

CHILD CARE REFRAMING THE DEBATE

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When child care research is discussed, the ensuing debate tends to become polarized. There are implicit or explicit assumptions that mothers should be at home or should work; that child care is good or bad for children; and that the solution therefore should either support mothers (or fathers) to stay at home—perhaps even work at home, or to work outside the home. As I conduct my own research and read the research of others, this notion of one side or the other doesn't fit. If one listens to the voices of families, it really doesn't fit. So in a debate of what often turns into "either/or" I will argue for need for "both."

Should policy and practice support parents in caring for their own children or support nonparental care?

Finding 1: Approximately three in five mothers with children under six are employed

- The recent figures on maternal employment from the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicate that the majority of mothers with children under six are employed. In March 1997, 60 percent of mothers with children under six were employed. Overall, 57 percent of mothers with children under three and 64 four percent with children three to five were employed.
- Among mothers with children under six who are married, 61 percent were employed. Among single mothers with children under six, 58 percent were employed.

Finding 2: Employed mothers contribute significantly to family income.

The Families and Work Institute's nationally representative study of the US workforce—the 1997 National Study of the

Changing Workforce (to be released April 16, 1998)—provides information about the earnings of employed parents.

- **According to the National Study of the Changing Workforce, employed mothers with children under 18 in dual-earner households contribute 39 percent of household earnings.**
- **Of course, not all families have two earners. Nineteen percent of employed parents with children under 18 are single parents with the sole or major responsibility for supporting their families. Of these, three in four is a single parent mother, and one in four (27 percent) is a single parent father.**
- **It is furthermore expected that welfare reform will increase the number of single parent mothers in the workforce.**

In a study we conducted for The Whirlpool Foundation, we found that employed mothers seem to have enlarged their definition of caring for their families to include nurturing as well as providing for their families economically.

Finding 3: The majority of employed parents with young children, even those working very few hours, use some form of nonparental care.

The National Center for Educational Statistics' National Household Educational Survey from October 1995 documents the use of nonparental child care among employed and nonemployed mothers.

- **Almost two-thirds of mothers (65 percent) with children under six-years-old who work between one and nine hours weekly use some form of nonparental care while 88 percent of mothers of young children who work 40 or more hours per week do so.**

TABLE 1: USE OF NONPARENTAL CARE BY EMPLOYED MOTHERS WITH CHILDREN UNDER SIX

Weekly work hours of mothers	Use of nonparental care	No use of nonparental care
1-9	65%	35%
10-19	71	29
20-29	75	25
30-34	83	17
35-39	92	8
40 or more	88	12
Total among working mothers	83	17

Source: National Education Survey, US National Center for Educational Statistics, October 1995

- Even among mothers not in the labor force, 32 percent use some form of nonparental care.

Should policy and practice support parents in caring for their own children or support nonparental care? Given the above data, it seems to me that public and private efforts should support both.

Should there be support for employees with children to work fewer hours?

Finding 4: Parents would prefer to work fewer hours.

The study that the Families and Work Institute conducted for The Whirlpool Foundation found that employed parents feel pressed for time and worry about families not having enough time together.

- According to the National Study of the Changing Workforce, two-thirds of employed parents would prefer to work fewer hours.
- When one asks about the number of preferred work hours, however, employed mothers want to work 32 hours a week on average (or 3.2 hours less than they are scheduled to

work) while employed fathers want to work 37.9 hours (or 3.7 hours less than they are scheduled to work).

Thus, it appears that while employed parents would prefer fewer hours, they especially want to eliminate the extra hours they work. Cutting back hours also can entail reducing income which for some families could be difficult.

TABLE 2: SCHEDULED, ACTUAL AND PREFERRED WEEKLY HOURS BY EMPLOYED MOTHERS WITH CHILDREN UNDER 18

Employee group	Scheduled weekly hours at main job	Actual weekly hours at all jobs	Preferred weekly hours	Difference between actual and preferred weekly hours
Employed mothers	35.8	41.4	32	9.4
Employed fathers	41.6	50.9	37.9	13

Source: Families and Work Institute, 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce

It is important to note that our research at the Families and Work Institute indicates that the number of hours worked is only weakly associated—or not associated at all—with parental well-being. Job factors (such as job autonomy, job security, and having a supportive supervisor) are the most significant in predicting most outcomes. Neither is simply the number of hours worked strongly associated with children's well-being in most studies of parental employment.

Merely looking at the hours that parents and children spend together or apart gives an incomplete picture of the impact of parental employment. Although the public debate tends to separate "quality time" from "quantity time" and asks which is best, studies of children's development indicate that the quality and quantity of time are inextricably linked and both should be supported.

Should policy promote one form of child care over another?

Finding 5: While different forms of child care are better for individual children, there is no one best form of child care.

The use of various forms of care depends on the age of the child, family income, and the supply of local child care. The preceding table shows how some of these factors affect parental selection.

TABLE 3: REGULAR CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHILDREN UNDER SIX

	Total non-parental	Relative	Nonrelative	Center	No non-parental
Total	60%	21%	18%	31%	40%
Maternal employment					
35 hours or more	88	33	32	39	12
Less than 35 hours	75	30	26	35	25
Household income					
Less than \$10,001	50	22	10	25	50
\$75,000 or more	77	14	30	49	23

Source: National Education Survey, US National Center for Educational Statistics, October 1995

Finding 6: Multi-site studies have found very similar global quality ratings for regulated family child care and center care.

- In the 1994 Study of Children in Family Child Care and Relative Care by the Families and Work Institute, the average quality rating among regulated providers was 3.92

on a scale where 1=inadequate, 3=mediocre, 5=good, and 7=excellent.

- A 1995 four-state study by the University of Colorado at Denver found that the average center was rated at 4.0 or mediocre in quality.
- Perhaps surprisingly, children being cared for by relatives were no more likely than those cared for by regulated or nonregulated providers to behave as if they felt safe and secure with their providers.
- Relative care received lower quality ratings in The Study of Children in Family Child Care and Relative Care than nonrelative care. Further investigation revealed that relative care was lower in quality when the providers were less "intentional." Intentionality is defined as being committed to providing care, thinking ahead and planning what one wants to do with the children, and seeking out opportunities to learn more about caring for children, and so forth. Only 23 percent of the relatives in this study saw child care as their chosen work.

Clearly, given a range of family need and finances, no one form of child care should be promoted over another. However, it makes sense for employers and government to support programs and providers who are intentional about caring for children.

What do families want when they select child care?

Finding 7: Parents want their children to be safe; to have providers who communicate with them about what is going on with their child; to have providers who pay attention to their child; and to have providers who are warm and caring.

- Interestingly enough, these are the same factors that researchers would consider crucial to children's positive growth and development. In The Study of Children in Family Child Care and Relative Care, the two factors most strongly associated with positive child outcomes were the warmth (or sensitivity) of the provider and her or his responsiveness to the child.

Finding 8: Many parents do not feel they have choices in the child care they select.

- In the 1992 National Study of the Changing Workforce, 27 percent of employed parents seriously considered using other arrangements when they selected their child care arrangement for their youngest child under 13. Of these, 58 percent reported finding no other acceptable choices.

Given the fact that child care is, on average, mediocre, is it possible to improve its quality?

Finding 9: Several studies indicate that it is possible to improve child care quality in ways that affect children's development.

A multi-site study of family child care training—Family to Family—funded by several businesses conducted by the Families and Work Institute reveals that:

- Children were more likely to be securely attached to their providers following training, and that the quality of the caregiving environments had improved.

In another study conducted by the Families and Work Institute (to be released March 8, 1998) where state government in Florida legislated higher staff-to-child ratios and higher educational requirements for staff, we have followed these changes since 1992 and have found that:

- Children's cognitive development had improved in 1994 and continued to improve in 1996 as evidenced by the fact that children engaged in more cognitively complex play with other children and with classroom materials.
- Children were also observed to be more securely attached to their teachers in 1994 and even more so in 1996, an indication of sound emotional development.
- In addition, children spent more time in learning activities in 1996 than in 1994.

- In 1994, we found increased proficiency with language among children and decreased behavior problems, including aggression, anxiety, and hyperactivity. These gains held in 1996.
- On a scale measuring classroom quality where a score of 1 equals inadequate, 3 equals mediocre, 5 equals good, and 7 equals excellent, Florida's scores increased from 4.17 in 1992 to 4.57 in 1996.
- Increased staff education and more rigorous ratio requirements did not have a marked negative impact on the child care marketplace nor did requirements significantly impact consumer costs during the 1992-1996 period.

Who should be responsible for addressing the problems that parents face with child care—its quality, cost, accessibility? Should it be families, government, or business?

Finding 10: Although a number of employed parents receive child care assistance from their employers, most are not served.

- According to the National Study of the Changing Workforce, only one in five employees with children under six works for an employer that offers a program or service that helps employees find child care. Access is higher for workers from households with higher income and for those who work for large companies.

Table 4: Access To Child Care Resource and Referral By Employee Group With Children Under Six

Employee Group	Access	No Access
<i>Family income</i>		
\$28K or less (<i>n</i> =113)	16% *	84%
\$28K-\$70K (<i>n</i> =286)	18	82
\$70k or more (<i>n</i> =104)	28	72
<i>US employees</i>		
Fewer than 50 (<i>n</i> =161)	11 ***	89
50-999 (<i>n</i> =144)	8	92
1000 or more (<i>n</i> =203)	35	65

Significance Levels: * $p < .05$; *** $p < .001$;

Source: Families and Work Institute, 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce

- Overall, 12 percent of employees with children under six report that they have access to a child care center operated or sponsored by their employer at or near their work location. Workers at large companies are more likely to have child care at the job.

Table 5: Access To On Or Near Site Child Care By Employee Group With Children Under Six

Employee Group	Access	No Access
<i>US employees</i>		
Fewer than 50 (<i>n</i> =163)	9% ***	91%
50-999 (<i>n</i> =148)	6	94
1000 or more (<i>n</i> =206)	18	82

Significance Levels: *** $p < .001$;

Source: Families and Work Institute, 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce

- Twelve percent of employed parents with children under six work for employers that provide employees with direct financial assistance—vouchers, cash or scholarships—to help employees defray the cost of child care. Full-time employees and those who work for larger employers are the most likely to receive financial assistance for child care.

Table 6: Access To Financial Assistance For Child Care By Employee Group With Children Under Six

Employee Group	Financial Assistance	No Financial Assistance
<i>Work status</i>		
Full time (n=450)	13% *	87%
Part time (n=69)	4	96
<i>US employees</i>		
Fewer than 50 (n=163)	4 ***	96
50-999 (n=147)	9	91
1000 or more (n=200)	20	80

Significance Levels: * $p < .05$; *** $p < .001$;

Source: Families and Work Institute, 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce

Another way that employers help employees pay for child care is by setting up Dependent Care Assistance Plans allowed under federal tax law. Employees set aside part of their pretax wages into an account that can be used to pay for child care.

- Thirty percent of employees with children under six have access to DCAPs. Those more likely to have access are employees who have higher hourly earnings, who have higher family income, who are married, and who work for larger employers. In fact, 47% of employees with young children who work for large companies have access to DCAPs.

Table 7: Access To Dependent Care Assistance Plans By Employee Group With Children Under Six

Employee Group	Access to DCAPs	No Access to DCAPs
<i>Hourly earnings</i>		
\$7.70 or less (n=115)	20% ***	80%
\$7.70-\$19 (n=242)	28	72
\$19 or more (n=123)	43	57
<i>Family income</i>		
\$28K or less (n=109)	13 ***	87
\$28K-\$70K (n=282)	31	69
\$70k or more (n=102)	44	56
<i>Marital status</i>		
Married/partnered (n=438)	32 *	68
Single (n=73)	20	80
<i>US employees</i>		
Fewer than 50 (n=161)	13 ***	87
50-999 (n=150)	27	73
1000 or more (n=209)	47	53

Significance Levels: * $p < .05$; *** $p < .001$;

Source: Families and Work Institute, 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce

Many employed parents don't have access to even more basic employee assistance either.

- For example, 12 percent of employed parents from low-income households and 11 percent of single parents with young children do not have access health insurance for their children from any source.
- 64 percent of employed parents with young children from low-income households and 63 percent of single parents with young children do not have access to paid time off to care for their children.
- 69 percent of employed parents with young children from low-income household and 63 percent of single parents with young children do not have access to traditional flextime.

- Only 28 percent of parents with children under six have the opportunity to work at least part of their regular hours at home. Obviously, it is impossible for some jobs to be done at home. Furthermore, working at home does not negate the need for child care for many parents. In fact, many large employers require that employees have child care if they are going to work at home.
- Finally, between one fourth and one third of employed parents with young children report that the work-family culture of their workplaces is not supportive to them as family members.

The responsibility for addressing the child care needs of employees belongs first and foremost to employed parents, but to do so, they will need the support of employers and government.

I hope that we can move the child care debate in this county away from the notion that one size fits all—that mothers should work or mothers should stay at home; that child care is good or bad for children. Many mothers and fathers have redefined their roles. By caring for their children they include nurturing them emotionally and supporting them financially. It is my hope that the rest of society can support families in both of these roles.

**United States Senate
Subcommittee on Children and Families**

“Caring for America’s Children”

A Congressional Symposium on Child Care and Parenting

Remarks by Danielle Crittenden

Editor, *The Women’s Quarterly*

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EVERY WORKING MOTHER knows the feeling. The pain of saying good-bye to small children in the morning. The worry for them throughout the day. The nagging guilt that you're not doing the best thing for them. The exhaustion of leading two full-time lives: one as worker, the other as mother.

Perhaps this explains why the majority of working mothers say they'd rather stay home or work part-time than work full-time. Not only that, a recent poll showed that a *majority of both* women and men feel that it's a step in the wrong direction for mothers of small children to work outside the home.

Unfortunately, the politicians who say they want to help working mothers are deaf to what working mothers actually want. Instead, they listen to day-care advocates and feminist groups who insist that women need and want *more* time away from their children, and not less. Today, I'd like to stand back and challenge that presumption.

When you think about it, it's strange that in all the public discussions of the problems faced by working mothers, the most animating aspect of motherhood--that we love our children more than anything else, and want to be with them as much as we possibly can--goes unmentioned. This is not because it is an obvious fact of nature that everyone takes for granted. Rather, it's a fact that is now too explosive to confront.

For more than thirty years, the women's movement has told us that we would be happier, more fulfilled human beings if we left our homes and children and went out to work. We've been urged to put our work ahead of our families or at the very least, attempt to "balance" the demands of boss and baby. And in this, the women's movement has been spectacularly persuasive. The mother who does not work outside her home has become a social and statistical novelty: day-care advocates like to point out that sixty percent of mothers of pre-school children now work for wages.

My generation was raised to believe that by providing for our children's physical and material needs, we could compensate the maternal comfort they lost by having us at work. Just so long as they were in "good

care," we were told, we wouldn't have to worry about compromising our career.

But this has proven to be a chimera: no amount of Fisher-Price gee gaws and cheerfully painted walls and chirping, brisk day-care workers can replace a mother's love and attention. Nor can putting our children in these surroundings ease our maternal fears for their well-being and our aching longing for their company. In all the breaking down of barriers women have done over a generation, this last remaining barrier—our love for our children—is the stubborn one we haven't been able to push through.

A friend of mine once told me about a Christmas Eve she spent at work, writing a newsletter her boss insisted get finished that night. She said it nearly broke her heart thinking about her two little kids waiting for her to come home while she labored like some modern-day female Bob Cratchit over the cheerless jargon of a routine corporate report. (The report, of course, was forgotten by the next week, but her children to this day remember the Christmas Eve their mother didn't come home).

When Brenda Barnes, one of the highest ranking female executives in the United States, resigned from her job as CEO of Pepsi-Cola North America last fall, she'd come to a similar conclusion about the effect of her work on her kids. She made the decision, she said to the press, when one of her children told her it would be okay to keep working if she could "promise to be at home for all our birthdays."

So it's with some defensiveness that the same advocates who promised that work would be a panacea for women now claim that if it's not, the blame belongs to a society unwilling to provide adequate child care. If we had government-funded, high-quality day care, they say, women would no longer be thwarted by the demands of their children and could fully realize their potential as citizens and workers. It doesn't seem to matter that parents have shown a marked aversion to the sort of institutional day care these advocates wish to foist upon them: only 1.8 million of the 10 million children under five whose mothers work are in institutional care (the majority are minded by fathers, grandparents and other relatives).

Nor does it seem to matter that a careful reading of the very sketchy research that has been done on children placed in this sort of care leaves in place the common sense conclusion that non-family care of very young children tends to be damaging. The call for "universal child care" has become a mantra among women's groups, a cure-all, and the yardstick by which they judge any politician's commitment to women's equality.

Yet the Department of Health and Human Services could announce tomorrow that it is creating a system of completely free day-care centers, each one headed by a cloned Mary Poppins, and *the* problem wouldn't go away. For despite all the reassurances to the contrary, the woman who kisses her child's forehead each morning before going to work still harbors the agonizing suspicion that what her child needs most is *her*.

Feminists react angrily to this sentiment. Mothers shouldn't have to always be the ones to sacrifice their work for their children. It's disturbingly sexist to say that women are "better" at caring for infants, or more suited to it, than men. And anyway, feminists argue, the issue is moot, because even if

most women wanted to, they couldn't afford to stay home with their kids, and it's elitist to suggest that they should.

But the question we should be asking is why, in the space of a generation, have we come to consider taking care of your own kids—even if it's just for the few short years before they are in school—as a perk of the rich, like yachting? This was not true even in the depths of the Great Depression.

It's true that working- and middle-class women have always done work of some kind--whether it was voluntary, or part-time, or from their homes. But it is odd that, in the *richest* period *ever* in our history, we should suddenly be considering a massive federal program to care for infants because the majority of mothers feel they have “no choice” but to work.

Part of the reason for that perception of lack of choice, of course, is the burden of taxes an average family is expected to shoulder today compared to thirty years ago, and the penalties in our tax code that make it more costly for one parent to stay home. My generation is also accused--justly I think--of

having higher expectations for our standard of living than our parents or grandparents did.

But I think the fundamental reason why mothers of small children feel the need to work today, when two generations ago they didn't, is the meltdown of the family. Even before a modern woman becomes a mother, even before she marries, she expects she will have to support herself. All around her are the vast new numbers of single mothers, for whom remaining in the workforce *is* an act of economic necessity. The greater prospect of divorce for a woman today, the fear of having to fend for herself and her children at some point, underlies why even happily married women often feel obliged to work, even when there's no immediate financial reason for them to do so.

Combine the women who must work because they are single mothers and the women who feel they should work to protect themselves lest they become single mothers, and you realize what looks like a child-care crisis is really a symptom of America's larger marriage crisis.

Okay, feminist critics may still argue, even if we all went back to the traditional marriages of the 1950s, women would still *want* to work. Arlie Hochschild writes of parents who “flee the pressures of home for the relief of work.” But, really, what sort of argument is that?

No one compels us to have babies. When we do bear them, we have an obligation to care for them, no matter how dull or tiring that may be. The New York animal shelters will not let you adopt a cat or dog if you work full-time; why should our attitude toward children be any less?

The fact is, when children come along, *someone* has to accommodate them. A woman who has carried the baby around for nine months inside of her usually finds it natural to do so--and often impossible not to.

A Roper poll of women's attitudes toward work, which has been conducted periodically since 1974, finds that a substantial majority (53 percent to 41 percent) of married women would prefer to stay home with their young children if they could--and that this majority has been growing since 1985.

This preference, however, is mostly ignored. Labor unions decry Third World factories where workers stitch and assemble with their children at their feet. But in the sleek settings of managerial America, this same practice is being hailed as a progressive way to combine motherhood and work.

Some companies are opening sick rooms for employees' children, staffed by nurses, so a parent never has to take a day off to care for a sniffling son or daughter. Cutting-edge day-care centers are installing cameras that parents can access on the Internet from the office. Other companies and organizations allow employees to bring their infants to the offices and are experimenting with breast-feeding on the job.

The visitor's bureau of Lake County, Indiana, issued a press release bragging that it will now permit newborn to six-month-old babies to accompany employees into the office where they may sleep in cribs near their mothers or fathers. "The sound of a Winnie the Pooh music box mixes with the beeps and whistles of faxes and computers," boasted the release. The head of the bureau said, "The time and resources saved by having the employee in the office greatly overcomes any loss of time due to limited

distraction.” Of course, the bureau didn’t offer any observations on where it expects parents to put their children *after* those first six months.

No one seems to find any of these solutions creepy. But think--what these policies are saying to women is this: You must never, ever *think* about taking five minutes away from the office, not even for a newborn child.

And what do these policies say, too, to the children themselves? From their earliest memories, the love they receive, the attention they get, will have been squeezed in around office schedules and ringing phones. Home will be for them the place of emotional upheaval and flashing tempers and food gulped in front of the television; it will be their day-care centers that offer them stability, security, and people who care that they have learned to stack blocks and mold Play-Doh.

Twenty years ago, psychologists caught up in the intellectual fashions of the moment insisted that divorce not only was fine for children, it was *good* for them: kids, they insisted, did better with one parent than two who were unhappily married. Now that the children of that generation have grown up, the data is irrefutable: divorce, however good it might be for parents, is a

disaster for children. I often have the sense when I hear day-care advocates extolling its benefits that the results of their experiment will prove equally catastrophic when the results are measured a decade or two from now.

When you think about it, it seems a poor trade-off for a society: valuing the work a woman does as a data processor or writing legal briefs more than the hours she might have devoted to helping her daughter feel her importance in the world. It is sad that in the space of a generation, full-time motherhood has sunk from being regarded as a strong, noble, and vital task, to one that garners pity at best, contempt at worst.

Let's remember: The average American woman of my generation will live eighty years. She will probably work for forty of those years. But for six or seven or eight of those years, she will be a mother to very young children. Does it make sense for society to attempt to re-invent itself so that she can more conveniently and inexpensively delegate the care of those babies to strangers? Or would it be better for society to try and figure out a way to help her care for them herself, and then return to work when her children are in school (or not return, if that is her preference)?

It may seem breathtakingly radical to phrase the question this way: to assert that the solution to the work/home dilemma involves imagining ways to help mothers of young children stay home. But if it does seem radical, that only shows how deeply the feminist beliefs about the primacy of work over family have been absorbed. I'd like to think that an enlightened society is not one in which all its economic and cultural forces combine to encourage women to deposit their children in state creches and walk away without a backward glance.

What infant children need is their mother. The difficulty that America's children have in getting her attention, the economic risks that America's mothers run if they give their children those few short years of care in infancy, the care they yearn to give--that is America's true child-care crisis. And the solution lies not in subsidizing day care to free Mom to go to work to pay the taxes to fund day care; the solution lies in identifying ways to aid and protect mothers who want to do society's most important job themselves.

UNITED STATES SENATE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
HEARING

"CARING FOR AMERICA'S CHILDREN"
A Congressional Symposium on Child Care and Parenting

Monday, February 23, 1:00-5:00 p.m.
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room SDG-50

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I would like to share a few observations on families and children. These observations address the first question raised by this hearing --“what is best for children?” Perhaps my comments relate to a more specific aspect of that question, namely-- “what is best for the healthy, emotional development of children?”

My observations derive from 35 years of clinical experience, from my research, and the research of other investigators reported in the medical literature.

The medical literature reveals a vast body of data exploring the impact of absent parents on the emotional development of children. Beginning with the classic research of Dorothy Burlingham and Anna Freud on children separated from their parents during World War II over 50 years ago and repeated by thousands of carefully controlled studies since that time, we now have a rather clear idea of what is best for the emotional well-being of children.

(I have included with copies of my remarks, a far from inclusive list of relevant research of the past 10 years, and, to demonstrate how long we have had access to this data, a shorter list of reports extending back some 50 years.)

What does this vast body of clinical research tell us about what is best for children? These findings indicate with unmistakable clarity that the emotional well-being of a child rests heavily on a close, warm and sustained relationship with both parents; and conversely, the absence of a parent through death, divorce, sickness or time-demanding jobs subjects that child to high risk for certain emotional illnesses-- illnesses that may occur early or later in life.

This research, like so much research on human behavior states the obvious-- once you become aware of it. Yet the obvious is most often overlooked and neglected. The studies confirm that child care relegated to agencies outside the home, regardless of the quality of the facilities and the training of the staff, can never substitute for the care of a parent who loves the child more than anything else on earth. And consequently, the most important step a nation can take to do "what is best for children" is to insure that its institutions and organizations unite in an attempt to provide maximum time for parents to spend with their children and with one another. This involves an extraordinarily difficult task that must consider the economic realities and the specific psychological needs of both the parents and children.

In our particular society, we fail to meet one another's emotional needs because we are essentially absent from one another--from our spouse, and especially from our children. We use the cliché-- "It's the quality and not the quantity of time that counts." But time and emotional accessibility are like the oxygen we breathe. Although the quality of the oxygen is important, the quantity determines whether we live or die.

My first interest in the impact of absent parents on the emotional development of children came from my early clinical experience as a psychiatrist to the students and faculty at Harvard. At that time about 60 to 70 percent of the student body came from private schools --the opposite of what it is now. In my clinical work, I began to see students from privileged backgrounds who presented with a specific cluster of symptoms:

- Low self esteem and feelings of worthlessness
- Inability to establish close, trusting relationships
- Inability to get their work done and feeling out of sorts with themselves and with the world generally
- Anger bordering on rage close to the surface and directed often toward the parents and toward other authority.

What these students had in common was that their care as infants and young children had been relegated to baby sitters and nannies. They had little physical or emotional contact with their parents. Most had been sent to boarding school at an early age--an experience many considered rejection.

During these years I also worked evenings in a clinic for the poor from the inner city. And, much to my surprise, I noticed the same cluster of symptoms among the adolescents and young adults. Like the more privileged Harvard students, these patients from poor families also had very little contact with their parents. The father had usually disappeared and the mother was out working long hours to survive. Infant and child care was relegated to whomever was available.

Though they shared a common background of inaccessible parents and the same symptoms as young adults, I observed one difference: those from wealthy backgrounds tended to turn their anger inward, becoming depressed and expressing their anger in self-destructive behavior--heavy drinking, psychoactive drugs, sexual acting out, etc. Those from poor backgrounds turned their rage outward into violent crime and other antisocial behavior.

My real interest in the impact of parental absence on emotional development began while conducting research on college students. During the early years of my clinical experience, I began a study of several hundred young men who dropped out of Harvard for psychiatric reasons. Two characteristics of that group were: (1) a marked isolation and alienation from their parents, especially their fathers, and (2) an overwhelming apathy and lack of motivation. In addition, among those who had the most serious emotional illnesses, severe depression or schizophrenia, a large number lost one or both parents through death. When compared with several control groups, this finding proved highly significant statistically.

As I continued my research, I realized that the death of a parent early in life was only one kind of absence. A study I conducted at that time on school children in a Boston suburb indicated that children who lost a parent through divorce appeared to suffer even greater consequences than losing a parent through death. We found a statistically significant, strikingly higher incidence of emotional illness among these children than children from intact families.

As you see from the list of recent research on the family, many studies over the last 10 years focus on separation of parents as a result of divorce. The divorce rate has risen over 700% in this century, most of this rise occurring during the 1970's and 1980's. The short term and long term effects of divorce, first explored some fifteen to twenty years ago, have now been replicated by hundreds of studies. Again I refer you to the list of references attached to my comments.

When we consult the scientific and medical literature, we find an impressive body of data based on carefully controlled experiments that corroborate the impression that a parent's absence through death, divorce or time-demanding job can exert a profound influence on a child's emotional health. The magnitude of this research paints an unmistakably clear picture of the adverse effects of parental absence and emotional inaccessibility.

Why has our society almost totally ignored this research? The answer is the same reason society ignored for scores of years sound data on the adverse effects of cigarette smoke. The facts demand a change in our lifestyle that we simply do not want to change--or that we have difficulty changing. Because families provide the foundation

of our lives as individuals as well as the vital cells of our society, we can no longer afford to ignore this research.

Let me close with a couple of suggestions.

I recommend that:

1). One way to meet the need of children for parental accessibility is for our institutions and organizations --our state and federal government, our schools and universities, our corporations -- to unite in giving the family the highest priority; that working hours within these organizations be geared to husbands and wives spending a sufficient amount of every 24 hours with one another and their children. (Would it be possible for Congress to set a model for the rest of the nation?).

2). That our institutions and organizations encourage mothers with young children to work at home whenever possible, abolishing outdated laws that discourage this work. That conferences and conventions stop taking spouses away from the family for days or weeks, but include families. That employers permit individuals to refuse to be moved to another location so as not to uproot the family, without fearing a demotion.

3) That young mothers who must work be provided facilities for superb care of their children, time to visit them during the day and flexible hours to allow them to be home when their older children return from school.

**The Impact of Absent Parents on the Emotional Development of
Children: Relevant Research During the Past 10 Years**

Relevant Research During the Past 10 Years

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**The Impact of Absent Parents on the Emotional Development of
Children: Selected Early Research**

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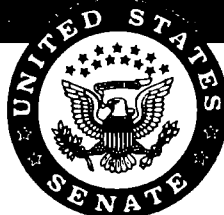
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Caring for America's Children



A CONGRESSIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON CHILD CARE & PARENTING
Senate Subcommittee on Children & Families



February 23, 1998

UNITED STATES SENATE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
HEARING

"CARING FOR AMERICA'S CHILDREN"
A Congressional Symposium on Child Care and Parenting

Monday, February 23, 1:00-5:00 p.m.
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room SDG-50

The Congressional Symposium on Child Care and Parenting will examine three vital questions which should be addressed before action is taken by this Congress concerning the care of our nation's children. First, what is best for children? Second, what do families really want? And third, what truly effective steps can be taken to enable families to provide the best care they can for their children? It is critical that these questions be asked and answered before federal solutions are proposed.

AGENDA

1:00 **Introductory Remarks: SENATOR DAN COATS, Chairman**

1:15 Panel One: The Critical Needs of Young Children

Speakers: *DLANE FISHER, Clinical Psychologist*
DR. STANLEY GREENSPAN, Child Psychiatrist
JAY BELSKY, Penn. State University
DR. ARMAND NICHOLI, Jr., Harvard Medical School

Discussants: **HON. OLIVIA GOLDEN**, *Department of Health and Human Services*
MAGGIE GALLAGHER, *Institute for American Values*
HELEN BLANK, *Children's Defense Fund*
WADE HORN, *National Fatherhood Initiative*
BRENDA HUNTER, *Psychologist*

3:00 Break

3:15 Panel Two: Balancing the Needs of Work and Family

Speakers: *ELLEN GALINSKY, Family and Work Institute*
DARCY OLSEN, The Cato Institute
DANIELLE CRITTENDEN, The Woman's Quarterly
ANITA BLAIR, Independent Woman's Forum

Discussants: *HEIDI BRENNAN, Mothers at Home*
CHARMAINE YOEST, Family Research Council
ROBERT RECTOR, The Heritage Foundation
MICHAEL LOTITO, Society for Human Resource
Management

Statement
By
Dr. Diane G. Fisher
Psychologist and Policy Consultant
Independent Women's Forum

United States Senate
Subcommittee on Children and Families

"Caring for America's Children"
Monday, February 23, 1998



INDEPENDENT WOMEN'S FORUM

Statement of Diane G. Fisher, Ph.D.

Psychologist and Policy Consultant, Independent Women's Forum

CARING FOR AMERICA'S CHILDREN - Congressional Symposium

Feb. 23, 1998

In the end, what is best for children is best for all of us. Thus, the question, "what is best for children?", must stand alone from what is best for employers, or the economy, or what is best for women. These questions are often confused, and they must not be.

The question, "What is best for children who live in families who are financially hopeless?" must be considered separately. These children need high quality, affordable care and their families need hope of improving their situation, financially and educationally. Middle-income and affluent families, who are able to parent and able to make financial choices do not need the same policy.

The question, "what is best for children whose parents are dysfunctional or unable to care for them?", must also drive separate policy. These children make up roughly 15 to 20% of the children in this country. Certainly, this percentage is too high. We need to move forward with intensive early programs for both the mother and the child, programs like Healthy Families, a young parent education program which has been used in 154 sites in 28 states with great success. Whenever possible, we must help the parent learn and develop rather than replacing her or him...since we know as psychologists, the impact of the parent, good or bad, absent or not, is lifelong.

We can then ask, "What is best for the child who has two average parents?" Do we wish, as a country, to foster a policy of encouraging parents to leave their babies in the earliest months, for full-time employment? Do we believe a system of substitute care, 21st Century schools, night-care, sick-child care, summer care and weekend care - whatever the workplace demands - is best (or even adequate) for our young children? And is it what the country wants? We need a cohesive national policy.

Most parents have decided that two-full-time working parents is not a good model for raising children. Very few parents prefer it for themselves (only about one-third) and very few think it best for their children (i.e. 15% in 1996 IWF poll). Furthermore, most parents do not believe they can be the parents they'd like to be when they are juggling parenting and full-time work (i.e. Pew poll 1997, National Commission on Children poll, 1994). The actual choices parents make are informative...The 1996 Census Bureau data shows that 66% of all children below age six are cared for by a mother who works part-time or is unemployed. This number rises when tag-teaming, parenting by Dad and mothers with more than one child are added in. The division between "at-home mother" and "working mother" is vanishing, parents are making real choices and finding solutions.

Why aren't we seeing more dual-career parents? In my experience with parents, lack of safe, affordable care is not the primary obstacle to working full-time. Most parents do not consider raising their children a waste of time, or secondary to professional achievement. Many are willing to make the financial sacrifice (now an average of \$20,000 less than dual-career families) to have an at-home parent.

A mahogany-paneled hearing room is miles away from the simple needs of children. We have become clever at word use, and precisely phrased polls and statistics. So I find it helpful to use images to illustrate the problem with our use of the phrase "quality" day-care, and to illustrate the emotional cost to women of leaving their children in the early years.

The Quality Promise - We would like to think that providing high-quality care is a win-win situation. Recently, I saw a fully licensed, accredited Kinder-care van driving through my neighborhood quite early in the morning, picking up half-asleep pre-schoolers who sat dazed, slumped in their car-seats - it was still dark outside. Why is this acceptable? The military day-care system has been held up as a model for high-quality centers everywhere. I remember taking my son to a state-of-the-art military day-care center a couple of years ago. No matter how high-quality and trained the caregivers are, the children still take their naps on little rows of mats on the floor, line up to eat at little Formica tables, with food wheeled in on a stainless steel restaurant cart, and curl up in the corner waiting for mommy. There is nothing more closely watched, from mid-afternoon on, than the front door of a day-care classroom. The first Mommy to enter at the end of the day sees the expressions of longing and hope on every face... children waiting.

Infants and children are placed in day-care at the most vulnerable needy stage of their lives, when most of their communication is subtle and non-verbal, when their emotional outbursts and testing requires enormous emotional containment. We are trying to train caregivers to rise to the occasion and manifest the kind of sensitive love these children need. How successful are we? Consider, the military and Head-Start programs have learned through hard experience that the way to maintain high-quality in day-care centers is through constant monitoring and unannounced checks by inspectors. Why? Does a good mother require unannounced checks to keep her from slipping in her parenting? Can I trust something that remains adequate only because I am popping in to monitor? Or using a camera? On some level, we have found that caregivers and day-care centers require this because the intrinsic motivation to love the child is not present, the devotion that a parent has is simply not trainable. Can this situation be optimal for children? Day-care as a tool or back-up, used in limited realistic amounts makes sense. It does not begin to reinvent the parent.

The public is confused - they are encouraged to believe the promises of "higher quality" and to believe that their existing problems with day-care have been because the caregiver was not trained properly or the center was not funded well enough. Some polls reflect this wish - IF their children had JUST THE RIGHT day-care, THEN they would be comfortable working longer hours. But the perfect day-care does not exist - no matter how much money is spent. We are excited by the promise, but the REALITY is always different. As a result, we see poll after poll citing parent's dissatisfaction with their present day-care situation, a high turnover, fickle loyalties to one center, a constant parental questioning and doubt that this situation is best for their child. And they are absolutely right. We parents keep hoping to find day-care "A" and we keep ending up in day-care "B"... because day-care "A" is us. It cannot be bought. It's that simple.

What will happen to the employee when day-care "B", the day-care he is not quite comfortable with, is his employer's on-site day-care center? Parental input and monitoring will not rid us of this uncomfortable bind.

The Hidden Emotional Bind - Mothers deciding between work and their children are in a painful emotional bind. Our society does not support maternal attachment or acknowledge a mother's maternal feelings. We value signs of compliance, early socialization or adaptability even though those are not the primary goals of the zero to three period. Arlie Hochschild refers to this as the new "emotional asceticism", parents learning to cope with the conflict by denying the deep emotional needs of the family. Recently, there was a poignant letter in a popular women's magazine. The mother, who apparently worked full-time when her children were young, wrote in defense of full-time work, stating that she had never had

Statement of Diane G. Fisher, Ph.D.
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any guilt or misgivings leaving for work, and that her children had always been happy with their nanny and had missed out on nothing. Years later, she wrote, her grown daughter had her that she used to "hide in the closet, smelling her mother's clothes" when her mother had left for work. Sadly, this is a symptom of deep emotional hunger and longing. The mother was in denial and unaware of her children's pain.

Correcting the Cultural Message - Our culture has misled parents without awareness of the damaging consequences. It has glamorized day-care, working and having it all. We must correct the cultural message - and decide to support parents turning back toward their children. Further, we, as professionals and child-care advocates, must shore up vulnerable parents who are questioning their commitment to their children. Few child advocates here today believe a young child is BETTER OFF in full-time substitute care. Even fewer believe infants belong in full-time care. If we believe that at-home parenting is best for young children - we must not be afraid to say it, or to help new parents become confident and skilled.

Everyone in this room has an opportunity for leadership on this issue. Our imaginations have been constricted by a constant barrage of images of working women and pre-school day-care... many parents no longer even dare hope that staying home is possible, or will be a viable option for their daughters. We need awareness of our own biases, and self-awareness of the broader consequences of our statements regarding day-care. Finally, we must not destroy hope by one-sided references to "economic reality" or "progress". Our predictions have power.

Statement
By
Dr. Stanley Greenspan
Child Psychologist

United States Senate
Subcommittee on Children and Families

“Caring for America’s Children”
Monday, February 23, 1998

The Irreducible Needs of Infants and Children

Stanley I. Greenspan, M.D.

Age-old observations, as well as the latest neuroscience research, reveal that experiences early in life are critical for a healthy mind and brain. We now know that the human brain is only partially formed at birth and that early experiences can change the actual physical structure and wiring of the brain. For example, extra interactive experiences with looking or listening increase the neuronal connections in the parts of the brain responsible for comprehending sights or sounds. Not all experiences or stimulation is the same, however. Excessive stimulation, fearful experiences, stress or deprivation can interfere with neuronal connections, alter brain chemistry, and undermine healthy development.

In recent years, we have been able to identify the critical types of experiences that are necessary for building healthy brains and minds. These critical experiences can be thought of as the irreducible needs of infants and children. Below we will review these critical requirements for a healthy mind and look at how well we are meeting them.¹

1. **Safety, Security, and Protection.** Every infant and child requires an environment that provides these ingredients, yet many babies, even before they are born, are exposed to intrauterine experiences that endanger the growth of their brains. Smoking, alcohol, and other toxic substances undermine the growth of a healthy nervous system that is able

¹ See Greenspan, S.I. (1997). *The Growth of the Mind and the Endangered Origins of Intelligence*. Reading, MA: Addison Wesley Longman. for a more detailed discussion of the children's irreducible needs and the experiences critical for healthy brains and minds, as well as the challenges we face in the future.

optimally to process sensations (sights and sounds), as well as organize thoughts and plan and implement appropriate actions. Chaotic or depriving environments can also seriously compromise the baby's ability to take in sights and sounds and make sense of his or her world. Overly impersonal or insensitive care by caregivers who are inexperienced or in setting where they must care for a number of babies at once can also compromise these basic abilities. In contrast, loving caregivers who patiently learn how their baby's nervous system works and find the optimal patterns of touch, sounds, sights, and rhythmic movement establish the foundations for learning and security.

2. **Ongoing, Intimate Relationships.** Warm relationships lasting years, not weeks or months, are essential for our capacities to love, form friendships, participate in groups and communities, and eventually govern ourselves. We have recently discovered that ongoing, intimate relationships are also vital for our capacity to reason, solve problems, and be reflective. Ongoing intimate, loving relationships, however, can no longer be taken for granted for the majority of our babies.

Some infants grow up without relationships, due to wars, poverty, parental substance abuse or mental illness, and family disorganization. Even children who are fortunate enough to escape these dire circumstances are at risk, however. Over half of parents with infants under age one are working and most of their infants or young children grow up in some form of non-parental care (e.g., day care). Yet, according to a large multi-site study coordinated by the University of Colorado at Denver, over 80% of center-based care is

inadequate.² The Families and Work Institutes found similar trends for family day care³ and the Commonwealth Fund reported that the majority of states have inadequate child care regulations.⁴ Furthermore, in the majority of day care centers caregivers change each year as the infant goes from the baby room to the toddler room to the preschool room and so forth. In addition, due to minimum wages and poor training, there is a great deal of staff turnover, leading many babies to experience three or four caregivers in a given year. No one would advocate deliberately changing parents each year or many times a year.

Many of our nation's babies are in day care most or all of each day with inadequate care and changing caregivers. A major study from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development finds that it is the quality of care in the home or day care setting that influences early development. When this study is coupled with the studies that are finding that most care is not of high quality and that it is difficult for day care to provide stable, loving, caregivers over a number of years, there is cause for enormous concern.

What are the implications for future generations?

² Helburn, S. et al. (1995). *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers*. Public Report. Denver. Department of Economics, Center for Research in Economic and Social Policy. University of Colorado-Denver.

³ Galinsky, E., Howes, C., Kontos, S., Shinn, M. (1994). *The Study of Children in Family Child Care and Relative Care: Highlights of Findings*. Boston, MA: Families and Work Institute.

⁴ Commonwealth Fund in collaboration with Yale University researchers study on state day care regulations. Published in *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*. Exact reference to follow.

3. **Emotional Interactions Geared to the Child's Developmental Needs and Level.** We have discovered that cognitive stimulation as such (e.g., flash cards, puzzles, or many types of educational toys) is not what enable children to learn to reason, think, and problem-solve. Rather, subtle, everyday emotional interactions are the foundation of both emotional and intellectual health. For example, way before an infant pulls on a string to ring a bell (which Piaget described as the first sign of causal thinking), a baby pulls on his mother's heartstrings with his smiles and when he gets a smile back, he is receiving his very first lesson in causality. Similarly, a sixteen-month-old toddler taking his Dad's hand and pointing to the toy chest and motioning "open," is learning his first lessons in complex communication, problem-solving, and scientific reasoning. A two-and-a-half-year-old creating a drama where her dolls are feeding the baby dolls held by Mommy is learning about creativity and language, and a three-and-a-half-year-old arguing the merits of a later bedtime is learning to be an abstract, logical thinker. Even math concepts of quantity are learned from emotional expectations; a lot is more than the child expects and a little is less than he wants. Numbers eventually systematize these subjective impressions. In one study we found that children with healthy family support and these kinds of emotional interactions were twenty times more likely than those without them to have normal to superior intelligence.

We have identified six types of these formative interactions that build healthy minds.⁵

Each of these requires a dedicated, sensitive caregiver to serve as an interactive partner in to master the new types of learning, be they preverbal problem-solving in the second year

of life (a critical foundation for all later social skills and scientific thought) or creative and abstract thinking in the third and fourth year of life.

The long interactive, preverbal and verbal dialogues that help children master these important human capacities also cannot be taken for granted as routine. Stressful, chaotic or traumatic environments clearly rob children of these needed interactions. These types of interactions are also less likely in the typical day care setting which cares for over half our nation's children. Consider that even in the best centers, during the first year of life, day care staff often care for four babies each and in the toddler and preschool years, often six or more. We frequently have observed many an eager, expectant eight-month-old baby give up and stare at the wall as his caregiver stops by his crib briefly but then hurries away to attend to a crying rival. In the toddler years, more of the interactions are between peers, which makes it difficult for the less social children to obtain the interactions they require.

4. **Gearing Experiences to Each Child's Nervous System.** We've discovered differences in children's nervous systems that lead them to differ in the way they take in sights and sounds and plan and execute their actions. These differences in their nervous systems include sensitivity to sights, sounds, and touch, underreactivity to these sensations, difficulty in planning and sequencing responses, craving lots of sensory input and activity, and difficulty with comprehending sounds, words, or complex sights. Yet, we have also found out how to create learning experiences for each type of nervous system.

⁵See Greenspan, S.I. (1997). *The Growth of the Mind and the Endangered Origins of*

Such experiences can help an active, sensory-craving child become a bold, confident, explorative leader, capable of compassion and empathy rather than a youngster prone to violence and anti-social patterns. Our current child-rearing patterns, educational approaches, and social service, health and mental health systems only rarely recognize or deal with these individual differences. In large settings with many children, it is often more difficult to create individualized learning experiences. In addition, for a variety of reasons not yet entirely clear, perhaps due to chaotic early environments and/or exposure to substances that damage the nervous system, more and more children appear to evidence the extremes of these individual differences for which it is harder to formulate successful remedies.

5. **Limits and Expectations.** Children also require firm, but gentle limits. Furthermore, they need expectations that are within their grasp while extending their reach. It's becoming more and more difficult for families to balance the need for empathy and support with limits and guidance. Children from chaotic or disorganized families rarely have either, experiencing instead vacillations between over-permissiveness, over-punitiveness. Even more organized and seemingly secure families, however, are often so overextended that they, too, vacillate rather than balance. Children in full-time day care as well as after-school day care programs must rely on the guidance and limits from a large children's group as well as a changing staff.

6. **Neighborhood and Cultural Continuity.** To form a healthy sense of self, children require cultural continuity and a stable community. In addition to their families, from about age seven on, children's identities are gradually more and more formed from their participation in groups. Through the grade-school years and into the adolescent years, values, goals, and aspirations are the product of children's experiences in the family, peer group, school, and larger cultural and community settings. When, due to overly busy or stressed families, dangerous schools and neighborhoods, or cultural dissolution these social settings become unpredictable, fragmented, frightening, or overly polarized into (extreme viewpoints), the opportunities for children to form balanced expectations and integrated identities are often compromised.

As we can see, meeting the "irreducible needs" and preparing children for their futures is not an easy task. Furthermore, changing social patterns may be taking us farther away from mastering this task.

We may in fact be at an evolutionary crossroads. In addition to the challenge of stressed communities, poverty, and disorganized families, for the first time in history, there is a growing trend for more and more middle and upper-middle class parents to farm out the care of their babies to others, often in settings not conducive to meeting children's irreducible needs. Impersonal child care may be only the most obvious symptom of a society that is moving toward impersonal modes of communication, education, and health and mental health care. Major societal changes are clearly necessary. Unfortunately, the consequences of not making changes may not be immediately obvious. The impact will likely be slow and insidious. People may gradually become more self-centered and less concerned with others. Thinking may become

more polarized, all or nothing, rather than subtle and reflective. Impulsive behavior, helplessness, and depression may increase. The ability for self-awareness and problem-solving may decrease, as will our capacity to live together and govern ourselves in cohesive communities. Consider some trends already in evidence.

- As indicated, over 50% of children are growing up in types of non-parental care, yet studies suggest that over 80% of day care centers are not of high quality and most are not appropriately regulated.
- The Center for Disease Control in Atlanta recently reported that the United States has the highest rate of adolescent homicide and suicide (both impulsive actions) among all the industrialized nations. There is also growing drug use among children.
- At the same time, studies reveal that adolescent risk-taking (including violence, drugs, and sexual promiscuity) is significantly reduced when there are strong and empathetic relationships with family, teachers, or mentors. Yet, these most critical relationships are what we appear to be reducing.
- In addition, increasingly we are unable to care for others. Rates of child abuse and neglect by parents are going up, and in some communities, over 50% of fetuses are damaged by maternal alcohol and drug abuse and poor prenatal care.

We are still in a position to actively choose which direction to go in—towards respecting the importance of critical types of human interaction for healthy brains and minds or towards greater self-absorption, impulsivity, polarized thinking, helplessness, and/or violence. If we wait too long to choose our direction, future generations may well lack the self-reflectiveness necessary to be aware of what is missing and to determine what collective actions are necessary.

Therefore, a major national and international effort is necessary to put our understanding of the irreducible needs of children into practice, involving:

- Educating our children about human development during their formative school years and in college so that they're prepared for their most critical role as a parent and a family member.
- Incentives for business and parents to enable parents to reclaim rearing their children, especially in the early years, and still have the opportunity for successful careers. For example, the 4/3 solution would enable each parent to work 2/3 of the time, providing 2/3 direct care for their child. Obviously such a solution and an array of improvements in parental leave, flex time, job sharing, and part-time work options would require cooperation by industry, aided by tax and other incentives.
- Revitalizing our commitment to our most vulnerable children and families (i.e., those with social, emotional, and/or physical disabilities) so that new generations of children from all walks of life truly have equal access to opportunity.
- A re-examination and re-formulation of the assumptions and values underlying our education, social service, health and mental health systems, and our justice system, coupled with new regulations and practices.

For example, at present

- Infants and children with developmental disabilities are discriminated against as speech therapy or occupational therapy is often not allowed under many managed care, HMO, and/or health insurance plans, while more expensive surgical procedures are covered.

- Difficult children go from one foster home to another because of too little training and/or financial incentives.
- As part of divorce proceedings, the justice system often unknowingly separates infants from their primary caregivers for days or weeks on end during especially sensitive early periods of development, thereby disrupting early mental development.
- Many orphanages and other settings for children without parents, or removed from parents, fail to create experiences which meet the most minimal of the irreducible needs described earlier. For example, in many settings for infants, there is no ongoing intimate relationship with a caregiver.

Current priorities and practices unfortunately fail to reflect the importance of our children to the world's future. Therefore, to underline and improve our ability to meet the irreducible needs of children, we should initiate a periodic national and international report card (including a region-by-region or nation-by-nation analysis) on institutions and practices in light of the irreducible needs of each of our children.

Statement
By
Dr. Jay Belsky
Distinguished Professor of Human Development and Family Studies
Penn State University

United States Senate
Subcommittee on Children and Families

“Caring for America’s Children”
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EARLY CHILD CARE, PARENTING, AND THE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

Jay Belsky, Ph.D.
Distinguished Professor of Human Development and Family Studies
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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Senate Subcommittee on Children and Families, it is indeed an honor and a privilege to be invited here today to testify on the subject of child care. I am Dr. Jay Belsky, Distinguished Professor of Human Development and Family Studies at the Pennsylvania State University. I have conducted research and published numerous articles on child social and emotional development and parent-child relations. I am a recognized scholar of the child-care literature who has read and digested numerous studies conducted by my colleagues around the nation. I am also a child-care researcher myself.

This afternoon I would like to address the effects of early child care on parenting and the parent-child relationship. Toward that end, I plan to share results from two recent investigations, one rather large and the other much more modest in scope. The former is the 10-site, federally-funded, NICHD Study of Early Child Care which involves more than 1300 children and their families who have been followed from birth through age 7. Only results pertaining to the first three years of life will be discussed today, because we have not yet analyzed the data collected beyond this developmental time point. It should be noted that even though all the results of this investigation that I will make reference to have been publically disseminated, the perspective I advance with regard to the findings I will describe may not necessarily represent the views of all

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collaborating investigators. Thus, this testimony reflects the perspective of only one of the Principal Investigators of this multi-investigator research project. The second study I will make reference to is a much smaller one. It involves some 130 working- and middle-class families raising firstborn sons in central Pennsylvania that I have followed from the time children were 1 year of age to the time they were 6 years of age. Given the primary focus of my remarks today on the topic of parenting, I will restrict my discussion of this investigation to data collected during the child's second and third year of life, a period when extensive home observations of family interaction were conducted.

Before proceeding to summarize findings from these two inquiries regarding parenting and the parent-child relationship, I want to draw attention to the most consistent finding that has emerged from the NICHD Study. Here I am referring to the effect of child care quality. Virtually wherever we have looked, we have found rather consistent, even if modest, effects of quality of care on children's development. Please note that when I speak about quality of care, I am referring to how sensitive, responsive, positively affectionate, and cognitively stimulating the care is that is provided by the child's nonmaternal caregiver. In some cases in our study these caregivers work in child-care centers, whereas in other cases the caregivers are family day-care providers, relatives, or even fathers. This is because in our work we have defined child care as any routine care provided for a minimum of 10 hours per week on a regular basis by someone other than the child's mother.

Results of the NICHD Study disseminated to date consistently indicate that the higher the quality of care that children experience, the better their psychological and behavioral functioning. Thus, we find that children who experience more sensitive, responsive, and stimulating care

across their first years of life are cognitively and linguistically better off and are more socially cooperative with adults and agemates. To be noted, though, is that the very findings that highlight such positive effects of child-care quality, simultaneously point to the fact that the lower the quality of care children experience, the poorer their functioning. This latter way of framing the findings seems important to me in light of evidence that the average quality of care in the U.S. is only mediocre in quality. Having drawn attention to this linkage between our results and what should be regarded as the sad state of care in the U.S., it is important to reiterate that the magnitude of the effects we are discerning are by no means large. In some respects, then, questions can--and perhaps should--be raised about the impact that modest improvements in care quality would have on child development. Put more simply, how much bang can we expect from the buck invested in improving child care quality?

Having drawn attention to this critical issue, one that I, for one, will not try to resolve today, I want to turn attention to the topic I was invited to discuss, the effect of early child care on parenting and the parent-child relationship. This is a topic that is near and dear to me because a little more than a decade ago I found myself in what I came to regard as the "day-care wars", after drawing attention to disconcerting evidence linking early and extensive nonmaternal care--of the kind typically available in the U.S.--to elevated rates of insecure infant-mother attachment relationships. I regarded these findings as important, in part, because of the centrality of the parent-child relationship to children's development. As my mentor, Urie Bronfenbrenner from Cornell University, compellingly argued almost 25 years ago, interventions aimed at affecting the parent-child relationship might be the most important to undertake because this relationship represents an enduring feature of the child's world. Thus, we might expect that planned

interventions--or routine experiences like child care--that influence parenting and the parent-child relationship might have enduring effects in ways that other interventions and experiences that did not affect enduring features of the child life would not.

In light of such theory regarding the importance of the parent-child relationship and controversy regarding the effects of early child care on infant-mother attachment security, one major goal of the NICHD Study of Early Child Care was to illuminate the conditions under which routine child care enhanced or undermined children's relationships with their mothers. Thus, not only did we measure the quality of children's nonmaternal care, but we also assessed the amount or quantity of care they experienced, the number of different child-care arrangements they had, and the type of care to which they were exposed. Furthermore, because many of my collaborators had understandable questions about, and even objections to, using the prevailing scientific strategy for assessing one central feature of the mother-child relationship, infant-mother attachment security, we adopted multiple approaches when evaluating the mother-child relationship. Thus, in addition to implementing a laboratory-based separation procedure known as the Strange Situation when children were 15 months of age, we also observed, either in the home or the university laboratory, mother-child interaction when children were 6, 15, 24 and 36 months of age. I think it is important to note in view of some remarks to come, that we adopted these latter approaches at the insistence of some collaborating investigators who argued that if we wanted to know about the mother-child relationship, we should simply observe how mothers and their young children interacted with one another. This would be more revealing, and certainly more ecologically valid, they contended, than trying to interpret emotional and behavioral responses to being separated from mother for a short period of time in the artificial setting of the laboratory.

Two years ago our group reported the first formal results of the NICHD Study, and late last year they were published in the prestigious journal Child Development. Although some media reports indicated that no effects of early child care on infant-mother attachment security, as measured in the Strange Situation, were discerned, this was not the case. Even though no feature of child care by itself--be it quantity, quality, stability or type--predicted whether a child would be classified as secure or insecure, there were a number of interesting findings that all pointed in a singular direction which we described as the condition of "dual risk." More specifically, when the quality of mothers' own care was rated as low in sensitivity, children were more likely to be insecure when any one of the following three independent child-care conditions obtained: the child was in care for more than 10 hours per week; the child was in low quality child care; or the child experienced more than 1 care arrangement across the first 15 months of life. There was also some evidence that the risk of insecurity was heightened in the case of boys who experienced more than 30 hours per week of care yet, surprisingly, more risk of insecurity when girls experienced less than 10 hours per week of care (including no care at all).

Before saying anything more about these just-described effects of child care on infant-mother attachment security, let me make it clear that the effects I am talking about were by no means overwhelming. In fact, just like the effects of quality of care on cognitive and social development, they were clearly modest in magnitude. The best way I know of putting this is to say that were any one of us to observe a particular mother-child pair, we could not tell by the naked eye which child had or had not been in care for more than 10 hours per week, or had received poor quality care, or had experienced multiple care arrangements. As a result, some are inclined to dismiss findings of the magnitude we detected. I can understand that inclination, but

raise the following counter considerations. First, measuring parent-child relationships, especially in the opening years of life, is a very tricky business and the possibility remains that our ability to detect effects of child care are seriously hampered by limitations of measurement. Second, even if we accept that at the individual level effects of child care--be they positive, negative, or neutral--are small, such effects, when aggregated across tens of thousands of children throughout the United States, may take on special meaning. This would seem especially the case when we recognize that virtually one of every two children under one year of age is cared for by someone other than their mother in America today, a situation dramatically different from anything we have heretofore experienced. Thus, what may be a small effect at the level of any individual child, may be something quite different from the perspective of our nation. Even though I do not know for sure that this is the case, it is an issue that I believe deserves serious consideration.

Also worth considering in this regard are the limits of NICHD Study, particularly in light of the findings that emerged with regard to attachment security. In designing the study, we purposefully chose to restrict our sampling so as not to include mothers under 18 years of age and non-English speakers. Further, we know that among those families we tried to recruit to participate in our extensive and time-consuming research, a sizeable percentage of families turned us down. Finally, we know that those families that enrolled and then dropped out were more at risk economically and psychologically than those who remained. In sum, I think there are reasonable--but by no means definitive--grounds for wondering whether we may have under-sampled the very group of families for whom we discerned child-care effects, namely, those in which mothers provided care that was rated low in sensitivity relative to the rest of the sample. If this were the case--and remember that this is only a supposition--it raises the possibility that the

“dual-risk” pattern of results mentioned above might apply to more children than our results currently imply, and thus that more mother-child relationships might be adversely affected by early child care, at least with regard to infant-mother attachment security as measured in the Strange Situation at 15 months, than some of us have assumed. After all, it was the coupling of more than 10 hours per week of care (on average), low quality of care, or more than one care arrangement with low sensitive mothering that increased the rate of insecure attachment.

Needless to say, this remains an issue that I do not think we can resolve. But it is for this very reason that I think it is particularly significant that our group designed into our study other ways of looking at the parent-child relationship. Recall that I noted earlier that because there was disagreement as to the merits of the separation-based, Strange-Situation procedure, we also included in our study design basic observations of mother-child interaction. More specifically, we arranged to observe mothers and their young children repeatedly from age 6-36 months, sometimes videotaping them while they played with a set of toys just as they might do at home on their own, and sometimes observing them while mother responded to questions posed by an interviewer about her childrearing practices. This latter approach captures what I regard as the natural condition of motherhood--having to do more than one thing at a time, in this case, talking with someone while monitoring the child.

I regard it as rather important that we found both positive and negative effects of child care on mother-child interaction. Consistent with the first set of results I quickly summarized, we observed that under conditions of high quality of care, mother-child interaction was more positive. These effects, however, were not as pervasive as those involving amount of care. More specifically, we observed that, irrespective of quality of care, more time in routine nonmaternal

care arrangements was associated with less sensitive mothering when the baby was six months of age, more negative mothering when the child was 15 months, less positive engagement of mother by the child at 24 and 36 months, including less affection expressed toward the mother at age 3 years, and less sensitive mothering at 36 months. Once more I have to reiterate that these findings were by no means large; even the term modest exaggerates the magnitude of effect. In point of fact, they were indisputably small. But does that mean meaningless? On this issue I think open-minded scientists can disagree. There is a need to highlight the following however: These negative effects of quantity of child care on mother-child interaction are not inconsistent with those pertaining to attachment assessed at age 15 months; are rather consistent across time, indeed interesting in light of the fact that maternal behavior was affected first (at 6 and 15 months) and then only later (at 24 and 36 months) child behavior; and, finally, ought to be considered at the aggregate societal level as well as at the individual family level.

I find further reason to breathe meaning into these disconcerting findings in view of related ones that derive from that much smaller (and unpublished) study which I carried out in and around the semi-rural university town of State College, PA. where Penn State University is located. Rather than focussing exclusively upon the mother-child relationship, or placing parent and child in experimentally controlled situations, in this investigation we simply directed parents to go about their everyday household routines at home. We then observed them, typically in the late afternoon and early evening, to gain insight into how mothers and fathers behaved toward their toddlers. Indeed, to insure that we secured reliable measurements, we carried out a total of 8 one-hour observations across the second and third year of life. When I examined these data as a function of child-care experience, I found that more time in routine nonmaternal care arrangements predicted

more negative parenting by mothers and less positive parenting by fathers. Negative parenting, by the way, was defined as expressing negative emotion toward the child and being intrusive and over controlling, whereas positive parenting was defined as being attentive, sensitive, positively affective, and cognitively stimulating. The magnitude of the child-care effects in this study were substantially larger than in the NICHD Study, but again not large on an absolute scale and again not necessarily visible to the naked eye.

What are we to make, then, of two different sets of findings, both highlighting potentially negative effects of child care--as we know it and have it in this country--on the parent-child relationship? On the one hand we could dismiss these findings--for several reasons. First, as I have repeatedly noted, they are by no means large, or even truly modest in magnitude. Second, most of the effects discerned to date on children's functioning outside of the parent-child relationship (e.g., cognitive and linguistic development, social functioning) highlight quality of care, as I noted at the outset, which could suggest that whatever limited negative affect quantity of child care may be having on the mother-child relationship does not pass through to affect the child. Personally, I find it too early to embrace such analysis. No one knows, for example, what will turn up when we examine the data we have collected during the late-preschool years and are in the midst of collecting in the early-elementary-school years in the large NICHD Study. The fact that other research links early, extensive, and continuous child care--of the kind typically available in this country--to negative social and academic functioning at these ages leads me to refrain from explaining away disconcerting results while fully embracing more positive ones regarding the positive effects of high quality care as seems to be going on at times with regard to findings from the NICHD Study.

Ultimately, I find myself relying upon an analogy to highlight the uncertainty of the meaning of our negative effects of child care on mother-child relations in the NICHD Study. To me these results do not suggest that the sky is falling or, for the analogy with which I will conclude, that it is pouring outside. Rather, it seems to me that we are faced with the kind of situation one encounters when stepping out of the house in the morning having not heard the weather report only to find out that it is drizzling. What we cannot determine in such a situation is whether the clouds will clear and the sun will come out, in which case there is probably no need to go back inside to get an umbrella, whether the drizzle will turn into a steady, day-long downpour necessitating an umbrella, or whether the drizzle will simply continue all day long. In other words, we cannot tell at the current time whether the very modest negative effects I believe we have detected with regard to the parent-child relationship will disappear, grow larger, or remain at the same level as children and their relationships with their parents develop. It is for this reason that, as developmental researchers, we continue to follow the children we are are studying.

I believe that for this reason it also makes sense to be cautious with respect to the adoption of public policies that will encourage more and more families to rely upon more and more child care--much of it of questionable quality--at younger and younger ages. Indeed, I find it especially troubling that some families that choose to rely upon traditional maternal care and thereby forego the additional income that a second wage-earner might provide may find themselves paying taxes to subsidize the nonmaternal care secured by two-wage earner families that make different choices regarding the allocation of a second-parent's time and energy. Although I am certainly in favor of any policy that would substantially increase the quality of child care available to the nation's most needy families, I think it is a mistake to make minimum

improvements, if any, in quality, and expect substantial returns from such investment. If we are going to have to choose between providing substantially better quality of child care to fewer children or only a little-bit better quality of care to many, then I think the former strategy makes far more sense, at least if we are increasing quality of care in hopes of enhancing children's development. Ultimately, I would recommend a policy in which poor, working, and middle-class families that have young children get additional tax benefits which could then be used to supplement family income in single-wage earner homes or pay for better quality care in dual-wage earner families. Why not consider, then, substantially increasing the \$500 per child allowance now available to all families during the child's first year or two, then reduce it somewhat for children under five, and then have it remain \$500 per child for children older than five?

STATEMENT OF

**DARCY ANN OLSEN
ENTITLEMENTS POLICY ANALYST
CATO INSTITUTE**

BEFORE THE

UNITED STATES SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

FEBRUARY 23, 1998

Mr. Chairman, distinguished members of the committee, colleagues:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before this committee to address one of the most important questions facing parents today: child care.

I am, or was, in a certain sense, the child that we are discussing today. I was raised by a young, single mother, who worked as a waitress, from the time I was 3-years-old. I was placed in many types of child care settings: institutional day care, family day care, babysitters, and even sibling care with my brother who was but a year older than I. My worst memory is not, perhaps, what one might expect: it was not a feeling of abandonment, as I understood my mother's need to work; it was not an inattentive provider, as my brother was good company; it was the family day care setting in which I was given powdered milk to drink, which was the worst imaginable suffering for me because I just hated powdered milk. All that may be of interest to you, but like the dozens of anecdotes put forward by many in the White House and in the media, my story has very little real significance. What matters today are not 1, 2, or 10 anecdotes, but the hard facts that speak for the millions of children in this country.

Those who study the child care market generally assess it in three ways: We look at availability, affordability, and quality. And what the facts show is that child care in America is available, affordable, and the high quality that parents seek. According to the most comprehensive nationwide survey done on the state of child care, which was co-sponsored by the department of Health and Human Services (National Child Care Survey), 96 percent of all parents said they are satisfied or very satisfied with their current child care arrangements. That satisfaction rate did not vary with the employment status of the mother, the type of care used, family income, the child's age, or race. Let us examine possible reasons for that satisfaction.

In terms of availability, the White House has suggested there is a serious problem. But their stories do not paint the true picture. According to the most comprehensive study done on child care providers in the United States, which was prepared under contract for the U.S. Department of Education (Profile of Child Care Settings), there is roughly a 12 percent vacancy

rate in child care centers, a figure that is remarkably similar across regions and urban, suburban, and rural areas. In addition, there are an estimated 1.1 million nonregulated family day care providers, 40 percent of whom say they have room for more children. According to the Profile of Child Care Settings, "The market seems to be working to increase supply as demand expands." That study confirmed the findings an earlier study by the Labor Department and the National Child Care Survey.

It is also important to note that the studies have also shown that any pockets of shortages are a result of regulatory requirements. Let me give you a local example. In the District of Columbia, it is illegal for two families to share a nanny (or a babysitter). Any babysitter or nanny who wishes to care for children from two different families must be regulated as a child development facility, where she would need to meet the same requirements for space, toys, and food preparation as a child care center. We can only guess at this point how much this ridiculous regulation costs families who might benefit from sharing a babysitter. Moreover, most city zoning commissions consider day care a small business and prohibit programs from opening in residential areas. Those prohibitions can extend even to individuals who wish to use their own homes to care for neighborhood children. Those who seek to increase the availability of child care should examine local zoning ordinances to see if they pose a significant barrier to expanding the supply of child care. If so, waivers can be sought to exempt day care facilities from the ordinances.

In terms of affordability, the White House's analysis-by-anecdote would have us believe that good quality child care is available only for the wealthy. Again, the facts tell a different story. Child care fees have not risen more than 5 percent (in real terms) since the late 1970s. More than sixty percent of pre-school-aged children are still cared for primarily by their mom, dad, or a relative. Among families who use non-family child care, half pay nothing: only half of all arrangements used for preschoolers while their mothers are working require a cash payment. That is because parents frequently trade services with other parents in the neighborhood. For those who do pay for child care, the average weekly expenditure for families below the poverty level is \$50. Families above poverty pay \$76. Is that too much or too little? Nine out of ten parents say they would be willing to pay more for their current child care arrangements.

While problems affording child care are not widespread, there is no doubt that some young families struggle to afford child care. There are roughly 1 million children [1,068,00] whose parents are members of the "working poor." Yet, their situation is far from destitute. More than 6 out of 10 of arrangements chosen by working poor families do not require a cash payment. *Thus, roughly 500,000 families are among the "working poor" who pay for child care.* Surely it is difficult for those families to pay for child care. However, their needs should be addressed, to the extent possible, as should the needs of *all* families: through relieving the tax burden. When that fails, those families should not be dismissed, but their needs can be, and would be, better addressed at the local or state level. Employers, unions, and communities have responded to working parents' demands for affordable child care. For example, more than half of all families report having an employer benefit that helps them manage child care. Those policies have come about without pressure or "tax incentives" from the federal government. Dozens of unions have also established child care programs for their workers, including the United Auto Workers, United Steel Workers, Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, and the International Ladies Garment Workers Union.

For families entering the workforce, the 1996 welfare reform bill increased the amount of funds in the block grant by 70 percent. Many governors have already reported having a surplus of funds. At least 27 states already provide transitional child care based on a sliding scale for between 12 and 24 months for individuals entering the workforce. And at least 20 states plan to appropriate state dollars beyond the amount that they are required to spend to draw on federal funds. Most important, the welfare reform bill stipulates that a state may not reduce or terminate assistance on the basis of a refusal to work if the household includes a single parent and a child under six and child care is unavailable for nearly any reason. That means that there is no danger of parents' being forced to leave their children in inadequate or dangerous settings while they work.

The American Public Welfare Association has concluded that "there is an across-the-board effort to ensure the availability of quality child care for all low-income residents, not just

those that are transitioning off welfare.” There is every reason to believe that the needs of the poor can be met with assistance from the state and private sectors.

The third criterion is quality. Again, the White House paints a picture of parents incapable of judging the quality of child care settings, but the facts tell a different story. Because people are different, parents have more than one way of defining quality. This medley of parental demands manifests itself in a market with a choice of products—parental care, relative care, family day care, church-based care, commercial child care, and educational preschools. Some parents see quality as a feature of providers—whether a provider is warm and loving, reliable and experienced. Those parents often choose relative or family-day care. Other parents see quality as linked to educational opportunities, and they are more likely to choose center-based care. However parents define quality, most say it is more important than cost or convenience when selecting child care providers. Parents’ high satisfaction rates with their child care arrangements suggests they are finding and using the quality care they seek.

In the end, the whole child care debate may be irrelevant to how children turn out. “Virtually no research has examined the cumulative, long-term effects on children of attending child care arrangements of varying quality as preschoolers,” according to the National Research Council. Even in the short term, the National Institutes of Health has found that regardless of how much child care a child receives, its effects are dwarfed by the influence of family. Even if it could be proven that child care is good for most children, every child has unique needs. The best solution to the day care debate is to allow parents to make the decisions that require keeping the unique needs of each child in mind.

The facts show that the child care market *per se* is healthy. Child care is available, affordable, and of good quality. There is no public demand for a federal child care plan, so why is there so much talk about child care? According to Rep. George Miller (D-Calif.), who worked to pass a similar child care proposal ten years ago, the child care movement is pure politics. “The fact is that I spent eight years in getting the child-care bill passed in Congress, and at its zenith, there was never a child-care movement in the country. There was a coalition of child-advocacy groups, and a few large international unions that put up hundreds of thousands of dollars, and we

created in the mind of the leadership of Congress that there was a child-care movement—but there was nobody riding me. And not one of my colleagues believed that their election turned on it for a moment. There wasn't a parents' movement."

What appears to be driving this movement is an assumption that parents can't be trusted to protect their children. In fact, First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton suggests that parents don't know what constitutes quality child care. As she puts it, parents often "don't know what is quality. If somebody's nice to them, it doesn't matter that they don't know the difference between caring for a 1-year-old or a 4-year-old." I think any parent has the perfect right to be insulted by that attitude. It didn't take a village of politicians to raise Chelsea, why should it take one to raise your child?

Already state, local, and federal tax dollars pay 40 percent of all child care expenditures in the country. Of course a serious reading of the Constitution would never have allowed that level of intervention in the first place, but that is a lengthy discussion for another day. Certainly though, President Clinton's prescription for a dramatic increase in federal involvement in child care cannot be squared with the notion of a national government whose powers are limited and enumerated by the Constitution.

Parents are not calling for federal day care programs; they are calling for choice. Moms and dads want choice: they want to select the best provider for their children, whether themselves, their family members, or educational learning centers. The best way to restore choice is with a direct tax cut.

Let me give you an example. A poll conducted for Glamour magazine found that 84 percent of women who were employed full or part time agreed with the statement, "If I could afford it, I would rather be at home with my children." That poll result is consistent with several other polls. Polls conducted by the Families and Work Institute show that nearly 7 out of 10 parents report wanting to spend more time with their children. The overwhelming majority of parents, moms and dads alike, say they want to spend more time with their children—they

simply can't afford it. In the modern age, in this era when taxes are so high that it often takes two full-time breadwinners to raise a family, those choices have become enormously expensive.

An across-the-board tax rate cut would help all parents, those using parental care and those using day care. For some parents, that would mean more money for a different day care provider, for other parents, probably the majority of parents, that would mean working less and spending more time with their children. We must remember that parents, not politicians, are best equipped to make decisions about child care arrangements—decisions that require keeping the unique needs of each child in mind. If the federal government could do one thing to help all children have the best possible child care, it would be to restore that parental choice by cutting taxes.

CHILD CARE IS NOT THE ISSUE

Give parents what they need: Tax cuts

By Darcy Olsen

Washington — It would, quite literally, be the Nanny State.

President Clinton's \$21 billion child-care proposal would expand four federal programs and start five new ones. The administration's claim that this "is not a big-government program" simply doesn't pass the straight-face test.

With sops to big business and unions representing child-care workers, the president's proposal would empty parents' pockets and give their children little in return. The tax credit for businesses isn't intended for employees of Joe's Auto Shop; it's corporate welfare for big businesses that have established child-care programs.

The truth about child care is that it is both widespread and affordable. That may be why 96 percent of parents in America, in a study co-sponsored by the Department of Health and Human Services, reported that they are satisfied with their current child-care arrangements.

Many families pay nothing for child care. In 1993, half of all arrangements for preschoolers with working mothers did not require a cash payment. The average weekly expenditure of employed mothers who have incomes below the poverty level and pay for child care for preschoolers is \$50. Mothers above poverty pay \$76.

Affordable child care is not

Affordable child care is not scarce. In fact, in 1990 there was roughly a 12 percent vacancy rate in child-care centers, a figure that was similar across regions and urban, suburban and rural areas.

scarce. In fact, in 1990 there was roughly a 12 percent vacancy rate in child-care centers, a figure that was remarkably similar across regions and urban, suburban and rural areas. That estimate does not include the nearly 1.1 million nonregulated family day-care providers, 40 percent of whom say they have room for more children. More than half of all families report having some employer benefit or policy that helps them manage child-care responsibilities.

What drives the Clinton child-care proposals? The assumption that parents can't be trusted because they are just too ignorant and too incapable of caring properly for their children. According to first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, parents don't know what constitutes quality child care. As she puts it, parents often "don't know what is quality. If somebody's nice to them, it doesn't matter that they don't know the difference between caring for a 1-year-old or a 4-year-old."

Parents do know what quality

care is, and they take great pains to find it for their precious children. However they define quality, the vast majority of parents say it is more important than either cost or convenience when selecting child-care providers.

The Clinton administration is pushing ahead with its child-care initiative despite the absence of any scientific data about its impact on young lives. Even in the short term, the National Institutes of Health has found that regardless of how much child care a child receives, its effects are dwarfed by the influence of family. One thing is clear: There is no consensus, scientific or political, on what is best for every child.

The White House would like to frame the debate over this proposal by asking whether you're for or against children, but that's an absurd question. We're all for children. The real question is, why on Earth would anyone seriously propose helping children by throwing another \$22 billion at businesses and special-interest groups?

The real crisis isn't in child care. It is the enormous tax burden that in so many cases forces both parents to work simply to have the purchasing power that one income used to provide. If the president sincerely wanted to help moms, dads and their children, he could do that in one easy step: He could cut their taxes.

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**United States Senate
Subcommittee on Children and Families**

“Caring for America’s Children”

A Congressional Symposium on Child Care and Parenting

Remarks by Danielle Crittenden

Editor, *The Women’s Quarterly*

The Independent Women’s Forum

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EVERY WORKING MOTHER knows the feeling. The pain of saying good-bye to small children in the morning. The worry for them throughout the day. The nagging guilt that you're not doing the best thing for them. The exhaustion of leading two full-time lives: one as worker, the other as mother. Perhaps this explains why the vast majority of working mothers say they'd rather stay home or work part-time than work full-time. Not only that, a recent American poll showed that a majority of both men and women feel that it's a step in the wrong direction for mothers of small children to work outside the home.

Unfortunately, the politicians who say they want to help working mothers are deaf to what working mothers actually want. Instead, they listen to day-care advocates and feminist groups who insist that women not only want to work but have to work. And the so-called solutions they put forth rest on this presumption--that women need and want more time away from their children, and not less. But I'd like to stand back for a few moments, and ask where this presumption came from in the first place, and why it's come to inform virtually every policy that is put forth in the name of working women.

As modern women, we are taught to anticipate many things in our lives, with only one big exception. We have been told, from earliest memory, to make something of ourselves, not to compromise our dreams for others, not to rely too much on men and to

be prepared to support and fend for ourselves. We may plot every move of our career as carefully and thoughtfully as a cartographer. But the one profound, life-changing act that most of us eventually will make is the one young women today are now least prepared for: the act of having a child. This is why all discussions of what we will do and how we will choose to live our lives invariably circle back to this one "problem." Having a baby is an experience that nothing readies you for, and for which you have to rely upon the guidance of others when you do. But the received wisdom of our time has been to be wary of motherhood as of marriage: to "fit it in" to our careers and to "do it when it's convenient," and "not let it define you." The discovery, of course, when we do have babies, is that they in no way "fit in" to *any* career, they can never be described as "convenient," and motherhood is about as defining an experience as any human being can undergo.

It's strange, then, that in all the public discussions of the problems faced by working mothers, the most animating aspect of motherhood--that we love our children more than anything else, and want to be with them as much as we possibly can--goes unmentioned. This is not because it is an obvious fact of nature that everyone takes for granted. Rather, if you believe even modestly in women's equality, it's a fact that is too explosive to confront. For more than thirty years, the women's movement has told us that we would be happier, more fulfilled human beings if we left our homes and children and went out to work. To the degree that we might feel any misgivings or guilt about leaving

our babies to others to raise, we have been assured that such feelings are *unnatural*, imposed upon us by society, and sexist--no more normal for a mother to experience than a father. Instead we've been taught to suppress these worries, and to put our work ahead of our families or at the very least, attempt to "balance" the demands of boss and baby. Any strong rush of maternal feeling, any desire to surrender pieces of our professional selves, is viewed as a reversion to some stereotype of motherhood the women's movement was supposed to have lectured out of us. The popular books on motherhood being published by feminists today are no less vehement in their assertions than they were a generation ago that being a good mother means taking care of ourselves first and learning to let others' needs come second. The so-called "Good Mother," who makes sacrifices for her children, has been "again and again, the means of restricting women's worlds and prohibiting them from engaging equally in the public world of men." writes Diane Ayer, author of *Mother-Infant Bonding: A Scientific Fiction*, in her more recent book *Motherguilt: How Our Culture Blames Mothers for What's Wrong with Society*. (Is it important to mention this great authority on maternal feeling is not a mother?) Not only this, but mothers working outside the home--we hear-- is actively better for our children, because it will foster in them a healthy sense of independence.

And in this, the women's movement has been spectacularly persuasive. The mother who does not work outside her home has become a social and statistical novelty:

daycare advocates point out that sixty percent of mothers of pre-school children now work for wages. For a working mother to admit to wanting to be with her children--or worse, to say she'd *rather* be with them than at the office--is to question the continuing exhaustive efforts to make women equal to men in the workforce: and not just equal in pay but, as the goal now is, equal in the hours they work, in the titles they hold, in the power they wield, and in the proportion they make up of any given occupation, whether it's firefighting or plumbing. Whenever a news report is broadcast about women's "gains" and "losses" this is the presumption that underlies it: women are seen to have *gained* equality when they reach statistical parity with men in an area of the workforce, and to have suffered losses if their numbers drop below fifty percent. Yet what goes unremarked is that in order to achieve such equality, *all* women would have to work *all* of the time.

That women--and in particular, mothers--might not desire this version of equality is not something those tallying up our success in tidy statistical columns wish to consider. This isn't to say that mothers must entirely abandon their work or careers in order to have children. But it *is* to say, no matter how much we might pretend or wish it otherwise, that having babies affects and constrains even the most ambitious among us, and affects and constrains us differently from men. Indeed, women's tendency to interrupt their careers for their children, or to take less demanding--and thus less lucrative jobs--is the main cause of the notorious pay gap between the sexes. June O'Neil, head of the congressional

Budget Office, in her definitive report on the wage gap, pointed out that women aged 27 to 33 earn 98 percent as much as men of similar education and work experience. It is motherhood--and not discrimination--that depresses women's wages. After they become mothers, O'Neil concludes, the priorities and career paths of women simply change.

So long as we continue to deny this, both publicly and to ourselves, all we do is exacerbate the guilty tension that is felt by every working mother at nearly every moment of her working day. This tension grips her round her leg when she leaves in the morning and hurls itself at her when she comes back through the door in the evening. It places a question mark next to every appointment she jots down in her Daytimer. It's the reason she calls home six times a day--or not at all. Indeed, this maternal tension is now a cliché, a staple part of any magazine feature on the problems of modern women, although it's usually spoken of as mere physical stress, the side-effect of the busy, productive lives we lead--the implication being that if we could only organize ourselves better, or magically squeeze more minutes out of each day, it would go away. But the tension is, as mothers know, not due to a simple shortage of hours. Rather, it's an *existential* lack of time: a feeling of constantly being pulled between two worlds.

My generation was raised to believe that by providing for our children's physical and material needs, we could compensate the maternal comfort they lost by having us at work. Just so long as they were in "good care," we were told, we wouldn't have to worry

about compromising our career. But this has proven to be a chimera: no amount of Fisher-Price gee gaws and cheerfully painted walls and chirping, brisk day-care workers and nannies can replace a mother's love and attention. Nor can putting our children in these surroundings ease our maternal fears for their well-being and our aching longing for their company. In all the breaking down of barriers we've done over a generation, this last remaining barrier—our love for our children—is the stubborn one we haven't been able to push through. A friend of mine once told me about a Christmas Eve she spent at work, writing a newsletter her boss insisted get finished that night. She said it nearly broke her heart thinking about her two little kids waiting for her to come home while she labored like some modern-day female Bob Cratchit over the cheerless jargon of a routine corporate report. (The report, of course, was forgotten by the next week, but her children to this day remember the Christmas Eve their mother didn't come home). When Brenda Barnes, one of the highest ranking female executives in the United States, resigned from her job as CEO of Pepsi-Cola North America in September, 1997, she'd come to a similar conclusion about the value of her work. She made the decision, she said to the press, when one of her children told her it would be okay to keep working if she could "promise to be at home for all our birthdays."

It's with some defensiveness then that the same advocates who promised that work would be a panacea for women now claim that if it's not, the blame belongs to a society

unwilling to provide adequate child care. If we had government-funded, high-quality day care--care that every woman could depend upon no matter what her income--they say, women would no longer be thwarted by the demands of their children and could fully realize their potential as citizens and human beings. It doesn't seem to matter that parents have shown a marked aversion to the sort of institutional day care these advocates wish to foist upon them: just 1.8 million of the 10 million children under five whose mothers work are in institutional care (the majority are minded by fathers, grandparents and other relatives). Nor does it seem to matter that a careful reading of the very sketchy research that has been done on children placed in this sort of care leaves in place the common sense conclusion that non-family care of very young children is damaging. As Dr. Diane Fisher, a clinical psychologist and authority on child development, has observed, "No matter how high quality the day-care center is, the children still take their naps in little rows of mats on the floor, children still sit in the corner sucking their thumbs and waiting for mommy." Yet the call for "universal child care" has become a mantra among women's groups, a cure-all, and the yardstick by which they judge any politician's commitment to women's equality.

But while the problem of child care is very real, and often a nightmare, for working mothers, it's not, as I've said, essentially *the* problem. The Department of Health and Human Services could announce tomorrow that it is creating a system of completely free day-care centers, each one headed by Mary Poppins, and *the* problem wouldn't go

away. For despite all the reassurances to the contrary, the woman who kisses her child's forehead each morning before walking out the door to her office still harbors the agonizing suspicion that what her child needs most is *her*. And the so-called solutions that are constantly being advocated in the name of working mothers—whether it is better child care or family leave acts that allow parents time off to go to the dentist with their kids—merely aggravate *the* problem because they are based upon the wrong assumption: that a mother wants and needs more help being in the workforce away from her children, not less.

Feminists tend to react angrily to this sentiment. It's odious, they say, to insist that mothers should be the ones who sacrifice their work for their children, and not fathers equally. It's disturbingly sexist to say that women are "better" at caring for infants, or more suited to it, than men. And anyway, feminists argue, the issue is moot, because even if most women wanted to, they couldn't afford to stay home with their kids, and it's elitist to suggest that they should.

But the question we should be asking is why, in the space of a generation, have we come to consider taking care of your own kids—even if it's just for the few short years before they are in school—as a perk of the rich, like yachting? This was not true even in the depths of the Great Depression; until our time, having to put your baby into the arms of the state, or to tote it along to the factory with you, has been considered tragic. It's true that working- and middle-class women have always done work of some kind--whether it

was voluntary, or part-time, or from their homes. But it is strange that, in the *richest* period *ever* in our history, we should suddenly be considering a massive federal program to care for infants because the majority of mothers feel they have "no choice" but to work.

Part of the reason for that perception of lack of choice, of course, is the burden of taxes an average family is expected to shoulder today compared to thirty years ago, and the penalties in our tax code that make it more costly for one parent to stay home. My generation is also accused--justly I think--for having higher expectations for our standard of living than our parents or grandparents did. But I think the fundamental reason that mothers of small children feel the need to work today, when a generation ago they didn't, is the meltdown of the family. Even before a modern woman becomes a mother, even before she marries, she expects she will have to support herself. All around her are the vast new numbers of single mothers, for whom remaining in the workforce *is* an act of economic necessity. Nearly one out of three American children is growing up in a home headed by a woman who either never married or is divorced or separated; half of all the children in the United States will live in a single-parent household at some point before the age of 18. The greater prospect of divorce for a woman today, the fear of having to fend for herself and her children at some point, underlies why even happily married women often feel obliged to work, even when there's no immediate financial reason for them to do so. If a woman could be sure that her husband, the cost of leaving the workforce, even

just for a few years, might well be bearable. But today no woman can be sure. So she must make her life choices defensively. Combine the women who must work because they are single mothers and the women who feel they should work to protect themselves lest they become single mothers, and you realize what looks like a child-care crises is really a symptom of America's larger marriage crisis.

Okay, feminist critics may still argue, even if we all went back to the traditional marriages of the 1950s, women would still *want* to work. That's why those seemingly idyllic marriages broke apart. And that's true, too. But then the question we might want to ask ourselves is how can we arrange our work better around the lives of our children, instead of vice versa. Simply saying that women want to work does not excuse preferring to work after we've brought an infant into the world. Arlie Russell Hochschild wrote her book *Time Bind* about parents who "flee the pressures of home for the relief of work." These working mothers find it more pleasant, less menial, and more fulfilling to be at the office than stuck at home with their infants. But, really, what sort of argument is that? No one compels us to have babies. When we do bear them, we have an obligation to care for them, no matter how dull or tiring that may be. The New York animal shelter will not let you adopt a cat or dog if you work full-time; why should our attitude towards children be any less? Yet the feminist wisdom has been that the child should always be the *first* obligation a woman drops, even if it's the one most precious to her. She must never let go

of any of the ones to do with her work. But if you're going to work and have children, some piece of your life inevitably has to give. As a startled broadcasting consultant quipped to the *Wall Street Journal* in the wake of the Brenda Barnes' resignation, "What state is our society in that deciding to take care of your kids is headline news?"

All right then, the same feminists may fairly argue, why should it be *women* who must make the sacrifice, and not men? But this is a question that only makes sense if you believe that there is no innate difference, or importance, between mothers and fathers—that we are, or should be, biologically interchangeable, and our roles as parents androgynous. The fact is, when children come along, *someone* has to accommodate them. A woman who has carried the baby around for nine months inside of her who finds it natural to do so--and often impossible not to. Some may prefer, for ideological reasons, to switch the job to the man. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg told a newspaper reporter that she'd readily consented to a flexible schedule for one of her male clerks so he could care for his children while his wife worked at a demanding job as an economist. "This is my dream of the way the world should be," she said. "When fathers take equal responsibility for the care of their children, that's when women will be truly liberated." Except in this instance, the father wasn't taking *equal* responsibility, he was taking *most* of the responsibility, as one parent of small children must if the other is going to work full-time. If a father is willing to do that, well, *swell*. But in most cases, it's still women who

not only adjust or sacrifice their work to their families, as June O'Neil found, but in poll after poll express the desire to do so.

For all the feminist insistence that Ozzie and Harriet are dead, the truth is that *women themselves* wish to stay home with their children if they possibly can. Only about one-third of the 7.2 million married women with children younger than three work full-time. A Roper poll of women's attitudes toward work, which has been conducted periodically since 1974, finds that a substantial majority (53 percent to 41 percent) of married women would prefer to stay home with their young children if they could--and that this majority has been growing since 1985.

This makes sense. Work for this generation of women is stripped of the novelty and glamour it held for women of our mother's time, who were entering its vast marble foyers from their cloistered living rooms. Women who can be described as having interesting, fulfilling jobs (like men, for that matter) represent a tiny minority of the workforce. There are about 100,000 female lawyers in America. More than 600,000 women work as receptionists, more than one million work as waitresses, and close to two million work as bookkeepers. On the whole, nearly 80 percent of working women earn less than \$26,000 per year. These women by and large do not experience the world of work as a liberation from the drudgery of child-rearing. More likely for them it is work that is drudgery, and child-rearing that is liberating. As a male executive told the *Wall*

Street Journal, "The truth is, no one wants to say it or print it, but a lot of these jobs are crap and a lot of these demands are just awful. One day you come in after your latest trip on the red-eye, beat to crap, and you say, 'I just don't want this stuff anymore.'"

Even women who *do* work in careers they find exciting change their minds after they have babies. Creeping into the pages of women's magazines are testimonial features by broadcast journalists and investment bankers who were *startled* by how much they enjoyed being mothers. "Growing up in the slipstream of feminism, my friends and I had definite notions of what we would do when we grew up. We would become pilots, lawyers, actresses, photographers, and tycoons," writes former newspaper correspondent Meghan Cox Gurdon in a 1998 essay. "Never, ever, would any of us settle for being just a housewife." But she goes on to say, with some embarrassment, "Reader, I *am* a housewife. I'm acquainted with scores more. And not one of these women...are bored, foolish, or frustrated. None of us is even overweight. Of the two dozen housewives I know best, all but one has at least a bachelor's degree. Most of us left successful, professional careers after our children were born, and most of us are in our thirties. At our coffee mornings--yes! we do sometimes meet for coffee!--we talk politics as much as we do infant feeding schedules...I ran into a former colleague recently, a radio correspondent who, like me, has lived around the world and reported dangerous and thrilling stories. Her face crinkled with incredulity when I told her of my current goings-on. 'But what do you

do?' Ah. This is the great unanswerable question, the one dinner party query that leaves all but the most self-assured housewives gasping like beached tuna."

This question is only unanswerable, however, in a society in which the virtues of work have been so inflated that we can no longer appreciate anything that's not accompanied by a check. When feminists elevated the status of work women did outside the home over what they did inside it, it was hard for mothers to answer back--as it is still hard for them to answer back. The joy mothers take in their children, the satisfaction they feel raising them into useful and decent citizens, are intangibles that cannot be neatly lumped into statistics nor whose proceeds will purchase a sport utility vehicle or some other trapping of worldly success. The rewards of a job are measurable in ways you can convey to other people, particularly those without children: I earn XX amount; I finished this lengthy report; my sales commissions went up XX percent last year. No one gets paid for being a mother--if anything, it's a colossal net loss, and the love you feel for your child, the love you receive back, are utterly untransferable. To onlookers he is just another runny-nosed, dopey-looking, whiny impediment to getting things done. It may be true that thirty years ago, shockingly discriminatory attitudes toward women in the workplace prevailed, and we are all thankful to be rid of them. But in their place has risen some shockingly discriminatory attitudes toward women who wish to have children without neglecting them (exemplified by Hillary Clinton's defensive remark, "I could have stayed

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The so-called “progressive” solutions being advocated are hardly so. Some companies are opening sick rooms for employees’ children, staffed by nurses, so a parent never has to take a day off to care for a sniffling son or daughter: Instead, they can pull their children from their beds, haul them to work in the car, and deliver them into sick cots under the watch “caring professionals.” Cutting-edge day-care centers are installing cameras that parents can access on the Internet from the office. That way they can watch their child playing happily or napping peacefully (the centers hope) after that tearful and upsetting parting scene they had when they dropped their toddlers off. Other companies and organizations allow employees to bring their infants to the offices and are experimenting with breast-feeding on the job. The visitor’s bureau of Lake County, Indiana, issued a press release bragging that it will now permit newborn to six-month-old babies to accompany employees into the office where they may sleep in cribs near their mothers or fathers. “The sound of a Winnie the Pooh music box mixes with the beeps and whistles of faxes and computers,” boasted the release. The head of the bureau extolled the benefits of the new policy: “The time and resources saved by having the employee in the office greatly overcomes any loss of time due to limited distraction.” Of course, the

bureau didn't offer any observations on where it expects parents to put their children *after* those first six months.

Labor unions decry Third World factories where workers stitch and assemble with their children at their feet. But in the sleek settings of managerial America, this same practice is being hailed as a progressive way to combine motherhood and work. No one seems to find any of these solutions creepy. But think--what these policies are saying to women is this: You must never, ever *think* about taking five minutes away from the office, not even for a newborn child. Is he sick? Bring him along and let our nurses care for him. Is he too little to be left alone in day care? Well, put a crib in your office and you can make those calls while breast-feeding! And what do these policies say, too, to the children themselves? From their earliest memories, the love they receive, the attention they get, will have been squeezed in around office schedules and ringing phones. Home will be for them the place of emotional upheaval and flashing tempers and food gulped in front of the television; it will be their day care centers that offer them stability, security, and people who show care that they have learned to stack blocks and mold Play-Doh. Yet as Dr. Robert Goldberg of the George Washington medical center has noted, "[T]here are more children grappling with psychological and social dysfunction...than there were before World War II. Rates of depression, cognitive disorders, suicide, teenage pregnancy, criminality, and drug abuse have doubled over the past twenty years. Violent youth crime,

in spite of a recent dip, has steadily risen over the past twenty-five years and is now projected to triple over the next decade. Incredible as it may seem, this generation of children, the most technologically and economically blessed in recent times, is the most troubled. And despite a massive increase in the size and number of government programs designed to give children a healthy and head start in life, we have on our hands what amounts to an epidemic of childhood dysfunction.” Twenty years ago, psychologists caught up in the intellectual fashions of the moment insisted that divorce not only was fine for children, it was *good* for them: kids, they insisted, did better with one parent than two who were unhappily married. Now that the children of that generation have grown up, the data is irrefutable: divorce, however good it might be for parents, is a disaster for children. I often have the sense when I hear daycare advocates who extol its benefits that the results of their experiment will prove equally catastrophic when the results are measured a decade or two from now.

When you think about it, it seems a poor trade-off for a society: valuing the work a woman does writing legal briefs more than the hours she might have devoted to helping her daughter feel her importance in the world. It is sad that in the space of a generation, full-time motherhood has sunk from being regarded as strong, noble, and vital task, to one that garners pity at best, contempt at worst. Until we acknowledge that not only do children need their mothers, but that mothers need their children, and that this neither bad

for women nor a sign of weakness, we will never be equal to men in way that we care about; only, at best, equivalent in our statistical output and our monetary invoices.

It may be that equality for women, *true* equality for women, will rest in accepting that we *can* have it all--but that we cannot have it all once. The average American woman of my generation will live eighty years. She will probably work for forty of those years. But for six or seven or eight of those years, she will be a mother to very young children. Does it make sense for society attempting to re-invent itself so that she can more conveniently and inexpensively delegate the care of those babies to strangers? Or would it be better for society to try and figure out a way to help her care for them herself, and then return to work when her children are in school (or not return, if that is her preference)?

It may seem breathtakingly radical to phrase the question this way: to assert that the solution to the work/home dilemma involves imagining ways to help mothers of young children stay home. But if it does seem radical, that only shows how deeply the feminist beliefs about the primacy of work over family, autonomy over motherhood, have been absorbed. I'd like to think that an enlightened society is not one in which all its economic and cultural forces combine to encourage women to deposit their children in state creches and walk away without a backward glance. And if I'm right, then any solution *must* begin with the recognition that women need help getting time *away* from the workforce to be

with their young children; and *not*, as the current advocates would have it, in subsidizing day care to free Mom to go to work to pay the taxes to fund day care.

To this end, there are a few things government policy could do to help women. First would be to help women feel more economically secure in their marriages, and thus more secure about taking time out from their work. That would mean correcting some of the distorting incentives of the tax code that penalize families in which one parent doesn't work. It might also mean for states to revive the old concept of alimony in divorce law for the benefit of at-home mothers. When a twenty-five-year-old woman leaves the workforce for eight years to rear her children, she loses more than simply eight years of income: She virtually guarantees that her income at age forty will drop below what it would have been if she'd remained at work. If she makes that sacrifice, she is relying on her husband's fidelity. And that reliance should be protected, just as it would be in any other contract. The well-being of the next generation of Americans depends upon that contract's being honored, and we therefore have an interest in seeing that it is. And if for some reason it is not--if that marriage ends in divorce--the wife's husband should owe her more than just child support till the kids reach eighteen: He should owe her a continuing claim upon his future income, in recognition of the benefit he derived from her work raising the children. (There's actually evidence that the husband of at-home women earn higher incomes than the husbands of working women: the Jenkins-can-you-get-on-the-next-plane-to-Cincinnati

effect. If so, that strengthens even further the at-home wife's claim on her husband's future income).

But government policy, in the end, can only do so much. Ultimately, any solution will rely upon changing the attitudes of women themselves. So long as we insist upon defining our identities only in terms of our work, so long as we try to shove the needs of our children and our own feelings for them under the rug, we will continue to feel torn, dissatisfied, and exhausted. Is this unfair? Probably. But it is an issue to take up with nature, not politicians. We are the most radically equal generation of women in human history and we have collided with one of the oldest facts of our sex. There may be ways to ease our situation, but we cannot change it. Nor should we want it to be changed. The guilt we feel for neglecting our children is a by-product of our love for them. It keeps us from straying too far from them, for too long. Their cry *should* be more compelling than the call from the office.

Biography

Danielle Crittenden

Miss Crittenden is editor of *The Women's Quarterly*, which she founded in 1994 with the Independent Women's Forum, a non-profit, non-partisan organization in Washington, D.C.

Miss Crittenden's numerous articles on women's and social issues have appeared in the *Wall Street Journal*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Weekly Standard*, *National Review*, the *Ladies Home Journal*, the *Washington Times*, and *Reader's Digest*, among other publications.

Miss Crittenden is also a frequent commentator on women's issues for national television and radio. She has appeared on NBC's *Today* show, CNBC's *Equal Time*, as well as numerous programs for MSNBC, PBS, and CBC; and she is a regular guest on talk radio programs across the country, including the *Mary Matalin Show* and *Janet Parshall*.

Her book, *What Our Mothers Didn't Tell Us: Why Happiness Eludes the Modern Woman*, will be published by Simon & Schuster in January 1999. Her essay on childbirth, "Knock Me Out With a Truck," is included in the anthology, *Backward and Upward: The New Conservative Writing* (Vintage: 1996).

Miss Crittenden was born in Toronto, Canada in 1963. She is married to journalist and author David Frum. They have two children and live in Washington, D.C.

Statement
By
Anita K. Blair
Executive Vice President and General Counsel
Independent Women's Forum

United States Senate
Subcommittee on Children and Families

"Caring for America's Children"
Monday, February 23, 1998



INDEPENDENT WOMEN'S FORUM

United States Senate
Subcommittee on Children and Families

Caring for America's Children

A Congressional Symposium on Child Care and Parenting

Monday, February 23, 1998

Statement of Anita K. Blair
Executive Vice President and General Counsel
Independent Women's Forum

Several polls have asked what people, especially women, really want in terms of balancing the demands of family and work.

The answers they give are basically these:

"I'd rather not have to work outside the home."

"I'd rather not have to spend so many hours at my job."

"I'd rather have a more flexible work schedule."

"I'd rather be my own boss and manage my time the way I want to."

Well, why not? What is so difficult about achieving these simple wishes? Why can't people just do what they want to do?

One major reason is that often it would violate federal and state laws. When you examine the reasons why families can't achieve their wishes, one thing quickly becomes apparent: For the most part, what families really want and need is not to be covered by new government programs but instead to get out from under old government regulations.

Now, there are no laws that say "Mothers must work" or "Parents must work overtime whenever possible."

But there are laws that say, "Families must pay a very large portion of their earnings out in taxes" and "Employers must incur substantial added expense when they offer flexible work conditions to employees."

And there are plenty of laws that say, in effect, "If you're thinking of owning your own business, BEWARE."

Too often in the past, Congress has acted in various areas—tax laws, labor laws, health and safety regulations, other business regulations—without fully considering the impact on families.

I have practiced law for over fifteen years, and in that time I've worked with hundreds of businesses, big and small. The majority, in fact, have been small, family-owned and operated businesses. Here are examples of the kind of legal problems they face every day. As you'll see, these stories start out as life problems—little dilemmas faced by people trying to make a living and have a life.

A proud mom would like to take a few hours off on occasional Friday afternoons to see her child play sports. She'd like to make up the time at work the following week. "Sorry," says her boss. "You'll have to take annual leave." What's the problem? Federal wage and hour laws require her boss to dock her pay for the short week and pay her overtime if she works extra hours the following week. Interestingly if she worked for the federal government she'd have flex-time and comp-time privileges. But flex-time and comp-time for other workers still is against the law. Simply allowing employers and employees to make mutual agreements about work hours would be a great boon to parents who want to manage their work and family obligations.

A mother who is a cashier in a store gets requests from her manager to work overtime all the time. She wants to be a team player, but she also wants to get home to her family. She wonders, "Surely it's cheaper to hire more people than to pay me all this overtime!" Well, it isn't. The high cost of payroll taxes, unemployment tax, workers compensation and other mandatory benefits makes it very expensive to hire additional people, especially if they only work part-time. As a result small businesses can't grow, existing employees are asked to work more hours, and potential new employees can't get work. If Congress would reduce these taxes on employment, businesses could hire more workers, and overworked people could get their lives back.

After the birth of her second child, a young mother decides, "That's it. I want to be home with my kids." So she plans to operate a consulting business from home, allowing her to work the hours she chooses. Is she home free? Hardly. She'll probably need an accountant and a lawyer to help her navigate the tricky tax problems she'll face as an independent contractor taking deductions for a home office and equipment. These restrictions have

been eased a little bit, but it's still way too complicated for normal people who just want a little income while they stay home with their kids. The tax code should be drastically simplified, especially for micro-businesses like this.

Many mothers work outside the home, not because they're pursuing a professional career or because they love to work, but because it's necessary in order for the family to have health insurance or pay college and educational expenses.

Even though portability of health insurance has been improved in recent years, many people are still tied to their current employer's health insurance plan. There is simply no good reason why individuals and families shouldn't be able to buy their own insurance and get a tax deduction for it. This would free them to take jobs that suit them best, and it would have the added benefit of reducing medical and insurance costs, by introducing competition into the system.

School costs, especially college, are just too high. And it's a shame to see young college graduates saddled with huge debts before they've even started their careers. As a trustee of a college, I know that colleges and universities spend a huge amount of their budgets just complying with federal regulations. Also state and local school systems are burdened with costs of federal compliance. If the federal government would ease up on expensive regulations and recordkeeping requirements, maybe schools across America could focus once again on providing a good education rather than lots of reports to Washington. This would help families.

There is a lot that people can do, which will really meet their individual needs, if they are allowed to work it out for themselves. For example, people who want more family time can benefit from job-sharing and telecommuting arrangements, which would let them spend less time on work. Most employers are not like Scrooge. They are people, too, and have families of their own. Many businesses, large and small, are eager to accommodate the family needs of their employees. But they face many hurdles in complying with complicated laws as they do it. And the reach of federal laws into every single aspect of employing people and running a business means employers must incur the cost of legal review anytime they're thinking of adopting a new idea to help their people.

The difficulties faced by parents and families today center around having not enough time and not enough money. To a large degree, their money goes to government, and their time goes to working longer hours so they live on the share of their income they get to keep.

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The best thing the federal government can do is let families take care of themselves by reducing tax the burden on them and allowing them to choose flexible work arrangements, including self-employment. Legislation about taxes and business regulations comes up every single day in Congress. It's most important for Congress to understand that these laws are going to affect not only businesses and taxpayers, but parents, children and families, too.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CONTACT TIM GOGGLEIN

February 23, 1998

**U.S. SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON CHILDREN
AND FAMILIES EXAMINES PRINCIPLES
OF CHILD CARE POLICY DEBATE TODAY**

WASHINGTON -- To examine principles that guide the debate on child care policy, U.S. Sen. Dan Coats, Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Children and Families, today chaired a hearing, **"CARING FOR AMERICA'S CHILDREN", A Congressional Symposium on Child Care and Parenting.**

"Of all the issues that policy makers face -- how we care for children has to be at the top of the list," Coats said. "Children are our nation's future. And any policy crafted to have an impact on their lives must be thoroughly, carefully, and very thoughtfully considered.

"The purpose of today's symposium is to enter into a discussion of the critical issues impacting children's care -- issues which must be addressed before Congress embarks on what the President has termed 'the single largest investment in child care in our nation's history'.

"Policy makers need to ask and have the answers to four key questions. First, what is best for children? Second, what do families want? Third, we will ask what effective steps can be taken to help families to provide the best care they can for their children?

"And finally, understanding that all families and children are different, we will ask and explore the problems and solutions to difficulties that face children who grow up without relationships due to family loss, poverty, parental substance abuse or mental illness, and family disorganization.

"Caring for children is a very complex and emotional issue because while it is true that one segment of our population needs high-quality day care in order to work, it is also true that there exists another segment of the population, nearly 70% , that do not have both parents engaged in full-time work.

"The question is, how do we effectively address the needs of the first segment, while ensuring that we are not discouraging or sending the wrong signals to the second? How do we ensure the long term best interests of all children?

"Working families struggle to care for their children and often make significant sacrifices to provide for their needs. They should not have to contend with government policies which discriminate against them for choosing to have one parent stay home, or for using informal child care arrangements.

"Today's discussion is intended to be a very broad and thoughtful discussion of these and other important issues. We will hear from leading experts in the field, from parents, and other individuals concerned about how we do what's best for kids.

"Families in America face many challenges. They are struggling to do the right thing for their children. Many however, have received a message from government and media that defines their choices. Families in America deserve more. They deserve more than political expediency can provide -- they deserve to be heard by their policy makers before legislative solutions are implemented," Coats said.

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Lewis (KY)
Livingston
LoBlundo
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McDade
McHugh
McIntnis
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McKeon
Metcalfe
Mica
Moran (KS)
Morella
Nethercott
Neumann
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nussle
Ozley
Packard
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Parker
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Paxon
Pease
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Pombo
Porter
Portman
Pryce (OH)
Quinn
Radanovich
Ranstad
Redmond
Regula
Riggs
Riley
Rogan
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Roukema
Royce
Ryun
Salmon
Sanford
Saxton
Scarborough
Schaefer, Dan
Schaffer, Bob
Sessions
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Shinkus

Shuster
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Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Snowbarger
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Taylor (NC)
Thomas
Thornberry
Thune
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Weller
Whitfield
Wicker
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

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Doolittle
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Gonzalez
Harman
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Linder

Wise
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Miller (FL)
Mink
Myrick
Nadler
Poshard
Ros-Lehtinen
Sawyer
Schiff

Wynn
Yates
Sensenbrenner
Smith (OR)
Smith, Linda
Stearns
Waters
White

NOT VOTING—22

□ 1723

Mr. MURTHA changed his vote from "yea" to "nay."

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. UPTON). Pursuant to the provisions of clause 5 of rule I the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on the second motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered or on which the vote is objected to under clause 4 of rule XV.

If a recorded vote is ordered on the first motion, relating to House Concurrent Resolution 202, that vote will be taken after debate has concluded on that motion.

If a recorded vote is ordered on the second motion, relating to Senate 927, that vote will be postponed until Thursday, February 12, 1998.

DAYCARE FAIRNESS FOR STAY-
AT-HOME PARENTS

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 202) expressing the sense of the Congress that the Federal Government should acknowledge the importance of at-home parents and should not discriminate against families who forego a second income in order for a mother or father to be at home with their children, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 202

Whereas studies have found that quality child care, particularly for infants and young children, requires a sensitive, interactive, loving, and consistent caregiver;

Whereas most parents meet and exceed the aforementioned criteria, circumstances allowing, often parental care marks the best form of child care;

Whereas the recent National Institute for Child Health and Development study found that the greatest factor in the development of a young child is "what is happening at home and in families";

Whereas a child's interaction with his or her parents has the most significant impact on their development, any Federal child care policy should enable and encourage parents to spend more time with their children;

Whereas nearly 1/2 of preschool children have at-home mothers and only 1/4 of preschool children have mothers who are employed full time;

Whereas a large number of low- and middle-income families sacrifice a second full-time income so that the mother may be at home with her child;

Whereas the average income of 2-parent families with a single income is \$20,000 less than the average income of 2-parent families with two incomes;

Whereas only 30 percent of preschool children are in paid child care and the remaining 70 percent of preschool children are in families that do not pay for child care, many of which are low- to middle-income families struggling to provide child care at home;

Whereas child care proposals should not provide financial assistance solely to the 30 percent of families that pay for child care and should not discriminate against families in which children are cared for by an at-home parent; and

Whereas any congressional proposal that increases child care funding should provide financial relief to families that sacrifice an entire income in order that a mother or father may be at home for their young child: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring). That the Congress recognizes that—

(1) many American families make enormous sacrifices to forgo a second income in order to have a parent care for their child at home;

(2) there should be no bias against at-home parents;

(3) parents choose many legitimate forms of child care to meet their individual needs—an at-home parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, neighbor, nanny, preschool, or child care center;

(4) child care needs of at-home parents and working parents should be given careful consideration by the Congress;

(5) any quality child care proposal should reflect careful consideration of providing financial relief for those families where there is an at-home parent; and

(6) mothers and fathers who have chosen and continue to choose to be at home should be applauded for their efforts.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING) and the gentleman from California (Mr. MARTINEZ), each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING).

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support House Concurrent Resolution 202, the equitable child care resolution, which I introduced on January 27, 1998, to ensure that any child care proposal that this Congress may consider this year addresses the needs of parents who choose to stay at home to care for their child. Almost all of the child care proposals in Congress focus solely on expanding commercial child care, despite the fact that only 30 percent of preschool children are cared for by paid child care providers. And of that 30 percent, an even smaller percentage are in commercial child care. We know the majority of preschool children are cared for by their mother or father who stay at home for that purpose. Yet Federal child care proposals would indicate that we should not consider those who stay home as child care providers. It is inconceivable to me that the Federal Government would tell

NAYS—191

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Baesler
Baldacci
Barcia
Barrett (WI)
Becerra
Bentsen
Bernman
Berry
Bishop
Blagojevich
Blumenauer
Bonior
Boraki
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brown (CA)
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Cardin
Carson
Clay
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Costello
Coyne
Cramer
Cummings
Danner
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Deutch
Dicks
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Dixon
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Dooley
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Fattah
Fazio
Filner
Ford
Frank (MA)
Frost
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Gajdenson
Gephardt

Gordon
Green
Gutierrez
Hall (OH)
Hastings (FL)
Hefner
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Holden
Hooey
Hoyer
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee
(TX)
Jefferson
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Johnson (WI)
Johnson, E.B.
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Kennedy (MA)
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Menendez
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McDonald
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Moran (VA)
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Payne
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
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Price (NC)
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Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
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Tierney
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Velazquez
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Visclosky
Watt (NC)
 Waxman

families that institutional care is the only way to rear their children.

If we want to help families with their child care needs, we should help give parents more time to spend with their children and give them back more of their own money so parents can afford the child care that best meets their needs.

This resolution, the Equitable Child Care resolution, sends a clear signal to the American people that we, the Congress, recognize there are a lot of families out there making huge sacrifices so that one of the parents can remain at home to care for their child.

□ 1730

Federal child care policy should no longer discriminate against at-home parents. We already have the problem with the marriage penalty in our income tax. Federal child care policy should not discriminate. Parents make big sacrifices if they stay at home in order to rear their children. It is time we recognize those sacrifices.

The resolution does not deny or discredit families where both parents are working hard to support their families, rather the purpose of the resolution is to simply recognize that at-home parents are child care providers also and should not be forgotten in any kind of child care discussion that may go on this year.

No child care proposal that discriminates against families based on their particular choice of child care should be actively considered. Families should be treated equally, and I would urge my colleagues to make sure all families with child care needs are treated fairly and to make sure that at-home parents are not forgotten in any child care debate.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. MARTINEZ asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. Speaker, this is a nice resolution but it is just a resolution, not a solution. I rise in protest not to the content of the resolution but to the manner it was brought to the floor.

The bill itself is innocuous. Mr. Speaker, we have a bill before us today which has never been marked up in a committee; has never been the subject of a hearing. Only 2 weeks ago the resolution was scheduled to be marked up by the Committee on Education and the Workforce. In fact, just prior to the consideration of the bill, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING), the chairman of the committee, postponed the markup subject to the call of the chair.

Unfortunately, people on that side of the aisle are now disregarding the committee process by rushing this resolution to the floor. I think that is very wrong. It puts us in a position of this side and that side. Consideration of

this bill should be bipartisan in nature. Our consideration of this bill under suspension of the rules denies the members of the committee and the House an opportunity to amend this legislation and include other child care priorities.

I am confident that all the Members in this body are deeply concerned about the quality of child care received by our Nation's children, and discussions about this topic are a worthwhile endeavor. However, the narrow theme of this legislation is certainly one of the many topics which should be discussed when we are talking about child care. This resolution's narrow focus highlights none of the vital issues which should be a part of a national debate on child care.

I, along with the gentleman from California (Mr. MILLER), had intended to offer amendments to the bill which would include those topics. We were not able to because it was not marked up in the committee.

The families that we consider for child care are not those who choose to have one parent at home, as the resolution deals with; these are families in which both parents must work in order to afford the expenses of daily life. There are families coping with the transition from welfare to work who need child care. These are the families truly in need of child care assistance; these are the families to which we should be directing our attention. Unfortunately, the procedures under which this legislation has been brought to the floor denies us an opportunity to discuss that.

Our committee has traditionally operated in a bipartisan fashion, but the consistent manner and movement in which the majority is now moving legislation to the floor, without proper committee consideration, is becoming a frequent practice. I can assure the chairman that I consider this a blatant override of the committee's process, and it is irresponsible and unjustifiable. I can only assume Election Year politics has once again gripped the majority and incited their need to create an agenda.

I urge all Members, whether the majority or minority, to protect the process which this House uses for thoughtful consideration of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW), a gentleman I worked very closely with last year to make sure that Republicans provided far more money than the President asked to make sure that child care was available so that the transition from welfare to work would work.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his very generous words.

President Clinton's \$22 billion child care initiative creates the impression there is a national child care crisis and that the Federal Government needs to

intervene even further than it has in local child care markets. The facts are that 73 percent of preschool children are cared for primarily by their parents or relatives and that the Federal Government already sponsors a host of child care programs. Five of these programs also provide direct payments or subsidies for child care totaling about \$11 billion this year. At the same time only about 30 percent of American families with preschool children use paid child care while parents work. Consequently, around 70 percent of the families, many with low incomes, who are struggling to provide quality care for children at home, would receive no support from the Clinton child care initiative.

If there is money to spend, it should go to all families with children. We should acknowledge that all mothers work, whether they decide to work at home with their children or remain employed outside of the home.

As part of the 1996 welfare reform law, we made two major reforms to child care programs: First, block grants totaling several major programs so that the States and localities would have flexibility in using Federal child care money; second, giving States \$20 billion over 6 years to help pay for child care for poor and low-income families.

CBO estimates that between 1997 and 2002 spending on child care will increase by 38 percent without any additional legislation. In response to the changes made by the welfare reform, States are now revamping and expanding their child care programs, especially to make them more effective in helping mothers who leave welfare. Let us give the States a chance to get their child care systems in place.

The child care credit in the Tax Code is open-ended spending available to all Americans who pay Federal taxes. This source of Federal support for child care is also expected to grow substantially without the need for additional Federal legislation.

The child care market is working well. Most parents report that they are satisfied with their current child care arrangement. The bottom line is that if there is money to be spent by helping families raise their children, it should be available to all families with children and not mandated from Washington.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY), the ranking member of our committee.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Once again the Republican majority is running roughshod over House procedures. The resolution before us today was never considered by the Committee on Education and the Workforce. It was rushed to the floor to produce sound bites for the 6 o'clock news.

This resolution focuses on the child care needs of at-home parents, parents that, as the resolution states, have

foregone a second income to stay at home with their children. Certainly the issue is worthy of discussion, however it ignores the great needs of working families where both parents work, it ignores the need to expand the Family and Medical Leave Act, and it ignores parents who are transitioning from welfare to work.

If this resolution were fair, it would reflect the priorities of working parents as well as the at-home parents. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the majority's abuse of the legislative process bars us from having this discussion today.

Last Congress, Mr. Speaker, the Republican majority voted to cut Head Start, to cut child nutrition programs and to eliminate the school lunch program. The Republican majority on our committee last Congress actually voted to cut child care by \$2.5 billion, despite the chairman's boasts of the Republican accomplishments in the field of child care.

Mr. Speaker, now the Republican majority offers only empty resolutions instead of real solutions to the Nation's child care needs. Instead of just passing resolutions, this Congress should be acting to ensure that all children, including those children whose parents must work, receive affordable, high quality day-care. Instead of passing empty resolutions, we should be taking up President Clinton's call for investing \$21 billion in helping all Americans meet the challenge of raising a family.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds, just merely to say that the free lunch program continues primarily because of the present chairman of the Committee on Education and the Workforce who had to fight constantly to make sure that they did not do away with the amount of money that comes from, quote, the paying customer. Otherwise the school lunch program ends if providers do not get that money and then there are no free lunches. So I want to make sure of that.

And secondly, again I want to repeat, we Republicans gave \$4 billion more than the President asked for in the whole child care effort last year.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. RIGGS), a member of the committee.

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I want to respectfully and politely take issue with the comments of the ranking member of the full committee who just a moment ago said Republicans are not concerned about helping working parents.

To the contrary; that is why we made the House's top priority House bill 1, the compensatory time bill, which would allow working parents to exchange overtime for time off in lieu of wages or income. It would give them more flexibility to meet the demands of their personal family situation and would give them the same rights that their public sector counterparts have had for years.

Secondly, the Republican-led Congress have provided tax relief for working families through a \$500 per child tax credit that we would like to expand in this session of Congress, at the same time eliminating the marriage penalty in the Tax Code.

But the real reason for this resolution, Mr. Speaker, being on the floor tonight, is the Clinton administration's proposal shows a predisposition in favor of institutionalized day-care, a continuation of paternalistic government, nanny government, and a discrimination against families, working families where one spouse chooses to be at home.

We submit, Mr. Speaker, that as a matter of public policy we want to make it more simple, not more difficult, for families who choose to have one spouse remaining in the home for the benefit, for the welfare, for the nurturing, for the upbringing of their children, we want to make it a little easier for families to do that rather than to continue this dependency on big government; rather to continue to believe that paternalistic nanny government is the solution rather than policies that are truly family friendly.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MILLER).

(Mr. MILLER of California asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, today we are being offered a resolution in support of parents who stay at home, with their children who are young. There is no dispute about the benefits a parent staying at home with his or her children can bring to that family, and on that basis alone this resolution should, and will, pass with a bipartisan majority.

What is most notable and most troubling, however, are the issues not addressed in this resolution. First and foremost is the issue of wages. Too many Americans are not earning enough to support their families with just one income. Half of America's families with young children earn less than \$35,000 per year. This includes families in which both parents work full time at the minimum wage and earn only \$21,400.

These are the families who have been left behind in the boom economy, families whose salaries have been flat-lined and benefits have been cut back while the stock market and the CEOs' salaries have skyrocketed. These are the families who are forced to send both parents into the work force, the many single parents who are forced to work more than one job.

Temporary employment agencies report that most of our employees are second breadwinners in the family and that 75 percent of the people they employ are working because they have to.

□ 1745

Families are in a bind over child care because they simply cannot earn

enough despite working so hard. It is true that where the second family income is marginally helpful to the family, then a small boost in a tax credit or some other form of assistance may help. But since the reality for most families is that a second income is essential, it is essential for buying basic needs like food, rent, and health care, than a small payment to stay-at-home parents will not resolve the problem of most working families, that both parents must work, and that child care is either too expensive, too far away, or too low quality, there are only two places that workers can go to get assistance and basic family needs, either from the wages their employers pay to them or from the government.

But with this resolution, the Republicans once again are opposing the requirement that wages be sufficient to provide for the essentials of a family.

This resolution is also further puzzling because in recent actions of the Congress to eliminate Federal welfare assistance, Congress voted last year to stop paying poor mothers to stay at home with their children, instead to go out and get a job, because we believe that the mothers of the children of our country would be better off. But now the Republican majority wants to use another tax-based subsidy to pay mothers or fathers to stay at home, and these are parents that are much better off than the working poor or those mothers that are on welfare. Somehow there is a consistency gap here.

Focusing on stay-at-home parents is part of an effort to deceive the public into thinking that providing a small taxpayer subsidy to parents to stay at home is the equivalent of providing a small taxpayer subsidy to working parents that need that money to provide for child care so they can stay in the work force.

In the first solution, the additional income is not enough to keep parents from having to work. But in the second instance, the additional support is crucial if these parents are going to be able to hold on to the jobs that provide the wherewithal for their families.

So while I welcome this opportunity to work together on child care, I wonder why it is that the majority cannot grasp the larger picture of the child-care needs of America's families.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GEKAS), my neighbor.

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my neighbor and colleague from Pennsylvania for yielding this time to me, and I congratulate him on bringing this issue to the floor.

It is an important issue. And if we accomplish nothing more during this debate than to notify the public and to spread the word that we are concerned about child care, and particularly about those families that sacrifice in order to have one parent remain home with the children, then we have succeeded. No matter what the opposition

might say or what final vote may be cast against this resolution, the American people will know more following this about our concern about child care than would otherwise be the case.

In every issue that we have ever had concerning taxation or its subordinate tax credits, the cry of the American people is, is it fair, is there an element of fairness in what you are about to do? Well, when we start to consider tax credits for child care, the American people will immediately recognize that those individuals who choose to have their children at home who will not be benefiting from a child-care tax credit program immediately will cry foul, it is not fair play. After all, a family who sacrifices should not be put in a worse position than a family who chooses a professional, commercial child-care situation to care for their children.

In the name of fairness, in the name of avoiding foul play, we ought to support this resolution.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY).

(Ms. WOOLSEY asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I am sorry to see this resolution on the floor today because I think that it would have benefited from the Committee on Education and Workforce markup that was scheduled and then canceled.

Since other members of the committee and myself had amendments to offer to H.Con.Res. 202, I truly had assumed that the committee would mark up and have it rescheduled. Silly me. I should have known that the majority would not give members of the committee an opportunity to improve the resolution so that it would actually acknowledge the importance of all families.

Certainly we should honor families who can choose to have one parent at home with their young child. Certainly we should honor families where parents get up and go to work every day, but cannot afford child care. And we should also honor the people that were covered in my amendment, those who give up or would be forced to give up their sole source of income because of the lack of child care, keeping them from fulfilling their work requirements under the new welfare law.

Had there been a committee markup, I would have offered an amendment expressing the sense of Congress that we must increase from age 6 to age 11 when a single parent would be forced to leave a child home if they were unable to find an appropriate child care.

Mr. Speaker, our current law allows this exception only for single parents with children under 6 years of age. This means that some parents with children as young as age 6 are forced to leave their children home alone before and after school, during school vacations, and all summer long. Or if the parents choose to stay at home with their young children, they lose their temporary assistance for needy families.

As we take time today to applaud the lucky parents who can stay at home with their children, I wish we were also protecting working parents who risk the loss of their sole source of income because they do not have child care.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON).

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding, and I rise in support of this resolution.

Let us review some facts about child-care options available to today's parents and what they are choosing. Fifty percent of parents choose to have one parent stay at home to raise their children, most often the mom. Twelve percent of parents tag-team by staggering their jobs so one parent is always at home. Thirteen percent of parents have grandparents, aunts, or uncles care for their children. Eleven percent pay neighbors, nannies, and informal day-care providers. Only 16 percent of parents choose formal day-care centers.

Washington must not discriminate against the 50 percent of parents who sacrifice a second income so one parent can stay home to raise their children. These parents are making financial sacrifices. Two-parent families, where one parent stays home to care for the children, have an income that is \$20,000 per year below their two-earner counterparts. But those families choose to pay that price because they know it is important to their children. Clearly, most parents prefer informal day care or staying at home with their kids.

I am troubled by the President's proposal. It discriminates against stay-at-home parents.

A December 12th, 1997, New York Times article discusses new trends in the 1990s that we must take into account. The article states, "While the story of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s was married women stampeding into the labor market, the demographic sea of change is now in the process of reversing." There are still twice as many two-income marriages as one-earner families, but the gap is narrowing and "it is a long-term trend." Richard F. Hokenson, chief economist at the brokerage firm Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette, believes that growth already has been substantial enough to explain some otherwise puzzling business developments. After the last fall in mortgage rates, in his view, families used the savings to allow one earner, usually the wife, to work part-time or leave the job market altogether.

Let us give parents what they want. Let us reduce the tax burden so parents can care for their children as they see fit.

If the child tax deduction had kept pace with inflation over the past 30 years, it would be worth more than \$7,500 per child today instead of \$2,400. Let us pass this resolution.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN).

(Mr. LEVIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, this resolution draws our attention to an important need. Unfortunately, it could divide instead of uniting us. Our purpose should be to ensure that all children should have the best care, whatever the economic and family situations of these children are.

The administration has shown its commitment to quality care for children. In 1996, early versions of welfare reform bills were vetoed in part because of inadequate attention to child care. This year, the administration has proposed a series of child-care initiatives. It has signaled its willingness to work together on a bipartisan basis to address the issue of stay-at-home parents. Indeed, a number of us are working on ways to provide further assistance to families that would make it easier for a parent to stay at home with a young child.

Perhaps because the Democrats' report on the importance of family care for children is clear, the real purpose of this resolution may be to protect a weak political flank of the majority.

One example of this vulnerability occurred when we battled over the long-standing program of SSI for families with severely disabled children. All of us agreed that we needed to get rid of abuse in the program, but there were some in the majority who tried to end a modest cash payment to families with a truly handicapped child, even when the clear effect of that modest help allowed one parent to stay at home with the child.

Let us not create an artificial wedge that pits working parents against those who stay at home with their children. I urge Democrats to vote for this resolution, but I also urge Republicans to join us in trying to improve child care wherever it is needed.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to enact meaningful, comprehensive child-care legislation that addresses the needs of both working and stay-at-home parents and their children. This is not an either/or proposition. In this respect, America should be one family.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds.

Mr. Speaker, just again to remind everyone in the Chamber and anyone listening that it was the Republicans last year who saw the need to increase funding for child care in order to make the transition from welfare to work. We provided \$4 billion more than the President asked for. And you cannot rebut that no matter how many times you go down in the well.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATTS).

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 202 introduced by my good friend and colleague, the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Chairman

BILL GOODLING. And I commend him on this important initiative in behalf of America's families.

For millions of American families where both parents work or single parents work, finding quality day care is always a great challenge and often a great expense. When parents make the day-care choice, it is not done lightly or without serious financial planning. That fact is clear or should be clear to every Member of this body.

However, the fact that we are often not clear on this is when parents elected the other option. The other option is taking care of their children at home, the option that most American families choose. That decision is also not made lightly, nor is it made without serious financial planning, because in most cases, this is the most expensive option. Giving up a second income is a great financial burden to any family.

So I strongly agree with my colleague and friend from Pennsylvania that when we talk about providing financial relief to parents of young children, we must not discriminate against those who bear the greatest cost.

And House Concurrent Resolution 202 recognizes the importance of at-home parents and their financial sacrifices. And I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Pennsylvania has 6 minutes remaining. The gentleman from California has 8 minutes remaining.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. KENNELLY).

Mrs. KENNELLY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, the legislation before us suggests that those who choose to stay at home with their children, do so, and I agree. But we should remember that some parents just cannot do that.

We have single heads of households that have to go to work and have to leave their child in day care. In fact, it was not that long ago that we all agreed and decided to have our people who were on welfare go to work and have to use day care.

We should also remember that an increasing number of couples both work because they want to carry out that American dream of owning their own home.

□ 1800

In short, what we are talking about, what we really need to do, is make sure we have child care safer, better, and more affordable. If you doubt this, consider the figure that I think is absolutely correct, and that is 60 percent of mothers who have children under the age of 6 do work outside the home. I am planning on introducing legislation for day-care to improve access to quality child care for parents in my home State and across the Nation. What we really should be talking about here is care for children, good care for children, safe care for children, whether they are at home or in day-care.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield one minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania. (Mr. FOX).

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, the intent of the Goodling resolution is to ensure that any future child care initiatives recognize that all parents have child care needs regardless of whether they choose to have an at-home parent, grandparent, neighbor, nanny or day-care center, care for their child.

The intent is to simply bring at-home parents into the child care dialog. There is no intent to favor at-home parents over child care centers.

Seventy percent of preschool children are in families that do not pay for child care. Many of these children are low- to middle-income families that struggle to provide home care for their children. Child care initiatives should focus on families that pay for child care as well as at-home parents who provide child care.

Parents should not be penalized for the type of child care they choose. Circumstances do not always permit many parents, especially low-income parents, to be at home with their children, and Republicans have supported and were successful in earmarking \$4 billion more over the 6 years, \$20 billion total, for States to provide for child care. This is a great first step.

The House, of course, will revisit this issue with regard to tax credits and, of course, the child development block grant, but the Goodling resolution is a great first step, and I hope Members will support H. Con. Res. 202.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas. (Mr. DOGGETT).

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, we were so fortunate in our family that my wife Libby could stay home with our two young daughters during their youth, pursuing her graduate degree and devoting most of her time to them. There is no doubt that that is the most important investment that our family has ever made. There is absolutely no complete substitute for the care of a loving parent to a child.

But, increasingly in this country, we find single parent families and we find two parent families where both parents face economic barriers, and the only way they can provide for their children is to both be out in the work force. And I know very few families in this country, certainly not mine, where a spouse is willing to stay home, and able economically to stay home for 18 years.

So it is that we come to this very strange resolution. You see, the President and our Democratic Caucus has had the courage to come forward and recognize that not all American families are like mine or any other individual family. There are many families with diverse needs, but there are few families in this country who do not at some time in their life need child care. And there is a vast void in America and shortage across America in quality child care to meet the needs and to support loving parents.

Mr. Speaker, this particular resolution has one thing in common for all parents, whether they are stay-at-home, single-parent, or two working-parent families: This resolution will do absolutely nothing for any of those families. It is a true do-nothing resolution. It seeks to create a false dichotomy between families in this country and to pit one group against another, which is your typical Republican approach. It does nothing in terms of assuring families, whatever their status, any additional support or assistance, direct or indirect.

We have nearly a child care crisis in parts of this country. It is a crisis for any working family that cannot find quality child care, as is true of millions of families across this country. Instead of dealing with this crisis in a bipartisan way, this Republican leadership is simply coming through with another phony resolution instead of a real solution.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Delaware. (Mr. CASTLE).

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time. I have some prepared remarks, but I would just like to focus for my minute on what we are dealing with here, because I am becoming increasingly concerned about what the Federal Government's role in child care should be.

I support the intent of this resolution to make sure stay-at-home parents are part of the child care debate, but I am increasingly bothered by the fact that the President will come forward and say that we need to spend an additional \$21.5 billion on child care, and we just spent some \$22 billion over 5 years in the welfare reform bill. I am concerned that we are putting stay-at-home parents with child care needs up against those that have out-of-home child care needs, and we are going to get into some sort of battle which we are going to escalate higher and higher in terms of the cost of what we are doing.

I hope we as a Congress will sit down and not get divided on a political basis in this particular circumstance, but sit down and try to determine what the real child care needs of Americans are, both at home and those who are not in the home, with respect to helping the kids. Keep it within a cost basis that we can manage within our balanced budget and go forward from there. I urge all of us to think carefully about what we promised to deliver, lest we raise expectations unrealistically or throw our balanced budget out the window.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind Members that the welfare bill reported out of our committee in 1995, under the leadership of the chairman, would have left 800,000 children without child care and cut \$2.5 billion in funding.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of the mothers and fathers who have the financial means or who make the financial sacrifice necessary to stay at home with their children. I regret that this resolution has chosen to focus on one group of parents, while excluding the families who, in order to provide for their children, must have both parents in the work force. This resolution sets up a false conflict between working parents and stay-at-home parents.

More than 3 million children whose parents stay at home choose to send their young children to preschool. They want their children to benefit from the social and intellectual growth that preschool can provide. Talk to most any parents, whether working or at home. Their concern is about finding and affording safe, high-quality educational care for their children.

We need to support all parents in their child care choices. Helping parents who need to find good child care so they can work and helping parents who stay at home should be complementary and not competing efforts.

Last October, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and I introduced a resolution honoring the child care givers who provide safe, educational care for children of working and stay-at-home parents. Its companion was introduced in the Senate by, among others, Republican Senators ROBERTS and JEFFORDS. That bipartisan resolution, which has twice as many House cosponsors as the resolution we are discussing today, is designed to recognize and promote high-quality care used by stay-at-home and working moms and dads.

Why has the Republican majority refused to move that resolution forward? Why has it chosen to pit one group of parents against another?

Whether parents stay at home or go to work, quality child care is a crucial issue. Parents know their children need safe educational care. CEOs know that high educational care must be important for their work force and a strong economy. Police officers know that high-quality child care provided early in life and before and after school reduces juvenile delinquency and chronic crime. Across our Nation, churches and synagogues donate classrooms to make quality child care more affordable and more accessible to millions of families. Parents, business leaders, law enforcement officers and religious communities across this country recognize the importance of safe, educational child care. We in this Congress must do that as well.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members on both sides of the aisle to stop the divisive practice of setting up parents against each other. Let us work together. Let us pass legislation this year that helps provide parents with the best possible educational care for all of the children in this country who need it.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Connecticut, Mrs. JOHNSON.

Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, this is an important resolution because in the process of making public policy in Washington, we have focused a lot of time, attention and resources on the cost of day-care, making day-care affordable for women coming off of welfare, helping families with the cost of day-care through, for example, the dependent care tax credit, but we have given entirely too little attention to the struggle of young families to try to stay home and take care of their own children.

For those of you interested in this resolution, I hope you will take a look at the tax bill I introduced that would provide to stay-at-home moms during the years when their kids are 0 to 3, 50 percent of that tax credit for staying at home, so they get some economic relief for staying at home and providing that very important educational quality of care that is necessary to the strong development of children in their early years.

Mr. Speaker, I support this resolution, and thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING) for bringing it to the floor.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. UPTON). The gentlewoman from Texas is recognized for 2 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, there is pain in this Chamber today. The reason being, there are gentlemen here, and women, who have come and advocated on behalf of families and children. We would want to be able to stand on the floor of the House and say that any resolution that comes before us dealing with the need of millions and millions of American families, those that work and those who have made the sacrifice to stay home, is the kind of resolution that we would like to support.

But, frankly, I am disturbed, because what this resolution does, albeit Members will decide for themselves, is it pitches one group against another. It pitches those single parents and working families who cannot do anything else but work hard, long hours and get up on the buses at 4 a.m., and they need child care.

Do you know who else it talks about? It talks about those welfare mothers that we debated 2 years ago when we said they do not need to stay home with their children, they simply need to get up and get out.

Now all of a sudden, Mr. Speaker, we are concerned about those parents who want to stay home with their children, and I am as well. As a member of the Congressional Children's Caucus, we join together to say we promote children as a national agenda. Therefore, I support the idea of making sure we have the right kind of child care.

This resolution, however, is a divisive one. I would much prefer that we came to the floor of the House and had the kind of structure and structures to

make sure we have quality child care, so that anyone who works part-time, stays at home, who may ultimately need child care, cannot worry about their child having a loss of life or being injured.

Yet what we say in this one is we negate what the President has done with the billions of dollars for child care for working parents, and we put a resolution that falsely represents to those that this is something good for them if they stay home.

I want parents to be able to stay home. I applaud those who can stay home and sacrifice. But I find it divisive that we did not give the same care and tenderness to those welfare mothers who need to stay home as well.

I hope we can resolve this in a manner that promotes child care and families and children and mothers together in unity and not dividable.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close this discussion.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to make sure that it was not the author of this resolution that pitted one group against another; it was the President of the United States. It was the President of the United States who proposed \$22 billion additional dollars only for paid day care. He said nothing about the parent that stays home.

□ 1815

My resolution does not tell anybody we must do something about child care. Nor does it say we should not do anything about child care. It does not say, this is the way you do it. All this resolution says is that if someone is going to discuss child care, if there is going to be child care legislation, then let us think about all parents, let us think about all children. That is all the resolution says. Since the President only talked about those families who pay for child care, this resolution merely says think about the families also.

So I would hope everyone would support the resolution because it has nothing to do with much of what we have heard; it has only to do with the fact that all parents and all children should be considered in any debate, any discussion, any legislation that we may enact this year.

Mr. FRANKS of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, this afternoon, Congress will vote on DayCare Fairness for Stay-at-Home Parents, a resolution recognizing the importance of stay-at-home parents and the care they give their kids.

I plan to support H. Con. Res. 202, because I believe that the Federal Government has for too long discriminated against parents who choose to stay at home to raise their children. We as lawmakers need to recognize the sacrifices these parents make to be at home with their kids, and encourage the kind of care that only they can give.

But a sense of Congress means nothing unless we back these words up with action. We should pass legislation that brings real tax relief to parents who stay at home.

The keystone of our child care effort should be to reverse current federal tax policy which effectively discriminates against parents who choose to stay at home to raise their children.

That is why I am introducing legislation today that will universalize the Dependent Care Tax Credit (DCTC) to give stay-at-home parents tax relief equal to that received by parents who choose to leave their children with an outside caregiver. Under my bill, parents who stay at home with their pre-school age children will receive credit on \$2,400 of expenses for one child, and \$4,800 for two or more children.

The Dependent Care Tax Credit (DCTC) is currently available only to working parents for expenses related to non-parental child care. In effect, the DCTC subsidizes parents to leave their children in the care of others. In my view, this is a fundamentally misguided and harmful policy.

While I support H. Con. Res. 202, parents who sacrifice a second income to stay at home with their kids deserve more than just a pat on the back. Let's show stay-at-home parents that we mean what we say. Support extending the Dependent Care Tax Credit. American's families and our children will be better off for it.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I support H. Con. Res. 202, legislation designed to ensure that parents who choose to stay home and provide child care are not excluded from any future child care tax credits.

Our children are our most important resource for the future. Studies show that quality child care from a loving and interactive caregiver is imperative to the growth and emotional development of infants and young children. Parents are the most significant influence on their children. They are often the best caregivers, combining love and attention in the comfort of the child's home.

Parents who choose to stay at home and care for their children often sacrifice a much needed second full time income. The average income of two parent families with a single income is \$20,000 less than the average income of two parent families with two incomes. At least 70 percent of preschool children are in families that do not pay for child care and many of these families are struggling to make ends meet. These families should not be discriminated against for their decision to put their children first. Any congressional proposal that increase child care funding should also provide financial relief to families that choose in order that a parent stay home and care for their young child.

Therefore I support H. Con. Res. 202, a resolution that will protect a families' choice to have one parent stay at home and care for a small child. I urge my colleagues to join in support of H. Con. Res. 202.

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the resolution offered by Chairman GOODLING.

Each and every day, Americans struggle to balance the competing demands of work and family. That's why this Congress has a responsibility to address the growing child care crisis in America in a common-sense, fiscally prudent, "real-world" way.

But as we move to craft legislation that addresses the needs those families who must have both parents work due to economic necessity, we also must be careful to recognize those families who have decided to pursue on another course.

This resolution makes sense for the American people. It is important that we acknowledge the importance of stay-at-home parents and we should not discriminate against families who make the economic sacrifice to stay at home with their children.

There can be no doubt. In this day and age such a decision carries and economic price. If a mother stays at home there has got to be some recognition in the tax code for her contribution.

For my way of thinking, we need to make it more attractive for a family to make the decision for one parent to stay at home. It is a struggle, but one that is worthwhile.

Stay-at-home parents are carrying on the traditions of our mothers and grandmothers. Those of us who were fortunate enough to have enjoyed the luxury of having our mothers stay-at-home realize what a great gift this was. This is our opportunity to show the value we place on the loving care that only a parent can provide.

I chose to stay-at-home full time with my children. We need to help make such a choice available. While there are many who are not able to afford allowing one parent to stay-at-home, we must help make it more equitable for those trying to be full time homemakers.

We need to remember both the parents who must place their child in care outside the home, and the parents who are struggling to afford keeping their child in care in the home.

This is only the beginning of what I believe will be a constructive debate on this subject of those who need affordable quality child care.

Support the Goodling resolution.

Lets not forget the stay at home moms.

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be an original cosponsor of H. Con. Res. 202, the Equitable Child Care Resolution, which ensures that all families with children will be included in future discussions on child care proposals.

It is important to recognize that all parents have child-care needs, whether they choose to stay home, depend on a family member or utilize a day-care center for their child. The fact that more than seventy percent of children are cared for by an at-home parent or relative, while most of the proposals before Congress focus solely on commercial child care, reveals the need for such a resolution.

Furthermore, this resolution states that any financial relief considered for parents who work outside the home should also be contemplated for families with at-home care givers. There should not be a bias against at-home parents, who many times forego a second salary to be home with a child.

This resolution will start the child care debate off on the right path by emphasizing the fact that there are many forms of child care. In seeking a federal policy, we should not favor one form of child care over another.

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, as a working mother, I can identify with the millions of parents across this country who find themselves torn between the competing responsibilities of work and family. For many families, there is no choice harder to make than whether to work, and put your child in the care of others, or to forego a second income to care for your child yourself.

The majority of mothers I have talked with would prefer to work part time, or not work at all, in order to care for their children. Unfortunately, that choice is not financially feasible for

most Americans. High taxes limit parents' freedom and ability to address the needs of their families. Mothers and fathers don't need experts and polls to tell them what they already know in their hearts to be true. What parents really need is more time to spend with their children, and more money to meet the financial needs of their family.

President Clinton has proposed a child care package that ignores these fundamental concerns of parents. His plan creates a bias against mothers who have sacrificed an income to raise their children at home. Instead, we should make it possible for as many children as possible to enjoy the benefit of full-time parental care during their early years. Non-parental care is second-best for young children and in some cases can even be harmful. This resolution is a first step toward making sure Congress passes laws that are good for children, not bureaucrats.

Families should not be penalized by Washington, DC for the personal choices they make, since parents—not bureaucrats—know what is best for their children.

As responsible legislators, we should not take away the choice of parents to stay home and take care of their children. We ought to enable an average family to survive in ordinary comfort on a single income. We can no longer guarantee this choice, however, because of the crushing tax burden on families raising children. To the extent that our tax policies are squeezing parents and forcing both into the work place, we are inflicting real harm on children.

I encourage this Congress to continue in our efforts to give all families the flexibility, choice, and freedom they need to provide for their families and raise their children in the manner they see fit, and we can only do so by promoting policies of equity that place value and trust in the ability of parents to do what is right for their children.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to raise some concerns I have regarding House Concurrent Resolution 202. This year President Clinton has brought to public debate the most pressing dilemma for American families. That dilemma is finding and affording appropriate child care. In the State of New Jersey, an estimated 56 percent of all women with children ages 6 and younger are employed and 75% of mothers with children between the ages of 6 and 11 work outside the home. Unfortunately, the cost of affordable care can be between \$4,000 and \$10,000 annually. We must also take into account the fact that if both parents work at full time minimum wage jobs they together will earn only \$21,400 a year. The need for some type of guidance and relief could not be more apparent in New Jersey and nationwide.

Unfortunately, the resolution we will consider today does not address the issue of access to quality child care. Instead it requires that we focus our attention on parents that choose to stay at home rather than go to work. I am pleased that some parents have such an option and I salute their commitment to their families. However, this resolution does not address the real problem that most concerns parents which is affordable child care. I believe we must first address the need of those parents who do not have a choice to stay home and supply them with the best options to find appropriate child care. I am also

concerned that this resolution includes a misrepresentation of facts that does not accurately reflect the reality of the child care dilemma in this country. It also largely ignores those who are committed to caring for children who are relatives but not immediate family members. These individuals are also important and deserve recognition by Congress in child care legislation. For example, a study conducted by the Department of Commerce found that grandparents and other non-parental relatives provide about 35% of the primary care for African American and Hispanic families. This resolution only focuses on stay at home parents and ignores other individuals that have a need to be compensated for their commitment to caring for children.

I must finally remind my colleagues that the U.S. House of Representatives voted to send millions of stay at home parents back into the workforce only three years ago by passing welfare reform legislation. This resolution sends the message that while we will encourage middle and upper class parents to stay at home we do not believe that the value of a stay at home parent is as important for low income children. This message is a disturbing one and not one that I will support.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. HEFNER. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. UPTON). The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. HEFNER. Mr. Speaker, before we take the vote, if this resolution passes, what would be the next step in this legislation?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. If the concurrent resolution is adopted in the House, it will go to the Senate.

Mr. HEFNER. It will go to the Senate?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Yes, it will. This is a concurrent resolution.

The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, House Concurrent Resolution 202, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 409, nays 0, answered "present" 3, not voting 18, as follows:

(Roll No. 13)

YEAS—409

Abercrombie	Baldacci	Becerra
Ackerman	Ballenger	Bentzen
Aderholt	Barcia	Bereuter
Allen	Barr	Berman
Andrews	Barrett (NE)	Berry
Archer	Barrett (WI)	Bilbray
Armey	Bartlett	Bilirakis
Bachus	Barton	Bishop
Baesler	Bass	Blagojevich
Baker	Bateman	Bliley

Blumenauer	Blunt	Boehert	Boehner	Bonilla	Bontor	Borski	Boswell	Boucher	Boyd	Brady	Brown (CA)	Brown (FL)	Brown (OH)	Bryant	Bunning	Burr	Burton	Buyer	Calvert	Camp	Campbell	Canady	Cannon	Cardin	Carson	Chabot	Chambliss	Chenoweth	Christensen	Clay	Clayton	Cleamont	Clyburn	Coble	Coburn	Collins	Combest	Condit	Cook	Cooksey	Costello	Cox	Coyne	Cramer	Crane	Crapo	Cubin	Cummings	Cunningham	Danner	Davis (FL)	Davis (IL)	Davis (VA)	Deal	DeFazio	DeGette	DeLaunt	DeLauro	DeLay	Deutch	Dias-Balart	Dickey	Dicks	Dingell	Dixon	Doggett	Dooley	Doyle	Dreier	Duncan	Dunn	Edwards	Ehlers	Ehrlich	Emerson	Engel	English	Ensign	Etheridge	Evans	Everett	Ewing	Farr	Fattah	Fawell	Fazio	Filner	Foley	Forbes	Ford	Fossella	Fowler	Fox	Franks (NJ)	Frelinghuysen	Frost	Furse	Gallegly	Ganske	Gelderson	Gekas	Gephardt	Gibbons	Gilchrest	Gillmor	Gilman	Goode	Goodlatte	Goodling	Gordon	Goss	Graham	Granger	Green	Greenwood	Gutierrez	Gutknecht	Hall (OH)	Hall (TX)	Hamilton	Hansen	Hastert	Hastings (FL)	Hastings (WA)	Hayworth	Hefley	Heffner	Herger	Hill	Hillery	Hilliard	Hincheey	Hinojosa	Hobson	Hoekstra	Holden	Hooley	Horn	Hostettler	Houghton	Hoyer	Hulshof	Hunter	Hutchinson	Hyde	Inglis	Istook	Jackson (IL)	Jackson-Lee	(TX)	Jefferson	Jenkins	John	Johnson (CT)	Johnson (WI)	Johnson, E. B.	Johnson, Sam	Jones	Kanjorski	Kaptur	Kasich	Kelly	Kennedy (MA)	Kennedy (RI)	Kasnelly	Kildee	Kilpatrick	Kim	Kind (WI)	King (NY)	Kingston	Kleczka	Klink	Klug	Knollenberg	Kolbe	Kucinich	LaFalce	LaHood	Lampson	Largent	Latham	LaTourette	Laxton	Leach	Levin	Lewis (CA)	Lewis (GA)	Lewis (KY)	Lipinski	Livingston	LoBlundo	Lofgren	Lowe	Lucas	Luther	Maloney (CT)	Maloney (NY)	Manton	Manzullo	Markey	Mascara	Matsui	McCarthy (MO)	McCarthy (NY)	McCollum	McCrery	McDade	McDermott	McGovern	McHale	McHugh	McIntosh	McIntyre	McKeon	McKinney	McNulty	Meehan	Meek (FL)	Meeks (NY)	Menendez	Metcalfe	Mica	Millender	McDonald	Miller (CA)	Minge	Moakley	Mollohan	Moran (KS)	Moran (VA)	Morella	Murtha	Neal	Nethercutt	Neumann	Ney	Northup	Norwood	Nussle	Oberstar	Oliver	Ortiz	Owens	Oxley	Packard	Pallone	Pappas	Parker	Pascarelli	Pastor	Paul	Paxon	Pease	Pelosi	Peterson (MN)	Peterson (PA)	Petri	Pickering	Pickett	Pitts	Pombe	Pomeroy	Porter	Portman	Price (NC)	Pryce (OK)	Quinn	Radanovich	Rahall	Ramstad	Rangel	Redmond	Regula	Reyes	Riggs	Riley	Rivers	Rodriguez	Roemer	Rogan	Rogers	Rohrabacher	Roe-Lehtinen	Rothman	Roukema	Roybal-Allard	Royce	Rush	Ryun	Sabo	Salmon	Sanchez	Sanders
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Sandlin	Snowbarger	Torres
Sanford	Snyder	Towns
Sawyer	Solomon	Traffant
Saxton	Souder	Turner
Scarborough	Spence	Upton
Schaefer, Dan	Spratt	Velaquez
Schaffer, Bob	Stabenow	Vento
Schumer	Stark	Visclosky
Scott	Stearns	Walsh
Sensenbrenner	Stenholm	Wamp
Serrano	Stokes	Waters
Sessions	Strickland	Watkins
Shadeeg	Stump	Watt (NC)
Shaw	Stupak	Watts (OK)
Shays	Sununu	Waxman
Sherman	Talent	Weldon (FL)
Shimkus	Tanner	Weldon (PA)
Shuster	Tauscher	Weller
Slatsky	Tauzin	Wexler
Slaggs	Taylor (MS)	Weygand
Skeen	Taylor (NC)	White
Skelton	Thomas	Whitfield
Slaughter	Thompson	Wicker
Smith (MI)	Thornberry	Wolf
Smith (NJ)	Thune	Woolsey
Smith (TX)	Thurman	Wynn
Smith, Adam	Tiahrt	Young (AR)
Smith, Linda	Tierney	Young (FL)

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—3

Frank (MA)	Martinez	Payne
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NOT VOTING—18

Callahan	Lantos	Obey
Conyers	Linder	Pohard
Doolittle	Miller (FL)	Schiff
Eshoo	Mink	Smith (OR)
Gonzalez	Myrick	Wise
Harman	Nadler	Yates

□ 1836

Mr. BERMAN and Mr. DAVIS of Illinois changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

So (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The title of the concurrent resolution was amended so as to read: "Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress that the Federal Government should acknowledge the importance of at-home parents and should not discriminate against families who forgo a second income in order for a mother or father to be at home with their children."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, I was called away on a family matter and was unable to be here to vote on H. Con. Res. 202, the Daycare Fairness for Stay-At-Home Parents.

I ask that the RECORD reflect that had I been here I would have supported this measure and voted "aye."

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Con. Res. 202.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.