



Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message

cc: Lori L. Anderson/WHO/EOP

Subject: Talking points, second round

These incorporate your initial suggestions: (We're still missing an answer on the cost. Anyone have something to put there?)

Draft talking points on conference

FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY

Updated April 8, 1997

"White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning: What New Research on the Brain Tells Us About Our Youngest Children"

- The President announced in March that he and Mrs. Clinton will host the *White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning: What New Research on the Brain Tells Us About Our Youngest Children* on April 17, 1997, at the White House.
- The President and First Lady chose this topic because of the critical role children's earliest experiences play in their development and their later success in school and in life.

This is an issue that the Clintons have focused on for many years. While still in law school, Mrs. Clinton spent an additional year at the Yale Child Study Center. A quick read of her book, *It Takes a Village*, is a strong reminder of the importance she has always placed on early childhood development. And this Administration is proud of the role it has played from its first days in pushing infants' and children's programs, like Early Head Start and immunization efforts.

- It is only recently that scientists have learned just how active children's brains are from the very first days of life. The Conference will focus on the practical applications of the latest scientific research on brain development for parents and care-givers, as well as on ways that all members of society can use this information to help strengthen America's families.

The conference will discuss the recent findings, answer some of the questions parents are asking most often in light of the research, and highlight model programs that incorporate this information.

[NOTE: The President first announced this Conference in his State of the Union Address:
"Learning begins in the first days of life. Scientists are now discovering how young children develop emotionally and intellectually from their very first days, and how important it is for parents to begin immediately talking, singing, even reading to their infants. The First Lady has spent years writing about this issue, studying it. And she and I are going to convene a White House Conference on Early Learning and the Brain this spring, to explore how parents and educators can best use these startling new findings." (State of the Union, 2/4/97)]

Q. Who will be participating in this Conference?

A. The President and Mrs. Clinton have invited leaders in the scientific and academic communities, leaders in the field of early childhood development, as well as representatives from various sectors of society, including the business, faith and medical communities to take part in the panels and be part of the audience. However, because the Conference will take place at the White House, space will be very limited. **(Full panelist list to be attached.)**

That's one reason we have worked to set up regional events, and are pleased that as many as 30 sites in 18 states will broadcast the morning session via satellite. **(Site list to be attached.)**

Q. Is the President going to make a big policy announcement at this Conference?

This Conference builds on the Administration's commitment to children and to early development. For example, the Administration has increased participation in Head Start, created Early Head Start for 0-3 year olds, increased participation in the WIC Supplemental Nutrition Program, and helped raise the rate of childhood immunization to record highs.

One of the things that will be explored at the White House Conference is how all members of society -- including policy makers -- can use this information most effectively. The Conference is certainly intended to focus the Administration's own attention on these early years and to spur action, not necessarily for the day of the Conference, but for the course of the Administration.

Q. How much does something like this cost?

Q. Is this Conference part of Rob Reiner's 0-3 campaign?

A. No. Rob Reiner is working on an important effort -- a National Engagement Campaign -- with a collaboration of foundations, corporations and media to spread the word about the significance of the first few years of life. The President and the First Lady are supportive of his efforts and believe they complement the White House Conference, but the two are separate.

Q. Doesn't the research on the earliest years of life suggest that women should stay at home?

No. What the research suggests is that we should support all parents, those who work outside the home and those who don't. What's most important is that children are surrounded by loving, nurturing care-givers who understand the importance of the first few years of life.

Q. Will there be a record of the Conference, a Conference report?

We're committed to making sure information from the conference is available as widely as possible following the event, and that includes a report.

Q. What about other materials?

That's something being looked at, and is likely to be discussed as part of the conference itself. Again, one reason to bring all these people together is to explore how we get this information out in the most accessible, usable fashion.

Message Sent To:

MCHUGH_L @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
Ann F. Lewis/WHO/EOP
Nicole R. Rabner/WHO/EOP
Pauline M. Abernathy/OPD/EOP
Jennifer L. Klein/OPD/EOP

White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning

Question: Gingrich and Armey have said that at the White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning you should devote at least one-third of the discussion to the development of the brains of fetuses. Will you agree to do this?

Answer: Brain development before birth is a relevant topic. ~~It will surely be discussed at the conference.~~ *One of the panelists has done significant work in this area.*

Question: Doesn't the new research that you are discussing at the Conference suggest that mothers should stay home with their children rather than return to work?

Answer: No. The research suggests that we should support **all** parents, those who work outside the home and those who do not. What is most important is that children are surrounded by loving, nurturing caregivers who understand that the experiences our children have in their first few years of life are essential to development and learning.

3/28/97 DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY

**White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning:
What New Research on the Brain Tells Us About Our Youngest Children
April 17, 1997**

OPENING REMARKS

The East Room

10:30-10:45 am *President Clinton and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton frame the day, highlight the investments and commitment of the Clinton Administration in early childhood development, underscore the unique contributions of the United States Government in supporting research on early childhood and brain development, and highlight the national opportunity and responsibility the new finding present.*

SESSION ONE:

**Exploration of Current Scientific Research on Brain
Development and Its Applications for Parents and Caregivers**

The East Room

Moderator: Dr. David Hamburg, MD,
President, Carnegie Corporation of New York

10:45-11:20 am *Overview of recent discoveries in neuroscience and behavioral science
(with brief slides and/or videotape and/or model of developing brain)*

Dr. Carla Shatz, University of California, Berkeley
(neuroscientific overview)

Dr. Donald Cohen, MD, PhD, Director, Yale Child Study Center
(behavioral development overview)

Dr. Patricia Kuhl, PhD, University of Washington
(language/cognitive development)

11:15-11:35 pm *Discussion of What This Research on Brain Development Means for
Health Care, Child Care and Early Education, and Parenting*

Dr. Ezra Davidson, MD, Drew University of Medicine (obstetrician)

Dr. T. Berry Brazelton, MD, Harvard University (pediatrician)

Dr. Deborah Phillips, National Research Council (child care/early education expert)

11:35-12:15 pm *Presenters from the opening session address concerns of parents, with questions generated from a poll conducted by Zero To Three with parents across the country*

The First Lady frames the discussion, poses questions and calls on parents in audience to voice questions and concerns

WORKING LUNCHEON

State Dining Room

12:30-2:00pm *Conference guests here have a chance to visit informally with one another (Tables are hosted by a White House or Administration official)*

Open Discussion [following the format of the White House Prayer Breakfast]

SESSION TWO: Applying the Knowledge

Roundtable Discussion Exploring Model Efforts Communities Are Undertaking To Support Parents and Enhance Early Childhood Development

The East Room

2:15-3:30pm *Various Sectors of society discuss how they are using new scientific findings to support families and enhance early childhood development and learning*

Dwayne Crompton, Executive Director
KCMC Child Development Corp., Kansas City, Missouri
(Child Care, Community)

Dr. Gloria Rodriguez, President and CEO
Avance Family Support and Education Program
San Antonio, Texas
(Parenting)

Mr. Melvin Wearing, Chief of Police
New Haven, Connecticut
(Law Enforcement)

Mr. Arnold Langbo, Chairman of the Board and CEO
The Kellogg Company
Battle Creek, Michigan
OR

Mr. Ralph Larsen, CEO
Johnson & Johnson
New Brunswick, NJ
(Business)

Mr. Rob Reiner
CastleRock Entertainment
Los Angeles, CA
(Entertainment/Media)

Dr. Barry Zuckerman, MD
Reach Out and Read,
Boston, MA
(Medical Community)

Harriet Meyer or program designate
Ounce of Prevention
Chicago, IL
(Early Head Start)

Panel Respondents:

Governor George Voinovich, Ohio

Governor Bob Miller, Nevada

Co-chairmen of the National Governors' Association Task Force on Young Children

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The East Room

The First Lady

The President

White House Conference on Early Childhood Radio Address

Announcement Options:

1. Executive Memorandum on FMLA

The President could announce that he is issuing an executive memorandum asking federal agencies to adopt policies consistent with his proposed legislative FMLA expansion. This includes allowing workers to take up to 24 hours off for their children's routine medical appointments or to select a new child care provider or school, meet with their child's day care provider or teacher, or participate in eligible volunteer activities at the child care center, Head Start center or school.

2. Prescription for Reading

The President could announce a new private-sector initiative to give the parent of every child under the age of six a prescription for reading by the year 2000 and could challenge communities to help put books into the hands of young children who do not have books at home. Pediatricians have a unique opportunity to encourage reading to young children because they see children regularly during these early years and because they are authority figures. The Academy of Pediatrics is making prescribing reading part of standard pediatric care and is working with Scholastic Books, First Book, the children's hospitals, community health centers, and libraries to secure initial commitments by each of their members toward achieving these goals and having doctors prescribing reading and giving children books in communities across the country when they visit the doctor.

White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning: What New Research on the Brain Tells Us About Our Youngest Children

Policy Announcements Under Development

- **Children's Health Executive Order (t)**
Executive Order directs all federal agencies to take children's well-being into consideration when developing regulations.
- **Prescription for Reading Initiative**
Initiative to encourage pediatricians to "prescribe" that parents read to their children, when families visit the doctor. Possible announcement of a large-scale initiative that builds on an existing program, based on the generous donation of children's books by Scholastic, Inc.
- **America Reads Challenge Early Childhood Kits for Families and Caregivers: Ready*Set*Read**
Kits include activities booklet and calendar of activities for families of children birth through age 5 and for caregivers of children birth through age 5, as well as a developmental growth chart for families and caregivers. Kits were produced through a partnership between the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services and the Corporation for National Service.
- **CEO Summit**
Kaiser Permanente will chair and fund a CEO Summit, bringing together business leaders to discuss how business can best enhance early childhood development. POTUS can challenge Summit to follow themes emerging from Conference. Kaiser Permanente CEO will attend Conference.
- **Child Care Initiative (in development)**
Initiative using Department of Defense child care model to enhance child care quality: release of RAND study that outlines why the DoD child care model is effective, release of DoD's preliminary on its outreach to the non-military child care community, and announcement of Technical Assistance to the states to adapt part of the DoD model.
challenge to states to do DoD
- **Children's Health Announcement (in development)**
Release of HHS report that documents the need in human and economic terms for children's health coverage, endorsement of Administration Children's Health proposal by a consortium of academic health centers, and the announcement of a private-sector commitment to invest \$100 million in children's health coverage.

April						
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Weekly Planner

April 13 - 19, 1997

Sunday <i>13</i>	
Monday <i>14</i>	
Tuesday <i>15</i>	3:00 PM HRC roundtable with reporters
Wednesday <i>16</i>	10:00 AM CPSC recall of unsafe children's products "I Am Your Child" Engagement Campaign kick-off Reiner & Co. testify on Hill (Riley also scheduled)
Thursday <i>17</i>	White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning
Friday <i>18</i>	
Saturday <i>19</i>	

April						
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Weekly Planner

April 06 - 12, 1997

Sunday 6	
Monday 7	
Tuesday 8	
Wednesday 9	
Thursday 10	
Friday 11	
Saturday 12	POTUS radio address

White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning: What New Research on the Brain Tells Us About Our Youngest Children

Reports for Release

- **CEA White Paper on Early Childhood Development Investments**
Cost-benefit analysis of USG investment in programs targeting early childhood across the federal government, demonstrating the cost-effectiveness of these investments.
- **National Science and Technology Council Report: “Investing in Our Future: A National Research Initiative for America’s Children in the 21st Century”**
Survey of USG research investments and their pay-offs in terms of public policy development.
- **Zero to Three Poll Results**
Poll of parents of young children to gauge what parents know about their children’s development, what they want to know, and how best to impart information to them. The poll results will help frame the discussion portion of the first session of the Conference. Zero to Three plans to release the poll on 4/16, embargoed for the start of the Conference.
- **Conference Report, “Rethinking the Brain: New Insights into Early Development”**
Report of 6/96 seminal Conference, “Brain Development in Young Children: New Frontiers for Research, Policy and Practice,” which reviews emerging knowledge in early childhood development.

Ken -
these are old.
NIE

FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY
March 13, 1997

**White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning:
What New Research on the Brain Tells Us About Our Youngest Children**

- Today, the President issued a statement announcing that he and Mrs. Clinton will host the *White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning: What New Research on the Brain Tells Us About Our Youngest Children* on April 17, 1997, at the White House.
- The President and First Lady chose this topic because of how critically important children's experiences in their first few years of life are to their development and their later success both in school and in life.
- The Conference will focus on the practical applications of the latest scientific research on brain development for parents and care-givers, as well as on ways that all members of society can use this information to help strengthen America's families.

[NOTE: The President first announced this Conference in his State of the Union Address: *"Learning begins in the first days of life. Scientists are now discovering how young children develop emotionally and intellectually from their very first days, and how important it is for parents to begin immediately talking, singing, even reading to their infants. The First Lady has spent years writing about this issue, studying it. And she and I are going to convene a White House Conference on Early Learning and the Brain this spring, to explore how parents and educators can best use these startling new findings."* (State of the Union, 2/4/97)]

Q. Who will be participating in this Conference?

A. No formal invitations have been issued yet. The President and Mrs. Clinton will invite leaders in the scientific and academic communities, leaders in the field of early childhood development, as well as representatives from various sectors of society, including the business, faith and medical communities. However, because the Conference will take place at the White House, space will be very limited. We are exploring how best to involve as many people as we can.

Q. If people want to come or be involved, who should they call or write to?

A. They should write to:

Office of Public Liaison
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20502
Attention: Ann Eder

Q. Is the President going to make a big policy announcement at this Conference?

This Conference builds on the Administration's commitment to children and to early development. For example, the Administration has increased participation in Head Start, created Early Head Start for 0-3 year olds, increased participation in the WIC Supplemental Nutrition Program, and raised the rate of childhood immunization to all-time high levels.

One of the things that will be explored at the White House Conference is how all members of society -- including policy makers -- can use this information most effectively. The Conference is certainly intended to focus the Administration's own attention on these early years and to spur action, not necessarily for the day of the Conference, but for the course of the Administration.

Q. How much does something like this cost?

Because the logistics of the Conference have not been finalized, we aren't in a position to estimate yet.

Q. How is this going to be structured?

While the details are still being worked out, we expect that the Conference will be divided into panel discussions, exploring the latest scientific research, addressing the practical applications of that research for parents and care-givers, and examining how all sectors of society can use this research to strengthen families.

Q. Will the President be there the whole time?

That hasn't been decided yet.

Q. Is this Conference part of Rob Reiner's 0-3 campaign?

A. No. Rob Reiner is working on an important effort -- a National Engagement Campaign -- with a collaboration of foundations, corporations and media to spread the word about the significance of the first few years of life. The President and the First Lady are supportive of his efforts and believe they complement the White House Conference, but the two are separate.

Q. Doesn't the research on the earliest years of life suggest that women should stay at home?
(NOTE: Joe Klein wrote a recent piece suggesting this)

No. What the research suggests is that we should support all parents, those who work outside the home and those who don't. What's most important is that children are surrounded by loving, nurturing care-givers who understand the importance of the first few years of life.

Q. Will there be a record of the Conference, a Conference report?

We're in the process of exploring that, but do not yet know definitively.

WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING: WHAT NEW RESEARCH ON THE BRAIN TELLS US ABOUT OUR YOUNGEST CHILDREN

"Learning begins in the first days of life. Scientists are now discovering how young children develop emotionally and intellectually from their very first days, and how important it is for parents to begin immediately talking, singing, even reading to their infants.... We already know we should start teaching children before they start school."

--President Bill Clinton, State of the Union Address, February 4, 1997

Today, President Clinton issued a statement announcing the date and themes of the White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning: What New Research on the Brain Tells Us About Our Youngest Children. The day-long Conference will take place on April 17, 1997 at the White House. The Conference will highlight how critically important children's experiences before school are to their development and their later success in school and in life.

The Conference will focus on the practical applications of the latest scientific research on the brain, particularly for parents and care-givers. Also central to the Conference will be a discussion of the ways all sectors of society, including the medical, business, and faith communities, child care providers and government, can use this information to strengthen America's families.

Over the last four years, the Administration has invested heavily in research to help us better understand the importance of the first few years to child development and learning, and in strengthening efforts that support families and caregivers with young children, including:

- **Increased NIH Research Funding 23%.** Unlike other research areas, the federal government is almost the sole funder of research of children and youth, supporting over 90% of research on children and youth. Under the Clinton Administration, funding for NIH research has increased by 23% since 1993, to \$12.7 billion in 1997. Between 1993 and 1997, funding for NIH children's research has increased 25%, from \$1.3 billion to \$1.6 billion. This sustained level of investment has helped support many of the research advances the April White House Conference will explore. In FY 1998 the President's budget proposes to increase funding for NIH by an additional \$337 million.
- **Enhanced Head Start Participation and Quality and Created the Early Head Start Program for Children 0-3.** The Administration has enhanced Head Start participation and increased its funding by 43% over the last four years, and created the Early Head Start program in 1994 to support families with children ages zero to three. Head Start provides low-income children and their families with comprehensive education, health services, and nutrition. The President's FY 1998 Budget further increases participation to reach 122,000 more children in FY 1998 than when he took office.
- **Commitment to Full Participation in WIC.** The Administration dramatically increased participation in the WIC Supplemental Nutrition Program, providing 7.4 million pregnant women, infants, and children with nutrition packages and information and health referrals -- 1.7 million more than when President Clinton took office. And his FY 1998 Budget would achieve his goal of full participation in the WIC program by the end of FY 1998. Research shows that every \$1 invested in WIC prenatal serves saves up to \$4 in Medicaid costs in the first 60 days after birth. [USDA, 1990 Mathematica Policy Research].
- **Leading National Effort to Raise Immunization Rates.** In 1993, the Administration launched a national effort to raise childhood immunization rates by reducing vaccination costs for parents and vaccine delivery services, and increasing community education and partnerships. Today, childhood immunization rates are at record high levels.

Session Two:
Description of Recommended Participants And
How the President and First Lady Could Respond

**Early Head Start/
Child Care/Community:**

Harriet Meyer, Ounce of Prevention, Chicago, IL

Founded by Irving Harris, the Ounce of Prevention combines public resources with private funds to develop and test innovative early intervention strategies for replication. The Ounce's Center for Successful Child Development provides child care, home visits, medical care, Head Start, and other services to families in public housing. The Ounce's Beethoven Project was the model for the Early Head Start federal program. Highly articulate and respected.

We could respond with: our child care proposals, the 30% expansion of Early Head Start and the expansion of Head Start in our FY98 Budget, and our steps to link Head Start to child care to cover the full day.

**Parenting/
Home Visiting:**

Dr. Gloria Rodriguez, Avance, TX

Avance is a widely acclaimed family support and education program begun in Texas in 1973 serving Mexican American families. Avance operates in public housing centers, elementary schools, and through its family service centers. It conducts home visits by trained staff, presents classes on child development, reaches out to fathers, and disseminates information on community services and education classes and job training. Avance is praised in *It Takes a Village*.

We could respond by: announcing our wonderful new parenting kits with activities for parents and childcare providers, and discussing the Parents as First Teachers grants in our America Reads proposal.

**Law Enforcement/
Safety:**

**Mr. Melvin Warring, New Haven Chief of Police,
New Haven, CT**

Model for DOJ-funded Yale Child Study Center effort that builds collaborations between police precincts and child development/mental health experts to train community police officers. Highly articulate.

We could respond by highlighting our 100,000 COPS program and DOJ funding for this project.

**Business/Parenting/
Community:**

**Mr. Arnold Langbo, CEO, The Kellogg Company,
Battle Creek, MI**

We recommend asking Langbo, the CEO of Kellogg, to participate in the roundtable rather than Johnson & Johnson or St. Paul Companies.

Kellogg wrote to you and the President asking to participate in the Conference because last fall their CEO launched a community-wide effort to reach every parent and caregiver in Battle Creek with information about early brain development and what parents can do to support their children from ages 0-5. The campaign includes print, radio and TV ads, mailing parents information tailored to the age of their children, and conducting brown-bag lunches in hundreds of businesses.

We could respond by announcing that a group of business people, led by Kaiser Permanente, have agreed to hold a conference of business leaders this fall on how more businesses can support early childhood development and parenting.

Pediatrician:

Dr. Barry Zuckerman, Reach Out and Read, Boston, MA

Dr. Zuckerman will discuss Reach Out and Read and how pediatricians are changing their practice in response to the new research.

We could respond by discussing the national effort to prescribe reading to young children and give children books when they come to the doctor that we hope to launch during the week of the conference.

Entertainment:

Rob Reiner, CastleRock Entertainment

Respondents:

**Gov. Voinovich & Gov. Miller, co-chairs
NGA 0-3 Task Force**

4/2/97 DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY

**White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning:
What New Research on the Brain Tells Us About Our Youngest Children**

April 17, 1997

OPENING REMARKS

The East Room

10:30-10:45 am *President Clinton and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton frame the day, highlight the investments and commitment of the Clinton Administration in early childhood development, underscore the unique contributions of the United States Government in supporting research on early childhood and brain development, and highlight the national opportunity and responsibility the new finding present.*

SESSION ONE:

**Exploration of Current Scientific Research on Brain
Development and Its Applications for Parents and Caregivers**

The East Room

Moderator: Dr. David Hamburg, MD,
President, Carnegie Corporation of New York

10:45-11:15 am *Overview of recent discoveries in neuroscience and behavioral science
(with brief slides and/or videotape and/or model of developing brain)*

Dr. Carla Shatz, University of California, Berkeley
(neuroscientific overview)

Dr. Donald Cohen, MD, PhD, Director, Yale Child Study Center
(behavioral development overview)

Dr. Patricia Kuhl, PhD, University of Washington
(language/cognitive development)

11:15-11:35 pm *Discussion of What This Research on Brain Development Means for
Health Care, Child Care and Early Education, and Parenting*

Dr. Ezra Davidson, MD, Drew University of Medicine (obstetrician)

Dr. T. Berry Brazelton, MD, Harvard University (pediatrician)

Dr. Deborah Phillips, National Research Council (child care/early education expert)

11:35-12:15 pm *Presenters from the opening session address concerns of parents, with questions generated from a poll conducted by Zero To Three with parents across the country*

The First Lady frames the discussion, poses questions and calls on parents in audience to voice questions and concerns

WORKING LUNCHEON
State Dining Room

12:30-2:00pm *Conference guests here have a chance to visit informally with one another (Tables are hosted by a White House or Administration official)*

Open Discussion [following the format of the White House Prayer Breakfast]

SESSION TWO: Applying the Knowledge
Exploration of Model Efforts Communities Are Undertaking
To Support Parents and Enhance Early Childhood Development
The East Room

2:15-3:30pm *Various Sectors of society discuss how they are using new scientific findings to support families and enhance early childhood development and learning*

Dr. Gloria Rodriguez, President and CEO
Avance Family Support and Education Program
San Antonio, Texas
(Parenting)

Harriet Meyer
Ounce of Prevention
Chicago, IL
(Early Head Start/Child Care)

Mr. Melvin Wearing, Chief of Police
New Haven, Connecticut
(Law Enforcement)

Mr. Arnold Langbo, Chairman of the Board and CEO
The Kellogg Company
Battle Creek, Michigan
(Business)

Mr. Rob Reiner
CastleRock Entertainment
Los Angeles, CA
(Entertainment/Media)

Dr. Barry Zuckerman, MD
Reach Out and Read,
Boston, MA
(Medical Community)

Panel Respondents:

Governor George Voinovich, Ohio

Governor Bob Miller, Nevada

Co-chairmen of the National Governors' Association Task Force on Young Children

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The First Lady

The President

Draft 2:45 p.m.

'97 APR 11 PM2:54

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
RADIO ADDRESS
APRIL 12, 1997
(TAPED APRIL 11, 1997)**

Good morning. I want to talk today about the toughest job that any person can have. It's not a job you can quit, or show up late for, or do just enough to get by. It is a life commitment, in every way. It's being a parent.

In our times, parenting has become an even greater challenge. The world moves faster, and that means parents worry more about how to protect their children's health and safety. Jobs place more demands on mothers and fathers. Finding a balance between home and work takes more effort than ever.

Parents could use some help. And while government doesn't raise children, it can give parents the tools to make their jobs easier. We fought for and won the V-chip and a ratings system for TV, so parents can better protect their kids from seeing unsuitable shows. We fought to keep the tobacco industry from advertising their products to children. And we're fighting to keep streets safer and to reduce juvenile crime. All that helps parents.

But there is still work to be done. Parents want to do right by their children -- from the very start.

The very start of childhood is something Hillary has studied for a long time. In her book, "It Takes a Village," she called our nation's attention to new findings about the early years of a child's life that so often are overlooked in intellectual, social and emotional development.

Our Administration has worked to better understand these early years. Since 1993, we increased funding for children's research at the National Institutes of Health by 25 percent and my balanced budget requests increased funding [\$337 million] for this important project. We expanded and improved Head Start, and we created the Early Head Start Program for children age 3 or younger.

From our research we know this: Learning begins in the first days of life. From those very first days, a child is developing emotionally and intellectually, and how he or she does in those first 3 critical years of life will help to determine how a child does later in school and in life. That's why we need to begin teaching and nurturing children **before** they go to school.

We want to sort through and get out the information we have to parents and care givers who can use it. So next week Hillary and I will bring together researchers, parents and other experts for the "White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning: What New Research on the Brain Tells Us About Our Youngest Children."

We will be meet for a full day at the White House, with satellite hook-ups to **more than**

60 sites around our nation.

This conference is an exciting and enormous undertaking. It is a call to action to parents, businesses, care givers, policy makers, media, the faith community and government to each do their part to enhance the earliest years of life. It grows out of our commitment to find new ways to support parents, and to help our children to thrive and to strengthen families.

As part of that commitment, I also want to call today on the Members of Congress to do their part to come to the aid of our families. They can do that by passing my expansion of the Family and Medical Leave Act.

This bill would allow Federal and eligible workers in the private sector up to 24 hours of unpaid leave each year to fulfill certain family obligations. This leave time could allow a worker to attend parent-teacher conference. If you have a two year old, you could take time off to go to the pediatrician; or you could use the time to find quality child care, or to take a child to a routine medical appointment. Or you could take leave to care for an elderly relative.

Families need this time -- not often and not forever -- but they do need it to take care of their own. 12 million American families have benefitted from the Family and Medical Leave Act since it became the first bill I signed into law in 1993. It was needed then; it's needed now, and we need to improve on it. I urge the Congress to act soon on this legislation. Don't ask our people to choose between being good workers and being good parents. We can help them to be both: Pass the Expanded Family and Medical Leave Act.

I think this bill is so important that today I am asking all Federal Departments and Agencies to make Expanded Family and Medical Leave available to their workers **immediately**. Wherever possible, I want workers to have access now to essential time off for family obligations.

Make no mistake: A little help for America's families now will make an enormous difference later. It will mean parents who are more involved in the lives of their children and who are there for them at important moments.

Almost a century and a half ago, Oliver Wendell Holmes said: "A child's education should begin at least 100 years before he was born."

What we do now and what we learn now can have benefits for generations of Americans. We can make it possible for all children to reach their greatest potential. We can start at the grassroots with the smallest community -- the family. And from there, we can rebuild and renew the best in America.

Thanks for listening.

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON

RADIO ADDRESS

APRIL 12, 1997

(TAPED APRIL 11, 1997)

Good morning. I want to talk today about the toughest job that any person can aspire to. It's not a job you can quit, or show up late for, or do just enough to get by. It is a life commitment, in every way. It's being a parent.

In our times, the job of parenting has become an even greater challenge. The world moves faster, and that means parents worry more about how to protect their children's health and safety. Jobs place more demands on mothers and fathers. Finding a balance between home and work takes more effort than ever before.

Parents could use some help. And while government can't raise children, it can give parents the tools to make their jobs easier. That's why we fought for and won the V-chip and a ratings system for TV, so parents can better protect their kids from seeing unsuitable shows. And why we fought to keep the tobacco industry from advertising their products to children. And why we're fighting to keep streets safer and to reduce juvenile crime.

But there is still work to be done. We know that parents want to do right by their children -- from the very start.

The very start of childhood is something that Hillary has studied for a long time. In her book, “It Takes a Village,” she called the nation’s attention to new findings about the early years of a child, up to age 3, that so often are overlooked in a child’s intellectual development.

In the last four years, our Administration has worked to better understand early child development. We increased funding for children’s research at the National Institutes of Health by 25 percent and my balanced budget requests increased funding [\$337 million] for this important project. We expanded and improved Head Start, and we created the Early Head Start Program for children under age 3.

From our research we know this: Learning begins in the first days of life. From those very first days, a child is developing emotionally and intellectually, and how he or she does in those first 3 critical years of life will help to determine how a child does later in school and in life. That’s why we need to begin teaching children **before** they go to school.

Our next step is to sort through and get out the information we have to parents who can use it. So next week Hillary and I will host the “White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning: What New Research Tells Us About Our Youngest Children.”

We will be joined at the White House by hundreds of experts and many more will join in by satellite link from more than 60 sites around our nation.

This is an exciting and enormous undertaking. It grows out of our commitment to find

new ways to help make better parents, and to help our children to thrive and to strengthen families.

As part of that commitment, I also want to call today on the Congress to do its part to come to the aid of our families -- and pass my expansion of the Family and Medical Leave Act.

This bill would allow Federal and eligible workers in the private sector up to 24 hours of unpaid leave each year to fulfill certain family obligations. This leave time could allow employees to attend parent-teacher conferences and other activities related to their child's education. Or it could be used to take a child for a routine medical or dental appointment. Or it could allow a worker to take care of an elderly relative.

These are all very basic family supporting activities. I urge the Congress to act soon on this legislation. Don't ask our people to choose between being good workers and being good parents. You can help them to be both. Pass the Expanded Family and Medical Leave Act.

I place great importance on this bill. So, I am asking all Federal Departments and Agencies to make the expansion of Family and Medical Leave available to their workers **immediately**. I want these workers at least to have the full advantage of essential time off for family obligations.

Make no mistake: We must all take very seriously the work that we must all do to help America's families. A little help now will make an enormous difference later. It will mean

parents who are more involved in the lives of their children and who are there for them at important moments. And that means stronger and healthier families, and smarter and better-adjusted children.

Forty years ago, the famous baby doctor, Benjamin Spock, said: "Perhaps a child who is fussed over gets a feeling of destiny. He thinks he is in the world for something important and it gives him drive and confidence."

If it's in our power, shouldn't we give more children that feeling of destiny? We can make it possible for all children to reach their greatest potential. We can start at the grassroots with the smallest community -- the family. And from there, we can rebuild and renew the best in America.

WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING: WHAT NEW RESEARCH ON THE BRAIN TELLS US ABOUT OUR YOUNGEST CHILDREN

"Learning begins in the first days of life. Scientists are now discovering how young children emotionally and intellectually from their very first days, and how important it is for parents immediately talking, singing, even reading to their infants....We already know we should start with children before they start school."

--President Bill Clinton, State of the

Address, February 4, 1997

Today, President Clinton issued a statement announcing the date and themes of the White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning: What New Research on the Brain Tells Us About Our Youngest Children. The day-long Conference will take place on April 17, 1997 at the White House. The Conference will highlight how critically important children's experiences before school are to their development and their later success in school and in life.

The Conference will focus on the practical applications of the latest scientific research on the brain, particularly for parents and care-givers. Also central to the Conference will be a discussion of the ways all sectors of society, including the medical, business, and faith communities, child care providers and government, can use this information to strengthen America's families.

Over the last four years, the Administration has invested heavily in research to help us better understand the importance of the first few years to child development and learning, and in strengthening efforts that support families and caregivers with young children, including:

- **Increased NIH Research Funding 23%.** Unlike other research areas, the federal government is almost the sole funder of research of children and youth, supporting over 90% of research on children and youth. Under the Clinton Administration, funding for NIH research has increased by 23% since 1993, to \$12.7 billion in 1997. Between 1993 and 1997, funding for NIH children's research has increased 25%, from \$1.3 billion to \$1.6 billion. This sustained level of investment has helped support many of the research advances the April White House Conference will explore. In FY 1998 the President's budget proposes to increase funding for NIH by an additional \$337 million.
- **Enhanced Head Start Participation and Quality and Created the Early Head Start Program for Children 0-3.** The Administration has enhanced Head Start participation and increased its funding by 43% over the last four years,

and created the Early Head Start program in 1994 to support families with children ages zero to three. Head Start provides low-income children and their families with comprehensive education, health services, and nutrition. The President's FY 1998 Budget further increases participation to reach 122,000 more children in FY 1998 than when he took office.

- **Commitment to Full Participation in WIC.** The Administration dramatically increased participation in the WIC Supplemental Nutrition Program, providing 7.4 million pregnant women, infants, and children with nutrition packages and information and health referrals -- 1.7 million more than when President Clinton took office. And his FY 1998 Budget would achieve his goal of full participation in the WIC program by the end of FY 1998. Research shows that every \$1 invested in WIC prenatal serves saves up to \$4 in Medicaid costs in the first 60 days after birth. [USDA, 1990 Mathematica Policy Research].
- **Leading National Effort to Raise Immunization Rates.** In 1993, the Administration launched a national effort to raise childhood immunization rates by reducing vaccination costs for parents and vaccine delivery services, and increasing community education and partnerships. Today, childhood immunization rates are at record high levels.

**THE WHITE HOUSE
OFFICE OF MEDIA AFFAIRS**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 8, 1997

Contact: 202/456-7150

**PRESIDENT AND MRS. CLINTON TO HOST WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE
ON EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING**

Washington, DC -- President and Mrs. Clinton will host the *White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning: What the Newest Research on the Brain Tells Us About Our Youngest Children*, on Thursday, April 17, 1997. The conference will spotlight recent findings about how children develop from the earliest days, and will explore what this means for parents and policy makers.

"We hope that this one-day conference will make the latest scientific research more accessible and understandable to America's families," President Clinton said in announcing the conference last month. "Our goal is to take this information and explore how it can be translated into everyday actions and activities involving children."

"We're excited that so many people will be able to take part in this event. We all have a role to play in making sure parents have the tools they need to do the best job they can," Mrs. Clinton said. "We believe this Conference can make a valuable contribution."

The morning session will also be broadcast, by satellite, to sites across the country. Watch parties will be co-hosted by regional federal agencies, local officials, children's and other organizations.

President and Mrs. Clinton will open the morning session, which will feature leading researchers and child experts. Among those who will talk about the new research and what it means to parents are: pediatrician T. Berry Brazelton, neuroscientist Carla Shatz, and Director of the Yale Child Study Center Donald Cohen.

The afternoon session will highlight model programs from across the nation that are supporting parents and enhancing early childhood development. Among the programs that will be discussed are the Avance Family Support program based in San Antonio, Texas, and the Ounce of Prevention program based in Chicago, Illinois.