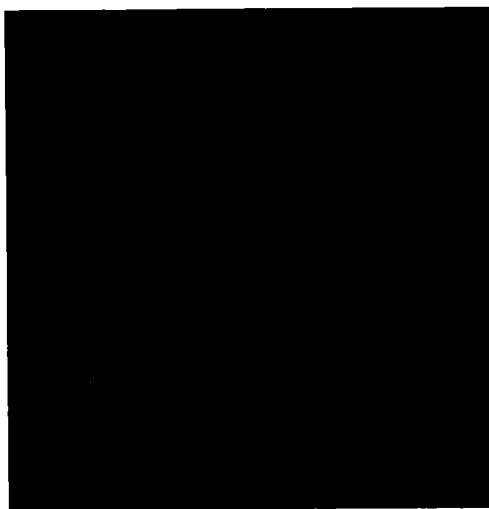


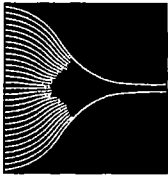


Benton Foundation

**PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION**

Molly -

I am going to have to leave in about 10 minutes or so.
I apologize if it is but the meeting ends.
RGM



Benton Foundation

THE ADVERTISING COUNCIL & THE BENTON FOUNDATION

The Keystone Campaign: Unlocking the Public's Willingness to Act on Behalf of Children

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For the first time in its more than fifty-year history, the Advertising Council has made a commitment to focus a majority of its public service advertising campaigns on a single beneficiary – children. This multi-year initiative is called “Commitment 2000: Raising a Better Tomorrow”. For the first three to five years, its centerpiece will be the “Keystone” campaign, a series of public service spots aiming to inspire Americans to come together around the needs of children and an integrated communications hub that helps them find meaningful and appropriate ways to do so.

In 1994, media donations to Ad Council campaigns were valued at a total of about \$900 million, which placed the Council among the top ten advertisers in the nation.

It is not enough, however, that messages overcome apathy and incite a public response. They must also give people a practical handle to get involved and make a difference. Inspired to act, the public wants to know how.

Appreciating the critical link between stimulating concern and expanding people's civic repertoire, the Ad Council and the Benton Foundation have forged a partnership. The assets Benton brings to the Keystone campaign include expertise in cutting-edge, interactive telecommunications and a broad network of relationships with organizations and institutions that serve the needs of children and their families.

Benton will consult with the Ad Council on message development and customize a menu of responses to the diverse interests that these messages prompt. Individuals inspired by the public service advertising will have access to a pyramid of information about opportunities for engagement at the local, state, and national levels. They will learn how to:

- ▶ give time or money to improve the lives of children;
- ▶ get better informed about children's status in the community, state, and nation;
- ▶ learn tools and techniques to help them address a specific interest related to children;
- ▶ get connected to groups that can act together on behalf of kids; and
- ▶ exercise responsible citizenship with children in mind.

Benton's state-of-the-art fulfillment system will advance an open-door policy to Americans concerned about kids and the future. The aim is less to push an agenda than to propose a continuum of contexts where people can act on behalf of children, whatever the scale of effort, whatever the specific focus or expression of caring.

The Keystone campaign represents more than an innovative, sustained effort at outreach, dissemination and mobilization. It is also an exercise in shared learning, one that promises to yield findings of strategic importance about how emerging technologies can be applied as tools to help replenish America's social capital.

Central to this delivery system will be a Communications Hub built around the World Wide Web site <http://www.kidscampaigns.org> on the Internet. This multimedia hub will be designed to meet the needs of viewers at whatever level of technology they have at their command, including Gopher, email, fax-on-demand, and regular mail services. The public service announcements will promote a toll-free telephone number and a World Wide Web address as the key access points to the hub. Viewers can use the phone service to order a campaign introduction – with a list of core documents – and a guide to using the Internet sites as well as materials available by mail order, fax-on-demand, and email. The Internet site will contain a much more expansive collection of information and resources.

In sum, the goal of the Keystone campaign is to unlock the public's natural desire to help children. Individuals who are inspired by the messages to help children will be directed to a state-of-the-art fulfillment service. This service is a critical component of an effort that will reinvent the concept of fulfillment and information dissemination. It will provide a sophisticated service that will link concerned citizens to information and a national network of service organizations that need their help.

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Benton Foundation

Leadership and tools to strengthen the
communications capacities
of nonprofit organizations

Benton

The foundation was established in 1981 in Washington DC by Charles Benton with the legacy of his father, U.S. Senator William Benton, founder of the advertising firm Benton and Bowles and owner of the Encyclopedia Britannica. Charles Benton is chairman and chief executive officer of Public Media Incorporated and chairman emeritus of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science.

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KIDS CAMPAIGNS

KidsCampaigns

<http://www.kidscampaigns.org>



Welcome to KidsCampaigns, where you'll find everything from A to Z to help improve the lives of America's kids.

Whether you are more comfortable working individually, within a neighborhood or school group, or as a leader in your town or community, this site has tools you can use to get involved and make a difference.



Find out how you can act on behalf of kids. Order a ready-made toolkit for action.



Who is working on issues in your city or state? Find out whose efforts you can join.



Join the Coalition for America's Children, a national organization of groups and individuals working for kids.



Find out about hot campaigns already at work on behalf of kids.

While you're here, please take a moment to sign our guestbook.



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What you can do takes visitors to a list of activities and toolkits that make it easy to start working on behalf of kids.

Get Connected allows people to search for organizations and campaigns already active in their area.

Join the Coalition brings people to the home page of the Coalition for America's Children.

Hot Campaigns links people to ongoing national and regional public service campaigns working to improve kids lives.



Site contents allows people to understand the site's architecture at a glance, making navigation easy.

Search lets visitors search the site's database by issue or region of interest.

More kids links connects visitors to other web and gopher sites that focus on kids issues.

Find out the Facts lets people search for hard data about kids by issue or region.

To Kids
Campaigns

About the
Coalition

Text
only



Welcome to the Coalition for America's Children

The Coalition for America's Children

<http://www.kidscampaigns.org/cachome.html>



The Coalition for America's Children is an alliance of 350 national, state, and local nonprofit organizations working together since 1990 to call attention to the serious obstacles impeding children's well-being and to boost children's concerns to the top of the public policy agenda.



Join the [Coalition for America's Children](#)



Connect with hundreds of groups working on behalf of children and browse the homepages of the [members of the Coalition](#)



Check out [Campaign '96](#) to see what the Coalition has planned for the 1996 campaign and find out [Who's for Kids](#) and [Who's Just Kidding](#)



See what [the latest polls](#) say about why Americans want to put children first



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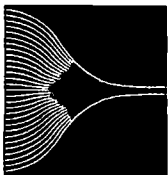
Membership invites visitors to join the Coalition as a Friend or a Member through a convenient online form.

Coalition members lets people connect with member organizations active in their city or state.

If you're looking for a current candidate's platform on children, news about the Coalition's public service campaigns, or newsflashes from members of the Coalition, *Campaign '96* is the place to go.

The *Public opinion* section houses a growing library of statistics on Americans' views about children.

Products brings people to the Coalition marketplace where they can order bumperstickers, toolkits, buttons, and Coalition publications.



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You Are Not Alone: A 21st Century KidsCampaign

Richard Louv,
Senior Editor, Kidscampaigns

Across America, children and their parents and those who care about children have reason to cheer with the entry of a new major player to connect concerned citizens to the hundreds of ways they can act on behalf of children in their communities. The Advertising Council, made up of the country's leading marketing and creative giants, has agreed to target the lion's share of its public service advertising resources on a single beneficiary-children. Its partner in the effort is the Benton Foundation, one of the founders of the Coalition for America's Children and an innovator in making media work in the public interest. Their collaborative three-year initiative is called Commitment 2000: Raising a Better Tomorrow. Its center-piece will be the "Keystone" campaign, a major new series of public service spots aimed at inspiring America to come together around the needs of children, and begin to reweave the lost strands of its social fabric.

The campaign will use the power of media to raise public consciousness about what each of us can do. But it will go much further, by creating powerful, interactive 21st Century tools, empowering millions Americans who want to help make life better for children -- but today may not know where to turn or how to do it.

While some observers believe that Americans would rather blame parents than help children, there is plenty of evidence that countless people -- fathers, mothers, grandparents seniors and others whose children are already grown, or who have no children of their own -- care deeply about the future of the next generation. What keeps them from acting? Exhaustion, lack of information and tools, a perceived scarcity of time, and most of all a lack of hope. All of these factors can be changed.

Over the past decade, while researching and writing several books, I've listened to more than 4,000 children, parents and other concerned adults. One theme, above all others, emerged. The often invisible web that helped support children in past decades -- the networks of family and friends, of teachers and neighbors, of safe sidewalks and front porches, of grandparents or surrogate grandparents, of institutions that cared for us and watched over us -- has today disappeared for too many children, and parents, too. In the past, parents depended on this web; it created the environment in which positive parenting was possible. For many parents today that web is gone, or remains as a few broken strands.

Now it is time for our generation to weave a new web of support for children and families.

* * *

To begin to weave this web, we need to squarely face the obstacles, but not be overwhelmed by them. Ad Council research, based on focus group interviews, suggests that many Americans care about children, but they think the afflictions "are so great and so pervasive that they are insoluble" and "they place the blame for children's deprivation squarely on the shoulders of 'irresponsible parents'; including poor parents."

Scratch deeper, though, and you will find deeper answers. Beneath the superficial layer of blame are deeper layers of isolation and a kind of yearning hope. If viewers and listeners are reached at these deeper layers, real action will result.

The first layer, of blame, is often expressed in such phrases as, "Children are parents' responsibility, not the government's" or "some parents and children are monsters " or "if people didn't insist on buying BMWs, the mom could stay home."

Parents may say that they blame other parents, but this is often expressed as a kind of indirect, almost subconscious indictment of themselves -- at their own limitations in a society of increasing economic pressure and decreasing community attachments. Therefore, in order to effectively reach parents, a public awareness program must be more understanding than judgmental; it must see the problems of some parents and children as, fundamentally, the problems of all parents and children, regardless of race, education, economic background, or the availability of innate or learned survival skills. I cannot emphasize enough the similarity of feeling expressed by parents in very different settings -- guilt, confusion, and anger at the systems and individuals who seemly have turned their backs on children and parents. Little positive action will result if the campaign depends solely on the message that only the good families -- the ones working hard to help themselves -- should be helped.

In fact, the more educated and well-intentioned parents are, the more confused and isolated they may, in fact, be. For example, on the issue of family time, a well educated parent may be more likely to worry about how they are going to pay for college for a child's college education; saving money for college probably demands two incomes, in an era of job insecurity. Therefore, the affluent parent may, in fact, be usually every bit as torn by guilt as the less affluent parent. Hard-working, affluent parents often feel damned if they don't spend enough time with their children, and damned if do: If they cut back work hours to be with their family, they can hurt the college fund as their family's overall economic security. Similarly, a low-income mother faces untenable choices, between, say, spending more time with her children or working longer hours in order to move to a safer neighborhood. In either of these contexts, it is not enough to say that parents should be helping themselves. Of course they should. But they cannot do it alone.

An effective campaign must first acknowledge, in a non-judgmental way, how confused and overwhelmed most parents are -- not only those with poor parenting skills, but even parents who seem to have their act together.

Fundamentally, parents today feel alone. Therefore, a central taproot message of an effective campaign must be: You are not alone.

You are not alone if you felt like hitting your kid last week; you are not alone if you're fighting the Nintendo war and losing it; you are not alone if you fear for your child's safety; you are not alone if you feel you aren't a good enough parent; you are not alone if you do not know how to ask for help; you are not alone if you do not know how to give help; you are not alone if you feel alone; and you are not alone in your desperate desire to change things, to make life better for your children -- for all children. And this message must also reach grandparents and other seniors, non-parents, business leaders: You are not alone if you sometimes feel helpless; and you are not alone in your desire to help.

The acknowledgment of common alienation is only the first part of an effective message. The message must also touch the yearning, tentative hope that lies just beneath the layer of blame and cynicism in our country. The message must say, You are not alone, because thousands of Americans want to make a difference, just like you do.

* * *

Ad Council research suggests that "the public is deeply pessimistic about its own personal future and the future of the country. Their pessimism is rooted in the decline of their personal financial situations and the moral decay they perceive all around them. They believe these two issues are linked...As for the government, they have gone beyond disenchantment, all the way to disgust. They feel the government works against them. Not for them....The old American values -- hard work, loyalty, playing by the rules -- don't count anymore. The people who live by them are routinely shafted.....A sense of community is gone."

These sentiments are certainly expressed loudly and clearly, across the country; I have heard them in the interviews I have done. But however searingly these sentiments are felt, they reside primarily on the surface.

Beneath the surface is yearning hope, which until quite recently has been unfashionable to express. It will become more fashionable shortly.

I believe a fragile but growing "culture of renewal" is beginning to compete, with some success, with the culture of fear and narcissism so abhorrent to most parents. As I wrote in a recent special report in Parents magazine, despite the continual media reports of disintegrating schools, increasing violent crime among youth, and a mouthing sense of isolation, stories of community renewal are becoming so common that it's "the equivalent of a nonviolent revolution, and it's not very well known," according to Franklin Thomas, president of the Ford Foundation. Grassroots community building -- almost always launched first in order to protect children -- seems to be back with a vengeance, whether it's in local school events, church-based family outreach programs, or the burgeoning crime-watch movement. "Everywhere I go, I hear people talking about rebuilding community," says John W. Gardner, a founder of Common Cause and chairman of the National Civic League. "A sound family is a tremendous advantage to a child, but it's not

enough. The parent has to know that when a child walks out the door, there are others who care and will create a safe environment."

One reason the community has taken on new importance is that, increasingly, families appear to have a genuine interest in staying in one neighborhood longer. The Census Bureau reported that in 1994, just 16.7 percent of Americans changed their residence annually, down from 20.2 percent nine years ago. And as they stay put, they're also digging in, working in record numbers to establish, strengthen, and improve their neighborhoods for their children. Neighborhood crime-watch groups alone now include some 17 million volunteers in 20,000 communities, almost double the number from a decade ago.

The movement is spreading church to church, block to block, business to business; it is made up of people of varying and contrasting political views, who come together on one issue: To save our children -- and ourselves -- we must rebuild community. The media have not reported this phenomenon well, but it is a paradigm shift that must be at the heart of any effective campaign on behalf of children.

Such a movement will not thrive on good intentions alone. A successful campaign for children must not only exhort Americans to volunteer, but must show them how, where, and why.

Moreover, a successful campaign must not focus solely on individual action, however important that is, but on the role that churches, PTAs, local governments, businesses, libraries, and other institutions play in providing individuals with the means to act. I organized my book, "101 Things You Can Do For Our Children's Future," to emphasize both the individual and the institutions in which individuals act; the book is organized outward, from the most personal to the most general. The campaign for children, in its media presentations, could follow the same concentric organization. The organization of "101" follows this pattern:

- * What you can do in your home and family; what you
- * What you can do in your extended and super-extended families;
- * What you can do in your neighborhood;
- * What you can do in child-care centers;
- * What you can do in schools;
- * What you can do in your place of worship;
- * What you can do in your workplace;
- * What you can do in your town or city;
- * What you can do in your state or nation.

People should be encouraged to enter at the level at which they feel comfortable, and then progress as their self-confidence and successes increase. This step-by-step, concentric method of presenting actions that people can take is important psychologically. First, people remain overwhelmed and pessimistic if the problem remains global and general, but they become more optimistic and enthusiastic when they can envision their individual actions taking place in a familiar, and defined, context.

Second, people are different in their aptitudes and interests: some Americans are good at taking action at the home or neighborhood level; others are more effective in the church or their workplace

A successful campaign must use new media to empower ordinary people. The current definition of child advocacy is limited by the constraints of old organizational methods and old ways of using media.

Child advocacy must be redefined. Rather than seeing child advocacy as something that professionals or semi-professionals do, we should see child advocacy as something anyone can do, from the grandmother concerned about neighborhood safety to a CEO committed to family-friendly policies, provided they have access to information and tools. To date, child advocacy has been limited to two levels: the efforts of national, Washington, D.C. based child advocacy organizations that focus primarily on federal legislation; the second level is comprised, mainly, of state and regional organizations that also focus on legislative remedies. These professional groups are essential.

But a third level, or stage, of child advocacy is emerging (part of what I have previously referred to as the culture of renewal). Using a public health analogy, this third stage of child advocacy could be compared to the trend (in the Third World) away from dependence on imported Western physicians and toward training health promoters -- ordinary people armed with fundamental public health information, who then move out into the villages and countryside, teaching about the relationship between boiled water and disease, and the like. Similarly, the third level of child advocacy now includes parents creating neighborhood safety patrols, seniors volunteering in reader mentor programs, re-energized PTAs, etc. However, the power of this third stage of child advocacy does not yet match its potential.

This will change if we begin to use new, interactive media to connect ordinary (and extraordinary) people to fundamental knowledge; and thereby create networks of people at all levels, locally, regionally and nationally, who can share their knowledge with each other.

This is why the Ad Council's partnership with the Benton Foundation is a major step forward to rethinking the passive brochure-in-the mail that has accompanied too many well-intentioned public service campaigns, Benton's ideas for the campaign promise to overcome the superficial notion that plugging in means connecting up, by helping people get the information they need electronically to get personally involved in local, state or national organizations that are trying to make a difference for kids. For the first time, Americans will be able to get the information they need when and where and how they need it --- by phone, fax or computer, at home at the library or at work. And they will be able to connect with each other, directly, to share their knowledge. Such an approach will change the way that our public institutions and our workplaces think about their roles; to be child-friendly means to encourage the 37 million Americans who have access to the Internet at work to get online and involved in improving the lives of children.

Those who wish to give money will be able to review the "wish lists" of a dozen children's groups in their area and contribute accordingly. Those who want to get smarter about the problems facing kids--their own and others'- will have access to national, regional and local statistics and studies, and hundreds of groups from whom they can solicit information, and with which they can share their own views. They will be able to get new information without having to "rediscover" the source each time--it will come to them automatically by e-mail or regular mail, by fax-on-demand or through the auspices of a local children's organization. And, above all, they will be able to do this on their own time, through a variety of carefully crafted "spaces," and to do so passively and privately or interactively. In essence, this new mechanism allows each user to tailor their own particular brand of child advocacy to fit their needs and interests.

Such an approach will overcome the disconnect between traditional public service campaigns and the public by creating ongoing connections, by using new fulfillment mechanisms to give viewers the tools and connections they need to move beyond spectatorism to action. While our networking efforts should not be limited to the Internet, we cannot ignore the potential power to help create a new wave of grassroots child advocacy.

Can the Internet -- the World Wide Web -- help reweave the web of support for parents and children? I think so, especially when linked with a wider array of new media techniques, from creative uses of fax machines to phone networks. Such an approach, I should add, will be newsworthy.

Beyond providing information, the campaign should provide or enhance organizational involvement mechanisms. It is vital that the campaign provide solid information on what people can do and what organizations they can join, But in the era of information overload, information is not enough. To the extent possible, the campaign should link with local media outlets and organizations to help people literally take the next step.

For example, in Salem, Oregon, Bea Genevro, a grandmother, worked closely with the local newspaper and dozens of businesses, schools, churches, synagogues and community organizations, to put into practice the principals of "101 Things You Can Do For Our Children's Future." I was asked to speak in Salem, and afterward, in prearranged meetings across Salem, citizen groups met to decide how to put the principles into practice. For example, one group of citizens interested in the role of churches met at a local church and decided which of the 101 Things they would do; they also came up with ideas of their own, specific to Salem's needs. Similarly, at other pre-arranged meetings at workplaces, schools, and in neighborhoods, other groups developed action plans -- and then acted. Not only did Bea and the newspaper distribute the information in "101" but these citizen groups adapted the information to Salem's special needs, and made sure the goals were met.

"101" is only one tool. But what if the national campaign were to replicate Bea's system in target communities around the country, with a variety of tools and media? Doing so would turn information into direct action, and would generate even more publicity and more action on behalf of children.

Beyond information dissemination and consciousness-raising, the ultimate goal of a successful campaign should be face-to-face action by people like you and me, on behalf of children.

* * *

How can Americans, especially parents, be expected to respond to such a campaign if they are as stressed as we believe they are? Most of us probably have more flexibility and energy than we believe we do, but this potential is unlikely to be actualized if we believe we are acting alone or if we do not see how acting can enhance our life. Moreover, the campaign will fail if it consciously or unconsciously places most of the burden on mothers.

It will succeed if it shows parents, particularly mothers, that they are not alone; and that each of us, in acting on behalf of children, will improve our own lives -- immediately -- because our own sense of personal isolation will be replaced by connection, community and purpose.

An effective campaign must deal squarely with the issue of time. Ad Council research shows that while people think highly of volunteerism, they often resist doing it. Yet the figures of increased community involvement suggest that the resistance can be overcome. One way is to break it down into doable parts. This is one reason why the image of the "web" is so effective; people understand that they do not have to weave the whole web by themselves, an overwhelming and paralyzing thought, but that they can weave a strand or two, and these can connect with the strands that others weave.

An important message of the campaign should be: We have more time for children than we suspect. Jack Levine, Florida's leading child advocate, is troubled by the fact that nobody seems to have much time anymore to build community, to volunteer in the schools or join a service club or even to know their neighbors. "There are three essential divisions in our waking hours: work, leisure, and family time," Levine says. "So if we're going to spend more time building community, where is that time going to come from?"

Probably not from work, not in this economy. Certainly not from family; we don't have enough family time now. What about leisure? Depending on which survey you trust, leisure time is shrinking, too. Nonetheless, Levine believes that big chunks of leisure time can be redirected to family and community. "For too many Americans today, leisure is defined as the first six-pack in the second quarter of the second TV football game," he says.

"We've equated leisure with spectatorism, to the detriment of our kids, our communities, our economy. "We've got to say to ourselves that time with family and time with community are forms of true leisure. We've got to carve away some of the spectatorism in our lives."

Recently, four governors to urge their states' schools, libraries, cities, civic groups, and families to declare a "TV Turnoff Week." As alternatives, citizens were offered free workshops, magic shows, swimming and athletic games, an ice cream social and organized family walks. That effort comes close to capturing Levine's vision. But he would use all that extra found time for even more constructive activities: 21st Century equivalents of barn-raising: "If we can carve away just a third of our spectatorism and spend it, say, volunteering side-by-side with our teen-agers, think what a difference we could make." Not only for our teen-agers, but for ourselves.

A successful campaign should emphasize personal payoff: specifically, the psychological benefits to the parent, grandparent, businessperson, etc., who gets involved. Some experts believe that the true goal of leisure should be fulfillment, not gratification, that it should have the same intensity as good work. As Levine points out, one way to deal with the time issue is to repackage or recast community service as a fulfilling form of leisure activity.

I have had some personal experience changing my ideas about how much time I have and the relationship between leisure and community service. Not long ago, (having stated in my newspaper column that parents, like me, needed to get involved with teen programs) I was drafted to head a blue-ribbon panel creating a teen center in an abandoned library building in my neighborhood.

Over the past few months, which began with some grumbling on my part (at the first meeting, I invited a coup), I have learned first hand how much fun -- and how much exasperation -- getting involved can bring. Not only have I come to enjoy the process, and now see it as a break from my work and as a way to explore a different side of myself, but my 14-year old has become much more involved in the community, too. This has had a profoundly positive impact on his and my mental health.

A fatigued person often believes that running -- intense exercise -- is the last thing he or she wants to do, although that is exactly what is most likely to revive the body. Similarly, a person who feels beaten down by the demands of work and caring for daily family needs can become refreshed and invigorated by joining with others to work on behalf of children.

A successful campaign for children should deal directly with structural barriers to getting involved, and should promote a new kind of community service. Boomers are likely to work longer hours than their parents, probably travel more for their work, and have less backup at home. Women still volunteer more than men-53 percent compared to 49 percent-but because they've entered the workforce, many women find it increasingly difficult to volunteer. For example, schools often assume that mothers will be on tap during the workday, though their most available hours are in the evenings and on weekends. Also, when schools call for volunteers, they often call the mother, not the father, who may be more available than the mother. Men, too, don't have the time and flexibility their fathers had for, say, the Kiwanis lunch or hot dog sale-partly because they're supposed to be home watching the kids while Mom works.

Traditionally, volunteer programs asked volunteers to come once a week on a regular schedule. "The old model of volunteer recruitment doesn't work anymore; it's too rigid," says Alan Chambers, director of City Cares of America, headquartered in Washington, D.C. "That's why the Cares model is catching on." In 1990, Jamie Gold, a former newspaper copy editor, created San Diego Cares. She realized that boomers wanted to care for their community but need a new system to do it. "Access and flexibility, those are the keys," she says. "San Diego Cares uses almost a co-op approach; we work with a pool of volunteers. We guarantee to an agency that works, for instance, with the homeless, that we're going to send them, say, 12 people every month-but they may not be the same 12 people." This "every-now-and-then" model fits the boomer generation better than tight scheduling. "Getting volunteers is not a problem; coordination is. We constantly follow up with our volunteers and the agencies." Many recruits who start out volunteering occasionally will, after a while, "settle down and get hooked on a cause," says Gold. "They start to bring their friends.

As they serve the larger community, they create a sense of community among themselves." In six years, the "Cares" model has grown to 40,000 volunteers in 20 cities-77 million boomers to go.

The workplace must also be challenged. Some enlightened companies around the country are beginning to provide time off, sometimes paid, for family time or community service time. The campaign should suggest that employers give every employee (not only parents) two to four hours per month to volunteer in schools, visit their child at day care, or visit a parent in elder care. In San Diego, the Southland Corp., which owns 7-Eleven stores, has adopted such a plan as part of its benefits package. Foodmaker Corp. now offers its employees one paid day a year for volunteer work.

An important campaign message should be: Real men fight for all our children. No campaign to help children will be successful if only half of the adult population, women, are targeted or involved. I have often found it disturbing, while speaking around the country, that so few fathers (usually between five and 10 percent of the audience) attend conferences on childhood, on education, on parenting. Men who, however unfairly, have the most power in the board rooms or the political realm, are too often AWOL on the issues of children. There is recent change here, though, organizations such as the religion-based Promise Keepers, the Fatherhood Initiative, and the Fatherhood Project, are galvanizing thousands of fathers across the nation to work for better fatherhood.

An interactive media campaign should stress increased father involvement in the home, father-friendly workplaces, the impact of fatherlessness, the need to teach young men and boys about fatherhood (not only about sex, but about fatherhood) before they become fathers, etc. But one emphasis, often overlooked, would be especially effective if we are to activate real action on behalf of children: the age-old but largely neglected role of fathers is as community builders, what I referred to in my book *FatherLove* as the third dimension of fatherhood (the dimensions include breadwinning, nurturing, community building, finding our place in time, and spirituality).

When men enter the third dimension of fatherhood, they enter the community of children and the community of parents. They move beyond work, out into their neighborhoods to become involved, to make a better life for their children-to weave a web of support. Real men fight to change the environment of childhood, and real men change company cultures-they work to improve company policies toward motherhood and fatherhood. Some examples of the third dimension mentioned by men: putting in hours at your child's day care center; taking time off to volunteer in your child's school; creating a community of fathers who support each other; introducing your child to the world of work; working in your community for better treatment of children and families, taking your child with you as you do it. In this dimension, men begin to feel a sense of power in fathering that they may have lacked.

When I interviewed groups of fathers across the country, their body language often bespoke fatigue when they discussed the first two dimensions; but when they talked about the third dimension, their body language changed dramatically. They began to speak excitedly; they expressed a sense of rediscovered or potential power in a nearly abandoned arena, a sense of (if you will) masculinity, of being explorers, change-agents, fuller men. It seemed to me, listening to them, that if the first two dimensions were to have fuller meaning, men must move into the third-must be energized by the third.

Non-parents and older Americans must be engaged and activated. In the past, I have often referred to seniors as the "winter soldiers" of the children's movement; older Americans often have more time, money and energy than harried parents. By the year 2000, about 35 million Americans will be 65 years or older.

This is a vast resource waiting to be tapped by schools. A few years ago, in Dade County, Florida, seniors -- when finally actively recruited as allies of children -- were instrumental in passing the largest school bond issue in the history of the United States. At an elementary school I visited in Seattle, septuagenarians and octogenarians would walk the 30 feet from the senior center to the school, then down a hallway to the cafeteria for a hot lunch. The old people and the kids seldom interacted; they might as well have moved in parallel universes. For ten years this went on. No one, during all that time, tried to create some kind of a formal relationship between the old and the young. Not until a school librarian, watching seniors moving like ghosts down the hall, thought to herself, "What a waste. We could use those people." She created a Senior Reading Partners program. Now the seniors arrive at the school library in the morning, and sit with children-many of them homeless or abused children from emergency shelters. These children have the lowest reading scores in the school, and . "They're desperate for some kind of adult contact," says the librarian.

"At first we weren't sure how the kids would respond to the seniors, but now we have kids-good readers-on a waiting list to get a senior reading partner. It's the contact they're after. That's what they're missing most of all: ironically, that's what the seniors, too, are missing." One 87 year-old woman explained to me why she took four bus passes to arrive early enough to help her little reading partner: "Because I have an 18 year-old grandson who can't read the letters I write him."

While seniors, as a demographic group, are too often neglected as partners in the battle for children, so are non-parents. A successful campaign should also focus on aunts, uncles, and non-parents not directly related to children. I have spoken to countless people who, though they have no children of their own, are hungry to explore their own sense of generativity, Erik Erikson's term for "the final stage of becoming an adult."

The campaign, in addition to dealing with early childhood, should also emphasize the often neglected teen years, especially early adolescence. A successful campaign should see teens not only as victims and potential problems, but as a valuable, largely untapped resource.

During the next 15 years, the proportion of the population made up of teen-agers will increase by 23 percent, according to James Fox, a dean at Boston's Northeastern University. In the bellwether states of Florida and California, the increase will likely be closer to 60 percent.

Yet, in survey after survey, according to the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, teen-agers from all economic backgrounds lament the lack of parental attention and guidance, their help in making educational and career decisions and forming the values that will carry them into adulthood. "Conventional wisdom holds that hostility and conflicts between parents and adolescents are inevitable and that parents should disengage or detach themselves in order to foster autonomy," according to Ruby Takanishi, director of the Carnegie's program on adolescence. The myth, a set of powerful stereotypes, is "based on a previous generation of research on parent-adolescent relationships in troubled families," says Takanishi.

The results: increasing age segregation; ever fewer regular, positive encounters between adolescents and adults; and all the pathologies that come with the territory.

But 15 years of new research-much of it focused on healthy families and adolescents-concludes that warm, authoritative (not authoritarian) parents can help a child's academic achievement and provide powerful protection against the risks of adolescence. A fully engaged parent, according to Carnegie, should offer firm discipline; communicate high expectations for achievement and ethical behavior; provide close supervision; teach, by word and example, constructive ways to deal with conflict; and understand the physical, emotional and social development issues common to adolescence.

That message should come through loud and clear, in the campaign.

Despite the growing body of knowledge, the Carnegie Council asserts that public policies and programs for adolescents almost always overlook families as a vital part of adolescents' lives. Parent involvement in schools drops off dramatically during a child's adolescent years, partly because parents "encounter barriers to their participation, because existing school practices have long accepted the absence," according to Takanishi. Adolescents without adult supervision are twice as likely to become substance abusers. So, after-school programs, rare for adolescents, should be dramatically increased-along with the number of teen centers.

Schools should also involve parents as volunteers and organize education and support groups for parents of adolescents and "shape a community of shared values regarding appropriate behavior." Health-care systems and community organizations, including religious, cultural arts, and youth groups, should include parents in their activities for adolescents. Companies usually limit parental-leave policies, flexible working hours, job sharing, and telecommuting (where these policies exist) to parents of young children and to those with elderly parents. The limitation is based on the false assumption that once a child is 9 or 10, parental supervision is no longer essential. Such policies should be expanded to include parents of adolescents.

The campaign should encourage parents and teens to reject the myth that, after puberty hits, it's time to fade from our children's lives. We need to be there for them, even if they try to push us away--even if they accuse us of trying to make up for lost time.

Teens and youths should be seen as a valuable resource. Today, college students are volunteering in their communities more today than at any time since the '60s, says Heather McLoud, the twenty-something editor of Who Cares magazine, "a journal of service and action" published in Washington, D.C., and targeted at the X Generation. During the 1993-94 school year, 12 million young people--48 percent of all 18- to 24-year-olds--worked as volunteers in their communities. Increasingly, high schools and even junior high schools are requiring a community service component for graduation. (The state of Maryland now requires all high school students to work in some way for the community.) The campaign should emphasize that, energetic young people -- teens and college students without children of their own -- should be targeted for recruitment to work with children and in programs that help families.)

When I was 14, my older son's age, my life was changed by a summer spent working as a volunteer with young children with disabilities. Too few adolescents have such an experience. As I have learned personally, while working on the teen center in my neighborhood, not only can teens be among the most effective community builders and advocates on behalf of smaller children, but they are eager to become engaged. This campaign, by targeting them as a valuable human resource, could go a long way toward easing the pain that teens experience, and weaving the new web of support for all children and families.

* * *

We are about to test whether this country can truly mount a children's movement, a movement badly needed in America today to unite us around a common and uncontested value. But history need not be written anew. We can learn from other movements that have made advances in the social order.

From the women's movement, we learned that the personal is the political. This is an important lesson to remember in helping parents realize that they are not alone, that community is essential, that no one makes change alone -- just as no one raises a child alone.

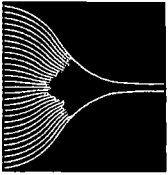
From the environmental movement, we learned to think globally and act locally. This helped us overcome the enormity and complexity of problems in favor of simple actions we could take to make the world a better place.

This is an important lesson to remember as we look for the way we can make our mark for children --- whether it's getting better informed about what's happening to children in our neighborhood, or giving time or money to support children's advocacy and services. Change starts with small steps.

Years ago, environmentalists concentrated on species survival, but they soon learned that a species cannot be saved in isolation; environmentalists now concentrate on the preservation and renewal of a sustaining, interwoven habitat. Now we must do the same for children, and for ourselves.

One strand will lead to another. The web will assemble almost invisibly, supporting families without replacing them, holding children gently so they will not fall.

RICHARD LOUV is senior editor for KidsCampaigns. He is also a contributing editor for Parents magazine, a columnist for the San Diego Union-Tribune, a senior associate for The National Civic League, and the author of several books about childhood in America, including "Childhood's Future" (Anchor) "101 Things You Can Do for Our Children's Future" (Anchor), and "FatherLove" (Pocket). His new book, "The Web of Life: Weaving the Values that Sustain Us," will be published in May by Conari Press.



Benton Foundation

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The President's National Information Infrastructure Advisory Council Chooses Benton Foundation to Continue Work on the KickStart Initiative

Benton will Continue the Council's Work to Bring the Information Superhighway to Schools, Libraries, and Community Centers

Today, at a White House meeting, the President's National Information Infrastructure Advisory Council (NIIAC) announced that its legacy would live on and grow through the Benton Foundation. Wrapping up its two years of work, the 36 member Council presented President Clinton with an upbeat vision of the opportunities and benefits for all Americans on the Information Superhighway and a set of recommendations about how to get them connected. The Council's work includes two publications, *KickStart Initiative* and a policy report, *A Nation of Opportunity* and a video entitled *The National Information Infrastructure and YOU!*, with Bill Nye, the Science Guy, as the host.

As heir to the Council's legacy, Benton will distribute and build on the NIIAC's documents, the *KickStart Initiative* and *A Nation of Opportunity*. In addition to promoting these resources, Benton will create new information services and forums to help schools, libraries, and community centers share their successes and challenges. Initial funders of Benton's KickStart Legacy activities include: AT&T, West Publishing, Microsoft Corporation, EDventure Holdings, Inc., with additional support from the National Education Association.

"The Benton Foundation welcomes the opportunity to continue the Council's important work to connect communities to the Information Superhighway. At Benton, we believe that the public interest in the digital age means that telecommunications technologies and policies are configured to build community, to sustain values of diversity and equity, to deliver real capability to enhance public education and lifelong learning, and to build a strong civic sector," says Larry Kirkman, executive director of the Benton Foundation.

- continued -

The Benton Foundation, founded in 1981, works with nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and industry to promote the effective use of communications technologies to serve and connect America's communities. Benton has equipped a constituency for public interest principles in the digital age, advancing the public policy debate on equity and access through research, policy analysis, and print, video, and online publishing. In addition, Benton serves as a convener for nonprofits, government agencies and the communication industry to discuss how to protect the public interest in the digital age. The Benton Foundation was founded by Charles Benton with the legacy of his father, U.S. Senator William Benton, founder of the advertising firm Benton and Bowles and owner of the Encyclopedia Britannica. Benton's work is made possible with funding from the foundation's endowment and from other foundations, including Carnegie, Ford, Kellogg, MacArthur and C.S. Mott.

To access the NIIAC documents on the Internet, use Benton's World Wide Web site: <http://www.benton.org>. To receive document descriptions, information on other Benton resources, or instructions on downloading the documents via gopher or ftp: email kickstart@benton.org, or call Benton's fax-on-demand service at 800-622-9013.

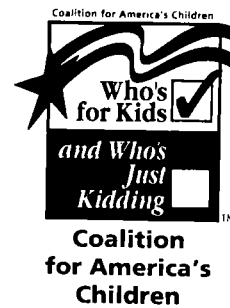
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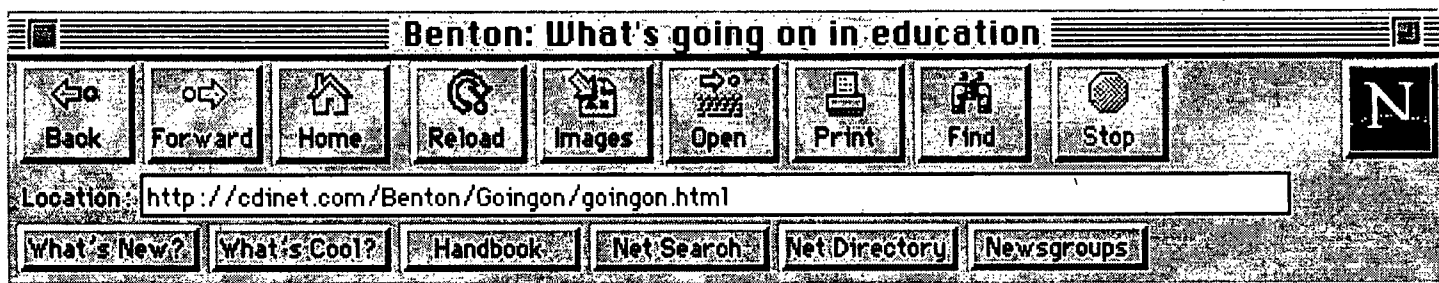
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The learning connection

Will the Information Highway transform schools and prepare students for the twenty-first century?

The Vision—The Clinton administration has challenged the telecommunications industry to wire every classroom in the nation by the year 2000. "It's easily achievable; it can and must be done," says Vice President Al Gore. He speaks for a growing number of national leaders, educators, and telecommunications enthusiasts who see computer-based networking as a crucial boost for education and the linchpin in efforts to make students ready for the 21st century. The idea is not a partisan issue. As Republican House Speaker Newt Gingrich put it earlier this year, "There has to be a missionary spirit that says to the poorest child in America, 'The Internet is for you; the Information Age is for you.'"

The Reality—Most schools still have no access to the information superhighway and would be ill-equipped to take advantage of network connections. Bringing them online—and creating the conditions in which they can use their connections in ways that enrich students—will require a substantial effort at a time of tight federal, state, and local budgets.

Bridging the Gap—Connecting schools is within our grasp if we agree it's a goal worth pursuing. But to make the effort worthwhile, four major issues must be considered: what are our underlying educational objectives, how do we give teachers the training and resources they need to use computer networking, how do we develop better means of assessing the impact of networking and other new media in the classroom, and how do we ensure that all schools and students—not just the privileged few—have access to the information superhighway.

What's Going On—Diverse groups and partnerships are seeking to show the educational potential of networking:

- *The federal government.* Despite budget constraints, the administration is pushing networking and other technologies in demonstration projects and basic research. Look for major reports this fall from the Department of Education and this winter from the National Information Infrastructure Advisory Council.
- *The states.* Officials are trying a wide range of strategies for connecting schools. States ranging from Texas to Minnesota already have set up statewide teachers networks, and about a dozen require telecommunications companies to offer schools discounted rates.
- *The private sector.* As charitable donations of computer equipment continue, some telecommunications companies are helping build networking infrastructure and train teachers. Meanwhile, companies like IBM Corp. and Autodesk, Inc. are helping to finance efforts at systemic education reform.

What's Next?—To sustain the effort to connect schools, policymakers, educators, the business community, public interest groups, parents and citizens at large must focus on our long-term goals—and pool our limited resources. Partnerships between Mendocino, Calif. schools and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and between Baltimore's Abell Foundation and the Maryland State Department of Education are models for the kind of collaborative relationships that will be needed to make the vision a reality.

Additional resources

Bibliography—Numerous sources on the history and current state of technology in schools.

Important Education Web Sites—The best in networking theory and practice on the World Wide Web.

Additional copies of this report are available through the following sources:

World Wide Web

<http://cdinet.com/benton/goingin/>

Email

info-benton@cdinet.com
education

Gopher

[gopher.cdinet.com/benton/what's going on](gopher.cdinet.com/benton/what's%20going%20on)

Fax-on-demand

1-800-254-1671
/education

File Transfer Protocol

[ftp.cdinet.com/benton/what's going on](ftp.cdinet.com/benton/what's%20going%20on)

The Benton Foundation's Communications Policy Project is working to strengthen public interest advocacy in communications policy and to involve nonprofits in shaping the National Information Infrastructure.

The Project promotes public interest values and noncommercial services for the National Information Infrastructure through research, policy analysis, print, video, and online publishing, and outreach to nonprofits and foundations. The Project has four interrelated goals:

- To build a new constituency among nonprofit groups to participate in policy advocacy initiatives.
- To advance analysis of selected policy issues to help nonprofits see their stake in the policy debate and to equip them with leading edge research and policy options in support of public interest values.
- To provide concrete illustrations of the social benefits these new technologies can deliver.
- To encourage demonstrations of nonprofit uses of new technologies that will help create an expanded vision of the new electronic environment.

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Benton Foundation Communications Policy Project



**What's
going on**

The learning connection

Will the Information Highway transform schools and prepare students for the twenty-first century?

Linking schools to the emerging telecommunications network has become one of the hottest education topics of the 1990s. Politicians proclaim their commitment to it. Businesses tout their contributions toward achieving it. And schools are spending substantial sums to accomplish it. All are propelled by a vision of students engaged in authentic and challenging tasks, linked to vast stores of information and "real world" experts beyond the school room, learning higher-order intellectual skills, and developing civic virtues on a global scale.

There's a clear logic to these goals. Advanced communications technologies are increasingly shaping how we work, play, and relate to one another. According to the Department of Labor, almost 50 percent of all workers use computers on the job (double the rate of just 10 years ago), and those who do earn 43 percent more than other workers. Some 37 percent of U.S. households have computers, and although the number connected to networks remains relatively small, it is growing exponentially. Indeed, the importance of computer networks is likely to grow enormously in the years ahead, as they become the means for delivering not just text and data, but video, audio and graphical information as well.

More than the ability to use the latest technology is at stake. Increasingly, employers say that the workplace of the future will require employees who are independent, flexible, innovative, and able to solve complex problems. Political and cultural life also require—more than ever—the ability to find, sift, sort, and analyze vast amounts of information from diverse sources. These are the same skills associated with computer networking.

But we are a long way from achieving the vision of connected classrooms. The average student spends just two hours a week using a computer in school. Students in only 3 percent of the nation's classrooms currently have access to the Internet. And the cost of providing schools with up-to-date computers linked to the communications network could easily total \$30 billion—plus operating costs that could run another \$5 billion a year. While that may seem small compared to the \$242 billion annual budget for K-12 public schools, it would require a substantial increase over the \$2.7 billion the schools currently spend each year on technology.

Still, the rapid rate at which schools have been buying computers—there are an estimated 5.8 million computers in schools today, more than twice as many as existed just five years ago—and the exponential expansion of online services suggest this may be a propitious time to promote networking in the classroom. But schools face substantial financial pressures, and winning financial support for connecting classrooms won't be an easy sell.

The Benton Foundation believes that how we as a nation go about connecting the schools in this era of converging media will be a major test of whether we can build a communications system that serves public needs and democratic values. As the debate over school networking and its role in preparing students for the twenty-first century progresses, several overriding issues must be addressed:

- First, the drive to connect the schools must be part of a broader discussion about what skills students will need and how classrooms should function. Without such a dialogue, the new technology may be used in ways that have little effect, and today's high expectations may become tomorrow's disillusionment.
- Second, we must invest more in training and other aspects of human infrastructure so that schools can make good use of computer networks once they are in place.
- Third, to sustain public support for networking in education, we must do more to demonstrate its educational value.
- Fourth, we must ensure that all students share in access to the information superhighway so that computer-based communications promotes equal opportunity in the classroom rather than exacerbating social divisions among schools and students.

Clearly, how we address the issue of networking in the schools will have wide-ranging effects. It is a discussion for everyone, not just educators and telecommunications experts. Policymakers, business leaders, advocacy groups, foundation executives, and others all must become involved to ensure that the needs of communities and students are met in the decades ahead.

The vision

"My curriculum has never been so alive, so up to date, so exciting for me," says Patrician Weeg, who teaches at Delmar Elementary School straddling the Delaware-Maryland border. KIDLINK, a grassroots project that has brought together more than 35,000 students between the ages of 10 and 15 into a "global dialogue," has made it possible for Weeg's students to have computer "keypals" in Finland, Iceland, Russia, Tasmania, Peru, the United Kingdom, Japan, Brazil, and elsewhere. They have talked about farming and the Nile River with an Egyptian schoolgirl, learned from kids in Alaska about life in a village so remote it can be reached only by airplane, and discussed the life of street kids with a student in Peru.

"Are we linked to a larger teaching and learning community?" Weeg asks on her school web page. "You bet we are! The world is our classroom! In the global classroom, the curriculum is a 'living' curriculum with real people—not textbooks—feeding our desire to learn and explore."

It sounds great, but is it just an expensive gimmick? Mary O'Haver, a social studies teacher at Fairland Elementary School in Montgomery, Md., thinks it is much more. She has turned her fifth grade social studies class into a veritable publishing empire. Using sophisticated desktop publishing skills, her students have prepared handsome autobiographical newspapers. They have presented commemorative stamps and book reports on their school home page. The attractive results serve as a powerful motivator, as does the awareness that the published results potentially have a global audience.

"Kids know parents or teachers are going to say, 'Good job,'" says Joyce Brunsvold, a Fairland reading teacher who is impressed by the sheer amount the students write, as well as its quality. "When a total stranger sends e-mail commenting on their work, it means a lot to my students."

O'Haver constantly ventures into cyberspace for online discussions with fellow teachers throughout her state, as well as collaboration with teachers as far away as British Columbia and Australia. She plans to

enroll students this year in Monarch Watch, a research project run by a group of entomologists at the University of Kansas that has enlisted 20,000 students nationwide to track the annual migration of monarch butterflies. O'Haver's own web page is full of suggestions for other teachers about resources, lesson plans, collaborative projects, and more. "Who would have thought that these machines could bring me so many friends and so much contact with my professional peers?" she asks.

Not far from Fairland, at Montgomery Blair High School, students are taking education-by-the-Internet a step further. As a sophomore, Yi-Lun Ding set out with a team of other students to design a device that could analyze stratospheric ozone. Seeking expert information, he went to the school's computer lab and connected with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. That link-up eventually led him to the chief ozone investigator at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. "We corresponded through e-mail for a while and learned the techniques he used in his experiment," Yi-Lun recalls. "We even received a videotape, articles his team wrote for *Science*, and booklets from NASA, which helped with our presentation."

The online world is full of such stories of students taking charge of their own education, engaging in real-world tasks, and sharing information nationally and internationally. At the same time, the convergence of traditional media is enabling students to take exciting "field trips" by video hook-up and computer to exotic places including the bottom of the ocean, Hawaiian volcanoes, and the stratosphere. Advocates say that these experiments show that advanced communications can turn students into active learners and help them develop such higher-order skills as writing, problem solving, fact finding, analysis, and synthesis—all in a highly enriched atmosphere.

"Distance learning multiplies the resources available to schools and teachers, greatly increasing opportunities for both teaching and learning," writes the National Academy of Sciences on its web page. "It invites students anywhere in the country to acquire the information they want directly from experts. Network links expand and enrich the pool of teachers in mathematics, science, and other fields. Moreover, the information students receive via networks can be individualized to fit their specific needs."

Inspired by schools like Fairland and Blair, President Clinton said in his 1994 State of the Union Address that the nation should set a goal of connecting all classrooms to the information superhighway by the year 2000. Through the National Science Foundation and the Department of Education, the administration has provided seed money to scores of projects designed to demonstrate the educational potential of computer networking. Some states have gone even further. North Carolina and Iowa are connecting schools to their state-built fiber optic networks, and Delaware has just decided to link its public school classrooms to a similar network.

But much of the action is at the state and local levels. A variety of schools, businesses, and nonprofit groups have formed partnerships to bring computer networks to classrooms. In Union City, N.J., for instance, Bell Atlantic Corp. is providing students and teachers at Christopher Columbus Intermediate School with computers and Internet connections in support of a school-reform plan launched by the local school district. And in Mendocino, Calif., the public schools have joined hands with the NASA and various private-sector partners to establish an Internet connection and develop a comprehensive network-based curriculum.

In Baltimore, Md., the Abell Foundation has joined forces with the state department of education to establish a regional technology center to help schools choose appropriate hardware and software, as well as obtain training. Numerous states are establishing networks for teachers. Nonprofit organizations like the Jason Foundation for Education and the National Geographic Society are developing curriculum and lesson plans that students in disparate locations can use for interactive, online learning. Companies like Microsoft Inc. are supporting technology training programs for teachers colleges, and corporate donations of computer equipment to schools total more than \$100 million annually.

Computers and networking have gained adherents partly because they are seen as enhancing the very skills considered necessary to survival in the twenty first century. "In 1850, it took about 50 years to double the world's knowledge base," notes Frank Withrow, director of learning technologies for the Council of Chief State School Officers. "Today, it takes only a little more than a year. The way we store, retrieve and use information is vastly different in the Information Age. The U.S. work force does not need 'knowers,' it needs 'learners.'"

The reality

The ideal embodied by teachers like Mary O'Haver and students like Yi-Lun Ding is far from being realized in most U.S. schools. According to a survey conducted for the National Education Association and other education groups, only 16 percent of teachers use the Internet and online services. In contrast, 58 percent use cable television in the classroom.

As yet, no single entity—neither government, industry nor the nonprofit sector—has come up with the resources to bring interactive connections like the Internet to the majority of classrooms. Estimating the costs of connecting schools is a speculative business. Schools have a wide range of choices, from installing a few networked computers in computer labs to putting one on every student's desk. Moreover, technology is changing so rapidly that today's prices are an uncertain guide for future costs.

In an analysis for the Department of Education, Massachusetts Institute of Technology researcher Russell I. Rothstein estimated that installing up-to-date computers in all U.S. schools, linking them to each other and to the Internet, and providing a telephone link with sufficient capacity to allow transmission of some video and other advanced applications could cost between \$11.8 billion and \$27.5 billion to install. Operating costs would run another \$1.9 billion to \$4.9 billion annually. That is the equivalent of between \$267 and \$625 per pupil in installation costs and between \$42 and \$112 in annual operating costs.

The range is so great partly because the cost for different schools, on which Rothstein based his estimates, varies widely based on location, their current level of resources, and other factors. A separate study by Brent Keltner and Randy Ross of the Rand Corp. analyzed six schools with Internet connections. They found that the annual cost—if hardware and software costs are amortized over five years and infrastructure changes over the next 10 years—ranged from \$142 to \$416 per pupil.

McKinsey & Co., which conducted its own study, concluded that technology spending by schools would have to rise from its current level of about \$2.7 billion to as much as \$10 billion annually.

Acquiring the hardware is just part of the battle. According to the General Accounting Office, 60 percent of all central city schools and almost half of all schools in rural areas and small towns say that their wiring and electrical power will not support advanced telecommunications. And many schools also will have to install air conditioning to maintain computers and telecommunications equipment. Making such improvements could require aging schools to undertake costly asbestos removal. Many schools face a need for improvements in lighting, ventilation, and security systems as well. Overall, the GAO estimated that it would cost \$112 billion to repair facilities to meet various health and safety regulations and allow for full use of technology.

Partly because of the lack of infrastructure, half of all school computers are installed in computer labs (and another 15 percent are scattered between libraries, offices, and special instructional rooms), making it almost impossible for most teachers to integrate them into the curriculum.

Even if all hardware problems could be surmounted, however, students still would not benefit unless teachers received sufficient support and training to make effective use of the new technology. Partly for this

reason, even though the number of computers installed in schools has climbed sharply, the average U.S. student spends just two hours a week using a computer. And students spend much of this time in computer labs learning about computers, rather than in classes using computers as tools for communication and research.

A 1992 survey by the International Education Association, analyzed by University of California Professor Henry J. Becker for the Office of Technology Assessment, showed that fewer than 3 percent of U.S. students used computers 10 times or more during an entire school year in science, social studies, foreign language, or industrial arts courses. For mathematics, the portion was just 7 percent, and for English it was 10 percent.

In the absence of network connections and well-trained teachers, many schools use computers extensively for rote learning through drill-and-practice routines, rather than for activities that foster higher-order intellectual skills. Professor Becker sees some improvement on this score, though. In 1983, he reported that computers were being used primarily for computer literacy classes and drill-and-practice programs and to teach programming. But in his review of the 1992 IEA data, he found that fifth graders were devoting about one-fourth of their time at computers to writing, analysis, synthesis and other higher-order skills. The percentage rose to 44 percent for eighth graders and 50 percent for students in the eleventh grade. Becker says that those results "are not as disappointing as might be expected, but they certainly leave much room for improvement."

Some analysts contend that simply introducing computers into the classroom can encourage development of higher-order skills. In a 1990 survey by the Center for Technology in Education, cited in the Office of Technology Assessment's report *Teachers & Technology: Making the Connection*, many teachers said that computers enabled them to introduce more complex material, individualize their instruction, allow more independent work, and spend less time lecturing.

But others say such changes are far from inevitable. Earlier generations of school reformers thought the motion picture, radio, television, and even the airplane would revolutionize education. Each time, however, they were disappointed. According to Stanford University Professor Larry Cuban, technology advocates overlook powerful traditions that have preserved the structure of education. These include three notions: First, knowledge is transmitted by teachers to students; second, knowledge consists largely of concrete subject matter that can be broken down into discrete segments and conveyed piecemeal as students progress from grade to grade; and third, that schools should be organized into self-contained, age-graded classrooms in which students and teachers come together for short periods of time.

Cuban says that there are powerful practical reasons for these traditions—including the fact that teachers are responsible for maintaining order and educating millions of students from diverse backgrounds, inculcating cultural values such as punctuality, the work ethic and competitiveness, and helping to channel students into different socioeconomic niches. Writing in the journal *Teachers College Record* (winter 1993), Cuban said these same forces could thwart hopes that computers will lead to a fundamental restructuring of the educational system. He titled his essay "Computers Meet Classroom: Classroom Wins."

Bridging the gap

What does all this mean for those who want to bring networking to students and teachers? The main lesson is that connecting the schools will require a massive effort—one that tackles not just technological issues, but also educational concerns and social issues.

Specifically, a strategy to connect classrooms must address what kind of schools society wants, give teachers the training and resources they need to use computers effectively, demonstrate clearly that computer networking helps achieve the desired educational goals, and maintain the traditional American commitment to educational equality.

Building support for a new pedagogy

If the only goal of networking schools is to engage students in practicing routine skills, or even to enable them to dial up the Library of Congress card catalog or the Smithsonian Institution, it is not clear that the investment would be worthwhile. Research suggests that when computers are used to reinforce traditional teaching practices, the result is only modest improvement in easily measured areas of student achievement. Moreover, the gains measured seem to dissipate with time, suggesting that novelty, rather than some more enduring quality, may be the decisive variable.

"Educational media alone do not influence the achievement of students," conclude authors Ann D. Thompson, Michael R. Simonson and Constance P. Hargrave in the Association for Educational Communications and Technology's exhaustive *Educational Technology: A Review of the Research*. "Media permit the delivery and storage of instructional messages but do not determine learning."

Roy D. Pea, a Northwestern University educational researcher, underscores the need to look beyond technology itself to how it is actually used in classrooms: "We know that technology may have important contributory effects to learning, but that they are crucially mediated by social practices in the classroom by teachers and students."

In *Using Technology to Support Education Reform*, a text prepared in 1993 for the Department of Education, a group of researchers argue that computers and other new technologies should be used in ways that engage students in "authentic, challenging tasks." Under this "constructivist" model, teachers would no longer serve as repositories of all knowledge; instead, students would be encouraged to define their own learning goals and then seek, sort, and analyze information to achieve them. Teachers would serve more as mentors, guides, and facilitators. The new approach also stresses collaborative work, which advocates say more closely mirrors how workplaces function in the modern economy than the older, individualistic, competitive model.

But the authors note that "technology and reform do not necessarily go hand in hand." As Cuban's history of technology—and the continuing use of computers for rote exercises—suggest, advocates of computer networking must look beyond technology and consider the broader school context if they hope to see the new model for schooling take hold. On this score, Cuban, who himself has some doubts about the value of computers in schools, believes that technology advocates have fallen short.

"Unless existing classroom and school settings are altered substantially, much beyond the conventional will be tough to attain," he writes in *Teachers and Machines*, his history of educational technology. "No computer advocates that I have read or heard, for example, have suggested that schools should hire more teachers and adults to reduce the teaching load, bringing it closer to the college schedule than to the factory. No computer advocate urges increasing school district budgets by half to modify the existing school and classroom arrangements concerning class size, governance, training, and teacher collaboration. Their sole recommendation is to put money into classroom computers."

Helping teachers

Teachers will need considerable support if they are to make effective use of computers in their classrooms. Although many say that using networked computers makes teaching more satisfying, most teachers say that

using computers to foster higher-order skills also makes teaching harder—at least initially. First, there is the challenge of mastering the technology itself. And that may be relatively easy compared to the challenge of helping students who are learning independently. When students are no longer expected simply to master a uniform body of knowledge conveyed by their teachers, but instead are expected to gather information themselves and take on projects that require more critical thinking, teachers actually must know more than ever about the content of their subjects, according to the authors of *Using Technology to Support Education Reform*.

In addition, teachers must know a great deal more about the learning process and about the individual learning styles of students. And to the extent that they encourage students to work in groups, teachers need to develop skills both to evaluate group performance and to pinpoint problems of individual students.

Despite the obvious need, school districts often find it easier to acquire computers than to help teachers learn how to use them creatively. On average, school districts devote less than 15 percent of their technology budgets to training, according to *Teachers and Technology: Making the Connection*, a study by the Office of Technology Assessment. The OTA, a research arm of Congress, said the percentage should be at least doubled.

Moreover, the typical approach to teacher training—offering a short course on a single topic, such as a specific computer application—may be particularly ill suited to preparing teachers to use computers effectively. As millions of Americans who have learned to use computers on the job know, the task requires continuous hands-on experience and follow-up support. Yet the OTA found that in 1992, only 6 percent of elementary schools and 3 percent of secondary schools employed a full-time computer coordinator. The agency said 60 percent of all schools have assigned no staff member to coordinate or supervise computer use.

But the biggest problem teachers face may be a simple lack of time—time to gather materials, develop lesson plans, assess student performance, maintain contact with parents, and keep up with advances in teaching and in academic subjects. "Teachers are given very little compensated staff development time, and there are multiple competing demands for this time," the OTA said. "Unless there are significant changes to the rhythm of the school day or changed incentives for giving teachers more time to learn and experiment with new technologies, this barrier to technology use will remain immense."

Developing better ways to assess the impact of electronic networks

Parents and policymakers will demand evidence that a substantial investment in computers and communications infrastructure is worthwhile—especially if the investment is accompanied by a change in the nature of classroom work. This will require new assessment tools.

Standardized tests, the traditional measure of student achievement, generally gauge mastery of discrete skills and factual knowledge, not whether students can solve complex problems, engage in sustained intellectual inquiry, work collaboratively, and analyze information from diverse sources. "Traditional testing methods don't capture all of the changes that technology can encourage in the classroom," says Steven Hodas, an analyst with Sterling Software in Washington, D.C., who has worked on the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's K-12 initiative.

Moreover, standardized tests exert a considerable conservative influence on teachers. To the extent that the current push for increased accountability on the part of schools and teachers leads to more emphasis on standardized test results, teachers may be inclined to use computers for drill-and-practice exercises to eke out whatever marginal gains in scores they can achieve, rather than in imaginative ways for which results may be more difficult to measure. Says Cuban: "Concentration on quantitative standards reinforced by high-stake test results usually diminishes risktaking in classroom and school innovations."

As an object lesson in the pressures on school officials and the inadequacy of traditional testing methods, a number of researchers have cited the case of Belridge School in McKittrick, Calif. The school spent heavily to purchase computers and software, as well as laser disc players and television production equipment. Students were assigned such projects as producing their own television news shows and running a computer-based presidential election. But when standardized tests two years later showed no improvement in scores, parents picketed the school and elected a new school board to find a "back to the basics" principal. And computers were removed from students' desks.

A small but growing number of studies are seeking to assess the impact of new technologies in fostering higher-order skills. Margaret Riel, a researcher at the University of California at San Diego, for instance, found that fourth graders in San Diego who had helped produce an online news service with students in Hawaii, Mexico, and Alaska showed marked improvement in reading and writing skills compared with students who had not participated. She theorized that editing another student's writing teaches a student more than looking for his or her own mistakes, and that students feel freer to edit the work of distant peers than that of their own classmates.

In another study, Riel found that judges scored articles that students wrote for their peers on the network significantly higher than the work they wrote for teachers, suggesting that the motivation to perform well is greater when students are engaged in authentic tasks rather than in artificial exercises.

The Software Publishers Association cites similarly encouraging evaluations of the National Geographic Society Kids Network, in which fourth- and fifth-grade students shared data on acid rain that they had collected online with remote classes. The students showed significant gains in the ability to organize, represent and interpret data. They also demonstrated considerable achievement in geographic knowledge, in the ability to use latitude and longitude to identify map locations and in understanding environmental issues.

Educational researchers are working to develop more "performance-based" testing methods that gauge what students actually learn and can do. Crucial as this work is to the future of school reform, it is in the very early stages of development and implementation. Much work remains to be done, both on the research front and in persuading parents and universities to accept more complex and subtle assessment techniques.

Ensuring equal opportunity

Perhaps the biggest concern arising from the current, scattershot approach to connecting the nation's classrooms is the possibility that in the absence of a concerted government effort, disparate access to the information superhighway will widen the gap between affluent and poorer Americans.

The problem does not primarily involve the deployment of computer hardware, although that is a concern. Analyzing data compiled by the Denver educational research firm, Quality Education Data, Inc., Henry Jay Becker found that the average black student attends a school with just 4 percent fewer computers per student than the average white student.

Hispanic students, however, do have significantly less access to computers. According to the QED data, the average Hispanic child's school has 13 percent fewer computers per student than the average white child's school. Becker theorizes that for schools with large numbers of Hispanic students, the need to provide bilingual teachers may overwhelm any efforts to install computers.

Chapter I, the federal program that distributes more than \$8 billion annually to schools with disadvantaged students, has helped narrow the difference in access to computers between rich and poor schools. Data compiled in 1992 by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Attainment show

that elementary schools where more than 25 percent of students are eligible for Chapter I actually have 16 percent more computers per student than the average elementary school. The pattern does not hold for secondary schools, however; schools where one-quarter of all students qualify for Chapter I have 13 percent fewer computers than the average secondary school, Becker reports.

Substantial socioeconomic differences, however, do show up in student access to computers outside school. Some 82 percent of the most affluent high school students (as measured by parents' education or an inventory of material possessions in their homes) have access to computers at home, compared with just 14 percent of poorer high school students. Further, affluent students use computers as much as 20 percent more than the average student. And they tend to use computers more for higher-order learning such as writing, analysis, and synthesis, rather than for more routine, fact-oriented learning.

The addition of networking to school computer arsenals has only widened this gap. According to Becker, computer networking is confined primarily to the northeastern United States, suburban secondary schools, rural elementary schools and schools in wealthier communities. Network use in 1992, for instance, was 70 percent higher in suburban secondary schools than for secondary schools as a whole, while black elementary school kids used networks 66 percent less than the average.

"Economically disadvantaged students, who often use the computer for remediation and basic skills, learn to do what the computer tells them, while more affluent students, who use it to learn programming and tool applications, learn to tell the computer what to do," wrote Delia Neuman, a professor at the University of Maryland College of Library and Information Services, in the digest of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Information Resources.

To the extent that such disparities exist, the consequences could be serious. "Many students become familiar with information technologies in a general sense. But those who cannot claim computers as their own tool for exploring the world never grasp the power of technology," wrote Charles Piller in a 1992 *Macworld* report detailing sharp differences between how affluent and disadvantaged kids are taught to use computers. "Such students become passive consumers of electronic information—usually in front of the television. Once out of school, they are relegated to low-wage jobs where they may operate electronic cash registers or bar-code readers. They may catch on as data-entry clerks, typing page after page in deadly monotony. They are controlled by technology as adults—just as drill-and-practice routines controlled them as students."

As the U.S. marches into the Information Age, and schools increasingly build on-ramps to the information superhighway, the issue of equal access will require close attention. In particular, if grassroots efforts and market forces fail to meet the needs of poorer school districts, government may have to assume a larger role.

What's going on?

Many people and organizations are working to bring networking to schools. Some of the most promising efforts involve partnerships among diverse players.

Consider the case of the Mendocino Unified School District in Mendocino, Calif. Three years ago, the district set out to find an Internet connection but was stymied by the estimated \$100,000 start-up cost, high operating expenses (the school faced the prospect of paying long-distance telephone rates for an Internet connection), and an almost complete lack of technical support. Working with the San Francisco-based

Autodesk Foundation, the school formed a partnership with NASA. The space agency, through its Information Infrastructure Technology and Applications K-12 initiative, provided equipment, technical advice, and Internet access. In return, the school helped to develop sophisticated K-12 lesson plans that could be used to demonstrate uses of networking technology in the classroom.

Since the partnership with NASA could not continue indefinitely, the school then took another big step. With help from Pacific Bell, Gandalf Equipment, Apple Computer, MCI, Pacific Internet and others, it created its own nonprofit business in early 1994 and became an Internet provider for its entire community. The business now has some 400 subscribers, and Superintendent Kenneth Matheson expects that figure to grow to 1,000 by the end of 1995. Businesses use the service to advertise their products, community agencies to make announcements, and individuals for their own, varied purposes. The school also began offering Internet training and technical help to other schools. Matheson expects the business to bring in \$150,000 in 1995—enough to pay for the school's own Internet connection and some extra hardware.

Even individuals can contribute substantially to the school networking effort. The Jason Foundation for Education, which offers schools virtual field trips to exotic places like Central American rain forests, owes its substantial online presence to the volunteer services of Gene Feldman, a scientist at the NASA Goddard Space Flight Center. Feldman also designed the handsome online version of the Smithsonian Institution's Ocean Planet exhibit.

In the absence of substantial government funding, more such collaboration and entrepreneurship will be required to bring schools onto the information superhighway. A closer look at what is happening in key areas follows.

The federal government

Despite its lack of resources, the Clinton administration is attempting to demonstrate the potential for computer-based learning in schools through demonstration projects, research and efforts to persuade the business community to provide technical assistance to schools trying to get online.

The Department of Education plans to issue a national strategy paper on technology and education in fall 1995. The document will define what the administration believes must be done over the next decade to achieve its goal of bring advanced communications to schools.

The department also will announce winners of its educational technology challenge grants program. The department is looking for projects that involve partnerships between different players—schools and private companies, for instance—in making innovative uses of technology and developing new learning content. The department says educational need should drive the projects rather than a simple desire to acquire new technology.

Also this fall, the department will announce the formation of six regional technology centers to give school officials objective information and advice about technology. (The centers will be distinct from the department's regional labs, which address education issues more generally.) Department officials hope that the regional centers also will help to shape the computer software market by aggregating demand to give educators market clout. Currently, school purchases for software are so fragmented that the educational community as a whole has little influence on software development.

The cabinet-level National Science and Technology Council, through its Subcommittee on Research and Development in Education and Training, has set four priorities for federal research in educational technology: support demonstration projects that showcase innovative technology and networking applications, develop new models for evaluating the impact of technology and other educational tools on student learn-

ing, promote the development of high-quality learning tools (for instance, by adapting effective government educational tools for use in schools, such as methods the Central Intelligence Agency uses to teach foreign languages), and to support basic research on learning and cognitive processes. The administration will establish an Interagency Learning Technology Office to coordinate the educational research activities of agencies ranging from the Department of Defense to the Department of Labor.

President Clinton and Vice President Gore are expected this fall to challenge businesses to lend technical support to schools interested in using networking in classrooms. The model for the volunteer effort is the Tech Corps in Massachusetts. Set up by *Computer World* editor Gary Beach and the Massachusetts Software Council, the corps now has 300 volunteers. Similar volunteer efforts will be launched soon in at least nine other states.

At the Federal Communications Commission, Chairman Reed Hundt has been an advocate for networking the schools. He often delivers his message to a wide range of groups that generally have not been involved in telecommunications issues—the Urban League and the Children’s Defense Fund, for instance—in order to broaden the constituency for policy initiatives in this area.

The FCC could wade further into the issue this fall. It has already issued two Notices of Proposed Rulemaking seeking public comment on how to maintain universal service in telecommunications. At least some commissioners appear willing to consider the possibility of making schools eligible for universal service subsidies. It is not clear whether the commission would actually have the authority to use universal service funds, raised from telecommunications providers, to subsidize service to schools. Strong public comment on the issue could encourage the FCC to pursue the issue further.

Congress could help schools, libraries and rural healthcare facilities to gain access to the information superhighway by ordering telecommunications companies to offer them discounted rates for their connections. Education groups are lobbying aggressively for an amendment that would achieve this objective. Sponsored by Senators Olympia Snowe (R., Maine), John D. Rockefeller (D., W. Va.), James Exon (D., Nebr.) and Robert Kerry (D., Nebr.), the amendment would require regulators to work out the exact size of the discounts. Congressman Thomas Bliley (R., Va.), chairman of the House Commerce Committee, has said that he will work to keep the measure in the bill that emerges.

Although transmission services represent only a portion of the total cost of connecting schools, advocates say that many schools have a harder time meeting the ongoing costs of transmission than the one-time expense of acquiring hardware and installing internal wiring. A conference committee is expected to take up the measure this fall. Congressional leaders hope to send the bill to President Clinton by late November.

Meanwhile, government spending programs to promote technology in schools have run afoul of the budget-cutting fervor of the new Congress. The Clinton administration requested \$122 million for school technology initiatives during the year beginning October 1, 1995, but the House approved only \$25 million. Although the Senate is unlikely to cut educational funds as deeply as the House did, the administration still is unlikely to get anywhere near its request.

All of the \$25 million that the House approved would go for the challenge grant program. The administration had requested \$70 million for that program alone. Earlier this year, Congress cut the \$27 million approved for fiscal year 1995 to just \$9.5 million.

If the House action stands, the Education Department would have to discontinue the regional centers just being launched. They were originally slated to receive \$50 million over five years. The department would also have to scrap various plans to provide leadership on educational technology issues, and eliminate several other telecommunications and distance learning programs.

The budget cutting in Congress appears to be prompted more by concern about the deficit than by opposition to computers or networking in classrooms. House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R., Ga.) is in fact one of the staunchest congressional advocates of computer networking. Early this year, he suggested that all students should have access to the Internet.

The National Information Infrastructure Advisory Council, meanwhile, plans to issue a report at the end of January 1996 that will provide specific models and blueprints for schools and communities interested in getting on the information superhighway. The council, a presidentially-appointed panel that includes representatives from private industry, public interest groups, and state governments, sees schools, libraries, and community centers as platforms for networking entire communities. Bonnie Bracey, a member of the council and a teacher in Arlington, Va., says that many schools cannot afford to get connected on their own. But, she says, their prospects are brighter if they join forces with other institutions. The advisory council report will offer specific examples of communities like Clark County, Nev., where school systems have successfully created stakeholders in their communities. The report also will share findings of a survey by McKinsey & Co., which has been looking at various techniques for financing computer networking in schools.

The National Science Foundation continues to support a wide range of innovative education technology projects. Nora Sabelli, senior program officer, says the agency is increasingly emphasizing pedagogy and teacher training. She cited as particularly exciting the Common Knowledge project, a collaboration between Pittsburgh public schools, the University of Pittsburgh, and the Pittsburgh Supercomputing Center to develop an electronic data network. The project is being designed "from the bottom up, starting with teachers," Sabelli says, rather than being imposed by school administrators.

She also mentioned the CoVis Project (Learning through Collaborative Visualization) at Northwestern University, a network that uses ISDN technology to provide desktop video teleconferencing, shared software for real-time collaboration, access to the Internet, a multimedia scientist's "notebook," and scientific visualization software. (ISDN, or Integrated Services Digital Network, can move substantially more data over telephone lines at a much higher speed than the average modem can.) In the project, students at two high schools—one in Illinois and one in California—are jointly studying weather and long-term climate data.

In addition, Sabelli cited the Geometry Forum, an online gathering that enables teachers to discuss teaching strategies with researchers, and a project at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign that permits students to engage in "self-paced, hands-on" calculus projects with computerized workbooks, to visualize some problems using software, and to gain online access to teachers who can help them when necessary.

In the meantime, some government agencies are demonstrating ways that information providers can package their materials for educational purposes. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration, for instance, is involved in two projects designed to develop interactive educational applications using space and aeronautics information. The Information Infrastructure Technology and Applications program provides print, online, and video resources to help teachers with curriculum development, teacher training, and infrastructure for K-12 schools. In addition, the program awards competitive grants to diverse applicants in partnerships with state and local departments of education. The agency gives high priority to disadvantaged school populations.

NASA also maintains the SPACELINK network, which contains technical information about the space program as well as curriculum materials and a network resource center for teachers. SPACELINK teleconferences allow teachers to converse online with astronauts. Schools without Internet access can connect with SPACELINK through a toll-free number.

States

When it comes to school networking, states once again are the laboratories of the U.S. system. Approaches to bringing computers and networks to schools vary widely. Schools in states like North Carolina and Iowa have an opportunity to connect to state-built fiber optic networks. But some argue that state networks are no panacea; according to articles in the *New York Times*, the *National Journal*, and other respected publications, the cost of using these networks can be very high. The *National Journal*, for instance, reported that schools in North Carolina pay \$4,000 a month to use the state network—more than many districts, especially in rural and poor areas, can afford.

Still, Iowa decided this year to spend \$18 million to begin extending the state fiber optic network to schools and libraries. About 500 schools and 100 libraries will receive service in the first round of a four-year, \$96 million plan. The state agreed to lease lines from private companies rather than install its own. Delaware, for its part, will spend \$30 million to build a fiber optic network that will link students in its 7,000 public school classrooms.

Other states are seeking to ensure that networks are built without direct government involvement in construction. Kentucky awarded a contract to build a statewide broadband network to a consortium of 21 telecommunications companies; the state also agreed to help schools meet rewiring costs to connect to the network. Kentucky also requires school districts to develop technology plans and consolidates computer purchases in order to increase schools' market clout and win attractive prices.

In more than a dozen states, regulatory commissions require preferential rates on telecommunications services for schools. Louisiana, for instance, requires that schools be charged residential, rather than business, rates. In Missouri, educational institutions receive a 15 percent discount. In Texas, the telecommunications services directly related to distance learning must be provided at rates 25 percent below normal charges.

Money, of course, is always an issue. The Florida legislature increased appropriations for school technology from \$36 million in 1993 to \$135 million in 1994 and \$128 million in 1995. The state's Retrofit for Technology program provides funds for schools to upgrade their power and telephone capacity, although they must pay for computer hardware.

In many states, however, budget pressures constrain governments efforts, and appropriations to help schools acquire hardware or to train teachers often fall short of the expectations of computer advocates and school reformers. But there are occasional windfalls: California and Indiana, for instance, have ordered telephone companies to offset consumer overcharges by helping to wire schools and other public facilities.

In Indiana, the legislature created the Corporation for Educational Technology, a nonprofit organization that receives state money and private donations to promote learning by helping families install computers, printers, modems, software and interactive television at home. The funds are administered by school districts.

Lacking enough funds to bring every student, or even every classroom, onto the information superhighway, several states have established statewide networks for teachers. Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Minnesota, Ohio, and Texas, among others, offer teachers low-cost or free access to the Internet.

Kathleen Fulton, project director for the OTA's *Teachers & Technology* report, argues that policymakers should concentrate on connecting teachers because it is unlikely that sufficient funds will be found to connect all students to the information superhighway any time soon. Besides breaking down the professional isolation of teachers, educators networks can demonstrate to teachers the potential for computer networking in education, while building a potentially powerful constituency for expansion of computer-based communications.

The private sector

A wide range of nongovernmental projects—often involving partnerships between various groups—are seeking to address virtually every aspect of educational technology, from providing basic hardware to helping teachers use it effectively in developing materials for classroom use.

Gifts in Kind America, a 12-year-old organization based in Alexandria, Va., connects companies willing to donate computers with needy school districts. In 1994, the organization reported \$118 million in donations of newly manufactured computers, and the total for the first six months of 1995 reached \$100 million.

"More and more companies are giving, and the companies that are giving are giving more," said Susan Corrigan, president and chief executive officer.

Among the partner companies working with Gifts in Kind America are Lotus Corp. and Microsoft Corp. Barbara Dingfield, manager of corporate contributions and community programs for Microsoft, says the company offers "very deep" discounts on products sold to school systems.

Separately, Bell Atlantic Corp. is donating equipment to schools in Union City, N.J. Since September 1993, the company has been providing two personal computers—one for home and one for school—to each seventh-grade pupil and teacher at Christopher Columbus School. The company also provided ISDN lines that allow students and teachers to exchange e-mail, graphics and data 24 hours a day.

"This new communications channel dramatically increased communication between students, teachers and parents, and a 'virtual community' was created around the schools," said Al Koeppe, president of Bell Atlantic-New Jersey.

Not surprisingly, telephone companies are interested mainly in bringing wires to some schools' front doors. There's a healthy dose of self-interest involved, since providing access creates good public relations and buys some leverage with regulators at relatively little cost to the companies. Leslie Graitcer, executive director of the Bell South Foundation, says the company is exploring the possibility of wiring schools as part of a proposal for federal regulatory relief. Moreover, by bringing wires to some schools' front doors, telecommunications companies are creating a new class of potentially high-capacity users.

Generally, company-sponsored efforts to bring telecommunications services to schools are small in scale. Bell Atlantic, for instance, has provided \$100,000 in grants to connect 50 schools in West Virginia to the Internet. And Bell South Foundation is working with the Palm Beach County School Board to develop an interactive, distance learning television network. While promoting the idea of using technology in schools, Bell South Corp. Chairman John Clendenin stresses that "if technology were the cure-all solution in education, we would find it much easier to create schools that are a match for the demands of the Information Age."

A larger effort is under way in California, where regulators required Pacific Bell to offer free installation of up to four ISDN lines for all K-12 schools, public libraries, and community colleges in its service area. The so-called Education First program, ordered to offset the excessive rates the regional telephone company had been charging, also includes one year of free digital service for such customers. Pacific Bell also has been negotiating with hardware vendors to obtain product and service discounts of up to 35 percent. And it is expanding its partnership with the Detwiler Foundation for placing donated computers in schools.

The Pacific Bell plan is not without its detractors. In his analysis for the Department of Education, Russell Rothstein warned that the plan would commit schools to a particular technology—ISDN—that ultimately may not prove the best choice. Some groups, including GTE California, are seeking instead to give schools technical assistance so that they can make their own choices.

Pacific Bell also provides technology grants through CalREN, a \$25 million program launched in 1993 to stimulate development of applications for high-speed data communication services. The program will end in 1996.

Providing technical help was also the idea behind the establishment of the Regional Technology Training Center in Baltimore, a project financed by the Abell Foundation and the Maryland State Department of Education, that provides training and demonstrations of new hardware and software for teachers. In addition, the center sends technical helpers to schools that are setting up computer facilities.

"You can put in a computer lab in the school, but if there isn't somebody there to back up the teachers and somebody to help them keep up with changes in hardware and software, utilization will fall short," says Anne LaFarge Culman, Abell's vice president.

Some companies also are putting more emphasis on teacher training. Microsoft, for instance, is working with Seattle University's school of education on a program designed to show teachers how to integrate software into curriculum development. The AT&T Foundation has given grants to the National Council for the Accreditation of Teachers in Education to promote teacher training. Each summer, the foundation also hosts two or three math and science teachers from 16 states at AT&T Bell Labs, where they learn about new technologies.

The U S West Foundation is developing networks to train teachers to use technology. In the company's home state, the University of Northern Colorado won a three-year, \$1.6 million grant to establish a network of teachers and administrators skilled in telecommunications. About 1 percent of the state's public school teaching force is expected to receive training, and each participant is expected to train 10 additional teachers and administrators. U S West also has a Teacher Network project in Utah and is developing others in Arizona, Idaho, Iowa, Oregon, South Dakota, New Mexico, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Washington, and Wyoming.

Meanwhile, a few companies and organizations are seeking systemic education reform through technology. The Autodesk Foundation offers schools technical assistance, Internet training, and help in developing Internet curriculum. But it insists that participating schools have a broad vision. "As a foundation funded by a high-tech company, we are very clear about the fact that computers are just a tool," says Autodesk Vice President Elizabeth Share.

The George Lucas Educational Foundation, founded by filmmaker George Lucas in 1991, also seeks broad education reform. The foundation's goals are to disseminate information about educational change and facilitate the exchange of ideas. "We're really looking at the education system across the board," says Patty Burness, the executive director. The foundation is working on a video designed to show "how the roles of teachers, students, parents and the community must change if education is to keep pace with our rapidly changing, highly technological society." The foundation also plans to produce a resource document on emerging technologies, student learning, parent involvement, governance issues, lifelong learning, and assessment, among other issues.

Apple Computer Inc. is conducting comprehensive research on computers and education through its Apple Classrooms of Tomorrow project. Now 10 years old, the project has studied teacher development, the influence of computers on student learning, the relationship between technology and teacher collaboration, supporting environments, and other topics. Its research is carried out in working classrooms through cooperative agreements with school districts. Apple says its goal is to promote the use of technology in ways that promote constructivist learning. "It's hard for us to talk about technology as an entity in itself," a company spokesman says. "It can't be separated from change."

IBM Corp. is taking a particularly long-term approach to education. In September 1994, it announced a five-year, \$25 million program to help educators adopt broad-scale reforms. The focus is on systemic, rather than school-by-school, change. Recipients of the first round of five "partnership" grants include the state of Vermont, which is working to establish a digital portfolio-assessment-and-support system for the fourth and eighth grades, and Charlotte, N.C., which is adopting a broad-based technological infrastructure to support its goals of higher graduation standards, multi-age ability grouping, a longer school day and year and more parent involvement. Five more partnership grants with school districts or state education departments will be awarded by the end of 1995.

One of the potentially most ambitious efforts at systemic education reform may be the McGuffy Project, headed by cellular telephone executive Craig McCaw and Thomas Wheeler, president of the Cellular Telecommunications Industry Association. The private-sector initiative—being staffed by the public policy consulting firm, National Strategies Inc. in Washington, D.C.—is looking at new funding mechanisms that schools could use to pay for advanced technologies. One possibility is a mechanism to securitize debt incurred to buy new technology, much as housing finance agencies securitize home mortgages. The group, which has been working with Congressmen Robert Walker (R., Pa.) and J. C. Watts (R., Okla.), probably will not present a legislative proposal this year, although it is exploring establishment of a congressional task force on networking and schools. The project also is working to develop a clearinghouse on networking issues for local officials.

What's next?

Clearly, computer networking has captured the imagination of many who are eager to help prepare students for the Information Age. The energy and enthusiasm it has unleashed create high hopes for our schools. To sustain the effort, all of us—policymakers, educators, the business community, public interest groups, parents and citizens at large—must focus on long-term goals and seek collaborative relationships wherever we can. Specifically:

- We must remember that while technology has enormous potential to help students prepare for the new demands of the twenty-first century, merely installing it will accomplish little. Networking advocates are unlikely to succeed unless they convince parents, policymakers, and the public that using technology to empower students, promote active learning, and break down walls between classrooms and the "real world" adds up to a better way to prepare children for the Information Age.
- In addition to addressing these issues directly, businesses, government agencies, and nonprofit groups should consider how they can make the information they produce available in ways that educators can use. The substantial contribution NASA has made to K-12 education provides a model for others.
- Technology experts must continue to build bridges to the education community. To avoid another round of disappointment such as those that followed previous efforts to introduce technology into the classroom, we must ensure that teachers are given the training, technical support, and time needed to integrate networking into the curriculum. Further, many people are not as naturally enthusiastic about computers and networking as the experts are; user-friendly applications and advice that meet the needs of those less comfortable with technology will help to spread the use of networking through schools.
- Helping all teachers get connected would be a good starting point. It would both enable teachers to share ideas with their professional peers and help build a powerful constituency for further efforts to connect classrooms.

- Educators and others interested in promoting networking in schools must become involved in the broader debate over the nation's telecommunications future. In particular, we must seek a telecommunications structure that is fully interactive. Systems like traditional cable television, which allow only one-way transmission of information, have their place. But since students are most likely to acquire the higher-order intellectual skills demanded in the Information Age only if they can participate in communications networks as both consumers and providers of information, our top priority should be to build two-way networks.
- As a practical matter, creative partnerships among diverse players—government agencies, businesses, and nonprofit groups—must play a major role in connecting schools to communications networks. Current fiscal and political realities will prevent the government from doing the job alone. But government must take the necessary steps to ensure that low-income and other disadvantaged groups have the same chances as others to succeed in the Information Age. It must not shirk from its traditional role as the guarantor of equal opportunity.

This is an exciting time. Networks are already helping teachers like Patricia Weeg and students like Yi-Lun Ding extend their reach far beyond the classroom. To create the same kind of opportunities for all students, the collaborative spirit that has energized the connected few must spread to parents, communities, businesses and other institutions. The result will be students better prepared for work and citizenship in the twenty-first century. In the end, the community at large will benefit at least as much as today's students.

Written and produced online and in print for the Benton Foundation by Christopher Conte and Communications Development Incorporated of Washington DC. Additional research by Katharina Kopp.

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Additional resources

Bibliography

This selective bibliography will help those interested to learn more about wiring the schools and its relation to school reform efforts.

Becker, Henry Jay. "Analysis and Trends of School Use of New Information Technologies." PB95-170981. Report prepared for the Office of Technology Assessment, March 1994. A useful analysis of recent surveys on the deployment and use of computers in K-12 education. This unpublished report can be purchased from the National Technical Information Service (703-487-4650) for \$19.50.

Committee for Economic Development. *Connecting Students to a Changing World: A Technology Strategy for Improving Mathematics and Science Education*. (Washington D.C.: Committee for Economic Development, September 1995). This new report offers examples of how teachers can use computer technology to improve math and science learning and recommends strategies for designing budgets and technology programs.

Cuban, Larry. *How Teachers Taught; Constancy and Change in American Classrooms, 1880-1990*. (New York: Teachers College Press, 1993). Explores why the traditional, teacher-centered classroom has endured despite various efforts at reform over the last century.

_____. *Teachers and Machines: The Classroom Use of Technology Since 1920*. (New York: Teachers College Press, 1986). Focuses on how movies, telephones and television failed to produce significant education reform despite the high hopes of their advocates.

_____. "Computers Meet Classroom: Classroom Wins," in *Teachers College Record*, Volume 95, No. 2. (Winter 1993): 184-210. A fascinating discussion of how computers, too, could fail to change the structure of classrooms.

Means, Barbara, and others. *Using Technology to Support Education Reform*, ISBN 0-16-042048 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1993). Prepared for the Department of Education's Office of Research, this excellent volume explains the pedagogical theories behind the current school reform movement, describes the various uses of educational technologies, surveys research findings on the impact of technology in classrooms, and discusses how reforms can fail or succeed.

National Center for Education Statistics. *Advanced Telecommunications in U.S. Public Schools, K-12*. ISBN 0-16-045498-0 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, February 1995). The most up-to-date statistics how technology currently is deployed in schools. The report, prepared by the Department of Education, offers no analysis but lots of data.

Piller, Charles. "Separate Realities: The Creation of the Technological Underclass in America's Public Schools," in *Macworld* (September 1992): 218-30. After traveling extensively to observe how schools were using computers, Piller came to the chilling conclusion that "in most cases, computers simply perpetuate a two-tier system of education for rich and poor."

Sivin-Kachala, Jay, and Ellen R. Bialo. "Report on the Effectiveness of Technology in Schools, 1990–1994." (Washington, D.C.: Software Publishers Association, 1994). Summarizes and analyzes the results of numerous studies on the impact of computers in education.

Stanfield, Rochelle L. "Connected Classrooms," in *The National Journal* (July 22, 1995): 1885–89. Stanfield describes connecting the schools as "an exceedingly expensive proposition" and how "just when it's needed most, the federal role is likely to be scaled back."

Stoll, Clifford. *Silicon Snake Oil: Second Thoughts on the Information Highway* (New York: Doubleday, 1995). These musings of a disillusioned cybersurfer raise some interesting and important questions about whether the Internet can live up to its reputation—in the world of education and in other spheres.

Thompson, Ann D., Michael R. Simonson, and Constance P. Hargrave. *Educational Technology: A Review of the Research* (Washington, D.C.: Association for Educational Communications and Technology, 1992). A very useful summary of research findings on the impact of various technologies on student learning. The volume is particularly valuable to the layman because it puts the research in a broader context, describing how evolving theories about how students learn have shaped ideas about school reform and the use of technology in the classroom. It also pinpoints areas where more research is needed—including qualitative measures of student performance. The volume, as well as numerous other publications, can be purchased from the Association for Educational Communications and Technology in Washington, 1025 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Suite 820, Washington, D.C. 20005 for \$25.

U.S. General Accounting Office. "School Facilities: America's Schools Not Designed or Equipped for 21st Century." GAO-HEHS-95-95, April 1995. Summarizes findings of a survey of school administrators' view on their infrastructure needs. The report must be read with a grain of salt because it relies on subjective responses from school officials. But it does indicate that many administrators see serious problems in being able to offer students a safe environment suitable for learning, let alone being able to house sophisticated computer systems.

U.S. Office of Technology Assessment. *Power On! New Tools for Teaching and Learning*. OTA-SET-379. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, September 1988). Though seven years old, this is still one of the most comprehensive discussions of the potential impact of technology in the classroom.

_____. *Teachers and Technology: Making the Connection*. OTA-EHR-616. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, April 1995). Discusses in great detail the role of teachers in making technology work for change in schools. This volume, probably one of the OTA's last publications (Congress is eliminating the agency's funding), is full of information about virtually every issue involving technology in education.

Another good source of information is the National Coordinating Committee on Technology in Education and Training (NCC-TET), an umbrella organization with representatives of more than 100 education groups—including the American Federation of Teachers, the Council of Chief State School Officers, International Society for Technology in Education, National Education Association, National Foundation

for the Improvement of Education, and the National School Boards Association, among others. See especially the NCC-TET's March 25, 1994, document, "The National Information Infrastructure: Requirements for Education and Training." NCC-TET can be reached at P.O. Box 4437, Alexandria, Va. 22303 or by electronic mail at NCCTET-COMMENTS@EDUCOM.EDU.

Web sites

Sites that discuss the current status of and theory behind computer networking and the schools:

Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing (<http://www.cse.ucla.edu/>). CRESST, based at the University of California at Los Angeles, offers a rich array of reports on research into alternative forms of evaluating student learning. Though not geared exclusively to the role of technology in the classroom, these papers give a detailed view of the theory and practice of "performance-based assessment," which many analysts believe must become one of the objectives of school reform.

Clearinghouse for Networked Information Discovery and Retrieval (CNIDR) (<http://www.cnidr.org>). Created by the National Science Foundation to support networked information discovery and retrieval, CNIDR hosts a number of WWW servers for information. John and Janice's Research Page, which can be reached through Janice's K-12 Outpost, shows results of an ongoing survey of schools with Internet connections.

Consortium for School Networking (<http://cosn.org>). Though still under construction, this web site promises to offer updates on important policy discussions involving school networking.

The Educational Resources Information Center (http://www.cua.edu/www/eric_ae/home.html). ERIC, a national information system established in 1966 and supported by the U.S. Department of Education, contains more than 850,000 abstracts of documents and journal articles on education research and practice. As the sheer volume of the material suggests, this is a web site for the serious researcher, not the casual reader.

Educational Technology Resources (<http://www.camosun.bc.ca>). For a view from Canada, look up this site of the Standing Committee on Educational Technology (SCOET), a panel of volunteers representing the 20 publicly funded colleges and institutes in British Columbia, Canada. Educational Resources has a variety of interesting links.

Educom Home Page (<http://www.educom.edu/>). Though oriented primarily toward higher education, this easy-to-manuever web site provides a wealth of information on educational technology issues from one of the early players in the field. Created in 1964, Educom describes its members as "institutions of higher education, nonprofit associations, corporations and other organizations committed to education that is active and learner-centered, free from traditional constraints of time and space, lifelong and collaborative, cost-effective, responsive, dynamic, relevant and accessible."

EdWeb (<http://K12.cnidr.org>). The Corporation for Public Broadcasting's education site includes very useful and accessible explanations of the development of the Internet and its relationship to education reform by author Andy Carvin.

From Now On: The Educational Technology Journal (<http://www.pacificrim.net>). Maintained by Jamieson McKenzie, a teacher, school administrator, and technology expert in Bellingham, Wash., this online publication is full of fascinating musings on the nature of Internet-based learning. The site also offers advice to school officials on how to plan technology acquisition and use.

ILTWeb (<http://www.ilt.columbia.edu>). The Institute of Learning Technologies, part of Columbia University, maintains this site full of readings, electronic texts, journals, and hypertext documents on the role of networked digital communication and multimedia on education. The materials are comprehensive and fascinating, but they can be difficult for the casual reader.

Institute for Learning Sciences (<http://www.ils.nwu.edu>). Northwestern University's ILS—an interdisciplinary research and development center dedicated to transferring innovative educational technology from the laboratory to practical applications in businesses, schools, government agencies, and the community—builds educational software for use in multimedia computers. The site includes Engines, a "hyper-book" by Roger Shank, ILS director, and Chip Cleary, a graduate student, on the problem's with the education system and how to reform it—especially through the use of educational technology.

The Internet and Schools (<http://sunsite.unc.edu/cisco/tracy-article.html>). A comprehensive report on major groups and activities shaping the Internet's role in education. This is part of the Sun Microsystems Inc. Cisco Education Archive (<http://sunsite.unc.edu/cisco/cisco-home.html>).

National Academy of Sciences (<http://nas.edu/nap/online/techgap/welcome.html>). A clear and well produced discussion of how computer networking can—and must—lead to school reform.

North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (www.ncrel.org/ncrel/). NCREL, one of 10 regional education laboratories financed by the U.S. Department of Education, offers a useful essay discussing how changes in the nature of the economy require a different approach to schooling. Although the paper, "Preparing Students for Work in the 21st Century," does not deal directly with computer networking, it explores what students need to succeed in the Information Age. From the NCREL home page, click on "Pathways to School Improvement" and then on "school to work."

Syllabus Web (<http://www.syllabus.com>). Published by Syllabus Press, this site offers an eclectic collection of information on technologies used to enhance education.

See also "Technology Refusal and the Organizational Culture of Schools," by Steven Hodas (gopher://whitman.nsi.nasa.gov). In this cogent essay, Hodas, a school and communications analyst working on the NASA K-12 Internet initiative, argues that "machines can indeed change the culture of organizations, even ones as entrenched and recalcitrant as schools. But they do it not, as technologists have

generally imagined, by enabling schools to do the same job only better (more cheaply, more efficiently, more consistently, more equitably) but by causing them to change their conception of both what it is they do and the world in which they do it." Hodas's essay may not be available online much longer, but it will be published in Robert Kling, ed., *Computerization and Controversy* (San Diego: Academic Press, forthcoming).

Exciting uses of the Internet in schools

School sites cited in this report:

Delmar Elementary School (<http://shore.intercom.net/local/weeg>). Teacher Patricia Weeg maintains this home page describing her students' many uses of the Internet—especially the KIDLINK keypal program. The Resources for Teachers section is full of links to other interesting web sites.

Fairland Elementary (<http://www.inform.edu/UMS+STATE/UMD-Projects/MCTP/TEC>). This home page, maintained by teacher Mary O'Haver, displays student work and includes an annotated set of links to other education sites of particular interest to teachers—including Monarch Watch, which was cited in this report.

Mendocino Community Network (<http://www.mcn.org>). The education pages offer an excellent and comprehensive set of lesson plans on how the Internet can be used in teaching a wide range of subjects. Other pages show how the school's networking activities have become a focal point for economic and community development.

Montgomery Blair High School (<http://www.mbhs.edu>). This does not display much of the highly sophisticated networking projects of students at this urban magnet school, but it is full of students' own home pages, including one by Yi-Lun Ding.

Resources for teachers

Computer as a Learning Partner (<http://clp.berkeley.edu/CLP.html#top>). In this educational research project at the University of California at Berkeley, educational researchers, natural scientists, middle-school teachers and technology experts describe a semester-long thermodynamics, light and sound curriculum for achieving integrated science understanding that involves the innovative use of computers in the classroom. This web site also has a lengthy list of other education-oriented web sites.

The Geometry Forum (<http://forum.swarthmore.edu/>). Funded by the National Science Foundation, this project based at Swarthmore College near Philadelphia is an electronic community dedicated to the teaching of geometry. Its most active components are discussion groups in which teachers can exchange ideas with each other and with professional mathematicians.

Global SchoolNet Foundation (<http://gsn.org/gsn/gsn.home.html>). A nonprofit corporation launched by a group of San Diego teachers more than 10 years ago, GSN conducts and offers assistance to teachers in designing collaborative learning projects; helps schools and other institutions develop telecomputing plans;

publishes articles, disseminates model lesson plans, training materials and instructional videos; provides newsgroups and discussion lists for classroom use; offers workshops and training; and coordinates conferences using desktop computers.

The Globe Program (<http://www.globe.gov>). Launched by Vice President Gore, this project seeks to enlist students in measuring environmental phenomena worldwide and then to link them to scientists for data analysis and interpretation.

International Education and Resource Network (I*EARN) (<http://www.igc.apc.org/IEARN>). This web site sponsors a variety of learning projects, mostly on environmental topics, and offers conferences for teachers and educational managers.

The Jason Project (<http://seawifs.gsfc.nasa.gov/JASON.html>). The Jason Foundation for Education, formed by explorer Robert Ballard, organizes annual interactive field trips to a volcano in Hawaii, the Galapagos Islands, the Mayan ruins and other locales. The foundation's substantial curriculum suggestions and lesson plans stress hands-on activities and multidisciplinary approaches. Each year's project culminates in 60 hours of interactive television coverage. An online component of the program enables students to exchange notes with explorers at the scene—including students and teachers selected to represent various regions—and to help students participate in actual research with scientists. On the 1995 "Island Earth" project, for instance, students communicated with a scientist studying the spider population on a Hawaiian island and then collected samples from their own areas. The data were shared online and then discussed by the scientists. The site also includes a software program designed by a participating teacher to help students study island ecology.

KIDLINK (www.kidlink.org). This grassroots keypal project has drawn 37,000 kids from 71 countries into a "global dialogue." For a glowing recommendation, see the Delmar Elementary School home page cited above.

LabNet (<http://hub.terc.edu/terc/LabNet/LabNet.html>). A forum for K-12 science and math teachers to explore inquiry-oriented, project-based learning. The site offers teachers access to Presidential Awardees, Woodrow Wilson Fellows and other recognized teachers, discussion groups, online collaborative projects, news and more. LabNet is run by TERC (see above) and funded by the National Science Foundation.

NASA IITA K-12 Internet Initiative (<http://quest.arc.nasa.gov>). This site describes NASA's many educational activities, including online interactive projects, grants programs, assistance in learning to use the Internet in schools, and links to NASA's own online resources.

The Online Internet Institute (<http://prism.prs.K12.NJ.US:70/0/WWW/OII/OIIhome.html>). This cooperative project brought together 400 teachers and an impressive array of mentors this summer to conduct workshops exploring ways to make use of the Internet in classrooms. New "sessions" will be conducted throughout the 1995-96 school year. One of the institute's guiding lights is Ferdi Serim, a Princeton, N.J., teacher and former drummer for Dizzy Gillespie. He reports on the institute's activities in the Roving Reporter section of Houghton Mifflin's GNN Education Center (<http://www.gnn.com/gnn/meta/edu/index.html>), which offers teachers a variety of curricula ideas as well as connections to education experts and other teachers.

Passport to Knowledge (<http://quest.arc.nasa.gov/livefrom/passport.html>). Similar to the work of the Jason Foundation, this multimedia project takes children on two or three field trips to exotic places via live, interactive video, bolstered by taped segments. In addition, students can tap into an online encyclopedia that answers simple questions automatically and forwards more difficult ones to a group of online experts. Teachers also receive a printed guide suggesting adaptations for math, social studies, language arts and computer classes. The inaugural trip was to Antarctica, and subsequent ones are planned aboard the Kuiper flying observatory (a NASA aircraft that flies at 45,000 feet to observe the stratosphere), the Hubble space telescope, the Amazon rainforest and more.

The Smithsonian Ocean Planet Exhibit (http://seawifs.gsfc.nasa.gov/ocean_planet.html). Want to take an online excursion to a current exhibit at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C.? This handsome, well-organized site offers cybervisitors more information than the actual exhibit does.

Technical Education Research Centers (TERC) (<http://hub.terc.edu:70/hub/owner/TERC>). TERC is a non-profit organization that researches and promotes innovative approaches to math, science and technology education. Its web site describes a variety of projects involving students in collaborative online science investigations. It operates The Hub (<http://hub.terc.edu>), an Internet publication service that disseminates reports, curricula, projects in progress, calendars, articles and software of value to educators. Hub concentrates on science and mathematics, but has other educational materials as well. For an annotated list of network resources for K-12 education, see http://hub.terc.edu:70/0/hub/owner/TERC/CET/networking_txt.)

Web66: A K12 World Wide Web (<http://Web66.coled.umn.edu>). A project of the University of Minnesota College of Education and the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement, this site is designed to help educators establish their own Internet servers, form links with teachers and students at other schools, and find useful resources on the World Wide Web.

Government sites

Information Infrastructure Task Force (<http://iitfc.nist.gov:94/doc/Education.html>). The Clinton administration's interagency IITF has produced a series of papers exploring various aspects of the information superhighway. "A Transformation of Learning: Use of the NII for Education and Lifelong Learning" lays out arguments for how networking can change schools. The paper includes a useful bibliography.

The National Science Foundation Directorate for Education and Human Resources

(<http://red.www.nsf.gov>). The NSF is behind some of the most innovative projects to develop computer networking in education. To find a description of the Common Knowledge Project in Pittsburgh and the Learning Through Collaborative Visualization (CoVis) Project cited by NSF senior program officer Nora Sabelli, first click on EHR programs and then go to the Advanced Technology Program and look for funded projects. Also, from the EHR programs page, click on Networking Infrastructure for Education for a variety of interesting NSF-backed projects. Also of interest is the division of elementary, secondary and information education, which describes NSF's Global Schoolhouse project, and has an archive of brief and interesting news about uses of technology in education.

Office of Technology Assessment (<http://www.ota.gov>). The OTA has been a leader in promoting creative uses of technology in schools. The future of this web site is uncertain since Congress is eliminating the agency, so check it soon. It includes the complete text of the seminal study, *Teachers & Technology: Making the Connection*.

The U.S. Department of Education Homepage (<http://www.ed.gov/index.html>). This web site contains a variety of interesting resources on education, laying out national educational policy and describing the department's activities. The technology initiative site (<http://www.ed.gov/techno.html>) describes the challenge grants program and lists examples of how schools are using networking.

Industry

Apple Computer Inc. (<http://www.info.apple.com/education/>). This site is full of information on Apple's extensive education program. Also check out the Apple Classroom of Tomorrow (<http://www.info.apple.com/education/acot.menu.html>) web site, which includes brief summaries of the reports conducted by the ACOT research unit.

Bell South Corp. (<http://www.bstbls.com/bbs/press-releases.html>). This web site offers press releases on Bell South educational technology programs.

Bolt Beranek and Newman Inc., National School Network Testbed (<http://copernicus.bbn.com:70/1>). BBN, a leader in the field of educational technology, describes in detail a comprehensive demonstration project in school networking.

Classroom Connect on the Net (<http://wentworth.com/classroom/default.html>). This handsome and comprehensive web site maintained by Wentworth Worldwide Media provides lesson plans, libraries, museums, science projects and numerous other valuable resources that can be used in the classroom today. Wentworth has embarked on an ambitious multimedia publishing program for the K-12 market, including newsletters, books, videotapes, computer software, and seminars. Webworld site is full of links to important business sites and contains an impressive list of nonprofit organizations' web sites.

Hewlett Packard Mentor Program (<http://mentor.external.hp.com>). This computer company offers to connect its employees to students in an e-mail mentoring program.

Microsoft Corp. (<http://www.microsoft.com/k-12>). This site describes the software company's various products and activities involving primary and secondary education. The discussion on school curriculum is interesting, though it focuses primarily on Microsoft's own products rather than dealing with the topic generally.

Net Squared Education (<http://www.commerce.com/net2/library/education.html>). Global Commerce Link, a communications company that provides and manages online services for businesses, offers a variety of links to schools and education resources. The links aren't thematically organized, however, so finding what you want can be time-consuming, tedious, and chancy.

Pacific Bell Corp. Three web sites offer information about the company's technology program for schools:

CalREN: <http://www.pacbell.com/superhi/CalRen/index.html>

Education First: <http://www.pacbell.com/superhi/EdFirst/index.html>

General: <http://www.pacbell.com/superhi/index.html>

Other sites

Autodesk Foundation (<http://www.autodesk.com/aboutad/foundati>). This site contains general information about the foundation, as well as specifics about its Mendicino school system project and other partnerships with local school districts.

Benton Foundation (<http://cdinet.com/benton>). The Benton Foundation's Communications Policy Project promotes public interest values and noncommercial services for the National Information Infrastructure through research, policy analysis, print, video and online publishing and outreach to nonprofits and foundations. Our web site includes updates on communications policy and upcoming events; a forum for discussion; publications such as bulletins, policy briefings and working papers; and cyber pages of other online resources.

George Lucas Educational Foundation (<http://glef.org/>). Visitors to this site can read the foundation's mission statement, as well as brief descriptions of its newsletter and projects.

Interesting Places for Kids (<http://www.crc.ricoh.com/people/steve/kids.html>). Steve Savitzky, senior Computer Scientist at Ricoh California Research Center, maintains this eclectic web page with links to kid-oriented literature, museums, entertainment and other sites.

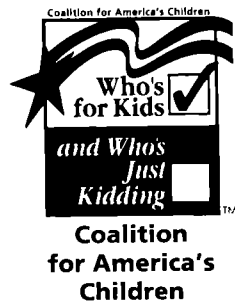
Yahoo (http://www.yahoo.com/Education/On_line_Teaching_and_Learning). This site lists a large number of education-related sites. It gives a general sense of what is available, but it is so sweeping that much probably will not be relevant to your particular interests.

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education
safety
security



The Coalition for America's Children

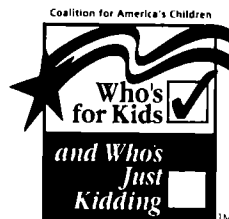
is an alliance of 350 national, state and local nonprofit organizations working together since 1990 to call attention to the serious obstacles impeding children's well-being and to boost children's concerns to the top of the public policy agenda.

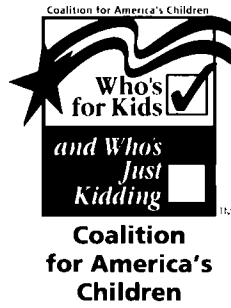
**For information on membership and how to
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Coalition for America's Children
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who's for
kids
and who's just
kidding?

How to Build and Maintain Your Children's Platform

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INTRODUCTION

In this election season, the Coalition for America's Children has launched a national nonpartisan campaign to ensure that every candidate for public office puts forth a substantive children's platform. Working with its 43 million members the Coalition offers tools and information to help communities find out *Who's for Kids and Who's Just Kidding*. The primary tool of this effort is the building of children's platforms in communities across the country.

Why Build a Children's Platform?

A children's platform will provide a place in your community where candidates for public office, community leaders, concerned citizens, parents and kids can come together to spotlight children's issues. This is a big election year -- the perfect time to push children's issues to top of your community's policy agenda and find out *Who's for Kids and Who's Just Kidding*.

Your children's platform can be a new structure that you build as a community effort, or you can inaugurate an existing structure or site as your children's platform. It doesn't even have to be a platform -- it can be any place where community members can gather to hear speakers and conduct rallies and other activities. The important point is that you create a place in your community where children's issues will be raised throughout the election season and which the community will come to see as the location to hold events and activities that are about children.

If you decide to build a new platform, you can use the construction effort as an organizing tool to bring together all the children's groups in your community. It also provides a great opportunity to get your local business and service community (hardware stores, building suppliers, construction companies, contractors, labor unions, service clubs) more involved in children's issues. We have included plans and instructions in this guide for building a platform (Appendix E) or you can get local architects and builders to help you design one for a specific site in your community.

Once the platform is built, it is meant to serve as the site from which political candidates put forth their positions on children's issues -- their children's platform. It can also be the place where your local children's coalition announces its children's platform and challenges all the candidates to respond.

With enough community support, the platform can become the focal point for a wide range of events, announcements and activities relating to kids -- from the mayor's declaration of child abuse prevention month to a puppet show about children with disabilities.

Launching Your Community's Children's Platform

Step One: Form a Platform Committee

Pick a time and place to hold a start-up meeting of the Committee. Contact the groups in your community that care about kids, such as the PTA, Junior League, teacher's union, children's hospital, Head Start and day care centers, local chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, department of child welfare, child abuse prevention coalition, recreation centers and athletic leagues, Safe Kids Coalition and American Association of Retired People (AARP). Place public service announcements in your local paper and on radio and TV announcing the formation of the Platform Committee and inviting interested citizens to come to the meeting. Contact the service clubs at local high schools to see if they are looking for a community service activity -- you've got one for them!

A big part of the Platform Committee's work will be developing ideas for events, finding groups to conduct or manage the events and figuring out ways to pay for them--with sponsorship from local businesses or by fund raising. You might want to include groups and individuals on your Committee who have a good track record at leveraging business sponsorship or raising funds in your community. In the calendar (Appendix C), we have listed ideas for events that can be held at the platform and included suggestions of groups that could be asked to conduct and sponsor the activities.

Step Two: Plan Your Launch Event

☆ Develop your message. What are the major issues affecting the children in your community? Build your message around those issues.

☆ Develop a timeline for your launch -- ensure enough volunteers to make it happen.

☆ Invite state, local and federal candidates to the launch to make a pledge on behalf of kids and answer questions about their children's platforms. Send invitations to all the candidates to ensure that the event is nonpartisan.

☆ Hold a contest in your schools to have kids decide the questions they think the candidates should address at the launch event.

☆ Put together a panel of adults and children to question the candidates at the event.

☆ Develop a media plan to publicize the launch and the Platform:

★ Ask a local public relations firm to act as the pro-bono media representative or consultant for the campaign.

★ Put together a press packet about the platform and send it to your local media. Include information about the platform and the Committee, fact sheets about the issues facing children in your community, and a list of the candidates who have been invited to the launch. A sample press release can be found at Appendix A.

★ Organize a press conference to announce the formation and purpose of the Platform Committee. Invite the media to cover the building of the platform as well as the launch event.

★ Invite local radio and TV talk show hosts to broadcast live from the platform.

★ Set up editorial board meetings with your local newspapers to tell them about the platform and urge them to cover children's issues during the campaign season.

★ Have members of the Platform Committee prepare op-eds for your local print and broadcast media about children's issues in your community and why the platform is important.

★ Ask the local newspaper to publish an insert with your questions for candidates and voters guide to the candidates' stands on children's issues.

☆ Use the World Wide Web -- create an on-line platform.

★ Develop a home page for your platform -- get kids to help.

★ Host an on-line forum to discuss local kids issues.

★ Hold an on-line press conference.

★ Post the candidate's platforms on your home page (and join communities across the country in posting them on the Coalition for America's Children home page, e-mail address: platecac@benton.org).

USING YOUR CHILDREN'S PLATFORM THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Once your platform is built and the launch event is in the works, you can begin planning events to be held at the platform throughout the year. To keep the Children's Platform in the front of the public and media, it is important to hold at least one event there a month. While the focus of the *Who's for Kids and Who's Just Kidding* campaign is to raise kids issues to the top of the election year agenda and get candidates to address them, you can plan events around a range of dates and activities in your community. The following suggestions for events and activities are divided into sections for election season and community-building events. Appendix C of this guidebook is a calendar that lists designated months, weeks and days from March through November. Your community is probably already planning events to recognize many of these dates, and you can offer to have the events or announcements held at the platform.

Suggestions for Election Season Events

- ☆ Invite local, state and national candidates to forums to discuss and debate the children's issues in your community. These events are a natural draw for the media and perfect for live radio and television coverage.
- ☆ Ask national candidates who are visiting your community to appear at the platform to make a pledge on behalf of kids and talk about their children's platform.
- ☆ Hold rallies to launch letter and postcard writing campaigns; give out postcards, sample letters and copies of the candidates' platforms.
- ☆ Hold a *Who's for Kids and Who's Just Kidding* poster contest for area school children and rotate the winning posters every week.
- ☆ Have town hall meetings on family issues and invite citizens, civic leaders and local, state and national candidates.
- ☆ Conduct voter registration at the platform on a regular basis. For instance, every Tuesday could be voter registration day, and a range of different civic group could sponsor the activities to spread the work around.
- ☆ Hold *Speak Up for Kids* rallies where speakers address important children's issues in your community and offer how-to's on making a difference for kids. Hand out questions for candidates booklets and candidate platforms as well as other information on local services and activities for kids.

☆ Encourage local nonprofit organizations to use the platform for announcements and news conferences on child-related public policy issues.

☆ Launch a children's issues canvassing project from the platform. Hold a kick-off rally after you conduct workshops on how to go door to door to get out the vote and make voters more aware of children's concerns.

☆ Hold a *Who's for Kids and Who's Just Kidding* photo contest on the health, education, safety and economic security of the children in your community. Have the awards ceremony at the platform. Ask your local newspaper to help you judge the contest and publish an insert with the winners. Get public officials to hang photos in their offices and mount exhibits at public display areas in their office buildings.

☆ Create a short video of some of the events and activities at the platform and use it in your meetings with public officials to demonstrate support for kids. A video production class or club at the local high school or junior college might be interested in this project, or you might find an interested professional who would like to do some valuable volunteer work. Be sure to send copies of your tapes to the Coalition for America's Children so they can be used in the video about campaign events across the country. Tips on videotaping your events can be found at Appendix E.

☆ Work with the local media in your *Who's for Kids and Who's Just Kidding* campaign, especially the local affiliate of the ABC Television Network, which is partnered with the Coalition for America's Children in the *Children First* campaign. Ask local television, radio and newspapers to sponsor both election season and community-building events at the platform. They can use the sponsorship to meet their community service obligations.

Suggestions for Community-Building Events

☆ Ask the local Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and other service clubs to help maintain the platform -- keeping it clean and painted. Put up a sign that says which troops or groups are doing the work.

☆ Ask local businesses and business groups, like the chamber of commerce or Kiwanis, to sponsor platform events.

☆ Allow local children's groups, such as the PTA, children's hospital, day care centers and homeless shelters, use the platform in their fund-raising efforts. They could use it as the start and finish lines for a fun run or to hold their volunteer awards ceremonies.

☆ Use the platform as a site to provide immunizations, health screenings and safety

fairs for children. The events calendar shows dates for these kinds of activities.

☆ Participate in the *Silent March, Americans Against Gun Violence Summer* during June and July. State and city coordinators across the country will collect shoes with notes in them to represent gun deaths. Local events will be planned, using the shoes as a centerpiece, to alert the public that gun violence is a preventable disease. The events (Silent Marches) and press conferences could be held at the platform. There will be a national Silent March in Washington, DC, on September 30. (See the events calendar at Appendix C.)

☆ Conduct town meetings at the platform on issues such as how to make your community more child-friendly, how to find good day care, or how to make your neighborhood safe.

☆ Publish a platform newsletter, distributed in hard copy and on-line, to report on the events taking place at the platform and highlight the groups sponsoring them. Involve community kids in the production and distribution of the newsletter.

☆ Use the platform to launch a park and playground clean-up day. Have community volunteers gather at the platform to get their clean-up assignments.

☆ Have a *Businesses for Kids Day*. Encourage businesses to sign a pledge that includes a checklist for developing and maintaining a family-friendly workplace. Honor those businesses that are already active in children's activities such as sponsoring little league teams.

☆ Hold community service awards ceremonies at the platform. Offer it as a site for existing awards events or start new ones such as awards for the best service project by kids for kids or for the most committed adult advocate for children.

☆ Invite performing artists with "kid-appeal" to appear at the platform. Their performances could be used as fund raisers for local groups or as a gift to the kids of the community. Local businesses might be willing to underwrite these events.

☆ At every event at the platform, make sure that *Who's for Kids and Who's Just Kidding* voter information is available.

CONCLUSION

Building and maintaining a children's platform is a lot of work and will require support from all areas of your community. But making sure that kids issues are put first will be well worth the effort. Your hard work will pay off in a strong and committed movement that stands up for the kids in your community during this election year and into the future.

If you need more information or assistance in building a children's platform, please contact:

Coalition for America's Children
c/o M.B. Fund
1634 Eye Street, NW, 12th Floor
Washington, DC 20006
phone: (202) 638-5770 fax: (202) 638-5771
e-mail address: platcac@benton.org
Web site: <http://www.kidscampaigns.org>

If you would like a copy of the *Children's Advocates Campaign Strategy Book*, a complete step-by-step guide on conducting election season activities, please look for ordering information at the back of this guide.

Sample Press Release

Your letterhead

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: *[Name]*

(Title)

[Organization]

(Phone Number)

[date]

[Ideas for Header]

COMMUNITY TO BUILD PLATFORM FOR KIDS [or]

"KIDS PLATFORM" WILL TEST POLITICIANS [or]

KIDS ASK FOR SUPPORT IN '96 ELECTIONS

At *[time]*, on *[date]*, more than *[number]* community leaders and more than *[number]* children will join hands at *[your organization]* and construct a "platform" for kids. The purpose of this platform is to invite candidates for office in the 1996 elections as well as business and other community leaders to step forward and express their visions for meeting the urgent needs of America's children and families.

This platform is built as part of a national "*Who's for Kids And Who's Just Kidding*" campaign sponsored by the Coalition for America's Children. The Coalition is an alliance of national, state and local nonprofit organizations working to draw attention to the needs of children and to elevate concern for children's health, education, safety and economic security to the top of the public policy agenda.

A national survey conducted for the Coalition for America's Children in 1995 found that three out of four American voters agree that "our political leaders are not doing enough to solve the problems facing children today." In an earlier poll, taken in 1992, nine out of 10 Americans said it is important to them that candidates for public office put forth a series of proposals, or a platform, on children's issues.

[Place a quotation from a recognized public leader such as the mayor or your CEO.]

The following children and their families are going to help build the platform: *[names of children and families who have agreed to help -- be sure to get written releases to use their names]*. And the following community leaders also have agreed to help: *[list names of community leaders]*.

Throughout the upcoming year, community leaders will be calling upon candidates for public office to appear at the platform and to articulate their agenda or platform for children and families. A calendar of educational and entertainment events for the general public is also planned. *(See attached calendar)*.

LOCATION: *[Your address]*

Sample Op-ed

Recently members of our community came together to construct a physical platform at {*location*} to draw attention to the needs of our children. This platform will provide a place for candidates in the 1996 elections to deliver their plans for meeting the needs of our community's children. It will also provide a place for the business community to demonstrate its commitment to children by sponsoring events, for civic leaders to announce programs that will benefit children and for parents and children to come together to learn and celebrate.

This platform was constructed as part of the 1996 "Who's for Kids and Who's Just Kidding" campaign sponsored by the Coalition for America's Children. The Coalition is an alliance of over 300 local, state and national organizations working to elevate concern for children to the top of the public policy agenda.

In 1995, a national survey conducted for the Coalition found three out of four voters agreed with the statement that "our political leaders are not doing enough to solve the problems facing children today." In a 1992 poll, the Coalition found that nine out of 10 Americans said it is important to them that candidates for public office put forth a series of proposals, or a platform, on children's issues. It appears that most Americans, regardless of their political leanings, are concerned about ensuring that children are kept healthy and safe, are well-educated and grow up in families that are able to take care of them.

Recent statistics show the plight of America's children:

- One in every six of our children is not covered by public or private health insurance.
- Real income for middle-income families has gone down over the past 20 years while the cost of housing has gone up.
- In 1994, more than 3 million reports of child abuse or neglect were investigated.
- Every two hours, a child in our country dies of a gunshot wound.
- Half of those Americans with child support agreements fail to make good on that obligation.
- About a third of our high school students do not graduate in four years.

The list of these statistics can go on and on. But more important are the children behind the statistics -- children here in {*name of community*}. As voters, we have a right to expect specific ideas and plans from those candidates who seek our support in the November elections. As families and concerned citizens, we have the added duty of protecting the interests of children, now and into the future.

As the activities at our community's children's platform unfold over this election year, we will have the opportunity to see which candidates step forward with visions for the future of our children. We will find out "Who's for Kids and Who's Just Kidding."

1996 DATES & IDEAS FOR EVENTS

☆ MARCH ☆

NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH

Local grocery stores & nutrition groups could hold a series of events about good nutrition

NATIONAL MENTAL RETARDATION AWARENESS MONTH

3-9 JUVENILE ARTHRITIS AWARENESS WEEK

3-9 NATIONAL PTA ALCOHOL & OTHER DRUG AWARENESS WEEK

Have the PTA provide information about prevention programs in the schools

4-8 NATIONAL SCHOOL BREAKFAST WEEK

17-23 CHILDREN AND HOSPITALS WEEK

17-23 POISON PREVENTION WEEK

Your local poison control center could bring MR.YUK to give away poison control information and home safety ideas.

☆ APRIL ☆

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

Have the mayor stand on the platform with your local child abuse coalition members to declare April Child Abuse Prevention Month

NATIONAL YOUTH SPORTS SAFETY MONTH

ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH

Have SADD hold a rally to raise awareness of teenage drunk driving

14-20 NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK

Children's librarians could hold readings for small children and high school service clubs could help supervise the kids

21-27 NATIONAL INFANT IMMUNIZATION WEEK

The local immunization coalition could provide free immunizations and screenings

☆ **APRIL** ☆

21-27 NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

Have the local red cross announce the youth volunteers of the year

23 NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE DAY

☆ **MAY** ☆

NATIONAL SAFE KIDS MONTH

ALLERGY AND ASTHMA AWARENESS MONTH

Have the local American Lung Association hold an asthma screening

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

Honor senior volunteers who work in schools and day care centers

NATIONAL PHYSICAL FITNESS/SPORTS MONTH

Hold an aerobathon fundraiser. Have aerobics instructors run the event and hold classes for kids.

1-8 SAFE SENIOR WEEK (GRADUATION SAFETY)

Have SADD or MADD host alcohol-free graduation parties with music, dancing, food.

4-11 NATIONAL SAFE KIDS WEEK

Have the safe kids coalition hold a safe biking rodeo. Ask a local taxicab company or bike shop to sponsor it.

5-11 PTA TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK

Have the PTA host picnic dinners for teachers in your community. Local grocery stores, restaurants and caterers could donate the food. Kids could provide entertainment.

12-18 NATIONAL RUNNING AND FITNESS WEEK

Hold a walkathon or fun run to raise money for the upkeep of the platform. Ask a local runners club or fitness center to sponsor the event.

7 NATIONAL TEACHER DAY

Have the school board president announce the names of the local teachers of the year.

12 MOTHER'S DAY

Have local florists decorate the platform. Hold a picnic brunch to honor the foster mothers in your community.

☆ **MAY** ☆

25 NATIONAL MISSING CHILDREN'S DAY

The safe kids or child abuse prevention coalition could hold a personal safety seminar for parents and kids.

31 WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY

Announce the formation of a new coalition to prevent tobacco use by young people in your community.

31 MEMORIAL DAY

☆ **JUNE** ☆

FIREWORKS SAFETY MONTH

Have your fire department hold safety demonstrations at the platform throughout the month.

NATIONAL DRIVE SAFE MONTH

This is the beginning of vacation season. Hand out tips on driving safety and ideas to keep kids busy on long car trips.

1 STAND FOR CHILDREN

Put up a big sign at the platform saying that it is closed for the day so everyone can go to Washington to participate in the stand for children.

9 RACE UNITY DAY

Hold an event celebrating the diversity of your community.

16 FATHER'S DAY

Hold a celebration of fatherhood with speakers on the joys and responsibilities of being a father. Be sure to include young fathers.

☆ **JULY** ☆

HUNGER AWARENESS MONTH

Local food banks and soup kitchens could hold an event to recruit volunteers and raise awareness of hunger in your community.

NATIONAL PARKS AND RECREATION MONTH

☆ JULY ☆

21-27 LEAD POISON CONTROL WEEK

Ask safe kids, poison control and environmental groups to hold an event celebrating the clean-up of a local lead hazard.

4 INDEPENDENCE DAY

Hold a 4th of July picnic for families. Ask MADD or SADD, local businesses and recreation groups to sponsor the picnic and provide some of the food and entertainment.

☆ AUGUST ☆

NATIONAL CLEAN WATER MONTH

Environmental groups or clubs could release the results of studies on the cleanliness of your drinking water.

12-15 DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION

26-29 REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION

☆ SEPTEMBER ☆

BABY SAFETY MONTH

Have the safe kids and maternal and child coalitions do an event on “shaken baby” awareness and prevention.

NATIONAL LITERACY MONTH

Hold a poetry contest with awards for different age groups - from five-year-olds all the way up to seniors.

CHILDREN’S EYE HEALTH AND SAFETY MONTH

Ask your optometric association to provide information on eye health for kids.

NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

2 LABOR DAY

Get local labor unions and businesses to sponsor an event at the platform. Bring employers and employees together to talk about workplace issues. Hold a community barbecue to celebrate the collaboration. Employers could pledge committing to family-friendly workplaces.

☆ **SEPTEMBER** ☆

- 9 **NATIONAL GRANDPARENTS DAY**
Hold a poster contest for kids with the theme being why their grandparents are so important to them.
- 30 **1996 SILENT MARCH IN WASHINGTON, DC**
This is the culmination of the gun violence awareness “shoes” events held all summer at sites around the country.

☆ **OCTOBER** ☆

CHILD HEALTH MONTH - VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Look for the packet of information and ideas from the American Academy of Pediatrics. Contact your local chapter or children’s hospital.

FAMILY HEALTH MONTH

MARCH OF DIMES CAMPAIGN FOR HEALTHIER BABIES MONTH

NATIONAL SIDS AWARENESS MONTH

Ask pediatricians and public health groups to provide materials about the “back to sleep” Initiative to prevent sids by putting babies to sleep on their backs.

NATIONAL UNICEF MONTH

- 6-12 **FIRE PREVENTION WEEK**
- 14-18 **NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH WEEK**
- 20-26 **NATIONAL SCHOOL BUS SAFETY WEEK**
- 14 **COLUMBUS DAY**
- 16 **WORLD HUNGER DAY**
- 31 **HALLOWEEN - HANDS OFF HALLOWEEN**
Hands Off Halloween works to keep beer companies from using Halloween as a marketing tool to sell beer. Team up with MADD or SADD in efforts to keep Halloween for kids.

☆ **NOVEMBER** ☆

NATIONAL PTA CHILD SAFETY & PROTECTION MONTH

The PTA will have ideas on events to bring public attention to issues of safety and protection.

17-23 AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK

Hold a fair at the platform with information about all kinds of educational opportunities in your community -- from recreation and arts classes to degree programs.

18-24 NATIONAL CHILDREN'S BOOK WEEK

Have a children's book fair at the platform. Ask a local children's author to hold a book signing. Auction children's books and use the proceeds to buy books for children in shelters.

24-30 NATIONAL FAMILY WEEK

Hold a poster or essay contest for kids on the theme of "What is a family?"

5 ELECTION DAY

Hold a get-out-the-vote rally. Use the platform as a gathering point for volunteers who will drive to the polls those voters who are elderly, disabled or without transportation.

11 VETERANS DAY

20 UNITED NATIONS: UNIVERSAL CHILDREN'S DAY

Have a costume contest for kids to try native dress from different countries around the world.

21 GREAT AMERICAN SMOKEOUT

Look for a packet of ideas for events and activities from the National Center for Tobacco-Free Kids.

22 NATIONAL STOP THE VIOLENCE DAY

Ask local violence prevention groups or coalitions to hold a rally or event at the platform to focus attention on violence against children.

28 THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY SEASON

Launch food and clothing drives from the platform. Use the platform to organize families to make sandwiches for a local soup kitchen. Have the platform be a collection site for toys for tots.

Congressional Primaries

☆ MARCH ☆

- 5 Maryland
- 12 Mississippi, Texas
- 19 Illinois, Ohio
- 26 California

☆ APRIL ☆

- 2 Mississippi Runoff
- 9 Texas Runoff
- 23 Pennsylvania

☆ MAY ☆

- 7 Indiana, North Carolina
- 14 Nebraska, West Virginia
- 21 Arkansas, Oregon
- 28 Idaho, Kentucky

☆ JUNE ☆

- 4 Alabama, Iowa, Montana,
New Jersey, New Mexico, South
Dakota, North Carolina Runoff
- 11 Maine, North Dakota, Virginia,
South Carolina, Arkansas Runoff,
South Dakota Runoff
- 25 Utah, Alabama Runoff,
South Carolina Runoff

☆ JULY ☆

- 16 Georgia

☆ AUGUST ☆

- 1 Tennessee
- 6 Kansas, Michigan, Missouri,
Georgia Runoff
- 13 Colorado
- 20 Wyoming
- 27 Alaska, Oklahoma

☆ SEPTEMBER ☆

- 2 Nevada
- 3 Florida
- 7 Delaware
- 10 Arizona, Connecticut, Minnesota
New Hampshire, New York,
Rhode Island, Vermont,
Wisconsin
- 17 Massachusetts, Washington,
Oklahoma Runoff
- 21 Hawaii, Louisiana

☆ OCTOBER ☆

- 1 Florida

Videotaping Your Children's Platform Events

Creating videotapes of the building, launch and activities held at your children's platform is a great way to record your community efforts. You can use the videotapes to recruit new committee members, to expand participation in the platform events, to create a historical record and to show to potential sponsors of the platform and events. Additionally, the Coalition will be collecting videotape of the construction and launch of children's platforms to create a documentary about Campaign '96 events across the country. Your footage could very well become part of this nationally distributed video.

Using Professionals

The best way to create a videotaped record that is polished and well edited is to have the work done by a professional video crew. There are several ways you might be able to afford such a service:

- ☆ Ask professional videotaping businesses to donate crews.
- ☆ Raise money from the community to pay for professional services.
- ☆ Contact the local public access cable television stations to see if they would be willing to tape activities as part of their requirement to cover community events.
- ☆ Contact high school or college video production classes or clubs and ask them to take on the documentation as a class project.
- ☆ Ask a large corporation that has a communications department with video production capability to donate services or assistance.
- ☆ Use your network to locate free-lance video production professionals who would be willing to donate time and expertise.

If local television stations cover your launch or subsequent events, you can ask them for the footage. You will probably get VHS copies, not the original tape. Try to get the highest quality format as possible; the best is betacam, and you may be asked to pay for tape of that quality. If you record your footage off the air (from television broadcasts of the events), record it in the fastest speed, which is called SP.

Using Volunteers

You can also recruit platform coalition volunteers to use their own equipment to tape records of the events. This will work best if their equipment is Hi-8 or Super-VHS

which are better formats than conventional VHS. To get the most interesting and complete record of events, recruit several people to videotape.

Here are technical hints that will help you improve the quality of your videotape.

Audio Quality:

☆ Most of the microphones built into camcorders are not high enough quality so get an audio feed from the platform's public address system -- the amplifier or mixer or whatever "box" is feeding the speakers.

☆ Take a microphone and/or line feed into the camera and coordinate with the audio operator.

☆ If you are recording events where you cannot tap into the public address system, it's important to get a good microphone close to the action. If you rely on the camera's built-in microphone you will probably not get satisfactory audio.

Video Quality:

☆ Shoot carefully and wisely. Nonprofessional camera operators often move the camera too much. Try to compose a good shot and then hold it without a lot of zooming in or out or panning the crowd and speaker.

☆ The best composition for a shot of a speaker is wide enough to feature the speaker and put him or her in context. Other people should be visible and perhaps a banner or sign. You want to give the sense that the speaker is in a group.

☆ Close-ups work best if they include head and shoulders. The best compositions are shot from an angle, instead of straight on. A good rule is to use no wider an angle than one in which both eyes are visible when the speaker is looking straight ahead.

☆ To record a person as if they are being interviewed, it works best if the person being interviewed talks to someone, real or imagined, standing right next to the camera.

☆ If you can control the interview, ask the interviewee to make short and direct comments and to speak in complete sentences that repeat the gist of the question.

Important Note:

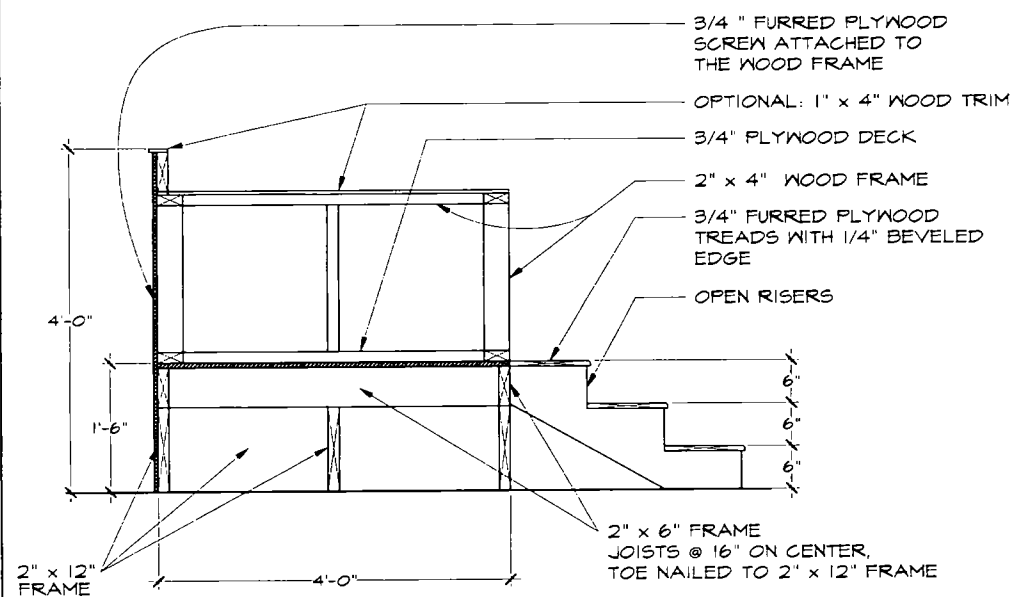
You need permission to feature anyone who is not a public figure or who is not making a public presentation. The permission doesn't have to be in writing if you ask them to

say on tape their name, address and that they give permission for pictures and sound of them to be used in your videotape record and any tape the Coalition for America's Children might use in the preparation of a documentary about the construction of children's platforms.

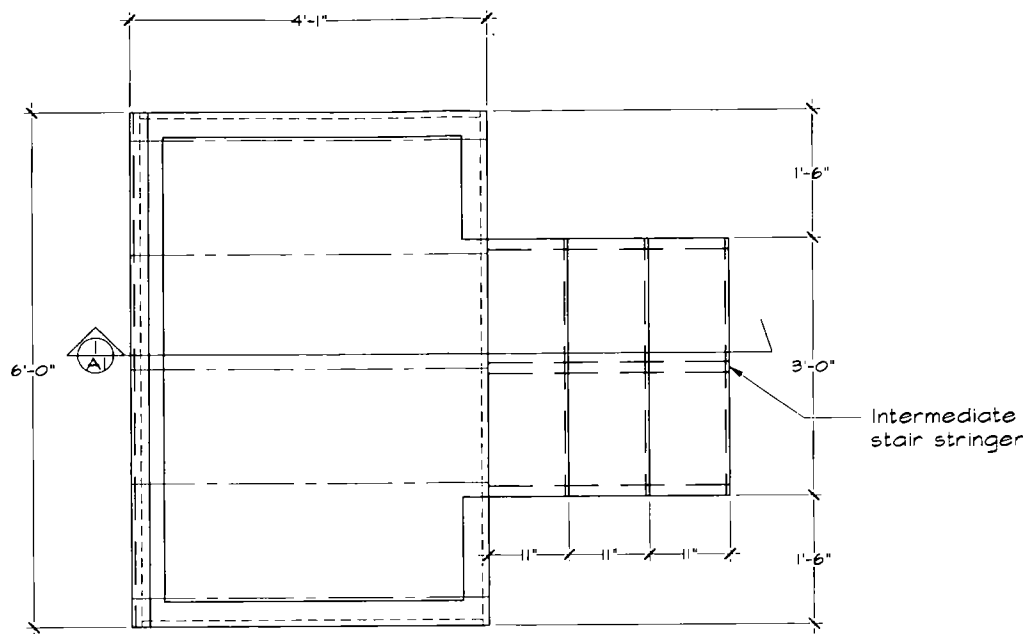
Send your videotape to the Coalition for America's Children:

Your footage can become part of the national documentary about the platform events held this election year. To get your events included in this exciting video production, you need to send your original videotape to the Coalition. Your originals will be returned to you. Send your tapes to:

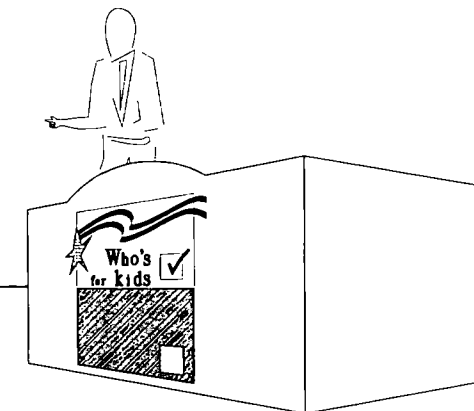
Coalition for America's Children
ATTN: David Weiner
c/o M.B. Fund
1634 Eye Street, NW,
12th Floor
Washington, DC 20006



1 SECTION
1" = 1'-0"



2 PLAN VIEW
1" = 1'-0"



PERSPECTIVE VIEW

GENERAL NOTES:

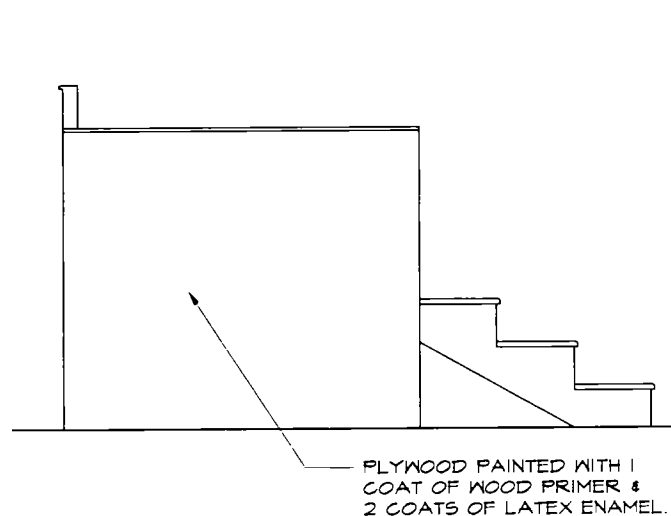
1: THIS PLATFORM IS DESIGNED TO BE CONSTRUCTED WITH LIGHT CARPENTRY TECHNIQUES. IT IS INTENDED TO BE A TEMPORARY INDOOR/OUTDOOR STRUCTURE. IF A MORE PERMANENT STRUCTURE IS REQUIRED, A REGISTERED ARCHITECT SHOULD BE CONSULTED. AN ARCHITECT CAN BE LOCATED THROUGH THE LOCAL CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS.

2: THIS PLATFORM DOES NOT MEET STANDARDS FOR THE AMERICAN DISABILITIES ACT. IF COMPLIANCE WITH THE ADA STANDARDS IS REQUIRED, AN ARCHITECT SHOULD BE CONSULTED.

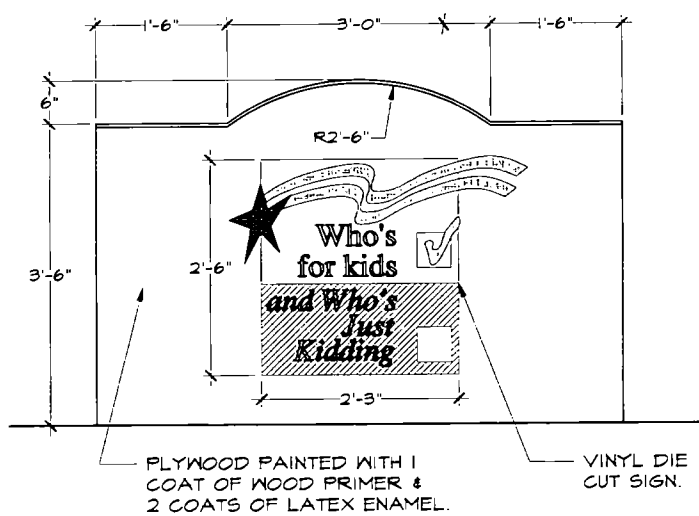
MATERIALS LIST:

THE FOLLOWING LIST IS A GENERAL LIST OF MATERIALS REQUIRED FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THIS PLATFORM.

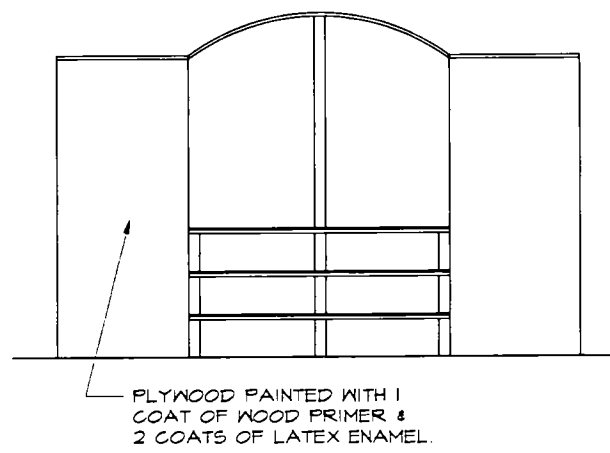
- 6 - 2" x 12" x 8'-0" WOOD STUDS
- 10 - 2" x 6" x 8'-0" WOOD STUDS
- 4 - 4'-0" x 8'-0" x 3/4" PLYWOOD, FURRED ON ONE SIDE.
- 1 - 20 LINEAR FEET OF 1" x 4" WOOD TRIM (OPTIONAL)
- 1 - 1 GALLON WOOD PRIMER.
- 1 - 1 GALLON LATEX ENAMEL PAINT SEMI-GLOSS FINISH.
- 1 - VINYL DIE CUT SIGN. CONTACT A LOCAL SIGN COMPANY FOR FABRICATION OF THE SIGN.



3 SIDE VIEW
1" = 1'-0"

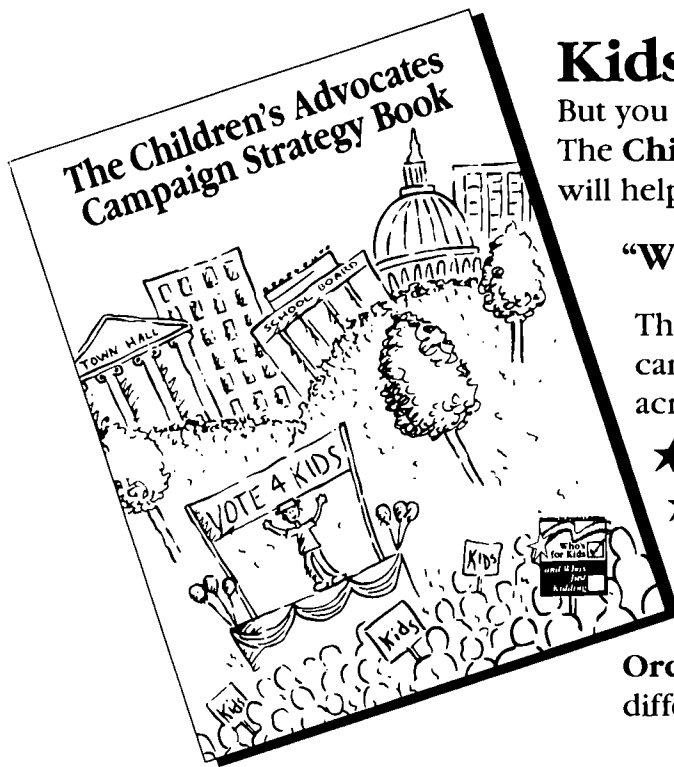


4 FRONT VIEW
1" = 1'-0"



5 BACK VIEW
1" = 1'-0"

The Children's Advocates Campaign Strategy Book



Kids can't vote...

But you can be their voice during the campaign season. The Children's Advocates Campaign Strategy Book will help you find out

"Who's for Kids — And Who's Just Kidding."

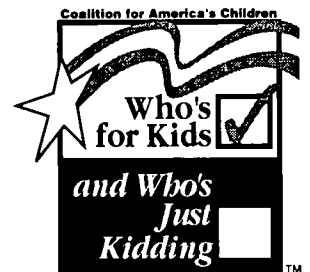
This 120-page how-to guide is packed full of examples of campaign strategies that have worked in communities across the country.

- ★ candidate pledges and report cards
- ★ canvassing for kids and get-out-the-vote drives
- ★ candidate briefings and questionnaires
- ★ editorial board meetings and op-eds

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Send \$15 by check or money order with your name and address to: NACHRI, ATTN: CACSB, 401 Wythe Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. Orders of 10 or more copies are \$12 each.

Produced by members of the Coalition for America's Children, a group of over 350 children's organizations promoting nonpartisan voter and candidate education on children's issues.



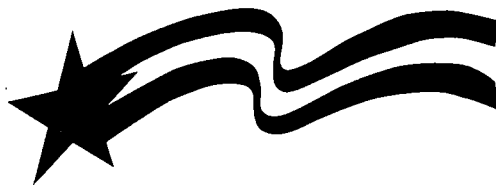
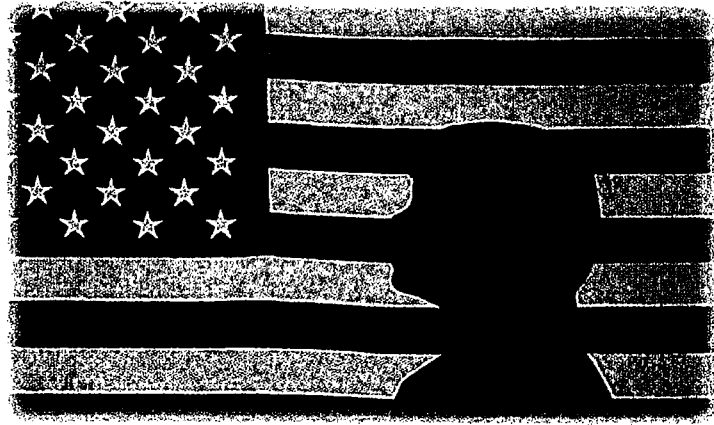
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Who's for Kids
And Who's Just Kidding



The First Five Years

Coalition for America's Children



A Child Can't See Through Campaign Promises. But You Can.

Our children deserve a higher priority on the agenda for America's future. This election year, we need to tell politicians: **Kissing babies is not enough. We need specific, realistic plans for the health, education, safety and security of all American children.**

**Join the
Coalition for
America's
Children
in asking
every
candidate
for public
office:**

Q. *What is your plan for ensuring that all American children have health care?*

Q. *How will you assure that all children enter school ready to succeed, and that college is within reach for all American families?*

Q. *How will you make our communities, homes and schools safe for children?*

Q. *How will you guarantee that every American child has food to eat and a place to sleep?*

(This space for your organization's or local coalition's contact information and your offer to send the "Agenda for Kids" produced by the Coalition for America's Children.)



Join us in asking every candidate the question:

Who's for Kids



And Who's Just Kidding



TM

