

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. schedule	Schedule for Hillary Rodham Clinton (partial) (1 page)	05/05/1998	b(6)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
First Lady's Office
Melanne Verveer
OA/Box Number: 18539

FOLDER TITLE:

Foster Care and Adoption 1997 to 2000 [binder] [1]

2013-0534-S

ry1772

RESTRICTION CODES

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

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

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

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

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

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

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

**Foster Care
&
Adoption
1997-2000**

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2

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
Foster Care and Adoption
1993-2000

1995

6/19 Home for infants and children, D.C. - Mother Theresa's Home
9/29 Adoption Meeting – White House
11/08 PSA - Adoption DHHS
11/13 National Adoption Month Event – White House

1996

2/15 PSA for The Adoption Exchange
5/10 Mother's Day Adoption Administration Efforts - White House
8/20 Photo with Adoption Advocates and Families
8/23 Video – Children's Service Conference - Holt International
9/13 Adoption Meeting – White House
10/29 Video - North American Council on Adoptable Children
11/13 Adoption Event – White House
12/14 Radio Address with POTUS

1997

1/27 Appearance on Rosie O'Donnell Show
2/14 Adoption Event with POTUS – White House
4/16 National Council for Adoption Dinner –Washington, DC
6/26 W.K. Kellogg Families for Kids by 2002 Conference
9/24 Adoption Meeting – White House
11/19 Adoption Bill Signing with POTUS – White House

1998

5/5 Video - National Adoption Center 15th Annual Gala
9/11 Foster Care –Destination Future '98 – Chevy Chase, Maryland
11/5 Video - Council on Adoptable Children – New York
11/24 Adoption Event – White House - Secretary Shalala, Dave Thomas

1999

1/29 Foster Care Event with Mrs. Gore – White House
2/5 Video – Children's Symposium at Dave Thomas Adoption Center – Ohio
9/24 Adoption Event - White House
12/14 Foster Care Event – Presidential Hall - OEOB

COLUMNS

July 30, 1995
October 29, 1995
May 14, 1996
December 17, 1996
June 24, 1997
September 9, 1997



November 18, 1997

November 20, 1997

September 23, 1998

November 25, 1998

February 3, 1999

September 29, 1999

November 24, 1999

Final 7/17/00

Katie McCormick Lelyveld



TALKING IT OVER
BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

In the short span of a week, the world lost two remarkable people: Princess Diana and Mother Teresa. Though separated by a multitude of differences, these two women were united by their desire to help others. As I flew to London to attend Diana's funeral, I thought of the pictures I had seen of the two of them together. Like so many others, I was left to wonder what we were going to do to keep the spirit of service they embodied alive.

Long before I ever met Mother Teresa, I knew of her work and mission to bring love and comfort to the poor and afflicted in India and around the world.

Still, nothing I had heard or read about her prepared me for the diminutive, determined and joyful woman I met at the National Prayer Breakfast in February 1994. Bill and I greeted her before the program started, and when she asked if she could see us privately afterward, we quickly agreed.

Standing on a step so she could see over the podium, Mother Teresa mesmerized an audience packed into the largest ballroom in Washington. She spoke without notes, calling on all of us to care for the poor and defenseless in society and making a plea against abortion.

After her speech, Bill and I sat together with Mother Teresa on folding chairs in the work space behind the curtain at the back of the stage. She took my hand in both of hers and told me she had been praying for me and my husband and for the work we were trying to do, especially in trying to provide health care to the poor. We also discussed abortion. Though we disagreed respectfully about birth control and whether abortion should be legal, we agreed that adoption should be promoted. We talked about doing more to make adoption a realistic option for pregnant women who do not want to keep their children -- and to make adoption easier for qualified adults who want to provide a child with a permanent, loving home.

Then, Mother Teresa asked me to help her open a shelter in Washington, D.C., for infants and young children awaiting adoption or placement with foster families. I said I would, though I had no idea how. I did, however, have the feeling that keeping my promise to Mother Teresa would involve a fair amount of hard work.

To find a way through the complicated legal and regulatory issues that surround opening such a home in the District of Columbia, I set up a coalition of community leaders and government representatives. The process took a year and a half. Over

9/9/97 Talking It Over

that time, I had the joy of corresponding with Mother Teresa. Letters would arrive, written in her own hand, telling me where she had been and what she had been doing and asking, of course, how we were coming with the house for children -- "the gift of love" she called it. At the top of each letter was an inscription: "As long as you did it to one of these My least brethren. You did it to me."

I saw that Scriptural lesson in action when Chelsea and I traveled to India the following year. In New Delhi, we visited a home for children run by the Missionaries of Charity -- the order Mother Teresa founded in 1950. The building we walked through was crowded with cribs holding babies. As I examined the surroundings, I thought about the struggle I was having back in Washington trying to fulfill my promise to open a home for babies there. There is no way the New Delhi home could have passed muster with the regulators in D.C., but the crowded rooms contained something no regulation could ever provide: enormous love for children who had been left to fend for themselves.

The next time I saw Mother Teresa was back in Washington for the long-awaited opening of the Mother Teresa Home for Infant Children on June 19, 1995. Before the ceremony, Mother Teresa and I toured the home with the Sisters who would staff it. We were delighted by the sunny rooms filled with bassinets, changing tables and rockers. Before we went outside to cut the ribbon, she said to me: "This is a gift of love but I've been told I cannot give the gift of peace because I don't give peace to anyone." What she meant, I believe, is that her work compelled her to "disturb the peace," to upset the complacency of the comfortable to help the poor.

From the moment she received a calling from God "to serve Him among the poorest of the poor" to the moment she passed away at 87, Mother Teresa gave selfless service, love and, yes, peace to countless others. It is in honor of her memory and her work that I will travel to Calcutta on behalf of the President to attend her funeral on Saturday. It is only fitting that people of different faiths from all over the world will come together to express their sorrow at her loss -- and to be reminded, once again, that feeding a child, healing a wound and caring for the dying ultimately help repair the human spirit.

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September 9, 1997

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This marker identifies the place of a tabbed divider. Given our digitization capabilities, we are sometimes unable to adequately scan such dividers. The title from the original document is indicated below.

**9/24/97 Adoption / White
Meeting / House**

Divider Title: _____

**SCHEDULE FOR HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1997
FINAL**

WASHINGTON, D.C.

CONGRESSIONAL CLUB

LEAD ADVANCE: **DAVID NESLEN**
 202/365-8285 **CELL PHONE**
 202/332-3686 **HOME**
 WHCA PAGER # **4101**

NEWSPAPERS FEATURES

COUNCIL LEAD ADVANCE: **JIM LOFTUS**
 WHCA PAGER # **4447**

CREATORS SYNDICATE

PRESS LEAD: **SAM MYERS, JR.**

PREV RON **The White House**

9:15am- **COFFEE** with Oscar de la Renta
9:40am Residence
 CLOSED PRESS/WH PHOTO ONLY

PARTICIPANTS:

-The First Lady
-Oscar de la Renta

9:45am **DEPART** South Portico
 [drive time: 10 minutes]

9:55am **ARRIVE** Congressional Club
 2001 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W.
 CLOSED PRESS/WH PHOTO ONLY

HRC Holding Room:
Congressional Club Office - 1st Floor
Phone: 202/332-1155
Fax: 202/797-0698

Greeters (inside upon arrival):

-Mrs. Carolyn Hobson, President
-Mrs. Sharon Archer
-Mrs. Karen Minge
-Mrs. Linda Dooley
-Mrs. Caryll Kyl
-Mrs. Lydia Foley
-Mrs. Julie Collins
-Mrs. Mary Clement, Past President
-Mrs. Tricia Lott

SCHEDULE FOR HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1997
PAGE 2

10:00am- CONGRESSIONAL CLUB DRESS UNVEILING
11:00am 2001 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W.
CLOSED PRESS/WH AND CONGRESSIONAL CLUB PHOTO

FORMAT:

- Mrs. Hobson will escort The First Lady and Mr. de la Renta upstairs to the ballroom and to their seats at Table 1.
- Mrs. Hobson will walk to the podium and make welcoming remarks and introduce Mrs. Clement.
- Mrs. Clement will make brief remarks -- focusing on the history of the club and the dresses -- and introduce Mrs. Archer.
- Mrs. Archer will recognize the program organizers and introduce Mr. de la Renta.
- Mr. de la Renta will make brief remarks.
- Upon the conclusion of his remarks, The First Lady will approach the manequin to the left of the podium.
- The First Lady and Mr. de la Renta jointly unveil the dress.
- After the unveiling, The First Lady steps to the podium for brief remarks.
- Upon the conclusion of her remarks, The First Lady steps to the right of the podium for a photo receiving line.

Note: The receiving line will move from left to right and will be done by tables. Each lady will return to her seat after photos.

- As the last photo is taken, Mrs. Lott approaches the podium to close the program.
- Upon conclusion of Mrs. Lott's remarks, The First Lady and Mr. de la Renta depart.

Note: The club members will remain for a buffet luncheon.

PARTICIPANTS: Approx. 100 people to attend.

SCHEDULE FOR HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1997
PAGE 3

11:05am **DEPART** Congressional Club
 [drive time: 10 minutes]

11:15am **ARRIVE** the White House

11:15am-
12:00pm **DOWN TIME**

12:00pm **DEPART** South Portico
 [drive time: 10 minutes]

12:10pm **ARRIVE** ANA Hotel
 2401 M Street, N.W.
 HRC Hold:
 Phone: will not have number until Wednesday
 Fax: N/A

Greeter:

Mrs. Corinta Kotula, Executive Director, Creator's Syndicate

12:15pm-
1:15pm **LUNCHEON SPEAKER** at the Newspaper Features Council
 ANA Hotel - Colonnade Room
 2401 M Street, N.W.
 OPEN PRESS/WH PHOTO

FORMAT:

- Mr. Rick Newcombe makes welcoming remarks then introduces The First Lady.
- The First Lady makes remarks.
- Upon the conclusion of her remarks The First Lady takes questions from the audience.
- Mr. Newcombe will draw the Q&A session to a close with closing remarks.
- Upon conclusion of closing remarks, The First Lady departs.

PARTICIPANTS: Approx. 140 people to attend.
See briefing book for complete guest list.

1:20pm **DEPART** ANA Hotel
 [drive time: 10 minutes]

1:30pm **ARRIVE** White House

SCHEDULE FOR HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1997
PAGE 4

1:35pm- **PHOTO-OP** w/❖ Popular Mechanics for Kids❖ co-hosts
1:45pm Map Room
CLOSED PRESS/WH PHOTO ONLY

PARTICIPANTS:

- The First Lady
- Elisha Cuthbert, Co-Host, ❖ Popular Mechanics for Kids❖
- Jay Baruchel, Co-Host, ❖ Popular Mechanics for Kids❖
- Bruce Paisner, Vice President, Hearst Corporation and Deputy Head of Hearst Entertainment
- Dennis Eckart, Attorney for Arter and Hadden

1:45pm- **PHOTO-OP** with Tome Bestard Bonet (tentative)
2:00pm Diplomatic Reception Room
CLOSED PRESS/WH PHOTO ONLY

PARTICIPANTS:

- The First Lady
- Tome Bestard Bonet

2:10pm- **SCHEDULING MEETING**
3:30pm Residence
CLOSED PRESS/NO WH PHOTO

PARTICIPANTS:

- The First Lady
- Pam Cicetti
- Kelly Craighead
- Bobbie Greene
- Patti Solis Doyle
- Melanne Verveer

Contact: Patti Solis Doyle
456-2468

3:30pm- **CHILD CARE MEETING**
4:30pm Map Room
CLOSED PRESS/NO WH PHOTO

PARTICIPANTS:

- The First Lady
- Elena Kagan
- Jen Klein
- Nicole Rabner

SCHEDULE FOR HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1997
PAGE 5

-Bruce Reed
-Melanne Verveer

4:30pm-
5:15pm

ADOPTION MEETING
Map Room
CLOSED PRESS/NO WH PHOTO

PARTICIPANTS:

-The First Lady
-Elena Kagan
-Jen Klein
-Janet Murguia
-Nicole Rabner
-Frank Raines
-Bruce Reed
-Donna Shalala
-Gene Sperling
-Rich Tarplin
-Melanne Verveer

RON

The White House

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National Adoption 11/4/97

Divider Title: _____

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

November 4, 1997

NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH, 1997

- - - - -

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

A PROCLAMATION

Most American children are blessed with loving, stable families. But, tragically, in our country today there are too many children whose parents are unwilling or unable to care for them. While foster care offers these children a safe and nurturing temporary haven in their time of greatest need, as many as 100,000 foster care kids will need permanent homes in the next few years. Many of these children have special needs and require the security and stability of an adoptive family to develop their full potential. Adoption allows these and other children to have the permanent homes they deserve, and it enables many dedicated adults to experience the joys and rewards of parenting.

My Administration is working hard to find ways to help encourage adoption. On December 14, 1996, I issued a Memorandum to the Secretaries of Health and Human Services, the Treasury, Labor, and Commerce and to the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, directing them to promote efforts to both increase the number of children who are adopted or permanently placed each year and to move children more rapidly from foster care to permanent homes. I also urged them to increase public awareness about the children waiting for permanent families and to encourage all Americans to consider the rewards of adoption.

I challenged the members of my Administration to work with States, communities, and civic leaders to create a plan for doubling the number of adoptions and permanent placements for children to 54,000 by the year 2002. And on February 14, 1997, the Adoption 2002 report, outlining changes in policies and practices necessary to reach this goal, was released. Since then, we have been actively implementing the recommendations included in the report, and States are reviewing data and submitting numerical targets for adoption and guardianships to be completed by the year 2002. The Office of Personnel Management has published a guide for Federal workers interested in adopting, and the Department of Health and Human Services is preparing to make the first annual Adoption 2002 Excellence awards later this year. Finally, the Congress is considering historic legislation that would provide the resources and statutory authority for financial incentives, technical assistance, and improved judicial decision-making for children in foster care.

As a Nation, we have before us an opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of our most vulnerable children. We must continue to promote public awareness of the need for adoptive families and to help families make the choice to provide loving, permanent homes for the many children who otherwise must continue to wait. We must also strengthen our support of those families who do choose to adopt. As we observe National Adoption Month, we reaffirm our commitment to adoption as a new beginning for thousands of children, and we celebrate the many American families who have embraced these children by accepting the rewards and responsibilities of adoption.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 1997 as National Adoption Month. I urge all Americans to observe this month with appropriate programs and activities to honor adoptive families and to participate in efforts to find permanent homes for waiting children.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this third day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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11/13/97 Statement

Divider Title: _____

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

November 13, 1997

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

I am pleased that the Senate and the House of Representatives have passed historic, bipartisan legislation to promote adoption and improve our nation's child welfare system, giving our nation's most vulnerable children what every child deserves -- a safe and permanent home. I very much look forward to signing the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 into law.

This legislation makes clear that children's health and safety are the paramount concerns of the public child welfare system. I am particularly pleased that the bill incorporates my Administration's recommendations to provide states with financial incentives to increase the number of children who are adopted and to make other changes in federal law that will make adoption easier and move children more rapidly out of foster care and into permanent homes. The legislation also strengthens support to states for services that help families stay together when that is possible and promote adoption when it is not. Most important, this legislation will help us meet the goal of doubling, by the year 2002, the number of children who are adopted or permanently placed each year.

I want to thank the many members of the Senate and the House of Representatives who worked so hard on this bipartisan achievement, but I particularly want to thank the congressional leadership and the sponsors of this legislation, Senators Chafee and Rockefeller and Representatives Camp and Kennelly, for their commitment. And I would like to add a special word of thanks to the First Lady for her tenacity and dedication to this important issue.

I can think of no better way to celebrate National Adoption Month than to sign this legislation into law.

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TALKING IT OVER
BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bill and I get a lot of letters. Some ask me for advice on hairstyles. Others ask him for golf tips. But the best letters are always from kids. I'll never forget the letter he got from a young boy in Iowa. It said, "Dear Mr. President, My name is Rollie. I like to play football and basketball. I've been waiting eight years for an adoptive family. I'm hoping for a family with pets, a brother and a sister, and nice parents."

Thanks to a new law Bill signed this week, the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, more children like Rollie will have their hopes fulfilled. This law holds out the promise that all children in our foster care system will have a chance to find what every child deserves -- loving parents and a safe, permanent home.

Right now, there are half a million children in foster care. For most of them, foster care is a safe haven on the road to a permanent home. Too many, however, make countless detours along the way, shuffling from family to family, without much hope that they'll ever find parents to love and take care of them.

This new law will come to their aid. It is the direct result of the President's commitment to improving the lives of all children. And it will help meet his goal of doubling by the year 2002 the number of kids who are adopted or placed in permanent homes each year.

Here's what this legislation will do:

-- With this law, the health and safety of children will always be the first priority. The best chance children have in this life is with parents who love them -- and we must always do our best to give them that. But we cannot ever leave children in unsafe homes. Under this law, states will no longer be required to try to keep children with parents who tortured, abandoned or chronically abused a child. When this happens, a child will be on a fast track to a safe, permanent home. Furthermore, states will conduct criminal background checks of prospective foster and adoptive parents.

-- With this new law, foster care will become what it was always meant to be -- a temporary refuge en route to a permanent home -- not a place to grow up. For kids in foster care, hearings determining their future will be sped up by at least six months. For children who have been in foster care for 15 of the last 22 months, states must move forward to terminate parental rights except in narrowly specified circumstances. For children who cannot be safely returned to their families, states must do all they can to find a permanent place to call home. And states now will receive financial incentives to

11/18/97 Talking It Over

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**11/19/97: Adoption Bill
Signing**

Divider Title: _____

SCHEDULE FOR HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1997
FINAL

WASHINGTON, D.C.

SCHEDULER: JULIE HUFFMAN
202/456-5315 PHONE
202/456-5340 FAX
202/363-5714 HOME
WHCA PAGER #4762

PREV RON The White House

1:10pm- BRIEFING [w/POTUS]
1:30pm Map Room
CLOSED PRESS/NO WH PHOTO

1:30pm- MEET AND GREET [w/POTUS]
1:40pm Blue Room
CLOSED PRESS/WH PHOTO ONLY

PARTICIPANTS: Approx. 20 people to attend.
Please see briefing book for complete list.

1:35pm- SIGNING OF HOUSE RESOLUTION 867,
2:15pm THE ADOPTION PROMOTION ACT OF 1997 [w/POTUS]
East Room
OPEN PRESS/WH PHOTO

FORMAT:

- The President and The First Lady, accompanied by The Vice President and Secretary Shalala are announced to the stage.
- The First Lady proceeds directly to the podium while the President, The Vice President and Secretary Shalala take their seats.
- The First Lady gives opening remarks, acknowledging other stage guests, and introduces Secretary Shalala.
- Secretary Shalala gives remarks and introduces the Vice President.
- The Vice President gives remarks and introduces Ms. Badeau.
- Ms. Badeau gives remarks then introduces

SCHEDULE FOR HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1997
PAGE 2

The President.

- The President gives remarks.
- Upon conclusion of The President's remarks, The President proceeds to the Bill Signing Table to sign the bill.
- The First Lady, accompanied by the other stage guests, stand behind The President as he signs the bill.
- Upon conclusion of signing, The First Lady proceeds to the Blue Room for a receiving line while The President and Vice President depart.

PARTICIPANTS: Approx. 180 guests to attend.

2:20pm-
3:00pm

PHOTO RECEIVING LINE
Blue Room
CLOSED PRESS/WH PHOTO ONLY

FORMAT:

- The First Lady will participate in a photo receiving line with the approximately 180 guests.

3:15pm-
4:30pm

PRIVATE MEETING
Residence
CLOSED PRESS/NO WH PHOTO

PARTICIPANTS:

- The First Lady
- Bobbie Greene
- Ellen Lovell
- Capricia Marshall
- Melanne Verveer

RON

The White House

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

November 19, 1997

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AND FIRST LADY
AT ADOPTION BILL SIGNING

The East Room

1:53 P.M. EST

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you and welcome to the East Room. Please be seated. We are delighted to have all of you join us today for this very important event and one that many of you in this room have worked for and looked for for many years.

There are some people that I would like to acknowledge and introduce before we get started. You will hear from the four members of Congress who are here on the stage, Representative Kennelly, Representative Camp, Senator Chafee and Senator Rockefeller. Also attending are Senator Craig, Senator DeWine, Senator Landrieu, Representative Levin, Representative Oberstar, Representative Maloney, and Representative Morella. And I'd like to ask all the members of Congress to please stand. (Applause.)

This was truly a bipartisan piece of legislation. It could not have been passed without the strong support of the members whom you see, including the sponsors who are here on the stage. It was also a work that was very much in the heart of Secretary Donna Shalala and her team from HHS -- Richard Tarplin, Mary Bourdette, and Carol Williams. And I'd like to ask the Secretary and her team to stand please. (Applause.)

There were also a number of members of the White House staff who worked very hard with members of Congress and with members of the HHS contingent, and I'd like to acknowledge just a few of them -- John Hilley, Bruce Reed, Elena Kagan, and in particular Jen Klein and Nicole Rabner. I want to thank all of them. (Applause.)

I'm also pleased that we have Governor Romer of Colorado. We have children, families, advocates, and leaders of the child welfare constituency here in our audience.

Nearly a year ago, the President and I met with children waiting in the foster care system for caring families to call their own. There the President pledged to reform the child welfare system to work better for the children it serves, to put their health and safety first, and to move children more quickly into safe and permanent homes. Today we as a nation make good on that pledge.

And for the thousands of American children who wait for a stable, loving home that will always be there, it is not a moment too soon. Right now there are nearly half a million children in foster care. For most, foster care is a safe haven on the road to a permanent home or back home. Too many, however, make countless detours along the way, shuffling from family to family without much hope that they will ever find permanent parents to love and take care of them. These children who will enter this holiday season unsure about whether the family they celebrate this year will be there with them next year deserve better.

We know it makes a difference for children to have permanent loving homes. It's not only research that tells us this; we know it by our intuition, by our own experience and we have all seen it firsthand. It was here in this room two years ago that a young woman named Deanna -- a child waiting to be adopted in foster care stood up and read a poem about what she wanted in life, and it wasn't real complicated. It is what all of us want. I'm happy that because of that event here in the East Room, she was able to meet a family who did adopt her. And I saw her last year at an event in Kansas City and almost didn't recognize her -- from a shy, withdrawn 13-year-old, she had blossomed into a cheerful, outgoing, confident teenager with a brilliant smile.

This landmark legislation that the President is about to sign will see to it there are more stories like Deanna's. This legislation stands as proof of what we can accomplish when we come together. As we see today, the national government does have an important role to play in reforming our foster care system, and giving guidance to courts and states in offering incentives to speed up and increase the numbers of adoptions, and in making sure that the health and safety of our children is always the first priority.

But we know even more, all Americans have a role and a responsibility. Businesses can make it easier for their employees to adopt a child. And I want to single out Dave Thomas of Wendy's, who has led the way in showing all of us how that can be done. (Applause.)

Religious leaders can help spread the word about the joys of adoptions. Parents thinking about adoption can expand their search to reach out to kids in foster care. And if we reform the system so that it works the way that it should, more Americans will look to American children to adopt and not feel compelled to go overseas to adopt children. (Applause.)

With us today are some extraordinary Americans who have answered this call. This morning, the Department of Health and Human Services observed National Adoption Month by honoring outstanding achievements with the 1997 Adoption 2002 Excellence Awards. Secretary Shalala developed these awards at the request of the President. The winners are dedicated individuals and organizations, both large and small, who have worked to move children out of the foster care system and into permanent, loving homes. Some of them have been at the forefront of this issue for years; some have promoted and supported adoption in their communities; and some are parents who have opened their homes and hearts to our nation's most vulnerable children.

I'd like to ask all the honorees who were honored this morning to please stand. (Applause.) We want to thank you for the work you have done, for the example you have set. And we hope that through these awards, in conjunction with this legislation, there will be many, many more in your ranks in the years to come.

* * * * *

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Sue Ann. Thank you, Aaron (phonetic). And I want to thank the Badeau family for showing up. I think it's fair to say it was a greater effort for them than for anyone else here. (Laughter.) I appreciate the rest of your presence. It was easier for me than anybody; I just had to come downstairs. (Laughter.) But I'm grateful that they're here.

Secretary Shalala, I thank you and your staff for your remarkable work on this. And I thank the members of the White House staff, all the

members of Congress who are present here. And especially I thank Senators Rockefeller and Chafee and Congressmen Camp and Kennelly for their work and for what they said here.

Congratulations to the Adoption 2002 Excellence Award winners. I thank all the advocates who are here. And I say a special word of thanks, along with all the others who have said it, to the First Lady, who has been passionately committed to this issue for at least 25 years now that I know. Thank you, Governor Romer, for coming. And thank you, Dave Thomas, for what you've done.

Again let me say to all the members of Congress who are here, Republicans and Democrats alike, I am very grateful for what you've done. This, after all, is what we got in public life for, isn't it?

Before I make my brief remarks, if you'll forgive me and understand, I have to make one public statement today about the situation in Iraq.

As I have said before, I prefer to resolve this situation peacefully, with our friends and allies, and I am working hard to do just that. But I want to be clear again about the necessary objective of any diplomacy now underway. Iraq must comply with the unanimous will of the international community and let the weapons inspectors resume their work to prevent Iraq from developing an arsenal of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. The inspectors must be able to do so without interference. That's our top line; that's our bottom line. I want to achieve it diplomatically. But we're taking every step to make sure we are prepared to pursue whatever options are necessary.

I do not want these children we are trying to put in stable homes to grow up into a world where they are threatened by terrorists with biological and chemical weapons. It is not right. (Applause.)

It's hard to believe now, but it was just a little less than a year ago when I directed our administration to develop a plan to double the number of children we move from foster care to adoptive homes by the year 2002. We know that foster parents provide safe and caring families for children. But the children should not be trapped in them forever, especially when there are open arms waiting to welcome them into permanent homes.

The Adoption and Safe Families Act, which I am about to sign, is consistent with the work of the 2002 report and our goals. It fundamentally alters our nation's approach to foster care and adoption. And fundamentally, it will improve the well-being of hundreds of thousands of our most vulnerable children. The new legislation makes it clear that children's health and safety are the paramount concerns of our public child welfare system. It makes it clear that good foster care provides important safe havens for our children, but it is by definition a temporary, not a permanent, setting.

The new law will help us to speed children out of foster care into permanent families by setting meaningful time limits for child welfare decisions, by clarifying which family situations call for reasonable reunification efforts and which simply do not. It will provide states with financial incentives to increase the number of children adopted each year. It will ensure that adopted children with special needs never lose their health coverage -- a big issue. Thank you, Congress, for doing that. It will reauthorize federal funding for timely services to alleviate crisis before they become serious, that aid the reunification of families that help to meet post-adoption needs.

With these measures we help families stay together where reunification is possible and help find safe homes for children much

more quickly when it is not. We've come together in an extraordinary example of bipartisan cooperation to meet the urgent needs of children at risk. We put our differences aside, and put our children first.

This landmark legislation builds on other action taken in the last few years by Congress: the Adoption Tax Credit I signed into law August to make adopting children more affordable for families, especially those who adopt children with special needs; the Multiethnic Placement Act, enacted two years ago, ensuring that adoption is free from discrimination and delay, based on race, culture, or ethnicity; and the very first law I signed as President, the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, which enables parents to take time off to adopt a child without losing their jobs or their health insurance.

We have put in place here the building blocks of giving all of our children what should be their fundamental right -- a chance at a decent, safe home; an honorable, orderly, positive upbringing; a chance to live out their dreams and fulfill their God-given capacities.

Now, as we approach Thanksgiving, when families all across our country come together to give thanks for their blessings, I would like to encourage more families to consider opening their homes and their hearts to children who need loving homes. You may not want to go as far as the Badaeus have -- (laughter) -- but they are a shining example of how we grow -- (applause) -- they are a shining example of how we grow when we give, how we can be blessed in return many times over. We thank them and all -- all of the adoptive parents in the country.

For those who are now or have been foster or adoptive parents, I'd like to say thank you on behalf of a grateful nation, and again say at Thanksgiving, let us thank God for our blessings and resolve to give more of our children the blessings they deserve.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END

2:19 P.M. EST

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

November 19, 1997

PRESIDENT CLINTON SIGNS
THE ADOPTION AND SAFE FAMILIES ACT OF 1997

November 19, 1997

Today, President Clinton signs into law the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, to help thousands of children waiting in foster care move more quickly into safe and permanent homes. This overwhelmingly bipartisan legislation was based in large part on the recommendations of the Administration's Adoption 2002 report. The report takes its name from one of the President's central goals which is, at a minimum, to double the number of adoptions to 54,000 by the year 2002.

The Act makes sweeping changes in federal law on adoption and foster care enacted in 1980. The new law makes clear that the health and safety of children must be the paramount concerns of state child welfare services. It sets swifter time frames for making permanent placement decisions and terminating parental rights for children. For the first time, states will have financial incentives to increase adoptions. Children with special needs and ongoing medical needs are ensured health care coverage. Federal funds will continue for programs that work to keep families together when it is appropriate and safe to do so.

Ensuring that Children are Safe

Clarifies Reasonable Efforts: As the President proposed, the new law ensures that children's health and safety are the primary concerns of the public child welfare system. It clarifies that there are instances when states are not required to make reasonable efforts to keep children with their parents, such as when a parent has been convicted of murdering another child or a child has been abandoned, tortured, or chronically abused.

Doubling the Number of Children
Adopted or Permanently Placed by 2002

Creates Financial Incentives: The new law contains the President's plan to offer a financial bonus to states that increase the number of children who are adopted from the public foster care system. These incentives will help to double the number of children adopted. For every additional child adopted, a state will receive \$4,000, with an additional \$2,000 paid for each child with special needs. The Act authorizes \$20 million for each of 5 years (FY 1999 to FY 2003) for the bonuses, though eventually the bonuses will be offset by savings in foster care expenses.

Establishes Tighter Time Limits: Children who cannot safely return to their own families often wait far too long in foster care -- typically over 3 years, and many times even longer. Under the new law, permanency hearings will now be held no later than 12 months after a child enters foster care, 6 months earlier than under previous law, and states must initiate termination of parental rights proceedings, except in specified circumstances, for any child who has been in foster care

for 15 of the previous 22 months.

Breaking Down Barriers, Promoting Safe and Stable Families, and Achieving Accountability

Eliminating Obstacles: The new law prohibits delaying or denying adoptions across state or county lines, thereby breaking geographic barriers to adoption.

Providing Supportive Services: The new law ensures that children with special needs keep health insurance coverage when they are adopted, either through Medicaid or through the new children's health program. In addition, the new law reauthorizes the Family Preservation and Family Support Services Program, renamed Promoting Safe and Stable Families, which provides services to strengthen families before crises occur and to ensure safe, stable homes for children who return to their families.

Emphasizing Results for Children: The new law authorizes HHS, in consultation with states, to develop new measures to track and rate state performance efforts in providing child welfare services to ensure successful results for children.

Recognizing Success: Prior to the bill signing today, HHS recognized 13 awardees for significant achievement in helping both adopted children and those waiting for adoption. Among the awardees are families, foundations, members of the media, and states that have improved the management of child welfare programs.

THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION RECORD ON ADOPTION

November 19, 1997

"I am pleased that the Senate and the House of Representatives have passed historic, bipartisan legislation to promote adoption and improve our nation's child welfare system, giving our nation's most vulnerable children what every child deserves -- a safe and permanent home."
-- Statement by President Clinton, November 13, 1997

The Clinton Administration has previously taken several important steps to encourage and increase adoptions and to support the families who choose to open their hearts and their homes to these children. Since taking office in 1993, the President has championed programs that find and assist adoptive families, and has committed his Administration to breaking down barriers, including high adoption costs and complex regulations. These steps include:

MAKING ADOPTION AFFORDABLE FOR FAMILIES. Last year, President Clinton signed into law the Small Business Job Protection Act of 1996, which provides a \$5,000 tax credit to families adopting children, and a \$6,000 tax credit for families adopting children with special needs. This provision has alleviated a significant barrier to adoption, helping middle class families for whom adoption may have been prohibitively expensive and making it easier for families to adopt children with special needs. Since President Clinton took office, the number of children with special needs who have been adopted with federal adoption assistance has risen by 60 percent. This year, in signing the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, President Clinton ensured more support for families who adopt children with the \$500 Per-Child Tax Credit.

GIVING STATES FLEXIBILITY AND SUPPORT. To test innovative strategies to improve child welfare systems, the Clinton Administration has granted child welfare waivers to California, Delaware, Indiana, Illinois, Maryland, North Carolina, Ohio and Oregon, giving the states more flexibility in tailoring services to meet the needs of children and families. Up to two more states will receive approval for waivers under previous authority. Under the new Adoption and Safe Families Act, HHS will grant up to 10 waivers per year to states. In addition, this Administration has provided states with enhanced technical support and helped improve court operations. In September, HHS awarded 40 demonstration grants totalling \$7.9 million, to states, local agencies, courts, private organizations, and others committed to promoting adoption for innovative programs to increase adoptions and reduce the number of children in foster care. To prevent children from entering foster care in the first place, in 1993, the Clinton Administration secured federal funding for the Family Preservation and Family Support Program to help states, local governments and service providers develop effective programs to serve children and families at risk.

BREAKING DOWN RACIAL AND ETHNIC BARRIERS TO ADOPTION. The Small Business Job Protection Act of 1996, also ensures that the adoption process is free from discrimination and delays on the basis of race, culture and ethnicity by strengthening the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act which the President signed in 1994.

PROVIDING SUPPORTS FOR CHILD PROTECTION AND ADOPTION. In 1993, President Clinton signed into law the Family and Medical Leave Act which enables parents to take time off to adopt a child without losing their jobs or health insurance. In addition, the welfare reform bill that the President signed into law maintains the guarantee of child protection and adoption, and does not reduce funds for child welfare, child abuse, foster care and adoption services.

RAISING PUBLIC AWARENESS. Through speeches, writings, events and public service announcements, the President and First Lady have promoted the importance and benefits of adoption.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

November 19, 1997

PRESS BRIEFING BY
SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR
DOMESTIC POLICY JENNIFER KLEIN

The Briefing Room

12:46 P.M. EST

MR. TOIV: Good afternoon. As you know, the President is going to sign the adoption legislation today, and here to brief on that is Jennifer Klein, who is Special Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy, works closely with the First Lady's Office on these issues.

MS. KLEIN: As Barry said, today the President is going to sign historic legislation to change the nation's child welfare system. It's a fitting time to do this because November is National Adoption Month. The bill passed Congress with really hard work on both sides of the aisle and intense work by the administration and overwhelming bipartisan support.

I want to just take a step backward and tell you where this started. First and foremost, the First Lady has been committed to this issue for more than 25 years and has really been a leading force in the administration on adoption and child welfare and particularly on many of the provisions that are actually in this bill. A little less than a year ago, the President issued an executive memorandum directing Secretary Shalala to come back within 60 days with specific recommendations on strategies to move children from foster care to permanent homes and to double the number of children adopted or permanently placed by the year 2002.

The report came back to the President on February 14 of this year and it outlined a very ambitious agenda with three key principles -- the first was that every child deserves a safe, permanent family; second, that children's health and safety should be the paramount concern; and third, that foster care is not -- is by definition a temporary situation, not a place for children to grow up.

The Adoption and Safe Families Act that the President is going to sign today reflects those principles and includes many of the specific recommendations in that report. First, in terms of the goal, the bill actually in its preamble makes very clear that the health and safety of children must underlie all decisions in the child welfare system. And there's a number of provisions to that end.

A key one is the clarification of the reasonable efforts standard. The law both reaffirms the importance of making reasonable efforts to reunify families before children are placed in an adoptive or other permanent placement. But it also makes clear that there are certain circumstances where the child's safety is at stake where states are not required to keep children with their parents, such as cases where the child has been abandoned or tortured or chronically abused. At the same time, the legislation also reauthorizes the Family Preservation and Family Support Services program, which provides services to help

families stay together whenever possible.

Second, the legislation ensures that foster care is temporary, as it should be. It sets time limits and it promotes the adoption of children who can't return to their homes. In that vein, it includes the President's plan to provide financial incentives to states to increase the number of children who are adopted each year, and it authorizes \$20 million for each of five years to do that.

And in addition, the time that children must wait for hearings is shortened. Currently, there is an 18-month length of time for children before any permanency hearing is held. That's shortened to 12, and even shortened further for children who have been in the foster care system for a longer period of time. And finally, the law ensures that children with special needs will keep health insurance when they are adopted. Those are the outlines of the bill, and I'm happy to take any questions you have.

Q Don't you expect all of this to go through court litigation to actually take children away from their parents? I mean, I'm speaking from a lack of knowledge, but wouldn't there be all these obstacles every inch of the way?

MS. KLEIN: Well, the purpose of this bill is actually to help courts do their job better. For example, the reasonable effort standard that I mentioned, that's a standard that has been imposed in law, and in many cases, although this was not the intention of that provision which came into law in 1980, it has prevented courts from actually getting children moving to the right place, either back with their birth parents or in another situation if that's not going to work. And what this law does is clarify that standard so courts have more of a clear direction of what to do and how to do it more quickly.

Q There's a move in some states to restrict adoption to married couples only. Does the President have any thoughts on any restrictions that should be placed on who adopts?

MS. KLEIN: We haven't addressed that yet.

Q Does he intend to?

MS. KLEIN: I think the President feels strongly that -- first of all, I think that's a state decision. But, second of all, that states decide who the appropriate families for adoptive children to go to, and the most important thing is to look from the perspective of the child, of where that child is going to be the most safe and loved.

Q Who decides that?

MS. KLEIN: Basically, that's a state decision.

Q Is there a special system set up to check and make sure that more children are getting adopted? How are you going to monitor this law?

MS. KLEIN: Part of what was in Adoption 2002, the President's report, which is now in this law, is to set a goal of doubling the number of children that are adopted by the Year 2002. Last year it was 27,000 children by 2002; it would be 54,000 children out of the foster care system. And one of the things that's part of that provision is a tracking system. And it's actually sort of interesting because it's the first time there's every been performance-based standards in the child welfare system.

Q Were there federal adoption laws before this one?

MS. KLEIN: Yes. The first federal adoption law, the one before this, which was also the first, was passed in 1980. Thank you.

END

12:55 P.M. EST

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November 14, 1997, Friday 3 STAR EDITION

SECTION: A; Pg. 20

LENGTH: 551 words

HEADLINE: Congress passes bill to expedite adoption of neglected children

SOURCE: Knight-Ridder Tribune News

BYLINE: STEVEN THOMMA, MELANIE EVERSLEY

BODY:

WASHINGTON - Congress on Thursday overwhelmingly approved a bill to speed the adoption of abused and neglected children, revamping a 1980 law that resulted in children languishing in foster care while social workers tried to fix their broken homes.

The bill, which now goes to **President Clinton**, shifts the priority for government agencies from reunifying abused children with their families to ensuring their safety and welfare.

"This legislation will not eliminate child abuse or guarantee a permanent home for every child, but will take a significant first step forward on the road to providing protection and permanency for our nation's abused, neglected and sometimes forgotten children," said Rep. Barbara Kennelly, D-Conn.

Administration officials have said Clinton will sign the bill.

The number of children in foster care - either abandoned or taken from parents - at the end of 1995 skyrocketed to 494,000, a nearly 80 percent increase over the previous decade.

With about 17,000 foster children placed in permanent adoptive homes each year, the number left behind in foster care continues to grow, as does their wait for adoption. In some states, the average wait for placement is three years, said Rep. Dave Camp, R-Mich., a chief author of the bill. "This bill says that in some cases, the child's health and safety are better served by being immediately considered for permanent adoption," said Camp. "We're putting the health and safety of the child first."

The 1980 law required states to make "reasonable efforts" to return foster children to their biological parents.

The new bill frees states from that requirement in cases of physical or sexual abuse, abandonment, torture, manslaughter or murder. It also requires states to move to terminate parental rights if a child has been in foster care for 12 of the previous 18 months.

Federal payments to the states of up to \$ 6,000 per child are included in the bill as incentives to speed up **adoptions**.

The bill's approval was called "wonderful, wonderful news" by adoptive parent Jim Williams of Bloomfield Hills, Mich., who had lobbied for the measure. "This will help the children that need the help the most - the ones that have been in foster care already," he said.

For years, Williams and his wife, Pam, tried to adopt three young brothers whose mother abused and abandoned them. The Williamses were nearly thwarted by the old adoption law.

This past summer, after much legal wrangling and lobbying in Washington, the Williamses were able to adopt the boys, ages 5, 8 and 9. Jim Williams called Thursday's passage a victory but predicted that children's advocates would pursue more battles.

"There are cases where children have been in foster care for years and the abuse from their natural parents was not serious enough to fall under this statute," Williams said. "We'll probably see about federal legislation to help them also."

In the meantime, the new bill likely will save children's lives, sponsors said.

"The Senate passed the bill on a voice vote. The House vote on the bill was 406-7. House members who voted against the bill were Reps. Christopher Cannon, R-Utah; Bart Gordon, D-Tenn.; Ray LaHood, R-Ill.; Donald Manzullo, R-Ill.; Patsy Mink, D-Hawaii; Ron Paul, R-Surfside; and Zach Wamp, R-Tenn.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: November 15, 1997

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View Related Topics

November 14, 1997, Friday
Correction Appended

SECTION: NEWS LOCAL & NATIONAL , Pg. 1A

LENGTH: 793 words

HEADLINE: ADOPTION BILL CLEARS CONGRESS

BYLINE: Jonathan Riskind, Dispatch Washington Bureau

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

An **adoption bill** approved yesterday by Congress will rescue thousands of children trapped in foster-care limbo or endangered by abusive parents, proponents say.

The centerpiece of the bill, a multi-pronged initiative to speed more of the country's 500,000 foster-care children to adoptive homes, says protecting a child is more important than keeping troubled families together.

That change to a 17-year-old child welfare law will save lives, said Sen. Mike DeWine, R-Ohio.

DeWine worked for nearly two years to overhaul the 1980 Child Welfare Act's requirement that "reasonable efforts" be made to keep children with their parents or reunite them in cases where children are removed from a home because of abuse or neglect.

Advocacy groups initially were cool to DeWine's proposal, fearing it would make it too easy to split up families, but most wound up endorsing the measure.

"Too often, reasonable efforts have come to mean unreasonable efforts - efforts to reunite families which are families in name only," DeWine said on the Senate floor. "The passage of this bill will cause a momentous change in how we look out for the interests of the most vulnerable children in this country."

The Senate approved the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 by voice vote. The House passed it 406-7.

President Clinton is expected to sign it into law. DeWine and other senators have received calls of support from first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton.

In addition to the DeWine language, the bill gives states bonuses of up to \$ 6,000 per child for increasing the number of adoptions - money that can be used to help families defray adoption costs or allow county agencies to pump up family assistance programs.

The final House-Senate bill grants \$ 53 million for bonuses, far less than the \$ 2.4 billion program Senate proponents envisioned to aid special needs adoptive children.

Two of the bill's co-authors, Sens. John Chafee, R-R.I., and Jay Rockefeller, D-W.Va., will try to win more money next year.

Still, the legislation is an important step forward in the battle to find loving homes for children suffering from abuse and neglect, said John Saros, director of Franklin County Children Services.

"There is no simple solution to family problems," Saros said. "But the bottom line is this will help us to do a better job protecting children that we can readily identify being at risk - and that is good."

A recent Franklin County case highlights the problem the bill attempts to address, Saros said.

The county took two infants from a home where seven others already had died from parental neglect; the children, now ages two and three, remain in foster care.

The parents, former drug abusers, are turning their lives around, and the children likely will be returned to them, Saros said. Still, under the bill passed yesterday the children probably would have found permanent homes as infants, instead of living in uncertainty during such formative years, he said.

"Too frequently, children have returned home and suffered terrible injuries . . . when (the DeWine language) would have given us the ability to take the children" and find them permanent adoptive homes, Saros said. "This will make a difference in our ability to protect some kids."

There were 1,976 Franklin County children in the foster-care system as of Nov. 11. About 150 children a year in the county find permanent homes; many languish for months or years in temporary homes or bounce back and forth between foster care and biological parents.

Nationally, about 17,000 children a year - out of 500,000 - are adopted. The average child stays in foster care for three years.

Rep. Deborah Pryce, R-Perry Township, an adoptive parent and adoption reform advocate, said the bill will streamline the adoption process, especially for children who have been abused or neglected.

"Congress and the federal government cannot legislate compassion and love for the nation's children, but through this legislation we can take reasonable steps to promote family stability and to give children - especially foster children - a fighting chance to see the loving homes they deserve," Pryce said.

DeWine said this isn't a cure-all and it doesn't mean thousands of children won't remain on foster-care rolls or in troubled homes. But he and other proponents contend it clearly will improve many children's lives - and actually save some lives.

"Some children will continue to spend too much time waiting to be adopted, but without this bill more children would have to wait, and have to wait longer," DeWine said. "And it's a tragic fact that children will continue to die of child abuse; but without this bill more children would die."

CORRECTION:

In a story in yesterday's Dispatch about an adoption bill approved by Congress, an example about seven children should have said the children were permanently removed from their home because of parental neglect.

LOAD-DATE: November 19, 1997

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View Related Topics

November 13, 1997, Thursday

LENGTH: 1267 words

HEADLINE: ADOPTION BILL SAILS TO THE WHITE HOUSE

BYLINE: By Elias Wolfberg, States News Service

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

A bill sponsored by Sen. Larry Craig, R-Idaho, to move abused and neglected children from foster care into permanent homes resoundingly passed both houses of Congress on Thursday.

The bill, which has been pushed by Craig for more than a year, uses a mixture of cash incentives and new safety guidelines to make it easier for parents to adopt foster children.

"This is legislation to make our child welfare system work foremost for children," said Craig. "Top among all our priorities is the safety and wellbeing of the child. No one else's interest should come first."

The legislation will end the uncertainty of most foster home arrangements by limiting the time a child can spend in foster care. The bill's supporters hope that forcing states either to put up children for adoption or return them to relatives will lead to quicker permanent homes.

Most children end up in foster care because their parents are either in jail or unable to take care of them, and foster homes are supposed to provide a temporary home for dislocated children.

The legislation also rewards states with grants of between \$3,000 and \$6,000 for every child they successfully put up for adoption, and pumps an additional \$65 million into a federal foster care program.

Critics of the current system say that foster homes have increasingly become a semipermanent situation, where children often are shuttled around from one home to another or returned to their abusive natural parents.

"I don't want to condemn anybody that has worked in the foster care system . . . but the bias in the past has been to the parents," Craig said. "That bias was so overpowering that it ignored the backgrounds of the parents, even when those parents might have been abusive."

While laws governing foster care differ in every state, the new measure will make sure that all states use a child's welfare as the litmus test when deciding whether to place that child back with its natural parents or up for adoption.

For the first time, states will not be required to try to keep together families with a history of physical or sexual abuse. Instead, the new law will require that a judge take away the "parental rights" of abusive parents.

"The practice has generally been not to return a child to a family where such abuse has occurred," said Karabelle Pizzigata of the Child Welfare League of America. But "this is the first time in federal law where it says that a reasonable effort by the state (to reunite all families) does not have to be made."

For a state like Idaho, the new law will codify a practice that is already underway.

"For every child that is going to be adopted, we do a comprehensive home study to make sure that all families are up to par," said Bill Walker, spokesman for the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare. "But the majority of children leave foster care within six months and go back to living with their families of relatives."

The bill has received a broad range of support across the political spectrum. In the House, it passed by a resounding 407-7, and won unanimous approval in the Senate. First Lady **Hillary** Rodham **Clinton** even called Craig -- often an opponent of causes favored by the First Lady -- to congratulate him when the bill first passed the Senate.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: November 13, 1997

FOCUSTM

Search: General News;adoption bill and hillary w/2 clinton

To narrow this search, please enter a word or phrase:

Example: House of Representatives

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11/20/97 Talking + Over

DRAFT

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

COLUMN FOR NOVEMBER 20, 1997

There is no greater tragedy for any family than when parents are unable or unwilling to care for their children. And there is no greater challenge for society than to decide what to do with children in these circumstances.

Today, nearly half a million children are in foster care, separated from their parents because of abuse or neglect. For most of these children, foster care is a temporary safe haven until they can return home. But for others, it's a bleak waiting game that can go on for years. Shuffled from family to family, they have little hope of being reunited with their birth parents or finding permanent placement with adoptive parents who will care for them and love them.

While there is no quick fix for the foster care crisis, and no fool-proof formula for deciding every foster care case, our nation took a giant step this week in improving the prospects for children in need of permanent homes. At a ceremony in the Rose Garden, the President signed legislation that, for the first time, will put the interest of children first when it comes to adoption and foster care. [NOTE: needs more emotion here, something personal would help.]

This new law gives states greater flexibility in assessing when and whether parents are able to meet their responsibilities to their children. States will no longer be required to reunify families who have come apart due to "aggravated circumstances", like torture, abandonment or sexual abuse. At the same time, the law will redouble efforts to keep families together by helping families overcome problems that can lead to family instability.

The new law will give states financial incentives to increase the number of adoptions by assuring prospective adoptive parents that children with special needs will retain their health care coverage. It also will require states to come to quicker resolution about permanent plans for foster children. And the new law will provide funding for the education and training of judges who must decide the fate of children in the foster care system.

This legislation surely will ease the pain and confusion that so often marks foster care cases. For too long, in courtrooms across America, children have been caught in a legal tug of war in which their own rights must compete with the noble, but sometimes unrealistic, ideal of family reunification.

I remember once representing a foster family in Arkansas that wanted to adopt a four-year old boy who had been in their care for three years. The boy had been abandoned by a mother who suffered from psychological problems and he showed all the symptoms of severe mistreatment; he had gained little weight, was unresponsive and shied away from human contact.

But in his foster family he began to thrive. Still, when his foster parents tried to adopt him, the state adoption agency refused. Instead, state officials began to consider returning him to his birth mother, who had filed suit to get him back.

It seemed clear that keeping the little boy with his foster parents was in his best interest. What was not clear was whether his health and safety was the priority that counted most in a court of law.

Thankfully, the judge allowed the foster parents to adopt the boy, giving him the opportunity that all children need and deserve: to grow up in a safe, loving, and stable family.

Not all of us are parents, but all of us have been children. We all know the importance of having a caring permanent family - either because we have been fortunate enough to have had the experience or because we are painfully aware of what we have missed.

I know that laws are not the answer to all of our nation's problems. A loving home and responsible parents are not things that can be legislated. But laws can help protect our most vulnerable children and smooth their paths to stable homes with mothers and fathers who want to take them in.

That's what this new law does. And what better gift can we give this Thanksgiving week than the hope for tens of thousands of children in foster care that they, too, may soon know the joy of spending the holiday season with a family that cares for them and loves them.

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**5/5/98 Video
National Adopt.
Center**

Divider Title: _____

SCHEDULE FOR HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
TUESDAY, MAY 5, 1998
FINAL

WASHINGTON, D.C.

SENATE SPOUSES

LEAD ADVANCE: MICHELLE KREISS
301/384-7118 PHONE

DC ARTS

LEAD ADVANCE: STEPHEN LAMB
202/205-3689 PHONE
202/232-8365 HOME

DC ARTS

PRESS ADVANCE: DOUG SMITH

DSCC DINNER

LEAD ADVANCE: AL RUTHERFORD
202/364-3628 PHONE
800/309-8499 PAGER

SCHEDULER: WENDY ARENDS
202/456-7007 PHONE
202/456-5340 FAX
202/518-8209 HOME
WHCA PAGER

PREV RON The White House

12:10pm DEPART South Portico
VIA Motorcade
EN ROUTE Senate Russell Building
[Drive time: 5 minutes]

12:15pm ARRIVE Senate Russell Building
PROCEED to third floor
VIA elevator

GREETERS (curbside):

Becky Daughtery, Office of the Sergeant at Arms

GREETERS (Third Floor):

Mrs. Gore
Joyce Bennett, Chair
Bonnie Bryan, Co-Chair

Note: The First Lady and Mrs. Gore sign the
Historical Book.

SCHEDULE FOR HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
TUESDAY, MAY 5, 1998
PAGE 2

12:20pm- MEET AND GREET
12:50pm Room 325
Senate Russell Building
CLOSED PRESS/WH PHOTO

FORMAT:

- The First Lady and Mrs. Gore proceed to Room 325 for a photo receiving line.

PARTICIPANTS: 98 guests

12:50pm- SENATE SPOUSES LUNCHEON
2:00pm Room 325
Senate Russell Building
HRC Hold: Room 324
Phone: 202/224-7548
Fax: 202/224-2417
CLOSED PRESS/WH PHOTO

FORMAT:

- Joyce Bennett escorts the First Lady to her table.
- Mrs. Gore makes welcoming remarks and introduces Marcia Coats.
- Marcia Coats gives the invocation.
- Joyce Bennett makes welcoming remarks.
- Lunch is served.
- Joyce Bennett makes brief remarks and introduces Marcelle Leahy.
- Marcelle Leahy introduce Elizabeth Bishop, Linda Mabbs, and Ken Wise from the Washington Opera.
- Elizabeth Bishop, Linda Mabbs, and Ken Wise perform.

PAGE 5

3:20pm **DEPART** Canadian Embassy
 VIA Motorcade
 EN ROUTE South Portico
 [Drive time: 5 minutes]

3:25pm **ARRIVE** South Portico

3:30pm- **MEETING** w/Leon Sullivan
4:00pm Map Room
 CLOSED PRESS/WH PHOTO

PARTICIPANTS:
The First Lady
Leon Sullivan
Melanne Verveer
Erica Barks-Ruggles

4:30pm- **VIDEOS**
5:30pm Roosevelt Room
 CLOSED PRESS/NO WH PHOTO

- National Adoption Center's 15th Annual Gala
- Project A.L.S. Benefit Welcoming Video
- Project A.L.S. PSA
- The Second Annual Roselyne C. Swig Award Gala
 for Partners Ending Domestic Violence
- The 1998 Children's Summit: Growing Up - The Walt
 Disney Company
- Educational Press Association of America's 1998
 Friend of Education Award
- The Historic Opening Celebration of the National
 First Ladies' Library
- The ABC Love Award at the Love Our Children Gala-
 Public Counsel Law Center
- Children's Circle of Care
- First Statewide Summit on Childcare "Schools,
 Communities, & Businesses: Florida's Partners in
 Quality Child Care"

5:30pm (T) **DROP-BY** Mrs. Gore's Cinco de Mayo Fiesta **(OPTIONAL)**
 Room 200, OEOB
 CLOSED PRESS/WH PHOTO

Note: The Cinco de Mayo Fiesta begins at 5:00pm.

SCHEDULE FOR HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
TUESDAY, MAY 5, 1998

Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. schedule	Schedule for Hillary Rodham Clinton (partial) (1 page)	05/05/1998	b(6)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
First Lady's Office
Melanne Verveer
OA/Box Number: 18539

FOLDER TITLE:

Foster Care and Adoption 1997 to 2000 [binder] [1]

2013-0534-S
ry1772

RESTRICTION CODES

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

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

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

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

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

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

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

PAGE 6

6:45pm-
7:00pm

DROP-BY Steve Silverman/Emily Bromberg
Going Away Party
State Dining Room
CLOSED PRESS/WH PHOTO

FORMAT:

- Erskine Bowles makes remarks and introduces the First Lady.
- The First Lady makes remarks and introduces Harold Ickes.
- Harold Ickes makes remarks and introduces the Vice President.
- The Vice President makes remarks and introduces the President (T).
- (T) - The President makes remarks.

PARTICIPANTS: approximately 80-100 guests

7:05pm

DEPART South Portico
VIA Motorcade
EN ROUTE DSCC Dinner
[Drive time: 10 minutes]

7:15pm-
8:15pm

DSCC DINNER at Home of Senator Feinstein

(b)(6)

[001]

CLOSED PRESS/DSCC PHOTO

FORMAT:

- The First Lady does a photo receiving line with 22 people.
- The First Lady proceeds to a tented courtyard for dinner.
- Dinner is served.

SCHEDULE FOR HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
TUESDAY, MAY 5, 1998

- Senator Barbara Boxer makes welcoming remarks and introduces Senator Patty Murray.
- Senator Patty Murray makes remarks and introduces Senator Diane Feinstein.
- Senator Diane Feinstein makes remarks and introduces the First Lady.
- The First Lady makes remarks.
- The First Lady departs.

PARTICIPANTS: approximately 22 people

8:15pm

DEPART DSCC Dinner
VIA Motorcade
EN ROUTE South Portico
[Drive time: 10 minutes]

8:25pm

ARRIVE South Portico

RON

The White House

Clinton Presidential Records Digital Records Marker

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**9/11/98 Destination
Future '98**

Divider Title: _____

SCHEDULE FOR HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1998
FINAL

WASHINGTON, D.C.

NATIONAL CATHEDRAL

LEAD ADVANCE: IAN ALBERG

4-H CENTER

LEAD ADVANCE: KAREN BURCHARD
202/401-3028 PHONE
202/401-0048 FAX
800/759-8888 PAGER
PIN 8917483

PRESS ADVANCE: LEE FLORES
703/506-0325 PHONE

SCHEDULER: MOLLY BUFORD
202/456-5315 PHONE
202/456-5340 FAX
202/244-2125 HOME
WHCA PAGER #4452

PREV RON The White House

8:45 am- BRIEFING
8:55 am The Map Room
CLOSED PRESS/WH PHOTO

CONTACT: Capricia Marshall 202/456-7136

9:00 am- RELIGIOUS LEADERS BREAKFAST [w/POTUS]
10:30 am East Room
POOL PRESS FOR REMARKS/WH PHOTO

FORMAT:

- The President and First Lady are announced into the East Room and proceed to their tables.

- The Vice President makes remarks and introduces The President.

- The President makes remarks and introduces Dr. Reverend Gerald Mann.

- Dr. Reverend Gerald Mann gives blessing.

SCHEDULE FOR HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1998
PAGE 2

- Breakfast is served.
- Following breakfast, The President opens discussion.
- Upon conclusion of the discussion, The President introduces Dr. Reverend James Forbes.
- Dr. Reverend James Forbes gives benediction.
- The President, First Lady, and Vice President depart.

PARTICIPANTS: Approx. 130 guests to attend.

CONTACT: Capricia Marshall 202/456-7136

11:10 am- [t] **DROP-BY** w/Nan Rich
11:15 am The Diplomatic Receiving Room
CLOSED PRESS/WH PHOTO

CONTACT: Nan Rich 202/296-2588

11:15 am **DEPART** The White House
VIA Motorcade
EN ROUTE National Cathedral
[drive time: 10 minutes]

11:25 pm **ARRIVE** National Cathedral

GREETERS:
Major Stephan Lott, Head Verger, Washington
National Cathedral

11:30 am- **EMBASSY VICTIMS MEMORIAL SERVICE** [w/POTUS]
12:45 pm National Cathedral
POOL PRESS/WH PHOTO

NOTE: The President, The First Lady, the Vice President, Mrs. Gore, Secretary Madeleine Albright and Secretary William Cohen will be seated prior to the start of the program.

FORMAT:

SCHEDULE FOR HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1998
PAGE 3

- Processional Bells (congregation stands).
- The "National Hymn" is sung.
- The Opening Anthem is read by Bishop Ronald H. Haines, Washington National Cathedral.
- Collect for Burial (prayer).
- The First Reading is given by John E. Lange, Charge d'Affaires, American Embassy, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (congregation is seated).
- Psalm 121 is sung by the Cathedral Choristers.
- The Second Reading is given by Mr. Idris M. Diaz, Attorney-Advisor, Department of State.
- The Third Reading is given by The Honorable Ambassador Prudence Bushnell, American Embassy, Nairobi, Kenya.
- Secretary William Cohen makes remarks.
- Secretary Madeleine Albright makes remarks.
- Hymn 579 is sung (congregation stands).
- The Vice President makes remarks.
- Anthem is sung by the Cathedral Choir.
- The President makes remarks.
- Hymn 680 is sung (congregation stands).
- The Gospel is read.
- The Reverend Jesse Jackson reads the Sermon (congregation is seated).
- Dean Nathan Baxter, Washington National Cathedral, offers prayers (congregation stands).

SCHEDULE FOR HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1998
PAGE 4

- Bishop Ronald H. Haines reads Commendation.
- "Fanfare of the Common Man" is played.
- Bishop Ronald H. Haines gives the blessing.
- Organ Postlude is played.
- The President and the First Lady, accompanied by the Vice President and Mrs. Gore are escorted from their seats and depart.

PARTICIPANTS: Approx. 2000 guests to attend.

12:50 pm **DEPART** National Cathedral
 VIA Motorcade
 EN ROUTE The White House
 [drive time: 10 minutes]

1:00 pm **ARRIVE** The White House

1:50 pm **DEPART** The White House
 VIA Motorcade
 EN ROUTE National 4-H Center
 [drive time: 20 minutes]

2:10 pm **ARRIVE** National 4-H Center

GREETERS:

James Walker, Director, National Resource Center
for Youth Services
Peter Correia, Associate Director, National
Resource Center for Youth Services
Susan Schelbar, Conference Coordinator, National
Resource Center for Youth Services

2:15 pm- **DESTINATION FUTURE CONFERENCE**
3:00 pm Aiton Auditorium
 National 4-H Center
 Chevy Chase, MD
 Hold: John Deere Room
 Phone: 301/961-2903
 Fax: 301/961-2898
 OPEN PRESS/WH PHOTO

SCHEDULE FOR HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1998
PAGE 5

FORMAT:

- James Walker makes welcoming remarks and introduces Carol Williams, Director, Children's Bureau, HHS.
- Carol Williams makes brief remarks and introduces Joy Warren, California Youth Connection.
- Joy Warren makes brief remarks and introduces The First Lady.
- The First Lady makes remarks and departs.

PARTICIPANTS: Approx. 250 guests to attend.

CONTACT: James Walker 918/585-2986

3:05 pm DEPART National 4-H Center
VIA Motorcade
EN ROUTE The White House
[drive time: 20 minutes]

3:15 pm ARRIVE The White House

3:20 pm- DOWN TIME
5:05 pm

5:10 pm- BRIEFING
5:20 pm The Map Room
CLOSED PRESS/WH PHOTO

CONTACT: Capricia Marshall 202/456-7136

5:25 pm- MEET AND GREET
5:30 pm Diplomatic Reception Room
CLOSED PRESS/WH PHOTO

PARTICIPANTS: Please see briefing book for complete list.

CONTACT: Capricia Marshall 202/456-7136

5:35 pm- IRISH PEACE EVENT [w/POTUS]

SCHEDULE FOR HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1998
PAGE 6

6:35 pm Tent
South Lawn
OPEN PRESS/WH PHOTO

FORMAT:

- The President, First Lady and Vice President are announced into the tent.
- The First Lady proceeds directly to the podium and makes welcoming remarks and introduces Senator Edward Kennedy.
- Senator Edward Kennedy makes remarks.
- Senator George Mitchell makes remarks.
- The Vice President makes remarks.
- Brian O'Dwyer makes remarks and presents the Paul O'Dwyer award to The President.
- The President accepts the award and makes remarks.
- Optional ropeline and depart.

NOTE: Following the event, The President, First Lady and Vice President have the option of mingling with guests on the State Floor.

PARTICIPANTS: Approx. 600 guests to attend.

CONTACT: Laura Schwartz 202/456-5655

RON The White House

TALKING IT OVER

BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

RELEASE: WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 1998, AND THEREAFTER

I met the most extraordinary young woman last week. Joy Warren had just begun her first week at Yale Law School. But what's remarkable is that Joy grew up in foster care, and like more than 20,000 foster-care children each year, she "aged out" of the system when she turned 18.

This means Joy has been entirely on her own, without the traditional support system so many families provide, for the past seven years -- years in which she managed to receive a college degree, work as an advocate to improve foster care and begin law school.

Children who grow up in foster care face many of the same challenges as other children and have many of the same needs. But they also have special challenges that demand special attention -- and too often they just don't get it.

One 13-year-old foster child told me what she wants most: "I want a place that I can call home; a room that I can call my room; a family that I can love and would love me back." Is this too much to ask?

Although my own mother was never in formal foster care, her teen parents were unable to care for her when she was born. They sent her to live with her grandparents, but when that didn't work out, she went to live in the home of a family where she helped take care of the children for room and board.

My mother has often told me how grateful she is to the woman with whom she lived because she got to see what a real family was like. She watched what happens inside a home where parents and children go through all they should go through as a family. And she wanted to pass that opportunity on.

When I was growing up, she invited young women from a group home to come and work for us, spending time with our family, much as my mother had done so many years before.

I'm proud that this Administration has cared enough to improve and reform our nation's foster-care system, including passing the Family and Medical Leave Act, which gives time off for parents to adopt a child. Tax credits are now available for families who adopt, and foster care and adoption have been freed from discrimination and delays based on race, culture and ethnicity.

I was especially proud when, last year, the President signed the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, a historic step toward improving the lives of children in

9/23/98 Talking it Over

foster care. The aim of this bill is to place this country's 500,000 foster-care children in safe, stable, loving and permanent homes. And it will help us meet our national goal of doubling the nation's annual adoption rate.

But, as important as this bill is, it doesn't address all the needs of the children who "age out" of the system each year and who, like Joy Warren, have to make the tough transition to living on their own.

Last year, at a roundtable in Berkeley, Calif., I spent an afternoon listening to young people describe the challenges of leaving the foster-care system. A disproportionate number are homeless and have trouble finishing school, finding jobs and receiving adequate health care. And, often, they don't get the life skills they need to survive in today's world.

There are many programs that work, several of which exist as a result of the advocacy and leadership of former foster kids like Joy. One national conference, Destination Future, where I met Joy last week, brings together older foster children and homeless young people to teach them life skills and advocacy techniques. Programs in Texas and Florida provide college-tuition assistance for young people in foster care. In Los Angeles County, set-aside entry-level jobs are available for young people aging out of foster care. Massachusetts has a teen parent transitional living program. And the California Youth Connection has become a national model of how to bring young foster teens together to form a network of support and advocacy.

One of the most critical challenges remaining is to make sure that children who age out of foster care gain access to health care. It is outrageous that these young people should find themselves among the uninsured. Some states are addressing this issue, but there is still far to go.

We must also strengthen the Federal Independent Living Program, which provides 85,000 young people critical assistance in their transition to independent living, helps them earn their high school diplomas and offers access to vocational training.

Federal legislation and state programs have put us on the right track. But we must do better. Now is the time to make sure that the 20,000 young people who each year become too old to remain in foster care receive the help they need to become independent and productive members of society.

To find out more about Hillary Rodham Clinton and read her past columns, visit the Creators Syndicate web page at www.creators.com.

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First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton
Remarks at Destination Future '98
4-H Club
September 11, 1998

Thank you. Thank you Joy and thank you all for inviting me to be here. I am very happy and delighted to be here with Joy and Erica on the stage, and all of you who are using your experience and energy on behalf of yourselves and other young people in the foster care system and those who have transitioned out of it, looking for ways to use your experience to make all of our systems, and the lives that they affect, better.

I want to thank Carol Williams for her leadership and her stalwart advocacy on behalf of children and youth. I have had the pleasure of working with Carol over a number of years now and many of the changes that we try to make on behalf of a better improved foster care and adoption system are because of her dedication.

I want to thank Jim Walker and all of you who are associated with the National Resource Center for caring about this extraordinarily important group of people in our country. I want to thank Donna Hughes for the National Network which I think is one of the best ways we can keep the issues of foster care, adoption and our systems that affect young people on the front burner.

As Joy mentioned, I was privileged to meet with a group of young people who were active in the California Youth Connection. And I was so impressed. My staff, my friends, my husband and my daughter know that I have talked about that meeting many times since then. I was impressed by the intelligence, the thoughtfulness and honesty of those young people who were still in the foster care system and those who have aged out of it.

And I came away from that meeting even more committed to do whatever I can do to try and make sure that your voices are heard. Because there isn't any doubt in my mind that after having been involved with foster care for more than twenty eight or nine years now, that there are any voices that are more important than yours.

And I have a feeling that this is the right time for those voices to be heard. That the issues that you will discuss this weekend will not just be left here when you go back to your states and communities but they will serve as a blueprint for what else we need to be doing here in Washington and in state capitals with organizations like the Resource Center and in networks around our country.

I thought a lot about why I have been so committed to and concerned about foster care for so many years. And I think it is for a number of reasons. I knew growing up that my mother had not been in formal foster care, but she had found it impossible to remain with her parents who were both teenagers when she was born many years ago. She was sent to live with a set of her grandparents, and that did not work out, so she went to work in the home of a family where she worked for room and board and a place to live, helping to take care of the children of that family. And that is how she got through high school.

When she ended high school, she had nowhere to go, and she didn't feel that she had a family that she could go to. When I was growing up, we often had the help of young women who were on the brink of aging out the foster care system -- not from any foster home with a family, but from what we would now call a group home. So, three or four of these young women would come and work with my mother as she had been worked with when she was a young woman.

My mother has often told me how grateful she is to the woman with whom she lived because she got to see a real family. She got to watch what happens inside a home where parents and children went through all they should go through in a family, because she never had that. And she wanted to give that opportunity to other young women as well.

When I was in law school, I now refer to it as Joy's law school -- Yale Law School -- I began working with legal services in New Haven, Connecticut. And the cases that came my way were cases involving foster children. Difficult cases of trying to decide if children should remain with that child's biological parents, to be put into foster care to be adopted out of foster care or sent to group homes -- all of the issues you have struggled with first hand.

And I saw through the cases that I handled, in the children and adults I represented, how difficult it was to make the decision that was best for the children. And often it wasn't a matter of people being mean spirited or malicious, it was just that they

were very difficult decision.

And so for all of those years since then, I have tried to keep my attention on the fostercare system. But I don't think that any one of us who have worked in it all these years really had the benefit of an organized way of hearing from the people who truly had the most to say about it -- those of you who had seen that system in a very personal way.

I wanted to come today to do several things. To ask you to be as honest and as helpful as you possibly can this weekend and throughout the year. To make sure that every decision-maker in every community, state and at the national level, knows what you know. And we will do what we can to amplify your voices so that your knowledge carries as far as possible.

Secondly, I think it is time for those of you who are on the front-line with this expertise to become our partners in improving and reporting these systems. As Carol Williams said, you have made progress, and I am very grateful for that progress. The administration, particularly the President, has brought to the forefront issues of foster care and adoption that had never been there before.

We have had events in the Oval Office at the White House where foster children, foster parents, social workers and advocates gathered to get the message out to our countries about how many children are in foster care and what your -- what their needs are.

We have passed laws like the Family and Medical Leave Law which encourages and gives time off to parents who adopt a child. We've provided a tax credit and an even higher tax credit to families who adopt children with medical or other problems. We have worked very hard to make foster care and adoption free from discrimination based on race, culture and ethnicity.

And last year, there was a historic step taken on behalf of foster care and adoption when, after a lot of hard work by many people, the President signed the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997. That Act is aimed at improving the foster care and adoption system and particularly improving the decision-making process, so that a decision can be made in a more orderly, effective and a timely manner, as to whether a child can return home, whether a child should be and can be placed for

adoption and then be placed as quickly as possible to create permanent solutions.

When the President signed that bill he said that we have laid the building blocks of what children should have as their basic fundamental rights -- a decent safe home, an honorable, orderly, positive upbringing -- a chance to live out their dreams and their God-given capacities.

So there has been progress. But I am not here to tell you that we have made anywhere near the progress we need to or we have to. Certainly what was done in the bill that was signed last year will help us move toward our national goal of doubling our national adoption rate. We want the laws to be friendly to people who are in the process of adopting, and we have put into place some safeguards and changes that we hope will make that possible.

For example, the bill shortens the time that a state has to place kids in permanent homes. It strengthens supports to help keep families together when that is possible, and when it is not, to make the decision to move on.

Most importantly, the legislation makes the health and safety of children the first priority. There are over 100,000 young children in our foster care system. That is way too many. We have to be more creative and more determined to do whatever we can to bring those numbers down, because we know there are many unmet needs of those children who are in our fostercare system. But one of those needs that has not gotten the attention it deserves is what happens when you age out the system. And that is what I heard a lot about when I met with the group of young people in California last year.

About 65,000 young people like yourselves will age out the system in the next three years. What can we do better to help you to help them? I heard a lot of advice last year and we are attempting to act on that. We want to address the important needs that young people face when their eighteenth birthday arrives.

That is why I am pleased today to announce a series of grants -- more than \$1 million devoted to making state and local programs that serve young people to work better for the young people they serve. These grants from the Department of Health and Human Services are aimed at giving nine states more assistance in strengthening how they deal with young people.

We want to do a better job in independent living. We want to do a better job in making sure you have the services you need as you transition out and afterward.

We know very well, and I have heard from numbers of young people who are on the brink or who have already aged out of the system, that you face extraordinary challenges.

Many foster youth face homelessness or difficulty finishing high school or enrolling in college or finding a job. And great difficulty in meeting health care needs, which means that you have nowhere to turn and will be uninsured, and are not getting those skills you require to live independently.

Now we know there are programs around the country that are working, and we want to hear honestly from you what works and what doesn't work. I learned for example, that because of advocacy of foster youth around our country programs in Texas and Florida promote college tuition assistance to young people in foster care. In Los Angeles County, set-aside entry level jobs are available for those who are aging out of foster care. Massachusetts has a teen parent transitional living program to help young mothers who are aging out of foster care with parenting and transitional living assistance.

And the California Youth Connection is becoming a national model of how to bring young teens and older young people together to form a network of support and advocacy. We are finally seeing some movement on behalf of older foster youth and those that have transitioned out. So this is a perfect time for you to be meeting to give us advice and to organize yourselves so that you can be sure to have an impact on the policies that are set.

We must strengthen the Federal Independent Living Program which provides 85,000 young people with critical help on their transition to independence. It helps young people like yourselves get a high school diploma and access to vocational training. It helps you learn the daily living schools that we all need like budgeting and finding a place to live.

But we have to review this program and evaluate its effectiveness and we need your help. Now some adults have a hard time admitting that being an adult doesn't mean that we have all the answers. We know we don't. We certainly can't pretend

in front of you that we do. We want you to help us find the best possible answer to the issues and challenges we face.

I believe that the American people need to know more about our foster care system and particularly those who are aging out of it. Most Americans don't know. But if they do know, we have found that they are responsive. More than three quarters of citizens polled about foster care strongly supported services that assist teens that are making that transition, and even said that they would be willing to pay more taxes to provide job placement, college tuition assistance and housing. -

But if we don't get the information out to them, and your stories aren't told and your experiences aren't shared, then people won't know. And I want to emphasize something that Joy mentioned when she introduced me. I imagine that many of you who have been in foster care spend a considerable amount of time trying to avoid telling people that -- trying to pretend it wasn't so. And it may seem perhaps a little odd to be asked to share your experiences now, to talk about what you learned and what you saw or what could be better. But we have no better resources than each of you.

I remember very well the big event in the East Room of the White House a few years ago. I invited various states to come with children who were in the foster care system who were waiting for adoption. And I wanted Americans to know that there were a lot of good, smart, saavy, sweet young people who were in our foster care system who would be an asset to any family.

One young woman from Kansas came with a poem she had written. And she stood up and she talked about her experience of being taken away from her family because of abuse, and how she was abandoned. From the time I was in the White House, she was thirteen and had been in five or six foster homes and because of various situations she was living in a group home.

She stood up to read her poem. She said she really didn't want a lot. She said "I want a place that I can call home. A place that I can call my own. A family I can love that loves me back." Somebody heard that poem and decided to adopt her.

I want every American to hear those words and be heard. Just as I listened to the stories of my mother and saw how determined she was that the family she had would never have the problems that she faced. I think there is a lot of people in



America who want to hear about your brilliance and hope and grit and determination. And I for one, whenever I can, will make sure those lessons and your voices get heard.

Thank you all very much.



September 10, 1998

DESTINATION FUTURE CONFERENCE

DATE:	Thursday, September 11
TIME:	2:15 pm - 3:00 pm
LOCATION:	National 4-H Center Chevy Chase, MD
FROM:	Brenda Costello and Nicole Rabner

I. PURPOSE

To deliver remarks at the *Destination Future: Youth Leadership Development Conference*, announcing the award of more than \$1 million in new grants to nine states to establish and support effective youth development program strategies at the local level. Your remarks will also serve as an opportunity to highlight your efforts to strengthen the nation's child welfare system and to ensure safety and permanency for all children in foster care.

II. BACKGROUND

Overview

On Thursday afternoon you will deliver remarks at the Opening Session of the 8th annual *Destination Future: Partnerships for Change - Youth Leadership Development Conference* in Chevy Chase, Maryland. You will announce over one million in new grants to nine states. The states receiving the Youth Development State Collaboration Demonstration Project grants are: Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nebraska, New York, and Oregon. Each state will receive a grant of \$120,000.

[This is the 8th annual *Destination Future* conference, which brings together foster and homeless youth ages 16-21 receiving independent/transitional living services and their adult sponsors.

Conference

The *Destination Future* conference brings youth and adult leaders from across the country together to build partnerships and promote youth development. Participants learn to network, address youth development issues, improve leadership skills and learn about advocating for change. The conference is specifically geared toward youth ages 16-21 who receive independent living / transitional living services, one of the national events of this kind in the country.

As in years past, the theme of the conference is Leadership Development, with a policy focus. Every other year the conference is held in the Washington, D.C. area, allowing youth conference participants to have access to policy and decision makers, a preference they themselves have communicated. The Conference is sponsored by the University of Oklahoma Resource Center for Youth Services with support from the NRCYD and the National Network for youth.

Youth participants discuss issues and write recommendations, issuing a report at the end of the conference (see 1996 report attached). The goal is to train participants to be better prepared to advocate and present their issues, achieved through a variety of workshops on topics such as how to run meetings, building youth advisory boards, communications, diversity, and youth advocacy. Many state service agencies are interested in hearing from youth, and the conference aims to prepare them to present in such venues as state legislatures. For example, in Texas and Florida, college tuition is free at state schools for youth who are accepted. According to the NRC, the bill which made this possible in Texas was expected to be rejected, but passed after a State Youth Advisory Panel made up of "kids in care" made a presentation during a state legislative hearing on the bill.

The Participants

Approximately 200 youth and their adult sponsors from nearly 20 states will attend this years conference. All foster and homeless youth ages 16-21 receiving independent/transitional living services are eligible to attend. Sponsors can include their social worker, foster parent, youth worker, mentor or volunteer. Some officials from HHS will attend, from the Administration for Children and Families.

Youth participants are selected by states, with the process varying from state to state. Some participants are selected by the state independent living coordinator, some by essay contest, others have volunteered with a state agency. Expenses for travel to the conference are paid for by the state agency's independent living funding.

Format

You will deliver remarks at the Opening Session of the three-day Conference. The Keynote speaker is Erycka Kasse, a community advocate, who will deliver her remarks after you have departed.

Announcement of Grants for Innovative Youth Development Projects

You will announce \$1.08 million in new competitive grants awarded by HHS to nine States to develop and support innovative youth development program strategies at the State and local levels. The new Youth Development State Collaboration Demonstration Project will help the States better address the needs of adolescents and provide positive alternatives and opportunities for youth. By enhancing collaboration at the federal, State, and local levels, the grants will help the selected States identify, develop, and

strengthen their youth development strategies in programs that assist children at risk, such as homeless and runaway youth, abused and neglected children, and others serviced in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

The grants will support a youth development philosophy of redirecting youth in high risk situations toward positive pathways of development and instilling in young people a sense of competency, connection to others and to society as a whole, and a belief in control over their lives. The grants will help to refocus programs on the positive outcomes desired by young people rather than the negative outcomes that adults hope to prevent. Positive developmental opportunities meet adolescents' needs while decreasing their exposure to destructive influences and involvement in risky behavior. Successful State and local strategies will be shared with program developers, managers and other youth service professionals across the country. HHS will award \$120,000 to each of the nine States selected -- Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nebraska, New York, and Oregon.

Independent Living Program

The Independent Living Program (ILP) is the main federal program that assists children who are emancipating from the foster care system. The intent of the ILP is to offer eligible youth the skills and support needed to become independent, productive members of society. The purpose of the ILP is to provide services to foster care children who are 16 or older to help them to:

- Make the transition to independent living by earning a high school diploma;
- Receive vocational training; and
- Learn daily living skills such as budgeting, locating housing, planning a career, and finding a job.

Begun in 1986, the ILP has been funded at \$70 million annually since 1992. Funds are awarded directly to the States; each State has the freedom to design its own program. There are approximately 85,000 young people participating in ILP across the country.

Studies show that youth who have participated in ILP find the services important and helpful. HHS is about to begin a review and analysis of 10 years of ILP reports from all 50 States and DC to inform the States about best practices and effective services. Once completed, the independent review will be widely distributed.

Statistics and Background of Children Emancipating From Foster Care

Approximately 65,000 young people ages 16 to 18 will be "aging out" of the foster care system in the next three years. A number of recent studies have examined the particular challenges of the adolescent and youth foster care population. These findings include: (1) youth leaving foster care lag far behind the general youth population in high school completion and college enrollment; (2) foster youth have had far more health problems (including mental health problems and cognitive delays) than other

children; (3) former foster youth are disproportionately represented in homeless shelters; (4) foster youth often have more difficulty than others finding a job due to a lack of job skills, transportation, experience, and contacts; (5) a significant number of former foster youth do not feel that they were prepared in life skills areas such as money management and parenting even after participating in Independent Living programs; and (6) former foster care youth often have trouble getting access to health care and mental health care services.

Recent Survey

A recent (6/21/98) national survey of the American public showed strong support for services that assist teens who are making the transition from foster care to independent adulthood. 79% of those polled were willing to pay an extra \$2 in state taxes to provide extended help, including job training and placement services, tuition assistance at state universities, and housing until the teen is able to live independently. The survey was funded by the Casey Family Program, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the David and Lucille Packard Foundation, and the Child Welfare League of America.

National Resource Center

The National Resource Center is a self-supporting program in the College of Continuing Education at the University of Oklahoma. Their niche is independent living, and is one of the only national programs in the country dedicated to child welfare services for this age group.

The NRCYD operates two centers, both with the mission of providing professionals with necessary skills to provide quality Youth Development Services. NRCYD also seeks to bring the concept of youth development to the public child-welfare system through the joint efforts of state agencies, nonprofit organizations, and professional service providers. The *NRC for Youth Development* provides training and speakers to states without charge and last year hosted 708 conferences across country (and is federally funded). NRC, for example, provides all child welfare training in the state of Oklahoma. The other, the *NRC for Youth Services*, provides services for a fee, primarily contracting with state agencies.

With an annual budget of \$5.5 million, NRC receives a \$550,000 federal grant annually from the Children's Bureau at HHS. This year the funding was supplemented bringing total federal funding to \$700,000. NRC also publishes materials for youth services which accounts for approximately \$400,000 of its budget.

III. PARTICIPANTS

- The First Lady
- James Walker, Director, National Resource Center
- Carol Williams, Director, Children's Bureau, HHS
- Joy Warren, former foster youth, first year student at Yale Law School. She attended the California Youth Connection/ Adoption event last year in which you participated (see remarks attached).

IV. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- James Walker makes welcoming remarks and introduces Carol Williams, Director, Children's Bureau, HHS.
- Carol Williams makes brief remarks and introduces Joy Warren, California Youth Connection.
- Joy Warren makes brief remarks and introduces The First Lady.
- The First Lady makes remarks and departs.

V. PRESS

Open press.

VI. REMARKS

Provided by Christy Macy.

California Room

Ann Fry, The Better Way, Austin, TX

The pressure's on, your stress level is percolating at overflow! What do you do? This "play shop" will give you hands-on, fun techniques for chasing that stress away—the playful way! Come with your sense of humor in charge and learn very effective ways to manage stress. You'll have a blast!

10:30-10:45 a.m. BREAK

10:45 am – 12:15 pm SMALL GROUPS SESSION II

Small Group 1	Jean Carpenter-Williams	Wisconsin B
Small Group 2	Misty Hager	California Room
Small Group 3	Becky Copeland	Montana Room
Small Group 4	Brinn Sullivan	Illinois Room
Small Group 5	Rebecca Lane	Idaho Room
Small Group 6	Emmitt Gill	Louisiana Room
Small Group 7	Ara Navarun	Washington Room
Small Group 8	Peter Correia	Wisconsin A
Small Group 9	Jim Walker	Arkansas

12:15-1:15 pm LUNCH

1:30 - 4:30 pm **SIGHT-SEEING AT THE CAPITOL**

DINNER AT UNION STATION
Buses will drop off at the Museum of Natural History, 14th and Constitution Avenue N.W. and pick up at Union Station, 40 Massachusetts Avenue N.E. (3 blocks N of U.S. Capital between 1st St. N.E. and N.W.)

6:30 PM RETURN TO THE 4-H CENTER

7:30 - 8:30 pm **GENERAL SESSION II** *Alton Auditorium*
Keynote Speaker, Ann Fry
Play Your Way to a Natural High!

8:30-8:45 pm BREAK

8:45—9:45 pm **GENERAL SESSION IV** *Atton Auditorium*
Comedian, Justin Lookadoo
Twist Your Life Away

9:45 — 11:00 pm **SNACK AND SOCIAL TIME** Recreation Center

11:00-11:30 pm	BED PREP
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11:30 pm **GOOD NIGHTS**

Sunday September 15

7:00—8:30 am	- BREAKFAST	Hardev Dining Room
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9:00—10:30 am SMALL GROUPS SESSION III

Same rooms as Small Groups Session I and II

10:30-10:45 am BREAK

10:45-11:45 am	GENERAL SESSION V	Arlon Auditorium
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Listening Panel
Small Groups Report to Panel of
Youth Development Professionals

11:45— Noon	CHECKOUT/ PICK UP SACK LUNCHES
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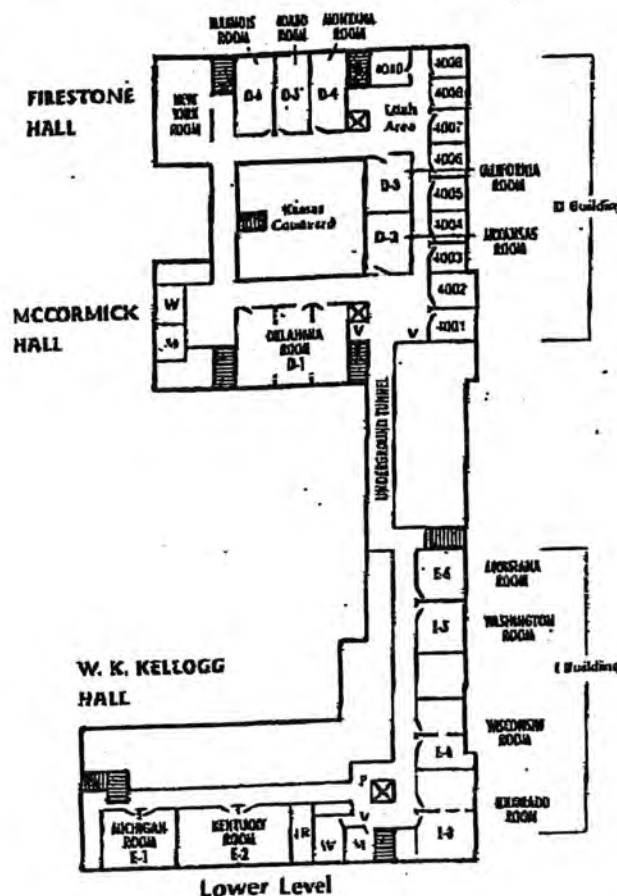
MEETING ROOMS

Other Locations:

REGISTRATION—Ground Floor, J. C. Penney Hall — lobby area just inside main entrance

ATON AUDITORIUM—Lower level, J. C. Penney Hall

HARDER DINING ROOM—Ground floor, W. K. Kellogg Hall



Partnerships for Change

**YOUTH
LEADERSHIP
DEVELOPMENT
CONFERENCE**

SUPPORTED BY
NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER
FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
and the
NATIONAL NETWORK FOR YOUTH

PRESENTED BY



**National
Resource Center
for Youth Services**

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA
COLLEGE OF CONTINUING EDUCATION
202 W. 8TH ST
TULSA OK 74119-7419

SEPTEMBER 11 - 13, 1998
NATIONAL 4-H CENTER
CHEVY CHASE, MARYLAND

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 11		
10:00 am - 1:30 pm	REGISTRATION	J.C. Penny Lobby A
Noon - 1:00 pm	LUNCH	Harder Dining Room
2:00 - 3:00 pm	OPENING SESSION	Aiton Auditorium

THE FIRST LADY Hillary Rodham Clinton

Keynote Speaker, Eryca Kassa
Telling Our Lives into Our Own Hands

3:00 - 4:30 pm SMALL GROUPS SESSION I		
Small Group 1	Jean Carpenter-Williams	Wisconsin B
Small Group 2	Joy Warren/Misty Hagar	California Room
Small Group 3	Becky Copeland	Montana Room
Small Group 4	Bilan Sullivan	Illinois Room
Small Group 5	Rebecca Lane	Idaho Room
Small Group 6	Ennith Gil	Louisiana Room
Small Group 7	Ann Newman	Washington Room
Small Group 8	Peter Corrae	Wisconsin A
Small Group 9	Jim Walker	Arkansas Room

4:30 - 5:30 pm	FREE TIME	
5:30 - 6:30 pm	DINNER	Harder Dining Room

6:30 - 8:00 pm WORKSHOP SESSION I		
Some workshops have been divided into two parts that are inter-related. In order to receive the full benefit, you are encouraged to attend both parts.		

- Creative Tips for Leading Meetings, Workshops, and Group Activities - Part 1** Wisconsin B
Jean Carpenter-Williams, National Resource Center for Youth Services, Tulsa, OK
None of us are strangers to meetings. Whether you're planning or facilitating a meeting or leading an ice breaker, you can always use tips on making the most of your time in groups. Information shared in this workshop will lay the groundwork for practicing time management skills in Part 2.
- Youth Advocacy - Part 1** Arkansas Room
Joy Warren, California Youth Connection, San Francisco, CA
California Youth Connection (CYC) is composed of current and former foster youth 14 to 24 who advocate to improve the foster care system. Former foster youth Joy Warren shows how and why CYC youth are effective advocates. You'll also learn to be a successful advocate in your own state.
- Keys to Effective Presentations - Part 1** Montana Room
Shemi Haines; Tammi Cunningham, University of Tennessee, Nashville, TN
An interactive exploration of different learning styles, group involvement, and techniques of saying what you think and being heard. Learn to identify training skills and special abilities, both obvious and hidden, that can be tapped to involve all people as trainers and create dynamic presentations.

- Building Youth Advisory Boards - Part 1** Illinois Room
Sandy Toledo, Department of Children and Families, Tallahassee, FL and Kimberly Weber, Miami, FL
Explains the history, goals and accomplishments of Florida's Foster Teen Youth Advisory board, plus the "nuts and bolts" of foundation building from local to regional to a state level board.
- Youth Development: What Is It? - Part 1** Idaho Room
Rebecca Lane, National Network for Youth, Washington, DC; Becky Copeland, National Resource Center for Youth Services, Tulsa, OK
Whether you're a youth or work with youth, this 2-part workshop lets you explore what youth development is about. Explore the youth development framework and how to apply it to every day situations. We'll build upon the knowledge of youth and adults in the room. Part 2 is How Do I Do It?
- What You Need to Know to Get the Job You Want** Louisiana Room
Reesa Koppaport, Red Lobster Training Division, Washington, D. C.
Focus on the skills needed to perform effectively in a job interview. Among the skills that are addressed are making a good first impression, dressing appropriately, and answering questions.
- Communication Is More Than Words** Washington Room
Ann Newman, National Resource Center for Youth Services, Tulsa, OK
Working with different people means knowing how to communicate well. Using "True Colors" we'll look at our personality style, the personality style of others, and how we communicate with them. This is a fun way to explore our values, beliefs, and stressors and how they influence our perceptions of people unlike us and how we can interact to work effectively with them.
- Diversity: The Color of Us** Wisconsin A
Peter R. Corrae III, National Resource Center for Youth Services, Tulsa, OK
Through the examination of perceptions and personal moods, we discover the value of our differences and how, in this decade of the 90s, we move toward the color of us-diversity.
- Positive Personal Power** California Room
Misty Hagar, National Resource Center for Youth Services, Tulsa, OK
Explore ways to recognize and increase personal power. Activities, including designing a T-shirt, are used to point the way toward building self-esteem.

8:00 - 8:15 pm	BREAK	
8:15 - 9:30 pm	GENERAL SESSION II	Aiton Auditorium
	Pantastik Fun Groove	
	A steel band drum group	
	Junior Fields, Washington DC	
9:30 - 11:00 pm	SNACK AND SOCIAL TIME	Recreation Center
11:00 - 11:30 pm	BED PREP	
11:30 am	GOOD NIGHT!	

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 12		
7:00 - 8:30 am	BREAKFAST	Harder Dining Room
9:00 - 11:30 am	WORKSHOP SESSION II	

- Creative Tips for Leading Meetings, Workshops, and Group Activities - Part 2** Wisconsin B
Jean Carpenter-Williams, National Resource Center for Youth Services, Tulsa, OK
Let's put the skills we learned in part one to work. Practice your group leadership skills, and fine tune them with the help of participant feedback. It is assumed that participants have attended part one of this workshop.
- Youth Advocacy - Part 2** Arkansas Room
Joy Warren, California Youth Connection, San Francisco, CA
Participants put the lessons learned in Part 1 into action. In small groups, you develop a plan for changing a policy, practice, or law which affects foster youth. Groups have an opportunity to present plans and receive feedback.
- Keys to Effective Presentations - Part 2** Montana Room
Shemi Haines; Tammi Cunningham, University of Tennessee, Nashville, TN
To build on part one, participants will put what they know into practice. Through developing and delivering presentations, participants explore how to take skills learned and put them to work back of home.
- Building Youth Advisory Boards - Part 2** Illinois Room
Sandy Toledo, Department of Children and Families, Tallahassee, FL and Kimberly Weber, Miami, FL
Building on our foundation, learn how we sustain our state Youth Advisory Board through both stability and change. Future goals, positive missions, and constant maintenance are topics of discussion.
- Youth Development: How Do I Do It? - Part 2** Idaho Room
Rebecca Lane, National Network for Youth, Washington, DC; Becky Copeland, National Resource Center for Youth Services, Tulsa, OK
Whether you're a youth or work with youth, this 2-part workshop lets you explore what youth development is about. Explore the youth development framework and how to apply it to every day situations. We'll build upon knowledge of youth and adults in the room.
- What You Need to Know to Get the Job You Want (repeat)** Louisiana Room
Reesa Koppaport, Red Lobster Training Division, Washington, D. C.
- Communication Is More Than Words (repeat)** Washington Room
Ann Newman, National Resource Center for Youth Services, Tulsa, OK
- Diversity: The Color of Us (repeat)** Wisconsin A
Peter R. Corrae III, National Resource Center for Youth Services, Tulsa, OK

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

JAMES M. WALKER

James M. Walker is Director of the National Resource Center for Youth Services of the University of Oklahoma located in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Mr. Walker, who holds an M.A. Degree in Human Relations Studies from the University of Oklahoma, has been providing training and consultation to juvenile justice, runaway youth and child welfare agencies for the past 23 years. Prior to joining the staff of the University, Mr. Walker served as the Executive Director of Youth Services of Stephens County, Duncan, Oklahoma, and as Director of Tillman County Youth Services in Frederick, Oklahoma.

The Oklahoma Association of Youth Services, Inc. (OAYS) honored him with the Youth Advocate of the Year Award in 1986.

Mr. Walker served six years as a Board member with two terms as the Chair of the National Network of Runaway and Youth Services. The NNRYS represents approximately 1000 runaway and homeless youth services agencies nationwide. He was honored by the National Network, receiving the 1990 National Volunteer Leadership Award. He served for four years as the Chairperson of the Southwest Network of Youth Services representing the states of Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, New Mexico and Louisiana. He also has served on the Board of Directors of the National Assembly of Voluntary Health and Social Services. Currently he serves on the National Staff Development and Training Association of APWA.

Locally, he served on the Board of the Parent Child Center for Tulsa and on the Board of Youth Services of Tulsa for six years.

James M. Walker, Director
National Resource Center for Youth Services
The University of Oklahoma
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Tulsa, OK 74119-1419
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FAX: (918) 592-1841
E-mail: jmwalker@ou.edu

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

JOY WARREN

Joy Warren, age 25, is in her first year at Yale Law School. Ms. Warren is a former foster child who lived in foster care in California from the ages of thirteen to eighteen. After emancipation from the system, Ms. Warren attended the University of California, Berkeley, where she received her Bachelor of Arts in History in 1995.

Following graduation, Ms. Warren worked for the Youth Law Center as a Legislative Analyst focusing on foster care issues. She also worked for the California Youth Connection, an organization made up of current and former foster youth, ages fourteen to twenty-four, who work to improve foster care.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

ERYCA KASSE

Many of us are familiar with Eryca Kasse's reputation as a community advocate. For several years, she has stood in the forefront of the feminist movement and has been particularly active as a proponent of equal rights for gays and lesbians. She has also been an outspoken member of the National Coalition Building Institute, an organization dedicated to eliminating all vestiges of homophobia and oppressive attitudes that continue to threaten our democratic values.

Last Spring, Eryca earned her Bachelors degree in Social Work, with a minor in Women's Studies, from George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. She now serves as the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender representative to the National Council on Youth Policy and interns with the National Network for Youth in Washington, DC. She enjoys biking and Chinese food, and she looks forward to moving to Seattle in October, where she plans to continue working in the youth services field.

**A REPORT
FROM**



1 9 9 6

**SEPT 6-8, 1996
NATIONAL 4-H CENTER
CHEVY CHASE, MARYLAND**



Presented by
National Resource Center for Youth Services
The University of Oklahoma College of Continuing Education

Supported by
National Network for Youth
National Resource Center for Youth Development

PREFACE

According to the American Public Welfare Association 657,000 children were in the nation's foster care system during 1993. A one-day count of children in foster care in 1993 showed 445,000 children in foster family homes or other group care settings—an increase of about two-thirds over the one-day count 10 years earlier. With these numbers still on the rise, the significance of assisting youth to develop the capacity to handle all aspects of their life before and upon discharge from the system becomes abundantly clear.

The University of Oklahoma National Resource Center for Youth Services (NRC) is committed to addressing the need for youth to be linked with services that will help them make a successful transition to adulthood. For the past eleven years NRC has been involved in training, technical assistance, and program planning for agencies providing independent/transitional living (IL/TL) programs. These programs offer assistance in the areas of housing, education, employment, life skills development, and support to youth leaving care.

Successful transition to adulthood often depends on the youth's ability to make appropriate decisions regarding his or her case plan. Youth who have a sense of self-esteem and who feel empowered are often better equipped to deal with the barriers as well as the opportunities that arise during and after care. By encouraging youth and adults to become partners in the decisions regarding the youth's treatment or well-being, the youth can begin to learn to take responsibility for themselves and thus feel empowered. This philosophy corresponds with the youth development movement.

Although the idea of youth development has been around for several years, there has not been, until recently, a national movement to encourage agencies to involve youth in the development, implementation, and evaluation of their programs. This is done by creating an environment where young people feel supported and safe in exploring opportunities that will allow them to practice skills, learn about relationships and connect with their community. As a result of this movement, agencies have been better able to utilize youth as a resource while empowering them to be more pro-active in the events that occur before and after care.

Recognizing that youth are a tremendous resource, NRC has provided an opportunity for youth and adults involved in IL/TL programs from across the nation to

come together and discuss ways to improve programming.

Destination: Future, a youth leadership development conference, allows youth to create solutions to issues they identify within IL/TL programs. Youth learn and practice leadership skills, as well as learn what it means to be an advocate for themselves

and others. Youth who attend this conference are not only making the system better for themselves, but they are paving the way for those youth who will follow. This report describes the events of **Destination: Future**. It contains discussions and reports which were presented throughout the conference format.

NRC acknowledges the support of, and extends sincere thanks to, the National Network for Youth. Thanks also to Pamela Johnson, Jake Terpstra and Wilfred Hamm, with the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth, and Families, and Jonah Edelman with Children's Defense Fund, Stand for

Children. These people attended the conference to listen and respond to the ideas of the youth.

It is the hope of the National Resource Center for Youth Services that this conference facilitates open discussion and enhances the partnership between youth and adults. We also hope this report is a catalyst for change in a system that affects our most precious resource . . . youth.

Youth who
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CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

Youth across the nation are beginning to take an active role in addressing issues that relate to their health, well-being, and safety. More schools are developing youth-led programs that address health issues such as HIV/AIDS, sexuality, and substance abuse. In addition, youth are forming task forces to address safety issues such as guns, violence, and racism.

Youth understand they can be instrumental in planning and implementing programs that affect them.

This is also true with child welfare and youth services programs. Many agencies are developing programs that allow youth to take the lead in addressing issues of youth in out-of-home care. From youth advisory boards to speakers' bureaus, youth in care are actively pursuing ways to enhance the system that raises so many of our youth.

For the fourth year, The National Resource Center for Youth Services (NRC) has provided a forum for youth in out-of-home care to identify the issues that affect them and take the lead in developing strategies for addressing these issues. On September 6-8, 1996, NRC sponsored ***Destination: Future***, a youth leadership development conference.

Held at the National 4-H Center in Chevy Chase, Maryland, just outside Washington, D.C., the conference is the only national event of its kind specifically for youth ages 16-21 who receive IL/TL services.

With the theme, Partnerships for Change, the goal of the conference was to provide the opportunity for youth and adults to build partnerships and to network with each other. It provided a forum for participants to discuss how youth and adults can partner together to solve problems by promoting youth involvement as well as leadership development.

With 22 states represented, 243 youth and adults (140 youth and 103 adults) attended the conference near our nation's capitol. The program was made up of large and small group activities as well as presentations by special guests.

Keynote speakers were Michelle Wallis and Robert Little.

Michelle has been the Peer Partner Coordinator at Youth in Need in St. Charles, Missouri since she was 18 years old. She challenged the conference participants to help change the negative attitudes of society regarding youth by getting involved in the world around them.

Among various roles and responsibilities, Robert Little is the former Director of the State of Michigan's Children and Family programs. Mr. Little currently works as a consultant to agencies working with neglected children, juvenile offenders and welfare recipients. He shared stories of his life growing up in foster care.

Participants had an opportunity to site-see and to participate in two large group sessions. Comedy Sportz, an improvisational comedy troupe allowed participants to explore their flair for comedy. Into Afrika Festivals, an African-American dance group provided a cultural experience where the participants could sing and dance.

One session of workshops was offered to provide some opportunities for learning more about leadership and youth involvement programs. The topics included: creating newsletters, a youth advisory board panel, how to run meetings and workshops, developing leadership skills, developing youth and adult partnerships, using games in meetings, working with diverse teams, youth advocacy, and building youth advisory boards.

The core of the conference was facilitated through a three-stage process.

In Stage I, participants, both youth and adults were divided into ten small groups. Each group spent time getting to know each other, discussing a definition of independent living and sharing concerns about moving out on their own.

In Stage II, participants returned to their small groups to discuss the focus question, "Since moving into adulthood can be hard, what can youth and adults do together to make the transition easier?" The groups were asked to brainstorm their ideas for addressing this question, to choose their most important ideas, and to develop a goal for each.

In Stage III, small groups met again to identify specific strategies for addressing their top goals from Stage II. These strategies were developed and reported in the closing session to the large group and panel of adults from the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth and Families and Stand for Children. The panelists were allowed to ask questions and respond to each group's list.

The following is a summary of the goals and strategies developed by each small group. This information has been compiled in this report to be distributed or made available to government officials, advocacy groups, leaders in child welfare and youth services and members of Congress.

GROUP REPORTS

The following is each group's top goals and strategies in response to the question, "Since moving into adulthood can be hard, what can youth and adults do together to make the transition easier?"

ONE-DER-FULS

Goal: *Adults can give emotional support to youth, and youth can give the same support to adults.*

Strategies:

1. Smaller case loads.
 - a. So workers can spend more time with their youth.
 - b. Put workers in area where they are more skilled, create internships.
2. Money for peer/adults mentorship program for current or former foster youth.
 - a. Because it would help youth know that the adults trust them and to think that they are important.
 - b. Help by taking some of the load off of the workers.
3. A hotline for the youth.
 - a. So they can talk about the problems without giving their identity.
 - b. So the caller can be anonymous.

Goal: *Helping to identify and manage resources, i.e., (legal, financial, educational, occupational, and medical.)*

Strategies:

1. Local 1-800 info phone number, to help youth with applications, legal papers, etc. (Different languages).
2. Mandate a maximum cap on number of clients per social worker.
3. Resource directory in different languages, (print form or on the internet).
4. Mandatory emancipation start-up kits (include resource directory) when leaving foster care.
5. Mandatory independent living skills programs for each county.

FROM YOUTH 2 LEADERS

Goal: *Listen to each other.*

Strategies:

1. Find a quiet, neutral environment.
2. Keep an open mind.
3. Stickers listening aide.
4. Respect differences.
5. During meetings youth and adults talk to each other more - mingle.
6. Allow each other to complete their thoughts.
7. Practice "test" listening together (youth and adults).
8. Look at each issue from a youth perspective and an adult perspective.
9. Don't let ideas block communication.
10. Workshop, seminar or retreat to teach youth and adults to listen better.

Goal: *Youth mentor other youth and co-train foster parents, adults, and group home staff.*

Strategies:

1. Counties/states to hire and or volunteer youth as mentors, big-brothers/sisters.
2. Create support policies that provide incentives for youth and adults.

Goal: *Plans for financial support system in emergencies.*

Strategies:

1. Create an emergencies help fund.
2. Building in "safety" for people who might abuse the fund.
3. Maybe a loan system (w/low interest).

Goal: *Strive to make one another comfortable*

Strategies:

1. Sharing commonalities (things in common).
2. Less formal meeting locations (parks, restaurants).
3. Sincerely talk and visit person to person before getting to business.

Goal: *Do not assume you know a youth by just reading their file.*

Strategies:

1. No pedestal "one-upisms" or putdowns.
2. Have an equal view of our relationships (two way respect - equal ground).
3. More casual dress when we can.
4. Build in fun often (all lighten up).

GUARDIAN ANGELS & 3 WISE MEN

Goal: *Turning responsibility's and decisions to youth with trust and respect of each other's judgments.*

Strategies:

1. Training adults to "let go" and include youth in decision making.
2. Trust: Youth can be able to earn trust back if or when lost.
3. Open-mindedness, willing to try new things.
4. Adults involved with youth should believe in youth empowerment; develop youth empowerment programs and experiences.
5. Letting youth learn things for themselves before leaving care.

Goal: *Social workers/providers/foster parents to serve as resource specialists and youth peer mentoring and scholarships.*

Strategies:

1. Scholarships for college.
2. Traveling and exploring different colleges.
3. Shopping together.
4. Job shadowing.
5. Independent living training for social workers/foster parents/providers.
6. Social workers should be updated with community resources.
7. Looking for housing together.
8. Develop and further peer/youth helper programs.
9. Independent living/resource specialist positions in each state.

Goal: *Effective Communication.*

Strategies:

1. Including youth in staff and foster parent training/judges, attorneys, casa volunteers, legislators, etc.
2. Youth training youth.
3. Basic communication skills training for youth and adults (listening, eye contact, body language, respect, speaking, etc.).
4. A mechanism for ongoing youth participation with decision makers, through: committees, advisory boards, newsletters, etc.
5. Self-esteem development in order for communication to be possible.
6. Allowing time for youth to get used to new environment.

Goal: *Partnerships which commit to developing healthy relationships (going that extra mile...) between youth/providers/workers/youth to youth.*

Strategies:

1. Take time to get to know each other.
2. Establish a trusting relationship.
3. Family/caseworker monthly meetings.
4. Training classes for providers/youth in human development.
5. If possible - pre-placement visits.
6. Counseling for providers/youth.
7. Providers/youth should be mandated to attend court dates.
8. Youth should be allowed to read their files.
9. Provide an advocate for the youth (casa, big brother/sister).
10. Show caring feelings for the youth (genuine).
11. Share activities with the youth (shopping, homework, quality time, etc.).
12. Have family nights at home (at least once a week).
13. Keep in contact with family (biological or foster care).
14. Youth to attend family classes (foster parents also).
15. Youth driven transitional living plans with the caseworker/provider "Enforced Consistently."

REALITY 4 YOUTH

Goal: *Communication.*

Strategies:

1. Youth on any board that serves youth.
2. Compromise.
3. Work together to change mind sets.

Goal: *Halfway programs.*

Strategies:

1. Support physically, emotionally, mentally.
2. Peer support and advice.
3. Utilizing adults who were in foster care.

Goal: *Independent Living skills.*

Strategies:

1. Someone to help with saving, checking, loans, interest.
2. IL skills - to help with college and job skills.
3. Mentor with good morals and standards.
4. Youth training for future foster caring

FUTURE LEADERS

Goal: Educate decision makers; establish national standard for TL/IL and after care programming.

Strategies:

1. More funding.
 - a. For after care, and transition living. Independent living.
2. Mandatory workshops.
 - a. Youth having input on the subjects and problems in everyday life. Youth training adults.
3. Consistent training: Foster parents and homes have training throughout the years. All over the USA.
4. Earlier training youth: Can't expect youth to cram how to live and operate their life in two years of a PAL (IL) Class.
5. *National* Develop youth advisory board: Using not just certain states but every state; not every state has the same problems.
6. *National* Newsletters: Stating the areas of the system that definitely need help and circulate ideas.
7. Advocacy: Foster youth organize efforts to present before decision makers issues of concern, and decision makers make themselves available for presentations and open to new ideas and opinions.

Goal: Communication, honesty, trust, commitment, listen, keep promises, cooperation, support, carry out responsibility.

Strategies:

1. Agencies hire staff/foster parents with specialized training and/or provide once hired on communication/commitment skills.
2. Educate and involve kids in the process of their case individually with worker and those associated with case.
3. Should be mandated in policy and enforced - staffings treatment plans/goals, written documentation, psychological testing/treatment.
4. Involve youth in training staff/workers/foster parents.
5. Involve youth in evaluating programs, policies, foster parents, caseworkers, administrators, treatment providers, etc.
6. Mandate limits on caseload size.
 - a. Funding match numbers and limits (support from workers limited by caseload size).
7. Flexibility of agency rules (liability, FLSA, etc.) to allow for more supportive forms of contact.
8. Match abilities of workers to client needs.
9. Built-in agency policies (Employee Assistance Programs, time-off, picnics, retreats, cost of living raises, etc.) for support to workers to support clients.
10. Enforce current policies, regulations and rights that are already in place. These need to be communicated to youth.
11. Consequences if these aren't enforced.

6TH SENSE

Goal: Youth need a recognized voice. Youth often feel powerless about the decisions made regarding their lives. We need a voice and some measure of control.

Strategies:

1. Mandatory youth advisory boards.
 - a. Youth need to be informed of all resources.
 - b. Youth need to have opportunities to get involved.
 - c. Participation by youth is mandatory.
2. Create statutes (law) that give youth the right to speak on their own behalf.
 - a. Case plan conference/staffing.
 - b. Citizen review.
3. Write.
 - a. Letters to judge
 - b. Supportive references from employers, teachers, friends, family, guardians.
4. Present yourself appropriately. (Practice/learn how)

Goal: Follow up/aftercare.

Strategies:

1. Keep in contact
2. Therapeutic staff support (TSS).
3. Knowledge and creation of community resources.

Goal: Life skills classes/youth independence.

1. Schedule and attend mandatory classes once per week/same day every week.
2. Team teaching and co-facilitation.
3. Start classes at 14 or 15.

Goal: What youth and adults can do together to make the transition easier:

1. Follow up aftercare (medical/college/work).
2. Life skills - preparing youth for life after care (early on).
3. Youth being able to depend on self.
4. Flexibility.
5. Respect with both.
6. Communication.
7. Honesty and trust between worker, agency, and youth.
8. True respect with both without stereotyping.
9. Stereotyping of and by youth and adults.

CLOUD 9: FUTURE IS FREEDOM, THE SKY'S THE LIMIT

Goal: *More money for job training/college.*

Strategies:

1. As youths in foster care we do not have the emotional and financial support of a family, therefore, it is critical that we have job training and/or a college education.
2. Matching federal funds for companies, businesses, and corporations that create apprenticeship positions for foster care youth.
3. Ear-mark federal funds for scholarships for foster care youth.

Goal: *Better regulate how money is spent in foster homes/more money allowance for clothes/know where money is going.*

Strategies

1. Eliminate the \$1,000 savings cap so that youth can have more than \$1,000 when they leave.
2. Federal funds to match a percentage of what a youth has in savings when they leave care.
3. Foster care youth need to have money in savings in order to be successful when they leave care.

Such as how it is spent in foster homes or allowances for clothes. Is the money that is given to the caretaker really used on the child like it should? Our group believes we should regulate the money better. Many children are neglected or not tended to properly with the money that is given to the caretaker. Our group has come up with three solutions. Having receipts to show how the money is spent on the child, such as: clothes, personal items, and school activities, for example: prom expenses, class rings, and graduation cost. Send a portion of the foster care payment to the youths in their teens directly. By doing this helps us learn responsibilities and how to budget our money for adult life. A mandatory clothing allowance of \$150 at least once every three months.

Goal: *Youth opinions valued same as adults.*

Strategies:

1. Adult advocate or speaking for youth ideas.
2. Understanding each other's stance.
3. Youth and adults empowering each other to deal with daily challenges.
4. Workers and youth realizing that they can learn from each other.

THE PERFECT 10: THE JOURNEY OF CHALLENGES

Goal: *Youth involved in decision making.*

Strategies:

1. System changes that allow youth to provide input into setting their goals for the plan of care and reviews (beginning with the first plan).
2. System changes that enable youth to meet with case workers at a minimum of monthly.

We recognize that many states have policies that require these things, but they are not being enforced.

Goal: *Workshop Training.*

Strategies:

1. Who: Youth that are involved in the system would train foster parents. Youth and adult staff developers will train new staff. Adults will train the youth to train these other people.
2. What: Training for trainers.
 - a. Discuss what to do if foster parents have problems with youth.
 - b. How does it feel to be a foster kid.
3. When: State social worker training sessions.
 - a. County foster parent training sessions.
 - b. Conferences or retreats (if money is there to furnish these).
4. Where: County based.
 - a. State based.
5. How: Do segments in the social worker training and in the foster parent training.
 - a. Have support groups or hot lines for these people to deal with problems after training.

SUMMARY

Although the groups addressed many topics, the issue of communication, trust and respect came to the forefront in virtually every group. The youth expressed a need to feel as though the adults are listening to their concerns. They want the adults to work with them. As one youth reporting for his group said, "Youth and adults need to come together, unify, and break down the barriers that separate, creating a system that is in tune with what those in care really need."

Youth would like to be more involved in the discussions and decisions that involve their care. Providing them with a forum to share their stories can give workers and foster parents an opportunity to hear from the youth. It also gives the adults and youth a chance to engage in a dialogue regarding the youth's care, thus, promoting a partnership. Many of the strategies listed to address this problem included involving the youth in training of workers, foster parents, and other youth.

The issue of after care services was also addressed in many of the groups. The youth stated in several cases, they are not aware of services that are available or often do not know how to access them. They cited issues of emotional support as a significant component of after care.

According to a recent independent living survey by The University of Oklahoma National Resource Center for Youth Development, 96% of the states who

responded to the questionnaire reported providing aftercare services to youth after the age of emancipation. It appears that the problem lies with getting the information communicated to the youth regarding the services and how to access them.

The youth also feel they need to be more informed of their rights and services available to them. There are inconsistencies among states regarding services that the youth feel should be standardized. Some of these inconsistencies include: clothing allowance, life skills training, resources, foster parent training, employment opportunities, and how independent living funding is spent.

In addition to providing a forum for discussion, the conference provided an opportunity for travel and education to which many youth had never been exposed. Many of the youth had never flown or traveled to a city such as Washington, D.C. This trip provided ample opportunities to practice life skills.

The significance of this national conference was evident. As the youth reported for their groups, the level of energy and passion was obvious. They are committed to addressing the issues that affect them every day of their lives. This conference continues to help provide the needed opportunities for youth to come together to explore and develop strategies to improve the child welfare and youth services system.

STATES

California
Colorado
Florida
Hawaii
Illinois
Kentucky

Massachusetts
Maryland
Michigan
Missouri
Mississippi
Nevada

New Mexico
North Carolina
North Dakota
Oklahoma
Pennsylvania
Tennessee

Texas
Virginia
West Virginia
Wisconsin

A recent national movement toward youth development is creating an environment where young people feel supported and safe in exploring opportunities that will allow them to practice skills, learn about relationships, and connect with their community.

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HEADLINE: At 18, It's Sink or Swim; For Ex-Foster Children, Transition Is Difficult

BYLINE: Barbara Vobejda, Washington Post Staff Writer

DATELINE: CINCINNATI

BODY:

Seventeen-year-old Carrie Lucas has spent the past two years in the embrace of the state. Her mother was mentally ill, her father in jail, and Ohio's child protection officials considered it their business to place Carrie in a safe foster home.

Now she's about to be dropped. At the toll of her 18th birthday next spring, Carrie will be released from the state's child protection system. The federal and state bureaucracies that fashioned themselves into a substitute family will declare themselves done. And like 20,000 other young people across the country each year, Carrie will be left to pay her own rent, fill her own refrigerator, manage her own budget. In essence, she will be expected to become her own parent.

"It's sort of scary to think I have to do this on my own," Carrie said. "I don't want to think about it too much."

If ever there was proof that, for many children, the foster care system does not offer a stable, surrogate family, it comes at the point they turn 18. The day the money stops, the care stops too.

While a minority of teenagers stay on for some time with their foster families, most grow up knowing exactly when their funding will end. They accept that they will be forced to leave on or near that birthday, knowing they'll be replaced by a younger child, who comes with money attached. If the foster families had wanted to make a permanent commitment to one child, experts say, they would have adopted. Most don't.

"We can't dump them fast enough at 18," said Robin Nixon, director of youth services at the Child Welfare League of America, referring to the federal-state system that has responsibility for more than 500,000 children, most of them abused or neglected by their parents. "But kids in the average community are 25 and 26 years old before they're expected to live alone."

It is this large but mostly forgotten population of America's disadvantaged that social researchers now believe makes up a significant component of the

nation's homeless population: One study found four of 10 of the nation's homeless are former foster children. Experts on homelessness say it is predictable -- that young people isolated from their families, often suffering from emotional problems, many of them former runaways, would end up in an emergency shelter. While some of these teenagers can go to grandparents or siblings for help, most are on their own.

The most recent study on the fate of foster children, conducted by University of Wisconsin researcher Mark Courtney, found that 12 to 18 months after they left foster care, just half were employed, one-third were receiving public assistance, one-fifth of the girls had given birth and more than one-quarter of the boys had been incarcerated.

Most of the teenagers had less than \$ 250 in savings when they went out on their own.

Yet while other subgroups among the disenfranchised -- the mentally ill, victims of domestic violence, welfare workers -- have their vocal advocates in policy debates, there is little public attention focused on how to keep foster children from migrating from their bureaucratic family to the streets.

For Carrie Lucas, the journey to independence has already begun. It is both tangible and psychological. She is a 17-year-old constantly aware of a clock ticking: Nine more months of financial help. That's it. One minute she's sure she can handle it. The next, she's in a panic about what lies ahead.

The state will keep paying an agency more than \$ 1,000 a month to help her until her 18th birthday. But after that, she can make no mistakes. Blow her rent money on a car, she may be sleeping in that car. Anger her landlord, she could be looking for a place to sleep. The same mistakes other kids make, but nobody to bail her out.

A month ago, she moved into a tiny attic apartment by herself. It is stifling, with no air conditioner, and the stairway leading up smells of cat urine. But she chose it because she loved the bathtub -- an antique with claw feet and flowers painted on the side.

Carrie had trouble sleeping when she first moved in, frightened of the nighttime sounds echoing around her old building. But now she's more relaxed, cuddled on the living room carpet beside her worn, thrift store couch, or in her narrow bedroom, surrounded by stuffed toys.

When Carrie was 4, her grandmother took her in because Carrie's mother would stay away from home for long periods of time, leaving Carrie and her three siblings to care for themselves. Carrie grew up cooking for herself, washing her own clothes.

"I think my mother is mentally insane," Carrie said. "She was never reliable, always working, or out with whoever."

But Carrie's grandmother died of cancer two years ago, and the child protection system took over. Carrie moved in with a foster mother, a woman in her late sixties who had raised 10 children of her own. "Her message was, 'I'm here for you,' " Carrie said, "but there was distance between us."

Under the state's policy, her foster mother received more than \$ 400 a month to keep Carrie, but that ended when Carrie asked to move out. She had heard of a program that would help her move into her own apartment, and her foster care money would go toward rent and utilities. So she left her foster mother's home and moved into her apartment. And since then, neither has picked up the phone to stay in touch.

In fact, Carrie says she's lucky. She lives in one of the few places around the country -- Hamilton County, Ohio -- where the child protection system places people as young as 16 in apartments to prepare them to live on their own. The program pays rent and sets up a savings account with a \$ 60 weekly stipend -- until she's 18.

Carrie likes living by herself. But already, her days play out with the rhythms of an adult, not a girl of 17.

This summer, she gets herself up at 6 each morning, eats a bowl of cereal and leaves her apartment by 7, catching a bus to work as an intern at a downtown bank, where she spends her days checking account numbers and ATM receipts. At 5 p.m., she heads home and fixes her own dinner. She is in bed by 9 p.m. On the weekends, she works a second job at a restaurant.

For now, she has \$ 594 in savings, and in the fall, she'll return to finish her senior year in high school. The county and the judge overseeing her case could extend her funding long enough to help her get her high school diploma. But even if that happens, she'll be cut loose in less than a year.

She worries most about how she will pay her \$ 240 monthly rent, or if she'll be able to afford college.

"I pray I can go to college," she said. "I'm going to try everything in my power to get a scholarship."

Some of the half-million children in the child protection system are allowed to stay with their biological families. But for those who are taken out of their homes, a combination of federal and state funds provides payments -- averaging \$ 431 a month for 16-year-olds -- to foster families. The government may pay much more for group homes or residential treatment facilities, where many foster teens reside.

In 1986, after researchers began to notice the link between foster care and homelessness, Congress reacted by establishing an "independent living program" for states to help prepare foster children for life after 18. States can extend the program to older teens, which is common for those with disabilities.

While states have established these programs, many are cursory -- occasional weekend seminars on housekeeping and budgeting, for example. And Courtney's study in Wisconsin found that one out of four teenagers had received no help in preparing for independence before they left the system.

In a handful of jurisdictions, however, welfare offices have gone to great lengths to ease this passage.

Los Angeles County, where about 800 young people leave foster care each year, has pulled together a package of subsidized housing, job training and some entry-level employment to help those moving out of the system.

And in Hamilton County, Ohio, where Carrie lives, dozens of teenagers, some as young as 16, are living in apartments as a transition to independence.

"Independent living without housing experience is like driver's education without the car," said Mark Kroner, who runs an independent living program for Lighthouse Youth Services, a nonprofit agency contracted by Hamilton County to put young people in apartments.

"You learn to budget food money when you go a day without food. You learn to budget utilities when you come home to a dark apartment," he said.

When young people come into his program, having been referred by county social workers or juvenile judges, they are matched with an adult on Kroner's staff who helps them find an apartment, shops with them for furniture and helps them move. The social worker stops by weekly, and the agency becomes the newest surrogate family.

But this family is dedicated to a daunting goal: sending a child, often one with emotional difficulties, out into the world.

It is not uncommon for Kroner to get a call saying one of his teenagers has been arrested. He has had kids knocking on a landlord's door asking for money just a week after moving in. Some have been kicked out of the program for failing to follow the rules.

Despite the problems, studies have found that placing kids in their own apartments is probably the most effective way to help them become independent.

One of Kroner's newest "clients," as the former foster children are called, is 16-year-old Ricky Bryant, who has dropped out of high school.

He lives in a second-floor, two-room apartment, where he sleeps on the living room floor. The dishes are carefully soaking in soapy water, and the refrigerator is virtually empty.

In just over a month of living on his own, it has become clear to Ricky that some things are beyond him: "My laundry. I cannot afford to do it. And keeping groceries in my house," he said. "I buy it and it's gone."

He says this on a Wednesday, five days until he gets his paycheck from Wendy's, where he works nights. He has cereal in the cupboard, but no milk to pour on it. A loaf of bread, but nothing to put between the slices. He has, literally, one penny in cash.

When Kroner hears this, he gives Ricky a dollar and tells him to take the bus to the agency office and someone there will give him an advance on his weekly \$ 60 stipend.

"I was afraid to ask," Ricky said. "I don't want to aggravate nobody."

Ricky landed here after years in the child welfare system, where he lived in 12 to 15 places, he estimates.

"My mom is the type who is a bar hopper," he said. "She was never home. She left us kids wherever." He was often home alone when he was just 7 and 8 years old. When his mother brought home a new boyfriend, and Ricky saw him abusing her, he left to live with his dad.

But that didn't work out either, "because I was a 'hood rat." And child protection workers moved Ricky to his first foster home. That began a long and sad list of fighting, running away, ending up in juvenile detention, until he was finally allowed this spring to return to his father.

That was the home Ricky had wished for all the years he was in foster care, he said. But three months later, in May, his father died of pulmonary disease.

Once again, a caseworker was ready to put him with a foster family, but Ricky wanted no more.

"I've never had a mother-father type deal in my life, so I wouldn't be ready for it," he said.

The next step for Ricky was his own apartment.

Last week, he sat huddled over a spiral notebook, the kind most kids his age would use for geography or math. He is no longer in any math classes, but the notebook is perfect for managing his money.

He budgets \$ 144 for two weeks of groceries, \$ 6 for "hygiene," \$ 50 for "recreation," \$ 20 for miscellaneous and \$ 20 to pay back a debt. But when he totals up his expenses, he compares it with the paycheck he expects to get and realizes he's \$ 3 short. He decides he will take it out of groceries.

He has written all this out carefully, underscoring the totals in pink highlighter.

Ricky has two years before his safety net is folded up.

He hopes he'll get a high school equivalency degree and a better job. In the meantime, he is learning to navigate the adult world. He lost his electricity in the middle of the night recently when he plugged in an old air conditioner he had found in the basement. But when he called the power company and heard they weren't going to send over any help right away, he told them he was blind. That got them over.

But for every victory, he discovers another trap. He is out of money because he blew a bundle on a Fourth of July cookout. He and his friends bought food and cases of soda pop and cigarettes, and that sent him way over budget.

"It was the first night of really enjoying myself," he said. It was Independence Day.

Struggling in the Adult World

Children leaving foster care at age 18, when federal and state funding ends, face a difficult future. Many suffer from emotional problems and are without financial help from relatives, making them vulnerable to homelessness and other problems. One study found that nearly four in 10 of the homeless population are former foster children.

12 to 18 months after leaving foster care system:

Average weekly wage

\$ 210 for males

\$ 157 for females

Physical injury

26% of the males had been beaten or otherwise seriously injured.

15% of the females had been beaten.

10% of the females had been raped.

Incarceration

27% of the males had been incarcerated.

10% of the females had been incarcerated.

Other

33% were receiving some public assistance.

19% of the females had given birth to children.

37% had not finished high school.

50% were unemployed.

Mental health treatment

Before leaving foster care:

47 percent were receiving some kind of counseling or medication for mental health problems

After leaving foster care:

21 percent were receiving treatment, although there was no reduction in mental problems

SOURCE: Mark Courtney, Irving Piliavin, School of Social Work, University of Wisconsin

ARTICLE

*J. Curtis McMillen,
Gregory B. Rideout, Rachel
H. Fisher, & Jayne Tucker*

Independent-Living Services: The Views of Former Foster Youth

ABSTRACT

Former consumers of independent-living programs for youth in out-of-home care present their views of the services they received. The youth found that skills classes and stipends for independent living were helpful, that instruction in managing a budget was particularly valuable, and that the services lessened the stigmatization and isolation of being in care. Foster parents and specialized independent-living workers eased the transition out of care, but regular public child welfare caseworkers were not helpful in this regard. The young people report that being in care was difficult to tolerate and that the transition out of care was often abrupt and difficult to manage.

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In the past decade, public and private child welfare agencies have developed programs to help older youth move from out-of-home care to more independent living situations (Barth, 1986; DeWoody, Ceja, & Sylvester, 1993; Westat, 1986). All states now provide independent-living-skills training classes, typically consisting of training in both hard skills (money management, cooking, etc.) and soft skills (such as building a social support network). An older youth leaving care today may also have received various other services, including subsidized apartment living, mentoring programs, trust funds, college tuition programs, conferences, camps, and after-care programs. Evaluations of these efforts are now being published (e.g., Bonham & Ash, 1988; Mallon, in press; McMillan & Tucker, in press; Mech & Rycroft, 1995; Scannapieco, Schagrín, & Scannapieco, 1995; Westat, 1991). Few of these evaluations, however, attempt to identify the components of the independent-

living programs that are most beneficial to those leaving care.

Determining what works and what does not work is important not only to the youth receiving these services, but to their funders as well. With current congressional and state budget constraints, funding for these programs may be streamlined. Identifying the most essential components of independent-living programs may become a necessity for every state.

The purpose of this study is to explore what former foster youth now living in the community think of the independent-living services they received while in care. In focus groups, former foster youth were asked to describe the services that were most helpful in teaching them how to live independently and to identify who was most helpful in their transition to independent living. In the following sections, the focus groups and the themes that emerged from them are described and the practice implications of these results are discussed.

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Methods

Qualitative focus groups (e.g., Krueger, 1988; Morgan, 1988, 1993), long a part of the evaluation of programs and services in the for-profit world, have gained popularity in evaluation research in the social service sector in the past several years (Partron, 1990). Focus groups enable social service organizations to receive extensive consumer feedback on specific questions of interest. Qualitative methods are particularly appropriate for the evaluation of independent-living programs because traditional program-evaluation methods of these services face severe limitations. Experimental designs are not feasible because of the varied nature of the interventions available and the difficulties involved in forming adequate comparison groups. It is unethical to withhold services thought to be valuable, which rules out no-treatment comparison groups. Delayed-treatment comparison groups are ineffective because the outcomes of interest occur several years later, when youth are living on their own. Finally, representative follow-up surveys of former foster youth have proven costly and have yielded low return rates (see Westat, 1991). Youth who leave care are exceptionally mobile (Barth, 1990; Festinger, 1983; Stein & Carey, 1986; Triseliotis, 1978; Westat, 1991), and it is very difficult to locate them.

Focus groups also offer some advantages over qualitative interviews with individuals. First, the format allows for group interaction and discussion. Members can and will openly disagree, offer alternative views, and make suggestions

regarding why the views are different. Thus the group yields information that researchers' planned questions may not elicit from an individual (Morgan, 1988). Second, focus groups are relatively inexpensive to conduct. Focus group interviewing and transcription time is less than the time needed for individual qualitative interviewing and

“Focus groups offer advantages over qualitative interviews with individuals because they allow for group interaction and discussion.”

transcribing. Focus groups have two disadvantages: Some groups may limit the expression of alternative views, and the small sample size makes it difficult to recruit groups that are representative of the population of interest.

The focus groups in this study were led by the first and fourth authors. The fourth author did not participate in one of the groups because she had been involved in providing services to some of the participants when they were in out-of-home care. A questioning route was developed with the following emphases:

- What services helped you learn to live on your own?
- What did you find helpful in the programs?
- Who helped you learn how to live on your own?

Some impressions formed from earlier groups were checked

with the later groups. All of the sessions lasted 90 minutes, were audiotaped, and transcribed with identifying information removed.

Themes were identified through careful reading of the transcripts. The first three authors read the transcripts and independently identified themes that emerged from them. They then met to discuss the themes. Only those themes that were agreed upon by all three readers were included.

Participants

Participants were young adults who had participated in independent-living-skills classes offered by the Missouri Division of Family Services (DFS) while living in out-of-home care, had left out-of-home care, and had been released from DFS's custody. Participants were recruited by DFS employees in charge of independent-living services for their geographic areas. Participants were paid \$10 plus travel mileage and were served a dinner for participating. Twenty-five young adults participated in a total of four focus groups, each held in a different geographical area of the state. Because Missouri encompasses both large urban and rural areas, two of the groups were held in urban areas (St. Louis and Kansas City) and two were held in smaller towns. Twenty-four of the participants were female, 16 White, 4 African American, 1 Hispanic, and 4 mixed race. Age range of participants was 18–23 years, with a mean age of 20.79 ($SD = 1.45$). The respondents had been out of care for a mean of 2.11 years ($SD = 1.61$).

All participants attended weekly independent-living-skills classes for at least six months while in care. The content of the classes dif-

ferred slightly by geographic location. All geographic areas presented content in 23 required areas. However, the specific curriculum and the methods used to teach it differed by areas of the state and by instructor. The classes were run by independent-living specialists who were full-time state employees and by workers under contract to provide the services. In addition to the skills classes, various other services were available to the youth, depending on the region of the state from which they received care. Other independent-living services included subsidized independent-living arrangements (in dormitories or apartments), wilderness ropes courses, teen conferences, seminars on specific topics, youth advisory boards, after-care groups, and paid opportunities to help teach independent-living skills to other youth in care.

The sample was biased in many ways. First, young men obviously were underrepresented. Second, the recruitment method was such that those who had fostered relationships with the independent-living specialists were most likely to be recruited. Workers knew how to contact only those young people who had stayed in touch with them. It does not appear that the sample was "creamed," as the participants were experiencing a wide variety of living situations at the time of the interviews. These were young people, however, who thought highly of their independent-living service specialists. Third, the lack of representativeness of the sample limits the generalizability of results. Readers should be especially cautious in generalizing results to other programs in other states.

Results

Nine themes emerged from the focus groups (see Table 1). The themes and some relevant comments from focus-group members are presented below. Themes related to the helpful aspects of independent-living programming; sources of help in the transition out of care, and views of the in-care experience.

Helpful Aspects of Independent-Living Programming

Several aspects of independent-living programming were identified as helpful. Overall, the skills groups were seen as helpful. Financial-skills training was deemed important, as were stipends for independent living. Perhaps the most dominant theme throughout the groups was the value the consumers found in meeting others like them.

Reduces stigma and isolation.
A prominent theme, discussed independently in each of the four

groups, was the importance of meeting other young people in similar situations. The youth felt that the skills classes and other activities reduced the isolation and stigma of being in alternative care. The seminars, camps, conferences, and reunions were noted to be particularly helpful in this regard.

I don't know how to explain it. When you first go into foster care, you feel so alone. And the more seminars and the more groups, camps, seminars, the more people you meet, the stronger you feel. But there are more people out there like you. And that makes you feel better knowing that you're not in it alone. And so the more people you meet, I think the better. For me, it made me feel better, knowing that there's even more people out there. [Pause] I never would have gotten any of this before. Without the program. If the program didn't exist, none of the seminars or camps ...

Things like that are very, very, very important because growing up in foster care, like we were talking about earlier, you feel isolated, like you're the only different kid, you know. And when you get a bunch of kids together from the same, I mean not exactly the same, they grew up in homes, I grew up in a foster care, but, and group homes.

Table 1. Themes from the focus groups with former independent-living program participants.

- The independent-living program, overall, offers opportunities to meet others in similar situations, resulting in decreased feelings of isolation and stigmatization.
- Teaching about financial skills was valued. Many expressed a desire for an increased focus on financial issues.
- In general, the skills classes were seen as helpful. In addition, several aspects of the classes were noted as helpful.
- A supportive and caring foster home was seen as extremely helpful in the transition out of care.
- Most, but not all, DFS caseworkers were perceived as not helpful in the transition out of care.
- Independent-living specialists were seen as very helpful.
- Leaving care was often an abrupt, tough transition.
- Being in care was hard to tolerate and viewed as intrusive for older youth in care.
- The independent-living stipend was viewed as helpful, with some reservations.

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but you ... we are all away from our families for one reason or another. And they may not be [for] the same reasons, we may not have went to the same place, or the same kind of place even, but there was a bond there that we just can't get from most other people.

Instruction in financial matters was valued. Each focus group discussed the importance of instruction in finances and credit and consumer skills. The financial skills that were mentioned as valuable included how to budget, use a checkbook, comparison shop, use unit pricing, save money, and use and build credit.

You know, in the long run it helps me 'cause I budget my money very well. My bills is paid on time.

The writing the checks and doing the checkbook balance and stuff, that was helpful. That was a godsend.

Comparison shopping was important. I have a husband and a child, and comparison shopping is very helpful for us.

Everyone had to call a few different stores and ask prices on a stick of gum and mac and cheese, stuff like that. And we just compared prices and that was very helpful, because I am married and if it would not have been for that class, I would not have known how to grocery shop at all.

Although the young people acknowledged that issues such as credit and the need for savings were discussed in the skills classes, they expressed a need for more teaching in this area.

We need to do all we can to teach more about credit cards. How they do interest, what happens if you miss a payment, how easy it is to get in trouble for it. My husband and I are responsible people and we got in trouble with our credit card.

There are a lot of things coming out nowadays like leases and stuff like

that and you don't know how to deal with them and it gets you in trouble.

I know that the car I just got... I have to pay \$300 every month for three years and at the end of these years the car still isn't mine. If I want it, I have to pay \$8,000 to keep it, or I can turn it in and get a new one and keep making car payments. If I pay it all out, it is going to end up costing me \$20,000.

[The skills classes need] more of an emphasis on you have to save. It's not optional. You have to have something to fall back on.

Overall, skills classes were seen as helpful. Overall, the focus-group participants thought the skills classes were helpful. In addition to the financial skills mentioned earlier, several other topics were endorsed as helpful. They included apartment hunting, birth control, cooking, changing tires, building relationships, and finding community resources. The following quotation illustrates one participant's experience in learning useful skills.

Until I went into foster care, when I was 14, I did not know how to cook, how to do laundry. I had never washed dishes. I had never done anything for myself at all. [My foster parents] thought it would be a good idea if I joined this program. So I did. I learned how to cook. I learned how to clean. I learned how to deal with my emotions and how to deal with other people on a one-to-one basis. My speech-delivery skills got 100% better. Before I went into the independent-living program, I could not even talk to a group of people like this. I learned how to change a tire on a car. I didn't know anything about that. Before I went into the independent-living program, I really didn't know anything about birth control, STDs, and in that group I learned everything I needed to live on my own. And even though when I moved on my own it was a big shock, I had these skills to fall back on, and if it

wasn't for them I honestly believe I would have fallen on my face.

We were required to go out and look for an apartment for ourselves. I mean, not to rent it, but just to go and look, write down comments about every one we looked at, everything we liked, didn't like ... how much it was, all that stuff. They told us what to look for. Gave us little checklists, something along those lines. I'm getting ready to move to [a new town] and we got a book of apartments yesterday and there's so many things I am going to have to look for, so I am kind of glad I know what to look for.

Birth control information was real helpful. My foster parents never would have talked to me about birth control.

Independent-living stipend was viewed as helpful. Some participants noted that it was helpful to have lived in an apartment of their own while having some expenses subsidized by DFS. Some youth experienced this subsidized independent living through what DFS calls an independent-living arrangement. Others experienced this through group-home-based programs. Both programs are designed to be part of a gradual transition out of care.

The money really does help. It helps a lot, especially when you are just getting started and you don't know what's going on and, but then you have to also realize when that money's gone, you have to learn to budget your money out of what you make.

I was a full-time student and I wanted to concentrate on school. I didn't want to have to worry about having to get a part-time job to pay for certain things. And have to concentrate on getting good grades in school. So it helped to have that money coming in because then you could concentrate fully on school.

It's a cushion for when you first go out on your own. It really does help.

Reservations with regard to receiving the stipend tended to be about the obligations the young people had to meet in order to be able to keep receiving the stipend. Some viewed it as intrusive or excessive. The young woman in the following quotation is talking about a group-home-based transitional-living program.

In order to get that money ... I had to have a social worker at my house at a certain allotted time like once a week. And I had to go to three out of four groups. There were like four things I had to do to be able to get that check, and I actually found that with me working and going to school and trying to get everything together and keep everything going for myself, I had to get out of that program and go to what is called the independent-living arrangement, where I actually got less money a month but I didn't have the restrictions placed on me, the requirements that I had the first time.

Who Was Viewed as Helpful?

The young people were also asked to address the topic of who was helpful to them in their transition out of care. In general, they reported that their independent-living specialists were helpful, but their DFS caseworkers were not. Respondents indicated that foster parents were able to provide the most assistance.

Foster parents were seen as helpful. When a healthy, supportive foster family was involved with the young person, the transition to independent living was much smoother. The families provided both material and emotional support during the transition and after youth left care. They may also have provided a platform for learning important values. For some, their foster families provided the most natural environment for

learning the skills they needed to live independently.

See, I feel lucky, 'cause I had a foster family. When I went into the independent-living program, I came from a foster home, so I kind of learned some of the things. When I first got into this class I was like, "Oh I know this. I know this. I know this. I already know this." A lot of the things, it was kind of like I knew it from watching and listening to my foster parents, and my family worked together on things like, "No you can't get this 'cause money's kind of tight and we need money for this." Just normal family conversation, and then going into the class kind of fine tuned what I vaguely knew.

Well, they didn't help much financially, but as far as emotional relationships ... they really helped. Finding a husband, you know. Knowing what qualities I should look for in a husband. You know, emotional qualities, not just physical qualities.

She was really good to me, and when I was getting ready to graduate from high school and move out on my own, she helped me find a place. The Christmas before that she didn't give me anything but pots and pans and spoons and dishes and glasses. I was ready. When I was ready to move out, I didn't have to buy anything except for rock and roll posters for my walls and toilet paper. Well, actually, she let me borrow my first roll.

The helpful aspect of foster families most often mentioned was their willingness to provide emotional support after the young people left care.

I was released not too long ago. I was in there about a year and a half and I still have problems. I was at my dad's the other night and I called my foster mom. I actually cried to her. She is the kind of person who would support me in my decisions whether she doesn't think they are right or wrong; she will stand behind me, help me.

She was open. She was always there for me no matter what. Even when I had the baby, she was the only one, the father didn't even come.... She came up there, and I was still drugged up and stuff and I woke up and there she was. She was right there with all this baby stuff and she was like, "Hello, you finally woke, huh?" And I couldn't do nothing but cry and hug her and hold her 'cause she was like the mother that should have been mine in the beginning, you know. It was like the state placed me with the right person.

When emotional support was lacking from foster families, it was sorely missed.

I don't have a close relationship with my foster parents anymore. It seems that since I got out of foster care and went into college, the ties have kind of slipped away. I guess, they felt like they got me to where I am and they don't need to help me any farther. And I'm really hurt by that, because I lived with them for five years of my life and I thought, you know, I'm like their own child. But I don't feel that way anymore. It's more like my in-laws are helping me [more] now than anyone else. I'm really hurt by it.

DFS caseworkers were not seen as helpful. Although exceptions were noted, the former clients did not find their DFS caseworkers to be helpful in their transitions out of care. When asked if their caseworkers were helpful, the most common reply was a simple "no."

They're supposed to come every month to see. And I had been in foster care ... for five years and that was the first one. And after five years, she maybe came to see me once.

Well, I had, I was in the system from '89-'95. I had seven workers during that time. Last one I had, the only time I saw her is if I went down to the office 'cause I had to be down there for something else. She never came to see me. She never came to see my baby, nothing. You know, I'm

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ANOTHER VIEW

Kudos for a Study That Allows Youth to Speak for Themselves

Beyond the descriptive findings of this excellent and revealing study is a subtext that includes two distinct but interrelated insights about the needs of young people dependent on out-of-family care: (a) the poignant need to realize that they, as individuals, have some worth, esteem, self-confidence, or any of the many terms that intend to confirm one's place in the world and, complementing this need, (b) the opportunity to acquire the practical social and survival skills for coping with life's demands. For some, a sense of personal worth anticipates the ability to achieve; for others, proof of esteem is in the doing, the accomplishing.

Children in intact families are no less in need of these conditions of living. For young people bereft of this dependable and supportive environment, however, the need is more acute. As the respondents of the study stated, they feel different, they lack the constancy of feedback that is reassuring, they are aware that life will present immediate tasks and challenges that cannot be deferred. Simply, for these young people facing a major life transition, more is immediately at stake.

The substance of these insights are included in the study's findings. However, they form part of a list of other findings, when in fact their self-worth and self-esteem are the conditions on which other factors—say, impressions of professionals who were helpful—rest. And they point to even deeper implications. In accord with the values of good qualitative research, participants are free, even encouraged, to respond in and on their own terms; investigators do not apply presumptions and pre-designed questions that predetermine the response. Although participants' responses vary in details, in substance they convey the same message: we have strengths, we can cope, we expect to do well. Despite the hardships they are experiencing, they view themselves as capable, resilient individuals. Given the mistreatment, rejection, or whatever other wicked conditions they actually experience, they could just as easily have defined themselves as unfortunate victims.

As professionals, we do not have a complementary language or a set of theories to define and explain ways of adapting that express strength, resilience, hope, and personal worth. Rather, we depend on a vocabulary of defects and disabilities and on theories that deterministically connect early traumas with later disabilities. As the authors conclude, qualitative research offers richly textured information about the significance of services from clients' perspectives and judgments. Such research continues to contribute to the growing interest in a strengths orientation to social work practice.

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In foster care and I have a child and usually in that situation.... She went and checked on my sisters once a month. Now I'm the one in the system and I have a child and there's a lot of things I didn't know that she never tried to help me. So I had to depend on other workers to help me to find out things that I needed to know for my baby. You know, I didn't know how to get my baby covered under Medicare or anything. I had to go to other people.

Those who found their caseworkers to be helpful most often mentioned the provision of emotional support: "She was my best friend. I would always call her and she would come talk to me, whatever. She was always there for me."

Independent-living specialists were seen as very helpful. The youth reported uniformly positive views of the independent-living specialists. They were perceived as helpful while youth were in care, during the transition out of care, and after youth left care. Participants reported that the independent-living specialists provided emotional support, information, and access to goods and services.

They did a lot of stuff they didn't have to do. Like ... they had some ... sort of ... garage sale kind of thing ... but it was just for the people in the program and you can buy an item for like two dollars, you know, and things when you live on your own, you know, you need things, small things and they did, some things that they did of their own free will.

I was really lost when I went to that shelter and I fell down and all I could remember was the independent-living group and I called [the independent-living specialist] and [the contract independent-living trainer] and I was like, "Listen you know, I don't want to bother you." That's the first thing I said, "I don't want to bother you," and then I just break out in tears and I start

talking to them. And even though I was out, they caught me and even though I was out completely with the group and everything, [they] found me, told me how to do this, that, and that, how to go about getting the apartment, how to go about keeping it, rent paying, how to go about not getting ... behind [in] bills and they just showed me. Even though I had \$234 [a month in AFDC] and even though it wasn't much, it got me three years in this apartment. O.K. now, to tell you how the independent-living program is, I'm off welfare right now, I've been on my job for a year and I have two kids and I'm in a big house and that's where the independent-living program got me and I'm happy.

The following interaction took place in one group. The first speaker was talking about having a baby after she left care.

Participant A: Which is when I needed somebody the most. I had to call [the independent-living specialist]. "Who should I call? Where do I get baby stuff?" And she's like, "Well, you should call these numbers." I mean she had every single.... I don't know where she got her information from, but she had every....

Participant B: She comes up with some stuff, doesn't she?

Participant C: I mean normal people do not know these things.

Participant B: She's got 'hotlines' for everything.

The groups also noted that their independent-living specialists treated them differently from the way others in the system treated them.

They don't do things for you. They tell you how to get them done ... right, exactly ... "cause a lot of people in the system they will go and do it for you. [The independent-living specialist] will be the first one to tell you, "I will not do anything for you. I will let you know any way you can get it done but I will not do it for you."

Views on Being in and Leaving Out-of-Home Care

Two themes emerged that were not related directly to the questioning route. These themes focused on the overall experience of being in and leaving care.

Alternative care was seen as intrusive. Group participants discussed how difficult it was to remain in care as an older youth. Some young adults viewed the system as intruding into their lives. Others talked about the number of people involved in making decisions about their lives.

The only thing you're on your own is you're living by yourself and you pay your own bills, but as far as your life is concerned they're completely around your life 100 percent, they need to know everybody you're living with, everybody you know, everything you do, and that's when I got out because, I mean, I was 19 years old. I didn't want it.

You still had to go to the, to the PPRs [periodic review], you still had to go to court, you still had to deal with all the DFS.

Leaving care was a tough transition. In each group, the members began talking about the transition from alternative care to living on their own. Group participants agreed uniformly that it was difficult and often abrupt.

I ended up failing quite miserably after about a year on my own. I had to move back with my mom or become homeless.

When they released me into my own custody at 16, you know, I had a ... I mean I ... fell. I hit the ground hard. I went to a homeless shelter and slept in cars with my baby.

After, you know, growing up in a home where there's a noose around you and then you go into a group home environment where there's a noose around you and then you're

just thrown out one weekend and said, "Here's the rest of your life." I mean that was a little too much of a shock for me. I think if I had gotten a night, a weekend, out and then like a weeknight out and then another weekend you know, had it like so that I could and stay in my new environment [for] a weekend and then a week or something, you know, something not so drastic.

After I was released from foster care, I had my own apartment and everything ... and I am not sure exactly what went wrong, but everything went wrong. I ended up moving back in with my mom and dad, and the reason I was in foster care, in the first place is because the way they treated me.

It's really unrealistic and all of a sudden you're 18 and say, "O.K., bye." And we have no resources to go back to. We have nothing to fall back on at all because they said that you're a grown-up now and we can't take care of you or we don't want to and I count that to be the most difficult thing for me.

I was doing very well, wanted to go to school. I wanted to do this. I wanted to do that, but they wanted to say, "You're out of here." But I still needed support.

Discussion

Two functions of independent-living efforts stand out from the results of this study: the ability of the independent-living programs to reduce the stigma and isolation of living in out-of-home care and the importance of learning financial skills while in care.

Focus-group participants reported that financial skills were the most important skills taught in the independent-living program. The importance of financial skills training is consistent with the results from Westar's follow-up

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study of former youth (Cook, 1994; Westat, 1991). In that study, researchers found no differences between those who received some independent-living-skills training and those who did not receive such training. But those who had received training in five core areas

“States and local child welfare agencies may want to consider developing low-cost means for youth in out-of-home care to meet one another prior to their participation in independent-living-skills training.”

(money, credit, consumer, education, and employment skills) were more likely to maintain a job for at least a year, not to be a cost to the community, and to be more satisfied with life than those who had not received training in these core areas. It is useful to learn that youth value the financial-skills training after they leave care. Some of these skills are difficult to teach in an engaging manner and are not always received enthusiastically at the time of training. It may also benefit youth currently in care to hear that those who have left care consider the information to be important.

The results also clearly point out the “destigmatizing” function of meeting and getting to know

others in out-of-home care. Although all youth may benefit from contact with others in out-of-home care, this may be particularly important for those living in foster family homes. States and local child welfare agencies may want to consider developing low-cost means for youth in out-of-home care to meet one another prior to their participation in independent-living-skills training. Mellor and Storer (1995) and Palmer (1990) described short-term therapeutic groups for foster youth. Rice and McFadden (1988) described groups for foster youth at foster-parent continuing-education events. Other possibilities include conferences for younger teens, groups for younger teens new to out-of-home care, and regular foster-parent and foster-children events such as picnics.

Foster parents and independent-living specialists were reported to be helpful during the transition out of care, whereas DFS caseworkers were not helpful. The youth reported that foster parents were helpful in teaching skills and providing informational and emotional support as they made the transition out of care. The view that foster parents are important in this transition is consistent with the independent-living literature. Professionals have previously advocated for the rights of youth moving toward emancipation “to have a place of stability, preferably located in a family,” from which they leave according to their own need and timing (Aldgate, Maluccio, & Reeves, 1988, p. 22). And compared with those in group care, youth in foster families score higher on measures of preparedness for independent living (Mech, Ludy-Dob-

son, & Hulseman, 1994).

Youth also found their independent-living specialists to be helpful in their transition out of care. This finding is likely influenced to a degree by recruitment method. All youth had some relationship with their former independent-living specialist in order for them to be contacted and invited into the focus groups. Nonetheless, the stories the youth told about the independent-living specialists indicate that these workers provide important personal assistance at crucial times, at least for some youth. The young people also appreciated the interpersonal styles of the independent-living specialists. Participants noted that the specialists tended to be nonjudgmental and to allow the youth to make decisions about their lives.

In contrast, youth did not find their caseworkers helpful. This is consistent with qualitative comments from older youth in out-of-home care about their caseworkers found elsewhere in the literature (Rice & McFadden, 1988). Caseload size may be the most glaring impediment to the improvement of relationships between youth in care and their caseworkers. Caseworkers' roles are also different from the roles of those who provide the independent-living classes. Caseworkers, with the power to change placements and with access to parents, care providers, and judges, are more likely to be perceived as authority figures. In addition, caseworkers may be less accustomed to dealing with teenagers and thus may be less likely to develop an interpersonal style that works effectively. It is also possible that the recruitment method may have biased results against caseworkers. Youth

with positive relationships with caseworkers may have been less likely to develop relationships with independent-living specialists and thus may have been less likely to have been recruited for this study. Nonetheless, it appears imperative that youth in care and caseworkers develop positive relationships. As Iglehart (1992) noted,

The worker is the direct link to the entity that has primary control over the client's life. While the agency steps in as parent, in reality the worker fulfills agency mandates and embodies the agency to the youth. The worker role is of paramount importance in the delivery of effective services to the foster adolescent. Permanency plans, treatment plans and ... independent-living programs require in-depth knowledge of the youth's case and individual characteristics. (p. 308)

Despite the provision of independent-living services, young people continue to find the transition out of care to be harsh. This underscores the need for youth to build helpful connections before leaving care and for programs to accent a gradual transition out of care and the availability of after-care services.

Many of the qualities that the group participants valued about the independent-living programs ideally would be a part of regular service provision to youth in out-of-home care. All youth in care need important relationships with similar peers and nonjudgmental adults. The financial support provided by federal independent-living initiatives may allow these youth to receive a level of personal attention and service that conveys that they are important people.

Finally, this study underscores the worth of qualitative evaluations for social service programs.

Such evaluations provide consumer feedback about specific aspects of social service programs to the people who design and operate them. Feedback about the importance of meeting similar others and the provision of financial-skill information would have been masked in a quantitative evaluation. In addition, compared with other forms of research, focus groups are relatively inexpensive, flexible, and simple to conduct. Human service administrators may be wise to include qualitative consumer feedback in future evaluation efforts.

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NPR

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BYLINE: Ray Suarez, Washington, DC

HIGHLIGHT:

Though foster care is supposed to be a temporary arrangement many children bounce from home to home for years, until they've aged out of the system. For those turned out of foster care at 18, the transition from teen to adult is abrupt. With little or no guidance, they must now find jobs, feed and clothe themselves and take complete responsibility for their well-being. Join Ray Suarez and guests for a look at the plight of former foster care teens making it on their own as adults.

BODY:

RAY SUAREZ, HOST: This is TALK OF THE NATION. I'm Ray Suarez.

If you're a child in the United States who cannot live with your parents but are still legally tied to them through parental rights, you're in for a tough time. There's a desperate shortage of foster parents in the United States.

The placement of children becomes more and more difficult as they get older. And if your parents are judged unfit to raise you, yet parental rights remain, or if parental rights are taken away but no one steps forward to adopt you, you can make it all the way through to young adulthood -- what's often called aging out -- and find that at that point, nobody's going to take care of you. Not your parents. Not a foster parent. Not the state.

The machinery for helping children at the end of their eligibility for foster care is in many places shockingly inadequate. We got you this far, the system seems to say, good luck. The problem with this conversation comes from talking



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about situations as varied as foster homes, and making broad generalizations. I recognize that.

As some family agencies have learned the hard way, the shortage of foster parents has let some less-than-ideal foster care givers slip through the net. Some merely neglect the children, feeding them cheap food to see a profit from the state's stipend or emotionally starve these highly needy kids, while a tiny number actually abuse and hurt them.

At the same time, there are foster parents whose faces should be on postage stamps and on the cover of magazines. They're heroic, loving, generous people who accept the sometimes shattered cargo of a child nobody wants and provide care, nurture, and stability. While still other foster parents want nothing more than to adopt the children in their care, but find the way blocked by courts, social workers, and parents who still hold out hope for family reunification.

So at the end of this process, on their 18th birthday, some foster children are ready to assume the responsibilities of adulthood, and some are, well, just a mess. And agency rules based on birthdays and eligibility are not equipped to make a distinction between the two.

Foster care and aging out this hour on the program. Mark Courtney is an associate professor of social work at the University of Wisconsin in Madison and co-author of "Foster Youth Transitions to Adulthood: Outcomes 12 to 18 Months After Leaving Out-of-Home Care," a report by the Institute of Research on Poverty. Welcome to TALK OF THE NATION.

MARK COURTNEY, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF SOCIAL WORK, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN, MADISON, CO-AUTHOR, "FOSTER YOUTH TRANSITIONS TO ADULTHOOD: OUTCOMES 12 TO 18 MONTHS AFTER LEAVING OUT-OF-HOME CARE": It's a pleasure, Ray.

SUAREZ: And Valli Matthews is here with me in Washington. She's the community education coordinator of For Love of Children here in DC. Good to have you with us.

VALLI MATTHEWS, COMMUNITY EDUCATION COORDINATOR, FOR LOVE OF CHILDREN: Good afternoon.

SUAREZ: Our number in Washington 800-989-8255. That's 800-989- TALK.

Mark Courtney, maybe you should give us some opening statistics which will give us an idea of what happens to these young people after they're cut loose.

COURTNEY: Well, my colleagues and I in Wisconsin, Irving Peliavin (ph) and myself, looked at youth aging out of care in Wisconsin. And we found a number of things. First of all, they're generally satisfied with the system, about three-quarters of them when you ask them questions like, you know, did foster parents have your interests at heart? They'll say, yes. They strongly agree or agree with that kind of statement. And about 75 percent of them felt that they were lucky to be in out-of-home care.

We asked whether they thought there was anything that would have allowed them to stay with their families, and 90 percent of them said no. So on the one hand,



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you get a clear picture that most of them feel very lucky to have been in foster care.

And I want to clarify that by foster care I'm referring to the entire system. And actually, a fair number of these youths spent some time in a group home or residential treatment center, although most of them were living in foster homes at the time they aged out.

They have high hopes and aspirations. About 70 percent of them expected to go on to college, generally thought they were going to do well. But when we interviewed them about 12 to 18 months after they had left the system, after they had been discharged from the system, we found that about half of them were sort of doing marginally well, and a significant proportion really had had some serious problems making that transition.

Only about half of them were employed when we interviewed them 12 to 18 months after discharge. That's actually slightly less than had been employed when we talked to them while they were in the foster care system. Even those who were employed were earning less on average than a full time minimum wage worker. Maybe that's not real surprising given their limited education. Thirty-seven percent of them hadn't finished either high school or obtained an equivalent degree, and fewer than 10 percent have gone on for any kind of college. When they needed medical care, about half of them reported that at some point they needed medical care. They couldn't get it. A number of them had been using mental health services, counseling of various sorts. Not surprisingly, given their backgrounds, while they were in the system, about half. But when we interviewed them after they left the system, fewer than half that, about 21 percent, were able to obtain any services for mental health needs.

And then we sort of looked at some things that we thought would be indicators of whether the transition was working for them: employment or not, education or not. And we found that a lot of them had experienced outcomes that I think any parent would be really hard pressed to feel good about. And as sort of a parent of the system, a citizen, I sort of hang my head thinking about this.

Thirty-seven percent of these youth had had one of the following things happen to them. Either they had been seriously physically victimized -- beaten up, attacked with a weapon, sexually assaulted, raped, homeless, or incarcerated at least once in the 12 to 18 months after they left care. So for a significant proportion of them, at least one pretty horrendous event had taken place. It was an indication that the transition to self-sufficiency really wasn't working very well.

I guess one last thing is, it was interesting to us, is the role that both foster families and the families of origin of these youth played when they were making that transition. About a third of them were able to stay for some period of time in their foster home after the system discharged them.

So, there clearly are a lot of foster parents out there that try to help with that transition by even allowing the youth to stay there. At the same time, when we interviewed them the second time around, almost a third of these young adults were living with their families, living either with a parent or another relative.



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And that's really striking, giving that the focus of independent living programs in general, the programs that try to prepare these youth to make it when they're young adults, is not on connecting them, reconnecting them or maintaining their connections with their family, trying to make the most out of those connections while minimizing any harm or stress that can come from those connections.

SUAREZ: Mark Courtney is with us from Madison, Wisconsin.

Valli Matthews, you know, when you think about being 18, it's tough enough to move toward independence if you've had a stable, coherent family life for much of the 18 years leading up to that day. But now, you're talking about people who have often had tumultuous lives until their 18th birthday. And now they've got to worry about rent and a gas bill, doing their own marketing and cooking and so on. It's a tremendous change.

MATTHEWS: Right. I think it's really important to think about your own family and when your own children grow up. Frequently, they are not prepared to leave at 18, at 21, at 28. Sometimes they even come back. And the system is considering foster children who always have some trauma connected to being in foster care, to going from home to home. Some children are sexually and physically abused. And then in addition, there are various breaks from foster families they may have connected to.

So when they leave the system, all those separations, sometimes they can't get back to foster families to get that support they need. And many of the -- in you're -- I'm now serving in the District area, it's split between children leaving foster care at 18 -- foster families. And many of them are living in group homes, and that's another situation where you're dealing with a counselor, an agency person, maybe very supportive. But it's still a transitional person.

So if at 21 you really need some assistance, many of the kids come back to the agency to get assistance and hope that same social worker is there. But it's not like being with a family when you can go back to a family and say, hey, I need a loan. I need someone to co-sign an apartment or a car. It's just really different and difficult.

SUAREZ: So the District does provide some -- it's not a cold turkey cut-off at 18, and even that you're finding isn't good enough?

MATTHEWS: Well unfortunately, they're changing the rules. They used to stop at 21, but the rules are being changed to have a cold cut-off at 18, unless the young person has special needs or they're in school, or they have, you know, they have -- they're trying to do something to become independent.

But the unfortunate thing, if young people are not doing those things at 18, those are the young people who go on to become homeless, because they haven't finished high school, they have no social skills. They can't move on into an independent world. So those are the young people least prepared to be released.

SUAREZ: We're talking about this at a time in America when governments are trying to preach the gospel of self-reliance, of giving people minimal necessary training that they need to be self-reliant and have them make their own way.

It would seem to be a case of bad timing to go, not only to the District of



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Columbia, but a county government in Minnesota or a state family services agency in New Mexico and say, you know, I'm not quite ready, but I don't need the full set of resources anymore. Maybe there's something in the middle you can give me. And it doesn't sound like it's a good time to ask for it.

MATTHEWS: Right. I was noticing the article that Mark wrote, which I thought really covered a lot of bases. There are some programs that really realize kids need more than just money, they actually need, you know, an entry-level employment position. They need job, housing, they need other pieces. And I think that's something different states could put together.

Locally, the only thing that the District is offering is a program called Keys of Life. This is a life skill preparation program, but every teen does not get that program. And many of the teenagers live in Maryland and Virginia, even though they're DC wards. So transportation to those programs are difficult. And my understanding is that the District is not spending their full allotment.

In many of the states, they contract with private agencies to support this effort. And for example, locally, that would be a good effort to ask some of the private agencies to help out with that.

SUAREZ: Mark Courtney, you mentioned that some of the young people you surveyed did stay in contact with their foster families. But I guess naturally, those families don't any longer get any support from the state for helping these kids?

COURTNEY: That's right. They -- in Wisconsin, I mean, and in general they don't. I mean, at 18 or in most states they do the same thing that Valli's saying. If a youth is going to finish high school, let's say, before their 19th birthday, then the foster parent can continue to receive a foster care reimbursement until that point in time. But that's really the extent of it. After that, the foster parents are expected, if they're going to provide any support, to do that on their own.

And some of them do that. As Valli said, some of these youth are living in group care situations at the time they age out. That's actually what brought me to interest in this. I worked in group care in California, and I really had a hard time with the fact that we had to just let them go. They'd be living there with us, and then the next day we wouldn't be reimbursed to care for them anymore, and we simply couldn't keep them.

So it really is a radical cut-off, and as Valli says, there are some states that actually don't even use their entitled allotment -- or their entire allotment of federal funding to try to provide support to these youth.

SUAREZ: Well, I'm wondering whether you could make a case for this being a smart way to spend money, to continue spending it on the 18-year-olds, given the fact that some of them get in trouble with the law, some of them are less than optimally employable, some of them have children out of wedlock after their placements. That they come back to the system one way or another in more expensive ways, if we don't spend the money up front.

COURTNEY: Well, yeah, I can give you a few examples. The comparison I like to make is when we interviewed them the first time, none of them were homeless. And 14 percent of the males in our sample were homeless at least once.



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Twenty-seven percent of these males had been incarcerated at least once. Incarceration's a very expensive thing for society to be doing. None of them were incarcerated the first time we interviewed them. And I could go on down the list.

And I think, from my perspective, as a prevention intervention, this is a very "high risk group." And I think it's a very sound investment, given the homes that they've come from, what we know about the challenges are when they reach the age of 18, to go and provide some more transitional support for this population.

Not all of them are going to need it, and the ones that don't need it will go on and do just fine. But for those who really do need it need significant help -- and in our study, it looks like about one-third, I think it would be a very wise investment.

SUAREZ: Valli Matthews.

MATTHEWS: I just wanted to mention, for example, we have a program for teenage mothers, and some of our mothers are as young as 13 and have two or three children. This is a very high risk group also for, one, child abuse and neglect, but also to be homeless, if they're released from care without any skills.

So in our agency, for example, we have a continuing program. They can live in foster homes, group homes or independent living. And it's a continual process of helping them to become independent and to become, you know, appropriate parents for their children as well.

SUAREZ: If you're just joining us, we're talking about foster care and what happens to the young people who age out of the system this hour on TALK OF THE NATION.

Valli Matthews is here with me in Washington, community education coordinator of a program called For Love Of Children here in Washington. And Mark Courtney is an associate professor of social work at the University of Wisconsin at Madison who's been looking into this particular population. He joins us from Madison, Wisconsin.

Our number's 800-989-8255. And our first stop this hour is San Jose, California. Hi, Wanda.

CALLER: Hi. I was thinking about volunteering for this program I heard about in California for mentoring kids coming out of the foster care program, and I was wondering if any of your people knew anything about those, and whether they were successful or not.

MATTHEWS: Well, I think mentoring in general is very successful, and I think it's great, Wanda, that you're going to volunteer because many of the young people need role models. And particularly, we try to encourage young people who have been in foster care to come back and reach back to some of those young people to say, you know, I'm successful, I can do it.

CALLER: Yeah, I was in foster care 20 something years ago, and did it on my own.



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But -- so that's part of why I want to volunteer is because I've been there, done that.

SUAREZ: Oh, so you were a person who aged out?

CALLER: Yes, I was.

SUAREZ: Well, talk about what kind of help, if any, you got back then.

CALLER: Well, I was lucky because I had a scholarship to college. And so, I did go to college. And my family that I was with -- the final family I was with was very supportive, and I'm still in touch with them today. I'm 41 years old. So, that's a long time.

And so, I was very lucky. But I still had problems. I still faced the shock of -- that's what medical care costs. Oh, my goodness, when I go to a dentist, I do get a bill, and doing a checking book -- checking account, and, you know, thank God I had their support. I could call and talk to them about how to do this, because I didn't have anybody else in the world.

MATTHEWS: Did the state offer any classes or life skill programs?

CALLER: No, I think it was \$125 was that -- that was it. You were given enough to set you up in a room basically. And I think at that time -- this was 1976, I think it was like \$125. And that was it, you know, here's \$125, goodbye, have a nice life.

SUAREZ: Wow.

COURTNEY: That's not surprising. That's actually why the federal government created the program. They did it 10 years after you left care, Wanda, so that's not surprising. And being a mentor for exactly the reasons you pointed out, I think, is really important.

We find that the youth who got concrete assistance, had somebody there to help them when they had to go and find a house, to help them when they had to find medical care, that's -- they seemed to be doing better. The ones who just got training classes that are offered typically by the system, that training really didn't appear to have much of an effect on how they did afterwards.

CALLER: Well, are these programs successful? Or, is it too early to have any numbers on that, or what?

COURTNEY: Well, one of the real shames is that this program now in state and federal money has probably spent a billion dollars, and we don't have any decent data evaluating these programs. To Wisconsin's credit, they -- actually, the money that funded our study was independent living money, federal and state money.

But that's the only state that I'm aware of that's really even gone to the effort to track kids the way we're doing here in Wisconsin. So if you talk to people who run mentoring programs, they're very positive about them. And based on what we see, it seems to make a difference in who does well and who doesn't. I would say that they're a promising program, but they haven't been really



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evaluated.

CALLER: OK, thank you very much.

SUAREZ: Wanda, thanks for your call. Wanda, joining us from San Jose, California. Mike's with us now from Bemidji, Minnesota.

CALLER: Yeah, hello.

SUAREZ: Hi, Mike.

CALLER: Well, I have a question. I was in the system, too, you know, back in the early 1970s. And my father had a mental illness. So he was like on Social Security.

And when they dumped me out into the street without any training or any place to live or anything, then the government also refused my real -- my genetic father's Social Security benefits which should have taken care of us until we were like 21, had we gone on to college. So, you know, that definitely created a tremendous hardship as you were ill prepared to face the real world, you know. So is there any programs out there to help these kids today, and what about with the Social Security part of it?

SUAREZ: For parents who are still living and on those forms of benefit? Can they tap into -- can people in the situation Mike was in tap into parental benefits?

MATTHEWS: Yes, they can. As long as, you know, they're identified as your birth family. Maybe one of the problems was to prove who your birth father was. I don't know if that was a concern.

CALLER: No. Everybody knew who he was.

MATTHEWS: OK.

CALLER: When I made inquiries, of course, being 18, I probably didn't make all the inquiries. And then the other thing, too, in the State of Washington, there was a notification, you know, after -- it was during the time the kids turned 18 and they became adults and they got the right to vote. And the state at that time used that as a cut-off point to save some money on a budget.

Well later on, they gave these children that they threw out in the street some money, you know. I don't know how much it was, but they never contacted me personally. And they probably -- what they did is they put an ad in some obscure paper, and, of course, 18-year-olds probably don't read the paper very often -- the back page or something.

And so, there was a lot of monies that probably not collected that should have been collected by these youth that were out there in the streets.

SUAREZ: Well, Mike, how did things go for you?

CALLER: Well, I went on to college. But statistically, it's a pretty abysmal deal. Probably 90 percent of your foster kids who get out there that go to



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school fail in college and don't graduate. I think there's a failure rate of like 90 percent the first two years.

Myself, I didn't finish, but I did go to five years of college. I had to work, you know, a couple -- three jobs. And as far as total life skills, you're out there in the street all the time. And you're -- even as an adult, you're in fear always because there's no net to catch you should you fail. And there's -- you know, when you want to buy a house, there's no one to co-sign so you get -- you know, it's a much more difficult situation than the, say, average American, regardless of race, would have. And then if you put factors of race in it, I can't imagine, you know, very difficult for them.

SUAREZ: Mike joining us from Bemidji, Minnesota. You're listening to TALK OF THE NATION from NPR News.

Let's go next to Janice. She's calling us from Minneapolis. Janice, welcome.

CALLER: Thanks for taking my call. I'm really pleased that you're having this conversation. I just wanted to share an observation. I've worked in the past in residential treatment for women, and they had their children there with them.

The women at their -- one of the biggest issues was that -- was abandonment. They had been basically raised as wards of the state or in foster care, and I've had an opportunity to follow their children who now have children. And who -- the children of these women, they're struggling as parents.

And so I see it kind of a generational thing, and cycle -- there's some -- definitely some cycles to be broken. And I'm just really pleased that this is on the table today.

SUAREZ: Well Mark Courtney, do we know about kids who come out of foster care, that they are more or less likely, or about the same likely as any other Americans to have children who end up in foster care themselves?

COURTNEY: Unfortunately, I'd say that we don't. There are a couple of studies out there that -- our study and another one in the Midwest, I think, have some chance of demonstrating that. But there really hasn't been very much good research that was able to follow these folks.

Typically, folks that have tried to follow them -- researchers that have tried to follow them have lost half of them. And I think that's an indication of how unstable the lives of many of these people are. And so, I can't say one way or the other really that they're more likely to enter foster care. I wouldn't be surprised.

I'm really glad that the last two callers raised that issue, because the thing that our young adults felt least comfortable about was parenting. We asked them how prepared you feel at a number of things -- find a home, get a job, get medical insurance, et cetera. Parenting was the thing that they felt least prepared for.

And I think, given their backgrounds, that's really telling. Kids I worked with, really were worried about that. They wanted to be good parents, but they were worried about it.



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MATTHEWS: Right. I think another thing that's really important if we can reconnect young people to their birth families, they feel some support. I think you kind of alluded to some of the young people actually live with their birth families. But just to know, even if the birth family can't help out financially, emotionally it's a kind of a safety net. But I think it also stops kids -- children from having -- foster children from having -- when they have their own children, they're very concerned about their children not going into care.

So they try extremely hard to be really good parents, to be really careful about what messages, they're sending because maybe in foster care they got a lot of negative messages. So I think their parenting skills, even though they might feel inadequate, they're really being super parents because they don't their kids to be in care.

SUAREZ: For those people you've met, Valli, who've come through a lot of separate homes or moved around a lot, is there a lack of willingness to trust, a difficulty in making friendships and tight bonds, because they've had to be broken so many times in the past?

MATTHEWS: I think it is difficult. A lot of children experience that, have difficulty connecting to other people. And they have a tendency to come back to people they know and they trust from the past. And that's an OK thing. But also, they don't -- they can't make that leap to make new friendships and meet new people. There's always that fear, mistrust of, you know, why are they doing this, what's their real motive, are they trying to get something out of me. So that's lacking -- the trust piece.

Unless they've connected with a foster family that they can go back and say, you know, Mom and Dad, I need some help now, what can you do to help me out with?

SUAREZ: You're listening to TALK OF THE NATION from NPR News. I'm Ray Suarez.

My guests are Mark Courtney and Valli Matthews. We're going to take a short break right now. When we return, we'll talk to a former foster care client about her life after she aged out of the system, and we'll take more of your calls at 800-909-8255.

You can e-mail us at totnfnpr.org or send us a card or letter to:

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At 33 minutes past the hour, it's TALK OF THE NATION from NPR News.

Welcome back to the program. I'm Ray Suarez.

Today, we're talking about the plight of foster care kids after they've aged out of the system. We're joined now by Lisa Foster (ph), a former foster care client from age 18 months until 18 years. Welcome to TALK OF THE NATION.

LISA FOSTER, FORMER FOSTER CARE CLIENT: Hi, thank you for having me.

SUAREZ: Well, tell us about your life after your 18th birthday. Were you given much preparation for being on your own?



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FOSTER: No, not really. I guess at about -- well it started for me at about 16, because I started to get very defenseful (ph) toward -- you know, I had so many moves. I had 11 moves in foster care altogether, so when I got about 16, I started to really get like oh my God and worry about where I was going to go after I graduated from high school.

So, I somewhat sort of put myself into this independent living program. And, you know, got some help from some people, you know, in that organization, and they offered college opportunities to me, and I decided to go there but I was so on the defensive about being dropped when I turned 18 that I, you know, dropped out of college because I didn't know -- OK, I'm gonna to do one more year and they're gonna drop me totally, so I was even afraid to even get up there to graduate. And I ended up going into the Navy and I did the Navy for three years and I've been pretty much, you know, in good standings ever since.

I got married pretty early. But like you guys brought up the issue about having kids, you know, all while I was in foster care, I didn't want any kids I -- you know, as a matter of fact, from like third grade on, I was like I am not having any kids, I do not want them to go through what I'm going through, I do not want them -- and, you know, like the system is your family, so you have to, you know, -- you have to turn to them for everything. But then you think, well what am I gonna do when I have aged out of the system? I don't have any family left so, I had to find some -- find my own family, you know.

SUAREZ: Well, it's interesting that you chose the Navy because at first blush that would seem like a very big, very supportive, and very structured family. I mean, they know what your life is like morning noon and night, and you wear the clothes that they tell you and all that.

FOSTER: Yeah, that too. And I that -- I have to admit that did get on my nerves because...

LAUGHTER

... that was somewhat sort of like being in the system too, you know. I didn't want to -- I wanted to do it because -- see it's like when you're in foster care, you have to ask permission to go to the next state sometimes, so when I -- I had never been out of -- really out of the state, so I wanted to go to different countries, different parts of the world, so I really went there so that I could travel, and as soon as I did that, I got out, you know, to get out of that little systematic thing.

SUAREZ: Right, but it accomplished what you needed for?

FOSTER: Yeah, it served the purpose, it served the purpose, you know. And when I got out of that, I just felt -- and like I still feel now, I totally -- I want total independence. I don't want to have to depend on anybody, no job or anything, and that's why I am taking the total entrepreneur approach to life, period.

SUAREZ: Well, you talked about how, in your late teens, how difficult for you to relax about where you were going to be because your situation was so-- unsettled...



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FOSTER: Right.

SUAREZ: ... is that something that hampered you later on, in your married life, in your young adult life?

FOSTER: Most definitely. Yeah, it's still, you know -- like I said before, when you're in foster care and you're switched from home to home, like I said I went to 11, it is so hard to even sleep in a new bed in a different bed. You know, I had so many nightmares and everything.

So when I got married I don't -- my poor husband, I sent him through some things because it was like I just wanted to stay in one place and just, you know -- and then with the military, you move anyway, but you know, my husband was with me there, you know, and -- through thick and thin, but it was like OK we're here and we're gonna stay here, but when it was time to move back to -- from California where I was stationed, back to DC, I got really nervous because I didn't know what was gonna happen -- was gonna happen, you know. I have never been -- I've never had that -- I had never had that -- the plan or the goal already set, you know.

SUAREZ: So, looking back on it what could have helped you in your particular situation that you didn't get just before you turned 18?

FOSTER: What could have helped me? Well, the one thing that did help me was college, but I guess a little more support, a little better pre-emancipation program, you know, something that would -- that I could fall back on something -- I don't know, something I guess financially. I had nothing really, you know. I had no family to fall back on. I guess the family support, a support system, people that I could call, people that I could say well, what do I do next? Things that you would normally get from a family and, you know, that you'd ask your mother, what should I do now, you know? And that wasn't there for me.

SUAREZ: Well Lisa Foster, it sounds like things have turned out rather well for you though, in spite of everything. Good to talk to you.

FOSTER: Thank you very much...

SUAREZ: Lisa Foster is a former foster care client, she spoke to us by phone from Maryland.

My guests for the remainder of the hour are Mark Courtney, associate professor of social work at the University of Wisconsin and co-author of the recent report Foster Youth Transitions to Adulthood: Outcomes 12 to 18 Months After Leaving Out of Home Care. And Valli Matthews, community education coordinator for the program For Love of Children.

If you want to join us, our number in Washington is 800-989-8255. And Valli Matthews, for all the unsettled part of her life before leaving care, it sounds like Lisa, you know kept her eye on the ball and didn't make some of the mistakes that you've talked about earlier.

MATTHEWS: Yes. I personally know Lisa and I know some of the struggles that she's had throughout the years, and I think she still is struggling with



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different issues. And she actually comes back and works with -- kind of a mentoring program to help other young people.

And I think as she said, one of the things that really helps is to have a family. And even if you can't have the family you lived with, even if families would say, you know, I'm willing to help young people aging out of foster care, I didn't raise them, but I'm willing to be resources, so when they need a meal, when they need some help, there's some adult that's there, either adult or couple, that are interested in supporting these young people.

SUAREZ: Let's go to Shaker Heights, Ohio. Karen, welcome to the program.

CALLER: Hi, I wanted to just make a few points that I think your guests probably already have. But, you know, part of independent living, I think, what teenager wouldn't like independent living? That's a great idea, get your own apartment, get your own finances. And I think that we haven't done the kids in the system any favor by doing that. I think it's been an excuse for the child welfare system to back out on some of these kids. And quite frankly, you know, I needed my mom after I was 18, and my parents, and I still do.

The other thing that I want to talk about are some of the trends in child welfare, the circles of support in permanency for teens, reconnecting them to the parents, to their birth parents, and to those who really care about them, because your guests are absolutely right, that these kids leave and the folks they come back to are the folks that they know. So, maybe their parents couldn't care for them when they were young, but their parents could care for them now. That's what I wanted to say.

SUAREZ: Mark Courtney.

COURTNEY: She's absolutely right. In some ways, I think some of the things that are really missing, and this is -- we need to do more looking at this, but transitional living, we focus too much on what we call independent living services, that we're going to somehow train people that when they're 18, boom, you're on your own, and now you're prepared and you can do everything on your own. And I think all the callers have really pointed to the fact that that's just not the way most people make that transition.

And really, having places for people to fall back on in terms of support, from people who are supportive, who know what it's like, and also in terms of housing, job assistance, et cetera, is essential. And the other thing is this reconnection.

All of child welfare practice, and I get the sense that the last caller was a child welfare worker somewhere, once kids are in long-term foster care, we tend to forget they have families. And the fact is they have families, and most of our youth have had active contact with their families fairly frequently since they've left the system, and that's not always positive, but I think that we need to pay attention to that and hopefully make that as helpful to them as possible.

SUAREZ: And that -- there you need support from the state to the degree that there almost has to be a referee sort of watching the encounter, because a lot of the children who come into the system come in wounded and damaged by the very



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people that we're referring to as their families. And it's not such an uncomplicated thing to continue to have contact with them. In some cases, it's wonderful; in some cases, their parents are dealing with the complications that forced them to put their children into foster care in the first place. In other cases it's not, but there has to be a third party, doesn't there, to sort of say...

COURTNEY: Absolutely.

SUAREZ: ... you know, this kid probably shouldn't know his mother and father.

MATTHEW: Well, I'm a trainer and I actually train foster and adoptive parents who prepare to take young people. And I think it's really critical that all children know their families, whether they've been adopted, whether they've been separated. And the reason I encourage that is because we've had people in their 50s and 60s that say I still don't know who my dad is, and it's still bothering me.

And even if they reconnect to families that are not totally in order, that really can't help them, it still helps them with their own identity, and helps them to feel like they're a part. They have a heritage and they have a connection.

So, I think there is some importance in that, sometimes you do need a third party, because as you're saying, Ray, some of these reconnections are not pleasant, but people do have a right to know, and young people have a right to know.

COURTNEY: I couldn't agree with Valli more.

SUAREZ: Well, but I did a program out of KCTS in Seattle last year called "Take This Heart," where we talked with people, both foster parents and foster children, and one kid in particular just had a horrendous background. And the foster parent in this case had to look to the state for some help, and some backup in making sure this child did not have continued regular contact.

In another case, with another set of boys, one parent said that when the boys would come home after spending a period of time with their mother, they were bouncing off the walls and incorrigible for days, because it was such an upsetting, grueling experience for them to spend a weekend with their mother, from whose house they had to be removed when they were kindergarten-first grade age.

I understand your endorsement of it in general principle, but boy, there are some cases where these poor kids are just being put through the wringer by this experience.

MATTHEW: Well, part -- the way the system used to work, and they're trying to change that, is birth family visits were not encouraged, so children were separated from parents, even parents that maybe did not abuse them, but maybe they were just neglectful. So there's not a lot feeling -- emotional feeling about them seeing those parents. The system would set it up so they didn't see the parents, and the connections were damaged between the child and the parent.



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So, then you have a parent who hasn't seen their parent in over a year, they're attached to a new foster family, and now we're trying to reconnect them to birth families. So, what we're trying to do in the system now as children come into care, we're trying to keep them in their own neighborhood, we're trying to find foster homes to keep them connect to their birth families.

Those children who are in danger of risky situations, are always supervised by an agency staff person, they would not be allowed to spend a weekend in a birth family where they're at risk, so that wouldn't happen.

SUAREZ: Go ahead, Mark.

COURTNEY: The other thing is even if they -- you know some of -- by the time that they're older teenagers, in my experience in what we find in interviewing these youths, is that most of them know on some level when their parents are really a problem for them. That doesn't always mean -- in some cases, they decide they don't want to have contact with family, but by and large they do, as Valli says.

And the system doesn't necessarily facilitate making that a helpful thing for them. In some cases, it maybe helpful to just work with them and as you say have a third party to help them sort out their feelings so that when they are on their own and they still are going to deal with their family, they're able to deal that -- do that in a manner that's not harmful to them.

In other cases family, and I think we want to look at that broadly, they have aunts and uncles and siblings, these are real sources of support for them. And when the system doesn't attend to those sources of support, it overlooks, you know, a major factor that plays a role in how they do after they leave.

It's not to say that there aren't cases where you want to be really careful about that, I agree with you, but Valli mentioned the fact that a lot of these kids come in because of neglect. Most kids coming into the child welfare system these days are placed because of neglect, not because they've been physically or sexually abused by the parents.

SUAREZ: St. Louis, Missouri is next. Gloria, welcome.

CALLER: Oh, thank you so much for your show, Ray, thank you for taking my call.

I was a foster child from 1952 to 1967, as an emancipated minor I had to get out of that house, that foster care system in -- the system failed totally, the foster parents should have been given Oscars for their performances, you know, the social workers, I don't know -- I don't know what was wrong with them.

I'm just an advocate for really close monitoring of the foster care family, because these people, a lot of times, they're not about anything but the little bit of money. And little bit that it might be, it's enough to pay the utility bills, or it's enough to get their hair done or do whatever they want to do with it. You know, and the children are just -- I mean -- for so long, I was just a mess. If it hadn't been for the Job Corp, and I was thinking about the military, but I had no choice back then. 1968 here in St. Louis, no one prepared me for anything, but I was just tired of being treated like, I don't know, less than human in that family.



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NPR TALK OF THE NATION (NPR), JULY 29, 1998

There was physical abuse, there was sexual abuse, there were just so many things going on. I was hopeless; I was helpless. That's just the way I felt. And I just feel that, you know -- I don't know how much worse orphanages could have been compared to some of these places. Physical -- our physical surroundings were better than our real mother could provide for us, but I don't know that it was necessarily better, you know, emotionally for us. And especially, the physical and sexual abuse that went on.

I just -- I don't know, I think it's awful. I'm an advocate for something other than what I went through. And consequently to this day I have no children. When I did contact my real mother, this woman was totally undesirable, she had started a new family and she was repeating the cycle. She had about five children in foster care already and she had six children additional.

SUAREZ: You're listening to TALK OF THE NATION, from NPR News.

Now, Gloria's call points out some of the shortcomings that she found in individual foster parents. How does this relate to the over all shortage of foster parents? There aren't nearly enough foster parents to handle the number of children that there are in need of care, in need of placement, but you'll hear stories like Gloria's told by children coming out of care today, not in 1968 pointing, to shortcomings.

Do we take on people that, if we had a sufficient supply, we would say well, thanks for their offer but no thanks, just because of the shortage?

MATTHEW: Well, I'd like to say, you know, we're recruiting foster parents all the time. It is much more difficult. We're asking to take children that have many more severe problems than they had before. And the motivations for people wanting to foster and adopt range from very appropriate reasons, to very inappropriate reasons. For example, if say they're infertile, that can be appropriate, if you've resolved that you're infertile, and you're not trying to take a foster child to replace the child you can't have. So, children -- foster children very often don't see, why do I have to be in a foster home when I'm abused and neglected I could have just stayed at my birth family?

But, screening people to have -- to know whether or not they're potentially gonna abuse and neglect children is extremely difficult. And one of the things many states have started is the preservice training. It's at least 30 hours of training, and there's several different programs around the country, but the idea is that trainers see them in this process and they also do the home studies, so they have a better in-depth feeling of how -- what are the -- what's the family's motivations? What's their style of parenting? What's their style of discipline -- because as you know they're not supposed to use corporal punishment, that's a big issue for many foster parents, because most people in America use corporal punishment, but we're telling them we're gonna give you a really difficult child and you can't use corporal punishment. So, those are some of the issues in screening parents we try to look for.

SUAREZ: Mark Courtney, how do we address this shortage which seems to be the nexus for a lot of other problems?

COURTNEY: Well, I think that we have to recognize that -- what Valli's saying



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that these are really challenging -- a lot of them are really challenging / children to care for.

I believe that we need to sort of recognize that for many of these folks, we need to professionalize foster care. We need to treat these people, the foster parents, as members of a treatment team. And we need to really provide a lot of support to them that quite often public child welfare agencies simply aren't able to provide, they don't have the resources to do that.

You see some what are called treatment or therapeutic foster care agencies, that are beginning to do those kinds of things, and they retain foster parents. They're able to recruit and retain foster parents, but it costs more money to do that, you have to pay the foster parents somewhat more money, and you have to provide them a lot more support.

I do want to say that in our study, and in a lot of studies, you don't find a lot of abuse of children in foster care. And we ask these folks, you know, where you maltreated? We ask very specific questions, very small percentage -- I think it was about 3 percent, experienced anything that you would call child maltreatment. And as I said, the vast majority were generally satisfied with the system, looking at how they fare afterwards you can question whether they were naive in their satisfaction, but, you know, the overwhelming majority really feel that they were lucky to be in care and generally have good things to say about their experience and care.

SUAREZ: Gloria in St. Louis, thanks for talking to us and telling us your story, and good luck. Gloria joining us from St. Louis. That's all the time we have for today thanks to everyone who called, and thanks to my guests. Valli Matthews, good to talk to you.

MATTHEWS: Thank you very much.

SUAREZ: Valli Matthews is the community education coordinator at For Love of Children, she joined us here in studio 3A. Mark Courtney, good to talk to you.

COURTNEY: Thank you.

SUAREZ: Mark Courtney is associate professor of social work at the University of Wisconsin in Madison and co-author of the report Foster Youth Transitions to Adulthood: Outcomes 12 to 18 Months After Leaving Out of Home Care. He joined us from member station WHA in Madison, Wisconsin.

Earlier, we heard from former foster care client Lisa Foster, she spoke to us by phone from Maryland.

Tune into TALK OF THE NATION at this time tomorrow for a look at the crisis in Sudan, a long-running civil war coupled with a drought has led to mass starvation in Africa's largest nation.

In Washington, I'm Ray Suarez, NPR News.

This is a rush transcript. This copy may not be in its final form and may be updated.



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FRIDAY

SEPTEMBER 11

10:00 am – 1:30 pm	REGISTRATION	J.C. Penny Lobby A
Noon – 1:00 pm	LUNCH	Harder Dining Room
2:00 – 3:00 pm	OPENING SESSION	Aiton Auditorium

THE FIRST LADY Hillary Rodham Clinton

Keynote Speaker, Eryca Kasse
Taking Our Lives into Our Own Hands!

3:00 – 4:30 pm	SMALL GROUPS SESSION I	
Small Group 1	Jean Carpenter-Williams	Wisconsin B
Small Group 2	Joy Warren/Misty Hager	California Room
Small Group 3	Becky Copeland	Montana Room
Small Group 4	Brian Sullivan	Illinois Room
Small Group 5	Rebecca Lane	Idaho Room
Small Group 6	Emmitt Gill	Louisiana Room
Small Group 7	Ann Newman	Washington
Small Group 8	Peter Correia	Wisconsin A
Small Group 9	Jim Walker	Arkansas Room

4:30 – 5:30 pm	FREE TIME	
5:30 – 6:30 pm	DINNER	Harder Dining Room

6:30 – 8:00 pm	WORKSHOP SESSION I
Some workshops have been divided into two parts that are inter-related. In order to receive the full benefit, you are encouraged to attend both parts.	

1. Creative Tips for Leading Meetings, Workshops, and Group Activities - Part 1

Wisconsin B

Jean Carpenter-Williams, National Resource Center for Youth Services, Tulsa, OK

None of us are strangers to meetings. Whether you're planning or facilitating a meeting or leading an ice breaker, you can always use tips on making the most of your time in groups. Information shared in this workshop will lay the groundwork for practicing time management skills in Part 2.

2. Youth Advocacy - Part 1

Arkansas Room

Joy Warren, California Youth Connection, San Francisco, CA

California Youth Connection (CYC) is composed of current and former foster youth 14 to 24 who advocate to improve the foster care system. Former foster youth Joy Warren shows how and why CYC youth are effective advocates. You'll also learn to be a successful advocate in your own state.

3. Keys to Effective Presentations - Part 1

Montana Room

Sherri Haines; Tammi Cunningham, University of Tennessee, Nashville, TN

An interactive exploration of different learning styles, group involvement, and techniques of saying what you think and being heard. Learn to identify training skills and special abilities, both obvious and hidden, that can be tapped to involve all people as trainers and create dynamic presentations.

4. Building Youth Advisory Boards — Part 1

Illinois Room

Sandy Toledo, Department of Children and Families, Tallahassee, FL and Kimberly Yeber, Miami, FL

Explains the history, goals and accomplishments of Florida's Foster Teen Youth Advisory board, plus the "nuts and bolts" of foundation building from local to regional to a state level board.

5. Youth Development: What Is It? — Part 1

Idaho Room

Rebecca Lane, National Network for Youth, Washington, DC; Becky Copeland, National Resource Center for Youth Services, Tulsa, OK

Whether you're a youth or work with youth, this 2-part workshop lets you explore what youth development is about. Explore the youth development framework and how to apply it to every day situations. We'll build upon the knowledge of youth and adults in the room. Part 2 is *How Do I Do It?*

6. What You Need to Know to Get the Job You Want

Louisiana Room

Reesa Rappaport, Red Lobster Training Division, Washington, D. C.

Focus on the skills needed to perform effectively in a job interview. Among the skills that are addressed are making a good first impression, dressing appropriately, and answering questions.

7. Communication Is More Than Words

Washington Room

Ann Newman, National Resource Center for Youth Services, Tulsa, OK

Working with different people means knowing how to communicate well. Using "True Colors" we'll look at our personality style, the personality style of others, and how we communicate with them. This is a fun way to explore our values, beliefs, and stressors and how they influence our perceptions of people unlike us and how we can interact to work effectively with them.

8. Diversity: The Color of Us

Wisconsin A

Peter R. Correia III, National Resource Center for Youth Services, Tulsa, OK

Through the examination of perceptions and personal roots, we discover the value of our differences and how, in this decade of the 90s, we move toward the color of us-diversity.

9. Positive Personal Power

California Room

Misty Hager, National Resource Center for Youth Services, Tulsa, OK

Explore ways to recognize and increase personal power. Activities, including designing a T-shirt, are used to point the way toward building self-esteem.

8:00 – 8:15 pm	BREAK	
8:15 – 9:30 pm	GENERAL SESSION II	Aiton Auditorium
	Pantastik Pan Groove	
	A steel band drum group	
	Junior Fields, Washington DC	
11:00 pm	SNACK AND SOCIAL TIME	Recreation Center
11:00 – 11:30 pm	BED PREP	
11:30 pm	GOOD NIGHT!	

SATURDAY

7:00 – 8:30 am
9:00 – 10:30 am

10. Creative Tips for Workshops, ar

Jean Carpenter-Williams, National Resource Center for Youth Services, Tulsa, OK

Let's put the skills we've learned in leadership skills, and how we can interact to work effectively with them.

11. Youth Advocacy - Part 1

Joy Warren, California Youth Connection, San Francisco, CA

Participants put their knowledge to work by developing a plan for youth. Groups have been assigned to work on their projects.

12. Keys to Effective Presentations - Part 1

Sherri Haines; Tammi Cunningham, University of Tennessee, Nashville, TN

To build on part 1, we will explore the importance of developing a plan for youth. Groups have been assigned to work on their projects.

13. Building Youth Advisory Boards — Part 1

Sandy Toledo, Department of Children and Families, Tallahassee, FL

Building on our first session, we will explore the importance of developing a plan for youth. Groups have been assigned to work on their projects.

14. Youth Development: What Is It? — Part 1

Rebecca Lane, National Network for Youth, Washington, DC

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Focus on the skills needed to perform effectively in a job interview. Among the skills that are addressed are making a good first impression, dressing appropriately, and answering questions.

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Ann Newman, National Resource Center for Youth Services, Tulsa, OK

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17. Diversity: The Color of Us

Peter R. Correia III, National Resource Center for Youth Services, Tulsa, OK

California Room

at overflow! What do you techniques for chasing that use of humor in charge and have a blast!

II

Wisconsin B
California Room
Montana Room
Illinois Room
Idaho Room
Louisiana Room
Washington Room
Wisconsin A
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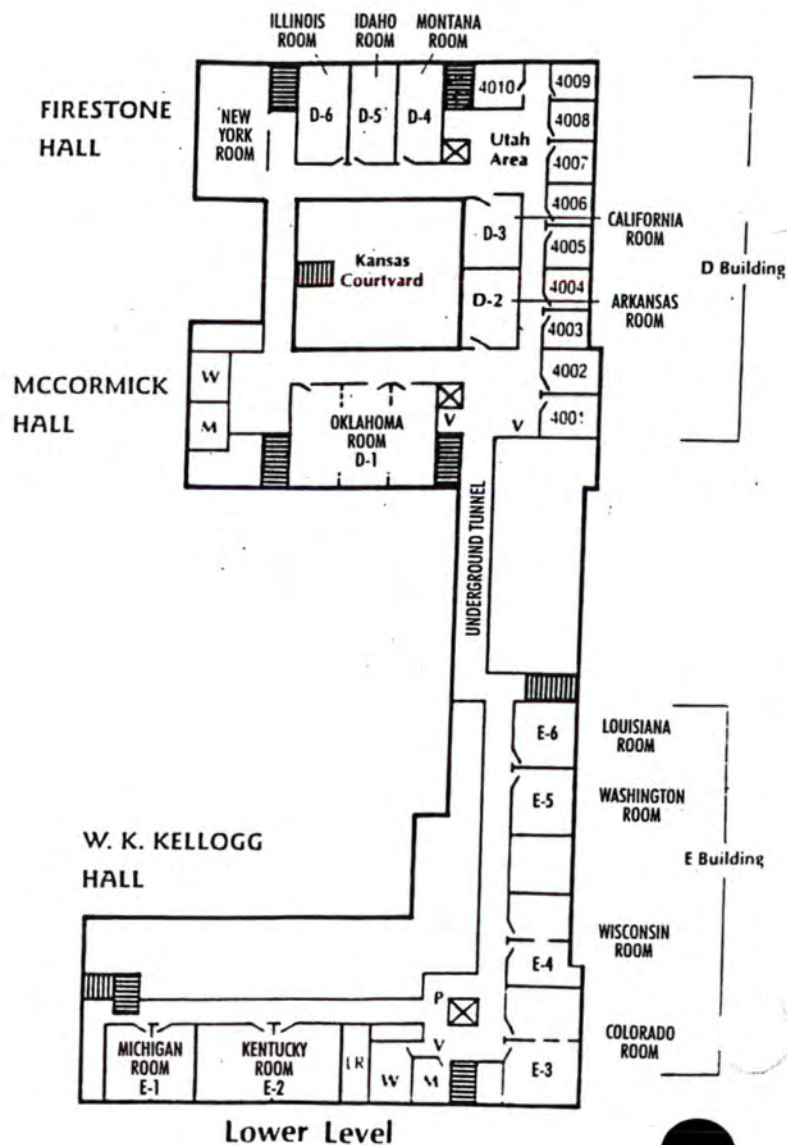
MEETING ROOMS

Other Locations:

REGISTRATION—Ground Floor, J. C. Penney Hall – lobby area just inside main entrance

AITON AUDITORIUM—Lower level, J. C. Penney Hall

HARDER DINING ROOM—Ground floor, W. K. Kellogg Hall



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SEPTEMBER 11 - 13, 1998
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View Related Topics

September 20, 1998, Sunday, Final Edition

SECTION: A SECTION; Pg. A01

LENGTH: 2347 words

HEADLINE: First Lady Forges On; Under Scrutiny, She's Business-as-Usual

BYLINE: Kevin Merida, Washington Post Staff Writer

BODY:

It's nearly 2:30 p.m. on Dark Friday, and her eyes seem heavy from stress and sleeplessness. In little more than an hour, Kenneth Starr's graphic account of her husband's affair with Monica S. Lewinsky will hit the Internet. And then **Hillary Rodham Clinton** will be transformed again into that creature she loathes -- the wronged first lady who must weather another public analysis of her marriage. It will be the most searing inspection of her 23-year partnership with Bill Clinton.

She may dread the impending Starr revelations, but showing it is not in her nature.

Not a hint of aggrievement or anger creases her face. No open wound to probe. Just a smiling, waving, poised diva is all we see. There's a limit to what can be learned from body language, but for everyone except her very closest friends, that's all **Hillary Clinton** gives the world to work with.

Backstage in a half-filled auditorium at the National 4-H Center in Chevy Chase, James Walker is thinking the first lady looks "somewhat tense." But, he later recalled, "she seemed to focus once she got up there on stage."

Walker, a nationally known consultant to youth service agencies, would later marvel at how the first lady suddenly came alive amid the cheers of teenagers from foster care and homeless backgrounds who had gathered from across the country for a leadership conference.

"I think there's a lot you can help teach Americans about resilience and hope and grit and determination," she tells the children. And before she can wade into the crowd to hug them and pose for photos, many sense she could easily have been talking about herself.

"Those kids were so important to her," says Melanne Verveer, the first lady's chief of staff. "She said, 'There's no way I'm not doing that.' There was never a thought of not doing that event."

Even on Dark Friday.

Public Composure

In the nine days since the world has learned the seamy particulars of her husband's dalliances with a White House intern -- and more is scheduled to emerge Monday morning -- **Hillary Clinton** has

projected the image of an unruffled woman carrying on: honoring a civil rights pioneer, dedicating the new Peace Corps building, rallying Democratic women on Capitol Hill, highlighting the importance of arts education.

She has kept such a vigorous schedule -- 18 events since the morning of Sept. 11 -- there has been no need to wonder: Where's Hillary? Tomorrow, she's with the president in New York for a conference on strengthening democracy in the global economy, and later in the week it's off to campaign for Democratic candidates out West. However she feels about her husband and his treatment of her, she has made a conscious decision to keep those thoughts sealed. If she is aching badly, and those who have spoken to her suggest she is, **Hillary Clinton** is resisting the role of martyr. She does not want the pity.

Part of this is her natural inclination to fight rather than fold. Her critics often seize on this aspect of her personality when issuing their harsh assessments. They see her as a cold, calculating political animal whose partisan edge is much sharper than her husband's.

Back in January, for instance, she went on national television to defend Clinton against allegations of infidelity and blamed his predicament on a "politically motivated" prosecutor allied with a "vast right-wing conspiracy." Even after the president was forced to admit he had lied about his affair with Lewinsky, **Hillary Clinton** was among those in the White House who encouraged him to challenge Starr's motivations in his televised apology. This strategy only deepened Clinton's woes, drawing criticism across party lines that he had not been sufficiently remorseful.

While Clinton later admitted he blundered, the first lady has not retreated.

"She is a very directed person," says a confidant of the first lady's. "Her father always had the view: 'Get back up on the horse. If they knock you down, get up.'"

"She's a very complicated person," says someone else who has spent considerable time with her. More mysterious than her husband because she shows her hand less often. Which is why it is nearly impossible to gauge whether her mood now is closer to rage or reconciliation.

"I think that is true and intentional," says friend and Democratic consultant Mandy Grunwald. "The tougher things get in terms of the public scrutiny of her marriage, I think that will make her more and more private about her feelings and her family. And as curious as the country is about how she's feeling and what does she say to him at night and how's Chelsea, I think all of these things will go unanswered."

Private Pain

It is difficult to assess anyone's state of mind, for the mind is a private domain. What **Hillary Clinton** has been telling friends about her inner state is that coping with her husband's latest infidelity "is extremely difficult and very painful," says Lisa Caputo, her former press secretary, but that "she is, however, a believer in the vows of marriage. And that's an important context to have."

Though her mother was a child of divorced parents, **Hillary Clinton** grew up in a family that looked like it was "straight out of the 1950s television sitcom, 'Father Knows Best,'" the first lady writes in her book, "It Takes a Village." Her father was a devout Methodist. Growing up, she didn't have a single close friend whose parents weren't together.

"My strong feelings about divorce and its effects on children have caused me to bite my tongue more than a few times during my own marriage and to think instead about what I could do to be a better wife and partner," she writes.

If that is one context in which to consider the survivability of the Clintons' marriage, another one is this: Over the past quarter-century her dreams have been his dreams, her career buckled to his. This has given rise to the notion that theirs is a marriage of pragmatism and convenience. Viewed another way, in a sense to leave him would be to leave herself.

"I think she takes 'for better or for worse' seriously," says Grunwald, "and she knows she has plenty of each."

The instinct is to try to read her facial expressions, to pore over her public persona for clues about her emotional being. What did it mean when she patted the president gently on the back when a reporter asked whether he had considered resigning? Was her embrace of him at a Democratic National Committee fund-raiser warm or cool? When she whispers to him or brushes her hand across his pant leg, are those gestures of forgiveness or carefully scripted acts meant to convey an impression?

At last week's state dinner for Czech Republic President Vaclav Havel, it was Mrs. Clinton who was the brightest social light in the room, partying as if it were November 1992 and they had just won the White House. She danced three times with her mate, fast and slow, starring for the world as the happily married woman. She was much more animated, in command and energetic than her husband as the night wore on. Typically, it's the president who gabs away while the first lady tugs on his arm to end the evening.

Of course, it was the first big social event since the Starr report dropped, and amateur behavioral scientists were sure to search for cracks in the first couple's chemistry. So perhaps **Hillary Clinton** decided early on she would not show a crack. Or perhaps she wanted and needed to have some fun.

Labor Secretary Alexis M. Herman spoke to the first lady at the prayer breakfast where the president admitted he had sinned and had failed to be contrite enough in his nationally televised Aug. 17 confession. She sensed in **Hillary Clinton** a surprising level of recuperation.

"There was such a glow about her that I don't think I've seen in all the years I've worked with her," Herman recalls. "You felt her love. For those of us who are a part of the [Clinton] team, it was as though she was lifting us up. I think she has searched her soul in the same way the president has searched his soul. . . . I think in her own time and in her own way she will say what she feels she needs to say if she needs to say it."

And for now?

"She is moving on. It's vintage Hillary."

'Soldier On, Hillary'

There is no right way to confront betrayal, no special knife to excise it from the soul. The first lady has not spent much time wilting, friends say. She continues to meet and talk with her pals, who have comforted her without passing along judgment about the Clinton & Clinton relationship that mystifies much of the public. Her longtime Arkansas friend Diane Blair, who was in town for a meeting, spent the night at the White House last week. Another friend sent her a baseball hat, inscribed: "Soldier On, Hillary."

Friends and aides suggest she has not read even portions of Starr's report, though no one is certain of that. Grunwald suspects **Hillary Clinton** the lawyer will want to be thoroughly briefed -- if she hasn't already been -- on the 11 acts the independent counsel cites as grounds for impeachment. She is, after all, still her husband's most valued strategist.

But she doesn't want to be rushed into making a public speech about forgiveness and is said to be

annoyed at suggestions that there is something she could do to improve Clinton's plight. If and when she does speak her mind, "a possibility" is to use her syndicated column as the vehicle, says her press secretary, Marsha Berry, "but how she chooses to speak out is totally up to her."

While she holds the president accountable for his behavior, Mrs. Clinton is also angry at Starr for the manner in which he has gone after her husband. "I think there's an element of that," says Berry.

Starr's office didn't return phone calls for comment.

The independent counsel continues to investigate the first lady in connection with the White House travel office and Whitewater.

Whatever tensions exist between the White House and the independent counsel's office, Starr's report locates **Hillary Clinton** squarely in the text of her husband's misadventures.

The report chronicles Lewinsky's recollections of having sexual encounters with Clinton on occasions when the first lady was in far-flung locations, such as Las Vegas or Ireland. It reports the president telling Lewinsky that he had "hundreds of affairs" before he turned 40. It quotes the president suggesting to Lewinsky that he "might be alone in three years." It even prints Clinton's alleged remark after having oral sex with Lewinsky "that he hadn't had that in a long time."

A Washington Post reconstruction of **Hillary Clinton's** schedule shows that the president had several of his alleged sexual experiences with Lewinsky just before or just after being with the first lady. On the evening of Jan. 21, 1996, for example, the Starr report says Lewinsky and Clinton engaged in a sexual act outside the Oval Office study. Earlier, Clinton and the first lady were given a private tour of the Johannes Vermeer exhibit at the National Gallery of Art.

Clinton's reckless disregard for the first lady's sensibilities has especially infuriated some of the president's female supporters.

"If I wasn't so dead set against violence," says Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (D-N.Y.) "then I might have liked to have seen him at Martha's Vineyard in a full-body cast with two black eyes. Women might have felt a little better about it."

Why She Stays

There is something eerily familiar about the spot **Hillary Clinton**, at age 50, finds herself occupying. This keeps happening to her -- ever since she drove to Fayetteville from the East Coast to help Bill Clinton campaign for an Arkansas congressional seat in 1974. She was still a girlfriend then, but her husband-to-be was already juggling multiple women, which was a source of frustration to campaign aides who were trying to prevent him from self-destructing, according to David Maraniss's biography of Clinton, "First in His Class."

She has been pelted with so many allegations of his unfaithfulness over the past quarter-century that it is difficult to fathom that anything about him would surprise her now.

"Two things keep Hillary with him," says Betsey Wright, a former Clinton troubleshooter in Arkansas who befriended the two in 1972. "One is her deep love for him. And two is the feeling that she is a better person -- they are better people -- because they have each other."

Hillary Clinton made a difficult calculation when she married the young politician in 1975 -- that she could find happiness by intertwining her ambitions with his and sharing the rewards. Now, as the Clinton presidency continues to unravel, and by extension her own dreams, the public is rendering its

own verdict.

A new U.S. News & World Report poll shows that while a majority of Americans still consider her a good role model for women, a majority also believe she deliberately ignored her husband's indiscretions. And 48 percent of those surveyed called the marriage a practical, business relationship, while only 18 percent described it as a loving marriage that has troubles.

"I wish people understood forgiveness and marriage convictions better," says Wright. "Few people go through what Bill and Hillary have done to keep their marriage, and I feel that they are almost persecuted for it at times."

Staff writer Roxanne Roberts and researcher Ruth Leonard contributed to this report.

At recent events, including dedication of Peace Corps building, the first lady has been poised. In the nine days since details of the president's affair with Monica S. Lewinsky were released by Congress, **Hillary Rodham Clinton** has maintained her schedule, appearing at events such as one at the Marie Reed Learning Center, at top, to promote arts education. The first lady has also maintained her composure in public appearances with her husband, awaiting Czech Republic President Vaclav Havel outside the White House last week, left, and chatting with Havel's wife, Dagmar Havlova, above.

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