things

1. training / recruitment
2. scholarships / training U.S.
3. facilities
4. standards - Academy
HCCA campaign

quality
standards -

Ziglar - giving up fight for nat'l standards -
put out → for consumer

→ Grant program - if state meets X standard -
gets dollars.

\$ for communities
public / priv partnership - com. can get gov dollars
if they have private dollars as well.

Redding DCYC

- expanding the slide
- making it refundable -
- refundable for accreditation

At in field

- tax credits to fam, bus., communities that do good things, providers.
- ECTS/HS - service
- higher ed/voc tech schools
- welfare training programs.

CC is central to fam support.

- facil → Econ dev. / community service centers ? of funds.
- using housing dev dollars - clear up lang -
- perception that