Keep if you
want it.
We don't have
Room for it here
—Julie

<u>Child Care Information</u>

- Talking Points
- Number of Children Served by ACF Child Care Programs
- ACF Child Care Programs - FACT SHEET
- CRS Issue Brief: <u>Child Care and the 104th Congress: Issues and Legislation</u>
- Summary of recent GAO Studies relating to Child Care
- <u>Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers</u> - Executive Summary
- Compilation of facts about the importance of child care to working parents
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- Creation of the Child Care Bureau
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- <u>Child Care Bulletin</u>

Talking Points Child Care

Key themes

1. Families struggling to become self-sufficient need access to affordable child care in order to participate in education, training and work.

o Studies indicate that when child care arrangements break down, families are more likely to drop out and go back on welfare.

o More than 400,000 children each month receive child care assistance through the AFDC and Transitional Child Care guarantees. Assistance for these children and their families is in jeopardy if child care funds are capped. If women are forced to work without adequate child care, their **children could be left home alone.**

2. Families should not have to go in the welfare line to get child care assistance.

o Almost one million children of working poor families receive assistance through the At-Risk and Child Care and Development Block Grant Programs. If child care funds are capped, these hard working American families could be cut off and put at-risk for welfare dependency.

o Millions of other working families are already in need of child care assistance. Low-income families who pay for child care spend more than a quarter of their income on child care expenses. GAO found long waiting lists for child care assistance in 5 out of 6 states they visited. For example they found 40,000 children on the waiting list in Texas and 225,000 children in California.

3. **The quality of care is far from adequate.** Poor quality care threatens childrens' development. The recent study conducted by economists and child development experts confirms that quality care is related to child outcomes. The vast majority of care in the country was found to be mediocre, with 40 percent of infant care considered poor.

Child Care and the Clinton Administration

o The President has included increases in child care in every budget submitted to Congress. Furthermore, the Work and Responsibility Act introduced last year included the continuation of the child care guarantees for families moving towards economic independence and an investment of $1.5 billion for working poor families at-risk for welfare dependency.

o The administration has worked to make programs more consistent and coordinated: proposing new regulations to reduce red tape, improve quality, and give states more flexibility and streamlining child care operations into a single Child Care Bureau.

o The administration has revamped and strengthened technical assistance to the states, territories and tribes to ensure that they have access to the best available information on quality issues, particularly health and safety. In addition, we have launched a National Child Care Information Center for policymakers and the general public.

Fact Sheet

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

ADMINISTRATION ON CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

ACF CHILD CARE PROGRAMS SERVING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Child care programs provide important assistance to working families and families who are moving toward self-sufficiency by participating in education and training programs. The Administration for Children and Families' (ACF) child care programs are administered by the Child Care Bureau within the Administration on Children, Youth and Families. The overwhelming majority of the children served are from working poor families. Through ACF child care, parents can choose the kind of care best suited to their families' needs.

Child care assistance is available through the states in the following programs:

Child Care for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) Recipients
Transitional Child Care (TCC)
At-Risk Child Care (ARCC)
Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG)

The first three are title IV-A child care programs, named after title IV-A of the Social Security Act which was amended by the Family Support Act of 1988 to provide for AFDC child care and TCC. Title IV-A was further amended by the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990 to provide for At-Risk Child Care. The Child Care and Development Block Grant is a separate program created under the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990.

Basic Facts about Federal Child Care Funding

Child Care for AFDC recipients entitles AFDC families with child care to the extent that it is necessary for employment or state-approved education and training. AFDC families who are working or in state-approved education or training programs, including the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training (JOBS) program, receive AFDC Child Care. This financial support allows them to pursue activities which will help them to become economically self-sufficient.

Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
370 L'Enfant Promenade, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20447
Phone: (202) 401-9215 \\ January 1995

Basic facts (cont.)...

Transitional Child Care provides up to 12 months of child care to working AFDC recipients upon loss of eligibility for AFDC due to increase in hours of or earnings from employment. TCC is funded as an entitlement program for those eligible and is critical to maintaining self-sufficiency.

At-Risk Child Care provides child care to low-income working families not receiving AFDC who need child care in order to work and who would be at risk of becoming dependent on AFDC if they did not receive child care assistance.

The Child Care and Development Block Grant funds state efforts to provide quality child care services for low-income family members who work, train for work, or attend school, or whose children are receiving or need to receive protective services. CCDBG provides states, Indian tribes, and territories with funding to help low-income families access quality child care for their children. In addition, CCDBG increases the availability of early childhood development and before- and after-school care services. Funds are available to provide certificates, grants, and contracts for child care services for low-income families. Nationwide, in FY 1993, 65 percent of children were served with certificates.

What the Numbers Show for FY 1993

Q. *What was federal spending on child care in FY 1993?*

In FY 1993, states, the District of Columbia, and territories received the following IV-A child care funds:

AFDC child care:	$470.4 million
TCC:	$112.7 million
ARCC:	$269.8 million

In FY 1993, 261 grantees, including the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, Palau, the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, the Virgin Islands, and 213 Indian tribes received:

CCDBG:	$890.6 million

State matching funds are required for AFDC child care, Transitional Child Care, and At-Risk Child Care at the FMAP rate for program funds. Matching requirements ensure that states and territories will receive a certain level of funding if they contribute a specified amount. The Child Care Development Block Grant is a discretionary program requiring no match.

Child Care Numbers (cont.)...

Q. *How many children were served by these child care programs in FY 1993?*

FY 1993 average number of children served:

AFDC/JOBS	201,389/month
non-JOBS AFDC	137,855/month
TCC	84,682/month
ARCC	219,017/month
CCDBG (funded some portion of care for):	755,904/year

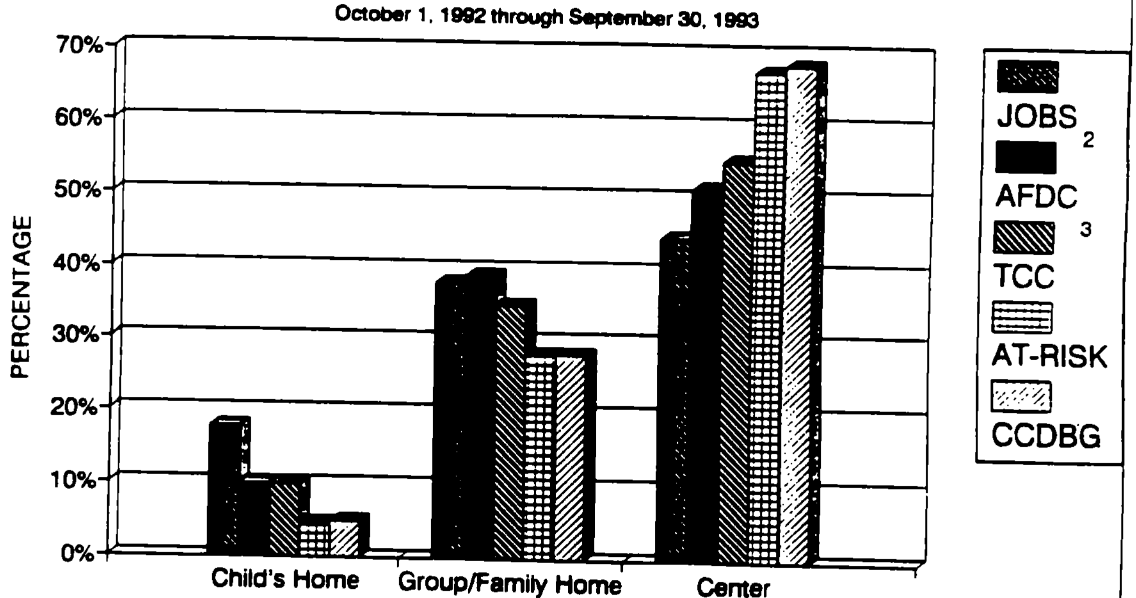
NOTE: Weekly hours or number of months for which child care was provided varied according to family need.

Q. *What types of child care did parents choose for their children?*

Parents choose a wide variety of child care arrangements. In FY 1993, the child care arrangement most frequently chosen by parents receiving title IV-A and CCDBG funds was center-based care. The next most frequently chosen arrangement was family day care home or group home followed by child care provided in the child's own home.

Children Served, By Federal Program And Type of Provider[1]

October 1, 1992 through September 30, 1993



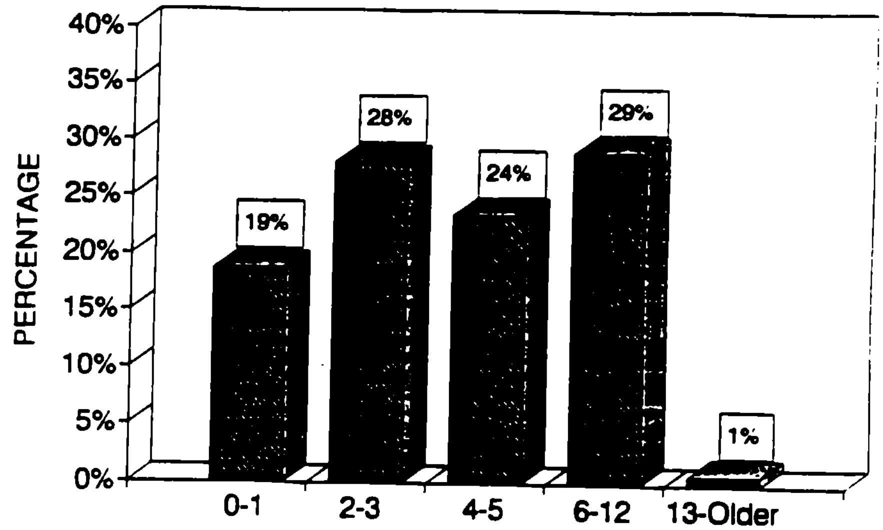
1 By program, the following number of States /territories reported on Type of Provider: 46 for JOBS; 41 for non-JOBS AFDC; 48 for TCC; 45 for At-Risk; 50 for CCDBG.
2 Children of JOBS participants receiving IV-A paid child care.
3 All other AFDC children receiving IV-A paid child care.

Q. What were the ages of the children in these programs?

FY 1993 age data are available only for children of AFDC/JOBS participants and children in CCDBG-funded care. The majority of children served by both programs are under age 6.

Children of JOBS Participants Receiving IV-A Paid Child Care, By Age

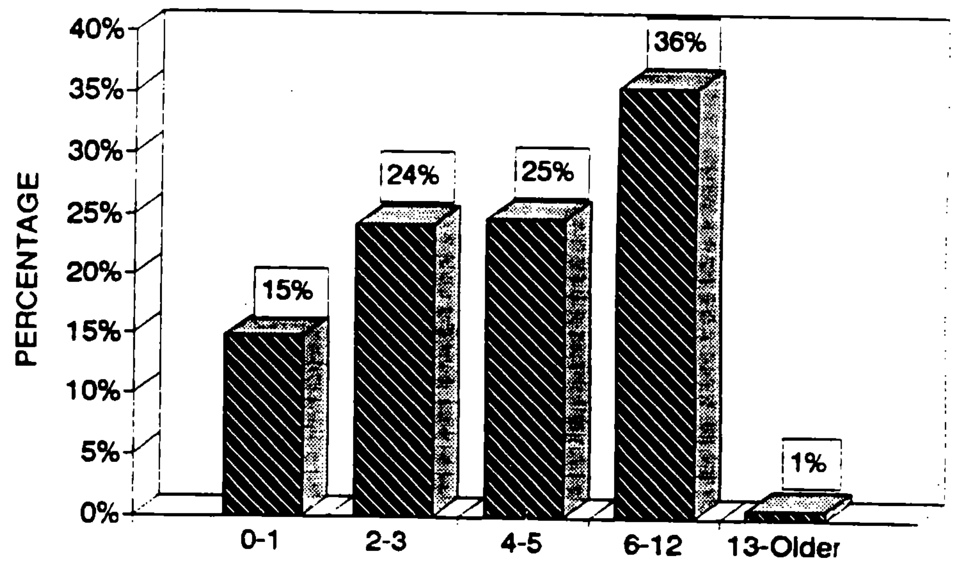
October 1, 1992 through September 30, 1993



Based on reporting by 43 States, the District of Columbia, and territories of Guam and Puerto Rico.

Children Served with CCDBG Funds, By Age

October 1, 1992 through September 30, 1993



Based on 41 States/Territories reporting the age(s) of children served.

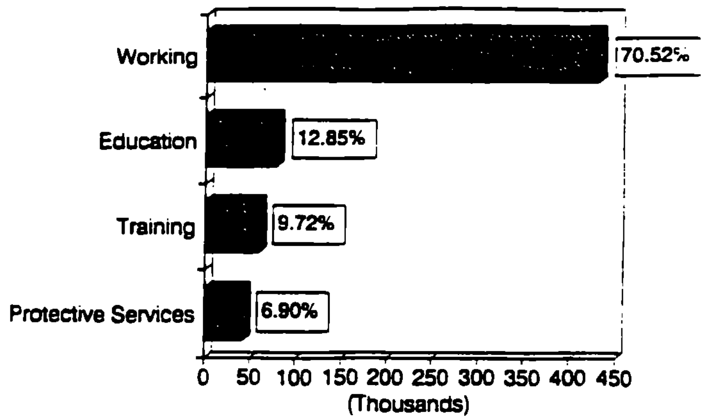
Child Care Numbers (cont.)...

Q. *Why did families using CCDBG funds need child care assistance?*

In FY 1993, over two-thirds of the children needed child care because their parents were working.

Children Served with CCDBG Funds. By Reason(s) For Care

October 1, 1992 to September 30, 1993



Total Reported For This Question - 612,247

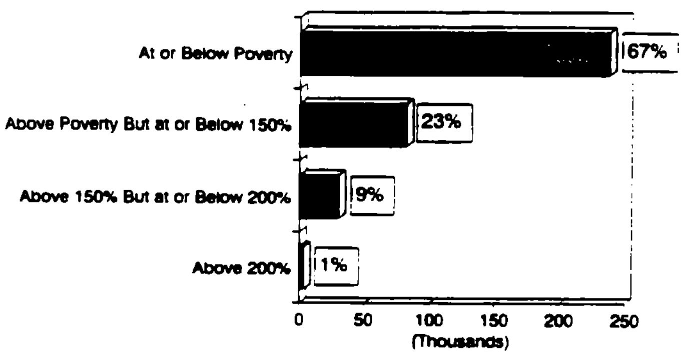
** Based on 40 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands reporting reason(s) for care.*

Q. *What was the income level of the families using CCDBG-funded care?*

In FY 1993, approximately two-thirds of the children in CCDBG-funded child care lived in families that were at or below the federal poverty level. Almost a quarter of the children in this program lived in families with incomes between 100 and 150 percent of the poverty level.

Family Income Level of Children in CCDBG-Funded Child Care

October 1, 1992 to September 30, 1993



Total Number of Children Reported For This Question - 354,643

Based on 31 States/Territories reporting.
Poverty refers to the Federal poverty level, though Grantees may vary on the year of the Federal poverty level used.

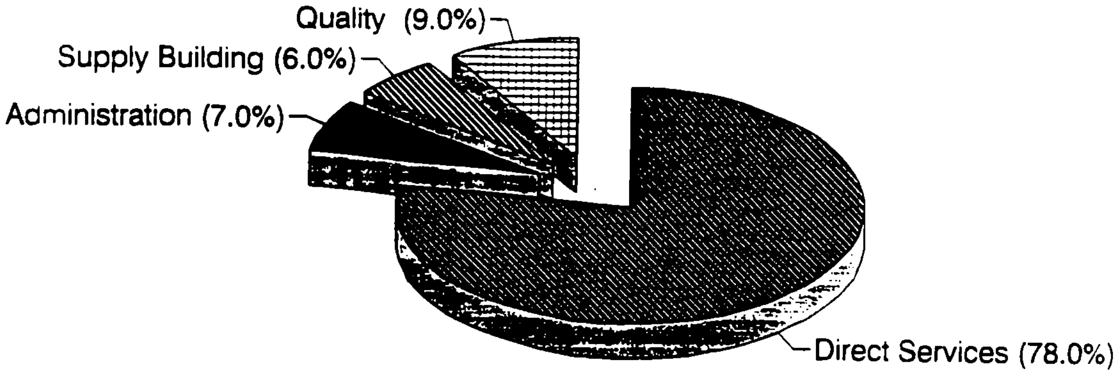
There is a family fee requirement for TCC, ARCC, and CCDBG based on a sliding fee scale. The sliding fee scale is based on family size and income, and may include other factors as well. AFDC families do not contribute to the cost of child care provided under title IV-A.

Q. How did CCDBG expenditures increase the quality of child care?

While more than three-fourths of FY 1993 CCDBG expenditures were used for direct services, nine percent of the funds were used to improve the quality of child care. These quality expenditures were used for resource and referral, monitoring, training and technical assistance, grants or loans to providers to improve standards, and projects to improve the compensation of child care workers.

CCDBG Expenditures

October 1, 1992 through September 30, 1993



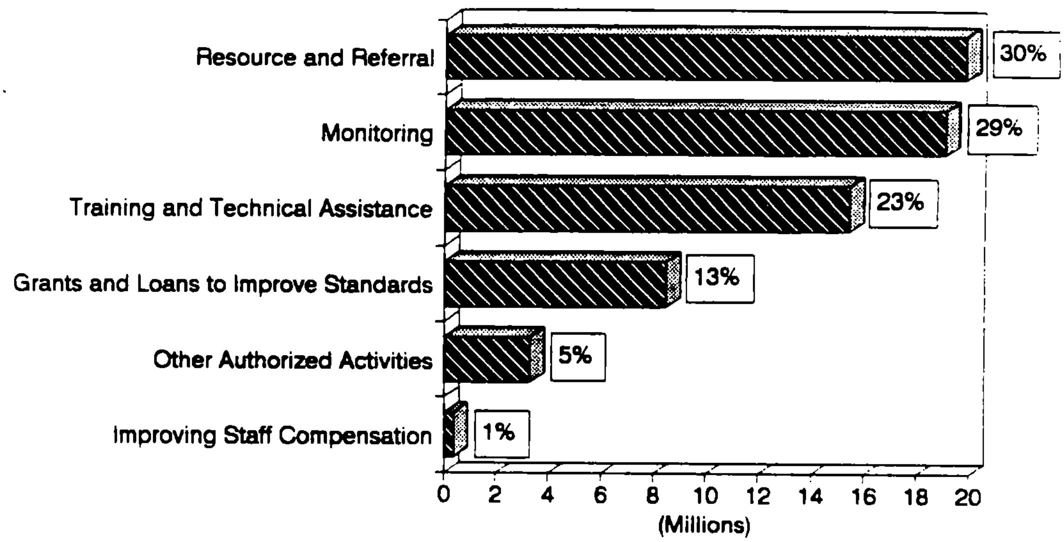
Direct Services: includes child care purchased with certificates, contracts, grants, or as part of before- and after-school care and early childhood development programs.

Administration: administrative expenditures are capped under the CCDBG regulations.

Percentages are based on 48 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the Virgin Islands reporting itemized expenditures.

CCDBG Quality Expenditures

October 1, 1992 through September 30, 1993



Total expenditures on quality under both the 75 and 25 percent funds for reporting period - $66,470,571

Other Authorized Activities: includes expenses such as conducting a needs assessment or organizing a planning committee.

**Percentages are based on 46 States/Territories reporting itemized expenses.*

Number of children served by CCDBG

In FY 1993, average number of children receiving child care subsidies through:

CCDBG	755,904/year

(as reported by: 50 states, DC, Guam, Palau, VI)

Numbers of children served by IV-A Child Care programs:

In FY 1993, the average number of children receiving child care subsidies through:

AFDC/JOBS	201,389/month*
non-JOBS AFDC	137,855/month**
TCC	84,682/month**
ARCC	219,017/month*
Total IV-A programs:	642,943/month

(as reported by:
*43 states, DC, PR, VI
**50 states, DC,Guam,PR,VI
***47 states, DC)

FIGURE 4:
Expended Cost per Child Care Hour
by State

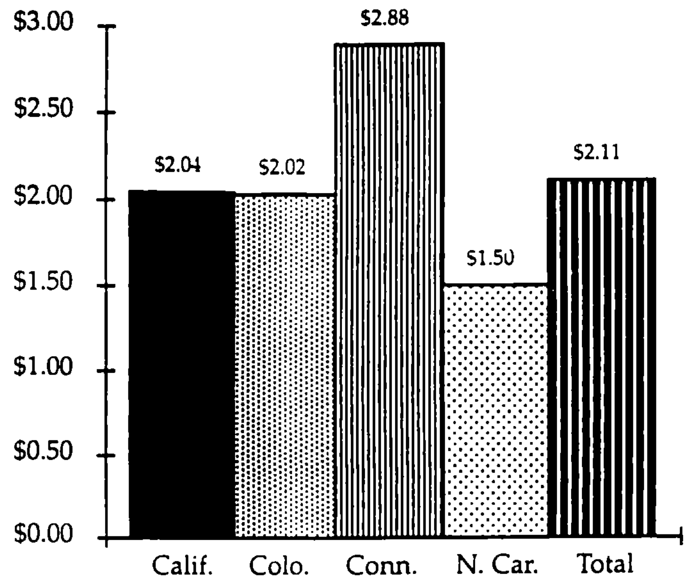
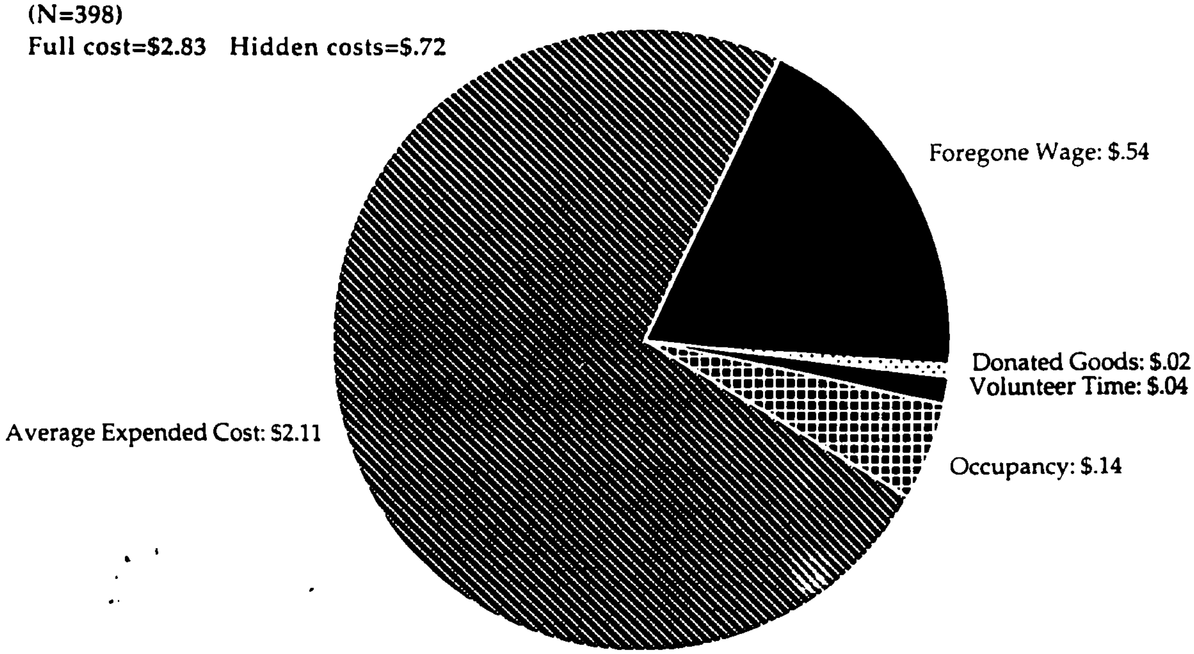


FIGURE 5:
Full Cost of Child Care per Child Hour
(N=398)
Full cost=$2.83 Hidden costs=$.72



and larger where overall quality is lower. This suggests that child care staff are being paid closer to the market value of their human capital attributes in the states with higher quality.

A comparison of the expended cost of child care with a typical family's income indicates the high cost of producing even mediocre-quality care. The average annual expended cost paid by a center to provide services for one child is $4940 per year. This represents 8% of the 1993 median U.S. family before-tax income of about $60,000 for a dual-earner family when both were employed full time, and 23% of the 1993 median before-tax earnings of just over $21,000 for families headed by a single parent employed full time (*Statistical Abstract of the U.S. 1994*, pages 429 and 474).

*FINDING 7: **Good-quality services cost more than mediocre quality, but not a lot more.***

The cost of providing care is modestly and positively related to the level of quality of services.[4] The additional cost to produce good-quality services compared to mediocre-quality care was about 10%. The cost of increasing quality increases, however, at higher levels of quality.

This 10% estimate is based on cross-sectional data and cannot, therefore, be used to project the quality change from increasing industry-wide expenditures. For a 10% increase in cost to significantly improve quality, the money would have to be spent wisely and not cause any increase in the prices of resources used.

*FINDING 8: **Center enrollment affects costs.***

The effect of enrollment on costs shows up in two ways. First, the larger the number of children served (up to the legal capacity of the center) and/or the longer the hours of service, the lower the cost per child hour for a particular level of quality. That is, using the same facility space, serving more children or serving them more hours brings about a proportionately smaller increase in cost per child hour. Second, larger centers, those serving a larger number of FTE children, also have lower average total expended costs per child hour than centers serving a smaller number of children, even holding quality constant.

*FINDING 9: **Cash payment from government and philanthropies are sources of center revenue that demonstrate a social commitment to sharing the expense of child care. On average, these cash payments represent 28% of center revenue.***

As a society we consider center child care an important service that some children need regardless of their family's income. Economists call such things ***merit goods***, because all who need the service merit having it. Cash philanthropic contributions, public funding of centers, and child care tax credits all help reduce the fees paid by parents and other purchasers of child care as do donations and foregone wages.

For the whole sample, including families whose child care is subsidized, parent payments to centers represent the equivalent of $1.55 per child hour or $70 per week. This represents 71% of center revenue (and 55% of full cost). For families that pay full tuition, tuition for preschool-aged children averages $1.92 per child hour or $86 per week. If the typical family elects to take the federal child care tax credit available to them, this represents another government contribution, reducing parent expense by an estimated average of $.21 per child hour (20% of $200 per month/193 hours per month).

SECTOR COMPARISONS:

Child care centers operate in a mixed market made up of private nonprofit centers, nonprofit publicly operated centers, and centers owned and operated for profit. The existence of nonprofit centers reflects long-standing public and philanthropic willingness to support provision of child care as a merit good. However, the fact that different kinds of financial structures co-exist and compete in local markets can affect the cost and quality of services.

[4] The cost referred to in Findings 7 and 8 is based on the definition used in the econometric analysis, where, for consistency with economic theory, cost was measured as variable cost (excluding facilities cost and including in-kind donations and the imputed value of administrators' salaries for owner-operated centers).

FINDING 10: There are differences between for-profit and nonprofit sectors. Overall quality of services, however, is not significantly different between the two sectors except in the one state with very lax licensing standards.

Quality is not significantly different between for-profit and nonprofit centers except in North Carolina, where for-profit centers provide much lower quality care. In addition, our econometric analysis indicates that there is no significant difference in variable costs per child hour (see footnote 4 for definition) between the two sectors, holding constant the number of hours of service, quality, wage rates paid, and size of facility. This means that the nonprofit sector is about as efficient in the use of resources as the for-profit sector.

Despite overall similarities, there are also differences. In nonprofit centers staff-to-child ratios in preschool rooms are higher than those in for-profit centers; teachers and teacher-directors have more specialized training and formal education; assistant teachers and teacher directors have more prior experience; staff have worked more months at the center; and annual turnover rates are lower. Nonprofit centers pay higher wages, and foregone wages of their staff are lower than those in for-profit centers. While these findings replicate those of earlier studies (Phillips & Howes, 1987; and Whitebook, Howes & Phillips, 1989) that nonprofit centers have higher structural quality measures and higher wages than for-profit centers, it is the first to find such limited differences between sectors with respect to process quality.

FINDING 11: Within each sector, particularly the nonprofit sector, there is variation by subsectors in center characteristics and quality.

To examine differences *within* each sector we divided the nonprofits into three subsectors: 1) independent nonprofit, 2) church-affiliated nonprofit, and 3) publicly operated nonprofit. We divided the for-profits into three subsectors: 1) independent for-profits, 2) local chains, and 3) national systems.

Within the for-profit sector, there is considerable homogeneity among the three subsectors with regard to staffing ratios and staff quality. In addition, the different subsectors do not significantly differ in their costs, revenues, and overall quality of services. National systems do, however, offer more staff benefits such as health insurance, maternity leave, and staff child care discounts, and they pay lower wages in California and Connecticut.

Nonprofits are less homogeneous; indeed, there are important differences among subsectors. Centers operated by public agencies have higher costs, revenues, and quality than other nonprofit centers. Church-affiliated centers have lower staff-to-child ratios, lower levels of trained and educated staff, lower wages, lower cost and revenues per child hour, and most importantly, lower overall quality than other nonprofits. These centers seem to resemble for-profit centers more closely than centers in the nonprofit sector. Indeed, the lower quality of church centers, which are proportionately represented in this study, but not in previous studies, accounts for our finding that for-profit, nonprofit sectors do not differ significantly in quality.

These findings dispel the notion that quality (or lack thereof) is crisply aligned with a particular sector. To the contrary, these findings suggest that it is difficult to associate any given level of quality with a sector overall; rather, levels of quality may be more clearly aligned with subsectors.

THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT:

A unique focus of this study was to learn more about the effects of market conditions on the cost and quality of care. Differences in demand and supply conditions faced by different kinds of centers (that is, for-profit and nonprofit sectors or subsectors) may affect the quality of care provided in the market.[5]

[5] It should be noted that this study was not designed to make a thorough comparison of the long-run advantages and disadvantages of a particular profit status. We did not collect data on capital invested in centers; nor did we investigate tax advantages and disadvantages of profit status.

FINDING 12: Characteristics of the market setting for child care—notably, market competition and subsidy dependence—affect center finances. For-profit and nonprofit centers face different competitive conditions that can affect their performance.

This study provides evidence of strong competition in local markets. First, centers in for-profit and nonprofit sectors charge similar fees per child hour. Second, both sectors seem to minimize costs. Third, both sectors receive similar low rates of profit (surplus) on sales (3.7%).

Despite evidence of a high degree of competition between sectors, the composition of costs and the ability to take advantage of scale economies is different. For-profit centers spend a higher percentage of total costs on facilities and a smaller percent on labor, which could lower quality. These centers, however, typically serve a larger number of children and/or provide more hours of service than do nonprofit centers. That allows for-profit centers to operate at lower average cost per child and enables them to compete successfully with their nonprofit counterparts at a given level of quality. Nonprofit centers, many of which depend on donated facilities, may not have the option of increasing their size (enrollment).

FINDING 13: There is evidence of inadequate consumer knowledge, which creates market imperfections and reduces incentives for some centers to provide good-quality care.

This study suggests some reasons for the prevalence of low-quality child care, particularly for centers dependent on parent fees. In our parent survey, while parents say they value the characteristics of good-quality child care, they substantially overestimate the quality of services their children are receiving. Ninety percent of parents rate programs as very good, while the ratings of trained observers indicate that most of these same programs are providing care that ranges from poor to mediocre.

There are numerous possible explanations for this discrepancy between parent and observer ratings, some of which we investigated. For instance, there is evidence that parents are hindered in assessing care by the inherent difficulty of monitoring service. The disparity between scores given by parents and observers assessing quality is higher for aspects of care that are difficult for parents to observe. Also, parents' priorities seem to affect their assessments. The more they value an aspect of care, the greater the disparity between their evaluation and that of the trained observer. There may be other reasons why parents rate their child care arrangement highly. For instance they may not feel that they have a choice of care, or they may never have seen good-quality care, giving them no basis of comparison. The inability of parents to recognize good-quality care implies that they do not demand it. There is little difference in fees between poor-quality and high-quality centers, which lends credence to this hypothesis. Given both a competitive market that equalizes fees across centers and parents' difficulty in identifying center quality, centers dependent on parent revenues have no incentive to provide a higher level of quality at higher cost.

The findings do suggest that centers are providing the services parents demand so they can go to work. Preschool classrooms meet health and safety needs. Centers in the sample are open long hours, 10 to 12 hours per day. They provide part-time care, before-school and after-school programs, and summer camps. Parents, however, while they value good-quality services, apparently are not demanding quality. To the extent that government agencies involved in purchasing care for low-income children impose low payments for services or fail to provide higher reimbursement for higher quality, they too contribute to lowering the demand for good-quality child care.

Summary and Implications

We found that only 1 in 7 centers provides a level of child care quality that promotes healthy development and learning, and that quality of child care affects children across all levels of maternal education. These findings confirm earlier reports about the quality of child care available to the average family in the United States, presented in the National Child Care Staffing Study (Whitebook, Howes & Phillips, 1989) and the Study of Children in Family and Relative Care (Galinsky, Howes, Kontos & Shinn, 1994). Our results indicate that care for infants and toddlers may be even lower quality than previously thought.

This does not mean that good-quality care does not exist or that the early childhood profession does not know how to provide it. We know that high staff-to-child ratios, more highly educated staff, administrators with more experience, and staff stability together do much to create good-quality services.

This study provides evidence of market competitive characteristics and imperfections that we have reason to believe affect the cost and provision of quality. Efficient markets require that buyers have full information. Until parents and other purchasers of care can easily distinguish good from mediocre and poor-quality centers, and demand higher quality, centers cannot increase their fees to cover the increased costs of providing better care. Since most centers have limited budgets, they cannot afford to provide better quality, given the existing fee structure.

Other conditions affect quality of services. First, weak licensing standards seem to induce some for-profit centers and church-affiliated centers to provide lower quality services. Second, accredited centers have higher quality. Third, publicly operated centers, worksite centers, and centers that conform to higher standards in order to receive public funding have higher quality; those centers seem to have sizeable donations or cash contributions, which they use to raise quality. Fourth, larger centers, or centers that maintain full capacity, can reduce costs and increase revenue, thus permitting an increase in quality.

Lower quality centers pay lower wages. We also found that wages of women working in child care are low, even compared to women's wages that already are lower than men's wages. Foregone wages are lower in Connecticut and California, the states where quality is higher. They are also lower in publicly operated and worksite centers where quality is higher. There is every reason to believe that higher foregone wages reduce staff job satisfaction and increase turnover. In the nonprofit centers studied, longer staff tenure is related to higher quality.

Recommendations

In this nation, there is a strong commitment to meeting the first of our national education goals—that by the year 2000, children will enter school ready to learn. Yet despite this knowledge and intent, the reality of child care in the United States today makes it highly unlikely that we will reach that goal. Unless poor-quality child care is curtailed, the development and well-being of large numbers of our nation's children may be jeopardized. To that end, we make one critical recommendation:

> **The nation must commit to improving the quality of child care services and to ensuring that all children and their families have access to good programs. That is, GOOD-QUALITY child care must become a merit good in the United States.**

We predicate this recommendation on several assumptions:

- Child care participation will remain totally voluntary; that is, parents will have the right and responsibility to choose whether or not they use child care;
- Parents' right to choose child care will be preserved; that is, parents will have the right and responsibility to select the type of child care they wish;
- Child care will remain a mixed sector industry; that is, centers will continue to operate in the profit, nonprofit, and public sectors;
- As a merit good, a service we as a society want to provide for all children, the financing of quality child care will continue to be shared by responsible parties; that is, to the extent feasible, families will help pay for child care, as will responsible employers, philanthropic organizations, and the government.

To achieve this goal, we recommend four action steps.

ACTION STEP 1: ***Launch consumer and education efforts in the public and private sectors to help parents identify high-quality child care programs and to inform the American public of the liability of poor-quality programs.***

- Give parents clear information regarding the observable ingredients of good-quality child care.
- Give parents and others information that clearly identifies good-quality programs.
- Initiate a long-term public media campaign analogous to the one addressing the impact of smoking on health, to raise public awareness of the nature and importance of good-quality child care.
- In collaboration with other private and public agencies, initiate a federally supported program of research to increase understanding of the child care market and to provide an ongoing data base on the status of child care and the effects on children in the United States.

ACTION STEP 2: ***Implement higher standards for child care at the state level, as a major approach to eliminating poor-quality child care.***

- Create higher standards at the state level and improve monitoring of child care as a part of consumer protection. Standards must do more than protect the basic health and safety of children—they must also take into account children's developmental needs.
- Eliminate all exemptions from state licensing standards.

- Encourage centers to seek and maintain voluntary professional center accreditation based on high standards.
- Give state and federal financial incentives for centers to provide care that meets higher standards, eliminating federal regulations that restrict the ability of states to pay higher prices for higher quality care.

ACTION STEP 3: *Increase investments in child care staff to assure a skilled and stable workforce.*

- Invest more federal, state, and local government funds and private sector funds in the education and training of child care teaching staff and administrators.
- Provide all child care staff compensation appropriate to their training, experience, and responsibility.

ACTION STEP 4: *Assure adequate financing and support of child care.*

- Increase investment in child care by federal, state, and local government as well as the private sector, to help families pay the cost of good-quality care.
- Tie all federal and state child care funding to standards that demonstrably produce high-quality care.
- Provide financial incentives that enable centers to hire experienced administrators and skilled staff and to learn how to keep them.
- Tailor employee benefits to provide significant help to employees with young children, as part of the private sector's support of child care.

Appendix 1: Study Methodology

This study examines the relationship between cost and quality of child care in centers, and the developmental outcomes of children enrolled in a subsample of the centers studied. The centers were located in four states—California, Colorado, Connecticut, and North Carolina—selected for their regional, demographic, and ECE program diversity.

Data were collected during the first half of 1993 on a stratified random sample of approximately 100 programs in each participating state, approximately evenly split between for-profit and nonprofit programs. The study included only state-licensed child care centers serving infants/toddlers and/or preschoolers that offered services at least 30 hours per week, 11 months per year. To be used in the sample, a program had to have been in operation at least one full fiscal year, and the majority of children had to attend at least 30 hours and five days per week. A total of 228 infant/toddler classrooms and 521 preschool classrooms were included.

The part of the study which addressed children's developmental outcomes included a subsample of observed preschool classes enrolling children eligible to enter kindergarten in fall 1994. A total of 826 children (approximately 200 per state) from 181 centers were included in this phase of the study. During the summer of 1993 individual assessments of the children were conducted at the centers by trained observers, and teachers and parents completed surveys.[6]

MEASURES AND PROCEDURES:

Through on-site interviews with center directors, data collectors obtained in-depth financial information such as center costs, revenue sources, and donation amounts. They also collected data on aspects of program characteristics, such as total attendance; enrollment and capacity; number of infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-aged children; number of publicly subsidized children; operating hours; ownership status; fee schedules; and source of payment. Finally, directors provided information on the education, training, demographic characteristics, and wages of each staff person working directly with children.

Staff persons in the sampled rooms completed questionnaires regarding their family and work experience. Center directors and lead teachers in each sampled room completed questionnaires on administrative leadership in the center. Parents in the sampled rooms were asked to complete a questionnaire of how they valued aspects of child care that professionals associate with child care quality, and of their assessment of quality in their children's classrooms.

Two well-established global measures were used to assess comprehensively the day-to-day quality of care provided for children: *The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale* (Harms & Clifford, 1980) and its infant/toddler version, *The Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale* (Harms, Cryer & Clifford, 1990). In addition, two instruments designed specifically to measure teacher involvement and style were used, *The Caregiver Interaction Scale* (Arnett, 1989) and *The Teacher Involvement Scale* (Howes & Stewart, 1987). For each center, results of these observations for the two classrooms were combined into an overall quality index number for each center. The center quality index is a weighted average of the scores of the two rooms in the center, weighted by the percent of children in the center who were in the given age-group. Five times during the day, classroom observations of staff-to-child ratios and group size were made.

Data collected for the developmental outcomes component included individual child assessments, teacher ratings, and parent surveys. Each child was seen individually at the center for about 30 minutes to administer the following assessment instruments. Receptive language ability was measured using the *Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised* (Dunn & Dunn, 1981). The *Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement-Revised* (Woodcock & Johnson, 1989; 1990) were used to examine pre-reading skills and pre-math skills. Children's attitudes toward child care and perceptions of competence were measured using the *Attitudes/Perceptions of*

[6] Those children were assessed again during the spring of 1994, and will be assessed at the end of their kindergarten year in May 1995 in the longitudinal continuation of this study.

Competence Scale (Stipek, 1993). The children's teachers completed ratings of children's social skills using the *Classroom Behavior Inventory* (Schaefer & Edgerton, 1976). They rated the teacher-child relationship using the *Student-Teacher Relationship Scale* (Pianta, 1992; Pianta & Steinberg, 1992). Finally, parents completed demographic surveys.

All measures were studied descriptively to determine whether there were reliable differences related to region, auspice, or three measures of program scope: the proportion of center full-time-equivalent children who were subsidized, the proportion who were infants/toddlers, and whether the center offered a before-school and after-school program.

The econometric analysis involved estimating short-run total cost functions and quality production functions. We employed multiproduct translog cost functions where the services provided for infants-toddlers, preschoolers, and school-aged children are distinguished. Quality of the child care is controlled by the quality index described above. A vector of dummy variables, representing center attributes, is included to capture efficiency differentials due to center characteristics.

The quality production function is estimated using ordinary least squares, where the center quality index is explained by standard structural inputs (e.g., staff-child ratio, staff education, and experience) and the composition of programs offered by the center, as well as variables capturing center-specific idiosyncracies, such as an administrator's involvement in the center's organization and curriculum. The model also includes controls for the financial, regulatory, and institutional constraints surrounding the center's operation.

A psychometric analysis of correlates of quality was also performed using hierarchical regressions in which process quality was regressed onto 7 sets or "chunks" of structural variables. Seven sets of regression models were fit to the data. The first included the first set of variables, state and profit status. The second included the first two sets of variables—state, profit, and the teacher's background variables. Each successive regression involved adding another chunk of variables to the model.

A third analysis was performed, a discriminant analysis to identify the factors that are most able to classify centers offering poor, mediocre, or developmentally appropriate care.

Hierarchical linear regression models were used to test the concurrent relationship between children's developmental outcomes and the quality of their child care. The initial model for each outcomes variable included all main effects and two-way interactions to determine whether child and family functions, center auspice, or geographic location mitigated the association between developmental outcomes and quality. Non-significant interaction terms were omitted one at a time until the model included all main effects, the state by auspice interaction (which constituted the sampling frame) and all other significant two-way interactions.

Appendix 2: Cost & Quality Findings for All Centers by Profit Status

Variable	Non-Profit N=200	For Profit N=201	All N=401
	Mean Values		
Center Structure:		Spring 1993	
Total FTE Children Enrolled	60	76	68
Percent of Centers Accredited	8	11	9
Percent of Infants & Toddlers	18	25	22
Percent of Centers with Before and After Care for School-Age	47	72	59
Annual Percent Center Turnover for Teachers	35	50	43
Annual Percent Center Turnover for Administrative Directors	22	40	28
Percent of Subsidized Children	34	13	23
Center Quality:		Spring 1993	
Weighted Process Index, Scaled to ECERS	4.16	3.87	4.02
ECERS Total Quality Score	4.39	4.05	4.22
ITERS Total Quality Score	3.55	3.35	3.42
Midmorning Teacher to Child Ratios for Infants and Toddlers	0.31	0.26	0.28
Mid-Morning Teacher to Child Ratios for Preschoolers	0.19	0.14	0.16
Percent of Teachers with College Education or More	39	33	36
Months of Tenure for Teachers by Hour	53	36	43
Cost:		Fiscal Year 1992	
Hourly Wage for Teachers	$ 7.83	$ 6.62	$ 7.22
Hourly Wage for Assistant Teachers	5.97	5.43	5.70
Hourly Wage for Administrative Directors	12.22	9.89	11.33
Labor Cost per Child Hour	1.75	1.24	1.49
Facilities Cost per Child Hour	0.16	0.40	0.28
Total Cost per Child Hour	2.22	2.00	2.11
Foregone Wages per Child Hour	0.53	0.55	0.54
Total In-Kind Gifts per Child Hour	0.31	0.09	0.20
Full Cost (Total Cost + In-Kind Gifts + Foregone Wages)	3.03	2.63	2.83
Revenue & Fees:		Fiscal Year 1992	
Revenue from Parent Fees per Child Hour	$ 1.27	$ 1.85	$ 1.56
Revenue from Public Fee Payments per Child Hour	0.48	0.20	0.34
Total Revenue per Child Hour	2.28	2.10	2.19
Surplus or Deficit per Child Hour	0.06	0.09	0.08
Hourly Cost to Parents Net of Tax Credit*	1.10	1.62	1.36
Full-time Monthly Infant Fee Charged by Centers	434.78	461.53	450.80
Full-time Monthly Preschool Fee Charged by Centers	358.18	384.29	371.50
Preschool Hourly Fee (Monthly Fee/Hours of Care)	2.01	2.05	2.03

Note: Elements may not add to totals due to rounding.
* Equals full tuition discounted by subsidized children and federal income tax credit.

Additional copies of the
Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study
Executive Summary
as well as two larger, more complete reports, are available.

Executive Summary copies are $ 8.00 each.

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Appendix A:

Child Care and Self-Sufficiency

Child care services are a critical component of efforts to help low-income families out of poverty. Child care services are important because:

Parents receiving AFDC have children who need child care if they are to work.

- Two-thirds (2/3) of families receiving AFDC in 1992 (an average of 3.2 million families each month) had at least one pre-school-age child. (Ways and Means Green Book, 1993)

- A 1992 study of California's welfare and job training program, GAIN, found that ninety-two percent (92%) of the single mother participants had at least one child under 13 and used child care while they went to school or job training activities. (National Integrated Quality Control Systems (NIQCS) 1987 data)

Parents receiving AFDC often do not have other adults available to them for child care services.

- 90% of women who received AFDC in 1992 were single mothers. (Ways and Means Green Book, 1993)

- 82% of all families with children under 18 who were receiving AFDC had no other adult living in the home in 1988. (GAIN Family Life & Child Care Study, Neil Gilbert, Jill Duerr Berrick, Marcia L. Meyer, Family Welfare Research Group, University of California at Berkeley, 1992)

- A 1990 study of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth found that 50% of young parents (ages 21 - 29) receiving AFDC had no other adult living in the home. (Implementing Child Care in the Family Support Act: Background Briefing Report and Meeting Highlights, Theodora Ooms an Lisa Herendeen, Consortium of Family Organizations (COFO), 1990)

Lack of affordable child care is a barrier to parents receiving AFDC who work or go to school.

- A 1991 study of single parents receiving AFDC in Illinois found that child care problems kept 42% of recipients from working full-time; 39% of recipients from looking for work as much as desired; 26% of recipients from working as much as desired; and 39% of recipients from going to school. (Child Care and AFDC Recipients in Illinois, Gary Seigel and Anthony Loman, Illinois Department of Public Aid, 1991)

- A 1986 study done by the National Social Science and Law Center of single mot receiving AFDC in Washington State found that more three-f rths (3/4) of the women receiving AFDC who had stopped looking for work completely, cited child care problems as the reason for stopping their search. The study also found that two-thirds of the mothers cited difficulty with child care responsibilities as a primary problem in finding and keeping a job. (Factors Affecting the Employability of Welfare Recipients, Washington State, 1986)

- A 1993 study of out-of school teen parents receiving AFDC in Ohio found that when these teens were asked why they were not enrolled in school, "I can't find adequate child care" was the most frequently mentioned reason. The majority of the teens also reported that child care is critical to their ability to stay in school. (LEAP: Interim Findings on a Welfare Initiative to Improve School Attendance Among Teenage Parents, Dan Bloom, Veronica Fellerath, David Long, Robert G. Wood, MDRC, May 1993)

- A 1987 GAO study of participants in 61 welfare-to-work programs in 38 states found that 60% of respondents reported that a lack of child care was a barrier to participation in the labor force. (Welfare: Income and Relative Poverty Status of AFDC Families, GAO/HRD 88-9, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1987)

Lack of affordable child care is also a barrier for all parents out of the workforce.

- One out of four (1.1 million) mothers in the 21 to 29 age group who were out of the labor force in 1986 said that they were not working because of child care problems. These problems were an even bigger barrier for poor mothers, 34% of whom were out of the labor force because of child care problems. ("Child Care Problems: An Obstacle to Work", Peter Cattan, Monthly Labor Review, October 1991)

- Mothers must consider the increase in child care costs when weighing the benefits of working. Studies have shown that the amount a mother will earn in excess of her increased child care costs is an important factor affecting her decision whether or not to work. (Who Cares for America's Children?: Child Care Policy for the 1990s, Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 1990 & "Child Care Problems: An Obstacle to Work", Peter Cattan, Monthly Labor Review, October 1991)

Many parents not working due to child care problems would re-enter the workforce if child care were available and affordable.

- A 1982 Census Bureau survey found that one in five part-time workers would work more hours if satisfactory child care were available at a reasonable cost. (Current Population Survey, 1982)

- A 1991 study of AFDC recipients in Illinois found that nine out of ten AFDC recip ts w d prefer working child : that liked trusted to not working an staying at home. (Child Care and AFDC Recipients in Illinois, Gary Seigel and Anthony Loman, Illinois Department of Public Aid, 1991)

Low-income working parents do not earn enough money to make child care services affordable.

- Women receiving AFDC often have lower levels of marketable skills and frequently do not have good chances of getting jobs that pay enough to permit payment for child care. A 1991 report on welfare mothers as potential employees found that only 29 percent of women receiving AFDC had the basic skills necessary to perform any professional or technical occupations and only 45 percent had the basic skills necessary to perform clerical or secretarial work. (Welfare Mothers As Potential Employees: A Statistical Profile Based on National Survey Data, Nicholas Zill, Ph.D., Child Trends, 1991)

- A 1991 GAO study on the earnings potential of single mothers found that single mothers are likely to remain near or below the poverty line even if they work at full-time jobs. (Mother-Only Families -- Low Earnings will Keep Many Children in Poverty, GAO, April 1991)

- A 1993 study of families receiving child care subsidies in Illinois found that 68% of the families that had completed a year of Transitional Child Care (TCC) had also continued to have incomes low enough to qualify for an additional year of "At-Risk" child care assistance. Of those families that did not receive an additional year of "At-Risk" assistance, the single largest reason for discontinuing child care assistance was because the family's youngest child turned thirteen and "aged-out" of child care eligibility. (Illinois Department of Public Aid, November 1993)

- Even though low-income families pay less in actual dollars for child care, the relative cost to these families is significantly greater than to affluent families. In 1990, families earning less than the federal poverty level who paid for child care spent roughly a quarter of their income, in contrast to non-poor families who spent six percent. (National Child Care Survey, 1990, Hofferth, et al., 1991 & Caring for Children in Low-Income Families, Hofferth, 1991)

- "Good quality" programs can cost more than low-income families can afford. In 1990, the General Accounting Office reported that the average annual cost of good quality child care centers (those centers accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children) for four-year-olds was $4,797 nationwide. For a family earning less than the federal poverty level ($10,560 for a family of three in 1990), the full cost of good quality child care would amount to at least 45% of their income.

(Early Childhood Education: What Are the Costs of High Q[illegible]ty Programs?, General Accounting Office, January 1990)

- Even in the cases where care is given by a relative, parents may still have to pay the relative for the child care services. A 1990 study found that one out of three employed mothers relying on relatives as a primary care arrangement paid for that care. (National Child Care Survey, 1990, Sandra Hofferth, April Brayfield, The Urban Institute, 1991)

If adequate, reliable child care is not available, many parents receiving AFDC will not be able to keep their jobs or stay in education and training programs.

- A 1992 study of the welfare and job training program in California, GAIN, found that single mothers who were most dissatisfied with their children's care arrangements, and those who rated that care as unsafe or understaffed were more likely to drop out of GAIN before the end of the year than parents who were more satisfied with their child care. (GAIN Family Life & Child Care Study, Neil Gilbert, Jill Duerr Berrick, Marcia K. Meyers, Family Welfare Research Group, University of California at Berkeley, 1992)

- A 1991 Illinois study reported that 58% of single parents on welfare reported that child care problems caused them to be late or miss work or school. (Child Care and AFDC Recipients in Illinois, Gary Seigel and Anthony Loman, Illinois Department of Public Aid, 1991)

- In a 1991 study of workers in the New York City garment industry, many of whom are low-income, over half (56%) of the respondents reported missing one or more weeks of work in the past year because of child care problems. Almost one out of four (23%) reported missing four or more weeks of work. (A Child Care Study of the New York City Garment Industry, NYC Department of Business Services, 1991)

Where affordable child care is not available, the working poor may be at risk of losing their jobs and needing AFDC assistance.

- A 1991 study of AFDC recipients in Illinois found that 20% of the women who returned to welfare within the year of the report had returned due to child care problems. Also, 42% who had quit school had quit due to child care problems. (Child Care and AFDC Recipients in Illinois, Gary Seigel and Anthony Loman, Illinois Department of Public Aid, 1991)

- A 1987 study of the welfare, employment and training program in Massachusetts found that of the mothers who had left welfare to work, one-third dropped out of the labor force after one year due to child care problems. (Child Care and Low-Income Families, Paula Roberts, 1987)

- A 1992 study of a group of families (48) in Minnesota who left Transitional Child Care (TCC) and were put on a waiting list for child care assistance found that one out of five returned to AFDC while waiting for child care assistance. (A Report on Transition Year Family Access to Basic Sliding Fee Child Care Assistance, Minnesota Department of Human Services, December 1992)

Quality child care makes a difference for children.

- A survey of the research on the effects of preschool education on at-risk children, conducted for the U.S. Department of Education, found that such programs have an effect on six major areas: improved cognitive abilities, improved classroom learning behavior, gains in socio-emotional development, higher family satisfaction and stronger parent-child relationships, greater likelihood of long-term social and economic self-sufficiency. (Exemplary Preschool Programs for At-Risk Children: A Review of the Literature, Balasubramaniam and Turnbull, U.S. Department of Education, November 1988)

- Comparison studies between groups of low-income three- and four-year olds showed that by age 19, children who had attended a quality early childhood development program were more likely to be literate, employed, and enrolled in post-secondary education and were less likely to be school dropouts, dependent on welfare, or arrested for criminal activity or delinquency than those who had not attended. (A Summary of Significant Benefits: The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study Through Age 27, Lawrence J. Schweinhart and David P. Weikart, High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, 1993)

- One dollar invested in high quality preschool education returns at least $7.00 in savings because of lower special education and welfare costs and higher worker productivity. (A Summary of Significant Benefits: The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study Through Age 27, Lawrence J. Schweinhart and David P. Weikart, High/Scope Educational Research Foundation , 1993)

Prepared by: **Gina Adams and Nicole Poersch**
Children's Defense Fund

NYTIMES 2.6.95

Care at Child Day Centers Is Rated as Poor

By SUSAN CHIRA

The care provided by most American child-care centers is so poor that it threatens children's intellectual and emotional development, according to a four-state study of hundreds of such centers made public yesterday.

The study, conducted by child psychologists and economists at four universities, concluded that infants and toddlers — the group researchers say most need security and stimulation to thrive later on in life — were worst off. As many as 40 percent of infant and toddler rooms provided poor care.

Over all, 12 percent of the centers studied were actually unsafe or unsanitary, and only 1 in 7 offered the kind of warm relationships that teach children how to trust adults and the intellectual stimulation that helps children become ready for school.

"I think the most important finding," said Barbara Reisman, executive director of Child Care Action Campaign, an advocacy group based in New York City, "is that in 76 percent of the centers, safety and health needs were being met, but the need to grow and develop were not."

The study, "Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers," was conducted by researchers at the University of Colorado at Denver, the University of California at Los Angeles, the University of North Carolina and Yale University.

The researchers examined 400 care centers in California, Colorado, Connecticut and North Carolina in the spring of 1993, and tested 826 children from those centers to see what impact their child-care experience had on their intellectual and emotional development.

The study is the latest of several condemning the quality of American child care, whether in centers or in family day care, where one adult cares for a small group of children in a home.

"What used to be the best-kept secret in America keeps getting rediscovered: the quality of child care in America is mediocre at best," said Jay Belsky, a professor of human development at Pennsylvania State University who was not part of the study. "The mistake would be concluding that only parents can care for young children and that day care is inherently problematical. When high-quality stable care is provided, there is good evidence that children thrive."

The problem, Professor Belsky and others said, is that good care is so scarce.

The study was made public as debates intensify over whether the Federal Government should contribute to child care at all, and as Congress considers proposals to force welfare mothers to work, which would increase demand for child care.

In 1991, according to the Department of Labor, 58 percent of mothers with children under 6 were working, mostly full time. Among employed mothers with children under 5, 28 percent placed their children in child-care centers and a third used family day-care homes.

Last April, a study of family day care by the Families and Work Institute, a private research organization, also concluded that quality was so poor that in more than a third of the cases, children's development might suffer.

That study and this latest one found examples of high-quality child care when centers had more adults taking care of children, paid better wages and hired employees with training in how to care for children.

The study released yesterday also found that the highest-quality centers were those with access to extra money from Federal or state governments, universities or employers providing care at a work site. The study concluded that to provide higher quality care, centers had to spend about 10 percent more than those that provided mediocre care.

"What's new about this study is that it was done by economists as well as child psychologists, and what it says is that we know what to do with the money — those centers that have more resources use them well," Ms. Reisman said.

But the study also noted that many parents either did not recognize quality child care or did not demand it. Ninety percent of the parents interviewed rated their child care as good, while the researchers found most poor or mediocre. Intense economic competition among centers means that most charge similar fees, regardless of quality.

The researchers found that states with stricter child-care regulations had more centers of higher quality.

To measure quality, the study used standards set by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. These include staffing ratios of 1 adult for every 3 to 4 infants, 1 adult for 4 or 5 2-year-olds and 1 adult for 8 to 10 4-year-olds. The Washington-based organization also calls on child-care providers to have a child-development certificate, which usually means a provider has had nine months of training.

The researchers recommended teaching parents how to evaluate quality child care, setting higher state child-care standards and providing more Federal and state money for child care.

Day care study finds centers inadequate

Washington Times - 2/7/95

Emotional, intellectual growth suffers

ASSOCIATED PRESS

The quality of most day care centers is so poor that it interferes with the emotional and intellectual development of thousands of young children, according to a four-state study released yesterday.

The study of day care facilities in California, Colorado, Connecticut and North Carolina found that most of them are mediocre and do not meet the children's needs for health, safety, warm relationships and learning. Infants and toddlers are especially vulnerable to poor-quality care.

"Babies in poor quality rooms are vulnerable to more illness because basic sanitary conditions are not met for diapering and feeding; are endangered because of safety problems that exist in the room; miss warm, supportive relationships with adults; and lose out on learning because they lack the books and toys required for physical and intellectual growth," said the study, which was conducted by researchers at four universities.

Ten million children under age 5 are cared for by someone other than a parent, according to the federal government. The study issued yesterday found that one in five of these children are in a center-based program.

Only one in seven centers provides good-quality care that encourages a child's healthy development, the report said. At one in eight, the children's health and safety are threatened.

The study comes as Congress considers welfare reforms that will heighten demand for child care as more single mothers are pushed from the welfare rolls to the work force.

Rep. Ron Wyden, Oregon Democrat, whose hearings last year revealed quality shortcomings in child care, said centers that don't address the learning and developmental needs of children "very often are little more than warehouses."

"The ability to get it right is going to be fundamental to welfare reform," Mr. Wyden said.

The study released yesterday took 2½ years and was conducted by researchers from the University of Colorado at Denver, the University of California at Los Angeles, the University of North Carolina and Yale University in Connecticut.

The researchers studied 400 day care centers in the four states, evenly divided between for-profit and nonprofit programs. All of the centers were state-licensed. A total of 228 infant-toddler classrooms and 521 preschool classrooms were studied.

The research involved classroom observation, individual assessments of 826 children, on-site interviews with center directors, and questionnaires by center staff, directors, teachers and parents. The study, funded by several foundations, cost $1 million.

The study said good-quality child care supports a child's positive development. In such child care, learning is encouraged in many ways through interesting and fun activities, adults are warm and caring, and the center meets health and safety standards.

The researchers said child care for infants and toddlers is of particular concern. Of the infant and toddler classrooms observed, only 8 percent were considered of good quality while 40 percent were rated less than minimal. The rest were mediocre.

The report found that the quality of care is related primarily to higher staff-to-child ratios, staff education and the administrators' prior experience.

Good-quality services cost more than mediocre care — but not a lot more. The centers studied charged an average full-time monthly fee of $450.80 for infants and $371.50 for preschoolers.

Kor

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

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Most day care poor to just OK

By Anita Manning
USA TODAY 2/6/95

The care children get at most day-care centers is "poor to mediocre," and in 12% of centers, children's health is jeopardized, says a study released today.

In 1993, researchers looked at 400 centers, 100 each in California, Colorado, North Carolina and Connecticut. Findings:

▶ One in seven (14%) was rated "good" or "excellent," meaning children's health and safety needs were met, the children received warmth and support from staff and learning was encouraged.

▶ One in eight (12%) was rated less than minimal — the children were ignored, standards for health and safety were not met and no learning was encouraged.

▶ The remainder (74%) received ratings just above "minimal," indicating that health needs are met, but children don't get much attention or educational encouragement.

The researchers, from the Universities of Colorado at Denver, California at Los Angeles, North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Yale University, New Haven, Conn., were most concerned about care given to babies. Of 225 infant or toddler rooms observed, 40% rated less than minimal. In these centers, hygiene was poor, there were safety problems, babies weren't held and there weren't appropriate toys.

Young children need the right kind of attention at the right time to develop fully, says Barbara Reisman of the Child Care Action Campaign, an advocacy group. By not assuring good care, she says, "we're slamming shut a very important window of opportunity and it can't be reopened."

Child-Care Centers Get Low Ratings

2-6-95

Quality Is Mostly 'Poor To Mediocre,' but Worst For Infants, Study Says

By Barbara Vobejda
Washington Post Staff Writer

The vast majority of the 5 million American children who spend their days in child-care centers are receiving "poor to mediocre" care, and one in eight are in poor-quality settings where their health and safety are threatened, according to a multiyear study of hundreds of centers.

The study, conducted by a team of academics at four universities and scheduled for release today, rated just one in seven centers as good quality, where children enjoyed close relationships with adults and teachers focused on the individual needs of the children.

The study said problems were most prevalent in care for the youngest children: 40 percent of infant and toddler rooms were given poor ratings.

"The level of quality at most U.S. child-care centers, especially in infant/toddler rooms, does not meet children's needs for health, safety, warm relationships, and learning," said the report, which was funded by several major foundations. While quality varies widely, the report concluded, most child care is "sufficiently poor to interfere with children's emotional and intellectual development."

The findings come as Congress debates whether to require millions of single mothers on welfare to work, which would dramatically increase the need for child care at the same time federal funding for such care may be reduced.

The study, entitled "Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers," is one of a handful of comprehensive studies of day care. It follows by less than a year a study by the New York-based Families and Work Institute that found comparably poor levels of care available in "family day care," in which children are cared for in another person's home rather than a center.

Together, the studies paint a picture of child care, a subject of inte interest in this country, where more than half of mothers of young children are employed.

"It is a wake-up call," said Barbara Willer, spokeswoman for the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) here. "As a nation we have not paid enough attention to the daily environment of 5 million of our preschool children."

Among employed mothers with children under age 5, 33 percent use family day care, 28 percent use day-care centers, 28 percent juggle their schedules so children can be cared for by the parents, and 10 percent arrange for care in their own homes with a nanny.

The new study found that parents greatly overestimate the quality of care their children are receiving. Ninety percent of parents surveyed as part of the study rated their children's programs as very good, while trained observers found that most of the same centers were poor to minimal.

"Parents need to be much better informed consumers," said Suzanne Helburn, an economist at the University of Colorado and principal investigator on the study. "They need to spend as much time looking for child care as buying a new car."

Among the most troubling findings, the study said, was the relatively lower quality of care for the youngest children.

"Babies in poor-quality rooms are vulnerable to more illness because basic sanitary conditions are not met for diapering and feeding; are endangered because of safety problems that exist in the room; miss warm, supportive relationships with adults; and lose out on learning because they lack the books and toys required for physical and intellectual growth," the report said.

In the poorest-quality centers, researchers said they saw no warmth or support from the adults toward the children. The teachers were not encouraging any learning, and the centers were run in such a way that children could become ill or hurt because of unsafe and unsanitary conditions.

The teachers in the poor-quality centers made less than the average hourly wage in the centers studied, which was $7.22 for teachers and $5.70 for assistant teachers. The researchers found that several factors improved the quality of care, including a higher number of teachers per group, higher teacher education and a more experienced administrator. Centers that were required to meet certain standards provided better quality, as did those with sources of funding other than parent fees. Those included centers in public schools, colleges and universities; those run by municipal agencies; and those at work sites.

Centers with access to additional funds, such as employer subsidies, pay higher wages and have higher staff-to-child ratios and teachers who have been on the job longer.

WHAT PARENTS SHOULD LOOK FOR

The study found that good-quality care was more likely in centers with:

- High staff-to-child ratios
- Higher levels of staff education
- More experienced administrators
- Higher teacher wages
- Lower teacher turnover

Researchers found a wide variation among state licensing requirements and said there were fewer poor-quality centers in states with the most demanding standards.

Researchers used as their standards in the study those issued by the NAEYC, which recommends staffing ratios of one adult for every three to four infants, one adult for four or five 2-year-olds and one adult for eight to 10 4-year-olds. The organization recommends that day-care teachers have at a minimum a "child development certificate," which usually requires a nine-month study program, and that directors have at least a bachelor's degree in a related subject and three years' experience.

The study found that quality was higher in centers where more teachers had college degrees.

The researchers also concluded that children in higher-quality care benefit socially and intellectually, have a more positive view of themselves and are more likely to share a warm relationship with their teachers.

The researchers observed 400 centers in four states: California, Colorado, Connecticut and North Carolina. The centers did not include traditional preschools, where children attend only part of the day and part of the year. The study was conducted by researchers at the University of Colorado at Denver; the University of California, Los Angeles; the University of North Carolina; and Yale University.

The report recommended that states implement higher standards for child care and that governments and the private sector spend more to help families pay for child care and improve staff training.

Ellen Galinsky, co-president of the Families and Work Institute, said the findings in this study were "strikingly similar" to those regarding family day care in the study she helped conduct last year.

Of family day-care settings that were regulated by states, she said, 12 percent were rated good quality, 12 percent were inadequate, and about three-quarters were considered safe, but children were not learning.

Child Care Is Worse Than Believed, With Safety Jeopardized, Study Suggests

2/6/95

By SUE SHELLENBARGER
Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

WASHINGTON – In a wake-up call to parents, a major study says the quality of care provided by the nation's child-care centers is even lower than previously believed, with 40% of infants and toddlers in conditions that threaten their health and safety and discourage learning.

In the broadest study so far of average U.S. day care, researchers at four universities found that 86% of child-care centers provide care so mediocre that it may interfere with children's emotional and intellectual development and compromise their readiness for school. Only 14% of centers offer high-quality care, including safe surroundings, adult warmth and support and interesting learning opportunities, according to the study, which is set for release today.

A major problem, the study suggests, is that parents aren't demanding quality, partly because they can't see what goes on in the classroom and don't know how to evaluate it. Researchers found most parents significantly overestimate the quality of the care their children receive.

The 2½-year, four-state "Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes" study is the first to link research on child-care costs, the quality of care and its effects on children. Its quality findings are even more dire than previous studies documenting major problems by the Families and Work Institute, New York, and the National Center for the Early Childhood Workforce, Washington, D.C.

For the latest study, researchers from the University of Colorado, the University of California, the University of North Carolina and Yale University visited 400 randomly chosen child-care centers in California, Colorado, Connecticut and North Carolina, observing classrooms and doing interviews and surveys with directors, teachers and parents. They also studied the development a few months later of 826 children from the centers.

They found that workers in two out of five infant and toddler programs failed to safeguard children's health and safety. The staffers neglected to supervise the children properly or follow good hand-washing and cleaning procedures, and they exposed them to dangerous equipment such as broken or hazardous playground toys, sharp-edged furniture or changing tables without protective edges to keep babies from rolling off.

Researchers found that market factors—particularly consumers' tendency to demand high quality service – don't work when applied to child care. Parents pay about the same fees for poor quality as for high quality care. This "lack of consumer knowledge" gives child-care centers little financial incentive to improve, the study says.

Other Findings:

• Parents pay only part of the full cost of providing even mediocre child care. Donations and teachers' willingness to work for low pay subsidize about 25% of the full cost (assuming staffers were paid what they probably would make doing comparable jobs outside the child-care field.)

• Centers that receive outside funding or donations in addition to parents' fees tend to provide higher quality care. These include college and university centers, employer-subsidized facilities and centers that receive state grants for meeting quality standards.

• High staff-to-child ratios is the characteristic most closely linked to high quality care, followed by staff education, center administrators' experience and staff stability.

• Children in higher quality centers had more advanced social skills, more positive attitudes and warmer relationships with their teachers than children in low quality settings.

The study was funded by the Carnegie Corp. of New York, William T. Grant Foundation, the JFM Foundation, the A.L. Mailman Family Foundation, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation and the Pew Charitable Trusts.

Don't Punish the Children

NY TIMES 1.23.95

"It took me 20 years to come off welfare, and I refuse to go that road again," a single parent named Stephanie Pitts told a Times reporter recently. "Self-respect, self-esteem and independence ... that's what this center has done for me."

Ms. Pitts is a teacher's aide, and her 10-year-old daughter is a participant in the after-school program at the 20-year-old Miccio Day Care Center in the Red Hook section of Brooklyn. But not, perhaps, for much longer. Miccio is one of 10 centers the Giuliani administration proposes to ax — most of them in poor neighborhoods.

Last November, city officials announced that 1,900 publicly financed spaces for children would be lost to budget-cutting. Day care advocates offered alternatives involving unused vouchers and accounting changes that, they said, would more than make up for the $6.1 million the city said the cuts would save. The city then said that instead of cutting spaces it would close centers whose landlords charged exorbitant rents. The displaced children would be placed in other city day care centers or their parents would be given vouchers to pay for private centers.

There are two things wrong with this logic. It is no secret that many landlords who rent to the city try to gouge it. But Mayor Giuliani could have taken them on months ago — with the whole city behind him. His hand would have been strengthened if the city had been more diligent about finding other sites. Absent competition, landlords have the city over a barrel.

Second, placing the children in other city centers will not be easy. There are 148 such centers, with 15,000 kids on their waiting lists. Vouchers are not a bad idea, but if a publicly financed day care center in a poor community is eliminated it is unlikely that a private center will arise to take its place. In Red Hook, the choice is the Miccio Center or an unlicensed family day care center that does not have to meet city health and safety standards and where the vouchers could not be used anyway.

New York City needs to trim its budget. But to make children suffer is unconscionable. Surely Mr. Giuliani can negotiate with landlords for better rents and improved maintenance. He can also find better ways to chop $6.1 million out of the day care budget. Above all, this champion of self-reliance should be among the first to support the Stephanie Pitts of this city.

WORK & FAMILY

By Sue Shellenbarger

Quality Day Care Through the Eyes Of a Child

WHEN SEIJA Surr recalls her time in day care as a child, she doesn't remember whether she learned any words or what her teachers talked about.

Instead, the 27-year-old editor for a San Francisco publishing house recalls what she felt, saw and tasted – her affection for a favorite teacher, the sweet rainbow candy the teacher handed out, her purple blanket against her cheek at nap time, the cold metal jungle gym outside and her fear of falling from it. "It's funny, the kinds of things you remember – the social and tactile experiences more than academic things," she says.

What matters most to the nine million U.S. children in day care isn't licenses, computers, shiny toys or rainbow paintings on the walls, studies show. It is the quality of each child's experience. In that touchy-feely bit of truth lies a conundrum that bedevils parents and regulators alike: Things that can't be seen outside the classroom or regulated – how a child is treated and what he or she feels, hears, sees, tastes and touches while parents are absent – also have the biggest impact on the child's happiness and progress.

A child's moment-to-moment interaction with the adult in charge is the most potent factor. In a study of several child-care centers in Bermuda, the way teachers talked to children had the biggest effect on their happiness and skills. Teachers who gave kids information – "Oh, look at that firetruck, see how red it is" – and support – "That's great! You did such a good job" – fostered better progress than those who gave mostly orders or criticism, says Sandra Scarr, a professor at the University of Virginia and chairwoman of KinderCare Learning Centers, a child-care chain.

A secure relationship with the adult in charge gives a child confidence, says Carollee Howes, a professor and leading child-care researcher at the University of California, Los Angeles. "The child will feel, 'This person will take care of me, and I can explore this rich environment.' " Conversely, a broken relationship disrupts learning. Ms. Surr's most poignant memory of day care is her distress at losing a favorite teacher to another class.

IF INTANGIBLES matter so much, how can a parent assess day-care choices? Some measurable traits, including those regulated by most states, can at least improve the odds for kids. Classroom ratios of one adult for every three to four infants, four to six two-year-olds and seven to 10 three-year-olds are recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, a Washington, D.C., accreditation group. (Most states allow more children per adult.)

Though group size isn't regulated in many states, it's important. "One of my most terrible experiences was being in a room with 36 toddlers in diapers with nine caregivers," Dr. Howes says. "The ratio was 1 to 4, but there were simply too many people in a very, very stuffy room."

The association recommends groups of six to eight for infants, eight to 12 for two-year-olds and 14 to 20 for three-year-olds.

Teacher training and education are linked in research to faster learning and socialization among kids. Also helpful are a structured program and orderly rooms with a variety of materials and activity spaces.

But none of these yardsticks guarantees a good experience for kids.

After enrolling my toddler in a day-care center with good ratios and a stable staff, I was puzzled when he came home a wreck every day. A visit to the center revealed that teachers were swapping classrooms several times a day, so kids never knew who would be caring for them. Lacking stability, my son stopped talking much with anyone there, storing up his frustration for home.

ALSO, HIGH-QUALITY care is so scarce in many places – half to three-quarters of parents who use day care feel they have no choices and must settle for what they can find, studies show – that parents lapse into denial about their kids' experience. A study by Debby Cryer, an investigator at the University of North Carolina, found that parents "significantly overestimated the quality of care their kids received," she says. In one center, researchers saw that none of the infants was fed on time, held or even diapered until just before the parents came. But though parents suspected problems, "almost all said they thought their child was the lucky one who got most of the attention," Dr. Cryer says.

Amid mounting concern about child-care quality, the national association has seen a sharp rise in centers seeking accreditation: 4,000 have gained accreditation, a third more than a year ago, and 7,000 more have applied. Accredited centers must submit annual reports; complaints prompt visits by the association. The group sets exacting goals for teachers' interactions with kids, including showing respect, affection, encouragement and emotional support. Employer support is rising, too. The American Business Collaboration, an employer group, is financing training for day-care center directors, urging them to have staffers spend more time on the floor with kids and include softness and texture in their surroundings.

And in comforting news, research shows that one factor parents *can* at least partly control – the quality of family life – matters most to children. A three-state study of 720 families shows that while day-care quality affects kids' development, family factors such as parental stress and income are as much as 20 times more powerful. "In the long run," Dr. Scarr says, "it's the families that are most important."

The Birmingham Post 1/18

The low pay of day care

Some workers say the quality of care suffers

By Gail Short
Post-Herald Reporter

Mary King was busy trying to control her class of 15 wiggling 4- and 5-year-olds last week at the Mustard Seed Day Care and Pre-School in Ensley.

She and seven fellow day-care workers teach nearly 40 infants and preschool children there.

Mrs. King, who also is the program manager at the school, wiped noses, taught two boys to share a plastic measuring cup, played games, sang songs and answered constant requests for attention. Beads of sweat appeared across her brow — and it was only 9:30 a.m.

"I had one parent to say, 'My hat is off to you because I don't see how you do it all day long,'" said Mrs. King, who has worked in day-care centers since 1978. "I have just always felt that I have had something that I could add to children's lives."

Across the nation, day-care workers such as Mrs. King care for and educate children of working parents. But most day-care workers face low wages, long hours and often have no health benefits. The poor compensation forces many to leave their jobs after only a few years.

In Alabama and in other states, many day-care workers make less than $9,000 a year, according research by Childcare Resources, a day care referral service in Birmingham. Some day-care employees with degrees in early childhood education may earn between $12,000 and $15,000.

"Child care has been traditionally a woman's job," said Alice Burton, policy associate with the Child Care Employee Project, a nonprofit group based that studies day-care issues. "And women's work has been devalued even though the profession requires training and sensitivity."

Cheryl McQueen, 28, of Calera, worked at two day-care centers from 1987 to 1989 and in 1993. She said she never made more than $5,000 a year.

"I was making about minimum wage," Mrs. McQueen said. "That is one of the reasons I left because it just was not working out financially. At one day care I got a dime raise and the director was presenting it to me like it was a privilege because no one else had gotten a raise."

Mrs. McQueen said she often worked from 6 a.m. until 6 p.m. To make ends meet, she often took baby-sitting jobs on weekends.

In addition to the low wages, many day-care centers offer no paid vacations and no sick days or health insurance even though workers are exposed to the children's illnesses, including colds and flu.

However, the 17 employees at First United Methodist Church Child Development Center in downtown Birmingham have sick leave, health insurance and paid vacations, said Executive Director Robin Barrett.

The teachers have college degrees and earn up to $15,000 per year. Tuition can cost more than $400 per month.

"We decided to charge what it costs to have consistent, quality day care," Ms. Barrett said.

"A lot of centers don't pay a lot. And it is the employees who subsidize the child care."

Alabama Department of Human Resources minimum standards require day-care workers to have a high school diploma or GED and four hours of training each year either on the job or through workshops and college courses.

Those working in smaller day-care establishments have fewer requirements to meet.

Kristin Massie, 29, of Montevallo said she once worked in a church-run day-care center where no training was required.

She said some employees became frustrated because they felt they did not have enough training to teach the children.

"There was a lot of (employee) turnover," said Mrs. Massie, "especially with people working with the younger children. If we had classes we could have coped better. There were no gripe sessions and no meetings."

Turnover of day-care employees can be as high as 50 percent each year at some centers, said A[illegible] Eddowes, program coordinator for early childhood education at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

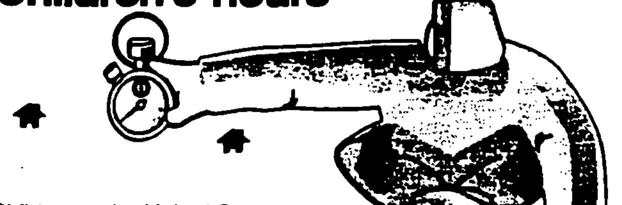
Research has shown that children need consistent, nurturing care to substitute for parents, Ms. Eddowes said.

To obtain better trained day-care workers, experts have suggested forming a career ladder system so that more training would automatically mean higher pay.

And federal and state subsidies and on-site day care provided by companies would help keep day care affordable for parents.

Tuesday, January 18, 1994
Birmingham Post-Herald

Children's hours



Children in the United States spend more time at home than children do in most other countries. This is the average number of waking hours that 4-year-old children spend at:

Country	Home	School/ center	Child care home	Relative's home	Play area
Belgium	8.6	6.0	0.0	0.9	0.1
China	8.7	3.0	0.4	0.3	1.4
Finland	10.1	2.1	2.4	0.3	0.7
Germany	11.0	2.0	0.1	1.0	0.7
Hong Kong	11.3	3.3	0.1	0.5	0.1
Nigeria	13.0	0.6	0.1	0.5	0.2
Portugal	10.1	2.5	0.5	1.8	0.5
Spain	8.9	4.3	0.0	0.5	1.7
Thailand	12.6	1.0	0.1	0.9	0.3
United States	12.1	1.9	1.0	0.3	0.2

Source: *Families Speak* By Julie Stacey, USA TODAY

Day care on the upswing globally

By Tamara Henry
USA TODAY 1/17/95

The world's 4-year-olds spend a significant amount of time at day-care centers, a trend likely to grow, says a multinational study out today.

In the USA, 61% of 4-year-olds spend some time away from their parents in care-and-education programs, says the study released by the Council of Chief State School Officers. Other countries reported more.

"The principal reason parents give for out-of-home care is employment," notes David P. Weikart, spokesman for the study. "When we ask the parents if there are problems with the service they are receiving, they are basically satisfied. Between the employment pattern and satisfaction of services ... the trend will continue."

Compared with the USA, nearly all of Hong Kong's 4-year-olds attend preschool but mainly because it is considered "an essential component of the life of young children."

In Italy, the percentage is 85%, while rates are 82% in Germany, 75% in Finland, 71% in Portugal, 79% in Spain and 98% in Belgium.

However, China reports only 43% of its toddlers are in day care, Nigeria, 33%; and Thailand, 12%.

Other findings:

▶ In nine of 11 countries, relatives provide very little of the child-supervision. Only in Portugal and Thailand do relatives provide at least two hours of daily care to 4-year-olds.

▶ China, with much of its population in rural areas, reports that a 4-year-old child typically spends almost three hours a day in "nobody's" care, without any direct supervision by an adult.

For child care, Mom is home alone

By Tamara Henry
USA TODAY

1/17/95

Despite a rapid growth in day-care centers and the trend toward couples sharing child-care responsibilities, an 11-country survey out today shows mothers still provide the greatest share of their young children's care.

American 4-year-olds spend an average of 12.3 of their 16 waking hours a day with at least one of their parents, more than toddlers in Belgium, China, Finland, Hong Kong, Nigeria, Poland, Spain or Thailand, and about the same amount of time as those in Germany.

In all of the countries, mothers are the primary caregivers. No country reports "father-only care" amounting to even an hour a day.

The High/Scope Educational Research Foundation in Ypsilanti, Mich., coordinated the survey for the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement — a non-governmental, non-profit organization of research institutions in more than 60 countries.

"In spite of the rhetoric about equality and role sharing in the Western countries," says High/Scope's David P. Weikart, "child care is still very much the responsibility of mothers in the survey's participating countries, regardless of the various cultures and levels of development involved."

In the U.S., 4-year-olds on average spend about 11 waking hours a day with their mothers alone, one hour per day with both parents and 42 minutes with their fathers alone. Time spent with Mother — alone or with Father — ranges from 8.3 hours in Hong Kong to 11.9 hours in Germany.

Fathers are present from 0.9 hour in China and Hong Kong to 3.7 hours in Belgium and 3.5 hours in Thailand.

Family time

The average number of waking hours per day that 4-year-old children spend with their parents.

	Mother	Father	Two parents
Belgium	5.2	0.5	3.2
China	6.8	0.9	1
Finland	7.7	0.8	2.1
Germany	10.0	0.6	1.9
Hong Kong	7.5	0.1	0.8
Nigeria	10.0	0.7	1.0
Portugal	8.2	0.4	1.6
Spain	7.6	0.3	2.3
Thailand	8.0	0.2	3.3
USA	10.7	0.7	0.9

1 – no data available

Source: *Families Speak*

By Stephen Conley, USA TODAY

Mixed Messages Heighten Anxiety Over Day Care

IS DAY CARE good or bad for kids?

It depends on whom you ask. Parents have been alternately reassured and alarmed in recent years by conflicting reports.

"Children learn critical academic and social skills from being in day care," declared the Child Care Action Campaign and Working Mother magazine in a 1993 survey, joining a raft of similar reports.

Then, British psychologist Penelope Leach hit a raw nerve last year with her book "Children First," claiming that full-time day care for babies is likely to damage their development. And author-psychologist Robert Karen suggests in "Becoming Attached" that too much group day care can jeopardize infants' attachment to parents.

The mixed messages reflect real disagreements in child-care research. Undisputed is that high-quality care can benefit children in many ways, speeding cognitive development and improving social skills. A Miami study of a model university day-care program found that children who entered full-time care as infants posted higher math scores than their peers in sixth grade and were more sociable.

The problem is, most U.S. child care bears little resemblance to model programs. A four-state study set for release in February by four universities is expected to confirm 1994 reports on major quality problems by Carnegie Corp. of New York, a philanthropic organization, and Families & Work Institute, New York. Most children get mediocre day care, and 10% to 20% get care so poor that it risks damaging their development, says Ellen Galinsky, the institute's co-president.

All this leaves many parents in the dark about the effects of the child care they use. This can be unnerving if you have ever lain awake nights, as I have, wondering whether you should be worried that your toddler no longer runs to greet you when you pick her up from day care or seems too aggressive in the evenings. To shed some light on such matters, here is a guide to some unanswered questions in child-care research.

HOW DOES mediocre or bad day care affect kids?

A new wave of research is under way. It's clear that the average day care most middle-class kids get doesn't hurt their cognitive development and may help it, the National Research Council says. But the few studies of poor-quality care at centers with ill-trained staff, inadequate materials, oversized classes and high staff turnover have found children scoring lower on cognitive tests. They are also less able to control themselves and more resistant to guidance. Deborah Vandell, professor of educational psychology at the University of Wisconsin, found that children who had been in poor-quality day care at age four were less happy and socially skilled than their peers by third grade. More research is needed.

Day care makes some kids more aggressive, but is that something to worry about?

While day-care kids tend to be more self-reliant and confident, studies also show they are more boisterous, competitive or likely to fight and argue. In a study of 589 children in average care, John E. Bates, a psychology professor at Indiana University, found that those who had spent a lot of time in day care were more aggressive by kindergarten.

Some researchers say that could be a sign of social maladjustment. Others say it reflects assertiveness.

Carol Lay

Alison Clarke-Stewart, a professor at the University of California, Irvine, says day-care kids are more independent and determined to get their way but lack the social skills to accomplish that smoothly. Also, a North Carolina study found that this unusual aggressiveness vanished after a few years in school.

DOES FULL-TIME [illegible] day care hurt infants?

There isn't any evidence that day care for children over a year old hurts their attachment to parents. But Jay Belsky, Pennsylvania State University human-development professor, started a firestorm when he wrote in 1986 that children with more than 20 hours a week of day care in their first year are more likely than home-raised infants to show insecure attachment to their mothers. The risks, he says, are linked to "early, extensive and continuous care of the kind we typically have in this country." Others have found the same thing.

But many criticize the test used, in which a baby is separated from its mother and subjected to stress. Its emotional attachment to its mother is evaluated when they reunite. Critics say it's the wrong test to use when comparing home-raised kids to day-care kids, who are more independent and used to unfamiliar situations. Also, half the children tested repeatedly come out with different results over time.

Nevertheless, Dr. Vandell found that eight-year-olds in a Texas suburb who had extensive day care from infancy had poorer peer relationships, work habits, emotional health and grades. Dr. Vandell blames the low quality of local child care, but says more research is needed.

A 10-site study by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development promises to clear the fog. Set for release over the next several years, it brings together researchers who have disagreed with one another for the first comprehensive study of nearly 1,200 children from birth through first grade.

Meanwhile, what's a parent to do? "Never mind the research," Dr. Clarke-Stewart says. "You have to go out and find the best care for your child. That means searching, and it means monitoring it."

—Next week: What characteristics of day care are most important to kids?

Post 1-11-95

JUDY MANN

Easing the Leap From Welfare to Work

President Clinton got it right in a radio address on Dec. 10 when he said hard-working Americans who play by the rules are "tired of watching their earnings benefit people who don't."

Most people simply have less disposable income today than they did in 1973. Census Bureau figures tell a stunning story of economic deterioration: In 1973, men with one to three years of high school had a median income of $24,079. By 1989, that median had dropped to $14,439. (All figures are in 1989 dollars.) The income of men with only a high school degree went from $30,252 to $21,650. When you've lost a third or more of your income, you don't have much room in your heart for charity.

The story for women in these educational categories is quite different: They lost, but they didn't have nearly as much income to begin with. Those with only one to three years of high school had a median income of $7,920 in 1973, and that dropped to $6,752 in 1989. For those with high school degrees, income went from $11,087 to $10,439.

"The decline in labor market opportunities for people with low levels of education has placed an enormous strain on the nation's antipoverty programs," write economists Robert H. Haveman and John Karl Scholz in the winter issue of Focus, a publication of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Institute for Research on Poverty. They warn that "unless the operation of the bottom end of the labor market is changed or supplemented, no plan designed to substitute work for welfare can ensure economic independence for the nation's large and growing pool of low-wage, low-skilled workers."

Barbara Bergmann, distinguished professor of economics at American University, and Heidi Hartmann, founder and president of the Institute for Women's Policy Research and a 1994 recipient of a MacArthur "genius" fellowship award, have put a proposal into the mix of welfare reform ideas that would supplement this low-end sector and encourage women to choose work over welfare. Their proposal, called "Help for Working Parents," would provide low-income parents with health insurance and child care, which women on welfare currently receive.

"The basic idea is to provide what is needed to families with children that have access only to low-paying jobs," says Bergmann. "Adequate child care costs on the order of $4,500 a year per preschool child. Health care is not available in many of the jobs these people can get. The bottom 20 percent of these families would get free child care; the next two quintiles would get help on a sliding scale."

Welfare reformers seem to fall into one of two camps: those who believe that poor people are poor because of their behavior and those who believe that poor people are a result of social structure. Probably both are correct to some extent. But the danger of the punitive approach—off welfare entirely—is that it will push women and some 9.2 million children even further into poverty.

The Bergmann-Hartmann model is based on the assumption that most people want to be productive. Hartmann's research has demonstrated that many women on welfare have worked and want to work, she says. "A full-time minimum-wage job would make a single mother with two small children much better off than she would be on welfare, but only if she doesn't have to pay for child care and health care."

They estimate that their plan would reduce welfare rolls by as much as 60 percent and that it would make a dent in the 22 percent poverty rate among children. They estimate that it would cost an additional $86 billion a year, much of which would go to families who are not on welfare but who are in or close to poverty.

The economists readily acknowledge that their plan is bold and very expensive and seemingly goes completely against the current winds. They propose to finance Help for Working Families by shifting funds from superfluous defense programs, the CIA and subsidies to wealthy farmers.

Feminist leader and author Betty Friedan has endorsed the Bergmann-Hartmann proposal, and she understands the political connection between men who have lost jobs and income from corporate downsizing and the current backlash against welfare mothers. "This program would meet the real needs of women in poverty," she says.

No one can calculate how much would be saved in terms of cutting crime by giving these children a decent start with child care that gets them ready for school and a home life in which the work ethic is taught every day by a working parent. That's the goal of most welfare reformers. The open question is how to get there.

Donna Hansen

THE OREGONIAN

January 8, 1995

Oregon: Things work differently here

Kevin Concannon had just arrived from Maine to run Oregon's Department of Human Resources, and at least one problem had to be sol immediately: The Legislature was not moving a bill that would let Oregon collect federal funds for pre-school special education. Since the 1987 session was about to peter out, Concannon quickly made an appointment with Senate President John Kitzhaber and House Speaker Vera Katz.

Un the bill passed, he explained quickly, Oregon would be the only state in the country not included in the program.

"They looked at each other," he recalls now, "[illegible] then they both [illegible]?' "

[illegible]nnon eventually got Kitzhaber and Katz to move the bill. But, he remembers, it was the last time he made the argument that if Oregon didn't do something, it would be different.

Seven and a half years later, as Concannon prepares to go back to Maine, Oregon works very differently than other states. The federal government is reluctant to give out waivers to let states run programs their own way; Oregon has collected more waivers than the entire National Basketball Association. When Vice President Al Gore talks about giving states greater flexibility, he talks about the "Oregon Option."

"It's viewed as a state that is authentically creative," said Concannon on Thursday. "We're not New Jersey or Rhode Island; people don't think that the money is just going to disappear. And Oregon's not so large or complicated that people can't see the results."

One result — which should be visible through rain and rhetoric — is that Oregon is now the only Western state where the welfare caseload numbers are consistently dropping. And Oregon has achieved that without simply cutting people off the rolls and wishing them luck — or wishing them gone.

The state hasn't even opened up a chain of orphanages.

What Oregon has done, with considerable shaping by Concannon, is to redesign the way it spends its money and the goals it seeks. Trying to find out how to get welfare clients into the workplace, Oregon has asked the question of an unusual group:

The clients.

"When someone comes in and says, 'I need assistance,' our workers are now trained to ask what are the barriers to work," says Concannon. "There's a much more coherent effort to say not, 'What will the payment be?', but 'What will it take to keep you working?' "

The answer, strikingly often, is not sterner moral fiber; it's reliable child care.

So Oregon has been paying for child care — three times as much as it was paying for three years ago. The feds require 90 days on welfare before they'll start to pay part of child care, meaning that people have to be out of the work force for three months before they are helped to get the main thing they need to work. So Oregon has been paying for it in unmatched state dollars — what Concannon calls "high-octane dollars" — and producing an interesting topic for its current conversations with Gore.

There are other supports for the state's JOBS program — the Oregon Health Plan improves low-income workers' chances of getting medical coverage, and the federal Earned Income Tax Credit, bolstered in the Clinton budget plan, provides some financial help.

And yes, there is some effort at weaving moral fiber.

"We have a four-week program, Life Skills, that's focused on self-esteem, getting to work on Monday, showering, getting along with people," says Concannon.

"People in Week 1 are all surly looks and why-the-hell-am-I-here. In Week 4, they're different."

And the program includes employment placement.

Across the country, getting people off welfare into jobs is not that hard; the trick is keeping them off. Nationally, 45 percent of the people who leave welfare are back within six months.

With the JOBS program, the return rate is 25 percent after 18 months. Keeping someone off welfare is as much an achievement as throwing someone off.

There are ways that government can do things better, and there are things that government can do successfully — if it's willing to do them differently. Concannon also cites Oregon's having the highest rate in the nation of teen mothers in school — achieved by making support services dependent on their being enrolled somewhere.

There are examples here for other places, and for other planners. On welfare, there are plans that actually work, along with chants that sound good in campaigns. There are arguments and ideas, coming out of Oregon, that can reinvent welfare, or even reinvent government.

Just don't argue that it's a mistake to different.

David Sarasohn is an associate editor of The Oregonian. He can be telephoned at 221-8523 or reached by mail at 1320 SW Broadway, Portland, OR 97201.

Dear Abby/Abigail Van Buren The Metropolitan Times 1/5/95

Child care a taste of parenthood

DEAR ABBY: Today I saw something that brought back some very unpleasant memories from my childhood.

I was having a manicure when a woman with three boys (about 6 months through age 9) came in. This woman (I'm assuming their mother) expected the oldest boy to take care of the youngest while she sat and had her nails done.

Of course, the baby was restless, so she told the boy, "Walk him around in the stroller." The boy went outside for a few minutes and then returned. Again she said, "I told you to walk him around!" He left again and returned a few minutes later. I could tell the boy did not want to do the task his mother had told him to do.

Why do parents expect the eldest child to become a built-in baby sitter or — worse yet — a parent? It wasn't the child's decision to have another baby; it was the parents'. Just because a child is mature for his age doesn't mean he should be responsible for a baby and miss out on his own childhood.

I speak from experience — like that little boy, I too was expected to care for my little brother. (We were 10 years apart.) I was just a little girl; I wanted to be a child, not a mother.

Didn't that mother understand that the little boy did not want to be outside and risk having one of his friends from school see him push a stroller? You have no idea how embarrassing it is for a child!

I'm 34 years old and still remember those situations as if they happened yesterday. All I can say is, if someday I am blessed with two children, I will never treat the firstborn this way. — FIRSTBORN IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR FIRSTBORN: What if the 9-year-old *were* seen by one of his playmates pushing a stroller — or looking after his younger sibling? It's nothing to be ashamed of; he is helping his mother. Not everyone can afford nannies to look after her children.

Traditionally, older children look after their younger siblings. They also shovel snow in the winter, mow the lawn in the summer and rake the leaves in the fall. Children are supposed to help their parents if they can. Don't knock child care; it's excellent training for parenthood.

DEAR ABBY: I recently moved to South Carolina, and a friend of a friend approached me with a shower invitation. She explained that it was an invitation to her bridal shower, but she didn't know me well enough to invite me to her wedding.

Then she said she had taken the liberty of signing me up to bring "something blue" for the bathroom.

Abby, I was not born in the United States and "bridal showers" are foreign to me, but I cannot believe that a bride would organize her own shower, much less invite people to a shower only, and tell the guests what they are to bring.

I gave her a beautifully wrapped shower gift — a single roll of pale blue toilet tissue.

Would you believe she never sent me a thank-you note? — STILL LAUGHING IN SOUTH CAROLINA

DEAR STILL LAUGHING: Yes. I can also think of a few comments . . . none of which is fit to print. Thanks for the chuckle.

Everybody has a problem. What's yours? Get it off your chest by writing to: Dear Abby, P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, Calif. 90069. For a personal reply, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $3.95 ($4.50 in Canada) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, PO Box 447, Mount Morris, Ill. 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

WELFARE

USA Today 1-3-95

Both sides of coin: Comparing the plans

Congressional hearings on welfare reform begin this week. Newt Gingrich, who becomes speaker of the House on Wednesday, says a bill will be written by the end of February, with a vote in March. President Clinton says he'll call a bipartisan summit of governors and members of Congress this month to seek a consensus. Following are provisions from the welfare proposal Clinton introduced last year and fr 1 the Republicans' Contract with America:

JOB PROGRAMS: Both the president's proposal and the GOP plan would require welfare recipients to work after two years of collecting cash benefits.

Clinton's plan provides $2.8 billion for education and training programs (on top of $1 billion spent now). Another $1.2 billion is set aside to create government or community-service jobs if recipients can't find work after two years. The administration projects 300,000 former recipients would be working full-time by 2000. Initially, only recipients born after 1971 would be eligible.

The GOP Contract proposal provides $10 billion for states to devise job training programs. It says 1.5 million former welfare recipients would be required to work by 2001.

TIME LIMIT: Clinton's proposal limits recipients to two s of benefits. Those who couldn't find work would get community-service jobs. Under limited circumstances, some beneficiaries could get extensions.

The Contract limits recipients to two years, with a life- e limit of five years or, if the states choose, two years.

TEEN MOTHERS, ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN: The president proposes a campaign to combat teen pregnancy, including grants to high schools to set up pregnancy-prevention activities. To receive benefits, unwed 18-year-old mothers would be required to live at home and stay in school. States would be allowed to reduce payments to women who have additional children out of wedlock.

Under the GOP Contract, mothers under 18 and their children would be denied benefits. States could raise the age to 21. The savings would go to the states to pay for orphanages and other alternatives for those women. To get benefits, teen mothers under 18 would be required to live at home and stay in school. Older unwed mothers would be penalized for having additional children while on welfare.

PATERNITY: The president would require a mother to supply the name and address of the baby's father immediately after giving birth to help establish paternity.

The Contract is stricter: No child may receive benefits unless paternity is established.

CHILD SUPPORT: The president would require all absent parents to pay child support. The legal process would be streamlined to make it easier to establish paternity. Support payments would rise as payers' incomes rise.

Computerized child support registries would help speed payments and track non-payers across state lines.

If support is not paid, states could threaten revocation of professional, occupational or drivers' licenses or deduct payment from paychecks. States may require absent parents to take jobs to pay support. Efforts would be made to t absent parents involved in their children's lives.

The Contract contains no specific provisions.

CHILD CARE: The Clinton plan would spend $2.7 billion on child care for participants in the training and education plan as well as those given community service jobs. Another $1.5 billion would go for child care for the working poor.

The Contract has no additional funding for child care.

IMMIGRANTS: The president would require sponsors to take more responsibility for immigrants. Immigrants could not get welfare until five years after arriving. If sponsors had incomes above $39,500, they would be responsible for supporting the immigrants until they became citizens.

The Contract eliminates welfare benefits, except emergency medical care, for all legal immigrants except those over the age of 75. Illegal immigrants are not eligible now.

NUTRITION: The GOP Contract combines nutrition programs, including food stamps, into grants states could spend on the nutrition programs of their choice.

The president has no specific proposal.

SPENDING CAPS: The Contract strives to cap spending by ending the entitlement status of the main welfare program, Aid to Families with Dependent Children. That means the programs would be limited to specific spending levels and, in hard economic times, some eligible applicants could be turned away or basic benefits could be reduced. Currently, anyone who meets eligibility requirements is assured of benefits.

The president's plan has no specific proposal.

THE WASH TIMES 12/29/94

Letters

Times takes a cheap shot at au pair families

Your Dec. 21 editorial "The nanny state — literally" is an insult to working mothers everywhere.

Women — and men — want the best child care possible. The au pair program, in addition to its cultural benefits, enables parents to get to know their care provider much more so than if their children were put in day care centers. And the children get to stay in their own home, whether it be all day or after school.

Your comment about "cheap foreign labor" shows your ignorance. Au pair families frequently pay out-of-pocket costs up to $15,000 a year to provide the au pair with a cultural experience of a lifetime in return for child care.

Your crack about women "desperate to get away from our children . . . and to get to the office" is an affront to working mothers. We host au pairs because we want what is best for our children in a country that offers few alternatives for quality child care. To suggest that I want to get away from my children offends me greatly. I demand an apology.

KARLA GRIENDLING
Fairfax

■

Your Dec. 21 editorial "The nanny state — literally" misses the mark.

My wife retired from her well-paid job (after 16 years) several years ago to focus on raising our children, who now number three (ages 3½, 20 months and 3 months). As anyone with children can tell you, raising children is more than a full-time job and requires an extra set of hands around the house.

We are currently hosting a wonderful teen-ager from Iceland through the au pair program who has become part of our family and is truly wonderful with children. I cannot speak for others in the program, but we have not "handed our infants over entirely to the tender mercies of strangers." She is here to assist us with the administrative chores (diapering, bathing, transporting, etc.) not to substitute for us in taking care of our responsibilities as parents.

Your claim that the au pair program provides "cheap foreign labor" only takes into account the weekly salary of $100. You carelessly leave out the $4,000 up-front fee to the au pair agency, telephone allowance for international calls back home, insurance-premium increases (both car and home), higher monthly electric bills, two-week paid vacation, higher weekly food bills, gas money, wear and tear on our auto, which we let her take so she can visit her au pair friends, and a $300-a-year tuition stipend. Cheap? I don't think so.

Frankly, the new regulations are causing us to think twice about continuing the program. I believe the government should stay out of this program and let competitive private enterprise do what it does best — find us the best au pair match at an affordable price and service the heck out of us.

JONATHAN R. PRICE
Phoenix, Md.

CARE

Lacking Child Care, Parents Take Their Children to Work

N.Y. Times 12-23-94

By LOUIS UCHITELLE

When he has to work late, David Cimpl, the chief financial officer of a Kansas City manufacturing company, picks up his 8-year-old daughter, Lauren, at her after-school program and takes her to the office for an hour or two.

There, while Mr. Cimpl works, his daughter colors, draws pictures, reads, watches TV and, sometimes, gets a little bored. "I like to put my hand on the copying machine and it makes a copy of my hand," she said, explaining a new way to kill time. "Then I ask my Dad to frame it."

Many thousands of parents, caught like the Cimpls between long workdays and a shortage of child care, often find themselves filling the gaps by taking their children to work. The phenomenon, while not captured in government and private surveys, is evident in interviews with child care experts, parents, executives and union officials. And it is happening at all income levels.

"I do hundreds of focus groups with parents across the country, and I think that bringing children to the workplace is going on to a much greater degree than we recognize," said Dana Friedman, co-president of the Families and Work Institute, a research group.

Interviews at a dozen companies and offices across the country, selected at random, turn up the practice at most of them.

When a baby sitter or nanny gets sick, or her husband is busy, Dr. Shea Cromley takes her 13-month-old son, Andrew, to her office. She practices pediatrics in Philadelphia with six other women doctors. They and their staff have 20 children among them, but they try not to have the children underfoot too often. "The problem is you get too distracted," said Dr. Cromley, who is 36.

After school, Jamel Allen, 12, walks over to St. Vincent's Hospital in Manhattan. From a house phone near the elevators, he calls his mother, Dianne, a secretary upstairs, and tells her he is safely in the lobby. There he waits until she finishes work. Sometimes he reads a comic book or he plays quietly with a friend who is also waiting for his mother, and sometimes he sleeps on a couch.

"I get bored just sitting there," Jamel said. But his mother prefers the arrangement. He is safer, she says, waiting for 90 minutes in the lobby than he would be alone at home, yet another latchkey kid.

At CMP Publications in Manhasset, L.I., which operates its own child care center, children sometimes migrate to a parent's offices after the center closes. In CMP's case, the parent is often working late to meet deadlines, while the other parent, if there is one, is not available to pick up the child. "Each crib in the center has wheels," said Ann Erbes, CMP's director of child care, "and can be wheeled into an office."

On business trips to New York, Molly Kittleson, 43, a tax consultant in Chicago, often takes along her only child, 2-year-old Julia. While Ms. Kittleson works at Time Warner Inc., her biggest client, Julia spends the day at the company's child care center, and evenings with her mother in a midtown hotel. "I don't like to be away from her for several days," said Ms. Kittleson, who is married, "and Julia likes the adventure."

Many companies don't like children at work but they look the other way.

Six or seven times a month, an employee of Computer Associates, a software company in Islandia, L.I., leaves a teen-age son at the company's fitness center. Then, Tony Zajac, the fitness director, whose main job is to help employees stay in shape, finds himself playing one-on-one basketball or racquetball with an employee's child. "We are not here for that," Mr. Zajac said. "They require a lot of attention; they are always asking if they can do this or that. But we keep them occupied and possibly teach them something."

As a small-business owner, Linda Pepping, 32, can mix children and work more easily than corporate employees can. Her business files divorce papers in Tucson, Ariz., for clients who do not hire lawyers in uncontested divorces. Last Friday, for example, her son, T. J., 6, made one of his frequent office appearances. "He did not want to go to after-school care — I don't know why," Ms. Pepping said. Her business began soon after T. J. was born. "I used to go to the courthouse every day with him in a stroller and divorce papers piled on the stroller," she said. "He learned to walk on those courthouse steps."

Many companies, including big corporations like AT&T, frown on children at work, but they also look the other way. "We would prefer [...] Burke Stinson, an AT&T spokesman. "But on any given day, there are children at the office somewhere in our system. AT&T is supposed to be a flexible company. You want people to feel that if they are in a jam, they can bring in their children, but you want managers who can tactfully limit the practice."

The presence of children in the workplace raises an important issue: does it hurt the children? Parents, particularly divorced or single mothers, argue that the alternatives are potentially more damaging. Leaving children unsupervised after school can be dangerous. And some say the children gain from watching their parents at work.

But that runs up against another worry. "The parents are focused on work, not their children," Ms. Friedman of the Families and Work Institute said. "The workplace is not a child's environment. They should be outside or with other children. The workplace is not a stimulating environment for them.'

Mr. Cimpl, 38, the Kansas City executive, whose wife, Laura Foley, is a nurse on a cardiac team who often works evenings, agrees. Lauren comes to the office about once a month now, less frequently than when she was younger. "If it is done too often and she has to sit there while I concentrate on my work, the message is that my work is more important to me than my daughter," said Mr. Cimpl, who works at Automatic System Inc.

The pressures that lead parents to bring children to the workplace are great. More than 60 percent of women with children work. Yet of the 22 million preschool children under 6, only 10 million are in day care centers, including the unregulated ones run out of someone's home, according to the Families and Work Institute. The rest are cared for by a relative, a baby sitter, a neighbor, an older sibling — all arrangements that can fail unexpectedly, forcing a parent either to stay home or take the child to work.

Recognizing this pressure, 50 or more emergency child care centers have been opened, mostly in big cities, in the last three years, Ms. Friedman said. Some are financed by consortiums of companies; others serve a single corporation. All function roughly as does Chase Manhattan Bank's emergency care center, in Brooklyn, at Chase's largest computer operation.

An employee whose regular child care has failed can use the center for a preschool child up to 20 days a year, at no charge. Chase pays $700,000 a year for the center, which handles 45 to 50 children a day on average. But the money is more than recovered in greater productivity, said Susan LaMonica, vice president of human resources. "People are not "or making 20 calls a day sure their kids are O.K. in the hands of whomever they left them with at the last minute."

School-age children up to 13 — nearly 30 million of them — are the most serious problem. Twelve percent, or 3.5 million, lack any after-school supervision, according to the most recent study, a 1990 survey financed by the Department of Health and Human Services.

Jamel Allen is typical. His mother, who is 46 and divorced, transferred the boy to P.S. 41 from a school in their Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood when Jamel was in the fifth grade. That solved the after-school problem by moving him next door to the hospital where she works.

For a while, the boy, now in the seventh grade, attended an after-school program at P.S. 41. But the program closed, and he is once again waiting for his mother in the lobby of the hospital, which permits this as long as the children are not rowdy. Ms. Allen would prefer another day care center, but the lobby is the next best solution.

"We spend quite a few quality hours together," Ms. Allen added, referring to the 45-minute subway ride from their home to St. Vincent's on West 12th Street near Seventh Avenue, and her son's present school, I.S. 70, five blocks away. "The only time we are not together is when he is in school. That puts my heart at ease."

Across America, in fact, the phenomenon of having a child at the workplace is most common among parents who cannot afford private child care and lack access to public centers. The children of low-wage factory workers, for example, congregate by the thousands after school in the lobbies and on the steps of numerous factories while are working the day shift, union officials and factory owners say. Sometimes they go to the parking lots and wait in their parents' cars.

Parents are often unwilling to let their children wait alone at home. They are fearful there might be an accident. In the worst case, they worry about being charged with negligence, said Bruce Raynor, southern director for the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers.

That is a concern at Northeast Knitting Inc., in Providence, R.I., where 100 women make elastic bands for dresses and shorts. "We don't let the children into the factory itself because of the danger from machinery," said Louis E. Lavoie, Northeast's president. "But I put vending machines near the entrance. School is supposed to get out at 2 P.M. For some reason the kids start to arrive earlier. And if their mothers work overtime, they wait."

The Washington Times 12/22/94

Don't turn back the clock on child care

By Ulysses Currie
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

If you ask me

November's tidal wave of citizen rejection of so-called "big government" and the "welfare state" has created a Republican-dominated Congress and increased Republican-controlled state legislatures from eight to 17.

In the Maryland General Assembly, the tidal wave increased House Republican membership from 25 to 41 and Senate Republican members from nine to 15.

Part of the conservative agenda, as stated by Newt Gingrich, the incoming speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, would turn back the clock more than 100 years on child-care policy. The plan calls for bringing back orphanages and other types of state-supervised residences to take care of illegitimate children. The mothers of these children would be cut from the welfare rolls, and the unspent welfare dollars would go, instead, to the states for the creation of orphanages.

In his misguided zeal, Mr. Gingrich compares these institutions to Father Flanagan's Boys' Town, where unruly boys were turned into worthwhile citizens. The penny-wise and pound-foolish Mr. Gingrich fails to acknowledge that the loving and nurturing orphanages he envisions would cost more than $100 per child, per day, as compared with a cost of $100 per child, per month under Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC).

Certainly, Mr. Gingrich has been around long enough to know that institutionalization is neither nurturing, nor effective, nor cheap.

According to the director of residential care services of the Child Welfare League of America, about 400,000 children are in foster homes today and 100,000 live temporarily in residential care facilities. Nearly all have learning or behavioral problems.

A return to orphanages would be a return to the deplorable child-care policy of the 1850s, which the AFDC program was established to remedy. It should be noted that foster-home care grew out of the need to provide an alternative to the horrible conditions existing in many orphanages.

The seeds of AFDC were sown when President Theodore Roosevelt prodded religious orphanages dating back to the 18th century into agreeing that children should be left in the care of their mothers at home . . . and that the mothers should be paid to provide such care. By 1920, Maryland and 40 other states had approved laws to create a "mothers' pension" to help women raise their children at home. The mothers' pension was the model for AFDC, enacted in 1935. It was perceived then, and is perceived now, as the more humane and less costly route to take. To date, family preservation remains the central principle of the child-care profession.

Certainly, I do not dispute the desperate need for welfare reform. As it is today, the welfare system offers no real monetary incentive to get off and stay off the rolls. It actually offers monetary incentives and an independent lifestyle to pregnant teens and teen-age mothers. And probably most damaging of all, it practically prohibits the two-parent family from existing.

The 1994 General Assembly approved a welfare reform pilot program that limited the duration of welfare benefits, offered recipients monetary incentives to get off and stay off the rolls and to marry and take responsibility for their lives. It also required pregnant teens to live at home, thus eliminating teen-age motherhood as a ticket to welfare-financed independent living. Unfortunately, Gov. William Donald Schaefer vetoed the measure.

A 1992 state welfare reform measure penalizes AFDC recipients who fail to have their children attend school 80 percent of the time or fail to get preventive health care for their children, including immunization. In 1993 about 10 percent of the state's welfare families lost part of their grants for failure to comply with school attendance and medical checkups. After being penalized, only 2 percent of the families were still losing their grants. The number of children receiving medical checkups rose 42 percent.

Mr. Schaefer has set the direction of child care in Maryland with the creation of the Department of Children, Youth and Family. The function of this agency is to bring home and place in their family and community Maryland children who are in out-of-state institutions and, where feasible, placing children who are in foster care back with their families.

To thrust children who could be cared for at home by their mothers into institutions is just plain cruel. To call such a cruel policy welfare reform is ludicrous.

I believe that it is a responsibility of government to improve the lives of its citizens. The new congressional majority believes the function of government should be limited to those things that only government can do, such as setting interest and tax rates, formulating foreign policy and regulating commerce and the economy.

The criterion by which the degree of civilization is measured is the manner in which a government treats its weakest members; the very young and the elderly. As I see it, the government that concerns itself with improving the lives of its most vulnerable citizens is the government that achieves the highest degree of civilization.

To turn back the clock to th[at] heartless era of the poor house and the orphanage would resu[lt] in a monumental tragedy for disadvantaged children.

■ *The author is a member of the Maryland House of Delegates from the 25th District in Prince George's County.*

Tom Knott

Tom Knott is on vacation. His column will resume on his return.

MISSOURI'S CHILDREN DESERVE BETTER

Assistant Editorial Page Editor

Missouri legislators didn't the job on child when they passed a new landmark law in 1993, and now it looks like state regulators won't, either.

The Missouri law requires for the first time that Missouri's churches with child care centers have to meet minimum health and sanitation standards and fire codes, as do state-licensed centers.

Left out of the law, however, was an important safety requirement: explicit authority for the Department of Health to require at least minimum adult staff to oversee the children in these centers.

This is an essential component of any child care regulation law. It simply has to be there. But children's advocates fear that the state Health Department will decline to defy the General Assembly — really, the Senate — and go ahead and put those requirements in the new day care regulations it is scheduled to publish next month.

If the department doesn't, then children's advocates should mount an effort to get them there — or to go back to the legislature in January to force this issue with a new legislature.

Children's safety is at stake.

The law as currently interpreted would allow a day care center in a church to have as few as two adults caring for 100 children — a situation found several years ago in a St. Louis church center — without state regulators being able to say anything about it.

Nor does the law allow state regulators to require church centers to hire people who know what they are doing in taking care of children. And there is no prohibition against corporal punishment, by whatever means, of these children.

Advocates for children consider all these regulatory loopholes to be big concerns. But particularly, the lack of a minimum staffing requirement is frightening. Children can get hurt if they aren't watched and supervised. Babies and toddlers are put at risk if the caregiver has too many of them to attend to. They also are neglected.

But worst of all is the possibility that a fire or other disaster could occur and there would not be enough adults to safely evacuate the children.

Ruth Ehresman, director for programs for Citizens for Missouri's Children in St. Louis, said the staffing requirements "absolutely have to be part of any kind of meaningful health and safety regulations."

The reason they aren't is the Missouri Senate. There, senators led by Sen. Emory Melton of Cassville, insisted that they not be.

Senators listened to conservative ministers and church leaders who claimed the state would be meddling in their ministry if they were. They specifically complained about staffing requirements, which may strike some people as odd. However, consider that a major cost of child care is employee salaries and benefits, so the fewer employees a center can hire, the cheaper it gets by.

Cheapness in the case of child care unfortunately does not equate to quality, or to safety.

When Colleen Kivlahan, director of the Department of Health, decided to forge ahead and require adequate staffing to fulfill the law's mission of providing safe day care centers, she was thwarted by Attorney General Jay Nixon, a former colleague of the senators who wrote the law.

Nixon told his client, the Department of Health, that it

Cont'd on next page

To protect them, child care laws must be stronger

ELEANOR MILLAMS News Art Sy

from previous page

Wisconsin and Massachusetts want to scrap the present system altogether.

Massachusetts Gov. William Weld is seeking a federal waiver to halt most cash welfare grants for adults after three months (teenage mothers would be exempt). After that, the state would provide services such as day care and health care while the adult looked for work or performed community service.

Wisconsin has gone further: State law requires elimination of welfare programs by 1998. The legislature must propose a replacement by Jan. 1.

Norquist, the Milwaukee mayor, demands even quicker action.

He wants out of all welfare rules so Milwaukee can use federal funds to create public-service jobs and immediately end welfare payments. A trial jobs program is being funded by the city and local businesses.

"It's really not worth saving," Norquist said of the welfare system. "From the standpoint of the poor, protecting the status quo might be the cruelest strategy of all."

Few want to protect the status quo anymore, not the President, not Congress and, especially, not the states.

"I believe that before the end of this decade, you'll see a state really get a handle on this system and change it," said Minnich, of Oregon's Adult and Family Services. "When that happens, folks are going to look and say: 'It couldn't have been that simple.'"

from previous page

clearly was prohibited from requiring the centers to have adequate staff.

Other lawyers disagree with that interpretation. Ehresman said that Citizens for Missouri's Children has provided the state with legal opinions from three non-state lawyers which dispute Nixon's advice.

However, Kivlahan faced the dilemma of forcing a showdown with church centers where she did not even have her own attorney behind her, or letting the other, also important rules for the unlicensed centers go into effect without the staff-child ratios.

Kivlahan's personal, internal struggle over this, as well as the department's, has been interpreted by some child welfare advocates as contributing to the tardiness of the department in promulgating new rules and regulations to implement the 1993 law.

But Cynthia Buser, chief of the child care licensing program at the Department of Health, said it simply has taken time to develop the new forms, to hire staff to work with the centers to get them into compliance, and to put on conferences giving day care providers information and training.

She said the department will begin in December courtesy inspections of day care centers to help them meet the new regulations. The department's attitude has been one of helping centers to comply, not forcing them.

The regulations also are scheduled to be published Dec. 1, with a period allowed for public comment.

If they contain no requirement of child-staff ratios for unlicensed church centers, children's advocates say they will attempt to mount a campaign to get them put in.

That is potentially the most successful approach to take — dealing with the department, not the legislature. The attorney general ought to be lobbied to be on board, providing outside legal counsel if necessary to help the Department of Health support its position if it is challenged.

Another way to get this law improved is to build parental support making through legislation. Parents soon are going to become better informed of the need for these changes. Under the proposed new rules, church centers will have to notify parents that they are exempt from state licensure requirements and therefore not inspected or supervised for staff numbers.

They will have to show parents what staff levels are in effect at the center they attend. Parents will be able to compare those to the state requirements for licensed centers — one teacher per four children under 2 years of age; one per eight children 2 years of age; one for every 10 3- and 4-year-olds, and one for each 16 children aged 5 years old and up.

This important exercise should also give the Department of Health information as to how close the unlicensed facilities in the state are to meeting the same staff-child ratios required of licensed centers. Right now, the state has no way of knowing.

It may find that many of them are very close to the state-set requirements. It wouldn't be difficult or costly for these centers to meet the state requirements, thus negating one of the arguments against such regulation.

Or the department may find that the worst nightmares are true — many children are out there at risk because virtually no one is watching them.

If anyone needs an example of just how bad that could be, consider the fire earlier this year at a Joplin day care center. The tragedy could have been tremendous, but no child was hurt. Staff members said they got all 67 children out safely because state licensing rules required them to have enough adults at the center to move the children out quickly, and because they were trained in what to do in case of an emergency.

Under the law written by the Missouri Senate, and backed up by a former senator who is now attorney general, any religious center can have one adult on hand at the time of a fire like that.

Isn't it time to end this charade, Missouri?

Day care crunch

The Atlanta Journal
The Atlanta Constitution

2/6/95

No longer just a city problem: The need for child care is twice as high as the available spaces in many growing, outlying counties that were once rural.

By Dennis McCafferty
STAFF WRITER

The Primrose School of Cumming is the right day care center for Alison Compton's 3-year-old, Matthew. The cedar-mulched playground is soft and safe. Paper penguins and snowflakes dot the walls where Matthew learns about letters and numbers through songs and games.

Compton, 35, said she would not have gone back to work unless she'd found a decent place for her son.

"This is more like preschool instead of day care," Compton said as she picked up Matthew one recent afternoon.

'There are so few places'

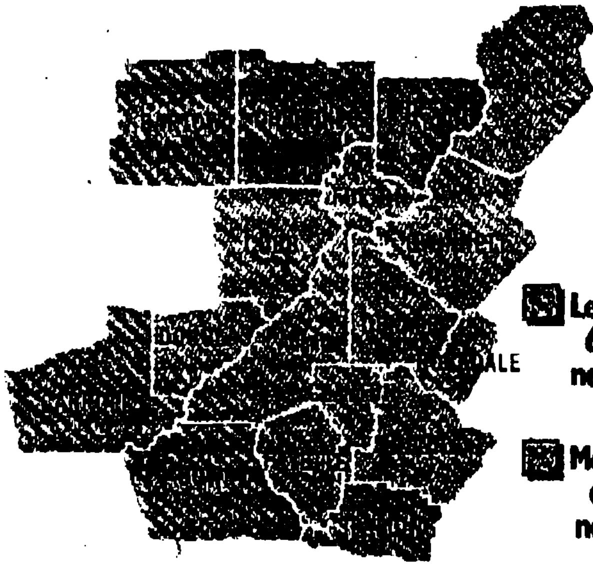
For Compton, who works at an insurance company near Perimeter Mall, it's also a relief that Primrose stays open until [illegible]30 p.m. to accommodate parents with long commutes. Like many parents in growing, outlying counties, Compton spent months on a waiting list to get Matthew in day care, and at first, there was only a part-time slot available.

"It's one of the most difficult decisions to make after you decide to have a child," said Brenda Laye, 32, a sales executive from Forsyth County, about finding day care for her 14-month-old daughter, Natalee. "There are so few places in this area."

The day care crunch has hit metro Atlanta's exurbs, once rural areas now emerging as bedroom communities. About 70 percent of the households in counties such as Cherokee and Forsyth have two or more wage earners in the family. But in those counties, the need for day care is twice as high as the available spaces. In Coweta County, only 40 percent of the day care need is being met.

Demand exceeds spaces

A survey of more than 5,000 Georgia day care businesses shows the shortage of day care is severe in many exurban counties, while day care needs appear to be better served in metro Atlanta.



[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Bartow	1,546	3,031	51%
Carroll	1,901	3,673	52%
Cherokee	2,715	5,132	53%
Coweta	1,213	3,021	40%
Douglas	2,945	3,861	76%
Fayette	2,747	3,387	81%
Forsyth	1,155	2,107	55%
Hall	[illegible]	4,628	73%
Henry	3,057	3,131	98%
Rockdale	[illegible]	[illegible]	72%
Spalding	1,197	2,876	42%
Metro Atlanta			
Clayton	8,357	9,812	85%
Cobb	20,578	21,732	95%
DeKalb	29,613	25,007	118%*
Fulton	28,086	30,651	92%
Gwinnett	18,732	19,359	97%

*DeKalb is the only county included that has a surplus of day care spaces.
Source: Georgia Association of Child Care Resources and Referral Agencies

GREY BLACKWELL / Staff

fig 1-2

ıre centers stretch to several :onths; re ıbling th in ɾore developed counties. And in ıme cases parents begin their ɪarch for day care months be- re a child is even born.

"Typically, the demand for ... far exceeds the supply," ... Sarah Nordmann, technical oordinator for the Association f Child Care Resource and Re- ɜrral Agencies in Washington. Growing communities tend to xperience that in a much more ı ıate way because they're xperiencing such growth ɔurts."

In many exurban counties, ıe demand far exceeds the ɾailable spaces, according to a ırvey conducted by the Georgia ciation of Child Care Re- ɔurce and Referral Agencies, a ... ivate, nonprofit group set up r parents needing day care.

Parents in those underserved :unties scramble for care rough neighbors or family. The :k of stability creates stress, id Jim Purcell, project manag- for the association.

"If you're trying to work, you n't have time to be making ıld care arrangements," he .

...'re the first to know'

Sometimes, parents are rced to have their young chil- en accompany them on a long mmute into metro Atlanta for y care, Purcell said. An hour longer in crawling traffic with ɾoung child can be an unnerv- ; experience for both.

The kind of day care center ıerging in the exurbs is shaped the professional parents' ex- ctations and needs. They want: ɔlace that's homey, secure and le to jump-start their children the road to academic success, en if kindergarten is years ead. And because they spend ɔre time commuting, the par- ts need day care centers that ıy open later than those in met- areas.

... stork will be dropping off a bun- dle. Sometimes before.

"We're the first to know, as soon as they're pregnant," said Elaine Draeger, executive direc- tor of Sheltering Arms Child De- velopment and Family Support.

Long waiting lists the norm

With 11 day care centers in exurban counties such as Rock- dale and Douglas, as well as in Fulton, DeKalb and Gwinnett, Sheltering Arms' waiting list in its outlying locations is a year or more — equal to the waiting list for centers inside the Perimeter.

And parents call all the time from Paulding and Fayette coun- ties asking for help that Shelter- ing Arms, as a nonprofit, can't deliver. "We can't continue to build buildings and expand as the need requires," Draeger said.

In Forsyth County, parents are willing to wait up to four months to enroll a child in Prim- rose, which charges $90 to $125 a week.

Centers such as Kiddie Castle in Carrollton have stopped keep- ing waiting lists because the lack of client turnover provides little hope.

"I was wondering if a center has gone out of business here, be- cause we turn away so many par- ents," said Marie Hollis, the owner.

After-school programs started

Some school systems have helped by starting after-school care programs. But even in towns where this has happened, such as Cartersville, resources continue to be strapped because of the overwhelming demand for infant and toddler care.

With 60 children enrolled, the Cartersville Child Care Center grew too large for its former home at Cartersville Church of God, so it moved a year ago. En- rollment has doubled to 120.

"Atlanta is moving this way," said Carol Trowbridge, director. "We expected this, but I'm sur- prised it's been this fast."

Another church-based center in Cartersville, the Tabernacle Learning Center, isn't so fortu- nate. Parents already are signing up for 1996 at the center, which is practically full with almost 170 children.

... rector. "We're in a church and no way of expanding."

G
The Atlanta Journal
The Atlanta Constitution
★★★★

The competition for space means parents are calling centers as soon as they know the stork will be dropping off a bundle. Sometimes before.

Two working parents

When both parents work, day care is a high priority, and the numb... of families with at least two wage earners in exurban counties is approaching or exceeding those in metro Atlanta.

COUNTY	% OF TWO-WAGE FAMILIES
Bartow	63.9%
Carroll	61.1%
Cherokee	70.4%
Coweta	61.5%
Douglas	69.2%
Fayette	68.2%
Forsyth	68.2%
Hall	65.5%
Henry	68.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

COUNTY	% OF TWO-WAGE FAMILIES
Rockdale	68.6%
[illegible]	68.8%
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
Clayton	66.4%
[illegible]	71.0%
DeKalb	67.6%
[illegible]	67.2%
Gwinnett	74.0%

GREY BLACKWELL / Staff

Pg 282

Poor are often stymied by day-care obstacles

Getting a job to stay off welfare may cost state aid, book says

By CARY B. WILLIS
Staff Writer

Deborah Payne works nights at the Denny's restaurant at Crittenden Drive and Eastern Parkway. With tips, she brings home about $200 a week.

She gets another $522 a month in Social Security benefits — the result of her husband's murder four years ago. Total monthly income: about $1,322.

Payne, 41, pays $220 a month for her apartment and $400 a month for food for her and the three children who still live at home. Utilities and miscellaneous expenses run another $100 a month. Her 5-year-old son is in kindergarten, but she has to fork over $560 a month for child care for her 16-month-old son and three-month-old daughter. Total bills: about $1,280.

Payne, who lives in the Americana Apartments in southern Louisville, refuses to go on welfare. She doesn't want "any more bureaucracy" — like the court battle over child support she's having with the father of her two youngest children. But staying off welfare may be costing her help from the state with child care.

"I work for almost nothing," she said in an interview last week. "It gets disheartening whenever I call these day-care places. Sometimes I do want to quit, but I don't know what I'd do with myself if I didn't work."

Eugene Johnson, a supervisor in the Jefferson County office of the state day-care program, said people with stories like Payne's "call every day, to the point of almost crying, saying, 'I don't want to go on welfare.' But if we don't have the funds, we just don't have them."

Johnson said his office stopped taking names for its primary waiting list two years ago. The head of a privately run organization, Community Coordinated Child Care, or 4-C, said it also has a two-year waiting list.

Johnson said the only names his office can still accept are those of people whose rising salaries are about to cut off their Aid to Families with Dependent Children — the primary form of welfare.

The backlog of working people awaiting child-care subsidies is one of many topics addressed in the fourth annual "Kentucky Kids Count" data book to be released today by Kentucky Youth Advocates and the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The book relies in large part on 1990 census data, but specific numbers relating to children were produced just a few months ago through an analysis by the University of Louisville's Center for Urban and Economic Research, according to Debra Miller, deputy director of Kentucky Youth Advocates.

According to the book, 34 percent of Kentucky families with parents under the age of 30 were living in poverty in 1990 — about double the number of young families without children.

Within the younger families in poverty, 44.3 percent of single mothers were working, while 77.8 percent of married couples had at least one parent working.

But just going to work is not enough, the report says. Child care and health care "are often major stumbling blocks to becoming self-sufficient."

Miller said in an interview that America's growing impatience with the welfare system is understandable, but she said those demanding reform rarely articulate how people can keep their jobs and avoid welfare in the first place. Over the past 20 years, salaries have remained stagnant or even fallen, when adjusted for inflation, she said. And higher-paying manufacturing jobs are constantly being replaced by lower-paying service jobs.

"As long as we're paying people $6 an hour, it's real hard for a parent" to provide health care and day care, she said.

"We as a nation are probably not willing to pay $4 for a Big Mac so those folks can make more money. But are we willing to then pay the consequence for that, and to have a quarter of our children growing up in poverty? How can we at least provide supplements for those families, so they can still flip Big Macs so they can support their kids?"

Johnson said his state programs paid child-care providers $467,000 to take care of 2,959 poor Jefferson County [illegible]dren in October. Elizabeth Grever, [illegible] heads 4-C, said her agency uses money from the city, county and private donors to finance day care for 400 to 500 children a month. Meanwhile, thousands more wait.

"We need desperately to get more money for child care," Johnson said. But with the current national climate that seems to demand cuts in nearly all aid programs, "it's looking dimmer all the time."

Sonya Amshoff doesn't need any more bad news.

The single mother of a 10-month-old daughter, Amshoff also has resisted getting on welfare, choosing instead to take a job as a waitress at a hotel-restaurant off Hurstbourne Parkway. But her decision will cost her $80 a week — maybe half her paycheck — in child care.

"I think it's ridiculous that you cannot get help just because you have not received a welfare check. I thought I was doing better by going out and working," Amshoff, 22, of Jeffersontown, said last week.

Amshoff said she lives in her mother's home right now, but she has been told she will have to find her own place by the end of the month. The baby's father cannot be located to provide child support, her car doesn't run, she has no savings and her new job doesn't provide health insurance or other benefits.

"There are people that beat and cheat the system every day," she said. "But the people like me who do need help can't get it."

12-5-94

Democrat
12-3-94

Report: C[illegible]im[illegible]als [illegible]aring for children

CHILD CARE: *The federal government does not require states to perform background checks on child-care providers*

Of a random sample of 500 child-care workers, up to 12 percent had been convicted of crimes.

By Jennifer Dixon
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON

People with criminal records are finding jobs in some child-care centers, according to federal investigators. Some of the records include convictions for child abuse and assault.

For their study, investigators with the Department of Health and Human Services asked the FBI's National Crime Information Center to conduct background checks on a random sample of 500 child-care p[illegible]s in Nevada, Wisconsin, [illegible] and South Carolina.

[illegible]ing the workers' names and Social Security numbers, the center found that 39 had a total of 440 arrests, which resulted in 181 convictions for crimes that included endangering the life of a child, indecency with a child, lewdness, prostitution, theft, illegal possession of drugs or alcohol, assault and battery, robbery and arson.

In all, 61 people were identified as having arrests or convictions. Other crimes included shoplifting, writing bad checks and welfare fraud.

The HHS inspector general's office did not, however, obtain fingerprints from the individuals to verify that the person with the arrest record and the child-care provider were the same. As a result, the investigators said, their findings may be less reliable than when fingerprints are used.

Based on their analysis of the "raw" matches, the investigators said the 61 individuals had a total [illegible] 726 arrests.

[illegible]nvestigators said the con[illegible]te for those checked may [illegible] be higher because of the [illegible]fficulty states have in providing timely data on final court action to the FBI's crime information center.

The workers were employed in day-care centers, Head Start centers and foster-care homes, nearly all of which were licensed.

HHS officials blame the problem on the lack of a national policy requiring background checks on child-care providers.

Although the report is limited to four states, Inspector General June Gibbs Brown said in it that she believes the results are "indicative of what the states may find in terms of the types of crimes of which prospective child-care providers may have been convicted."

"The results of our background checks indicate that children in child-care facilities could be in the care of individuals who may have been convicted of crimes that could bear upon their fitness to care for children," Gibbs said in a memo to HHS Assistant Secretary Mary Jo Bane.

"We believe this was due to the absence of a nationwide policy requiring the screening of child-care providers to identify individuals likely to threaten the well-being of children," Gibbs said.

A 1993 law, the National Child Protection Act, permits states to require nationwide background checks of child-care providers, but does not require them to do so.

According to the federal Administration for Children and Families, 35 states have criminal background statutes. Some of those laws, however, apply only to certain kinds of day-care providers, such as day-care centers, but not those who take care of children in their homes.

The four states studied vary in their approach to background checks.

According to the inspector general's study, South Carolina requires state background checks for employees at licensed day-care and foster-care facilities.

Wisconsin does not require background checks for employees at day-care, foster-care or Head Start facilities, but does require employees in facilities licensed by the state to sign statements attesting to whether or not they have criminal records. The state tests the accuracy of these statements through background checks on a sample basis.

In Missouri, foster-care providers and employees and volunteers working in licensed day-care facilities are required to undergo a child abuse registry check. In Nevada, all day-care, Head Start and foster-care providers, their employees and any adults living in the facilities are required to undergo background checks, including a fingerprint check.

Crimes committed by child-care workers included endangering the life of a child, indecency with a child, lewdness, prostitution, theft, assault and battery, robbery and arson.

INVESTIGATORS WANT MANDATORY BACKGROUND CHECKS

Child abusers found on day care staffs

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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12-3-94

Day-care laws lacking

Study: Many staffers with criminal record

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LOS ANGELES TIMES 11/30/94

Welfare Reform Without Tears

How to save taxpayer money and help people get on their feet

Both Republicans and Democrats want welfare reform. Newt Gingrich, soon to be House majority leader, promises to hold hearings on the GOP's Personal Responsibility Act—part of the House Republicans' "Contract With America"—in the first 100 days of the coming session. President Clinton promises to make good on his campaign vow to change welfare through his proposed Family Support Act. Promises, promises. But surely common ground can be found in Washington. Here are three principles of sensible welfare reform:

1. PLACE A TIME LIMIT ON WELFARE: Work is part of the American ethic. Both bills would impose time limits and work requirements for Aid to Families With Dependent Children. However the proposals may differ, these common elements provide a good starting point.

WELFARE WATCH

■ One in an occasional series

Under the House Republican proposal, states could deny welfare to recipients who received benefits for two years if a parent had participated in a job program for one year. That restriction, though reasonable for literate welfare recipients in areas with booming economies and plenty of jobs, would punish recipients in states like California that have been crippled for years by a lingering recession. It would also punish illiterate welfare recipients who need help to get a job.

The Administration's plan would require parents to work *after* receiving aid for two years. This approach would benefit the mothers of infants and other preschool children. It would also allow more time for poor parents who lack basic skills to get the training they need. If California's workfare experience is any indication, this approach is more likely to pay off in the long run. But America's patience is running out.

2. EMPHASIZE, EMPHATICALLY, WORK: The GOP plan would require parents who applied for welfare to look for work immediately. States would be required to place 100,000 recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children in work programs next year, and the figure would increase to 900,000 in the year 2000. The emphasis on finding a job is appropriate, as the success of Riverside County's state workfare program has proven. But GAIN, California's increasingly successful welfare-to-work program, provides education and training as well as child care; the GOP bill provides neither.

Under the House Republican proposal, all welfare recipients would lose benefits after five years on AFDC regardless of their circumstances. They would lose everything even if they were willing to work, went to school, participated in job training and followed every rule. That sink-or-swim approach may motivate some families, but it would sink many.

3. TRY TO KEEP FAMILIES INTACT: Both Republicans and Democrats target teen-age childbearing, where long-term dependency typically begins. To discourage early childbearing, the Administration would require the youngest mothers to stay in school, get training and go to work. To reduce illegitimacy, Gingrich's bill would deny welfare benefits to mothers under the age of 18 and states would be allowed to raise the age to 21. Children, no matter how poor the family, would be permanently barred from welfare unless their biological parents married or their single mothers married men willing to adopt them. Mothers who did not establish paternity of their children would also lose benefits. And all *legal* immigrants would lose benefits even if they had worked legally and paid the taxes that support welfare. This is ridiculous.

If the House Republicans prevail, up to 5 million children and their parents will eventually be thrown off welfare. What would happen to those children? The House Republican contract calls for orphanages, group homes and adoptions. The well-publicized orphanage proposal is seen by many now as a red herring, since such care costs from $30,000 to $50,000 a year per child, nearly 10 times the cost of maintaining a welfare child. It's also hard to see how sending kids to orphanages is pro-family. Gingrich would encourage families who exhausted welfare benefits to turn to private charities. But most charities already are stretched beyond capacity.

Gridlock on this issue would not do anybody any good. Welfare reform that encourages parental responsibility without scarring poor children and that supports families without swelling taxes or deficits—these should be the goals of Republicans and Democrats alike.

A Tax Break That Few Employees Use

NY TIMES 11.10.94

By MARY ROWLAND

Though largely neglected, the flexible spending account lives.

An employee benefit sponsored by many companies since the early 1980's, the account allows an employee to set aside a portion of salary to pay for health-care or child-care costs with pretax dollars.

This year, companies have given the benefit short shrift, in large part because the health-care legislation proposed by President Clinton would have eliminated it. But when Congress and the President deadlocked on health care, the spending account got a reprieve.

Its survival is one undeniable bit of good news for employees, as companies all around ask workers to pay a bigger share of medical costs and sometimes to narrow their choice of doctors. Where available, the account is a proven way for the typical family to save hundreds or even thousands of dollars a year.

Jim Motherway says he saved nearly $1,000 this year by making use of the health-care spending account at Lehman Brothers, where he works as a sales assistant on the high-yield-bond trading desk. Mr. Motherway put $1,200 into the account to cover out-of-pocket medical expenses for his family of five. Although the money comes out of his salary, he does not have to pay taxes on it. Those bills would have taken at least a $2,200 bite of his salary otherwise, he said.

To calculate the savings, employees simply multiply their tax bracket by the amount of money spent. Someone who puts $3,000 in an account and pays 40 percent in taxes hence would save $1,200.

Employees who want to sign up for a [illegible]lth-care or child-care spending ac[illegible]t for [illegible] at co[illegible]a-nies [illegible] offer the benefits [illegible] notify [illegible] employers [illegible] ment period for 1995 benefit choices. Changes can usually be made until the first of December.

Participation has been disappointing, with workers often saying they do not understand how the accounts work. The legislative threat added to the confusion this year.

"Employers who do a lot of early communication to employees were sending out signals that the accounts might not be available next year," said Jane Lindenburg, a consultant in the Rowayton, Conn., office of Hewitt Associates.

Rosanna Z. Milley, a consultant at the Apex Management Group in Princeton, N.J., said few companies added flexible spending plans.

But spending accounts are already available at about 45 percent of large employers, according to a survey by Foster Higgins, benefits consultants in Princeton, N.J. Only 18 percent of employees at those companies use the health accounts and 7 percent use the dependent-care accounts.

Small companies are less likely to offer the accounts, but their employees are more likely to participate. Where the accounts are available, 32 percent of employees use them for health care and 13 percent for child care, Foster Higgins found. Smaller companies provide fewer benefits, encouraging workers to take advantage of them, said George Faulkner, a Foster Higgins consultant.

Expenses eligible for the health-care accounts are items not covered by insurance, including deductibles. For example, someone might use the money to pay for hearing and vision care, routine exams, vaccinations and birth control pills. The Internal Revenue Service does not put a limit on the accounts, but employers typically institute a $2,500 or $3,000 cap.

Mr. Motherway, 33, who [illegible] been [illegible]g the account for three years, [illegible] s to [illegible] his [illegible]tributi[illegible] to $2[illegible] for [illegible] because he [illegible] ex- this year by October. He expects to spend close to $500 on eyeglasses, contact lenses and checkups for himself and his wife, Eileen, 32. Another $500 will go to the deductible on his medical plan, which pays 80 percent of expenses after the deductible.

Of the remaining $1,000, half is allotted for the 20 percent that the Motherways must pay on doctor visits for Caitlin, 6, Meaghan, 4, and Brian, 1. "One or another of the kids is at the doctor twice a month with ear infections and other routine things," he said. "The bills really pile up." The final $500 will cover dental and miscellaneous expenses.

For dependent-care accounts, the maximum contribution is $5,000. Eligible expenses include baby sitters, day-care centers, day camp and after-school activities — as long as the expenses are incurred so a parent can work or look for work.

The care can be for a child under 13 or even a disabled parent or a spouse who lives with you and is a dependent for tax purposes. The worker simply must provide the Social Security number of the person who provides the care.

The downside is that any money left in the account at the end of the year will be forfeited. As January approaches, however, leftover money can be used to stock up on needs, contact lenses for example.

Employees who quit also lose out. "People who leave get reimbursed for claims only up until the date they left," explained Angela Watson, a consultant in Washington at the Wyatt Company, a benefits firm.

Similarly, companies must make the entire amount available to employees in January. So someone who runs up a big hospital bill in January could be reimbursed in full and leave in February after contributing only a few dollars. The employer is left to make up the shortfall, presumably with money forfeited from others.

Letters NYTimes 10.30.94

Should the Way Back From the Mommy Track Be Smoother?

"Back From the Mommy Track" (Oct.9), Deborah L. Jacobs's look at professional women whose careers were set back because they left work to care for their children, drew an unusually large response from readers. Following is a sample of those letters:

To the Editor:

I was saddened by your article largely because it hit so close to home. I have been a lawyer more than 10 years. When my first child was born, I determined to switch from the fast-paced full-time practice of litigation to a part-time practice. Through four years and another child, I have managed to continue practicing part-time, which many in the field of litigation contend is impossible.

The experiences reported in your article mirror my experiences. Employers do tend to perceive part-time lawyers as less capable neophytes who are not "serious" about their profession. As a consequence, my graduating with honors, judicial clerkship and years of full-time practice are given less credit than they deserve. In addition, according to your article, I must now accept that, should I ever want to return to full-time practice, I will be given little credit, if any, for the valuable experience I acquired while working part-time.

Any woman who works while also caring for a family knows how difficult it is. Now I know how Ginger Rodgers must have felt. Not only am I expected to dance as well as Fred Astaire, but I'll get no credit for doing so backwards as well as in high-heels.

HILLARY SLOANE GEBLER
Oak Park, Ill., Oct. 12

To the Editor:

"Back From the Mommy Track" depicts the struggle of working women, who were once — but are no longer — in the minority. Therefore, the corporate cultures they struggle in are on the verge of change.

Not only is roughly half of today's work force female, but since 1950, labor force participation among women with preschool-age children has more than quadrupled. Today, 52.6 percent of mothers with children who are younger than 1 year old are working; 75 percent of mothers return to work by the time their children are 2. Women are earning 54 percent of undergraduate degrees, nearly half of the law degrees and more than a third of the M.B.A.'s. Corporate and professional America must attract and retain the best and brightest of these women or lose the competitive edge.

As president of Catalyst, a nonprofit organization that works with business and the professions to bring change for women, I talk with C.E.O.'s who already know this. Those in the vanguard recognize that the traditional ways of managing the workplace today operate against half the work force. They are making institutional changes to address the family needs of employees.

We're witnessing the first stages of an overhaul of a workplace created for another era and another sex. Those who lag will find half the talent deserting for organizations in which women find the flexibility they need and where their ideas are heeded. Or they'll be competing with businesses started by women, today numbering 4.1 million.

SHEILA WELLINGTON
Manhattan, Oct. 14

To the Editor:

Moving to a mommy track or opting out of the labor force is expensive. It is no surprise to learn that employers give child-care experience a negative value. Women who chose to move off the fast track by completely leaving the labor force or chose a flex/part-time arrangement in order to raise their children should expect to lose from monetary and career perspectives.

Nancy Doniger

LINDA A. WOOLLEY
Bethesda, Md.

Staying at home is easily a million-dollar mistake. It is a lousy investment choice. For example, if you are earning $100,000 and expect annual pay raises of 5 percent during the next 10 years; pay 35 percent in taxes and $300 to $500 a week in child care expenses, you will forgo roughly $560,000 to $697,000 in net earnings. If you are on the fast track, the forgone earnings multiply.

When I left a career six months ago, I did so knowing that it is a long road back. A career is predicated on continuous employment and continuous skill development and refinement. Successful negotiating skills used with a 6-year-old are often similar to those used with certain C.E.O.'s but realistically, skills developed and refined from child care are not career skills.

It should come as no surprise that moving to the mommy track or opting out has negative financial and career ramifications. What was a pleasant surprise was that women are being rehired in the same or analogous fields. It all depends on one's re-entry expectations.

PAMELA DAVIS
Brooklyn, Oct. 13

To the Editor:

Am I missing something? Is the supposed plight of the mommies who took 5- to 10-year holidays from the work force that they were not compensated at the same rate as those professionals, male or female, who stayed in the work force?

Was the point of your article to suggest that these mommies should be paid the same as someone who has slogged into work everyday, kept long hours and sacrificed something in the way of family life?

Like it or not, the notion of "what have you done for me lately?" is alive and well in the workplace. Professionals rarely are hired on the speculative basis of what they might be capable of accomplishing; they are hired based on what they have achieved. Compensation is usually commensurate with experience, and a 5-to-10-year gap, regardless of how much organizational and financial skills are used in homemaking, is just that — a gap.

The mere suggestion that professional women who took time off to raise children should just jump back into the work force at the level and salary they would have had if they had stayed, belittles the hard work of those of us who did stay. In some cases we didn't stay because we were enamored of our positions or our professional life styles, but because we did not have husbands to fall back on as financial ur

Too many kids, too few centers

By Charles S. Clark
CONGRESSIONAL QUARTERLY

When her baby's leg was mysteriously broken at the home of a neighborhood day care provider, Barbara Daniels decided to quit her job.

The suburban Maryland graphic artist now spends her time mothering and doing free-lance work from her Laurel home. She and her husband are suing the former caregiver, whose small, "family day care" operation represents one of the fastest growing child care arrangements.

By contrast, day care has worked well for Martha Franks of Santa Fe, N.M. After her son, Leonard, was born, Martha took six weeks' maternity leave, then went back to work as a lawyer in the State Engineer Office. What made it work was finding a good day care center two blocks from her office.

"I'm pleased, largely because it's so close," she says. "And by going every couple of hours to nurse him, I've gotten to know the staff."

Whether through luck, money, research or smart shopping, success in finding good child care these days is the Holy Grail of any parent who rushes to work every day with that sinking feeling in the pit of the stomach.

In 1970, only 28.7 percent of mothers with children under age 6 were in the work force, according to the Labor Department. By 1990, that percentage had more than doubled to 58.2 percent, with the rise predicted to continue.

The pace of modern life — frazzled parents pressuring their kids to wolf down breakfast so everyone can leave for jobs or day care — has undeniably accelerated. The result, says child care expert Alison Clarke-Stewart, a professor of psychology at the University of California at Irvine, is a life in which "day care is as necessary for most families as a car or a refrigerator, but infinitely harder to find and more expensive."

Though the supply of day care has increased by 80 percent since 1970, the nation's crazy quilt of commercial and nonprofit child care centers and home-based neighborhood providers forces the average parent to spend five weeks searching for a slot, according to a 1990 federal government study.

Because of the "yuppie supply effect," as Harvard University researchers [illegible]ntly [illegible] it, afflu[illegible] count[illegible] have access to 50 percent more of the nation's 80,000 preschools than do low-income neighborhoods.

Once found, child care consumes the largest portion of family budgets after food, housing and taxes. And yet it is often of uneven quality, with as much as 70 percent of situations considered below desirable standards, according to child care expert Edward Zigler, a professor of psychology at Yale University.

"It's worst for the middle class," says psychology professor Deborah Phillips of the University of Virginia. "The working class can get good, subsidized care, and the children of the wealthy get high quality. But it's the people in the middle who use the for-profit chains, which tend to be lower in quality."

The effects of day care on children have long been debated. But people on all sides of the issue agree that the fruits of recent decades of change in child care are worrisome.

In a 1990 poll of "twentysomethings," the 18-to-29-year-olds of the day care generation, the Yankelovich organization found that 64 percent planned to spend more time with their own children than their parents had spent with them. And a 1992 poll by the Center for the Study of Social Policy at George Washington University showed that Americans by a 2-1 margin believe children today are worse off than the previous generation.

To many women's groups and child development specialists, the solution is to vastly improve government and employer contributions to helping average Americans find good child care. Child care-related absenteeism costs businesses $3 billion a year, notes Richard Stolley, senior editorial adviser to Time Warner and president of the New York City Child Care Action Campaign.

"Child care can no longer be viewed as a women's issue," he said in a speech in April.

Increasingly, advocates view child care as not merely babysitting, but as a key step in early education.

"A child today needs more experiences than I needed 30 years ago," says Maripat Blankenheim, public relations director for 9to5, the National Association for Working Women.

"You can't go from mother and grandmother right to kindergarten because now you must hit the ground running. Kids are growing up faster at all levels. Who'd have thought 15 years ago that a kindergartener would be on the computer?"

ment of institutional child care.

"Ultimately, a child and a [illegible]d caretaker don't really share very much," American Enterprise Institute researcher Karl Zinsmeister has written. "Their relationship is commercial, temporary, practical. ... A child and a parent are bound eternally, by blood and destiny."

A nationwide poll released in September by the conservative Family Research Council showed 87 percent agreeing that "young children fare better when they are primarily cared for by their own mother rather than by a day care provider."

But other polls show the public more divided. When an August 1992 Yankelovich poll asked about enrolling very young children in day care or nursery schools to give the mother more leisure time, 51 percent said that was not acceptable, while 45 percent said it was.

With women firmly ensconced in the work force, and with 17.5 million American children, or one in five, living with only one parent, many observers say it is pointless to suggest that the country return to the days when Dad was the family breadwinner and Mom stayed home.

Instead, the search for proper child care is proceeding toward options ranging from parents working from home to a new government-industry-school partnership to overhaul the current child care system.

• *Distributed by Scripps Howard News Service*

Child Care

Continued on next page

CHILD CARE

WHO'S MINDING THE KIDS?

More than half of all preschool children with working mothers in 1991 were cared for by relatives or family members, principally fathers and grandparents. The count included mothers who either brought their preschoolers to work or watched them while working at home.

Non-relatives in a home	23 percent
Fathers	20 percent
Grandparents	16 percent
Child care center	16 percent
Mothers at work	9 percent
Preschool	8 percent
Other relatives	8 percent

Source: Population Reference Bureau Inc., September 1993; Congressional Quarterly

The Washington Times

WHO GOES TO PRESCHOOL

Children of middle- and upper-income families are much more likely to attend formal preschool programs than poor children.

Family income	**Percent of 3- to 5-year-olds in preschool**
$10,000 or less	42 percent
$10,001 to $20,000	40 percent
$20,001 to $30,000	41 percent
$30,001 to $40,000	48 percent
$40,001 to $50,000	55 percent
$50,001 to $75,000	60 percent
More than $75,000	75 percent

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, "The National Education Goals Report: Building a Nation of Learners," 1992

The Washington Times

The Washington Times
SPECIAL REPORT

The challenges of finding good child care

Latchkey children grow up isolated

CONGRESSIONAL QUARTERLY

The child attending school with a key around his neck is to some a symbol of neglect. But to many working parents, the key to an empty house is a badge of early maturity. And to others, it is the only choice available.

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates there are 2.5 million latchkey children nationwide, many in higher-income neighborhoods. But Thomas Long, a Bethesda psychologist and professor of education, says the actual number is closer to 5 million or 6 million, because many parents won't admit they leave children home alone.

Mr. Long has been studying the phenomenon since the late 1970s. His interviews with latchkey children in seventh to 10th grade showed that many of them experiment with alcohol, have friends over or leave the home in defiance of parents' instructions.

"Boys will go out, and girls tend to stay home and talk on the phone," he says. "But girls also have boys over, and gradually, if there is an attraction, they get into petting and sex. Many of the kids also get bored watching TV and will explore the house. They look in bureau drawers, where they might find Dad's Playboys, or a weapon. Some boys will find their parents' extra car keys and take the car out even if they don't have a license."

"A lot of parents misjudge the readiness of kids to handle self-care," says Margaret Plantz, who directed Project Home Safe, a short-lived latchkey information service of the American Home Economics Association in Alexandria.

"We're concerned about physical threats, a fire starting, the child cutting himself and not knowing what to do. But the numbers are relatively small. Our real concern is children being by themselves day after day, month after month. Kids learn a lot from being around other people, but in self-care they don't experience and learn from social interaction, and so they're under stress."

Such isolation, she adds, can alter school performance.

Project Home Safe, discontinued this fall after losing its corporate funding, offered pamphlets advising parents how to judge a child's readiness for latchkey arrangements: Can they tell time? Unlock windows and doors? Fix a sandwich? Take phone messages? Understand what "stranger" and "emergency" mean?

The Department of Health and Human Services in recent years has funded experiments in which neighborhood parents organize and designate individual families to monitor others' latchkey kids.

One of the most successful solutions to the latchkey predicament is the extended-day programs now offered to 1.7 million children in 49,500 schools. One of the nation's first was launched in Arlington in 1969, according to coordinator Patti Macie. The program uses county funding and some donated services, charging user fees based on parents' income. It's of particular appeal to single mothers desperate for after-school or before-school care.

Staffed by moonlighting cafeteria and recreation department workers, the program offers kids a snack, planned leisure activities and an enforced homework period if parents so request.

"It's individualized, and there's backup activities," says Ms. Macie. "Some boys, for example, might want to play poker instead of going to art class. Kids have such a programmed life in today's society, I like them to have time to see their friends or just sit in a beanbag chair and daydream. I'm a single mother, and there were no kids in our neighborhood, so the extended-day program became my daughter's neighborhood."

Mr. Long says extended days are good for younger kids, but not adolescents, and seldom are offered past the middle-school stage.

"By the time kids are past pubescence, the parents want to be home with them. But by then, the kids don't want them home; they want their independence."

• *Distributed by Scripps Howard.*

Extent of chi d-care shortage 'n Dallas area surprises advocates

The Dallas Morning News Monday, October 24, 1994

BARBARA KESSLER
CHILDREN'S ISSUES

When The Child Care Company of Dallas decided to survey the local supply of child care, it expected to find that the number of children needing care exceeded the available slots.

The company, part of The Child Care Group, a nonprofit referral and advocacy agency, knew from experience that many parents have a difficult time finding suitable care.

But even The Child Care Company was surprised to discover just how many kids they found, and how few slots.

Its study of Dallas, Tarrant, Denton, Collin and Ellis counties showed that the number of slots in licensed day care centers and family day care homes could accommodate only about 34 percent of the area's children under age 13 whose parents work.

"That seems to be a gap," said Roberta Bergman, executive vice president of The Child Care Company.

Some of the gap is covered by grandmothers, in-home nannies and parents who work split shifts, Ms. Bergman said.

(The analysis, which reviewed requests for child care for 30,000 children over the last four years, did not count children who have a parent staying at home with them.)

But the great disparity between slots and children suggests that there are many children whose care is patchwork, unregulated or nonexistent, she said.

Some 11-year-olds, in other words, are home alone after school. And some children are in day care settings of questionable quality.

The most severe shortage of care is for infants, the study found. Parents of children younger than age 1 may find themselves forced to accept inadequate care because it's all they can find or afford.

Such was the case for "Samantha," one of the 3,719 parents surveyed and one of four whose child care dilemmas are highlighted in the report, "A Question of Child Care."

Samantha told the interviewers that her baby became listless and withdrawn by the end of every day at her child care center.

"One day, Samantha visited the center unannounced and found chaos. She understood immediately that her baby was withdrawing from a dark, noisy room, crowded with more than 20 infants and toddlers in the care of two very young and obviously untrained women.

"Now Samantha is distraught. In her rural town there are no other child care programs available. Samantha knows her daughter will not thrive at the center, but she does not have the option of quitting work to care for her child," the report said.

Ms. Bergman said that there are many Samanthas, each with their unique problem. Some can't find care close to home. Others can't find adequate after-school arrangements. Others are pinched by the cost of care.

"There's this quiet, low-level hum of discontent out there," she said.

The survey results seem an outright groan.

■ 40 percent of parents reported concerns about the quality of their current child care program.

■ More than 50 percent had changed their care arrangements at least twice in the six months preceding the survey.

■ More than 25 percent said they'd considered quitting their jobs because of child care problems.

Fortunately, the child care crunch is not uniformly dire. Some areas, mainly in outlying suburban counties, actually have more day care slots than children to fill them, Ms. Bergman said.

Another finding showed that parents in the Dallas-Fort Worth area pay less on average for child care than parents in many other parts of the country.

Still, that may be the silver lining of a dark cloud. The lower costs may be a case of getting what you pay for, Ms. Bergman said.

The Child Care Company hopes its survey will bring more attention to the problems of working parents and their offspring. It is mailing copies to Texas legislators and others in a position to help.

"It's real easy to believe that the supply and quality of child care is adequate, because you don't see children wandering the streets while their parents are at work. They're somewhere," Ms. Bergman said.

"But we need to look deeper at where they are, and what their parents had to do to get them there."

Barbara Kessler is a general assignments reporter who covers children's issues for The Dallas Morning News.

St. Louis Post-Dispatch; 10-24-94

What Price Quality Child Care?

By Cheryl L. Fadley

Annie, who is 15 months old, is dropped off with her day-care provider Mary around 6:30 a.m. on most weekdays. She stays with Mary until 5:30 or 6 p.m. Annie's mom is an administrative assistant and her dad is a manager.

Mary has two children: Mark, a preschooler, and Melanie, a teen. Her husband works for a trucking firm. Mary has worked various service jobs but is thinking about going to college once Mark enters school. Mary chose to stay home with Mark during his early years so that she could give him a strong family foundation.

Mary plays a critical role in our society. She opens her home and her heart to other children whose parents are called away from them. She is actively helping to raise these children. Annie's parents may spend quality time with her, but most of Annie's life is spent with Mary.

Mary doesn't babysit for just anyone. For her, babysitting means developing an emotional attachment to the child. She considers the parents' demands and their expectations of how she should care for their children. She takes into account the child's age and personality and how that child will fit into Mark's and Melanie's routines.

Caring for young children is challenging. With every meal Mary prepares, Annie learns about nutrition. As Mary changes her diaper, Annie learns about good touches and respect for her body. As Mary plays with Annie, she lets her know how important she is. When she cleans up after Annie, she teaches her about an orderly life. When Mary holds Annie, hugs her, comforts her, reassures her, she teaches Annie about love and trust. When Mary says "no" to Annie, she is teaching her about limits.

For all of this, Mary earns $1.45 an hour before taxes. Social Security, retirement, health care, insurance and extra expenses like playpens, high chairs, car seats and presents

Mary does this work because she wants to be home with Mark but she needs the money to make ends meet. She has also watched another little girl who is closer to Mark's age on a part-time basis for the past year. The wage she makes is what most home day-care providers make per child. Mary has chosen not to take in lots of kids because she feels she wouldn't be as effective a caregiver. However, because Mary's children's needs are changing, Mary needs to make more money.

She tried to raise her rates this summer to $2 an hour per child. Annie's family wouldn't pay that price and started looking for a cheaper caregiver. Mary missed Annie and has decided to watch Annie and her newborn brother for $3 an hour. Yes, she's making more per hour, but now she has two children in diapers to care for besides her own.

Mary tried to work at a local day-care facility where she would have earned minimum wage and been able to keep her son there free of charge. But, after a short time, she became uncomfortable with the facility. The caregivers responded too often with policy, strict regimens and even demoralizing comments rather than personal loving care.

There are probably some home day-care providers who collect a houseful of kids, throw in some videos, serve a poor lunch, appease the children with sugary snacks and then expect them to nap at the same time. Perhaps these kinds of caregivers only deserve $1.50 an hour per child. Mary certainly doesn't.

Mary is what I like to think of as being a professional mother. Couples should examine carefully how much they pay for the full-time care of their children. A quality caregiver should be paid a quality salary.

Designer clothes and shoes and expensive toys that the children are barely home to play with shouldn't be a high priority in most of our homes. In our fast-food mall-type lifestyle, we shouldn't subject our young children to being raised in a factory type environment, where the compensation for their "production" amounts to little more than "piecework."

At the end of this year, Mary will be figuring out whether she is really making any money as a day-care provider. It may not be worth it to her and her family to continue to provide such an important service to our society. What a terrible loss that would be for Annie and her family.

Cheryl L. Fadley writes from Troy, Ill.

Workfare only works with a little bit of effort

Odessa Smith, a community activist from Roxbury, used one of the "p" words at Tuesday's gubernatorial debate. "Is it fair to further *penalize* mothers and children," she asked the candidates, by imposing workfare on welfare families — as both Weld and Roosevelt would?

Workfare opponent Betsy Wright of the Massachusetts Human Services Coalition sprinkles her conversation with the second "p" word — *punitive* — favored by those who think pushing single parents to work, usually mothers, is a nasty idea.

MARGERY EAGAN

Some feminists even claim welfare reform — a hot-button issue of campaign '94 — is yet another patriarchal plot to take away poor women's options and freedoms, though it's not clear that a meager monthly AFDC stipend buys many options or any freedoms. Certainly it does not "empower," to use a favorite term of the day.

Still, welfare reform is a tough issue if you think of yourself as compassionate, if you think we should be doing more for children and the poor, if you'd even pay more in taxes for programs that work — but you don't think welfare works.

And that's tough to concede if you're afraid to be called a mean-spirited, selfish baby-basher at cocktail parties in Cambridge, which is exactly what you'd be called.

How could you favor such a "punitive" measure as workfare against the poorest of the poor? How could you expect a quid pro quo — that the down-on-their-luck do something to get something, women we've somehow decided lack the skills for meaningful paid work — yet do have the skills, at 19 or 20, to raise little children, on their own, no husband, no family, no help?

That doesn't say much about our view of motherhood. It says plenty about our patronizing of the poor. But I digress.

Yesterday at 10 a.m. the Commmunity Children's Center in Dorchester, at the site of the old St. Margaret's Hospital, was dedicated. It's a bright, hopeful place with massive windows, lots of light, a gorgeous aquarium mural of fish and green plants and the deep blue sea in its entranceway.

There are toddler-sized cubbies for jackets and winter boots. There are toddler-sized sinks and toddler-sized benches, which mean they're about six inches off the ground. There's a book corner and an art corner, a sandbox [illegible] a great big climbing structure outside. Lots of grass. No glass.

there, 25 so far, 45 at capacity, are homeless. They come from shelters in Roxbury and Dorchester. And there is a catch, a quid pro quo, to their admission.

Their parents — mostly mothers — must promise to work toward self-sufficiency for their children to attend. They must work, or go to school or job training.

As long as mothers do, their children can remain at the center indefinitely. Says Suzanne Heilman of Horizons Initiative: "We have limited resources. We decided to orient this to families who'd use it most productively, take advantage to move forward.

"Kids basically need to be in a stimulating, nurturing environment from the earliest age. If a family can't provide that, if they're homeless or in a very stressed situation, this (center) not only helps the child but helps the family. Parents know their kids are well cared for."

The concept of this center is not, in mini-version, unlike the concept of the supposedly "punitive" workfare reforms being offered both by Weld and Roosevelt. Both propose state funded child care to mothers willing to work in return.

But guess what. Just a month into its operation, these mothers are finding jobs and GED programs. They are getting somewhere. The idea is working.

So-called advocates for the poor can worry about the quality of the child care a Weld or Roosevelt may offer, and fiscal conservatives can fret over its cost. But is it really "punitive" to say that we will help you — but you must help yourself first?

Year after year, the numbers on child poverty get worse. Ironically, part of the reason AFDC budgets are continually slashed is because of these very same so-called advocates. They've argued for years only for bigger stipends, more programs, more training — thus enraging [illegible] whose opposition to welfare comes from opposing something for

WORK & FAMILY

BY SUE SHELLENBARGER

Child-Care Crunch Puts Parents Between The Kids and the Boss

IT IS ONE of parents' most painful dilemmas: Your boss changes your work hours, and you can't find child care.

You hit the phones to call child-care providers and find too-short hours or sky-high fees everywhere. A gut-wrenching mental image of your kids, home alone as you leave for work, clouds your thinking. You plead for understanding with your boss, who looks pained but offers little help.

Despite your best efforts, you just can't be at work when the boss wants. Then, you get fired.

Court dockets nationwide bear evidence of a trend: More workers are getting disciplined or fired because they can't find child care. Diane Mutchler, a Federal Express agent in Pittsburgh and mother of [illegible], was fired after she failed to [illegible] to a night-shift assignment for lack of child care. Joy Newland, a clerk for a Minot, N.D., drug wholesaler and mother of three, lost her job because her boss assigned her to an "on-call" evening shift during hours no child-care provider would accept. David Prickett, a single father and mechanic for a Minneapolis circuit-board maker, was fired because he couldn't find child care for his shift.

After two decades of exponential growth in day care and working parents, why are employees still being forced to choose between their children and their jobs?

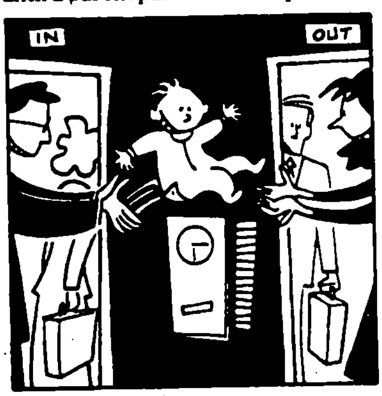
The answer is that the rules of the workplace are changing, and the child-care system isn't keeping up. As if turning your kids over to someone else every day weren't complicated enough, workers are losing control over their hours, too. Weekend and night work, forced overtime and involuntary part-time work with unpredictable hours are on the rise as employers fine-tune schedules to cut costs or improve service. But most child-care providers are mired in the 9-to-5 era, excluding part-timers and fining parents for picking children late.

THE CLASH POSES one of the saddest no-win situations in today's workplace. Employers can't win when an employee lacks child care to comply with a schedule change. Their best hope, as a human resources executive at a New York financial services concern with 24-hour customer-service operations says, may be that "we've never had to fire anybody" for it.

But "companies sometimes forget that these employees live in the community," says Michael Lotito, West Coast managing partner for the law firm of Jackson, Lewis, Schnitzler & Krupman. Picture the egg on an employer's face, he suggests, if friends and neighbors ask a fired parent, " 'Hey, I thought you were working for ABC Corp.' And they say, 'Well, I was, but I couldn't find child care. So I go to my supervisor and he says he doesn't care about my kid—he's got a department to operate.' "

Employees can't win either. Many depend on child-care arrangements so fragile that they collapse at the slightest schedule change. In a handoff much like "a football game," a New York father says, he and his wife, who work back-to-back shifts at a pharmaceutical plant, meet at 3:15 p.m. daily at the plant. She watches their son in the car while he changes into his work uniform. He watches their son while she changes out of her uniform. She punches out at 3:30 p.m., they kiss goodbye, and he punches in a few seconds later.

Few people notice such stresses—until a parent panics and the problem



Carol Lay

erupts in its ugliest form. In a much-publicized case a few years ago, Chante Fernandez, an Elizabeth, N.J., single mother and full-time secretary, locked her five-year-old daughter in her car while she worked weekends at a second job at a nearby mall.

DEFENDING HER decision as "an act of desperation" after a fruitless search for weekend child care, Ms. Fernandez told police she badly needed the paycheck. Her [illegible] on misdemeanor chan[illegible] [illegible]pended.

[illegible] incidents "happen more often than anyone has record of," says Joan Zorza, senior attorney for the National Center on Women and Family Law. The dearth of child-care services, child-care advocates say, is society's failing. "The employer feels, 'Why should I be burdened? I haven't done anything,' " Ms. Zorza says. "In a sense, the employer is right."

But being right adds up wrong when employers are paying the bill anyway – in lost workers and higher payroll taxes, as state courts increasingly hold employers responsible for unemployment compensation in child care-related firings. The best solution, consultants say, is for employer and employee to work together – with the employer helping look for child care and asking for volunteers to swap hours. Federal Express won't comment on Ms. Mutchler's case. But the company says it balances employees' needs with those of its operation and provides as much notice as possible to workers whose shifts are changed. It also recently added an employee child-care referral service.

"The employer is obliged not to be judgmental and to be willing to talk, investigate, evaluate different approaches," Mr. Lotito says. "After you go through all that, you may still have to say, 'There is nothing that I can do for you. But that doesn't mean I don't care.' "

The real question, perhaps, is whether anyone can care enough in today's workplace. With employers still more inclined to stretch workers further, clashes over child care are "only going to get worse," predicts the New York human-resources executive. The trend "is putting tremendous strain on people. We're only seeing the tip of the iceberg."

The Long Goodbye

Starting Preschool Means 'Separation'

9-30-94

Parting With a 3-Year-Old Now Is Such Sweet Sorrow; How It Goes in the Village

By ELLEN GRAHAM

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

NEW YORK – Samantha Sterman doesn't know it yet, but she has just taken a giant stride on the road to independence. The curly haired tot is mixing well with the other three-year-olds kneading Play-Doh and bathing dolls at West Village Nursery School in Greenwich Village.

For her father, Bruce Sterman, the first day of nursery school is a bit more stressful. Squirming in his tiny chair in a corner of the classroom, the restaurateur is preoccupied with a string of business crises brought on by the recent move of his Manhattan Chili Co. uptown from the Village. But this week – and for perhaps longer – the contractors and balky new computer system must wait: he is going to spend his mornings here in the classroom, easing Samantha's oh-so-gradual transition into school.

This is an autumn ritual known as "separation," the weaning of child from parent – and vice versa – that transpires at the beginning of preschool. For countless parents whose children attend developmentally sensitive nursery schools, it is a time of high anxiety and disrupted work schedules. The protracted parting sometimes can go on for weeks – a far cry from the kiss-and-run approach of years gone by.

Easing In

Many schools follow a protocol similar to that at West Village: The year's crop of 15 entering three-year-olds is split into two groups. For the first week, the groups meet in separate shifts of an hour-and-a-half each. The second week, the groups merge, and class time is then lengthened by 15 minutes a day until the children are on a full 9 a.m. to noon schedule.

At an orientation before school opens, parents are briefed: The first day or so, they sit in the classroom for the full hour-and-a-half, but are urged to gently deflect their children's efforts to draw them into dress-up play or story circle. Gradually, the parents edge into the coatroom, out of sight but seldom out of mind. When Paula Kaplan, the school's director, feels a child is ready – often in a matter of days – parents can venture outside to sit on the stoop or even go for coffee. After the child has adjusted to that, the school gives the parents the go-ahead to leave for work or home.

"Our aim is to make children competent separators," says Ms. Kaplan, who teaches the threes class with Coline Morse.

surprising," she says, explaining that a clingy child may be sensing the parent's own mixed emotions about letting go.

Mark of a Good School

Early-childhood professionals say that close attention to separation is one mark of a good nursery school. Since the 1970s, preschool has became a way of life for increasing numbers of very young children across the country. And the hasty goodbye that might satisfy a worldly kindergartner, educators say, is too wrenching for a tyke barely out of diapers.

Nursery-school trauma "doesn't mean you won't get into Harvard," says Barbara Willer, a spokesperson for the National Association for the Education of Young Children, in Washington. But she says a gentle start sets a child up for future success as a learner.

A booklet NAEYC distributes on the subject advises: "Parents and employers need to plan for separation just as they plan for pregnancy leave." So it is that corporate productivity flags in the waning days of September, as throngs of young professionals duck out of work to hover in the classroom.

At West Village Nursery, the day of reckoning dawns the third week of September. Paint pots and crayons at the ready, the teachers throw the door open to welcome the first shift. The coatroom, a boisterous tumble of denim and plaid, is ablaze with flashbulbs, as parents capture for a lifetime the first meeting of teacher and child. Jack Kamine clings to his mother's leg. Nina Boyd clutches a well-worn doll.

Meaningful Glances

But the classroom beckons, and as the children scamper off, their parents give each other meaningful, misty glances. "I feel like chopped liver," Mr. Sterman jokes – both proud and rueful – as he takes up his station in the corner.

Mothers predominate during the second shift; a nightclub owner and a psychotherapist cuddle newborn infants they've brought with them to separation, and as the chatter turns to home-birthing and Caesarean sections, it reaches such an animated pitch that the teachers have to shush them.

"Colin, I have a story," coos Ms. Kaplan, trying to lure a youngster from his mother's lap. Colin's mother, Rita Campon, says she has mentally set aside two weeks for the separation process. Colin's father, a computer consultant, will probably do a stint at school, too, she says.

By the fourth day, signs of parental restlessness are apparent. Donna Phillips, a pediatric orthopedic surgeon, has been told she can leave; her son Allen is coping well. Diane Cohen leaves for her job at an employment agency, declaring that her son, Jake, isn't accustomed to having her home during the day, and that her presence is just agitating him. Even a few nannies show up.

tie them up and keep them here," she says of the parents. "If a kid is truly comfortable, I go with the flow."

A few stragglers sit marooned in the coatroom. "You lucky ducks!" says Karen Langan as other mothers breeze past her, headed for work or, in one case, a manicure. She is perplexed by her daughter Sofi's protests when she tried to leave: Sofi is an old hand at preschool, and knows most of her new classmates. "We've already separated," Ms. Langan insists. "Sofi did this at one-and-a-half." She chides herself: "I should have just left – I know she's manipulating me."

At dismissal, she and another mother, Wendy Maitland, apologize to the teachers for failing to leave as they said they would.

let parents shake off babysitting blues

By Penny Parker
Denver Post Staff Writer

Tuesday, September 20, 1994

THE DENVER POST

The Denver Post / Brian Brainerd

Peter Nordstrom at Let's Go Play!

Drop-in Daycare

The babysitter calls in sick. Your daycare closes on Jewish holidays. You'd like to go grocery shopping . . . in peace. You'd kill for a nap.

Four metro area drop-in daycare centers have the cure for the babysitting blues. For $3 to $5 an hour, you can reserve a spot at one of these state-licensed facilities or simply drop off the little darlings for up to four hours. Short Stop for Kids in Cherry Creek is licensed to take kids up to 10 hours a day because, unlike the other three facilities, Short Stop has a large outdoor playground.

"Children don't like to go shopping or out to dinner — unless it's Burger King — or to the doctor's office, and the doctor doesn't really like you to bring your kids," says Caroline Schomp, who opened Short Stop with her sisters Kiki and Meg last April. "Unless you have your mother in town who's willing to watch the kids, you're pretty much sunk."

Laura Woodward learned about Short Stop from a friend. Woodward brings her 3-year-old son, George, to the center about twice a week.

"I don't work, but it's hard to get a babysitter," Woodward says as she helps George select a sticker when it's time to leave. "Most babysitters want a schedule. I use this place to go out to lunch or shopping, to go exercise or to take a nap."

Schomp says she and her sisters chose Cherry Creek because of the nearby shopping center, boutiques, restaurants and office buildings. "We have some parents who are accountants or lawyers and need to work a few hours on Saturday. Not everybody has a nanny."

Patty Stouffer, owner of Club Kid in Highlands Ranch, says even nannies bring their charges to her facility where they can play with other kids and the nannies get a break. Stouffer opened the first metro area drop-in daycare center two years ago. Most of her employees are stay-at-home moms who bring their kids to work and are readily available to come in if the center fills up to its maximum of 30 kids.

Stouffer, a preschool teacher and mother of two, originally considered opening a preschool when her sister-in-law suggested a drop-in center. "My sister-in-law lives in Texas and they have these in every suburban neighborhood," Stouffer says. She hired a Texas drop-in center owner as a consultant, invested $24,000 from her savings and from family members (banks turned her down for a loan), and started breaking even a month after she opened.

Club Kid has become so successful (Douglas County is the fastest-growing county in the state) that Stouffer plans to open a branch in Parker within six months. "Every day two or three new families come in because this is such a growing area," Stouffer says.

"Every day moms thank me for oper[illegible] ing. Many moms drop off the kids and [illegible] back home to clean or play piano. Man[illegible] kids ask to come here."

In one corner of the 1,900-square-foot room, 4-year-old Austin stands by the Little Tikes beauty parlor. "Anybody need a

Please see DAYCARE on 2E

Daycare centers cater to specific ages

DAYCARE from Page 1E

haircut?" he barks over the din of busy little people. A 5-year-old girl in high heels shuffles over and plops down in front of the mirror. Austin makes hairdo magic.

Of the 1,000 families registered with Club Kid (a $10 registration fee is required), the majority of the moms stay at home, Stouffer says. "I really feel that having this place available helps them be better moms," she says. "A mom will call me and say, 'My 4-year-old and I are not getting along, can I bring him in?'"

At Let's Go Play! in Lakewood, 12-year-old Mike Bettini and his 7-year-old sister munch apples and fruit leather during snack time.

This is Mike's first visit to the center and he gives it an enthusiastic thumbs up. "It's pretty cool," he says. "I thought it would be for smaller kids but they've got stuff for 12-year-old kids." Stuff like Nintendo, a basketball hoop and an elaborate indoor gym.

Karen Korody, owner of Let's Go Play!, spent nearly $400,000 transforming an electronics store in a strip mall across from the Villa Italia shopping center into a playland. The 12,000-square-foot space can hold up to 173 children ages 6 weeks to 12 years. Korody's drop-in facility is the only one licensed to take infants.

The huge space has a separate play area for toddlers 19 months to 3 years and another space for 4-year-olds and up. Infants (and pre-walkers) have their own room equipped with playpens, cribs and age-appropriate toys.

Older kids can wander from the art room with easels, paint and Play Dough, to the fully stocked kitchen and dress-up area, to the Barbie (and Ken) corner or take a break in front of a Disney movie playing on the VCR.

The Town Center in the middle has a painted grass floor, park benches, an airplane teeter-totter and a race track where kids can test their peddle prowess on tricycles and foot-powered cars.

Blue and white and pink and white bathrooms feature pint-size potties.

Parents who bring children to Let's Go Play! are given a pager so staff can beep them in case of an emergency or chronic crying. "Some parents tell us if she doesn't stop crying within a half-hour, call us," Korody says. "Sometimes all it takes is a parent coming in and calming the child down."

Diane Johnson opened Kids Play near the Westminster Mall a year ago after her brother visited from Minnesota with his two kids.

"He said, 'Let's drop the kids off and go out to dinner,' " Johnson recalls. "I said, 'Drop the kids off where?' "

In Minnesota, Johnson says, there's a chain of drop-in centers with branches near most malls.

Johnson says her busiest day last year was New Year's Eve, when she kept the center open until 2 a.m. Reservations for this New Year's Eve are required.

All four centers offer extended hours on Friday and Saturday nights (some up to midnight) and some are open on Sundays. Snacks are served every two hours and meals are available for an extra charge.

Anticipate spending about 10 minutes during the first visit to fill out state-required forms.

Parents of infants need to bring immunization records on the first visit to Let's Go Play!

For older children, parents need to supply the drop-in facility with immunization records within 30 days of the first visit.

Side by side on the roster are some of America's biggest corporations, like AT&T, Xerox, IBM and Procter & Gamble and smaller companies like Kennebunk, Maine, clothing maker Toms of Maine, with 64 workers and 242-employee United States Hosiery of Lincolnton, N.C.

The list includes famous product names, like Campbell Soup, Hallmark Cards, Mattel and Nike. The little-known also are represented, like Hanna Andersson, which sells family clothing by mail from Portland, Ore., and Frontier Cooperative Herbs, a Norway, Iowa, consumer co-op that sells herbs, spices, coffees, teas and skin care products.

Working Mother chooses the companies based on pay and opportunities for advancement for working mothers, child care and ``family-friendly'' benefits like part-time jobs with benefits, job sharing and flexible hours.

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^Magazine Chooses Best Companies for Working Moms(
^By ROBERT NAYLOR JR.=
^AP Labor Writer=

WASHINGTON (AP) — Home products maker S.C. Johnson Wax has a ''Women's Business Council'' to help break down barriers to advancement faced by female employees.

Skokie, Ill.-based Fel-Pro, which makes car gaskets, sealants and lubricants, provides up to $6,500 in tuition reimbursements for children of its workers. And the St. Petersburg (Fla.) Times reserves a room for nursing mothers.

Such benefits helped earn those companies a place on Working Mother magazine's ninth annual list of 100 best companies for working moms.

The list was unveiled Tuesday over breakfast at the Labor Department.

''We've discovered that quality of life is a much greater asset in securing people than high salaries,'' said George Lucas, maker of such hit movies as ''American Graffiti'' and the ''Star Wars'' trilogy.

On-site child care facilities and flexible work schedules helped win his Lucasfilm Ltd. a place on the list for the fourth consecutive year.

Lucas, who also won the magazine's ''Family Champion Award,'' said he was being recognized for ''just doing what one should be doing.''

A single father of three, Lucas joked that by virtue of his juggling work, parent-teacher conferences and dinner, ''I guess I qualify as a working mother.''

The 100 companies ranged from the tiny to the colossal.

There was G.T. Water Products, a Moorpark, Calif., plumbing products manufacturer on the list for the seventh year in a row. The company provides 26 weeks of leave for new parents, even though with just 24 employees it is exempt from the federal Family and Medical Leave Act.

At the other end of the size scale was 358,000-worker General Motors, which returned to the list after a five-year absence. Last year the automaker added three child care centers serving more than 600 children and introduced referral services for child care and elder care.

''We saw the extent to which working mothers thought about their children during the day,'' said Ralph Larsen, chairman of Johnson & Johnson, one of the world's biggest marketers of baby products and health care supplies.

The New Brunswick, N.J., company has four on-site child care facilities. It also provides up to $3,000 to help workers adopting children.

Larsen said company studies show that workers with children in on-site facilities worry less their kids than those using off-site centers.

Other companies were recognized for the number of women they hire and how much they pay them.

At cosmetic maker Avon, 74 percent of the work force and 76 percent of the highest paid employees are women, including the president, general counsel and chief financial officer of the company's U.S. division.

Forty percent of the work force and 47 percent of the highest paid workers are women at Ben & Jerry's Homemade, the Waterbury, Vt., ice cream maker.

— MORE —

Au Pair Program Cuts Red Tape of Child Care

99.94

By Deborah Lohse
Staff Reporter of The Wall Street Journal

If only Zoe Baird had hired an au pair—a real "au pair," that is.

Ms. Baird, President Clinton's first choice for attorney general, lost her chance at the top Justice Department job after it was revealed that she and her husband had hired an illegal immigrant to provide live-in child care and hadn't paid Social Security taxes for the woman and her husband, who was the family's driver.

But if Ms. Baird and her husband had tapped the au pair program, they wouldn't have had to worry about such responsibilities.

The term "au pair," which is French for " an equal," is often used loosely to refer to anyone who provides live-in child care. But the term also can specifically mean a person who enters the U.S. on a special cultural-exchange visa to live with a host ly as an equal—that is, as a member of an extended family—and care for its children while ning about America. Under the six- -old program of the U.S. Information A y, parents don't have to constantly tally and pay Social Security taxes, workers' compensation insurance or other employment taxes as they must with other live-in help.

"You don't have to hire an accountant" to e an au pair, says Tom Thacker, a vice presi- with Smith Barney in Valley View, Ohio, who has sponsored three au pairs.

Giora Carmi

Limited Choices

For most families, in-home child care simply t affordable. Only about 3% of families with children under age 12 hire in-home child care, says Ellen Galinsky, co-president of Families and Work Institute, a New York research group.

Even for those who can afford legal live-in child care, there are few choices. Generally, families must between nannies, who may or may not have formal nanny-school training, and au pairs, mostly women age 18 to 25 from Western European countries who have varying amounts of child-care experience.

Nannies offer the possibility of continuity, someone who may end up caring for a family's children over [redacted] years. Au pairs come to the U.S. on 13-month cultural-exchange visas, living with a host family for 12 [redacted]s and caring for the children for up to 45 hours a Their last month is reserved for traveling.

Hiring a le nny generally costs from $200 to a metimes more. In a lon, you must pay Social Security taxes at a rate of 15% (half from your pocket, half from the nanny's pay); federal unemployment taxes of 6.2% on the first $7,000 of earnings; and, in about 20 states, workers' compensation insurance of $100 to $600 a year, according to management consultants Towers Perrin in San Antonio.

The paperwork alone can seem bottomless. "We don't make it easy [in this country] to hire someone as an in-home care giver," says Nancy Kolben, executive director of Child Care Inc., a New York child-care resource center.

By contrast, hiring an au pair is fairly simple. Eight organizations around the country are authorized by the USIA to match au pairs with famil Annual costs include a fee of $3,000 to $3,775, de on the au pair agency, to cover screening, the a transportation to the U.S. and health insurance; $300 for education; and $100-a-week spending money. That breaks down to about $175 a week. However, the USIA may soon recommend that the agencies raise the weekly pocket money to $125 as early as next January.

Despite the tax and administrative chores, live-in nannies are the choice of many parents who want someone to look after their children over several years. And some parents prefer older nannies, who may have a great deal of experience in child care, to young au pairs.

Some parents who can afford to be choosy prefer "real" nannies with formal child-care training. At the English Nanny & Governess School in Chagrin Falls, Ohio, for example, students undergo three months of training in child growth and development, infant care, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, activities for children and nutrition.

Susan Baird, a vice president with Book-of-the-Month Club in New York who isn't related to the former attorney-general designate, has employed the same nanny for two years. "I appreciate the fact that she did go through a fairly rigid course of study," she says.

As for contributing to their employees' Social Security, unemployment or disability, parents who prefer legal live-in nannies say such chores are simply part of being a good employer.

Flexible Schedules

Still, a growing number of parents are discovering that au pairs can be a realistic answer to their child-care problems.

As with other live-in help, au pairs offer more flexibility than day care or live-out baby sitters for parents who are kept late at the office. And live-in help can make mornings less frantic.

"We don't have the opportunity or the time to take our child to other people" every day, Mr. Thacker says.

Norma Wolfe, a computer-operations-services coordinator for Ohio Edison, says it would have cost her about 30% less than what she pays her au pair for her two boys simply to go to their private school early and stay late under a supervised program. But that would commit her to leaving work at the same time every day, something she says isn't possible with her schedule.

Like other costs of legal child care, the money paid to an au pair is eligible for special tax treatment. You may qualify for a child-care tax credit, or you could stash up to $5,000 of such costs into a special tax account work that escapes your income taxes and someti ial

Official Defends Welfare Plan's Family Themes

By Deborah L. Cohen

Washington

Mary Jo Bane delivers rapid-fire answers to questions on President Clinton's welfare-reform plan with the composure of a scholar who not has been quizzed on the same topic repeatedly, but who helped write the test.

Indeed, the assistant secretary, who heads the Health and Human Services Department's administration for children and families, grows slightly impatient when responding to some critics' concerns that the plan is too hard on families.

To Ms. Bane, the underlying theme of the plan is self-evident: Work is better for families and children than welfare.

"It challenges us to bring all of our systems together to make sure families are helped to be economically strong" so they can raise healthy and productive children, she said in a recent interview.

Ms. Bane is a former Harvard professor who specialized in poverty issues; she has also served as New York State's commissioner of social services. Now the Clinton Administration official who oversees most family-welfare programs, she co-chaired the task force that helped craft the reform proposal that President Clinton unveiled in June. *(See Education Week, June 22, 1994.)*

Congressional panels held several hearings on welfare reform this summer, and more than 20 welfare bills have been introduced. But welfare has taken a back seat to health-care reform, and it is unclear how much headway Congress can make this year.

Nevertheless, it remains a popular issue on Capitol Hill. Some lawmakers are still clamoring to address the issue before the fall elections, and it is virtually certain to reappear on the agenda.

While some liberals think the two-year time limit on benefits proposed by Mr. Clinton is too harsh, some conservatives would go so far as to virtually eliminate welfare, at least for unwed teenage mothers.

However, though her optimism has been tempered by rancorous debates on the crime bill and health care, Ms. Bane believes a consensus is within reach.

Critics Span the Spectrum

"I have actually been struck in conversations on [Capitol] Hill about how much common ground there is," Ms. Bane said. "The highly partisan nature of all the debates in Congress at the moment is obscuring the fact of how much agreement there is."

The Clinton plan would impose the two-year time limit on recipients who do not fall into specific exempted groups, phasing in those born after 1971 first. Those who could not find jobs would enter a subsidized work program.

The plan also calls for expanded training and child-care programs, tougher child-support enforcement, and teenage-pregnancy prevention grants to schools.

Child-welfare groups have supported those efforts, but raised several concerns about the plan's effects on children and youths.

Some argue that the bill falls short of meeting parents' need for child care and could force working poor families back on welfare to get limited child-care aid. Ms. Bane noted that besides increasing funding for education, training, and work slots by $2.7 billion, the plan proposes to boost aid for families at risk of going on welfare by $1.5 billion over five years.

That plan and an increase in the Child Care and Development Block Grant proposed in the President's fiscal 1995 budget would nearly double federal child-care aid for the working poor, Ms. Bane said.

Child-Care Standards

The plan, she added, would also help to raise the quality of care by requiring programs for welfare clients to adopt the same health and safety standards as those funded by the block grant and allowing states to spend 10 percent of their funds to boost program quality.

"Some will say we are going too far," she noted, citing the argument that too much regulation makes it harder for parents to choose informal care settings.

The plan also lowers the exemption from work requirements from three years to one year after the birth of the recipient's first child.

While some conservatives say that policy is still too lax, child advocates fear it would strain an already weak supply of care for children in the vulnerable birth-to-3 age span.

Ms. Bane noted that a new birth-to-3 program being created under Head Start, while small, will help offer "leadership" in that area. Phasing the welfare plan in beginning with the youngest clients, she added, will allow "time to build the infrastructure we need."

But some studies have suggested that the youngest welfare recipients, most often single mothers, may be the most difficult to serve and least likely to benefit from time limits and work requirements. *(See Education Week, July 13, 1994.)*

Ms. Bane counters that they will be even harder to reach in 15 years and that data on which age group is hardest to serve offer at best a "mixed picture."

"We didn't claim that this is the easiest group to serve," she said, "but it is the most important to send a clear message to young people."

Work or Education?

The bill would call for expanded funding for education and training under the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training program and offer some extensions to the time limit for educational pursuits. But youth advocates fear its emphasis on quick job entry could limit access to longer-term education.

While research on work- versus education-oriented programs is not clearcut, Ms. Bane is adamant that "evidence and experience" support a strong work focus.

"What JOBS lacked was a sense of urgency—the time limit says this is serious, we've got to do it quickly," she explained.

A proposed national campaign to combat teenage pregnancy, meanwhile, would offer prevention grants to 1,000 schools and start a curriculum clearinghouse. But Ms. Bane conceded that no one approach has been proved effective.

New Federal Bureau Aims To Elevate, Coordinate Child Care

By Deborah L. Cohen

Washington

The Health and Human Services Department is establishing a bureau to help raise the stature of child-care issues and bring more consistency to federal child-care programs and policies.

Mary Jo Bane, the assistant secretary for children and families, announced the plan for the new bureau at a meeting of child-care and human-services professionals convened here last month by the Families and Work Institute, a New York City-based research group, and the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

"If we are going to serve children and families well, we must make sure we work hard to have a cohesive system," Ms. Bane said. Creating the new bureau, she said, is a small but symbolically important step at the federal level that "sends a message to states that child-care programs ought to be part of the same system."

The move is one of several steps proposed by the Clinton Administration in recent months to build a more coherent system of child care for disadvantaged families:

- A Head Start reauthorization bill passed this year encourages coordination between Head Start and other child-care providers to offer full-day, full-year care, as well as links to welfare reform.
- The Health and Human Services Department in May proposed regulations to create more consistency between the federal child-care block grant and child-care programs for families on or at risk of going on welfare.
- President Clinton's welfare-reform plan would require that the welfare-related child-care programs adopt the same standards on health and safety, parental choice, and unlimited parental access required under the block grant. The plan also would allow states to administer all federal child-care funds through one agency.

Ms. Bane emphasized that the new child-care bureau will try to encourage "seamlessness" in administering the block grant and welfare child-care programs.

The bureau will be housed within the Administration for Children, Youth, and Families, which now includes the Head Start Bureau, the Children's Bureau, the Family and Youth Services Bureau, and the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect.

Participants at the conference said they were hopeful that having a federal child-care bureau—on a par with the Head Start bureau—will bring a greater sense of urgency to child-care issues.

"Child care has always been the stepsister; this gives it some important visibility," said Sue Bredekamp, the director of professional development for the young children's group.

"It puts a little extra credibility on the issue of child care," echoed Michele Piel, the director of child care and development for the Illinois Department of Public Aid.

About 330 people from the child-care and early-education fields, as well as from state and local governments, businesses, and social-service agencies, attended the National Forum on State and Community Planning in Early Education and Care, which was the second annual meeting of its kind.

Children's Summit?

Presenters described how other federal initiatives can be tapped to spur collaboration on child-care and early education. They cited the family-preservation bill, which is aimed at revamping state child-welfare systems, and the empowerment zones and enterprise communities program, the centerpiece of the Administration's community-revitalization strategy.

Participants also cited efforts by state and local agencies and parent groups to make children's services more comprehensive.

Gov. Howard Dean of Vermont, the chairman of the National Governors' Association, told conferees that his group plans to convene a national children's summit next May or June and that he hopes to enlist President Clinton and members of Congress.

The summit, which would try to mobilize support for children's issues in the same fashion as the 1989 education summit held in Charlottesville, Va., would cap off the Governors' Campaign for Children, announced by the governors' group last month. *(See Education Week, Aug. 3, 1994.)*

Governor Dean and Gov. Roy Romer, who spoke to the participants via satellite from Colorado, also described efforts in their states—amid pressures to balance budgets and build more prisons—to beef up early-childhood programs.

A new report, previewed at the conference by the Zero to Three/National Center for Clinical Infants Programs, offers case studies on efforts in six communities to improve programs for young children.

More information on "Living and Testing the Collaborative Process: A Case Study of Community-Based Services Integration" is available by calling the Zero to Three Publications Department, at (800) 899-4301.

Denver Post

Wider access to day-care files gets OK

By Jennifer Gavin
Denver Post Capitol Bureau

Gov. Roy Romer announced a new program yesterday to make it easier for parents to inspect state records on day-care centers.

In a news conference, Romer also said the state will reallocate $100,000 to better train day-care workers and set up a business roundtable on improving child care.

"We have a lot of information about child-care facilities, and we need to get that information out to parents, who can use it," Romer said.

He called on his budget director to find $300,000 for the effort. It will make information available not only at the Colorado Department of Social Services in Denver — where it can be viewed now — but also in local social services outlets, at libraries and even on-line for home-computer access.

The work is expected to take up to a year.

"In choosing child care outside the home, parents need to know a facility is safe and nurturing. If there are past problems, they need to know," Romer said.

The news conference was one of at least three Romer is expected to hold this week in his ongoing "Kid's Crusade."

In later news appearances, he is likely to provide updates on state pilot programs, supported by lawmakers, to make the welfare-to-work transition more likely to succeed and to describe new measures cracking down on parents who don't pay child support.

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AT PLAY IN THE LEGAL WAR ZONE

At Superior Court, a Place for Kids to Wait Out the Wheels of Justice

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By Laura Blumenfeld
Washington Post Staff Writer

Brittany of the skinny arms and puffy eyes, Brittany with knee scars the color of pearls, Brittany who sings bluer than a weary grown-up is here to play.

"Go on," says her great-aunt, releasing her hand. But the 5-year-old sticks close to her leg. She has never been to D.C. Superior Court, nor to its day-care center. She has just come through court halls as dark as bad weather, peering now around a room painted sunflower yellow. Her aunt has to leave, to look for her lawyer. She wants custody, says Brittany's father is neglectful. "Play," the aunt says, shooing the girl.

Brittany edges toward the other kids. They are the children of cops, defendants, plaintiffs, jurors, witnesses and lawyers—jumbled together amid the toys. The center accepts them all. And while their parents sue and testify against each other, while they deliberate over another's fate and avoid each other's eyes, their children sit together and play Uno.

Outside, adults puzzle over the slot in which to deposit their filings: criminal, family, probate, civil. Inside, children build flower puzzles from different petal shapes: triangle, rectangle, circle, square. Outside, signs scold, "Criminal Division." Inside, they welcome, "Music Center."

Two boys walk in, toting lunches. "They're not to eat any food except what's in this bag," says their mother, Rachel Seidel, who is here for jury selection.

"We keep kosher," she explains. Her older son, Alex, 7, wearing a white yarmulke, leads the way toward a corner.

Moments later, Ashley McBride, 4, arrives, biting a fingernail. She glides in with tiny spirit-steps. Her mouth is soft, not frowning, not smiling, but confused, like she'd just been shaken awake.

Ashley's mother has the same soft lips. They tighten as she says, "Her father's in a hearing."

More parents, more kids, and the room splashes with color—girls painting rainbows, boys piling up bright wooden blocks. The yelps are happy, but it is 10:30 a.m., still early. "You never know how your day will turn out," says Sara Lucas, the center's director.

Once a mother dropped off her 2-year-old. In the afternoon, when she tried to retrieve him, the father blocked her way. That day, she had lost custody, and the pair ended up in a scuffle. Sometimes, the parents never return. In those cases, Lucas calls a family member or protective services. She keeps a petty cash fund for such emergencies. If a parent is sent to jail, Lucas buys the child a hot dog, french fries and a piece of pie.

Lucas is here, every day, trying to assure children in a building that trades on uncertainty. She has the sweet-scented arms and long-skirt swish of a kindergarten teacher. Her voice is even and soothing, the fluff of a stuffed bear against your cheek.

"You want to play?" she asks Alex.

All the other kids are.

"No, I'd rather read," he says contentedly. He has found one of the few adult-size chairs in the room, tucked his legs under him, propped open the pages with his elbows.

"It's a really good book," he says, with the critical confidence of a boy who long ago left "Chicken Little" behind. "It's about this pirate named Blackeye and his brother."

Alex's brother Natan, 5, is with him in the corner, reciting: "Number 20, James Garfield, 21, Chester Arthur . . ." He is practicing reading the names of all of the U.S. presidents. Their mom is a teacher and their dad is a rabbi. They are learned little men. In a couple of weeks, Alex will get his first pair of glasses.

Across the room, Brittany, 5, is brushing a doll's hair with long, vigorous strokes. Brittany's own hair is in lopsided clumps, not the trim braids of the other girls.

Later, her aunt explains that Brittany's mother lives on the street. The aunt has temporary custody, shares her bed with Brittany in a public housing unit. She hopes to keep the girl away from her father. ("He on drugs," Brittany says later. "He beats me too much." As does her stepmother: "I put bubble gum on a chair and she hit my head on the concrete ground.")

Now Brittany is running a toy iron feverishly over a pillowcase. "I need to iron for my baby," she says, serious, head down. Her movements are worried, jerky. It is an anxious game of house.

"She's cold," Brittany says, quickly pulling the pillowcase around her child.

Nearby, Ashley is talking into a plastic telephone.

"Hello, Mommy?" she says, with that dazed expression, the same bewildered mouth, as if she could hear her mother's voice, but it was fading away. "Mommy? Mommy? Mommy?"

Mommy is upstairs, in Room 202, the one for felony hearings. She sits among the defendants and their relatives. Next to her is Ashley's father, who works in construction. He was accused of crack possession. The room is silent except for the judge, who speaks into a microphone yet projects only a murmur.

The couple step outside for a break. Cops jingle by; metal detectors warble. The halls are dark except for thin beams above the benches, spotlighting each family's particular misery. It smells of alcohol, urine and sweat. There's a condom on the floor, a piece of newspaper coiled tight by some jittery hand.

The walls are brown marble, with

under-the-thumbnail gr in their crevices. The walls are thick, icy on your scalp if you lean back in your seat; they send painful waves back into your fingers if you pound them.

And yet amid all this gloom, behind a heavy wooden door, is a room carpeted with red hearts, yellow stars and brilliant green suns. The day-care center is magical—dolls have hair made from rows of Tootsie Rolls, whales spout along the walls, bellowing, "Let's have a whale of fun!"

The children, for the most part, are unaware of the outside turmoil. Several jurors' kids were asked what their parents did during jury duty.

"They eat pizza and do grown-up math," says Dominique, 5. "They run around crazy like monkeys."

"They play with turtles," says Kevin, 4.

In fact, Kevin's mother is trying to decide if some men kidnapped, raped and sodomized a 22-year-old woman. Seven days now, the jury has been tangled in deliberations. Today it'll leave again, undecided.

It is noon now and Alex announces, still in his chair, "I just finished 127 pages!" Lucas tries again, unsuccessfully, to entice him with a game. Ashley is moving around restlessly, picking up toys and then putting them

right d . Brittany is begging to borrow the d up gown of a juror's daughter.

"Be your best friend," she says. Finally the girl relents and Brittany wriggles into the long, white gauze dress. It is spun with gold, a tiny gold rose at the neck.

And Brittany becomes a princess. She whirls and poses and hugs herself. She pulls a stranger toward her and whispers, "I love you." The earlier tension is gone. She glues glitter and draws. She asks to hear a book called "Gus Loved His Happy Home." Her dress sweeps elegantly along.

Then the parents begin to drift back. There's a mother on a grand jury. This morning she heard about an armed robbery, a carjacking, two murders and a child molestation. Her two girls spent it playing Barbie dolls.

Ashley, on the floor with a court-scene puzzle, trying to fit the lawyer's head onto his neck, looks up. There's Daddy.

"We have to come back in September," the father tells Lucas. He looks relieved.

He bends down to scoop up Ashley. "We're going home," he says. And the girl with the tentative mouth is suddenly jumping with smiles.

Alex and Natan's mom arrives next. Second day of jury selection, second day she's been rejected. She passed her time in the stuffy courtroom—reading. "Say goodbye to everyone," she says.

And last, Brittany's aunt.

"You come for me?" Brittany says, not eager to leave. She was in the middle of a spirited game of Go Fish, her white gauze sleeves pushed up past her wrists.

Her aunt never found the lawyer, nor did she find Brittany's father. She had spent hours just wandering around the court, office to office.

Brittany goes quiet. She delicately removes her princess dress. The skinny arms appear again, and the pearl-colored scars.

"Can I come back, Mommy?" Brittany asks.

They hold hands and head toward the playroom's heavy wooden door. The gown lies in a heap.

CHILD-CARE CHOICES DON'T MATCH MOMS' WISHES

Most adults think that day care in a child's home is the best choice. But care elsewhere is the more common arrangement.

Most Americans think that care in a child's own home is the best arrangement for infants. Sixty-two percent of adults prefer this over other options, according to a 1993 nationally representative survey of 1,000 adults conducted by the Gallup Organization for the Employee Benefit Research Institute (EBRI). Child-care centers rate a distant second, at 16 percent, followed by group care in someone else's home, preferred by 12 percent.

> **A majority of adults in all income groups prefer in-home care over other arrangements for infants.**

When babies become toddlers, group care becomes more acceptable. The largest share (44 percent) of adults still think that home care is best for toddlers, but 31 percent prefer child-care centers. Group care in another home remains the third choice, at 19 percent. Together, the two group options outrank in-home care, perhaps because adults feel that toddlers are ready for preschool socialization.

Yet preference doesn't always translate into practice. Only 41 percent of infants are cared for in their own homes, 52 percent are cared for elsewhere, and 8 percent hang out with Mom while she works, according to a 1991 Census Bureau survey. Most of the in-home care and much of the out-of-home care is provided by relatives such as fathers and grandmothers.

Relatives are a popular choice because they are family and they are cheap (although not free). Child-care costs paid separately for children under age 5 averaged $1.84 per hour in 1991 for those cared for by a relative, compared with $3.11 for those cared for in their own home by a nonrelative, $2.08 in child-care centers, and $1.91 in a nonrelative provider's home.

For mothers without available family members, the cost-efficiency of group care is too valuable to overlook. Only 8 percent of infants with employed mothers are cared for in their own homes by nonrelatives, compared with 21 percent who are cared for by nonrelatives in the provider's home and 12 percent who go to organized day-care centers.

A majority of adults in all income groups prefer in-home care over other arrangements for infants, according to the EBRI/Gallup survey. But the preference is less pronounced for those with incomes below $20,000. Likewise, just 42 percent of minorities think that in-home care is the best option. Low-income respondents might be thinking only of high-priced, nanny-type situations. Those who can't afford it might not want to admit they would prefer it.

Low-income adults and minorities are much more likely than average to say they prefer organized day-care centers. Marcia Kropf, issues specialist on child care and working families at Catalyst of New York City, suggests that people of all income levels are wary of group care in providers' homes as the most unpredictable and potentially lowest-quality option. Low-income people may prefer organized centers because [illegible] of competence, whether or not they deserve it.

For more information about *Public Attitudes on Child Care and Family Leave, 1993*, contact the Employee Benefit Research Institute in Washington, D.C.; telephone (202) 775-6338. For more information about 1991 child-care arrangements and costs, contact the Census Bureau at (301) 763-5303. —*Diane Crispell*

Baby's Day

More than half of infants with working mothers spend the day with relatives.

(number of children under age 1 with employed mothers in thousands, and percent by type of child-care arrangement, 1991)

TOTAL UNDER 1	**1,650**
In child's home	**40.5%**
By father	21.6
By other relative	11.4
By nonrelative	7.5
In another home	**40.5**
By relative	20.0
By nonrelative	20.5
Organized child-care center	**11.5**
By mother at work	**7.6**

Source: Census Bureau, P70-36

Food

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Daily News For August 23, 1994

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NY TIMES 8 23 94

Before Reforming Welfare, First Provide Quality Child Care

To the Editor:

Many are asking how the Clinton welfare proposal will affect children. We have convincing evidence that forcing mothers to work when decent child care is not available will endanger their children. The prospects are terrifying.

We know that poor families live in neighborhoods where quality child care is often simply not available. We know that poor quality care can do lasting harm. The Carnegie Corporation's "Starting Points" report shows that such care is damaging to the health and development of young children, and that this damage can be permanent.

Last year 4-year-old Matthew Hintzen died in a fire in an unlicensed family child care home in Queens. Both of his parents were working. They were using this care because "it was all they could afford." Mothers moving from welfare to work will be in an even more precarious financial position, because they do not have two incomes to rely on.

We already know that when mothers move from welfare to work they are faced with long waiting lists for subsidized child care. Many are forced to go back on welfare, because they simply cannot find the child care their children need.

I do not question that our welfare system leaves much to be desired. We must make dramatic changes in the way we support our poorest and most vulnerable families. But we must establish a system of child care that is safe, that provides parents with a choice of programs and services, and that is adequately financed — by a mix of parent fees, employer support and government investment.

It is time we caught up with the rest of the industrialized world. Let's begin by taking care of children, by insuring that the next generation has the job skills to avoid the need for welfare. Before we push mothers out of the home, let's first put in place quality child care programs that allow them to train for a job or go to work without endangering their children.

ELINOR GUGGENHEIMER
Founding President
Child Care Action Campaign
New York, Aug. 17, 1994

WORK & FAMILY

BY SUE SHELLENBARGER

Home Life Matters More To Employees

MORE WORKERS are concerned that their employers prevent them from balancing work and personal life, a new survey shows.

Reflecting "an emerging priority" among workers since a 1992 survey, the study shows a doubling in the number of workers who say that they value having a job that doesn't interfere with personal life and who also give their employer poor ratings in that regard. This is according to recent interviews with 1,000 workers by Stephen A. Zimney, a New York human-resources and communications consultant, and Cambridge Reports/Research International, Cambridge, Mass.

Though balancing job and personal life still ranks behind fair promotions, pay and treatment by bosses as an employee concern, it is the only factor showing a major change since the 1992 survey. Both studies single out areas where workers feel their needs are not being met. These are concerns highly likely to erode workers' commitment to their employer, Mr. Zimney says.

Commitment is important because it motivates workers to give more discretionary effort – not only by working more intensely, but by making suggestions for improvement, identifying with company goals and supporting co-workers, says Mr. Zimney, who has done studies for Chevron, Motorola and others. Employers increasingly depend on commitment as they stress teamwork in their efforts to raise productivity.

But employers may unwittingly risk eroding employee commitment by making it harder, in a post-downsizing environment, for them to take care of personal needs, Mr. Zimney says. "In focus groups, people are saying, 'Can't my boss get it, that I have nine things pulling on me?' " he says. "They say, 'Sometimes I have to go to the doctor and he isn't open after 5 p.m., or I have to go to school to pick up the kids. I don't need my boss to manage all this for me. I just need him to understand.' "

Companies Now Tout Work-Family Benefits

WORK-FAMILY benefits become a competitive factor in some industries, a new Working Mother list shows.

Accounting, banking and insurance companies are heavily represented on the magazine's 1994 list of the best employers to work for, reflecting heightening competition, according to Milton Moskowitz and Carol Townsend, the Mill Valley, Calif., writers and experts on workplace quality who compiled the list. The list, in its ninth year, is set for release Sept. 13 in Washington.

Accounting firms are following the lead of Arthur Andersen, cited for six years by Working Mother, in lengthening the partner track and other steps, says Betty Holcomb, deputy editor of the magazine. Though half of the profession's recruits are female, accounting is plagued by high attrition among women. "Some of these Big Six accounting firms are really taking these issues seriously," says Ms. Holcomb.

More banking companies are taking cues from NationsBank. With its child-care subsidies, a $10 million fund to improve child and elder care and far-reaching flexible scheduling, "NationsBank has really upped the ante in the banking industry," Ms. Holcomb says.

Kids Can't Sue Over Parent's Injuries

CHILDREN whose parent has been injured by an employer's negligence can't win damages unless they have suffered "emotional distress so severe that no person could be expected to endure it," the Nebraska Supreme Court rules.

Nathan, Jason and Shelly Vosburg, ages five through 12, sued Cenex-Land O'Lakes Agronomy after their mother, Georgia Thomson, was allegedly poisoned in 1988 by chemicals stored in a farm-supply warehouse operated by the company. Dust from the chemicals, pesticides and herbicides for use on crops seeped through the wall between the warehouse and Ms. Thomson's employer, a fire-alarm manufacturing concern, says David Geier, a Lincoln, Neb., attorney for the children.

The chemicals contaminated workers' clothing, food and skin, Mr. Geier says. Ms. Thomson suffered lasting health problems, including vomiting, dermatitis, blurred vision, numbness in her legs and arms, hair loss, insomnia, kidney problems and severe depression, the children's complaint says. Ms. Thomson, who has been unemployed since quitting work after her injury, received a settlement from Cenex-Land O'Lakes, a joint venture of the Cenex and Land O'Lakes cooperatives, says a Land O'Lakes spokesman, who wouldn't disclose the size of the settlement.

The children claim in the complaint that they "continue to suffer" because of their mother's illness and were "seriously and permanently shocked, weakened and impaired" by watching her condition deteriorate. They also cited the loss of their mother's "care, protection, . . . companionship [and] comfort."

But the state Supreme Court upheld a lower-court ruling that minor children haven't any right to damages for the loss of a parent's companionship unless they witness a tragic event or learn of it in such a shocking way that they experience unendurable distress. The court "is saying you have to meet some real tough burdens" to win damages for kids, Mr. Geier says.

Odds and Ends

INSPIRED partly by last winter's school snow days, DuPont is spending $80,000 to set up a back-up and emergency child- and elder-care referral service. Child Care Connection, Wilmington, Del., will arrange snow-day programs, in-home aides and other services aimed at helping employees of subscribing companies, as well as other callers, get to work no matter what. . . . Shaky ties: Nearly 20% of sixth- through 12th-graders haven't had a 10-minute conversation with at least one of their parents in more than a month, according to research compiled by the Children's Defense Fund.

August 22, 1994

WALL STREET JOURNAL

Saving Money by Caring for Children

Manager's Journal

By Dee Moran

Until one year ago, at least two of our 1,600 employees a day would wake up and feel forced to tell a lie—they would call in sick to stay home and care for a sick child. Employees repeatedly told managers at our company, Schering-Plough Healthcare Products in Memphis, that this wasn't what they wanted.

What they really wanted opened on Aug. 16, 1993: A Children's Place, a $900,000 on-site child care center for infants to five-year-olds, with a "Sniffles and Snuggles" room for mildly ill youngsters up to age 12. When the need arises, employees telephone the center and arrange for a spot in Sniffles and Snuggles. Under the watchful eye of a student nurse or a pediatrician, the child goes into a softly colored room with up to five other ill youngsters for a day of sleeping in a cozy bed, watching videos, listening to the radio and playing quiet games.

Figures from the first six months of operation showed that Sniffles and Snuggles saved the company about $26,000. In less than one year of operation, the sick-child care room saved 180 employee workdays, amounting to more than the $20,000 it costs to administer the program for an entire year.

Our employees now tell us they felt guilty about neglecting their jobs to care for a mildly ill child, but they didn't have a choice. Deciding between the job and a sick child is a very real problem for employee-parents nationwide. According to "Childcare and Corporate Productivity" by John Fernandez (D.C. Heath & Co., 1986), a survey of 5,000 employees at five major U.S. corporations showed that 82% of working parents said they missed days at work, were tardy, had left work early, and had used work time to deal with various child-care problems. The survey put the lost work time at eight days per parent. In our Memphis facility, based on the number of employees we have with children under six years old, this would add up to about 2,200 days a year.

Such lost work time amounts to millions of dollars across the American work force. Saving those dollars is an economic issue that cuts across business lines.

The American work force is dominated now by dual-career families, and federal statistics show that women make up two-thirds of the new entrants into the labor market. Competition for the most skilled, reliable and talented employees is heating up. Child care and related family issues have become a bottom-line issue for most companies, no matter what they make or sell.

That's why we were interested in starting up A Children's Place. The 8,200-square-foot center, with its age-specific swings, slides, tricycles and even a vegetable garden, opened with a capacity of 82 youngsters. Annual nonfacility-related expenses total $148,000 a year, and the center is operated by Corporate Child Care Management Services Inc. under contract. Parents pay $70 to $85 a week, with scholarships available. A Children's Place now has a waiting list.

But even with a brand-new child care center or a subsidized child care program, a child's illness is still the number-one reason a parent-employee is absent. Most day-care centers and schools send ill children home, fearing that they will infect others and lacking the proper facilities to care for them. The parent-employee focus groups that worked to develop A Children's Place saw early on the need for a safe place to put youngsters who have a low-grade fever, a cold, or who are recovering from strep throat or a recent vaccine. But care for sick children appeared to be an expensive and tricky situation in a group setting such as A Children's Place.

Three keys to a successful sick-child program emerged from our research: consistent staffing, flexibility and affordability for parents. Some companies that tried sick-child programs in their centers staffed them on an as-needed basis. Many times the part-time caregivers were unavailable; the care was sporadic and parents stopped using it. In another situation, a hospital offered care for the sick children of working parents, but it was $35 a day per child.

The sick room at A Children's Place is isolated from the rest of the day-care center and staffed every day by a medically trained person. Two days a week, a student nurse from one of the hospital training programs takes care of youngsters at no cost to the center as a part of her college requirements. The other three days a pediatrician cares for any sick children.

Sniffles and Snuggles is averaging two children a day. Employees whose children do not regularly attend A Children's Place are welcome as drop-ins, but they must be pre-registered. For children already enrolled in the center there is no extra charge for sick-room care, but drop-ins pay $15 a day—and fees include meals and snacks.

What do sick-room caregivers do if there are no sick children? They must be flexible enough to work with the regular classroom teachers—for example, older toddlers are learning folk songs from the pediatrician. The children become accustomed to seeing the Sniffles and Snuggles caregivers in the classrooms, and that makes the sick-child room less threatening. It also stretches the staffing dollar.

Although the total economic value of A Children's Place to the company is still being assessed, preliminary figures—and anecdotal evidence from grateful parents—shows Sniffles and Snuggles has real bottom-line value.

Ms. Moran is director of Diversity/Employee Services at Schering-Plough Health-Care Products in Memphis, Tenn.

WORK & FAM LY

BY SUE SHELLE ARGER

Child-Care Crunch ●uts Parents Between The Kids and the Boss

IT IS ONE of parents' most painful dilemmas: Your boss changes your work hours, and you can't find child care.

You hit the phones to call child-care providers and find too-short hours or sky-high fees everywhere. A gut-wrenching mental image of your kids, home alone as you leave for work, clouds your thinking. You plead for understanding with your boss, who looks pained but offers little help.

Despite your best efforts, you just can't be at work when the boss wants. Then, you get fired.

Court dockets nationwide bear evidence of a trend: More workers are getting disciplined or fired because they can't find child care. Diane Mutchler, a Federal Express agent in Pittsburgh and mother of three, was fired after she failed to report to a night-shift assignment for lack of child care. Joy Newland, a clerk for a Minot, N.D., drug wholesaler and mother of three, lost her job because her boss assigned her to an "on-call" evening shift during hours no child-care provider would accept. David Prickett, a single father and mechanic for a Minneapolis circuit-board maker, was fired because he couldn't find child care for his shift.

After two decades of exponential growth in day care and working parents, why are employees still being forced to choose between their children and their jobs?

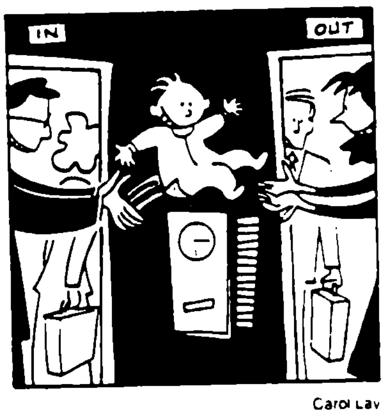
The answer is that the rules of the workplace are changing, and the child-care system isn't keeping up. As if turning your kids over to someone else every day weren't complicated enough, workers are losing control over their hours, too. Weekend and night work, forced overtime and involuntary part-time work with unpredictable hours are on the rise as employers fine-tune schedules to cut costs or improve service. But most child-care providers are mired in the 9-to-5 era, excluding part-timers and fining parents for picking up children late.

THE CLASH POSES one of the saddest no-win situations in today's workplace. Employers can't win when an employee lacks child care to comply with a schedule change. Their best hope, as a human resources executive at a New York financial services concern with 24-hour customer-service operations says, may be that "we've never had to fire anybody" for it.

But "companies sometimes forget that these employees live in the community," says Michael Lotito, West Coast managing partner for the law firm of Jackson, Lewis, Schnitzler & Krupman. Picture the egg on an employer's face, he suggests, if friends and neighbors ask a fired parent, " 'Hey, I thought you were working for ABC Corp.' And they say, 'Well, I was, but I couldn't find child care. So I go to my supervisor and he says he doesn't care about my kid—he's got a department to operate.' "

Employees can't win either. Many depend on child-care arrangements so fragile that they collapse at the slightest schedule change. In a handoff much like "a football game," a New York father says, he and his wife, who work back-to-back shifts at a pharmaceutical plant, meet at 3:15 p.m. daily at the plant. She watches their son in the car while he changes into his work uniform. He watches their son while she changes out of her uniform. She punches out at 3:30 p.m., they kiss goodbye, and he punches in a few seconds later.

Few people notice such stresses—until a parent panics and the problem



Carol Lay

erupts in its ugliest form. In a much-publicized case a few years ago, Chante Fernandez, an Elizabeth, N.J., single mother and full-time secretary, locked her five-year-old daughter in her car while she worked weekends at a second job at a nearby mall.

DEFENDING HER decision as "an act of desperation" after a fruitless search for weekend child care, Ms. Fernandez told police she pendec

Such incidents "happen more often than anyone has recorded," says Joan Zorza, senior attorney for the National Center on Women and Family Law. The dearth of child-care services, child-care advocates say, is society's failing. "The employer feels, 'Why should I be burdened? I haven't done anything,' " Ms. Zorza says. "In a sense, the employer is right."

But being right adds up wrong when employers are paying the bill anyway—in lost workers and higher payroll taxes, as state courts increasingly hold employers responsible for unemployment compensation in child care-related firings. The best solution, consultants say, is for employer and employee to work together—with the employer helping look for child care and asking for volunteers to swap hours. Federal Express won't comment on Ms. Mutchler's case. But the company says it balances employees' needs with those of its operation and provides as much notice as possible to workers whose shifts are changed. It also recently added an employee child-care referral service.

"The employer is obliged not to be judgmental and to be willing to talk, investigate, evaluate different approaches," Mr. Lotito says. "After you go through all that, you may still have to say, 'There is nothing that I can do for you. But that doesn't mean I don't care.' "

The real question, perhaps, is whether anyone can care enough in today's workplace. With employers still more inclined to stretch workers further, clashes over child care are "only going to get worse," predicts the New York human-resources executive. The trend "is putting tremendous strain on people. We're only seeing the tip of the iceberg."

New Salvo in Custody Wars

LOS ANGELES TIMES 8/3/94

■ **Courts:** How much can a single parent rely on day care? How important is care from a family member? A Michigan case raises fears—and hackles.

By ELIZABETH MEHREN
TIMES STAFF WRITER

Just about the only thing the parties in Ireland vs. Smith agree upon is that the case was never intended to be an indictment of day care. What they were arguing about, Jennifer Ireland and Steven Smith say through their lawyers, was child support and custody—nothing more.

But in ruling that 3-year-old Maranda Kate Ireland-Smith would be more likely to find "security .... a safe place . [and] permanency" in the home of her father and paternal grandparents than in the day-care facility where she was sent by her college student mother, a Michigan judge has unleashed a full-force tempest.

Suddenly, the issues of single mothers who pursue their educations, children who are not "raised and supervised by blood relatives" and "child-parents"—unwed mothers and fathers who bring offspring into the world before they are themselves of majority age—were under a microscope.

"The mother's academic pursuits, although laudable, are demanding, and in order to complete her program it necessitates the leaving of the child for a considerable portion of its life in the care of strangers," Macomb County Circuit Court Judge Raymond Cashen wrote in explaining his decision to place Maranda in the custody of her 20-year-old father and his parents.

Cashen's conclusions followed nine days of hearings initiated when Ireland sought child support payments of $12per week. Smith countersued, demanding custody of Maranda. It was the first appearance in court for Ireland and Smith, who are not married and who grew up in Mount Clemens, Mich., a working-class community not far from Detroit.

In an opinion released last week, the judge riled representatives from women's groups and child advocacy organizations when he added: "There is no way that a single parent, attending an academic program at an institution as prestigious as the University of Michigan, can do justice to their studies and to the raising of an infant child."

Legal experts also expressed reservations about the ruling.

Kim Gandy, executive vice president of the National Organization for Women, called the decision shocking, adding: "It puts women who are doing the very best they can do for their children into a lose-lose-lose situation."

Leslie de Pietro, a counselor at the Family Resources Center at the University of Michigan, was equally appalled, asserting, "To me the biggest irony in this case is that the judge is essentially saying to single mothers, 'stay at home, go on welfare, let the taxpayers support you and be that kind of role model.' "

And Scott A. Altman, a family law professor at the University of Southern California, branded Cashen's action as "just simple, plain, old-fashioned gender discrimination," where the prevailing view is that "women should not be pursuing their education, and if they do, they should be punished."

With 15 days before the ruling was to take effect, 19-year-old Jennifer Ireland was in seclusion. Through her attorneys, who filed an emergency motion Monday, asking the Michigan Court of Appeals to block the judge's order, she declined interview requests.

But Smith, who lives with his parents while working part time in the local parks department and attending a community college, said he was overjoyed by the decision.

His only disappointment, Smith said by telephone from Mount Clemens, was that the wording of Cashen's opinion "makes it sound like a day-care issue, and it's not. There are many more facets to this case than just day care."

The "moral fitness" of both parties was, for example, an area that Cashen dwelt on heavily in his ruling. The judge described Ireland as "sexually indiscriminate as a young girl." Smith, Cashen said, "wasn't much better"—adding that both parties "had a great fetish for partying" and that neither parent deserved "medals for their youthful activities."

Cashen also examined the consistency of Maranda's care to date, concluding that "the maternal-grandparent was the staying force in the early raising of the child." He also credited Ireland's mother with having provided the bulk of Maranda's financial support since birth.

He failed, however, to pay credence to allegations of domestic violence raised by Ireland against Smith. "The parties in their youthful way apparently crashed or mauled one another," Cashen wrote. "It is all superfluous."

But while Cashen, who declined interview requests because he has jurisdiction over the case until Maranda is 18, dismissed the domestic violence issue as "not pertinent," Ireland's attorneys said the matter would figure prominently in the appeal.

No one disputed the basic facts of the case. Ireland was a 15-year-old high school sophomore when she became pregnant. Smith, then a 16-year-old student at the same parochial school, acknowledged paternity. They considered abortion, adoption and briefly had the child in foster care. Marriage was never an option.

While her mother served as Maranda's primary caregiver, Ireland finished high school as a cheerleader with a 4.0 grade point average. She earned a scholarship to the University of Michigan and moved to Ann Arbor. In Ireland's freshman year as a liberal arts major, Maranda spent about 35 hours per week in the care of Annette Johnson, a licensed child-care provider near the university campus.

"She's a sweet little girl,"

'The judge misunderstands what 'stability' is and what 'the home' is. [To the judge], the home means you are in the same bedroom until you are 18. To most people, home is an emotional attachment, and the people you are with, not a place.'

JULIE FIELD
Attorney for the plaintiff

Wall Street Journal

8/1/94

WORK & FAMILY

By Sue Shellenbarger

Judges Show Sympathy For Child-Care Troubles

THE COURTS are growing more tolerant of workers' child-care woes.

Citing "modern child-care realities," the Minnesota Supreme Court ruled that a father who failed to report to work because he couldn't find child care showed no "lack of concern for his job."

David Prickett, a day-shift mechanic for Circuit Science, a Minneapolis circuit-board maker, was told one Friday in 1992 to report to the 3:20 p.m. shift on Monday. Although Mr. Prickett, a single father with custody of his three-year-old son, asked his mother, sister and neighbors for help, he couldn't find care.

Mr. Prickett reported to work at his old time, 6:50 a.m. on Monday, and told his boss, who gave him some time off. Mr. Prickett contacted five day-care centers in the next three days and kept in daily touch with his employer, but he had no luck. In less than two weeks, he was fired, then denied unemployment benefits for job misconduct.

Thus began a two-year legal battle over $4,000 in benefits. The state supreme court's decision on June 30 in Mr. Prickett's favor overturned Minnesota court rulings in 1953 and 1958 that people lacking child care were "unavailable for work" and should be denied unemployment.

Citing more recent rulings in Florida and North Dakota state courts that showed tolerance for employees' child-care problems, the court also noted that Mr. Prickett might have been subject to criminal child-neglect charges if he had left his child home alone. The decision reflects a legal trend acknowledging the scarcity of flexible child care, says Tim Theisen, an Anoka, Minn., attorney for Mr. Prickett.

Workers Get Better At the Balancing Act

ALTHOUGH WORKERS' lives have grown more harried in recent years, employees also are doing a better job of managing the competing demands of the job and personal life, a long-term study of employees at a big electronics company shows.

The study by Boston University's Center on Work and Family compared 1985 and 1992 surveys at the company, which refused to let its name be used. The studies showed a decline in morale and job satisfaction, reflecting downsizing and competitive pressures. Employees who said they wished for more family time "always" or "most of the time" rose to 56% in 1992 from 47% in 1985. Nearly half said they lack time for themselves.

But nearly twice as many employees were satisfied with their child care; 80% said they were comfortable in 1992, compared with 42% in 1985. Employees also said it was easier to adjust work schedules to gain family time, visit friends and avoid rush-hour traffic. The study credits the company's six-year-old child-care-referral and flexible-scheduling policies for at least part of the improvement.

The study also signals new directions for work-family programs. About 44% of those surveyed in 1992 expect to start caring for an elderly relative in the next few years, compared with 35% who plan to have children. Employees already caring for elders had more problems in 1992 than those with child-care duties, reflecting a lack of elder-care resources, the study says. Employees caring for elders are at the same stage now that those with child-care problems were in 1985, posing "a new and perhaps greater challenge" for employers.

Amid declining morale and loyalty and accelerating workplace change, programs to help employees balance jobs and personal concerns can be "a core strategy" for employers in "establishing a new employee contract," the study notes.

New Family Leave Law Violates Old Policies

THE FAMILY-leave law is running afoul of employers' absence policies.

The federal guarantee of 12 weeks' unpaid time off for childbirth, adoption or personal or family illness clashes with some companies' practice of disciplining or firing people who fail, for any reason, to meet attendance standards. Many employers haven't updated policies to reflect the law. About 9% of family-leave complaints to the Labor Department come from employees who claim they were illegally disciplined for taking leave.

Manuel Gomez, a former aircraft assembler at a General Dynamics plant in San Diego, had been off for three weeks and was under treatment for anxiety and depression when he returned to his job. Although he was drowsy from an antidepressant drug, he resumed work drilling holes in an airplane fusilage from a third-floor scaffold. Moments later, the drill slipped out of his hand and glanced off his head. Mr. Gomez took a few more days off so his doctor could reduce and monitor his medication. But when he returned to work, he was fired for violating the company's absence policy, he says.

Mr. Gomez claims his absence was allowed under the family-leave law. A Labor Department investigator agreed and asked General Dynamics to restore Mr. Gomez's job, according to a letter from a department official to Rep. Bob Filner (D., Calif.). General Dynamics refused, and Labor Department lawyers are reviewing the case. The company declines to comment.

It gets particularly sticky when employees asking for time off don't specify that they want to be covered under the family leave law. That leaves the burden on the boss to discern whether the absence falls into categories protected by the law.

Public & Private

ANNA QUINDLEN

Done In By Day Care

Sometimes you just can't win for losing. Particularly if you're a single mother in America.

Jennifer Ireland got pregnant when she was 15. She was a cheerleader; boyfriend was the captain of the football team. She decided to have a baby rather than an abortion, graduated third in her high school class, and won a scholarship to the University of Michigan. When she moved to Ann Arbor she took with her Maranda Ireland-Smith, now 3. Maranda was enrolled in a licensed day-care home, where a woman cared for her own two children and three others.

And that explains how the 19-year-old student came to lose custody of her child.

Confused? Oh, yes, so are we all, except, apparently, for Judge Raymond Cashen. He had to find "clear and convincing" evidence to take Maranda away from her mother and award custody to the father, Steve Smith, 20. And in his written opinion the sole difference he finds between the two is that Jennifer uses paid day care and Steve will not.

"Under the future plans of the mother, the minor child will be in essence raised and supervised a great part of the time by strangers," the judge wrote.

Overruling the recommendations of two impartial child welfare groups, Judge Cashen decided that the little girl, who has never lived with her father full time, should go to him. While Steve, too, goes to college, Maranda will be cared for by his mother. A classic: on the one hand, a man who has found a woman to handle his domestic concerns. On the other, a woman trying to do it herself. It's the equivalent of a good mother losing custody because she works and her ex-husband's new wife not.

Memo to the judge: Get real.

This decision is an outrage. It is insulting to people who provide loving day-care environments in their homes. The woman who cares for Maranda is no more a "stranger" than her kindergarten teacher will someday be.

It reinforces the knee-jerk belief that relatives make better caregivers, which is not necessarily so. A study by the Families and Work Institute in New York listed among its most surprising findings that "children are not more likely to be securely attached to providers who are relatives than to nonrelatives."

And it reflects a view astonishingly out of touch with the world. "There is no way," wrote the judge, "that a single parent, attending an academic program at an institution as prestigious as the University of Michigan, can do justice to their studies and the raising of an infant child." For all of us with rigorous jobs and small children, that not only is patently false, it's deeply offensive.

Last week came word from the Census Bureau that the number of women having babies without getting married had soared over the last decade. A substantial number are teen-agers who leave school and go on welfare. Their futures evaporate when their babies arrive.

And then there is Jennifer Ireland. The judge tarred her in his opinion as "sexually indiscriminate" and said that when she was in high school she left much of the rearing of Maranda to her mother. (Somehow, when she did this it was a vice; when Maranda's father proposes it, it becomes a virtue.)

But though she would never lead the life of an average college student, Jennifer tried to forge ahead. Then she made a mistake. She went to court to collect child support. And after she was awarded a paltry $8 a week, her former boyfriend smacked her with a custody suit.

She thought her ambition would count in her favor. And in his opinion the judge noted that as she grew older "a new maturity and determination made itself evident." But maturity, and maternity, were overridden by a kind of Donna Reed cultural terrorism, the notion that mothers who work, even work at bettering themselves for the sake of their children, are second-rate.

One of her attorneys said that if Jennifer had stayed home and gone on welfare she would never have lost her daughter. True, maybe, but then she'd have to listen to politicians, who have made unmarried mothers the new official national scapegoat, pontificate about how she should be forced to go to work, go to school, get off the dole. Can't win for losing; damned if she strives, damned if she doesn't. This case goes next to an appeals court. Let's hope someone there is from Planet Earth and not mired in Fantasyland. □

In a Utah the judge reversed a ruling that had given custody a father because the mother had children in day care and the father had a new stay-at-home wife, saying that there was no evidence to support the idea that the step-mother would be better than day care.

"Some judges are stuck in the 1950's roles of parents," Mr. Atkinson said. "But I'd say the trend is that most judges are not."

The problem, several experts said, is that judges still have such wide discretion to interpret what a child's best interests are. "There are many judges who make equitable decisions," Ms. Erickson said. "But because women do not know which kind of judge they're going to get, they're terrified of custody battles."

Custody Case Stirs Debate on Bias Against Working Women

-NEW YORK TIMES 7/31/94

By SUSAN CHIRA

A Mi igan judge's decision to take way from a mother who la r in day care has created a uror ver whether courts are biased gainst working mothers and has re-indled debate about the broad lee-ay judges have in deciding what is the interests of a child.

To many custody experts and wom-n's advocates, this case reflects a idespread, lingering bias among dges that penalizes mothers in cus-dy disputes for working or going to chool. To other experts and fathers' ghts proponents, the case is an xception to the rule that most judges ill d to favor mothers over fa-ers.

"There is certainly a backlash in e custody area against women who t some sort of independence, in vor of fathers who offer, albeit be-tedly, some concrete evidence of anting to be involved with their chil-ren," said Carol Bruch, a professor law at the University of California Davis.

This impression has been bolstered several recent cases in which fa-ers have won custody or have con-sted adoptions. Among these is the cent Illinois decision to take the ild known as Baby Richard from s adoptive parents and give him to s biological parents.

Mothers Are Favored

B en Effron, who heads the stody committee of the American r Association, said, "Even though e courtroom is supposed to be gen-r neutral, when I represent the ther, it's an uphill battle because s still the mommy."

Because no one can track the custo- decisions in all the nation's courts, th sides concede that it is impossi- to tell whether most judges still ld traditional views. But the Michi-n case has stirred passions that ickly moved beyond the Macomb unty Circuit Court.

Jennifer Ireland and Steve Smith re 15-year-old high school students en she discovered she was preg-nt. Their daughter, Maranda, was n three years ago, and until re-tly lived with her mother and ndmother, who is a professional nny and took care of her while Ms. land finished high school. Maran-s father did not see her until she s a r old, but after that he ited her frequently.

After receiving a scholarship to the iversity of Michigan, Ms. Ireland ved to Ann Arbor with Maranda and placed her in day care 35 hours a week. The father sued for custody, saying that his mother, a full-time housewife, would take care of Maranda while he took courses at a local community college and worked part time.

ow do judges ine what's st for a child?

Similar Arguments

Judge Raymond Cashen ruled that the claims of the mother and the father were identical in every way except that Mr. Smith and his family would provide Maranda with more stability than she could receive living with her mother.

The judge said that Maranda had formed a primary bond to her mother and grandmother, and that the day care at the University of Michigan was good. But he concluded that Ms. Ireland's student life would involve more moving around, care in the hands of strangers and therefore less continuity.

"Under the plan of the mother, the minor child will be in essence raised and supervised a great part of the time by strangers," his opinion said. "Under the future plan of the father, the minor child will be raised and supervised by blood relatives."

In his opinion, the judge also discounted Ms. Ireland's charges that Mr. Smith had twice pushed or struck her; Mr. Smith's lawyer, Sharon-Lee Edwards, said these charges were filed only after Mr. Smith began seeking custody. Mr. Smith at first did not pay any child support, though Ms. Edwards replied that Ms. Ireland had prevented him from seeing his daughter and that he earned little money while attending high school full time. He was initially ordered to pay $8 a week and then $12.

Appeal Is Planned

Judge Cashen would not comment on the case, and neither would Ms. Ireland or her lawyer, who said only that they planned to appeal.

Several custody experts, including Ms. Effron, denounced the ruling as both unfair to a mother whose child would benefit if she got a good education and as a common example of a court's failure to consider psychological factors, including which parent had the primary bond with the child.

But some lawyers, including Arthur Balbirer, the immediate past president of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, said the judge was reflecting a legal preference for biological care. Even many lawyers who said they disagreed with the decision in this particular case said judges should take into account how many hours each parent can spend with children. It is not clear in this case whether Mr. Smith could be at home more, although his lawyer asserts he would be absent only two days a week.

Mr. Balbirer and Eleanor B. Alter, who represented Mia Farrow, said they counseled fathers wanting custody, just as they did mothers, to make sure they are working reasonable hours, even if that means hurting r careers.

In any case, custody experts agree, judges tend to dislike out-of-home child care.

"Many judges tend to believe that care by someone other than the biological parent is inferior to care by the biological parent," said Jeff Atkinson, a former chairman of the American Bar Association's custody committee who follows custody cases nationwide. "But we should be looking the quality of the parent-child relationship and at the quality of the child care. One shouldn't make the automatic assumption that day care is always worse."

A recent study by the Families and Work Institute, a research organization based in New York, said care by relatives was often no better and sometimes worse than that by day care centers.

But many women's advocates who follow cases around the country say many judges are not only unaware of day care's potential strengths but also often biased against working women as well.

"This case is regrettably not in the least unusual," said Lynne Hecht Schafran, a lawyer with the NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund. "Women should not be penalized for working outside the home. That is what is happening in many courts today."

Ms. Schafran, Professor Bruch, and Nancy S. Erickson, a lawyer with the National Center on Women and Family Law, based in New York, cited a number of cases within the last several years that appeared to penalize working mothers.

In San Jose last year, a court awarded custody to a father because the mother, who was going to law school, had allowed her boyfriend to take care of her son part time.

Surveys Show Bias

And in a case that was ultimately overturned but that experts said was typical of many around the country, a California court ruled that a working mother should lose custody to a father who had remarried and whose wife would stay at home to take care of the children.

Several states that are examining gender bias in the courts, including Colorado, Massachusetts and New York, cited surveys of lawyers or judges suggesting that custody decisions sometimes or often favored remarried fathers with stay-at-home wives. A 1990 Massachusetts survey said half the probate judges felt that mothers should be at home when children return from school and that preschool children were likely to suffer if their mothers worked.

But Mr. Atkinson said the judges' dislike for day care just as often hurt fathers who could not call on relatives to watch their children while they work. He also cited several opinions in which judges had made strong statements in support of working mothers and, sometimes, day care.

Mom loses custody over day care

By Charmagne Helton
USA TODAY 7/27

A Mount Clemens, Mich., judge has given custody of a child to the father because the mother puts the toddler in day care while she goes to college.

Macomb County Circuit Judge Raymond Cashen Monday awarded custody of 3-year-old Maranda to Steven Smith, who will leave the child with his mother during the day.

The child's mother, Jennifer Ireland, 19, is a student at the University of Michigan. The two lived in campus housing during the week and with Ireland's mother on weekends, summers and holidays.

Women's groups are in an uproar.

"This decision is a slap in the face to working mothers," says Gloria Woods of the National Organization for Women.

Cashen calls the day-care issue "pivotal" in his decision. Ireland would be "leaving the child for a considerable portion of its life in the care of strangers," Cashen says.

Cashen also says the child's paternal grandmother could provide more stability because she is a homemaker.

Family counselor Leslie de Pietro of the Family Care Resources Center at the University of Michigan disagrees.

"This ruling is a condemnation of all working women who are trying to better themselves," she says.

But Smith's attorney, Sharon-Lee Edwards, says women's groups "are jumping on the bandwagon without even knowing all the facts. Don't rally around her just because she's a woman."

Ireland's lawyer, Julie Field, says that if anyone has neglected Maranda, it's Smith, 20, who didn't pay child support for two years.

Field plans to file an appeal.

NY TIMES 7.27.94

Day Care Costs Mother Custody of Daughter, 3

MOUNT CLEMENS, Mich., July 26 (AP) — A judge has ordered a woman to give up her 3-year-old daughter, saying the girl's father deserved custody because the mother put her in day care and the father would not.

The judge, Raymond Cashen of Macomb County Circuit Court, ruled on Monday in the case of Steve Smith, Jennifer Ireland and their daughter, Maranda.

Ms. Ireland had put the girl in a day care center for 35 hours a week while she was taking classes at the University of Michigan. Mr. Smith plans to have his mother take care of the child while he is at work.

The ruling enforced the judge's earlier opinion that he intended to grant custody to Mr. Smith. "A child gains the feeling of security, a safe place by virtue of permanency," Judge Cashen wrote on June 27.

He said that living with her mother, Maranda would be "in essence raised and supervised a great part of the time by strangers.' While living with her father, the judge said, Maranda would be "raised and supervised by blood relatives."

Ms. Ireland's lawyers said they would seek an emergency order from the Michigan Court of Appeals to block the ruling, which requires her to hand over her daughter within 15 days. The judge gave Ms. Ireland visitation on alternate weekends, holidays and at other times.

Mr. Smith, 20, and Ms. Ireland, 19, were high school classmates when she became pregnant. They never married.

Jacquie Steingold, a board member of the National Organization for Women, said, "It illustrates an attitude toward women about where they should be — the bedroom, kitchen and those kind of places, not at college."

The Clarion-Ledger Wednesday, July 27, 1994

Day care money wasted, audit finds

Frivolities such as designer salt-and-pepper shakers were bought with money intended for poor children, auditor says.

By Emily Wagster
Clarion-Ledger Staff Writer

Millions of federal dollars meant for poor Mississippi children's day care was never spent or was wasted on frivolities such as designer salt-and-pepper shakers, state Auditor Steve Patterson said Tuesday.

Some contractors for the state Department of Human Services — those accused of wasting the money — eventually could face criminal charges, Patterson predicted as he released an audit for the budget year that ended June 30, 1993.

Patterson

"Contained within this audit is a terrible picture of the mismanagement of critical child care assistance monies," Patterson said. "Not contained in it is the indifference and virtually nonchalant attitude we encountered as we uncovered a grant program rife with frivolities, waste, apathy and outright incompetence."

Officials from the U.S. Inspector General's and the state Attorney General's offices begin an investigation next week. That investigation could lead to criminal charges, Patterson said.

Later Tuesday, Department of Human Services Director Gregg Phillips slammed Patterson for calling a news conference to release the audit. Human Services investigators uncovered the misspending and brought it to Patterson's attention months ago, Phillips said.

"One word comes to mind: grandstanding," Phillips said. "Our state auditor is playing a stupid political game by trying to take credit for someone else's work."

Patterson, auditor since 1992 and longtime Democratic Party activist, said he hasn't ruled out challenging Republican Gov. Kirk Fordice, Phillips' boss, in the 1995 election.

Human Services' investigation of a $15 million Child Care and Development Block Grant was finished two months ago, Phillips said.

"Gregg Phillips is a liar," Patterson said later. "We received printed copies of this audit last Thursday."

See PATTERSON, 9A

Questions about Human Services' federal block grant spending were raised beginning in 1992 when Ruth Ann Williams, wife of Fordice campaign supporter Liles Williams, was director of the agency's Office for Children and Youth. Phillips asked Ruth Ann Williams to resign in March 1993, after he took charge of the agency.

Neither Phillips nor Patterson would discuss whether Williams is responsible for any of the misspending. They would not name people accused of wrongdoing.

Patterson said his office examined records for $8.3 million of the $15 million grant. Some other examples of misspending:

- A child-care provider with a home office spent federal money on lawn maintenance, repairs to personal furniture and subscriptions to local newspapers. The person also spent $37.50 on the designer salt-and-pepper shakers.
- About $400,000 was spent for construction and improvements to a rental building in violation of [illegible]eral law.
- A day care provider received $129,000 in federal money before getting a license for business.

Patterson said he believes patterns of misspending spring from Human Services workers' disdainful attitudes about people on welfare.

"Their attitude is 'cut the f[illegible]d spigot off and the lazy rascals will get a job and go to work,'" Patterson said.

Phillips said the misspending is further proof that federal [illegible]llars should go directly to parents as vouchers for child care instead of to child-care providers. "I'd ra[illegible] it in the hands of the mother [illegible] let her decide what to do," he said.

But some single mothers eligible for public child-care support say they've had a tough time getting help from Human Services.

LaShay Sanders, 15, said she to drop out of school last semester because she couldn't get federal or state money to pay someone to care for her baby, who's now 9 months old. She said she filled out papers Human Services requires, only to be told she needed more information, then more information each time she visited the agency.

"If we could get more child-care help, we could go ahead and make something of ourselves," Sanders said.

Salestino Horton, 26, has a job and is trying to work her way off welfare. But her salary as a day care worker isn't enough to pay expenses for her and her three children, ages 5, 6 and 7. She said she applied to Human Services for child-care assistance in December — and hasn't gotten any response.

"I'm a very independent person. I want to work," Horton said. "They should help us until we can completely get off the (welfare) programs."

RS

STAR BULLETIN JULY 22, 1994

Aid moves mom toward independence

By Helen Altonn
Star-Bulletin

Joni Gates: "I know a lot of girls on welfare. . . . I tell them, 'I did it. You can.' "

JONI Gates says the welfare system allowed her to escape an abusive husband, then gave her the chance to go to college and become independent.

Gates, now 37, had a 17-month-old daughter and was pregnant with her son when she left her husband and went to a shelter for battered women, she said. She could have accepted family help but said she turned to welfare because she "just wanted to take care of my children by myself and be independent."

She became inspired to go to college after a YWCA program featuring a Kamehameha Schools official talking about self-esteem and financial aid for schooling. She said she set a goal "to get a degree and go for it. . . . Everything worked out perfect."

She joined Project Success, a forerunner of the state Job Opportunities and Basic Skills program for welfare recipients. When it folded, she applied for financial aid at Leeward Community College and was accepted.

Her problem then: "Who was going to watch my babies?"

JOBS solved her problem, covering expenses for her transportation, school supplies and child care at the Mililani Presbyterian preschool, which she chose.

She earned an associate degree in accounting in December.

Gates volunteered for the JOBS unit in Waipahu while going to college and in February was hired as an emergency worker in the JOBS administrative offices.

She left welfare two months ago. "That was a good feeling," she said. She and her husband also reunited. "We both sought help. We said, 'We've gotta make it work.' "

Gates, a graduate of Sacred Hearts Academy, married when she was 20 and was divorced after eight years and two children, now 15 and 14.

She worked as a customer service manager for a title company on the mainland before her present, six-year marriage and two more children, now 5 and 4.

She is seeking a permanent position as a JOBS accounting clerk, saying she really likes her job, "but my heart is with the clients. . . . I know a lot of girls on welfare. I tell them what I went through. I tell them, 'I did it. You can.' "

She advises them to apply for aid for college while waiting to get into JOBS, so they'll be "a couple of steps ahead."

She said they're discouraged by the amount of paperwork, but she tells them: "What's wrong with that? They're helping you."

It's Hard to Do Day Care Right—and Survive

1/20/94

By Sue Shellenbarger
Staff Reporter of The Wall Street Journal

DONNA KRAUSE is in a cutthroat business. When she raises prices just 3%, she loses customers to cheaper competitors. While she tries to provide high-quality service, she can't pay enough to keep trained workers. To cut costs, she has professional employees scrub toilets and mop floors, and she spends her evenings shopping for cheap supplies. Still, twice in the past month she has had to dip into her personal savings just to meet the payroll.

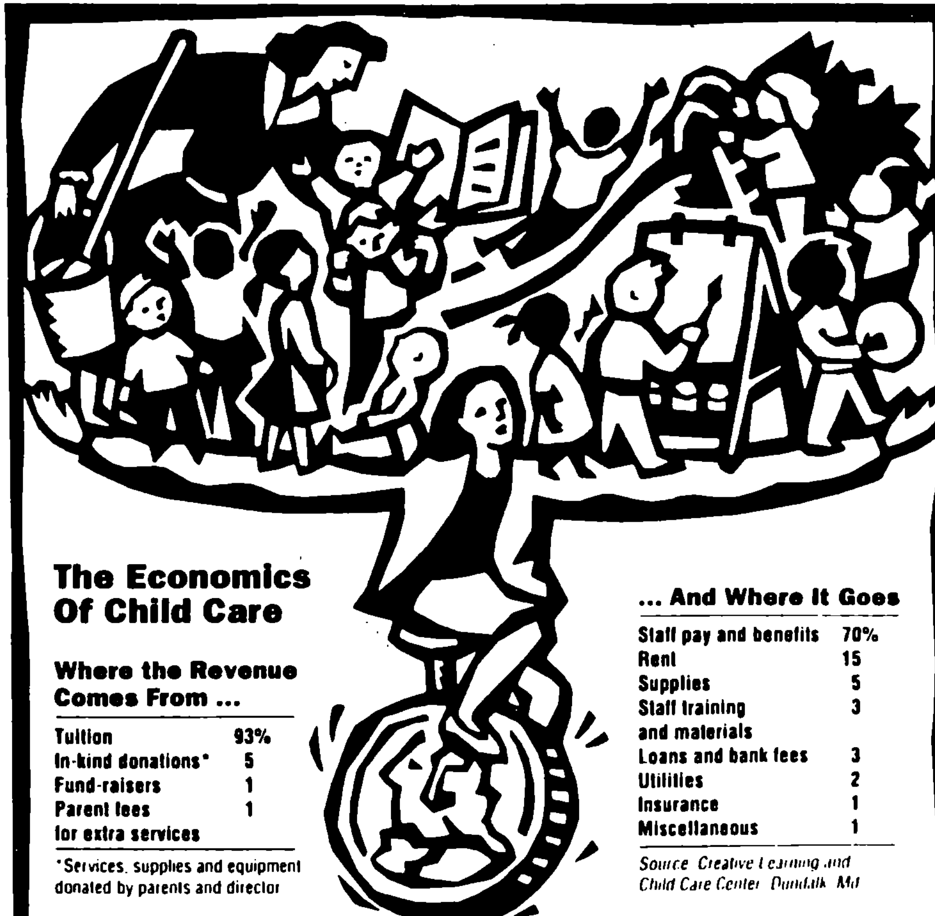
First of three articles

Ms. Krause's business: She cares for children. "There just aren't enough resources to go around," says the owner and director of Creative Learning and Child Care Center in Dundalk, Md. "We drive ourselves crazy and we drive our parents crazy" trying to make ends meet.

U.S. child care is increasingly under attack by researchers as mediocre or even harmful to children. A new generation of studies concludes that only a small minority of the estimated nine million children in child care outside their homes get the nurturing attention they need. "Compared with what we used to see in the 1970s, I would have to say that the quality of child care is declining," says Carollee Howes, a professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, and a leading child-care researcher.

A close look at the economics of child care suggests that quantum leaps in quality won't come soon. A vast underground market for cheap, unregulated care acts as a ball-and-chain on centers' prices. Most experts believe that low teacher turnover, staff training, ample materials and a planned curriculum help to achieve quality day care. But despite their good intentions, directors of child-care centers must make excruciating tradeoffs to attain even one or two of these goals.

Ms. Krause, who has a master's degree in education, all the resources she can into teacher pay and train- She spent $2,000 last year to expand an in-house teacher resource center and runs training courses. She ekes out 25- to 50-cent-an-hour annual raises for her teachers, who start at a minimum of $1.50 an hour, partly by spending her evenings shopping for cheap cleaning fluids and sink strainers. Last year, when the center finished the year with a small profit, she split it among the teachers.



The Economics Of Child Care

Where the Revenue Comes From ...

Tuition	93%
In-kind donations*	5
Fund-raisers	1
Parent fees for extra services	1

*Services, supplies and equipment donated by parents and director

... And Where It Goes

Staff pay and benefits	70%
Rent	15
Supplies	5
Staff training and materials	3
Loans and bank fees	3
Utilities	2
Insurance	1
Miscellaneous	1

Source: Creative Learning and Child Care Center, Dundalk, Md.

Nancy Doniger

But giving raises is getting harder each year. When Ms. Krause raised tuition just 50 cents a day a few years ago to $70 a week, she lost six families from her 90-child center. So she badgers her parents to help fix gate latches and donate toys, and she runs constant fund-raisers, blank the neighborhood with kids selling candy bars. e ends meet, she had to fire the cleaning servic sk teachers to wash cots and scrub toys. "That's a dirty job for someone who has a degree," she says. Asked where the next budget cut will come from, she says, "There is no other" that can be made.

Increasingly, her teachers are quitting for higher-paying jobs. When one teacher left abruptly earlier this year to take a temporary job at General Motors for $13 an hour, painful ripples spread through the center. "Her partner cried all day" out of a sense of betrayal and frustration that she would have to train a new co-worker in the thousands of details of running a classroom, Ms. Krause says. Worse yet, "boom, she's out of the lives of the kids."

Mary Wortman's three-year-old, one of the children in the room, "just doesn't understand where [his teacher] went. He wants to see her," his mother says. Ms. Wortman, a first-grade teacher and former child-care worker herself, worries that if too many important people depart from a preschooler's life, "it becomes very hard for a child to trust anybody."

Some centers, particularly non-profit centers that receive donated space, manage to hold teacher turnover down by using as much as 80% of their budgets for salaries. Still, they often have to sacrifice basic equipment. Bob French, director of three nonprofit centers in New Bedford, Mass., holds turnover to 10% a year partly by starting staff at $8.32 an hour. He has put together a "tattered patchwork" of subsidies and grants by working seven days a week. But he can't afford to put in a playground at one center even though he has the space; children have to walk to a neighborhood park instead.

Sue Britson, director of the non-profit Step One School in Berkeley, Calif., pays well enough to attract experienced teachers with college degrees. But she spent a week recently trying to shave $1,000 off the center's insurance costs. She also had to make painful cuts in materials, using recycled toys and cheap art supplies. "Kids get less interested in painting" with poor paints, she says. have to work so much harder to get a lousy wa

It's Difficult to Do Child Care Properly And Make Ends Meet

Continued From Page B1

to perform for them."

Among the 35% of child-care centers that operate for profit, many don't make any money. Others eke out slim margins by paying teachers less, while a few target the small proportion of more affluent parents who will pay higher tuition.

Despite the improving economy, center directors say parental resistance to higher prices is intensifying. For many years, Ms. Britson, whose school is in an affluent area, raised tuition 4.5% annually to finance 6% teacher-pay raises. But this year, the formula no longer works. Parents "squeezed their time down to fewer hours so they didn't need full-time care" anymore, she says.

Inflation-adjusted pay for the lowest-paid assistant teachers has actually fallen 1.5% since 1988 to an average of $5.08 an hour, or $8,890 a year, a 1992 study by the Child Care Employee Project shows, leaving many child-care workers below the poverty line. Renee Sutton, a Raleigh, N.C., child-care worker, had to support herself and her two daughters on food stamps while working full-time at $5.40 an hour for a child-care chain.

And annual teacher turnover, already about 25% to 40% industrywide, threatens to get worse as service industries generate more jobs paying $5 to $8 an hour. Ms. Krause has lost two of her 10 teachers in the past month. When she advertises, she fights a losing battle for applicants with a new Home Depot store nearby.

Consuelo Marie Sullivan, one of the teachers leaving Ms. Krause's center, loves the work and moonlighted 16 hours a week selling shoes to pay for night classes in child development. "When parents say, 'Christopher talked about this today,' I can say to myself, 'I taught him that,' " she says. But she is getting married next year and wants to save money, so she has taken a higher-paying job in retailing. "I gotta do what I gotta do," she says.

The best teachers often leave first. Kevin Becketti, a bearded six-footer who works at Step One School, has a talent for working with aggressive kids. He plays basketball with them and tells stories that help them develop self-control. At parties, he delights them by donning a pirate suit. "He is a fabulous teacher," says his boss, Ms. Britson.

But come fall, Mr. Becketti will leave Step One. The only car he can afford, an aged Volkswagen van, can't even make it to the top of the hill where the school is located. "I can't maintain this [salary] and do any of the things I might want to do later on, like have a better car and maybe a house one day," he says.

Though advocacy groups have campaigned to get parents to pay more for child care, parents resist. They are already paying 6% to 30% of their income for day care and either can't or won't pay more. Child care is seen as a low-paying service, "and changing it is not just a matter of changing people's moral sensibility," says James Greenman, a vice president of Resources for Child Care Management, Morristown, N.J.

And unlike France, Belgium, Sweden and Finland, where child care is part of public education, the U.S. leaves child care mostly to the private sector. Day-care costs for some poor families are subsidized, but few people expect government to start financing universal child care.

Improved management alone isn't the answer either. A three-year study at 20 Minneapolis-area child-care programs found that improving management increased resources about 10%. "You're going to need a lot more than a 10% increase in the budget to get those teachers up to $9 or $10 an hour," says Nancy Johnson, director of center-management services for the nonprofit Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association.

"The problem is much bigger," Ms. Johnson says. "This is a failure in the marketplace."

ncreas'ng number of moms stay at home

By TAMMY JOYNER
Gannett News Service

Superwoman has had enough.

After two decades of balancing children and careers to secure a place in corporate America, more working mothers are finding there's no place like home.

The percentage of women in the work force between ages 20 and 44 is dropping for the first time in more than 25 years. The decline is most pronounced among women ages 20 to 24, where the level of working women has slipped to 70 percent from 75 percent since 1989.

Experts say the phenomenon has vast implications for American business. It's causing reduced sales of women's business clothing, higher sales of household merchandise and a growing supply of part-time workers. Discount and outlet retailers have grown as more families cope with a single paycheck.

"Women who are not entering the work force don't need a wardrobe for the office. They also need fewer pairs of pantyhose," concludes a report on the trend written by Richard F. Hokensen, chief economist with Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette in New York.

Janell Phillips of Holly, Mich., is at the leading edge of the trend. The 26-year-old quit her job as a $1,600-a-month insurance saleswoman in August to stay home with her infant son. To make ends meet, she and her husband refinanced their home, and use coupons and comparison-shop to find bargains. She works part time as a waitress to bring in extra cash.

"Some weeks it's real good, some weeks it's scary. On a good week, I bring home $300 in tips," she said.

But she'd rather live on a tighter budget than send 5-month-old Evan to a day-c[illegible]center, she said.

"I ke[illegible]ring these horror stories. You hear on TV what happens at day-care centers and how many kids there are to each person. I couldn't handle the thought of it," she said. "I talked to my husband and said, 'I really don't want to work. I want to stay home.' "

Gannett News Service

Janell Phillips of Holly, Mich., quit her job rather than send son Evan to day care.

High day-care costs and lower interest rates are among the factors influencing women to leave the workplace. For many, going to work just doesn't pay off.

About 80 cents of every dollar earned by the average working mother goes to child care, meals at work, gas and clothing, Hokenson said. Only half of the nation's working women work traditional 9-to-5 jobs, making it difficult to find child care. In addition, many women are tired of juggling work and family, and find their employers still unsympathetic to their role as parents.

A Detroit-area woman, who asked not to be named, said she decided she will close her law office later this year after she heard her daughter tell a playmate she must check a calendar to see when they can play together.

"Every month, my husband and I sat down with his calendar, my calendar and the sitter's calendar to coordinate who would get home in time to relieve her (the sitter)," said the 37-year-old mother of three, who works from 30 to 60 hours a week. "It really hit home. I thought, 'I'm not sure this is the life I wanted, to be ruled by our calendar.' "

She said about 90 percent of her income goes to pay for day care and other costs related to her children.

Other factors driving women back home include barriers to advancement in the workplace, high-tech conveniences that enable people to work from home, corporate downsizing and increased demand for temporary workers.

At-home mothers are starting to show their influence at the cash register.

More families are shifting to private-label goods from brand names to save money, changing the outlook for big corporate names like Kellogg Co., Hokenson said.

In the 1980s, big-name consumer products benefited as two-worker couples had the money for brand names, and didn't have time to shop around for a better value.

Buying power is shifting from office-related buying to home purchases.

Sara Lee Corp., the Chicago-based maker of L'eggs pantyhose, Hanes underwear and food products, recently announced plans to lay off as many as 9,000 workers. Spokeswoman Nancy Young said the company's hosiery business is hurting but sales of sweatsuits and T-shirts are increasing.

Madison Avenue has picked up on the trend, and is pushing more products to mothers, said Judith Langer, president of Langer Associates, a research firm.

The trend is also affecting work habits, as many women who drop full-time careers take part-time positions from home.

"Women are folding work around the family," Hokenson said. "They're looking for flexibility."

LOVING CARE

The Dallas Morning [redacted] Cindy

Courtney Tullis, 1, of Flower Mound, teacher Lu Ann Stavindra of Flower Mound and 1-month-old Kelsey Avans of Carrollton relax a Little Miracles Child Care Center.

Center opens doors to disabled children

By Jeffrey Weiss

Staff Writer of The Dallas Morning News

CARROLLTON — The first day at the Little Miracles child care center was itself a little miracle.

Three children were closely tended. The rest of the four brightly lighted and cheerfully colored rooms were filled with Brenda Sloggett's dream.

Ms. Sloggett, the center's director, foresees 62 children — a mix of disabled and not disabled — playing together in a setting unusual in Dallas-area day care.

Until Monday, her experience had been restricted to two special-needs children and her own three kids in her own home day care program.

The Easter Seals Society, owner of the complex on Josey Lane in Carrollton, jumped at the chance of melding her dream and the needs of many parents of disabled children. Society officia Ms. Sloggett's vision of mainstr children with a variety of lenges.

"Children do not know the ence," said Easter Seals regional d Shirley Knape.

Ms. Sloggett got into the da business by happenstance. Ten half years ago, her son cancer. Chemotherapy knocked o

Please see DAY CARE Page 2

Day care opens doors to disabled

Continued from Page 13A.

malignancy — and his immune system.

Because her son's fragile health made it impossible for him to be with other children for several years, Ms. Sloggett quit her job to stay home.

A few years later, while casting about for a way to make a little money, a friend suggested that she take in a child with Down's syndrome and heart trouble.

Since then, she has generally had a couple of special-needs children playing with hers every day. She also had a growing waiting list that increasingly frustrated her, she said.

Many of the children she cared for were referred by the Easter Seals Society. Last May, she went to Ms. Knape with a proposal: Take some of the rooms in the society's complex and convert them into a day care center.

Ms. Knape said Monday that she had been considering such a program "forever." A survey of parents who bring their children to the center for therapy — about 140 a day — identified a crying need for day care.

Monday, finally, was opening day, and nine full-time staffers were on duty.

"Children do not know the difference."
— Shirley Kı
Easter Seals regional dir

Two 17-month-old girls gurgled happily in the infants' room. One was tethered by a feeding tube pumping food directly into her stomach. The other had no special complaint beyond afternoon crankiness. A 4-year-old boy diagnosed with an attention deficit disorder sat with a teaching aide in a room designed for children his age.

Ultimately, Ms. Sloggett wants the mix to be about 40 percent children with disabilities.

Some special equipment is already in place to make mingling easy. A table set up for Lego blocks is attached to a higher table designed to let a child in a wheelchair play. An outdoor sandbox will be similarly split-level, with an upper compartment high enough for the wheelchair-restricted to reach.

The price for all children runs from $130 a week for infants to $100 a week for 6-year-olds. A part-time program costs about 10 percent less.

Several other disability-specific agencies in the Dallas area also offer day care. But their programs are generally smaller than Little Miracles. And they do not mix a variety of disabled and non-disable as is envisioned in the gram.

"It is pretty un for t ea," said Patrick r, c of United Cerebral Palsy of "It's something that a lot of cies are working toward."

Ms. Sloggett knows some p of children without disabiliti be reluctant to allow their ch to mix with the disabled.

"They're afraid ch might catch 'it,'" she said. "Y need to explain it to ."

Cerebral palsy, no more contagious than born without a th , she miming a missing thumb. shake your hand, it d t your thumb is going to fall o

Ms. Knape is more empha

"You're going to : with prejudice, but the A with Disabilities Act says thes dren have a right to be with peers," she said. "These ch have an awful lot to n them (the disabled), how to come not being perfect."

TIMES

Children Are Harmed

Welfare: Full-time work for aid recipients will be beneficial only if decent child care is available to all.

By BRUCE FULLER and SUSAN D. HOLLOWAY

The Clinton Administration is eagerly sketching the virtuous New Welfare Mother of the 1990s: She awakes early to drop off her youngster at day care, then zooms to Burger King. Sure, she earns just $4.25 an hour, but she has sworn off the evils of welfare. Through the sanctity of working full-time and despite her ignoble past, she rises as a born-again Calvinist.

What's wrong with this lovely picture?

It depends on the mythical mother's ability to find child-care or a preschool spot for her young child. Almost two-thirds of the 4.5 million single mothers on welfare have preschool-age children. But the current day-care system serves just 4 million youngsters nationwide. And "system" is an optimistic misnomer. Preschooling in America is an archipelago of little organizations in basements and churches, thinly stretched over an escalating number of children.

'If President Clinton is serious about strengthening fragile families . . . he must also focus on the most vulnerable members: young children.'

If President Clinton is serious about strengthening fragile families—as he signaled in his first year, implementing the Family Leave Act and cash support for working-poor parents struggling to escape welfare—he must also focus on the most vulnerable members: young children.

Policy-makers rushing to get single mothers off the dole and into jobs could inadvertently push infants and young children into unsafe, low-quality day care. Then we will undoubtedly read more stories of abuse inflicted by care-givers, youngsters left home alone because the baby-sitter didn't show, babies handed off to "friends" of dubious child-care ability in violent neighborhoods.

Thoughtful family policy should aim to reduce welfare dependency and strengthen the quality of young children's lives. This requires that policy-makers and children's advocates tackle three issues as this summer's debate over welfare reform steams up Washington:

- *Dumping more young children into already strained child-care organizations will further erode quality.* Any parent who has shopped around for preschool services has seen distressing disparities in quality, from ... staff. We pay preschool teachers one-fourth the wages earned by public-school teachers. Low-quality preschools turn over half their staff every year. A recent review of Head Start confirmed what insiders had known for years: Rapid expansion has seriously undercut its quality.

- *Poor single mothers have too little access to child care.* The child-care market has barely kept pace with rising demand and the supply of quality preschools is distributed unfairly. Working-class sections of Los Angeles have just 11 preschool classes available for every 1,000 preschool-age children, compared with more than 25 classes per 1,000 in affluent suburbs like San Mateo County or Arlington, Va. Some inner-city neighborhoods and towns in Southern states have no child care at all, or the few that exist are of dismal quality.

Welfare agencies like to nudge mothers into home-based day care, since it saves money. Latino families often opt for modest home-care operations run by Spanish-speaking neighbors who are more personal. But a recent study, drawing on observations of these services in Los Angeles and the San Fernando Valley, found that such caregivers often have no training in child development and that preschoolers show little warmth or attachment to the care providers.

Clinton's welfare-proposal does include fresh funding for child care, but far less than the leading congressional proposals. Clinton's increase, in fact, is less than the increases proposed by President Bush in his last two years in office.

- *Washington's policies, while pro-family, are unfocused.*

Clinton's support for families has come in fits and starts, in fragments like the budget increase for Head Start, rather than building broad-based policies and consolidating programs. Entitlements increasingly go to parents who already have abundant resources. More than $1.5 billion in child-care tax credits now go to families earning more than $50,000 a year. Rather than financing welfare reform by cutting benefits for the politically powerless, like the White House plan to slash aid to elderly immigrants, money can better be saved by targeting child-care aid so it goes to poor and working-class families.

Just a year ago, the Family Leave Act—a touchstone of pro-family sentiment among presidential candidates—advanced the argument that perhaps we should change work as we know it, allowing more time for parents to be with their young children. But Washington's prescription for impoverished single mothers goes in the opposite direction. Pushing mothers into full-time work may be beneficial to all concerned, but not if we shove their children into hazardous child care or even no care at all.

Bruce Fuller is a professor of comparative policy and Susan Holloway is a professor of human development at Harvard University's Graduate School of Education.

(Second of parts)

This spring, Deborah Fo decided to a job that would boost her family of three off welfare and out of poverty. "You can't expect someone to always give and give," she says. "I wanted to have something more for my kids."

Through a friend, she heard about Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW), a D.C. organization that prepares women for higher-wage, nontraditional jobs. On her first visit, it seemed like the answer to a prayer.

The staff didn't laugh when she told them she wanted to become an electrician. They said they would assess her skills and tutor her from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. so she could get home by the time Vincent, her oldest, arrived from kindergarten. They would help her find an apprenticeship.

They'd also help her locate child care for her 2-year-old daughter, Shae. Did she know that, thanks to welfare, she could place Shae in day care for free while at WOW, and for one year after that? No, she didn't know that.

In order to enroll Shae in day care, Forrest had to find an opening at an approved center. She called 10 of them before finding Park Terrace Nursery on Fitch Street SE, about a 15-minute drive from her housing project in Northeast. Two days later, Forrest, Shae and Shae's dad, a service worker, left Forrest's well-maintained apartment and drove up to a beige building in a run-down neighborhood.

The three of them wound their way down a flight of stairs, where they found several small rooms and about 30 preschoolers. "I thought, 'Oh my goodness,'" Forrest recalls. "I had an idea it would be a real nursery, you know, lots of windows, light and space. . . . I noticed they had bars on the windows, and four or five exits for safety."

As they headed for WOW's offices downtown a few minutes later, Shae's cries lingered in the air. "[Shae's father] got teary-eyed, and I got teary-eyed," Forrest says. "He said, 'You know, a child should be around her mother. What if she gets sick?'" Stay home, he told her.

"I said to him, 'I'm trying to do what you are, make a living.'"

The availability and quality of child care, almost all surveys agree, are among the best predictors of whether poor children thrive and whether working moms formerly on welfare succeed in staying off. One study in Baltimore examined the progress, 17 years later, of the families of teen welfare moms who earlier had taken part in an education and training project. The children who enjoyed enrichment programs did far better in school and had fewer run-ins with the law than those who did not.

California's newest welfare program, called GAIN, reported last year that its mothers dropped out significantly more often when they were unhappy with their day-care providers. Such experiences led the American Public Welfare Association, the organization of state welfare directors, to recommend to President Clinton and Congress that "child care that meets both the child's developmental needs and the parent's need for substitute care should be available to all families on a sliding scale."

Yet welfare reform plans currently under consideration—both Clinton's, announced last week, and a House GOP bill—fall far short of that goal. The plans somewhat increase day-care money for women in school, training or their first year of work. But state welfare offices must match that money, something they've been reluctant to do in the past, and the proposals contain little that would make states fulfill their obligation.

The Clinton plan projects that within six years, 2 million welfare recipients, mostly parents, will either hold a job, be in school or in training. That worries child-development experts ask, it t serve youngsters already in child care very

As Fo 1 , day-care "slots," particularly in regulated centers where care is , aren't readily available. Since the Family Support Act was passed in 1988, encouraging mothers on welfare to go to school or find a job once their youngest turned 3, the demand for AFDC child care has increased dramatically, according to a survey reported this year by the Children's Defense Fund, an advocacy organization. Forty-eight states reported increased need, with one state—Florida—anticipating a growth of 50 percent in two years. At the same time, nine states admitted they had decreased their spending on child care for AFDC families because of budget constraints.

Two years ago, hundreds of women on public assistance in Wisconsin enrolled in job training and school only to be told, sometimes the day before classes were to begin, that the state could not provide child care as promised. Some dropped out of school, and others shifted their children from one arrangement to another. "It was like waking up to a nightmare," one single mom of two children told the Milwaukee Journal.

When AFDC children are placed in these limited slots, the children of the working poor often are pushed out.

> *"Child care that meets both the child's developmental needs and the parent's need for substitute care should be available ..."*
>
> —American Public Welfare Association

Subsidized slots for day care are becoming as scarce as public housing units, says Cindy Marano, executive director of WOW; Wisconsin's waiting list, for example, jumped from 5,200 to 8,000 in two years.

The White House welfare task force estimated about $5 billion would be needed to fund child care for the working poor, but recommended only $1.5 billion. Mary Jo Bane, co-chairperson of the White House group, defends that figure as twice what is currently allocated.

Mostly, reformers seem to assume demand for new slots will increase the supply. Experience has shown that that often does not happen. When it does, the quality may suffer, and quality may be particularly important for these children. A study headed by Deborah Phillips of the National Academy of Sciences suggests that low-income children develop appropriately only in child care designed to give extra attention to developmental needs such as language and exploration. The study says there is some evidence to believe that these children actually can be harmed in more typical child-care programs.

Typical, or worse, is what many children get, according to two large, multisite studies. The surveys, one on institutional care and the other on care in private homes, conclude that only a minority of care-givers provide the kind of nurturing and stimulation that help youngsters thrive. The home day-care study by the Families and Work Institute in New York says that relatives—whom low-income mothers use most often—provide the worst care of all.

The best care, these studies show, is also the most expensive. Yet expensive care is out of the reach of most welfare mothers whose day-care subsidies average $200 a month for infants and toddlers and $175 a month for older children. Welfare mothers who go to work are constantly searching for better care and moving their children from more. "From the perspective of a child's development, it's horrifying," says Marano of WOW.

Returning from an errand by Metro, Forrest stops at the Rhode Island station to call Park Terrace, where Shae has been going for several weeks. "I wanted to see how she was doing, and they told me she hadn't eaten her lunch in several days," Forrest says.

Then Forrest gets the big news: The day before—when fortunately, Shae had been home—two thugs had robbed the center while about 10 children were there. The nursery had been burglarized before, Forrest learns, but always after hours.

Forrest broods over this until late afternoon. When her son, Vincent, arrives home from school, she hustles them both into a taxi for an $8 ride to the nursery. She picks up Shae, and the next morning, calls the center to say Shae won't be back. She also calls WOW to say she can't continue in class until she has found suitable day care for her daughter. She now says she may wait to look for a job until the fall, when she can enroll Shae in a Head Start program at Vincent's school.

"I just hope my new boss will be more understanding than my last boss," she says. "Me being a single parent, there are some times, when it comes to mine, I gotta go."

Forrest's oldest child had persuaded her to give work a try, and her youngest is the reason she stopped. Welfare reform that doesn't build on this kind of bond is, in the opinion of several independent welfare analysts, doomed to fail. That's why a growing number of experts and agencies, including the the Foundation for Child Development, Child Trends, the Children's Defense Fund and a national group of job trainers including WOW, have called for more "two-generation programs," which intervene directly with families to assess and fund the needs of the children as well as their parents.

tional. The evaluation of projects, while still sketchy, indicates that they can work if enough money is appropriated for decreasing caseloads re-training personnel.

Cost has prevented such programs from realizing their potential, however; the Denver effort, for example, serves 750 people but has a waiting list of 1,000. Neither the president nor Congress is in the mood to fund similar programs elsewhere. Some experts have suggested it might be more cost-effective and more humane to leave the current welfare system in place temporarily, and concentrate what new money there is on a few state or city programs selected for their family-intensive approach and targeted to the youngsters in most need. Follow-up, they say, with independent evaluations of what happens to the mothers *and* their children.

But that, of course, is a long-term strategy with few immediate political benefits, and it doesn't enable policymakers to trumpet nationwide that rights to welfare don't come without responsibilities as parent and citizen.

It also doesn't put large numbers of children at risk of becoming poorer, unhealthier, and less safe. The current reform proposals do, children's advocates fear. Speaking of the White House plan, Barbara Blum, president of the Foundation for Child Development, says, "Where states have strong economies . . . some kids will be much better off. But where the economy is lousy, where there's little capacity to train and provide [child] care, we'll have tragedies beyond anything we've ever seen."

Focusing on Teenage Moms

The children who would be affected immediately by these reforms are those who themselves have children. The House Republican plan proposes to eliminate all benefits to mothers under 18. The White House plan includes teenagers by targeting changes initially at the youngest third of the welfare caseload, those born after 1971.

The children of teenage mothers are younger and have more physical, emotional and child-care needs than other age groups. So why focus on their moms? Because teenage mothers are presumably malleable. "We have the most hope of changing their circumstances," says Mary Jo Bane, one author of the White House plan.

One national organization that trains welfare mothers, the D.C.-based Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW), doesn't believe this is the best policy. WOW leaders Cindy Marano and Diana Pearce suggest starting reform first with volunteers and second, based on the age of the youngest child, with 3-5 years old the optimum age. "Our experience has been that it is the age of the youngest child, not the age of the mother, that determines success in completing education/training programs and entering employment," they write.

Both the White House and the Republicans want to cut the number of teenagers having babies. There are sound reasons to do so. While babies born to teenagers declined between 1970 and 1988, the percentage born out of wedlock jumped from 29 percent to 65 percent. About 50 percent of unwed teenage mothers go on welfare within one year of the birth of their first child, and 77 percent within five years, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

Teenage mothers stay on welfare longer than older first-time mothers. They and their children suffer, says Douglas Besharov, scholar at the American Enterprise Institute: "Even richly funded demonstration programs have found it exceedingly difficult to improve the ability of these mothers to care for their children, let alone to become economically self-sufficient."

The White House proposals include:

- Funding demonstration projects on pregnancy prevention in middle and high schools in poor areas.
- Requiring mothers under 18 to live at home or with a responsible adult.
- Allowing states to withhold additional benefits to any mom who gives birth to a child while on welfare.

Proponents of the "family cap" say it will discourage illegitimacy. Tried in New Jersey, it reduced births by 9 percent, or 188 births, over two months, according to the Center for Law and Social Policy.

It also denied benefits to 458 newborns over the same time period, and many children's advocates don't like it. "The [Clinton] proposal tells newborn babies in a welfare family . . . , 'Sorry you were born,' " says Sharon Daly of Catholic Charities USA, the country's largest private social service provider, "and you will be sorry, too, because this country is going to make your family even poorer and more miserable than before."

—Laura Sessions Stepp

STUDY TRACKS GENDER VIEWS IN CHILD CARE SETTINGS

Early childhood professionals and students interested in pursuing an early childhood career generally took a dim view toward male participation in the child care setting, according to a new study of gender attitudes in Australia.

"This anti-male attitude is in direct contradiction to a basic early childhood tenet, namely that young children should be helped to recognize stereotypes and caricatures of people in their everyday world ... and to understand that bias is not a productive activity," said Margaret Clyde of the University of Melbourne in presenting data at the annual meeting of the Association for Childhood Education International in New Orleans April 1.

For her study, Clyde presented 200 first- and third-year university students and 22 child care professionals with various gender-based scenarios in the child care setting. Respondents were asked to assess how child care staffers named "Mary," "Steve" and "Chris" would react to certain situations.

Reinforced Stereotypes

In the view of most surveyed, Mary would "touch, encourage, support and sustain" while Steve would "ask, tell, demonstrate and stand close by." Chris would act much like Steve or Mary depending on whether a respondent viewed "Chris" as a man or woman.

Based on these views, respondents then were asked to assess the ability of the three to succeed in an early childhood career. Clyde said the early childhood professionals in particular agreed that men would not seek long-term jobs in the profession. Based on these responses, Clyde said it was clear that professionals "took a somewhat fixed attitude toward males and male attitudes" about child care and child-rearing.

"The early childhood field in Australia has been slow to accept that males are perceived to have a role in children's services, even with the very youngest children in child care," said Clyde, who called for more research on the topic. For more information about the study, contact Clyde at the School of Early Childhood Studies, University of Melbourne, Private Bag 10, Kew Australia 3101.

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After-School Support For Latchkey Children

KidCall even offers help on homework

By Michael McCabe
Chronicle Peninsula Bureau

The calls from children started pouring in almost from the moment the phone lines were open.

"How long does it take a hummingbird egg to hatch?" asked a 10-year-old boy.

"How do you make pizza?" asked a 9-year-old girl.

"I want to tell you about recess today," another 9-year-old announced.

They were among the more than 250 calls home-alone children made to KidCall , a free support line for youngsters that started this week. Each weekday children can call to get help with homework, have stories read to them, tell jokes and generally find a friendly adult ear during after-school hours.

Staffed by five volunteers each weekday at Lucile Salter Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford, KidCall is run out of a small, windowless office in the basement of a building near the hospital.

"One of the first calls I got was from a kid who wanted to know what a quadratic equation was," said volunteer Palmer Browning. "I stalled him for awhile so we could look it up, but he got impatient and hung up." Another young voice wanted to know who was the 31st president of the United States. After some frantic consultation among volunteers, they had an answer: "Herbert Hoover!"

Wednesday, the first day of operation, 268 children called 1-800-546-7549. Of those, 77 dialed between 3 and 6 p.m., when the line is actually operated with adults to take calls. At other times, a recording advises them of the hours, and their calls are tallied.

"The idea is to be available by telephone to kids who are lonely or scared or just have a question they want to put to an adult," said KidCall coordinator Katherine Nelson, a registered nurse.

In the Bay Area, it is estimated that about 185,000 children between ages 5 and 14 are at home after school without adult supervision on a regular basis.

Nelson emphasized that KidCall is not designed to be a crisis line. Although there is always the possibility that some children may use the service simply to make crank calls or joke calls, Nelson said she hopes that the staff can educate them that it is really to be used for "important" reasons.

Why mothers can't get off welfare.

NEW REPUBLIC
APRIL 15, 1994

DAY CARELESS

By Paul Offner

People may disagree about how to fix the welfare system, but one thing is clear: whatever reforms are adopted, day care services will have to be increased significantly. When the reforms are in place, more than 3 million welfare mothers will be attending school, in job training or in jobs, and they will need someone to look after their kids. Although many of these mothers will rely on relatives and friends, more than 1 million will need publicly financed care, at a cost of $200 to $500 per month per child. Currently, the government spends $2.4 billion on day care. House Republicans would more than double that amount to $5.8 billion by 1999. The Clinton plan includes a similar increase.

Yet money isn't the only issue; just as important is the question of what kind of day care the government will fund. Bowing to pressure from the National Association for the Education of Young Children and other day care groups, which want to minimize industry competition, many states place restrictions on who can service the poor. These states say they will reimburse only *licensed* providers—e.g., conventional day care centers—even though welfare mothers often prefer to leave their kids with unlicensed providers, such as friends and neighbors. The result is that many mothers stay home and watch their kids themselves.

In Ohio, for instance, day care groups have convinced state officials to make staff training, staffing and physical site requirements part of the licensing process. Most informal providers in poor areas are unable to meet those requirements. Thus mothers can't leave their kids with a neighbor and have the state pay; they must take them to another part of town and leave them with a provider they don't know. Some decide it's not worth the effort.

Isn't participation in work, school or job training mandatory for welfare recipients? Yes, but a mother who is unhappy about her day care arrangements may refuse to participate even at the risk of losing part of her grant. If she does go, she may perform poorly. So day care woes become a barrier to getting mothers off the dole.

On philosophical grounds, restrictive day care policies run counter to the whole spirit of welfare reform. We are asking welfare mothers to take control of their lives, and yet we are sending them the message that we do not trust them to make proper arrangements for their kids. They can decide how to house their families, how to feed them and when to take them to the doctor. But when it comes to day care, the state knows best.

There are also practical objections. Most day care providers want clients with regular daytime hours. But welfare mothers, particularly those in the process of pulling their lives together, are anything but regular. They take vocational courses at night, work part-time or try one program for a few weeks and then switch to another. Licensed providers have little interest in such a variable business. The obvious answer is to let these [illegible] can be more flexible in offering care. But these neighbors often live in run-down houses in poor areas; they don't have licenses and couldn't get them if they wanted to. So they are ineligible for state payments.

This problem is particularly acute for young mothers, many of whom are reluctant to leave their infants or toddlers with licensed providers they don't know. Only 11 percent of Ohio's teen welfare mothers use publicly financed day care while they are in school, preferring to leave their kids with friends or relatives whom the state won't reimburse. Sometimes these friends and relatives babysit for free, but not always. As a result, some teen mothers drop out of school to take care of their kids.

Fortunately, not all states are like Ohio. California, for example, pays for *any* available day care. Most of its welfare mothers have little trouble finding day care, according to the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation. More than two-thirds of mothers with children under age 6 who are working, in school or in job training use state-funded care.

Why not eliminate day care restrictions? Day care lobbyists cite potential health and safety problems: they worry that children left with friends or neighbors may be abused. If this argument has merit, the law should prohibit *everyone*—not just the poor—from purchasing babysitting services from friends or neighbors. But the argument doesn't have merit. In California there is no evidence that the safety of children is in question. Moreover, withholding state payments from unregulated providers does not stop low-income parents from using such care, as is clear from the example of Ohio's teen parents. It just means that the state won't pay. And it deprives welfare mothers of the help they need.

Children's advocacy groups, such as the Children's Defense Fund, also oppose looser regulations. They want to see a comprehensive network of child development services in every community, and they dislike informal providers who aren't trained care-givers and don't offer an enriched curriculum. It is hard to quarrel with this vision. In an ideal world, every child would have access to such services. Even then, decisions about day care should be left with the family; they should not be dictated by reimbursement policies.

The federal government ought to *encourage* people in low-income areas to get into the day care business, providing them with technical assistance, aiding the development of networks so that backup services are available when they get sick, and providing start-up money.

Many welfare mothers in these neighborhoods could make a living providing day care services, and some could achieve financial independence in this way. Of course, one could imagine a situation where *thousands* of welfare mothers become day care providers. This raises the specter of a "day care economy" in which women stay in their homes, not interacting with the labor market or picking up job skills. While this could happen, it is a long way from today's reality, which finds few welfare mothers becoming providers. In any event, a woman who gets off welfare by taking care of five neighborhood kids is surely setting a better example for her kids than one who sits at home doing nothing.

A strong case can be made that the federal government should override the states' restrictive policies. First, however, we should give the states a chance to fix the problem themselves. George Voinovich of Ohio, William Weld of Massachusetts and many other governors say they are firmly committed to welfare reform. One way they can prove it is to give low-income fam[ilies] the freedom to choose the day care they need.

San Francisco Chronicle
THE VOICE OF THE WEST

4/15/94

EDITORIALS

A Child-Care Credit To Reduce Welfare

THE LEGISLATURE has a duty to restore the personal income tax credit for child care that was an important part of the state tax program for 24 years. As it stands today, California is listed by the National Women's Law Center as one of 17 states that don't provide families with the same kind of income tax credit that can be found in the federal tax code.

> *A worthwhile tax credit that was put into effect in California in 1978 has been allowed to expire*

The credit died in the Legislature in 1992, and an effort to revive it failed when the votes were counted last year. The odd thing is that the gap in the California tax program persists in the face of the state's efforts to make it attractive for women with young children to leave the Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC) program and go to work.

The state's new "Work Pays" campaign may have something for everybody — not just the involved families but Governor Wilson, who hopes to cut welfare costs, and liberal members of the Legislature, who want to see adults get off welfare without hurting their children.

Under "Work Pays," parents who suffered severe cutbacks in aid under the old rules when they left AFDC for low-paying jobs are now permitted to retain a much larger share of their earnings. Perhap equally important, they do not lose thei family's Medi-Cal health coverage.

"The purpose of welfare reform is to ge people to see that it really does pay to work that work is good for you and especiall good for your children," Eloise Anderson director of the state Department of Socia Services, said in a meeting with The Chroni cle editorial board.

What Anderson said made excellen sense. It is therefore disconcerting to find that a worthwhile tax credit that went into effect in California in 1978 has been allowed to expire — and continues to do so at the very time that Governor Wilson is including an additional $12.5 million for child care in the state budget.

It disappeared, in fact, in spite of a policy in recent years to make California income tax rules coincide as much as possible with federal regulations. And although there may be much to criticize in the nation's ta laws, the child-care credit in the federa code has proved to be remarkably fair in that it provides help for those who need i most.

There is no denying that child-care cost can be a major factor in obliging a mother in a single-parent family to remain at home on welfare rather than go to work.

Assemblywoman Jackie Speier failed last year in an effort to persuade the Legislature to do the right thing. It will be shameful if she finds herself obliged to conclude once again that a worthy bill failed chiefly because children lack the political clou needed to stir the Legislature to action.

Public & Private

ANNA QUINDLEN

NY TIMES 4.13.94

Playing Perfect Pattycake

The mythical mother.

Why in the world am I sitting here trying to recall how many hours my children spent playing with blocks when they were small? Why am I trying to tote up the time I spent reading "Pat the Bunny" versus that I spent wheeling them around supermarket aisles talking to myself?

Because I am looking at the study just released from the Families and Work Institute, that's why, a study that shows some day care is not as good as we might have imagined.

The assessment of family day care by the research group shows that informal care for a few children in the home of a paid provider or a family member, the most prevalent kind of child care for the small children of working mothers, is significantly flawed. Nine percent of the caregivers were rated as good quality, 56 percent adequate and 35 percent inadequate.

Has anyone ever done a similar assessment of mothers?

That's the question we're never to ask, much less subject to prolonged scrutiny. The reason child care is such a loaded issue is that when we talk about it we are always tacitly talking about motherhood. And when we're talking about motherhood we're always tacitly assuming that child care must be a very dim second to full-time mother care.

Which is why I'm comparing my own mothering skills with those of people who get paid for caring for kids. Do they spend more time using crayons and books than I did? Is it time to finally admit that while child care is all over the map, from stellar to deplorable, the quality of mothering can be various, too?

How well I remember, some years ago, the frisson of fear when I read that part of the evidence against Mary Beth Whitehead, in her battle to keep the child she'd conceived in a surrogate arrangement, was the testimony of a psychiatrist that she had played pattycake incorrectly. The mother of two young children at the time, I wondered: am I playing right?

While the Families and Work Institute study quantified the time spent in family day care in artwork, stories, puzzles and the like, I can scarcely remember doing many of those things. But no matter; there is a clear double standard for mothers and caregivers. One mother at the park laced into a departing sitter, complaining that she'd spent all her time at the park talking to her friends while the children played nearby, oblivious to the fact that she and I were doing the same. Another once told me that she could not imagine how a family day-care provider could adequately care for three small children at once, either unaware that I had three such myself or confident that mothers had magical powers.

The bar for the caregivers had been set by both of them, not at the level of our own [illegible] and sometimes [illegible] at that of some mythical being, the always child-centered and responsive mother. She is the person against whom we always measure child-care options; is it any wonder that even the good ones are often found wanting?

The truth is that the good ones are not legion, as the Families and Work Institute study suggested and the Carnegie Commission noted in a blistering report on the state of America's children released this week. No one with kids would argue with the notion that more and better child care options must be a key part of our plan for the future.

And no one will deny the special, central place parents have in the lives of their children. While the study of family day care showed that only about half the children were "securely attached" to their caregiver, studies of attachment to mothers show, happily, a much higher number.

But let's not pretend that all mothers approach their work at home joyously, competently or well. "If you compared child-care workers against mothers, you'd probably find the same variety in quality," says Ellen Galinsky, a co-president of the Families and Work Institute.

So let's not perpetuate this cult of the perfect pattycake mother, who renders all other options suspect and second-rate. It pits women whose children are cared for in part by others and worry that they rob them of this ideal childhood against women who care for their kids full time and wonder why they cannot measure up to the ideal. It assumes a uniformity to our families, our kids and our own abilities that is simply illusory. And it sets us all up for failure.

NY TIMES 7.12.94

Allow Nanny Employers More for Child Care

To the Editor:

In "Addressing Nannygate" (editorial, March 30), you suggest that Congress will have gone a long way toward solving the problem of failure to pay Social Security taxes for domestic workers by increasing to $620 the minimum one must pay a domestic employee before having to file Social Security tax forms.

However, from a sample of people I know, all of whom pay more than $15,000 a year for nannies, and most of whom do it off the books, this change won't have any effect whatever. Even for a nanny earning $15,000 a year, the total taxes and fees (including the nanny's income taxes) add up to more than $4,000 a year, and people simply don't want to pay.

Under the current system, after Federal, state and local taxes, the employer must earn nearly twice as much as the nanny is paid just to break even. In other words, under these laws, couples, as well a single parents, are strongly discouraged from working, and those who do work are discouraged from enrolling their nannies in Social Security.

Under the dependent care spending accounts offered by many large companies, a working couple is permitted to deduct as much as $5,000 a year for child care. Unfortunately, $5,000 is a small fraction of what many working parents must pay for child care to work themselves.

The way to solve the problem is to increase the deduction to cover the full cost of child care. To deduct child care expenses, one would be required to pay all proper nanny taxes. Working parents would come out ahead by paying nanny taxes and claiming their deductions.

You can be sure that the Zoe Bairds, William Kennedy 3ds and those others in the public spotlight who were tripped up by this matter would change their ways.

This change would bring hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of low-income workers into the Social Security system and would convert a similar number of tax evaders into law-abiding citizens. PETER F. BROWN

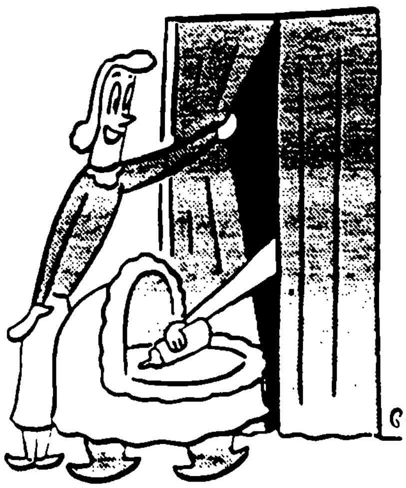
New York, April 4, 1994

Let Workers Pay In

To the Editor:

Re your March 30 Nannygate editorial: I don't believe that the United States Government (despite the many wonderful people who work for it) is really deeply concerned about Social Security and the future of domestic workers and baby sitters. I think the Government is concerned about all the potentially undeclared income that may go untaxed.

Unless, that is, every employer of domestic help, tutors and baby sitters



Phil Marden

can be coerced into serving as an arm of the Internal Revenue Service. Not to mention serving as the conscience of that segment of such employees who fail, in the face of relative poverty, to declare all of their income, which is often paid in cash and therefore untraceable by the Government.

Domestic employees, unless they work through an agency, are basically self-employed people who sell their skills and services to a variety of people. If our concern is really about having them get Social Security in their old age, it makes more sense to let them take responsibility for themselves. By letting them declare their own income and make the Social Security payments themselves, every penny of their income can be covered, not just income from those who pay them more than $620 in a year.

This is what consultants, therapists and others who provide service do. Why not domestic employees? Because we don't have as much respect for what they do, maybe? And because the Government thinks it will get a more complete accounting of income by creating a paperwork blizzard from every employer.

The system that has been devised demeans the integrity of those whom it is supposedly protecting and casts people who employ domestic and other help in the role of consciences and law enforcers. I think that's a bad idea. KATHERINE E. RABENAU

New York, April 4, 1994

Lessening the Burden

To the Editor:

"Addressing Nannygate" (editorial, March 30) shows concern that "hundreds of thousands, maybe millions" of "cleaners, cooks, baby sitters and the like" are not receiving the benefits of employer-matched Social Security. The majority of in-home workers not only do not participate in Social Security, but also, by not being registered for Social Security, they avoid paying income taxes.

With salaries for cleaners often beginning at $10 an hour, many workers earn taxable income. They thus receive society's benefits without contributing. Often in old age they then become a burden to the taxpayer.

If these hundreds of thousands, maybe millions paid their fair share, it would lessen the burden of taxpaying citizens. SHEILAGH ROTH

Executive Director

English Nanny & Governess School

Chagrin Falls, Ohio, April 1, 1994

Wall Street Journal 4/18/94

Poor Quality Found in Family Day Care

By Sue Shellenbarger
Staff Reporter of The Wall Street Journal

The broadest study yet of the nation's most widely used kind of child care – family day care and relative care – reveals major quality problems, with more than a third of the children studied receiving care of such poor quality that it could harm their development.

The survey also shows that dropping the kids off with a relative in order to go to work may be one of the worst things a parent can do.

The study by the Families and Work Institute, a nonprofit New York research concern, examined family child care, which is informal care in the provider's home or in a relative's home. Family day care and relative care are used by 33% of employed parents, compared with 28% who use child-care centers, and 28% who care for their children themselves, often by working different schedules.

By surveying 226 child-care providers and 820 mothers and observing their children during day care, researchers found that only half the children were "securely attached" to their providers or felt trusting and secure with them – a fundamental measure of quality. Only 9% of the providers were rated as good quality, while [illegible] provided [illegible] adequate or "custodial" care, and [illegible] were inadequate, the study says. And more than a quarter of the mothers surveyed said they were so dissatisfied that they would use other care if they could find it.

[illegible] the study also found that children are more likely to be securely attached to unrelated caregivers than to [illegible] them – apparently, the [illegible], because many relatives would rather not care for the children but do so only as a favor.

Edward Zigler, director of the Yale University Bush Center in Child Development and Social Policy and a founder of Head Start, terms "tragic" the finding that so few children in relative and family day care receive high-quality care. "If a child has had five lousy years of child care, he or she will not arrive at school at age five ready to learn," he says.

The findings don't mean family day care and relative care are worse than other kinds of child care. Studies of child-care centers have found that about half the children are securely attached to workers in typical centers, and about a quarter of the parents using centers would change their arrangements if they could.

But the latest study "explodes the widely [illegible] view" that family day care and relative care are a more intimate and reliable alternative to child care centers, Dr. Zigler says.

The study also suggests that state regulators have [illegible] grasp on the underground child care economy than was previously believed. One in five of the caregivers surveyed was operating without required state licenses. Previously, most experts assumed that most unregulated providers cared for too few children to require licenses.

The best quality care in the study was usually provided by licensed nonrelatives who followed good safety practices, operated in a businesslike way – paying taxes, providing contracts and so on – and cared for three to six children rather than one or two. The best providers also tended to charge more.

Children from low-income and m[illegible]rity families in the study tended to be in lower quality care than others, and relying on relatives wasn't a solution, the study showed. Three-fifths of the relatives surveyed said they were only helping out the mothers, suggesting they would rather be doing something else. Also, nearly two-thirds of the relatives were living in poverty, creating "stressed, socially isolated" conditions, the study says.

The findings are significant for the welfare-reform debate. Some states p[illegible] sure welfare recipients to become child-care providers. "Public policy measures must not push or require people to take care of children when their hearts or interests lie elsewhere," the study says.

Also, many parents make bad assumptions in choosing child care, the study shows. While parents place little importance on whether a provider is licensed, the study found that licensed providers tend to be more sensitive and responsive and are far less likely to provide poor-quality care. Also, while parents place a high value on long experience, providers with more years of experience were more detached and harsher in their dealings with children. The findings "underline the need for consumer education," the study says.

The study was done in the Dallas, Los Angeles and Charlotte, N.C., areas, and funded by 10 foundations and companies.

What They Do

How children in family day care spent 15.5 morning hours, as observed in a single week

ACTIVITY	HOURS
Learning activities	8.8
■ Puzzles, blocks	3.5
■ Stories, music	2.4
■ Artwork	1.2
■ Fantasy play	1.2
■ Everyday chores	0.5
Running around (indoors and outdoors)	3.8
No activities	1.5
Watching TV	1.4

Source: Families and Work Institute

Broad Study Says Home-Based Day Care, Even if by Relatives, Often Fails Children

NY Times 4-8-94

By SUSAN CHIRA

Family child care, the most widely used form of child care by employed mothers in the United States, is often of poor quality, according to a broad study released yesterday.

Only half of the 225 children in three cities studied by the Families and Work Institute, a private research organization, showed signs of trust or attachment to the people who cared for them, even if those providing the care were relatives.

Forty-one percent of those watching the children planned no activities for their charges, and the researchers estimated that in 35 percent of the cases, care was so indifferent it might actually hurt the children's development.

But the researchers noted that the quality of family day care, in which one person cares for a number of children at home, was in some respects no worse than day care centers, because a previous study showed the same low levels of attachment between children and day care workers.

'Best-Kept Secrets'

"The sorry state of child care in America is one of our best-kept secrets," said Jay Belsky, a professor of human development at Pennsylvania State University, a child-care researcher who was not involved in this study. "The moral of the story here is not that day care is inevitably bad for children but that the care that America dispenses to its children leaves a lot to be desired. The crime is that we know how to make it better. It's an issue of will and money."

But good care does exist, the researchers said, and they pointed out ways parents could identify family child-care providers who stimulated children's development in an emotionally warm setting. The study said the best care providers appeared to enjoy their work, considered it important, had received some training in child development, planned children's activities in advance, charged higher fees, were better-educated and were regulated.

To improve the quality of family child care, the report called on government, businesses and communities to help parents pay for good care, start and help pay for child-care training programs, establish toy-lending libraries and other resources, educate parents about good quality care and regulate family child care providers.

"There's a very important message here for parents," said Barbara Reisman, executive director of the Child Care Action Campaign, which works to improve child care. "If you're looking for a child-care provider, look for somebody who loves children, understands the different stages of a child's development and will plan activities that meet your child's needs."

One-third of employed families with children under 5 years old place them in family child care, while 28 percent of families put them in day care centers, according to a 1991 study. Many parents choose family day care for young children because they believe it will be a warm, informal setting closest to home — and because it is often less expensive than child-care centers.

Aunts and uncles aren't always the best baby sitters, researchers say.

But the new study, the first large-scale look at family child care since 1981, found that such care was not always warm and that parents generally got what they paid for. The higher paid the provider was, the better the care tended to be, and low-income and minority children tended to be in lower-quality care. Moreover, 65 percent of the mothers said they had no other choices than the arrangements they were using, and 28 percent said they would use other care if it was available.

'I Was Very Disturbed'

Ellen Galinsky, co-president of the Families and Work Institute and one of the report's researchers, said the study contradicted a number of common assumptions about family child care. Most mothers in the study preferred experience to training when selecting family day care, but the study found training was more important. Although many parents turned to relatives first for care, their children were not more attached to relatives, probably because many relatives were watching children more as a favor to their parents than as a commitment to the job.

"I wasn't surprised by our finding that the quality of care on average was low," said Ms. Galinsky. "I was very disturbed by it, but I'm also optimistic for another reason. We've got a working definition of quality that seems to be agreed to by families in different ethnic groups, with different incomes."

Mothers of all ethnic groups and incomes interviewed agreed that they wanted care providers who were warm and attentive to their children, communicated with parents and provided the children a safe home. The researchers found that care providers with these traits had closer attachments with children and stimulated their intellectual and emotional development.

The researchers interviewed 820 mothers and observed 226 family child care workers and 225 children under age 6 in three metropolitan areas: San Fernando/Los Angeles, Dallas/Fort Worth and Charlotte, N.C. The families varied in income, race and ethnicity and paid fees of $15 to $300 a week, although the median was $80 a week. The study is not nationally representative and was primarily observational, so there is no margin of sampling error for the findings.

The researchers observed the children in the family child care homes for an average of three hours and found strengths as well as weaknesses. Most of the children's time, or about 57 percent, was spent in what the researchers called "learning activities," including arts, music, fantasy play and domestic chores like folding laundry. The researchers deliberately included activities like folding or putting away dishes because advocates of family child care believe these are valuable experiences that mimic what children would do in their own homes.

To measure quality of care, the researchers noted whether a family child care provider would comfort children, let them cry, or scold them; or whether they tended to answer them in monosyllables or engaged them in conversation. To measure attachment, researchers noted whether children appeared to trust the provider, whether they resisted being picked up, or whether they ignored them.

Most Child Care Lacking, Five-Year Study Asserts

■ **Family:** Of children who were cared for in someone else's home, 56% of the providers were called only adequate. Another 35% were rated as inadequate.

L.A. Times 4-8-94

By ELIZABETH MEHREN
TIMES STAFF WRITER

The nation's most prevalent form of day care for young children of employed mothers has received unimpressive marks in the topic's first major study in more than a decade.

Of child care that takes place in someone else's home—called family child care—in a five-year study released Thursday by the New York City-based Families and Work Institute. The study was funded by groups that included the Annenberg Foundation, the Carnegie Corp. of New York, Dayton-Hudson Foundation, Mervyn's and Target stores.

Only 9% of the 226 care providers examined in the San Fernando Valley, Dallas-Ft. Worth and Charlotte, N.C., were ranked as good, meaning conducive to the growth and development of a child. Fifty-six percent of the home providers in the study were described as adequate.

To Ellen Galinsky, who conducted the study for the Families and Work Institute, the findings were startling—and troubling.

"Once again, we find that although we know how to provide quality child care, we still are not doing it," Galinsky said in an interview.

"Since this is the foundation of future learning and school success for many of our children, it's hard to think that they may not be in a good situation," she said. "But many are not."

Thirty-three percent of U.S. families with employed mothers use child care in someone else's home for children under 5. In nearly two-thirds of these cases, the provider is not related to the child.

By contrast, 28% of U.S. children under age 5 with working mothers are cared for in child-care centers.

The survey of 820 mothers and their children also revealed that:

- Only half of the children felt securely attached to their providers. Surprisingly, children were not more likely to be securely attached to providers who are relatives than to non-relatives.
- Of the parents who looked for alternatives when selecting care, 65% believed that they had no choices. Twenty-eight percent of the mothers in this sample said they would use other care if it were available.
- Children from low-income homes are in lower-quality care than their higher-income counterparts.
- Children from minority families are in somewhat lower-quality care than "non-minority" children.

Care in the home of a provider breaks down into homes that charge for care and where the providers have received a state license, and homes where the providers are not regulated and are not related to the child or children. The Families and Work Institute study found that most were non-regulated because they had more children than rules allow. Ninety-six percent of these providers charged for child care.

Non-regulated relatives who provide care make up a third category, with 52% of

Please see CARE, A12