

Caring for America's Children

The Clinton Administration and Child Care

October 23, 1997

Over the past decade, the number of American families with working parents has expanded dramatically. Making high quality child care more affordable and accessible is critical to the strength of our families and to healthy child development and learning.... Each of us --from businesses to religious leaders to policy-makers and elected officials --has a responsibility and an important stake in making sure that children of all ages have the best possible care available to them. From infancy through adolescence, in child care settings and after-school programs, children can learn and thrive with the right care, attention, and education.

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President Clinton is hosting the first-ever White House Conference on Child Care to focus the nation's attention on the importance of addressing the need for safe, affordable, quality child care. This Conference underscores and builds upon the President Clinton's commitment to strengthen the American family by giving parents the tools they need to fulfill their responsibilities and giving children the ability to reach their full potential.

STRENGTHENING AMERICA'S WORKING FAMILIES

- **Putting Families First.** Throughout his presidency, President Clinton has worked hard to help America's working families. That is why the President fought for the passage of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) to allow workers to take up to 12 weeks unpaid leave to care for a newborn or adopted child, to attend to their own serious health needs, or to care for a seriously ill parent, child or spouse. In June 1996, President Clinton proposed expanding FMLA to allow workers to take up to 24 unpaid hours off each year for school and early childhood education activities, routine family medical care, and caring for an elderly relative. The President also has fought for greater health security for America's families. He signed into law the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act which includes important new protections for an estimated 25 million Americans who move from one job to another, who are self-employed, or who have pre-existing medical conditions. And in August 1997, President Clinton signed the Balanced Budget Act which included \$24 billion for the Children's Health Initiative -- the single largest investment in health care for children since 1965 -- to provide meaningful health care coverage to millions of uninsured children.
- **Providing Economic Opportunity.** In 1993, President Clinton put into place an economic strategy that invests in people and provides real opportunity. President Clinton has fought for policies that help working parents fulfill their responsibilities, including winning inclusion of a \$500 per-child tax credit for children under age 17 in the Balanced Budget Act -- helping 27 million families with 45 million children. The new Child Tax Credit is in addition to the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit (tax credits President

Clinton protected during the balanced budget negotiations). President Clinton also expanded the Earned Income Tax Credit to give 15 million working families tax relief. In 1997, the average tax credit is \$1,450 on family income up to \$29,290. And the President proposed and signed into law an increase in the minimum wage from \$4.25 to \$5.15. For a full-time, year-round worker at minimum wage, this 90-cent increase raises yearly income by \$1,800 -- as much as the average family spends on groceries over seven months.

INVESTING IN CHILD CARE

- **Increasing Child Care Funding.** Because of President Clinton's leadership, federal funding for direct child care subsidies has increased by nearly 70 percent since he took office, providing child care services for over one million children. The 1996 welfare law increased child care funding by \$4 billion over six years, providing child care assistance to low-income working families and parents moving from welfare to work.
- **Increasing Participation in Head Start and Improving Program Quality.** For more than thirty years, Head Start has been one of our nation's best investments ensuring that low-income children start school ready to learn. President Clinton has made expanding and improving Head Start a priority of his Administration. Since 1993, funding for the program has increased by 43 percent -- in fiscal year 1997, Head Start will serve nearly 800,000 low-income children four years old and younger. The Balanced Budget continues the expansion of Head Start toward the President's goal of serving one million children in 2002. Over the last three years, the Clinton Administration has also invested significantly in improving program quality, providing local programs with the resources they need to attract and retain high quality teachers, and ensuring the safety of Head Start centers.
- **Created Early Head Start for 0-3 Year Olds.** Initiated by the President in 1994, there are now 143 *Early Head Start* programs across the country, expanding the proven benefits of Head Start to low-income families with children age three and under. The program provides early, continuous and comprehensive child development and family support services, preparing children for a lifetime of learning and development. In FY 1997, the program will have served nearly 25,000 children and their families.
- **Developed a Full-Day, Full-Year Head Start Initiative.** In March 1997, the Administration announced a new Head Start initiative that will expand Head Start services for children while also helping parents, including those moving from welfare to work. Under the new initiative, child care providers will be given priority for Head Start expansion funds to deliver full-day, full-year Head Start services in partnership with Head Start. Children will stay in one place all day rather than attending Head Start for half a day then moving to child care for the remainder of the day.

- **Expanding Child Care in Rural America.** Under the Clinton Administration, the Agriculture Department's Rural Housing Service's Community Facilities program is directing its efforts towards meeting the need for quality child care in rural areas. As a part of this effort, 31 child care centers were created in FY 1997 and the program will expand in FY 1998. In addition, the Rural Housing Service has been forming partnerships with other federal programs (including Head Start) and the private sector to help provide child care in rural America.
- **Providing Child Care in Urban Communities.** Under the Clinton Administration, the Department of Housing and Urban Development is supporting working families and those moving to work by providing both quality child care for their children and opportunities for parents to become self sufficient. Community Development Block Grants fund initiatives that include education/training opportunities, on-site after-school child care and construction of child care and youth centers. The Ounce of Prevention Program enhances efforts already underway in Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities with summer and after-school education/recreation activities and mentoring and tutoring programs. In 1997, the Department awarded \$550 million in urban revitalization (HOPE VI) funds which will be used to physically revitalize communities and fund initiatives such as on-site day care centers and transportation services that provide access to employment centers and health care facilities. In 1997, the Administration funded \$42 million for the Family Economic Development and Supportive Services (EDSS) program that will include child care services, youth leadership and mentoring skills and family/parental development counseling.
- **Serving Children with Special Needs.** Under the Clinton Administration, the Department of Justice has worked hard to make sure that children with disabilities have access to child care along with non-disabled children. For instance, the Justice Department has entered into agreements regarding children with disabilities with the two largest child care companies in the country -- KinderCare has agreed to do "finger-prick" tests as requested by doctors and parents for children with diabetes and, in another agreement with KinderCare, the company has agreed to develop a model policy to enable a child with mental retardation to attend one of its centers with a state-funded personal care attendant. In addition, La Petite Academy has agreed to do the same "finger-prick" tests, to keep epinephrine on hand for severe and possibly-life-threatening allergy attacks, and to make changes to some of its programs so that children with cerebral palsy can participate. The Justice Department also provides information through its ADA information hotline (1-800-514-0301, 1-800-514-0383 TDD) and produces *Commonly Asked Questions about Child Care Centers and the ADA* for distribution. Additionally, the HHS Child Care Bureau has launched a special initiative to assist ten states to develop and implement effective plans aimed at improving and expanding their child care service delivery system. The project, "Map to Inclusive Child Care," will expand to other states over the next three years.
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for on-site community services -- Head Start facilities, a health clinic, and child care centers -- at transit facilities across the country to help parents obtain child care for their children on their commuting routes to work or training.

ENSURING HEALTH AND NUTRITION IN CHILD CARE

- **Improving Health and Safety with Healthy Child Care America.** In an effort to improve the health and safety of child care programs and to provide child health education to child care providers and parents, in 1995, the Clinton Administration launched the Healthy Child Care America initiative. This effort has established partnerships between child care providers and health care services in 46 states, helping to ensure that children in child care are in safe and healthy environments.
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CARING FOR SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

- **Convened the 1997 School-Age Child Care Forums.** The Child Care Bureau at the Department of Health and Human Services convened ten regional conferences to share promising initiatives for school-age children among child care, education, and community based organizations from nearly every state. These conferences spurred additional dialogue among participants and stimulated planning to address "out of school time" in states and communities across the country.

- **Keeping Schools Open as Community Learning Centers -- A Guide.** In May 1997, First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton released *Keeping Schools Open as Community Learning Centers: Extending Learning in a Safe, Drug-Free Environment Before and After School*. The Department of Education, along with the National Community Education Association, Policy Studies Associates, and the American Bar Association, wrote the step-by-step guidebook on how school facilities can be used for after-school programs.
- **Providing After-School Activities Through 21st Century Learning Centers and Title I.** The Clinton Administration's Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This law included a new statutory requirement that encourages schools receiving funding to enhance their instruction with such programs as extended school years, before- and after-school programs, and summer programs -- effectively giving "teeth" to after-school options. For instance, Title I -- which is funded by the Improving America's Schools Act and provides extra help with basic and advanced skills to disadvantaged students in elementary and secondary schools -- has been successful in helping Title I funded schools provide after-school programs. In addition, under this law, the 21st Century Community Learning Center program has been developed -- a program that once fully implemented will benefit urban and rural schools and their communities, allowing schools to stay open beyond the normal hours, offering expanded learning opportunities to children after-school. The President's current budget request includes \$50 million to fund 350 21st Century Community Learning Center programs in FY 1998.
- **Supporting Positive After-School Choices with the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act.** Because children unsupervised after school are more likely to engage in risky behaviors like substance use, the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act funds before and after-school programs. In the 1994-95 school year, over 2,700 school districts used these funds to support before- and after-school activities.
- **Staying Safe After School with Community Schools.** In the Anti-Gang and Youth Violence Initiative, the President has called for 1,000 new after-school initiatives across the country. Schools that stay open longer and are open on weekends and during the summer can provide students, parents and communities with access to valuable resources. Turning schools into after-hour safe havens can help to prevent violent crime and violent behavior while boosting our children's academic achievement.
- **Helping Children Through Service.** As co-chair of the Presidents' Summit for America's Future, President Clinton helped bring businesses, nonprofits, states and communities, and volunteer groups to Philadelphia in April 1997 to focus on service and to ensure that every child in America has five key resources -- a caring adult, a safe place, a healthy start, a marketable skill, and a chance to serve. Many of the hundreds of corporations and nonprofits that made commitments at the summit pledged to become involved in after-school and mentoring programs. America's Promise, the nonprofit organization founded to follow up on the summit promises, is now working with these organizations to ensure that they do so.

- **Enhancing Child Care and After-School Care with the Corporation for National Service.** Established by President Clinton in 1993, the Corporation for National Service, through AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America and the National Senior Service Corps, is addressing the needs of children through service activities. Approximately two-thirds of the national service programs work to address the needs of children and youth often in child care and after-school settings. AmeriCorps members, college students, and senior volunteers, working alongside child care providers, are serving as tutors and mentors, health and nutrition educators, in both child care and after-school programs across the country.
- **Aiding the Boys and Girls Clubs of America.** The Clinton Administration is providing resources to the Boys and Girls Clubs of America to establish and enhance more clubs throughout the United States. These Clubs are situated in at-risk communities and reach thousands of kids through violence prevention and reduction, educational health programs and youth leadership development. For instance, the Boys and Girls Clubs of America was awarded an AmeriCorps grant to provide education awards to 100 full-time and 800 part-time AmeriCorps members in up to 100 clubs early next year. The AmeriCorps members will be either older (17 and 18 year-olds) Boys or Girls Clubs members or club member alumni who will serve as tutors, mentors, and recreation activity coordinators in after-school programs.

PROVIDING INFORMATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- **Providing Child Care Information.** In 1995, the Clinton Administration established the Child Care Bureau at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to streamline child care program operations and improve the quality and efficiency of service. In addition, HHS launched the National Child Care Information Center to disseminate child care information, publications and resources to help providers start up child care centers, parents locate child care in their communities, and researchers and policy makers attain access to policy information. Through the Technical Assistance Project, HHS has brought states together to share promising practices and has held special forums on school-age care, consumer education, Tribal child care programs, and a range of other topics.
- **Promoting Public/Private Partnerships.** The Child Care Bureau has launched a nationwide effort to promote public/private partnerships in child care by providing technical assistance to states on promising initiatives going on across the country.
- **Providing a Resource and Referral Clearinghouse for Working Families.** The Department of Labor Women's Bureau recently published a report entitled: *What Works! The Working Women Count Honor Roll Final Report* which highlights employers who have made real change in the areas that working women and their families care about most -- pay and benefits, family friendly workplaces (including child care) and respect and fair treatment on the job. Hundreds of employers accepted this challenge to deliver real change -- especially in child care. This guide was a result of the Working Women Count national questionnaire which surveyed 250,000 working women -- the largest questionnaire of working women ever. Notably, child care was identified as a top issue for working women. In addition to this guide, the Labor Department has expanded its resource and referral clearinghouse for employers and working

families. The agency has established a toll-free number (1-800-827-5335) and provides materials like the *Work and Family Resource Kit* and *Care Around the Clock: Developing Child Care Before 9 and after 5*.

- **Training Caregivers -- a Nationally Acclaimed Program.** The Education Department's Office of Educational Research and Improvement supports the regional laboratory in San Francisco, California called WestEd. WestEd has developed a nationally acclaimed Infant/Toddler Caregiver Training Program which teaches caregivers how to provide nurturing and stimulating environments to promote quality child care. Research-based videos and printed materials are available in Spanish, Chinese, and English. Eight thousand caregivers have been trained in California and the program has been expanded across the nation.

LEARNING LESSONS FROM THE MILITARY CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

- **Providing High Quality Child Care -- The Military Model.** Under the Clinton Administration, the Department of Defense (DoD) has made important strides to improve the quality of child care for the children of the men and women who serve our country. The DoD Child Care System serves over 200,000 children (age zero to 12) daily making the U.S. military system the largest employer-sponsored child care program in the nation. The DoD Child Care System, known as the Child Development Program, includes Child Development Centers, Family Child Care homes, School Age Care programs, and Resource and Referral services. Through this system, the military offers full-day, part-day, and hourly child care, part-day preschools, before- and after-school programs for school age children, and extended hour care which includes nights and weekends to accommodate shift workers. Because of the Department of Defense's commitment to excellence in child care, since 1992, the number of military child care facilities that are accredited by the independent National Association for the Education of Young Children has risen from 55 to 353. Currently, over 75 percent of military child care programs are accredited, as compared to only 7 percent of other child care facilities nationwide. Since the early 1990s, the DoD has focused on improving the quality, availability, and cost of child care for military families.
- **Sharing the Military's Expertise.** Because of the DoD's high quality, comprehensive child care programs, in April 1997, President Clinton directed the Secretary of Defense to share the expertise and lessons learned from the Military Child Development Programs with Federal, State, tribal, and local agencies, as well as with private and nonprofit groups, that are responsible for providing child care. In his Directive the President stated, "The Military Child Development Programs have attained a reputation for an abiding commitment to quality in the delivery of child care. The Department of Defense's dedication to adequate funding, strict oversight, improved training and wage packages, strong family child care networks, and commitment to meeting national accreditation standards is laudatory. I believe that the military has important lessons to share with the rest of the Nation on how to improve the quality of child care for all of our Nation's children." In response to the President's directive, the Pentagon is implementing a plan to reach out to states and civilian child care centers to share its expertise.

SUPPORTING A FAMILY-FRIENDLY FEDERAL WORKPLACE

- **Promoting Family-Friendly Initiatives.** Under President Clinton's leadership, the federal government, striving to be a model employer for other private and public employers, has implemented family-friendly leave initiatives that enhance the ability of employees to balance family and employment obligations. In addition to leave initiatives, the federal government offers compressed or flexible work schedules to many workers so that they may spend more time with their families.
- **Providing Child Care for Federal Workers.** In addition to the Department of Defense's model child care program, there are more than 230 child care centers for civilian government employees in federal buildings in as many as 36 states. The General Services Administration (GSA) oversees 108 of these centers, making GSA the largest civilian sponsor of work-site child care in the nation. Under this Administration, the emphasis on quality has continued -- with 73 percent of GSA sponsored centers accredited by the independent National Association for Education of Young Children, and with a goal of reaching 100 percent accreditation within two years. Striving to meet the needs of parent workers, 89 percent of GSA centers have infant care, 74 percent have drop-in/emergency care, and 42 percent provide summer programs for school aged children. In addition, more than 80 percent of centers are open 11 or more hours per day. Nearly 70 percent of the child care center directors have ten or more years of experience in early childhood education.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

If you're a working parent, chances are that you have struggled to find affordable, quality child care. Like millions of others, you know just how important child care is to your family's well being and to your ability to work without worry. Yet for too long, parents across our country have struggled with too little information, too few choices and too much anxiety.

For far too long, America's families have faced this problem alone. Now it is time to move this issue to the top of our country's agenda. We have a special opportunity to do that when the President and I host a White House conference on child care on October 23. We hope that this conference will begin an honest national discussion about child care and build on promising efforts already underway in states and communities.

Here are some of the questions we need to answer -- as individual parents and as a nation: How can we ensure that children in care are safe from harm? What are the best ways to make the hours children spend in care as stimulating and nurturing as possible? How can we do a better job of valuing the important work of child care professionals? How can we encourage employers to provide child care benefits to their employees, a practice that makes sense not just for children, but for the corporate bottom line, as well? How can we put into practice what research tells us -- that when children participate in good after-school programs, they do better in school, don't engage in risky behavior and thrive? And how can we genuinely support parents who choose, often at significant economic cost, to stay at home with their children?

When I was a working mother with a young child, my friends and I shared these concerns. Today, when families are under even greater stress, I continue to worry about how we can meet the challenge of strengthening child care for American families. The President and I believe it will take parents, businesses, child care providers, experts, advocates, and officials at all levels of government working together to ensure that children get the care they need to learn and grow, that parents have peace of mind while on the job, and that employers can count on responsible, attentive workers. I hope you will join in this important discussion.

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- **Providing After-School Activities Through 21st Century Learning Centers and Title I.** The Clinton Administration's Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This law included a new statutory requirement that encourages schools receiving funding to enhance their instruction with such programs as extended school years, before- and after-school programs, and summer programs -- effectively giving "teeth" to after-school options. For instance, Title I -- which is funded by the Improving America's Schools Act and provides extra help with basic and advanced skills to disadvantaged students in elementary and secondary schools -- has been successful in helping Title I funded schools provide after-school programs. In addition, under this law, the 21st Century Community Learning Center program has been developed -- a program that once fully implemented will benefit urban and rural schools and their communities, allowing schools to stay open beyond the normal hours, offering expanded learning opportunities to children after-school. The President's current budget request includes \$50 million to fund 350 21st Century Community Learning Center programs in FY 1998.
- **Supporting Positive After-School Choices with the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act.** Because children unsupervised after school are more likely to engage in risky behaviors like substance use, the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act funds before and after-school programs. In the 1994-95 school year, over 2,700 school districts used these funds to support before- and after-school activities.
- **Staying Safe After School with Community Schools.** In the Anti-Gang and Youth Violence Initiative, the President has called for 1,000 new after-school initiatives across the country. Schools that stay open longer and are open on weekends and during the summer can provide students, parents and communities with access to valuable resources. Turning schools into after-hour safe havens can help to prevent violent crime and violent behavior while boosting our children's academic achievement.
- **Helping Children Through Service.** As co-chair of the Presidents' Summit for America's Future, President Clinton helped bring businesses, nonprofits, states and communities, and volunteer groups to Philadelphia in April 1997 to focus on service and to ensure that every child in America has five key resources -- a caring adult, a safe place, a healthy start, a marketable skill, and a chance to serve. Many of the hundreds of corporations and nonprofits that made commitments at the summit pledged to become involved in after-school and mentoring programs. America's Promise, the nonprofit organization founded to follow up on the summit promises, is now working with these organizations to ensure that they do so.

- **Enhancing Child Care and After-School Care with the Corporation for National Service.** Established by President Clinton in 1993, the Corporation for National Service, through AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America and the National Senior Service Corps, is addressing the needs of children through service activities. Approximately two-thirds of the national service programs work to address the needs of children and youth often in child care and after-school settings. AmeriCorps members, college students, and senior volunteers, working alongside child care providers, are serving as tutors and mentors, health and nutrition educators, in both child care and after-school programs across the country.
- **Aiding the Boys and Girls Clubs of America.** The Clinton Administration is providing resources to the Boys and Girls Clubs of America to establish and enhance more clubs throughout the United States. These Clubs are situated in at-risk communities and reach thousands of kids through violence prevention and reduction, educational health programs and youth leadership development. For instance, the Boys and Girls Clubs of America was awarded an AmeriCorps grant to provide education awards to 100 full-time and 800 part-time AmeriCorps members in up to 100 clubs early next year. The AmeriCorps members will be either older (17 and 18 year-olds) Boys or Girls Clubs members or club member alumni who will serve as tutors, mentors, and recreation activity coordinators in after-school programs.

PROVIDING INFORMATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- **Providing Child Care Information.** In 1995, the Clinton Administration established the Child Care Bureau at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to streamline child care program operations and improve the quality and efficiency of service. In addition, HHS launched the National Child Care Information Center to disseminate child care information, publications and resources to help providers start up child care centers, parents locate child care in their communities, and researchers and policy makers attain access to policy information. Through the Technical Assistance Project, HHS has brought states together to share promising practices and has held special forums on school-age care, consumer education, Tribal child care programs, and a range of other topics.
- **Promoting Public/Private Partnerships.** The Child Care Bureau has launched a nationwide effort to promote public/private partnerships in child care by providing technical assistance to states on promising initiatives going on across the country.
- **Providing a Resource and Referral Clearinghouse for Working Families.** The Department of Labor Women's Bureau recently published a report entitled: *What Works! The Working Women Count Honor Roll Final Report* which highlights employers who have made real change in the areas that working women and their families care about most -- pay and benefits, family friendly workplaces (including child care) and respect and fair treatment on the job. Hundreds of employers accepted this challenge to deliver real change -- especially in child care. This guide was a result of the Working Women Count national questionnaire which surveyed 250,000 working women -- the largest questionnaire of working women ever. Notably, child care was identified as a top issue for working women. In addition to this guide, the Labor Department has expanded its resource and referral clearinghouse for employers and working

families. The agency has established a toll-free number (1-800-827-5335) and provides materials like the *Work and Family Resource Kit* and *Care Around the Clock: Developing Child Care Before 9 and after 5*.

- **Training Caregivers -- a Nationally Acclaimed Program.** The Education Department's Office of Educational Research and Improvement supports the regional laboratory in San Francisco, California called WestEd. WestEd has developed a nationally acclaimed Infant/Toddler Caregiver Training Program which teaches caregivers how to provide nurturing and stimulating environments to promote quality child care. Research-based videos and printed materials are available in Spanish, Chinese, and English. Eight thousand caregivers have been trained in California and the program has been expanded across the nation.

LEARNING LESSONS FROM THE MILITARY CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

- **Providing High Quality Child Care -- The Military Model.** Under the Clinton Administration, the Department of Defense (DoD) has made important strides to improve the quality of child care for the children of the men and women who serve our country. The DoD Child Care System serves over 200,000 children (age zero to 12) daily making the U.S. military system the largest employer-sponsored child care program in the nation. The DoD Child Care System, known as the Child Development Program, includes Child Development Centers, Family Child Care homes, School Age Care programs, and Resource and Referral services. Through this system, the military offers full-day, part-day, and hourly child care, part-day preschools, before- and after-school programs for school age children, and extended hour care which includes nights and weekends to accommodate shift workers. Because of the Department of Defense's commitment to excellence in child care, since 1992, the number of military child care facilities that are accredited by the independent National Association for the Education of Young Children has risen from 55 to 353. Currently, over 75 percent of military child care programs are accredited, as compared to only 7 percent of other child care facilities nationwide. Since the early 1990s, the DoD has focused on improving the quality, availability, and cost of child care for military families.
- **Sharing the Military's Expertise.** Because of the DoD's high quality, comprehensive child care programs, in April 1997, President Clinton directed the Secretary of Defense to share the expertise and lessons learned from the Military Child Development Programs with Federal, State, tribal, and local agencies, as well as with private and nonprofit groups, that are responsible for providing child care. In his Directive the President stated, "The Military Child Development Programs have attained a reputation for an abiding commitment to quality in the delivery of child care. The Department of Defense's dedication to adequate funding, strict oversight, improved training and wage packages, strong family child care networks, and commitment to meeting national accreditation standards is laudatory. I believe that the military has important lessons to share with the rest of the Nation on how to improve the quality of child care for all of our Nation's children." In response to the President's directive, the Pentagon is implementing a plan to reach out to states and civilian child care centers to share its expertise.

SUPPORTING A FAMILY-FRIENDLY FEDERAL WORKPLACE

- **Promoting Family-Friendly Initiatives.** Under President Clinton's leadership, the federal government, striving to be a model employer for other private and public employers, has implemented family-friendly leave initiatives that enhance the ability of employees to balance family and employment obligations. In addition to leave initiatives, the federal government offers compressed or flexible work schedules to many workers so that they may spend more time with their families.
- **Providing Child Care for Federal Workers.** In addition to the Department of Defense's model child care program, there are more than 230 child care centers for civilian government employees in federal buildings in as many as 36 states. The General Services Administration (GSA) oversees 108 of these centers, making GSA the largest civilian sponsor of work-site child care in the nation. Under this Administration, the emphasis on quality has continued -- with 73 percent of GSA sponsored centers accredited by the independent National Association for Education of Young Children, and with a goal of reaching 100 percent accreditation within two years. Striving to meet the needs of parent workers, 89 percent of GSA centers have infant care, 74 percent have drop-in/emergency care, and 42 percent provide summer programs for school aged children. In addition, more than 80 percent of centers are open 11 or more hours per day. Nearly 70 percent of the child care center directors have ten or more years of experience in early childhood education.

The White House Conference on Child Care

October 23, 1997

Internal Q and A

GENERAL CONFERENCE QUESTIONS

Question: **Why are you hosting a White House Conference on Child Care?**

Answer: The President and First Lady are hosting the first-ever White House Conference on Child Care to address the need that America's parents have for safe, affordable child care for their children. Millions of Americans, struggling to be both good parents and good workers, rely on child care and after-school programs to care for their children for part of each day. Exploring the roles of both the public and private sectors, the Conference is intended to begin a dialogue on three of the most pressing child care issues -- availability, affordability, and assuring safety and quality.

The White House Conference on Child Care underscores and builds upon President Clinton's commitment to strengthen the American family. As he said to the National Governors Association, "We think every child should have access to quality child care, and we think it's the next great frontier if we're going to make sure all Americans can succeed at home and at work." (7/28/97)

Question: **What is happening at the Conference?**

Answer: There will be two panel discussions addressing three critical child care challenges -- availability, affordability and assuring safety and quality in child care. The morning panel, moderated by the President and First Lady, will explore why child care is important to our children's development and our nation's economy, and examine the strengths and weaknesses of child care in communities across the country. The afternoon panel, moderated by the Vice President and First Lady, will highlight promising efforts around the country and discuss how all members of the community can address the challenge of assuring safe, affordable child care for working families who need it.

Question: **What does the Administration see as the toughest problems facing parents when it comes to child care?**

Answer: The intent of this conference is to examine the tough questions facing parents when seeking child care -- *Can I get it? Can I afford it? And can I trust it?* Millions of Americans rely on child care and after-school programs to care for their children for part of each day. Parents need for it to be safe, available and affordable.

Question: What has the President done on this issue?

Answer: President Clinton has worked to improve and increase funding for child care. Under President Clinton's leadership, Federal funding for child care has increased by nearly 70%. The 1996 welfare reform law increased child care funding by \$4 billion over 6 years to provide child care assistance to low-income working families and parents moving from welfare to work. A percentage of these funds are set aside for efforts to improve the quality of child care. To ensure that children in child care are in safe and healthy environments, the President also launched the Healthy Child Care America Initiative. And because the Department of Defense child care system has become a model of employer-sponsored child care and after-school programming, the President asked the DOD to share its expertise with the civilian child care community.

During President Clinton's time in office, funding for Head Start has increased by 43%. This funding will continue to expand until it reaches the President's goal of serving one million children by the year 2002. The President also initiated the Early Head Start Program to expand the proven benefits of Head Start to low-income families with children age three and under.

To expand the benefits of after-school care, the President has, among other things, supported and signed the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act to fund after-school programs; called for an increased number of community schools that stay open longer and provide valuable resources to families and communities; and published a guide on *Keeping Schools Open as Community Learning Centers*.

Question: What is the state of child care in America?

Answer: The morning panel will examine the question: what does child care look like in America today? As we know, studies have shown that quality is not what it should be. A recent four-state study on child care centers found that one in eight expose children to unsafe or unsanitary conditions and that only 14 percent provide high quality care. The conference participants -- parents, academic experts, economists, child care providers, advocates, and representatives of the religious, labor, and business communities -- will explore how we can improve the current state of child care.

Question: By focusing on paid child care, are you discouraging parents from staying at home? Isn't it really the parents' role to nurture the child?

Answer: The President and First Lady believe that the most important people in children's lives are parents, and they value and respect parents who decide to stay home to care for their children. We talk about family values in this country, but we need to look at steps to help parents make the choices that are right for their families. But, the reality is that 13 million children spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents, either because both parents choose to or because both parents need to

work. An important purpose of this conference is to address the needs of those 13 million children and their families.

Question: Are you looking at doing something to support parents who want to stay at home and care for their children?

Answer: This issue will be discussed at the Conference, and the President is looking at ways to support these parents at the same time as he is exploring ways to help working parents. Throughout his Presidency, President Clinton has worked hard to provide real choices and opportunities for parents. He has fought for policies that help working parents fulfill their responsibilities, including putting forth a \$500 per-child tax credit for children; expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit to give 15 million working families tax relief; increasing the minimum wage, and signing Family and Medical Leave into law. President Clinton is committed to helping parents make the choices that are right for their families, whether that means working or staying home to care for children.

Question: How did you select these individuals who are panelists?

Answer: The White House held discussions with experts on child care from all across the country and received recommendations.

Question: The panels do not appear to be very bipartisan. Why not?

Answer: We have encouraged and received participation from both sides of the aisle. Republican State Representative Jane Maroney of Delaware will be a panelist today. In addition, Republican members of Congress will speak at the luncheon and the reception.

Question: What will the First Lady's role be in this?

Answer: The First Lady will continue to do what she has done for the last twenty years -- be a strong voice for children and families.

Question: Is the President intending to propose big investments in child care -- or strict regulation of child care -- in his next budget or State of the Union?

Answer: The President is considering a wide range of proposals for inclusion in the budget or State of the Union. He has made no decisions yet. But the President believes that the best way to make progress in this area is through collaboration with states, rather than through big, exclusively federal programs.

QUESTIONS ON NEW PROPOSALS

Question: What did the President announce today?

Answer: The President announced his intention to develop a child care initiative as a part of his next budget proposal. In addition, he announced several new efforts:

- 1) The appointment of a **Child Care Working Group** that will report to Secretary Rubin on the role that business can play in providing child care;
- 2) A **proposal for a new scholarship program** for students training to be child care providers, as well as an **outreach plan** to make child care workers aware of possible eligibility for Pell Grants;
- 3) The transmittal of the “**National Crime Prevention and Privacy Compact**” to Congress, which will enable states to share criminal history information for non-criminal purposes, including background checks on child care workers; and
- 4) A **strategy to use community service to strengthen after-school programs**.

Enabling more communities to use community service to enrich their after-school programs, the President announced actions by the Corporation for National Service’s new To Learn and Grow Initiative, a public-private partnership dedicated to expanding access to and enhancing the quality of after-school programs through service.

Question: Are you announcing any new funding for child care today? What is the timing of your announcements? When will we see some really dollar figures? Next budget?

Answer: The President took an important step to improve the quality of child care by asking Congress to enact a National Child Care Provider Scholarship Fund that will provide more than \$300 million in scholarships over five years to up to a quarter of a million child care providers (50,000 annually), helping the approximately 2.5 million children they care for. In addition, as the President said, his next budget will include a child care initiative.

The Child Care Working Group

Question: Who’s on it?

Answer: The Child Care Working Group will be made up primarily of prominent members of the business community. The group will consult with labor, economists and community leaders and report back to Secretary Rubin with recommendations.

Question: What’s its purpose?

Answer: The group will look at promising models of child care and think more carefully about the role that business should play in providing child care for their employees or enabling their employees and others in the community to gain access to high quality child care.

National Child Care Scholarship Fund

Question: What is it?

Answer: The President is proposing a new scholarship program, the National Child Care Scholarship Fund, as well as an outreach plan to let child care providers know that they may be eligible for Pell Grants. The Scholarship Fund will provide more than \$300 million in scholarships over five years to up to a quarter of a million child care providers (50,000 annually). It will provide assistance to full-or part-time students who are working toward a Child Development Associate credential or another degree in child development and who agree to remain in the child care field for at least one year. Providers who complete their course work will receive increased compensation or a bonus. This program will be modeled after North Carolina Governor Hunt's T.E.A.C.H. -- Teacher Education And Compensation Helps Early Childhood Project -- and on the military system.

Question: Why is the Administration proposing a new scholarship program, when the previously-existing Child Development Associate (CDA) Scholarship Program was consolidated under the Child Care and Development Fund?

Answer: The Child Care Associate (CDA) scholarship program was a small program targeted at only one credential (the CDA). Given the limited nature of the CDA scholarship program, folding it into the Child Care and Development Fund made sense as part of an effort to simplify funding. The proposed new National Child Care Scholarship Fund is much broader in scope. It provides greater flexibility to States in designing programs that meet their needs. States can provide assistance to child care providers working towards state credentials, national credentials, and Associate, BA, or BS degrees.

Question: Will the National Scholarship Fund raise the cost of child care?

Answer: There is no evidence that child care costs will significantly increase since the overall demand for child care workers is continuing to grow, and any additional cost will be offset to some extent by savings associated with reduced staff turnover. North Carolina has not seen higher costs since it put T.E.A.C.H. in place.

Question: How many people will the program affect?

Answer: The program will provide training and support for up to 50,000 providers nationwide, affecting the care of more than a half million children per year.

Question: Why is a national scholarship program needed since individuals can already receive assistance under the Pell Grant program?

Answer: Pell Grants generally serve only very low-income individuals, and sometimes do not fully cover their costs. According to the U.S. Department of Education, among independent students (students for whom parental support is not expected), 70 percent of Pell Grant funds go to students with incomes of \$9,000 or less. Many of these low

income students are in need of additional financial support. And others who need support are ineligible for Pell grants. This program will pay for a variety of costs, instead of, or on top of, Pell grants, such as tuition, books, transportation, and child care. All students will need to apply for a Pell grant before receiving benefits under this program.

Question: Why is it important to remind child care workers that Pell Grants are available?

Answer: We would like to attract many talented students into this field. It is important that students know about all their options. Pell Grants can help make higher education a reality. A typical caregiver in a child care center earns \$12,000 a year. Attending a community college half time, with total costs of \$3,000, this individual would be eligible for a \$1,350 Pell Grant in 1997-98.

National Crime Prevention and Privacy Compact

Question: What is the National Crime Prevention and Privacy Compact?

Answer: The National Crime Prevention and Privacy Compact will facilitate effective background checks on child care providers by eliminating state law barriers to the sharing of criminal history information for purposes other than ongoing criminal investigations. The vast majority of child care providers are caring people who have dedicated their lives to teaching and nurturing children. But one tragedy in child care is too many, and background checks are one important way to ensure that the people watching our children are fit for this responsibility.

Question: The First Lady has talked a lot about a registry of offenders. Is this what you are proposing be put in place?

Answer: If the compact is passed and ratified, it will facilitate effective background checks on child care providers by eliminating state law barriers to the sharing of criminal history information for purposes other than ongoing criminal investigations. That way, child care agencies or parents wanting to do background checks can gain access to ratifying states' complete criminal records. It is not a registry. It is an efficient, effective way of getting this important information to parents and agencies.

After-School Service Announcement

Question: What is it?

Answer: The President announced steps to use community service to strengthen after-school programs. The Corporation for National Service's new To Learn and Grow Initiative, a public-private partnership dedicated to expanding access to and enhancing the quality of after-school programs through service, will:

- Release a “How-To Manual” that shows after-school programs how they can use service to strengthen their efforts; and
- Provide training and technical assistance to after-school programs that want to use national service and volunteers to help meet their needs.

Question: Why is this important?

Answer: We are building on what works. Today, communities use both volunteers and those engaged in full-time service commitments such as AmeriCorps to extend the reach and improve the quality of many child care and after-school programs. These individuals work alongside child care providers, educators, and community-based professionals across the country. Two-thirds of national service programs supported by the Corporation for National Service, including AmeriCorps, address the needs of children and youth, many in child care and after-school programs. The To Learn and Grow Initiative will build on this experience to show programs across the country how to use volunteers and others engaged in service to provide better care to more children. In addition, the Initiative will show after-school programs how to involve participating youth in service activities, so that the youth themselves gain the benefits of serving others.

Question: Why are you proposing that volunteers provide child care and after-school care when the real need is for high-quality, trained professionals? Aren't volunteers ill-equipped to do this?

Answer: We need both. There is a great need for better trained professionals in child care, but volunteers and those engaged in national service like AmeriCorps can greatly enhance and expand after-school options. Volunteer organizations like Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA/YWCA's, and churches have a long history of providing high quality programs that have benefitted millions of children. In order to meet the need, we must tap the resources of many sectors.

OTHER CHILD CARE POLICY QUESTIONS

Question: Can you explain the Child and Dependent Tax Credit? And can you tell us why it hasn't been adjusted for inflation since 1982? Is this something you are looking at?

Answer: Working parents, who pay for the care of children under the age of 13, can reduce their income tax liability with the child and dependent care tax credit. Taxpayers can also claim the credit for the care of disabled spouses and dependents.

The credit can be applied to child care expenses of up to \$2,400 for one child and \$4,800 for two or more qualifying individuals. Married couples are generally only eligible for the credit if both the husband and wife work.

Regarding the question of an inflation adjustment: We are considering all options. This conference will explore how both the public and private sectors can respond to the need for safe, affordable, quality child care for Americans who are struggling to be both good parents and good workers.

Question: **Are there any incentives for businesses to provide child care?**

Answer: Yes. Currently, employers are allowed to exclude contributions for employer-provided child care expenses from employees taxable income.

Question: Will you propose national standards on health and safety?

Answer: As I said, nothing is off the table at this point, I will say that we realize that national standards are controversial, and we have found that the most successful efforts occur when the Federal government works hand-in-hand with States to improve and enforce high standards.

Child Care and Welfare Reform

Question: When the President signed welfare reform into law, he praised the child care provisions of the bill. Has he changed his mind? Does he now think those provisions were inadequate?

Answer: No, he has not changed his mind. When the President signed welfare reform into law, he praised the bill for spending \$4 billion more on child care to help mothers on welfare go to work. The President continues to believe that child care is a critical component of welfare reform. But what was done in the welfare law is not enough. Today's conference will examine child care from a broader perspective, looking at the impact it generally has on child development, school readiness, and our economy as a whole. As the President said to the National Governors' Association in July, he and the First Lady think child care is "the next great frontier if we're going to make sure all Americans can succeed at home and at work."

Question: The new welfare law provided a substantial increase in funding for child care. Are states spending the additional funds?

Answer: Every indication is that States are experiencing a high demand for child care and that States across the country have committed their own dollars in order to get the Federal share of the matching funds contained in the new welfare law.

Question: The new welfare law contained a significant increase in child care funds. Are new investments really needed?

Answer: Because child care is vital to the success of moving welfare recipients into work, the President fought hard to make sure that the welfare law contained increased funding. And because of the President's efforts, the welfare reform law provided an additional \$4 billion in child care subsidies to address the real problem of child care availability. As today's conference will show, there are still many low-and middle-income working families who have never been on welfare who cannot afford the child care they need. And much of the child care available is of poor quality, and does not do enough to prepare our children for the challenges of the 21st century. Greater investment, be it public or private, is definitely needed.

Question: How do you expect so many welfare recipients to go to work if there's not enough good quality child care available?

Answer: Funds are available to help families on welfare go to work --the welfare reform law provided an additional \$4 billion in child care subsidies to address this problem. But, as today's conference will show, there are still many low-and middle-income working families who have never been on welfare who cannot afford the child care they need.

Question: Are welfare recipients getting preferential treatment for child care subsidies over families who've always worked and played by the rules?

Answer: States have a great deal of flexibility in deciding which low income families receive child care subsidies. Many states are focusing their subsidies on very poor families making the transition from welfare to work. Some states --such as Illinois, Michigan, and Washington --have created seamless child care systems that help low income parents whether they used to be on welfare or not. In July, the President called this practice "a model that I hope one day we'll be able to have everywhere in America" in a speech before the National Governors' Association. Today's conference will explore these tough questions of how the public and private sectors can respond to the need for safe, affordable, quality child care for all American families who are struggling to be both good parents and good workers.

In addition, it's important to remember that one of the larger child care investments our nation makes is through the tax code, which assists non-welfare families through the child and dependent care tax credit.

Question: At the Conference, you talked about supporting parents who want to stay at home and care for their children. But in the welfare law, mothers are required to go to work. Isn't this a contradiction in philosophy?

Answer: It is true that parents accepting public monies will not have the choice to stay at home to care for their children. But that is perfectly consistent with helping self-supporting families deciding to get by on one income so that a parent can stay home. In addition, it is important to remember that the welfare law gives states flexibility to exempt mothers for a period of time so that they may stay home with young children; and many States have taken advantage of this provision.

Question: There are a lot of child care proposals on the Hill. For instance, Senators John Kerry (D-MA) and Kit Bond (R-MO) announced yesterday an Early Childhood Development Act. Does the Administration support it?

Answer: We appreciate the commitment shown by many members of the House and Senate towards child care and early child development programs, and are pleased that many members are speaking here today and that the Conference will be watched by satellite on Capitol Hill. Additionally, White House staff have met and continue to meet with

Members of both parties and congressional staff, to explore promising ways to improve child care in America. We look forward to continuing our working relationship.

CHILD CARE FOR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WORKERS

Question: How do Federal employees learn about their child care options?

Answer: The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) assists Federal employees in locating appropriate care by providing the *Handbook of Child Care and Elder Care Resources* and refers employees to the ChildCare Aware toll-free number (a national number anyone can use) which helps locate child care resources and referral organizations in their area.

Employees of the Executive Office of the President are told about U.S. Kids, the child development center serving the Executive Office of the President, during first-day orientation. In addition, notices are posted electronically on the internal electronic bulletin board, as well as the (old fashioned) standard push pin bulletin boards.

Question: What are the child care options for parents who work at the White House?

Answer: Employees of the Executive Office of the President (EOP) have the option of enrolling their children in the nearby U.S. Kids Child Development Center, a center accredited by the independent National Association for the Education of Young Children. Additionally, White House parents may enroll their children in any of the 27 other Federal child care centers in the greater Washington, D.C. area. U.S. Kids serves employees of the EOP, the Export-Import Bank, the Treasury Department and the Department of Veterans Affairs and is open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. and has programs for children ages three months to five years. [Address: 1425 New York Avenue, phone: (202) 233-4623. Center Director: Sharon Hall Fleming]

Question: The President and First Lady tout the Military's Program. Why?

Answer: The DoD Child Care System serves over 200,000 children (age zero to 12) daily, making it the largest employer-sponsored child care program in the nation.

DoD Addresses the Comprehensive Needs of Parents: The DoD system, known as the Child Development Program, includes Child Development Centers, Family Child Care homes, School-Age Care programs, and Resource and Referral services. Through this system, the military offers full-day, part-day, and hourly child care, part-day preschools, before- and after-school programs for school age children, and extended hour care which includes nights and weekends to accommodate shift workers.

DoD's Child Care System has been Recognized for its Devotion to Excellence: Because of the Department of Defense's commitment to excellence in child care, since

1992, the number of military child care facilities that are accredited by the independent National Association for the Education of Young Children has risen from 55 to 353. **Currently, over 75% of military child care programs are accredited, as compared to only 7% of other child care facilities nationwide.** Since the early '90s, the DoD has focused on improving the quality, availability, and cost of child care for military families.

Question: Isn't it unrealistic to hold up the Military child care system as the model?

Answer: There are certain aspects of the DoD system that are unique. The Department of Defense as an employer invests significant funds into their system because providing for military personnel and their family needs benefits the overall readiness mission. Although DoD is unique, there are still lessons to be learned (including family day care networks, unannounced inspections, etc.) Because of the DoD's high quality, comprehensive child care programs, in April 1997, President Clinton directed the Secretary of Defense to share the expertise and lessons learned from the Military Child Development Programs with the civilian child care communities. DoD is doing just that. Defense Secretary Cohen recently sent a letter to the President outlining this effort.

Question: How does the civilian sector of the Federal Government rate?

Answer: There are more than 230 child care centers for civilian government employees in Federal buildings in as many as 36 states. The General Services Administration (GSA) oversees 108 of these centers, making GSA the largest civilian sponsor of work-site child care in the nation. Under this Administration, the emphasis on quality has continued with 73 percent of GSA sponsored centers accredited by the independent National Association for Education of Young Children, with a goal of reaching 100 percent accreditation within two years. Striving to meet the needs of parent workers, 89 percent of GSA centers have infant care, 74 percent have drop-in/emergency care and 42 percent provide summer programs for school aged children. In addition, more than 80 percent of centers are open 11 or more hours per day. Notably, nearly 70 percent of the child care center directors have ten or more years in early childhood education experience.

Question: One of the biggest barriers to finding quality child care is affordability. How is the Federal government addressing this issue?

Answer: The Federal Government, like the private sector, still faces challenges in providing affordable care to lower paid government employees. The General Services Administration, the largest civilian sponsor of work-site child care in the nation, has studied this problem intensively this year. It found that while employer-supported child care is a cost-effective investment, it requires steady, predictable funding. In May, GSA released a report to Congress outlining the need to increase revenues and enrollment, reduce operating costs, and expand the availability of tuition assistance for parents who

can't afford to pay full fees.

At the Executive Office of the President, U.S. Kids, the nearby Federal child care facility, does provide a small tuition assistance program fund. [Presently, there are four children receiving need-based scholarships.]

Question: The Federal Government is often touted as a model employer. What are some of the innovations?

Answer: Under President Clinton's leadership, the Federal government, striving to be a model employer for other private and public employers, has implemented **family-friendly leave initiatives** that enhance the ability of employees to balance family and employment obligations. In addition to leave initiatives, the Federal government **offers compressed or flexible work schedules** to many workers so that they may spend more time with their families. The Administration also **supports telecommuting** where appropriate.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

Question: Mark Fiedelholtz -- the father of Jeremy Fiedelholtz, an infant who died in a Florida child care center -- has been critical of the Administration, specifically your denying him a role in this conference. Do you have any comment?

Answer: Mr. Fiedelholtz has litigation pending in the state of Florida regarding the death of his infant son Jeremy. It is White House policy not to comment on any matters currently before the courts -- we must avoid the impression that we are attempting to influence the outcome of judicial proceedings.

The President and First Lady were saddened to learn of the Fiedelholtz's loss and sent the family a condolence note in May. Additionally, Mr. Fiedelholtz has been in contact with the White House Office of Agency Liaison which has provided Mr. Fiedelholtz with the name and phone number of an HHS Administration for Children and Families staffer who handles such cases.

Question: In Cambridge Massachusetts, a nineteen year-old British woman, in this country through an au pair program, is on trial for the murder of her young charge. Shouldn't these au pair programs be better regulated so qualified caregivers are taking care of our nation's children?

Answer: This case is currently before a Middlesex County Court and it is White House policy not to comment on any matters currently before the courts -- we must avoid the impression that we are attempting to influence the outcome of judicial proceedings.

The U.S. Information Agency, the agency that runs the au pair program announced in

September (unrelated to this case) updated regulations regarding the screening and placement of au pairs. The updated regulations include: au pair participants who care for children under two years old must have 200 or more documented hours of infant-care experience; au pair training will include 24 hours of child-development instruction; au pairs will be limited to working 10 hours a day and 45 hours a week; their pay will increase from \$115 to 139.05 a week because of the increased minimum wage; and a more open process of verification of information has been put in place aiding the selection and screening process of au pair participants.

Economics of Child Care

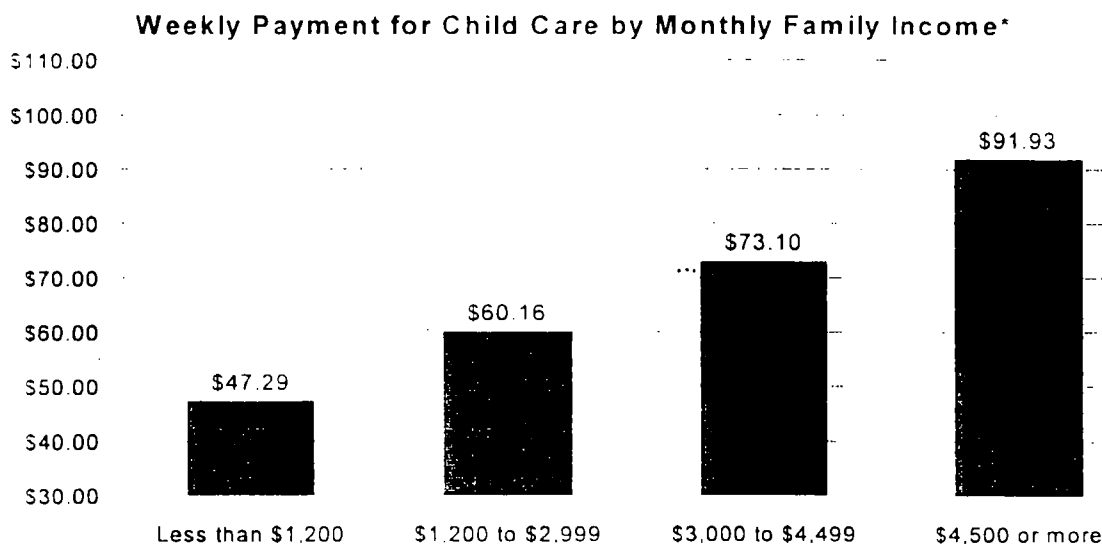
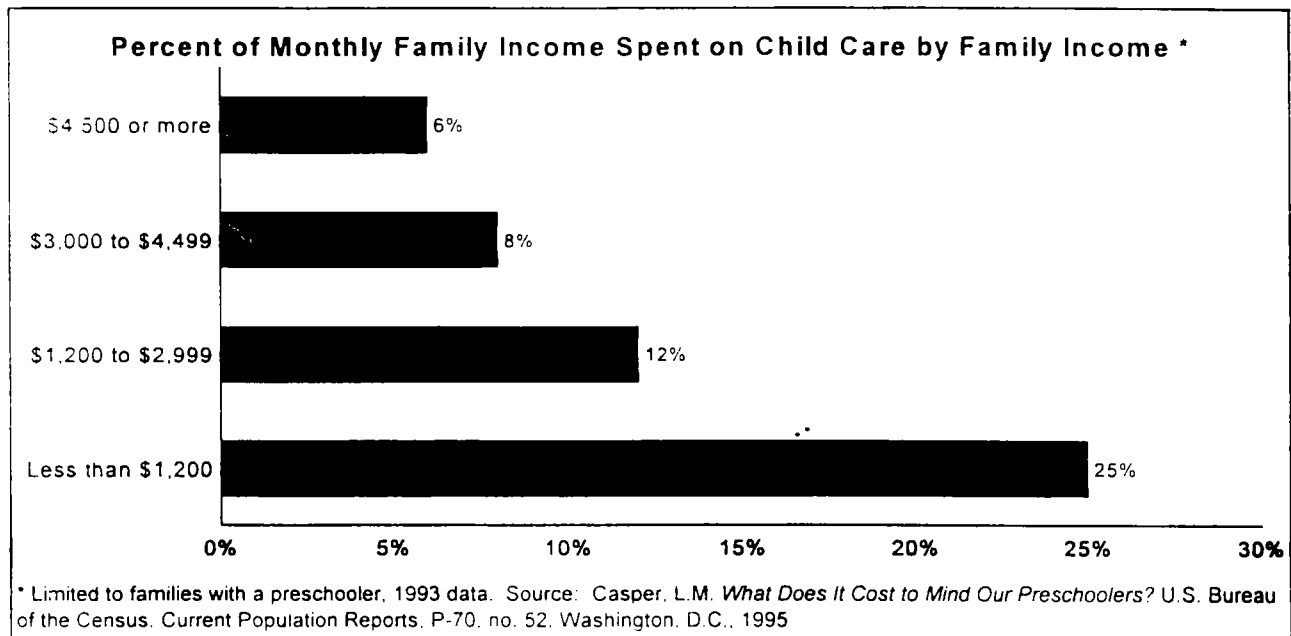
● In 1994, 62% of married mothers with a child under age six were in the workforce, compared with 30% in 1970.[†]

● The increased employment of mothers outside the home has led to a sharp increase in the use of child care over the past several decades. Eight of 10 employed mothers with children under six are likely to use some form of nonparental child care arrangement.[†]

● In 1990, 7.2 million mothers with 11.7 million children under age 15 worked full or part time during nonstandard hours.^{**}

● In 1993, the average family with an employed mother and a child under age five spent about \$74 per week for child care for all preschoolers in the family.^{*}

● Families with annual incomes under \$14,400 that paid for care for children under five spent 25% of their income on child care, compared with 6% for families with incomes of \$54,000 or more.^{*}



* Limited to families paying for child care for preschoolers, 1993 data. Source: Casper, L.M. *What Does It Cost to Mind Our Preschoolers?* U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P-70, no. 52, Washington, D.C., 1995

Information in this fact sheet is excerpted from [†] Sandra L. Hofferth, "Child Care in the United States," *The Future of Children*, vol. 6, no. 2 Summer/Fall 1996, with additional information from: National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education; ^{*}U.S. Bureau of Census; ^{**}Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor.

For additional information, contact the National Child Care Information Center at (800) 616-2242 or visit the Web site at <http://ericps.crc.uiuc.edu/nccic/nccichome.html>

Child Care for Young Children: Demographics

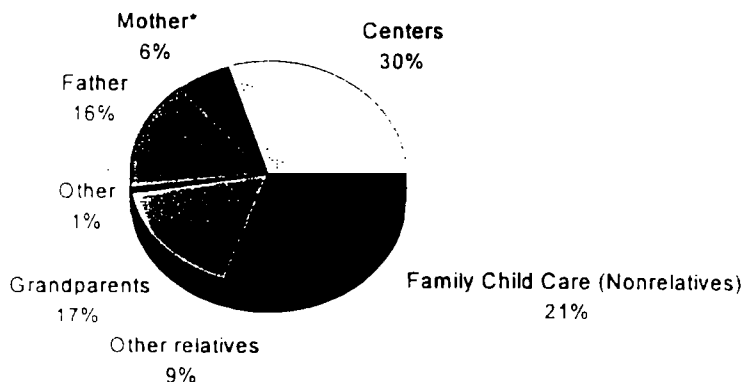
● According to the National Center for Education Statistics, in 1995 there were approximately 21 million infants, toddlers, and preschool children under the age of six in the U.S., more than 12.9 million of these children were in child care.[†]

● Forty-five percent of children under age one were in child care on a regular basis.[†]

● While use of center-based care increased from 1988 to 1993, most young children are still in a home-based setting, including family child care.^{**}

Primary Child Care Arrangements Used by Families with Employed Mothers for Preschoolers: 1993

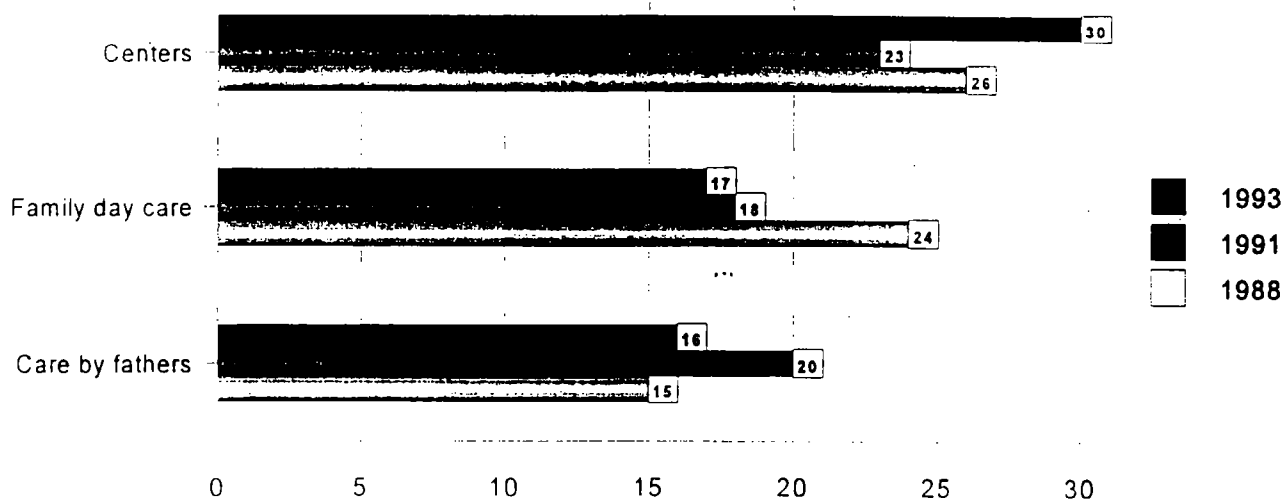
(Percent of preschoolers of working mothers in selected arrangements)



* Includes mothers working at home or away from home. Source: Casper, L.M. *Who's Minding Our Preschoolers?* U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P-70, no. 53, Washington, DC 1996

Changes in Selected Child Care Arrangements: 1988 to 1993

(Percent of preschoolers of working mothers in selected arrangements)



Source: Casper, L.M. *Who's Minding Our Preschoolers?* U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, P-70, no. 53, Washington, DC 1996

This profile of child care demographics has been excerpted from information provided by the [†] National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education and the ^{**}U.S. Bureau of the Census.

For additional information, contact the National Child Care Information Center at (800) 616-2242 or visit the Web <http://ericps.crc.uiuc.edu/nccic/nccichome.html>

A Profile of the Child Care Work Force

Approximately three million child care teachers, assistants, and family child care providers in the U.S. care for 10 million children each day.

Who are the child care teaching staff?

97% are female
41% have children
10% are single parents

● Child care teaching staff earn an average of \$6.89 per hour or \$12,058 per year (based on 35 hours per week and 50 weeks per year) (data from *Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers*, Technical Report 1995, salary data are in 1993 dollars).

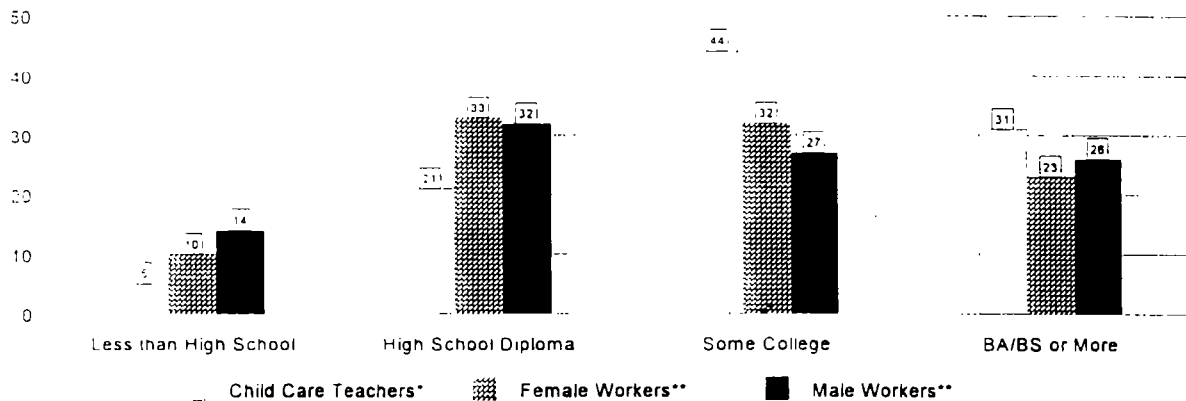
● Only 18 percent of child care centers offer fully paid health coverage to teaching staff.

● Although they earn lower wages, child care teachers are better educated than the general population.

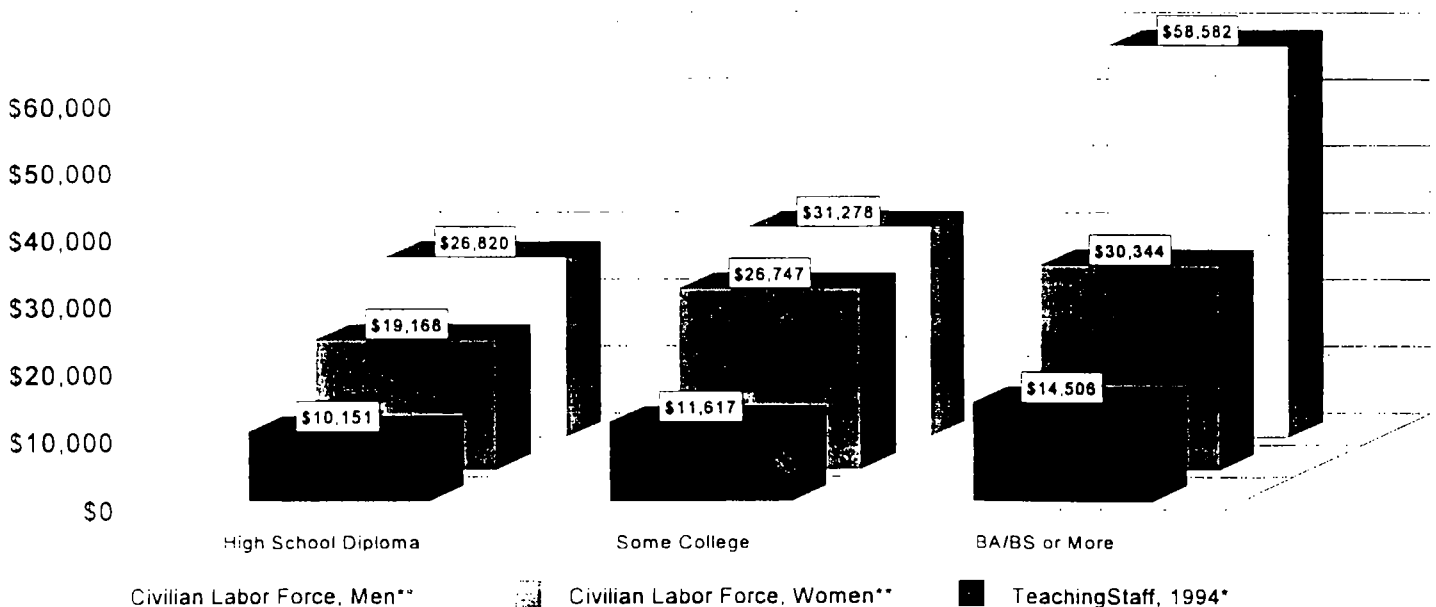
● One-third of all child care teachers leave their centers each year.

● Family child care providers who care for and educate young children in their homes also have very low earnings. Providers earn \$9,528 annually after expenses (data from *The Economics of Family Child Care Study*, a forthcoming publication from Wheelock College, earnings in 1996 dollars). Unregulated providers, who care for fewer children and are offered fewer supports, earned just \$5,132 after expenses.

Education of Child Care Teaching Staff Versus All Workers***



Annual Wages of Child Care Teaching Staff Versus All Workers***



***These charts only provide information on center-based teaching staff.

Child Care for Young Children: Quality

"Recent brain research suggests that warm, responsive child care is not only comforting for an infant; it is critical to healthy development."

- Rethinking the Brain: New Insights into Early Development
Families and Work Institute (1997)

- **Higher quality child care for very young children (0 to 3) was consistently related to high levels of cognitive and language development.** "Mother-Child Interaction and Cognitive Outcomes Associated with Early Child Care", NICHD Early Child Care Research Network (1997)
- **Studies have raised concerns about the quality of care:**
 - A four-state study of quality in child care centers found **only one in seven (14%) were rated as good quality.** *Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers, (Executive Summary)* University of Colorado at Denver (1995)
 - **Thirteen percent of regulated and 50 percent of nonregulated family child care providers offer care that is inadequate.** *The Study of Children in Family Child Care and Relative Care*, Families and Work Institute (1994)
 - **"The quality of services provided by most centers was rated as barely adequate."** *The National Child Care Staffing Study (Executive Summary)*, National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce (1989)
- **"[M]any children living in poverty receive child care that, at best, does not support their optimal development and, at worst, may compromise their health and safety."** *New Findings on Children, Families, and Economic Self-Sufficiency*, National Research Council, Institute of Medicine (1995)

What Works to Improve the Quality of Child Care

- **Children who receive warm and sensitive caregiving are more likely to trust caregivers, to enter school ready and eager to learn, and to get along well with other children.** . . . To ensure that child care settings nurture children, protect their health and safety, and prepare them for later school success, better qualified staff are essential." *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Carnegie Task Force on Meeting the Needs of Young Children (1994)
- **"[S]maller group sizes, higher teacher/child ratios and higher staff wages result in quality child care.** Outcomes for children are also better when they attend programs that include a curriculum geared to young children, well prepared staff and where parents are involved in programming." *Early Childhood Care and Education: An Investment That Works*, National Conference of State Legislatures (1997)
- **Any child care setting will benefit from a health consultant.** . . . to advise on potential infectious diseases, explain symptoms and treatments to families, plan health alert procedures when infectious disease occurs, and assist with public health reporting requirements. *Caring for Infants and Toddlers in Groups, Zero to Three*, National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families (1995)
- **States with stronger licensing requirements had a greater number of good-quality centers** according to recent research. *Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers*, University of Colorado at Denver (1995)
- **Voluntary conformity to higher standards through professional center accreditation or through meeting another set of quality standards also increased the likelihood of higher classroom quality.** *Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers*, University of Colorado at Denver (1995)

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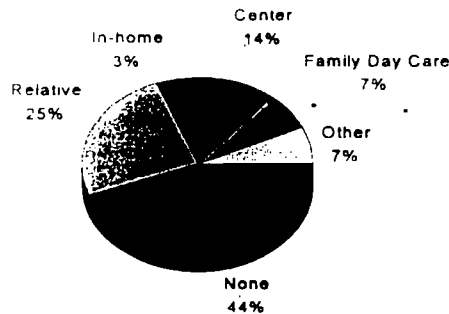
Out-of-School Time School-Age Care

According to the Bureau of the Census, in 1997 there were 38.8 million children between the ages of 5 and 14 years living in the U.S. There are approximately 24 million school-age children with parents in the workforce or pursuing education (based on 1993 SIPP data from the Bureau of the Census).

Care Arrangements of School-Age Children

- Experts estimate that **nearly 5 million school-age children spend time as latchkey kids without adult supervision during a typical week.**
- Approximately 1.7 million children in kindergarten through grade 8 were enrolled in 49,500 formal before- and/or after-school programs in 1991, according to the National Study of Before and After School Programs.
- In 1993-94, according to the National Center for Education Statistics, there were 18,111 before- or after-school programs in public schools—70% of public schools did not offer extended learning programs.
- School-age children are likely to spend time in many different care arrangements. According to the National Child Care Survey (1990), **76 percent of school-age children with an employed mother spend time in at least two child care arrangements during a typical week, in addition to their time in school.**
- According to the National Child Care Survey, children aged 5 to 12 with employed mothers use the following types of supplemental care: 7% are in family day care; 14% are in centers, 3% are cared for by in-home providers, 25% are cared for by relatives and 44% do not use supplemental care.

**Use of Supplemental Care,
Children 5 to 12 with Employed Mothers**



The Effects of Out-of-School Time on Children

- Children under adult supervision in a formal program during after-school hours have demonstrated improved academic achievement and better attitudes toward school than their peers in self- or sibling care. Miller and Marx, 1990 in *Supplement to the National Assessment of Chapter 1*
- Youth are at greatest risk of violence after the regular school day. Youth between the ages of 12 and 17 are most at-risk of committing violent acts or being victims between 2:00 pm and 6:00 pm—a time when they are not in school. *Fight Crime: Invest in Kids*, 1997

The most frequently mentioned barrier to participation is the parents' inability to pay the tuition and fees charged by programs. Other barriers include availability, quality of activities, inadequate facilities, transportation, high staff turnover, hours of the program and lack of resources.

Components of Successful Before- and After-School Programs include: linkages between after-school and regular school programs, children's participation in age appropriate learning activities, hiring of qualified staff, low student-staff ratio, involvement of parents, program evaluation and coordination with the schools and other community organizations.

For information on what states and communities are doing to meet the need for school-age care, contact the National Institute on Out of School Time (formerly the School-Age Child Care Project), Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College at (617) 283-2547 or visit the World Wide Web site at: <http://www.wellesley.edu/WCW/CRW/SAC/> For additional information on extended learning in after-school programs in schools, contact the U.S. Department of Education, please call (800) USA-LEARN or visit the World Wide Web site at: <http://www.ed.gov/PFIE>.

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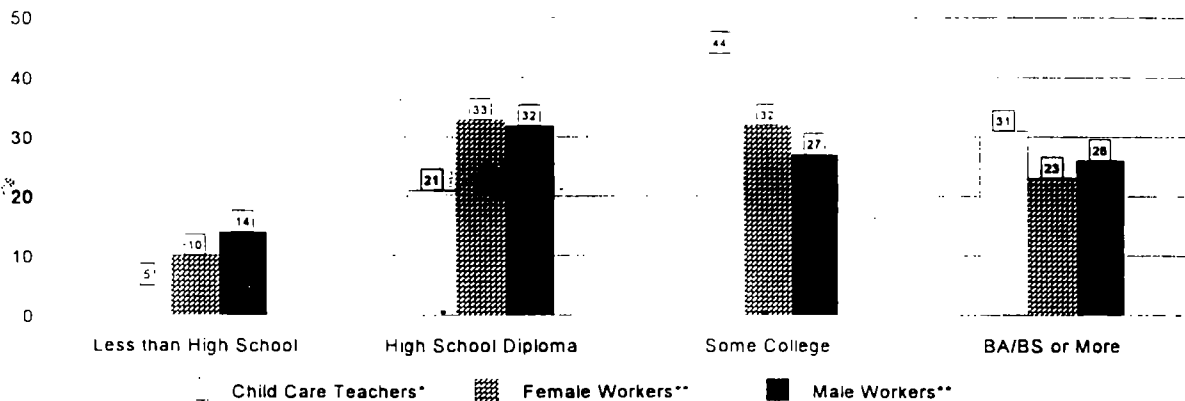
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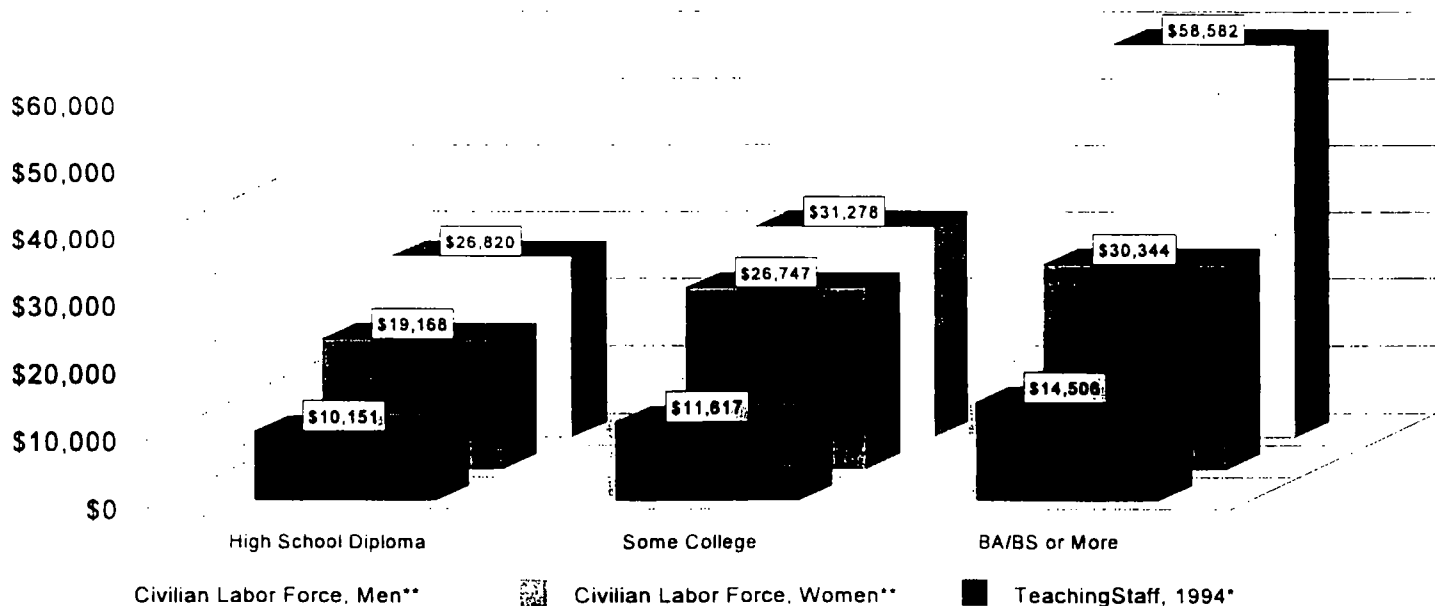
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THE WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON CHILD CARE

October 23, 1997

"I hope that this conference will be the beginning of a national dialogue about how best to care for all of America's children and will make a valuable contribution to our effort to improve child care in this country."

-- President Clinton, July 23, 1997

Today, the President and First Lady are hosting the first-ever *White House Conference on Child Care*. The day-long conference will address the need that America's parents have for safe, affordable child care for their children. Millions of Americans, struggling to be both good parents and good workers, rely on child care and after-school programs to care for their children for part of each day. Exploring the roles of both the public and private sectors, the Conference is intended to begin a dialogue on three of the most pressing child care issues -- availability, affordability, and assuring safety and quality.

Clinton Administration Commitment to Strengthening Child Care. President Clinton has worked to improve and increase funding for child care. Under President Clinton's leadership, federal funding for child care has increased by nearly 70%. The 1996 welfare reform law increased child care funding by \$4 billion over 6 years to provide child care assistance to low-income working families and parents moving from welfare to work. A percentage of these funds are set aside for efforts to improve the quality of child care. To ensure that children in child care are in safe and healthy environments, the President also launched the Healthy Child Care America Initiative. And because the Department of Defense child care system has become a model of employer-sponsored child care and after-school programming, the President asked the DOD to share its expertise and lessons learned with the civilian child care community.

During President Clinton's time in office, funding for Head Start has increased by 43%. This funding will continue to expand until it reaches the President's goal of serving 1 million children by the year 2002. The President also initiated the Early Head Start Program to expand the proven benefits of Head Start to low-income families with children age three and under.

To expand the benefits of after-school care, the President has, among other things, supported and signed the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act to fund after-school programs; called for an increased number of community schools that stay open longer and provide valuable resources to families and communities; and published a guide on *Keeping Schools Open as Community Learning Centers*.

Clinton Administration Commitment to America's Working Families. This Conference builds on the President's record of helping America's working families. To take a few examples, the President fought for passage of the Family and Medical Leave Act to allow workers to take unpaid leave when their families need them. And he signed into law the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act to extend important new protections for an estimated 25 million Americans who move from one job to another, or who have pre-existing medical conditions. And in August 1997, the President signed the Balanced Budget Act which included \$24 billion for the Children's Health Initiative -- the single largest investment in health care for children since 1965. President Clinton has also fought to expand economic opportunity for working families, including a \$500 per-child tax credit for children under age 17 -- helping 27 million families with 45 million children. The Administration also expanded the Earned Income Tax Credit to give 15 million families tax relief, and increased the minimum wage by 90 cents.

Conference Program and Participants. During the morning session, experts will discuss why child care matters both to our children's development and to the economy, and will examine the state of child care in this country. The panelists for this first session are: Ms. Ellen Galinsky, Families and Work Institute; Ms. Michelle Seligson, National Institute of Out-of-School Time; Secretary of the Treasury Robert Rubin; Secretary of HHS Donna Shalala; Governor James Hunt, North Carolina; Dr. Valora Washington, W.K. Kellogg Foundation; and Patty Siegel, California Child Care Resource and Referral Network. The afternoon session will highlight promising efforts around the country and discuss how all members of the community can meet critical child care challenges. Panelists are: Major General John G. Meyer, United States Army; Representative Jane Maroney, Delaware State Legislator; Dr. Susan Aronson, American Academy of Pediatrics; Bishop Joseph M. Sullivan, Diocese of Brooklyn; Ms. Beatriz Otero, Calvery Bi-Lingual Multicultural Learning Center; Mr. John J. Sweeney, AFL-CIO; and Mr. Doug Price, FirstBank of Colorado.

Broad Participation Across the Country. The entire conference will be broadcast by satellite to over 100 locations in over 45 states across the country, as well as to several Federal agencies. Satellite conferences will be co-hosted by regional federal agencies, local officials, and children's and other organizations.

PRESIDENT CLINTON ANNOUNCES CHILD CARE PROVIDER SCHOLARSHIP FUND

October 23, 1997

Today, President Clinton announced a National Child Care Provider Scholarship Fund as well as an outreach plan to let child care providers know that they may be eligible for Pell Grants. Too many child care providers currently do not have the training our children deserve and are not rewarded with higher compensation when they do have training. The measures announced today will help improve the quality of our nation's child care by helping caregivers get training and raise their pay, and thereby supporting efforts to recruit and retain them.

New National Child Care Provider Scholarship Fund: The National Child Care Provider Scholarship Fund will provide more than \$300 million in scholarships over five years to up to 50,000 child care providers annually -- helping the more than half a million children they care for.

Up to a \$1,500 Scholarship and Higher Pay For Continued Service: The Fund will provide scholarships of up to \$1,500 to current and future child care providers who agree to remain in the field for at least one year after receiving assistance. These providers will earn increased compensation or a bonus when they complete their course work, provided by some combination of the Fund and the provider's employer.

Public-Private Partnership: The Fund will receive at least \$250 million in Federal funds over five years, with every four dollars of Federal funds matched with at least a dollar of private, local or State funds. States will have flexibility in designing their programs, and can provide scholarships for students working toward a state or national credential, certificate, or Associate, B.A. or B.S. degree. States cannot use the Fund to substitute for existing efforts. States also cannot provide scholarships to employees or child care providers that are not licensed or registered.

Modeled on Successful Programs: The Fund is modeled on the North Carolina T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Project, a bipartisan program that has been shown to work. Participants in T.E.A.C.H. complete an average of 18 credit hours per year and receive an average 10 % increase in their wages. They have less than a 10 % turnover rate, compared to the statewide rate of 42 %. The President's Child Care Provider Scholarship Fund is also modeled on the Defense Department's model of tying pay raises to increased training, which has helped to make the Department of Defense child care system one of the best in the world.

Builds On Pell Grants: While not limited to those eligible for Pell Grants, the scholarships build on Pell Grants for those eligible, by covering any costs not covered by Pell, including tuition and fees, books, supplies, transportation, and child care expenses. For example, a typical caregiver in a child care center earns \$12,000 a year. Attending a community college half time, with total costs of \$3,000, this individual would be eligible for a \$1,350 Pell Grant in 1997-98. The Fund will then provide additional monies. All applicants must first apply for Pell Grants before receiving a Child Care Provider Scholarship.

Actions To Help Child Care Workers Take Advantage of Pell Grants, the New Lifetime Learning Tax Credit and Other Financial Aid: Many child care providers are not aware of other financial aid that is available now. Today, the Secretaries of Education and Health and Human Services jointly sent a letter to child care providers in all 50 states, providing them with information on the aid already available to current and future child care providers, including Pell Grants, the new Lifetime Learning and HOPE Tax Credits, and loans.

Builds on the President's Actions to Make Higher Education Universal and Lifetime Learning the Standard: Today's initiatives build on President Clinton's historic achievements to promote opportunities for lifelong learning, including winning the largest increase in Pell Grants in more than 20 years, creating HOPE and Lifetime Learning Tax Credits, expanding College Work Study, creating the Direct Lending program that lets students repay their loans as a share of their income, and creating AmeriCorps National Service program to enable young people to earn money for college while serving their country.

PRESIDENT CLINTON SENDS NATIONAL CRIME PREVENTION AND PRIVACY COMPACT TO CONGRESS

October 23, 1997

Today, President Clinton transmitted the National Crime Prevention and Privacy Compact to Congress. The compact will facilitate effective background checks on child care providers by eliminating state law barriers to the sharing of criminal history information for purposes other than ongoing criminal investigations. The vast majority of child care providers are caring people who have dedicated their lives to teaching and nurturing children. But one tragedy in child care is too many, and background checks are one important way to ensure that the people watching our children are fit for this responsibility.

Current Limitations on Information. Many states currently have laws prohibiting release of criminal history records for purposes other than ongoing criminal investigations -- such as in connection with background checks for employment or licensing. This means that a child care agency wishing to do a nationwide check to determine whether a potential child care worker has a criminal history will not be able to gain direct access to all states' records but instead must go to the FBI for information. FBI records, however, are not nearly as complete as states' own records because state reporting of criminal dispositions to the FBI is wholly voluntary. In addition, FBI checks can take weeks or months to complete because of the total volume of FBI records and the FBI's nationwide criminal responsibilities.

Effect of the Compact. Under the compact, each ratifying state would agree to release its own criminal history information to other ratifying states for any purpose authorized by the receiving state's law. This means an agency wanting to do a nationwide check for a purpose authorized by state law need not rely on incomplete FBI records, but may gain access directly to other states' complete criminal records. The only role played by the FBI would be to give the requesting agency a list of the states in which the individual has a criminal record (information which the FBI would have in complete form), so that the agency can access those states' records directly. In this way, the compact will vastly increase the effectiveness and efficiency of nationwide criminal background checks.

One Step in Ensuring Safety of Child Care. A background check is only a first step in assuring that our children are cared for safely. Many people who are unsuited to be child care providers are never arrested or convicted of a crime; most child abuse cases, for example, are not prosecuted in criminal court. A recent study by the American Bar Association's Center for Children and the Law found that personal interviews and reference checks are essential tools in checking the credentials of caregivers.

**THE PRESIDENT URGES SERVICE AS A STRATEGY
IN AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS**
The White House Conference On Child Care
October 23, 1997

Today, at the White House Conference on Child Care, President Clinton announced steps to use community service to strengthen after-school programs.

Helping Communities Link Service and After-School Programs. To enable more communities to use community service to enrich their after-school programs, the President announced actions by the Corporation for National Service's new To Learn and Grow Initiative, a public-private partnership dedicated to expanding access to and enhancing the quality of after-school programs through service. The initiative will:

- Release a "How-To Manual" that shows after-school programs how they can use service to strengthen their efforts (prepared by the Corporation for National Service with the National Institute on Out-of-School Time at Wellesley College); and
- Provide training and technical assistance to after-school programs that want to use national service and volunteers to help meet their needs.

Building on What Works. Today, communities use both volunteers and those engaged in full-time service commitments such as AmeriCorps to extend the reach and improve the quality of many child care and after-school programs. These individuals work alongside child care providers, educators, and community-based professionals across the country. Two-thirds of national service programs supported by the Corporation for National Service, including AmeriCorps, address the needs of children and youth, many in child care and after-school programs. The To Learn and Grow Initiative will build on this experience to show programs across the country how to use volunteers and others engaged in service to provide better care to more children.

Young people can also benefit from serving others after school hours. For example, Big Brothers/Big Sisters committed at the Presidents' Service Summit that its mentors would participate with young people in service projects. In addition, the Corporation's Learn and Serve program supports service-learning programs across the country, where young people serve and then reflect on that experience. The To Learn and Grow Initiative's manual and training activities will guide after-school programs in incorporating service into their activities.

Successful Programs Exist. Successful programs where service strengthens after-school programs today include Jumpstart AmeriCorps, where AmeriCorps members get needy children and their families ready for school; Columbia University's Community Impact program, where AmeriCorps members provide educational enrichment, mentoring, and tutoring for youth from K-3rd grade in collaboration with the YMCA; the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program in St. Paul, Minnesota, which pairs seniors and middle school students in after-school programs with 900 children in K-3rd grade; and the Sheridan Family Resources Center in Colorado, where AmeriCorps members tutor at-risk youth, run after-school and summer camp programs, and help youths and senior citizens have access to health services offered by school-based and community clinics.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

October 23, 1997

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AND FIRST LADY
AT WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON CHILD CARE

The East Room

10:00 A.M. EDT

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you and please be seated, and welcome to the White House Conference on Child Care. We are delighted to have with us in the East Room today members of Congress and the President's Cabinet, other officials from the government here in Washington. We have many elected officials from around the country and a great group of distinguished guests, including parents and experts in this important issue.

I also want to greet the hundreds of people gathered at the Departments of Agriculture, Labor, and Health and Human Services here in Washington, and to the thousands more who are joining us via satellite from the more than 100 sites at universities, hospitals and schools and businesses around the country.

I'd like to take a minute for all of us to think about what's happening in America this morning, and about what happens every morning. Parents are making the preparations to get to work, and those preparations include for most working families putting their children in the care of others. And most, even before they're out the door, are worrying about the logistics of the care that their children will receive. Some are even worrying about the safety or quality of that care.

There are many who are wondering whether they would get better quality care if they could pay more. Others are struggling to determine how they'll be able to afford next month's payment. And there are many who are in the work force who worry every day about how they'll care for their child and hold down the job that they need. Many parents will go to work, but have trouble focusing on work because they are worried about the snuffle that their daughter had or wondering how their son is faring.

And before we finish today, many more working parents will keep looking anxiously at the clock and will murmur into telephones the instructions that their children need after school, because their concerns don't end at the end of the day for their children's school time, because parents won't get home, so that they have to worry about what happens to keep their child safe and well occupied during those hours, as well.

These are just some of the questions that America's parents are asking themselves this morning and every morning that they prepare to go to work. Some parents ask themselves these questions in the afternoon, as they prepare to go to a swing shift, or at midnight as they start to work in one of the other jobs that are essential to keeping our economy strong.

Earlier this month I went to the University of Maryland to visit its center for young children, and as soon as I walked in the door I knew immediately it was the kind of place any of us would feel comfortable sending our children. I was, frankly, tempted to sign up myself. The walls were painted bright colors. There was lots of natural light. The workers there were creative, energetic and focused. Inside there were toys and crafts material. Outside there was a playground. And the children looked happy and occupied and full of energy.

Now, later I left the center to make a speech, and after the speech I opened the floor to questions. And the very first question was one that I thought summed up the dilemma that we face today. It came from a divorced mother who works full-time as a secretary at the university. To send her 4-year-old son to the center I had visited, she told me, would cost \$6,000 a year, a quarter of her income, and she just couldn't do it. She had to do some real juggling to get the situation that she told me about. She was able to send her son to another less expensive center because she

qualified for a scholarship, and she moved back in with her parents. Otherwise, she said, I would have to quit my job and go on welfare, and then I would have to worry about who would watch my child as I looked for a job.

She and so many women like her are the reason we are here today, and parents like Paula Broglio, who is here with us in the East Room, represent the millions of parents who worry about this important issue. Thirteen million American children spend all or some of their day being cared for by someone other than their parent. Yet, a recent national study found that child care at most centers in our country is, "poor to mediocre, with almost half of the infants and toddlers in rooms having less than minimal quality."

The study also concluded that fully 40 percent of the rooms serving infants in centers provided care that was of such poor quality as to jeopardize children's health, safety or development. A recent University of Colorado at Denver survey of child care in four states found only one in seven child care centers to be of good quality.

And quality care, as Paula and so many others know, when it is available is often financially out of reach. According to the 1995 census, families earning under \$1,200 a month or less than \$15,000 a year pay an average of 25 percent of their income for child care. Middle class families are hit hard as well. These families, earning up to \$36,000 a year pay 12 percent of their income for child care.

The urgency of this conference today to focus on child care is heightened by the new scientific information we have about the emotional and intellectual development of young children. As we learned at the White House Conference on Early Childhood Development in April, what happens to a child in the earliest years affects how well he or she learns for a lifetime. With 45 percent of our children under the age of one in day care regularly, the issue of quality has tremendous bearing not just on individual lives, but on the future of our nation.

What's more, we now know from other studies that good care, whether given at home or in a day care setting, is good care. Done right, day care can be beneficial for children, and it is, therefore, worth our investment.

There's another reason that compels us to act, and that is demand. Demand for quality child care is growing, hastened on by our new economy, which has meant in the last 40 years dramatic changes in the American work force and in the American family's life. We know, for example, that half of all mothers with children under one year of age are working outside the home, and not only are more parents working, they are working longer hours. Also, with welfare reform we know that many more children will be needing quality child care.

So this conference is meant to start a conversation. It is only one day, but we hope it is a day that will renew our efforts to improve child care in America. We also hope it will involve our entire national community, because every aspect of our life together must be involved in looking for solutions. The federal government has a role to play, but so do state governments, business and labor, the nonprofit and religious communities, school systems, individual citizens, and especially parents.

We also know there are models of excellent child care around the country and we will hear about some of them -- like the military's day care system or the Smart Start Program in North Carolina. These initiatives provide examples of best practices and can energize and inspire us to do more.

We also know how important it is to ensure choice for parents in their selection of child care. One size fits all child care does not fit America's families. We don't work the same hours, we don't have the same economic or other kinds of pressures that we're dealing with, so we have to provide more options and we have to empower parents with good information to enable them to become good consumers. We also have to find ways that would make it easier and more affordable for parents who want to stay home with their children for some period of time to be able to afford to do so.

So I hope we approach this conversation with a certain fearlessness, with the same kind of energy that I see on the face of a three or four-year-old who's going about some task that he knows will occupy himself. We need to have the same kind of fearless approach, asking the hard questions and then listening to the answers.

There will be a lot of questions raised today -- questions about how to ensure the safety of every child in child care; how to do a better job of training and paying care-givers; how to encourage more employers to provide child care benefits of some variety to employees; how to make successful after-school programs more widely available; how to meet the needs of children with disabilities; how to better support parents who choose, often at significant cost, to stay home with their children; how to ensure that quality and affordability do not come at the expense of one another; and how to learn from the good models that we have in every community and state of our country; and, also, how do we leave ideology at the door and honestly address the real needs of America's families.

These are tough questions, and there are many more that we will be considering today. But we consider these questions at an opportune time. And we hope that this conference will spur the conversations around kitchen tables and water coolers and standing in supermarket aisles or at soccer games, or while going to or from work in the carpool -- whatever it takes to engage more Americans in this discussion, to make it clear that we want American parents to succeed at the most important task they have, caring for the next generation, and to be good workers who contribute to the economy and the quality of life that we enjoy in our country.

Now I'd like to address your attention to a video produced by New Screen Concepts, in association with the Families and Work Institute, entitled, "Why Should We Care about Child Care?"

(Video is shown.)

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THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Welcome to the White House. Thank you very much, Kathy Carliner, for your remarkable statement. And I thought you were very good in the film. Rob Reiner wants to give you a screen test. (Laughter.)

I am so happy to see all of you here. There are many people here who might well be introduced, but I think I must start with the people who are terribly important to whether we will be able to fully achieve our part of the great agenda we are going to lay out

today -- the members of Congress who are here. And I'd like to call their names, and then when I finish, ask them all to stand.

Senator Herb Kohl, who sponsored legislation on child care; Senator Jack Reed; Congressman Bill Clay; Congressman Sandy Levin; Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro; Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey; Congresswoman Sue Kelly; Congresswoman Maxine Waters; Congressman Xavier Becerra; and Congressman Nick Lampson. Would the members of Congress who are here please stand. Thank you for coming. (Applause.)

I'd also like to thank my longtime friend -- Hillary and I have been friends of Governor Jim Hunt and his wife, Carolyn, who are here, for almost 20 years now. And I think Governor Romer is here or on his way. Mayor Clevinger, we're glad to see you. And John Sweeney, the head of the AFL-CIO, and others who have come to be with us today. I thank you very much.

This is a happy day at the White House, first for all the people in the administration and all those who have worked with them for months and months and months to help this day come to pass; and second, and even more important, from my point of view, this is a happy day because I have been listening to the First Lady talk about this for more than 25 years now -- (laughter) -- and it may be that I will finally be able to participate in at least a small fraction of what I have been told for a long time I should be doing. (Laughter.) And I say that in good humor, but also with great seriousness.

This is an anniversary of sorts for me. It was six years ago today as a newly-announced candidate for President that I went back to my alma mater at Georgetown and began a series of three speeches outlining what I thought America ought to look like in the 21st century and what I thought we would have to do to create a country in which everyone had an opportunity, everyone was expected to be a responsible citizen, and where we came together across all the lines that divide us into one community.

There are many things that are necessary for that to be done, but clearly two of them are, first, people in this country have to be able to succeed at work and at home in raising their children. And if we put people in the position of essentially having to choose one over the other, our country is going to be profoundly weakened. Obviously, if people are worried sick about their children, and they

fail at work, it's not just individual firms, it's the economic fabric and strength of the country that is weakened. Far more important, if people fail at home, they have failed in our most important job, and our most solemn responsibility.

Second, we'll never be the kind of country we ought to be unless we believe that every child counts and that every child ought to have a chance to make the most of his or her God-given abilities.

That's why we're here today -- to examine where we are and what we still have to do. And what we still have to do is quite a lot, to make sure we live by what we believe when we say that all parents should be able to succeed at home and at work and that every child counts. No parent should ever have to choose between work and family; between earning a decent wage and caring for a child. Especially in this day and age when most parents work, nothing is more important, as you have just heard Kathy Carliner say, than finding child care that is affordable, accessible, and safe. It is America's next great frontier, in strengthening our families and our future.

As the Catholic Conference has noted, no government can love a child and no policy can substitute for a family's care. But there is much that we can do to help parents do their duty to their children. From my days as governor of Arkansas to my service as President, strengthening families has been a central goal of what I have worked on. I'm very proud that the first bill I had the opportunity to sign into law as President was the Family and Medical Leave Act, so that no parent has to choose between caring for a child or keeping a job when a family member is ill.

The expanded earned income tax credit helps to ensure that parents who work don't have to raise their children in poverty. No one who is out there working full-time with children should have to worry about that. Expanded Head Start programs are serving more families than ever before. We've collected record sums of child support enforcement. The historic balanced budget I signed this summer provides a \$500-per-child tax credit and helps parents to pay for their children's college education through IRAs, expanded loans and Pell Grants, the HOPE Scholarship and other tax credits.

The Congress has before it now a program of Secretary

Riley's called 21st Century Community Schools in which we ask for funds to help our states keep our schools open after classroom hours for children who have no place else to go and need that environment.

We've also made some progress on child care. Since 1993, child care assistance has increased by 70 percent to help families pay for nearly a million children. Last year in the welfare reform debate, we fought and won the battle to expand child care assistance by \$4 billion over the next six years, giving states an unprecedented opportunity to lead, to innovate in efforts to make child care more affordable.

But we have to do more. With more families required to rely on two incomes to make ends meet, with more single-parent families than ever, more young children are left in the care of others even in their earliest years. And as the First Lady said, we learned at our Conference on Early Childhood and the Brain, that's when children develop or fail to develop capacities that will shape the entire rest of their lives. It's also true that more and more schoolchildren are returning to empty homes after school.

The first thing we have to do is to make it possible for parents to spend time with their children whenever possible. That's why I hope the Congress will vote to expand the Family and Medical Leave law so that parents at least can take some time off for their children's medical appointments, teacher conferences and other basic duties. And I support flex-time laws that will allow workers to choose between receiving overtime in pay or in time off with their families.

But during those times when children can't be with their parents, they must get care that keeps them safe and that helps them to learn and grow. As we all know, too often that isn't the case. Too often, child care is unaffordable, inaccessible and, sometimes, even unsafe. The cost, as Hillary said, strains millions of family budgets. And government assistance meets just about a quarter of the need. Even for those who can afford it, sometimes good care is hard to find, as Kathy said in her remarks. Waiting lists sometimes takes months or years to move, forcing many parents to cobble together unstable arrangements.

The shortage of care puts older children at risk, as

well. Five million of them between the ages of five and 14 are left to fend for themselves after school. And as they get older, that increases the chances that they'll be exposed to drugs, tobacco and crime.

Finally, studies have shown that too many child care facilities are literally unsafe. The tragedies that have befallen families who depended on child care continue to make headlines all across our nation. This conference is an important step forward in addressing all these issues. What we learn today should spur us on to find ways to help parents, all parents, afford safe, affordable, high quality child care, whether it's at home, a child care center or a neighbor's house.

In the coming months, our administration will develop a plan to be unveiled at the next State of the Union, to improve access and affordability, and to help to ensure the safety of child care in America. In the meantime, I want to announce four specific things we can do right now.

First, I'm asking Congress to establish a new scholarship fund for child care providers. (Applause.) Too many care-givers don't have the training they need to provide the best possible care. Those who do have training are rarely compensated with higher wages. The scholarship program I propose will help students earn their degrees as long as they remain in the child care field for at least a year, and it will ensure that care-givers who complete their training will receive a bonus or a raise.

Second, we have to weed out the people who have no business taking care of our children in the first place. I am transmitting to Congress the National Crime Prevention and Privacy Compact, which will make background checks on child care providers easier and more effective by eliminating state barriers to sharing criminal histories for this specific purpose. I urge Congress to pass and states to ratify this legislation.

Third, I've asked Secretary Rubin to oversee a working group on child care, composed primarily of business leaders working with labor and community representatives to find ways more businesses can provide child care or help their employees afford high quality child care. And again, I thank John Sweeney for his important support of this initiative. (Applause.) In some ways the most

gripping part of that film we saw was the father talking about how he was just consumed with worry at work. No parent should ever have to go through that.

Finally, we must use community service to strengthen and expand access to after-school programs. Today, the Corporation for National Service through its To Learn and Grow Initiative will pledge to help after-school programs all across our country to use volunteers to provide better care to children. It is releasing a how-to manual for groups who want to incorporate community service into after-school programs. And I think that, Secretary Riley, if we can win in our little budget battle here on the 21 century community schools, then together, we can do some real good out there on this issue.

My friends, for centuries, over two now, the American Dream has represented a compact that those who work hard and play by the rules should be able to build better lives for themselves and for their children. In this time, and even more into the future, child care that is too expensive, unsafe or unavailable will be a very stubborn obstacle to realizing that dream. So let us commit ourselves to clearing the obstacle, to helping parents fulfill their most sacred duty, to keeping the American Dream alive for them and most important, for their children.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

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Thank you very much. (Applause.)

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MRS. CLINTON: You know, Ellen, I think that your work over the last number of years from the Families and Work Institute has really helped to highlight a lot of these issues. And one of the most important audiences for this conference, of course, are parents. And I'd like to ask you how we do a better job of empowering parents to make choices about working and child care that are best for their families, and as a subsidiary of that, in particular, what are your views about how we can support parents who want to stay home with their children?

MS. GALINSKY: Well, have the notion in this country

that there is a system of choice, but, in fact, if you look at parents choosing child care, we find in our studies between 58 percent and 75 percent of parents feel that they have zero other choices other than the arrangement that they've chosen when they have child care. So, of course, we need to provide better quality child care. And we need to provide the choice for families to stay at home that's a real choice. And you talked about the earned income tax credit and you talked about family medical leave. So it's income and it's programs and policies that support them.

But I think even more important is respect. Right now, I feel often when I talk to mothers and fathers around the country that those mothers who work feel that they're doing something wrong, that they're missing out on their child's life, that society is judging them negatively. And the mothers who are staying at home feel that they're losing the opportunity to earn money and that society is judging them negatively.

So I think what we need to do is to -- you know, I keep wondering, what are we doing to this generation of families? Let's really not only provide real choices, but let's respect them in the choices that they make.

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: I'd like to ask one question. First of all, I can't help saying this -- when I heard you say that warm and responsive child care actually triggered a biochemical reaction that reduced stress -- I wish we could have a center like that for the White House staff and the Congress staff. (Laughter.) We may actually come up with a revolutionary new proposal here today. (Laughter.)

Let me ask you a serious question. One of the things that I have, that I constantly try to deal with here that I'm super sensitive to because I was a governor for 12 years before I came here, is trying to determine who should do what -- what we can do and make a difference; what we have to basically either exhort or incentivize or require some other people to do.

I was quite taken by the comment you made that only 36 hours of training of a child care worker can make a huge difference. I can't help thinking there probably are a lot of young, often single

parents that might benefit from the same 36 hours of training. And I'm wondering how you think that issue ought to be dealt with. Should states basically upgrade their training standards and put funds into it? Should there be training centers established, more than are there now, even if everybody were required to do it? Are there enough places that do the training in all states?

Talk a little bit about how we might set up an infrastructure and pattern of training to give -- let's suppose we said within two years we wanted every child care provider, even people who do it out of their home, wherever, to get the 36 hours of training, and we'd like it to be open, let's say, to low-income parents who are having their first child -- how would we do such a thing?

MS. GALINSKY: The block grant in child care actually, I think, was very helpful. Some of the programs that we looked at were supported by that. And what they did was to let communities determine how best to meet the needs of the people there. But what was particularly interesting to me in that -- so you need to make training available, you need to also make it -- and I think your proposal is terribly important -- you need to make sure that people who get training then make enough money to be able to stay in the field.

People came into the training in our study for, not so much to learn about kids, but they came into training to figure out, what do I do Monday morning, how do I deal with business practices, sort of the more practical aspects of how do I manage my job. And then they got interested in kids and their development. And when that 18 to 36 hours of training was over, almost everyone, more than 95 percent, wanted to continue their training and they wanted it tied into a credentialing system. They wanted to get college credit for it. And then we followed them over the next year or so and about half of them did get more training.

So it's not just that 36 hours is a magic number or that there's a magic bullet. It's the opportunity to provide meaningful training, training that really helps people where they are in their own development, and to have it continue.

THE PRESIDENT: But what percentage of the people who are now providing child care get that kind of training? That's the

question I'm trying to get.

MS. GALINSKY: Well, I don't really know the exact figure of that, but I don't think that it's very many. I mean, in most states in the country all you have to do to start being a child care provider is be alive and breathing and over 18 years old, and hopefully be a good person, as you're saying. And then you have to promise in many states to get training. In a study that we have just finished and hasn't been released yet, even though they required 30 hours of training in that state, very few people actually did it, and it was required. So it's not enough to require it, we need to have a system that supports it.

In that particular study, there were obstacles to getting the training. It wasn't so easily accessible and they couldn't have time off to do it. So we need to create training that is available, affordable, nearby and good quality, and we need to have the whole child care system support it. You have a requirement and then you don't enforce it, you might as well not have it.

MRS. CLINTON: You know, that just reminds me of how often I've heard it said that we have all kinds of licensing and professional requirements for people who do your hair or other kinds of important functions. Why did I think of hair first? I don't know. (Laughter.) Can't imagine. But we don't have anything like the same licensing, credentialing requirements for people who hold themselves out as child care workers. So there is a real disconnect between what we say is important and what we value and what we have systems for supporting.

Thank, you, Ellen.

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THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. I would just like to make a couple of observations. I thought what you said was terrific. First of all, until -- the crime rate in America's been going down for five years now, rather steeply, but it's been going up among people under 18. It may have leveled off, maybe dropping a little bit now; we're hopeful. But if it is, it's because more and more communities are doing what you suggested. We need another -- at least another year

to see whether it's changed.

But you are very familiar with what's been done in Boston, and one of the things that's been done is the whole juvenile justice system has been geared to be warm and responsive. Juvenile probation officers make house calls will police officers. And community groups walk the streets in the afternoon to, basically, almost pick the kids up and give them things to do and get them involved with things. And as far as I know, it's the only major city in America where nobody under 18 has been killed by a gun in two years now. But, it's not rocket science. It's a systematic attempt to take personal responsibility for all these children after school. And I can tell you, you see the flip side of it in these juvenile crime rates -- it's really touching and quite moving.

The other thing I wanted to say is I wonder if you have any sense, just as a practical matter, of whether these programs tend to work better is they are school-based. And the reason I ask that is I think that we fight these battles around here all the time of how to spend the school money, and most money for schools comes from the state and local level, anyway. But I think one of the biggest problems that these schools have on the issue you've talked about is in school after school after school after school, financial problems have caused them to cut back on their art programs, cut back on their music programs, cut back on their non-varsity athletic programs, the things that children used to typically do after school or could stay after school and do. The school districts as they're now budgeting and as they're now staffed and under the rules under which they now labor, they cannot -- more and more schools are dropping these programs. And I think it's disastrous, because a lot of it is just exactly how children relate in kind of a nonlinear, just purely intellectual way that both of you have said is so important. And I was wondering if you've seen that and if you think that's contributing to the problem.

I mean, a lot of people, without any programs, used to just stay after school because there was an art project, there was a music project, you were getting ready for a concert, the intramural teams were playing. And this is -- you know, there are huge school districts in this country where all of these things are a thing of the past. People look at you like you've lost your mind when you talk about this now; they haven't had these things in years.

And it may be that one of the things we ought to be exploring is whether we can reinstitute some of these things in the lives of our schools that would naturally lead to an out-of-school atmosphere so they wouldn't think about adopting a new program approach. Anyway, I just kind of wanted to ask you that: Are the schools the best place if they work, or does it not matter if you do it right?

MS. SELIGSON: I think it should be a matter of whoever is ready, willing and able to do after-school programs. And I think if schools are ready, willing and able to do them and to find the resources to make them enriching and creative environments, then schools should be the place. But it's not an either-or situation, because really schools can partner with community-based organizations, and most of the school-based care that's out there right now looks like that. It looks like partnerships with the Y or with community organizations.

And then there are some school districts that have put money behind after-school care because they see it in their best interestS to do that in terms of what the outcomes will be for the kids. And some Title I money is going into after school programs. So I think all of it possible. I don't see the schools as the only locus. And because there is such local autonomy about decision-making, the local school board makes those decisions, it's very much a community-by-community decision.

MRS. CLINTON: Can you speak more, though, about what makes up a good after school program? What are the components that you would look for as a parent or as a community leader who wanted to provide such a service in your community? Because sometimes I worry that, just as the President was saying, a lot of what we took for granted when we were growing up is no longer readily available. And a lot of the after-school programs that I visit or that I hear about seem so academically oriented, they're not letting kids sort of blow off steam and explore other talents and be part of doing something different. So perhaps you could talk a little bit about what the components of a good after-school program are, and address the issue about whether or not they're valuable only if they are academically oriented.

MS. SELIGSON: Well, of course, the single most important feature in an after-school program that one would call good

is the staff. And that means people who have been trained, who are prepared to work in these informal learning environments with kids.

The other thing that I'd like to say about the academic programs is that academic programs are fine as long as they understand, those program planners understand that you can't do academics alone in a vacuum without meeting the other needs of kids. Because kids will vote with their feet, and even if they stay in the program, they may be absent emotionally or mentally. So all programs should have good space, comfortable facilities. Children should feel that they're not just occupying a cafeteria that isn't really theirs, where they can put their things down, where they can start a project and not have to wrap it up before they're finished with it, where someone actually looks at them and says, aha, so you're interested in radio or chess or macrame or whatever, and really takes the time to create opportunities for that child to learn how to do those things and do them well.

So I think it's about, as I said, the relationship and the individual, the nature of the relationship between the staff and the individual child. And I think also for parents, it has to be a place where they feel comfortable coming. Many parents find after-school programs to be sort of gateways for them into the school, sort of mediating places, a way to feel more comfortable themselves with the actual schoolteachers and the regular school day.

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you very much, Michelle.

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THE PRESIDENT: I have to excuse Secretary Rubin in a moment to return to his duties, but I wanted to make one point and ask one question. The point I want to make is, he tries real hard to put on that sort of cold shtick, you know, that this is just economics, but -- (laughter) --

SECRETARY RUBIN: "Shtick" is an Arkansas term.
(Laughter.)

THE PRESIDENT: I learned that from him, that word, you know. (Laughter.) But I'm sure you could see there was more there.

It occurred to me, listening to you talk about this,

that this child care issue is an example of what makes our work both wonderful and maddening. How many times has Secretary Riley and I said that every problem in American education has been solved by somebody in some school somewhere, so why don't we get uniform excellence.

I just had the most difficult policy development process I have been through I think since I've been President, that Secretary Rubin and I did together; it was on trying to develop America's position on climate change. But it had very little to do with the science. There is literally enough technology out there today to enable us without lowering our standard of living, indeed while raising our standard of living, to substantially cut our emissions of greenhouse gases. And I can cite you industry after industry after industry that's made a ton of money doing it on their own, so why doesn't everybody do it? Why don't we even have a critical mass of companies doing it? And I ask you that question. So we've got another example here with child care.

If you can cite these examples where all of these companies are making money and having happier, more productive employees, what are the barriers? Why is the market dysfunctional in cases like this, and what can we do to make it work? Because if we were trying to get hookups to the Internet, we'd have 100 percent penetration in one-tenth of the time it takes us to get 10 percent penetration for educational excellence, environmental conservation or spread of child care. What's the difference? (Laughter.)

SECRETARY RUBIN: Are you asking me? (Laughter.)

THE PRESIDENT: I think it's the single, most important question about social policy today. You and I think about this all the time, but I don't know what you think about this.

This is not in the notes, he's not prepared to say this.

SECRETARY RUBIN: You're the President of the United States, you're supposed to know the answer to these things. (Laughter.) But having said that, I'll give you a view, whatever it's worth.

I think, Mr. President, you make a very good point. And I think you can point to a lot of other areas where the same thing is

true. I think what we need to do -- and it's true with respect to the importance of our country and the global economy, -- the importance of trade liberalization and a lot of other things -- I think there is a need for a massive effort of trying to improve the understanding of people in all parts of our economy and our society about what we really need to do in this new and modern global economy. And I think one of the great difficulties is trying to communicate what really matters -- issues such as this in a world which has so much else coming in at people that, really, in my judgment, matters very little.

But I think that your point here, which is to set up a private sector group of some sort -- or it wouldn't be totally private sector necessarily, but a group of people of some sort, try to identify the best practices, try to identify what works, try to identify problems, and then go out and amongst their peers try to bring to their peers the same understanding they they've acquired through their own experience is maybe the most effective and best way to do this, rather than having somebody else who is not part of their world talking to them and trying to bring them into a shared understanding. And that's at least what we're going to try to do with this, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. (Applause.)

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you very much, Secretary Rubin. It is true -- I think you could hear the frustration in the President's voice, that he spends a lot of time, and all of us around him spend a lot of time, and all of us around him spend a lot of time wondering why the best practices and the model programs in a variety of areas in our country don't receive greater awareness and provide more models for people to follow, so that we could spread the success that is evident in so many ways every time you travel around our country.

And we're going to turn to the next part of our program and in a way start addressing this very issue, because Part Two is how we are doing in meeting the challenge and what we need to be doing.

We're going to turn to four additional experts who will address how we're working to assure that families have access to safe, affordable child care, and also give us some insight into what is working well and what we might do to try to replicate that.

* * * * *

THE PRESIDENT: I was glad to hear what you said about not being able to sit still after 3:00 p.m. (Laughter.) I'm glad to know you've been sitting still before 3:00 p.m. (Laughter.) I have never seen you still for two minutes in all of our acquaintance. This is amazing. (Laughter.)

I don't think you can answer this now, but I think it's quite important that we be explicit about a dilemma that we will face as we move toward next year, the State of the Union, what our position ought to be. We all know that there will be in the context of the budget agreement we just adopted, fierce competition for limited money. We're going to have some more money to put into this; we'll do the very best we can. It will be a priority, but still, it seems to me that there will be competition for what the best way the federal government can spend more money in child care is.

We could increase the tax credit to either make it more generous to people who get it now or move it up in the income limits. We could expand Head Start, particularly the Zero To Three program, where we've only got just a few thousand kids now -- 25,000 or something. And I think the early results are pretty promising. It's a terribly important initiative. Or we could devise some way to help get these salaries up, which is abysmal.

When you were talking about the salaries, Hillary gave me a chart which showed that child care workers on the whole are better educated than the American work force and lower paid. So we keep saying we want all these people to come in and get more education and more training, and yet -- and there are some cases where people don't have any education or training, but there are a lot of them that are quite well-educated that are working for ridiculously limited wages. (Applause.)

So what's your sense about how we ought to go about making that decision? And I'll just give a blanket invitation to the audience, too, that if you were in my position and you knew you couldn't do a hundred percent of all these things, would you do a little bit of all of them, would you focus on one, would you focus on the other? And I invite you to make your views known to us either today during the course, or in writing -- because this will be a

difficult thing. Congressman Lampson is still here; he's going to have to make a decision about how to vote on this stuff. And we will have to decide.

SECRETARY SHALALA: Mr. President, I think that all of us would say to you we have to invest resources in quality. Start with the basics -- health, safety and encouraging a good learning environment, focus on the care-giver, start with the care of our youngest children and also our school-age children. But it has to be a quality agenda. That's where the weakness is in the system, and focusing on those care-givers is going to be very important in the future. (Applause.)

* * * * *

THE PRESIDENT: Well, thank you very much. I agree with the last thing you said for sure. (Laughter.)

Let me say, the reason I wanted Governor Hunt to come here today, apart from our 20 years of friendship and my immense admiration for him, is that -- if I could go back to the question I asked Secretary Rubin -- the great trick we have with all great social questions in America is that we know that government can't solve alone, either because we don't have the resources or the capacity, is how to have grass-roots, community-based partnerships that still, when the day is over, add up to a system that serves everybody instead of just makes nice, touching stories we can all tell each other at seminars till kingdom come.

And that is what they have done in North Carolina. They have kept the entrepreneurial spirit, they have the partnership. They've cobbled money together, first one place, then another, and he's put a lot of new money in it, and because he has taken this initiative and set up a framework within which creativity and partnership can flourish, they have a system. And I still believe -- I'll say it again -- I think that is the great sort of challenge that America faces that goes across so many of our problems and plainly relates to this.

The only question I wanted to ask you about it that I would like you to specifically address is, do you have enough money to deal with the dilemma that raising quality standards must increase your cost to some extent, and does that price anybody out of it? And

if not, why not?

GOVERNOR HUNT: Well, Mr. President, we don't have enough money. We've put about an additional \$100 million of state funds into this in the last two or three years, and we've been bringing the counties in as they prepared for it. Three years from now -- they have all gotten some planning money. They really have to really show that they're doing this right. Three years from now, our plan is to have \$300 million state dollars in this, in addition to what we had before, federal money and so on. (Applause.)

We think that will get us pretty close to quality for kids. But it may not be enough, and costs go up. It is terribly hard to get the resources. That's why we've got to understand how important this is. You can't do this on the cheap. You really can't. (Applause.) That's why we need businesses' help. We need everybody's help we need the in-kind, churches providing the places, and we need all the federal money we can get, Mr. President. (Laughter.)

THE PRESIDENT: You know, just one other thing I'd like to say that I think we ought to consider -- this is a little thing, but you talked about the bully pulpit -- I think a lot of people are just plain, old-fashioned ignorant about what's involved in being an effective, successful child care worker, would be surprised at the average educational level of child care workers in America and the average pay. And I think that we ought -- one of the things that we ought to do with this bully pulpit idea of yours is start trying to find ways that every community and every state can honor outstanding child care workers the same ways we honor teachers today, or scientists or others. (Applause.) Because, I think that's terribly important. I just don't think society -- I don't think they mean to devalue people in this work, I just think they don't know -- most people.

GOVERNOR HUNT: Mr. President, if I may, last year, Mrs. Hunt and I had a statewide gala banquet, 1,200 people or so in the State Capitol to present the awards to the top child care-givers like top teachers. And they came from all over the state. And we had the winners in every county. We really need to really start doing that, showing our appreciation, holding these people up, telling how important this is. We've done it some for schools, not nearly enough. You're going to honor teachers tomorrow right here. But we

need to do it for child care-givers, the most important teachers in the world.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: I don't think you can underestimate how important it is for people to say to other people that they matter. And if it matters in your personal life, it's got to matter in all these other areas, too. I think it's a big issue.

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I just want to thank Governor Hunt for his example, because one of our hopes is through this conference to highlight what states are doing. He mentioned some of the other states that have very good practices and are expanding the supply of affordable quality child care. I know that the President fought very hard to put into the Welfare Reform Act that there be a provision that would set aside a portion of federal child care dollars to improve quality in the states. And that's a very important aspect of what we hope states are going to be able to do.

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MRS. CLINTON: Dr. Washington, that was an excellent analysis of what we are confronting. And what would be your advice about how the President, governors, all of us who are concerned about this issue could do more to engage communities in this discussion where either the community themselves, or the leadership of the community don't think they have any particular stake in trying to pursue the sort of process that you outlined and that Governor Hunt has put into practice in North Carolina?

DR. WASHINGTON: Well, as we've all heard today, we all benefit from quality child care. We've got the word out that child care is a collective good. That's why the federal role and the state role and the local role is so important. Child care is a collective good that doesn't just benefit the people who receive the service, the children and the families themselves, but it gives benefits that accrue to the whole society. That's what we've heard the Secretary speak to. We've got to get this message out in our communities, child care is a collective good; we all benefit from child care.

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you very much.

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THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is, I think, an extraordinary way to wrap up our morning session. I can't think of anything that could be added to what you said. But if you think about what all of our last speakers said, it amounts a plea to us to do what we can to both increase the coherence and completeness of community-based action within a framework that creates a system that involves all our children.

And again, let me say to all of you involved in this work, I am profoundly grateful to you. I thank you for being here today. This has been an immensely enlightening day to me. I have been struggling to understand this issue, especially since one day several years ago -- we all have our little epiphanies in life about these matters, but Hillary had been talking to me about child care for years, and one day -- and I was running for governor, more than well over a decade ago -- I used to make a habit in every election season of going to the earliest plant gate in my state, because the workers came to work between 4:30 a.m. and 5:30 a.m. And even the vote-hungriest politicians wouldn't get up that early. (Laughter.) So I always had them all to myself.

And I never will forget, one day I came home and I told Hillary, I said, "you won't believe what happened to me at a quarter to 5:00 a.m. this morning," it was a Campbell soup plant in North Arkansas, and this pickup truck rolled up. And as often happened, the husbands and wives, and one was taking the other to work and they would come up in the dark and kiss each other good-bye. And so this pickup truck came up and this lady leaned over and kissed her husband good-bye and opened the door. And the light came on, and inside were three children under the age of five.

And so I went over and talked to the young man when his wife went in to work -- at a quarter to 5:00 a.m. I said, what are you doing with these kids and how do you do this? He said, well, we've got to get them up every morning at a quarter to 4:00 a.m. And we dress them up. And he said, I keep them as long as I can, but I have to be at work at 7:00 a.m. So I had to find somebody who would take care of them at 6:30 a.m. Three kids under five. But, he said, we've got three kids under five. We both have to work.

Now, there are millions of stories like that. And they are no less gripping for the parents than those who don't have quite such strange circumstances. But it is inconceivable to me that we

have had all of you wonderful people working at this and we've put all this money in it, and we still never develop a systematic approach or, in the words of Patty, a quilt that everybody can be a part of. And that, I think, we should all leave as our mission.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END

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CHILD CARE BULLETIN

| Special Issue |

White House Conference on Child Care

We are very pleased to bring you this Special Issue of the *Child Care Bulletin*, in honor of the **WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON CHILD CARE**, held on October 23, 1997. The day-long conference, hosted by President Bill Clinton and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, provided an unprecedented opportunity to focus national attention on issues critical to meeting the needs of children and families for high quality, affordable child care.

The conference featured a morning panel discussion, moderated by the President and Mrs. Clinton on *The Challenge: Availability, Affordability, and Assuring Safety and Quality in Child Care*. The afternoon panel, *Learning From What Works*, shared examples of best practices and was moderated by Mrs. Clinton and Vice President Gore. Thousands of participants joined with us across the country by sponsoring working meetings and conferences in their communities. Over 100 localities accessed the proceedings via satellite downlink.

Joan Lombardi, Associate Commissioner of the Child Care Bureau, described the Conference as "a special day for all of us, especially for working families who depend on child care everyday and for the providers who work to meet the needs of the children in their care." We have the chance to embrace the positive momentum that such an extraordinary event can generate and bring about real change. Child care is everybody's business. New efforts across all levels, and in partnership with the private sector, can assure that all children receive the care they need to grow and thrive.

We hope that you will continue in your efforts to ensure that each family who needs child care will have the information, resources and options that will enable them to succeed as parents and as workers: child care that they can count on, they can afford, and they can trust to keep their children safe, healthy, and happy.

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