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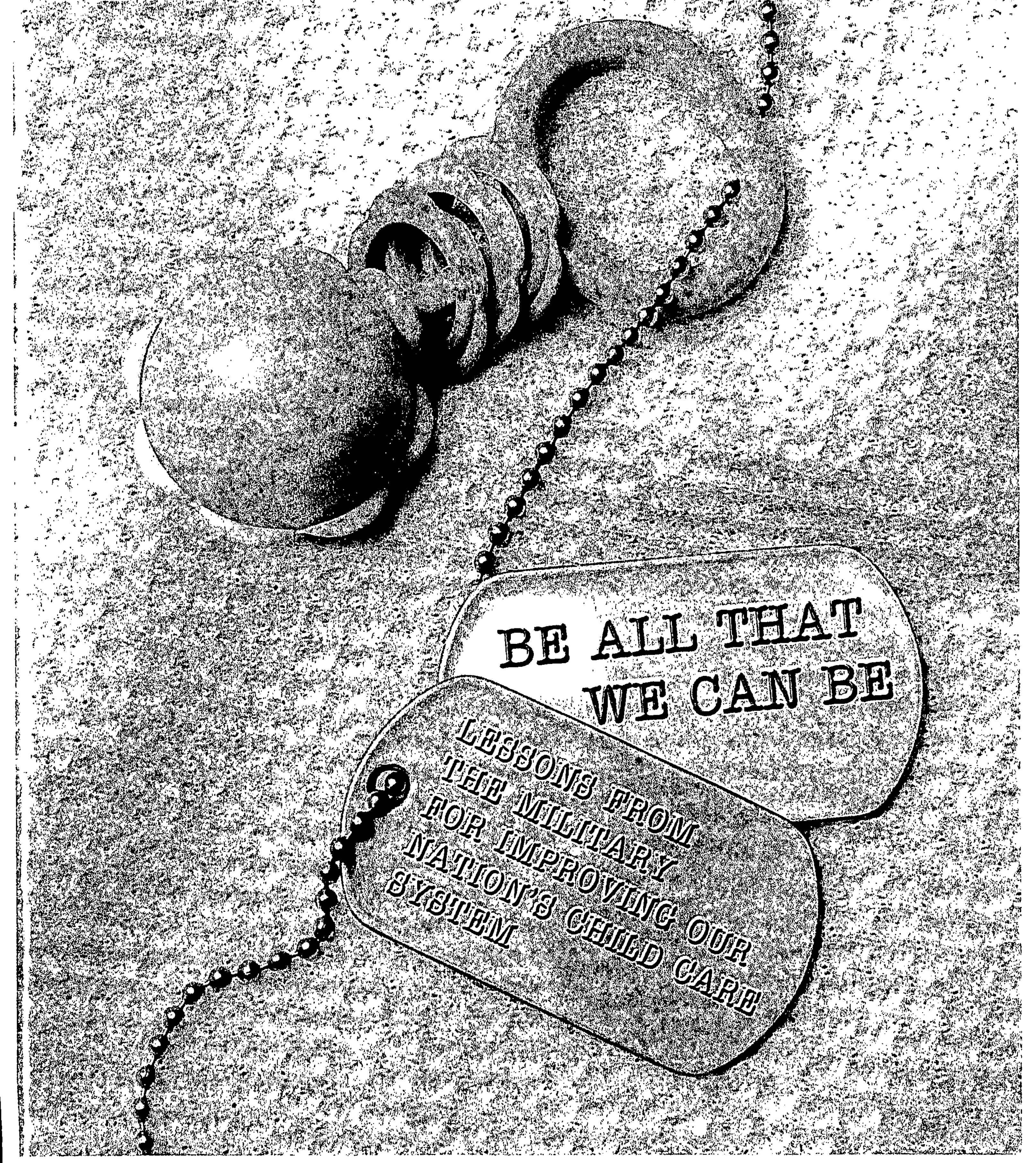
Background Information on Federal Child Care for

ANN O'LEARY

General Services Administration
Office of Child Care
February 16, 2000

NATIONAL WOMEN'S LAW CENTER
EXPANDING THE POSSIBILITIES



The Washington Post

View Related Topics

July 25, 2000, Tuesday, Final Edition

SECTION: METRO; Pg. B02; FEDERAL DIARY

LENGTH: 668 words

HEADLINE: House Wants Federal Day-Care Center Workers to Get Closer Look

BYLINE: Stephen Barr

BODY:

Worried about the safety of children in federal **child care** centers, the House has moved to tighten background checks on current and prospective workers at the government centers.

The 1990 Crime Control Act required mandatory background checks for employees hired by federal agencies, but Rep. Benjamin A. Gilman (R-N.Y.) said some agencies interpreted the law as not applying to their day-care centers. The agencies reasoned that the workers are hired by the day-care provider, not the government.

Gilman, joined by Reps. Carolyn B. Maloney (D-N.Y.) and Constance A. **Morella** (R-Md.), urged the House last week to require **child care** workers in federal facilities to undergo a criminal background check just like federal employees. The House accepted the Gilman proposal and attached it to a fiscal 2001 spending bill.

"Federal employees who use federally provided **child care** should feel confident that these **child care** providers have backgrounds free of abusive and violent behavior that would prevent them from working with our children," Gilman said.

Morella added, "It only takes one missed background check to lead to a devastating situation."

Gilman warned that a violent **child care** worker "has the opportunity to create a terrorist situation, the likes of which have not been seen since the tragedy in Oklahoma City."

The same bill, the Treasury-Postal appropriations measure, also would extend for another year the pilot program that allows agencies to subsidize **child care** expenses for their lower-income employees. That program, just now getting under way in many agencies, had been set to expire Sept. 30.

Meanwhile, persons with children in **child care** facilities in General Services Administration-controlled buildings would be kept better informed of the security levels in those buildings under a bill approved by the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Before enrolling a child, parents or guardians would be told the level of the building's security and the identities of the building tenants. Afterward, they would be told if any new federal tenant is scheduled to move in or if any "serious threat" has arisen to the building.

GSA also would have to assess safety and security of all **child care** facilities in buildings under its control and make recommendations for improvements. The report, which would be due one year after the bill's enactment, would have to include an assessment of whether the windows and interior furnishings provide adequate protection against natural disaster or terrorist attack.

There are 113 **child care** centers in GSA-controlled buildings, with about 7,900 children enrolled, 55 percent of them children of federal workers. The Defense Department has about 800 **child care** programs, not all of them centers, and other agencies have 137 centers in buildings under their control.

Retiree COLA

Although it's too early to tell, increases in the cost of gasoline, heating oil and some other consumer goods could translate into a substantial cost-of-living increase for federal retirees at the start of 2001.

Over the last nine months, a consumer price index that is used to set retiree COLAs--the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers--has increased 3.2 percent. That includes a 0.6 percent boost in June.

Three months are left in the current counting period for January's COLAs. Prices can go in either direction, but it appears likely that retirees will get the largest COLA since the 3.7 percent increase that went to Civil Service Retirement System retirees in 1991.

Employees under the Federal Employees Retirement System get a COLA that is 1 percentage point less than the CSRS figure when the consumer index is more than 3 percent. They got 2.7 percent in 1991.

One indicator of what might lie ahead is the latest 12-month count in the inflation index used to calculate COLAs. Through June 2000, it jumped 3.9 percent.

Stephen Barr's e-mail address is barrs@washpost.com.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: July 25, 2000

NATIONAL WOMEN'S LAW CENTER

EXPANDING THE POSSIBILITIES

Ann O'Leary
Office of Policy Development
Eisenhower Executive Office Building, Room 218
17th and Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington DC 20502

May 24, 2000

Dear Ms. O'Leary:

We are pleased to provide you with the enclosed copy of our new report, *Be All That We Can Be: Lessons from the Military for Improving Our Nation's Child Care System.* We hope that this report will encourage law makers at the federal and state levels to make expanding access to high-quality, affordable child care for families across the country one of our nation's top priorities.

Be All That We Can Be tells the story of the military's remarkable transformation of its child care system, and demonstrates how its experience over the past decade provides an excellent model for the very real reforms that need to be made in civilian child care policy and practice as well. The military now operates a comprehensive child care system that includes center-based care, family child care homes, before- and after-school programs, and resource and referral services to assist parents in finding care. Basic standards have been applied and are rigorously enforced, and over 95 percent of military child care centers are accredited by National Association for the Education of Young Children. Caregivers receive systematic training and increased compensation linked to their training. Subsidies help parents afford the care they need. And the system is serving a steadily increasing proportion of military personnel who need it. *Be All That We Can Be* offers valuable lessons on how similar improvements can be made in civilian child care.

We look forward to working with you to use these findings to improve child care for families all across the country. To obtain additional copies of the report, please send in the enclosed order form or download the report from our web site at www.nwlc.org.

Sincerely,

Nancy Duff Campbell
Co-President

Judith C. Appelbaum
Vice President and Director of
Employment Opportunities

NATIONAL WOMEN'S LAW CENTER
EXPANDING THE POSSIBILITIES

NEWSNEWSNEWS

Embargoed Until:
Press Conference at the Pentagon
Tuesday, May 16, 2000
10:00 a.m., EST

Contact: Margot Friedman or
Maricka Oglesby at 202-588-5180
web site: www.nwlc.org

MILITARY PROVIDES MODEL FOR CHILD CARE REFORMS, NEW NWLC REPORT CONCLUDES

At a time when child care around the country is woefully inadequate, the U.S. military has achieved a remarkable transformation of its child care system and its experience provides important lessons for policy makers, child care providers and parents concerned about improving child care everywhere. These are the major findings of the National Women's Law Center's new report, *Be All That We Can Be: Lessons from the Military for Improving Our Nation's Child Care System*, which was released today and presented to Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen at a news conference at the Pentagon.

"If the U.S. military can do an about-face and dramatically improve its child care system in a relatively short period of time, there is great hope for improving child care across the United States. The lessons learned from this example should be applied to expand access to high quality, affordable child care for everyone," said Nancy Duff Campbell, NWLC Co-President.

Secretary Cohen said, "Quality military child care is essential for the readiness of our Armed Forces. America's military is the best in the world not just because of our technology, training and tactics but, above all, because we recruit and retain the best men and women the country has to offer." The military runs what is essentially the largest employer-sponsored child care program in the country, serving over 200,000 children per day in over 300 locations.

NWLC's report describes the deficiencies in military child care before the reforms; the specific steps that the military used to turn its system around; and, most importantly, a series of "lessons learned" showing how the military's experience can be applied more broadly to improve civilian child care.

With the advent of the All Volunteer Force in 1973, the military experienced significant demographic changes that had a direct impact on the demand for child care. The Services were no longer comprised mainly of single men, but increasingly of career-oriented men and women with children. But the military child care system did not meet the needs of these families. It was plagued by many of the deficiencies that are familiar to civilian parents today – poor quality care, a lack of standards addressing issues such as maximum group size and educational activities, high staff turnover due to low salaries and poor working conditions, long waiting lists for available slots, and unaffordable parent fees. Prodded by Congressional hearings and the enactment of the Military Child Care Act of 1989, the Department of Defense now runs a military child care system that is a model for the nation.

"The concerns that made investing in child care for the military a high priority – a desire for a stable workforce and for healthy child development – apply equally outside the military. We need the same commitment to get results in every state and for every child," said Campbell.

Be All That We Can Be provides six key lessons from the military for state and federal policy makers:

Lesson 1: Do Not Be Daunted by the Task: It is Possible to Take a Woefully Inadequate Child Care System and Dramatically Improve It.

- The military consciously set out to, and did, build a system that links centers, family child care homes, before- and after-school programs, and resource and referral services to assist parents in finding care through a single point of entry.
- No state has such a systemic approach, whose adoption would dramatically improve child care across the country.

Lesson 2: Recognize and Acknowledge the Seriousness of the Child Care Problem and the Consequences of Inaction.

- Policy makers in Congress and in DoD acted to improve military child care because they recognized the harsh consequences of poor child care on military readiness and child welfare.
- With some exceptions, policy makers at the state and federal levels have not made the same commitment to improving civilian child care, despite the similar threat to workforce performance and the healthy development and learning of children.
- It is essential that policy makers recognize these connections and consequences and take action.

Lesson 3: Improve Quality by Establishing and Enforcing Comprehensive Standards, Assisting Providers in Becoming Accredited, and Enhancing Provider Compensation and Training.

a) Develop Comprehensive, Uniform Standards, and Ensure That They Are Met Through a System of Unannounced Inspections and Sanctions for Violations.

- Basic standards – encompassing health and safety, staff/child ratios, staff training, and other matters – have been established and rigorously enforced in all forms of military child care. For example, the military requires and conducts four unannounced inspections of its child care centers and family child care homes per year, and installation commanders are routinely briefed and held accountable for inspection results at their bases.
- On the civilian side, state standards vary considerably and some programs are exempt from any protections. No state requires four annual unannounced inspections of child care centers and fourteen states require visits to family child care homes only once every *five* years.

- States could significantly increase the quality of care by measuring state standards against those established by outside experts, strengthening them, and applying them to a wider range of care, as well as by adopting the military's model of a rigorous, unannounced inspection program with meaningful, well-publicized sanctions for non-compliance.

b) Assist Providers in Meeting Additional Voluntary Standards, Such as Those Necessary for Outside Accreditation.

- The military has provided the resources to help its child care centers meet the high national accreditation standards of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, addressing such concerns as staff/child interactions and developmental activities. Ninety-five percent of military child care centers are accredited by NAEYC, compared with just 8 percent of civilian child care centers nationwide.
- Following the military's lead, states should encourage child care providers, through grants or other incentives, to go beyond mandatory minimum licensing requirements and to meet higher accreditation standards.

c) Increase Staff Compensation and Improve Staff Training, and Link Compensation Increases to the Achievement of Training Milestones.

- In military child care centers, caregivers receive systematic, ongoing training as well as compensation linked to training that is comparable to that of other individuals with similar training, seniority and experience. As a result, staff turnover has been reduced dramatically – from over 300 percent annually at some bases before the reforms to less than 30 percent today – and staff morale and professionalism have improved.
- The civilian child care workforce lacks access to training, is poorly compensated and is prone to high turnover rates that undermine the quality of care. Unlike the military, thirty-one states do not require that child care workers receive any training before they can care for children. Moreover, the *average* wage for a caregiver is currently $7.40 per hour in a civilian child care center and less than $5 per hour in a civilian family child care home – below the nearly $8 per hour *entry-level* wage for a military child care center worker, who receives a raise to $10 per hour upon the successful completion of training.
- States should use the military model to develop similar training and compensation strategies.

Lesson 4: Keep Parent Fees Affordable Through Subsidies.

- Parent fees in military child care centers are subject to a sliding fee schedule based on income to ensure that personnel with the lowest incomes can afford child care; in addition, commanders provide direct subsidies to family child care homes to help keep parent fees reasonable. On average, fees for center-based military care are 25 percent lower than fees paid by civilians for comparable care, even though military families typically use center care for longer hours and for younger children (including infants) than civilian families.
- In civilian care today, a patchwork of government measures assists some families in meeting their child care expenses, but not adequately. For example, the Child Care and

Development Block Grant reaches only 10 percent of children eligible under federal guidelines. Moreover, experts recommend that low-income families above the poverty level should be required to pay no more than 10 percent of their income for child care, approximately what military families pay. Yet in 1999, ten states required a family of three at 150 percent of the poverty level to pay more than 10 percent of its income in child care co-payments to receive a subsidy; in an additional nine states, such a family was eligible for no child care subsidy at all.

- Policy makers, at both the state and federal levels, should follow the military's example in making significant public resources available to help subsidize care for families who cannot afford to pay the full cost of good child care.

Lesson 5: Expand the Availability of All Kinds of Care by Continually Assessing Unmet Need and Taking Steps to Address It.

- The military made a conscious decision to focus its initial efforts on the quality and cost of care, to some extent at the expense of expanding supply. Nevertheless, the military estimates that it is currently meeting about 58 percent of its child care need and has a plan, with specific goals and timetables, to reach 80 percent by 2005.
- No state is providing subsidized, high-quality child care to anywhere near 58 percent of its families.
- Both the federal government and the states should follow the military's model of continually assessing need and developing specific plans to expand child care capacity.

Lesson 6: Commit the Resources Necessary to Get the Job Done.

- The military could not have achieved its successes without a substantial increase in resources. Funds appropriated for military child care have climbed dramatically in recent years, from about $90 million before the enactment of the Military Child Care Act to $352 million in FY 2000.
- Although it is difficult to quantify the level of public investment in civilian child care today, it is woefully inadequate to meet the need, especially for low-income families.
- Both the federal government and the states should recognize, as the military has, that increased funding for child care ultimately pays for itself in the stability of the workforce and the healthy development of children – and increase their investments dramatically.

NWLC will work with state and federal policy makers to implement the lessons learned in *Be All That We Can Be* to improve civilian child care. Established in 1972, the National Women's Law Center conducts public policy research, advocacy, litigation and public education efforts to protect and advance the legal rights of women and their families, with special attention given to the concerns of low-income women. NWLC has a longstanding record of involvement in child care and issues of concern to women in the military.

Note to reporters: To download a copy of the report or background materials, visit www.nwlc.org or call 202-588-5180.

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THE NATION'S NEWSPAPER
USA TODAY
NO. 1 IN THE USA

Wednesday, May 17, 2000

Military is the model of child-care efficiency

The rest of the country could learn some lessons from the military about providing child care, says a report from the National Women's Law Center (NWLC), a non-profit organization that monitors women's issues. Ten years ago, Congress passed a law ordering the military to meet the need for better child care for increasing numbers of career-oriented women and men in the military. The military turned itself around, becoming a possible model for state policymakers around the country, the report says. The military trains child-care workers better, pays them better, and enforces health and safety standards in facilities better than much of the nation, the NWLC says. As a result of reforms, child-care staff turnover has fallen from 300% annually at some bases to 30%. "If the U.S. military can do an about-face and dramatically improve its child-care system in a relatively short period of time, there is great hope for improving child care across the United States," NWLC president Nancy Duff Campbell says.

The New York Times

WEDNESDAY, MAY 17, 2000

Child Care In Military Is Praised As a Model

By ELIZABETH BECKER

WASHINGTON, May 16 — The military has so improved its child care system in the past decade that it has become a model for state and national programs, according to a study released today.

The National Women's Law Center, a nonprofit research and advocacy group in Washington, said in its report that the military had remade a program once described as a "ghetto" of child care — with long waiting lists, uneven care and costs too high for many military families — into one providing affordable, high-quality care to more than 200,000 children worldwide.

The military, according to Nancy Duff Campbell, co-president of the center, who discussed the report at a Pentagon briefing, "transformed a seriously deficient child care system into one that now serves as a model for child care reform nationwide."

In those 10 years, the Defense Department and the services created a network of child care centers, family care homes, after-school programs and referral services. The military tripled the number of children in its system and now meets 58 percent of the needs of service members' children requiring care, the study estimated, a level far exceeding that of the civilian child care industry.

In the last fiscal year, the military spent $339 million for child care, the study found, as the Pentagon realized such services required large subsidies to assure that military families could afford them. Fees are based on the parents' income.

Ms. Campbell said her group hoped to use the study "to push the civilian side and say 'these are the things you can do.' "

Adequate child care became part of the armed forces' efforts to retain members of the all-volunteer services. The military also realized that quality care was needed to cut the service time lost while parents were home caring for their children.

"At first there was no money allocated for child care and we had to compete with tanks and weapons for funding," recalled M.-A. Lucas, the civilian manager for the Army's child care program.

The study praised the military for setting caregiver training requirements and improving the wages. Hourly wages for military caregivers start at $8 and rise to $10 after two years. Pay for civilian childcare workers averages $7.13 an hour.

As a result, staff turnover — a serious problem in civilian child care centers — fell from more than 300 percent a year on some bases to less than 30 percent today.

"This isn't a mere nicety; it's a military necessity," said William S. Cohen, the secretary of defense. "We simply can't afford to have our service members worried about the basic well-being of their families."

Also attending the briefing were Senators Christopher Dodd, Democrat of Connecticut, and James M. Jefford, Republican of Vermont, sponsors of legislation to raise child care financing in the civilian sector.

"Child care, as it's offered to our men and women in uniform, is the gold standard," Mr. Dodd said. "You can't do a job well if you're worried about how your infant child is doing in a child care center or where the care is being given. And so this is about as fundamental as it gets."

The Washington Post
WEDNESDAY, MAY 17, 2000

Military Child Care Wins Raves From Study

Advocates Praise 10-Year Overhaul

By JACQUELINE L. SALMON
Washington Post Staff Writer

In the 1980s, just about everyone agrees, the military's child-care system was a mess. As more young parents joined the armed services, demand for child care swelled. But military child-care centers were not prepared for active duty.

Lead-based paint peeled from ceilings and walls in some centers, roofs leaked, poorly paid caregivers supervised as many as 15 babies and toddlers at a time, and in some facilities, entire staffs turned over three times a year.

Ten years after the military launched a massive overhaul of its child-care system, the picture is dramatically different. And yesterday, the National Women's Law Center praised the revamped operation, calling it a model for the country.

Since the Military Child Care Act passed in 1989, standards have risen, caregiver training has become rigorous and the military has started offering benefits and salaries that look positively lush when compared with those in the private sector, the policy group said in a study released yesterday.

"It's time, indeed past time, for the civilian sector to catch up," Nancy Duff Campbell, co-president of the Law Center, said at a Pentagon news conference attended by military top brass and two U.S. senators.

The authors of the report from the public-policy group, which focuses on women's and children's issues, say they hope it will spur Congress to increase funding for the nation's patchwork child-care system.

Policymakers "need to make the same investment in providing quality child care and affordable child care to working families who aren't in the military," said Judith Applebaum, vice president of the Law Center.

In the Washington area, thousands of service families use military child care—the largest employer-sponsored system in the country.

The system cares for 200,000 children worldwide—in 800 child-care centers, in 9,000 homes where military family members care for youngsters, and in hundreds of programs for school-age children at schools and other locations.

Quality child care is a top priority for the Defense Department, officials say. "We simply can't afford to have our service members worry about the basic care of their family members," said Defense Secretary William S. Cohen.

He said he hopes the Law Center's report will guide similar gains in the civilian world.

The report documents the money and effort the military has poured into its child-care system. Defense Department spending on child care has tripled in the past 10 years, reaching $352 million in fiscal 2000. Still, the Defense system meets only 58 percent of demand, and military families need 126,000 more slots for their children, the report said.

Reflecting higher pay scales for military child-care workers, their entry-level pay averaged $8 an hour, compared with the civilian average of $7.40 an hour, Campbell said.

At the same time, military parents pay 25 percent less a week than civilian parents. Military parents earning $23,000 or less a year pay as little as $39 a week per child, while military parents earning $70,000 or more pay a maximum of $112 a week, the report said.

In addition to caring for thousands of military children in the region, the military is getting involved in the area's civilian child-care system.

Military personnel are helping revamp the District's child-care regulations, said Barbara Kamera, executive director of the D.C. Office of Early Childhood Development. And civilian child-care workers may take training classes at local military bases for free.

"It's helped tremendously," said Kamera, whose department must add 2,800 subsidized child-care slots by year-end.

The New York Times

THE NEW YORK TIMES EDITORIALS/LETTERS FRIDAY, MAY 19, 2000

A Model Child Care System

In a remarkable turnaround over the past 10 years, the Department of Defense has transformed an abysmal military child care system into a model for the nation, judging from a report by the National Women's Law Center, a research and advocacy group. A decade ago, military child care services were plagued with poorly trained staff, extremely high turnover in caregivers, long waiting lists and costs too high for many military families to afford. But child care became a key personnel issue, and in 1989 the Military Child Care Act mandated that improvements be made.

The military created a network of child care centers, child care in family homes and before- and after-school programs. It nearly tripled the number of child care slots, and established training requirements, safety and health standards and child-to-staff ratios that are rigorously enforced. It also raised wages to $10 an hour for experienced caregivers, significantly higher than civilian scales. And it provided substantial subsidies to ensure that child care is affordable even to low-income families.

These improvements would not have been possible without more resources. The budget for military child care has risen from $90 million in 1989 to $339 million in the last fiscal year. Federal and state policy makers should make a comparable commitment to improve child care in the civilian realm.

Boston Sunday Globe

MAY 21, 2000

Investing in child care

Back when the military used the draft and did not depend so much on volunteers, day care for children on bases was poor. Quality was low, waiting lists were long, fees were beyond many parents' reach, and staff turnover was endemic.

Conditions improved markedly, however, after the draft ended and the services became fully dependent on volunteers who are more likely to be married with children than draftees and can leave the military after their enlistments if they don't like conditions. In fact, improvements were so noteworthy that the National Women's Law Center last week published a report on military child care and held it up as a model for civilian life.

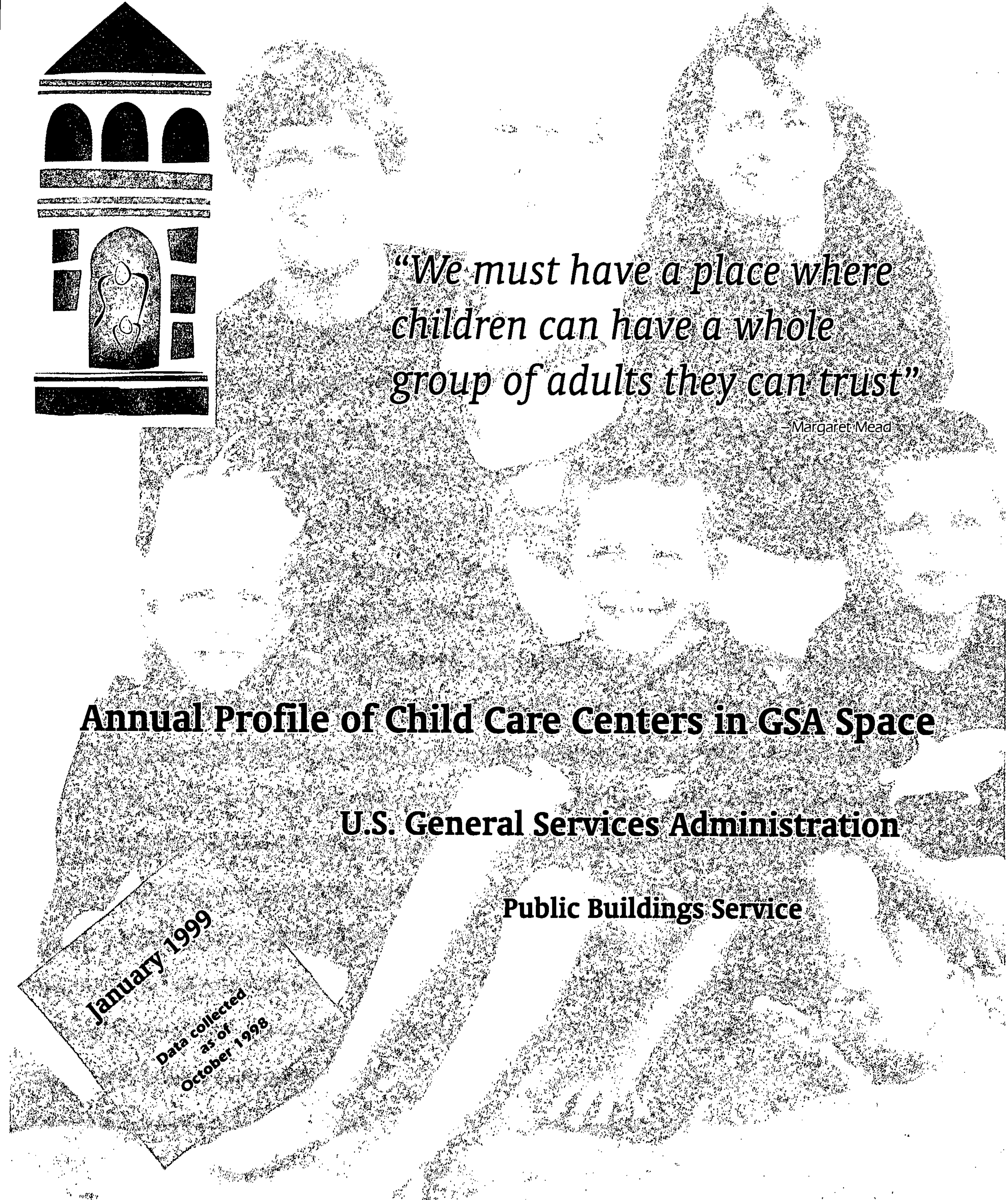
The report includes many excellent suggestions on standards, frequent and unannounced inspections, employer subsidies, and staff training that civilian officials would do well to follow. But the most significant lesson is more basic: Real progress in child care comes when a community – whether it is the US military or a state or a city – simply decides to give day care the importance it deserves.

"The concerns that made investing in child care for the military a high priority – a desire for a stable work force and a healthy child environment – apply equally outside the military," said Nancy Duff Campbell, co-president of the women's law center.

After the draft ended in 1973, day care in the volunteer military became such a drag on morale and a deterrent to reenlistment that Congress finally passed a law in 1989 to address the problem. Fortunately, the law worked in creating a system of both base child development centers and private, family-based centers.

One secret of the military's success is that its program draws families of all income levels. The program director has said that it is critical that all families, at all income levels, receive some subsidy, so that child care is seen as a universal program and not just for low-income families.

Make high-quality child care a priority and make it universal – these are principles the country as a whole should adopt. Parents should not have to join the military to get good, affordable day care.



"We must have a place where children can have a whole group of adults they can trust"

– Margaret Mead

Annual Profile of Child Care Centers in GSA Space

U.S. General Services Administration

Public Buildings Service

January 1999

Data collected as of October 1998

GSA's Child Care Program: Serving Federal Employee Families Nationwide

GSA's Child Care Program allows families of Federal employees to receive quality child care in centers located in GSA-managed space throughout the United States.

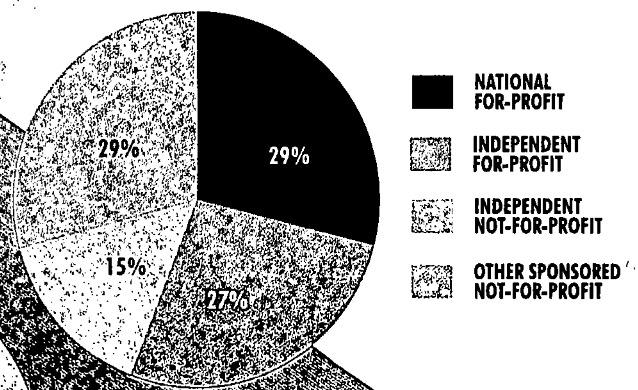
GSA works in partnership with Federal agencies and boards of directors to select high quality child care providers. We strive to take advantage of the best available child care resources within each local community. Overall program guidance and standards are prioritized in formal licensing agreements.

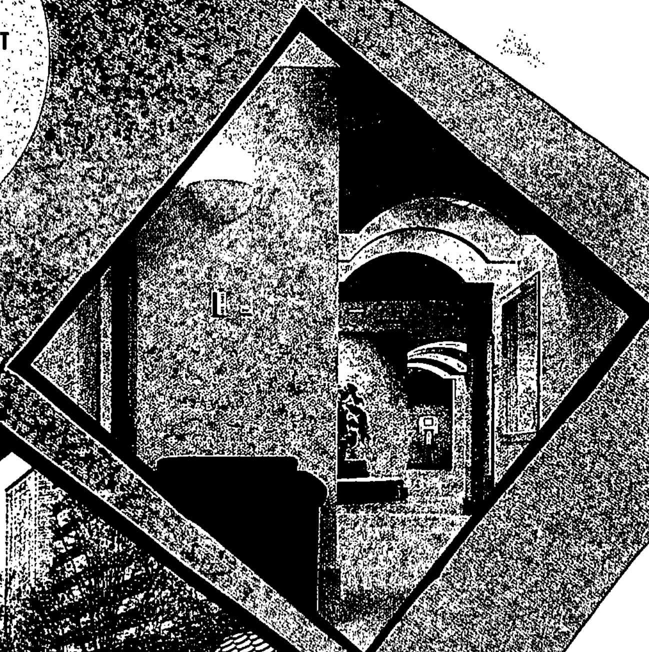
Title 40 of the United States Code, Section 490b, as amended, gives Federal agencies the authority to establish child care centers for Federal families without charge for rent or services. The Code, known as the Trible Amendment, requires that at least 50% of the children enrolled in a center be children or dependents of Federal employees. The remaining enrollment may be open to the general public.

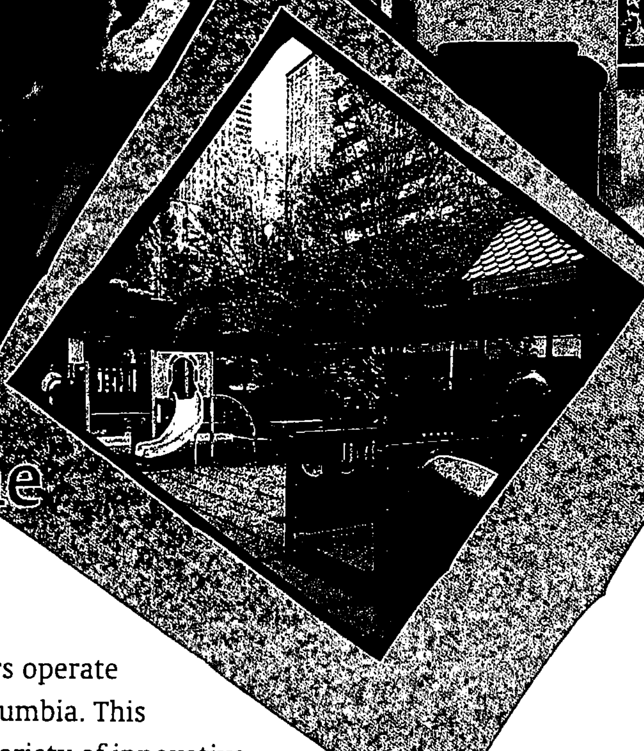
Managed by the Best in National and Local Providers

GSA oversees a network of private, market-based child care providers. This network, which consists of both for-profit and not-for-profit companies, includes nationally recognized providers as well as small independent organizations.

WHO PROVIDES OUR CHILD CARE







Partners in the Community

Currently, 112 child care centers operate in 32 states and the District of Columbia. This year 20 centers participated in a variety of innovative partnerships addressing the quality, availability and affordability issues in their communities. These partnerships included: agreements with Head Start, the public schools, state funded pre-k programs, local community outreach programs, training agreements with universities, a pilot project with the military, and consortium agreements with local employers.

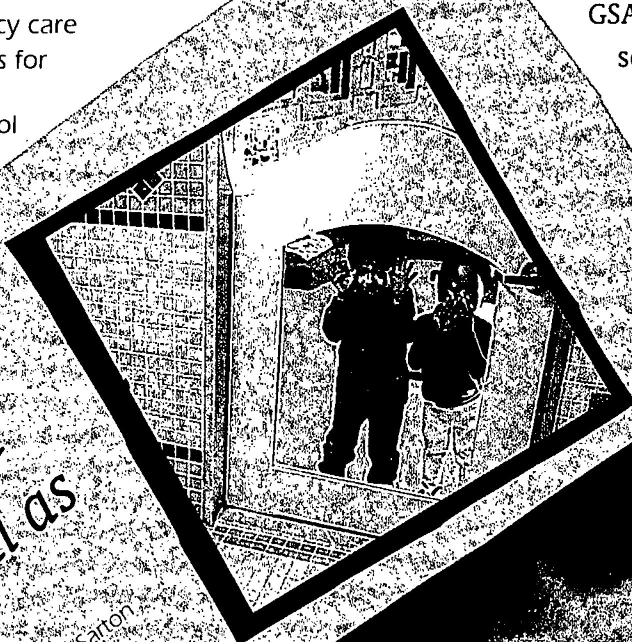
Reflecting Diverse Local Needs

PROGRAMS

Of the 112 centers operating nationally:

- 91% provide infant care
- 23% provide kindergarten (state-approved) programs
- 67% provide drop-in/emergency care
- 30% provide summer programs for school-age children
- 16% provide before/after school programs

Each community establishes priorities for its center within the quality guidelines set by GSA. As a result, GSA's Child Care Program serves a rich geographic and demographic diversity of Federal families.



"Childhood is a place as well as a time." —Mary Sarton

OPERATING HOURS

- 89% of the centers are open 11 or more hours per day
- Open hours range from 10-13 hours per day

ENROLLMENT FIGURES

Total National Enrollment . . 7,646

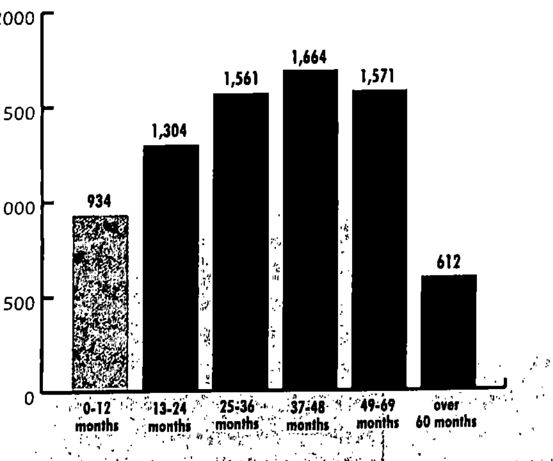
Full-time Enrollment . . . 6,410

Part-time Enrollment . . . 1,236

Enrollment from Federal families . . . 4,281

Enrollment from Non-Federal families . . . 3,365

AGE GROUP OF CHILDREN IN CENTERS



Providing Quality, Accredited Care

All centers operating in GSA managed space are required to achieve accreditation from the Academy of Early Childhood Programs, a division of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Health and safety, staffing, staff qualifications, physical environment and administration are all reviewed during accreditation 67% of eligible centers currently are accredited.

STAFFING LEVELS AND EXPERIENCE

- Centers employ 1,597 full-time staff and 384 part-time staff (caregivers, administrators and support staff)
- 71% of Directors have 10 or more years experience in early childhood education
- Average tenure for directors in a center is 3 years

STAFF SALARIES

	RANGE	AVERAGE
Director	$18,684-$57,482	$32,210
Highest paid teacher salaries	$13,711-$54,080	$23,947
Entry-level teacher (with degree)	$12,293-$31,366	$18,405

STAFF BENEFITS

99% of centers provide paid vacation, 83% provide paid sick leave, and 99% offer health insurance. 84 centers contribute 50% or more of the employee's premium. 61% of centers offer a retirement plan.

STAFF TURNOVER

- Average number who left centers in the 12-month period: 8
- Average annual turnover rate: 48%
- Average turnover rate for full-time teaching staff: 33%

OFFERING MARKET-DRIVEN, FEE-BASED CARE

Cost of care in GSA Child Care Centers is determined locally. Tuition rates vary according to geographical location, services offered, number of operating hours, size of center and other criteria. Federal agencies do not subsidize operating costs. Instead, parent fees are assessed.

TUITION DATA

AVERAGE TUITION PER WEEK:

	Federal	Non-Federal	Tuition Ranges:
Infants	$152	161	$77-240
Toddlers	$145	151	$77-240
2's	$129	134	$65-224
Pre-school	$116	121	$65-191
Kindergarten	$110	114	$45-180

TUITION ASSISTANCE

Because the cost of high quality care is not affordable for many families—even when the government provides space and equipment—tuition assistance is critical.

- 100% of the centers offer a tuition assistance program
- 1,840 families received some form of tuition assistance at some time between October 1997 and September 1998.
- Centers reported a total of $1,395,662 was distributed from a variety of sources—$323,082 from Combined Federal Campaign/United Way contributions and the balance primarily from state funds, recycle funds or fundraising events run by the boards of directors.
- 70% of the Centers received Combined Federal Campaign and/or United Way contributions
- Grant money, used for training and special programs to enhance quality, also directly or indirectly affected the cost of care for parents.
- 23 centers received non-Federal grants
- 31 centers participated in the USDA Food Program

Future Directions

The GSA network of child care professionals remains committed to addressing the staffing, quality, and affordability challenges. GSA centers will strive to continue providing accessible, high-quality early care and education programs on behalf of Federal families.

"Children's faces looking up holding wonder like a cup"

—Sara Teasdale

U.S. General Services Administration
Child Care Operations Center of Expertise
26 Federal Plaza, Room 1709
New York, NY 10278
(212) 264-8321

http://www.gsa.gov/pbs/centers/child/

Data Sources

Surveys were distributed to each center in GSA space in October 1998. The information provided by centers was in terms of their status as of October 15, 1998. Completion of the survey typically involves the center director, the provider and the board of directors.

The results of these surveys provide GSA and its client agencies with an updated analysis of center operations. The results are also used for legislative briefings and to provide policy makers with accurate information about GSA's Child Care Program.

U.S. General Services Administration

Public Buildings Service
Child Care Operations
Center of Expertise

DRAFT -- NOT FOR RELEASE

September 25, 2000
(House)

H.R. 4519 - Baylee's Law
(Rep. Franks (R) New Jersey)

The Administration supports House passage of H.R. 4519, but strongly urges that it be amended to apply to all childcare centers in Federal space regardless of who controls the space (other than Department of Defense centers, because the Department of Defense has independent authority to operate its own child care centers, most of which are located on secured military installations). The Administration looks forward to working with the Congress on this and other concerns as this bill moves through the legislative process.

* * * * * * *

(Do Not Distribute Outside Executive Office of the President)

This Statement of Administration Policy was developed by the Legislative Reference Division (Gonzalez) in consultation with the Departments of Transportation (Holmstrup), Veteran's Affairs (Thompson), Defense (Brick), Energy (Rabben), and Justice (Taylor); GSA (Sims), NASA (Stehmer), and Smithsonian Institution (Payne); and TCJS (Haas), BASD (Balis), OMB/GC (Aitken), and GGF (Deich).

OMB/LA Clearance: Michael Deich

Commerce, HHS, Agriculture, and EPA did not respond to our request for views.

On September 19, 2000, the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee reported the bill without amendment (H.Rept. 106-869, I), and the bill was placed on the Union Calendar.

Summary of H.R. 4519

H.R. 4519 would require the General Services Administration to: (1) notify parents in a childcare center under the control of GSA of the identity of the current tenants and the designation of the level of security of the building; (2) notify parents in writing of any " serious threat" to that building which could affect the safety and security of children enrolled in the center; and (3) submit a comprehensive report to Congress within one year of enactment providing an identification and description of each childcare center, an assessment of the level of safety and security of that center, and an assessment of the windows and furnishings of the center to determine whether adequate protective measures have been implemented to protect children from natural disasters or terrorist attacks.

Administration Position to Date

The Administration has not previously taken a position on this bill.

Pay-As-You-Go Scoring

According to BASD (Balis), H.R. 4519 would not affect direct spending and receipts; therefore, it is not subject to the pay-as-you-go (PAYGO) requirement of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990.

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE DIVISION
September 25, 2000 - 6:00 p.m.

CHARTER

INTERAGENCY CHILD CARE COUNCIL

1. Official designation: The name of this council is the Interagency Federal Child Care Council (IFCCC).

2. Background: Federal agencies, through statutory authority contained in 490b, 40 USC, have established more than 230 (non-Department of Defense (DoD)) child care centers in Federal facilities. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has asked the General Services Administration (GSA) to provide leadership among Federal agencies to address Federally sponsored child care quality, affordability, accessibility, and other topics of interest, and to publish guidance, best practices, and relevant policy. The establishment of an Interagency Federal Child Care Council will provide a forum for executive, legislative, and judicial branch agencies to collaborate in discussing and recommending governmentwide child care policy and guidance.

3. Functions: The functions of the Council include, but are not limited to:

a. Facilitate the exchange of information, and develop practical, professional governmentwide standards that preserve and protect the health, safety and welfare of children in child care centers in Federal facilities.

b. Make recommendations for new or improved legislation governing child care in Federal facilities.

c. Evaluate and determine what aspects of child care in Federal facilities need to be addressed in governmentwide policy, guidance, and regulations.

d. Recommend revisions and updated measures of compliance for health, safety and facility standards in child care regulations.

e. Promote and improve the affordability, accessibility, and quality of child care services provided by or through Federal agencies and organizations.

f. Establish strategies and goals for the work of the council, and provide working/task groups as needed.

4. Structure:

a. The Council consists of executive level senior leadership officials representing the child care program interests of their agency.

b. The Council has a working group consisting of a designated representative from each member agency. The representative should have substantial experience or knowledge of child care in the agency they represent.

5. Membership:

a.. The council is composed of a senior representative from the legislative and judicial branches, and each of the following departments and agencies:

- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Commerce
- Department of Defense
- Department of Education
- Department of Energy
- Department of Labor
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Department of Health and Human Services
- General Services Administration
- Department of Interior
- Department of Justice
- NARA
- NASA
- National Science Foundation
- Office of Personnel Management
- Social Security Administration
- Department of State
- Smithsonian
- Department of Transportation
- Department of Treasury
- Department of Veterans Affairs

b. The Chairperson may invite additional representatives as deemed appropriate.

6. Support services: The Chairperson of the council is the GSA Associate Administrator for Management and Workplace Programs. The chairperson may appoint a vice chairperson. The GSA General Counsel will designate a legal advisor for the Council. The GSA Office of Real Property, Office of Governmentwide Policy will provide administrative support. The chairperson may establish subcommittees and interagency working groups as required to accomplish its functions.

7. Meetings:

a. Council meetings are to be held annually, or as appropriate, as determined by the chairperson.

b. Working group meetings are to be held as required, but at least semi-annually

8. Records and reports: The supporting administrative staff maintains the necessary records. The Chairperson prepares any reports necessary to accomplish the Council's objectives and to keep agency officials advised. The reports are exempt from the reports control program.

CHILD CARE CENTER
FIRE/SAFETY INSPECTION SHEET

NAME OF CENTER:______________________________

NUMBER OF CHILDREN ON DAY OF INSPECTION______________

ITEM	YES	NO	N/A
In the child care center are corridors,aisles, passageways and doors which lead to the exits clear and unobstructed?			
Are the exit doors from the child care Center in good working condition?			
Are the child care center's exit discharges (e.g. building lobby, side walks etc.) clear and unobstructed?			
Are exit signs within the child care center properly located?			
Are the exit signs within the child care center unobstructed?			
In the child care center are corridors, aisles and passageways which lead to the exits illuminated?			
Are the exit signs within the center illuminated?			
Are the portable fire extinguishers accessible?			
Have the portable fire extinguishers been properly maintained and inspected?			
Are instructions posted on the manual operation of fire protection systems for kitchen equipment?			
Is the child care center's evacuation plan available and up to date?			
Are the evacuation procedures posted within each child care activity room?			
Are fire drills conducted monthly?			
Is documentation on file within the center for each monthly fire drill?			
Is the child care staff properly trained in the evacuation procedure?			
Is the fire alarm system tested routinely?			
Are the fire alarm pull stations within/near the child care center accessible?			
Are the sprinkler heads clean, unpainted and unobstructed?			
Do the sprinkler heads have adequate clearance (18 inches)?			
Are the sprinkler components (e.g. inspectors test, sprinkler valves, etc.) properly identified?			
Is the sprinkler system inspected and tested routinely?			
Are the entrance doors to mechanical, equipment, and hazardous areas inside the child care center properly labeled?			
Are the electrical outlets showing signs of arching or disrepair?			
Are electrical outlet cover plates in place?			
Have the unused electrical outlets been provided with shock stops safety plugs?			
Have operable windows been protected to prevent climbing?			
If screened, have the screens been secured?			
Are cords on window coverings (blinds/curtains) either not looped or held with secure tie down devices?			
Noticeable odors are not prevalent within the center?			
Noticeable tripping hazards are not within the center?			
Unauthorized personal electrical appliances are not within the center?			
Portable electrical fans/space heaters are not in the center?			
Extension cords and power strips are not being used within the center?			
Are all electrical outlets child proofed?			

ITEM	YES	NO	N/A
Is the emergency lighting in the corridors, aisles and passageways in good working condition?			
Are supplies within the center properly stored (bleach bottles)?			
Are two first aid kits available within the center?			
Are two first aid kits properly stocked with first aid supplies?			
Are security measures used properly? (doors locked)			
Are storage areas neatly maintained?			
Is the government provided equipment clean and in good repair?			
Are there mats under indoor climbing equipment?			
Does water temperature not exceed 110 degrees in children's areas?			
Are there are any sharp edges on building fixtures or equipment?			
Are there any exposed nails, bolts, screws or pipes?			
Are there any missing handles, or pieces?			

OUTSIDE PLAY AREA

ITEM	YES	NO	N/A
Play area surrounded by secured fence?			
Fence in good condition?			
Outside area clean and well landscaped?			
Play area free of glass, needles, garbage?			
Play area free of trip hazards?			
Play area free of exposed concrete or brick edges?			
Play area free of poor drainage areas?			
Play area free of pests, (bees, ants, rodents)?			
Is climbing equipment & (swings) anchored properly?			
Is there exposed or loose anchoring?			
Is the fall zone adequate and/or in good repair?*			
Are there any exposed nails, bolts, screws, pipes?			
Is the wood in good condition?			
Are there any areas of head or body entrapment (spaces >3.5"or <9")?**			
Are any pieces, rungs, handles missing?			
Are there any sharp edges?			
Is the storage shed in good repair?			

* Surfaces under play equipment in a 6' radius must have a fall zone of protective surface. Loose materials must be maintained at a depth of 9-12 inches depending on the material and height of the equipment.

**Entrapment areas are fully explained in the CPSC Handbook for Public Playground Safety page 33.

Summary of findings:

If findings were made by what date should each finding be corrected?

BUILDING MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATIVE:______________________________

DATE OF INSPECTION :______________________________

U.S. GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

CHILD CARE OPERATIONS CENTER OF EXPERTISE

HEALTH AND SAFETY PRACTICES ASSESSMENT
FOR
CHILD CARE CENTERS

Instructions and Guidance

Regional Child Care Coordinator:

______________________________ ______________

name **phone number**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDANCE FOR CONDUCTING THE GSA ASSESSMENT OF HEALTH AND SAFETY PRACTICES

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) has responsibility for the establishment and oversight of child care centers located in GSA space according to Public Law #102-393. The primary mission of the child care program is to ensure quality child care for the young children of Federal families in these centers. One of the mechanisms for doing so is the biennial assessment of the center's health/safety practices and policies.

The current tool for GSA Health and Safety Practices Assessment (hereafter referred to as Health Assessment) is based primarily on several sources: standards described in Maternal and Child Health Bureau's *National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs*, originally published by American Public Health Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics (1992); recommendations from the *Handbook for Public Playground Safety (draft)* undergoing revision May, 1997, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission; and criteria for accreditation in *Accreditation Criteria & Procedures* (1992) from the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs (NAECP), a division of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. The NAECP criteria, in many instances, reflect topics of the other two. The instructions and guidelines for the Health Assessment were prepared by GSA's Child Care Operations Center of Expertise.

This Health Assessment focuses almost exclusively on health and safety practices and policies but excludes, with only a few exceptions, references to those already covered in the GSA Program Review. The Program Review is another oversight mechanism. Through eliminating overlap and opting for only a representative sampling of critical health and safety propositions instead of the total domain, a shorter assessment instrument than the original which was implemented in 1995 has evolved.

The intent of the current version is the same as that of the original. The Health Assessment is meant to be an educational tool. GSA's continuing goal is to assist the center director and staff in striving for the best practices in child care health and safety. The assessment is to be conducted by a health consultant, knowledgeable in the topics covered, who will provide feedback to the director when the assessment is completed and who will conduct training for staff (e.g., bloodborne pathogens). The assessment, feedback, and training should take approximately 8 hours and be completed in one site visit. After the site visit, the consultant is to prepare a 2-page (*maximum*) summary of his/her findings and recommendations for improvement.

To facilitate the progress and productivity of the site visit, the GSA Regional Child Care Coordinator will send a copy of the Health Assessment to the center director at least a week ahead of the scheduled visit and the health consultant should familiarize her-/himself with the checklist items and the guidance for each prior to the visit.

Specific Guidance and the Checklist

on

HEALTH

Mark the individual items using C for Compliance, P for Partial Compliance, N for Noncompliance, N/A for Not Applicable, and N/O for Not Observed.

Symbols: ++ item is used to observe in all classrooms or at least more than one area, *e.g., toileting area*
** item requires examination of one or more documents

Policy and Records

____ ****1. The health record for each paid staff member who works (full- or part-time) directly with children is on file at the center. The record shows each has had (a) a physical exam by a health care provider within three months prior to hire or within one month of employment and (b) proof of a tuberculosis (TB) screening within the past 1 to 2 years.**

Guidance: Code as P if only (a) or (b) is on file.

Comment: ____

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____ ****2. The child's health record/file includes results of (a) a recent health examination and (b) of an up-to-date record of age-appropriate immunizations.**

Guidance: Both (a) and (b) need to be in file to code as C. The "recency" of a health examination may be judged in terms of the regular health evaluations recommended by American Academy of Pediatrics: every 6 months for children under 2, every year for children 2 to 6, and every 2 years for school age children. (As recommendations change over the years, be sure to consider the current recommendations, which may be slightly different from the ones stated here.)

Comment: ____

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____ ****3. A written policy for exclusion of staff member or child on the basis of health is on file at the center. The policy has at least 3 components: statements about**

(a) exclusion for specific communicable diseases, a physical condition, or injury which requires professional medical attention;

(b) exclusion for the duration of possible exposure if an outbreak of vaccine-preventable disease; and

(c) requirements for re-admission to the center.

(Guidance for 3. on next page)

Guidance: If only one of the alphabetized items are evident, the item can be coded as P.

For (a), obvious examples of communicable diseases - purulent conjunctivitis, scabies, measles. Examples of a physical condition - severe diarrhea, axillary temperature in excess of 100.5 degrees F or 101, depending on the child's age (check current recommendations). Example of a physical injury - child in a cast which precludes mobility and, therefore, participation in daily activities.

For (b), obvious examples of vaccine-preventable diseases - polio, diphtheria, Hepatitis B.

For (c), return requirements vary depending on the condition/disease. The health consultant must be familiar with periods of contagion for given diseases, recommended treatment periods, physical evidence of recovery (e.g., impetigo lesions not draining), etc. to judge if the center's readmission policy is written adequately enough for parents and center personnel to anticipate return of the child to care.

Comment: ____

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____ ****4. According to the center's written policy,**

(a) the parents must notify the center within 24 hours after their child develops a known or suspected communicable disease.

(b) The center, in turn, must notify the state/local public health authorities of the known or suspected communicable disease, if required by their regulations, and

(c) the center must notify parents of enrolled children who may have been exposed to the known or suspected communicable illness.

Guidance: The policy must have all three of the above for a code of C except when (b) is not required by the authorities. If the latter is true, then only statements regarding (a) and (c) are needed for a C. If at least one of the components of the policy is in evidence, code as P.

Comment: ____

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____ ****5. The center's written policy on a child's oral or topical medication (prescription or nonprescription) either**

(a) precludes administration by center personnel but allows it to be given by a parent on center premises or

(b) allows administration by center personnel but only when a written request by the parent to do this is on file at the center or, if not, is submitted with the medication.

Guidance: Either the essence of (a) or (b) must be conveyed in the written policy. Note that both (a) and (b) cover nonprescription as well as prescription medication.

Comment: ____

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____ **6. According to the written policy on child's oral or topical medication, whether administered by the parent/guardian or center personnel,

(a) nonprescription medicine is accompanied by instructions for its administration signed and dated by a health care provider; and

(b) prescription medicine is given according to instructions of the health care provider's instructions on the dated prescription label.

Guidance: If administration of medication is not allowed in the center, code the item as N/A.

Comment: ____

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____ **7. According to written policy, accidents which occur on site and individual illness which is detected on site are reported to parents; a written record is kept of such incidents.

Guidance: The record need not be in a specific format but should convey enough information that events can be recalled properly at a later time.

Comment: ____

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____ **8. Each child's record/file includes a signed and dated consent by the parent allowing staff to act on the parent's behalf for emergency treatment when an immediate response is required and the parent or designee cannot reach the center fast enough to take the child for treatment.

Guidance: Emergency procedures to which the parent is agreeing include, at the least: (a) first aid, (b) CPR, and (c) emergency transportation to a local health care facility. To code as C, all three elements should be conveyed.

Comment: ____

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____ **9. The child's record/file includes signed and dated written authorization by a parent for staff to release the child to other designated persons. Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of persons authorized to pickup the child are included in the authorization information.

Guidance: The above is the minimal acceptable detail for coding as C. Code as P if names, addresses, or phone numbers are missing for one or more of the designated persons.

Comment: ____

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____ **10. The center has a separate room or designated area within a room for the care of a child who needs to be separated from the group due to injury or illness until the parent can remove the child from the center.**

Guidance: Ask to see the area(s). The health consultant should make a judgment regarding the adequacy of the room/area. A code of C depends on adequacy in addition to availability.

Comment: ____

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Hygiene, Supplies, and Sanitizing

____ **++11. Caregivers wash their hands**

- ____ **a. upon arrival at the center;**
- ____ **b. whenever hands are contaminated with body fluids (saliva, tissue fluid, fluid from a skin sore, and blood-containing body fluids);**
- ____ **c. before food preparation or handling and serving;**
- ____ **d. before and after eating meals and snacks;**
- ____ **e. after wiping noses;**
- ____ **f. after changing diapers; and**
- ____ **g. after assisting a child with toilet use.**

Guidance: Please code each one of the alphabetized statements above. The overall item will be coded at GSA's National Office based on the individual codes.

Some handwashing "musts" are not listed above because it would be awkward to observe them (e.g., following caregivers into restrooms to observe if they wash their hands after toileting). Since handwashing should be pervasive, however, a sampling of it or omission of it should be possible for the circumstances listed above. If the circumstances of 11a. do not occur in any of the rooms on the day of the site visit, mark N/O. If the center has no children 0 to 3 years old, mark 11f. and 11g. as N/A.

Comment: ____

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____ **++12. Children wash their hands (or are assisted in washing their hands)**
(a) before and after eating meals and snacks and
(b) after toilet use or after diaper changing.

Guidance: Code as P if (a) or (b) is missing. Handwashing or the lack of it should be possible to observe for the circumstances listed above. Regarding 12b., after changing a child's diaper, the caregiver should clean the infant's or toddler's hands thoroughly. This counts as assisted handwashing. Clearly, there are other circumstances for which handwashing is desirable. The above, however, will go a long way toward keep the child healthy and establishing the critical handwashing habit.

(Comment section for 12. on next page)

Comment: ____

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____

____ 13. Adequate first-aid supplies are available but stored out of children's reach.

Guidance: Necessary first-aid supplies include, at the minimum: disposable nonporous gloves; sterile gauze; adhesive tape; bandage tape, bandages, safety pins, eye dressing, syrup of ipecac, insect sting preparation, cotton; medicated soap; tweezers; scissors, thermometer, antiseptic wipes, water, cold pack, poison control center phone number, first aid text, coins for pay phone or cellular phone, pen/pencil, note pad, and ice pack. The health consultant may choose to accept substitute supplies if serving the same functions as the named items. If all of the named items or their acceptable substitutes are not available, code as P. The supplies may be stored in one or more places; simply be sure that the storage place is not accessible to the children.

Comment: ____

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____ ++14. Toilet rooms, flush toilets, toilet training equipment, and handwashing sinks are cleaned and sanitized at least daily and when soiled.

Guidance: Examine all the toileting areas. To be sure the sanitizing does go on, ask the center director about the cleaning contract if you do not observe regularly scheduled cleaning. Most of the regular daily cleaning is done in the evening after the children leave.

Comment: ____

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____ ++15. A new bleach solution is made each day and placed in several locations (out of the children's reach) to foster frequent use as a disinfectant.

Guidance: A solution of 1/4 cup of household liquid chlorine bleach added to 1 gallon of tap water is usually the preferred disinfectant in the child care environment but the health consultant may choose to accept a product registered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as "disinfectants."

Comment: ____

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____ ++16. Indoor environmental surfaces associated with children's activities, such as table tops, are cleaned and disinfected daily.

Guidance: Examine the surfaces in each of the classrooms. Most of the cleaning is done in the evening after the children leave. Caregivers will be doing the clean-ups when table tops are soiled before these are used for the next activity.

(Comment section for 16. on page 15)

Comment: ____

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____ ++17. Toys, thermometers, and pacifiers placed in children's mouths or contaminated otherwise are set aside and cleaned with water and detergent, disinfected, and rinsed before handling by another child. Machine-washable toys are machine-washed when contaminated.

Guidance: Observe in each relevant classroom to notice if "contaminated" toys, etc. are set aside. Ask the director or the caregivers about such procedures and about the "washing" if you do not observe instances of them while visiting.

Comment: ____

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____

____ ++18. Cots/beds/mats/cribs (if used) are assigned to each child and are not shared. This equipment is cleaned on a regular basis and is disinfected prior to being assigned to another child for use.

Guidance: If the assignments to children are not easily observable by the visitor, the health consultant should ask for caregiver assistance to determine how the child or caregiver knows which equipment is assigned to which child. Ask also about the disinfectant procedure or ask to see a policy/procedural statement in an operations manual or other center handbook.

Comment: ____

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____ ++19. The individual bedding (e.g., sheets, pillowcases, and blankets) are cleaned and sanitized for (a) infants on a daily basis, and for (b) toddlers and preschoolers on a weekly basis, and when soiled or wet.

Guidance: Ask about the schedule or ask to see a policy/procedural statement about it in an operations manual or other center handbook. If the center has no washer and dryer, ask about a laundry contract to handle linens. If the center is using other alternatives to launder, the health consultant must judge if these meet "the daily, weekly, or when soiled schedules".

Comment: ____

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____.++20. Cots, cribs and mats are placed at least 3 feet apart.

Guidance: If this spacing is not physically possible, head to foot sleeping is employed and aisles are maintained on one side of each cot/mat/crib for evacuation purposes.

(Comment section for 20. on next page)

Comment: ____
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_____ **++21. Floors are vacuumed/swept and mopped with a sanitizing solution at least daily and when soiled.**

Guidance: Examine the floors during the visit. Most of the regular daily cleaning is done in the evening after the children leave.
Comment: ____
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____ **++22. Carpet areas**
(a) are vacuumed daily and spot cleaned as needed.
(b) have been shampooed within the last three months.

Guidance: Examine all of the carpeted areas to ensure that the carpet is clean. Most of the regular cleaning is done in the evenings and carpets are required to be spot cleaned when needed. Caregivers will be doing the clean up when the floors are dirty before moving to the next activity.

Comment: ____
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Food-Related Propositions

____ **++23. Children attending the center for at least 8 hours are offered at least one meal and two supplements (snacks) or two meals and one supplement. For those attending 9 or more hours, at least two meals and two supplements or one meal and three supplements are offered.**

Guidance: Code this item on the basis of the child having the opportunity for all these intakes, not necessarily consuming the food offered. The source for the food (center kitchen, catering, home) is not the point here. If the health consultant can't observe all these intakes, check the menus/activity schedules to determine whether they occur.

Comment: ____
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____ **24. No skim or low fat milk is given to a child 0 to 24 months of age unless prescribed by the child's health care provider.**

Guidance: Children in this age range may be in at least two different rooms in some centers. Written policy may be the easiest route to verify this practice but observation may also be possible through noting the labeling on the milk stored for the age group.
(Comment section for 24. on page 17)

Comment: ____

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____

____ ++25. All meals and snacks eaten in the center (whether prepared in the center, by caterers, or at home) must meet the child's nutritional requirements as recommended by the United States Department of Agriculture Child Care Food Program.

Guidance: If the health consultant doesn't have the opportunity to observe all these intakes, examine posted daily menus as a way of determining whether catered or center-prepared food meets the requirements. If all meals or snacks are brought from home at a given center, ask the director if these are observed by center personnel in some way for nutritional requirements. If the answer is no, then this item cannot be coded as C, but will be coded as P or N depending on the director's comments. (If center personnel have no knowledge of what the children are eating when food is brought from home, then there is no basis for assuming nutritional requirements are met and the item is coded N.)

Comment: ____

____

____

____ ++26. Children are offered drinking water after meals or snacks when teeth cleaning is not possible. If teeth cleaning is possible, children are allowed time for that activity after meals or snacks.

Guidance: Try to observe at least two intakes (e.g., a snack and lunch) as the basis for coding.

Comment: ____

____

____

____ ++27. Food that is not consumed is discarded after each meal/snack.

Guidance: Try to observe at least two intakes by children (and infants, if any) as the basis for coding. (A similar item is not included in the separate infant checklist. If infants attend the center, the spirit of the item applies. That is, contents remaining in the bottle after an infant feeding are discarded.)

Comment: ____

____

____

___ ++28. Staff who have signs or symptoms of illness, including vomiting, diarrhea, and infectious skin sores (or open injuries on hands) that cannot be covered are not involved in food handling in any way.

(Guidance section for 28. on page 18)

Guidance: The item can be coded as C if the health consultant observes no individuals involved in food handling who manifest the above problems. Food handlers in the kitchen and in each of the rooms should be observed if possible. If only food from home is eaten at the center, caregivers who assist children during a meal or snack, whether pouring a drink or handling their food (unwrapping sandwiches, etc.) should be observed for the above problems.

Comment: ____

____

____

____ ++29. Food preparation areas are separated from areas used by the children for activities unrelated to food(diaper stations, toilet rooms and hand washing sinks) by a door, gate, counter, or room divider.

Comment:____

____

____

____++ 30. Refrigerators are maintained at temperatures of 40 degrees F or less in all parts of food storage areas and freezers are maintained at temperatures of 0 degrees F or less.

Guidance: Please be sure to check refrigerators in individual classrooms if so located.

Comment: ____

____

____

____ 31. The center properly washes and disinfects pots, pans, dishes and tableware by one of the following methods:

(a) has a 3-compartment sink to wash, rinse, and disinfect; or

(b) has an approved dishwashing machine capable of disinfecting multiuse utensils; or

(c) in the absence of (a) or (b) uses paper cups and plates and plastic tableware.

Guidance: In the comment section, please cite which alternative is in place for compliance. If another system is in place which provides equivalency in the health consultant's professional opinion, code as C and describe it in the comment section.

Comment: ____

____

____

Specific Guidance and the Checklist
on
STAFF TRAINING

Mark the individual items using C for Compliance, P for Partial Compliance, N for Noncompliance, N/A for Not Applicable, and N/O for Not Observed.

Symbols: ++ item is used to observe in all classrooms or at least more than one area in the center.
** item requires examination of one or more documents

____ **1. Each new staff member receives orientation training before being placed with the children.

Guidance: In the real world, covering many topics prior to placement with children is not always possible; instead, topics are scheduled over time. There should be evidence, however, of at least the following orientation trainings as they concern health/safety before placement with children:

(a) positive discipline procedures;
(b) emergency evacuation from the room to which the staff member is being initially assigned; and
(c) policies relating to interacting with the parent.

Some of the topics named can be assimilated through reading sections of the staff handbook or operations manual. If at least one of the named topics is part of orientation, code as P.

Other training, as mentioned in other checklist items concerning health and safety, should take place as soon as feasible.

Comment: ____
____
____

____ **2. Within 30 days to 60 days of hire, on-site center administrators and staff have training to recognize common indicators of child abuse (physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and neglect), to prevent child abuse, and to report suspicions of it.

Guidance: This is one of the few topics which is also included on the Program Review. Because there is staff turnover and knowledge in this area is critical, assessing the status yearly is not excessive.

In coding this item, consider both the fact of training and the timeliness. The 60 days is the outside limit of "timeliness;" high quality child care systems allow only 30. If records show only some of the personnel have received timely training or show training for all took place more than 60 days beyond their hiring dates, code P.

Comment: ____
____
____

____ **3. All staff involved in the provision of direct care have received training within 60 days of hire in pediatric first aid including, at the least,
(a) rescue breathing, (b) choking, (c) treatment of insect bites, and
(d) management of head injuries and of bleeding.

(Guidance and comment for item 3. on page 20)

Guidance: The training should be consistent with that included in pediatric first aid training developed by the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, or the National Safety Council for First Aid Training Institute, or the equivalent of one of the three. If all staff do not have the indicated training but some do or the on-site administrator/center director does, code as P. If all staff /administrators are trained in only some of the indicated topics, code as P.

Comment: ____

____

____

____ **4. All administrators and staff are trained to take and read axillary temperature.

Guidance: Code as P if all are not.

Comment: ____

____

____

____ **5. All staff receive training about bloodborne pathogens and universal precautions.

Guidance: Some state-specific OSHA regulations may be more rigorous than federal regulations. Only the latter are the focus of this Health Review.

Training should cover an explanation of transmissibility of HIV and HBV; an explanation of the universal precautions (universal infection control measures) and the types of tasks likely to result in exposure; description of the exposure reporting procedure; and information on the hepatitis B vaccine. OSHA requires a written record of attendance at training.

Comment: ____

____

____

____ **6. The administrators and staff receive training in use of fire extinguishers.

Comment: ____

____

____

____ **7. All administrators and staff receive training and practice in evacuation procedures through drills held at least once per month when children are present.

Guidance: Routes, destinations, and some procedures may vary depending upon the assumed reason (e.g., fire, bomb threat, tornado, earthquake etc.), but there should be evidence of monthly drills which practice full evacuation and its attendant procedures (e.g., accountability for children).

The records of evacuation drills is on file in the Directors office in the center. Code this item N/O if you have not seen the written records.

(Comment for item 7. on page 21)

Comment: ____
____
____

____ ****8. All staff have their own copy or access to a copy of**

(a) the center's exclusionary policy as it regards the ill health of staff member or child;

(b) the center's written policy on administration of a child's oral or topical medication; and

(c) the center's policy about releasing the child to other than the custodial parent.

Guidance: See staff manual for evidence of the policy. If the center cannot afford to give all staff copies of the foregoing materials, there should be some evidence (e.g., signed list for each document) that each staff member has read the relevant material.

Comment: ____
____
____

____ ****9. Directors and all caregivers should have the following clock hours of continuing education concerning child health/safety and staff health:**

(a) 14 hours in the first year of employment and

(b) 8 hours in each subsequent year.

Guidance: Training can derive from a mix of sources: formal education classes, conferences (e.g., NAEYC, GSA), staff meetings, etc. Check staff files for documentation of training. Training in all the topics named in the eight preceding checklist items count toward the specified hours of continuing education.

Comment: ____
____
____

____ **10. The center has access to a health consultant, who is a physician, certified pediatric or family nurse practitioner, registered nurse with pediatric experience, and shall be knowledgeable about out of home child care, community child care licensing requirements and available health resources.**

Comment: ____
____
____

Specific Guidance and the Checklist
on
SAFETY

Mark the individual items using C for Compliance, P for Partial Compliance, N for Noncompliance, N/A for Not Applicable, and N/O for Not Observed.

Symbols: ++ item is used to observe in all classrooms or in more than one area of the center or playground

** item requires examination of one or more documents

Indoors

____ ++1. Each area in the facility can be viewed at any time by at least one adult in addition to the caregiver.

Guidance: Given that visual accessibility is meant to reduce the likelihood of isolation of individual caregivers with children, the health consultant should judge arrangements accordingly. Large windows in doors (including those of administration offices in the center), windows in the walls between hallways and activity rooms, and various other layouts can provide good visual access. Some arrangements of toy shelves and children's cubbies, however, may block the line of sights that such windows provide so, please be alert to such potential problems for visual accessibility.

Comment: ____

____

____

____ ++2. No lock or fastening device prevents free escape from the interior of any room in the center.

Comment: ____

____

____

#____ ++3. The facility shall have a written plan for reporting and evacuating in case of fire, flood, tornado, earthquake, hurricane, blizzard, power failure, or other disaster that could create structural damages to the facility or pose health hazards. The facility shall also include procedures for staff training on this emergency plan. Emergency evacuation routes are posted in each room of the center.

Comment: ____

____

____

____ **++ 4. Passageways, hallways, and exits are free from obstacles that might cause injury or impede evacuation.**

Guidance: Obstacles within a room that may impede exiting the room directly to the outside or to a passageway/hallway that leads to the outside are equally problematic.

Comment: ____

____

____

____ **++5. Fire extinguishers are accessible to center personnel and periodically inspected.**

Guidance: The health consultant can check accessibility and, while doing so, check the inspection tags attached to the extinguishers for dates of inspection.

Comment: ____

____

____

____ **++6. Strings and cords (e.g., those that are parts of toys, or those that are found on window shades that are long enough to encircle a child's neck (6 inches or more) shall not be accessible to the children.**

Comment: ____

____

____

____ **++7. No unauthorized electrical appliances are present in the classrooms.**

Guidance: Examples of such appliances are space heaters, popcorn poppers, coffee pots and fans.

Comment: ____

____

____

____ **++8. Electrical outlets accessible to children are covered with child-resistant covers or pediatric outlets.**

Comment: ____

____

____

____ **++9. Electrical cords are placed out of the children's reach. Extension cords are not in use.**

Comment: ____

____

____

____ **++10. Medications are inaccessible to children.**

Comment: ____

____

____

____ **++11. Poisonous and toxic materials are inaccessible to children and stored separately from medications and areas involving food storage, preparation, and eating.**

Guidance: Examples of poisonous/toxic materials are cleaning materials such as cleansers, detergents, pesticides, and poisonous plants. All such materials should be stored in their original containers to facilitate identification.

Comment: ____

____

____

____ **++12. Plastic bags are stored out of children's reach.**

Comment: ____

____

____

____ **++13. No projectile toys, toys or objects with diameter of less than 1.25 inch, or toys with sharp points/edges are present.**

Comment: ____

____

____

____ **++14. No protrusions or pinch/crush/sharp points are on or underneath children's furniture or indoor play equipment.**

Comment: ____

____

____

____ **++15 Every toilet door used by preschool children is easily opened from the outside.**

Comment: ____
____
____

____ **++16. Bathrooms for toddlers and preschool children have child-sized toilets.**

Comment: ____
____
____

____ **++17. The water temperature for handwashing sinks is set no higher than 120 degrees F.**

Guidance: If water is not heated centrally, the heaters at the individual sinks should be checked.

Comment: ____
____
____

OUTDOORS

____ **++18. Playground surfaces and walkways are checked daily for trash, broken glass, loose objects, holes, and sudden irregularities.**

Guidance: Daily checking is the focus here. It doesn't matter whether it is done by center personnel or building/grounds personnel or some one else. However, if the property is not under the oversight of GSA, before children are allowed to use the playground, child care center personnel must take responsibility for clearing trash, etc., keeping children away from faulty equipment, holes, etc. and subsequently reporting problems for correction.

Comment: ____
____
____

____ **++19. Playground equipment does not have**

a. missing or damaged parts/pieces;
b. exposed footings;
c. splintered, cracked, or otherwise deteriorating wood; or
d. rusting and/or deformed parts/pieces.

Guidance: If one or two of the above is present, code P; if more, code N.

Comment: ____

____

____

___ **++20. No protrusions or pinch/crush/sharp points are on or underneath children's outdoor play equipment.**

Guidance: The presence of any one instance of the named problems could cause serious injury to a child. Therefore, if one is present, code as P; if more, code as N. The safety hazard should be called to the attention of the center director.

Comment: ____

____

____

____ **++21. No component (or group of components) of the playground equipment has openings that could trap a child's head.**

Guidance: Generally, an opening should either be too small for the child's head to fit into or too large for the head to get stuck. Roughly, that translates to openings being less than 3.5 inches and more than 9 inches.

Comment: ____

____

____

Specific Guidance and the Checklist
on
<u>INFANTS/TODDLERS</u>

Mark the individual items using C for Compliance, P for Partial Compliance, N for Noncompliance, N/A for Not Applicable, and N/O for Not Observed.

Symbols: ++ item is used to observe in all classrooms or at least more than one area of the room(s)
** item requires examination of one or more documents

The following is a mix of health, safety, and training items pertaining to infants. If the center does not have an infant program, please code relevant items if they apply to some or all of the children classified as Toddlers by the center and the topics are not covered elsewhere in this Health Assessment. (For example, some toddlers are not yet toilet-trained and require diapering. This section is the only one that addresses diapering.) If practices, policies, and training apply to children in more than one classroom, be sure to consider all the relevant rooms.

____ **++1. Diaper changing procedures consistent with those recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and prevention are followed.**

Guidance: The health consult will be familiar with these procedures as published in *"What to Do to Stop Disease in Child Day Care Centers"* so description here is omitted. See pp. 68-72 in *"Caring for Our Children"* for some detail if needed.

Comment: ____
____
____

____ **++2. The diaper-changing table has an impervious, nonabsorbent surface. The changing area is never used for temporary placement or serving of food or drink.**

Comment: ____
____
____

____ **++3. For disposal of diapers, the trash cans used**
(a) are lined with disposable, leak-proof plastic bags;
(b) have tightly fitting lids; and
(c) are inaccessible to children.

Guidance: The foregoing are drawn from one of the universal precautions to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. If any of the alphabetized items are not evident, code as P. (Some aspects of "proper" disposal methods are not mentioned here because it is not clear that all apply to child care centers [e.g., color of plastic bag, food-operated disposal cans marked as "biohazardous waste," special trash collections, etc.) (Comment section for 3. on next page)

Comment: ____

____

____

____ **++4. All diapering supplies are within the caregiver's reach but inaccessible to children.**

Comment: ____

____

____

____ **++5. Without necessarily entering the sleeping area, caregivers can see and hear infants who are sleeping.**

Guidance: If floor to ceiling partitions separate the sleeping area from the rest of the infant area, windows should be mounted in the partitions and or have an open door to permit a reasonable amount of sight and sound. An audio system which projects sound from the sleeping area is not adequate by itself. If either visual or auditory accessibility to the infants while sleeping is judged inadequate, code as P. As these approach nonexistence or are missing entirely, code as N.

Comment: ____

____

____

____ **++6. Cribs are made of wood, metal, or approved plastic. Slats are no more than 2 3/8 inches apart, with the mattress fitted so that no more than two fingers can fit between the mattress and the crib side.**

Comment: ____

____

____

____ **++7. Drop-side crib latches securely hold sides in the raised position and are not reachable by the child in the crib. The crib is not used with the drop side down.**

Comment: ____

____

____

____ **++8. Evacuation crib(s) ,with 4 inch wheels, are placed to the closest egress point (within the sleeping area) and must fit through a 36 inch door. One evacuation cirb is available for each 4 infants in a room.**

Comment: ____

____

____

____ **++9. Infants are fed either while held or sitting up for bottle feeding. Infants unable to sit are always held for bottle feeding. No bottles are ever propped.**

Comment: ____
____
____

____ **++10. Only cleaned and disinfected bottles and nipples are used. All filled bottles of breast milk and iron-fortified formula are dated and labeled with name of child and refrigerated until immediately before feeding.**

Comment: ____
____
____

____ **++11. Bottles of breast milk or formula are warmed by placing them in a pan of water or in a bottle warmer. The warmed bottle is shaken well and temperature tested on the caregiver's inside wrist before feeding.**

Comment: ____
____
____

____ **++12. All formula and breast milk are used only for the intended child.**

Comment: ____
____
____

____ ****13. Infant caregivers are trained to place infants in the prone position for sleeping to help avoid a suspected correlate of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.**

Guidance: The prone position is recommended currently by the American Academy of Pediatrics unless otherwise requested by the child's pediatrician for medical reasons.

Comment: ____
____
____

Specific Guidance and the Checklist
on
SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN

The items below are to be coded only if the child care center has special needs children enrolled.

Mark the individual items using C for Compliance, P for Partial Compliance, N for Noncompliance, N/A for Not Applicable, and N/O for Not Observed.

symbols: ++ item is used to observe in all classrooms or at least more than one area in the center
** item requires examination of one or more documents

____ ****1. Staff serving children with special needs receive training in**
(a) the effect of the different disabilities on the child's ability to participate in group activities;
(b) the preparation of children without disabilities to having children with special needs participate in their program;
(c) methods to assist the disabled child's participation, e.g., role modeling, involvement of nondisabled peers, and
(d) the use of behavior modification techniques in the promotion of self-esteem and of positive behavior through appropriate application of positive reinforcements.

Guidance: If one of the above is not evident in some way, code as P.

____ ****2. Evacuation plans specifically include consideration of the problems of the special needs children (e.g., assistance for the physically handicapped; recommended support for those with respiratory problems; specific guidance for those with attention deficits, etc.).**

Guidance: The health consultant must determine to his/her satisfaction that such plans do exist if not evident in writing.

Comment: ____
____
____

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*Special needs children are those with "developmental disabilities, mental retardation, emotional disturbance, sensory or motor impairment, or significant chronic illness who require special health surveillance or specialized programs, interventions, technologies, or facilities," according to *Caring for our Children (1992),* American Public Health Association and American Academy of Pediatrics, p. 237.

Report on Number of Children and Number of Adults
in
Each Age Group/Classroom

Health Consultant:

The following is separate from the preceding checklists but information requested by the GSA Regional Child Care Coordinators. The table to be completed is on the next page.

Guidance: The range of recommendations from NAEYC for staffing are listed on the table on the next page. Go over this table with the director.

If the center assigns children to groups differently than the clusters shown in column 1 or if the reported ratios and/or group sizes differ from those listed, write in the ages and numbers which do apply. e. g., if the center uses "6 weeks - 12 months" to cluster, show that immediately below "birth - 12 months" and cross through "birth - 12 months."

Going across the row for each age group, circle or write in the number of children (column 2) that the director reports that the center allows per one adult for the age group and circle or write in the maximum group size (column 3) the director reports that the center allows in the program for the age group.

Count the number of children in the room and enter that number in the row for the age in column 4, "actual group size observed." Count the number of adults in the room, omitting volunteers and visitors, and enter that number in the row for the age group in the last column.

2/98

Age Group	Reported Number of Children per Adult	Reported Maximum Group Size for Age Group	Actual Group Size Observed	Actual Number of Adults Observed
Birth - 12 months	3 4 ____	6 8 ____	____	____
13 months - 24 months	3 4 5 6 ____	6 8 10 12 ____	____	____
25 months - 30 months	4 5 6 ____	8 10 12 ____	____	____
31 months - 36 months	5 6 7 ____	10 12 14 ____	____	____
3-year-olds	7 8 9 10 ____	14 16 18 20 ____	____	____
4-year-olds	8 9 10 ____	16 18 20 ____	____	____
5-year-olds	8 9 10 ____	16 18 20 ____	____	____
6- to 8-year olds	10 11 12 ____	20 22 24 ____	____	____
9- to 12-year-olds	12 14 ____	24 22 ____	____	____
Mixed-Age Group: Identify ages ________	____	____	____	____

The Washington Post

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July 25, 2000, Tuesday, Final Edition

SECTION: METRO; Pg. B02; FEDERAL DIARY

LENGTH: 668 words

HEADLINE: House Wants Federal Day-Care Center Workers to Get Closer Look

BYLINE: Stephen Barr

BODY:

Worried about the safety of children in federal child care centers, the House has moved to tighten background checks on current and prospective workers at the government centers.

The 1990 Crime Control Act required mandatory background checks for employees hired by federal agencies, but Rep. Benjamin A. Gilman (R-N.Y.) said some agencies interpreted the law as not applying to their day-care centers. The agencies reasoned that the workers are hired by the day-care provider, not the government.

Gilman, joined by Reps. Carolyn B. Maloney (D-N.Y.) and Constance A. **Morella** (R-Md.), urged the House last week to require child care workers in federal facilities to undergo a criminal background check just like federal employees. The House accepted the Gilman proposal and attached it to a fiscal 2001 spending bill.

"Federal employees who use federally provided child care should feel confident that these child care providers have backgrounds free of abusive and violent behavior that would prevent them from working with our children," Gilman said.

Morella added, "It only takes one missed background check to lead to a devastating situation."

Gilman warned that a violent child care worker "has the opportunity to create a terrorist situation, the likes of which have not been seen since the tragedy in Oklahoma City."

The same bill, the Treasury-Postal appropriations measure, also would extend for another year the pilot program that allows agencies to subsidize child care expenses for their lower-income employees. That program, just now getting under way in many agencies, had been set to expire Sept. 30.

Meanwhile, persons with children in child care facilities in General Services Administration-controlled buildings would be kept better informed of the security levels in those buildings under a bill approved by the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Before enrolling a child, parents or guardians would be told the level of the building's security and the identities of the building tenants. Afterward, they would be told if any new federal tenant is scheduled to move in or if any "serious threat" has arisen to the building.

GSA also would have to assess safety and security of all child care facilities in buildings under its control and make recommendations for improvements. The report, which would be due one year after the bill's enactment, would have to include an assessment of whether the windows and interior furnishings provide adequate protection against natural disaster or terrorist attack.

There are 113 child care centers in GSA-controlled buildings, with about 7,900 children enrolled, 55 percent of them children of federal workers. The Defense Department has about 800 child care programs, not all of them centers, and other agencies have 137 centers in buildings under their control.

Retiree COLA

Although it's too early to tell, increases in the cost of gasoline, heating oil and some other consumer goods could translate into a substantial cost-of-living increase for federal retirees at the start of 2001.

Over the last nine months, a consumer price index that is used to set retiree COLAs--the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers--has increased 3.2 percent. That includes a 0.6 percent boost in June.

Three months are left in the current counting period for January's COLAs. Prices can go in either direction, but it appears likely that retirees will get the largest COLA since the 3.7 percent increase that went to Civil Service Retirement System retirees in 1991.

Employees under the Federal Employees Retirement System get a COLA that is 1 percentage point less than the CSRS figure when the consumer index is more than 3 percent. They got 2.7 percent in 1991.

One indicator of what might lie ahead is the latest 12-month count in the inflation index used to calculate COLAs. Through June 2000, it jumped 3.9 percent.

Stephen Barr's e-mail address is barrs@washpost.com.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: July 25, 2000

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July 25, 2000, Tuesday, Final Edition

SECTION: A SECTION; Pg. A21; THE FEDERAL PAGE

LENGTH: 729 words

HEADLINE: The Unknown Child Care Benefit; Agencies Find Few Applying for Subsidy as Deadlines Approach

BYLINE: Cathy Newman , Special to The Washington Post

BODY:

When Tifanny Burke went to pick up her 1-year-old son from a neighborhood day-care center on her way home from work, she found him locked in a closet. Ronald had crawled in and shut the door, and no one had noticed the little boy's absence until his scared and angry mother found him hours later.

The incident prompted Burke, now 20, to move the boy to a child care center in a General Services Administration building where she works. GSA would ordinarily charge about $ 150 a week to look after Ronald, now 2, but Burke, an office clerk making little more than $ 250 a week, qualifies for a government subsidy that cut her cost to just $ 49.

Despite the fact that GSA recently set up a $ 1 million fund to subsidize child care for 500 of its employees, only Burke and 40 other parents have taken advantage of the help. The problem? Few GSA employees know about the program, and others are worried that it may not be a continuing source of aid. And the deadline for getting help is looming: GSA employees must apply by Aug. 1.

Congress approved legislation last year permitting federal agencies to offer child care subsidies to their employees for child care centers in federal buildings or registered providers of the parents' choice. Eligibility varies at the agencies--GSA provides assistance to families with income up to $ 45,000, while the Labor Department, for example, limits it to families earning up to $ 39,999. Many agencies that didn't get their programs underway until spring have funds to reimburse qualified workers from April through September.

There have been varying degrees of success throughout the administration in signing up people.

For a single mom like Burke, the subsidized care in a GSA child care center is a godsend.

"It [the neighborhood provider] was very scary. . . . I didn't think it was too safe. There were times I'd knock on the door for hours and no one would be there," Burke said. As she talked at GSA's center at Seventh and D streets in Southwest, Ronald merrily hit a plastic tyrannosaur on the head, while 3-year-old Nina Danley led her playmates in a song about the sunshine.

Burke may have sorted out her child care nightmare, but another GSA employee makes clear the agency needs to do more to advertise the benefit. A 38-year-old GSA worker, who earns about $ 220 a week and looks after her daughter's 2-month-old baby and her son's 3-year-old, said she found out about the program by accident.

"If I hadn't been on the GSA [Web] home page, I wouldn't have known. Maybe God just sent me there; He knew I needed help," she said. She declined to be identified.

She also mistakenly believed at first that, because she makes more than $ 220 a week, she would not qualify for the program.

With the Aug. 1 deadline fast approaching, the GSA plans to post notices in agency elevators and to leave a message on every employee's voice mail.

GSA is not the only federal agency to appear to have trouble signing up people for the child care help. The Office of Personnel Management set aside $ 120,000 for its program, but has so far only signed up 11 families. The Labor Department, which has aggressively advertised its $ 1.2 million program through posters, e-mail, memos and the Web, is now providing child care assistance to 115 families, said Tali Stepp, director of human resources at Labor.

An OPM spokesman defended the agency's track record, saying its program has only been running for six weeks. "We're still undertaking to educate people. It's a very difficult thing to get people to change something as fundamental as child care," the spokesman said. OPM employees can sign up through September.

Bonnie Storm, policy adviser in GSA's Office of Child Care, said some parents may be unwilling to alter their child care arrangements until the program's future is assured.

Rep. Constance A. **Morella** (R-Md.), who sponsored the legislation, is confident the program will be renewed. The Senate Appropriations Committee recently voted to extend the program for a year, a move welcomed by the National Treasury Employees Union, which has been calling for permanent child care subsidies in the federal workplace.

Once the legislative hurdles are surmounted, **Morella** said she's certain the program will take off: "The need is there. . . . Child care is so dear. It's a No. 1 issue."

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: July 25, 2000

An Executive Order- Federally Sponsored Child Care

Federal parents, like all parents, struggle to balance their responsibilities at work and their responsibilities to their young children. Parents deserve to know that their children are healthy, safe and well nurtured during the workday. The Federal government sponsors over 1,000 child care centers throughout the country, and it is essential that these centers follow uniform health, safety, program and facility guidelines, and that criminal history background checks for staff be conducted. Executive branch child care programs beyond those sponsored by the Department of Defense (DoD) should have such uniform guidelines, and all agencies do not uniformly conduct criminal history background checks of staff before they are permitted to work with young children. Today I am directing the Administrator of General Services Administration (GSA) to take significant steps to improve the quality of Federally sponsored non-military child care in the Executive branch, as follows:

[illegible] 1

1. In conjunction with the Interagency Federal Child Care Council (IFCCC), develop and lead the implementation of uniform health, safety, program and facility guidelines for all Executive agency child care programs;

2. Provide consistent mechanisms through which agencies can verify compliance with the regulations and provide timely information on compliance to the Administrator and to the public.

I am also mandating that all child care facilities located in space that is owned or leased by an Executive agency become accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting organization and that complete criminal history background checks be conducted for all employees at executive agency child care centers ~~located in federa~~lly owned or leased space. [illegible]

[illegible]

I direct the Administrator of GSA, in conjunction with the IFCCC, to issue regulations on health, safety, facility, and provide program guidelines to ensure the health and well-being of children in child care programs sponsored by Executive agencies. The Administrator will develop procedures for Executive agencies to follow when centers are not in compliance with established health, safety, program and facility requirements. These procedures will require affected centers to develop corrective action plans.

The Administrator may provide technical assistance to Executive agencies and entities sponsoring child care centers in executive facilities in order to assist agencies in complying with provisions of this order.

The Administrator will also develop a child care portal on the Internet which will serve as a single point of entry for all Federal child care information and services, available to the public. In addition to being a means for Executive agencies to use to provide information on their programs, agencies will also use this site to promptly inform the Administrator and the public of all agency steps taken to comply with the regulations established pursuant to this order.

Public [illegible]

Finally, I direct the Administrator to submit an annual report to the President

summarizing agency compliance with the child care guidelines established by this order, including any corrective actions taken to correct deficiencies in the centers.

"Seiden, Suzanne B." <SBSEIDEN@opm.gov>
08/09/2000 09:25:10 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Ann O'Leary/OPD/EOP

cc:
Subject: Info on Child Care Subsidy Programs

Ann,

Here is the info you requested on the agencies using the child care subsidy programs

Currently, the following agencies have implemented the child care subsidy:

Overseas Private Investment Corporation
OPM
GSA
Department of Labor
Department of Energy
IRS
HHS

EPA, Education, Commerce and Interior are considering programs. Education is waiting for final signatures.

So far, about 200 employees have received tuition assistance. Since the program just got underway, we are requesting an extension for the report until March so it will reflect one full year of implementation. In the meantime, OPM is working on an interim report to cover the March 14 to Sept. 30th timeframe.

A Federal Child Care Executive Order

Federal child care is the largest employer-sponsored child care program in the country. In Federal agencies, including the Department of Defense, over 1,000 centers serve nearly 208,000 children on a daily basis. The Military Child Care Act of 1996 provides health, safety and facility guidelines and mandates accreditation of each center and criminal background checks for all employees at military child care programs.

No such standards exist for other Federal employees. Non-DoD agencies use a range of operational approaches, and consequently compliance with standards and accreditation rates vary. Federal child care programs are plagued by inconsistent quality, a lack of compliance with health, safety and facility standards, and inadequate criminal background checks.

An Executive Order is needed to:

1. Require the implementation of uniform health, safety and facility guidelines. Mandate accreditation and complete background checks.

2. Provide for consistent oversight through a uniform system for monitoring agency compliance and enforcement.

The Executive Order should require the Administrator of the General Services Administration to establish health, safety and facility guidelines for all executive agency child care centers, and those standards should be no less stringent than those required of other licensed child care facilities in the same geographical area. D better NAEYC

The Order would also require that Federal child care centers become accredited to ensure the quality of the program for the healthy development of the enrolled children. Accreditation standards are an important benchmark of quality and represent the industry minimum standards for care and education.

To ensure compliance with the proposed standards, the Order should require a single agency with oversight of all Federal child care centers. Consistent evaluation is needed to ensure immediate correction of life-threatening deficiencies and timely corrections to secure children's safety. The Order should spell out procedures to be followed if a Federal center were not in compliance with established health, safety and facility requirements. It should require affected centers to develop corrective action plans and to close the affected portion of any center where there is a life-threatening situation or where circumstances pose a risk of serious harm. Centers should be required to disclose any health, safety, facility or program violations to parents.

President Clinton recognized the Department of Defense Child Development Program as exemplary. DoD contends that the single most effective way of improving and maintaining program quality are through quarterly unannounced inspections and ensuring compliance with standards. The Order should authorize a single agency, General Services Administration, for such inspections and for enforcing compliance.

The Executive Order should mandate criminal history background checks in all Federally sponsored centers. Some agencies have interpreted the 1988 Crime Control Act as not applicable to their centers because the Act specifically applies to employees. In the case of non-DoD Federal agencies, employees are hired by the child care provider, not the agency. Nevertheless, those employees should pass the same rigorous background check.

Stephen Barr

Subsidized Child Care Experiment Extended After Labor's Program Wins Broad Support

When the Labor Department decided to participate in a child-care subsidy experiment authorized by Congress, applications from employees poured in from field offices stretching from Puerto Rico to California.

"People are very interested in what their workplace can do to accommodate their needs and their children," said **Al Holston**, director of the business operations center at Labor. "It's a high priority among our employees."

The department has set aside $1.2 million for its child-care subsidy program this year. It is evaluating applications from 115 employees, and those selected to participate will receive subsidy payments retroactive to April 1.

The child-care subsidy, sponsored by Rep. **Constance A. Morella** (R-Md.), was authorized for a one-year period ending Sept. 30. Despite its uncertain status, the program appears to be winning broad support throughout the government.

This week, the House Appropriations subcommittee that oversees general government issues said it would extend the program "for an additional year to obtain proper evaluation of the demonstration project."

The Labor Department hopes its program will help employees with an annual family income of less than $40,000 obtain better day care for their children. The program covers children through age 13 or through age 18 if they are disabled.

The subsidies are paid to eligible day-care providers on a graduated scale. The department, for example, will pay as much as $375 monthly for a family earning less than $26,929, and $200 monthly for families earning between $35,000 and $39,999 annually.

Edward Chmielowski, acting director of the department's WorkLife Center, said the subsidy program has encouraged several families to transfer their children to licensed day-care facilities, one of the program's requirements.

The department operates a day-care center, which has an enrollment of about 80 infants, toddlers and preschoolers. By September, the department hopes to expand the center to enroll another 40 infants and toddlers. About 150 families are on the waiting list to get in.

Labor Secretary **Alexis M. Herman**, in keeping with a presidential directive, also has increased the transit subsidy offered to Labor employees from $50 to $65 monthly. The subsidy increase began last month, making Labor one of the first departments to comply with **President Clinton**'s order.

About 6,000 Labor Department employees—split almost evenly between the Washington headquarters and the field—participate in the transit subsidy program, Holston said.

The subsidy programs, of course, cost money. Labor officials look for savings in their operating budgets and evaluate the programs on a quarterly basis to determine how many employees are participating and how many dollars are being spent.

"We're working hard to make sure we create an employee-friendly environment," Holston said. "The bottom line is that if we don't do these kinds of innovative things, we are going to lose our competitive edge . . . with the private sector."

SEC Workers Unionize

Employees of the Securities and Exchange Commission voted yesterday to be represented by the National Treasury Employees Union, the union announced. The vote was 968 to 373.

The employee decision represented a setback for SEC Chairman **Arthur Levitt Jr.**, who brought in outside consultants in an attempt to stave off unionization of the agency.

Union President **Colleen M. Kelley** called the vote "a credit to SEC employees who, despite all of the obstacles, persevered in their demand to have a voice in creating a quality workplace where quality work can be done."

Employees also voted on whether employees deemed "professional" under federal labor law should be in a single bargaining unit with workers classified as "non-professional." The vote approving a single bargaining unit was 452 to 410, the union said.

Weekend Talk Shows

Richard W. Swartz, associate director for information technology and chief information officer for the Census Bureau, will be the guest on "Fed Talk" at 10 a.m. tomorrow on WUST (1120 AM).

Richard Calder, deputy director for administration at the CIA, will appear on "The Business of Government Hour" at 8 p.m. Sunday on WWRC (570 AM).

Stephen Barr's e-mail address is barrs@washpost.com.

The Washington Post
Friday, July 14, 2000

THE RELIABLE SOURCE

By Lloyd Grove

Acting for His Supper

Henry Winkler, The Fonz no more, this Sunday wraps up a three-week Kennedy Center run in **Neil Simon's** "The Dinner Party," in which he plays a comically rumpled loser. But first he's off to Capitol Hill to do some lobbying for the arts. Winkler and **John Ritter**, his "Dinner Party" co-star, are supposed to meet today with Rep. **John Dingell** (D-Mich.) and Sen. **Ted Kennedy** (D-Mass.).

"I would encourage Congress to embrace the arts, fund the arts, participate in the arts," the 54-year-old Winkler told us. "The arts is not an afterthought; it's a lifeline. That it is treated so dispensably is criminal because for at least one out of five children the arts may be the only way they get to communicate who they are and what they're feeling to the world." A dyslexic who struggled in grade school, Winker recalled his first dramatic role "I was a tube of toothpaste in a hygiene play in nursery school." He added: "Certainly the arts have been very, very good to me. It was one of the only ways I could have excelled."

Despite his stage work, Winkler has managed to fit in some Washington sightseeing and a bit of, well, gourmandizing. "I've eaten really well," he said. "We've been to Galileo and Equinox—wow, that's good. And the Daily Grill—their eggs Benedict is really good. After the show we all go to Dominique's, which is right by the Kennedy Center. They've been so incredible to the cast." Talk about a dinner party!

Winkler said he has relished every minute of his stint at the Eisenhower Theater, where audiences have included Dingell and **President Clinton's** tormentors, **Ken Starr** and **John McLaughlin**. Just last week, Winkler and the cast received the good news that the play is headed for Broadway this fall. "When we came here we didn't know where the play would go," he said, "and all of sudden, bingo, this dream came out of the blue."

Ritter and Winkler, not quite done with "Dinner."

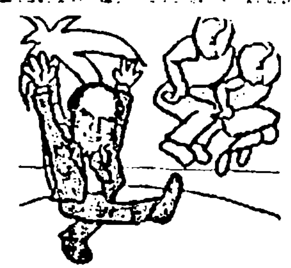
Got a hot tip or a nagging question? Dish with ***Lloyd Grove*** *today at 10 a.m. EDT at http://washingtonpost.com/liveonline*

www.Hizzoner.org

■ Business news baron **Michael Bloomberg**, apparently serious about his potential candidacy next year for mayor of New York, is leaving nothing to chance. He recently instructed his lawyers at Wilkie Farr & Gallagher to corner the market on Web site domain names. So, all you rival candidates, don't even *think* of using: mikeformayor.com, mikeformayor.org, mikeformayor.net, mike4mayor.org, mike4mayor.com, mike4mayor.net, bloombergformayor.com, bloombergformayor.org, bloombergformayor.net, bloomberg2001.com, bloomberg2001.org, bloomberg2001.net, mike2001.com, mike2001.org, mike2001.net, nycmayor.net, mayormike.org, mayormike.net, nycmayor2001.com, nycmayor2001.org, nycmayor2001.net, mikebloomberg2001.net, mikebloomberg2001.com, mikebloomberg2001.org, newyorkcitymayor.com, newyorkcitymayor.org, newyorkcitymayor.net, bloombergnyc.com, bloombergnyc.net, bloombergnyc.org, yesformike.com, yesformike.net, yesformike.org, nycmayor.net, nycmayor.org, mayor2001.com, mayor2001.net, mayor2001.org, mikeformayor2001.com, mikeformayor2001.org, mikeformayor2001.net, bloombergno.com, bloombergno.net, bloombergno.org, bloombergyes.com, bloombergyes.org or bloombergyes.net . . . Got that?

Bloomberg: Do we like Mike?

■ For conservative disciplinarian **Richard Viguerie**, it's a dream come true. Starting today on his new Bushrunningmate.com Web site, the Republican direct-mail pioneer will launch a "Veep Survivor" contest by kicking two GOP vice presidential contenders into the shark-infested waters off Veep Survivor Island. Viguerie told us yesterday that based on the results of daily cyber-balloting, he'll be thinning the 24-person herd, which includes everyone from **Alan Keyes** to **Elizabeth Dole**, by two contenders a day until July 26. "If it were up to me, the first ones I'd kick off would be **Christie Whitman** and **Tom Ridge**"—the moderate governors of New Jersey and Pennsylvania, respectively. "We hope to have some sound effects—some jungle noises, somebody getting the boot, and then big applause."



Viguerie's Veeps sweeps.

■ We hear that **Whoopi Goldberg** is joining **Barbra Streisand** Aug. 17 for a $4 million hard-money fundraiser at L.A.'s Shrine Auditorium. Democratic Party organizers are also trying to nail down the likes of **Lionel Richie** and **Chaka Khan** for the glitzy convention capper. A party wag told us yesterday that **Robin Williams**, whose profane performance at a recent Washington fundraiser frightened horses and children, won't be on the program: "He can come—but he'll have to pay like everyone else."

■ From "Kaddish" to *mazel tov*: On Oct. 29 in Washington, New Republic literary editor **Leon Wieseltier**, 47, author of a 1998 book inspired by the Jewish prayer of mourning, will marry Brookings Institution senior policy analyst **Jennifer Bradley**, 29, a former reporter and editor at the weekly magazine. Of the wedding—his second, her first—Bradley told us: "It's going to be small."

The Washington Post
Friday, July 14, 2000

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Divider Title: **1**

A Report to the President

Steps to Improve Federally Sponsored Child Care

As a result of the March 10th, 1998 Memorandum (TAB 1) from the President to the Federal Departments and Agencies, GSA Office of Child Care acted as the Executive Agent to gather extensive information across the government. In the memorandum, the President requested that the GSA Administrator develop a plan to ensure complete and timely background checks for all child care workers in Federally sponsored child care, and a plan to ensure that all Federally sponsored child care centers receive nationally recognized independent accreditation. A Report to the President was sent in the summer of 1998.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

98 MAR 13 AM 10:17

March 10, 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

SUBJECT: Steps to Improve Federally Sponsored Child Care

Now more than ever, America's working parents are struggling to balance their obligations to be good workers -- and their more important obligations to be good parents. By choice or by financial necessity, millions of Americans rely on child care to care for their children for part of each day. Parents deserve to know that their children are safe and nurtured in child care.

One of my highest priorities is to make child care better, safer, and more affordable. That is why my balanced budget includes the most significant investment in child care in our Nation's history and proposes specific measures to improve child care quality.

As a supplier of child care and as an employer that must recruit and retain a strong workforce, the Federal Government should lead the way in improving child care. I am proud that our military has developed one of the finest child care delivery systems in the world, and that the Department of Defense, at my request, is sharing its expertise with the public and private sectors. Still, we need to do more. The executive branch of the Federal Government has responsibility for over 1,000 child care centers -- 788 through the military, 109 through the General Services Administration, and 127 through other Federal departments. In addition, the military oversees nearly 10,000 professional family child care providers. In total, approximately 215,000 children are in our care.

Today I am directing my Administration to take significant new steps to improve the quality of Federally sponsored child care in the executive branch by (1) ensuring proper background checks of child care workers; (2) achieving 100 percent independent accreditation of all eligible centers; (3) exploring partnerships among Federal agencies and with the private sector to improve child care quality and affordability; and (4) ensuring that all Federal workers become better informed of child care benefits and the options available to them.

W00278 /98

First, all child care workers in Federally sponsored centers should undergo thorough background checks to make sure that our children are safe. The vast majority of child care workers are caring people who have dedicated their lives to teaching and nurturing children. But one tragedy in child care is too many, and criminal and civil background checks are necessary to determine whether the people caring for our children are fit for this responsibility. The military already has a model system to conduct background checks of child care workers. I now want to guarantee that workers at all nonmilitary, Federal child care facilities undergo such background checks in a thorough and timely fashion.

I therefore direct the Administrator of General Services ("Administrator") to report to me, within 90 days, with a plan to ensure complete and timely background checks, to the fullest extent possible, for all child care workers in nonmilitary, Federally sponsored child care settings. Agencies with oversight of nonmilitary child care settings will report to the Administrator within 60 days on this matter.

Second, all Federally sponsored child care centers should receive nationally recognized, independent accreditation as soon as they are eligible to do so. Currently, only 76 percent of military centers, and 35 percent of other Federally sponsored centers, are accredited. By the year 2000, 100 percent should be accredited. I therefore direct the Secretary of Defense and the Administrator to provide me, within 90 days, with a plan to ensure, to the fullest extent possible, independent, nationally recognized accreditation of all eligible, Federally sponsored child care by the year 2000. Agencies with oversight of non-military child care settings shall report to the Administrator within 60 days on this matter.

Third, partnerships among Federal agencies and with the private sector are an increasingly important way to maximize existing resources and improve child care. I therefore direct the Administrator to work with the heads of all Federal departments and agencies to explore opportunities for collaboration both within Government and with the private sector to improve child care quality and affordability in Federally sponsored settings.

Finally, employers have a responsibility to make sure that their workers are better informed on child care and the options available to them at the national, State, and local levels. I therefore direct the Director of the Office of Personnel Management ("Director") to ensure that, to the fullest extent possible, all Federal workers receive full information about child care benefits available to them on the Federal, State, and local levels, including information on resource and referral networks, available tax credits such as the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit, as well as public subsidies. The Director shall also host a nationwide summit designed to showcase model public and private sector solutions to child care needs.

William J. Clinton

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Divider Title: **2**

A Report to the President
Steps to Improve Federally-Sponsored Child Care
Accreditation and Criminal Background Checks

Children enrolled in child care centers sponsored by Federal agencies are in good hands. Since 1985, when Government agencies formally began providing child care centers in Federal buildings, issues of quality and safety have been paramount. Accreditation rates, which measure quality, are nine times higher in Federally sponsored child care centers than in the private sector. Criminal background checks for workers at child care centers are required by most agencies; and, while they take too much time to complete, those checks help create safe environments for the children. We can improve accreditation rates and the timeliness of background checks, but the fact remains that many Federal employees cannot afford to enroll their children at Federally sponsored child care centers.

On March 10, 1998, the President directed his Administration to take significant new steps to improve the quality of Federally-sponsored child care in the executive branch by: 1) ensuring proper criminal background checks for all child care staff who work in Federal buildings, 2) achieving 100 percent independent accreditation of all eligible centers, 3) exploring partnerships among Federal agencies and with the private sector to improve child care quality and affordability, and 4) ensuring that Federal workers become better informed about child care tax credits and other.

The General Services Administration (GSA) and the Department of Defense (DOD) were charged with reporting back on the status of accreditation rates and background checks. Under the auspices of the newly-chartered Interagency Federal Child Care Council (IFCCC) (see attached list of member agencies), we surveyed those agencies that sponsor child care and identified certain barriers--structural, legislative, financial, and operational--that must be removed or overcome in order to improve Federal child care.

This report focuses on those centers sponsored by civilian Federal agencies. It is worth noting, in brief, the fundamental differences between DOD centers and those sponsored by civilian agencies. DOD has a centralized structure dedicated to child development, operates its own centers, and allocates appropriated funds to the Military services, which in turn subsidize centers and offer a sliding fee scale based on total family income. Because of this commitment, DOD has an 86 percent accreditation rate for 437 centers that are part of a variety of its child development options, which include family care homes, and out-of-school care. Since it has an entirely different nature and scope for its child care system, DOD has provided a separate report.

What is the state of Federally-sponsored child care now?

The Federal Government sponsors the largest employer child care program in the Nation. Civilian agencies sponsor 240 child care centers at which 15,000 children are nurtured and educated. Unlike DOD, which operates its own centers, other Federal agencies do not run child care centers. Instead, they sponsor child care, and the centers are operated by either non-profit boards or by for-profit or not-for-profit vendors.

Under existing law (40 U.S.C. 490b), Federal agencies may provide space in existing buildings, lease additional space, or construct new space and playgrounds to accommodate child care centers. Agencies also may provide: (1) the office and classroom equipment used by the staff and children, and (2) operational support through provision of utilities, telecommunications, maintenance, and security. Some agencies elect to pay for the costs of processing the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and State criminal background checks that are required by the Crime Control Act of 1990, as amended, Public Law 101-647.

Current legislation does not allow the use of agency funds to subsidize staff salaries, Δ training, or tuition assistance. Most civilian Federally sponsored child care is affordable primarily to higher-grade employees. Lower-grade employees cannot afford tuition unless they are qualified for and can access subsidy funding. Δ Child care subsidy Agency by [illegible]

How can we improve the Federal civilian child care system?

The good news is that remarkable progress in the provision of quality on-site child care for Federal employees has been made over the past dozen years. We can take great pride in that accomplishment, yet much work remains. The President has directed the DOD to share its expertise with non-DOD centers, and that process has begun through the IFCCC. Certainly, we can use the best practices from DOD and learn from the private sector.

Affordability, however, remains the single-largest concern. If we are to make quality child care available on-site to the majority of Federal employees with young children, there must be significant changes in the way the Government-sponsored child care centers are organized structurally and how they are funded. While this report does not address the possible solutions to the affordability problem, it should be noted that we seek additional legislative authority on oversight and for exploring expansive collaborations with the private sector to increase the quality, quantity, and affordability of child care. Some of our specific recommendations for accreditation and background checks require legislative relief, and others have fiscal and/or personnel consequences.

ACCREDITATION

The national accreditation rate for all child care centers in the private sector is approximately five percent. To determine accreditation rates among Federally sponsored centers, GSA polled the members of the IFCCC. We received responses from civilian agencies responsible for 240 centers. Of the civilian agencies that have provided data, 216 of the centers are eligible for accreditation. Of the eligible centers, 95 are accredited, 54 have begun the process, and 67 have not started the process. The current accreditation rate for Federally sponsored child care is 44 percent. The following section identifies barriers to accreditation and offers steps for improvement.

25% 44%

71% 54/216 = 1/4

Staff Turnover

The most frequently cited barrier was director and teacher turnover that disrupts the accreditation process. Continuous staff turnover usually indicates low wages, lack of benefits, and little or no staff development or training.

Lack of Quality Providers

The Federally sponsored child care system has a mix of different types of providers, including for-profit and non-profit entities, national chains, and community-based entities. The mix complicates not only the development of an effective system of performance measurement and a standardized-control system, but it significantly and adversely affects compliance with accreditation requirements. Quality providers that pay decent wages, provide benefits, implement stimulating and engaging curricula and are committed to attaining and maintaining accreditation are often in short supply, especially in non-urban areas.

Recommendations:

1. *The IFCCC should explore establishing a list of qualified providers.* In the interim, Federal agencies should use available information. For example, the National Association for the Education of Young Children has prepared information on how to choose quality providers, and it maintains a database of accredited providers by location. The proposed mentoring network (see General Recommendations) should link to this advice, so that boards can have ready access to this information.

2. *Enforce the vendor/Federal agreement.* When a Federal agency agrees to provide space to a child care entity, the agency should require the entity to take all necessary steps to attain accreditation within two years as a condition of occupying the space. The sponsoring agency should monitor and enforce this requirement, working with or through, as appropriate, the non-profit board.

3. *Use Interagency teams to address accreditation issues.* The IFCCC should establish Specialist Teams, drawn from its membership, for onsite review and assessment of non-accredited centers. These teams will determine if the provider (a) will not achieve accreditation within two years and should be replaced; (b) could take advantage of the network to provide additional training; (c) should use the mentoring system for their self-study process; and (d) should undertake other assignments, such as working with the agency, to facilitate accreditation requirements.

4. *Aggressively explore direct contracting.* (See the General Recommendations.) One benefit of direct contracting would be to give agencies immediate oversight of the quality of centers and the ability to terminate contracts with vendors who do not achieve accreditation within the allotted time period.

5. *Build on small, quality local providers.* Small local providers that are committed to quality and that have successfully been accredited should be encouraged and supported to expand their businesses to other locations.

Lack of Federal Agency Support

Child care has been given a low priority at some agencies. Insufficient funding has been allocated for appropriate agency staffing, travel to child care centers and national conferences, and oversight responsibilities to monitor the accreditation process. Problems and issues appear to occur with the mid-level management that agency child care support staff turn to for program needs. In some cases, agencies do not encourage their employees to participate on boards or to attend meetings during working hours, which reduces the ability of the board to function effectively. Resources have not been made available to address board turnover.

Recommendation: The President should direct agencies to appoint accountable senior-level employees, who are trained or are knowledgeable about the delivery of child care, to monitor the sponsored centers in the agency and to assure that the child care entity takes all appropriate steps to achieve and maintain accreditation. Trained program-level employees should monitor operations of the centers. Further, agencies should consider establishing policies that would permit agency employees to spend a specifically defined amount of time on board-related issues.

Facility Issues

Some agencies lack expertise to identify necessary alterations and equipment, and do not budget adequate funding to procure alterations and equipment. In some centers, the appropriate level of cleaning and proper maintenance has not been provided, leading to health and safety deficiencies.

Recommendation: After an agency identifies centers that they believe require facility upgrades and/or expansions in order to become accredited, an IFCCC Specialist Team should inspect the site, develop a list of needed improvements, and work with agency architects to design changes. Those alterations, equipment, furnishings and other materials required for accreditation should be addressed, and the sponsoring agency should fund upgrades and equipment, as allowed under the law.

Board Turnover

Frequent board turnover disrupts and delays the accreditation process. Because of the frequency of board turnover, there is a continuing need to train boards on their roles and responsibilities, especially if they are operating the center.

Recommendation: Agencies should: use the mentoring network to access information on non-profit boards and to share best practices with one another; explore community resources available to provide training for non-profit providers; and procure consultants to provide board training if community or agency resources are not available.

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

GSA surveyed civilian Federal agencies to determine their practices and procedures for criminal background checks. Agencies generally require such checks, but they are not being completed in a timely manner. Civil child abuse background checks are not performed by any civilian Federal agency. There are many complex issues associated with civil child abuse and neglect background checks, primarily those concerned with privacy rights. While we make no recommendations on civil child abuse and neglect background checks, we note that in April 1998, the Department of Justice's (DOJ's) Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention issued "Guidelines for the Screening of Persons Working With Children, the Elderly, and Individuals With Disabilities in Need of Support." These guidelines identify many issues and make recommendations for State governments to consider.

The Crime Control Act

The specific language of the Crime Control Act applies only to child care workers who are employees of the Federal Government or work under contract. Child care employees in civilian Federally sponsored child care centers are not employees of the Federal Government, and in most cases, they do not work for vendors who are Federal contractors. Most vendors who operate the centers contract directly with a non-profit board. Though most agencies require FBI and State criminal background checks on every child care employee as a condition for operating in Federal space, a few agencies do not. Some agencies do not believe that they have authority to use appropriated funds to process criminal background checks.

Recommendation: The President should propose legislation that would amend the Crime Control Act to state clearly that all child care workers in Federally sponsored or operated child care centers must have FBI and state criminal background checks. The legislation should be amended to clarify that ~~appropriated~~ funds may be used for the specific purpose of obtaining background checks. The licensing agreement between a Federal agency and a child care provider must define appropriate screening requirements. The sponsoring agency must be accountable for full compliance with the Crime Control Act and must have appropriate management controls in place to assure that compliance.

Timeliness of FBI Background Checks

Agencies reported considerable variation on the amount of time it takes to receive documentation of a completed FBI background check, with an average of five months from the time of the completion of the forms to receiving the documentation of completion of the check. Rejection of fingerprint cards was cited by agencies as the major reason for the delay.

Recommendation: The President should direct the FBI to give high priority to working with agencies to institute a clearly delineated, standardized, and timely method for background checks, including a routine schedule for child care workers to have their fingerprints taken at FBI offices in urban areas near their centers. Expansion of digital fingerprinting for Government employees should be a priority.

No "Quick Check"

At this time, there is no standardized Governmentwide method to conduct pre-employment screenings for child care staff who work in Federal buildings. Confusion about the process and what it covers leads to delays and the admittance of employees who have not been cleared into the centers located in Federal buildings.

Quick name checks prior to the child care employees' beginning to work in a Federal building are not done routinely because of restrictions on using the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) for employment screening purposes. Some agencies have received a letter of waiver from DOJ allowing the use of NCIC for "quick checks." This waiver is not Governmentwide, and the waiver letter has not been widely distributed or fully incorporated into agency practices.

Recommendation: The President should direct the DOJ to ensure that Federal law enforcement organizations in all agencies have the authority to request "quick name checks" on every child care employee who works in a Federal building. The President should direct the Director of the FBI to issue a memorandum granting the exception for use of the NCIC system for employment screening purposes for child care employees located in Federal buildings or in leased space on a government-wide basis. Agencies should be directed to implement the "quick check" as a condition for allowing child care workers to begin work in a Federally-sponsored or operated child care center.

Criminal Background Check Database

Most agencies do not maintain a centralized database on completed criminal background checks, but rely instead on the child care provider/vendor to maintain such records. Although GSA's Federal Protective Service maintains a database, they do not perform all agency checks. In addition, no centralized database is kept by agencies or Governmentwide about terminations for cause of child care workers.

Recommendation: The IFCCC should explore the creation of a centralized Governmentwide database for completed background checks on child care workers. Also, the IFCCC should review the feasibility of including the names of workers who have been terminated for causes that reflect their unsuitability to work with children. This review should include the legal constraints, if any, associated with such a practice.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS:
CREATING CONTEXT AND CULTURE

As the Nation's largest employer, the Federal Government should take the lead and be a model for quality, affordable child development centers for its employees. In order to do so, we must first create a context and culture among Federal agencies that reinforces child care as a priority. Building on the strengths and experience of the Federal child care system, we recommend these next steps.

1. *New Language*

"Child care" is an outdated term that discounts the need to nurture and educate young children. Child care is not baby-sitting. Our best centers use curricula that stimulate and engage children, helping to develop their intellectual, social and emotional intelligences.

Recommendation: Re-name Government-sponsored child care centers as "child development centers" to reinforce our responsibility to provide good care *and* early education. DOD runs child development centers, and adoption of that terminology would provide for Governmentwide consistency.

2. *Champions*

The lack of consistency of standards and policies throughout Government-sponsored child care has created a loosely organized system which has no "parent" agency. In many agencies, child care is a "foster child," with responsibility and accountability fragmented across the agency.

Recommendations: A common element of all successful child care programs is strong, dedicated, and consistent leadership. A great opportunity exists for the President to create "champions" for child care, beginning with the Cabinet and the heads of every agency.

We recommend that the President:

- Direct the leaders of all agencies that sponsor child care centers to identify a single trained person who will be directly responsible for the accreditation of every eligible center and for 100 percent compliance with criminal background checks for all child care staff by the year 2000.

- Send a strong message to agency heads that these goals require a commitment to provide financial and human resources and full participation in the IFCCC.

3. Governmentwide Consistency

Federal civilian agencies and departments generally do not directly operate child care centers or directly contract with vendors for the operation of the centers. Agencies that do not contract directly have adopted a variety of methods to allow the vendors to occupy space. There is no standard licensing agreement between vendors and agencies for the use of Federally controlled space for operation of a child care center.

Recommendation: On June 29, 1993, GSA published in the Federal Register "Special Conditions to Licensing Agreement for Child Care Centers in GSA-Controlled Space," which represented the terms and conditions under which child care providers would be licensed to occupy space in GSA-controlled facilities. In consultation with the IFCCC, GSA's licensing agreement should be revised to ensure that it includes terms and conditions that promote quality and affordable child care for Federal employees. Among other things, that agreement should state specifically what services and supports the Federal agencies **may** provide, and must clearly set forth the requirements that a vendor, or a board-operated center, **must** agree to in order to operate in Government-controlled space, including but not limited to specific accreditation and employee background screening requirements. The President should direct Federal agencies to use the revised licensing agreement and to have appropriate management controls in place to ensure that the agreements are enforced.

4. System Assessment

Government sponsored child care began as a facility-based program. Over the years, agencies have taken more responsibility for the selection of vendors, the quality of the program, and the safety and design of the space the center occupies. Civilian agencies have just over 10 years of experience in the child care business, and it is now time to evaluate the method by which we provide child care services for Government employees to determine whether there is a more effective and less costly delivery system.

Recommendation: The President should direct GSA, in consultation with the IFCCC, to analyze the feasibility of direct contracting with vendors to determine whether it would improve the quality of Federally sponsored child development centers. The study should include a cost/benefit assessment of the impact of direct contracting.

5. A Mentoring Network

Communication among Gvernment-sponsored child care centers is negligible. Most child care centers that operate in Federally ponsored space do not use the Internet, and some do not have computers at all. This lack of access to technology can significantly affect the ability of centers to obtain information about best practices, subsidies, and other resource and referral tools, and contributes to a lack of efficient and ongoing staff training, particularly in remote areas.

Recommendation: The President should direct all agencies that sponsor child care to ensure that all of their centers have computers and access to the Internet by January 1999. The IFCCC should initiate a public/private partnership to create an electronic network for their child development centers. Internet access will also enable distance learning for child care personnel. The IFCCC will create technical assistance to supplement Web-based training and Internet mentoring among the centers. The network also will facilitate face-to-face mentoring with professionals from DOD centers and the private sector.

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Divider Title: 3

The Morella Provision to the
Fiscal Year 2000 Treasury Postal Appropriations Bill

During the 106^{th} Congress, Congresswoman Connie Morella (R, MD) introduced legislation to permit the use of appropriated funds to subsidize child care costs for lower income Federal employees. It faced significant opposition, but was eventually passed as an amendment to the Fiscal Year 2000 Treasury Postal Bill, signed by President Clinton.

Provisions of the amendment are provided as well as the key points.

ten petition requesting that the determination be modified or set aside."

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 309(a)(6)(A) of such Act (2 U.S.C. 437g(a)(6)(A)) is amended by striking "paragraph (4)(A)" and inserting "paragraph (4)".

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to violations occurring between January 1, 2000 and December 31, 2001.

SEC. 641. (a) Section 304(b) of the Federal Election Campaign Act (2 U.S.C. 434(b)) is amended by inserting "(or election cycle, in the case of an authorized committee of a candidate for Federal office)" after "calendar year" each place it appears in paragraphs (2), (3), (4), (6), and (7).

(b) The amendment made by this section shall become effective with respect to reporting periods beginning after December 31, 2000.

SEC. 642. (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 636 of the Treasury Postal Service, and General Government Appropriations Act, 1997 (5 U.S.C. prec. 5941 note) is amended in the first sentence by striking "may" and inserting "shall".

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on October 1, 1999, or the date of enactment of this Act, whichever is later.

how many agencies have already done this now?

SEC. 643. (a) IN GENERAL.—Upon promulgation of the regulations required under subsection (c), an Executive agency which provides or proposes to provide child care services for Federal employees may use appropriated funds (otherwise available to such agency for salaries) to provide child care, in a Federal or leased facility, or through contract, for civilian employees of such agency.

(b) AFFORDABILITY.—Amounts so provided with respect to any such facility or contractor shall be applied to improve the affordability of child care for lower income Federal employees using or seeking to use the child care services offered by such facility or contractor.

(c) REGULATIONS.—The Office of Personnel Management shall, within 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, issue regulations necessary to carry out this section.

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(d) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this section, the term "Executive agency" has the meaning given such term by section 105 of title 5, United States Code, but does not include the General Accounting Office.

(e) NOTIFICATION.—None of the funds made available in this or any other Act may be used to implement the provisions of this section absent advance notification to the Committees on Appropriations.

SEC. 644. (a) INCREASE IN ANNUAL COMPENSATION.—Section 102 of title 3, United States Code, is amended by striking "$200,000" and inserting "$400,000".

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall take effect at noon on January 20, 2001.

SEC. 645. Effective October 1, 1999, all personnel of the General Accounting Office employed or maintained to carry out functions of the Joint Financial Management Improvement Program (JFMIP) shall be transferred to the General Services Administration. The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall provide to the

ATIVES { REPORT 106–319

MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE TREASURY DEPARTMENT, THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE, THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT, AND CERTAIN INDEPENDENT AGENCIES, FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2000, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

SEPTEMBER 14, 1999.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. KOLBE, from the committee of conference, submitted the following

The com otes of the two Houses (... the bill (H.R. 2490) "making appropriations for the Treasury Department, the United States Postal Service, the Executive Office of the President, and certain Independent Agencies, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes", having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses as follows:

That the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate, and agree to the same with an amendment, as follows:

In lieu of the matter stricken and inserted by said amendment, insert:

That the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the Treasury Department, the United States Postal Service, the Executive Office of the President, and certain Independent Agencies, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes, namely:

TITLE I—DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

DEPARTMENTAL OFFICES

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For necessary expenses of the Departmental Offices including operation and maintenance of the Treasury Building and Annex; hire of passenger motor vehicles; maintenance, repairs, and im-

59–321

Morella Amendment to the Treasury Postal Bill

- The Morella provision to the FY00 Treasury Postal Bill permits the use of appropriated funds (otherwise available to such agencies for salaries) by Executive agencies to provide child care, in a Federal or leased facility, *or through contract,* for civilian employees of such agency.

- Amounts provided to such facility or contractor shall be applied to improve affordability of child care for lower income Federal employees using or seeking to use child care services offered by such facility or contractor.

- OPM has issued a draft regulation (or Rule) which was commented on by the affected Federal agencies in January 2000. OPM has incorporated the requested changes and the draft rule was sent back to OMB for final approval before publication (expected in late Feb 00).

- Appropriations Committees MUST be notified of all agencies' plans to allocate funds for this purpose.

- Other points:

    - In Nov/Dec 99 The CIO conducted an agency-wide survey to determine the need for a child care subsidy. Well over 6,000 employees responded.

    - Other agencies (e.g. Department of Energy) have announced plans to use their appropriated funds to subsidize the child care costs of their employees.

    - In early September 2000, OPM is required to report to Congress on which agencies used funds, and who it helped (anecdotal information as well as hard data). Agency reports are due to OPM in August 2000.

    - The GSA Office of Child Care has been meeting with various internal offices e.g., Chief Financial Officer, Congressional Affairs, Center of Child Care Expertise, General Counsel, Human Resources, and the GSA union representatives. The group is meeting to develop consensus on a GSA proposal to use appropriated funds to supplement employees' child care costs.

- Office of Child Care Point of Contact: Bonnie Storm, 208-5119

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Divider Title: **4**

The Federal Employees Quality Child Care Act
S:813 (Tab A)

For the past two Congressional sessions, Congressman Gilman (NY) and Senator Jeffords (VT) have sponsored bills to improve the quality of Federal Child Care. The Gilman bill (H.R. 28) passed committee in 1999, but failed to be passed in the house. H.R. 28 and Jefford's bill, S:813 are virtually identical. Summaries of both are at Tab B

Three key ways the legislation could improve Federal Child Care across the government:

1. **Require the implementation of uniform health, facility and safety guidelines, and accreditation and complete background checks,**

2. **Provide for consistent oversight through a uniform system for monitoring compliance and enforcement, and**

3. **Allow greater flexibility by permitting pilot projects and public-private partnerships to address affordability.**

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Divider Title: **A**

106th CONGRESS

1st Session

S. 813

To ensure the safety of children placed in child care centers in Federal facilities, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

April 15, 1999

Mr. JEFFORDS (for himself, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. DODD, Mr. SARBANES, and Mr. KENNEDY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Governmental Affairs

---

A BILL

To ensure the safety of children placed in child care centers in Federal facilities, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the `Federal Employees Child Care Act'.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act (except as otherwise provided in section 5):

(1) ADMINISTRATOR- The term `Administrator' means the Administrator of General Services.

(2) CHILD CARE ACCREDITATION ENTITY- The term `child care accreditation entity' means a nonprofit private organization or public agency that--

(A) is recognized by a State agency or by a national organization that serves as a peer review panel on the standards and procedures of public and private child care or school accrediting bodies; and

(B) accredits a facility to provide child care on the basis of--

(i) an accreditation or credentialing instrument based on peer-validated research;

(ii) compliance with applicable State or local licensing requirements, as appropriate, for the facility;

(iii) outside monitoring of the facility; and

(iv) criteria that provide assurances of--

(I) use of developmentally appropriate health and safety standards at the facility;

(II) use of developmentally appropriate educational activities, as an integral part of the child care program carried out at the facility; and

(III) use of ongoing staff development or training activities for the staff of the facility, including related skills-based testing.

(3) ENTITY SPONSORING A CHILD CARE FACILITY- The term `entity sponsoring a child care facility' means a Federal agency that operates, or an entity that enters into a contract or licensing agreement with a Federal agency to operate, a child care facility primarily for the use of Federal employees.

(4) EXECUTIVE AGENCY- The term `Executive agency' has the meaning given the term in section 105 of title 5, United States Code, except that the term--

(A) does not include the Department of Defense and the Coast Guard; and

(B) includes the General Services Administration, with respect to the administration of a facility described in paragraph (5)(B).

(5) EXECUTIVE FACILITY- The term `executive facility'--

(A) means a facility that is owned or leased by an Executive agency; and

(B) includes a facility that is owned or leased by the General Services Administration on behalf of a judicial office.

(6) FEDERAL AGENCY- The term `Federal agency' means an Executive agency, a legislative office, or a judicial office.

(7) JUDICIAL FACILITY- The term `judicial facility' means a facility that is owned or leased by a judicial office (other than a facility that is also a facility described in paragraph (5)(B)).

(8) JUDICIAL OFFICE- The term `judicial office' means an entity of the judicial branch of the Federal Government.

(9) LEGISLATIVE FACILITY- The term `legislative facility' means a facility that is owned

or leased by a legislative office.

(10) LEGISLATIVE OFFICE- The term `legislative office' means an entity of the legislative branch of the Federal Government.

(11) STATE- The term `State' has the meaning given the term in section 658P of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858n).

SEC. 3. PROVIDING QUALITY CHILD CARE IN FEDERAL FACILITIES.

(a) EXECUTIVE FACILITIES-

(1) STATE AND LOCAL LICENSING REQUIREMENTS-

(A) IN GENERAL- Any entity sponsoring a child care facility in an executive facility shall--

(i) comply with child care standards described in paragraph (2) that are no less stringent than applicable State or local licensing requirements that are related to the provision of child care in the State or locality involved; or

(ii) obtain the applicable State or local licenses, as appropriate, for the facility.

(B) COMPLIANCE- Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this Act--

(i) the entity shall comply, or make substantial progress (as determined by the Administrator) toward complying, with subparagraph (A); and

(ii) any contract or licensing agreement used by an Executive agency for the provision of child care services in the child care facility shall include a condition that the child care be provided by an entity that complies with the standards described in subparagraph (A)(i) or obtains the licenses described in subparagraph (A)(ii).

(2) HEALTH, SAFETY, AND FACILITY STANDARDS- The Administrator shall by regulation establish standards relating to health, safety, facilities, facility design, and other aspects of child care that the Administrator determines to be appropriate for child care in executive facilities, and require child care facilities, and entities sponsoring child care facilities, in executive facilities to comply with the standards. The standards shall include requirements that child care facilities be inspected for, and be free of, lead hazards.

(3) ACCREDITATION STANDARDS-

(A) IN GENERAL- The Administrator shall issue regulations requiring, to the maximum extent possible, any entity sponsoring an eligible child care facility (as defined by the Administrator) in an executive facility to comply with standards of a child care accreditation entity.

(B) COMPLIANCE- The regulations shall require that, not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act--

(i) the entity shall comply, or make substantial progress (as determined by the Administrator) toward complying, with the standards; and

(ii) any contract or licensing agreement used by an Executive agency for the provision of child care services in the child care facility shall include a condition that the child care be provided by an entity that complies with the standards.

(4) EVALUATION AND COMPLIANCE-

(A) IN GENERAL- The Administrator shall evaluate the compliance, with the requirements of paragraph (1) and the regulations issued pursuant to paragraphs (2) and (3), as appropriate, of child care facilities, and entities sponsoring child care facilities, in executive facilities. The Administrator may conduct the evaluation of such a child care facility or entity directly, or through an agreement with another Federal agency or private entity, other than the Federal agency for which the child care facility is providing services. If the Administrator determines, on the basis of such an evaluation, that the child care facility or entity is not in compliance with the requirements, the Administrator shall notify the Executive agency.

(B) EFFECT OF NONCOMPLIANCE- On receipt of the notification of noncompliance issued by the Administrator, the head of the Executive agency shall--

(i) if the entity operating the child care facility is the agency--

(I) not later than 2 business days after the date of receipt of the notification, correct any deficiencies that are determined by the Administrator to be life threatening or to present a risk of serious bodily harm;

(II) not later than 4 months after the date of receipt of the notification, develop and provide to the Administrator a plan to correct any other deficiencies in the operation of the facility and bring the facility and entity into compliance with the requirements;

(III) provide the parents of the children receiving child care services at the child care facility and employees of the facility with a notification detailing the deficiencies described in subclauses (I) and (II) and actions that will be taken to correct the deficiencies, and post a copy of the notification in a conspicuous place in the facility for 5 working days or until the deficiencies are corrected, whichever is later;

(IV) bring the child care facility and entity into compliance with the requirements and certify to the Administrator that the facility and entity are in compliance, based on an onsite evaluation of the facility conducted by an individual with expertise in child care health and safety; and

(V) in the event that deficiencies determined by the Administrator to be life threatening or to present a risk of serious bodily harm cannot be corrected within 2 business days after the date of receipt of the notification, close the child care facility, or the affected portion of the facility, until the deficiencies are corrected and notify the Administrator of the closure; and

(ii) if the entity operating the child care facility is a contractor or licensee of the Executive agency--

(I) require the contractor or licensee, not later than 2 business days after the date of receipt of the notification, to correct any deficiencies that are determined by the Administrator to be life threatening or to present a risk of serious bodily harm;

(II) require the contractor or licensee, not later than 4 months after the date of receipt of the notification, to develop and provide to the head of the agency a plan to correct any other deficiencies in the operation of the child care facility and bring the facility and entity into compliance with the requirements;

(III) require the contractor or licensee to provide the parents of the children receiving child care services at the child care facility and employees of the facility with a notification detailing the deficiencies described in subclauses (I) and (II) and actions that will be taken to correct the deficiencies, and to post a copy of the notification in a conspicuous place in the facility for 5 working days or until the deficiencies are corrected, whichever is later;

(IV) require the contractor or licensee to bring the child care facility and entity into compliance with the requirements and certify to the head of the agency that the facility and entity are in compliance, based on an onsite evaluation of the facility conducted by an independent entity with expertise in child care health and safety; and

(V) in the event that deficiencies determined by the Administrator to be life threatening or to present a risk of serious bodily harm cannot be corrected within 2 business days after the date of receipt of the notification, close the child care facility, or the affected portion of the facility, until the deficiencies are corrected and notify the Administrator of the closure, which closure may be grounds for the immediate termination or suspension of the contract or license of the contractor or licensee.

(C) COST REIMBURSEMENT- The Executive agency shall reimburse the Administrator for the costs of carrying out subparagraph (A) for child care facilities located in an executive facility other than an executive facility of the General Services Administration. If an entity is sponsoring a child care facility for 2 or more Executive agencies, the Administrator shall allocate the reimbursement costs with respect to the entity among the agencies in a fair and equitable manner, based on the extent to which each agency is eligible to place children in the facility.

(5) DISCLOSURE OF PRIOR VIOLATIONS TO PARENTS AND FACILITY EMPLOYEES-

(A) IN GENERAL- The Administrator shall issue regulations that require that each entity sponsoring a child care facility in an executive facility, upon receipt by the child care facility or the entity (as applicable) of a request by any individual who is--

(i) a parent of any child enrolled at the facility;

(ii) a parent of a child for whom an application has been submitted to enroll at the facility; or

(iii) an employee of the facility;

shall provide to the individual the copies and description described in subparagraph (B).

(B) COPIES AND DESCRIPTION- The entity shall provide--

(i) copies of all notifications of deficiencies that have been provided in the past with respect to the facility under clause (i)(III) or (ii)(III), as applicable, of paragraph (4)(B); and

(ii) a description of the actions that were taken to correct the deficiencies.

(b) LEGISLATIVE FACILITIES-

(1) ACCREDITATION- The Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives, the Librarian of Congress, and the head of a designated entity in the Senate shall ensure that, not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the corresponding child care facility obtains accreditation by a child care accreditation entity, in accordance with the accreditation standards of the entity.

(2) REGULATIONS-

(A) IN GENERAL- If the corresponding child care facility does not maintain accreditation status with a child care accreditation entity, the Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives, the Librarian of Congress, or the head of the designated entity in the Senate shall issue regulations governing the operation of the corresponding child care facility, to ensure the safety and quality of care of children placed in the facility. The regulations shall be no less stringent in content and effect than the requirements of subsection (a)(1) and the regulations issued by the Administrator under paragraphs (2) and (3) of subsection (a), except to the extent that appropriate administrative officers make the determination described in subparagraph (B).

(B) MODIFICATION MORE EFFECTIVE- The determination referred to in subparagraph (A) is a determination, for good cause shown and stated together with the regulations, that a modification of the regulations would be more effective for the implementation of the requirements and standards described in subsection (a) for the corresponding child care facilities, and entities sponsoring the corresponding child care facilities, in legislative facilities.

(3) CORRESPONDING CHILD CARE FACILITY- In this subsection, the term `corresponding child care facility', used with respect to the Chief Administrative Officer, the Librarian, or the head of a designated entity described in paragraph (1), means a child care facility operated by, or under a contract or licensing agreement with, an office of the House of Representatives, the Library of Congress, or an office of the Senate, respectively.

(c) JUDICIAL BRANCH STANDARDS AND COMPLIANCE-

(1) STATE AND LOCAL LICENSING REQUIREMENTS HEALTH, SAFETY, AND FACILITY STANDARDS, AND ACCREDITATION STANDARDS- The Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts shall issue regulations for child care facilities, and entities sponsoring child care facilities, in judicial facilities, which shall be no less stringent in content and effect than the requirements of subsection (a)(1) and the regulations issued by the Administrator under paragraphs (2) and (3) of subsection (a), except to the extent that the Director may determine, for good cause shown and stated together with the regulations, that a modification of such regulations would be more effective for the implementation of the requirements and standards described in paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) of subsection (a) for child care facilities, and entities sponsoring child care facilities, in judicial facilities.

(2) EVALUATION AND COMPLIANCE-

(A) DIRECTOR OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES COURTS- The Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts shall have the same authorities and duties with respect to the evaluation of, compliance of, and cost reimbursement for child care facilities, and entities sponsoring child care facilities, in judicial facilities as the Administrator has under subsection (a)(4) with respect to the evaluation of, compliance of, and cost reimbursement for such centers and entities sponsoring such centers, in executive facilities.

(B) HEAD OF A JUDICIAL OFFICE- The head of a judicial office shall have the same authorities and duties with respect to the compliance of and cost reimbursement for child care facilities, and entities sponsoring child care facilities, in judicial facilities as the head of an Executive agency has under subsection (a)(4) with respect to the compliance of and cost reimbursement for such centers and entities sponsoring such centers, in executive facilities.

(d) APPLICATION- Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, if 8 or more child care facilities are sponsored in facilities owned or leased by an Executive agency, the Administrator shall delegate to the head of the agency the evaluation and compliance responsibilities assigned to the Administrator under subsection (a)(4)(A).

(e) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, STUDIES, AND REVIEWS- The Administrator may provide technical assistance, and conduct and provide the results of studies and reviews, for Executive agencies, and entities sponsoring child care facilities in executive facilities, on a reimbursable basis, in order to assist the entities in complying with this section. The Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives, the Librarian of Congress, the head of the designated Senate entity described in subsection (b), and the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, may provide technical assistance, and conduct and provide the results of studies and reviews, or request that the Administrator provide technical assistance, and conduct and provide the results of studies and reviews, for legislative offices and judicial offices, as appropriate, and entities operating child care facilities in legislative facilities or judicial facilities, as appropriate, on a reimbursable basis, in order to assist the entities in complying with this section.

(f) INTERAGENCY COUNCIL-

(1) COMPOSITION- The Administrator shall establish an interagency council, comprised of--

(A) representatives of all Executive agencies described in subsection (d) and other Executive agencies at the election of the heads of the agencies;

(B) a representative of the Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives,

at the election of the Chief Administrative Officer;

(C) a representative of the head of the designated Senate entity described in subsection (b), at the election of the head of the entity;

(D) a representative of the Librarian of Congress, at the election of the Librarian; and

(E) a representative of the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, at the election of the Director.

(2) FUNCTIONS- The council shall facilitate cooperation and sharing of best practices, and develop and coordinate policy, regarding the provision of child care, including the provision of areas for nursing mothers and other lactation support facilities and services, in the Federal Government.

(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS- There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $900,000 for fiscal year 2000 and such sums as may be necessary for each subsequent fiscal year.

SEC. 4. FEDERAL CHILD CARE EVALUATION.

(a) IN GENERAL- Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator and the Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall jointly prepare and submit to Congress a report that evaluates child care provided by entities sponsoring child care facilities in executive facilities, legislative facilities, or judicial facilities.

(b) CONTENTS- The evaluation shall contain, at a minimum--

(1) information on the number of children receiving child care described in subsection (a), analyzed by age, including information on the number of those children who are age 6 through 12;

(2) information on the number of families not using child care described in subsection (a) because of the cost of the child care; and

(3) recommendations for improving the quality and cost effectiveness of child care described in subsection (a), including recommendations of options for creating an optimal organizational structure and using best practices for the delivery of the child care.

SEC. 5. CHILD CARE SERVICES FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYEES.

(a) IN GENERAL- In addition to services authorized to be provided by an agency of the United States pursuant to section 616 of the Act of December 22, 1987 (40 U.S.C. 490b), an Executive agency that provides or proposes to provide child care services for Federal employees may use agency funds to provide the child care services, in a facility that is owned or leased by an Executive agency, or through a contractor, for civilian employees of the agency.

(b) AFFORDABILITY- Funds so used with respect to any such facility or contractor shall be applied to improve the affordability of child care for lower income Federal employees using or seeking to use the child care services offered by the facility or contractor.

(c) REGULATIONS- The Administrator after consultation with the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, shall, within 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, issue regulations necessary to carry out this section.

(d) DEFINITION- For purposes of this section, the term `Executive agency' has the meaning given the term by section 105 of title 5, United States Code, but does not include the General Accounting Office.

SEC. 6. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS RELATING TO CHILD CARE PROVIDED BY FEDERAL AGENCIES.

(a) AVAILABILITY OF FEDERAL CHILD CARE CENTERS FOR ONSITE CONTRACTORS; PERCENTAGE GOAL- Section 616 of the Act of December 22, 1987 (40 U.S.C. 490b) is amended--

(1) in subsection (a)--

(A) by striking `officer or agency of the United States' and inserting `Federal agency or officer of a Federal agency'; and

(B) by striking paragraphs (2) and (3) and inserting the following:

`(2) the officer or agency determines that the space will be used to provide child care and related services to--

`(A) children of Federal employees or onsite Federal contractors; or

`(B) dependent children who live with Federal employees or onsite Federal contractors; and

`(3) the officer or agency determines that the individual or entity will give priority for available child care and related services in the space to Federal employees and onsite Federal contractors.'; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

`(e)(1)(A) The Administrator of General Services shall confirm that at least 50 percent of aggregate enrollment in Federal child care centers governmentwide are children of Federal employees or onsite Federal contractors, or dependent children who live with Federal employees or onsite Federal contractors.

`(B) Each provider of child care services at an individual Federal child care center shall maintain 50 percent of the enrollment at the center of children described under subparagraph (A) as a goal for enrollment at the center.

`(C)(i) If enrollment at a center does not meet the percentage goal under subparagraph (B), the provider shall develop and implement a business plan with the sponsoring Federal agency to achieve the goal within a reasonable timeframe.

`(ii) The plan shall be approved by the Administrator of General Services based on--

`(I) compliance of the plan with standards established by the Administrator; and

`(II) the effect of the plan on achieving the aggregate Federal enrollment percentage goal.

`(2) The Administrator of General Services Administration may enter into public-private partnerships or contracts with nongovernmental entities to increase the capacity, quality, affordability, or range of child care and related services and may, on a demonstration basis, waive subsection (a)(3) and paragraph (1) of this subsection.'.

(b) PAYMENT OF COSTS OF TRAINING PROGRAMS- Section 616(b)(3) of such Act (40 U.S.C. 490b(b)(3)) is amended to read as follows:

`(3) If a Federal agency has a child care facility in a Federal space, or is a sponsoring agency for a child care facility in a Federal space, the agency or the General Services Administration may pay accreditation fees, including renewal fees, for that center to be accredited. Any Federal agency that provides or proposes to provide child care services for children referred to in subsection (a)(2), may reimburse any Federal employee or any person employed to provide the services for the costs of training programs, conferences, and meetings and related travel, transportation, and subsistence expenses incurred in connection with those activities. Any per diem allowance made under this section shall not exceed the rate specified in regulations prescribed under section 5707 of title 5, United States Code.'.

(c) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS- Section 616(c) of such Act (40

U.S.C. 490b(c)) is amended--

(1) by inserting `Federal' before `child care centers'; and

(2) by striking `Federal workers' and inserting `Federal employees'.

(d) PROVISION OF CHILD CARE BY PRIVATE ENTITIES- Section 616(d) of such Act (40 U.S.C. 490b(d)) is amended to read as follows:

`(d)(1) If a Federal agency has a child care facility in a Federal space, or is a sponsoring agency for a child care facility in a Federal space, the agency, the child care center board of directors, or the General Services Administration may enter into an agreement with 1 or more private entities under which the private entities would assist in defraying the general operating expenses of the child care providers including salaries and tuition assistance programs at the facility.

`(2)(A) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, if a Federal agency does not have a child care program, or if the Administrator of General Services has identified a need for child care for Federal employees at a Federal agency providing child care services that do not meet the requirements of subsection (a), the agency or the Administrator may enter into an agreement with a non-Federal, licensed, and accredited child care facility, or a planned child care facility that will become licensed and accredited, for the provision of child care services for children of Federal employees.

`(B) Before entering into an agreement, the head of the Federal agency shall determine that child care services to be provided through the agreement are more cost effectively provided through the arrangement than through establishment of a Federal child care facility.

`(C) The Federal agency may provide any of the services described in subsection (b)(3) if, in exchange for the services, the facility reserves child care spaces for children referred to in subsection (a)(2), as agreed to by the parties. The cost of any such services provided by a Federal agency to a Federal child care facility on behalf of another Federal agency shall be reimbursed by the receiving agency.

`(3) This subsection does not apply to residential child care programs.'.

(e) PILOT PROJECTS- Section 616 of such Act (40 U.S.C. 490b) is further amended by adding at the end the following:

`(f)(1) Upon approval of the agency head, a Federal agency may conduct a pilot project not otherwise authorized by law for no more than 2 years to test innovative approaches to providing alternative forms of quality child care assistance for Federal employees. A Federal agency head may extend a pilot project for an additional 2-year period. Before any pilot project may be implemented, a determination shall be made by the agency head that initiating the pilot project would be more cost-effective than establishing a new Federal child care facility. Costs of any pilot project shall be paid solely by the agency conducting the pilot project.

`(2) The Administrator of General Services shall serve as an information clearinghouse for pilot projects initiated by other Federal agencies to disseminate information concerning the pilot projects to the other Federal agencies.

`(3) Within 6 months after completion of the initial 2-year pilot project period, a Federal agency conducting a pilot project under this subsection shall provide for an evaluation of the impact of the project on the delivery of child care services to Federal employees, and shall submit the results of the evaluation to the Administrator of General Services. The Administrator shall share the results with other Federal agencies.'.

(f) BACKGROUND CHECK- Section 616 of such Act (40 U.S.C. 490b) is further amended by adding at the end the following:

`(g) Each Federal child care center located in a Federal space shall ensure that each employee of the center (including any employee whose employment began before the date of enactment of this subsection) shall undergo a criminal history background check consistent with section 231 of the Crime Control Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 13041).'.

(g) DEFINITIONS- Section 616 of such Act (40 U.S.C. 490b) is further amended by adding at the end the following:

`(h) In this section:

`(1) The term `Federal agency' has the meaning given the term `Executive agency' in section 2 of the Federal Employees Child Care Act.

`(2) The terms `Federal building' and `Federal space' have the meanings given the term `executive facility' in such section 2.

`(3) The term `Federal child care center' means a child care center in an executive facility, as defined in such section 2.

`(4) The terms `Federal contractor' and `Federal employee' mean a contractor and an employee, respectively, of an Executive agency, as defined in such section 2.'.

END

S.813, The Federal Employees Quality Child Care Act

Federal child care is the largest employer-sponsored child care in the country. In Federal agencies including DoD, there are over 1,000 child care centers. Nearly 208,000 children are served on a daily basis. The Military Child Care Act of 1996 provides standards and oversight for military child care programs. S813 has similar provisions for non-DoD employees. Among federal agencies, there are a variety of operational approaches and funding strategies. Oversight of federal child care programs, accreditation rates and compliance with existing standards also vary among agencies. This leads to inconsistent quality and lack of compliance with standard, health and safety practices.

The Federal Employees Quality Child Care Act holds non-military federal child care to comparable standards and improves federal child care in four main ways:

1. Requires the implementation of uniform health, facility and safety guidelines, and accreditation and complete background checks,

2. Provides for consistent oversight through a uniform system for monitoring compliance and enforcement, and

3. Allows greater flexibility by permitting pilot projects and public-private partnerships to address affordability,

4. Provides the authority for federal agencies to use appropriated funds to control tuition costs for low-income families.

The bill requires the Administrator of GSA to establish health, safety and facility standards for executive facilities and to evaluate compliance with those standards. It also requires federally sponsored child care centers to meet a standard no less stringent than those required of other child care facilities in the same geographical area, and to become accredited within five years.

The bill also requires oversight of federal child care centers. Currently there is a lack of consistent oversight and evaluation among federal child care programs. Consistent evaluation is needed to ensure immediate correction of life-threatening deficiencies and timely corrections of all other deficiencies to secure children's safety. A uniform evaluating body and consistent interpretation of requirements will assure the quality of the centers and health and safety of the children enrolled. Uniform program evaluation is key to a safe, healthy and quality program. President Clinton recognized the Department of Defense (DoD) Child Development Program as an exemplary program. DoD contends that the single most effective method of improving and maintaining program quality has been the ability to ensure program accountability by conducting quarterly unannounced inspections and ensuring compliance with standards. This bill would establish such accountability for federal child care. The bill establishes procedures if a center is not in compliance with the health, safety and facility requirements. It also includes provisions for the development of corrective action plans, and mandates that the affected portion of the center be closed if the situation is life threatening or poses a risk of serious harm. It requires disclosure of facility, safety, health or program violations to parents.

Provision for criminal history background checks in Federally sponsored centers is needed because some agencies have interpreted the Crime Control Act as not being applicable to their centers because the Act specifically applies to *employees*. In the case of federal (non-DoD) centers, employees are hired by the child care provider, not the agency.

GSA supports the requirement that federal child care centers meet local licensing standards, accreditation standards, and standard child care program requirements. Local licensing standards will ensure care in federal centers is, at a minimum, equivalent to the care a child receives in any local child care center. Federal requirements will also ensure that programs are safe and appropriate to the healthy development and well being of children. Accreditation standards are an important benchmark of quality; they represent the industry standard for the minimum quality a center should provide for the education and care of the children enrolled. All federally sponsored child care centers will be accredited and required to maintain a comparable level of quality. Examples of program requirements that may be implemented include hand washing, building and equipment safety standards, emergency plans, first aid and CPR training, child abuse/neglect identification and reporting, etc. Government-wide child care requirements are needed to ensure the safety and well being of Federal families' children and enable them to have the peace of mind that would come from basic health, safety and facility requirements.

Pilot projects will allow exploration of innovative public and private partnerships to increase affordability. Agencies will have the authority to enter into agreements with private entities in which the private entities could, for example, assist in defraying expenses including, but not limited to salaries and tuition assistance. These demonstration projects and innovative approaches will give federally sponsored centers access to public and private funding and thus allow federal agencies to maximize funding. For example, it will permit agencies to partner with schools for before & after school programs. Testing new kinds of partnerships would improve the ability of federal agencies to provide the best quality child care at more affordable rates.

The bill broadens the 50% federal enrollment requirement so those individual centers with fluctuating enrollment have the ability to remain open without violating the law. The bill also broadens the definition of a federal child to include other dependent children who live with federal employees (e.g. nieces, nephews, grandchildren, foster children) and children of on-site contractors. The bill maximizes flexibility so non-federal employees can access the center and contribute to the financial viability of the center where there has been government downsizing and a shortage of Federal employees.

The Act would permit the use of appropriated funds for tuition assistance. The current Trible amendment authorizes the use of federal facilities for child care and permits funds to be spent only for child care spaces, utilities, equipment and basic furnishings. The Morella amendment to the Fiscal year 2000 Treasury-Postal bill permit the use of appropriated funds to subsidize lower income families' child care tuition, but it is a one-year provision. Child care center parent boards conduct fundraising for tuition assistance. These efforts are dependent on the board efforts and vary widely. As a result, the average parent fee in GSA centers is $130 per week, with infant spaces costing as much as $240 per week. In urban areas, a GS-6 employee earning $22,000 per year, could ill afford infant care, as it would constitute 59% of salary. The authorization of the use of funds is needed because many federal child care programs are unaffordable to all but the highest graded employees.

In summary, the bill would improve the quality of federally sponsored child care through accreditation and the sharing of best practices in health safety and facilities. It would increase the accountability and consistent oversight of federally sponsored programs, and assist with affordability through the use of agency funds and model demonstration projects.

H.R. 28, The Quality Child Care for Federal Employees Act

Federal child care is the largest employer-sponsored child care in the country. In Federal agencies including DoD, there are over 1,000 child care centers. Nearly 208,000 children are served on a daily basis. The Military Child Care Act of 1996 provides standards and oversight for military child care programs. H.R. 28 has similar provisions for non-DoD employees. Among federal agencies, there are a variety of operational approaches and funding strategies. Oversight of federal child care programs, accreditation rates and compliance with existing standards also vary among agencies. This leads to inconsistent quality and lack of compliance with standard, health and safety practices.

The Quality Child Care for Federal Employees Act holds non-military federal child care to comparable standards and improves federal child care in three ways:

1. Requires the implementation of uniform health, facility and safety guidelines, and accreditation and complete background checks,

2. Provides for consistent oversight through a uniform system for monitoring compliance and enforcement, and

3. Allows greater flexibility by permitting pilot projects and public-private partnerships to address affordability.

The bill requires the Administrator of GSA to establish health, safety and facility standards for executive facilities and to evaluate compliance with those standards. It also requires federally sponsored child care centers to meet a standard no less stringent than those required of other child care facilities in the same geographical area, and to become accredited within five years.

The bill also requires oversight of federal child care centers. Currently there is a lack of consistent oversight and evaluation among federal child care programs. Consistent evaluation is needed to ensure immediate correction of life-threatening deficiencies and timely corrections of all other deficiencies to secure children's safety. A uniform evaluating body and consistent interpretation of requirements will assure the quality of the centers and health and safety of the children enrolled. Uniform program evaluation is key to a safe, healthy and quality program. President Clinton recognized the Department of Defense (DoD) Child Development Program as an exemplary program. DoD contends that the single most effective method of improving and maintaining program quality has been the ability to ensure program accountability by conducting quarterly unannounced inspections and ensuring compliance with standards. This bill would establish such accountability for executive branch child care. The bill establishes procedures if a center is not in compliance with the health, safety and facility requirements. It also includes provisions for the development of corrective action plans, and mandates that the affected portion of the center be closed if the situation is life threatening or poses a risk of serious harm. It requires disclosure of facility, safety, health or program violations to parents.

Language requiring criminal history background checks in Federally sponsored centers is needed because some federal agencies have interpreted the Crime Control Act as not being applicable to their centers because the Act specifically applies to *employees*. In the case of Federal (non-DoD) centers, employees are hired by the child care provider, not the government.

GSA supports the requirement that federal child care centers meet local licensing standards, accreditation standards, and standard child care program requirements. Local licensing standards will ensure care in federal centers is, at a minimum, equivalent to the care a child receives in any local child care center. Federal requirements will also ensure that programs are safe and appropriate to the healthy development and well being of children. Accreditation standards are an important benchmark of quality; they represent the industry standard for the minimum quality a center should provide for the education and care of the children enrolled. All federally sponsored child care centers will be accredited and required to maintain a comparable level of quality. Examples of program requirements that may be implemented include hand washing, building and equipment safety standards, emergency plans, first aid and CPR training, child abuse/neglect identification and reporting, etc. Government-wide child care requirements are needed to ensure the safety and well being of Federal families' children and enable them to have the peace of mind that would come from basic health, safety and facility requirements.

Pilot projects will allow exploration of innovative public and private partnerships to increase affordability. Agencies will have the authority to enter into agreements with private entities in which the private entities could, for example, assist in defraying expenses including, but not limited to salaries and tuition assistance. These demonstration projects and innovative approaches will give federally sponsored centers access to public and private funding and thus allow federal agencies to maximize funding. For example, it will permit agencies to partner with schools for before & after school programs. Testing new kinds of partnerships would improve the ability of federal agencies to provide the best quality child care at more affordable rates.

The bill broadens the 50% federal enrollment requirement so those individual centers with fluctuating enrollment have the ability to remain open without violating the law. The bill also broadens the definition of a federal child to include other dependent children who live with federal employees (e.g. nieces, nephews, grandchildren, foster children) and children of on-site contractors. The bill maximizes flexibility so non-federal employees can access the center and contribute to the financial viability of the center where there has been government downsizing and a shortage of Federal employees.

In summary, the bill would improve the quality of federally sponsored child care through accreditation and the sharing of best practices in health safety and facilities. It would increase the accountability and consistent oversight of federally sponsored programs, and assist with affordability through the use of model demonstration projects.

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Divider Title: **5**

Afterschool.gov

The Office of Child Care and the National Partnership for Reinventing Government (NPR) have developed a web site for all after-school programs. America Online (AOL) has rated it the number 1 after-school web site.

Visit www.afterschool.gov!

Sponsored by Federal Support to Communities Initiatives, with General Services Administration and Vice President Gore's National Partnership for Reinventing Government

fterschool.gov

A brand new web site for after-school programs

- **Get information about federal resources**
  - **Snacks**
  - **Mentors**
  - **Grants**
  - **Safe web sites for kids**
  - **Etc.**
- **Learn from colleagues about developing new resources**
- **Hear success stories from around the nation**

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Divider Title: **6**

The office of Child Care publishes a newsletter which is sent to all members of Congress, government agencies, all Federal child care centers, to many public and private child care operations, and professionals in the field.

child@gsa.gov

Issue 1.4 General Services Administration Office of Child Care June 3, 1999

More Hill Action

Child Care Bills Introduced in the House of Representatives

On Capitol Hill, two bills which would have an impact on Federal child care were approved by the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight in the House of Representatives on May 19. They will next go to the House floor for a vote.

The Quality Child Care for Federal Employees Act (H.R. 28) was introduced by Representative Benjamin Gilman. In many respects, it will have the most direct impact for GSA and is similar to S. 813 introduced in the Senate which we outlined in issue 1.3 of child@gsa.gov

Representative Connie Morella introduced a bill (H.R. 206) to make child care more accessible to greater numbers of Federal Employees. In general, HR 206 states that:

> *An Executive agency which provides or proposes to provide child care services for Federal employees may use appropriated funds (otherwise available to such agency for salaries) to provide child care, in a Federal or leased facility, or through contract, for civilian employees of such agency.*

We will continue to keep you informed about the progress of these bills and similar bills in the Senate. For the very latest information on bill summaries and status, you should check out the Thomas website on the Internet http://thomas.loc.gov/home/thomas.html and search by bill numbers.

Get On Board

The May/June issue of the Child Care Information Exchange magazine has a very useful article on board recruitment and development. You can also check out the organization on line at http://www.ccie.com.

Building Partnerships for Child Care

The Child Care Bureau of the Department of Health and Human Services, in conjunction with The Finance Project, the Families and Work Institute, and the National Governors' Association, hosted a meeting in Washington, DC on May 24-25 on "Building Public-Private Partnerships for Child Care." Participants at the meeting discussed and received a set of tools and materials through the Child Care Partnership Project that would be useful to any child care professional interested in reaching out to make a public/private partnership.

The Tool Kit

Engaging Business Partners: An Employer Toolkit is divided into six separate sections on: business reasons for investing in child care; getting started; public-private partnerships; child care options for employers; overcoming challenges; and resources. Toolkits can be tailored to fit the needs and resources of different organizations, including their structure and culture, which will allow users to be more effective in engaging business partners. In the "Getting Started" section, for example, pull-out sheets on how to do a cost-benefit anaylsis, and assessments of corporate needs and policies, community resources, employee needs and more will help you make your case on the local level.

Perhaps the most useful tool is a pull-out on successful business roundtables, coalitions and committees with real-life examples taken from the Texas Employer Coalition Initiatives, Florida's Child Care Executive Partnership, Employers' Child Care Alliance in Alabama, and the Colorado Business Commission on Child Care Financing.

You can download a copy of the toolkit template at http://nccic.org/ccpartnerships or call the Child Care Partnership Project at 800-616-2242 and ask for Engaging Business Partners: An Employer Toolkit Template.

Quality First

A message from the Associate Administrator, GSA's Office of Child Care

Dear Friends:

Accreditation by a nationally recognized accrediting body is certainly a hallmark of quality programming, and I am proud of GSA' s record in this area. Nearly 70 percent of our eligible centers have achieved accreditation, some 10 times the percentage of the private sector. We have some truly wonderful centers, showcases for facility design, and the children are safe, healthy and well-cared for all across the country.

As we approach the new millennium and mark the history of GSA's participation in onsite child care, we should pledge ourselves to raise the bar on quality -- particularly in the area of programming.

There are centers in GSA's facilities which rival the very best of the best in early education and child care, and they can serve as models for the system as a whole. We need to come together as a community and share best practices, good ideas, and sound curricula. We have an obligation to our customers -- the parents who place their children in our care and especially the children -- to give them the sound foundation for a lifetime of learning.

Over the next few issues of this newsletter, we will use this column to point to some of the best resources for program development, research in early education, and successful models. This is an opportunity for those of you in the field to do a little healthy bragging. We would like to hear from you about what quality means to you, and what you are doing in your centers to raise the bar.

To participate in this forum, simply e-mail us at child@gsa.gov and we will broadcast the news through the newsletter. In time, we hope to use the World Wide Web as a permanent place for you to continue developing quality programs. We will also be sharing ideas at our annual conference this July in San Diego. Our aim is nothing less than the best for every child in every center sponsored by GSA. As our agency celebrates its 50th anniversary, we should revel in our success and use that birthday as a springboard for success in the years ahead.

Susan Clampitt

The Wild Wide Web

Reviews of websites in the Wild Wide Web do not constitute any endorsement by the General Services Administration.

Connect for Kids

Run by the Benton Foundation in partnership with The Ad Council, Parent Soup, Yahoo!, and the Coalition for America's Children, the Connect for Kids website calls itself a "tool that helps adults get connected to the information and resources they need to make a difference for kids and their communities." Its membership casts a wide net to include early education professionals, children's advocates, parents, and anyone with an interest in our nation's children.

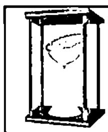
The scope of its content and links to other resources is broad and deep. The site contains news, feature articles, "Ideas for Action," an expansive reference room, organization links, state-by-state links, and a national calendar.

Of particular interest to those in the Federal child care community is the extensive section in the reference room devoted to child care issues. Topics include early education brain research, Census Department reports on who's minding the preschoolers and fathers as caregivers, statistics on absenteeism among parents of young children, a state-by-state ranking of child care, costs, financing, and choosing quality child care.

Well organized and up to date, Connect for Kids also has articles exclusive to the site and a discussion group on balancing work and family. Best of all, it offers a free subscription to its newsletter which will be delivered straight to your e-mail inbox.

To connect with Connect for Kids, go to:

http://www.connectforkids.org



Time's Running Out...
to register for
GSA's Child Care Conference
JULY 7-9, 1999 in San Diego
Call today 202/501-3464 or 202/501-3965

child@gsa.gov

Issue 1.7 | General Services Administration | Office of Child Care | August 16, 1999

The GSA Way

Managing the civilian government's largest child care network

Outside of the Department of Defense's mammoth child care system (some 800 centers and 9,000 family child care homes with spaces for 215,000 children), the child care network run by the General Services Administration is the largest in the Federal government. Over 7,500 children are enrolled in GSA centers from Anchorage, Alaska to Boston, Massachusetts. Oversight for the operations and management of that system falls into the capable hands of GSA's Center of Expertise for Child Care Operations, a division of the Public Buildings Service.

Child Care Operations is one of a dozen national Centers of Expertise in PBS. Established in the Fall of 1997, the Centers of Expertise system bring together a core group of talented people in a particular subject area to form an elastic cross-regional team of experts. The Child Care Operations Center of Expertise, under the direction of Eileen Stern, includes professional staff in New York and Washington which guides and assists the child care coordinators in 11 regions across the country. Those child care coordinators are responsible, in turn, for oversight of the individual centers within their respective regions.

Working in concert with GSA's Office of Child Care, which is responsible for policy direction, guidance, field-wide research and legislation, the Child Care Operations Center of Expertise supports the national commitment to providing quality child care as a key building amenity and an essential component of a quality work environment. The Center ensures that working families using child care in centers located in GSA-managed space receive high quality care for their children. One of the hallmarks of that commitment is GSA's 74 percent accreditation rate of all its eligible centers.

Designing Brighter Tomorrows

In addition to directing the day-to-day aspects of child care centers in our Federal facilities, the Center of Expertise has also worked diligently to share best practices and information among GSA and other Federal centers. For the past several years, the Center has organized and managed GSA's annual child care conference, and they have built a website to broadcast GSA services to other government agencies, parents and the child care field. A quarterly newsletter, Center News, provides an update on issues directly related to the operations of the GSA centers such as accreditation updates and highlights from the centers.

One key publication that can benefit everyone in the child care field is GSA's *Child Care Center Design Guide* which offers step-by-step guidance and recommendations for designing and building child care centers that are not only aesthetically pleasing and safe environments but that are designed for learning children as well.

As part of GSA's commitment to using technology to enhance business operations, the Center of Expertise is also responsible for ensuring that all GSA centers have access to the rich resources and information available online. GSA centers all across the country are taking advantage of this new technology to find out information about the latest educational practices as well as important health and safety information for the children in their care. GSA's Child Care Operations Center of Expertise is another example of the GSA Way -- thinking "out of the box" to provide new solutions for our customers. As PBS Commissioner Robert Peck has said about theCenters of Expertise, "We cannot afford to be set in our ways or to have the lines between our organizational boxes get in the way of our responsiveness."

The Wild Wide Web

Understanding the GSA Network

As one of 12 Centers of Expertise, the Child Care Operations Center website can be found on the PBS portion of the General Services Administration public website (http://www.gsa.gov/pbs/centers). The Child Care Operations site uses a frames interface to present a lively picture of child care within the GSA system.

Colorful crayons serve as navigational buttons for the following sections: About the Center, Annual Conference, Child Care Centers, Center of the Month, Library, What's New, Boards of Directors, and Fundraising.

Clicking on the first of those crayons will take you to a welcome page which outlines the mission of the Center and the legislative authority which gives Federal agencies permission to establish child care centers for Federal families. A useful link to a contact list gives you email, phone and address access to the Center's staff as well as each of the regional child care coordinators.

The "Annual Conference" crayon links you to information about GSA's Child Care conference which is organized and run by the Center of Expertise. Make sure to bookmark the site for information next Spring about the year 2000 conference.

Clicking on the "Child Care Centers" crayon will take you to a clickable map of the United States, divided into the 11 different GSA regions. Simply click on the region and up pops a state-by-state list of all centers within a given region. At the bottom on the map, you can link to a list of those centers that have been accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

"Center of the Month," as the name implies, highlights one of the over 110 GSA centers around the country, and in the "Library" section, visitors have access to the Center's quarterly newsletter and a PDF version of the *Child Care Center Design Guide.* In order to read and use the PDF guide, you will need to download a Postscript document reader, such as the Acrobat from Adobe, which is free. If you don't already have a reader, simply follow the easy instructions to install it on your system.

Rounding out GSA's Child Care Operations website are a calendar of events under "What's New," along with pertinent information all centers should have. The crayons for "Boards of Directors" and "Fundraising" offer useful tips for local child care center boards as well as examples of local fundraising strategies. The last crayon, "Centers Home," will take you back to the PBS Centers of Expertise page.

To go to GSA's Child Care Operations Center of Expertise website, type:

http://www.gsa.gov/pbs/centers/child/child.htm

Any changes, questions or recommendations about the site should be addressed to Sue Dixon (202/501-0287 sue.dixon@gsa.gov).

The director of the Center of Expertise, Eileen Stern, can be contacted at:

Eileen.Stern@gsa.gov or by phone at 212/264-8321

Ready for Reading

Our next newsletter, on encouraging literacy, will appear after Labor Day.

Divider Title: 7

The Trible Amendment

The Trible Amendment is the authorizing legislation that permits child care in Federal owned and leased facilities.

TRIBLE AMENDMENT

Authority allowing Federal agencies to establish child care centers is provided under 40 U.S.C 490b, commonly known as the "Trible Amendment." It states:

SEC. 139. (a) Notwithstanding section 101(i) and section 102(c) of this joint resolution, and notwithstanding any provision of H.R. 3036, if any individual or entity which provides or proposes to provide child care services for Federal employees applies to the officer or agency of the United States charged with the allotment of space in the Federal Buildings in the community or district in which such individual or entity provides or proposes to provide such services, such officer or agency may allot space in such a building to such individual or entity if -

(1) such space is available:

(2) such officer or agency determines that such space will be used to provide child care services to a group of individuals of whom at least 50 percent are Federal employees; and

(3) such officer or agency determines that such individual or entity will give priority for available child care services in such space to Federal employees.

(b)(1) if an officer or agency allots space to an individual or entity under subsection (a), such space may be provided to such individual or entity without charge for rent or services.

(2) If there is an agreement for the payment of costs associated with the provision of space allotted under subsection (a) or services provided in connection with such space, nothing in title 31, United States Code, or any other provision of law, shall be construed to prohibit or restrict payment by reimbursement to the miscellaneous receipts or other appropriate account of the Treasury.

(3) For the purpose of this section, the term "services" includes the providing of lighting, heating, cooling, electricity, office furniture, office machines and equipment, telephone service (including installation of lines and equipment and other expenses associated with telephone service), and security systems (including installation and other expenses associated with security systems).

SEC. 528. Section 616 of the Act of December 22, 1987 (40 U.S.C. 490b) is amended—

(1) by amending subsection (a)(2) to read as follows:

"(2) such officer or agency determines that such space will be used to provide child care services to children of whom at least 50 percent have one parent or guardian who is employed by the Federal Government; and";

(2) by amending subsection (b)(3) to read as follows:

"(3) For the purpose of this subsection, the term 'services' includes the providing of lighting, heating, cooling, electricity, office furniture, office machines and equipment, classroom furnishings and equipment, kitchen appliances, playground equipment, telephone service (including installation of lines and equipment and other expenses associated with telephone services), and security systems (including installation and other expenses associated with security systems), including replacement equipment, as needed.";

(3) by redesignating subsection (b)(3), as amended by paragraph (2), as subsection (b)(4), and inserting after subsection (b)(2) the following:

"(3) If an agency has a child care facility in its space, or is a sponsoring agency for a child care facility in other Federal or leased space, the agency or the General Services Administration may pay accreditation fees, including renewal fees, for that center to be accredited by a nationally recognized early-childhood professional organization, and travel and per diem expenses for attendance by representatives of the center at the annual General Services Administration child care conference."; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

"(c) Through the General Services Administration's licensing agreements, the Administrator of General Services shall provide guidance, assistance, and oversight to Federal agencies for the development of child care centers to promote the provision of economical and effective child care for Federal workers.

"(d) If a Federal agency has a child care facility in its space, or is a sponsoring agency for a child care facility in other Federal or leased space, the agency or the General Services Administration may enter into a consortium with one or more private entities under which such private entities would assist in defraying the costs associated with the salaries and benefits provided for any personnel providing services at such facility.".

SEC. 529. Section 532 of the Act of November 5, 1991 (104 Stat. 1470; Public Law 100–509), is amended—

(1) by inserting "(a)" immediately before the first sentence inside the quotation marks; and

(2) by adding before the close quotation marks at the end the following new subsection:

"(b) The Internal Revenue Service may use competitive procedures or procedures other than competitive procedures to procure the services of attorneys for use in litigating actions under the Internal Revenue Code to which a foreign-controlled corporation is a party. The Internal Revenue Service need not provide any written justification for the use of procedures other than competitive procedures when procuring attorney services for such cases and need not furnish for publication in the Commerce Business Daily or otherwise any notice of solicitation or synopsis with respect to such procurement.".

SEC. 530. (a) None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to implement, administer, enforce, or otherwise carry out any change in the terms or conditions governing benefits under

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Divider Title: **8**

This is a first-of-its-kind attempt by the Federal government to team up with a local government, private foundations and corporations.

Penn Quarter Partnership for Children and Families

Description

Penn Quarter Partnership for Children and Families is the first child care center collaboration among the Federal government, local government and a major corporation to provide high quality child care targeted for low and middle income families that also includes extended-hours care. The mission of the Penn Quarter Partnership for Children and Families is to provide high quality, affordable child care to parents working in Washington D.C. The center will provide care for 114 children from infants to pre-kindergartners from 6:30 am to 10:00 PM, Monday through Saturday. The urban center, to be located at 410 8th Street in Washington DC NW, will also provide comprehensive family support services such as health care for the children, health and parenting education for adults, ESL classes, and other supportive activities. The DC Childcare Corporation (DCCCC), the non-profit corporation established to oversee the center, will continue to raise substantial scholarship funding so that lower and middle income families will have access to the highest quality child care.

Partners

- The Federal Government:
  - The U.S. General Services Administration
  - The U.S. Department of Justice
  - The U.S. Department of the Treasury, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms
  - The U.S. Department of Labor
  - The Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation
- Marriott International and Host Marriott Corporation
- The D.C. Government

History and Development

The project began as a joint effort to fund high quality, affordable child care in an urban neighborhood with many Federal employees and Marriott staff. The DCCCC was incorporated in 1999 and established as a 501© (3) non-profit entity, with board members from private companies, foundations, the Marriott Corporation, Washington DC government and the Federal government. Quality, affordable child care for lower and middle-income families is extremely hard to find in Washington DC. The DC market rate for infant care is $200-250 per week. The Marriott Corporation and the Federal government have a mutual need for affordable care for lower wage staff. The Vice President of Marriott for Work-Life programs sought to partner with GSA and Washington DC to meet their mutual child care needs. Each partner brings resources the other partners cannot contribute e.g., Federal agencies support through renovation and rent funds. Washington DC will support through renovation and tuition assistance funds, Marriott contributes private funds and the ability to attract other private funding sources.

Current Activities

Currently the DCCCC is in the process of selecting a child care provider through a Request for Proposal process. Three proposals are being reviewed and the board is expected to select

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U.S. GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
Associate Administrator
Office of Child Care

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Ann,

Looking forward to our meeting Wednesday morning. We've prepared this briefing book to give you an overview of who we are and what we do.

Eric Dodds (GSA's White House Liaison) and Bonnie Storm of my staff will be joining us on Wednesday.

Bonnie's information:

Sheila Storm

SS (b)(6)

DOB

[001]

Susan

a provider in January 2000. The center renovation began in November 1999, and is expected to be completed in March 2000.

Resources

- D.C. Government – Dept. of Housing and Community Development grant for building renovation
- U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) and other Federal partners- half of building renovations and rental funds, furnishings and equipment, and in-kind contributions
- Private foundations
  - The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation
  - Host Marriott Corporation
  - The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation - for scholarships, start-up, transportation and program
  - Philip L. Graham Fund - for scholarships, start-up and transportation
- Kaiser Permanente – health insurance for uninsured children, parent and staff health and parenting education, CPR training
- PEPCO - scholarships

Unique Characteristics

- This project is the first public-private partnership created for child care that involves a major corporation, the federal government and the local government.
- Major commitment by corporate partners for fundraising so that children from lower income level families have access to the highest quality child care
- The center will be open non-traditional hours, 6:30am to 10:00pm, Monday through Saturday. These hours were chosen specifically to accommodate parents working early morning and evening hours and Saturdays. It is difficult to find high quality center based care during these hours.

Contact Information

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A Federal Child Care Executive Order

Federal child care is the largest employer-sponsored child care program in the country. In Federal agencies, including the Department of Defense, over 1,000 centers serve nearly 208,000 children on a daily basis. The Military Child Care Act of 1996 provides health, safety and facility guidelines and mandates accreditation of each center and criminal background checks for all employees at military child care programs.

No such standards exist for other Federal employees. Non-DoD agencies use a range of operational approaches, and consequently compliance with standards and accreditation rates vary. Federal child care programs are plagued by inconsistent quality, a lack of compliance with health, safety and facility standards, and inadequate criminal background checks. Unlike the military system, other Federal agencies do not subsidize parental tuition, and in order to address this issue, they should be allowed to explore partnerships with the private sector to reduce the cost to parents.

An Executive Order is needed to:

1. Require the implementation of uniform health, safety and facility guidelines. Mandate accreditation and complete background checks.

2. Provide for consistent oversight through a uniform system for monitoring agency compliance and enforcement.

3. Allow greater flexibility by permitting pilot projects and public-private partnerships to address affordability.

The Executive Order should require the Administrator of the General Services Administration to establish health, safety and facility guidelines for all executive agency child care centers, and those standards should be no less stringent than those required of other licensed child care facilities in the same geographical area.

The Order would also require that Federal child care centers become accredited to ensure the quality of the program for the healthy development of the enrolled children. Accreditation standards are an important benchmark of quality and represent the industry minimum standards for care and education.

To ensure compliance with the proposed standards, the Order should require a single agency with oversight of all Federal child care centers. Consistent evaluation is needed to ensure immediate correction of life-threatening deficiencies and timely corrections to secure children's safety. The Order should spell out procedures to be followed if a Federal center were not in compliance with established health, safety and facility requirements: it should require affected centers to develop corrective action plans and to close the affected portion of any center where there is a life-threatening situation or where circumstances pose a risk of serious harm. Centers should be required to disclose any health, safety, facility or program violations to parents.

President Clinton recognized the Department of Defense Child Development Program as exemplary. DoD contends that the single most effective way of improving and maintaining program quality are through quarterly unannounced inspections and ensuring compliance with standards. The Order should authorize a single agency for such inspections and for enforcing compliance.

The Executive Order should mandate criminal history background checks in all Federally sponsored centers. Some agencies have interpreted the 1988 Crime Control Act as not applicable to their centers because the Act specifically applies to employees. In the case of non-DoD Federal agencies, employees are hired by the child care provider, not the agency. Nevertheless, those employees should pass the same rigorous background check.

Pilot projects would allow agencies to explore partnerships to reduce costs to parents. Agencies should be authorized to enter into agreements with private entities on a pilot or demonstration basis to assist in defraying operating expenses. Testing new kinds of partnerships would improve the ability of Federal agencies to provide the best quality child care at more affordable rates.

file: childcare anyear fyi family

Most states don't conduct federal background checks on child care providers

February 1, 2000
Web posted at: 10:26 AM EST (1526 GMT)

WASHINGTON (AP) -- While most states conduct background checks on child care providers, fewer than a third use the FBI's records to detect criminals who may have crossed state lines, the government says.

All but four states conduct some kind of background investigation, with most checking state criminal records and child abuse registries, according to a report issued Monday by General Accounting Office, the investigative arm of Congress.

But only 16 states reported conducting FBI checks that list federal offenses and crimes in other states.

"We spend more time testing school crossing guards than we do daycare center workers," said Rep. Pete Stark, D-California, who requested the investigation and is sponsoring legislation to increase federal funding for child care.

"Working parents need more than a place to park their children while they work," Stark said. "They deserve to know their children are in a safe facility, cared for by well-trained child care providers, and in a program designed to help children flourish."

The need for child care has swelled in recent years -- 65 percent of mothers with children younger than six were in the labor force in 1997 compared to 39 percent in 1975, the report said.

States are responsible for protecting the safety and health of children in child care settings, but they have to maintain basic standards to receive funding from the federal government.

To establish one standard to measure the various state programs, the investigators created a list of key requirements, which included criminal background checks, frequent surprise inspections of care facilities and a certain case load for state workers who monitor the facilities.

The investigators found that most state licensing offices don't have enough staff to inspect their state's child care facilities. Only 11 states had caseloads lower than the recommended 75 centers for each had caseloads lower than the recommended 75 centers for each inspector, with a third having more than 150.

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