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Everyone working for a brighter future for our young children needs to read and use
this essential publication.

—Bob Miller

Governor of Nevada and Chairman, National Governors' Association

Community Mobilization: Strategies to Support Young Children and Their Families

by

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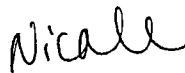
Families and Work Institute



Families and Work Institute

January 16, 1997

Ms. Nicole Rabner
The White House
Office of the First Lady
OEOB - Suite 100
Washington, DC 20500

Dear ~~Ms. Rabner~~, 

It was a pleasure to see you at the December 9th meeting at the White House. We were delighted to hear about your early childhood initiatives and to discuss the Early Childhood Public Engagement Campaign with you. We look forward to a continued relationship with you as we launch—and then sustain—this campaign.

At the meeting, we offered to send you a copy of the Families and Work Institute's new book, *Community Mobilization*. It describes what we believe is a movement emerging across the United States: citizens and community leaders alike coming together, essentially to say "It's time to take charge and do something for children and families." Typically, they develop a vision of what they want their community or state to become, goals and strategies to achieve that vision, and processes to assess the results of their efforts. The book not only provides compelling examples of these initiatives but also how-to information for every step of the process. We hope you find it useful.

Again, we look forward to our work together in the coming months. To keep you updated, I am enclosing the most recent campaign description.

Best wishes,



Ellen Galinsky
President

encs.

“I Am Your Child”

Early Childhood Public Engagement Campaign Description

Funders

AT&T Foundation
The California Wellness Foundation
Carnegie Corporation of New York
The Commonwealth Fund
The Charles A. Dana Foundation, Inc.
The Harris Foundation
The Teresa & H. John Heinz III
Foundation
IBM Corporation
Johnson & Johnson
W.K. Kellogg Foundation
John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur
Foundation
A.L. Mailman Family Foundation, Inc.
Robert R. McCormick Tribune
Foundation
The Travelers Foundation

Prominent entertainers, media, foundations, corporations, and child development experts have established an unprecedented public awareness and engagement campaign to focus on new and compelling evidence about the importance of the first three years of life. The campaign is designed to promote family involvement in young children’s healthy development and school readiness, to mobilize communities to act on behalf of young children and their families, and to build the capacity of early childhood organizations to help families nurture their children. The campaign will create an enduring collection of educational resources for parents, early childhood practitioners, and policymakers.

This effort builds on research evidence presented in *Starting Points*, the seminal 1994 report by Carnegie Corporation of New York that documents the substantial body of literature on young children’s emotional, social, physical, intellectual, and brain development. It concludes that “how children function from the preschool years all the way through adolescence, and even adulthood, hinges in large part on their experiences before the age of three.”

The report points out that our nation has inadvertently neglected these crucial years and that this neglect has led to a variety of troubling conditions that should be improved. Nationwide, many families with very young children do not have health insurance, child poverty rates are alarming, child abuse rates are high, and a substantial number of infants and toddlers are in potentially harmful child care situations. Families of all income levels are under stress. Parents worry about the amount of time they can spend with their families and about the safety and future prospects of their children.

The goals of the campaign are to help reverse these troubling trends by:

- raising public awareness about the importance of the first three years of life;
- working with national, state and community leaders to improve programs and policies for young children and their families.
- connecting families with young children to the information, resources and services they need;

Campaign founders represent an unusual collaboration that includes entertainment talent—spearheaded by Rob Reiner and Michele Singer Reiner, and by Ellen Gilbert from International Creative Management (ICM)—and a broad range of experts from the early childhood fields, including professionals in child development, early childhood care and education, parent education and family support, and children's health, coordinated by Ellen Galinsky and Nina Sazer O'Donnell of the Families and Work Institute. The campaign is supported by over a dozen foundations including the AT&T Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, and the Teresa and H. John Heinz III Family Foundation.

National Media

Called "I Am Your Child," **An Hour-Long ABC Prime Time Special** is being produced by Rob Reiner, Michele Singer Reiner and their production team. It is scheduled to air during the week of April 21, 1997. It will feature music, comedy and a documentary created by New Screen Concepts about a community that has mobilized on behalf of young children and their families. The program will be hosted by Tom Hanks, and will feature Robin Williams, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Whitney Houston, Walter Cronkite, Billy Crystal, Rob Reiner, Carl Reiner, Mel Brooks, and other stars who are donating their time and talents. *Good Morning America* will feature the campaign continuously during the week of the prime time special, as will many local ABC affiliates.

ABC will produce footage for ABC affiliates across the country to use as a wrap-around for local stories about their community's issues and solutions. The TV special will also include a toll-free number viewers can call to obtain fulfillment materials.

Newsweek Special Edition. *Newsweek* magazine will publish a special edition that will coincide with the show's airing. It will include a national status report on young children and their families, along with practical information about parenting.

Public Service Announcements (PSAs). Two broadcast public service announcements (PSAs) will be produced by Edge Creative (creators of Coca Cola's ad campaigns) for television, radio and print media and distributed by The Advertising Council. The PSAs will focus on the importance of family involvement in early childhood development and school readiness. They will contain a toll-free number introduced on the TV special that viewers can call for fulfillment material. United Airlines has also agreed to run the PSAs on in-flight entertainment.

Toll-Free Number and Written Fulfillment Material. The prime time television special and the PSAs will include a toll-free number that viewers can call to obtain written fulfillment material. This material will include research-based information on how families can promote young children's school readiness and healthy development and provide state by state lists of parenting resources and services. Space will be available on this material for state and local organizations to add their own logos, toll-free numbers, or resources. Fulfillment material will also be disseminated by national organizations, businesses, state and local coalitions and will be available in public libraries throughout the country.

Other Collaborators

The Advertising Council,
Inc.

Benton Foundation

Coalition for America's
Children

Evolutionary Publishing,
Inc.

National Governors'
Association

New Screen Concepts

The Rand Corporation
tcn

ZERO TO THREE:
National Center for
Infants, Toddlers and
Families

A Video for New Parents will focus on the importance of attachment between babies and their primary caregivers, with information on how families can encourage children's healthy development. The video will be distributed free of charge through hospitals, clinics, child care centers, schools, employers, non-profits, and early childhood state and community mobilization efforts. The Marriott Corporation will show the video on its hotel television channel.

A CD-ROM and On-Line Information will address the questions that parents have about their children, beginning in the prenatal period and extending through the first three years of life. An on-line information service, available to all Internet users, will provide practical parenting information and linkages to resources.

A World Wide Web Site is facilitating widespread communication about campaign activities. The Web site enables national, state, and local campaign leaders to find colleagues in their geographic or content interest areas; to share information about their activities and to share ideas with each other.

A Conference on Brain Development was held in June 1996 in Chicago to present key findings from leading researchers who are investigating prenatal and early childhood brain development. Panels of early childhood experts, the media, business,

and public policy leaders discussed the implications of the findings. A report from this conference, *Rethinking the Brain*, will be available in February 1997.

Materials from the campaign will be broadly distributed to policy makers, business leaders, national organizations, and state and local leaders.

Public Policy

The campaign is stimulating bipartisan dialogue about federal, state, and local policy goals. To ensure that all young children get a decent start, the campaign has identified four key areas that constitute vital starting points for our nation. These areas are: the promotion of responsible, informed parenthood; the creation of comprehensive preventive health care for mothers, fathers and young children; the wider availability of high-quality child care and early education; and the expansion of proven state and community-based approaches to reverse current patterns of neglect.

The Rand Corporation is conducting research on the long term economic benefits of effective policies and programs. A series of cost-benefit analyses on the impact of such programs on the prevention of child abuse, crime, welfare dependency and other outcomes will be released in Spring 1997 to coincide with the campaign's launch.

National "Summit" Meeting. Campaign leaders are in discussion with the President, cabinet officials, and a bipartisan group of members of Congress and governors about the design of a national conference on the status of young children in America. The conference will develop strategies to propel coordinated national, state, and local responses.

The National Governors' Association is working with campaign organizers to expand the gubernatorial interest and investment in young children's policies and programs. A bipartisan task force of governors led by Bob Miller (Nevada) and George Voinovich (Ohio) will study federal and state policy options to strengthen programs and supports for families with young children.

National Education Goals Panel. The nation's governors will attend a plenary session devoted to the campaign goals at the association's February 1997 meeting. A special briefing for the National Education Goals Panel, chaired by Roy Romer (Colorado) will also take place.

The National Conference of State Legislatures is developing a leadership group of state legislators who will promote legislative action based on new evidence on brain research and the healthy development of young children. Campaign leaders will provide a briefing at the organization's national meeting in August 1997.

Outreach to National Organizations

Work with National Organizations. National organizations are using their newsletters, journals, and other communications vehicles to publicize the campaign and inform their members about early childhood brain development. They are also encouraging their members to participate in state and local coalition activities. In addition, over three dozen national organizations have begun to make specific plans for participation in the campaign. Examples include:

- The American Library Association will develop information packages and present displays in libraries around the country for families with young children;
- The American Academy of Pediatrics is using the campaign to disseminate information about brain development to its members and to promote state and federal policies that ensure health care coverage for all families with young children;
- The American Public Welfare Association is disseminating campaign information through its extensive network of state and local offices;
- The Coalition for America's Children, a consortium of 350 national and local organizations, will help families connect to health care, family support, child care, and volunteer opportunities in their own communities.

Linkages to Business Leaders. A business symposium will be conducted in collaboration with the Committee for Economic Development in April 1997. This event will focus attention on what companies are doing to support new and expectant parents. The symposium is designed to stimulate additional strategies to engage the business community in the campaign. A report on innovative business strategies will be produced for the symposium and will be widely disseminated.

Expert Advisory Board

Judy Langford Carter, MA,
Former Executive
Director of Family
Resource Coalition;

Jerlean Daniel, Ph.D.,
Past President, National
Association for the
Education of Young
Children;

Emily Fenichel, MSW,
Associate Director of
ZERO TO THREE

Deborah A. Phillips, Ph.D.,
Director, Board on
Children and Families

Barry Zuckerman, MD,
Chairman, Department
of Pediatrics, Boston
University School of
Medicine

State and Community Action

State and Local Campaign Coalitions of business leaders, child advocates, and parents in thirty-six states are forming partnerships to strengthen programs and policies. Additional coalitions are continuing to form.

A small **Expert Advisory Board** has been selected to ensure that the content of this campaign is guided by accurate scientific knowledge. Expert Advisors represent national organizations reflecting the major domains specified in the *Starting Points* report: health,

parent education and family support, early childhood education and care, and child development.

For further information please contact Families and Work Institute:

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