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Folder Title:
Littleton/School Violence Background [2]

Stack:	Row:	Section:	Shelf:	Position:
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Background on Parents:

(1) More parents working

Stats from 2 most recent years available. The 1997 data were collected in the March 1998 CPS:

Families w/ children under 18	1996	1997
Married couples		
No. of fathers employed	22,861,000	22,938,000
No. of mothers employed	16,949,000	17,013,000
Unmarried heads		
No. of fathers employed	1,417,000	1,498,000
No. of mothers employed	4,919,000	5,276,000
Total	46,146,000	46,725,000

CEA advises that 1997 marked the highest rate of parents working ever, given population growth, the strengthening labor market, and rising employment of female heads and married mothers.

(2) New Families and Work Institute study on work-family conflict

- HRC announced the study in the 2/2/99 Roundtable with parents in Brooklyn, NY (fact sheet attached).

- Highlights: A recent study by the Families and Work Institute shows that, from 1977 to 1997, parents working more than 20 a week report much higher levels of conflict between their work and family life.

Here you could talk about the need to support parents as they balance their responsibilities to their jobs and their more important responsibilities to their families -- i.e. family and medical leave, affordable/dependable child care, after-school programs, long-term care assistance.

(3) National Parenting Association

The NPA did a 1996 survey of parents, which confirmed that parents are feeling strain as they try to balance work and family responsibilities; further it found that parents want government and employers to more -- not less -- to help parents. [Note: the survey was really aimed at supporting the NPA's Parents Bill of Rights, a variety of pro-parent initiatives, some but not all of which we support. It is founded by Sylvia Hewlett and Cornel West, who wrote the book The War Against Parents, which similarly argues for this Bill of Rights.

(4) Effective ways to support parents

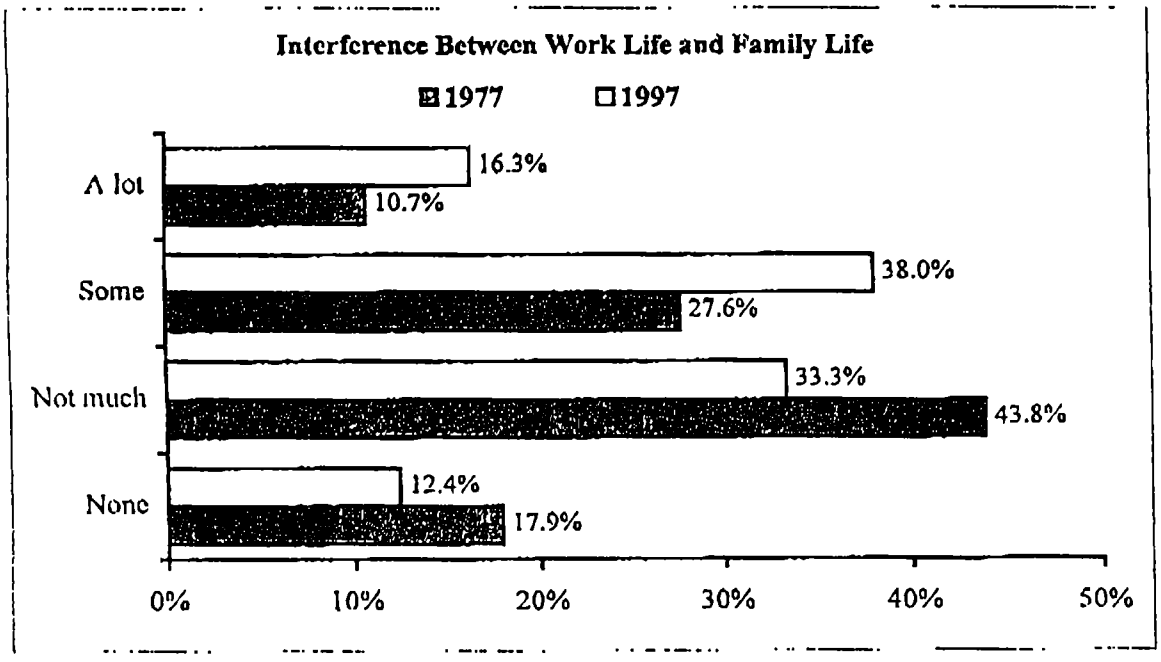
You may or may not want to note general policy ways in which we can help parents: home visitation; time off from work to care for a child or attend a PTA conference (our FMLA

expansion proposal is both for increasing the # of workers covered and for allowing FMLA-eligible employees to take 24 hours off to go to doctors appts, PTA visits, etc.); encouraging family-friendly workplace practices; affordable/reliable child care; new tax credit to help parents who chose to stay at home with their young children.

WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT: A GROWING PROBLEM FOR THE U.S. WORKFORCE

- **U.S. wage and salaried workers with families report significantly higher levels of work-family conflict today than workers did 20 years ago.**

Comparisons of data from the Families and Work Institute's 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce and the U.S. Department of Labor's 1977 Quality of Employment Survey—both representative samples of the U.S. labor force—reveal that interference between work and family life has increased significantly in the past 20 years among employees with families who work 20 or more hours per week.



If this apparent increase were due simply to the rapid influx of women into the labor force from 1977 through 1997, one would expect employed women with families to experience more work-family conflict than their male counterparts and/or employed men with employed spouses to experience more conflict than those with nonemployed spouses. However:

- **Employed men and women, as well as employed men with and without employed spouses, reported virtually the same levels of work-family conflict as one another in 1977 and again in 1997. Moreover, both employed men and employed women reported significantly higher levels of work-family conflict in 1997 than their counterparts did in 1977.**

The consequences of work-family conflict are troublesome for employees, families, and employers.

- **Data from the Families and Work Institute 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce reveal that work-family conflict is associated with higher levels of job-related stress and general life stress, as well as with lower levels of satisfaction with family life, satisfaction with life in general, and job satisfaction.**

Families and Work Institute, 330 Seventh Avenue, New York, NY 10001
Telephone: (212) 465-2044 Fax: (212) 465-8639 Website: www.familiesandwork.org

Jon Powers 638-3730
Phil Keen 386-2775

→ mental health

White House Conference on School Safety
Causes and Prevention of Youth Violence
October 15, 1998

On October 15, 1998 President Bill Clinton, joined by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton and Vice President Al Gore, hosted the White House Conference on School Safety: Causes and Prevention of Youth Violence. The conference was a day-long event in the East Room of the White House. The conference included workshops on various issues surrounding youth violence, a morning panel discussion with experts in the field and an afternoon panel that will explore some of the best practices and model safety strategies currently being employed throughout the country.

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(1) mental health → media violence → gun violence → parents → (5)

(1) guns → guns

(2)

The George Washington University
WASHINGTON DC

HAMILTON FISH NATIONAL INSTITUTE
ON SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY VIOLENCE

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To: Ms. Neera
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Date: 04/22/99
From: Avinash Patwardhan

TOTAL PAGES, INCLUDING COVER SHEET: 69

MESSAGE: [illegible]

Re: my talk with Jim Jagerson

I am faxing the transcript. It is 68 pages long & hence I may be forced to send it piecemeal. Trying to send 10 pages at a time.

Jamon Kent, Superintendent, Springfield, OR Public Schools **(link to jump to her statement)**
Paul Evans, Commissioner, Boston Police Department, Boston, MA **(link to jump to her statement)**
Liberty Franklin, Boys and Girls Club Youth of the Year **(link to jump to her statement)**
Joanna Quintano, Teacher, Coral Way Elementary School, Miami, FL **(link to jump to her statement)**
Tony Earles, Professor, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA **(link to jump to her statement)**
Mayor Deedee Corradini, Salt Lake City, UT **(link to jump to her statement)**
U.S. Representative Bobby Etheridge, North Carolina **(link to jump to her statement)**

Afternoon Panel II

Discussion of Initiatives and Strategies that Work to Reduce Youth Violence

First Lady Hillary Clinton **(link to jump to her statement)**
Attorney General Janet Reno **(link to jump to her statement)**
Secretary of Education Richard Riley **(link to jump to her statement)**

Lynn McDonald, Ph.D., Founder, Families and Schools Together (FAST), Madison, WI **(link to jump to her statement)**
Irma Howard, FAST Graduate, New Orleans, LA **(link to jump to her statement)**
Mariana R. Gaston, Director, Resolving Conflict Creatively Program (RCCP), New York, NY **(link to jump to her statement)**
Thomas C. Frazier, Police Commissioner, Baltimore Police Department, Baltimore, MD **(link to jump to her statement)**
Sandra McBrayer, Executive Director, Children's Initiative, San Diego, CA **(link to jump to her statement)**
Lt. Gary French, Boston's Operation Ceasefire, Roslindale, MA **(link to jump to her statement)**

White House Conference on School Safety

October 15, 1998
Morning Session

Hillary Rodman Clinton:

Good morning, good morning, good morning, and welcome to the White House. We are delighted to have all of you here to begin this important National Conference on School Safety and Youth Violence. We are here because we believe that every child in America deserves to grow up in homes and communities free from fear and violence and to attend a safe, orderly school where he or she can learn and flourish.

We have come together today after a lot of hard work by many, many people around our country as well as in our government to help make that vision a reality. I am glad to see so many of you here today that contribute to the safety and well-being of our children -- parents and teachers, law enforcement officials, religious leaders, elected officials, heads of youth organizations, counselors, child advocates, and young people.

I also welcome those who are participating in this event by way of satellite. There are over 650 downlink sites in communities nationwide. We are also being cybercast on the Internet. I am heartened that so many of you have joined us here today because to be successful, we must reach out and get our message out and mobilize communities beyond these walls and this White House.

This year the words -- children, guns, and death -- were tragically linked in our national consciousness. Shootings in schools across the country from Jonesboro, Arkansas, to Springfield, Oregon, refocused our attention on the problem of youth violence and brought us together in national mourning and grief. These terrible events also left us asking over and over again how could this have happened? What does it mean? What can we do about the countless acts of violence that occur in our nation every day and that affect our children and communities, in their homes, on their streets, and in their schools?

We know that this conference cannot find all the answers or solutions, but we can make significant headway by listening to those on the front lines about the many challenges we face and by learning to work more effectively together. Today we will hear how critically important it is to get responsible adults back into the lives of our young people and give our children positive alternatives to violence and crime. We will also be reminded once again how schools so often reflect the problems and needs of the neighborhoods around them and how we must develop comprehensive school safety plans that engage the broader community.

We have a busy day ahead. I know that there have already been some very stimulating workshops this morning that many of the participants here in the White House have participated in.

Now, conference panelists will build on existing knowledge about the problems of young people and violence. You have already looked at some of the root causes of youth violence and at some of the early warning signals of violent behavior.

In this first plenary panel we are pleased to be joined by the Attorney General Janet Reno, and the Secretary of Education Dick Riley, as well as three people who have first hand experience and expertise about the problems we are discussing today: Suzann Wilson, Marlene Wong, and Paul Kingery. We will look in depth about the challenges from the recent incidents of violence in our schools to the more familiar problems of guns, drugs, and gangs. We will also talk about what happens in the early years of a child's life that may in some way direct that child more toward violence and what we can do to help break that cycle of violence in families and communities.

After lunch the President will lead a discussion about solutions and will unveil new initiatives that we believe will help address the problems of youth violence. The panelists will talk about successful strategies, from community policing to mentoring, that are making a real difference across our country.

At the third and final conference panel later this afternoon, community leaders and legislators will highlight some of the nation's most effective programs that are helping to lower juvenile crime and delinquency. We will look at how entire communities have developed comprehensive intervention and prevention strategies that, not only cut youth violence, but also lower drop-out rates, teen pregnancy rates, and arrests for possession of drugs and weapons.

You know the President has also said there are no problems facing America that haven't been solved already somewhere in America. We have seen first hand how enforcement of laws, like zero tolerance for guns in school, are combined with prevention measures, like art classes and after-school sports and tutoring, and that together they help keep our children in school, off of drugs, and out of trouble. Sometimes the word doesn't spread. A successful program in one city may not be known about across the country. Part of our goal today is to make sure everyone concerned about these problems knows what is going on so they can seek out the help, the ideas, and the assistance they need.

We are going to recognize the progress of countries making and creating safer schools and communities. We are going to highlight how it does make a difference what political leadership does -- whether it is at the national level with the passage of anti-crime measures, like the passage of the Brady Law or the ban on assault weapons that are keeping thousands of handguns and assault weapons out of the hands of felons, fugitives, and stalkers and away from children. I am delighted that we are going to be joined today by Sarah and Jim Brady as well. We have also funded a hundred thousand new police officers on the street. We know the effect of community policing and how it has helped to reduce crime. Not only decrease crime but also create better networks of support within communities between law enforcement and neighbors.

The fact is that we know what works and we just have to get about the business of doing it. We have to learn from each other. Too many of our children are not benefiting from what we know works. I am delighted to see some of the mayors from some our cities here today that are doing such great work in implementing anti-crime and anti-youth violence measures. We have to do more than develop safe strategies. We have to teach our children that guns won't earn you respect and that violence won't settle an argument. We have to give them a positive vision of their future.

We are going to get started now. We are going to see a short video made by MTV that gives us a chance to hear from the people who are most affected by violence in their lives, namely our young people. So, if you will, please join me in watching this video.

(Video)

Thank you for creating that video and giving young people a chance to be heard on this issue. Now we'll hear from someone who has given an enormous amount of herself to doing what she could to try to create better and more effective responses to violence throughout our country and that is our Attorney General Janet Reno.

Janet Reno:

Mrs. Clinton, thank you and the President for bringing together so many wonderful people here today. It is exciting and you can feel the strength and the courage and the hope and the possibilities in this room and with the panels that we have all shared in this morning. The diversity is so important to see so many people from so many different perspectives coming together to see how we can work together to solve the problem of violence in the schools and amongst our children. The video was just special because children and young people have such a voice of wisdom and it is so important that we listen to them.

The President has done so much to help us focus on communities and to realize that communities understand their needs and resources better than we do and how can we become a partner in delivering services, expertise, and ideas about what works and what doesn't work in a full two-way street. It has been so exciting to see what mayors, police chiefs, commissioners, governors are doing across this country in terms of bringing people together, working with communities, but most of all, working with parents and with children in a manner that can produce results.

Five years ago when I came to Washington, I talked about prevention. People wondered why an attorney general talked about prevention. Now more and more people are talking about it. But most of all, more and more people are putting it into place in their communities. We are seeing a difference. We are seeing a reduction in violence. We are seeing young people with a chance to grow in a strong and positive way because of what people in this room, and [those] we are sharing a satellite with, are doing around this country.

It is so exciting to see the possibilities, but we have got to take the energy in this room, the thoughts in the satellite centers around the country, and convert it into action that truly makes a difference because we have so much to do.

Matthew Shepherd's horrible death is a reminder that we must move forward to deal across this nation with violence. Our hearts, and our thoughts, and our prayers go out to his family. With the energy in this nation, with the President's leadership, I know we are, and we can, make a greater difference.

Mrs. Clinton:

Thank you so much.

The Secretary of Education, Dick Riley, has many responsibilities and has worked as hard as anyone I have ever seen to change our public schools and improve our education system and has a lot of accomplishments to show for the last six years of effort, some of which we finally got done, at least we hope we got done, as of yesterday night around midnight or so.

I think that one of the issues that he has worked on is how to deal with school safety. I would like to call on the Secretary of Education, who worked with the Attorney General on the *Annual Report on School Safety* to talk about the findings and some of the important conclusions reached in that report. Secretary Riley.

Dick Riley:

Thank you so much. I want to thank the First Lady for providing such grand leadership in this area, and the panel members, and all of you, and those who are watching on connected downlinks. We have gone to a lot of schools. I have -- the President, the First Lady, the Vice President, Tipper, the Attorney General -- talked to young people. We are all really serious about working in a close way with students, with teachers, with principals and community leaders, with the mental health folks, the law enforcement folks, to try as best we can to provide leadership in this country in a very serious area.

Yesterday the Attorney General and I released, at the direction of the President, our first annual report on school safety. This is kind of a black and white edition. The next one will be a lot more colorful. You probably have read some things about it. It is the first comprehensive effort by the Federal Government to give parents, to give students and teachers, to give everyone a clear picture regarding the safety of their children in school. You hear so much conversation about that. This is our way of saying, "Let's put it all together in one place so we will know really what some of the facts are." The report tells us some interesting things.

First of all, that 90 percent of our schools are free of serious violent crime. Also, from a positive standpoint, school crime itself is slightly down. That's the good news. Much of the crime that is occurring, in terms of numbers of crime, is involving theft and things of that nature.

The report also tells us where we need to pay attention. The number of gangs, for example, has almost doubled over the last several years. Too many teachers are victims of violence. Drug use by eighth graders, for example, is up. Drug use across the country is down. We need to do a better job of targeting our resources for that 10 percent of the schools that have to deal with serious violent crime. I tell you that, in our concern, we are concerned deeply about every single child regardless of who they are or where they live. The life of every child is precious. The education of every child is precious.

Let me make one final comment about the report. The report also tells us that smaller schools and smaller classes are better than large schools and large classes when it comes to safety, especially in terms of classes in those early years. That is research based. It is very, very interesting how that teacher having the opportunity to have a close relationship, a connection, with those young students and to really help them, and if they really have a serious problem, to, of course, pull in a professional person to give them more help.

Young people need to feel connected, connected hopefully, strongly with their families, their grandparents, others in their families, their brothers and sisters, their teachers, their coaches, their counselors, principals, other adults. This business of being connected, I think, is so important.

Young people who aren't connected can simply lose their way. They might decide, for example, that the only way they can get attention is to get a gun and use it. We need to do everything possible to make sure this never happens. Unsupervised gun use and children do not mix.

Let me, at this time, introduce Suzann Wilson. Suzann is from Jonesboro, Arkansas, and I wish she were not here with us today. She is here because her eleven-year-old daughter was shot and killed along with four other children in school when two boys opened fire on their classmates. To her great credit, Suzann Wilson has been willing to step forward, as difficult as it is, to try and to make some good come out of this great tragedy for her family as others have done. We are grateful to all of you. It is my pleasure to introduce to you at this time, Suzann Wilson.

Suzann Wilson:

Good morning. Thank you, Mrs. Clinton, Attorney General Reno, and Secretary Riley, and all of you for asking me here today. It has been almost seven months since we lost our daughter, Brittany, and her classmates and a teacher to a senseless shooting.

In these long and painful months I have given a lot of thought as to what I could have done as a parent to have prevented this and the question keeps cropping up, "Why?" Why would one child take a gun and kill another child? Clearly we have some fundamental problems with many children in this nation.

I'm not involved in politics. I'm not a prosecutor or even an expert. I'm just a mother, a mother who has been touched by a senseless shooting. I think part of the answer to this problem can be found if we would not let children have access, or unsupervised access, to guns.

We live in a nation that has over 200 million guns. We live in a nation where children die from these guns at a rate that is so much more tragic and unnecessary than any other children in other countries. I'm not talking about banning guns. I'm not talking about taking away my Second Amendment rights. I'm just trying to talk about fixing a problem with our youth.

Jonesboro is a community that is pretty typical of most southern small towns. We have a lot of hunters, a lot of gun owners. My husband is a gun owner. My father was a gun owner. I am not opposed to owning guns. I am not opposed to hunters, but what I am opposed to is people leaving an unsupervised gun lying on a table or in their bedroom, so that a child can gain access to it.

Schools have been opened for a few weeks now, and already at least thirteen children and teenagers have been caught at school with firearms. Just three weeks ago in Topeka, Kansas, a five-year-old brought a nine-millimeter handgun to a kindergarten class. The gun accidentally fired in a classroom filled with 20 students. He was five years old. Where did he get the gun from? Clearly the question is not if there will be more violence, but when there will be more violence.

We here today can do something to stop this. Yesterday the Center to Prevent Handgun Violence released a report that analyzed 137 incidents of children getting hurt or killed by firearms during the last school year. At least 63 percent or two-thirds of those incidents were preventable, preventable by safe storage, by gun owners locking up their guns where children or teenagers can't get to them, preventable by safety design -- in some cases a part that costs as little as 50 cents. This could have prevented some unintentional shootings and saved a lot of lives. This is all preventable by common sense, responsibility, just ordinary behavior that we expect of ourselves as parents and as Americans.

I think, you know, we should all take a look at ourselves and realize that, you know, we owe it to our children to make our home safe. We lock up our liquor cabinets. We have safety caps on our medicine. We do everything we can to prevent our children from being hurt, but sometimes we overlook the biggest danger, I think, by leaving the gun in the cabinet or on top of the shelf in the closet. I hope today that you will take time to

realize that it is very important to lock the gun up so that your child cannot harm another child. I thank you for letting me speak today.

Secretary Riley:

Thank you so much. Thank you so much, Suzann, for your positive contribution and your personal courage and strength. It is interesting to me that with the strict laws that we passed here in Washington and all the states have passed dealing with guns in school, over 6,000 young people were expelled last year for having guns in school. As much as we have talked about it and as much interest as there is in it out there. That shows that things are beginning to work. I hope that number will be tremendously less this year.

One thing I want all of us to think about is of that 6,000 young people, around 50 percent of them went to some kind of alternative school. The other half of them did not have any kind of place like that to go to. This idea of turning children out who are troubled and mixed up, confused, or disconnected without some kind of alternative school is something all of us need to think about.

It is my pleasure now to present a person who has been tremendously helpful to all of us in terms of this particular issue. I have had a number of meetings and [she] has always been involved.

Marlene Wong is the director of mental health, District Crisis Intervention Team and Suicide Intervention Program for the Los Angeles Unified School District, the second largest school district in America with an enrollment of 849,000 students, 900 schools and centers. Ms. Wong is the administrator of the District Crisis Intervention Team, comprised of pupil attendants and elderly counselors, nurses, psychologists, social workers, and school police. Marlene.

Marlene Wong:

Thank you, Mr. Riley and Mrs. Clinton, for inviting me here today. I think that mental health has a great deal to contribute to this discussion. I am very moved as a mother and as an educator by Suzann's speech.

One of the things that we know is that we have to change the climate on our school campuses, especially our secondary campuses. There are many students who relate to each other through conflict of arms.

Someone once asked Freud, "What is mental health?" He said, "Mental health is to love and to work." He didn't say, "It is to fight and to win." There are many children who neither have the benefit of a supportive home environment nor the benefit of someone in their lives at school who can serve as a mentor, an encourager, and a supporter.

Somehow we have to build those partnerships. There are many children who don't know how to solve conflicts. We need to teach them life's coping skills.

There are really two levels. One is early identification and prevention. So we can find those children who are troubled and help them. Not blame them. Not only discipline them. Not send them away, but treat them with compassion and care.

Then there are those children, in general, each of whom needs an opportunity to learn about how to live with each other. It is not as simple as it used to be. We are such a diverse nation. When I go to schools in Los Angeles and I look at the children, they are from all over the world. There are 83 primary languages and yet they have come together. We have the job of educating them. If they are ever able to reach their potential, there must be some way that we can sit down and live with each other.

The other change that I see, this is my 25th year in the Los Angeles Unified School District, is that children, irrespective of their race or of their economic situation, have been traumatized. There are children -- middle class children, working class children, all children, unfortunately -- have been subjected to some sort of act of violence or have witnessed that violence.

Now when our crisis teams go out, we have been [in] existence since 1984, the things we see, the change in their physiology, after they have seen a traumatic event, the change in their emotional status, their inability to focus on school, their fear. What recent research has told us, is that there are changes in the brain, that the brain releases hormones that causes these changes. It can't attend. It can't focus on learning. Fear disrupts learning.

In Oklahoma City, I was there off and on for two years providing consultation and support and training to the teachers there, 40 to 50 percent of the child population knew someone who died or was injured in that incident. There's a perpetrator and then there are hundreds of thousands victims and we need to change that. I hope that all of us as mental health professionals will engage in that discussion and will engage in that work to make this change.

Thank you.

Secretary Riley:

Marlene, your description of the connection between these early experiences with violence and then later aggressiveness on the part of children and young adults is kind of a cycle. I wonder do you have any suggestions in terms of public policy on how we deal with such a close family situation and how we can impact it in a positive way?

Marlene Wong:

White House Conference on School Safety
Causes and Prevention of Youth Violence
October 15, 1998

On October 15, 1998 President Bill Clinton, joined by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton and Vice President Al Gore, hosted the White House Conference on School Safety: Causes and Prevention of Youth Violence. The conference was a day-long event in the East Room of the White House. The conference included workshops on various issues surrounding youth violence, a morning panel discussion with experts in the field and an afternoon panel that will explore some of the best practices and model safety strategies currently being employed throughout the country.

The goals of the conference were: to build on the existing body of knowledge about young people and aggressive or violent behavior; to listen and learn from students, parents, teachers, law enforcement, and other experts about the safety of our children both in and out of school; to share best practices and explore new solutions; and to develop strategies to put these safety models in place in schools and communities across the nation. The conference worked towards finding solutions to this challenge: How do schools, families, and communities work together to make sure that every child is safe in every school in America?

TRANSCRIPT OF CONFERENCE:

Morning Plenary Session (link that jumps to page 3)

Led by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton **(link to jump to her statement; page 3)**
Attorney General Janet Reno **(link to jump to her statement; page)**
Secretary of Education Richard Riley **(link to jump to her statement)**
Suzanne Wilson, Parent, Jonesboro, AR **(link to jump to her statement)**
Marlene Wong, Director, Los Angeles School of Mental Health, Valley Branch, CA **(link to jump to her statement)**
Paul Kingery, Ph.D., Director, Hamilton Fish National Institute on School and Community Violence, Rosslyn, VA **(link to jump to her statement)**

Afternoon Panel I

Discussion of the Causes and Prevention of Youth Violence that Affect our Schools and Communities:

President of the United States William Jefferson Clinton **(link to jump to her statement)**
Vice President of the United States Albert Gore **(link to jump to her statement)**
First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton **(link to jump to her statement)**

Well, earlier in the session this morning, Mrs. Reno presided over a group of people who spoke so articulately about the kinds of new partnerships that we have to establish. They are partnerships that go beyond our professional day. They are partnerships that don't start at 8 a.m. and end at 4:30 p.m. They are partnerships that surround children with the kind of care and support that they need, and surround families with the kind of care and support that they need. There are so many working mothers, single parents who are struggling with survival issues, economic survival issues, emotional survival issues. Somehow we just haven't caught up yet. All of those of us who provide those services need to work harder to think of ways to support and lift up the families.

Mrs. Clinton:

One of the programs that I have particular interest in, which has now had some very good longitudinal studies about the last 15 years, concerns home visits to families, particularly families at risk, particularly the kinds of families that you just described, starting in the hospital and going forward.

We know that if we have a good, structured home visitor program, such as the one that has been the most studied in our country in Elmira, New York. With well-trained professionals and paraprofessionals, we can significantly decrease child abuse, which is the first experience of violence which often leads to the generational continuation of the cycle of violence.

So there are some strategies, such as home visiting, that we need to look more seriously at the national, and state, and local level, and try to concentrate our resources in working with families where that chain of violence can be disrupted by a responsible adult. In effect, parenting the parents so that the parent can better parent the child. In a lot of [situations], the problems in the home can be dealt with effectively.

The State of Hawaii has some very good experience with that. Some other places in the country are looking to do that. The Freddie Mac Foundation has been very supportive of funding that in the private sector. The National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse has made home visiting its principle priority for the next several years. That's one thing can be done in the early years.

Then, as children get into school, we have unfortunately removed a lot of the resources that used to be in our elementary and middle schools, such as school nurses, such as counselors who dealt [with] children. If there are counselors, they have a caseload of four or five hundred. It's a fairly meaningless kind of token presence. I think we just have to pay attention to what we know might help adults treat children better from the earliest years to what then might help children with positive intervention in school and [the] community. Those are some of the things that your team and your school district have tried to put into place, which, I think, can serve as examples for the rest of the country.

Secretary Riley:

Thank you. The next panelist is [a] person nationally recognized [for] research in this area.

Dr. Paul Kingery serves as Director of the Hamilton Fish National Institute on School and Community Violence. There he is responsible for planning and supervising the research undertaken by the Institute in the area of school violence, coordinates school violence prevention efforts of seven universities that are part of a consortium with Hamilton Fish. Dr. Kingery.

Paul Kingery:

Thank you. Thank you Mrs. Clinton for having us here today and for your leadership (on school violence prevention), and thank you Secretary Riley and Attorney General Reno.

The tragic shootings in schools in recent months have caused us all to look for early warning signs for violence and to find ways to help troubled youths before they become violent. At the same time, we have to keep in mind, however, that many of the problems we're seeing in schools and communities are of a much more common nature -- things like fighting, weapon carrying, substance abuse, intolerance, and bias. These problems are less severe, and less often end in death, but the sheer magnitude of their frequency leads us all to a situation where we have to search for solutions. Mrs. Wilson's presence on this panel today brings a sense of gravity and urgency to this effort. Her presence urges
us to look forward to prevention strategies that can affect all of these more common incidents as those horrific incidents we have seen in schools in recent months.

We've heard a number of trends from Secretary Riley already. Some of these are encouraging and give us hope, and some of them are a challenge to us. We've seen, for example, that youth violence, especially gun carrying and weapon-related offenses climbed rapidly in the 1980s. Then we saw violence and delinquency level off more recently. And we've seen some things fall. Firearm-related homicides among inner-city youth, especially in the 15- to 17-year-old range, have dropped off a great deal. Some types of substance abuse have declined as well.

We are urged to look forward to some further benefits of prevention, and yet we have some challenges ahead of us. Fears are up. The fears of children in school that they will be harmed are up. They avoid places in the school, they avoid certain people, some days they don't go to school because they are afraid. It doesn't happen in every school, but it happens a little bit in many schools, and in some schools it happens a great deal. We are also concerned about the increasing presence of gangs in schools, by the self-reports of students. Students are saying more than ever, as we heard from Secretary Riley, that

gangs are in their schools. And we can't help but wonder about the link between the presence of gangs in schools and growing fears of students in those settings.

When we look at those fears we can guess, or we can study, the causes. We can look for problems that lead to those conditions and treat them as real, and I think we should take that approach. We heard the metaphor already about a cycle of violence. The cycle is something that occurs between generations when one family passes on violence to the next generation, and so on, because we learn violence. Brain chemistries are involved, there are other factors, society shapes our violent responses, but we learn to be violent by watching it repeatedly. Too often, we watch it in families, communities, and in schools, and the challenge is to find ways to reduce that.

I'd like to raise another metaphor, though, other than a cycle, and that is that of a path: getting on the right path, getting on the wrong path, an upward path or a downward path for children. The upward path is the one that most parents are enjoying in the lives of their children, and what a joy it is to see. But the downward path is one that is often unappreciated and unnoticed, and those who do notice it are so burdened already that they're unable to do very much about it. We look for things that start children on those downward paths, because the longer they're on the path, the harder it is to turn them around. And the paths start very early. The progress on those paths starts in early childhood in the family and community.

As we look for those things that get children on the wrong path or the right path we begin to look at families first. Families can have such a strong and positive influence on youth, or they can have such a negative and lasting influence on youth. Families that abuse their children, or allow others to abuse their children, families that neglect their children, families that are unable, or unwilling, or simply cannot access the services available to them to parent effectively, have children who very often become violent. There are some stalwarts out there that prevent that from happening, even in the most dire circumstances, and they are the unsung heroes, but for many youth it's a downward path.

The challenge for families is to build open and loving communication, strong bonds -- to build something that lasts with a child. If families condone or portray violence, then children learn violence and they portray it as well. And it can be a cycle. But before it's a cycle, it's a path, and children are already down that path by the time they are two-, three-, and four-years-old. I ask you, many of you are parents, "When is violence appropriate in your family?" "When is nonviolence inappropriate for your child?" "When, in a child's life, does it cease to be humorous -- their ineffective attempts at aggression and hitting a much larger adult person or another child." "When does it cease to become funny and begin to be serious, and recognized as a starting place, and as a gate-post on the wrong path?"

Peers, also, are a strong influence in the lives of youth. There is a point early in the lives of youth where they can reach out to other children and try to become independent from their parents, and that's a good thing in a certain measure. But too often peer influence is of the wrong type as well. Sometimes students try in vain to establish themselves in their

peer group, and the peer group rejects them, because of the way they look, the way they talk, or the way they act. It's not fair, but it happens. As children become rejected, sometimes because they fail in school, also, or just because their peers don't like them, they become hopeless, and hopelessness, among many other things, leads to violence.

We also look in our communities, and too many communities are broken. Some of them are great, just like many families are great, but some of them have too much violence, too much substance abuse, too many boarded up buildings, too many filthy dirty streets, and too little evidence of concern for the lives of children. Some of the most difficult situations in communities have some of the most wonderful programs. They can't be painted with a broad brush. And yet as we look forward toward improving those communities we find many challenges.

When we put all of those things together, and many others, we have a group of things that cause violence. We sometimes call them other things -- correlates, risk factors, possible causes -- but there are many things that we know cause violence and we can do something about it. Schools can't stop or prevent all of this violence. They cannot clean up the ravages of broken families and broken communities in the lives of children, but they can do a great deal to hold those forces at bay while education does its work in changing the attitudes and behaviors of those children.

When we look in the final picture, down the road, in the coming year, we have a big challenge -- a challenge that requires leadership as we're seeing here today from the President and the First Lady, the Secretary of Education, and the Attorney General of the United States. It requires coalition-building in communities that really make a difference, and that aren't just on paper: really breaking down some barriers, sharing information and data on violence, police, law-enforcement, professional security, schools, parents, youth-serving organizations, faith communities, and many others. If all of those people can take on that challenge, we can really make a difference. There are things that work. We'll measure our success in the life of every child.

Thank you.

Secretary Riley:

Thank you so much, doctor. I am very interested in your comments on the early warning signs where you have troubled children. I would point out that the Attorney General and I have also published [in] September, [an] early warning guide [*Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools*] that we received tremendous help from law enforcement people, from educators, from child psychologists, mental health folks, and so forth. It is well thought out, very careful though not to label children. You have to be very careful if you are dealing with these very sensitive early warning guides of troubled children and how teachers then can work with them and, if not, pull people in from public health, the centers, and so forth.

That guide and also this first report on school safety you can obtain from us at 1-800-USA-LEARN. We welcome hearing from anybody in the audience. We will forward either one or both of these publications. I think they can be very, very helpful. Hillary.

Mrs. Clinton:

Well, thank you, Dick. I think it is really important just to quickly review some of the points that were made on this panel as a reminder of what we are talking about when we talk about causes and prevention. Also to keep in mind as we move into the afternoon panel where we talk about solutions that have worked.

There is a whole range of causes. I think that one of the important advances in the last year or two is that we are taking an honest look at these different causes. It is almost an epidemiological approach to violence. The Center for Disease Control has been doing some very important research that talks about how important it is to look at the various levels of causation for violence and to begin to address each one of them. You can have a comprehensive approach by taking incremental steps, strategies that will work.

Suzann put her finger on a very important cause. Guns kill people. Guns are, in the hands of young people, extraordinarily dangerous because of all that we know about children's psychology. I just want to emphasize that it is an important part of the strategy, in really being honest and recognizing the cause, that unsupervised access to guns is a real problem in our country.

I said earlier in my opening remarks that we are pleased to have Sarah and Jim Brady, and I see, Representative Carolyn McCarthy here, people who have really been on the front lines, talking about sensible measures that can keep guns away from children. We cannot really make the kind of progress we need to with respect to youth violence if we don't do more, as Suzann has reminded us, to keep guns out of the hands of children and to hold adults responsible for unsupervised access to guns. That is one of the causes that we have to be honest about and recognize.

Any of us who live long enough know that kids are always going to fight. I can think of a million stories from my own growing up of fights on the playground and pushing in the hallways. The addition of guns changes the calculation dramatically and tragically. The extraordinary emphasis on guns in our media makes the idea of guns attractive to younger and younger children, as Suzann pointed with the recent incident in Topeka.

Marlene Wong reminded us that we have to think about mental health in a very broad context to deal with the many problems that children bring to school that exist in their families and in their communities. One of the solutions that we will be talking about later today is how we create better responses by utilizing mental health strategies and professionals.

Certainly the important point that Marlene made about how fear disrupts learning is something educators have to be much more conscious of and get the message out to families and communities. I have been in lots and lots of schools as many of us in this room, not only the panel, but those of you in the audience and people looking in at this through satellite.

Even at a very young age when you go to shake hands with a child, you can tell almost immediately how much confidence that child has and how much fear that child lives with when they look you in the eye. They shake your hand. They tell you their name. So many of those little children have already been subject to so much that they just can't get themselves oriented to take advantage of what goes on in school. We have to pay more attention to the mental health dimension of this and create more strategies to intervene.

Dr. Kingery, with his very important description about prevention strategies and the fears of children being up, I think, reminds us so clearly about what happens when a child is damaged in those early years.

I wanted to ask you, Dr. Kingery, when you talk about rejection leading to hopelessness leading to violence, what are some of the best ways that you are aware of through your research at the Institute about how to break that cycle or take that path in a different direction to try to, in the family and community, intervene early and then in the school, as you rightly pointed out, create ways to hold the negative forces from the family and the community at bay so that at least within the school day the child can feel protected and may be repair some of the damage that has been done?

Dr. Kingery:

We often think of strategies as something that goes between two sides of a binder, but strategies also include a family member or friend or parent taking time with a child or a school teacher or a counselor. Some of the best strategies are those that convey love and warmth and affection and a sense of hope. They are interactive in that they are not necessarily planned ahead of time. They are often spontaneous, but they do follow some lines of research on what is effective.

What is effective is something that is substantial, something that is sustained over time, and something [that] affects the root causes of violence and the feelings that those children have. We'll talk later this afternoon, I am sure, about the specific examples of those programs, but the strategies that are effective, I think in the main, are the ones that build real human connections between adults and youth.

Mrs. Clinton:

We are very lucky to have some people here with us who have been doing that, you know the MTV video very appropriately highlighted what has been going on in Boston. Mayor Menino is with us today. We'll hear more about the Boston approach.

What Boston did by creating a comprehensive approach that could intervene in a general way in the lives of so many children at risk, but then in a very specific way focus on that relatively small group of kids who cause the most trouble. So you are dealing with both ends of the problem at the same time, trying to keep the general population of children more engaged, give them more to do, recreation, and other activities. But really try to put a focus on the kids who were already damaged to the extent that, if they didn't have some intervention, they might lead to violence. So we will be talking more about that.

I wanted to ask the Attorney General about the early warning guide, the Secretary mentioned, because this was a very important publication. When did you issue this, Dick?

Secretary Riley:

September.

Mrs. Clinton:

The start of this school year.

Secretary Riley:

We sent it to every school, public and private, in the country. Over a 100 thousand.

Mrs. Clinton:

Because we know from the tragic school shootings that a lot of those young boys had said something to somebody. They had made threats. They had talked about getting even with people. They had given some evidence that they were troubled, that they were thinking about taking some kind of action.

I wanted to ask the Attorney General if she could talk about this early warning guide and what kinds of assistance it can give schools, if they will find it in their pile of mail and make sure they have got it open and use it this school year to try to create some structure to deal with these early warning signals.

Attorney General Reno:

What I would ask everybody to do is see if you can find it in your mail, if you haven't already. If you need another copy, let us know. Then tell us how we can make it more useful for the future. Give us feedback. Let us create the two-way street that enables us [to] get to you programs and ideas that work, but get feedback from you. It can be so important and it can make a difference.

Mrs. Clinton, in the earlier panel a point was made. We need to understand the danger signals and warnings, but we need to be trained to understand them. The community police officer, who sees a child at risk, may need to know what to do and how to do it. So we have got to figure out how we train teachers, counselors, and police officers, but then we have got to have the resources to provide the follow-up after the police officer has identified the problem.

Mrs. Clinton:

Janet, one of the real problems that people are concerned about is, do our laws and do our law enforcement facilities and resources permit a police department, for example, to really respond to a school call and says, "We're worried about John. He has been making threats. What can we do about it?" What happens at that point?

Attorney General Reno:

I think the President envisioned it when he talked about community police officers. A community police officer who understands his or her community, who understands the problems, who has reached out and informed himself or herself better as to what is needed can make such a difference. That school principal, that Head Start teacher, all of us can make a difference, but I think Dr. Kingery put his finger on it. It takes time. It takes real time and real commitment. You can't just dabble in a child's life once every six weeks. It's got to be sustained. Reverend Rivers and so many members of the faith community have provided that time and that intensity that is so important.

Mrs. Clinton:

I think that you have a pretty clear idea of how important both the Secretary, and the Attorney General, and the panelists believe it is to focus in and to be educated on the early warning signals so that we can take appropriate action. But, of course, that, as the Attorney General reminds us, requires that there be people in a position to take such action. That's one of the things that we hope will come from this conference is that more communities and more schools will, not only learn what has been successful in other parts of our country, but will take the effort to educate themselves and begin to put into place the training and the structures that will enable communities and schools to respond to such early warning signals.

Secretary Riley:

Hillary, I think it is important to realize, if a school out there, parents or teachers or whatever really want to deal with this issue, the first thing that they should do, and that's what these studies show, is assess the problem, really develop data on your own school. What is the problem in the community, the school, and the environment and then develop a plan, using students, using teachers, using parents, using mental health folks, law enforcement folks, and pull them all together to develop a plan. Make sure that it's a comprehensive plan. What do you do in case you determine a child is really troubled? All of that should be pre-decided and thought out. Who do you call? What do you do next?

So I think it is real important. First of all, analyze the situation. Then develop a comprehensive plan, involving those outside the school as well as those in the school, but especially the students.

Mrs. Clinton:

I want to give everyone on the panel a chance for one last word because we are about to end this panel.

Suzann, is there anything you wanted to add? I keep thinking that it was so fitting that the Brady Bill, which was finally passed with such an effort and signed by the President, it has done so much to keep guns out of the hands of fugitives, and felons, and stalkers, and other people who shouldn't have them. It was appropriately named for the two people, Sarah and Jim Brady, who really lead the national effort. I think that what you have done in coming to the forefront on this issue of gun safety and access to guns by children is something that is equally important. I want to thank you for that. Are there any last words or comments that you would like to share with us?

Mrs. Wilson:

I would just like to share with all the parents, I would just like to say that it is very important to stay involved in your child's life. Know what your child is doing. Know who their friends are. When they go over to the neighbor's house, find out how the neighbor stores their weapons. Don't just assume that people are responsible because you are responsible.

Mrs. Clinton:

That's a really important point, Suzann. In fact, several pediatricians have told me recently that they have begun, in their just general check-ups, to ask parents about the availability of guns in their home because it has become such a problem. They have also urged parents to do exactly what Suzann has just said

You wouldn't let your child walk into a dangerous situation, if you knew about it, a neighbor's home. You ought to be willing to ask neighbors if they have got locks on their guns and if they have got the guns totally stored away so that they can't be accessible to children while the children are in their home.

I think, if all of us as parents, took a decision to do that we would begin to help educate parents about what this is about. Then create more support for the sort [of] legislation that Suzann has convinced me is very important for our children's safety. Marlene.

Mrs. Wong:

Well, there are a couple things. One is, I think, we need to keep listening to people like Suzann, because they are the ones who will tell us what we need to do to work on this problem. The other thing, I would like to speak about is what I consider to be a rising level of children who are depressed. We have so many middle school and high schools students who are depressed.

When we look at the events that have happened in the past year in the L.A. Unified School District, over 80 percent of the times we went on a crisis call, it had to do with a child who was having problems in the community or at home. Many of those incidents revolved around depression and attempted suicide.

Mrs. Clinton:

Thank you, Marlene, Paul.

Dr. Kingery:

I would just urge parents not to become discouraged about the daunting nature of violence in school and the fears for their child and not to be embarrassed asking for help. There's help available.

Mrs. Clinton:

Both Marlene's and Paul's final points were good ones to end on because they remind us that, yes there is a problem, but there is a lot that can be done to help people deal with these problems. In study after study and certainly based on anecdotal evidence, there is a

lot of reason to believe that the most fervent desire of our children is that they have more time from the adults in their lives, that they have more attention, that they be given the limits that they know they need, and that they be given the support they require to navigate safely to adulthood.

As Marlene has reminded us, there are a lot of sad children. The sadness comes from the combination of what goes on in their families and communities, from a steady dose of fear that they get from the mass media which makes them feel even more insecure. There needs to be a lot of reassurance and support. Many parents are working very, very hard, spending a lot of time making a living and feeling that they are not giving enough time to their children. We, as a society, need to do more to support parents so that they can give that love and attention and discipline to children.

As Paul rightly said, there is help out there. There is advice out there. There are strategies out there that work.

I want to thank the panelists, particularly the Attorney General and Secretary of Education, for the work they have done, leading up to this, for the reports that they have issued, the early warning guide with the annual school report. I want to thank our panelists, each of whom brings a very particular and important perspective and experience to this issue.

We will break now for lunch. Everyone who is watching through satellite, I guess on the West Coast, you can have breakfast, the rest of us will have lunch. We will be back here this afternoon where the President will make some important announcements about what it is we want to do to deal with the causes of violence in our schools, our homes, our communities. How each of us as members of families, communities, and our nation can do more to help protect our children and give them a better chance about feeling hopeful about the future.

Let me remind everyone in this room, you are invited to lunch.

White House Conference on School Safety
October 15, 1998
Afternoon Session I

Mrs. Clinton:

I would like to welcome all of you back to the second panel of our national conference. I have just been told that since this morning, when I was privileged to open the conference, we now have about 717 satellite down-link sites. So we're delighted to welcome all of you as well. We really hope that you're getting as much out of this Conference and the panelists' discussions wherever you are as we are here in the White House.

This morning we learned about some of the serious problems that our children are facing -- family breakdown, rising levels of depression, problems in the communities such as gangs, pervasiveness of drugs, easy access all too often to weapons, handguns and other weapons in the home. We are very concerned about all of these problems and how they impact on the issue of youth violence. We also reminded ourselves this morning how important it is to focus on solutions.

I am particularly looking forward to this panel where we will hear from experts -- from mayors, from law enforcement, educators, and others -- who will tell us about the strategies at the national, state, and local levels that are reducing youth violence and making it possible for more young people to feel hopeful about their future and less fearful about the present.

It is now my honor to introduce our Vice President, who has been committed to children and families for his entire career. Please join me in welcoming Vice President Al Gore.

Vice President Al Gore:

Thank you very much. Thank you very much. Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. I am grateful for your warm welcome. I would like to thank the First Lady for those very kind words.

You know, I am reminded that it has probably been three decades now that the First Lady has been a leader on this issue and five and half years in this house as a leader for our country on this issue. I understand that, as is always the case, she presided over this morning's session extremely well. I would just like to say on behalf of all of us to the First Lady, thank you very much for all you have done.

I want to acknowledge Attorney General Janet Reno and Secretary of Education Dick Riley, Governor Paul Patton of Kentucky, four distinguished mayors who are present, Mayor Dennis Archer of Detroit, Mayor Tom Menino of Boston, Mayor Sharon Seles

Felton of Minneapolis, and Mayor Deedee Corradini of Salt Lake City, who will be speaking shortly.

Quite a few members of Congress are here. I may miss some of them, but I want to acknowledge Congressman Bobby Ethridge of North Carolina who is here, Congresswoman Caroline McCarthy of New York who is here, Congresswoman Donna Christine Corinne of the Virgin Islands, Congressman Harold Ford, Jr., of my home state of Tennessee, and Congressman Bob Wise of West Virginia.

State Senator Valerie Weiner of Nevada is here. There are probably quite a few other state representatives and state senators who are here. Forgive me for not knowing to acknowledge all of you. I see quite a few members of the law enforcement community here and, of course, educational leaders. We welcome all of you.

I would like to begin by expressing some regrets from my wife, Tipper, who has joined me at some forums around the country on school violence, but who injured her leg running a couple of weeks ago and is still recovering. I give you her best wishes.

In just a moment I will have the pleasure of introducing the President or presenting the President. Let me take a moment before doing so to put this conference in context. We meet at a time of enormous prosperity for our country. We are making progress in solving a lot of problems that have resisted solution for a long time.

Our economy is growing. Jobs are being created. Incomes are up. Now after months of partisanship in the Congress, President Clinton's persistence and resolve have brought us very close to a budget agreement that will make historic new investments in our children and our future. The President will devote a few words to that during his comments in just a moment.

There is a reason he has pressed the Congress so hard to achieve the priorities that he set forth nine months ago. He knows to keep our prosperity going, our schools and our children must be strong.

I was in each of the three cities represented by the mayors here, in the front row, in the recent weeks. I was reminded that the generation of children aged under 18 just passed the Baby Boom generation as the largest generation in American history. I was in a classroom in Florida just a few days ago, where the fifth grade teacher had 38 students in her classroom. The average class size in that Little River elementary school in the upper grades was 35 to 1.

We are in an information age when we put a premium on knowledge and learning. Brains are replacing brawn. We have to prepare them by making the same kind of commitment to our educational system for this new generation that those World War II vets made to the Baby Boom generation so many years ago, when the President and the First Lady and Tipper and I first started elementary school so many years ago. When we start focusing on how we can make that commitment, we have to put first things first

because children can only learn in a safe place. I think this conference has already brought some needed perspective to the whole issue that we are discussing.

In looking at it through the eyes of children, we understand that we have got to deal with the fears that are in their hearts. I was reminded freshly of that just last week when I was in Erie County, New York, having a town hall meeting about access to education. A young nine-year-old girl raised her hand. She had a lot of courage in an audience almost completely made up of grown-ups. She wanted to speak. She came out to the area where she could be seen. She said, "Can you make my school safe?" Her name is Alexis Heideger. I figured the best answer I could give her was to ask her to come and be part of this Conference today. Alexis, bless your heart. If you would stand up, we want to thank you for putting this conference in perspective.

We have kept Alexis very much in mind in the design of this conference. It really combines two areas of preeminent focus for the President. One of them I just mentioned is education. The other one is preventing crime and reducing violence in the United States.

President Clinton has focused on a new anti-crime strategy with elements that were never really combined before, a lot more community police officers, stronger punishment for violent offenders, efforts to get guns off the sidewalks, and smarter prevention programs. This combination of approaches has worked. Violent crime has been reduced five years in a row. Thanks to your good work, most of our schools are free from violent crimes.

Even one child getting hurt is one child too many. Today 17 percent of city schools still report at least one incident of violent crime. If there is one message that our children need to hear over and over again, it is simply this: Violence is not the solution for any problem. We have to work together to teach those things that are most essential to our children, giving them the deep sense of trust and guidance and security that tells them that they are truly loved, truly cared about, and truly respected for who they are.

In places where parents and teachers have come together to love and nurture our children, it has made an enormous difference. Tipper and I have seen it first hand. I remember at one of the meetings in California where we met parents who volunteer their time to mentor students and help them with schoolwork. In Ohio, I met with parents who are working to keep their schools open after school and give them a safe place to go between the hours of two and six.

In Indianapolis, Indiana, I met an extraordinary couple, named Linda and Tony Wallace. Violence was so high at their high school that they were actually going to send their daughter away to a private school in another city, but rather than doing that they decided to make a stand. They recruited more than 40 other parents and created a program, based at the school, called Security Dads. I wish you could have seen all 40 of them, sitting in the gymnasium there in Indianapolis with their T-shirts that have Security Dads on it. They are a presence at school events. They told wonderful stories about what a huge difference it makes in the behavior of the students when the Security Dads are there.

They also help to mentor students. They reconnect absent fathers with their families. They told stories of the transforming impact that reconnection can have in the lives of these men who get to know their children freshly and get reconnected with their families.

Today Security Dads, as an organization, has helped to reduce crime across the board. When we tried to praise them and give them all the credit for it, they immediately turned and gave the credit to a strong principal, who made it possible for them to come into the school and organize the Security Dads. I am glad that all three of them are here today, Linda and Tony Wallace as well as Principal Jackie Greenwood. As representatives of so many others like them who are involved in such efforts around the country, I would like the three of them to stand so we can thank them for their efforts.

We have been very proud to be partners by working to expand the Safe and Drug Free School Act, to get guns out of our schools, to help teachers get the information they need in order to respond to the early signs. Let me just add that I'm particularly pleased that this budget agreement, that we hope will soon come, will contain a substantial increase in a program that we have all worked hard on, that Tipper and I spotlighted at our last family conference, after-school care.

We believe these programs are especially important. They give children constructive opportunities during that window of time in the afternoon, before the parents get home from work, when they are most vulnerable to violence or to the temptation to get into trouble of various sorts. Together all these steps send the message that we care about the safety of children.

I would like to draw just one short analogy. Attorney General Reno has educated all of us about the crime-fighting theory known as broken windows. If there is a broken window in the neighborhood, if there is graffiti, if there is litter, then the potential criminal, who is thinking of some mischief, walks into that neighborhood and receives a very powerful, unspoken message. The message is: If you want to commit a crime, this might just be the place to do it because we tolerate disorder. We don't care that much about what goes on here.

Going in the opposite direction and fixing those windows, picking up the litter, getting rid of the graffiti, and making the connections with community leader sends another powerful message: Don't even think about causing trouble in this neighborhood. We take pride in ourselves and in this place where we live.

I think the same theory applies to our schools. If there are 38 students in the classroom, holes in the ceiling, paint pealing from the walls, and lunch is served in shifts starting at 10 o'clock in the morning, the message has to be: We don't care all that much about your education because we are certainly not devoting enough resources to it. It's not a priority for us.

If, on the other hand, you see an acceptable student-teacher ratio, modern textbooks, classrooms connected to the information superhighway, Security Dads, other parents

involved actively in the school, well-trained teachers, a curriculum well-attuned to what is relevant to our country and to these students lives, then the powerful message is: We care a lot about what is going on here. You need to study hard because, since this is a priority for us, it should be for you as well.

Ladies and gentlemen, I think that is the kind of message that President Bill Clinton has sent with his unyielding focus on education for five and a half years, on crime prevention, and on violence reduction. Even right now in the closing hours of this great struggle with the Congress over what is going to be in the budget, the message is: Education is Priority One. The message of this White House Conference is: Safety in our schools is the number one priority before we can accomplish anything else in our schools.

It is my great honor to present to you someone, who for six years now has done more than anyone else, worked harder than anyone else to create safer, stronger schools. He stood up to the gun lobby to get guns out of our classrooms. He fought to keep our schools safe and drug free. He fought for smarter crime prevention. Now he has brought us to the verge of a new agreement with the majority in the Congress that represents a broad victory for this President's vision.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my honor to present to you our President, William Jefferson Clinton.

President William Jefferson Clinton:

Thank you. Your kindness is interfering with my determination to stay on schedule. (Laughter.) But thank you very much. I want to thank Secretary Riley and Attorney General Reno for their devotion and consistent work on this matter. I thank the Vice President. He and Hillary and I are delighted to have all of you here at the White House today, and the many, many people all across America who are joining us, thanks to the technological revolution.

I thank the members of Congress who are here. And, Governor, thank you for coming -- and the mayors and the other members of the administration, and all the distinguished citizens who are here. Our good friend, Edward James Olmos, thank you for being here.

I saw a survey, a public opinion survey a few months ago that asked the American people what they thought the most important story of the first six months of 1998 was, and dwarfing everything else was the concern our people had for the children who were killed in their schools. And I think that your presence here and the number of people who are involved all across America, the quality of the panelists and, indeed, the courage of many of them -- the mother of one of the children killed at Jonesboro, Arkansas, in my home state, was on the morning panel with Hillary -- this is truly a moving thing. And it's a very important thing for our country.

You know, when I leave here -- and I hope I don't have to leave before this panel is over. But I think all of you know that we have been able to put together a conference for several days, a meeting between the Prime Minister of Israel and the Chairman of the PLO in our attempts to make the next big step toward peace in the Middle East. And I got to thinking about it on the way over here today, as I was walking over from the Oval Office, and all the things I'm trying to get these people to lay down and get over and give up, so they can go on with their children's future, so that we can stop innocent children from being killed in the place in the world that is the home of the world's three great monotheistic religions.

It's all a part of our attempt not to give up on anybody and not to permit hatred or anger to destroy even one child's life anywhere. And if we're going to do that elsewhere in the world, to try to be a force for good, then we have to be as good as we can here at home. And all of you are trying to help us achieve that, and I'm very, very grateful to you.

Because this is the only chance I'll have to do it today, and because all of you care so much about education, I'd like to just take a moment to talk about where these budget negotiations are on Capitol Hill. They're about to [be] concluded, I hope -- they've certainly gone on long enough. But we're not quite there yet. However, even though there are still points outstanding, I believe we'll succeed. And as the Vice President said, one thing we know already, we know that now this budget will reflect a major commitment to education and to the future of our children.

I am very pleased it will make the first installment on our plan to hire 100,000 new teachers. (Applause.) You heard the Vice President's catalogue of the class size issue, but the Secretary of Education tells me that we haven't fully grasped it because, unlike the baby boom, we think that this increase in our children will go on more or less indefinitely, and we've got a lot of very fine teachers in the classroom who will be retiring in the next few years. So this is a huge challenge for us.

The United States has never before done anything like this. And there were a lot of people who honestly thought I was wrong to fight for this or they disagreed with me, but it seems to me that we had enough experience when we put 100,000 police on the street. I was told the United States had never done anything like that before. We didn't have anything to do with telling the cities where the police should go, but the results have been pretty satisfactory. And everywhere I go, someone mentions it to me.

If it worked there and we have crime at a 25-year low, how much more important is it to put the children in the classroom? And this will make a major down payment toward our goal of an average class size of 18 in the early grades -- very different from what has been reported.

And I should also say that when the Attorney General and the Secretary of Education went out across the country in the wake of all of these school shootings, and they met with educators and they met with people talking about how we can prevent these things from happening in the first place, one of the things that they were told was, get us small classes in the early grades so that we can get to know these children, find out

the ones who obviously have got some serious problems, and try to get them the help they need before their lives and others' are irrevocably changed. So this is a very, very good day for the United States.

There were some other very important educational initiatives that will be fully supported -- our child literacy drive, to make sure every child can read independently by the end of the 3rd grade; our college mentoring drive to help lower-income students prepare for college and to be able to tell every one of them what kind of financial aid they'll get if they stay in school and learn their lessons and stay out of trouble.

It increases support for Head Start, expands the number of innovative charter schools. There are now 1,000 of those schools in America; there was one when I became President, and there will be 3,000 before we're done in 2000.

We will provide for half a million summer jobs for our young people, a program that many had sought to eliminate. It will provide for after-school programs for a quarter million young people. And I think we all know how important that is.

I'm very, very grateful for the strong support I have received from the members of my party in the Congress to turn away attempts to actually cut funds from our public schools and instead to renew our historic commitment to them, to more and better-trained teachers, to smaller classes, to hooking up all those classrooms to the Internet by the year 2000, for extra support for children who need it, for accountability and choice.

This is what I mean by putting partisanship behind progress, by putting people ahead of politics. And I am grateful to all those in both parties who are responsible for pulling this agreement together.

There's still a lot to be done. A lot of these teachers we'll hire will have to hold class in trailers or hallways, or crowded or crumbling classrooms. I proposed in the State of the Union a targeted tax cut for school modernization that was fully paid for, wouldn't take a dime from the surplus, won't create a single new federal bureaucracy, but it will lower the cost of building these buildings. It could mean as much as 300 new schools in Florida alone next year.

If our children are learning in trailers and schools with broken windows and where the wiring won't even permit them to be hooked up to computers, then we're not getting them ready for the 21st century. So I do want to say, while I am profoundly grateful for the 100,000 teachers, I am determined to see that we finish the job next year in the next Congress. (Applause.)

Now, I also want to thank the First Lady for her role in this conference. We've been at this a long time. In 1983, when I was governor of our state, I asked Hillary to chair a commission on school standards, and one of the things that we fought hardest for, that was very controversial at the time, was to have a class size limit of 20 in the early grades. And 15 years ago, it was a hard fight, and we got it. And I haven't checked the numbers yet, but I bet, given the growth in population in our schools, they're being

swamped and hard-pressed to meet it. And we really believe that making this a national goal and sticking with it will pay major, major benefits to our children all across the country.

Let me also say what I've already said a little bit of. The American people -- if I had been polled, I would have been right there with them. I think that all of us were shocked by the violence we saw in Springfield and Paducah and Jonesboro and Edinboro and Pearl. I think we're still disturbed when we see the sights of metal detectors in school doorways or see gangs of young people who are on the streets when they ought to be in the halls of their schools.

We know that there are still some schools where children are afraid to go to school. And doing something about school violence, therefore, is very important, but also we have to understand the nature, the magnitude of the problem. Why do some teenagers from some troubled backgrounds pick up guns and open fire on their classmates? Why do some teenagers who don't appear to have trouble at home do the same thing? What is at the bottom of this and what can we really do?

You know, I have to say this -- and I'm not blaming anybody because I've done it myself, so I will posit the fact that I have done this -- but when people are in elected office and they hear about a problem like this, and they know the people they're doing their best to represent are afraid, the first impulse is always to say, well, if we just punish them a little harder and a little faster and kept them a little longer, everything would be all right. Now, the truth is that some people are so far gone and what they have done is so heinous that that is the appropriate thing to do. But I have never met a police officer in my life who believed that we could punish our way out of our social problems without other appropriate actions -- not one time. And I think we're all here because we believe in a good society we would stop more bad things from happening in the first place.

The report that's being released today tells us that the vast majority of our schools are safe, that the majority of our children are learning in peace and security. But it also tells us that in too many schools students feel unsafe. Even if they're not, if they feel unsafe it's going to have a huge detrimental impact on their ability to learn and grow and relate to their fellow students in an appropriate way.

In too many schools, there is still too much disrespect for authority and still too much intolerance of other students from different backgrounds. Our schools, all of them, must be sanctuaries of safety and civility and respect.

Now, here are some things that I think we can do to help you meet the challenge. First, in the schools with the biggest violence problems, security has to be the top priority. Today, I am pleased to announce a new $65-million initiative to help schools hire and train 2,000 new community police and school resource officers to work closely with principals and teachers and parents and the students, themselves, to develop anti-violence and anti-drug plans, based on the actual needs of individual schools. Community policing has helped to make our streets safe; it can work for our schools, too.

I'm also very pleased that Congressman Jim Maloney of Connecticut has sponsored a bill to help schools use the funds available for hiring the community police officers to hire officers to work with the schools. This bill was passed by the House and Senate and it will get up here to me in a day or two and I'll look forward to signing it into law.

Second, we have to help schools recognize the early warning signs of violence and to respond to violence when it does strike. Today, I want to tell you that soon I will be sending to Congress a plan to create a School Emergency Response to Violence, the SERV Program, that will work just as FEMA does when it responds to natural disasters. Project SERV will travel to where the trouble is and help communities respond quickly to school violence, from helping schools to meet increased security needs, to providing emergency and longer-term mental health crisis counseling for students, faculty and their families.

Now, let me just say a word here of appreciation to somebody who is not here, to Tipper Gore, who, once she became 50, fell victim to the Vice President and my propensity for leg injuries -- (laughter) -- but, you know, more than any other person in America since we've been here in the White House, she has tried to elevate the importance of proper mental health care and the fundamental dignity of it. And I think that we have got to, all of us, keep working until we remove any last vestige of stigma that attaches to getting treatment for children who have troubling mental problems. We know that most of them, the vast majority of them, can be treated successfully. And we know that it is not a cause for shame or denial among families. And we have to keep working on that. And all of you, I ask you to join Tipper Gore and others who understand this and try to make that a part of our approach to this issue as well.

Third, we can't stop the prevention efforts at the schoolhouse door. As I said, the budget agreement we reached today will double or more the after-school programs that keep young people safe after the bell rings. But if young people leave the safe school and enter an unsafe community, they're in trouble.

Today we want to announce two new steps to help them meet that challenge. Our Safe Schools-Safe Communities initiative will help 10 targeted communities develop plans to reduce youth violence and drug use in and out of school -- not only more police, but after-school programs, mentoring, counseling, conflict resolution, mental health services, and more. We wanted to put together in at least 10 places that don't have it now, a truly comprehensive approach.

I'm also pleased to announce that in response to constructive criticism and suggestions from many members of Congress and educators and community leaders across this country, we're going to overhaul our Safe and Drug-Free Schools program, which we have dramatically increased in the last few years, to require schools who get the funds to establish tough, but fair discipline rules; to put in place proven drug prevention strategies; to issue yearly school safety and drug use report cards to measure their own progress. These methods have worked so well in cities like

Boston, they can work around the country, and it will guarantee that the money that's being spent will actually achieve the results that it's been appropriated to achieve.

Fourth, we have to expect more from young people themselves. Given the facts, the resources, the encouragement, almost all of them will do the right thing. This year we launched a huge media campaign to tell young people that drugs are wrong, illegal and can kill you. Now we have to tell them they, too, have responsibilities to prevent youth violence, to help their fellow students who are violence prone, to report trouble signs they see and try to help kids get the help they need.

I am pleased that MTV is going to work with us to launch a new campaign to encourage people to become mentors -- young people -- to help their peers resolve their conflicts peacefully. And, again, I'm very grateful and I'd like for all of you to join me in thanking MTV for their willingness to invest in this important endeavor. (Applause.)

Lastly -- I've spoken a little longer than I meant to because I wanted to really hear the panelists, but I return to the theme on which I began and what I will do when I leave here in working for the peace process in the Middle East. We have got to do more to teach our young people to have tolerance and respect for one another; to understand the rich and only superficial dichotomy that the more we appreciate each other's diversity, the more we reaffirm the fundamental core values and existence we have in common.

The recent death of young Matthew Shepard in Wyoming makes it all too clear to us that violence still can be motivated by prejudice and hatred. Yes, we do need a new hate crimes law. And I have directed the Education Department Civil Office to step up its enforcement to stop discrimination and harassment against students. But, again, ultimately, we have to be reconciled to one another. We have to believe in one another's fundamental humanity and equal right to be here and to become whatever they can become.

And I hope that all of us -- the young people of this country, because our school population is more diverse than ever before, and because to some extent they are unburdened by some of the problems that their parents and grandparents grew up with, can go either way with this issue. If they become the victims of a kind of a current climate of prejudice and bigotry and a sense of opposition and isolation, because of our increasing diversity it could wreak total havoc in this country, in a way that we can't even imagine and even couldn't have imagined in the old days of the civil rights years. But if they do what they will do left to their own better selves, then the increasing diversity of America is something that will guarantee us renewed strength, unparalleled opportunities in the 21st century world.

So I don't think we should forget that, either. In the end, the human heart still counts for quite a great deal, and we ought to bring out the best in all the ones we can.

Now, I would like to start the program -- and I'm going to sit down to do it -- and I'd like to begin with Mr. Kent, Jamonn Kent, who is the Superintendent of the

Springfield, Oregon, public schools, that I had the honor to visit after the terrible incident there. And because we're running a little late, I'm going to do something a little bit unconventional. I'm going to call on the all the panelists to make their remarks and then open for questions, starting with Mr. Kent. (Applause.)

Superintendent Jamoon Kent, Springfield, Oregon, Public Schools:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, Mr. Vice President, Mrs. Clinton, thank you for the invitation to serve on this panel and thank you for the opportunity to help you plan it. We did that early in September, but mostly, Mr. President, thank you for coming to Springfield. It was a real pleasure to have you there. You assisted us in our healing and helped us start to get back on the road that we really want to be on.

Springfield is the community that cares about its kids. It is the community that is very resilient. This caring and resilience was like a bright star in the aftermath of a very dark May 21. We are all still wondering why a fifteen-year-old boy, who had highly respected parents, a boy who attended a great high school with caring staff members, a boy who had really a pretty quality home, would be the same boy who would walk in calmly to high school campus and engage in the most violent act our community has ever seen. We may never be able to answer that question, but we have learned a few lessons from it. This horrific event taught me that youth violence is not about what is wrong with our schools.

It is about a society where too many people of all ages think it is OK to solve their problems by using violence. Mr. President, as you already know, schools are safe. What we are experiencing in our communities is a societal problem, not just a school problem. Schools cannot be islands of safety in a sea of community violence or in communities where families have few resources to address their problems. Blaine County's Public Safety Coordinating Council has been working for over two years to develop plans to address these issues in our community. Unfortunately for us the issues suddenly have very real faces on them. The gaps are all too evident to us. We are focusing on providing services that will fill some of those gaps, alternative schools, transition school programs, expanded intervention, and assessment services.

Mr. President, I know you share our passion for promoting counseling services to families with children from birth to three and beyond; after-school programs that are fun for kids and fill the crucial hours between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.; reduced class sizes so teachers can work one-on-one and more closely with our children; programs to find those kids who aren't in school and turn them around and get them back into school where they can be successful and get educated and have marketable skills; more caring adults in our schools, counselors, school resource officers, parents, volunteers -- and maybe even a tax credit for those volunteering; legislation that would allow our juvenile departments to

hold any student who brings a gun to school until an evaluation can be completed; and to teach values that will keep kids from turning to violence to solve their problems.

Mr. President and Mrs. Clinton, let's end the violence here today. Let's build a future where children to do not have ready access to guns, where we invest in school programs that keep our children in school and provide help to our families to prevent them from solving problems with violence. Let's build a future where we reinstate the very fabric of our American family, instill family values, provide family support, and regain the safety and the pride in our communities.

Mr. President and Mrs. Clinton, thank you for your leadership in this endeavor.

President Clinton:

I don't want to violate my own rule, so I won't ask a question, but I do want to highlight one thing he said, because if it resonates with your experience, then we need your feedback to the Attorney General and to the Secretary of Education, ultimately to the Congress.

We now have a national policy of zero tolerance for guns in schools. Last year, I believe the number of -- the Secretary of Education can correct me if I make a mistake -- last year, I believe there were 6,000 children who were found, students who were found with guns. Guns were taken, and they were sent home. This actually happened in Oregon to this young man right before he came back the next day and killed the kids.

So the question is what is -- we have to find the constitutional fix here -- and then the schools have to have the resources so that you don't just take a gun and expel somebody because there's obviously something going on inside the child that is just as important as the physical manifestation of having the gun. So that was the one thing that they've really done in Springfield, is to sort of spark a nationwide reassessment of what we ought to do with the children besides just send them home.

And they've proposed a period of 72 hours or some sort of period of evaluation, and we're trying to work out the details of it. But if any of you have any thoughts about this, I would ask you to give it to us, because that's a very clear issue that was raised in the Springfield case, that I must confess until I went and talked to them had never occurred to me before.

I'd like to now call on Commissioner Paul Evans, the Police Commissioner from Boston, who led Boston's innovative Operation Cease-Fire. I spent a half a day up there with the Mayor, and the Commissioner, and others several months ago. And many of you know that Boston went for over two years without having a single child under 18 killed by a gun. That's astonishing. (Applause.)

And so I would like for Commissioner Evans to make whatever remarks he'd like to make on this subject.

Commissioner Paul Evans of the Boston Police Department:

Thank you, Mr. President. Let me add my thanks to you, the Vice President, Mrs. Clinton, the Attorney General, and the Secretary for your leadership on this very, very critical issue.

This morning the First Lady mentioned Boston's approach to youth violence. We believe we have a very comprehensive approach of prevention, intervention, and enforcement with all being equally important. It was particularly gratifying to hear this morning about the commitment to jobs and alternatives to young people, which, we believe, is absolutely critical.

In Boston we have learned that the keys to maintaining safety and security are communication, collaboration, and a commitment to focused intervention. We operate under a vision of community government, which Mayor Menino has been championing for four years.

We have worked to get the entire community onto the same page, onto a mission of prevention. Once we come together to this sense of a common purpose, we make prevention possible. Where we have school police, administrators, and teachers in regular communication with police, probation officers, youth workers, prosecutors, clergy, social service agencies, and others, we create a network of prevention.

Through school-based partnerships, we all get around the table and compare notes on who is having trouble and who is creating trouble. Through this collaborative process, we develop tailored programs for individual youngsters. We lose children one by one and we can only get them back one by one. The results from this work, both in school and on the street, have resulted in an approximate 80 percent decrease in firearm homicides between now and our crisis year of 1990.

In recent months, our collaborative approach has focused on a threatened spread of gang membership in our middle schools and a comprehensive approach to truancy. Last spring we saw middle schoolers organizing around man-made notions of two notorious national gangs. We identified about 4,000 youngsters, and held in-school briefings with them in over 55 public and private schools. The teams were made up of police officers, school police, probation officers, clergy, and youth outreach workers. Teachers and guidance counselors identified the kids. We talked with both potential gang members and children at risk of being victimized. In addition we made a few hundred home visits with the same types of teams to the most at-risk youngsters. The message was clear and focused. If you get into gang life, you will pay the consequences. If you stay out, we will work with you to get you and your family alternatives and other resources. So far the message has been heeded.

We brought the same approach to truancy. We put together school-based attendance panels, made up of all the authorities who have a stake in the child's development from police to teachers, including some non-traditional partners, such as the clergy and youth workers. We are creating focused interventions for particular youngsters. The earliest results seem to suggest a marked improvement in attendance.

Our mission is the prevention of crime and improvement of the quality of life in our neighborhoods. Our vehicle is community policing. It is problem-solving policing. It is policing that is going around this country. It is all about a licensed, clinical social worker, who works in a police station in the morning, helping police officers get resources for young people and their families at-risk, and who then goes to a boys and girls club in the afternoon.

Those programs and many like them would not be possible without the support of the Federal Government. I just want to take a moment to thank you for the role that you play in allowing Boston to have such creative and innovative programs like that. The Justice Department in particular has been an intrical partner.

Thank you.

President Clinton:

I would like to make one brief observation about what the Commissioner said, because I have spent a great deal of time in Boston -- and I don't want to single them out in derogation of the astonishing efforts that have been made elsewhere, many of which have already been featured. But the thing that strikes me -- it struck me when I spent a day up there and I met with -- the Mayor's got a nun who represents him, who has this youth council for the city. The city has its own youth council, like others have the city council. But the thing that struck me about Boston is they do things that seem obvious when you hear about them, but a lot of people don't do it. The systematic contact that they have in a personal, one-to-one way, with a huge percentage of the young people in their cities is quite astonishing.

And if somebody asked me, in a sentence, why have they been so successful, I would say they mobilize in a systematic way a consistent contact with a huge percentage of the young people. The idea of, you know, well, we hear we're going to have a gang problem in middle school, why don't we go interview the customers. You know, if you were running a business that's exactly what you'd do. But I think they deserve a lot of appreciation, but also a lot of modeling for that.

Our next panclist is Liberty Franklin. She is the National Boys and Girls Club Youth of the Year. She is from Everett, Washington. She has an astonishing personal story. She is Exhibit A for what could happen in America if all of us did our part. Liberty.

Liberty Franklin:

Safety has always been a concern of mine because I lived in public housing, where drugs and violence severely affected my life. These two things also affected my family. Fortunately my Boys and Girls Club was a safe haven. I became a member when a staff offered a free membership. From that day on it was a race to get to the club and they had to pry me off the door at closing.

I have been a member for six years now. I know first hand the Boys and Girls Clubs of America give kids constructive, character-building activities after school so that they can be in a good environment during the hours when they are much more at risk.

As a charter member of Swirls, a leadership group for girls, I brought together a difficult group of girls so that we could talk [about] issues affecting our lives and how to make the positive choice. Programs such as this and Smart Moves, a drug and alcohol and prevention from pregnancy program, help to develop healthy kids, who avoid gangs, know how to talk out their issues, and avoid negative situations.

If we are going to stop violence in schools, we need to look at what kids are doing after school. It is not just about saying, "No." It is about providing a positive atmosphere and positive people to look up to.

Thanks to the Everett Boys and Girls Club, I am a 3.95 student and ranked seventh in my class. I plan to be an orthodontist and help low-income families and have a partnership with the Boys and Girls Club. Every kid deserves that same chance.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my story and my thoughts.

President Clinton:

She also has a job where she works to save money for college. She was exceedingly modest in the description of the difficulties she has had to overcome. So I will say again. She is Exhibit A of what we could become as a country if the rest of us do our part.

Now I would like to call on Joanna Quintana *Hermoso*, who is a third grade teacher at the Coral Way Elementary School in Miami, Florida. Joanna.

Joanna Quintana *Hermoso*:

Good afternoon, it is an honor for me to be here today. My name is Joanna Quintana *Hermoso*. I am a third grade teacher at the Coral Way Elementary School in Miami, Florida. Speaking in front of the President, First Lady, and the Vice President about education is a little overwhelming for a teacher, who spends her day speaking to eight-

year-olds. I only hope to impart whatever wisdom that seven years of teaching third grade has brought me.

When I watch the news at night, I hear words like classroom overcrowding, school violence, discipline problems, and drug abuse, being used over and over. You are all too familiar with the problems that have crept into many schools. If a child is a victim of any type of violence at home or at school, his education will suffer. If a child sits in a crowded classroom where there is simply not enough time to give each student the amount of time he or she needs to progress, that child's education, psychological development, and social skills will suffer.

These are not just new accounts of nameless children to me. These are very real problems in too many schools, but they are problems for which there are solutions. I can proudly say that I have seen many solutions applied in my school and in my classroom. For example, in big, bright, bold letters, Winston Churchill's words carry the tone, theme, and lessons in my classroom: "The price of greatness is responsibility."

Each member of the school community bears responsibility for making schools as safe as possible. I ask students to be responsible for their own belongings, class work, homework, and conduct. The adults in the school are responsible for setting high standards for students in conduct and achievement.

At Coral Way, we have a rigorous curriculum, clear discipline codes -- fairly and consistently enforced -- such as school uniforms for all students. The school uniforms keep students focused, equal, and safe since we can immediately recognize an outsider. In addition, we have alternative programs in the fourth and fifth [grades] for students identified as high risk students. We also have an active curriculum throughout the year to address and prevent the troubling, modern, social, school issues like guns, drugs, and violence. What I find most amazing and important is the feedback an eight-year-old has on these topics.

Realistically school is the safest place for most students. Keeping school safe and orderly requires an ongoing effort. It is doable. As Churchill's words declare, let us all take responsibility for insuring the greatness for our children's education and safety. Again, it is doable. We owe our children nothing less. Thank you and God bless America.

President Clinton:

I have two brief things to say. First of all, don't you feel better knowing that there are people like her in the classrooms of America? (Applause.)

And second, I want to thank you for what you said about school uniforms. When Secretary Riley and I set out to promote school uniforms around the country, there were some here in Washington who derided this as one of those "little ideas" that we were constantly harping on. It may be a little idea, but I have never been to a school that had them that didn't think it made a huge difference in the lives of the children there. And so I thank you for giving a boost to that endeavor.

I would now like to call on a very distinguished scholar, Felton Tony Earles, who is a professor at the Harvard School of Public Health, who has actually done research on what works in neighborhoods. Professor Earl, the floor is yours.

Felton Tony Earles:

Mr. President, Mr. Vice President, and Mrs. Clinton, thank you very much for inviting me here.

While I am very proud to live in Boston, I must say I am not here because I am going to talk about Boston very much. My research was done in Chicago. We chose Chicago from among many American cities because it is very large and very tough. We figured what things we would learn in Chicago would be generalizable to much of the nation's urban populations.

What we are doing is looking at children growing up across all the neighborhoods in Chicago by class, racial ethnicity, competition, and so forth. At the same time that we are looking very broadly across neighborhoods, we are looking in great detail into a few children's lives, who live in those neighborhoods. The study is combining scoping comprehensively with a very detailed analysis of some children at the same time. What are we learning?

First, we are learning that there are a lot of neighborhoods in a city like Chicago that are working well. Where adults know the children who live there, care about the children who live there, and are willing to take action to do something when they see a child doing something that's wrong or probably wrong. That's a very important finding in the context of looking across all probable neighborhoods, because from a distance one might think that the city is not very working well. I think that while it is common sense in some ways to know that some neighborhoods are working well. It is very important scientifically to be able [to] document this with some precision and some accuracy. I think our research has been able to do that and that is good news.

The second major finding, which at first glance, seems to go against what I just said. That is that the great majority of children, who live in the city of Chicago and we think, therefore, other large cities like it, are insecure. They are fearful. 25 to 30 percent of children tell us they have witnessed violent events, in homes, in schools, and in communities. This insecurity is interfering, if you will, with their ability to concentrate on academic pursuits. It is no trivial matter that this is affecting very large proportions of children.

The third thing we are learning is that large proportions of children are poorly engaged, or disengaged, from the adult world around them. This we are learning, in the more detailed analysis if you will, of the few children we spend a great deal of time with. What they tell us is that they know very little about the way the city functions, about civics, for example. In the sense when I say disengagement, I am not talking about

children who have nothing to do with adults. But it is their sense that their opinions and their voice are not counted and not heard in things that really matter to them -- school policy, for example, the quality of recreational areas, and so forth.

The very thing that the President just said about how the community is stitched around children in Boston is what we are hearing from Chicago as not being in place. From our research we are recommending a cluster strategy that, first of all, brings up the quality of adult engagement in the lives of all children across the neighborhoods in the city. Secondly, creates safety, democratic safety in a way, in which children's voices and opinions can really count.

I think that what is necessary to achieve this is something that will require bold and creative kinds of strategies, but that certainly is something that our research would suggest we need.

Thank you.

President Clinton:

Mayor Deedee Corradini is president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the Mayor of Salt Lake City, Utah, the host of the next Winter Olympics, and a very fine public servant. Deedee.

Mayor Deedee Corradini, Mayor of Salt Lake City, Utah:

Thank you very much, Mr. President. It is an honor to be here, representing the United States Conference of Mayors.

I think, as mayors, all of us very much understand that when we get together as a country on a major issue and crisis facing our country, we can make a difference. That happened in the area of crime. It was mayors and police chiefs, working with the Administration, that helped shape the 1994 Crime Bill we think had something to do with crime going down in this country. As we as mayors focused on the issue of crime, we all started in the area of enforcement, but soon realized we had to move to intervention and then to prevention. Five years ago, if mayors talked about prevention, we would have been laughed at. Now we can start talking about prevention and be listened to.

This issue all of us are concerned about -- our kids. Mayor Daley of Chicago was the one who brought education to the fore of the Mayors Conference two years ago. We have a new relationship now developing between mayors and education, which we have not had in the past. As a result of that we are all concerned about our kids. This is our top priority, this next year, is dealing with the whole issue of kids, violence in the schools, but also from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. Thirty percent of our juvenile crime happens on school days between 2 p.m. to 8 p.m.

We pulled together a national summit on violence in schools and kids from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. on September 24 in Salt Lake City. We had about 60 mayors in attendance, about 15 police chiefs from around the country. The Attorney General Janet Reno was with us for a good part of the day. We had educators, students, representatives from the national organizations that are present here today, and also the news media and the entertainment industry. Because the data shows that by the time a child is eighteen they have watched 200,000 violent acts on television. They have witnessed 16,000 murders by the time they are 18-years-old. The study shows that eight-year-old boys exposed to violence at that age are much more prone to be in trouble by the time they are eighteen and have committed criminal acts by the time they are thirty.

We have tried to take a comprehensive look [at] this issue from all aspects and came up, divided our plan into those four different areas. In the schools what should we do? We have taken the approach of enforcement, intervention, and prevention in all areas. Violence in the schools, kids from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m., what should we be doing? Just a quick example. A 10-year-old girl named Anna Palmer in Salt Lake City -- whose single mother couldn't afford day care -- several weeks ago went home after school, as she did every day, could not go to day care, had no place to go, was murdered on her front porch. We have not caught the murderer yet. What are we doing with our kids from two to eight?

We have also dealt with the issue of what do we do about the entertainment industry? We have some recommendations there as well as what to do about violence in the news media?

Just to summarize very quickly some of the conclusions that we reached. You act awfully fast back here because a 100,000 teachers is part of our plan. We appreciate that very much. A 100,000 cops made a huge difference. A 100,000 teachers will make a huge difference, but one of the issues that did come out in our session was what about a 100,000 counselors? We need counselors back in our schools. We used to have them when I was growing up. We need them again. School uniforms are at the top of our list. They work. If you look at the front page of USA Today, it is all about school uniforms as well as yesterday's New York Times. If you didn't see the story about Wendy Williams, 13-years-old, on the outskirts of Chicago, uniforms would have helped her. We feel strongly about that.

Closed campuses. We used to eat lunch on the school premises; we ought to think about doing that again. Very strong feeling that we need to get music, art, and physical education back into the school curriculum. We are all seeing that our kids are obese and out of shape. Kids who are physically fit and regularly involved in physical fitness have higher self-esteem, stay in school longer, and do not get involved in at-risk behavior. We feel strongly about that.

In the area of 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. things have already been mentioned, but day care -- we have got to keep our school buildings open before and after school and on weekends with

activities for our kids. We need to get our churches and religious institutions and synagogues. Also use those buildings all week long. I had two churches call me in the last couple of weeks in Salt Lake City, saying, "What can I do to help in this community? We want to do more." I said, "Keep your buildings open and provide day care for kids who can't afford it."

Parks and activities through our parks and recreation programs for after-school activities.

In terms of the entertainment industry we feel it is time we tackled that issue again. We need to have a close working relationship with the leadership in the entertainment industry. I know, Mrs. Clinton, you have done some work on this, as has Tipper. We have really got to get a handle on that issue. We do call for a boycott of corporations that have commercials during violent television programming.

In the news media, some of the issues that came up there are that, while crime is down in this country, the coverage of crime is going way up. It is absolutely ridiculous because that incites fear in our communities. Even though our cities are safer, people are feeling more scared, including our kids. That's not right. We need to meet with the news media in the same way and the leadership of the news media nationally to deal with that issue.

We had the television people there. We had CNN at our meeting and USA Today. We are admitting that it is much easier for news media outlets, who are now entertainment in many ways, to show the grotesqueness of an act committed but then don't show the consequences at a later time. We have some real work to do with our friends in the news media.

Those are some of our recommendations. I would like to present to both of you, Mr. Vice President and Mrs. Clinton, our action plan that we released, actually printed yesterday from our meeting with over 60 suggestions. Also this *Best Practices Guide*, [which highlights] over 100 cities and what is working in terms of violence [prevention] in the schools and kids from two to eight. We would like you to have a copy of it. We would like to meet with you. We would like to work with the Administration as we have so well over the years. You have been such a tremendous partner for the cities of America. We appreciate it very much.

Thank you.

Mrs. Clinton:

The President had to excuse himself for just a few minutes to take a phone call and will be back shortly. He asked me to go ahead and introduce our final panelist, who came to the Congress in 1996 after completing his second term as superintendent of public instruction in North Carolina. He held that position since 1988. It is important that more members of Congress and elected officials understand what so many of you know so well, that is what goes on in our schools and what we need to do to provide more

resources. Congressman Bobby Ethridge from North Carolina, we are pleased to have you part of this discussion.

Congressman Bobby Ethridge of North Carolina:

Thank you, Mrs. Clinton. Let me thank you, the President, and the Vice President, for putting this together. I am glad to have the time here with my good friend, Secretary Riley, who I worked with for many years when I was chief, and to the distinguished panelists and guests we have here today.

Let me be the first to reinforce, and hopefully not the last, what's been said several times today. By and large in this country, schools are the safest place for children to go to. We need to remind people of that. They are a reflection of the communities from which those children come from. Dr. Earles talked about earlier the real challenge we have to make our communities a better place -- places for our children to live and our communities to thrive.

As Mrs. Clinton said, before I came here I served as superintendent. Prior to that I was a state legislator for 10 years and a county commissioner prior to that and in business. More importantly than that I am the father of two teachers, teachers who serve in the public schools in my state, a son who is a second grade teacher, and a daughter who is a high school teacher, and a wife who is in child nutrition. Just because I left the superintendency, it is not that I am disconnected from education in any way. I get it reinforced every weekend when I go home.

Let me say at the beginning I believe in zero tolerance, zero tolerance for school violence. As the President talked about earlier, locally and nationally we have to believe in every school in every community. Then we will see it go down.

One of my earliest initiatives right after I became superintendent in 1989; we did a survey of our schools. We surveyed something like 25,000 students, parents, teachers PTA presidents, and business people. We were shocked at what we got back -- that was in 1989. Thirty-seven percent of the students, only 37 percent, said that they respected their teachers. To us that was a problem in our schools. That led to development; we pulled together a committee as all of them do. In elected office or appointed, we want to have committees. So we pulled it together. What came out of that was the beginning of ethics, a ground-up character education program, that we really kicked off in the early '90s. It promoted the positive virtues that I think are really important in our schools. It showed that we lacked discipline, respect for authority, and ultimately all those things led to school violence. The character education is really a long-term process.

To help young people know and care about the acts upon which the basic values [are] trustworthiness, respect for self and for others, responsibility, fairness, compassion, and citizenship. As a result of a grant which we received from the U.S. Department of Education, Mr. Secretary, in 1996, we put it in three pilot projects, Wade County,

Cumberland County, and Mecklinberg County, three of our very diverse and large school systems. Today I can tell you it is making a difference.

As an example, in Johnston County -- another school that is doing it -- adjacent to our state capital of Wade, the principal of Selma Elementary School shared this with me earlier this year: He attributed 59 fewer student suspensions between 1995 and 1996, in one year, as a result of the character education program, which focused on I Care. Every month they will have one of those principles of character education that I emphasized, but this goes on throughout the year.

We put out a curriculum in 1995 that is integrated in our kindergarten to eight curriculum for every teacher to teach every day. It is a long term and is part of the total teaching. I think this helps tone down the problem of school violence and gives the character education I think we need to have in our schools.

Now let me talk just a bit about the other side of that issue. The other side of that coin is that we must vigorously enforce the zero tolerance policy against violent behavior that we talked about today. In North Carolina I think we have pioneered the school resource officers to bring the proven technique of community policing into the education environment. We have really been doing this now for a number of years. We started in the early 1990s, when I was superintendent, with the help of the General Assembly and the leadership of Governor Hunt who really came behind this. Earlier this year, the U.S. News and World Report documented the success of our resource officers:

> "In the past two years reported firearm possessions have dropped 50 percent in North Carolina schools. Principals identify the school resource officers as the single most important factor in deterring crime."

Now that was their comment, not mine. I think that it was a lot of those other factors more important than just the resource officers, but you have to have the deterrents there and then you have the other pieces.

We have also instituted in North Carolina in the early 1990s, about '93 or '94 I believe, what we call SOS, Save Our Students. The Governor's initiative and the General Assembly pushed it and we put it in our departments. It is after-schools care for children and tutoring. It is not only in the schools. It is in our churches. It is a joint effort and it is working well.

Do we have it in all places? No. Do we have enough of it? No, because there is never enough money to get the job done. But we can and we must take action that will make our school policies all across this country, that there is zero tolerance for school violence. Teachers can't teach. Students can't learn. The parents and the community will not support schools where they think there is violence in those schools. Those officers in policy positions have a responsibility in my opinion.

I want to commend the President, the First Lady, the Vice President, the Secretary, and the Attorney General for pulling this conference together. This is the first step in a long journey. Those officers of Congress need to put our shoulders to the wheel to putting some money behind putting some resource officers out there across this country to get the job done.

Thank you.

President Clinton:

First of all, I want to apologize to all of you, and in particular to Mayor Corradini, who made a terrific presentation, according to the First Lady. I got a call -- we just completed our agreement on the budget and the negotiations. In a half hour or so, for the members of the press, we'll have a statement about that.

But let me say, first, I think about Congressman Etheridge, it is -- one of the things that we desperately -- that we need so much in Congress -- Congress works better when there are people in the Congress who have all kinds of different experiences that are relevant. It's an incredible gift that we have a member of the House of Representatives that was actually a state superintendent of public instruction. And the influence he can have on other members and the role he can play in the years ahead, I think, is virtually limitless just because of the life he lived before he came there. And I'm very grateful for what he said today and for what he's done.

I would also like to thank Mayor Corradini for the report, for the recommendations and for the best practices booklet. I think that we need -- every single challenge we've got in this country, we'd be a lot better off if everybody who was working on it issued a best practices book, because one of my pet theories is that everybody solved every problem somewhere, but we're not very good at playing copycat when we ought to. So I thank her for that.

The only other thing I want to say, and then I want to turn it over to the Vice President and let him ask a question, is that the mayors recommended new youth counselors, and Bob talked about other kinds of support personnel on security issues. One of the things that we had to fight hardest for in 1983, that Hillary convinced me we ought to do 15 years ago, was to require every elementary school to have a counselor. But 15 years later, it looks like a pretty good decision.

And I think we have to -- with people who have to pay for these things, with the taxpayers and others who may not deal with it, we need to let them know that a well-trained counselor dealing with the kind of challenges these children face is a terrific investment. And I appreciate the recommendation of the mayors and I look forward to following up on them.

Vice President Gore:

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

I have really learned a lot from this panel here today. I think they have all done an outstanding job not only in their statements here, but in the work that they do every single day. There are so many questions I could ask. I will only focus on one of them. I wanted to just note in passing that the representatives of the faith community here, and I was thinking particularly of the success story, Paul, that you and John Menino had and the important role the faith community has played in Boston. That story can be told in other communities as well. I wanted especially to mention that.

If Tipper were here, she would focus our attention, at least one more time, on the role that mental health care can provide. I talk to teachers a lot who tell me that in the earliest grades, they can often identify a child who is troubled and who would benefit from some kind of counseling. When a community goes through a trauma as Springfield did, mental health professionals can play an important role in helping to bring healing and closure to a community that experienced the trauma.

Yet we don't have parity for payment of mental health services. There is still discrimination and stigma attached to mental illness. Diseases of the brain are just considered to be in a completely different category than diseases of the heart or of the liver or of the kidneys or whatever. Medical science is telling us much more about the physical basis for all of these disorders. They are not simply artifacts of personality.

I wanted to just ask briefly to our teacher here. Whether or not teachers do indeed need a better opportunity to make referrals if a child seems to be in difficulty? What role the mental health community played in providing help the healing in Springfield assault?

Ms. Quintano:

I believe that class size has a lot to do with being able to make the referrals necessary to help the children in the future. Only through reducing class size can we identify and address student's needs early enough to prevent the problems that will occur. The warning signs are there. It is hard to reach the children when you have 32 to 35 of them in your classroom.

Once you reduce the class size, yes, it is easier. That child will speak up. You will see it. Immediately you follow with a referral to the counselor. We are lucky enough to have two counselors in our school. The school is very big. It goes only from pre-kindergartner to fifth grade. We have 1,400 students. All our classrooms are crowded.

Vice President Gore:

You have two counselors?

Ms. Quintano:

Yes, we are very lucky. We were given two counselors because our school population is very large. That's how we help them. Once a referral has been done, they are placed in alternative classrooms for fourth and fifth grade. The ratio is reduced student to teacher. There are two teachers for 20 students. They are well taken care of. The curriculum stays the same. Their needs are being met.

Vice President Gore:

Thank you very much. Yes, sir.

Mr. Kent:

The mental health communities were extremely helpful in Springfield. One of the things we didn't have in our own resources were sufficient members of that community to assist us. If it wasn't for NOVA [National Organization for Victim Assistance] and the surrounding agencies, we would probably not be where we are.

Some of the things that our own in-house counselors/psychologists did, Kathy Keen and Bob Catosh, led in walking us through a series of events that were very helpful. I don't think we would have thought of that as administrators. As an example of that, we had a candle light vigil almost the day after. That was from the mental health folks, telling us that we had to have some event to help us start to heal, start to get our anger, start to come together.

We also had the communities of faith come together and said we need to have services. They held two services, I think, one large service at our high school. We also had a community gathering where we talked about issues. That was put together by our city where we came together and talked about what were the issues.

Then another one that was put together by the mental health helpers was the first assistance center for families and kids and community members could go in. I say all that to say we would not have put all that together if I were just saying, "How do you administer something like this?" The mental health helpers walked us through the kinds of things they know work. The kinds of things that they know will lead you off into looking to the future.

One of the things that just was so important for us in Springfield was not to just sit there and say, "This has happened to us," and just kind of wait. We had to look to the future and say, "What's next? What's next for our kids? What's next for the community? What's next for those kids that were in the high school?" They essentially lost their high school because the media came with the 35 trucks in front. They knew that their cafeteria

was basically gone to them, at least for some. We had to work our way back in. It was a very delicate process when you deal with people, their lives, their feelings. I think the mental health folks that worked with us -- the counselors, the psychologists, the social workers -- were extremely effective.

Thank you.

President Clinton:

Anyone in the audience who want to ask a panelist a question?

Go ahead.

Man from audience: Man was not at a microphone, so the question is not audible.

President Clinton:

I would have an elementary school that would have classes between 15 and 20 in the early grades. I would have a maximum number of kids in the school of about 300. I would have -- and about 1,000 for the high school. I would have the support personnel, I'd have all the teachers trained, and I'd have a parent coordinator that had huge numbers of the parents coming in and out of the schools all the time.

And then I'd try to figure out how to make young people like Liberty the rule rather than the exception. That is -- I was sitting here when she was telling her story -- I was thinking about [how] she got to the Boys and Girls Club, and that's a good thing. But there's a whole bunch of kids that live in the place where she does that didn't get there, and that's not a good thing. And so I think that would mean you'd either have comprehensive before- and after-school programs and summer school programs for the kids on-site. Or there would be some system by which the school, in effect, connected every child to responsible adult community groups of some kind that Professor Earles says works so well.

I think those are the things that I would -- I basically believe you've got to have problem-solving mechanisms, but I think the prevention approach is by far the best approach. And I think almost all -- so that's what I would do.

In the high schools, it's more complicated. I'd also have a uniform policy. I think they're very important. I'd be in a community that had a strong anti-truancy policy. If I had a violence problem, I'd have a curfew. I'd be interconnected with all of the churches and synagogues and other faith institutions. I would have the school bringing people in a systematic way, and I would be connected with the police

department that would do what the Commissioner explained that they tried to do in Boston.

But I think -- in the high schools, I think that, as I said -- I'd make sure that we had programs that would keep every child who needed it, give them all an opportunity to be in the school.

Let me just say one other thing that I think is worth saying. It may have been put on the table while I was out briefly. But twice -- if you read what the mayors say here, twice, they say, they talk about the importance of the arts programs, the music programs, the physical education programs -- not the kids that are on the athletic teams, the other things. I have seen school after school, after school, all across this country, because of the financial burdens on the schools, have to abandon these programs. And I think it is terrible.

I think that basically, all of these people are saying you've got to treat the whole child here, deal with the whole child, deal with the family situation, deal with the community situation. And I just wanted to put in a little plug for that. I think that there are a lot of ways to learn in this life, a lot of ways to communicate in this life, and a lot of ways for people to find greater peace and connection. And I think it's been a terrible setback to American education that so many schools have had to abandon their art programs, their music programs and their physical education programs for the non-team athletes. Anything we can do to advance that I think would also be positive. (Applause.)

I'll take one more question, but you have got to ask someone besides me a question.

Reverend Eugene Rivers of Boston:

Following my Commissioner, who helped us do this visitation, which has helped us so much.

Professor Earles, regarding your findings could you say a bit about what -- in your judgment -- needs to happen from the community-based side, in terms of at-risk youth from the hours eight to midnight? Because many of these kids, who are most severely at-risk, come from the context where there has got to be the most intensive intervention with the family to move beyond the nine to five social service/educator hours. Do address this. Would you say a bit about what in your judgment needs to be a time for intervention?

Professor Earles:

The most difficult part of our research has been to evaluate how community functions from the points of view of men. That in going into communities and collecting lots of information about how they function, it is the women who give us the information about

how these places function vice a vie children. It has been very difficult to get strategies to work, to get equal numbers of men who essentially give a perspective of how the community works from their point of view.

What I like about the question that the gentlemen from Iowa asked, about high schools, is that it makes us as adults think from a child's perspective, when we were children about how communities were supposed to function. I think it is very important to carry that into our research. We believe that children spend a lot of time thinking about where are the men, what are they thinking about, and what are they doing at the community level.

When I heard about the Security Dads program in Indiana, it sounded exactly right. Something that makes men visible, responsible, and interactive would just be a very valuable contribution, I think, to how community works. It certainly would shed much light on our research if we had their perspective to equal that of women.

Vice President Gore:

I know that is the last question, Mr. President. If I could just follow up very briefly on the question and the response. In addition to the Security Dads which is a program that I recommend [for those] looking for a good successful model, there is also a participant in this conference, named Joe Jones from Baltimore. He is director of Academy Concepts, Inc. He has a different model than Security Dads. He works with men, many of whom have been out on the street. They have been disconnected from their children and finds ways along with other men to reconnect them with their children. Then he forms small groups to help them in their own growth and development, to help them become reintegrated back into their families, whether married or not. That provides a real stabilizing influence.

There is a whole network, well I say network, bunch of programs that have sprung up at grass roots level to try and help reconnect these men with their families and with the life in the community. I was just moved by what you said and I wanted to try and highlight Joe's work in the community.

President Clinton:

Let me say, I wish we could stay here another hour, but we have another panel. We don't want to deprive them of the opportunity to make their contributions and to be heard. Perhaps at the end of that, you could have a more free-flowing question and answer session.

But again, let me thank all of you. And let me ask you to join me in thanking all of our remarkable panelists for their contributions. Thank you. (Applause.)

White House Conference on School Safety
October 15, 1998
Afternoon Session II

Hillary Rodman Clinton:

Welcome back to the third panel of the conference. I am delighted that we are going to hear in more depth about successful efforts to address both school and youth violence that involves the communities.

Many programs across our country are working to keep our kids on track by putting together programs that bring the community together. What all of these programs have in common is that they address these issues at their roots, the family, peers, and the environment in a young person's life. They often balance strong support with strong messages of accountability and responsibility. We know that communities at the local level are finding answers to the problems of juvenile violence and delinquency. I am looking forward to hearing about such effective efforts so that we can all learn from their success.

We are very fortunate that we have two such devoted people serving in the President's cabinet. They have been with us all day today as they have been working on these problems for many years now. Attorney General Reno will serve as the moderator of this panel.

Attorney General Reno:

Thank you, Mrs. Clinton. We have panelists with us today from several programs that represent the important areas of a child's life and the balance of prevention and boundary setting. These are the initiatives that address the roles of parents, peers, and the community. We will also discuss community-wide strategies that involve all these initiatives and balances done with tough accountability measures so that children get the message that we care enough about them to invest in the future, that we love them, that we want to really reweave the fabric of the community around them, but that they have the responsibility to stay on the right track.

Appropriately we will start with families. They can either be a great source of strength or a great weakness in the life of a child. Children are less likely to be violent if they have close and supportive relationships, avoid substance abuse, set boundaries, and help them achieve their goals. Families and Schools Together, called FAST, is a program which empowers parents and increases their involvement in their children's schools.

I am pleased to introduce Dr. Lynn McDonald, founder of the FAST program. She has created, developed, and supervised the national replication and dissemination efforts of this successful program since 1988. Hello, Dr. McDonald.

Dr. James Garbarino, authour of Lost Boys: Why Our Sons Turn Violent and How We Can Save Them

In the Lost Boys, Dr. James Garbarino focuses on boys in prison, and the factors that led them to commit the crimes that landed them there. He speaks of a societal condition in which children are exposed to more violence than ever, and that some children are more suseptable to its dangers. Add to that a decrease in time parents spend with their children, increased access to violent weapons, and video games which dis-connect children from the notion of crime and killing, all of which create an nvironment of "social toxicity."

On "Social Toxicity" and Blame

- "The conditions of social toxicity are there across society---the gun culture, kids being awash in imageries ~~of violence, the decline of adult time with kids,~~" [The Atlanta Journal, ~~May~~ 31, 1998]
- "Where do you point the finger? You'd need at least two handfuls of fingers." [American Journalism Review September, 1998]
- "~~There's evidence that from the early 1970s~~ to the late 1980s, that the percentage of American kids who were sufficiently troubled to need professional mental health services doubled from about 10 percent to about 20 percent. During that same period, the exposure of children to a whole variety of toxic influences in terms of the virulence of graphic, sexualized, and violent imagery increased dramatically over that same period.....We have data on declining adult supervision in children, adult time spent with kids. We have a whole variety of things, including what David Grossman (ph) has talked about -- the new generation of video games that mimic military training to desensitize kids to the actual act of shooting." [Talk of the Nation, 8/12/98]

- "Well, I think there are at least a couple of things. The first is that the capacity, the physical capacity, even the psychological capacity of children to do things that have profound consequences ought not to blind us to the fact that we're still talking about children and very young adolescents who think and feel like other children and very young adolescents. We know that you could put a nine-year-old in a car and he might physically be able to drive a car, but I don't think many of us would want nine-year-olds driving cars. The crime that they commit needs to be understood not in terms of its consequences, but in terms of who it is that's -- that's committing it.

  So I think we need to always be thinking about what is it in the lives of children and young teenagers that brings them to this point? And when it's an individual kid, we typically find an experience of victimization at home or in the community. We find experiences of trauma, coupled with the fact that our culture is offering children scenarios of what to do with rage; what to do with the feeling of injustice all the time.

  And these kids aren't inventing the scenarios that they are living out. They're borrowing them from images that are presented to them on a regular basis. And that combination of

sense of connection.

John Bulby (ph) the British psychiatrist who really coined the word attachment, I remember speaking about a boy who had this Reactive Attachment Disorder who very calmly through a cat in the fire without a sense that this was another living being. And that sense of non- connection is certainly one of the most dangerous characteristics of a boy -- again particularly boys, that we could find in a child. And that's one reason why, as you point out, the kids that we're most concerned about, that everyone ought to be most concerned about, are the boys who show cruelty to animals, fire setting, the sense of treating the world -- the alive world, as if it were simply objects. And I think it'll become one of the common themes as we explore this further in the years to come. [Talk of the Nation, 8/12/98]

- "Unless we do something to intervene...children identified as aggressive at age 8 will tend to be aggressive 30 years later."[The San Francisco Chronicle APRIL 21, 1999]

On Guns

- "Well I think they [guns] play at this point in our history, in this point in the evolution of childhood and adolescence, they play a very central role. Because they provide the means, very efficient means, to turn adolescent fantasies or childhood impulses into mayhem. Imagine those boys in Jonesboro with the same fantasy without the access to the guns; trying to implement thatfantasy. And you know, it doesn't work.

  What's really shocking is the prevalence of guns as a central symbol in the life of children. For example, I remember interviewing eight-year-olds in Chicago, in a suburban part of Chicago, and finding that one out of every three said he or she could get a gun if they needed one. A recent survey found that two-thirds of high school students said they could get a gun in an hour if they needed one.

  Now, the question is: Why do they think they need one? I speak with children and they say they need a gun partly because it makes them feel safer, because they don't think the adult world is taking care of them. And two, because it is such a loaded symbol of power in the culture, particularly for a boy who feels shame or a boy who feels humiliated; a boy who feels diminished. Here's a very clear symbol of power that's readily accessible. So I think it's a very dangerous combination in America in the 1990s." [Talk of the Nation, 8/12/98]

- "Even if a 12-year-old then had access to a gun, he would have been less able to point it at a human being and shoot. An increased dose of violence and things like point-and-shoot video games break down children's inhibitions the same way they break down soldiers'," [The Boston Globe, May 21, 1998]

troubled individual kids and these horrible scenarios is very dangerous. When you get more than one kid together, you have the added element that sometimes the sum of their parts is very different from them individually.

I'm sure a lot of people remember the book "In Cold Blood." It was very clear that horrible murder that was committed in Kansas -- that neither of the perpetrators, in that case adults, would have committed that crime alone. But together, it was a kind of awful chemistry between them, and I think actually all three of the cases you've mentioned -- the recent one of the two boys just this past month, and the case from last year or two when the boys dropped someone off the roof -- have all of those elements in it of at least one troubled boy provoking a situation with another boy, and then living out one of these scenarios. But they're doing it like children watching "Titanic" or some other melodramatic scenario, only in this case it's obviously a very lethal one." [Talk of the Nation, 8/12/98]

Mental Health

- "I spend most every week -- I sit down with a youth who's either in prison or on trial for murder. And one of the striking things about it is how often, how terribly often you can see in their childhood by the time they're eight or nine-years-old a discernible definable mental health problem that isn't addressed well at all.

  We're still only responding with professional intervention to something like a third or a half of kids with identifiable mental health problems in childhood. And it's very clear that overwhelmingly kids who end up killing or committing very severe acts of violence come from that population. The most common diagnoses is the diagnoses of what's called conduct disorder, which really means that the kid has gotten wrapped up in a pattern of very negative anti-social destructive behavior. And typically what happens is kids are suspended because of that or they're moved to another school rarely do they get effective mental health intervention. And that's the group from which most of the severe chronic violent juveniles come.

  By the time they've ended to be 15 they've added on problems of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder because of victimization experiences, they've added on depression, a lot of them have anxiety disorders. That's puts a different slant on this idea that these are just kids who show up and turn bad. They come out of a long period of developing problems and they're typically troubled kids who's experience has not been a positive one and has culminated in these terrible events. [Talk of the Nation, 8/12/98]

- I think it's an important part of this issue that is only beginning to be understood. As you say it's often not seen in those terms in childhood, but I'm struck talking with boys now who are 13 to 18 about their early relationships how often this pattern of disrupted and broken relationships of kids who were and felt rejected and who never really made that connection so they're not under the same control -- emotional controls that other kids are. Because as you point out if a kid has not got that basic attachment, that different emotional rules apply to them, they don't feel bound and governed in their feelings by the

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04/19/99 12:32:00 PM

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To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message

cc:
Subject: remarks at Teacher of the Year event

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release April 19, 1999

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AND TEACHER OF THE YEAR, ANDREW BAUMGARTNER,
AT CEREMONY HONORING TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Presidential Hall

10:10 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Thank you, Terry. I also want to acknowledge and welcome Congresswoman Patsy Mink from Hawaii who is here, with her husband, John. We're very delighted to see them. I'd like to thank the Chief State School Officers for sponsoring this award, along with Scholastic -- and I believe Gordon Ambach and Ernie Fleishman are both here.

Terry said I'd give 131 speeches on education. I didn't know that until I just came in here. (Laughter.) I wasn't keeping count. It is true that a few years ago I started reeling off all my teachers, beginning at kindergarten. And when I started running for office a long time ago now, I remember I asked -- the fellow who was helping me put my first campaign together said, people don't know much about you, we've got to do a little biographical film and we ought to put one of your teachers in it. And I said, well, I still carry on a correspondence with my 6th-grade teacher, Kathleen Shearer (phonetic.) I did until she died at about 91 years of age. And I used to see her about once a year.

But you can't use her, I said. And they said, well,

why? That sounds like a wonderful story. I said, it is, but she's liable to tell you what she told me the day I finished my elementary school career. (Laughter.) True story. My sainted 6th-grade teacher, who is one of these wonderful -- she lived with her first cousin and they lived until their late 80s or early 90s and they taught school for a gazillion years. And she looked at me when I left elementary school for the last day -- she said, Bill, I just don't know about you. (Laughter.) She said, you know, if you ever learn when to talk and when to keep quiet, there is nothing you can't achieve. But if you don't learn the difference, I'm not sure whether you're going to be governor or wind up in the penitentiary. (Laughter.) So we found someone else to do the film. (Laughter.) But Kathleen Shearer continued to write me for the rest of her days, including a letter I have that I received just a week before she passed away.

So I want to thank all of you for being here today. I also would like to thank Terry for the magnificent perspective she's provided to us for years now, in the Department of Education, on education and on teachers. And I'd like to thank her for mentioning Kosovo today. I know a lot of you -- probably in every school in the country, now, children are looking at maps and learning about the world we live in, and I think that's very important, because it is such a small world, growing smaller.

I went out to San Francisco a couple of days ago to speak to the newspaper editors, and I said that it is truly ironic that here we stand on the verge of a new century and a new millennium -- where education is more important than ever before, because we have this explosion in technology, drawing us closer to different people of different cultures, and our own country is becoming more diverse -- we can imagine a future that is more prosperous and more peaceful, and more interconnected in a very human way, than ever before; we got by the Cold War -- thank goodness, without any nuclear weapons falling; and now we've found that that future was threatened by the oldest demon of human society, which is our fear of people who are different from us.

I'm sure one time it was rational when tribes roamed around in isolated ways in prehistorical times and fought over limited resources and saw people in different tribes who were different from them, and they were maybe afraid for rational reasons. But today we have an opportunity to sort of celebrate our differences and enjoy them, as long as we understand they have to operate within a framework that says, underneath, the common humanity we all share as children of God is more important than those things which distinguish us one from another. That's really what's at stake there.

And it would be ironic, indeed, if after two world wars and a Cold War being fought on the continent of Europe, and all

the lessons we have learned over this century, that it would be in Southeastern Europe and the Balkans, where our vision of the 21st century would come apart.

So this conflict in Kosovo, in a fundamental way, is either the last conflict of the 20th century or the first conflict of the 21st century. And it's very important that our children understand that.

I just want to say one word about it and then I will come back to the task at hand. But I do have to announce today that I intend to send to Congress an emergency funding package to pay for our military and humanitarian needs of the operation in Kosovo; to ensure that we have the resources to sustain the air campaign until we achieve our goals, while maintaining our high level of general military readiness; to provide critical humanitarian assistance and relief to the hundreds of thousands of refugees; and to provide for resources for the nation in the region -- the neighbors of Kosovo, who have suffered so much from the effects of this conflict.

One of the things that a lot of people don't understand is that this is putting an enormous burden on Albania, the poorest country in the region, taking all those refugees, struggling to maintain a democracy. It's putting enormous burdens on Macedonia, a very small country trying to manage its own ethnic differences, now having these refugees loaded on top of them. It causes real problems for Bulgaria and Rumania. This is a difficult thing for the neighborhood.

So I hope the Congress will act on this. The need for this funding is urgent, immediate, clearly in the national interest. There are literally lives hanging in the balance. And so I hope, in the spirit of genuine bipartisan, the Congress will move the package right away.

Now, let's talk about why we're here. The first Teacher of the Year Award was presented in 1952 by a man who was one of my heroes as a child growing up, Harry Truman. He did it right here on the White House grounds. The recipient was a Miss Geraldine Jones, who taught first grade in Santa Barbara, California, in a school whose name I rather liked -- the Hope School. (Laughter.) Harry Truman said on that occasion that next to one's mother, a teacher had the greatest influence on what kind of citizen a child grew up to be.

Every year since, Presidents or members of their families have personally handed out this award, as Terry said, to recognize not only the awardee and all of you, but, through you, all teachers in our country.

Eight hours a day, five days a week, nine months a year, teachers hold the future of America in their hands. They teach our children to read, to write, to calculate -- to sing, to

play, to paint, to listen, to question, hopefully to work with others and think for themselves. They excite our children's imaginations, lift their aspirations, open their hearts and strengthen their values.

Everyone probably can recall a story like the one I told you at the opening of my remarks today. Many of us can remember our teachers in stunning detail -- their faces, their expressions, their voices, their favorite admonitions. The way their hands gripped the chalk at the blackboard. We can still, most of us, summon the pride we felt when they praised us and the absolute chill we felt when we were scolded. (Laughter.)

The role of teachers, while hard to ~~exaggerate,~~ unfortunately, is too often easy to overlook. Teachers do their jobs quietly, largely isolated from other adults. Their work, therefore, is seldom glorified by Hollywood, and rarely sufficiently rewarded by society.

Andy Baumgartner is our Teacher of the Year. He spent two years in the United States Marines. He gained inner confidence, self-motivation, physical stamina at Parris Island and Camp Lejeune. I imagine they have been useful to him in dealing with young children. (Laughter.)

Since he is a former Marine, I think it's worth pointing out that today we rightly honor the men and women serving in and around the Balkans as patriots. We should also honor our teachers as patriots.

Andy's colleagues marvel at the way he rivets the attention of his kindergarten students by keeping himself in constant creative motion. That's the first impression I had of him. (Laughter.) I have met a person who has even more energy than I do. (Laughter.) One minute he's using popcorn and M&Ms to teach counting. The next, he's conducting a sing-a-long to "This Land Is Your Land." A few minutes later, he's marching the class up the hill behind the school to conduct a solemn funeral for a departed pet tarantula named "Legs." (Laughter.)

As the father of a son with a learning disability, he knows firsthand the struggle many parents go through to get the individual attention their children need. He works hard to give that kind of attention to all his students.

When he's not teaching, he can be found directing a school play, teaching other educators, writing guidebooks for parents, working in community theatre, participating actively in his church. He is an example of the kind of vital, active American that Alexis D'Tocqueville marveled at when he came here so long ago and talked about the unique quality of our citizenship.

If he were alive today, D'Tocqueville I think would

agree that America could do more to honor classroom teachers like Andy Baumgartner. Perhaps more of our best and brightest young people would choose teaching as a career if we did more to lift our teachers up and honor them. Even though I am one, we don't need many more lawyers. We have plenty of financial analysts on Wall Street. But we desperately need more teachers.

When our finest young people pass up teaching, they're missing out on rewarding careers, and we're missing out on a chance to put our talent where we need it the most today. With 53 million children in our public schools -- the greatest number ever -- from more diverse backgrounds than at any time in our history, certainly since the turn of the century -- with enrollments growing and a wave of teacher retirements about to hit, our schools will have to hire 2 million more teachers in the next decade.

At the same time, we're trying to bring down class size and that requires more teachers. And the new teachers must be better trained. A quarter of all secondary school teachers today do not have majors, or even minors, in the subjects they are teaching. And, of course, the deficit is worse in low-income neighborhoods where the need is greatest.

Now, these are enormous challenges. I believe we can meet them if we act now when our economy is the strongest it has been in a very long time. But we have to act now. There are things the federal government can do, to be sure, and I want to talk a little about them. But I'd like to point out that we provide only about 7 percent of the funding of total public school funding in America. That's a higher percentage than it was when I became President. When we were cutting the deficit and cutting programs, we doubled our investment in education in about five years. But it's still important to remember that a lot of this has to be done at the state and local level.

And so as the governors of our various states enjoy great prosperity, and as the crime rate comes down and, presumably, therefore, they don't have to keep spending all their new money on building prisons, as was the case when I was a governor, too often. I certainly hope that as much money as possible will be put into our public school systems, to hire those teachers and to raise teacher pay. That has to be done at the state level, primarily, and it is absolutely imperative.

At the national level, we're going to do what we can to pass a bill to build or modernize thousands of schools, to help to hire 100,000 highly trained new teachers to reduce class size in the early grades. The studies, of course, confirm what a lot of our teachers have been saying for a long time, that smaller classes means more individual attention, more discipline and more learning.

Last fall, Congress reached across party lines to put

down a down payment -- they paid for about a third of these 100,000 teachers. I certainly hope we can finish the job this year.

We have to redouble our efforts to recruit more of the best and brightest young Americans into teaching. A lot of our young people in the AmeriCorps program are getting some of their college education paid so they can go and become teachers. Our budget now calls for an investment to provide 7,000 scholarships for students who will commit to teach in the poorest inner city and rural schools. It calls on an investment to get 1,000 Native American young people to teach on Indian reservations, and in other public schools with large Native American populations.

It calls for more money to recruit and train members of the United States military when they retire to become teachers through our Troops for Teachers program, something that has really been very, very successful. Our 25 million veterans represent a vast pool of potential teachers. Many of them, because they're going into military retirement, can actually afford to be teachers. (Laughter.) And most of them have their kids gone. So it's a pool that we need to look at and draw on. Our Teacher of the Year, here, is pretty good evidence that soldiers can be quite good teachers. We ought to make it easier for others to do the same thing.

Third, in our budget we provide more funds for teacher training. I think it's quite important that teachers -- our new teachers especially -- demonstrate that they know what they're supposed to teach. But we cannot expect the schools out there, who have to teach the kids, to be able to do what they're supposed to do unless we provide -- we in the public sector -- provide the resources we need not only to recruit, but to properly train the teachers in the subjects they have to teach.

Fourth, we should do more to make our schools attractive places where people want to work. In our Educational Accountability Act, we have a lot of funds for better schools, and for turning around schools that aren't performing, and for after-school and summer school programs to help the children who need extra help.

Now, last thing I'd like to say is something I've already said. I know I've given 131 speeches on education -- I now know that -- so I've learned a new fact today, and I love facts. But the larger truth is this: Everybody is for education in general, but not enough people are for it in particular. It's easy to give a talk, and harder to foot the bill. And I think it is very important that we not only remain committed to substantive reforms -- you know, I believe that every school district should have a no-social-promotion policy, but I don't think the kids should be branded failures. I think if they're not making it, then they should get the extra help they need. And that's why we have moved on from $1 million, and $20 million,

to $200 million, to $600 million this year in federal support for after-school programs and summer school programs. We're working at this. But America needs to focus on this.

We're going to honor Andy -- I'm going to bring him up here to give him his award, and he's going to give a speech, and we're all going to practically laugh or cry. And it will be a wonderful thing. But I want America to hear this, when they see you tonight on television. We have 2 million teachers to hire in the next few years. And in the best of all worlds, they would every one of them, be just as committed and just as knowledgeable and just as effective as you are.

And it isn't going to happen unless we make the necessary decisions, and put the necessary priorities in place, not only in Washington, but in every state capital, and every local school district in the country.

So I say today, the best way we can honor America's teachers is for the rest of us to give them the tools to succeed with our children in the 21st century. (Applause.) Thank you.

Ladies and gentlemen, the 1999 Teacher of the Year, Mr.

Andy Baumgartner. (Applause.)

MR. BAUMGARTNER: He would emphasize that I was height-challenged to begin with. (Laughter.) You're a hard act to follow.

Thank you, Mr. President. Ladies and gentlemen, I am filled with immense pride as I stand here in our Capitol City today and take part in this national celebration on teaching and teachers.

My 23 years' experience as an educator has proven to me that our schools are filled with many of the brightest, hardest working and most enthusiastic and capable professionals that can be found anywhere in the world. My pride is compounded by the fact that we teach in a country that guarantees the right of every child to an education.

I am greatly encouraged by the fact that the attention of our nation is being focused on our education system. We are constantly being reminded that there is an undeniable correlation between the attainment of an education and the realization of the American Dream. We are being energized by the debates over standards and accountability, to make changes that will certainly cause the performance levels of our schools and the individual achievements of our students to prosper. We must use care and caution to enact only those changes that are both responsible and prudent.

The time has come when we must exchange laying blame for cooperative and collective problem-solving. We must constantly remind ourselves that the mission of an effective teacher should not be bounded by a particular book or program or test. Instead, it should extend to meet the individual needs of each and every student. We must realize that educational accountability is the shared responsibility of all Americans. We can no longer continue to make excuses for not providing optimal learning environments for our children, who deserve nothing less than the best.

Reducing class size, strengthening parental involvement and community support, and providing access to the most current and innovative materials and technology must be considered necessary basics. We must end any disparities that exist between schools by upgrading those with the most numerous and significant unmet needs without lessening support to any others. We must furnish every classroom with a highly qualified and respected teacher who is adequately and professionally compensated for his or her commitment.

When together we have achieved these goals we will have provided all schools with the necessary components to enable their students to excel in the face of all challenges. The proof that it can be done lies in this beautiful and historic city in which we have gathered. For here we are inundated by sights and sounds that make it impossible for us to doubt that ideals can, indeed, be made into realities.

Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you. (Applause.)

END 11:35 A.M. EDT

Message Sent To:

Laura E. Schiller
04/22/99 01:30:04 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Christine N. Macy/WHO/EOP

cc:
Subject: Early Warning Guide Information

---------- Forwarded by Laura E. Schiller/WHO/EOP on 04/22/99 01:30 PM ----------

[redacted] 11:59:03 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Laura E. Schiller/WHO/EOP

cc:
Subject: Early Warning Guide Information

info--
---------- Forwarded by Neera Tanden/WHO/EOP on 04/22/99 12:00 PM ----------

Tanya E. Martin
04/22/99 10:22:55 AM

Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message

cc:
Subject: Early Warning Guide Information

The ED dept is sending over 80 copies of the early warning guide to Jason Schecter in the Press Office. You should be able to pick one up there if you need a copy.

ED has previously distributed 100,000 copies of the Guide to schools after its release last fall. The Dept is now releasing another 100,000 copies to a wider audience, including religous organizations, businesses, community groups and schools.

Message Sent To:

Laura E. Schiller
04/22/99 01:28:03 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Christine N. Macy/WHO/EOP

cc:
Subject:

---------- Forwarded by Laura E. Schiller/WHO/EOP on 04/22/99 01:28 PM ----------

Record Type: Record

To: Laura E. Schiller/WHO/EOP

cc:
Subject:

Four quick points -- Audrey is walking other data over there now:

1. The theme for the school violence conference was "Responsible Adults Involved in the Lives of Children" --- fyi

2. Just talked to Bill Modzeleski, who runs the Safe and Drug Free Schools program:

He wanted to make one major point, which I think you can make where you wanted to make it --community. It's beyond parents to the community. Youth-service organizations, clergy and religious organizations, community leaders, businesses, all have to get involved in the lives of children, and they have to help parents help kids navigate their way to adulthood. Yes, it takes a village.

3. The message on mental health issues, which I think is good particularly for her is, prevention has to start early. These kids were troubled and disturbed -- and they should have been helped 10 years ago, not just last year. We need to have better connections to parents - giving them the information they need - so that they can ferret out normal bad adolescent behavior from mentally disturbed behavior that can lead to violence. The Early Warning Guide, that you should get any minute, is part of that effort -- it helps teachers and counselors look for the first signs of trouble.

4. Schools are still safe places for our children. In fact, though these tragedies seem to tell us otherwise, schools are still the safest places for children.

This came to me in Dec, 1999

CLINTON/GORE ADMINISTRATION WINS NEW MENTAL HEALTH VICTORIES IN THE BUDGET BUT MUCH REMAINS TO BE DONE

The final budget is clearly a win for Clinton/Gore Administration and for people with mental illnesses. However, there is still much work to do. Unfortunately, Republicans have blocked critical legislation this year that would improve health care for people with mental illnesses.

- **Substantial New Increases to Improve Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment.** The Congress has responded to the Clinton/Gore Administration's proposal to substantially increase substance abuse prevention and treatment activities. Congress has approved a critical $275 million increase in the Substance Abuse Block Grant at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA). With this increase, over $1.5 billion will be allocated to the block grant in FY1999 enabling tens of thousands of high-risk youth, pregnant women, and other underserved Americans to get much-needed drug treatment and prevention services.

- **New Investments in Mental Health Services at SAMHSA.** The budget included a new $13 million increase in mental health block grant. With this increase, the block grant will contain $288 million in mental health spending in FY1999. These services provide much needed treatment, counseling and services for thousands of people with mental illnesses.

- **Expansion of National Institutes of Health for Biomedical Research.** The Administration's FY1999 budget included the largest-ever dollar increase in funds for the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The final budget includes almost $2 billion expansion of NIH research funding --a 14-percent increase. In the last decade, scientists have made historic progress identifying and treating mental illnesses, improving the lives of millions of Americans. This new investment will help scientists explore important new breakthroughs in biomedical research and have been which could revolutionize the way medical experts understand, treat, and prevent mental illness.

Unfortunately, the Congressional Leadership Thwarted the Passage of Critical Legislation That Would Improve Quality Health Care for People With Mental Health Illnesses.

- **Failing to Pass a Patients' Bill of Rights That Would Assure Quality Health Care for People with Mental Illness.** The Clinton/Gore Administration has repeatedly urged the Congress to pass a strong, enforceable patients' bill of rights that would assure Americans the quality health care they need. Congressional Republicans killed this year's effort to pass a patients' bill of rights that contain critical protections for people with mental illnesses, including: access to specialists, continuity of care so to prevent abrupt changes in critical treatment when an employer changes health plan, and a fair independent appeals process to assure that individuals can appeal decisions made by HMOs.

- **Failing to Pass A Work Incentives Bill for People with Disabilities.** At the commemoration of the Americans with Disabilities Act last July, the President endorsed the bipartisan Jeffords-Kennedy bill that enables people with disabilities to go back to work by providing an option to buy into Medicaid and Medicare, as well as other pro-work initiatives. This bill was on the list of top Administration priorities in the final budget negotiations, but rejected by Republicans. Clinton/Gore Administration will continue to fight to give people with disabilities the opportunity to work -- including the critical health insurance that makes work possible.

Trooper Sanders @ OVP
12/10/98 08:13:31 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Nicole R. Rabner/WHO/EOP

cc:
Subject: MENTAL HEALTH ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Here's one good solid accomplishment:

Our funding for children's mental health services went from just $5 million in FY 93 to $78 million for FY 99.

This was a budget victory