



What Will Parents Vote For?

A survey by the National Parenting Association
and Offspring Magazine — MAY 2000

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ABOUT THE NATIONAL PARENTING ASSOCIATION

The National Parenting Association is working to make parenting a higher priority in our private lives and on the public agenda with a message that unites Americans and a national campaign to value, support, and strengthen parenting.

We're adding parents' voices to the national debate and finding new solutions to the problems facing today's parents — in how we organize our work lives, schools and our communities. We're laying the groundwork to spark and sustain a new social movement with solid research and fresh thinking, expertise in communications to reach parents, opinion-leaders, and the American public, and partnerships with others who care about parents, kids and America's future.

Support for the fieldwork for *What Will Parents Vote For?* Update 2000 was provided, in part, by a grant from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.

ONLINE

An online version of this Summary and Analysis and the full report including the survey instrument and complete findings can be found on the National Parenting Association web site, www.parentsunite.org. Related stories and an online version of the survey can be found at the *Offspring Magazine* web site, www.offspringmag.com.

What will parents vote for?

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

Despite an unprecedented span of prosperity and dramatic drops in crime, parents are more worried than four years ago about violence, drugs, educating their kids, instilling values and managing time demands of both family and work.

It's not that parents think government can't offer solutions ... they think no one is listening.

Political pollsters keep churning out the numbers tracking which candidate is ahead with one or another segment of the American public. Yet virtually none have thought to look at the issues that could unite a broad swath of the population because of their fundamental common concerns *as parents*. We thought it was important to understand what's on the minds of our nation's parents these days. What are their daily struggles? What do parents say would help them succeed in the challenges of raising the next generation? And do they think the politicians are paying attention?

To learn the answers, the National Parenting Association commissioned Charney Research to update our landmark 1996 research, *What Will Parents Vote For?* We surveyed a national sample of 650 parents in late January and early February 2000. What we found was that despite an unprecedented span of prosperity and dramatic drops in crime, parents are more worried than four years ago about threats of violence and drugs, educating their kids, instilling values and managing the time demands of both family and work. We also found lots of agreement among parents, with strong across-the-board support for a host of practical measures to keep guns away from kids, improve public schools, ease the time crunch and the economic burdens on young, low-income parents that make these pressures even worse for them.

While parents clearly think that government could address their concerns — four out of five say that government can do a great deal or something — less than half (46%) say that government is responding, a six-point decline since this same question was asked four years ago. And nearly two-thirds (64%) of parents now believe that public officials, “do not care much about what parents like me think” — up seven points from 1996. It's not that parents think government cannot offer solutions, it's that they think no one is listening. Political leaders would do well to heed this wake-up call.

After years of advocacy on the need for family-friendly work practices, attitudes are starting to change... but the shifts don't go nearly far enough.

Both mothers and fathers say balancing work and family is their greatest daily challenge.

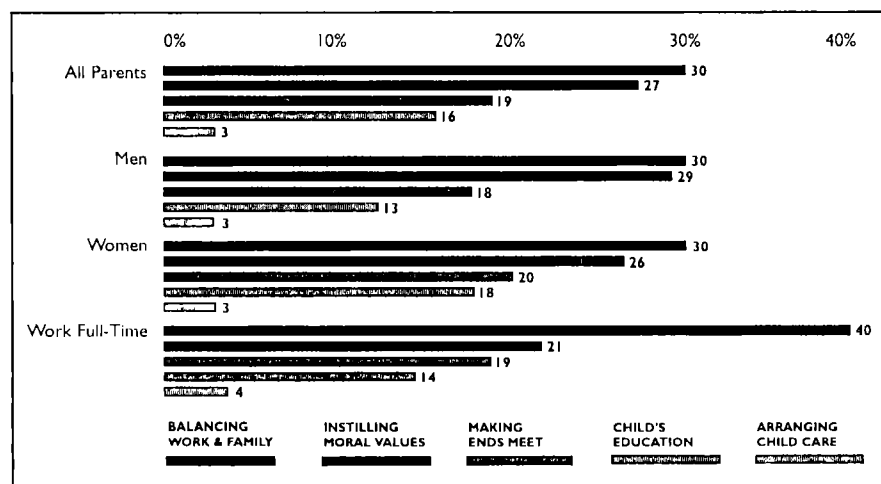
WHAT DO PARENTS WANT?

Relief from the time crunch

The good news from our survey is that employers — particularly in today's tight labor market — have begun to respond to the realities of contemporary family life. The majority of working parents now report that they have some flexibility on the job:

- sixty-nine percent of working parents say they can work fewer hours regularly if family needs require it, and
- sixty-seven percent say they can work flexible hours, for example starting earlier or later than normal working hours — and nearly half of working parents are currently doing so.

WHAT'S THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE FACING YOU AS A PARENT?



Most parents say it would not hurt their careers if they told their boss they need more time for their children, by a margin of 65% to 27% — a finding that is both surprising and heartening. After years of advocacy on the need for family-friendly work practices, attitudes are starting to change.

The bad news is that the shifts we see do not go nearly far enough or reach widely enough to solve the time crunch confronting working parents. When asked, "What is the biggest daily challenge you face as a parent?" the single most frequent response was balancing work and family. Thirty percent of parents — interestingly, the same percentage among fathers as mothers — said work-family balance was their greatest challenge. Among those working full-time, four out of

ten said so. In response to an open-ended question about their greatest worries, 19% of parents spontaneously mentioned coping with work and family and having time for their kids, up significantly from 6% four years ago.

For working parents, the lack of time for family and self is reaching crisis proportions. Moms working full-time are especially overburdened. Nearly four-fifths of them don't have enough time for themselves and almost half say they lack enough time for their kids.

WHO FEELS THE TIME CRUNCH THE MOST?

Percentage of parents who say...		Not enough time for self	Not enough time for kids
All Parents		56%	32%
Working full-time	Women	79	48
	Men	53	36
Working part-time	Women	50	30
	Men	58	35
Non-working	Women	45	17
	Men	40	14

6% of lower income parents vs. 30% of higher income parents work for firms that rate high on family friendliness.

While helpful, the transition we are beginning to see in the workplace does not reach everyone. Our data show that the folks left out tend to be lower income and younger parents — precisely those who need help the most. Thirty percent of parents with family incomes over \$60,000 a year, compared to only six percent of parents with incomes under \$20,000, work for firms that rank high on an index measuring the availability of family-friendly options. Parents under age 35, who generally have younger children, are also less likely to have on-the-job flexibility. ✎

WHICH PARENTS HAVE WORKPLACE FLEXIBILITY?

Availability of Family Friendly Work Options	Income		
	Under \$20,000	\$20,000-\$60,000	Over \$60,000
High	6%	19%	30%
Middle	32	33	38
Low	62	48	33

Apart from limited child care subsidies and the passage of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993, the government has not done much to address the time bind squeezing today's families. The FMLA guaranteed that new parents could have 12 weeks of job-protected leave, but time off is unpaid and the law only applies to those working in firms with 50 or more employees. That means that people working for smaller firms — over half the parents in our sample — are excluded.

Work-life balance has not yet emerged as a major issue on the political landscape, so parents may not see it in those terms. But when specific public policies were proposed to them, the ideas drew broad support:

- ninety percent favor (55% strongly favor) tax incentives to encourage family-friendly policies by employers, such as benefits for part-time workers and flexible working hours, and
- eighty-four percent favor (53% strongly favor) a law to ensure 24 hours or three days paid leave annually for family needs, like parent-teacher conferences or taking kids to the doctor.

These measures were overwhelmingly favored across party affiliation, race, gender and income.

We also asked parents their views on whether new mothers should be allowed to collect unemployment benefits while on maternity leave, an idea recently put forward by the Clinton administration. Proposed regulations would allow states to use the unemployment system to offer paid leave to working parents following the birth or adoption of a child. Even when presented with the opposing argument that this could draw down reserves that might be needed in times of recession, parents favored the idea by a margin of five to three (54% to 34%).

Parents would like to see this and other workplace practices adopted that would give them more time with their families. Three out of four parents (78%) favor letting workers take time off rather than extra pay for overtime and being able to trade in ten days pay for ten days additional leave (76%).

These findings suggest that if candidates articulated ideas to combat the family time famine, they could be rewarded with widespread enthusiasm among potential voters. Our survey found that major strides have been made in making job hours less rigid. But such steps alone are unlikely to solve the magnitude of the time dilemma facing working parents. Despite the reported prevalence of flexible

hours, parents still say balancing work and family is their ~~biggest daily challenge~~. It will take more fundamental changes to reorganize our lives of paid work so that we can give the unpaid job of parenting — a vital social investment — the attention it deserves.

Worries about crime and violence top parents' concerns. Nearly 7 out of 10 parents worry that a school shooting could happen near them.

Action to combat gun violence

Worries about crime and violence continue to top the list of parents' concerns and have intensified since four years ago. Forty percent of parents cite crime and violence as a major worry, up from 30% in 1996. The highly publicized wave of deadly school shootings is undoubtedly weighing on parents' minds. Nearly seven out of ten parents (69%) told us they are worried that a school shooting, like the one at Columbine High School in Colorado, could happen at a school near them. Concern is deep and widespread: at least two-thirds of parents in every demographic group and region fear that such a shooting could take place locally.

PARENTS SUPPORT TOUGHER GUN CONTROL

	Percent in Favor				
	All Parents	Women	Men	Gun Owners	Non-Owners
Legislation requiring gun makers and sellers to install trigger locks or safety devices to make it harder for kids to fire them.	88%	92%	85%	82%	92%
Registering all guns and licensing all owners, as is done with cars.	84	88	80	68	93
Raising the age of possession for handguns and assault weapons to 21.*	82	85	79	75	87

*Federal law only bans private ownership of all assault weapons and ammunition clips with over ten rounds made after September 13, 1994.

Parents do not sidestep their responsibility. Over half (53%) put most of the blame for school violence on "parents' failure to teach and watch their kids." One in five thinks violent TV, movies, and computers are the most to blame, and 14% point to kids' access to guns. However, while parents may not see access to guns as the prime cause of youth violence, they certainly see restricting access to guns as an important solution to the problem. Parents — including the 32% who own guns — overwhelmingly support legislation requiring trigger locks, gun registration and raising the age for gun possession. Just over half of parents (51%) would ban handguns altogether.

Once again, support cuts across party lines *when we look at parents' views*. All three measures were favored by at least eight out of ten parents, whether they identified themselves as Democrats, Republicans or Independents. Tougher gun control is another issue that unites parents from all backgrounds, income levels and regions.

WHAT SHOULD BE THE NEXT PRESIDENT'S TOP PRIORITY?

Parents saying...

Improving public schools	29%
Health insurance for all	17
Tax cuts	16
Strengthening moral values	16
Gun control	12
Family-friendly workplaces	5
Restricting abortion	3

Parents say the next President's top priority should be improving public schools.

Better schools

The schooling of their children is a paramount concern for parents. Many aspects of education absorb their attention: quality, school hours, meeting the costs of preschool and college, and, now tragically, safety. When asked what should be the next President's top priority, the most frequent answer by a sizable margin was "improving public schools." This was the case despite the fact that, historically, public schools have been primarily a local, not a federal responsibility. Whether or not they make this distinction, it may be that parents are so dissatisfied and frustrated with the quality of education that they just want someone, somewhere, to fix the schools.

The specific measures that we asked about that drew the widest across-the-board support included:

- federal funds for school construction and renovation, favored by 85% of parents (strongly favored by 51%), and
- extending public education to include pre-kindergarten or early childhood education for all children, with 81% in favor (strongly favored by 49%).

Though two-thirds of parents would like to see schools kept open longer hours to better match the work day, this proposal is somewhat less popular than it was four years ago. And parents are divided on whether the school year should be lengthened by a month, with 44% in favor and 49% opposed. Taken together with other findings from our survey, it suggests that given a choice between keeping kids in school more or cutting back their own work hours, many parents would prefer the latter.

Economic means to provide their children with essentials

While only 16% of parents thought a general tax cut should be the President's top priority, we found substantial support for targeted tax breaks, particularly aimed at helping parents afford to provide their children with a good education, health insurance and other basic needs:

- eighty-nine percent favor (56% strongly favor) increasing tax deductions or credits to help more families pay for higher education
- eighty-eight percent favor (63% strongly favor) health insurance for every child, with a full or partial government subsidy to parents who can't afford it
- eighty-seven percent favor (59% strongly favor) eliminating state and local sales taxes on kids' necessities like diapers, school materials, and car seats.

The great majority of parents — 86% — agree that the minimum wage should be raised so that all full-time workers are above the poverty level. Support for this idea unifies parents; it gets high levels of support from African-Americans, whites and Hispanics. Not surprisingly, 98% of those at the lowest end of the income ladder favor raising the minimum wage, but the proposal was also supported by 91% of middle-income parents, and 78% of those earning over \$60,000 a year. Raising the minimum wage to lift families out of poverty enjoys greater support among Democrats (90%), and Independents (89%), than among Republicans (76%), but all favor it by substantial margins.

What are the political implications?

The outcome of what's shaping up as a tight race for the Presidency and control of Congress is likely to be determined by the ability to attract crucial swing voters among the nation's 63 million parents. With that in mind, we looked at where parents in this pivotal group stand on the issues. "Swing voters" — defined as people who called themselves either independents, "weak" Democrats or "weak" Republicans — comprised 58% of our sample.

Like parents in general, swing voters most often say that their toughest daily challenge is balancing work and family. What sets them apart is the salience of two issues: violence and schools. Swing voters are even more worried about violence than those squarely in either the Democratic or Republican camps. Not

CAPTURING THE SWING VOTE

Percent Who Say...	All Parents	"Swing Voters"	Strong Democrats	Strong Republicans
Biggest daily challenge is balancing work and family	30%	31%	30%	30%
Biggest worry is violence	40	43	33	36
Next President's top priority should be				
Improving public schools	29	33	24	22
Cutting taxes	16	15	20	20

surprisingly, they favor tougher gun control. Swing voters are also significantly more likely to say that improving public schools should be the next President's top priority. They voice strong support for proposals to provide federal dollars for rebuilding schools, universal early childhood education, and tax deductions to help pay college costs. Parents, and particularly those in the center with their votes up for grabs, are saying here are the problems we want addressed: the time crunch, gun violence and educating our kids.

COULD THIS BE AN AGENDA FOR A PARENTS' MOVEMENT?

Parenthood is a powerful common denominator. In our research, we found striking and far-reaching agreement among parents on what we need to do to improve the outcomes for their children — and our future. Support for measures like these would help parents in practical ways. And it would do something more. It would say that we, as a society, value the importance of the work of parenting.

Ruth A. Wooden, *President*

Nancy Rankin, *Director of Research and Programs*

HOW THE SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED

What Will Parents Vote For? Update 2000 was conducted for the National Parenting Association from January 26 to February 8, 2000 by Charney Research, a New York-based polling firm. It consisted of a total of 650 telephone interviews, divided among a national random sample of 500 American parents and oversamples of 50 black parents, 50 Latino parents, and 50 parents who were welfare recipients. All respondents were American citizens 18 or older with children who were living at home or as their dependents. The margin of sampling error for the national sample is $\pm 4.5\%$.

The oversamples were conducted to provide sub-samples large enough to allow comparison of separate findings concerning African-Americans, Hispanics, and welfare beneficiaries. The oversamples are weighted down to their correct proportions of the national population in the data on all parents.

The sample structure is similar to that of the 1996 survey of American parents conducted for the National Parenting Association, except in one respect. The 1996 parents poll excluded welfare recipients, who then made up 5% of parents. They currently make up 3% of parents. Since they are so few, even if welfare recipients are excluded from the 2000 data, none of the national results change by more than one percentage point. Hence the 2000 findings, although they include welfare recipients, are comparable to the 1996 results.

This summary is based on the work of Craig Charney and Joan Zacharias of Charney Research, and Nancy Rankin, Ruth Wooden, and Peggy Shiller of the National Parenting Association.

"When it comes to how to help kids, who better to ask than the folks who care about children the most — their parents? This important new survey by the National Parenting Association and *Offspring* Magazine reveals a striking consensus among parents on what should be done to help them better address the needs of their children. All of us who care deeply about making sure kids are pointed in the right direction need to listen carefully to these voices."

General Colin L. Powell, *America's Promise*

"Employers will want to listen to what parents have to say if they want to hire and keep the best workers. It's encouraging to see that corporate America is waking up to employee needs for flexibility. Now it's time for work-life balance to become the norm in businesses large and small."

Carolyn Buck Luce, *National Director, Ernst & Young*

"The research shows there's more that unites parents than divides them. When it comes to their kids, parents are in agreement about what's important: they want better schools, less violence and more time for their families."

John A. Buehrens, *President, Unitarian Universalist Association*

"I especially urge candidates of both parties to give these findings serious attention."

John Mack Carter, *The Hearst Corporation*

"The National Parenting Association has done a real service in listening to the voices of parents and their major concerns."

Ellen Galinsky, *author of Ask the Children, and President, Families and Work Institute*

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TOTAL PAGES
INCLUDING COVER) : *28*

REMARKS:

*Here's the latest on the
Senate Early Learning amendments
may*

Add to
bill

EARLY LEARNING FUNDING

"(a) To carry out this part, there is authorized to be appropriated to the Department of Health and Human Services,

- (1) \$750,000,000 for fiscal year 2001;
- (2) \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2002;
- (3) \$1,500,000,000 for fiscal year 2003;
- (4) such sums as necessary;
- (5) such sums as necessary;

"(b) If the conference report on the concurrent Budget Resolution for fiscal year 2002 reserves funds for this Act, the amount reserved is appropriated consistent with the resolution in each of fiscal years 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2005. The amount appropriated for each fiscal year is the lesser of:

- (1) the amount authorized in subsection (a)(3) above; or
- (2) the reserved in the Budget Resolution.

AMENDMENT NO. _____

Calendar No. _____

Purpose: To provide for early learning programs, and for
other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES—106th Cong., 2d Sess.

S. 2

To extend programs and activities under the Elementary
and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

Referred to the Committee on _____
and ordered to be printed

Ordered to lie on the table and to be printed

AMENDMENT intended to be proposed by Mr. JEFFORDS

Viz:

1 On page 922, after line 18, insert the following:

2 **PART D—EARLY LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES**

3 **SEC. 1401. SHORT TITLE; FINDINGS.**

4 (a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This part may be cited as the
5 “Early Learning Opportunities Act”.

6 (b) **FINDINGS.**—Congress finds that—

7 (1) medical research demonstrates that ade-
8 quate stimulation of a young child's brain between
9 birth and age 5 is critical to the physical develop-
10 ment of the young child's brain;

1 (2) parents are the most significant and effective
2 teachers of their children, and they alone are responsible
3 for choosing the best early learning opportunities
4 for their child;

5 (3) parent education and parent involvement
6 are critical to the success of any early learning program
7 or activity;

8 (4) the more intensively parents are involved in
9 their child's early learning, the greater the cognitive
10 and noncognitive benefits to their children;

11 (5) many parents have difficulty finding the information
12 and support the parents seek to help their children
13 grow to their full potential;

14 (6) each day approximately 13,000,000 young
15 children, including 6,000,000 infants or toddlers,
16 spend some or all of their day being cared for by
17 someone other than their parents;

18 (7) quality early learning programs, including those
19 designed to promote effective parenting, can increase
20 the literacy rate, the secondary school graduation
21 rate, the employment rate, and the college enrollment
22 rate for children who have participated in voluntary
23 early learning programs and activities;

24 (8) early childhood interventions can yield substantial
25 advantages to participants in terms of emotional

1 tional and cognitive development, education, eco-
2 nomic well-being, and health, with the latter 2 ad-
3 vantages applying to the children's families as well;

4 (9) participation in quality early learning pro-
5 grams, including those designed to promote effective
6 parenting, can decrease the future incidence of teen-
7 age pregnancy, welfare dependency, at-risk behav-
8 iors, and juvenile delinquency for children;

9 (10) several cost-benefit analysis studies indi-
10 cate that for each \$1 invested in quality early learn-
11 ing programs, the Federal Government can save over
12 \$5 by reducing the number of children and families
13 who participate in Federal Government programs
14 like special education and welfare;

15 (11) for children placed in the care of others
16 during the workday, the low salaries paid to the
17 child care staff, the lack of career progression for
18 the staff, and the lack of child development special-
19 ists involved in early learning and child care pro-
20 grams, make it difficult to attract and retain the
21 quality of staff necessary for a positive early learn-
22 ing experience;

23 (12) Federal Government support for early
24 learning has primarily focused on out-of-home care
25 programs like those established under the Head

1 Start Act, the Child Care and Development Block
2 Grant of 1990, and part C of the Individuals with
3 Disabilities Education Act, and these programs—

4 (A) serve far fewer than half of all eligible
5 children;

6 (B) are not primarily designed to provide
7 support for parents who care for their young
8 children in the home; and

9 (C) lack a means of coordinating early
10 learning opportunities in each community; and
11 (13) by helping communities increase, expand,
12 and better coordinate early learning opportunities
13 for children and their families, the productivity and
14 creativity of future generations will be improved, and
15 the Nation will be prepared for continued leadership
16 in the 21st century.

17 **SEC. 1402. PURPOSES.**

18 The purposes of this part are—

19 (1) to increase the availability of voluntary pro-
20 grams, services, and activities that support early
21 childhood development, increase parent effectiveness,
22 and promote the learning readiness of young chil-
23 dren so that young children enter school ready to
24 learn;

1 (2) to support parents, child care providers, and
2 caregivers who want to incorporate early learning ac-
3 tivities into the daily lives of young children;

4 (3) to remove barriers to the provision of an ac-
5 cessible system of early childhood learning programs
6 in communities throughout the United States;

7 (4) to increase the availability and affordability
8 of professional development activities and compensa-
9 tion for caregivers and child care providers; and

10 (5) to facilitate the development of community-
11 based systems of collaborative service delivery mod-
12 els characterized by resource sharing, linkages be-
13 tween appropriate supports, and local planning for
14 services.

15 **SEC. 1103. DEFINITIONS.**

16 In this part:

17 (1) **CAREGIVER.**—The term “caregiver” means
18 an individual, including a relative, neighbor, or fam-
19 ily friend, who regularly or frequently provides care,
20 with or without compensation, for a child for whom
21 the individual is not the parent.

22 (2) **CHILD CARE PROVIDER.**—The term “child
23 care provider” means a provider of non-residential
24 child care services (including center-based, family-
25 based, and in-home child care services) for com-

1 person who or that is legally operating under
2 State law, and complies with applicable State and
3 local requirements for the provision of child care
4 services.

5 (3) EARLY LEARNING.—The term “early learn-
6 ing”, used with respect to a program or activity,
7 means learning designed to facilitate the develop-
8 ment of cognitive, language, motor, and social-emo-
9 tional skills for, and to promote learning readiness
10 in, young children.

11 (4) EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM.—The term
12 “early learning program” means—

13 (A) a program of services or activities that
14 helps parents, caregivers, and child care pro-
15 viders incorporate early learning into the daily
16 lives of young children; or

17 (B) a program that directly provides early
18 learning to young children.

19 (5) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian tribe”
20 has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the
21 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance
22 Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

23 (6) LOCALITY.—The term “locality” means a
24 city, county, borough, township, or other general
25 purpose unit of local government, an Indian tribe, a

4 (7) PARENT.—The term "parent" means a bio-
5 logical parent, an adoptive parent, a stepparent, a
6 foster parent, or a legal guardian of, or a person
7 standing in loco parentis to, a child.

8 (8) POVERTY LINE.—The term "poverty line"
9 means the poverty line (as defined by the Office of
10 Management and Budget, and revised annually in
11 accordance with section 673(2) of the Community
12 Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902(2))) ap-
13 plicable to a family of the size involved.

14 (9) REGIONAL CORPORATION.—The term "Re-
15 gional Corporation" has the meaning given the term
16 in section 3 of the Alaskan Native Claims Settle-
17 ment Act (43 U.S.C. 1602).

18 (10) SECRETARY.—The term "Secretary"
19 means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

20 (11) STATE.—The term "State" means each of
21 the several States of the United States, the District
22 of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

23 (12) TRAINING.—The term "training" means
24 instruction in early learning that—

- 1 Regional Corporation, or a Native Hawaiian entity.
- 2 For purposes of this part, 2 or more localities acting
- 3 together may be considered a locality.

1 (A) is required for certification under
2 State and local laws, regulations, and policies;

3 (B) is required to receive a nationally or
4 State recognized credential or its equivalent;

5 (C) is received in a postsecondary edu-
6 cation program focused on early learning or
7 early childhood development in which the indi-
8 vidual is enrolled; or

9 (D) is provided, certified, or sponsored by
10 an organization that is recognized for its exper-
11 tise in promoting early learning or early child-
12 hood development.

13 (13) YOUNG CHILD.—The term “young child”
14 means any child from birth to the age of mandatory
15 school attendance in the State where the child re-
16 sides.

17 SEC. 1104. PROHIBITIONS.

18 (a) PARTICIPATION NOT REQUIRED.—No person, in-
19 cluding a parent, shall be required to participate in any
20 program of early childhood education, early learning, par-
21 ent education, or developmental screening pursuant to the
22 provisions of this part.

23 (b) RIGHTS OF PARENTS.—Nothing in this part shall
24 be construed to affect the rights of parents otherwise es-
25 tablished in Federal, State, or local law.

1 (c) PARTICULAR METHODS OR SETTINGS.—No local-
2 ity that receives funds under this part shall be required
3 to provide services under this part through a particular
4 instructional method or in a particular instructional set-
5 ting to comply with this part.

6 **SEC. 1405. AUTHORIZATION AND APPROPRIATION OF**
7 **FUNDS.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), there
9 are authorized to be appropriated to the Department of
10 Health and Human Services to carry out this part—

- 11 (1) \$750,000,000 for fiscal year 2001;
12 (2) \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2002;
13 (3) \$1,500,000,000 for fiscal year 2003; and
14 (4) such sums as may be necessary for each of
15 the fiscal years 2004 and 2005.

16 (b) SPECIAL RULE.—If the report provided pursuant
17 to section 202(e)(2) of the Congressional Budget Act of
18 1974 (ordinarily called the “Budget and Economic Out-
19 look: Update for Fiscal Years 2001 through 2010”) esti-
20 mates an on-budget surplus for any of fiscal years 2001
21 through 2005 that exceeds the on-budget surplus set forth
22 in the Congressional Budget Office’s March 2000 Budget
23 and Economic Outlook for fiscal years 2001 through
24 2010, then there is appropriated to carry out this part

1 in each of fiscal years 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2005 the
2 lesser of —

3 (1) the amount authorized in subsection (a)(3);

4 or

5 (2) the amount of such excess for such fiscal
6 year projected in the Budget and Economic Outlook
7 update report for such fiscal year.

8 **SEC. 1106. COORDINATION OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS.**

9 (a) **COORDINATION.**—The Secretary and the Sec-
10 retary of Education shall develop mechanisms to resolve
11 administrative and programmatic conflicts between Fed-
12 eral programs that would be a barrier to parents, care-
13 givers, service providers, or children related to the coordi-
14 nation of services and funding for early learning pro-
15 grams.

16 (b) **USE OF EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES.**—In the case
17 of a collaborative activity funded under this part and an-
18 other provision of law providing for Federal child care or
19 early learning programs, the use of equipment and
20 nonconsumable supplies purchased with funds made avail-
21 able under this part or such provision shall not be re-
22 stricted to children enrolled or otherwise participating in
23 the program carried out under this part or such provision,
24 during a period in which the activity is predominately
25 funded under this part or such provision.

1 SEC. 1107. PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.

2 (a) GRANTS.—From amounts appropriated under
3 section 11405 the Secretary shall award grants to States
4 to enable the States to award grants to localities to pay
5 the Federal share of the cost of carrying out early learning
6 programs.

7 (b) FEDERAL SHARE.—

8 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Federal share of the
9 cost described in subsection (a) shall be 85 percent
10 for the first and second years of the grant, 80 per-
11 cent for the third and fourth years of the grant, and
12 75 percent for the fifth and subsequent years of the
13 grant.

14 (2) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—The non-Federal
15 share of the cost described in subsection (a) may be
16 contributed in cash or in kind, fairly evaluated, in-
17 cluding facilities, equipment, or services, which may
18 be provided from State or local public sources, or
19 through donations from private entities. For the
20 purposes of this paragraph the term “facilities” in-
21 cludes the use of facilities, but the term “equip-
22 ment” means donated equipment and not the use of
23 equipment.

24 (c) MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT.—The Secretary shall
25 not award a grant under this part to any State unless
26 the Secretary first determines that the total expenditures

1 by the State and its political subdivisions to support early
2 learning programs (other than funds used to pay the non-
3 Federal share under subsection (b)(2)) for the fiscal year
4 for which the determination is made is equal to or greater
5 than such expenditures for the preceding fiscal year.

6 (d) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.—Amounts re-
7 ceived under this part shall be used to supplement and
8 not supplant other Federal, State, and local public funds
9 expended to promote early learning.

10 SEC. 11408. USES OF FUNDS.

11 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to section 11410, grant
12 funds under this part shall be used to pay for developing,
13 operating, or enhancing voluntary early learning programs
14 that are likely to produce sustained gains in early learn-
15 ing.

16 (b) LIMITED USES.—Subject to section 11410, Lead
17 State agencies and localities shall ensure that funds made
18 available under this part to the agencies and localities are
19 used for 3 or more of the following activities:

20 (1) Helping parents, caregivers, child care pro-
21 viders, and educators increase their capacity to fa-
22 cilitate the development of cognitive, language com-
23 prehension, expressive language, social-emotional,
24 and motor skills, and promote learning readiness.

25 (2) Promoting effective parenting.

1 (3) Enhancing early childhood literacy.

2 (4) Developing linkages among early learning
3 programs within a community and between early
4 learning programs and health care services for
5 young children.

6 (5) Increasing access to early learning opportu-
7 nities for young children with special needs, includ-
8 ing developmental delays, by facilitating coordination
9 with other programs serving such young children.

10 (6) Increasing access to existing early learning
11 programs by expanding the days or times that the
12 young children are served, by expanding the number
13 of young children served, or by improving the afford-
14 ability of the programs for low-income families.

15 (7) Improving the quality of early learning pro-
16 grams through professional development and train-
17 ing activities, increased compensation, and recruit-
18 ment and retention incentives, for early learning
19 providers.

20 (8) Removing ancillary barriers to early learn-
21 ing, including transportation difficulties and absence
22 of programs during nontraditional work times.

23 (c) REQUIREMENTS.—Each Lead State Agency des-
24 ignated under section 11410(c) and locality receiving a
25 grant under this part shall ensure—

1 (1) that Local Councils described in section
2 11414 work with local educational agencies to iden-
3 tify cognitive, social, emotional, and motor develop-
4 mental abilities which are necessary to support chil-
5 dren's readiness for school;

6 (2) that the programs, services, and activities
7 assisted under this part will represent develop-
8 mentally appropriate steps toward the acquisition of
9 those abilities; and

10 (3) that the programs, services, and activities
11 assisted under this part collectively provide benefits
12 for children cared for in their own homes as well as
13 children placed in the care of others.

14 (c) **SLIDING SCALE PAYMENTS.**—States and local-
15 ities receiving assistance under this part shall ensure that
16 programs, services, and activities assisted under this part
17 which customarily require a payment for such programs,
18 services, or activities, adjust the cost of such programs,
19 services, and activities provided to the individual or the
20 individual's child based on the individual's ability to pay.

21 **SEC. 11409. RESERVATIONS AND ALLOTMENTS.**

22 (a) **RESERVATION FOR INDIAN TRIBES, ALASKA NA-**
23 **TIVES, AND NATIVE HAWAIIANS.**—The Secretary shall re-
24 serve 1 percent of the total amount appropriated under
25 section 11405 for each fiscal year, to be allotted to Indian

1 tribes, Regional Corporations, and Native Hawaiian enti-
2 ties, of which—

3 (1) 0.5 percent shall be available to Indian
4 tribes; and

5 (2) 0.5 percent shall be available to Regional
6 Corporations and Native Hawaiian entities.

7 (b) ALLOTMENTS.—From the funds appropriated
8 under this part for each fiscal year that are not reserved
9 under subsection (a), the Secretary shall allot to each
10 State the sum of—

11 (1) an amount that bears the same ratio to 50
12 percent of such funds as the number of children 4
13 years of age and younger in the State bears to the
14 number of such children in all States; and

15 (2) an amount that bears the same ratio to 50
16 percent of such funds as the number of children 4
17 years of age and younger living in families with in-
18 comes below the poverty line in the State bears to
19 the number of such children in all States.

20 (c) MINIMUM ALLOTMENT.—No State shall receive
21 an allotment under subsection (b) for a fiscal year in an
22 amount that is less than .40 percent of the total amount
23 appropriated for the fiscal year under this part.

24 (d) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Any portion of the al-
25 lotment to a State that is not expended for activities under

1 this part in the fiscal year for which the allotment is made
2 shall remain available to the State for 2 additional years,
3 after which any unexpended funds shall be returned to the
4 Secretary. The Secretary shall use the returned funds to
5 carry out a discretionary grant program for early learning
6 demonstration projects.

7 (e) DATA.—The Secretary shall make allotments
8 under this part on the basis of the most recent data avail-
9 able to the Secretary.

10 SEC. 1110. GRANT ADMINISTRATION.

11 (a) FEDERAL ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—The Sec-
12 retary may use not more than 3 percent of the amount
13 appropriated under section 11405 for a fiscal year to pay
14 for the administrative costs of carrying out this part, in-
15 cluding the monitoring and evaluation of State and local
16 efforts.

17 (b) STATE ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—A State that
18 receives a grant under this part may use—

19 (1) not more than 2 percent of the funds made
20 available through the grant to carry out activities
21 designed to coordinate early learning programs on
22 the State level, including programs funded or oper-
23 ated by the State educational agency, health, chil-
24 dren and family, and human service agencies, and
25 an State-level collaboration or coordination council

1 involving early learning and education, such as the
2 entities funded under section 640(a)(5) of the Head
3 Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9835 (a)(5));

4 (2) not more than 2 percent of the funds made
5 available through the grant for the administrative
6 costs of carrying out the grant program and the
7 costs of reporting State and local efforts to the Sec-
8 retary; and

9 (3) not more than 3 percent of the funds made
10 available through the grant for training, technical
11 assistance, and wage incentives provided by the
12 State to localities.

13 (c) LEAD STATE AGENCY.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to receive an
15 allotment under this part, the Governor of a State
16 shall appoint, after consultation with the leadership
17 of the State legislature, a Lead State Agency to
18 carry out the functions described in paragraph (2).

19 (2) LEAD STATE AGENCY.—

20 (A) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—The Lead
21 State Agency described in paragraph (1) shall
22 allocate funds to localities as described in sec-
23 tion 11412.

1 (B) FUNCTIONS OF AGENCY.—In addition
2 to allocating funds pursuant to subparagraph
3 (A), the Lead State Agency shall—

4 (i) advise and assist localities in the
5 performance of their duties under this
6 part;

7 (ii) develop and submit the State ap-
8 plication;

9 (iii) evaluate and approve applications
10 submitted by localities under section
11 11413;

12 (iv) ensure collaboration with respect
13 to assistance provided under this part be-
14 tween the State agency responsible for
15 education and the State agency responsible
16 for children and family services;

17 (v) prepare and submit to the Sec-
18 retary, an annual report on the activities
19 carried out in the State under this part,
20 which shall include a statement describing
21 how all funds received under this part are
22 expended and documentation of the effects
23 that resources under this part have had
24 on—

1 (I) parental capacity to improve
2 learning readiness in their young chil-
3 dren;

4 (II) early childhood literacy;

5 (III) linkages among early learn-
6 ing programs;

7 (IV) linkages between early
8 learning programs and health care
9 services for young children;

10 (V) access to early learning ac-
11 tivities for young children with special
12 needs;

13 (VI) access to existing early
14 learning programs through expansion
15 of the days or times that children are
16 served;

17 (VII) access to existing early
18 learning programs through expansion
19 of the number of young children
20 served;

21 (VIII) access to and affordability
22 of existing early learning programs for
23 low-income families;

24 (IX) the quality of early learning
25 programs resulting from professional

1 development, and recruitment and re-
2 tention incentives for caregivers; and
3 (X) removal of ancillary barriers
4 to early learning, including transpor-
5 tation difficulties and absence of pro-
6 grams during nontraditional work
7 times; and

8 (vi) ensure that training and research
9 is made available to localities and that
10 such training and research reflects the lat-
11 est available brain development and early
12 childhood development research related to
13 early learning.

14 **SEC. 11411. STATE REQUIREMENTS.**

15 (a) **ELIGIBILITY.**—To be eligible for a grant under
16 this part, a State shall—

17 (1) designate a Lead State Agency under sec-
18 tion 11410(c) to administer and monitor the grant
19 and ensure State-level coordination of early learning
20 programs;

21 (2) submit to the Secretary an application at
22 such time, in such manner, and accompanied by
23 such information as the Secretary may require;

24 (3) ensure that funds made available under this
25 part are distributed on a competitive basis through-

1 out the State to localities in rural, urban, and subur-
2 ban areas of the State; and

3 (4) assist the Secretary in developing mecha-
4 nisms to ensure that localities receiving funds under
5 this part comply with the requirements of this part.

6 (b) **STATE PREFERENCE.**—In awarding grants to lo-
7 calities under this part, the State, to the maximum extent
8 possible, shall ensure that a broad variety of early learning
9 programs that provide a continuity of services across the
10 age spectrum assisted under this part are funded under
11 this part, and shall give preference to supporting—

12 (1) a locality that meets criteria, that are speci-
13 fied by the State and approved by the Secretary, for
14 qualifying as an area of greatest need for early
15 learning programs; and

16 (2) a locality that demonstrates, in the applica-
17 tion submitted under section 11413, the locality's
18 potential to increase collaboration as a means of
19 maximizing use of resources provided under this
20 part with other resources available for early learning
21 programs.

22 (c) **LOCAL PREFERENCE.**—In awarding grants under
23 this part, localities shall give preference to supporting—

24 (1) projects that demonstrate their potential to
25 collaborate as a means of maximizing use of re-

1 sources provided under this part with other re-
2 sources available for early learning programs;

3 (2) programs that provide a continuity of serv-
4 ices for young children across the age spectrum, in-
5 dividualy, or through community-based networks or
6 cooperative agreements; and

7 (3) programs that help parents and other care-
8 givers promote early learning with their young chil-
9 dren.

10 (c) PERFORMANCE GOALS.—

11 (1) ASSESSMENTS.—Based on information and
12 data received from localities, and information and
13 data available through State resources, the State
14 shall biennially assess the needs and available re-
15 sources related to the provision of early learning
16 programs within the State.

17 (2) PERFORMANCE GOALS.—Based on the anal-
18 ysis of information described in paragraph (1), the
19 State shall establish measurable performance goals
20 to be achieved through activities assisted under this
21 part.

22 (3) REQUIREMENT.—The State shall award
23 grants to localities only for purposes that are con-
24 sistent with the performance goals established under
25 paragraph (2).

1 (4) REPORT.—The State shall report to the
2 Secretary annually regarding the State's progress to-
3 ward achieving the performance goals established in
4 paragraph (2) and any necessary modifications to
5 those goals, including the rationale for the modifica-
6 tions.

7 **SEC. 11412. LOCAL ALLOCATIONS.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Lead State Agency shall allo-
9 cate to localities in the State not less than 93 percent of
10 the funds provided to the State under this part for a fiscal
11 year.

12 (b) LIMITATION.—The Lead State Agency shall allo-
13 cate funds provided under this part on the basis of the
14 population of the locality.

15 **SEC. 11413. LOCAL APPLICATIONS.**

16 (a) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to receive assistance
17 under this part, a locality, in cooperation with the Local
18 Council described in section 11414, shall submit an appli-
19 cation to the Lead State Agency at such time, in such
20 manner, and containing such information as the Lead
21 State Agency may require.

22 (b) CONTENTS.—Each application submitted pursu-
23 ant to subsection (a) shall include a statement ensuring
24 that the locality has established or designated a Local
25 Council, as described in section 11414, and developed a

1 local plan for carrying out early learning programs under
2 this part that includes—

3 (1) a needs and resources assessment con-
4 cerning early learning services and a statement de-
5 scribing how early learning programs will be fi-
6 nanced to reflect the assessment;

7 (2) a statement of how the locality will ensure
8 that early learning programs will meet the perform-
9 ance goals reported by the Lead State Agency under
10 this part; and

11 (3) a description of how the locality will form
12 collaboratives among local youth, social service, and
13 educational providers to maximize resources and
14 concentrate efforts on areas of greatest need.

15 **SEC. 1114. LOCAL ADMINISTRATION.**

16 **(a) LOCAL COUNCIL.—**

17 (1) **IN GENERAL.**—To be eligible to receive
18 funds under this part, a locality shall establish or
19 designate a Local Council, which shall be composed
20 of—

21 (A) representatives of local agencies di-
22 rectly affected by early learning programs as-
23 sisted under this part;

24 (B) parents;

1 (C) other individuals concerned with early
2 learning issues in the locality, such as individ-
3 uals providing child care resource and referral
4 services, early learning opportunities, child care,
5 education, and health; and

6 (D) other key community leaders.

7 (2) DESIGNATING EXISTING ENTITY.—If a lo-
8 cality has, before the date of enactment of the Early
9 Learning Opportunities Act, a Local Council or a re-
10 gional entity that is comparable to the Local Council
11 described in paragraph (1), the locality may des-
12 ignate the council or entity as a Local Council under
13 this part, and shall be considered to have established
14 a Local Council in compliance with this subsection.

15 (3) FUNCTIONS.—The Local Council shall be
16 responsible for assisting localities in preparing and
17 submitting the application described in section
18 1413. The views of the Local Council shall be in-
19 cluded in a locality's application.

20 (b) ADMINISTRATION.—

21 (1) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—Not more than 5
22 percent of the funds received by a locality under this
23 part shall be used to pay for the administrative costs
24 of the locality and Local Council in carrying out this
25 part.

1 (2) FISCAL AGENT.—A locality may designate
2 an entity, with a demonstrated capacity for admin-
3 istering grants, that is affected by, or concerned
4 with, early learning issues, including the State, to
5 serve as fiscal agent for the administration of grant
6 funds received by the locality under this part.



DATE: 5/4

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
200 INDEPENDENCE AVE., SW
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

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OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR LEGISLATION
HUMAN SERVICES LEGISLATION
ROOM 413 H HUMPHREY BUILDING

FROM:

TO : Ann O'Leary [☒ MARY M. BOURDETTE
OFFICE : W/H [] BARBARA P. CLARK
ROOM NO : [] LAUREN HIGGINS
PHONE NO : [] AMY LOCKHART
FAX NO : 456 - 2878 [] LULA BARNES

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REMARKS:

Here's the latest on the
Shute Early Leroy amendments
May

file: Early Learning

Subcommittee on Children and Families
Committee on Labor and Human Resources
Senator Christopher J. Dodd
Ranking Member

FACSIMILE TRANSMITTAL FORM

Phone: (202)224-5630

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5/17/2000

TIME:

10

A.M.

P.M.

TO:

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FROM:

____ Brooke Byers

____ Suzanne Day

____ Jim Fenton

____ Jeanne Ireland

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2

COMMENTS / MESSAGE:

PART
3 REPORT
ON
LANGUAGE STATE

218

by reducing the child's need for special education, mental health intervention, drug and alcohol treatment programs, and incarceration and rehabilitation costs.

The Senate is considering bipartisan legislation to establish a block grant program to enable States and local organizations, including faith based institutions, to improve and promote early childhood learning programs. While the Committee has not provided funding for this block grant program, it supports this effort and will consider funding in the future, pending the outcome of this legislation. In recognition of the benefits of early learning programs, the Committee has provided a \$1,000,000,000 increase over last year's funding level for the Head Start program.

Runaway and homeless youth

The Committee recommends \$46,152,000 for this program, an increase of \$2,500,000 above the fiscal year 2000 level and the same as the administration request. The Committee has also provided an additional \$14,999,000 from the violent crime reduction program.

This program addresses the crisis needs of runaway and homeless youth and their families through support to local and State governments and private agencies. The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act requires that 90 percent of the funds be allocated to States for the purpose of establishing and operating community-based runaway and homeless youth centers, on the basis of the State youth population under 18 years of age in proportion to the national total. The remaining 10 percent funds networking and research and demonstration activities including the National Toll-Free Communications Center. Consolidated within this line item is the transitional living for homeless youth program, which awards grants to public and private nonprofit entities to address the shelter and service needs of homeless youth. Grants are used to develop or strengthen community-based programs which assist homeless youth in making a smooth transition to productive adulthood and social self-sufficiency; and to provide technical assistance to transitional living programs for the acquisition and maintenance of resources and services.

The Committee is aware of the progress of the California Child, Youth, and Family Coalition in providing runaway and homeless youth with a safe place to sleep, food and clothing, counseling, educational opportunities, and job training.

Runaway youth—transitional living

The Committee recommends \$28,003,000 for the transitional living grant program, an increase of \$2,500,000 over last year's level. This program provides grants to local public and private organizations to address shelter and service needs of homeless youth, ages 16-21. The program's goals are to have youth safe at home or in appropriate alternative settings and to help them develop into independent, contributing members of society.

A homeless youth accepted into the program is eligible to receive shelter and services continuously for up to 540 days. The services include counseling; life skills training, such as money management and housekeeping; interpersonal skill building, such as decision-

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S.L.C.

File Early Learning

106TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. _____

DRAFT

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

_____ introduced the following bill; which was read twice and
referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To amend title X of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to provide for early learning programs, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the "Early Learning Oppor-
5 tunities Act".

6 **SEC. 2. EARLY LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES.**

7 Title X of the Elementary and Secondary Education
8 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 8001 et seq.) is amended by add-
9 ing at the end the following:

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1 **"PART I—EARLY LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES**

2 **"SEC. 10995A. FINDINGS.**

3 "Congress finds that—

4 "(1) medical research shows that adequate
5 stimulation of a young child's brain between birth
6 and age 5 is critical to the physical development of
7 the young child's brain;

8 "(2) many parents have difficulty finding the
9 information and support that they seek to help their
10 children grow to their full potential;

11 "(3) each day approximately 13,000,000 young
12 children, including 6,000,000 infants and toddlers,
13 spend some or all of their day being cared for by
14 someone other than their parents;

15 "(4) quality early learning programs can in-
16 crease the literacy rate, the secondary school grad-
17 uation rate, the employment rate, and the college en-
18 rollment rate for children who have participated in
19 voluntary early learning programs;

20 "(5) participation in quality early learning pro-
21 grams can decrease the incidence of teenage preg-
22 nancy, welfare dependency, arrest, and juvenile de-
23 linquency;

24 "(6) several studies indicate that for each \$1
25 invested in early learning programs, the Federal
26 Government can save over \$5 by reducing the num-

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1 her of children and families who participate in Fed-
2 eral Government programs like special education and
3 welfare;

4 "(7) the low salaries paid to staff in early
5 learning programs, the lack of career progression for
6 the staff, and the lack of child development special-
7 ists involved in early learning programs makes it dif-
8 ficult to attract and retain quality staff to help
9 young children enter school ready to learn;

10 "(8) early learning is accomplished in the
11 United States through programs like those estab-
12 lished under the Head Start Act, the Child Care and
13 Development Block Grant of 1990, and part C of
14 the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and
15 through State prekindergarten programs, but these
16 programs--

17 "(A) serve far fewer than half of all eligi-
18 ble children;

19 "(B) are not primarily designed to provide
20 support for parents who care for their young
21 children in the home; and

22 "(C) lack a means of coordinating early
23 learning opportunities in each community; and

24 "(9) by helping communities increase and ex-
25 pand early learning opportunities for children and

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1 their families, Congress expects this part to vastly
2 increase the productivity and creativity of future
3 generations, and prepare the Nation for continued
4 leadership in the 21st century.

5 **"SEC. 10995B. PURPOSES.**

6 "The purposes of this part are—

7 "(1) to increase the availability of voluntary
8 programs, services, and activities that support early
9 childhood development and promote the learning
10 readiness of young children so that young children
11 enter school ready to learn;

12 "(2) to support parents, educators, and care-
13 givers who want to incorporate early learning activi-
14 ties in the daily lives of young children;

15 "(3) to remove barriers to the provision of an
16 accessible system of early childhood learning pro-
17 grams in communities throughout the United States;
18 and

19 "(4) to increase the availability and afford-
20 ability of professional development activities for
21 caregivers and child care providers.

22 **"SEC. 10995C. DEFINITIONS.**

23 "In this part:

24 "(1) CAREGIVER.—The term 'caregiver' means
25 an individual, including a relative, neighbor, or fam-

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1 ily friend, who regularly or frequently provides care,
2 with or without compensation, for a child for whom
3 the individual is not the parent.

4 “(2) CHILD CARE PROVIDER.—The term ‘child
5 care provider’ means a provider of noninstitutional
6 child care services (including center-based, family-
7 based, and in-home child care services) for com-
8 pensation who or that is licensed, regulated, reg-
9 istered, or otherwise legally operating under State
10 law, and complies with applicable State and local re-
11 quirements for the provision of child care services.

12 “(3) EARLY LEARNING.—The term ‘early learn-
13 ing’ means learning designed to facilitate the devel-
14 opment of cognitive, language, motor, and social-
15 emotional skills for, and to promote learning readi-
16 ness in, young children.

17 “(4) EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM.—The term
18 ‘early learning program’ means—

19 “(A) a program of services or activities
20 that helps parents, caregivers, and child care
21 providers incorporate early learning into the
22 daily lives of young children; or

23 “(B) a program that directly provides early
24 learning to young children.

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1 “(5) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term ‘Indian tribe’
2 has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the
3 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance
4 Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

5 “(6) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY; STATE
6 EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.—The terms ‘local edu-
7 cational agency’ and ‘State educational agency’ have
8 the meanings given the terms in section 14101.

9 “(7) LOCALITY.—The term ‘locality’ means a
10 city, county, borough, township, or other general
11 purpose unit of local government, an Indian tribe, a
12 Regional Corporation, or a Native Hawaiian entity.
13 For purposes of this part, 2 or more localities acting
14 together may be considered a locality.

15 “(8) PARENT.—The term ‘parent’ means a bio-
16 logical parent, an adoptive parent, a stepparent, a
17 foster parent, or a legal guardian of, or a person
18 standing in loco parentis to, a child.

19 “(9) POVERTY LINE.—The term ‘poverty line’
20 means the poverty line (as defined by the Office of
21 Management and Budget, and revised annually in
22 accordance with section 673(2) of the Community
23 Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902(2))) ap-
24 plicable to a family of the size involved.

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1 “(10) REGIONAL CORPORATION.—The term
2 ‘Regional Corporation’ has the meaning given the
3 term in section 3 of the Alaskan Native Claims Set-
4 tlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1602).

5 “(11) SECRETARY.—The term ‘Secretary’
6 means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

7 “(12) STATE.—The term ‘State’ means each of
8 the several States of the United States, the District
9 of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

10 “(13) TRAINING.—The term ‘training’ means
11 instruction in early learning that—

12 “(A) is required for certification under
13 State and local laws, regulations, and policies;

14 “(B) is required to receive a nationally or
15 State recognized credential or its equivalent;

16 “(C) is received in a postsecondary edu-
17 cation program focused on early learning or
18 early childhood development in which the indi-
19 vidual is enrolled; or

20 “(D) is provided or certified by an organi-
21 zation that is recognized for its expertise in
22 promoting early learning or early childhood de-
23 velopment.

24 “(14) YOUNG CHILD.—The term ‘young child’
25 means any child who has not reached the age of

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1 mandatory school attendance in the State where the
2 child resides.

3 **"SEC. 10995D. PROHIBITIONS.**

4 "(a) PARTICIPATION NOT REQUIRED.—No person,
5 including a parent, shall be required to participate in any
6 program of early childhood education, early learning, par-
7 ent education, or developmental screening pursuant to the
8 provisions of this part.

9 "(b) RIGHTS OF PARENTS.—No program assisted
10 under this part shall take any action that infringes in any
11 manner on the right of a parent to direct the education
12 of their children.

13 "(c) PARTICULAR METHODS OR SETTINGS.—No lo-
14 cality that receives funds under this part shall be required
15 to provide services under this part through a particular
16 instructional method or in a particular instructional set-
17 ting to comply with this part.

18 **"SEC. 10995E. AUTHORIZATION AND APPROPRIATION OF**
19 **FUNDS.**

20 "There are authorized to be appropriated and there
21 are appropriated to the Department of Health and Human
22 Services to carry out this part—

23 "(1) \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2000;

24 "(2) \$1,500,000,000 for fiscal year 2001; and

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1 “(3) \$2,000,000,000 for each of the fiscal years
2 2002 through 2004.

3 **“SEC. 10995F. COORDINATION OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS.**

4 “(a) COORDINATION.—The Secretary and the Sec-
5 retary of Education shall develop mechanisms to resolve
6 administrative and programmatic conflicts between Fed-
7 eral programs that would be a barrier to parents, care-
8 givers, service providers, or children related to the provi-
9 sion of unified services and the coordination of funding
10 for early learning programs.

11 “(b) USE OF EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES.—In the
12 case of a collaborative activity funded under this part and
13 another provision of law providing for Federal child care
14 or early learning programs, the use of equipment and
15 nonconsumable supplies purchased with funds made avail-
16 able under this part or such provision shall not be re-
17 stricted to children enrolled or otherwise participating in
18 the program carried out under this part or such provision,
19 during a period in which the activity is predominately
20 funded under this part or such provision.

21 **“SEC. 10995G. PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.**

22 “(a) GRANTS.—From amounts appropriated under
23 section 10995E the Secretary shall award grants to States
24 to enable the States to award grants to localities to pay

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1 the Federal share of the cost of carrying out early learning
2 programs.

3 “(b) FEDERAL SHARE.—

4 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Federal share of the
5 cost described in subsection (a) shall be 85 percent
6 for the first and second years of the grant, 80 per-
7 cent for the third and fourth years of the grant, and
8 75 percent for the fifth and subsequent years of the
9 grant.

10 “(2) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—The non-Federal
11 share of the cost described in subsection (a) may be
12 contributed in cash or in kind, fairly evaluated, in-
13 cluding facilities, equipment, or services, which may
14 be provided from State or local public sources, or
15 through donations from private entities. For the
16 purposes of this paragraph the term ‘facilities’ in-
17 cludes the use of facilities, but the term ‘equipment’
18 means donated equipment and not the use of equip-
19 ment.

20 “(c) MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT.—The Secretary
21 shall not award a grant under this part to any State unless
22 the Secretary first determines that the total expenditures
23 by the State and its political subdivisions to support early
24 learning programs for the fiscal year for which the deter-

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1 mination is made is equal to or greater than such expendi-
2 tures for the preceding fiscal year.

3 **"SEC. 10995H. USES OF FUNDS.**

4 “(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to section 10995J, grant
5 funds under this part shall be used to pay for developing,
6 operating, or enhancing voluntary early learning programs
7 that are likely to produce sustained gains in early learn-
8 ing.

9 “(b) LIMITED USES.—Subject to section 10995J,
10 Lead State Agencies and localities shall ensure that funds
11 made available under this part to the agencies and local-
12 ities are used for 2 or more of the following activities:

13 “(1) Helping parents, caregivers, child care pro-
14 viders, and educators increase their capacity to fa-
15 cilitate the development of cognitive, language com-
16 prehension, expressive language, social-emotional,
17 and motor skills, and promote learning readiness.

18 “(2) Enhancing early childhood literacy.

19 “(3) Developing linkages among early learning
20 programs within a community and between early
21 learning programs and health care services for
22 young children, including services under the med-
23 icaid program under title XIX of the Social Security
24 Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) and the State Chil-

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1 dren's Health Insurance Program under title XXI of
2 the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397aa et seq.).

3 “(4) Increasing access to early learning oppor-
4 tunities for young children with special needs, in-
5 cluding developmental delays, and facilitating coordi-
6 nation with other programs serving such young chil-
7 dren.

8 “(5) Increasing access to existing early learning
9 programs by expanding the days or times that the
10 young children are served or by expanding the num-
11 ber of young children served.

12 “(6) Improving the quality of early learning
13 programs through professional development and
14 training activities, and recruitment and retention in-
15 centives, for early learning providers.

16 “(7) Removing ancillary barriers to early learn-
17 ing, including transportation difficulties and absence
18 of programs during nontraditional work times.

19 “(c) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.—Amounts re-
20 ceived under this part shall be used to supplement and
21 not supplant other Federal, State, and local public funds
22 expended to promote early learning.

23 “(d) SLIDING SCALE PAYMENTS.—States and local-
24 ities receiving assistance under this part shall ensure that
25 each individual who seeks to participate in a program

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1 funded under this part pays the cost of the services pro-
2 vided to the individual and the individual's child subject
3 to the individual's ability to pay.

4 **"SEC. 10995I. RESERVATIONS AND ALLOTMENTS.**

5 "(a) RESERVATION FOR INDIAN TRIBES, ALASKA
6 NATIVES, AND NATIVE HAWAIIANS.—The Secretary shall
7 reserve 1 percent of the total amount appropriated under
8 section 10995E for each fiscal year, to be allotted to In-
9 dian tribes, Regional Corporations, and Native Hawaiian
10 entities, of which—

11 "(1) 0.5 percent shall be available to Indian
12 tribes; and

13 "(2) 0.5 percent shall be available to Regional
14 Corporations and Native Hawaiian entities.

15 "(b) ALLOTMENTS.—From the funds appropriated
16 under this part for each fiscal year that are not reserved
17 under subsection (a), the Secretary shall allot to each
18 State the sum of—

19 "(1) an amount that bears the same ratio to 50
20 percent of such funds as the number of young chil-
21 dren in the State bears to the number of young chil-
22 dren in all States; and

23 "(2) an amount that bears the same ratio to 50
24 percent of such funds as the number of young chil-
25 dren living in families with incomes below the pov-

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1 erty line in the State bears to the number of such
2 young children in all States.

3 “(c) MINIMUM ALLOTMENT.—No State shall receive
4 an allotment under subsection (b) for a fiscal year in an
5 amount that is less than 1 percent of the total amount
6 appropriated for the fiscal year under this part.

7 “(d) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Any portion of the
8 allotment to a State that is not expended for activities
9 under this part in the fiscal year for which the allotment
10 is made shall remain available to the State for 1 additional
11 year, after which any unexpended funds shall be reallocated
12 by the Secretary to other States in proportion to the origi-
13 nal allotments to the other States. Funds allotted under
14 subsection (a) shall be proportionately reallocated by the
15 Secretary to other Indian tribes, Regional Corporations,
16 and Native Hawaiian entities.

17 “(e) DATA.—The Secretary shall make allotments
18 under this part on the basis of the most recent data avail-
19 able to the Secretary.

20 **“SEC. 10995J. GRANT ADMINISTRATION.**

21 “(a) FEDERAL ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—The Sec-
22 retary may use not more than 3 percent of the amount
23 appropriated under section 10995E for a fiscal year to
24 pay for the administrative costs of carrying out this part,

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1 including the monitoring and evaluation of State and local
2 efforts.

3 “(b) STATE ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—A State that
4 receives a grant under this part may use—

5 “(1) not more than 2 percent of the funds
6 made available through the grant to carry out activi-
7 ties designed to coordinate early learning programs
8 on the State level, including programs funded or op-
9 erated by the State educational agency, health, chil-
10 dren and family, and human service agencies, and
11 any State-level collaboration or coordination council
12 involving early learning and education, such as the
13 entities funded under section 640(a)(5) of the Head
14 Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9835 (a)(5));

15 “(2) not more than 2 percent of the funds
16 made available through the grant for the administra-
17 tive costs of carrying out the grant program and the
18 costs of reporting State and local efforts to the Sec-
19 retary; and

20 “(3) not more than 3 percent of the funds
21 made available through the grant for training, tech-
22 nical assistance, and wage incentives provided by the
23 State to localities.

24 “(c) LEAD STATE AGENCY.—

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1 “(1) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to receive an
2 allotment under this part, the Governor of a State
3 shall appoint, after consultation with the leadership
4 of the State legislature, a Lead State Agency to
5 carry out the functions described in paragraph (2).

6 “(2) LEAD STATE AGENCY.—

7 “(A) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—The Lead
8 State Agency described in paragraph (1) shall
9 allocate funds to localities as described in sec-
10 tion 10995L.

11 “(B) FUNCTIONS OF AGENCY.—In addition
12 to allocating funds pursuant to subparagraph
13 (A), the Lead State Agency shall—

14 “(i) advise and assist localities in the
15 performance of their duties under this
16 part;

17 “(ii) develop and submit the State ap-
18 plication;

19 “(iii) evaluate and approve applica-
20 tions submitted by localities under section
21 10995M;

22 “(iv) prepare and submit to the Sec-
23 retary, an annual report on the activities
24 carried out in the State under this part,
25 which shall include a statement describing

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1 how all funds received under this part are
2 expended and documentation of the effects
3 that resources under this part have had
4 on—

5 “(I) parental capacity to improve
6 learning readiness in their young chil-
7 dren;

8 “(II) early childhood literacy;

9 “(III) linkages among early
10 learning programs;

11 “(IV) linkages between early
12 learning programs and health care
13 services for young children;

14 “(V) access to early learning ac-
15 tivities for young children with special
16 needs;

17 “(VI) access to existing early
18 learning programs through expansion
19 of the days or times that children are
20 served;

21 “(VII) access to existing early
22 learning programs through expansion
23 of the number of young children
24 served;

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1 “(VIII) the quality of early learn-
2 ing programs resulting from profes-
3 sional development, and recruitment
4 and retention incentives for care-
5 givers; and

6 “(IX) removal of ancillary bar-
7 riers to early learning, including
8 transportation difficulties and absence
9 of programs during nontraditional
10 work times; and

11 “(v) ensure that training and research
12 is made available to localities and that
13 such training and research reflects the lat-
14 est available brain development and early
15 childhood research related to early learn-
16 ing.

17 **“SEC. 10995K. STATE REQUIREMENTS.**

18 “(a) **ELIGIBILITY.**—To be eligible for a grant under
19 this part, a State shall—

20 “(1) designate a Lead State Agency under sec-
21 tion 10995J(c) to administer and monitor the grant
22 and ensure State-level coordination of early learning
23 programs;

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1 “(2) submit to the Secretary an application at
2 such time, in such manner, and accompanied by
3 such information as the Secretary may require;

4 “(3) ensure that funds made available under
5 this part are distributed on a competitive basis
6 throughout the State to localities in rural, urban,
7 and suburban areas of the State; and

8 “(4) assist the Secretary in developing mecha-
9 nisms to ensure that localities receiving funds under
10 this part comply with the requirements of this part.

11 “(b) STATE PREFERENCE.—In awarding grants to
12 localities under this part, the State, to the maximum ex-
13 tent possible, shall ensure that a broad variety of early
14 learning programs that provide a continuity of services
15 across the age spectrum assisted under this part are fund-
16 ed under this part, and shall give preference to
17 supporting—

18 “(1) a locality that meets criteria, that are
19 specified by the State and approved by the Sec-
20 retary, for qualifying as an area of greatest need for
21 early learning programs; and

22 “(2) a locality that demonstrates, in the appli-
23 cation submitted under section 10995M, the local-
24 ity's potential to increase collaboration as a means
25 of maximizing use of resources provided under this

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1 part with other resources available for early learning
2 programs.

3 “(c) LOCAL PREFERENCE.—In awarding grants
4 under this part, localities shall give preference to
5 supporting—

6 “(1) projects that demonstrate their potential
7 to collaborate as a means of maximizing use of re-
8 sources provided under this part with other re-
9 sources available for early learning programs;

10 “(2) programs that provide a continuity of serv-
11 ices for young children across the age spectrum, in-
12 dividually, or through community-based networks or
13 cooperative agreements; and

14 “(3) programs that help parents and other
15 caregivers promote early learning with their young
16 children.

17 “(d) PERFORMANCE GOALS.—

18 “(1) ASSESSMENTS.—Based on information
19 and data received from localities, and information
20 and data available through State resources, the
21 State shall biennially assess the needs and available
22 resources related to the provision of early learning
23 programs within the State.

24 “(2) PERFORMANCE GOALS.—Based on the
25 analysis of information described in paragraph (1),

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1 the State shall establish measurable performance
2 goals to be achieved through activities assisted under
3 this part.

4 “(3) REQUIREMENT.—The State shall award
5 grants to localities only for purposes that are con-
6 sistent with the performance goals established under
7 paragraph (2).

8 “(4) REPORT.—The State shall report to the
9 Secretary annually regarding the State’s progress to-
10 ward achieving the performance goals established in
11 paragraph (2) and any necessary modifications to
12 those goals, including the rationale for the modifica-
13 tions.

14 “SEC. 10905L. LOCAL ALLOCATIONS.

15 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Lead State Agency shall al-
16 locate to localities in the State not less than 90 percent
17 of the funds provided to the State under this part for a
18 fiscal year.

19 “(b) LIMITATION.—The Lead State Agency may not
20 allocate funds provided under this part to any locality in
21 an amount that is unfairly disproportionate, as determined
22 by the Secretary, to the locality’s population.

23 “SEC. 10995M. LOCAL APPLICATIONS.

24 “(a) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to receive assist-
25 ance under this part, a locality, in cooperation with the

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1 Local Council described in section 10995N, shall submit
2 an application to the Lead State Agency at such time, in
3 such manner, and containing such information as the
4 Lead State Agency may require.

5 “(b) CONTENTS.—Each application submitted pursu-
6 ant to subsection (a) shall include a statement ensuring
7 that the locality has established a Local Council, as de-
8 scribed in section 10995N, and developed a local plan for
9 carrying out early learning programs under this part that
10 includes—

11 “(1) a needs and resources assessment con-
12 cerning early learning services and a statement de-
13 scribing how early learning programs will be fi-
14 nanced to reflect the assessment; and

15 “(2) a statement of how localities will ensure
16 that early learning programs will meet the perform-
17 ance goals reported by the Lead State Agency under
18 this part.

19 **“SEC. 10995N. LOCAL ADMINISTRATION.**

20 “(a) LOCAL COUNCIL.—

21 “(1) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to receive
22 funds under this part, a locality shall establish a
23 Local Council, which shall be composed of represent-
24 atives of local agencies directly affected by early
25 learning programs assisted under this part, parents,

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1 and other individuals concerned with early learning
2 issues in the locality.

3 “(2) DESIGNATING EXISTING ENTITY.—If a lo-
4 cality has, before the date of enactment of the Early
5 Learning Opportunities Act, a Local Council or a re-
6 gional entity that is comparable to the Local Council
7 described in paragraph (1), the locality may des-
8 ignate the council or entity as a Local Council under
9 this part, and shall be considered to have established
10 a Local Council in compliance with this subsection.

11 “(3) FUNCTIONS.—The Local Council shall be
12 responsible for assisting localities in preparing and
13 submitting the application described in section
14 10995M. The views of the Local Council shall be in-
15 cluded in a locality’s application.

16 “(b) ADMINISTRATION.—

17 “(1) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—Not more than
18 5 percent of the funds received by a locality or
19 grantee [Note: unclear who grantee refers to; would
20 recommend removal of this term] under this part
21 shall be used to pay for the administrative costs of
22 the locality or Local Council in carrying out this
23 part.

24 “(2) FISCAL AGENT.—A locality may designate
25 any entity that is affected by, or concerned with,

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- 1 early learning issues, including the State, to serve as
- 2 fiscal agent for the administration of grant funds re-
- 3 ceived by the locality under this part."

Nicole R. Rabner

01/07/2000 09:16:20 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Zoe M. Neuberger/OMB/EOP@EOP
cc: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
bcc:
Subject: Re: Early Learning Fund budget text 

I think the text looks very good, Zoe. I have a couple of comments:

1. I'm uncomfortable with the opening of the paragraph. First, I don't believe that scientific research bears out that early childhood programs dramatically affect brain development -- rather, we know that brain development is profoundly important in the early years, and that high quality early childhood programs can help children get to school ready to learn and achieve even beyond that. Also, my sense is that we should not discuss IQ -- I'm not sure that we endorse that measure, but I could be convinced otherwise. I would suggest something like the following to open, if we do not have the NAS study cite, which I think would be optimal:

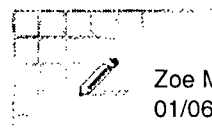
"Scientific research shows that experiences in early childhood are critical to brain development, and for low-income children, high quality early childhood programs can significantly improve education achievement, including boosting school-readiness and improving grade retention and likelihood of high school graduation in later years. The White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning in 1997 showcased some of this evidence. In response, the Administration proposed the Early Learning Fund to help improve early childhood education for children under five years old."

The NAS study came AFTER the White House conference, so I think it is misleading to say that the research described in the first sentence was presented at the WH Conf., but I think it's important to maintain some reference to the conference, considering that this was in fact the origin of this proposal.

2. Regarding this sentence: *Resources could be used to help providers obtain certification or accreditation, enhance provider training and retention, and reduce child-to-staff ratios--factors associated with positive developmental outcomes for young children.* **My understanding is that providers do not get accredited; rather, child care centers and facilities do.**

3. I wonder, but don't feel strongly, if we should add the following in bold to this sentence to make clear that those listed are not the only allowable activities of the fund: ***Resources could be used, for instance, to help providers obtain certification or accreditation, enhance provider training and retention, and reduce child-to-staff ratios--factors associated with positive developmental outcomes for young children.***

Zoe M. Neuberger



Zoe M. Neuberger
01/06/2000 06:42:04 PM

Record Type: Record

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

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

Subject: Early Learning Fund budget text

As discussed at our meeting this afternoon, here is the revised Early Learning Fund paragraph for the Working Families budget chapter. Last year's text follows for comparison. I've given the language an education focus, with references to the outcome measures, allowable activities, and evaluation that we discussed. I open with a description of the research findings on outcomes associated with early childhood education programs, but have been unable to find the specific reference to students lagging behind by first grade. Ann is going to track down that data and I'm considering including it in place of the White House conference sentence if you are amenable.

Unfortunately, the chapter is on the verge of being sent out for West Wing review. If I receive comments by 10:30 am tomorrow (Friday) I'll be able to address them in the version to be sent for review. Otherwise, revisions won't appear until the next draft and it will be somewhat harder to make changes.

Revised Early Learning Fund budget text

Scientific research shows that early childhood programs profoundly affect brain development and for low-income children can significantly improve education achievement, including raising IQ in early years and improving grade retention and likelihood of high school graduation in later years. In response to such evidence presented at the White House Conference on Early Child Development and Learning in 1997 the Administration proposed the Early Learning Fund to help improve early childhood education for children under five years old. The 2001 budget proposes to establish the Early Learning Fund at a level of \$3 billion over five years to provide community grants for activities that foster cognitive development, with a focus on language acquisition, emergent literacy, reading development and other early childhood education activities aimed at improving readiness for school. Resources could be used to help providers obtain certification or accreditation, enhance provider training and retention, and reduce child-to-staff ratios--factors associated with positive developmental outcomes for young children. Grants to states would be contingent on reporting of children's progress toward educational goals, such as vocabulary building and language use, and a federal evaluation would assess improvements in educational outcomes that result from the Fund.

FY 2000

The Early Learning Fund responds to the scientific research presented at the White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning in April 1997, indicating that a child's experiences in the first three years of life profoundly affect his or her brain development. The budget proposes \$3 billion over five years for the Fund, which would provide grants to communities for activities that improve early childhood education and the quality and safety of child care for children under five years old. For example, the money can fund innovative efforts to meet the developmental needs of children, with a focus on language development, emergent literacy, and other child development activities aimed at improving readiness for school. Resources could also fund parent education in child development, home visits, and efforts to help child care centers become accredited and reduce child-to-staff ratios in child care.

Message Sent To: _____

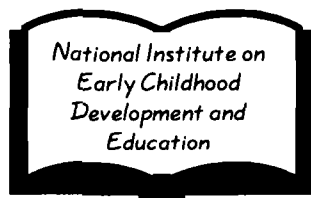
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Early Childhood Digest:

How Busy Parents Can Help Their Children Learn and Develop

September 1999

This Early Childhood Digest, produced by the National Institute on Early Childhood Development and Education, is based on information from the School Transition Study, sponsored by the MacArthur Network on Successful Pathways through Middle Childhood and conducted, in part, by the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP).

Parents can help their school-age children learn and develop, but parents are often very busy. They may be working two jobs or trying to find a job, going to school, or taking care of other family members.

No matter how busy parents are, there are things they can do to help their children. Parents of first- and second-graders in the "School Transition Study" research project have discovered creative ways to stay involved in their children's learning and development. Researchers conducting the survey learned important and useful tips to share with busy parents everywhere.

Use your time well

- *Organize your time.* One single parent of four who is going back to school tries hard to organize her class schedule so that she has time with her children. She is able to be home with them in the afternoons on most school days. In another family where the mother and father both work full time, they are able to organize their work schedules so that one of the parents is always at home with the children. One day a week after school, the children walk to their mother's workplace where they wait a short time with her until their father picks them up.
- *Do a few things at once.* One father arranges to do quiet household chores right beside his daughter who does her homework at the kitchen table. Then the father is there to answer questions. Another mother has her daughter start her homework in the family's car while they are waiting for her older brother to get out of school. The car is a quiet place where they can talk together.

- *Make daily routines a time for learning.* When one mother walks her girls to school, she uses the time to talk about the unsafe parts of the neighborhood and how the girls can protect themselves. Children are learning all the time, but when you talk to them like this, it can help even more with their learning.
- *Find other people to help.* One single parent who cannot be home in the afternoon or evening has the babysitter help the children with homework. Another single parent who works two jobs during the summer arranges for her son to get taken to his neighborhood summer program every morning by his grandfather, who lives nearby. When the program is over, the mother's friend takes the child to football practice and then back home, where the mother serves everyone a late dinner. As a busy parent, you can't do everything yourself. One important thing you can do is be the *manager*, and make arrangements for *other* people to help.

Balance work schedules and family

- *Do some school things at the beginning of the day.* One single father in our study who works a late shift uses the morning when he is home to check over homework with his son. Then he takes him to school. Sometimes he will sit in the classroom and watch or chat with the teacher before he goes to work.
- *Make breakfast the big family meal.* Another mother who also works late has her high school-aged daughter make a simple dinner for the younger children. Then the mother cooks a big hot breakfast every morning when she is home, before the children go to school.
- *Do things differently on the weekend.* One mother leaves for her job every morning before the children are up. But on Sundays, she wakes them up early, so she can share time with them before she goes to work. A special thing for this family is eating lunch later at the restaurant where the mother works.

It can be very hard for parents working the evening or night shifts. One mother was able to do something about it. She was working a late shift and her son was angry and doing very poorly in school. She had a note from the school counselor, saying that her child was having problems in school, partly because she was not able to be with him in the afternoons and evenings. The mother showed this note to her boss and was able to get her work schedule changed, so she could be with her son. Now he is happier, and doing better in school.

Ways to stay involved with your child's school when you are busy

Being involved with school is an important way to show you care about your child's learning.

- *How busy parents stay involved at school.* One mother, who cannot volunteer in the classroom because of her work schedule, finds it easier to go to meetings at night, and has been to some school council meetings. Another mother volunteers to help keep things organized in the halls at the end of the school day, when she is there picking up her child. In a family where the mother is taking care of a baby, the father is able to help out in his older son's classroom 2 hours a week. Even with a baby, there may be things you can do at school: sell tickets for a show, answer phones in the office, or help put away books in the library when the baby is napping. If it's hard for you to be in the school building, you can work on some things at home, like decorations or displays for the classroom.
- *How schools help busy parents.* Some schools have afterschool child care or homework tutoring. Some schools provide transportation or child care to help parents come to school meetings at night. Schools in our study also made special arrangements to help. One school asked an older child to help a younger one from a different family with his homework because the younger one did not have anyone at home who could help. One school loaned a parent a video of a volunteer training meeting that the parent could not attend because of work.
- *Ways parents ask schools for help.* Staying in touch with your child's teacher is the most important thing you can do at school, but sometimes it can be hard to find a good time to talk. One mother called her son's teacher and asked for the parent-teacher conference to be changed to a

better time for her. Another mother asked the teacher to call her at work, when the teacher needed to talk to the mother about her child. If it is hard for you to come to classroom open houses at night, ask if they also can be held in the mornings before school. Ask about potluck breakfasts to feed busy families before they go to work and school. Maybe you could come to meetings at night if the school helped. For example, ask if the school could open a study hall or offer homework help for older children during the meeting.

Think about what's right for you

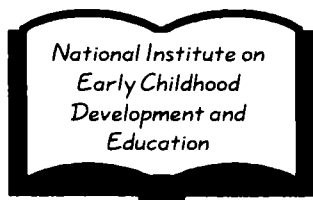
Some parents feel so overwhelmed from everything they have to do that they can't seem to do anything. All parents should remember that there are places where they can get help when they need it. Family resource centers can help. Parent education programs can give parents new skills that will help them better use their time with their children. Parents may know another parent they can talk to and get ideas from.

Parents often feel guilty because they cannot spend as much time with their children as they would like. But it can help for parents to know that when they are busy, they can be setting an example for their children. Children watch their parents work hard at a job, attend classes, help out at church, or take care of relatives or friends. They can learn about responsibility and working for a goal from your example. Talking about this can help reinforce their learning.

Take time to think about your own situation. There may be things you are doing now that help you to be a part of your child's learning. Maybe there are changes you can make or ask others to make. Maybe some of the ideas from parents in our study can work for you, too.

This Digest was prepared by Ellen Mayer, Holly Kreider, and Peggy Vaughan of the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP). For more information on the work of the School Transition Study, a large national long-term research project looking at how family, school, and community shape children's development, please call HFRP at (617) 496-4304, write to them at 38 Concord Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138, or visit their Web site at <http://hugsel.harvard.edu/~hfrp>

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Early Childhood Digest:

Helping Parents Communicate Better with Schools

May 1999

This Early Childhood Digest is based on information from the School Transition Study, sponsored by the MacArthur Network on Successful Pathways through Middle Childhood and conducted, in part, by the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP).

Good communication between parents and teachers has many benefits. When parents and teachers share information, children learn more and parents and teachers feel more supported. Good communication can help create positive feelings between teachers and parents.

Schools and teachers know that good communication with parents is an important part of their job. Teachers need to know about the children's families, language, and culture in order to help children learn. Parents benefit because they learn more about what goes on in school and can encourage learning at home. Most importantly, children benefit by improved communication because contact between home and school helps children learn and succeed.

But parent-teacher communication can also be hard, especially when parents feel uncomfortable in school, don't speak English well, or come from different cultural backgrounds than teachers. Fortunately, both parents and teachers have developed ways to make communication easier. In addition to parent-teacher conferences or other meetings in the schools, parents and family members in the School Transition Study discovered creative ways to gather and share information with teachers and to feel more comfortable doing so.

Communicate and be comfortable in the school

In our research, we found that communication is hard when parents do not feel comfortable in the school or talking to teachers. Some parents might have had a bad experience in school when they were children. Other parents have not felt welcomed by the school or teacher. Fortunately, there are things you can do to help overcome these barriers. Here are examples of how some parents have become more comfortable and confident. But, remember, parents and teachers should check with each other first to make sure they both feel comfortable with these arrangements:

- *Chat with the teacher.* One father just stops by and chats with his daughter's teacher when he picks his daughter up from school. Through these talks they have come to know each other and that can make it

easier when it is time to have a parent-teacher conference.

- *Join in an activity or program for parents at the school.* Some parents help a science class by doing gardening and helping children see how plants grow. Some parents attend a parent group at school to learn how to help their children learn at home. When parents do these kinds of things, it is a way of telling the teacher and the child that the parent cares a lot about the child's education and the school.
- *Talk to other people who spend time in the school.* One parent knows the school nurse and is able to talk comfortably to her. This parent is able to learn more about the school by talking with other parents or neighbors who know the school and can provide information.
- *Spend time watching your child in the school.* One mother regularly sits in her son's classroom at the beginning of the day for a few minutes when she drops him off. She gets the feel of the classroom and sees how he acts with his friends and his teacher.

Communicate from outside the school

Our research also found that it can be hard for a parent to communicate with a teacher when the parent cannot get to the school. Sometimes parents do not have a car or someone to watch their other children while they visit the school. Other times, parents work during the day or evening and cannot get to a meeting. But communication can happen even without a visit to the school.

- *Have other family or friends visit the school.* One mother has been home sick, so her father walks his young granddaughter to school each morning. He sometimes talks to the teacher or takes home written materials and tells the mother what he has observed in the classroom. In all these ways, he passes along information from the girl's teacher to her mother.
- *Talk on the phone with the teacher.* One mother works full time, but is able to take calls at her job. She gave her work number to her child's teacher. When the child has a problem in class, the teacher

can call the mother so they can work on a solution to the problem together. Sometimes the mother will give advice to the child over the phone.

- *Write a little note.* A mother who works a swing shift job has a hard time coming into school during school hours. Sometimes she asks her older daughter who goes to the school to deliver a note to her young son's teacher, to tell the teacher about a doctor's appointment or other news.

Communicate even when there are different languages

Some of the parents in our study do not speak the same language as teachers, come from different backgrounds, or have not lived in the United States for very long. These things can sometimes make communication hard.

- *Spend time in the school.* One mother speaks Spanish and her child's teacher does not. The mother feels good being in the school, but she felt uncomfortable working in the classroom. So she helps with school events by doing things like decorating the school. Helping out in the school lets everyone see that she cares about her child and the school, and she stays involved and knows what is going on.
- *Find someone who speaks your language.* Some parents find someone in the school who speaks their language. Often it is the principal or a teacher's aide. They can listen to parents' concerns or translate during parent-teacher conferences. Another way is to bring a friend or family member to school to translate, or ask the school to help find a translator.
- *Ask about language classes at the school.* Sometimes schools can help parents learn the new language. One parent took English as a Second Language (ESL) lessons right in her child's school, which made it easier for her to talk to the teacher.
- *Volunteer at home.* Sometimes you can help with a class project at home. Teachers will appreciate your involvement and your children will see that you care about their school.

Communicate even when there are different cultures and backgrounds

Even when parents and teachers speak the same language, they may come from very different backgrounds and have different beliefs and traditions. One African-American mother feels differently from the teacher about the importance of music and dance as a part of her daughter's education. It is important to share your views with your children's school.

Many teachers want more information about a child's family, the family's beliefs, and what happens in the child's life outside of school to help them understand the child better. But some teachers are afraid to ask families about this, or feel too busy. Some teachers may end up guessing about what is happening with the child outside of school.

- *Share your beliefs and values if you feel comfortable.* One mother feels that children should not be sent on to the next grade if they are struggling with learning. She explains that in her country, children are not promoted until they are ready. When her own children had difficulty learning, this mother found out about the school's policy about promoting children to the next grade, and made sure to share her own beliefs with the teacher and principal. The school respected her wishes.

Choose the way that's right for you

In addition to attending parent-teacher conferences, parents can visit the school, chat after school or by phone, or ask another person to pass along information. There are many different ways for parents to communicate with teachers about children's learning. It's important to find the way that's right for you.

The role of teachers and schools in communication

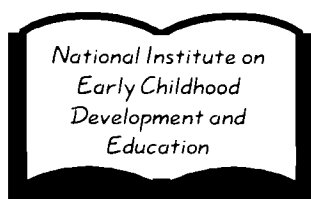
To do their job better, teachers need to know about the child's life outside of school. Some teachers schedule conferences that fit in with parents' work hours. Offering child care or transportation when possible would also make it easier for parents to come to the school. Schools that greet visitors warmly or open a parent center make some parents feel more comfortable and welcome in the school.

Some teachers call parents at home. Some teachers also write notes to parents, or send home information about the child with other family members. Finally, some teachers and schools provide translators and celebrate the diverse cultural backgrounds of children and their families.

Teachers and schools can do many things to make communication with families easier. It's important to tell your child's teacher the ways of communicating that work best for you.

This Digest was prepared by Holly Kreider, Ellen Mayer, and Peggy Vaughan of the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP). For more papers on this study, please call HFRP at (617) 496-4304, write to them at 38 Concord Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138, or visit their Web site at <http://hugse1.harvard.edu/~hfrp>.

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Early Childhood Digest

Latino Families: Getting Involved in Your Children's Education

April 1999

My name is Lorena, and 10 years ago I came to the USA from Guatemala. Now I have a son in first grade and a daughter in third grade. Schools in this country want parents to get involved with the education of their children, but I'm not really sure what to do. Besides, we're so busy! School activities are often during the day when I'm working, and at night I need to stay home to take care of the kids. Even when I go to the school, it's hard to communicate because not many teachers speak Spanish.

Many Latino parents feel just like Lorena. They have many questions. What is parent involvement? What can I do at home to help my child learn better? How am I supposed to work with the preschools and schools in this country? Can I trust them?

These are hard questions, but they are important questions. Children are more successful when their families are involved in their education. One of your roles as a parent is to make sure that your child receives the best education possible. To do this, you need to be involved!

What do schools want in this country?

By schools we refer to childcare, preschool, Head Start, and kindergarten. If you grew up in Latin America, the schools might have been very different. Maybe parents expected schools to do all the teaching. In the United States, families and schools are supposed to be a team. The family is the biggest influence on a child's life, and the school is the next biggest influence. Schools expect parents to get involved, both at home and at school. Parents are supposed to ask questions. Your ideas and questions are important. The relationship between the family and the school makes a big difference in how much a child can benefit from school.

How do I help with my child's education at home?

- *Children learn better when they are healthy and well-rested.* You need to make sure that your children are

getting enough sleep, going to the doctor for immunizations, getting dental checkups, and eating a healthy diet. Your community clinic can give you more information about how to do these things.

- *Children learn everywhere.* At home, you can teach your children the names and uses of things, like the furniture, the refrigerator, and the telephone. In the community, you can talk to them about things like cars, streets, stores, and the weather. They will be learning important language skills no matter what language you're speaking, so you should do these activities in whatever language is most comfortable for you.
- *Children need a good learning environment.* This means that you should take your children to the library, read books with them, and talk with them whenever you can, even when they are very young. Limit their TV watching. It's best to watch educational TV shows like "Sesame Street" or "Where in Time is Carmen Sandiego?" And if your children are old enough to have homework, they need a quiet place to study. All these things will help them do better in school.
- *Children need a positive attitude toward school.* Children learn attitudes from their parents. When you do all these things to get involved in your children's education, your children discover that you think learning is very important. Then they start to believe that learning is important too, and this has a powerful influence on how well they do in school.
- *Share your high expectations.* Perhaps you dream of your child finishing high school or attending college. Share this dream with your child often, starting at a very young age. Sharing your high expectations can help your child succeed.

How do I help with my child's education at school?

- *Use translators.* Ask the school for a translator if you need one. Or, feel free to bring along a friend who speaks both English and Spanish. If you want to speak with the teacher

or someone else at the school, it is important that you understand each other well.

- *Build trust.* Many Latino parents are afraid of the government, and they know that schools are part of the government. Talk to other Latino parents who have gotten involved with the local schools to find out what their experiences have been.
- *Get to know your child's teacher.* Talk with the teacher frequently, even when things are going well and there are no problems with your child. Ask about your child's learning and behavior. Ask about things you can do at home to help your child learn better. Ask about ways you can get involved at the school—for example, helping out in the classroom or attending class field trips.
- *Attend parent-teacher conferences.* If you are not available at regular conference times, call and ask for a time that fits your schedule. Try to bring questions about things you would like to know, or things that are worrying you.
- *Ask questions.* To understand the school better, it is important to ask questions. How can I stop that bully from picking on my son in the playground? Why is my daughter painting in class when I want her to learn to read? The better you understand what's happening, the better it is for your child.
- *Remember, you are the expert on your own child!* When you talk to the teachers, you can teach them about ways to work better with your child. Maybe your son learns better when he sits closer to the teacher. Maybe your daughter will be sleepy because there was a fire alarm in your building last night. It's better for your children if you tell the teacher these things. Your feelings and opinions are important.
- *Learn about school rules and school programs.* Find out how they affect your child and how he or she can benefit from them.

What if I have problems with the school?

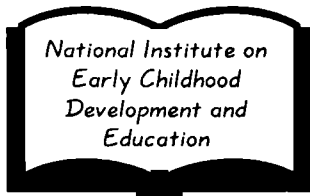
- *Keep trying.* Remember, teachers and principals are busy people, just like you. If you tell them about a problem and nothing changes, maybe they forgot or didn't have time yet to take care of it. Call them again, or write them a note. Don't give up, because then nothing will change. But they do need to listen to you. If you think they aren't taking your problem seriously, there are other things you can try.

- *Set up a special meeting.* Make an appointment to speak with the teacher or the guidance counselor about your concern. If that doesn't work, you may want to meet with the principal. You might be upset, but remember to stay calm!
- *If you do not agree, you can appeal.* Maybe you disagree with the school's decision about your child, such as being placed in a reading group that is too easy. Maybe the school won't hire enough translators. You have the right to appeal these decisions. You can find out how to start the appeal process by asking someone at the school or the school district office. It's important to do what you think is best for your child's education.
- *Talk with parents and advocates outside the school.* Your neighbor or someone at your church might already have solved a problem similar to the one you're having now. Some communities even have organizations to help Latino parents. Ask around to see if anyone has advice for you. Solving a problem can be easier when you have help.

Hi, this is Lorena again. It's been a real struggle, but this year I got more involved in my children's education. We have a quiet hour every night for doing homework, and I'm teaching my children to love reading and talking. When I asked the teacher, she even found a translator and offered me special meeting times that fit my schedule. After a year of getting to know people at the school, I feel more comfortable and welcome there. It wasn't always easy, but some of them were very helpful and friendly. Now I know how important it is to get involved, and I hope you will too.

This issue of *Early Childhood Digest* was prepared by Eliot Levine of the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP). For information on HFRP and other publications, please write to HFRP at 38 Concord Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138, call us at 617-496-4304, or visit our Web site at: <http://bugse1.harvard.edu/~hfrp>

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Early Childhood Digest:

Family Involvement in Early Childhood Programs: How to Choose the Right Program for Your Child

May 1998

There are many kinds of early childhood programs for young children ages 0–5. Some programs are home-based, while others are in more formal settings such as centers and schools. They include Head Start and preschool programs, both public and private. Regardless of the location, the extent of your family's involvement in your children's early childhood program makes a big difference in how well children adjust and how much they learn. When families take part in their young children's education programs, children do better in school, and the quality of their education can improve.

What is family involvement and how can families choose early childhood programs that encourage it? This issue of *The Early Childhood Digest* looks at these questions, and provides information on how to choose an early childhood program that encourages family involvement.

What is Family Involvement?

Family involvement means that families work together with care givers and teachers to create an atmosphere that strengthens learning both at the program and in the home. It includes the many ways that family members can influence children's education. For example:

- *You can be a customer* because early childhood education is a service for families. Like other customers, you can tell programs what you like and don't like about the program, and offer ideas about how to make it better.
- *You can be a supporter* of the program by giving materials (snacks, classroom supplies) to the program. You can sell things (baked goods, t-shirts) to raise money, and ask for donations from local businesses who want to support the program. You can find new families by advertising in local newspapers, and places where families go during the day.
- *You can be a volunteer.* You can work at your child's program and help teachers in the classroom or at snack time or lunch. Sometimes helping at school lets you go to teacher training workshops on issues like health and safety. Sometimes it means taking part in classroom activities like reading to your children.

- *You can be an advocate for the program* by talking to school board members and local politicians about the benefits of the program and the need for continued funding. It is your job to let the community know the importance of the early childhood program.
- *You can be on the parent-teacher association (PTA) or on a parent advisory board* that helps plan the program, hire staff, and raise money. This job lets you have a direct say in how the program affects your family.
- *You can be a learner.* Research shows that parents' child-rearing practices and beliefs are related to the child's performance in school. A good early childhood program can help you learn about your own children's development and what you can do to best support their learning and social skills. They can offer you ideas about how to help your children learn at home. They can provide information about what aspects of the home, what parents do, and what their attitudes are that are most important to children's early school success.
- *You are the best resource for information about your child.* Each child is special and you can help the program adapt to your child's individual differences. If your child has a disability, this is particularly important.

How to Choose a Program that Promotes Family Involvement

If you are looking for an early childhood program that encourages family involvement you need to do two things. First, tell the program's director that you and your family want to be involved in your child's education while in the program. Second, ask what opportunities are available for family involvement in the program. Below are some questions that you can ask when looking for a program that encourages family involvement.

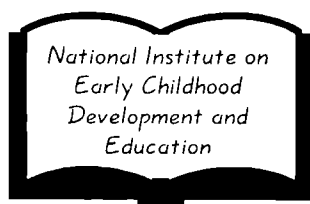
- *How does the program show that family involvement is a good idea?* All family members, including parents, brothers, sisters, and grandparents should feel welcome in the program. Are program activities open to my whole family? Do program staff seem willing to listen to my ideas? Do the written materials from the program talk about family involvement?

- *How does the program respond to each family's needs?* Every family faces its own set of challenges and programs should understand the individual strengths and needs of each family. Are meetings scheduled after work so that I can come? If meetings are at night, is child care provided? Do teachers speak any languages other than English? Will my child's teacher visit our home to get to know the family better? Are my family's holidays celebrated at my child's early childhood program?
- *How does the program let families know what happens during the day?* Communication between home and the program is an important part of family involvement. Program and home activities should complement each other. Families need to know what children are doing in their programs. They may wish to reinforce some of these activities at home. Teachers or care givers need to know what children are doing at home so that program activities can take advantage of these learning opportunities. Are there regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences? Do teachers have "call-in" hours? Is there time to speak with teachers when I drop off or pick up my child? Is there a daily log book that tells me what my child did during the day? Is there a newsletter that tells me what is going on at the program?
- *How does the program offer ideas about how families can help children learn at home?* Children are learning all the time, especially when they are home. But families often need guidance on how they can take advantage of these opportunities. Programs that value family involvement should provide ideas on how families support their children's learning at home. Is there a lending library where my children can get books to take home? Does the lending library have books on parenting? Does the program provide parenting tips on developing my child's language, art, and math skills?
- *How does the program encourage families to help at the center?* Family members have many skills that programs can use. Can I share family stories with my child's class? Can I schedule a time to read stories with the children? Can I help plan field trips? Can I go on field trips with the class? Can I schedule a field trip to visit my place of work? Can I volunteer to help at recess or lunch?
- *How does the program support the whole family?* Family involvement includes ways that programs support families, both at the center, and in the community. How does the program help me meet other families? Does the program offer coffee hours where I can meet other parents and make new friends? Is there a parent education center where I can get parenting tips and meet other families in the program? Some programs can even help parents find services in the community that they need.
- *How does the program value family members as advisors?* Family members have good ideas and programs need to hear them. Does the program have a parent advisory board? Can I help interview new staff members? Can I help decide what happens during my child's day? Can I tell program staff how I think the program could be better?
- *How does the program respect and use parent expertise about their child?* If your child has a disability, does the program ask you to provide training and information to the staff?

How much you choose to be involved with your children's program is up to you. The questions listed above can guide you as you look for a program for your child. Programs that value family involvement need to understand that your family is busy. Even if you can't commit to regular participation, you should feel welcome whenever you are able to help. Remember, no matter how small your involvement, your children benefit when the whole family is involved in their early childhood program.

This issue of *Early Childhood Digest* was prepared by Priscilla M.D. Little of the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) and based on HFRP materials, including *Raising Our Futures*, *New Skills for New Schools*, *Early Childhood Reform in Seven Communities*, and *Family Centered Child Care*. For copies of these publications, please write to HFRP at 38 Concord Avenue, Cambridge, MA, 02138, call us at 617-496-4304, or visit our website, [HTTP\hugse1.harvard.edu/~hfrp](http://hugse1.harvard.edu/~hfrp).

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Early Childhood Digest:

Families and Teachers as Partners

March 1998

The Early Childhood Digest is a quarterly report on ways that families and schools can work together to help young children learn and grow. The information for this Digest is based on research conducted by the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP), which studies programs and policies in education and child care that support families.

An audience filled with parents broke into applause as the kindergarten class finished its play "The Little Red Hen." Parents came up to the teacher, Claudia Gomez, in tears, telling her how moved they were by the children's performances. Don Barnes, an African-American father of a kindergarten student, wrote the music for the play.*

Don was not always so involved in the school. At first, he wasn't very involved at all. But when Claudia, his child's teacher, visited his home, she discovered that Don had many talents: he was a gardener, singer, writer, and composer.

Each time she visited the family, Claudia learned new things about them. After a few visits from Claudia, Don began to feel more comfortable and agreed to plant a garden for the children. As time went on, he started doing more things with the students. First he sang with them in the classroom and then he wrote the musical.

Everyone was excited about the play. Claudia called other parents to help arrange the choreography and sew costumes. The play was a big success. But more importantly, the children, the teachers, and the families all learned from working together and everyone had fun while they learned.

Children, families, and schools all benefit when families and teachers work together. However, many families do not know how to work with teachers, and while teachers need to know how to work with all families, most do not get enough training. It is not surprising then that many teachers and families don't know how to reach out to each other. Some teachers do not know how to talk with families or how to invite them to help in the classroom. Likewise, many families feel ill at ease with teachers or are afraid to talk to them or to enter the classroom.

What can families do to work better with schools?

All parents and family members want to help their young children succeed in school. By working together with schools and teachers, families can help their young children succeed. Below are some questions that family members can ask themselves to begin to meet teachers halfway:

- *What is my relationship like with my young child's teacher or caregiver?* To strengthen your relationship with your child's teacher, call to plan a meeting or to set a time to talk on the phone. Be sure to share what you expect your child to learn. Ask about your child's schoolwork and behavior in preschool or school.
- *How do I find out what the school expects from me and share what I want for my child from the school?* Families and teachers often come from different cultural backgrounds, which can make it hard to know what to expect from each other. Let your child's teacher know what you do at home to help your child learn and what you want your child to learn in school. Also ask what the teacher expects you to do in the school or with your child.

- *How can I help my young child at home?* You can ask your child's teacher for suggestions about learning activities that you and your child can do together at home.
- *What can I tell my young child's teacher about my child?* You are an expert about your child. Think about your child's interests, talents, and challenges. Share this information with your child's teacher so that the teacher can help your child learn.
- *How can I be most helpful to the school or early childhood program?* Let your child's teacher know what your interests and skills are, such as sewing, cooking, woodworking, or computers. Also let the teacher know when and where you are available to help. Ask about the kinds of help that are most needed.
- *How can I help educate teachers?* Think about how you can help teachers learn to work as partners and become better teachers. For example, you could form a committee to help new teachers learn about your community. You could also help change school policies and practices by joining the Parent Teacher Association.

How can teachers and families work together?

To work well with families and help young children learn, teachers need to know several things. The following skills are ones that parents can look for in their child's teacher. These are also skills that parents can help teachers learn.

Teachers need to know:

- About families—who they are and what they want for their young child.
- How to involve families in their young child's learning.
- How to talk with families.
- How to support families in helping their young child learn at home.
- How to involve families in the classroom and school.
- How to support families' interests and needs.
- How to share decision making with families.
- Respect and value different cultures.

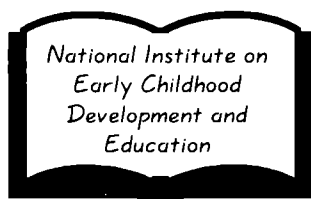
Research on how teachers learn to work with families shows good examples of families and teachers as partners and the important role that families play. For example, in an early childhood center in Napa, California where the preschool teachers are mostly non-Hispanic and the families are mostly Hispanic, the teachers invited the families to the center to learn from them about their culture and their goals for their young children. In this way, the parents and teachers helped each other gain important knowledge about what the families and teachers valued, how to communicate with each other, and how to work as partners.

In an early childhood center in Fort Worth, Texas, teachers and other staff members have helped busy parents save time and have more time to spend with their young children. Parents can drop off their dry cleaning at the center when they bring their children there in the morning. They can also buy snacks for the ride home when picking their children up in the evenings. Many of these time-saving ideas came from parents who returned a survey about what they needed help with most from the child care center.

This Digest was prepared by Holly Kreider of the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP). A recent report published by the U.S. Department of Education and the Harvard Family Research Project, called *New Skills for New Schools: Preparing Teachers in Family Involvement*, looks at what teachers need to know to be partners with families. To order a copy of the report call 1-800-USA-LEARN. For more information on HFRP reports call 617-496-4304 or write to them at 38 Concord Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138.

This Digest was sponsored by the National Institute on Early Childhood Development and Education of the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education. It may be reproduced at no cost. For copies contact Carol Sue Fromboluti at (202) 219-1672.

*This story is based on fact but names have been changed.



October 1998

Early Childhood Digest:

Family Resource Centers: Where School Readiness Happens

What is a Family Resource Center?

When families take part in their young children's education programs, children do better in school. Many early childhood programs offer you the opportunity to participate in your child's learning from the very beginning. Often, these programs reach out to you through family resource centers. Family resource centers are places where you can get information on raising and educating your child. Your child does not have to be involved in an early childhood program for you to participate in a family resource center. However, they are places where you can get ideas about how to work with your child's teacher, volunteer in the classroom, and support your child's learning at home. They are also places to meet other families and work together to improve schools. This issue of the *Early Childhood Digest* describes family resource centers and how they can help you get your child ready for school. Family resource centers are not all alike and the services they offer may vary across the country. However, most family resource centers

- *will make you feel welcome.* They are places that want to help you get involved in your child's learning. They give you the opportunity to develop family activities that reflect the culture and language of your own family and other families in the community. Often, parents like these centers because staff listen to them and value their ideas.
- *are places to get information.* Most family resource centers provide written materials on topics such as discipline, health and nutrition, and child care. They also share important information about your child's education. For example, one pre-kindergarten program invites parents to attend workshops where the parents use the same materials as their child. Parents finger-paint, play with play dough, and use blocks to understand how these activities help children problem-solve and be creative.

- *are places to take classes.* They offer parenting classes on such topics as coping with stress, how to handle your two-year-old, and healthy meal planning. They can also help you get a high school equivalency certificate. It is very important for your children's learning that they know how much you value your own education. They help you find, and sometimes pay for, child care while you attend classes.
- *help you meet other parents and share your stories about raising children.* Some centers organize family events like "Dads and Tots," or family picnics. These give parents a chance to meet and share parenting stories, as well as make new friends.
- *support families by making many services easier to get.* Some schools work with other agencies in the community to improve children's growth and learning and to help families solve problems. They use the family resource center as a place to offer families health and social services. Children need to be healthy to learn. Some centers help families get food stamps so that children can eat properly and stay healthy. Some family resource centers help you work with doctors to be sure that your children are immunized and that they have regular well-child check-ups. Some centers offer you the chance to get more education and job training skills. These centers help families who are eligible for services as well as those who are not.
- *offer your family support for a long time.* Family resource centers usually are located in the schools your child will attend. Therefore, they get to know your family when your children are young, and help you as your children go through the school. Since resource center staff know your family, when you come to them with concerns, they can find the best solutions for *your* family.

- *can help parents work together to improve schools.* Resource centers are places where parents can meet not only to share information with each other but to organize efforts to make their children's school better. Center staff can provide helpful information and suggestions about how parents can take action to change school policies that affect their children. For example, parents at one preschool did not like their children sleeping on the floor at nap time. Enough parents got together that the school listened to their concerns and purchased cots for the children.

How Can Parents Get Involved in Family Resource Centers?

To help your child get ready for school, you need to find out what resources are available in your community. You need to go to your family resource center and ask what they do and how you can become involved. Here are some suggestions for your involvement in a family resource center:

- Locate the family resource center in your community. Usually, family resource centers are located in public schools or community centers. Call your local library and they can tell you where to find the family resource center in your community. Other places to look are early childhood programs, schools, community colleges, or family-centered organizations.
- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funds parent training and information centers, as well as community resource centers that can help families of children with disabilities.
- Find out what activities they offer. Usually, centers offer a range of activities from workshops to "drop-in" play times to picnics. Go to whatever events interest *you*.
- You and your children can drop in at the center during the day. Your children can play with other children while you talk to the other parents about what they learn and do at the center. You can also get ideas from other parents about how you can help your child learn at home and at school.
- Family resource centers need plenty of help—everything from mailing monthly calendars to teaching workshops to providing child care so parents can attend classes. If you have time, find out what you can do to help. Anything you offer will be appreciated because family resource centers know how busy families can get and how much it means to spend some time volunteering.
- Think about what activities would be best for your family and your friends. If the center doesn't offer them, ask. It is *your* resource center and you need to help it find ways to help *your* family.

When families, school, and communities work together, children succeed. Family resource centers are places where families, schools, and communities can come together to help children get ready for school. Remember—a group of families has a larger voice than one individual family. Let the family resource center in your community help you organize parents to make schools better for your children.

This issue of *Early Childhood Digest* was written by Priscilla M.D. Little of the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) and based on HFRP materials, including *Paths to School Readiness* and *Early Childhood Reform in 7 Communities*. For copies of these publications, please write to HFRP at 38 Concord Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138, call us at 617-495-9108, or visit our web site, <http://hugsel.harvard.edu/~hfrp>.

This *Digest* was sponsored by the National Institute on Early Childhood Development and Education of the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education. It may be reproduced at no cost. For copies, contact Carol Sue Fromboluti at 202-219-1672 or visit our web site, <http://ed.gov/offices/OERI/ECI>.



Early Learning
Summary & Legislation
As part of the FY2001
Budget Resolution

FAX TRANSMISSION

**DEMOCRATIC OFFICE OF
THE UNITED STATES SENATE
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS**

To: Ann O'Leary

FROM: Stephanie Robinson

FAX #: 456-2878

DATE: 4/10/00 **TOTAL PAGES (INCLUDING COVER)** 3

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COMMENTS:

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Early Learning Amendment Summary

& legislation which was

agreed to unanimously as part

of the FY2001 Budget Resolution -

(Senate)

Early Learning Amendment #3003 (Stevens, **Kennedy**, Jeffords, Lautenberg,, Bond, Murray, Cochran, Kerry, Gordon Smith, Dodd, Chafee, Durbin, Reed, Warner, Murkowski, Bingaman, Boxer and Robb) The amendment creates a reserve fund of \$8.5 billion over 5 years from the budget surplus for legislation that improves opportunities for early learning and school readiness among young children from birth through age six.

April 7, 2000
11:30 a.m.

AMENDMENT NO. 300.3

CALENDAR NO. 11

Purpose: To establish a reserve fund for early learning and parent support programs.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES — 106TH CONG., 2d SESS

S. CON. RES. 101

Setting forth the Congressional budget for the United States government for fiscal years 2001 through 2005 and revising the budgetary levels for fiscal year 2000.

Referred to the Committee on the Budget and ordered to be printed

Ordered to lie on the table and to be printed.

Amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. Stevens (for himself, Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Jeffords, Mr. Lautenberg, Mr. Bond, Mrs. Murray, Mr. Cochran, Mr. Kerry, Mr. Smith of Oregon, Mr. Dodd, Mr. Chafee, and Mr. Durbin, Mr. Warner, Mr. Reed, and Mr. Murkowski, Mr. Bingaman, and Mrs. Boxer)

Viz:

At the end of title II, insert the following:

Sec. ____ RESERVE FUND FOR EARLY LEARNING AND PARENT SUPPORT PROGRAMS.

(a) ADJUSTMENT.-- When the committee on Education and Workforce of the House of Representatives or the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate reports a bill, an amendment is offered in the House of Representatives or the Senate, or a conference report is filed that improves opportunities at the local level for early learning, brain development, and school readiness for young children from birth to age 6 and offers support programs for such families, particularly those with special needs such as mental health issues and behavioral disorders, the relevant chairman of the Committee on the Budget may increase the allocation aggregates, functions, totals, and other budgetary totals in the resolution by the amount of budget authority (and the outlays resulting therefrom) provided by the legislation for such purpose in accordance with subsection (b) if the legislation does not cause an on-budget deficit.

(b) LIMITATIONS. — The adjustments to the aggregates and totals pursuant to subsection (a) shall not exceed \$8,500,000,000 on budget authority (and the outlays resulting therefrom) for the period fiscal year 2001 through 2005.

Kle: Early Learning



"Wilhelm, Susan" <Susan_Wilhelm@ed.gov>

02/29/2000 03:43:01 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Ann O'Leary/OPD/EOP

cc:

Subject: early childhood

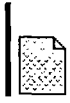
Attached is the most recent policy paper I can find in my files. I think there was still a later version which I will keep looking for. In the meantime, this may be helpful to you. I do not believe we actually has specs on the pre-K proposal, but will double check with Tom Corwin. In talking with Naomi, she says that the Georgia pre-K initiative seems to be working well. The big difference between the GA approach and what we had outlined is that GA funds nonprofit entities to provide pre-K services (not clear to me whether churches are in or out). It also appears (though I cannot be sure from their web site) that they fund entities directly rather than through any local consortia which is the model in the Early Learning Fund. In talking to one of the major foundations that funds early childhood the other day, Naomi found out that foundation has decided no longer to fund categorical early childhood services--meaning that they will no longer fund Head Start projects to do things in isolation, but will only fund joint activities with multiple types of early childhood providers including schools.

Although my first choice at the moment would still be to run the pre-K funds through schools as we were originally thinking, It may be worth considering (if a decision is made to go with a pre-school initiative) is to fund local consortia that must include schools so that the role of the Federal money would be two-fold--(1) increasing slots among a variety of providers and (2) providing incentives for more folks to focus on the pre-K school transition component. (I wonder if anyone has any data on the extent to which pre-K transition is happening--The only study I know of was done in the last Title I reauthorization. If found that very little was going on.) Obviously, this raising a number of questions that would have to be worked through--and there may be issues that other folks might identify that make it impracticable--but it might be something to think about. We would also want to take a closer look at the GA legislation--it would be nice to model a national proposal on something that appears to be working.

<<ESEADE~1>>

I think there is something wrong with this file--if you cannot open it I will fax it to you. Is 456-2827 the correct number?

Also, I really enjoyed seeing you on Friday. Thanks so much for the pointers on how to get the picture taken. Susan



- ESEADE~1

ESEA Early Childhood Initiative:
A Proposal to Increase Early Childhood Opportunities focused on Language and Literacy Development

Year after year, children from our poorest communities come to school with language and literacy skills that jeopardize their chances for school success. While the Clinton Administration has dramatically increased opportunities for children to participate in pre-school through expanding Head Start and supporting the Even Start Family Literacy program, 59% of children in our highest poverty schools still come to first grade without having participated in either Head Start or any other preschool program (U.S. Department of Education, Prospects: Interim Report). We now have clear evidence that children who receive enriched child care that stresses language and cognitive development in early childhood show significantly higher reading achievement when they reach the later elementary and middle school years (NAS, 1998).

With the release of the National Academy of Sciences Report, "Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children," the U.S. Department of Education assessed its unique ability to promote and support programs that provide literacy-focused, comprehensive early childhood services connected to public elementary schools and focused on high standards and high-quality.

The 1999 ESEA reauthorization offers the opportunity to propose a major early childhood component to help prepare all children to reach high academic standards and be able to read well and independently by the end of the third grade by –

- promoting professional development for childcare providers and other providers of early childhood services to help children build basic language and literacy skills;
- encouraging the development early childhood standards and benchmarks with the concurrent development of curriculum and assessment models and materials aligned to the standards;
- fostering necessary coordination and connections between pre-school programs and kindergarten; and,
- increasing quality early childhood education opportunities.

The above goals will be met through a major early childhood initiative that will include: (1) Ready To Learn, a Title I preschool initiative; (2) an expansion of the current *Even Start Family Literacy Program*, and (3) Ready to Teach, an early childhood professional development initiative. The purpose of this paper is to briefly describe these options.

A common thread across the three initiatives is that each requires a focus on early language, literacy, and reading development and proposes a core of services to enhance child readiness for school and prevent reading difficulties in young children. Resources available through these initiatives will improve child, parent, and educator skills, and increase access to, and improve the quality of preschool programs.

Why should the ESEA contain an early childhood initiative?

The goal of ESEA programs is to help all children achieve to high standards. Title I is specifically targeted to ensure that children in high poverty schools receive the assistance they need to reach the same high standards expected of all children. A key part of helping all children attain high standards is to ensure that as many children as possible enter school with the literacy and other foundation skills needed to achieve in school. These are (insert NAS information here on literacy, numeracy)

Unfortunately, many children do not have access to preschool services. Even fewer have access to the type of high-quality programs that foster the important foundation skills listed above.

Unmet Need for Quality Early Childhood Services

More than 14 million children live in poverty in the United States. One of every nine preschoolers lives in extreme poverty—with incomes less than half of the poverty line. Although the highest concentrations of poor children are in the central cities, child poverty rates are slightly higher in rural than in metropolitan areas. Poor rural children are one and a half times more likely than other poor children to remain in poverty for more than three years, and they are less likely to have access to health care, social, and other government services. (Source)

This Administration has taken a significant step towards ensuring quality early childhood services for more poor preschoolers by proposing to expand Head Start to serve XX children by XX. However, even with this significant expansion of Head Start many children will not have access to quality pre-school/early childhood programs that provide them with the literacy readiness skills critical to later success in school. Existing State-funded preschool programs are also insufficient to meet the need. Even though 39 States fund some type of prekindergarten program, there is great variety in the number of children served ranging from a few hundred per State to 60,000. Eleven States invest no State funds in either prekindergarten programs or Head Start. (Mitchell, 1998)

In XXXX, 59 percent of first grade children in high poverty schools (75 to 100 percent poverty) did not participate in either Head Start or other preschool programs.

A significant portion of the unmet need for early childhood services is among Hispanic and children of immigrant families. Children of immigrant families are much less likely to attend a prekindergarten program than their U.S. born peers (Hernandez, 1998).

Hispanic families are less likely to enroll their children in center-based early childhood programs. For example, a recent study shows that 15% of Latino preschoolers nationally spend part of their week in a child care center—compared

with 28% of white children and 29% of black children (reported in 9/29/98 Los Angeles Times from a recent U.S. Department of Education Study). While some argue that this is a historic preference of Latino parents, other note the lack of opportunities. A study conducted by Policy Analysis for California Education Center found recently that among California's poorest communities, predominately Latino areas have half the number of preschool slots that low-income black and white communities offer (Healy, 9/29/98 Los Angeles Times). The availability of high-quality, literacy-rich early childhood programs is important because they provide a mechanism for helping to prevent later reading and literacy problems.

Provides a mechanism for helping to prevent literacy problems

As noted in the National Academy of Sciences report, "The most effective way to prevent literacy problems is to ensure that lower income children have access to the kinds of conversations middle class children are more likely to get at home. These efforts should include educating parents, exposing children and their families to a broad range of interesting experiences, and offering much higher quality children care settings than many children are currently experiencing (Snow, 1998).

This conclusion is based on empirical research findings, including the following:

- Children who received enriched day care stressing language and cognitive development from ages 0-5 showed statistically significant higher reading achievement from ages 8-15 (grades 3-8) (Abecedarian Project, Campbell, Ramey, 1994; (NAS report, p.150)
- More intensive and high-quality classroom-based preschool experiences for children in poverty resulted in enhanced value and positive results for those children's language development (CARE program, Roberts, 1989 and Wasik, 1990; Infant Health and Development Program, St. Pierre, Lopez, 1994);
- In 1994, four years after prekindergarten attendance, students from Texas prekindergarten programs were less likely to repeat a grade and closer to grade level in their reading comprehension. Conversely, children who were eligible for prekindergarten but did not participate were below level in their reading comprehension. (Texas Education Agency, 1995)

In sum, there is growing evidence that, "Early language and literacy development as promoted in high-quality preschool programs is critical to positive long-term educational outcomes" (Frede, 1995).

An ESEA initiative complements and supports Head Start

An ESEA **initiative** to promote literacy-focused, comprehensive early childhood services builds upon and complements the efforts to increase access to early literacy services

started in the recent Head Start reauthorization. Funds provided under this initiative could be used to **support** Head Start **in meeting its** requirements for having degreed teachers in at least 50 percent of Head Start classrooms by providing certified teachers for such programs. Professional development **funds** provided under this initiative could train Head Start staff in the skills they will need to meet the laws new literacy readiness requirements.

Provides a catalyst to encourage existing State prekindergarten efforts to include a literacy readiness focus.

While 39 States have some sort of early prekindergarten program, it is not clear the extend to which (or very few of?) these programs include an early literacy focus. The availability of federal resources directed at literacy readiness would encourage and assists States to incorporate a literacy **focus** in their State-funded prekindergarten programs further increasing the number of children with access to high-quality early childhood programs.

An ESEA initiative promotes linkages among a wide range of prekindergarten programs and Title I schools allowing for a continuum of literacy readiness and literacy services beginning at the preschool level through the third grade.

There are no current broad-based federal efforts focused on professional development activities for early childcare educators around early language, literacy, and reading development.

While Head Start will have to develop some capacity to deliver professional development around early language development to meet the requirements of its new law, Head Start professional development is limited to Head Start staff. *(What can we say about state training efforts? Susan: Unfortunately, I do not have anything at my immediate disposal to add here. I can search if you want but probably will not get to it until tomorrow or Wednesday at the earliest.)*

OPTIONS (Options are not mutually exclusive)

1) Ready To Learn, a Title I preschool initiative (Naomi has an idea (Preschool Readiness Enhancement for Kindergarten) for a name that spells out PRE-K)

Provides State grants (and within States, competitive grants to high-need LEAs) for high quality preschool programs that focus on language, literacy, and reading development, as well as improvement of the transition from early childhood education **programs** to kindergarten and the early elementary grades. Grants would be used to:

- (1) **enhance** quality of existing services, including Title I preschool, Head Start, Even Start, and other public preschool programs; and,
- (2) to expand opportunities **to access high-quality, literacy-focused programs** for Title I-eligible preschool-age children in areas that are underserved by Head Start and other preschool programs.

Discussion:

This option will build linkages between preschool programs and Title I schools for improving program quality, helping children and schools meet readiness goals, and promoting successful transitions from preschool to kindergarten. It will also **support** Head Start in meeting its new literacy goals. It accomplishes this by adding a new section to the Title I statute, with separate funding, that incorporates and builds upon the existing Section 1112(b)(9). Section 1112(b)(9) requires LEAs to describe, in their plan, their preschool services, where appropriate, and states that when LEAs provide preschool services they may do so directly or through a subcontract with local Head Start, Even Start, or another comparable public early childhood development program.

This new section would authorize grants to LEAs (formula grants to States) for preschool programs and services such that:

- each program must include a literacy component (based on the NAS study), parenting education (addressing the brain research) to help parents serve successfully as their child's first teachers, and professional development related to these two activities;
- services can be provided by the school directly, or through a subcontract with Head Start, Even Start, or other comparable public early childhood development program depending on the needs of a local community;
- services may be provided in combination with resources from other programs (for example, wrap around services might include adding a half a day of Title I funded services to an existing Head Start program to enable full day program or programs where the educational component (teacher) is paid for by Title I and Head Start pays for the health and social services component);
- services may include professional development including training for public school and non-public school early childhood programs, transition activities that involve children, families, early childhood educators, and public and non-public early childhood programs, the development and implementation of early childhood education standards, assessment, and accountability systems that are appropriate for young learners and that are linked to k-12 standards, assessment and accountability systems, and accreditation of early childhood education programs and licensing and certification of early childhood educators (how does this last use fit into the purpose of promoting early literacy?); and
- performance indicators would be required to measure program effectiveness (using model from Voc Ed—Tom Corwin to provide details)

This proposal is consistent with and complementary to the intent of other Federal

readiness and education initiatives including Title I, Head Start, Even Start, the America Reads Challenge, and the Reading Excellence Act. Focusing on the first five years of life and adding additional resources to support an expanded effort to provide high-quality early childhood education within the purview of public schools, this program adds an essential building block to a comprehensive Federal education strategy aimed at achieving the twin goals of all children entering school ready to learn and being successful readers by the end of grade 3.

Both the Head Start and Title I statutes contain provisions relating to the transition from preschool to kindergarten. Studies prior to the 1994 Title I reauthorization indicated that little transitions services were occurring. A July 1998 survey of kindergarten teachers indicates that transition continues to be a problem for many children, particularly with regard to academic readiness. Kindergarten teachers in the survey reported that 48 percent of children entering kindergarten have transition problems; Thirty-six percent of the teachers indicated that about half of their class or more entered kindergarten with academic skill needs (National Center for Early Development and Learning, 1998).

Note: New data from the Title I state performance reports indicates there is a substantial increase in the number of children receiving Title I preschool services. However, it is unclear whether this is due to an actual increase in services or whether it is a result of the conversion of schools with preschool programs to "schoolwide status."

FY 2000 Budget Request: \$200 million

Pros:

1. The proposal supports the goal of all children reading on grade level at grade 3 by ensuring more children are exposed to literacy readiness skills that build the foundation for reading successfully when they enter school.
2. The proposal complements Head Start and other preschool programs by building on existing preschool efforts in States and communities and promoting linkages between these programs and the Title I schools most high poverty children will be attending.
3. The proposal requires research-based approaches to learning and a research-based focus (NAS recommendations) on early language, literacy, and reading development for educators, parents and children.
4. The proposal supports the Secretary's priority that all children are reading on grade level at grade 3.
5. **The proposal makes** the funds available competitively to districts enables funding to be targeted to areas of greatest unmet need.

Cons:

1. **The proposal** might be perceived as a duplication of existing Federal and State efforts to increase the number of children receiving preschool services.
2. There has been no recent national study/evaluation of the quality of Title I preschool

programs.

Option 2 -- Expansion of the current Even Start Family Literacy Program

Reauthorize Even Start with quality improvements based on the National Academy of Sciences' recommendations and stronger accountability measures.

Discussion:

The purpose of the Even Start program is to integrate early childhood education, adult literacy or basic education, and parenting education into a unified family literacy program. This option would expand the program in the nation's poorest school districts to help parents become full partners in the education of their children and assist their children in reaching their full potential as learners.

Both the first and second national evaluations of Even Start demonstrated positive outcomes for adults and children comparable to or better than other early childhood or adult education programs even though Even Start serves a population with greater educational and economic needs (see Even Start paper). Parents in Even Start make significant, moderate-size gains in a measure of cognitive stimulation and emotional support parents provide to children (based on HSQ—what is HSQ?). By comparison, parents from a control group in a study of the Comprehensive Child Development Program did not achieve the gains in HSQ. Families in Even Start that have large amounts of time for parents and children together had improved home environments (e.g. more literacy materials, more parent/child learning activities, approaches to disciplined reading, etc.). Intensive literacy-based parenting education in Even Start is related to improvements for children in the area of receptive vocabulary as measured by the Peabody Preschool Vocabulary Test. However, because program quality is uneven, this proposal also would incorporate all the quality improvement changes proposed in the Even Start paper.

Pros:

1. Even Start targets the poorest families with the lowest levels of literacy.
2. There is a very large unserved population of families eligible for Even Start services based on a recent Department study.
3. Increasing the literacy levels of adults has been proven to increase child literacy levels and current improvement efforts focus parenting education on instruction that helps parents develop the behavior and practices that research shows most support children's language and literacy development.
4. Family literacy is a particularly attractive model for educational services for Hispanic families and other families with young children who have recently immigrated to the U.S.

Cons:

1. Expanding the program before recently enacted quality improvements have been implemented and tested may result in an increase in less than effective programs.
2. Does not guarantee coordination with Title I.
3. Limits local flexibility by requiring implementation of a specific model of family literacy programs and services that include among other components adult education.

FY 2000 Budget Request: An additional \$100 million to reach an additional 100,000 disadvantaged children and parents.

Option 3 -- Ready to Teach, an early childhood professional development initiative

This initiative would enhance professional development and training opportunities for early childhood educators so that they are fully prepared to help children enter school ready to learn. Through this program, the Department would make grants to State partnerships for activities that build on existing State efforts, employ research-based adult learning principles, and lead to recognized degrees or certificates for participants. Specific activities would include program development, provision of scholarships, recruitment and induction activities, and the development of specific early childhood educator standards, credentials and certifications.

This initiative is critical. Highly skilled early childhood educators are one of the most important strategies for helping young children **to develop optimally and acquire the learning foundations necessary for reading readiness and school success**. The quality of instruction they provide can make a big difference in children's development of literacy skills (NAS, 1998). Yet, there are no current federal efforts focused on professional development activities for early childhood educators around early language, literacy, and reading development. Generally, high-quality professional development opportunities for staff working with young children in the preschool years are very limited, lack a research-based focus on early language, literacy and reading development, and often do not articulate to certificated or degree programs.

Early childhood teachers are, in general, poorly prepared to provide effective educational and developmental programs. Childcare teachers often have minimal training. Public school early childhood teachers often lack foundations in child development and pedagogy, including effective practices that support reading and writing success (Good Beginnings for All Children: From Brain Research to Action, 1997). Many preschool teacher preparation programs are offered only at the prebaccalaureate level and the course work is not very demanding or interesting. The NAS reading report (1998) recommends that preschool preparation programs include specific information related to preventing reading difficulties. Curricula should include information about how to:

- Provide a range of rich experiences that build large vocabularies and foster reasoning

skills in children;

- Create activities that develop skills in naming objects, learning about relationships and abstract terms, and differentiating between and among meanings of words;
- Nurture children's listening comprehension skills and their ability to learn new language;
- Foster children's sense of story and their sensitivity to the sounds of language, including the sounds in words and the sounds associated with letters of the alphabet;
- Develop children's awareness of concepts of print and written language, including reading from right to left;
- Involve children in activities that develop fine motor skills important for writing; and
- Motivate children to want to read.

Given the lack of readiness of the current early childhood workforce to foster children's optimal development, especially the language and literacy development of young children, a major, national professional development initiative is needed to achieve the desired outcomes of all children entering kindergarten ready to learn and all children reading successfully by the end of grade 3.

Pros

1. Promotes professional development opportunities linked to recent early brain, language, literacy, and reading development research.

Cons:

1. May provoke conflict among the major early childhood providers (Head Start, childcare, school) around what is an appropriate early childhood education literacy focus. **However, the International Reading Association (IRA) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) have recently released a joint statement on this topic that should lead to greater consensus in the field.**
2. The field currently lacks research-based models and resource materials for delivering training and professional development linked to early brain research, language, literacy, and reading development research. **These would be important to develop and test as part of the initiative.**

FY 2000 Budget Request: \$100 million

Additional Decision Items

- (1) Should programs funded under Options 1 be required to meet the NAEYC/IRA or similar standards?

Discussion: Title I funded preschools currently have to meet Head Start performance standards, unless they are using the Even Start model. The Education and Early Childhood section of the Head Start performance standards (Section 1304.21) requires that programs provide for the development of each child's cognitive and language skills by several strategies including supporting emerging literacy and numeracy development through materials and activities according to the developmental level of each child.

There has been some controversy around the original NAEYC standards, which were misinterpreted by some as endorsing giving children materials and letting them teach themselves. The standards have been recently rewritten to more clearly reinforce the need for a balance **between teacher-directed and child-centered activities**. There are also Montessori standards. However, none of these standards **have an "academic" base**.

- (2) How should services be provided to preschool students attending private religious schools?

- (3) Should the 8-year limit on receiving funds for Even Start be dropped if significant expansion is being proposed?

(Insert from Miriam)

- (3) Should the scope of activities in the professional development option include

**SUSAN: My version of the paper ended here. If you have more, please send it and I would be willing to work on it early this afternoon (Monday, 12/14 after 12:30).
Diane**

CHILD CARE NOW!

FACSIMILE TRANSMITTAL SHEET

TELEPHONE: (202) 662-3547

FAX: (202) 662-3560

TO: --

Ann O'Leary

FIRM:

CITY/STATE:

FAX NUMBER:

456-2878

FROM:

HELEN BLANK, Director, Child Care Division,
Children's Defense Fund, Department of Programs and Policy

DATE:

11-27-00

TIME:

5:00

NUMBER OF PAGES SENT (INCLUDING COVER SHEET):

COMMENTS:

here is the letter that will be sent on
Dec. 4th 5th. on the 5th, there will also
be an Ad in Roll call --

If you have any problems receiving this fax, please contact Jennifer Hutsal at (202) 662-3544.

November 15, 2000

Dear Senator/Representative:

As Members return to complete action on appropriations legislation before the close of the 106th Congress, we urge you to maintain the agreement reached by the conferees and not re-open the early childhood development/child care, Head Start, and after-school provisions in the FY2001 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations conference.

As currently agreed to, the measure would help millions of families afford child care so that they can work, enable almost a million children to participate in Head Start so that they can start school ready to succeed, and provide safe after-school opportunities for millions of children so that they will not continue to go home alone.

Maintaining these investments can make a real difference in the lives of children and families who need your help now. Please do not re-open the negotiations on these key children's programs. Let's work together to Leave No Child Behind.®

Sincerely,

9 to 5, National Association of Working Women
American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy
American Federation of School Administrators
AFSCME, American Federation of State, County, and Municipalities Employees
Alliance for Children and Families
Alliance to End Childhood Lead Poisoning
America's Second Harvest
American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences
American Humane Association
American Jewish Congress
American Medical Women's Association
American Psychiatric Association
American Psychological Association
Americans for Democratic Action
California Church Impact
California Women's Law Center
Camp Fire Boys and Girls
Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College
Center for Community Change
Center for the Child Care Workforce
Center for Law and Social Policy
Child Care Action Campaign
Child Care Law Center
Child Welfare League of America
Children's Defense Fund
Children's Foundation
Church Women United
Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition
Council for Exceptional Children
Council for Health and Human Service Ministries
Early Childhood Policy Research
Easter Seals
Ecumenical Child Care Network
Families Against Violence Advocacy Network
Fight Crime: Invest in Kids
Food Research and Action Center
Generations United
Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.
Good Faith Fund
Homeless Action for Necessary Development
Human Services Coalition of Dade County, Inc.
Illinois Facilities Fund
Jewish Council for Public Affairs

Jewish Labor Committee
Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs, ELCA
Lutheran Services of America
Muscogee Creek National Office of Child Care
NA'AMAT
National Association for the Education of Young Children
National Association for Regulatory Administration
National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies
National Association of Commissions for Women
National Association for Family Child Care
National Partnership for Women and Families
National Association of School Psychologists
National Association of State Directors of Special Education
National Association of WIC Directors
National Black Child Development Institute
National Black Police Association
National Child Care Association
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
National Coalition for Campus Children's Centers
National Coalition for the Homeless
National Community Education Association
National Council of Churches
National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA
National Council of Jewish Women
National Council of Negro Women
National Council of Senior Citizens
National Council on Family Relations
National Education Association
National Employment Law Project
National Head Start Association
National Institute on Out-of-School Time
National Latino Children's Institute
National Low Income Housing Coalition
National Organization for Women
National PTA
National Puerto Rican Coalition, Inc.
National Recreation and Park Association
National Respite Coalition
National Rural Education Association
National School-Age Care Alliance
National Women's Law Center
NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby
NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund
Ohio Professionals for School-Age Care
Oklahoma Tribal Child Care Association

Places and Programs for Children, Inc.
Presbyterian Church (USA), Washington Office
Public Justice Center
Quality Care for Children
RESULTS
The Salvation Army
Service Employees International Union, AFL-CIO
Teaching Strategies, Inc.
Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE)
United Auto Workers International Union
United Cerebral Palsy Association
United Methodist General Board of Church and Society
United States Conference of Mayors
USA Child Care
Volunteers of America
The Washington Ethical Action Office, American Ethical Union
Wider Opportunities for Women, Inc.
Windham Child Care Association
Women Employed
Women of Reform Judaism, the Federal of Temple Sisterhoods
Women's Business Development Center
YWCA of the U.S.A.
ZERO TO THREE: National Center for Infants, Toddler, and Families