

DRAFT #2 4/16/97

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT
THE EAST ROOM
WASHINGTON, D.C.
APRIL 17, 1997**

Welcome to the White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning.

Welcome to those who are here with us in the East Room today, and to the thousands who are joining us via satellite from universities, hospitals, and schools around the country. Nearly 100 sites in 37 states.

At first glance, it may seem odd to devote this august space to talking about babytalk.

But that discussion has never been more important. Because science, as we will hear from the experts who are with us today, has now given us a blueprint for child development in the earliest years of life. Revolutionary new work has confirmed what many parents have instinctively known all along: that the song a father sings to his child in the morning, a story a mother reads to her child before bed, are some of the most important and lasting transactions Americans can have. They lay the foundation for a child's life. And, in turn, for our nation's future.

So the President has convened this conference with a clear mission: To give the leading experts in the field of early child development -- scientists, pediatricians, researchers, and others -- the opportunity to synthesize their discoveries, make their insights accessible, and to put this invaluable body of knowledge at the service of America's families.

But not America's families alone. This information is crucial for anyone in the position of leaving an impression on a child's growing mind: Day-care workers. Teachers. Doctors and nurses. Television writers and producers. Government policy-makers. The list goes on. The plain fact is: The responsibility for raising happy, respectful, well-adjusted children who will then grow into happy, respectful, well-adjusted and productive citizens reaches far beyond any individual family's front door. It belongs to all of us.

It is astonishing what we now know about the young brain and about how children develop. Just how far we have come is chronicled in a report being issued today by the Families and Work Institute entitled Rethinking the Brain. Fifteen years ago, we thought that a baby's brain structure was virtually complete at birth. Now we understand that it is a work in progress -- and that everything we do with a child has a good or bad physical influence on the rapidly forming brain.

A child's earliest experiences -- their relationships with parents and caregivers, the sights sounds and smells and feelings they encounter, the challenges they meet -- determine how their brains are wired. The brain shapes itself through repeated experience. The more something is repeated, the stronger the neuro-circuitry becomes. The connections, in turn, can be permanent. In this way, the seemingly trivial events that a baby cannot recall -- hearing a song, getting a hug after falling down, knowing when to expect a smile -- are anything but.

For the first 3 years of their lives, children are laying down the fundamental circuitry that will last them for as long as they breathe. They will learn to soothe themselves when they are upset, to empathize, to get along. These experiences can determine nothing less than whether children will grow up to be peaceful or violent citizens; focused or undisciplined workers; attentive or detached parents themselves.

We have reached the point where our understanding of a child's mind is catching up with our understanding of a child's body. During the first part of the 20th century, science built a strong foundation for the physical health of our children: Vaccines for polio and measles; a knowledge of nutrition; a score of other remarkable, life-saving achievements. The last years of this century are yielding similar breakthroughs, but for the brain. We are completing the job of primary prevention. We are coming closer to the day when we will be able to ensure the well-being of children in **every** domain -- physical, social, intellectual, and emotional.

I have very high hopes for this conference. There are, however, two things I hope it will **not** do.

The first is to burden or overwhelm parents. Parenting is the hardest job in the world. The information we offer today is meant to help parents, not to imprison them in a set of rules. If you forget to read to your child one night, it's okay. There won't be any scars. Think of this conference as a map. And like any good map, it shows you lots of different ways to get where you need to go.

I should add that many American parents have been asking for just such a map. A new survey from the National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families shows a real hunger, on the part of parents, for knowledge on how they can play a positive role in their child's early development. I hope this conference will answer their call.

The second is to create the impression that once that third birthday rolls around, the important work is over. **The early years are not the only years.** The brain is the last organ to become fully mature anatomically. The neurological circuitry for many emotions isn't completed until a child reaches 15. This, I think, is reason for tremendous hope. It means that there is always the chance to save a child. And it has special relevance for adoption: adoptive parents can make an enormous difference -- even for older children.

That said, here's what I hope this conference **will** accomplish.

I hope it will get across the revolutionary idea that the activities that are most fun to do with your child are also the best for his or her development: Singing, playing games, reading. Some of my best memories are of reading to Chelsea -- even if I fell asleep in the middle of Goodnight Moon. Reading to her when she was young was a joy to Bill and me. We think it was a joy for her. But we had no idea that it was literally turning on the power in her brain, firing up the connections that would enable her to speak and then to read.

I hope the science presented in this conference will ease the minds of parents whose children are in day care. Good care is **good** care -- whether that care is given at home or at a day-care center. This conference will provide a template for what that care looks like, ensuring that even more young children get the attention they need to grow up right.

I hope, too, that this conference will drive home a simple message -- one supported, in great detail, by a report being issued today by the President's Council of Economic Advisers: If we commit ourselves now to modest investments in the sound development of our children -- including our very youngest children -- we will lay the groundwork for an American future with increased prosperity, better health, fewer social ills, and ever-greater opportunities for our citizens to lead fulfilling lives in a strong country.

Every child needs the stimulation of learning, reading, playing, singing and love to really reach his or her highest emotional and intellectual potential. Children can lose out long before they even get to preschool. And we cannot afford to lose even a drop of the potential of our nation's children. It's a stark equation: invest now, or pay later.

There's a line from the Talmud that says every blade of grass has an angel over it, whispering grow, grow. Well, we must be angels unto our children. We knew this instinctively. Now we know it scientifically.

I am pleased to introduce someone who has been saying this for a long time -- maybe not quoting the Talmud, but certainly expressing the sentiment. And who, as President of the United States, has acted on these beliefs -- putting the security of children at the very center of national policy. My husband. President Bill Clinton.

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

April 11, 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Bruce Reed
Melanne Verveer
Elena Kagan

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SUBJECT: White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning

As you know, on Thursday, April 17, you and the First Lady will host the *White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning: What New Research on the Brain Tells Us About Our Youngest Children*. This memorandum provides an overview of the Conference, as well as summarizing recommended policy announcements.

Conference Overview

The Conference will spotlight new scientific findings about how children develop, and explore how we can make the most of this information to give children what they need to thrive. The Conference will provide an opportunity to showcase what your Administration already has accomplished in this area, such as increasing investments in scientific research and creating or improving programs like Early Head Start and WIC.

The Conference will consist of two roundtable discussions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, with a luncheon in the State Dining Room (optional for you) in between the two.

Morning session: You and the First Lady will make remarks to open the Conference. Yours will discuss the importance of the issue to be addressed, note past Administration accomplishments in the area, and discuss new initiatives, principally for improving child care and children's health (detailed below).

A panel of experts will then present an overview of the emerging knowledge, gained from neuroscience and behavioral science, on early childhood development. Dr. David Hamburg, President of the Carnegie Corporation, will moderate brief presentations by:

- Dr. Donald Cohen, Director of the Yale Child Study Center, who will discuss what the behavior of children shows about their cognitive, emotional, and social development;
- Dr. Carla Shatz, a neuroscientist at the University of California, Berkeley, who will explain how children's brains develop in the earliest years of life; and

- Dr. Patricia Kuhl, Chair of the Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences at the University of Washington, who will discuss how children learn language.

Following these presentations, three more experts will join the panel to discuss what the scientific research suggests about protecting children's health and providing good child care:

- Dr. Ezra Davidson, Drew University of Medicine, who can address the importance of prenatal and perinatal services;
- Dr. T. Berry Brazelton, Harvard University, who can discuss the pediatrician's role in early childhood development; and
- Dr. Deborah Phillips, Institute of Medicine, who can address how child care can affect early development.

These experts also will respond to a series of questions posed by the First Lady and Mrs. Gore. Some of these questions will come from a poll conducted by Hart Research for Zero to Three (an early development advocacy group) that tried to discover what parents most want to know about early childhood development. Other questions will tackle the tough issues raised by the new research -- for example, "does this research mean that women should not work outside the home?" or "does this research suggest that adopting an older child is a bad idea?"

Afternoon Session: The purpose of the afternoon session is to highlight model efforts that communities are undertaking to support parents and enhance early childhood development. This panel will be action-oriented and will give you an opportunity to highlight Administration accomplishments and initiatives. Participants in the discussion will include:

- Dr. Gloria Rodriguez, Avance Family Support Program, San Antonio, TX.
Avance is a widely acclaimed family support and education program serving predominantly Hispanic communities.
- Harriet Meyer, Ounce of Prevention, Chicago, IL.
Ounce of Prevention is a statewide program in Illinois that develops innovative early childhood programs and runs model Early Head Start and child care programs.
- Melvin Wearing, Chief of Police, New Haven, CT.
Wearing will discuss a pioneering initiative that trains community police officers to use child development principles in their work.
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Kellogg launched a community-wide effort last fall to provide practical early brain development information to every Battle Creek parent and caregiver.

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Executive Order on Environmental Health and Safety Risks: You currently have under consideration a proposed Executive Order that would require agencies to consider and explain the effects of certain major rules on children. This order, if you decide to approve it, would serve as an excellent lead-in to the Conference, and we recommend issuing it on April 16. The order gives meaning and effect to your Administration's commitment to protect children in making regulatory decisions.

Conference Policy Announcements

The biggest news from the Conference should be the Conference itself -- that you and the First Lady hosted a day-long meeting on this subject and that scientists, community leaders, parents, and other experts communicated ideas and information on this issue to each other and the American public. The Conference also should provide a vehicle to remind everyone of your Administration's accomplishments in this area, such as increasing funding for research related to children, expanding and improving Head Start and creating the Early Head Start Program, raising childhood immunization rates to an all-time high, and launching a major new effort to eliminate childhood lead poisoning.

In addition, the Conference -- especially your opening remarks -- will give you an opportunity to discuss new and pending policy initiatives that show a continuing commitment to this set of issues. We recommend that your comments focus principally, but not exclusively, on child care and children's health and that you make the announcements discussed below.

Child Care: Child care experts believe the Defense Department's child care system is now the best in the country and possibly the world (in large part because of legislation enacted in the late 1980s). DoD child care is characterized by: high standards, including a high percentage of accredited centers; a strong enforcement system with four unannounced annual inspections and a 1-800 hot line for parents to report concerns; a wage structure that is tied to training and an "up or out" personnel policy requiring completion of training requirements; relatively generous wages and benefits, which reduce staff turnover; a system of linking up individual home care providers to give them needed support; and sufficient funding to make quality child care affordable (though there still are waiting lists).

✓ We recommend you hold up the DoD child care system as a model for the nation and issue an executive memorandum directing the Secretary of Defense to use the Department's resources and expertise to improve child care across the nation. In particular, you would direct that (1) military bases partner with state and county governments to provide on-the-job training in child care to welfare recipients; (2) each military child development center partner with a civilian child care center and work with it to improve quality; (3) DoD establish regional "Child Care Masters Programs" that civilian child care managers could attend for two weeks to learn best practices; (4) DoD publicize its model designs for child care facilities and playgrounds; and (5) DoD issue benchmarks in the areas of standards, enforcement, compensation, and cost against which civilian child care programs could evaluate themselves. Most civilian child care systems

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will come up short against DoD's benchmarks, particularly in terms of compensation and affordability, but such a comparison might help build public support for greater investment in child care. DoD fully supports the idea of issuing such a directive.

You also might want to float some trial balloons on more ambitious -- and costly -- proposals. For example, some have suggested making the Child and Dependent Tax Care Credit refundable (at a cost of \$2-4 billion), so that families with little or no income can benefit from it. The Blue Dog budget makes the credit refundable, but pays for it by eliminating the tax benefit for families with incomes over \$100,000. Another legislative proposal would provide a tax credit to private companies and institutions to encourage them to build quality child-care centers on-site. Given our budget, you cannot endorse any of these proposals, but you might want to use this opportunity to suggest your openness to further discussion of such legislation.

Children's Health Initiative: We also recommend that you discuss in your opening remarks the importance of insurance coverage for children's health and development, highlighting the Children's Health Initiative in your 1998 budget proposal. Your proposal will extend coverage to up to 5 million uninsured children by the year 2000. You can announce at the Conference that the deans of academic medical centers -- important legitimators within the medical community -- have endorsed your proposal.

We are also planning a follow-up children's health event, where you will release a study showing the links between insurance coverage, health status and development and learning for children from 0 to 18 years old and talk in more detail about your health proposal. Either at the follow-up event or at the Conference itself, you can announce a project by Kaiser Permanente to spend \$100 million over the next 5 years to provide health insurance to uninsured children.

Child Victims of Violence Initiative. You can announce that the Department of Justice will establish, with FY 97 discretionary funding, a Child Victims of Violence Initiative through the Yale, New Haven Child Development-Community Policing Program. This program, which Chief Wearing will speak about, trains police officers in child development, so that they can better respond to situations arising in the field. The new initiative will extend the program to other sites and also broaden it to include people other than police officers -- such as prosecutors, probation and parole officers, and mental health professionals -- whose work would benefit from knowing about early child development.

Head Start Funding: You can announce the launch of a new competition for Early Head Start grants, which will highlight this Administration's creation of the program.

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Kellogg launched a community-wide effort last fall to provide practical early brain development information to every Battle Creek parent and caregiver.

- Rob Reiner, CastleRock Entertainment, Los Angeles, CA.
Reiner will discuss the "I Am Your Child" campaign launched this month and the media's role in making early childhood development information available.
- Governor Bob Miller, Nevada, Co-chair of the NGA Children's Task Force.
Miller will discuss what States are doing to enhance early childhood development.

Satellite Sites: The morning session of the Conference will be transmitted to at least 53 satellite sites -- mostly universities and hospitals -- in about 30 states and all 10 federal regions. (Fifty-three is the current number; there will probably be more.) In almost all of these sites, local organizers will put on programs of their own to follow the morning session and will report back to you on their proceedings and recommendations. Cabinet Affairs is encouraging subcabinet officials to attend and speak at these satellite conferences. In addition, regional administrators from HHS, USDA, EPA, Education, and GSA are taking an active role in the satellite sessions.

Report of Proceedings: We are currently making arrangements for an official conference report, to be issued in early June. The report, in addition to providing a summary of the conference proceedings, will serve as a resource guide and learning tool for parents and child care providers. We expect to print 250,000 copies and distribute them through departmental programs, such as Head Start and Even Start, and to individuals who request information about the Conference.

Pre-Conference Policy Initiatives

We would like to make three announcements prior to the Conference, in order to lay the groundwork for the Conference's discussion of ways to enhance early childhood development.

FMLA Expansion for Federal Employees: In your April 12 radio address, you will introduce the themes of the Conference and then direct heads of executive departments and agencies to expand family and medical leave for federal employees in the ways proposed in your legislation. This action would allow federal employees 24 hours of unpaid leave each year to participate in activities relating to school and child care, children's health care, and (unrelated to the Conference) elderly relatives' health needs. You will stress in your radio address how such family-friendly policies can support parents with young children.

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To: Milan Verveer

From: Mark Penn

I looked over some of the materials and have attached a summary of some points related to describing the conference that I hope can be useful to those writing the talking points.

The most significant new element is simply the idea of talking in terms of tying the conference to achieving the full potential of all every child – of giving every child the opportunity to develop to their fullest emotional and intellectual potential – and of relating this to achieving our national potential. I think that the conference is less about the intersection of science and policy, and more about achieving the potential of all of our kids.

Early Brain Conference

Goals:

This conference is about doing the best for our children – giving every child the opportunity to develop to the fullest of their God-given potential. For a long time now we have known how children need proper nutrition and access to healthcare to develop. And now we are finding out that very early on -- in the first three years – every child needs the stimulation of learning, reading, playing, singing and love to really reach their highest emotional and intellectual potential. Children can lose out long before they reach even our pre-schools, and we cannot afford to lose even a drop of the potential of our nation's children. That's what this is all about.

The First Lady is leading this effort as an extension of her lifelong work in the area of child and family development, highlighted in "It Takes a Village." She has brought together the country's leading experts, pediatricians, social workers, day care workers, business media, and the government. This is not a problem any one of these can solve, but one that they must all cooperate together on – and that's why she has made this a truly national conference with sites throughout the country.

This conference highlights:

How we must turn this latest research into action by telling parents what they need to do to nurture their children – that the time a parent spends reading, singing and playing with their children means so much to those kids not just now, but in later life. (ie. The prescription).

We need to extend the frontiers of research in this area, 90% of which is federally funded, so that we have all of the expert knowledge we need to raise our children and how this affects not just parenting, but all of our health, nutrition, child care and educational programs.

How we need to continue to expend the programs that protect our young children – The President has secured the guarantee of healthcare for 10 million children, now we must cover 5 million more. The President has increased participation in Head Start, but now we must expand it, along with early head start, to serve 1 million children by 2002. The President has increased funding for childcare, and now we must organize nearly \$3 billion in new quality childcare so that welfare mothers can re-enter the workforce without compromising on the development of their children. And we must continue to vaccinate all young children and guard them from debilitating lead paint.

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

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

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

On April 17, the President and First Lady will host *The White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning: What New Research on the Brain Tells Us About Our Youngest Children*. The day-long conference will highlight new scientific findings on brain development in very young children and point to the importance of children's earliest experiences in helping them get off to a strong and healthy start.

Applying New Findings on Brain Development in the Earliest Years. New scientific research shows that experiences after birth -- particularly in the first three years of life -- have a dramatic impact on brain development. That means that nurturing, talking to, singing to and reading to our youngest children will improve their ability to learn and develop throughout their lives. The White House Conference will focus on the practical applications of the latest scientific research on the brain, particularly for parents and caregivers. The conference will also be a call to action to all members of society -- including the health, business, media and faith communities, child care providers and government -- to use this information to strengthen America's families.

Clinton Administration Commitment to Young Children. This conference builds on the Clinton Administration's investment in children and families. The Administration has invested heavily in research to help us better understand the importance of the first few years of life to child development and learning. Between 1993 and 1997, funding for NIH children's research increased 25%, from \$1.3 billion to \$1.6 billion.

President Clinton has also strengthened efforts to support families with young children. To take just a few examples, the Administration raised funding for Head Start -- providing low-income children and their families with comprehensive education, health services, and nutrition -- by 43% over the last four years and created the Early Head Start program to support families with children ages zero to three. The President's FY 1998 Budget further increases participation to reach 122,000 more children in FY 1998 than when he took office. The Administration also dramatically increased participation in the WIC Supplemental Nutrition Program, providing 7.4 million pregnant women, infants, and children with nutrition packages and information and health referrals - 1.7 million more than when President Clinton took office. And his FY 1998 Budget would achieve his goal of full participation in the WIC program by the end of FY 1998.

Conference Program and Participants. During the morning session of the conference, leading researchers and child development experts will discuss the new research and what it means for parents and caregivers. The panelists for this session are: Dr. David Hamburg, Carnegie Corporation of New York (moderator); Dr. Carla Shatz, University of California, Berkeley; Dr. Donald Cohen, Yale Child Study Center; Dr. Patricia Kuhl, University of Washington; Dr. Ezra Davidson, Drew University of Medicine, Dr. T. Berry Brazelton, Harvard University; and Dr. Deborah Phillips, National Research Council. The afternoon session will highlight model community efforts to support parents and enhance early childhood development. The panelists include: Avance Family Support and Education Program, San Antonio, TX; the CEO and Chairman of the Board, The Kellogg Company, Battle Creek Michigan; and Ounce of Prevention, Chicago, IL.

Widespread Participation Across the Country. The morning session of the conference will be broadcast by satellite to over 50 locations across the country. The satellite conferences will be co-hosted by regional federal agencies, local officials, and children's and other organizations.

4/12/97 DRAFT

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

OPENING REMARKS

The East Room

10:50-11:15 am *President Clinton and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton frame the day, highlight the investments and commitment of the Clinton Administration in early childhood development, underscore the unique contributions of the United States Government in supporting research on early childhood and brain development, and highlight the national opportunity and responsibility the new finding present.*

SESSION ONE:

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

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

11:20-1:00 pm *Overview of emerging knowledge of early childhood development in neuroscience and behavioral science*

Dr. Donald Cohen, Yale University, will discuss how children's behavior helps us understand their cognitive, emotional and social development.

Dr. Carla Shatz, University of California, Berkeley, will explain how children's brains grow and develop in the earliest years of life.

Dr. Patricia Kuhl, University of Washington, will discuss how children learn language.

11:40-12:15 pm *Presenters from the opening session address, joined by the experts below, will address concerns of parents, particularly discussing what this emerging knowledge means for health care, child care and early education and parenting. Questions are generated from a poll conducted by Zero To Three with parents across the country, and are posed by the President and the First Lady*

Dr. Ezra Davidson, Drew University of Medicine, will discuss the importance of prenatal and perinatal services.

Dr. T. Berry Brazelton, Harvard University, will talk about the pediatrician's role in early childhood development.

Dr. Deborah Phillips, Institute of Medicine, will discuss how child care can affect early development.

CLOSING REMARKS

The President

WORKING LUNCHEON

State Dining Room

1:20-2:30pm *Conference guests here have a chance to visit informally with one another
(Tables are hosted by a White House or Administration official)*

Informal Format

SESSION TWO: Applying the Knowledge

Exploration of Model Efforts Communities Are Undertaking

To Support Parents and Enhance Early Childhood Development

The East Room

3:00-4:30pm *Various Sectors of society discuss how they are using new scientific
findings to support families and enhance early childhood development and
learning*

Dr. Gloria Rodriguez, Avance Family Support Program

San Antonio, TX

Avance is a widely acclaimed family support and education program serving predominantly Hispanic communities.

Harriet Meyer, Ounce of Prevention

Chicago, IL

Ounce of Prevention is a statewide program that develops and tests innovative early childhood development programs for replication, and runs model Early Head Start and childcare programs.

Melvin Wearing, Chief of Police

New Haven, CT

Will talk about a pioneering initiative that trains community police officers to use child development principles in their work.

Arnold Langbo, The Kellogg Company CEO

Battle Creek, MI

Kellogg launched a community-wide effort last fall to provide practical early brain development information to every Battle Creek parent and caregiver.

Rob Reiner, CastleRock Entertainment

Los Angeles, CA

Will talk about the "I Am Your Child" campaign launched this month, and the media's role in making early childhood development information available.

Bob Miller, Governor of Nevada

Co-Chair of the National Governor's Association and co-chair of the National Governors' Association Children's Task Force

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The First Lady

The President

RECEPTION

South Lawn

Tented South Lawn reception draws together a broad range of local advocates and association leaders.

Remarks by the President and the First Lady

**THE WHITE HOUSE
OFFICE OF MEDIA AFFAIRS**

FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY
NOT FOR RELEASE
Contact: 202/456-7150

April 10, 1997

**WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT
AVAILABLE ON SATELLITE AND IN SITES ACROSS THE COUNTRY**

Washington, D.C. -- On April 17, parents, caregivers and other interested parties across the nation will view the White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning's morning session by satellite. The full day event, being held at the White House, will highlight recent research on the brain, and what it means to early childhood development. Scientists and physicians will discuss the current state of knowledge and answer some of the questions most frequently asked by parents.

The following are some of the sites that plan to broadcast the morning session. Many will use the broadcast as a way to organize local events.

Live and unrestricted satellite feed available beginning 10:30 am, April 17, EDT
Expected to end approximately 12:30 pm

Coordinates:

KU Band
Galaxy K-4
Transponder 21 Horizontal
Downlink frequency 12110 MHZ H
Orbital slot is located at 99' west
Audio 6.2/6.8(Satellite coordinates follow.)

Sites will include:

Boston University Medical Center
West Newton St.
Boston, MA
Holly Newman (617) 534-3643

Boston Federal Executive Board
O'Neill Federal Building
10 Causeway St.
Boston, MA
Kim Ainsworth (617) 565-5823

Brown University
Providence, RI
Brenda Mussei (401) 274-9548 ext. 240

University of Rhode Island
Kingston, RI
Dr. David Byrd (401) 874-2581

Stamford Public Schools
888 Washington Blvd.
Stamford, CT
Sarah Arnold (203) 977-4105

New Haven Public Schools
East Rock Elementary School
133 Nash St
New Haven, CT
Dr. Verdell Roberts (203) 946-7871

University of Vermont
School of Education
Burlington, VT
Dean Jill Tarule (802) 656-3424

NH Division of Children, Youth & Families
6 Hazen Drive
Concord, NH
Joy Tinker, HHS

University of Maine at Fort Kent
25 Pleasant St.
Fort Kent, ME
John Martin (207) 834-7568

University of Maine at Orono
Orono, ME
Judy Graham Cobarm, USDA (207) 581-3104

Manhattan Borough Community College
199 Chamber Street
NY, NY 10007
Bill Caldararo (212) 346-8185

Cornell University Cooperative Extension Center
Marten Road
Albany County
Voorheesville, NY
George Hecht (518) 765-3500

Cornell University Cooperative Extension
Faculty Commons
Ithaca, NY
Susan Miles (607) 255-2246

Cornell University Cooperative Extension
Education Center
12690 Million Dollar Highway
Albion, NY
Shirley Bright (716) 589-5561

Cornell University Cooperative Extension
Education Center Community Campus
Dillion Drive
Middletown, NY
Patricia Claiborne (914) 344-1234

PBS TV Affiliate WXXI
289 State Street
Rochester, NY
Sharon Conheady (716) 428-6400

St. Christopher's Hospital for Children
Bell Atlantic Training Center
Erie Avenue at Front Street
Philadelphia, PA
Site Contact: Carol Norris (215) 427-5525
HHS Contact: James Mengal (215) 596-0504

Egleston Children Hospital
1405 Clifton Road, NE
Atlanta, GA
HHS Contact: Pat Ford-Roegner (404) 331-4159 or 331-2442

Arkansas Childrens Hospital
Sturgis Building
800 South Marshall
Little Rock, AR
Jeanette Wagner (501) 320 6441

North Carolina Cooperative Extension
North Carolina State University
302 Ricks Hall
Raleigh, NC
Site Coordinator: Dr. Karen DeBord (919) 515-2770
Press Contact: Ellen Devlin (919) 515-3173

Roper Mountain Science Center
504 Roper Mountain Road
Greenville, SC
Press Contact: Dr. Scarlett Owens (864) 241-3159

Illinois Institute of Technology
10 West 31st Street-Stuart Building
Chicago, IL 60616
Site Contact: Charles Scott (312) 567-5167
Press Contact: Bret Hoffman (312) 886-8217

Texas A&M Agriculture Experiment Station
2415 E Highway 83
Weslaco, TX
Location Contact: Jose Amador (210) 968-5585

University of Texas Arlington
Netteman Hall
211 Cooper St.
Arlington, TX
Margie Barret (817) 272-3954
Patricia Montoya (214) 767-3301

University of Texas Arlington
Thomas Rivera Conference Center
Union East 3rd Floor
Union Ave.
El Paso, TX
Dr. Arturo Pacheco (915) 747-5572

Childrens Hospital of Oklahoma
Nicholson Tower
900 NE & 13th
Oklahoma City, OK
Kurt Snodgrass (401) 530-3484

Albuquerque Technical Vocational Institute
Jeanette Stromberg Hall
2000 Coal Ave. SE
Albuquerque, NM
Patricia Buehler (505) 224-4414

University of Missouri-Kansas City
5100 Rockhill Road
Kansas City, MO
Sandra V. Walker (816) 880-4000
Dr. Eugene Eubanks (816) 235-5270

Epworth Family Learning Center
207 N Washington St.
East Prairie, MO
Dr. Martha Ellen Black (573) 649-3731

Saint Louis-TBA
Enterprise Community Service Projects
330 North 15th St.
Saint Louis, MO
Donna Dailey (314) 622-3400

Child Care Resource and Referral "Childnet"
1200 University Ave., Suite H
Des Moines, IA
Janet George (515) 286-3366

Kansas Department of Education
120 SE 10th St.
Topeka, KS
Phyllis Kelley (913) 296-3069

NW Kansas Education Service Unit
703 West 2nd St.
Oakley, KS
Judy Rodger (913) 672-3125

Creighton University
1819 Farnam St. #1100
Omaha, NE
Scott Knudson (402) 444-5381

Nebraska Department of Education
301 Centennial Mall South
P.O. Box 94987
Lincoln, NE
Polly Feis (402) 471-5025

Alliance Public Schools
1604 Sweetwater
Alliance, NE
Lonie Sherlock (308) 762-1580

Colorado Department of Health
4300 South Cherry Creek Drive
Denver, CO
Dr. Hugh Sloan HHS (303) 844-6163 ext. 340

Colorado Department of Health Laboratory
Training Facility
8100 Lowry Boulevard
Denver, CO
Lary McNatt (303) 692-2116

Auraria Media Center/Library
Lower Level, Video Classroom AU 008
11th and Lawrence Streets
Denver, CO
Jim Straub (303) 556-4729

Mabel Smyth Auditorium
510 Beretania St.
Honolulu, Hawaii
Emory Lee (415) 437-8500

Phoenix College
1202 West Thomas Road
Phoenix, AZ 85013
Bret Garrett (602) 285-7483

San Francisco State University
425 Market Street, 2nd Floor
San Francisco, CA
Jennifer Peck (415) 437-7526

Sacramento State University
Room 11, Library
Sacramento, CA
Ginny Monroe (916) 668-2045

Fresno State University
Cedar & Shaw Streets, Room 200 (upstairs in cafeteria)
Fresno, CA
Ginny Monroe (916) 668-2045

UCLA, Northwest Corner
Sunset Village Commons, Salon 306 A
Los Angeles, CA
Dierdre Nurry (415) 744-1156

High Desert Conference & Training Center
3200 East Cheyenne Ave., J1E
North Las Vegas, NV
Vince Juarasti (702) 687-5670

Central AZ College
8470 N. Overfield Road
Coolidge, AZ
Diana Jennings (602) 280-8754

GSA Regional Headquarters
400 15th Street, SW
Auburn, WA
Rick Desimone (206) 931-7020

CLINTON ADMINISTRATION EFFORTS TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF AMERICA'S YOUNGEST CHILDREN

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

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

Preparing our children for the 21st century is among our most important national priorities. Over the past few years, scientific research has demonstrated that the earliest years of life -- before children reach school age -- are critical to their cognitive, emotional, and physical development. President Clinton is meeting the challenge to improve those years by investing in research, supporting parents and caregivers, and strengthening programs that provide early intervention to disadvantaged families.

Increased participation in Head Start, created Early Head Start for 0-3 year olds, and improved program quality. For more than thirty years, Head Start has been one of our nation's best investments. By ensuring that low-income children start school ready to learn, Head Start can pay for itself. For that reason, President Clinton has made expanding and improving Head Start a priority of his Administration. Over the past four years, funding for the program has increased by 43%, and in fiscal year 1997 Head Start will serve 800,000 low-income children four years old and younger. Initiated in 1994, there are now 142 *Early Head Start* programs across the country, expanding the proven benefits of Head Start to low-income families with children under three. Over the last three years, the Clinton Administration has also invested significantly in improving program quality, providing local programs with the resources they need to attract and retain high quality teachers and ensuring the safety of Head Start centers. The President's 1998 budget proposal provides a \$324 million increase in Head Start's budget so that it will remain on course to serve 1 million children by 2002.

Increased participation in WIC program. WIC Supplemental Nutrition Program provides nutrition packages, nutrition education, and health referrals to low-income pregnant women, infants, and children. Over the past four years participation has expanded by 1.7 million from 5.7 to 7.4 million women, infants, and children. The increase in the President's budget proposal fulfills his commitment to achieving full participation in WIC by the end of 1998. Research shows that WIC prenatal services save Medicaid much more than they cost by reducing health care expenses in the first 60 days after birth.

Raised Childhood Immunization Rates to an All-Time High. The President's Childhood Immunization Initiative focuses on five areas: 1) improving the quality and quantity of vaccination delivery services; 2) reducing vaccine costs for parents; 3) increasing community participation, education and partnerships; 4) improving systems to monitor diseases and vaccinations; and 5) improving vaccines and vaccine use. This initiative has achieved notable success: in 1995, seventy-five percent of two-year olds were fully immunized -- an historic high. Funding for childhood immunization has doubled since fiscal year 1993.

Improved Support for Infants and Toddlers with Special Needs. Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Infants and Families Program supports the continuing efforts of States to implement high quality statewide early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities. Over the past four years, funding for the program has increased by 48% or \$102.5 million. During the same period, the number of children served increased by 21.5 percent. An estimated 191,000 children will be served in fiscal year 1998.

Enhanced Family Literacy Program. Even Start Family Literacy is a family-focused grant program to improve the educational opportunities for children and their parents in low-income areas by integrating family literacy activities, including early childhood education, adult education, and parenting education. Since 1993, funding for Even Start has increased by over 40% to support programs in every state and the District of Columbia.

Improved Child Care in Public Housing. The Early Childhood Development Program helps to provide quality child care for families living in public housing communities, as well as families who are homeless or at risk of becoming so. The program allows parents or guardians who live in public housing to get and keep jobs by ensuring that their children are cared for. In 1996, \$21 million was awarded to public housing sites across the country -- three times more than in 1994.

Providing Funding for Parent Resource Centers in 42 States. In addition to involving parents in the development of state and local education plans, the President's Goals 2000 program provides funding to establish parent resource centers that help parents learn how to help their children meet high standards. The centers provide training, distribute resource materials, and support a variety of programs that strengthen family involvement in education. In fiscal year 1997, funding is available for support centers in 42 states, 14 more than in 1996.

Promoting Parents as First Teachers. The President's America Reads Challenge, a campaign to ensure that every child can read well by the end of the third grade, includes Parents as First Teachers Challenge Grants to fund proven local, regional and national programs that provide assistance to parents to help their children become successful readers. The grants can be used to expand successful programs such as the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) and the Parents as First Teachers (PAT) program. They will also fund national and regional networks to share information on how parents can help children to read.

Supported Over 90% of all Children's Research. In fiscal year 1995, the federal government spent an estimated \$2 billion on research and development directly related to children and youth. Spending at The National Institutes of Health (NIH) alone increased 25% between 1993 and 1997. This research has contributed to the recent advances in understanding early learning and language development.

Maintained the Commitment to the Medicaid Guarantee for 10 Million Children Under 6 Years Old.

This Administration has protected and, preserved -- and now will improve on -- the guarantee of Medicaid coverage for 36 million Americans, including 9 million children under the age of 6. In 1995, the President vetoed the Republican Medicaid block grant proposal that would have ended the guarantee of coverage for up to 4 million children by 2002. At the same time, the President worked with states by granting 15 comprehensive Medicaid waivers and approving many more state plan amendments that improve and expand coverage for children.

Seeks to Extend Health Coverage to Up to 5 Million Children. Although this Administration has made great strides in protecting the health of America's neediest children, there is still much to be done. In 1995, more than 10 million American children, 80% of whom have working parents, had no health insurance. The President's budget takes three important steps to address the problem of children who lack health insurance coverage:

- 1) Provides annual grants to states to cover health insurance premiums for families of workers who are in-between jobs;
- 2) Utilizes state partnership grants to help working families who are not eligible for Medicaid to purchase private insurance for their children; and
- 3) Expands Medicaid coverage by allowing states to continue Medicaid coverage for up to one year even if family income changes, intensifying outreach to children who are currently eligible but not enrolled, and continuing current law expansions of coverage to reach poor children between the ages of 13 and 18.

Increased Child Care Funding. Since 1993 federal funding for child care has increased by 22%, providing quality services for over 660,000 children of whom 65% are under 5 years of age. The newly established Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) has made available \$2.9 billion to states. This new program, authorized by the new welfare law, will assist low-income families and those coming off welfare to obtain child care so they can work or attend school.

Eliminating Childhood Lead Poisoning. The Administration has launched a major new effort to eliminate childhood lead poisoning. The campaign includes notification and disclosure to parents who buy or lease older homes so that they get the information they need to protect their children, grants to states to control lead-based paint hazards in low-income privately-owned dwellings, development of a consensus on lead safety standards, and technical assistance to ensure that lead hazard control work is done safely and efficiently.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

Embargoed For Release
Until 10:06 A.M. EDT
Saturday, April 12, 1997

RADIO ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT
TO THE NATION

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. Today, I want to talk about the toughest job any person can have. It's not a job you can quit, show up late for, or do just enough to get by. In every way, it's a lifetime commitment -- it's being a parent.

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

Parents can use some help. And while government doesn't raise children, it can sometimes give parents the tools they need to make their jobs easier. That's why we fought for and won the V-chip and a ratings systems for TV, so parents can better protect their young children from unsuitable shows. That's we fought to keep the tobacco industry from advertising their products to children. And why we're fighting to keep streets safer and to reduce juvenile crime. All these help parents to do a better job with their children.

But there is still work to be done. Parents want to do right thing by their children from the very start. And giving our youngest children what they need to thrive from the very first days of life is something the First Lady has studied for a long time. In her book, "It Takes a Village," Hillary called on our nation to give its attention to new findings about the early years of children's lives that so often are overlooked in intellectual, social and emotional development.

Our administration has worked hard to better understand these early years. Since 1993, we increased funding for children's research at the National Institutes of Health by 25 percent -- or \$322 million -- and my balanced budget plan promotes further increases in funding. We expanded and improved Head Start, and we created an Early Head Start Program for children age three or younger so that they could get the stimulation they need at those critical times.

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

We want to sort through our research and get it to parents and to care givers who work with children. So next week Hillary and I will bring together researchers, parents and other experts for the White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning: What New Research on the Brain Tells Us About Our Youngest Children.

We will meet for a full day at the White House, with satellite hook-ups to more than 60 sites around our nation. This conference is an exciting and an enormous undertaking. It is a call to action to parents, to businesses, to care givers, the media, the faith community and the government, each to do their part to enhance the earliest years of life. It grows out of our commitment to find new ways to support parents and to help their children reach their God-given potential.

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

This bill would allow workers up to 24 hours of unpaid leave each year to fulfill certain family obligations. It could allow a worker to attend a parent-teacher conference, or take a child to the pediatrician, or to find quality child care, or to care for an elderly relative.

Families occasionally need these small pieces of time to

take care of their own. More than 12 million American workers have taken leave for reasons covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act since it became the very first bill I signed into law in 1993. It was needed then, it's needed now and we need to improve on it. So I urge the Congress to act soon on this legislation. Don't ask people to choose ever between being good workers and good parents. We can help them to do both. Pass the expanded Family and Medical Leave Act.

I think this bill is so important that today I am asking all federal departments and agencies to make expanded Family and Medical Leave available to their workers immediately. Wherever possible, I want workers to have access right now to essential time off for family obligations.

I am committed to doing all we can to support families as they struggle to do right by their children. We know that the very earliest years will decide whether children grow up to become healthy and happy people. That's why we're giving parents time off to care for them, why we should extend the family leave law so millions more parents can have that opportunity and why we must focus all our science, education and public efforts to give our children the very best start in life.

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

What we do now can benefit generations of Americans to come. We can start with the smallest community -- the family. And from there we can rebuild and renew the best in America by beginning with the best of America, our children

Thanks for listening.

END

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 13, 1997

Today, Hillary and I are pleased to announce that on April 17, 1997, we will host the *White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning: What New Research on the Brain Tells Us About Our Youngest Children*. The Conference, which will take place at the White House, will spotlight exciting new findings about how our children develop, and explore how we can make the most of this information to give our children what they need to thrive.

We hope that this one-day Conference will make the latest scientific research, nearly all supported by the federal government, more accessible and understandable to America's families. The research clearly indicates the importance of children's first few years to their later success in school and in life. This Conference is a continuation of my Administration's commitment to children and, in particular, it follows Hillary's work over the years on issues relating to early childhood development.

The Conference will examine how we can use this new research in practical ways -- to be better parents, more informed care-givers and more responsive members of our communities. It will also explore how this information can be used by all members of our society -- from corporate executives to pediatricians, from ministers to elected officials -- to help strengthen America's families.

Parents desperately want to do right by their children, and we all have a role to play in making sure they have the tools they need to do the best job they can. We believe this Conference can make a valuable contribution.

-30-30-30-

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

April 3, 1997

REMARKS BY THE FIRST LADY
TO THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT
The Sheraton Washington
Washington, D.C.

MRS. CLINTON: -- I want to thank Dr. Elder and thank all of you for the expertise and leadership you bring to the field of child development. The work you do is vitally important, not only in promoting a greater understanding of our children and how they develop but in strengthening our understanding and the connection between research, public policy, and people's everyday lives.

I've had a chance to look through the book that has been produced for this biannual conference -- and I know you haven't been in Washington, D.C., since, I believe, the 1930s -- but given the number of topics and presenters, it seems like you are more than making up for the fact that you have not been here for some time. The range of topics that you are addressing and the research that you are discussing touches on every aspect of children and families and the environments in which they grow and develop.

Many years ago, it seems to me now, when I was in law school, I had the chance to study children at the Yale Child Study Center in New Haven, Connecticut. I was privileged to work with many experts in the field of psychiatry and psychology and development and social work and medicine. And I was particularly privileged to work with one of the pioneers in the field of infant behavior, Dr. Sally Provence. I still have vivid memories of the gentle and subtle ways that Dr. Provence would elicit information from parents and infants to help establish better patterns of relating to children. And I would stand sometimes behind the one-way mirror, watching her work, thinking to myself, how can we know so much about these babies? How can we draw from their gestures and their patterns of relationships such lessons? That was before I myself was a mother.

Later on in the work that I have done with children's organizations, such as the Carnegie Council on Children and others, I have been interested in watching how experts, such as yourselves, have applied the knowledge that you have learned from research to public policy, and that has become one of my abiding interests. How do we take what you have developed

through research and apply it in the public policy arena? I think that that is a question that certainly should be on the minds of anyone who takes seriously Dr. Elder's challenge about the state of children in our country. We have made a lot of progress in many areas.

Certainly, if you look at the progress that has been made in infant mortality -- eradicating childhood diseases like measles or polio, developing and releasing new drugs and therapies, making it better known to the general public what are the conditions of child rearing that are more likely than not to benefit a child's development -- one can see a very clear nexus between medical science and research and policy. I don't know that we could have made as much progress in our understanding of certain hazards that affect the lives of children -- whether those hazards be lead or tobacco or alcohol or illegal drugs -- without basic research. We are also beginning to understand how violence is a public health epidemic, and the steps that need to be taken to try to protect our children from it.

In so many areas the research that you and your colleagues do every day enhances our teaching methods for children with learning disabilities; outlines the benefits of everything from educational television programming to friendship to nutrition; gives us new tools for devising care and services for infants, toddlers, young children, adolescents; helps us strengthen programs, whether they be child care or Head Start or school programs, aimed at providing better conditions toward a child's development.

In short, science and research need social policy. And social policy needs science and research, and needs scientists and researchers. There has to be a relationship so that the work that you do and that you report at this conference doesn't just stay in a room like this but is able to inform public debate far beyond these walls.

I have seen for myself in the programs that I've worked with how using the benefits of science and research can make a difference. Dr. Elder mentioned one program that I've been involved with called the Home Instruction Program for Pre-School Youngsters -- the acronym HIPPPY -- which I always get a kick out of saying. (Laughter.) Some of you may know that it's a program which started with research at Hebrew University in Israel. And using data from research on immigrants to Israel who were exposed to many of the same social conditions as those who had lived there longer but were not progressing as well in school, researchers devised a program to begin to work with the parents of such youngsters to increase the confidence of parents, primarily mothers, in their capacity to be their child's first teacher, to begin to lay the foundation for the acquisition of academic skills. And in country after country we've seen that programs like this, if properly administered, can make a difference not only in the preparation of a child but in the increased competence of a parent.

There are many such efforts that we could mention that researchers have devised that have helped to improve the quality of life for our children, our families and our communities. So I thank you and commend you for building on the rich legacy of the SRCD and providing this opportunity to showcase some of the latest advances in children's research. What I hope is that

this work will continue to inform scientists, decision-makers, child care providers, individual parents as we seek to create more promising conditions for the growth and development of our children.

We do face many challenges. On the one hand, there have been advances and greater understanding in how a child develops. On the other hand, we know that, given the necessary prerequisites for healthy development, we are falling short in many respects, in many communities. And we must have a united effort that involves every level of society in addressing the needs of children and putting to use the information that we have.

I think it's especially important that we continue with the federal government's historic support of basic research. (Applause.) All too often skeptics wonder why the government should invest in research instead of leaving research to the private sector. Yet we know that government support is essential to the kind of progress that we have already made and that we must continue to make on behalf of children, both in the scientific and public policy arenas.

This is especially important when we talk about the issues that you are concerned with. The federal government contributes more than 90 percent of the funding for children's research in this country. Since 1993, funding for children's health research has increased by 25 percent from the federal government. And we have seen some fruits already of that investment. Without federal support we simply would not be where we are today in terms of our understanding of child development.

As unfashionable as it is in some quarters today to suggest that government has any virtues at all -- (laughter) -- I believe that government, and in particular the federal government, can be instrumental in funding research that leads to better understanding of children's needs and in adopting policies shaped by that scientific knowledge. I also believe that the government can help people apply your research in practical ways that better their lives.

Research, for example, now confirms what many of our own parents and grandparents knew intuitively all along -- that hugging a baby and reading to a child or singing and talking to a child has an impact on that child's well-being. What our parents and grandparents and the vast majority of us did not know until recently is just how great an impact those activities have on actual brain development. Clearly, the latest research from neuroscience is a very exciting step in our understanding of how children grow in their earliest years.

But the information coming from our laboratories and our clinical studies is essentially useless if parents and caregivers and teachers and doctors and lawmakers and others who have an impact on children don't have any clue about that basic information nor what to do with it.

As some of you may know, the President and I will host a conference at the White House later this month on early childhood development and learning. Our goal is to help spread the word about new research on the development of the brain in the earliest years. And to take this

extraordinary information and explore how we translate it into our everyday actions affecting children.

The White House conference will bring together leading neuroscientists, pediatricians, and child development specialists -- including some of you in this room -- with child care providers, business and religious leaders and others who are putting this knowledge to practice. It is an important starting point, a first step. But much work will have to be done to ensure that parents and caregivers who need this information actually get it and know how to make use of it.

I am still constantly surprised, when I speak with people that I meet as I travel around the country about their young infants, how many of them still do not know that reading to an infant, singing to an infant, talking to an infant -- all of that is feeding that young child's development. I still have people say to me, well, why would I talk to him? He can't talk back. And it's not that the person who says that is in any way resistant to helping a child; it's that that is not something that they've ever been told. So we will do our best to tell as many people as possible about why what many of us did because we liked doing it and thought it was good for our children turned out after all to be essential.

But we have to be vigilant about how this information is used, because for all the good ideas that new research brings, it is always subject to manipulation, oversimplification, and misinterpretation. One of my great fears, for example, about this research concerning the brain is that parents who are doing their best to raise children, often under difficult circumstances, will feel even more guilt and anxiety because they aren't sure if they are doing everything that the research should ask them to do.

I am reminded of a man I know who became so obsessed after reading in a popular magazine about how synapses develop that he determined he would read two books to his young son every night -- and he raced through the material without ever giving the child a chance to look at the pictures or ask questions about the story and couldn't understand why his son was not enjoying this experience at all. (Laughter.) And speaking with some of us, as he described what had turned into a forced march toward reading, and we asked him questions about what it was he was hoping to get out of this experience with his son, it became clear that instead of a loving, nurturing, stimulating experience, it had become a tense obligation for them both.

So there is one anecdotal piece of evidence of someone who heard about brain development, applied what he thought would be the appropriate approach, and learned quickly that that is not what we're talking about.

It's very important that, as exciting as new discoveries about early brain development are, that the early years are not seen as the only important time in a child's life. We know, from your research and from reading various reports like the excellent Carnegie Foundation Reports "Starting Points" and "Years of Promise" and "Great Transitions," that children do not exist in a vacuum of time.

Many of you in your own research have shown that children need interaction, engagement, and stimulation every day and every year of their lives, and that they can profit from that. It will do our children little good if we only care about promoting cognitive development until the age of three and then pretend that all learning is over and done with. To fully understand a child's development, we must explore the dynamics of development during each stage of life -- from birth, through adolescence, and on to adulthood. And we should be willing to invest in young people at every step of their development.

I was reminded of that forcefully during my recent trip to Africa, when I was privileged to spend time with President Mandela on Robben Island, where he had been imprisoned for 27 years. He talked to me about how the political prisoners who were educated would take time to teach prisoners who were not. They would all work in a lime quarry from early in the morning until sundown and, because they were working they had more freedom than when they were in their cells or eating or taking exercise. So they would be using the opportunity of the sand and the quarry to be showing these other prisoners letters, and then to be talking with them about learning. And so many of the prisoners who came into the prison illiterate left literate, including one man who now holds a high position in the government.

Clearly, learning doesn't stop, and all of us have an opportunity to continue to promote learning. And even with our emphasis on early childhood, we need to make clear that all people deserve a chance to learn and develop, and that although we should put more resources and attention on the earliest years, that should not be the only place that we place emphasis. I imagine that there will be some people who upon hearing about the importance of reading and talking to infants and toddlers will wonder whether mothers and fathers should immediately quit their jobs to stay home with their children and read to them all day. Some parents may, I'm sure, begin to second-guess their own personal and professional choices.

Here again, a combination of research and common sense ought to be our guide. As we will learn tomorrow from the results of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Study about child care, it does make a difference to the cognitive development of children if they are in a nurturing, stimulating child care environment.

But what does this mean in practice? It means that all children need love, attention, stimulation, and discipline no matter what settings they are in, whether it's with their own parents, babysitters, caregivers, preschool teachers, neighbors, or relatives. I have seen examples, as I'm sure many of you have over the years, of parents who work full-time and sometimes double-time and still manage to give their children the love and support they need for healthy development. And I've seen parents who stay home all day and are uninvolved, inattentive, and emotionally divorced from the children they are raising.

The same can be said for child care. There is a huge chasm of quality among child care providers, from the most nurturing and stimulating caregivers to those who fall far short of the mark.

So I hope that rather than further confusing parents on these sensitive issues, we will help them by using this new research in ways that are sensible and appropriate to their own family circumstances. There is so much we can do together by taking the results of your work, translating it into language that average parents can understand, making sure it is disseminated widely to people who have responsibility for children, and challenging decision-makers in business and government, academia, religion, every aspect of our life together, to apply what we know helps children's development in all that we do.

I know that among those participating in this conference are many established veterans of children's research, as well as some of you who are just embarking on careers. To those of you who have devoted your lifetimes to expanding our understanding of children, we are grateful for your ongoing commitment and for the wisdom and expertise you continue to lend us. And to those of you who are new to the profession, we are encouraged by your decision to commit yourselves to this important field, and we eagerly await your contributions in the years ahead.

The child development research community is making a profound contribution to the future well-being of our country. Just as your work has inspired me and many others who have watched it and followed it from outside the profession, you can't open new vistas for people everywhere. And as you gather to discuss your research in all its rich, technical complexity, please consider too its implications for public policy and the everyday lives of families. It is not always easy to take research and apply it to the public policy arena. And certainly the complexity of what you study and the results that you achieve may not always fit into a sound bite for the nightly TV news.

But I hope that you will continue to search for ways to translate your work into information that is readily available and usable in many different venues. We need that now as much as ever. I think there is a greater attention to the needs of children than there has been. We are embarking in our country on many changes -- welfare reform being but one that I could mention -- that will have profound implications on how children develop. We need your expertise; we need your early warning signals; we need your advice.

And so I would ask you not only to continue your research for the sake of developing the body of knowledge that is available to experts but to do whatever you can to make sure that information is available to all of us. This is, I believe, a moment in time to intensify our commitment to understanding child development as deeply as possible and to use that emerging knowledge to the benefit of all of our children.

It is an exciting time to be studying development with all of the breakthroughs in research that have already occurred and that are on the brink of occurring. And it will be a great test of our political will, of our humanity, of our understanding of how we are all inextricably connected to see whether or not we take what we know works for children and apply it, and that we make sure that it is not just the children of people like us who benefit from the information that is available, but that we work to make society more attentive to the needs of children and

parents who might otherwise be left behind.

The two weeks that I just spent in Africa was exhilarating, challenging, exciting, sometimes depressing, but I felt at the end of that trip that it wasn't only in our country or in advanced countries that people were beginning to focus on the next generation in a way that perhaps we hadn't for the last couple of decades. Whether I was in a classroom in Soweto with young boys and girls who were learning English; or in a school in Kampala, Uganda, with 74 eight-year-olds in a classroom because the country has committed itself to increasing school enrollment, and in the space of less than a year has increased enrollment by more than 2 million; or whether I was in the newest country in Africa, Eritrea, talking with men and women who had spent 30 years fighting for their independence, and hearing how what their doing is investing in education and health care for children -- I felt that there was a commitment to what is really important among many of the people I had a chance to meet.

I feel the same when I travel in our own country: that there are many people who look at what is happening in the economy, who look at the changes that have gone on in the family, who understand the challenges that we are facing socially, and who are committed to making it possible for more children to be productive and successful in their development.

And what we have to do -- those of you who care about the work you have committed yourselves to and those of us who want to translate your work into practical application -- is to be relentless in speaking about and standing up for the needs of children, and doing all we can to take what works and spread it as widely as possible.

As we move toward this new century -- my husband is very fond of saying we do not have a person to waste -- and we must believe that, we must act on it. And you can provide an enormous amount of inspiration and information to make sure that we do.

Thank you for what you're doing on behalf of children. And please make sure that what you know is broadly known so that all the rest of us can try to make sure we leave no child behind. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

DOING THE BEST FOR OUR KIDS

The First Lady calls for Americans to work together and give parents the tools they need to raise their children—and provide them with a lifetime of learning

SOMETIMES IT SEEMS THAT TIME HASN'T always been an ally to us parents. As Bill and I have discovered at every birthday and every milestone in our daughter Chelsea's life, months and years fly much faster than we ever want. Like other parents bracing themselves for a child's departure for college, we ask ourselves every day: "How did the baby we brought home from the hospital grow up so fast?" "Is there any way we can move the White House to her college campus?"

Of course, we know that Chelsea is ready to begin a new phase of her life and that college will be a great experience. But it still doesn't keep us from reviewing the past 17 years and wondering if we've made the most of every minute to prepare her for the challenges of adulthood.

As science is now telling us, some of the most important preparation we can give our children takes place during the earliest years of life. New research has confirmed what many parents have known instinctively: infants begin learning the minute they are born. They are acutely aware of their surroundings and their brains crave and absorb all sorts of stimulation. Recently we have learned that the combination of intellectual and emotional interactions with infants and toddlers—holding a child in your lap while reading a story, for example—is crucial to their learning and emotional development.

Although Bill and I didn't realize it at the time, the countless hours we spent cuddling with Chelsea and reading her favorite stories not only strengthened our relationship with her but literally helped her brain grow.

Unfortunately, too many children are still missing this early stimulation. Just half of all infants and toddlers in our country are routinely read to by their parents. Over the years I have met parents who tell me they never really talk to their babies because babies can't understand what they are saying. I've also met parents who thought that they

couldn't read well enough themselves to read to a child.

We must help parents understand that, no matter their educational level or reading ability, they can stimulate their children's cognitive and emotional development by talking to and reading to their children, even if they stumble over a few words here and there. Most likely, their children won't even notice. But they will notice the power of reading and the books to take them on fascinating adventures and introduce them to the world of words and ideas. And just as important, they will notice the time a parent has set aside to be with them, to hold them close and to share in a nurturing activity.

Earlier this year, I announced a nationwide effort to encourage early reading in homes across our country. I believe that few efforts can make a more dramatic difference over the next 10 years than to persuade parents of all educational and economic backgrounds to take this mission of reading, talking—and even singing—to babies more seriously.

At the same time, parents shouldn't go overboard. A friend of mine told me that he became so obsessed with making sure that he and his son finished reading two books a day that he rarely stopped for questions or allowed his son to look closely at the pictures. And mothers and fathers don't need to feel that they have to rush out and read the latest scientific paper on human brain development for exact instructions on how to interact with their children.

The point is that learning is a lifelong proposition—one that, in the best of worlds, begins at the earliest stages and continues for years. Yes, the first three years of life are crucial, but they are not the only time that parents need to be engaged with their children or help them develop the skills they need to progress in the world. We should not use this new research to ignore the learning needs of older children and adults. I thought about this recently when I visited Robben Island in South Africa, the prison where Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners were jailed for many years.



Reading to patients at a Kansas City, Mo., hospital

As Chelsea gets ready to leave for college, Bill and I can't help reviewing the past 17 years; we wonder if we've made the most of every minute to prepare her for the challenges of adulthood

While doing hard labor in a nearby limestone quarry, literate prisoners taught their fellow inmates to read by writing letters and words in the dust with their shovels and picks. One prisoner who learned to read that way went on to educate himself and now is a top official in the South African government.

My greatest hope is that we can find effective ways to apply the knowledge we are gaining from science and make it more easily available to parents. It seems as if every day more new information is piled on top of what already exists about how our children develop and what they need most to grow. And yet many parents lack access to this research and others aren't sure how to interpret it. What little information they do get comes in bits and pieces, with little guidance about how to apply it to benefit their children. This month, the president and I are convening a first-ever White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning. Our aim is to bring together parents, scientists, policymakers, educators, business leaders and child-care providers to dis-

cuss the new research on the brain and early-childhood development and explore how we can deliver this information to more homes.

Many things can conspire against parents as they try to provide children with the attention and stimulation they need to develop. Parents are often stretched for time and resources, and can use all the help they can get.

As I've been saying for years, it does take a village to raise a child. That's why we can all work together to make sure parents have the tools they need to raise their children—whether it is providing information about the importance of reading and talking to children in the early years, strengthening prenatal care, expanding Head Start or ensuring access to affordable, high-quality child care.

Our children have so much potential to grow and thrive throughout their childhood. Wherever there is patience, love and commitment, the window of opportunity for raising a healthy, happy and well-adjusted child never closes.

TALKING POINTS FOR THE PRESIDENT
WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON EARLY DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

Good morning. I want to welcome you to the White House Conference on *Early Child Development and Learning: What New Research on the Brain Tells Us About Our Youngest Children*.

For some time now, Hillary and I have been looking forward to this gathering, which grows out of our commitment to find new ways to support parents and to help their children reach their God-given potential. This Conference brings together researchers, parents, and other experts on how our youngest children develop and learn. It is an opportunity for all of us to learn about dramatic new findings about early brain development. At the same time, it gives us a chance to consider how new insights can be translated into tools that can help parents, teachers, health professionals, and policy makers do our jobs better.

We Americans are at our best when we consider our experience from many perspectives. As we seek to enlarge our understanding and find better solutions, we tend to look both outward and inward.

It was just a week ago that scientists reported that the building blocks of life may well exist on one of Jupiter's moons, providing a likely cradle for new life. Today, we're taking another look at how a new life develops—this time by looking inward. We're looking at how chemical messages inside our brains make the extraordinary leap from one cell to another. The distance these signals travel is minuscule, especially when compared to space exploration; but the leaps they make are no less miraculous. They form the neural pathways that allow the activities we think of as "brain work." Thanks to new brain imaging technologies, we know much more about how these pathways are formed and reinforced than we ever did before.

A report being released at our Conference today, *Rethinking the Brain* by the Families and Work Institute, points out some of the ways that breakthroughs in neuroscience and new understandings about child development have changed our ideas about the needs and capacities of our youngest children.

We used to think that our brains were "pre-wired" at birth, and that how brains developed depended almost entirely on the genes we were born with. Today we know that brain development depends on the interplay between nature and nurture—between the genes we are born with and the experiences we have.

Scientists tell us that a newborn comes into the world with billions of brain cells, but these cells are not yet hooked up into the networks that allow complex thought and learning to take place. The needed connections form while babies are in the world, in constant contact with their surroundings—especially with mothers and fathers and other people who care for them.

That's why the experiences children have in their first years of life are so important. Scientists tell us that early experiences don't just create a context for learning; they actually affect the way connections in the brain are formed.

What's more, early experience has a huge impact on how the brain will be "wired" throughout life. The connections that are used repeatedly in the early years are reinforced and tend to remain part of the brain's permanent circuitry. But those that are not used frequently enough tend to be eliminated.

Scientists tell us that early experiences also affect the biological systems that shape emotional and social development. Secure early relationships are fundamental to healthy brain development. Young children who have strong, secure early attachments to the people who take care of them are better able to withstand day-to-day stress later in life. They appear to be better able to regulate their own emotions, and to get along well with other people.

Research also tells us that learning continues throughout life. I, for one, am grateful for that fact every day.

But like most parents, Hillary and I have observed that there are special times when children seem to learn most quickly and easily. Scientists are now confirming that different parts of the brain develop at different times, providing prime times for acquiring different kinds of knowledge and skills. Scientists call these times "critical periods"—but I think of them as critical opportunities.

For example, children are most efficient at acquiring a language and mastering reading skills in the first decade of life. If we do not seize these opportunities, we must make up for lost time later. Whether your child is a toddler or a teenager, it is never too late to help her learn and succeed. We must never give up on any child. When it comes to growing and learning, every day is a new beginning.

At the same time, we must be realistic. Research shows that once critical opportunities have passed, learning is likely to be more difficult and more costly. Efforts to promote healthy development must begin before children enter kindergarten. And we must see to it that every American child can read independently by the third grade. That is the goal of my *America Reads* initiative. It is the impetus behind the First Lady's *National Prescription for Reading* campaign—which encourages doctors and other health professionals give new parents “prescriptions” for reading to their babies and young children.

These findings about early development, and many others that we will hear today, are certainly fascinating. But once we have a firm grasp of the scientific principles, we have to gaze outward again, so that we can seize the vital opportunities to which they point.

We have to look again at our health clinics and human services agencies, at our child care centers and our schools, and at programs in all of these institutions that strengthen parent involvement. We have to encourage community organizations, businesses, faith institutions, and the media to consider new insights into early development as they set policies and plan activities that affect families with young children.

Our administration has worked hard to better understand the early years, and to take actions that can help parents do right by their children. Since 1993, we have increased funding for children's research at the National Institutes of Health by 25 percent, and my balanced budget plan promotes further increases in funding. We expanded and improved Head Start, and we created an Early Head Start Program for children who are three years old or younger so that they can get the stimulation they need at those critical times. I signed into law the Family and Medical Leave Act, and I am calling upon members of Congress to come to the aid of our families by passing my expansion of that bill.

But we can't stop there. Today, nearly 60 percent of mothers go back to work before their babies reach their first birthday. As this trend increases, we have to be especially concerned about the healthy development and well being of their children. It is time to build on past initiatives by working together to address four broad challenges:

- **How can we ensure that mothers and fathers have the time, information, and resources they need to do right by their children?** Parenting is the toughest job in the world—and one that most of us take on with very little preparation. Balancing the responsibilities of home and work can be especially trying. Research shows that most employed parents feel pressed for time. They need our help. They don't need us to do their jobs for them. Families raise children—not the government or community organizations. But these sectors can sometimes provide tools that make parents' jobs easier.
- **How can we make sure that new and expectant parents have adequate health care coverage?** When pregnant women lack adequate nutrition, take drugs or alcohol, or experience severe stress, their children are more likely to be premature, have birth defects, have difficulty regulating themselves, and have a harder time learning. Today, one in five expectant mothers receives no prenatal care in the crucial first trimester of pregnancy; for African American, Hispanic, and American Indian women, the figure is one in three. In addition, 2.2 million children under the age of three have no health insurance.
- **How can we improve the quality of child care and early education?** We need a new national commitment to early care and education. As more and more parents work outside of the home, the majority of children under the age of five are in out-of-home child care. Many parents enroll their young children in child care centers; many others arrange for care in the homes of relatives or child care providers. Studies show that our youngest children are the most likely to spend their days in unsafe, poor quality child care. We can do better. Early Head Start is a good beginning, but we need to work with the states to raise child care standards; provide better training and education to child care providers; and strengthen consumer education; and strengthen accountability. We have to recognize the vital role and honor the contributions of the women and men who spend their days taking care of other people's children. Providing child care is hard work, and it is important work.

Not everybody can do it. Improving working conditions for these women and men must become a national priority. Only in this way can we improve the choices available to working parents.

How can we enable communities to have the flexibility and resources they need to mobilize on behalf of young children and their families? Today, in cities and towns across the nation, we are seeing many efforts to mobilize on behalf of young children and their families. We are seeing new one-stop centers providing a full range of services for families with young children; new community-based efforts to ensure that expectant parents receive prenatal care and that their children are immunized by the age of two. Across the country, in states as diverse as Ohio, Minnesota, and North Carolina, citizens are coming together to assess the needs of children and families in their communities and to respond effectively. I applaud these efforts. Now we need to do more to ensure their success. Research shows that piecemeal programs are less effective than programs embedded in comprehensive efforts to strengthen communities. We need to create public/private partnerships that can help localities create a vision of the kind of community they want to live in, devise strategies for financing and achieving that vision, and measure their results.

I am confident that the research and practical experience that we will hear about today will help us as we work together to address these urgent questions. Like you—and like the thousands of people who are joining us by means of satellite hook-ups to more than 60 sites across the nation—I'm here to learn. By the way, I'm going to be especially interested in what scientists have to tell us about how the two hemispheres of the brain develop and function. We could use a good model for getting two sides working together on a regular basis. That's why I'm encouraged by the bipartisan leadership that is being exercised to address the challenges of promoting healthy development in the early years. In particular, I am looking forward to working closely with the bipartisan task force of the National Governors' Association, chaired by Governors Miller and Voinovich.

In the weeks to come, the First Lady and I will be reporting to you on the information and ideas that emerge here today, and how they can benefit generations of Americans to come. There is a great deal to know and a great deal to do, and we must answer to the American people. Most of all, we must answer to the children. They are the best of America. Thank you.

BRAIN DEVELOPMENT AND YOUNG CHILDREN FACT SHEET

THE HUMAN BRAIN IS A WORK IN PROGRESS.

- A newborn's brain is approximately 25 percent of its adult weight.
- At birth, the brain has roughly 100 billion brain cells, but most of these brain cells (or neurons) are not yet linked into the networks that are needed throughout life to think, remember and process information.
- At birth, the parts of the brain that handle thinking and remembering, as well as emotional and social behavior, are very underdeveloped.

“...in humans, the great preponderance of brain development takes place outside the womb, in direct relationship with the external environment. In short, to a greater extent than other species, humans have brains that are dependent on environmental input.”

Rethinking the Brain: New Insights into Early Development. (1997). By Rima Shore. Families and Work Institute.

BRAIN DEVELOPMENT IS VERY DRAMATIC IN THE FIRST THREE YEARS OF LIFE.

- By the age of three, a child's brain has formed 1,000 trillion connections (or synapses) among brain cells—about twice as many as an adult's.

Research finding:

In the 1970s, Peter Huttenlocher from the University of Chicago began counting the synapses in the frontal cortex. He observed that children's brains have many more synapses than adults' brains, and the density of synapses remains high throughout the first decade of life.

“Synapses form the brain's physical 'maps' that allow learning to take place. We now know that in the months after birth, this process proceeds with astonishing rapidity, as the number of synapses increases twenty-fold, from 50 trillion to 1,000 trillion.”

Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children. (1994). Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Research finding:

Using PET scan technology, Harry Chugani and his colleagues at Michigan Children's Hospital, have documented that in the early years, the human brain has a significantly higher metabolic rate (as measured by its utilization of glucose) than it will have later in life, presumably due to the profusion of connections being formed in the brains of young children.

- By the age of three, a child's brain is at least twice as active as an adult's. It remains that way throughout the first decade of life.

“ This transformation [in the brain] corresponds to the dramatic changes that parents and other people who care for babies witness in the first years, as newborns progress with incredible speed from virtually helpless beings to children who are starting to reason, to walk and talk, to form intentions and carry them out, and to enjoy interactions with a variety of people, pets, and objects.”

Rethinking the Brain: New Insights into Early Development. (1997). By Rima Shore. Families and Work Institute.

- As these changes in brain structure and activity occur, infants and toddlers rapidly increase their cognitive, emotional, social and motor capacities.

THE EARLY YEARS ARE FILLED WITH OPPORTUNITY.

- Because brain development is so rapid and extensive in the early years, young children are biologically primed for learning.
- The brain is especially flexible during this time span. Children's ability to respond to experiences from parents and professionals is especially marked during these years.

“ While learning continues throughout the life cycle, there are 'prime times' for optimal development—periods during which the brain is particularly efficient at specific types of learning.”

Rethinking the Brain: New Insights into Early Development. (1997). By Rima Shore. Families and Work Institute.

HOW THE BRAIN IS “WIRED” DEPENDS NOT ONLY ON THE GENES CHILDREN ARE BORN WITH, BUT ALSO ON THE EXPERIENCES THEY HAVE.

- Children's early experiences—their relationships with parents and other important caregivers; the sights, sounds, smells, and feelings they encounter; and the challenges they meet—don't just influence their moods. These experiences actually affect the way children's brains are “wired.”
- As the brain responds to the experiences a child has in the early years, it creates and organizes connections among brain cells.

“Only 15 years ago, neuroscientists assumed that by the time babies are born the structure of their brains is genetically determined.”

Rethinking the Brain: New Insights into Early Development. (1997). By Rima Shore. Families and Work Institute.

“Today, researchers around the world are amassing evidence that the role of the environment is even more important than earlier studies had suggested.”

Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children. (1994). Carnegie Corporation of New York.

THE BRAIN OPERATES ON A "USE IT OR LOSE IT" PRINCIPLE.

- As children grow into adults, excess connections are thinned out, creating more efficient, powerful networks.
- The connections that are repeatedly activated through early experience are reinforced and tend to become permanent. The connections that are not used at all, or often enough, tend to be eliminated.
- In this way, even everyday events that a baby will not recall—such as playing peekaboo or feeling a soothing embrace in response to a cry—can effect the way the child's brain is wired.

“Like a sculptor chiseling a form from a block of marble, nature creates the adult brain by eliminating excess neurons and synapses from the very dense immature brain.... Researchers have not yet isolated the precise factors that control the pruning of excess neurons and synapses, but they know it is not random. Certainly, genetic programming plays a role, but there is growing evidence that the process is guided, to a significant degree, by sensory experience. In other words, the brain uses information about the outside world to design its architecture, particularly in the early years of life.”

Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children. (1994). Carnegie Corporation of New York.

CHILDREN LEARN IN THE CONTEXT OF IMPORTANT RELATIONSHIPS.

- How parents and other caregivers respond to young children directly affects the way that brain cells link up into networks.
- Studies show that children fare better when they receive consistent, warm, responsive care in the first year of life and become securely attached to their caregivers.

“A strong, secure attachment to a nurturing caregiver appears to have protective biological function, ‘immunizing’ an infant to some degree against the adverse effects of later stress or trauma.”

Rethinking the Brain: New Insights into Early Development. (1997). By Rima Shore. Families and Work Institute.

Research finding:

Megan R. Gunnar of the University of Minnesota has investigated children's reactions to stress by measuring the levels of a steroid hormone called cortisol in their saliva. Children with chronically high levels of cortisol have been shown to experience more developmental delays—cognitive, motor, and social—than other children. Gunnar has found that babies who receive warm and responsive care in their first year of life are less likely than other children to respond to minor stresses by producing cortisol than other children. And when they do respond by producing cortisol, they are better able to turn off this response.

- Securely attached children also tend to be more successful in school, and better able to get along well with other children.

Research finding:

Byron Egeland, L. Alan Sroufe, and their colleagues at the University of Michigan have conducted a longitudinal study of high risk families since 1975. They have found that children with secure attachments to their primary caregivers at age one have fewer behavior problems and better quality relationships with other children in preschool. In addition, these children have higher school achievement in the first, third and sixth grades as well as at age 15.

Mary Ellen
6-2673

TO: Elena, Pauline, Nicole, and Jen
FR: Christa

Teaching parents
about how to
raise kids

Final Documents attached:

- Event Memo
- Morning Panel Materials:
 - Script
 - Sequence of Speakers
 - Bios
- Afternoon Panel Materials:
 - Script
 - Sequence of Speakers
 - Bios
- Overview of Policy Announcements
- Fact Sheet on Children's Health Initiative
- Letter of Support from Association of American Medical Colleges
- Fact Sheet on Safe Start Initiative
- Fact Sheet on DOD Memorandum
- DRAFT Copy of Memorandum
- 1 Pager on Event
- Accomplishments Document
- List of Audience Participants
- List of Satellite Sites
- Internal Q&A

Shay Bilchik - Juvenile Justice

Carolyn Beecraft - Dep. Asst for
Families

April 16, 1997

CONFERENCE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

DATE:	April 17, 1997
LOCATION:	The East Room
TIME:	1st Panel: 10:45 am - 1:00 pm 2nd Panel: 2:45 pm - 4:30 pm
FROM:	Bruce Reed/Elena Kagan

I. PURPOSE

To call attention to new scientific research on brain development in very young children and the practical applications of these findings. This is also an opportunity to showcase what your Administration already has done to enhance early childhood development and to announce some new initiatives.

II. BACKGROUND

You and the First Lady will be hosting two panel discussions, with the Vice President and Mrs. Gore joining you for the afternoon session. During the morning session of the conference, leading researchers and child development experts will discuss the new research and what it means for parents and caregivers. The afternoon session will highlight model community efforts to support parents and enhance early childhood development. The First Lady will moderate the afternoon session.

The morning session will be broadcast to approximately 100 satellite sites attended by, among others, subcabinet officials, and regional administrators. The hosts of these satellite conferences will put on programs of their own in the afternoon.

This conference builds on the Administration's investment in children and families. The Administration has invested heavily in research to help us better understand the importance of the first few years of a child's life, including increasing the funding for NIH children's research by 25%, from \$1.3 billion to \$1.6 billion. In addition, the Administration raised funding for Head Start by 43% over the last four years and created the Early Head Start program to support families with children ages zero to three. Your FY 1988 Budget further increases participation in the Head Start program to reach 122,000 more children in FY 1998 than when you first took office. The Administration also dramatically increased participation in the WIC Supplemental Nutrition Program.

This conference is an opportunity for you to announce the following new policy announcements:

- **Executive Memorandum to DOD:** Based on reports from child care experts that the military child care system is now the best in the country, you will be issuing an executive memorandum directing the Secretary of Defense to use the Department's expertise to help improve child care across the nation. The memorandum urges the Department to consider: (1) creating partnerships with civilian child care centers in the community to help them improve quality; (2) providing training courses for civilian child care providers; (3) sharing the materials and models for worker training, accreditation and evaluation, facility design, financing, and other ingredients of the military's success; and (4) working with States and local governments to enable military child care facilities to serve as training sites for welfare recipients moving from welfare to work.
- **Children's Health Initiative:** You will announce that the Association of American Medical Colleges issued a letter of support for your children's health proposal. Your FY 1998 budget proposal includes a children's health initiative that will extend coverage to up to 5 million uninsured children by the year 2000 by strengthening Medicaid for poor children, building innovative State programs to provide coverage for working families, and continuing health coverage for children of workers who are between jobs.
- **Expanding Early Head Start.** The Department of Health and Human Services is requesting proposals for new Early Head Start programs to expand Early Head Start enrollment by one-third next year. Created by the Clinton Administration in 1994, the Early Head Start program brings Head Start's successful comprehensive services to families with children ages zero to three and to pregnant women.
- **America Reads Early Childhood Kits: "Ready, Set, Read."** America Reads is releasing early childhood development activity kits that offer suggestions to families and caregivers about developmentally appropriate activities for children ages zero to five. They will be distributed in May to early childhood programs across the country and to callers to the Department of Education's 1-800-USA-LEARN hotline. (The kits are being handed out to all of the participants and press at the conference.)
- **Safe Start.** The Department of Justice is establishing "Safe Start" to change the way law enforcement officers respond to children who are the victims of or witnesses to violence. The program will provide training on early childhood development to community police officers, prosecutors, probation and parole officers, school personnel and mental health providers. It will better prepare law enforcement officials to respond to young children exposed to violence. The initiative is built on the successful partnerships between community police officers and mental health providers funded by DOJ in New Haven, Connecticut and three other communities. (*The New Haven Police Chief will be participating in the afternoon panel to discuss the success of this partnership in New Haven.)

III. PARTICIPANTS

Briefing Participants:

The First Lady
John Podesta
Bruce Reed
Elena Kagan
Melanne Verveer
Sarah Farnsworth
Carolyn Curiel

Morning Panel Participants:

The President
The First Lady
Dr. David A. Hamburg, President of the
Carnegie Corporation of New York
Dr. Donald J. Cohen, Director of the Yale
Child Study Center (Behavior Development)
Dr. Carla J. Shatz, Professor of Neurobiology,
Univ. of California, Berkeley (Neuroscience
Overview)
Dr. Patricia K. Kuhl, Speech and Hearing
Sciences at the University of Washington
(Language/Cognitive Development)
Dr. Ezra C. Davidson, Jr., Drew University
of Medicine (Obstetrician)
Dr. T. Berry Brazelton, Harvard Medical
School (Pediatrician)
Dr. Deborah Phillips, Institute of Medicine
(Child Care expert)

Afternoon Panel Participants

The President
The First Lady
Mrs. Gore
The Vice President
Arnold Langbo, Kellogg Corporation
Dr. Gloria Rodriguez, Avance Program
Sheila Amaning, Early Childhood PTA
Melvin Wearing, New Haven Police Chief
Harriet Meyer, Ounce of Prevention
Rob Reiner, "I Am Your Child" Campaign
Governor Bob Miller, Nevada

IV. PRESS PLAN

Open.

V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS FOR FIRST PANEL

- You will briefly greet panelists in the Blue Room.
- Panelists are announced into the East Room and take seats at table.
- You and the First Lady are announced into the room and proceed to the podium.
- The First Lady makes welcoming remarks from the podium and introduces you.
- You make remarks from the podium.
- You and the First Lady then take seats at the table.
- You will call on the first speaker, David Hamburg to open the discussion.
- David Hamburg makes remarks and introduces the next three consecutive speakers.
- Dr. Donald J. Cohen makes remarks.
- Dr. Carla J. Shatz makes remarks.
- Dr. Patricia K. Kuhl makes remarks.
- You will thank the first three speakers and call on the next three speakers to discuss the implications of the information being discussed, beginning with Ezra Davidson.
- Ezra Davidson will make remarks.
- The President will ask Ezra Davidson a follow-up question.

- Dr. Berry Brazelton will make remarks.
- The First Lady will ask Dr. Berry Brazelton a follow-up question.
- Dr. Deborah Phillips will make remarks.
- You will ask a follow-up question
- At this point, you and the First Lady can pose one or two additional questions to any of the panelists.
- You will thank participants and close event.

SEQUENCE FOR SECOND PANEL (All speakers are SEATED while speaking)

- You will briefly greet participants in the Blue Room.
- The panelists are announced into the East Room and take their seats.
- You, the First Lady, the Vice President, and Mrs. Gore are introduced into room and take seats.
- Mrs. Gore makes welcoming remarks.
- The Vice President makes remarks and introduces the First Lady to moderate the discussion.
- The First Lady introduces all the panel participants and calls on them individually to speak, beginning with Mr. Arnold Langbo.
- Mr. Arnold Langbo makes remarks.
- You could ask Mr. Langbo a follow-up question.
- Dr. Gloria Rodriguez makes remarks.
- The Vice President asks Dr. Gloria Rodriguez a follow-up question.
- Sheila Amaning makes remarks.
- Mrs. Gore asks Sheila Amaning a question.
- Police Chief Melvin Wearing makes remarks.
- You could ask a follow up question to Police Chief Wearing.
- Harriet Meyer makes remarks.
- You could ask a follow-up question to Harriet Meyer
- Rob Reiner makes remarks.
- You could ask a follow-up question to Rob Reiner.
- Governor Miller makes remarks.
- You will thank Governor Miller and other participants and make closing remarks.

VI. REMARKS

Morning Panel: Opening and closing remarks prepared by Speechwriting.

Afternoon Panel: Closing Remarks prepared by Speechwriting

VII. ATTACHMENTS

- Bios on panelists
- Script of each panel
- Administration Accomplishments
- 0-3 Poll Executive Summary
- Letter of support from the Association of American Medical Colleges

FIRST PANEL OUTLINE OF EVENTS

The President opens discussion following his remarks by introducing David Hamburg, who will serve as moderator for the first panel.

David Hamburg, President of the Carnegie Corporation of New York

The Carnegie Corporation produced the Seminal 1994 Study "Starting Points." Last year David Hamburg received the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

David Hamburg will make very brief remarks and introduce the panelists. The following three speakers will make consecutive presentations:

Dr. Donald Cohen, Director of the Yale Child Study Center

Dr. Cohen will discuss emerging knowledge in the field of behavioral development.

Dr. Carla Shatz, Professor Neurobiology at the University of California, Berkeley

Dr. Shatz will explain brain development and wiring.

Dr. Patricia Kuhl (COOL), Chair, Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences, University of Washington.

Dr. Kuhl will discuss how infants learn language.

It is important to move quickly to the second portion of the panel where there is a greater opportunity for discussion. Below is a suggested question if you would like to make comments at this time.

OPTIONAL QUESTION (to Kuhl): *Can you tell us more about how the interactions between children and adults affect children's language development?*

The President will turn to the next three speakers on the panel and ask them to discuss the implications of this scientific research in each of their fields.

"We're now going to hear from three experts in obstetrics, pediatrics, and child care. They are going to tell us how they make use of this knowledge to help parents and children."

Dr. Ezra Davidson, Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science, Los Angeles

Dr. Davidson is an expert on prenatal and perinatal services and their importance for early childhood development.

SUGGESTED QUESTION: *How can we encourage people who work with expecting parents to talk to them about the importance of early learning?*

Dr. T. Berry Brazelton, Harvard Medical School

Dr. Brazelton is America's best-known pediatrician. He has written 26 books on subjects relating to child development. He will discuss the pediatrician's role in early childhood development.

FLOTUS QUESTION: As I mentioned earlier, the organization Zero to Three today released the results of a nationwide survey of parents of young children, which tries to find out what parents know and what they don't know about their children's development. It is clear from the poll's findings that parents are hungry for information on how to enhance their children's development. Dr. Brazelton, what are the best things that every parent can do to nurture their young children.

Dr. Deborah Phillips, Director of the Board on Children, Youth and Families of the National Research Council's Commission on Social and Behavioral Sciences and the Institute of Medicine.

Dr. Phillips is an expert in child care services; she will talk about the implications of this new scientific research for how we care for our youngest children.

SUGGESTED QUESTION: How can we equip parents to figure out what child care settings will be good for their children?

FLOTUS QUESTION Some people argue that what this research really tells us is that women with very young children shouldn't work outside of the home. Can you comment on that?

The President then thanks participants and makes closing remarks.

MORNING PANEL SEQUENCE OF SPEAKERS

Mrs. Clinton makes welcoming remarks.

The President makes remarks.

Dr. David A. Hamburg, President of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, introduces panelists.

Dr. Donald J. Cohen, Director of the Yale University Child Study Center, will discuss emerging knowledge in the field of behavioral development.

Dr. Carla Shatz, Professor of Neurobiology at the University of California, Berkeley, will explain brain development and wiring.

Dr. Patricia Kuhl, Chair of Speech and Hearing Sciences at the University of Washington, will discuss how infants learn language.

The President thanks first three panelists and calls on next three.

Dr. Ezra Davidson, Jr., Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science, will discuss the importance of prenatal and perinatal services to early child development.

The President asks a question.

Dr. T. Berry Brazelton, Clinical Professor of Pediatrics Emeritus at Harvard Medical School, will discuss the pediatrician's role in early childhood development.

The First Lady asks a question.

Dr. Deborah Phillips, Director of the Board on Children, Youth and Families of the National Research Council's Commission on Social and Behavioral Sciences and the Institute of Medicine, will discuss the implications of new scientific research for child care.

The President asks a question.

The First Lady asks a question.

The President will make closing remarks.

MORNING PANEL PARTICIPANTS

Dr. David A. Hamburg, President of the Carnegie Corporation of New York

Among the many projects completed in his tenure was the production of *Starting Points*, the 1994 seminal report on early childhood development. Dr. Hamburg has served on numerous policy boards, including his current position on the board of the President's Committee of Advisors on Science and Technology. In 1996, President Clinton bestowed onto Dr. Hamburg the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Dr. Donald J. Cohen, Director of the Yale University Child Study Center

The Yale Child Study Center is internationally recognized for its multi disciplinary programs of clinical and basic research, professional education, and clinical services and advocacy for children and families. Dr. Cohen is also the Irving Harris Professor of Child Psychiatry, Pediatrics and Psychology at the Yale School of Medicine. His research has focused on urban child development and approaches to intervention, as well as studies of the impact of violence and trauma on children and families in the United States and abroad.

Dr. Carla J. Shatz, Professor of Neurobiology at the University of California, Berkeley

Her ongoing studies of brain development have gained her numerous honors, including the Society for Neuroscience Young Investigator Award in 1985 and the Charles A. Dana Award for Pioneering Achievement in Health and Education in 1995. Dr. Shatz is the immediate past president of the 24,000 member Society for Neuroscience.

Dr. Patricia K. Kuhl, Chair of Speech and Hearing Sciences at the University of Washington

Dr. Kuhl's research focuses on language and speech development, and the results of her studies have illustrated how infants' early experience plays a role in the acquisition of language. She is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Psychological Society, and the Acoustical Society of America.

Dr. Ezra C. Davidson, Jr., Professor of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science, Los Angeles, California

Dr. Davidson also holds professorships at the University of California, Los Angeles and the Dartmouth School of Medicine. He has led an active career in research, education, and clinical and public service, serving, for example, as president of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and as chair of the Secretary of Health and Human Services' Advisory Committee on Infant Mortality. He currently chairs the Advisory Committee for Reproductive Health Drugs for the Food and Drug Administration.

Dr. T. Berry Brazelton, Clinical Professor of Pediatrics Emeritus at Harvard Medical School

Dr. Brazelton is a widely acclaimed pediatrician, author, and professor, who has served as president of the Society for Research in Child Development and of the National Center for Clinical Infant Programs. Dr. Brazelton is also an active member of the Child Development Unit at Children's Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts.

Dr. Deborah Phillips, Director of the Board on Children, Youth and Families of the National Research Council's Commission on Social and Behavioral Sciences and the Institute of Medicine

Dr. Phillips is an expert in child care policy. She was the first Director of the Child Care Information Service of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, and serves on numerous advisory groups that address child and family policy issues, including the Task Force on Meeting the Needs of Young Children of the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Advisory Committee on Services for Families with Infants and Toddlers of the U.S. Administration for Children, Youth and Families.

SECOND PANEL

(Suggested questions are for POTUS unless otherwise indicated)

- **Mrs. Gore will make welcoming remarks and introduce the Vice President.**
- **The Vice President will make remarks and introduce the First Lady to moderate.**
- **The First Lady will introduce panelists and call on Mr. Langbo to make remarks.**

Mr. Arnold Langbo, CEO, The Kellogg Company, Battle Creek, Michigan

Last fall, Kellogg launched a community-wide effort to provide practical early brain development information to every Battle Creek parent and caregiver.

SUGGESTED QUESTION: *What kind of employment policies can businesses adopt to support their employees as parents?*

Dr. Gloria Rodriguez, Founder, President and CEO, AVANCE, (A-VON-SAY) Inc., Texas

The AVANCE Program is a widely acclaimed community and school-based family support program that serves children and parents in low-income hispanic families throughout Texas.

***VP ASKS QUESTION:** *Can you tell us about the role of fathers in AVANCE?*

Sheila Amaning (A-MON-ING), Co-President, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Early Childhood PTA, North Carolina As a parent, as co-president of the Early Childhood PTA, and as an employee of a non-profit that provides information to parents on early learning, she is committed to enhancing childhood development.

MRS. GORE ASKS QUESTION: *What have you learned from other parents and teachers in the Early Childhood PTA program that has helped you as a parent?*

Melvin Wearing, New Haven Chief of Police, New Haven, Connecticut

Through a DOJ-funded program, Police Chief Wearing works in partnership with the Yale Child Study Center to train community police officers to use child development principles in their work.

SUGGESTED QUESTION: *Do you think this effort will help to reduce crime in the long term?*

Harriet Meyer, Executive Director, Ounce of Prevention, Chicago, Illinois

The Ounce of Prevention Fund is a statewide program in Illinois that develops innovative early childhood programs and runs model Early Head Start and child care programs.

SUGGESTED QUESTION: *What do you think are the advantages of home visiting?*

Rob Reiner, Castle Rock Entertainment, Founder of the "I Am Your Child" Campaign

The "I Am Your Child" campaign being announced this week brings together entertainment leaders, corporations, early childhood experts, etc. to work together to promote family and community involvement in the early stages of young children's lives.

SUGGESTED QUESTION: *What do you think is the media's responsibility to improve children's lives through the entertainment they provide?*

Gov. Bob Miller, Governor of Nevada, Chair of the National Governors' Association and Co-Chair of the National Governors' Association Children's Task Force.

The President will thank participants and make closing remarks.

AFTERNOON PANEL SEQUENCE OF SPEAKERS

Mrs. Gore will make welcoming remarks.

The Vice President will make remarks

The First Lady will introduce panelists.

Arnold Langbo, CEO, The Kellogg Company, will discuss the community-wide effort Kellogg launched last fall to provide early brain development information to parents.

The President asks a question.

Gloria Rodriguez, President and CEO, AVANCE, Inc. Family Support and Education Programs, Texas will discuss the contributions parenting programs can make.

The Vice President asks a question.

Sheila Amaning, Co-President, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Early Childhood PTA, will discuss the benefits of Early Childhood PTA.

Mrs. Gore asks a question.

Melvin Wearing, New Haven Chief of Police, will discuss a pioneering initiative that trains community police officers to use child development principles in their work.

The President asks a question.

Harriet Meyer, Executive Director of Ounce of Prevention in Chicago, will discuss innovative early childhood programs and model Early Head Start programs.

The President asks a question.

Rob Reiner will discuss the "I Am Your Child" campaign launched this week and the media's role in making early childhood development information available.

The President asks a question.

Governor Bob Miller will discuss what states are doing to enhance early childhood development.

The President will thank Governor Miller and make closing remarks.

AFTERNOON PANEL PARTICIPANTS

Arnold Langbo, CEO, The Kellogg Company, Battle Creek, Michigan

Last fall, Kellogg launched "Learning Now!" a community-wide partnership between local business and education leaders to provide practical early brain development information to every Battle Creek parent and caregiver. The campaign includes print, radio and TV ads, mailings to parents with information tailored to the age of their children, and brown-bag lunches in hundreds of businesses. The goal is to ensure that every student arrives at school ready to learn.

Gloria Rodriguez, President and CEO, AVANCE, Inc. Family Support and Education Programs, Texas

The AVANCE Program, founded by Dr. Rodriguez in 1973, is a widely acclaimed community and school-based family support program that serves over 7,000 low-income children and parents a year in predominantly Hispanic communities throughout Texas. AVANCE operates in public housing centers, elementary schools, and through its family service centers. It presents classes on child development and parenting activities, conducts home visits by trained staff, reaches out to fathers, and disseminates information on community services and education classes and job training.

Sheila Amaning, Co-President, Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools Early Childhood PTA, North Carolina

This Early Childhood PTA gives parents of pre-school age children the opportunity to share ideas with each other and become involved in their children's learning from the start. Ms. Amaning has participated in this Early Childhood PTA since her son was two years old.

Melvin Wearing, Chief of Police, New Haven, Connecticut

With support from the Department of Justice, the New Haven Police Department has partnered with mental health clinicians at the Yale Child Study Center to develop innovative ways in which community police officers can deliver better serve children and families exposed to violence.

Harriet Meyer, Executive Director, Ounce of Prevention, Chicago, Illinois

The Ounce of Prevention Fund combines public resources with private funds to develop and test innovative early intervention strategies for replication. The Ounce's Center for Successful Child Development provides child care, Head Start and Early Head Start, home visits, medical care, and other services to families in public housing. The Ounce's Beethoven Project was one of the models for the federal Early Head Start program established in 1994.

Rob Reiner, Founder, "I Am Your Child" Campaign

The "I Am Your Child" campaign launched this week brings together entertainment leaders, corporations, foundations, elected officials, and early childhood experts to work together to promote family and community involvement in the early stages of young children's lives.

Gov. Bob Miller, Governor of Nevada, Chair of the National Governors' Association and Co-Chair of the National Governors' Association's Children's Task Force

The National Governors' Association has formed the Children's Task Force to explore what actions states can take to enhance early childhood development.

WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING POLICY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today, the President and First Lady are hosting *The White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning: What New Research on the Brain Tells Us About Our Youngest Children*. The day-long conference highlights new scientific findings on brain development in very young children and points to the importance of children's earliest experiences in helping them get off to a strong and healthy start and reach their full potential.

Clinton Administration Commitment to Young Children. The Clinton Administration has invested heavily in research to help us better understand the importance of the first few years of life to child development and learning. President Clinton has also strengthened efforts to support families with young children by investing in Head Start and Early Head Start, the WIC Supplemental Nutrition Program, immunization and other early childhood programs.

At the conference, the President will make a series of policy announcements that build on the Clinton Administration's commitment to young children:

Improving the Quality of Child Care By Learning from the Military. Child care experts believe that the military child care system is now the best in the country. The President is issuing an executive memorandum directing the Secretary of Defense to use the Department's expertise to help improve child care across the nation. The memorandum urges the Department to consider: (1) creating partnerships with civilian child care centers in the community to help them improve quality; (2) providing training courses for civilian child care providers; (3) sharing the materials and models for worker training, accreditation and evaluation, facility design, financing, and other ingredients of the military's success; and (4) working with States and local governments to enable military child care facilities to serve as training sites for welfare recipients moving from welfare to work.

Providing Health Coverage for Children. The President's fiscal year 1998 budget includes a children's health initiative that will extend coverage to up to 5 million uninsured children by the year 2000 by strengthening Medicaid for poor children, building innovative State programs to provide coverage for working families, and continuing health coverage for children of workers who are between jobs. Today, the Association of American Medical Colleges issued a letter of support for the Clinton Administration's children's health proposal.

Importance of Early Education. The President recognizes that children must be nurtured and stimulated in the earliest years. That is why he is announcing two initiatives geared toward early learning.

- **Expanding Early Head Start.** The Department of Health and Human Services is requesting proposals for new Early Head Start programs to expand Early Head Start enrollment by one-third next year. Created by the Clinton Administration in 1994, the Early Head Start program brings Head Start's successful comprehensive services to families with children ages zero to three and to pregnant women.
- **Giving Parents and Caregivers Early Childhood Tools.** The President's America Reads Challenge is releasing "Ready*Set*Read" early childhood development activity kits. The kits

offer suggestions to families and caregivers about developmentally appropriate activities for children ages zero to five. They will be distributed in May to early childhood programs across the country and to callers to the Department of Education's 1-800-USA-LEARN hotline.

Safe Start. The Department of Justice is establishing "Safe Start" to change the way law enforcement officers respond to children who are the victims of or witnesses to violence. The program will provide training on early childhood development to community police officers, prosecutors, probation and parole officers, school personnel and mental health providers. It will better prepare law enforcement officials to respond to young children exposed to violence and can help prevent today's children from turning into tomorrow's criminals. The initiative is built on the successful partnerships between community police officers and mental health providers funded by DOJ in New Haven, Connecticut and three other communities.

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S CHILDREN'S HEALTH INITIATIVE

Significant gaps remain in children's health coverage. In 1995, 10 million children in America lacked health insurance. The President's children's health initiative will extend coverage to up to 5 million uninsured children by 2000 by strengthening Medicaid for poor children, building innovative State programs for working families, and continuing health coverage for children of workers who are between jobs. Today, the Association of American Medical Colleges issued a letter of support for the Clinton Administration's children's health initiative.

Strengthening Medicaid for Poor Children

- **12-Month Continuous Eligibility.** Currently, many children receive Medicaid protection for only part of the year. The President's fiscal year 1998 budget gives States the option to provide one year of continuous Medicaid coverage to children. The budget invests \$3.7 billion over five years, covering an estimated million children who would otherwise be uninsured.
- **Outreach.** The President also proposes to work with the Nation's Governors, communities, advocacy groups, providers, and businesses to develop new ways to reach out to the 3 million children eligible but not enrolled in Medicaid.

Building Innovative State Programs for Children in Working Families

- The President's budget provides \$3.8 billion between 1998 to 2002 (\$750 million a year) in grants to States. States will use these grants to provide insurance for children, leveraging State and private investments in children's coverage through a matching system (as in Medicaid). States have flexibility in designing eligibility rules, benefits (subject to minimums set by the Secretary), and delivery systems.
- The Federal grants, in combination with State and private money, will cover an estimated one million children whose families earn too much to qualify for Medicaid but too little to afford private coverage. The grant program will also increase Medicaid enrollment by about 400,000 kids since some families interested in the new program will learn that their children are in fact eligible for Medicaid.

Continuing Coverage for Children Whose Parents are Between Jobs

- The President's budget will give States grants to temporarily cover workers between jobs, including their children, at a cost of \$9.8 billion over the budget window. The program, which is structured as a four-year demonstration, will offer temporary assistance (up to 6 months) to families who would otherwise lose their coverage. This assistance may be used to purchase coverage from the worker's former employer (through COBRA) or other private plans, at States' discretion.
- This initiative will help an estimated 3.3 million working Americans and their families, including 700,000 children, in any given year.
- The President's budget also makes it easier for small businesses to establish voluntary purchasing cooperatives, increasing access to insurance for workers and their children.



ASSOCIATION OF
AMERICAN
MEDICAL COLLEGES

2450 N STREET, NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20037-1127
PHONE 202-828-0400 FAX 202-828-1125

Jordan J. Cohen, M.D., President

April 17, 1997

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), I write to express our strong support for your efforts to extend health care coverage to the ten million American children who are currently without coverage.

Recent studies have shown that the reduction in the availability of health insurance has disproportionately affected children in part due to the decline in employment-based dependent coverage coupled with the general reduction of employment-based coverage. As you know, lack of health insurance coverage has been shown to be a deterrent for individuals both in requesting and receiving care. As a result, many uninsured persons seek treatment for themselves and their family when their condition is more advanced and, as a result, more difficult and expensive to treat. For a child, forgoing needed medical care can have implications that last a lifetime.

The AAMC represents all of the nation's 125 accredited medical schools, approximately 400 major teaching hospitals, including 75 Veterans Affairs medical centers, the faculty of these institutions through 89 constituent academic society members and the more than 160,000 men and women in medical education as students and residents. The AAMC member institutions, which have the multiple missions of education and training, research and direct patient care, are acutely aware of the rise in the number of uninsured Americans, many of whom seek treatment at our institutions.

As you strive to reach an agreement on a balanced budget, the AAMC strongly supports your efforts as well as those on Capitol Hill to include a significant investment to expand health insurance coverage for children. We are prepared to work with you, your staff and members of Congress to achieve this critical objective for our nation's children.

Sincerely,

Jordan J. Cohen, M.D.
President

CLINTON ADMINISTRATION'S SAFE START INITIATIVE

Announcement

- Today at the White House Early Childhood Development and Learning Conference, the President announced a new Safe Start Initiative to help break the cycle of violence for our nation's youngest victims. The Safe Start Initiative will provide training to law enforcement, prosecutors, school personnel, probation officers, and other professionals to better respond to the needs of children exposed to violence in their homes and communities.

The Problem

- Throughout America, too many children are exposed to violence at home, in their neighborhoods, and in their schools. Children's exposure to violence has been associated with increased depression, anger, substance abuse, and lower academic achievement. Children who experience violence either as victims or witnesses also are at increased risk of becoming violent themselves.
- In a study conducted at Boston City Hospital, 1 out of every 10 children seen in its primary care clinic had witnessed a shooting or stabbing before the age of 6 -- half in their homes and half in the streets. The average age of these children was only 2.7 years old.

The Safe Start Initiative

- The Safe Start Initiative builds on the Child Development-Community Policing Program (CD-CP) started in 1991 between the New Haven Department of Police Services and Yale University Child Study Center, and now funded by the Department of Justice. It was more recently extended to Buffalo, NY; Charlotte, NC; Nashville, TN; and Portland, OR, with Justice Department funding.
- The Safe Start Initiative will increase the number and expand the scope of these regional demonstration sites in which community police officers partner with mental health clinicians to provide rapid and effective treatment to children exposed to violence.
- The Safe Start Initiative will also provide nationwide intensive training and technical assistance for professionals who come into contact with children who have been exposed to family and gang violence, violence in their community and schools, and abuse or neglect.
- Up to 20,000 professionals who work with children in communities across the nation will receive Safe Start training including: law enforcement, prosecutors, school personnel, and probation and parole officers.

PRESIDENT CLINTON ASKS THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT TO SHARE EXPERTISE FROM THE MILITARY CHILD CARE SYSTEM

We now know that children's earliest experiences, including those in child care, have significant effects on learning and development. I believe we all have a role to play in making sure that all of our children have a strong and healthy start in life.

– President Bill Clinton, 4/17/97

Today, the President urged the Secretary of the Department of Defense to use the military's expertise to improve child care across the nation.

Building on Success: Learning from the Military.

Child care experts believe that the military child care system is now the best in the country. Military child care programs serve the families of men and women in the United States armed forces and the civilian employees of the Department of Defense. In developing its child care system, the Department of Defense has learned how to make a difference in the day to day lives of children. The military child care system is noted for: (1) high quality standards, including a high percentage of accredited centers; (2) a strong enforcement and oversight system with four annual unannounced inspections and a 1-800 hot line for parents to report concerns; (3) mandatory training for child care providers; (4) relatively generous wages and benefits tied to continued training and education; (5) a system of linking up and providing needed support to individual home care providers; and (6) sufficient funding to make quality child care affordable.

Leading the Nation in Child Care Accreditation.

Most notably, the Defense Department today leads the nation in achieving child care accreditation: 72% of all of its child care programs have been accredited, compared to 5% nationally. Most of the Department's success in meeting accreditation standards has come recently: the National Association for the Education of Young Children has accredited 337 of military child care facilities today, as compared to 55 in 1992.

A Challenge to the Defense Department.

The President issued an executive memorandum to the Secretary of Defense, directing him to use the Department's expertise to improve child care in communities across the nation. The memorandum urges the Department to consider: (1) creating partnerships with civilian child care centers in the community to help them improve quality; (2) providing training courses for civilian child care providers; (3) sharing the materials and models used by the military for worker training, accreditation and evaluation, facility design, financing and other ingredients of their success; and (4) working with States and local governments to enable military child care facilities to serve as training locations for welfare recipients moving from welfare to work.

DRAFT

DATE

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Using Lessons Learned from the Military Child Care System to Improve the Quality of Child Care in the United States

We now know that children's earliest experiences, including those in child care, have significant effects on learning and development. I believe we all have a role to play in making sure that all of our children have a strong and healthy start in life.

The Military Child Development Programs have attained a nation-wide reputation for an abiding commitment to quality in the delivery of child care. Your dedication to adequate funding, strict oversight, improved training and wage packages, and strong family child care networks and your commitment to meeting national accreditation standards is laudatory. I believe that the military has important lessons to share with the rest of the nation on how to improve the quality of child care for all of our nation's children.

I therefore direct you, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Administrator of the General Services Administration, to share the expertise and lessons learned from the Military Child Development Programs with federal, state, and local agencies, as well as with private and non-profit entities, that are responsible for providing child care for our nation's children. I ask that you report to me, within six months with a preliminary report and within one year with a final report, on actions taken and with further recommendations. I urge you to consider the following:

- I. In consultation with States, encourage military installation child development facilities in the United States to partner with civilian child care programs in their local communities to improve the quality of service offered. The military staff could provide assistance with local accreditation efforts, offer training as available, assist with state and local child development credentialing processes, and provide models of effective child care practices.
- II. Establish military Child Care Programs of Excellence, to the greatest extent feasible, to offer training courses to civilian child care providers. These training courses could demonstrate model practices for child care centers, family child care homes, and school-

age facilities.

- III. Make widely available to the civilian child care community information on the model approaches and designs that the military uses for training and compensation, accreditation and evaluation, playground and facility design, support systems linking individual family child care providers, as well as overall financing strategies.
- IV. Establish partnerships with State or County employment and job training programs to enable Military Child Development Centers and Family Child Care Homes to serve as training locations for welfare recipients moving from welfare to work. Military programs could provide on-the-job training, work experience, and an understanding of best practices for the delivery of child care.

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

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

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

Today, the President and First Lady are hosting *The White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning: What New Research on the Brain Tells Us About Our Youngest Children*. The day-long conference highlights new scientific findings on brain development in very young children and point to the importance of children's earliest experiences in helping them get off to a strong and healthy start.

Applying New Findings on Brain Development in the Earliest Years. New scientific research shows that experiences after birth -- particularly in the first three years of life -- have a dramatic impact on brain development. That means that nurturing, talking to, singing to and reading to our youngest children will improve their ability to learn and develop throughout their lives. The White House Conference will focus on the practical applications of the latest scientific research on the brain, particularly for parents and caregivers. The conference will also be a call to action to all members of society -- including the health, business, media and faith communities, child care providers and government -- to use this information to strengthen America's families.

Clinton Administration Commitment to Young Children. This conference builds on the Clinton Administration's investment in children and families. The Administration has invested heavily in research to help us better understand the importance of the first few years of life to child development and learning. Between 1993 and 1997, funding for NIH children's research increased 25%, from \$1.3 billion to \$1.6 billion.

President Clinton has also strengthened efforts to support families with young children. To take just a few examples, the Administration raised funding for Head Start -- providing low-income children and their families with comprehensive education, health services, and nutrition -- by 43% over the last four years and created the Early Head Start program to support families with children ages zero to three. The President's FY 1998 Budget further increases participation to reach 122,000 more children in FY 1998 than when he took office. The Administration also dramatically increased participation in the WIC Supplemental Nutrition Program, providing 7.4 million pregnant women, infants, and children with nutrition packages and information and health referrals -- 1.7 million more than when President Clinton took office. And his FY 1998 Budget would achieve his goal of full participation in the WIC program by the end of FY 1998.

Conference Program and Participants. During the morning session of the conference, leading researchers and child development experts will discuss the new research and what it means for parents and caregivers. The panelists for this session are: Dr. David Hamburg, Carnegie Corporation of New York (moderator); Dr. Carla Shatz, University of California, Berkeley; Dr. Donald Cohen, Yale Child Study Center; Dr. Patricia Kuhl, University of Washington; Dr. Ezra Davidson, Drew University of Medicine, Dr. T. Berry Brazelton, Harvard University; and Dr. Deborah Phillips, National Research Council. The afternoon session will highlight model community efforts to support parents and enhance early childhood development. The panelists include: Avance Family Support and Education Program, San Antonio, TX; the CEO and Chairman of the Board, The Kellogg Company, Battle Creek Michigan; and Ounce of Prevention, Chicago, IL.

Broad Participation Across the Country. The morning session of the conference will be broadcast by satellite to over 80 locations across the country. The satellite conferences will be co-hosted by regional federal agencies, local officials, and children's and other organizations.