

THE WHITE HOUSE

October 29, 1997

Ms. Barbara Reisman
Executive Director
The Schumann Fund
21 Van Vleck Street
Montclair, NJ 07042

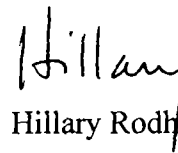
Dear Barbara:

Thank you for your letter and words of support. You were missed at the White House, but I am pleased to know that you participated in the White House Conference on Child Care at the New Jersey convening. I hope you agree that the conference opened an important national discussion of the critical challenges our nation faces in child care.

I look forward to working with you as we move ahead.

With warm regards, I am

Sincerely,



Hillary Rodham Clinton

cc: Jennifer Klein
Nicole Rabner

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 5, 1997

Susan Roman
Executive Director
American Library Association
50 East Huron Street
Chicago, IL 60611-2795

Dear Susan:

Thank you very much for your letter and for the information updating me on the Born to Read project. I am pleased to hear of your progress, and I hope that its success will continue.

The First Lady would very much like to stay involved in your efforts. Please keep me informed as you continue your work.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Klein
Special Assistant to the President
for Domestic Policy

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Chicago, Illinois 60611-2795
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Association for Library Service to Children

ALA American Library Association

October 14, 1997

COPY

Hillary Rodham Clinton
Office of the First Lady
The White House
Washington, DC 20502

Dear Mrs. Clinton

I'm writing to bring you up to date on the Born to Read project and to highlight some new and exciting developments.

In late July, the Born to Read Project received the 1997 Award of Excellence from the American Society of Association Executives in their Associations Advance America Awards. We were pleased at this recognition as you can well imagine.

The Born to Read project was the feature/cover story of the July issue of *School Library Journal*. We have enclosed a copy for your review. The coverage has sparked a lot of interest in the project and we are busy filling the requests for more information.

In September we were able to place information about the Born to Read Project in the packets distributed to participants at the meeting of the Congressional Black Caucus. Representative Payne had heard of the project and was eager to share information about it with his colleagues.

Since the April White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning, we have been pursuing many avenues to accomplish our pledge to make all the nation's public libraries Born to Read sites. Through our initial five demonstration sites we have reached over 35,000 families and the number is growing. There are now approximately 160 Born to Read sites. The State of Florida has rolled the program out statewide and will be holding training workshops for partnered librarians and health care professionals on November 5-6. The State of Ohio also is blanketing the state with workshops for Born to Read training. Both of these statewide programs are being administered through the State Library.

Reach Out and Read training will be included in some of these workshops. In fact, for its workshops Ohio is producing a video that features Sue McCleaf Nespeca, a children's librarian

and early childhood expert, and Dr. Robert Needlman, of Reach Out and Read. There are, of course, many instances where librarians have gotten involved in the Reach Out and Read training, most notably right at the Georgetown Hospital in Washington where Dr. Sandra Cuzzi, pediatrician, and Maria Salvatore, Coordinator of Children's Services at the DC Public Library, have joined together for Reach Out and Read training.

We remain deeply committed to demonstrating how Born to Read can support the America Reads Initiative and the goal of having all children reading on level by the end of third grade. As part of these efforts, I am working with New Visions for Public Schools, a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the New York Public Schools. We met with Michael Levine at the Carnegie Corporation of New York two week ago, and he has encouraged us to proceed with a full proposal for a demonstration project tentatively entitled "Born to Read: Parents As First Teachers." I do not think Michael would mind if I share our letter of intent with you. The letter will give you a good idea of this new twist to a proven program since it outlines the purpose of the project.

Thank you again for your leadership in promoting early literacy. I hope we can continue to count on you to be Honorary Chair of the Born to Read Project, even as we expand the advisory committee in this next phase of the project. Best regards.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Roman".

Susan Roman
Executive Director

enclosures

P.S. On a purely personal level, I just found out that Elise and Les Detterbeck are such good friends of yours. Elise and I trained together and are docents at the Terra Museum of American Art. Our husbands accompanied us on a recent docent trip to study the American Impressionists. On the trip, Les and I had a chance to talk about you and your wonderful commitment to improving the future of America's children and their families. It was quite a "love fest" over you and your work. I promised I would say "hello" the next time I see you, but I think Les will be seeing you before then.

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Association for Library Service to Children

COPY

ALA American Library Association

Michael H. Levine, Ph.D.
Program Officer
Carnegie Corporation of New York
437 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10022

September 19, 1997

Dear Michael:

As you know, last spring, First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton brought together two proven programs on early literacy under the title of Prescription for Reading. Born to Read, developed and administered by the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), a division of the American Library Association (ALA), was one of these two programs. As Honorary Chair of the Born to Read Project, Mrs. Clinton is well aware of the program goals and its success in working with parents. Her charge to Born to Read and to the other program, Reach Out and Read, was how we could work together to support her Prescription to Read Initiative and link it to the America Reads Challenge, as well. We think we have the answer, in part, thanks to your wisdom in sending Beth Lief and Sheila Salmon to ALSC to discuss how New Visions for Public Schools and ALSC could work together on emergent literacy through public schools.

Following the very interesting and enlightening meeting last week, Sheila, Beth, Steven Herb (ALSC immediate past-president and early childhood expert) and I met to discuss a model of how the partnership of Born to Read could be expanded to include schools. For one thing, we know from the new brain research that reading, talking, singing, etc. are essential for healthy brain development and that the stimulation must occur from birth through the earliest years for best results. We also know from research that reading aloud to children is the best predictor of developing a love of reading in children, which is the precursor for a lifelong love of reading and learning. We know, as well, that unless children continue to have support once they start school, there is a diminishing of all they learned in their preschool years. We know that parents are the first and strongest influence on a child's attitude toward education. Therefore, we have decided that Parents as First Teachers is the key to a child's success in school and beyond. This fact was substantiated through the Born to Read project. The missing piece of the Born to Read project in accomplishing Mrs. Clinton's challenge is the work with schools in making a successful transition from preschool years to school years, to ensure that all children will be reading on level by the end of third grade.

We are proposing to add a third partner to the librarian - health care provider model of Born to Read. That partner is the school. We would like to expand the original model and develop a

demonstration project entitled “Born to Read: Parents as First Teachers.” We are confident that with five distinct demonstration sites in the New York public schools, we can show how this can be done. The goals of the project would be:

- To create a nation of readers in support of the America Reads Challenge
- To support parents in their role as the child’s first teacher
- To ensure that every child has the opportunity for healthy brain development through early stimulation of language and listening skills.
- To ensure that every child will develop a love of reading as the basis for lifelong learning
- To ensure that children and their families receive the support from their earliest years through the transition into school
- To meet the White House Challenge of having every child reading on level by the end of third grade
- To break the deadly partnership between illiteracy and poverty allowing all children to achieve their dreams

In order to accomplish these ambitious goals, we propose the following:

- To expand the Born to Read program partnership to include schools
- To select five demonstration sites in the New York public school system to pilot the expanded program
- To provide training and continuing support for the partnerships which would include collaboration techniques, recruitment of volunteers, tip sheets for media coverage, etc.
- To expand school library collections and parenting centers to include materials for parents and the youngest children; e.g., paperboard and picture books in multiple copies
- To provide books and other incentives for children and their parents as motivation to participate in the model programs and to build home libraries
- To add a research and evaluation component to the project
- To increase the National Advisory Committee to include new representatives from the American Association of School Librarians, the American Academy of Pediatrics, Reach Out and Read, Families and Work Institute, and other organizations that would be vital to the success

of the program

To revise existing training manual materials to include the area of school cooperation and transition steps

To keep the White House and Mrs. Clinton closely involved in this expanded project

To use the demonstration sites as models for a national roll-out

The added dimension of involving public schools in the Born to Read project is very exciting. I know that you could tell from Beth's call after the meeting last week that the staff and members from both ALSC and New Visions are committed to a successful project that meets the challenges of Mrs. Clinton, but even more importantly, that meets the needs of children and their parents.

We look forward to our meeting with you on September 29 at 1:00 p.m. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us if you need additional information. Best personal regards.

Sincerely,

Susan Roman, Ph.D.
Executive Director

cc: Beth Lief
Sheila Salmon
Steven Herb, Ph.D.

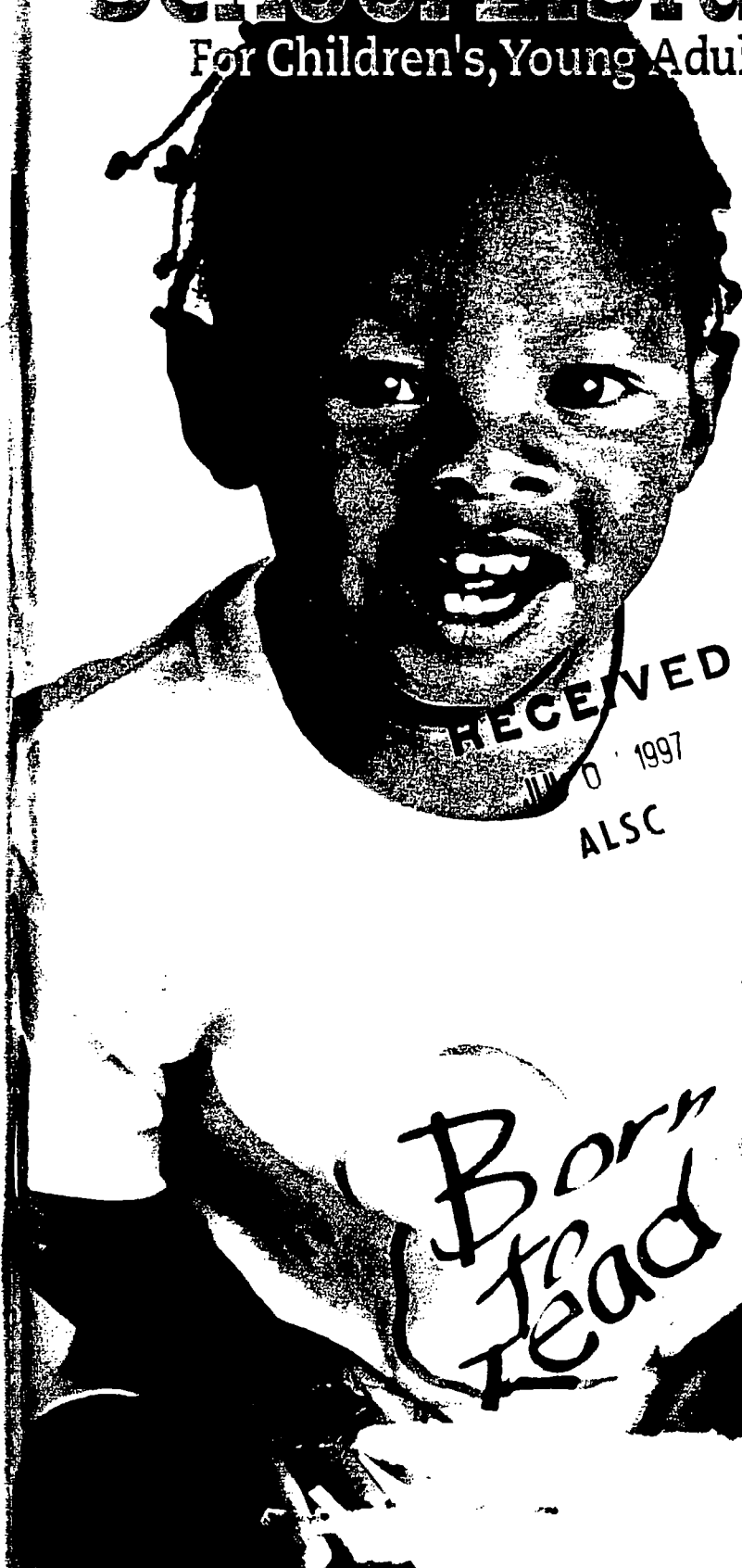
Up For Discussion: The Language of Adoption

JULY 1997

School Library Journal

For Children's, Young Adult & School Librarians

A CAHNERS/RR BOWKER PUBLICATION



**Born
to Read**
Bringing Babies
& Books Together

RECEIVED

JUL 10 1997

ALSC

**Fun on the Web:
Where do YAs Go?**

**Public Library
Career Kit**

*Born
to Read*

Ooooh Baby, What a Brain!

By Cara Barlow

Born to Read works to reach children during the years most crucial to brain development.

No bite book!" is a common cry in our household. Anna, my year-old daughter (on page 21), often gets so caught up in exploring her books that she not only looks at and handles them, but bites too. You can tell which books are her favorites by the toothmarks on the spine and the rumpled and taped pages.

Babies are hard on books, but they also need them. How else are they to learn how a book works, how to turn pages, and that books are to be enjoyed and read (but not bitten)?

Children's librarians have steadily lowered the age of children they serve at storytimes and through outreach programs to take advantage of this early developmental period. This spring, interest among the general public in the development of children from birth through age three intensified as Hillary Rodham Clinton chaired the White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning. The "I Am Your Child" campaign that began in late April included an ABC television special and a special edition of *Newsweek* on the status of young children.

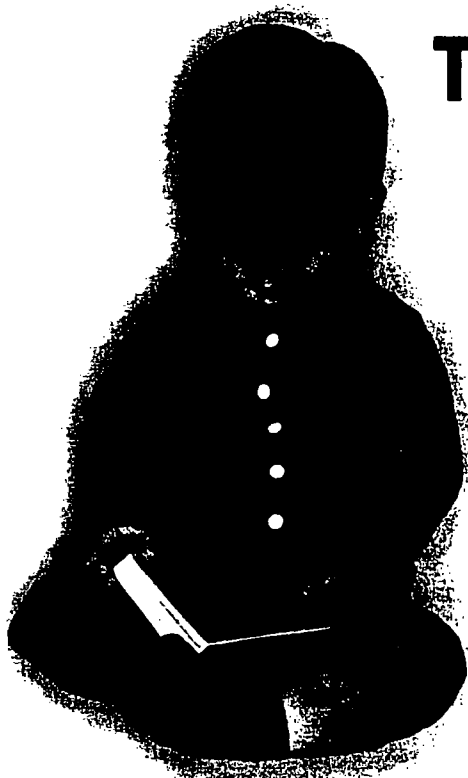
While research (see page 23) shows that the foundations of literacy are laid at a very early age, other studies show that infants and toddlers are simultaneously threatened by economic and social problems.

Cara Barlow (cbarlow@empire.net) is a New Hampshire-based freelance writer and former Head of Children's Services at the Winchester (MA) Public Library.



John Fortunato

The Early Impact of Books & Libraries



Cara Barlow

A 1994 Carnegie study called "Starting Points" (www.carnegie.org/starting-points/) provides evidence of the "quiet crisis" that confronts children under three. Among the problems the study found are inadequate prenatal care, parental isolation due to more divorces, substandard child care, and poverty. In fact, a full quarter of families with children under three live in poverty, according to the report. The findings also showed that only 50 percent of infants and toddlers are read to routinely by their parents, and many parents give insufficient attention to their child's intellectual development.

A Collective Brainstorm

Reaching at-risk parents, most of whom are not library users and may not be able to read themselves, is difficult. When I lived in Boston I volunteered for Boston City Hospital's Reach Out and Read pro-

gram. I was incredibly excited to be a volunteer—I would be working with a segment of the population with which I'd had relatively little contact, and it would be in a hospital setting, not a library. The volunteers read to children in the waiting room and pediatricians give out a book to their young patients each visit.

But reading to sick children (or their restless siblings) who may not speak English or who have never handled a book before is no easy task. I often ended up just chatting with parents about their children and children's books. The books given out by the doctors,

though, were a huge hit with both parents and children. The American Academy of Pediatrics now encourages pediatricians to give books to their patients.

Similarly, Born to Read, a project administered by ALA's Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) and initially funded by the Prudential Foundation, has attempted to build partnerships between public librarians and health care providers to reach out to new and expectant at-risk parents. The hope is that together librarians and health care providers may be able to break the cycle of illiteracy, help parents improve their reading skills, impress upon them the importance of reading to their children, and promote awareness of the health and parenting resources available in libraries.

Born to Read is part of a decade-long collective brainstorm that links health care, children's reading, and family literacy. The project started by distributing five \$30,000 grants to sites in 1995, its

first year, and now serves as a model for similar projects, funded locally

A Trio of Born to Read Sites

To see what the project entailed, I interviewed librarians at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh and the Provo (UT) City Library. I also spoke with Deborah Halsted at the Houston Public Library, which ran a Born to Read program but used alternate funding. Each library approached its Born to Read project in a different way.

Pittsburgh Starts Early. Pittsburgh's Carnegie Library and its affiliate group Beginning with Books launched Born to Read in 1995 without waiting for the babies to arrive. They started by doing outreach to mothers-to-be.

Pregnant adolescents scheduled for checkups and parenting classes at the Magee-Womens Hospital participate in a program called the Read-Aloud Parent Club, which is designed to appeal to teens, according to Elizabeth Segel of Beginning with Books. In addition to an introduction to the library and discussions on topics like "the reading-writing connection" and "celebrating diversity," the facilitator includes activities to foster the teens' involvement in the program, such as crafting homemade photograph albums or encouraging club members to compose greetings to their soon-to-arrive children.

After the Born to Read grant ran out, Pittsburgh's Drue Heinz Trust agreed to fund the Read-Aloud Parent Club for a year, through June 1997. Talking with young women about the importance of reading while they wait to see a doctor may not seem like much, but the message of why parents should prepare a story-filled home for their children got

Pittsburgh's Carnegie Library...doesn't wait for babies to arrive—they reach out to mothers-to-be.

"The younger you are, the less attention you get."—Virginia Mathews, Youth Advocate

through in a big way. One participant sent her husband to the club when she couldn't attend, and another came back to the hospital for a session just days after giving birth.

Provo Targets Dads. Utah's Provo City Library has the largest audience in the nation for children's programming: 34 percent of its population is under 18, and 6,000 babies are born each year in the county. Provo's population is highly educated, but low income levels exist due to a large student population at Brigham Young University that marries young and has large families.

"Our focus is infants," says Head of Children's Services Carla Morris. "We have 16 storytimes a week, nine of which are infant programs. We have a lot of kids and want to make sure that people know the library is welcoming to children."

Another of the original Born to Read sites, Provo's program continues today. During the first year, the library distributed 3,000 Born to Read packets to two area hospitals, purchased materials for infants, and expanded infant programming: Book Babies for infants, Mother Goose for 12- to 24-month-olds, and Toddler Times for two-year-olds. Born to Read funding also provided postnatal nursing care for at-risk families. "A child needs to be nourished in his body, but also his spirit and soul need

to be nourished and enriched by reading," said Morris.

Provo's first-year Born to Read programming also included Time with Dad, a feature that Morris hopes to return to in the future. For fathers and their children, Time with Dad sessions featured visits with author Dean Hughes, who writes sports books for children, and with Brigham Young University basketball players, who talked about what books they liked to read when they were kids. Also included in the mix were storytelling, puppets, and magic.

"Dads liked it," said Morris. "They liked having their own night, and they were just like the moms—they enjoyed meeting each other and talking about their kids. I think it made them feel like they were good dads." Despite the emphasis on sports, Morris said that the fathers brought both sons and daughters.

Because of the success of Born to Read, the library won a \$4,800 Federal Community Development Block Grant to continue distributing hospital packets. The Book Babies, Mother Goose, and Toddler Times programs have all been funded and staffed as permanent programs.

Houston Models Reading. The Born to Read program at the Houston Public Library is designed to reach at-risk African-American and Hispanic parents through local health clinics. But unlike

Pittsburgh and Provo, Houston used \$8,350 from a U.S. Department of Education Title I grant.

Children's librarians visit two clinics twice a week to model reading to children and use ethnically correct dolls, according to Deborah Halsted, HPL's Coordinator of Programming. The program, which started in October 1996, offers coupons for free board books in both Spanish and English, redeemable at the branch libraries. Participants attending at least three sessions receive a Born to Read bib, a board book, a book for themselves about reading to their children, and informational packets. Because the program is so new, Halsted said they are still ironing out wrinkles.

No Easy Task

At-risk parents are one of the toughest groups for librarians to reach, and the fact that most librarians are white, middle-class, English-speaking women does not help. Reaching parents who do not share the same background without seeming condescending or patronizing is a constant concern. And if there's a language barrier, reaching them can be literally impossible. Selecting the correct time, place, and staff for outreach programs is essential. If anything shows that we need a more ethnically diverse profession, it's the need to more easily reach minority and immigrant families with infants who are not accustomed to using public libraries.

"There's mounting evidence, too strong to be refuted, that relates to brain development and literacy," said Virginia H. Mathews, a well-known advocate for library services to youth and author of "Kids Can't Wait...Library Advocacy Now" (*SLJ*, March 1997, pp. 97-101). "We've never paid much attention to young children—the younger you are, the less attention you get. Now that's been turned upside down." □

For more information

Butler, Dorothy. *Babies Need Books.* (Atheneum, 1982)

Greene, Ellin. *Books, Babies, and Libraries.* (ALA, 1991)

Judge, April. "Nurturing a Baby's Love of Learning." *American Libraries* (December 1995): 1134

Klass, Perri. "For Children's Good Health, a Book at Every Check-Up." *Boston Globe* (October 27, 1996): D7

To Attract More Babies

Here are resources to help you create infant- and toddler-centered services.

To start a Born to Read program

Born to Read

Association for Library Service to Children

50 East Huron St.

Chicago, IL 60611

(800) 545-2433 or (312) 280-1398

lbostrum@ala.org

www.ala.org/alsc/born.html

Born to Read demonstration sites

H. Leslie Perry Memorial Library, Henderson, SC

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh

Provo (UT) City Library

Sutter County Library, Yuba City, CA

Memphis/Shelby County (TN) Public Library and Information Center



Building Blocks for Literacy: What Current Research Shows

By Steve Herb

The foundation for literacy is in preschool language experiences.

What is it about the preschool years that make them so important in the development of future reading skills?

Although young children may learn many concepts and skills from books—e.g., the range of blues that make up “blue” and, at an even earlier age, which publisher produces the tastiest book covers—the foundation for emergent literacy is in preschool experiences with language. And the only sound means of transmitting those experiences is through human interaction, the social aspects of learning.

We’ve learned that the roots of literacy appear to be strongly grounded in orality (speaking and listening) and playfulness. In fact, playful oral language experiences prepare children to understand and experiment with written language. In his book *A Is for Ox* (Pantheon, 1994), cultural historian Barry Sanders makes a passionate call for society to reinvest in our children’s literacy. He speaks of a growing number of violent and illiterate young people as “post-illiterates,” at home neither in orality nor in literacy.

Sanders’s historical research leads him to conclude that children need to be immersed in an oral culture intimately connected to their families before they can absorb text later on.

Literacy and Learning Theory

The personal and social interactions of an adult and child with a book are well covered in a variety of learning theories.

One excellent example is from the work of psychologist Lev Vygotsky. Vygotsky proposes that children’s mental abilities originate from social interactions with members of the child’s culture. Learning first occurs within this social context, and only later does the child internalize it.

He further distinguishes between development and learning. Learning takes place when a more competent person gives the child the support needed to engage in a task that would be too difficult to do alone at the child’s present developmental level. Vygotsky calls this area in which learning occurs the Zone of Proximal Development. Examples of enhancing literacy learning through the Zone of Proximal Development are:

- a parent who remembers that her four-month-old baby squeals excitedly at a particular page in a cardboard book keeps track of the book, and reads it to the baby regularly; and
- a librarian who notices a two-year-old say “pumpkin eater” when he touches a jack-o-lantern at the library and takes a moment to squat down to chant the whole rhyme with the child, perhaps repeating it at storytime.

Notice that in both examples there is a shared cultural context between child and adult: the mother who can “read” her

baby’s emotions and pairs that with a cultural idea of a favorite book, and the librarian who knows the songs and rhymes taught by families. This cultural sharing is necessary for learning because it provides continuity between what is already known and the new learning offered.

By examining the learning theories of Vygotsky and his fellow psychologists Jerome Bruner, Urie Bronfenbrenner, and Albert Bandura, we understand that literacy learning is facilitated when children have:

1. opportunities to participate in literacy activities that are guided and paced by a more skillful member of the child’s world;
2. opportunities for learning that enable the child to actively participate;
3. opportunities for intimate learning; that is, learning with support from someone who knows the child well enough to make appropriate judgments about when and what the next learning steps should be—the distinct advantage of the parent as a child’s first teacher; and
4. support for learning that resides not just in families and schools, but across a range of cultural contexts—e.g., libraries—that directly and indirectly influence children’s development.

Research Findings on Books

In this age of the Internet and an overwhelming emphasis on technology, the 32-page picture book is still the best means of linking an adult and a child in those social bonds that produce a literate human being. Research findings regarding children’s books indicate that:

- children’s early experiences with books directly relate to their success in learning to read in school. Specific aspects of these books make the experience even more effective, such as the interest level and ease of understanding and remembering the story;
- children are more motivated to request being read to, and to read or explore on their own books with which they are already familiar;
- there is a relationship between how much children have been read to and how well they will read; and
- storybook reading is a more effective influence on literacy development when children have opportunities to engage in conversation about the story.

Steven Herb is Education Librarian at Pennsylvania State University in University Park, PA, and outgoing President of the Association for Library Service to Children.

This material is based on research conducted for a paper in preparation entitled “Preschool Education Through Public Libraries,” by Steven Herb and Sara Willoughby-Herb for Westat/American Library Association.



Photo © Library

Jon Poling, intern for Jennifer Klein, responded via telephone call to Gail Solit of the National Coalition for Campus Children's Centers on October 15, 1997. Called to inform Ms. Solit that we could not accommodate her request to be included in the White House Conference on Child Care because the invitations had already gone out.

National Coalition for Campus Children's Centers

Office: P.O. Box 258, Cascade WI 53011 Phone (414) 528-7080 or 1-800-813-8207 Fax: (414) 528-8753 Fed ID #39-1587614

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Office Manager
Charles F. Boulton

October 14, 1997

First Lady Hilary Clinton
White House
Washington, DC

Dear Mrs. Clinton,

It was a pleasure and an honor to listen to your speech on child care at the University of Maryland. I also appreciated the answer you gave to my question about how you and President Clinton are thinking about the unique needs of children who have special needs and their families as well as the staff within child care centers, who serve these children. I write this letter with three "hats" on: as a Board member of the National Coalition for Campus Children's Centers, as a special educator, and as the director of the Gallaudet University Child Development Center.

As I reflect on your speech, I would like to suggest that a Board member from the National Coalition for Campus Children's Centers attend the White House conference on child care. This organization is the largest and oldest organization that is specifically dedicated to campus child care. In its 25 year history, NCCCC has provided leadership, guidance and information, to university and college administrators, early childhood professionals, college students, campus child care directors and families, on what it means to plan for and implement a high quality model program for young children at our nation's campuses.

As you suggested in your speech, one way for community child care centers to improve is to learn from some of the excellent programs that do exist in this country. As you stated there are often excellent programs on military bases and at university and college programs.

Therefore it seems that it would be appropriate to have a NCCCC Board member attend the White House conference. The Board member can offer information and input about the various campus programs and how NCCCC can assist in coordinating such efforts, as well as sharing information and ideas, learned from this conference, to its membership.

I am enclosing a current list of the NCCCC Board members.

I am also sending a copy of a 1991 Early Childhood Research Quarterly that focused completely on campus child care centers. Some of the chapters might be of interest to you and your staff.

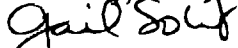
In regard to my "hat" as a special educator. Many of us in the field have worked to determine how best to serve children with special needs and challenges within child care centers and family home providers' homes. Many special educators have worked with child care centers through federal grants awarded through the Early Education Programs for Children with Disabilities (EEPCD), a division of Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS). Working through this federal department, has allowed ideas and solutions to be disseminated. As I am sure you are aware of, there are several articles and books written about serving children with special needs in child care centers. I am enclosing an article which I wrote about integrating child care centers.

I hope these resources will be useful to you and your staff as you prepare for this important conference.

I hope that this conference can be a beginning of a national, unified cohesive effort to raise the quality of child care in this country, affordable by all families.

If I can be of further help, please feel free to contact me at (202) 651- 5130.

Sincerely,


Gail Solit

Director, Gallaudet University Child Development Center

cc: Jo Copeland, President, NCCCC

202.651.5130

National Coalition for Campus Children's Centers

received

4/9/97

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 28, 1997

Patty Siegal
California Child Care Resource and Referral
111 New Montgomery Street
7th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105

Dear Patty:

We cannot thank you enough for your participation in the White House Conference on Child Care. Your contributions during the panel discussion and your expertise made the Conference a phenomenal success and we think, helped to start a national discussion on Child Care. On a personal note, it was an honor to work with you.

As soon as we receive the transcripts and photographs from the Conference, we will forward them to you. In the meantime, please feel free to call either of us at (202) 456-6266.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Klein
Special Assistant
to the President for
Domestic Policy



Nicole Rabner
Associate Director
for Domestic Policy

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 28, 1997

Michelle Seligson
Center for Research on Women
106 Central Street
Wellesley College
Wellesley, MA 02181

Michelle
Dear Michelle:

We cannot thank you enough for your participation in the White House Conference on Child Care. Your contributions during the panel discussion and your expertise made the Conference a phenomenal success and we think, helped to start a national discussion on Child Care. On a personal note, it was an honor to work with you.

As soon as we receive the transcripts and photographs from the Conference, we will forward them to you. In the meantime, please feel free to call either of us at (202) 456-6266.

Sincerely,

Jennifer

Jennifer Klein
Special Assistant
to the President for
Domestic Policy

Nicole

Nicole Rabner
Associate Director
for Domestic Policy

Ditto →

*You were
fantastic! We look
forward to working
with you in the
coming
month*

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 1, 1997

Gail Solit
National Coalition for Campus Children's Centers
P.O. Box 258
Cascade, WI 53011

Dear Ms. Solit:

Thank you very much for your letter to Mrs. Clinton and for sharing with us the 1991 Early Childhood Research Quarterly. We very much appreciate your advice and suggestions, and are glad that you were able to participate in the White House Conference on Child Care at the Department of Health and Human Services.

Please find enclosed the transcript from the conference. We look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jennifer Klein".

Jennifer Klein
Special Assistant to the President
for Domestic Policy

National Coalition for Campus Children's Centers

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Office Manager
Charles F. Boulton

October 14, 1997

First Lady Hilary Clinton
White House
Washington, DC

Dear Mrs. Clinton,

It was a pleasure and an honor to listen to your speech on child care at the University of Maryland. I also appreciated the answer you gave to my question about how you and President Clinton are thinking about the unique needs of children who have special needs and their families as well as the staff within child care centers, who serve these children. I write this letter with three "hats" on: as a Board member of the National Coalition for Campus Children's Centers, as a special educator, and as the director of the Gallaudet University Child Development Center.

As I reflect on your speech, I would like to suggest that a Board member from the National Coalition for Campus Children's Centers attend the White House conference on child care. This organization is the largest and oldest organization that is specifically dedicated to campus child care. In its 25 year history, NCCCC has provided leadership, guidance and information, to university and college administrators, early childhood professionals, college students, campus child care directors and families, on what it means to plan for and implement a high quality model program for young children at our nation's campuses.

As you suggested in your speech, one way for community child care centers to improve is to learn from some of the excellent programs that do exist in this country. As you stated there are often excellent programs on military bases and at university and college programs.

Therefore it seems that it would be appropriate to have a NCCCC Board member attend the White House conference. The Board member can offer information and input about the various campus programs and how NCCCC can assist in coordinating such efforts, as well as sharing information and ideas, learned from this conference, to its membership.

I am enclosing a current list of the NCCCC Board members.

I am also sending a copy of a 1991 Early Childhood Research Quarterly that focused completely on campus child care centers. Some of the chapters might be of interest to you and your staff.

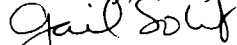
In regard to my "hat" as a special educator. Many of us in the field have worked to determine how best to serve children with special needs and challenges within child care centers and family home providers' homes. Many special educators have worked with child care centers through federal grants awarded through the Early Education Programs for Children with Disabilities (EEPCD), a division of Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS). Working through this federal department, has allowed ideas and solutions to be disseminated. As I am sure you are aware of, there are several articles and books written about serving children with special needs in child care centers. I am enclosing an article which I wrote about integrating child care centers.

I hope these resources will be useful to you and your staff as you prepare for this important conference.

I hope that this conference can be a beginning of a national, unified cohesive effort to raise the quality of child care in this country, affordable by all families.

If I can be of further help, please feel free to contact me at (202) 651- 5130.

Sincerely,



Gail Solit

Director, Gallaudet University Child Development Center

cc: Jo Copeland, President, NCCCC

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A Place for Marie: Guidelines for the Integration Process

by Gail Solit

Marie, who is four years old, is deaf. Her parents, who are also deaf, have used American Sign Language with Marie since her birth. Marie is bright, friendly, likes to converse, and is sometimes bossy — a pretty typical four year old. She attends a preschool for deaf children three days a week. Her parents and teachers feel she will benefit from attending a nearby child care center on the other two days of the week. Her working parents also need child care before and after school when the preschool for deaf children is not open.

Today more and more children with disabilities are entering child care settings. Though teachers may need a somewhat different orientation and new skills to work with children with a wider range of abilities, sound early childhood practices and teaching principles provide an effective foundation. To maximize the effectiveness of their work with these children and their families, teachers and directors need to work together to address the following topics.

Center Philosophy

Most high quality early childhood programs have developed a philosophy statement that speaks to the importance of providing a good program for all children and parents. Yet sometimes "all children" means all nondisabled children. It is a very important process for staff, parents, and other professionals to review and, where necessary, expand the center's philosophical statement to ensure that it is inclusive for all children.

It is important for everyone involved to examine their feelings about working with children and adults who

have disabilities and to explore how they feel about working with other professionals to provide appropriate services for all children and their parents. A strong explicit written philosophy statement will serve as a guide for parents and staff.

Staff Training

Marie's new teacher needs to learn about deafness. She doesn't need to become an expert; but she needs to know enough to understand evaluation data, to explain deafness to other parents and children, and to plan an appropriate educational program for Marie.

This teacher's situation is similar to that of a teacher who is new to teaching two year olds and must now learn about them — or a teacher who will be working with a child from a culture that she knows little about. Most early childhood educators expect to continually learn about children and families. As a program begins to include children with differing abilities, all staff must make a commitment to learn about each child from a variety of sources.

• Listening to parents

Since Marie's parents are also deaf, they know what this disability means for Marie. They can provide her teacher with a wealth of clinical information and terminology, and they can explain what life is like for a child who is deaf.

Parents of children who have differing abilities have listened to many, many specialists talk about their child. They have received training on how to position or hold their child who has cerebral palsy; they



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know how to use an inhaler to help a child with asthma. Most parents are eager to pass on their knowledge so the teacher can do a better job caring for their child.

- Access to specialists

Teachers should have access to all the specialists who work with a child after that child is enrolled in their classroom. Specialists provide both theoretical and practical information about the child and about the ability.

- Focused in-service training

Directors can design training opportunities to provide teachers with the information they need. Important topics include: understanding federal laws about children with differing abilities, the benefits of early intervention and inclusion, working with families, encouraging positive social interactions between children, team building, and assessment procedures. Local colleges, universities, or early childhood training institutes can be accessed by staff

Photograph by Subjects and Predicates



to acquire information on these and other relevant topics. Many books and videotapes on these topics are available through early childhood and special education presses.

Now that the teacher knows basic information about Marie, she is ready to work with her. The teacher learns that Marie has a moderate hearing loss, with no developmental or cognitive delays. Marie wears hearing aids. The audiologist taught the teacher how to check the hearing aid to ensure it is working. The teacher learns that the hearing aid will make sounds louder, but it will not necessarily clarify speech. The parents explain that Marie uses American Sign Language to communicate. The director decides to find a volunteer who can sign to Marie, communicate with the teacher, and also be a role model for Marie. The teacher also receives release time to attend sign language classes.

The audiologist explains how to adapt the classroom environment so there are less auditory distractions for Marie. The teacher learns that many aspects of the program do not need to change because Marie will benefit from the high quality early childhood classroom that is already in place.

Federal Laws

An essential area of training for early childhood teachers is information about the federal laws mandated for children with disabilities and their parents. Teachers who work in early childhood programs need to know what is expected of them.

Public Law 101-476, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) which passed Congress in 1990, shapes what educators and parents can expect and demand for their children who are differently abled. Part H (the Infants and Toddlers Program) of IDEA is a grant program to assist states in developing early intervention programs for infants and toddlers with disabilities in settings which are as similar as possible to programs that serve infants and toddlers without disabilities. Part B of IDEA states that to the extent possible children with disabilities should receive their special education services in regular education settings, often referred to as the least restrictive environment (LRE).

Information regarding federal legislation is available through the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), United States Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington,

DC 20202 — (202) 205-9084; the National Early Childhood Technical Assistance System (NEC*TAS), 500 Nations Bank Plaza, 137 East Franklin Street, Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27514 — (919) 962-2001; and the lead agencies which provide special education services for children in each state.

Team Development

Many early childhood educators already see themselves as part of a team: center team, classroom team, and teacher and parent team. In many high quality early childhood programs, teachers meet regularly to divide center tasks, to plan activities to meet curriculum goals, and to discuss progress and growth of children with each other and with parents.

Children with disabilities are guaranteed a service coordinator by law. The center providing care becomes one of the sites which the service coordinator manages for children and their families. All professionals, including child care teachers, who work with the child, together with the child's parents, become members of this multidisciplinary team. This team meets regularly to develop and implement the best Individual Educational Program (IEP) for the child and his/her family or an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP).

Working within a multidisciplinary team may be a new skill for some teachers. Some teamwork training may be required to help teachers learn to communicate across abilities and to share responsibilities in regard to children and their families.

Marie's child care teacher attends all meetings about Marie's educational plans, together with Marie's parents, the audiologist, the sign language trainer, and the teachers from the preschool serving children who are deaf. During the meetings everyone adds their observations and assessments about Marie's progress. The plan for Marie states that an adult who signs needs to be in the child care class with Marie, that the audiologist visits the child care center monthly, and that the sign language trainer visits the classroom every two weeks. Through these meetings and other less formal conversations, everyone is working to create the best program possible for Marie.

Physical Environment and Staffing Patterns

Each classroom environment must be designed to meet the needs of the age of the children served, and

it must reflect the cultures of these children. When a child who has a disability enters the classroom, the teacher needs to be ready to once again change the environment. Sometimes the changes required are physical (special chairs, standing tables) and sometimes they require staff adjustments. For a more thorough discussion about adapting environments, read the article by Diane Trister Dodge, "Places for ALL Children: Building Environments for Differing Needs."

Marie's teacher learns that for Marie's needs only a few physical environmental changes are required. Marie will function best in an environment which is visual and has many hands-on materials and activities; this classroom, already visual and highly interactive, meets the needs of all the children.

Marie's teacher learns if she wants to get everyone's attention, calling from one end of the classroom is no longer a fair or effective method because Marie will miss the message. Instead she needs to walk over to Marie, tap her on the shoulder, get her attention, and then make her announcement.

In most special education classes, the ratio of staff to children is small to allow for more individual attention. Adding staff to facilitate inclusion is often a financial issue which requires administrative attention. But there are several other methods of solving staff needs which do not require money.

One method, depending on the child's particular abilities and needs, is the utilization of volunteers, such as the Foster Grandparent Program or student interns. The director can contact local volunteer organizations or college or university programs to organize a group of assistants.

A second method to help with staffing is to bring other members of the child's interdisciplinary team into the classroom. Often, the other professional or parent can be present in the classroom during the intervention activity. Individual attention can be provided to one child with other children watching or participating — a benefit to all.

When the audiologist and the sign language trainer come to Marie's classroom they play two games with a small group of children. While they play Twister, all the children in the group, including Marie, learn the signs for red, yellow, blue, green, your turn, right, and left. During a role playing game the children have to express



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various feelings through body language, an important part of American Sign Language.

A third method to create more individual time between teacher and children is to redesign specific daily routines. During circle or meeting time, most early childhood programs read a story, discuss the day's events, or review the calendar and weather with a large group of children. A simple solution for providing more individual attention to a child with a disability within a large group is to have two concurrent meeting times instead of one.

Individual Needs

Most early childhood educators subscribe to the importance of a developmentally appropriate program for young children. Developmentally appropriate includes two concepts: age appropriateness and individual appropriateness.

All of the above adaptations and additions to Marie's class and program relate to making the program meet her individual needs. These individual needs include Marie's learning style (visual and interactive), accounting for Marie's family background (the wishes of Marie's parents), and individual personality (Marie is friendly, likes to converse, and is at times bossy).

Through her knowledge of typical development, her new knowledge about deafness, and her insights about Marie, Marie's teacher can now plan appropriate activities. For Marie, who is basically developing as a typical four year old, only a few changes are needed in the curriculum. As long as everything is presented to her in American Sign Language, all good early childhood activities should be appropriate for her. Her teacher will formulate ideas of how best to alter the curriculum through the discussions with the specialists and parents at the IEP or IFSP meeting.

Information and Support

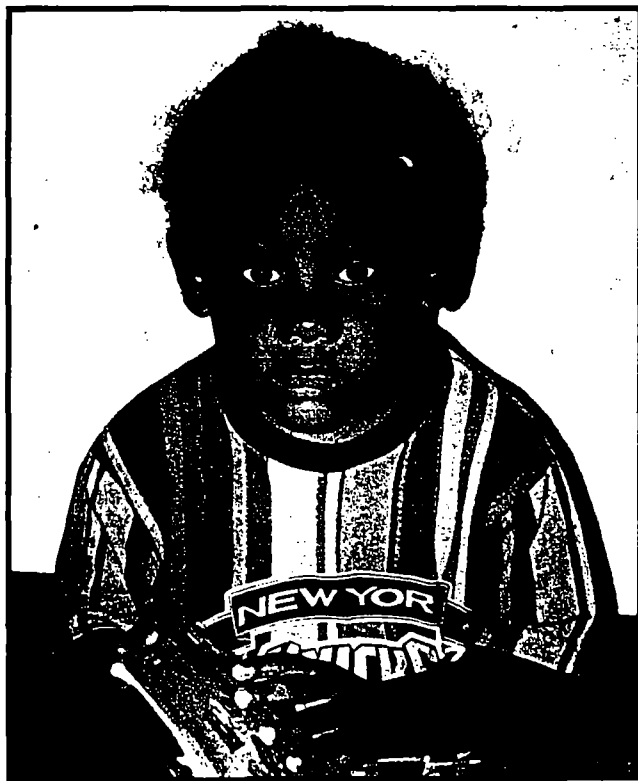
One of the adjustments teachers may need to make is how they talk to children about children with differing abilities. Because of the work of educators like Louise Derman-Sparks and the ABC Task Force, many early childhood teachers are already skilled in appropriate ways to help children accept and respect each other. Teachers need to be ready to answer questions about the child with a disability — knowledgeably and honestly.

When children asked, "Why does Marie speak funny?" the teacher answered, "Marie's speech sounds different than yours because Marie has never heard speech. Her sounds are hers; each of us has a different sounding voice. Marie does not rely on her speech to communicate but instead uses her hands. She uses American Sign Language. All of us will be learning sign language so we can better communicate with Marie and she can communicate with us. There is nothing wrong with Marie because her speech sounds different, and you do not need to be afraid of her."

Another adjustment teachers may need to make is to actively encourage social interactions between disabled and nondisabled children. Teachers may want to design some carefully planned learning activities to encourage sharing, cooperation, and interaction until all the children are comfortable with each other. Activities which pair children to complete tasks or games which include small groups of children are good ways to develop trust and tolerance between children. Once children are comfortable with each other, they will begin to see that they have much in common.

The idea of inclusion is being implemented throughout our society. Through legislation like the Ameri-

Photograph by Bonnie Neugebauer





September 22, 1997

Jennifer Klein
Special Assistant to the President
White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Washington Office
3rd Floor
624 9th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001
202-628-3636
Fax: 202-783-7123

Dear Jennifer:

I am faxing you a copy of Dr. Prema Mathai-Davis' biography as a follow-up to our conversation at the Media Strategy Group meeting. It was good to hear you say that there was a good possibility that Dr. Mathai-Davis will be included as one of the 130 people invited to the October 23rd White House Conference on Child Care. In addition to her position as **CEO of the YWCA of the U.S.A.**, a review of Dr. Mathai-Davis' background will point out many ways in which she will be an excellent participant on October 23rd. Dr. Mathai-Davis is a working mother of three who has a Ph.D. in Child Development. She is an example of how much the United States can benefit from the full participation of Asian Americans in our society.

As one of the largest providers of child care and youth services, employment preparation for women, and housing for low- and moderate income women, the YWCA has a long history in empowering women and is prepared to participate in many ways as the President leads the country to make the child care changes needed in our country.

If I can provide any further information to assist you in selecting Dr. Mathai-Davis to be one of the White House participants or if there is any other way we at the YWCA can assist with the Conference, please contact me at 717/290-7362.

Sincerely,

Rhea F. Starr
Special Assistant/Child Care Advocate

The new address for the headquarters of the YWCA of the U.S.A. is The Empire State Building, 350 Fifth Ave., Suite 301, New York City, NY 10118.



Prema Mathai-Davis
Chief Executive Officer
YWCA of the U.S.A.

Empire State Building
350 Fifth Avenue
Suite 301
New York, NY 10118
212-273-7800
Fax: 212-465-2281

Prema Mathai-Davis is the Chief Executive Officer of the nation's oldest and largest women's movement, the YWCA of the U.S.A., with affiliates operating programs and services in thousands of communities in all 50 states. The YWCA seeks to empower women and girls and eliminate racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination, and represents more than one million women and girls in communities across the country. Dr. Mathai-Davis assumed the position of leadership of the YWCA in February 1994 and brings to the position a wide range of experiences which meet the YWCA's diverse needs at a crucial point in its more than 138 year history.

Under the leadership of Dr. Mathai-Davis, the YWCA of the U.S.A. has embarked on a national strategic planning process to restructure and redefine itself for the 21st century as the premier national women's leadership movement. In addition to her national leadership role, she continues to lead and support global initiatives. This year, Dr. Mathai-Davis has served as an advisor to NIKE in their evaluation of their global business practices. In 1995, she launched a national public education campaign, the **YWCA Week Without Violence**, that seeks to encourage a broader dialogue in the country on promoting practical and sustainable alternatives to violence in everyday life. More than 20 million people participated in the campaign's first year. And in the second year, more than 20 countries on six continents participated. "For reminding a nation that violence need not be a way of life," Dr. Mathai-Davis was named as a **Woman of the Year** in 1995 by *Ms.* magazine. Dr. Mathai-Davis has initiated a national advertising campaign to showcase the many programs and services of the YWCA and participated in Lifetime Television's public education campaign "**Picture What Women Do.**" She was one of three conveners of the first "**Girls Speak-Out**" event at the United Nations during the March 1995 UN preparatory meetings for the UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. In 1996, she organized and led the first **National Girls Conference**, which focused on developing a national girls agenda based on the UN Platform for Action that was developed at the UN World Conference on Women.

During her first year at the YWCA, Dr. Mathai-Davis successfully initiated the inclusion of legislation to safeguard the confidentiality rights of rape victims in the **Violence Against Women Act of the 1994 Crime Bill**. In 1995, the YWCA initiated and led a national child care campaign to educate Congress on the need and importance of safeguarding childcare programs in the country. The public policy priorities for Dr. Mathai-Davis for the YWCA include violence prevention, fairness in the workplace, affirmative action, childcare, welfare reform, social justice issues, and health care issues.



Parents as Teachers National Center, Inc.

Vision: All parents will be their child's best first teachers

Sept. 15, 1997

First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500-0003

Dear Mrs. Clinton,

Once again, the President and you are focusing on an important issue in the lives of our nation's young children with the White House Conference on Child Care on October 23. Too little recognition is given to the importance that caregivers play in the development and well-being of our nation's children. Providers who are well-trained are not adequately recognized nor compensated, and, unfortunately, many caregivers have absolutely no training in the development, health and safety of young children. Given the new neuroscience information on the importance of the first three years, these providers play a crucial role in shaping our children's future.

I wanted to share the powerful, positive impact training has on family child care providers who have participated in the Parents as Teachers four-day training, *Quality Care*. Due to increased knowledge about child development, they provide more stimulating environments through books, toys, playtime, etc. with the children. They realize the benefits of increased communication with the parents to all parties. They have changed their practices to include healthier and more sanitary routines for the children--which is important because when children are healthy, mom or dad don't miss work. These providers also recounted how they benefitted from networking with other caregivers and exchanging ideas.

In addition to training family child care providers, Parents as Teachers (PAT) has been successfully incorporated into child care centers around the nation. When PAT is implemented in the child care center setting, everyone benefits. The child receives more individualized attention and higher quality care, and benefits from common goals set at home and in the center. The caregiver increases her knowledge of child development, and her feelings of competence and self-esteem also rise. Parents feel confident their child is receiving the best possible care, and are validated in their role as their child's first and most influential teachers.

The critical roles that parents and providers play during the first three years of a child's life assumes new importance in light of recent neuroscience findings. Parents as Teachers is leading a three-year project to translate the latest neuroscience findings on early learning into concrete "when", "what", "how" and "why" advice that supports

Robert E. Bartman
Missouri Commissioner
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Roseann Bentley
Missouri State Senator

Christopher S. Bond
United States Senator

T. Berry Brazelton
Harvard Medical School

Mel Carnahan
Missouri Governor

F. Sessions Cole
Washington University
Department of Pediatrics

Harvey R. Colten
Northwestern University
School of Medicine

Gail Daniels
Corporate Consultant

Marian Wright Edelman
Children's Defense Fund

Gerald D. Fischbach
Harvard Medical School

June Fowler
Mallinckrodt Group, Inc.

SuEllen Fried
National Committee for
Prevention of Child Abuse

Marcia Fudge
Cuyahoga County, Ohio,
Prosecutor's Office

Richard A. Gephardt
United States Congressman

Jo Ann Harmon
Emerson Electric Co.

Dianne Juhnke
Oklahoma Parents as
Teachers

Carolyn Losos
Focus St. Louis

Theresa E. Loveless
Girl Scout Council of
Greater St. Louis

Arthur L. Mallory
Education Consultant

Marylen Mann
The OASIS Institute

Jane R. Mitchell
Husch & Eppenberger

David L. Morley
Monsanto Corporation

Ann P. Murphy
"Parents" Magazine

Jane Nelson
CPI Corp.

Jane K. Paine
Nat'l. Bd., Child Welfare
League of America

Margaret Pence
Hall Family Foundations

Douglas A. Ries
Cardinal Glennon
Children's Hospital

Terry J. Singleton
CPI Corp.

William M. Van Cleve
Bryan Cave LLP

Jeannette Watson
Early Childhood Consultant

Heather Weiss
Harvard Family
Research Project

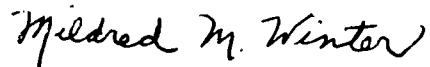
Edward F. Zigler
Yale University

parents in giving their children the best possible start in life. Our curriculum is being enhanced with neuroscience findings stated in layman language. We are co-hosting, with Washington University, a National Forum, "Good Beginnings for All Children: From Research to Action" for educators, policy makers and scientists on Nov. 7-8. The U.S. Department of Education is co-sponsoring the forum.

Our country jeopardizes the well-being and development of our children if we do not adequately train family child care providers and spotlight important issues facing parents and caregivers. We hope the attention focused on these critical issues at the October 23 Conference will only be the first step in positive action by decision makers at national, state and local levels.

We look forward to learning more about the conference and hope that the Parents as Teachers National Center will be invited to participate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mildred M. Winter".

Mildred M. Winter
Executive Director

Enclosure

Family Child Care Providers and PAT

Improving skills to nurture children's development



Parents as Teachers recognizes that to give all children a good beginning, we need to support family child care providers as well as parents.

Family child care providers offer an invaluable service to working parents. Thanks to them, mom and dad can go to work. Unfortunately, society seldom recognizes the contribution of family child care providers, who care for the majority of the nation's young children. Studies show they are often isolated from other caregivers and may have little access to training in child development. Lack of meaningful communication with parents about the child is often a primary concern of family child care providers.

Parents as Teachers (PAT), a national early childhood family education and support program, offers a special training program, *Quality Care*, to family child care providers to enhance the quality of care they provide.

Improving Skills

The four-day *Quality Care* training covers topics including working and communicating with parents, child development from birth to age 5, indicators of developmental delays, learning through play, developmentally appropriate activities and appropriate discipline.

Child care providers also form a network during the training that serves as an ongoing support system after the training ends. In addition, child care providers are linked to the PAT parent educator network for future training opportunities. They receive follow-up telephone consultation, a certificate of achievement and a one-year subscription to *Everyday TLC*, a family child care newsletter, to keep abreast of new information.

Strengthening Families

Everyone—caregiver, parent and child—benefits from this training. The child feels more secure when common goals are set by parents in the home and by the caregiver at child care. Mom and dad feel confident their child is receiving the best possible care and go to work with peace of mind, allowing them to concentrate on their job. And by taking advantage of this unique and exciting opportunity, the caregiver:

- heightens her knowledge of child development for children birth to 5;
- promotes the healthy development of the children in her care;
- enhances the parents' feelings of confidence and competence and;
- strengthens her communication with the parents.

Parents as Teachers' experience shows family child care providers gain knowledge and skills to help them provide quality care that nurtures young children's development when they attend this special training.

To help the caregivers in your community improve their skills to better nurture children, contact the Parents as Teachers National Center about *Quality Care* training.



Tips for Mom, Dad and Caregiver

Your Child Says

Please don't leave me without saying good-bye. It scares me when you disappear.

Each morning, talk to my caregiver about my previous night. Tell her when I went to bed, if I slept well, etc. Let her know about any changes in our lives such as dad traveling or grandma being in the hospital.

Sometimes I may cry or "act up" when you pick me up from child care.

I feel more grown-up when you let me make choices.

Talk or sing to me when you change my diaper, hold me or when we are driving in the car. Be sure to show me pictures in books as soon as I'm ready.

Please wait to toilet train me until I'm really ready.



Parents as Teachers Suggests

Parents, let your child know when you are leaving and reassure her that you will return later. This eases separation anxiety and builds a trusting relationship.

Caregiver, reinforce what the parent tells the child.

When parents and caregiver work as partners, you ensure continuity in the child's life, between home and the child care setting. When parents relay tidbits about their child, it helps the provider react appropriately. The reverse is true--the caregiver should let parents know how the child acted while in her care.

The child releases her emotions with the people she feels most comfortable with--you. After a long day of separation, crying or inappropriate behaviors can actually let you know your child missed you and is glad you returned.

Being able to make simple choices such as walking or being carried into the child care setting increases your child's self-esteem and promotes independence. Choosing between two alternatives gives your child practice in decision-making.

Your baby benefits when you talk, sing or read to him. Make the sounds that he makes and talk to him about what he sees, hears and does. At 5 to 6 months, your baby likes stiff-paged books so he can see the pictures and move the pages back and forth.

Most doctors agree that a child is not ready for toilet training until he is 2 years old. Signs that tell you that your child might be ready are regularly staying dry for two hours at a time during the day, waking up dry from a nap or complaining when wet or dirty. Talk with your caregiver about signs she may see.



Babies are Born to Learn™
Parents are their first teachers

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 9, 1997

Dear Mr. Wehling -

Many thanks for your prompt and generous offer to help with the October 23rd reception for participants in the White House Conference on Child Care. We're very pleased with the quality of the agenda and participants, and hope to make some real progress on this very important problem that confronts millions of American families.

I look forward to meeting you and your colleagues on the 23rd. (over)

Please feel free to call me
in the interim if you
have questions or would
like more details.

Sincerely,
Dobbie Greene