

# Casey Journalism Center for Children and Families

Cathy Trost, Director

Lisa Caputo  
Press Secretary  
Office of the First Lady  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

January 17, 1995

Dear Ms. Caputo:

I am writing in the hopes of arranging an interview with Hillary Rodham Clinton at the White House with 30 print and broadcast journalists who cover child welfare issues. These journalists will be attending the Casey Journalism Center's week-long conference on "Protecting the Welfare of Children" at the University of Maryland, June 11-16, 1995.

The journalists, who compete for fellowships to attend the conference, have substantial backgrounds in covering children's issues and their work has wide impact. Past conferences have included journalists from the *Washington Post*, *Congressional Quarterly*, *ABC World News Tonight*, *American Agenda*, *USA Today*, *U.S. News & World Report*, *Education Week*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Boston Globe*, *San Francisco Examiner*, *Philadelphia Inquirer* and *Baltimore Sun*. Mrs. Clinton's remarks would receive even wider exposure through a summary of the conference which is published in the national monthly magazine *American Journalism Review*.

Journalists attending these intensive conferences participate with a range of experts to better understand the complex forces which shape children's lives today. Past speakers have included Attorney General Janet Reno, Children's Defense Fund president Marian Wright Edelman and Baltimore Mayor Kurt Schmoke. We are a journalism center funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation and based at the University of Maryland, aimed at enhancing the quality of reporting about the issues and institutions affecting disadvantaged children and their families.

Key themes which we will explore in the conference are the connecting problems which challenge children and families today, and the roles that government, communities and families play in protecting and supporting children and families. The core focus of the conference will be exploring the causes of increasing poverty among the young, and the debate over how we as a country can create more economic and cultural stability for vulnerable children and their families. The journalists will be spending the week engaged in discussions about the competing proposals for welfare reform, teen pregnancy, the role of fathers and the changing economic structure and ways to strengthen families.

Would it be possible to arrange such a session at any time during the weekday portion of our conference, Monday through Friday, June 12-16? I will call your office next week to follow up.

Sincerely,

*Cathy Trost*  
Cathy Trost, Director

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# FELLOWSHIPS

## "Protecting the Welfare of Children"

**Apply now to attend the third annual conference of the Casey Journalism Center for Children and Families at the University of Maryland**

**T**hirty journalists will be awarded fellowships to attend a week-long conference on "Protecting the Welfare of Children," June 11-16, 1995. Participants will join leading authorities from government, universities and the private sector for discussions on the connecting problems which challenge children and families today, and the roles that government, communities and families play in protecting and supporting children.

The conference will help journalists better understand issues that are widely covered—but rarely covered well: child abuse and foster care problems, teen pregnancy, violence, and poverty among the young.

Sessions will focus on new ways to serve children and families, including collaborations among community and state agencies and institutions.

With new leadership in Congress and many statehouses, this is a chance for journalists to explore potential changes in welfare and other programs affecting children and families. There also will be new models of project and beat reporting from around the country and sessions on the practical problems journalists face, including confidentiality rules.

Previous Casey conference speakers include Attorney General Janet Reno, Baltimore Mayor Kurt Schmoke and Children's Defense Fund president Marian Wright Edelman.

Fellowships cover instruction, lodging, meals and reading material and a travel subsidy of up to \$300. The Center is part of the College of Journalism of the University of Maryland and is funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

### DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS:

**Received by March 13, 1995**

The program is for experienced print or broadcast journalists. **We encourage applications from editors who direct coverage of children and family issues.** To apply, send *five copies each* of: a resume; statement of up to 500 words of reasons for wanting to attend and how this will strengthen coverage of children's issues; nominating letter from a supervisor; and three published articles, one audiotape or 1/2" VHS tape. **Contact: Cathy Trost, Director, Casey Journalism Center, College of Journalism, University of Maryland, College Park, Md. 20742-7111. Phone: 301-405-2482.**



1994 Casey Conference fellowship recipients for "Violence and the Young." From left to right, bottom row: Andrea Neal, The Indianapolis Star; Meg James, Palm Beach Post; Lisa Paradise, Norfolk (Neb.) Daily News; Millicent Lawton, Education Week; Jennifer Maddox, Port St. Lucie (Fla.) News; Betsy Rubiner, The Des Moines Register; Martha Shirk, St. Louis Post-Dispatch; Kathy Barber Hersh, South Florida Parenting. Top rows: Karen Houppert, The Village Voice; Lori Savitch, WPXI-TV, Pittsburgh, Pa. and Nick News; Patty Edmonds, USA Today; Leslie Goldberg, San Francisco Examiner; Kimberly Mills, Seattle Post-Intelligencer; Christine Crumbo, The Wichita (Kan.) Eagle; Louise Kiernan, Chicago Tribune; Anita Diamant, freelance writer; David Zucchini, The Philadelphia Inquirer; Dorian Friedman, U.S. News & World Report; Maureen McFadden, Woman's Day; Isabelle de Pommereau, The Bristol (Conn.) Press; Anne Bothwell, The Milwaukee Journal; Jodie Sinclair, KHTV-TV, Houston; Karen Peart, Scholastic UPDATE Magazine; Janet Gardner, The Gardner Group; John Barry, The Miami Herald; Curtis Krueger, St. Petersburg (Fla.) Times; Ben Holbert, WUAB 43, Cleveland, Ohio; Carol Gunderson, Minnesota Public Radio; Jack Kresnak, Detroit Free Press. Not pictured: Bryan Denson, The Houston Post.

Photo by John De Fabbio

### Comments from the 1994 recipients:

*"A must for journalists serious about children's issues."* —Jack Kresnak, Detroit Free Press

*"A very well-conceived crash course covering all angles of the issue."* —Patty Edmonds, USA TODAY

*"An excellent source of information, data and expertise."* —David Zucchini, The Philadelphia Inquirer



# The Casey Journalism Center for Children and Families

The Casey Journalism Center for Children and Families is a national resource for journalists who cover children and family issues. Its mission is to enhance reporting about the issues and institutions affecting disadvantaged children and their families and to increase public awareness about the concerns facing at-risk children. The Center is funded by The Annie E. Casey Foundation of Baltimore, Md., the nation's largest philanthropy dedicated exclusively to improving the futures of disadvantaged children. The Center is part of the University of Maryland College of Journalism.

**Fellowships —** Annual fellowships for print and broadcast journalists to attend an intensive week-long conference on children's issues cover instruction, lodging, meals and reading material and a travel subsidy of up to \$300. Previous conferences on "The American Family: A Tradition Under Siege" and "Violence and the Young" have attracted a strong field of applicants. Thirty fellowships are awarded to each annual conference. The next will be held in June 1995, with application deadlines in March 1995. Participants join leading authorities from government, universities, research groups and the private sector for discussions on policy issues as well as practical reporting techniques and new models of children and family reporting from around the country. Previous speakers include Attorney General Janet Reno, Children's Defense Fund president Marian Wright Edelman, Baltimore Mayor Kurt Schmoke, former *Philadelphia Inquirer* editor Eugene Roberts and other key decision-makers and journalists. Previous recipients have said: "Among the most useful conferences I've ever attended."—Barbara Vobejda, *The Washington Post*. "Better focused and better people who are doing real things than anything I have been to in 22 years in this business."—Jane Daugherty, *Detroit Free Press*.

**Awards —** The Casey Medals for Meritorious Journalism honor distinguished coverage of disadvantaged and at-risk children and their families, and the institutions and agencies charged with serving them. First-place winners in nine categories receive \$1,000 awards and are eligible for \$2,000 study/travel grants. Categories include newspapers, magazines, television, radio, photojournalism, and books. Applications for the 1995 awards are due in August. Work published or broadcast between June 1994 and June 1995 is eligible.

**Resource Center —** Journalists are provided with information about programs and trends from a database of experts on a wide variety of children's issues. Also, quality journalism on children and family topics is highlighted in the Casey Center's quarterly newsletter, *The Children's Beat*. The Center is a non-partisan, independent group with a national advisory board of journalists and experts on children's issues.

**For more information, contact:**

Cathy Trost, Director, Casey Journalism Center, College of Journalism, University of Maryland;  
College Park, Md. 20742-7111. Phone: 301-405-2482.

# COVERING VIOLENCE



PHOTOGRAPH BY STEPHEN SHAMES/MATRIX

# COVERING VIOLENCE

**S**tories about crime and violence dominate the news, but the stories often don't go much beyond body counts. As a result, the media face increasing criticism for lurid coverage that provokes public fear about runaway crime. Against that backdrop, the Casey Journalism Center for Children and Families convened a conference to help journalists take a more comprehensive look at the causes and consequences of increasing violence by and against children and youths. Thirty print and broadcast journalists spent a week in intensive discussions with 40 experts at the conference on "Violence and the Young," the second of an annual series of such conferences held at the University of Maryland. The journalists, chosen from a field of 82 applicants, engaged in hours of policy discussions about violence, its roots and its impact. But they also had sessions about news judgment, play and ethical concerns and debated ways to cover the issue better.

## A REPORT ON A CONFERENCE ON VIOLENCE AND THE YOUNG

The following summary of the conference was funded by the Casey Journalism Center and was written by its director, Cathy Trost, a former children's beat reporter for the Wall Street Journal.

**The Casey Journalism Center for Children and Families** is a national resource for journalists who cover issues and institutions affecting disadvantaged children and their families. The center, part of the University of Maryland College of Journalism, is funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the nation's largest philanthropy dedicated exclusively to disadvantaged children. The center is politically nonpartisan. It has a national advisory board of journalists and experts. The center conducts an annual conference for print and broadcast journalists, administers a journalism awards program for distinguished reporting, and publishes a quarterly newsletter, the *Children's Beat*. It also provides journalists information from a database of experts on children's issues. For information write Casey Journalism Center, University of Maryland College of Journalism, College Park, MD 20742-7111, or call 301-405-2482.

**J**OURNALISTS NEED TO DO A BETTER JOB OF STRIKING A BALANCE between fear and fact when reporting on crime and violence, and work harder to convey the complexities of the story. That message pervaded intensive discussions at the conference.

For journalists, it's one of the most demanding stories around. Covering children and violence requires digging through confusing crime data, investigating root causes, searching for solutions, and trying to put a human face on statistics while dealing with confidentiality and access barriers in child welfare and juvenile justice systems. But best intentions are often undermined by deadline constraints, shrinking news holes, and increasing pressures from tabloid-style television and newspapers to play up the sensational aspects of crime stories.

"How do we write about the violence, the poverty, the isolation without sensationalizing it, without being trite, without sounding like a foreign correspondent, without appearing wide-eyed, without blaming the victim or absolving them of responsibility?" asked Alex Kotlowitz, a former Wall Street Journal reporter and author of "There Are No Children Here," an award-winning book about the toll of violence on two brothers living in Chicago public housing.

He said there is a "very deep and wide chasm that separates the two Americas" and journalists must be able to provide a bridge for better understanding between them.

"The most important challenge for us in this profession is to get people to believe stories that approach unbelievability," he said. "Given the horrors that take place in communities like the one I wrote about and the ones you write about, the best we can do is understate what takes place, not to hype it. More importantly, to bring readers into the lives of these children in as intimate a way as we can. To let readers feel the fear and anxiety of these children. To let them smell the urine and spilled cheap wine in the halls of public housing. To let them become nauseous at the sight of a bloodied corpse. To let them share in the joy of winning a spelling bee or landing the first date. To capture both their strengths as well as their frailties."

Conference speakers cautioned journalists to carefully scrutinize crime data because the numbers can be confusing. They warned that without context, the daily images and stories about random crime and violence splashed across television screens and newspaper and magazine pages are fueling false public perceptions of an unprecedented crime wave and misguided public policy solutions.

Marian Wright Edelman, president of the Children's Defense Fund, warned that the "moral threshold" of the country had dropped so low "that we have somehow accepted that killing children is routine." Though crime victims are disproportionately minority and lower income, she said violence transcends race and class and challenged journalists to "make clear about the transracial nature of gun violence in this society." Roughly half of gun homicide victims from 1968 to 1991 were white and half were black, she said, and the majority of whites are killed by whites and the majority of blacks are killed by blacks. "We need to be clear that the majority of this is occurring between people who know each other, members of families, acquaintances. It is not street crime, even though our fears have been driven and our crime bill and all of those bills are being driven by our real perception and fear of street crime."

Many speakers decried the prominent play given to random murders and street crime in television and newspaper news as misleading. "The way it is portrayed in the media creates the image that everyone could potentially be a victim any minute. It truly does not work that way," said Andrew McGuire, executive director of the Pacific Center for Violence Prevention, a policy advocacy center for a five-year, \$32 million violence prevention initiative launched by the California Wellness Foundation.

He said relatively rare crimes like mass shootings or drive-by assaults get overplayed while "the real problem, the suicides and the homicides in the home, do not get reported. I would like to see the kleig lights turned over into the domestic violence, suicide arena where the big numbers are of deaths and injuries."

Some speakers were skeptical about the media's ability to focus on complex issues. "What matters is what makes a sound bite, what is a good throwaway line and what makes a great headline," said Jerome Miller, president of the National Center on Institutions and Alternatives. In press coverage of the Florida tourist killings last year, for example, he said the "implication was that there was this fantastic wave of killings of tourists by kids" when in fact one publication later reported the numbers were down compared to the previous year.

Journalists at the conference talked about the difficulties of informing readers about violence with compelling, readable stories while not stepping over the line into sensationalism. Stories about violence educate and mobilize the public, but they can also lead to a "sense of despair and overwhelming complexity

with the issue," said Betsy Rubiner, a family reporter at the Des Moines Register.

After the Chicago Tribune's "Killing Our Children" series, which documented the death from homicide of every child under age 15 in the Chicago area in 1993, the paper launched a project called "Saving Our Children" to explore solutions to the problems documented in the first series. Ann Marie Lipinski, the Tribune's deputy managing editor, says reporters and readers alike were feeling frustrated about how to fix the seemingly overwhelming problems. "I remember getting a letter from one woman at one point saying, 'OK, you have my attention, now what do you want me to do?'" she said.

And though readers may be shocked and horrified, Lipinski and other journalists said news organizations must not try to protect readers from the devastating truth about the peril to children's lives. The Tribune's "Killing Our Children" series displayed the daily body count in bold black numbers on the newspaper's front page with an accompanying story that dug deeply into each child's life and the circumstances that led to its end.

"There were people inside and outside of the paper who thought this was just sort of wretched excess, that putting these kids in the paper day after day was numbing," conceded Lipinski. But she came to believe that readers should be shaken by the stories so that they would start to realize how massive the problem is.

During the project, she clung to a letter from a suburban mother that read: "I'm tired of picking up my newspaper every day and reading about these kids: it has really gotten to be too much. I have three words of advice to you: Keep it up."

Stephen Shames, a prize-winning freelance photographer who has done powerful and intimate work on violence and children (see cover), said he sometimes has difficulty convincing national media to run some of his photographs, but

he believes it's important to show people real images. "Some issues you have to upset people about," he said.

The major lesson, said Kenneth E. Powell, an official with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, is that the media should not "spend less attention on violence. There have been many very responsible articles dealing with violence and calling attention to it in helpful ways, and that kind of reporting is something we can benefit from."

**J**OURNALISTS WERE urged to get beyond the daily body counts and explore the root causes of vio-

*Children's Defense Fund president Marian Wright Edelman (second from left), and Howard University Violence Prevention Project director Hope M. Hill (third from left) talk with journalists and students at Stanton Elementary School in Washington, D.C.*



RICHARD A. BLOOM

lent behavior as well as the psychological effects on children living in families and neighborhoods where violence is part of their daily routine.

James Garbarino, director of Cornell University's Family Life Development Center, encouraged journalists to look for "both the psychological and the philosophical consequences of violence on individual children, on groups of children and on the entire culture." The "package of psychological symptoms" is often seen in the form of trauma similar to post-traumatic stress disorder while the philosophical consequences of violent trauma include "what it does to kids' world views" and what it does to their "moral sensibility" (see "Garbarino's List," page 8).

The journalists spent a morning talking to children about the effects of community violence on their lives in group sessions at Stanton Elementary School in Washington, D.C., coordinated by Hope M. Hill, director of the Howard University Violence Prevention Project and the Children's Defense Fund Child Watch Division. The children wrote letters to the journalists that poignantly showed how normal childhood pursuits have become tainted in troubled neighborhoods.

"My neighborhood is full of violence and coke. My hobbies are swimming and reading," wrote one boy. "My neighborhood is bad, they take drugs and shoot," wrote a girl. "Last week this man got shot. And got threw under a car and that man got pick up and was put in a bag. My hobby is skating and jump rope."

Speakers also encouraged journalists to look at resiliency in children and communities, and models of success, not just the problems. "We have always been sort of geniuses at finding the agency or program or institution that is screwing up and not working," said Curtis Krueger, a reporter with the St. Petersburg Times in Florida. "Should we have our Bob Woodwards doing that same thing to the agency that is working?"

Some participants spoke out about the dangers of racial and ethnic stereotypes in media coverage of crime, and journalists acknowledged their own concerns. Jeffrey A. Roth, study director of the National Research Council Panel on the Understanding and Control of Violent Behavior, warned the media "to be aware of negative stereotypes and the fact that

- they can become self-fulfilling" by reducing opportunities for young black males.

Karen Peart, assistant editor for Scholastic Update magazine, said there aren't enough "positive images of black and minority males on TV or even in the newspaper." Responded Roth: "Part of what that does is help say to employers, 'Hey, we do not want to hire these kids.'"

"A crime in this country now means black, and it is not necessarily the print press, but certainly when you watch shows like 'Cops' and 'Hard Copy' and 'Inside Edition' night after night you would swear that all the criminal activity in this country is occurring in the inner city and involves black or Hispanic men," said Jerome Miller of the National Center on Institutions and Alternatives. "You never have to utter race. All you have to do is talk about crime. It is an easy way to go and certainly the press in this country are riding it high and mighty."

Black-on-white homicides, like the Long Island commuter rail shootings, are highly publicized while black-on-black homicide, which is far more common, gets short shrift, says Lawrence W. Sherman, professor of criminology at the University of Maryland and chief criminologist for the Indianapolis Police Department. "What are the consequences of that in our perception of the American crime problem?" he asked. The press pays little attention to the major growth in the numbers of young black males killing other young black males, he says. "But you could have a tiny 1 or 2 percent increase in black-on-white homicide and it is all over the front pages." He said he doesn't know what the numbers are, but

- he senses that the politics of crime are being driven by these highly publicized incidents.

**T**HOUGH MEDIA COVERAGE IS OFTEN SHALLOW, SOME NEWS organizations are digging beneath the surface and offering readers more depth and detail about the causes and consequences of violence and offering ideas about solutions.

At the conference, journalists discussed new ways of covering violence, along with a wide range of other concerns, including ethical considerations when interviewing children, developing new sources of information, and dealing with

*"As I was leaving my house with two other friends I was shot in the back. I thought it was never going to happen to me."*

—TAYESE BROWN, 15

## CONSIDER THIS

JOHN DE FABRIO



Sarah Cromwell

Sarah Cromwell's 16-year-old son was shot to death while walking home from a basketball game in Baltimore. The shooter was also 16 and didn't know his victim. "It just happened to be his initiation into manhood that night," she says. After her son's death, Mrs. Cromwell was interviewed by many reporters, and she found the experience painful.

"I would like for you to

remember that when you approach us for a story, that once you leave, you leave us bleeding. We are bleeding all over the carpet just like it is day one again," she said. Reporters got their story about her son, but she was left in a "state of agitation, depressed, and the pain started again" after recounting the details of her son's death. Only one reporter ever took the time to send her a

letter thanking her for talking. "That touched me so," she said.

"Take the time and call the person back, or drop them a note and just say, 'Thank you for bleeding for me to help someone in the community,'" she said. "You know that on the news it says, 'If it bleeds, it leads,'" she said. "Thank that person for bleeding for you because we do bleed, and it hurts."

confidentiality rules restricting access to juvenile courts and child welfare systems.

Should journalists use children's names when reporting stories? How far should they go to protect children who aren't savvy about the press? How should they handle sensitive information told to them by children that could cause problems for the family? How can journalists understand the true hopes and fears of children, and how can they ensure their own physical safety when reporting in violence-torn neighborhoods?

And what about the "pizza question?" A reporter once told Alex Kotlowitz that he agonized over the question of whether it was ethically appropriate to take a child he was interviewing out for pizza. "I think it is terribly important to take these kids out to lunch, to take them to the movies," said Kotlowitz, adding that he spent less money on the boys in the Chicago public housing project when he was reporting the story for the Wall Street Journal than "some reporters at the paper do taking out some Wall Street analyst for lunch on a single day."

Whether or not to use children's real names is a vexing question for journalists. Kotlowitz says he never uses a child's first or last name without his or her parent's permission. He thinks it's critical that reporters sit down with parents to explain the implications of the story to help them decide.

When he wrote the story for the Wall Street Journal, he used the family's real last name. He also mentioned that the father lived at home sporadically. As a result, local officials launched an investigation into why the mother was receiving public aid. In his book, he gave the family a fictitious last name because he did not want the children "to have to live, for better or for worse, with the legacy of that book." In a more recent story for the New York Times Sunday Magazine, he made the decision not to use the last name of a juvenile being tried as an adult even though his parents gave permission. "I do not think they fully comprehended what it would mean to have their family's name in the the New York Times Sunday Magazine," he said.

Andrea Neal, a reporter with the Indianapolis Star, raised concerns that using fake names or initials for a child in a story adds "an air of fiction" to reporting "that is already unbelievable to a lot of people." She said her paper would not print a story on page one with initials standing for a real name. Kotlowitz said he prefers using real names to add credibility but "you need to consider the well-being of that child you are writing about. There is a trade-off."

He also said reporters must make sure children thoroughly understand the implications of publicizing sensitive information about their lives. "When children tell me what I consider sensitive information in their lives, for example, about a brother who was on drugs, assuming I have gone out and confirmed that, I will make a point of going back two or three times with that child to make sure that they understand that I will use this information and to make sure it is alright with them," he said. He also makes a point of keeping his reporter's notebook visible as often as possible "to remind children why you are there."

Kotlowitz outlined some guidelines for journalists reporting on children, based on the two years he spent reporting the story of Lafayette and Pharaoh and the toll that violence took on the two brothers in the Henry Horner Homes in Chicago.

*continued on page 8*

► **I**S CRIME UP OR DOWN? ARE JUVENILES DRIVING VIOLENT crime trends, or are kids getting into the same amount of trouble today as they ever have? And if things really aren't so bad, then why do Americans rank crime as one of the most important problems facing the country today? Hours of policy discussions at the conference focused on the often confusing, often conflicting data about crime and how journalists can better understand it.

► In fact, the total volume of violent crime in the adolescent population hasn't changed much, said Delbert S. Elliott, director of the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence at the University of Colorado at Boulder. What's changed is the proportion of those violent crimes that result in death, so that crime has become "more lethal." And violent crimes are taking place in a much wider range of social situations and places, from supermarkets to hospital emergency rooms. That adds to public fear, he said, because "we no longer have safe places."

► The proportion of murders committed by juveniles in 1992 was 9 percent, the highest in a generation, according to

## JUVENILE CRIME TRENDS

► Howard N. Snyder, director of systems research for the National Center for Juvenile Justice. "What juveniles are doing is getting more involved in murders...primarily because of the increased use of weapons," Snyder said. But he warned journalists against assuming that juveniles are driving violent crime trends. Overall, just 19 percent of the increase in violent crimes in the United States between 1983 and 1992 can be attributed to juveniles, he said.

► Murder and robbery rates have been "oscillating between two fairly narrow ranges" for the last 20 years, said Alfred Blumstein, J. Erik Jonsson professor of urban systems and operations research at Carnegie Mellon University. But contributing to the public's fear is "the growth in these murders by these young kids" plus "how they are doing it." Beginning in 1985, there was a striking increase in the percentage of gun murders by juveniles, which now accounts for 80 percent to 85 percent of murders by juveniles.

► Still, said Kenneth E. Powell, an official with the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the United States has a homicide rate much higher than other countries. "The current situation is not one we need to accept," he said.

► Violence falls most heavily on minority males and occurs most often in urban areas, but the difference in rates appears primarily to reflect conditions in low income neighborhoods, says the National Academy of Sciences violence panel. ■

**W**HAT WE HAVE FOUND IS THAT THE psychological impact of witnessing violence on many children is just as severe as if they actually had been victims of physical or sexual abuse themselves," said Hope M. Hill, director of the Howard University Violence Prevention Project.

"We have an elevated level of depression in Washington, D.C., among young children," she said, adding that the same is true in other major areas. "We are seeing depression as a side effect not just of violence but of multiple stresses that young children are asked to cope with on a day-by-day basis. Many of the kids in our program are concerned about whether or not their parents will get home safely from the bus at 6:30. Will their older brother and his friend literally get home safely from school?" But there is a "critical lack" of mental health and other services for children.

Dr. Modena Wilson, director of Johns Hopkins Children's Center Division of General Pediatrics, talked about the effect the rise in gunshot injuries is having on

## **HIDDEN SCARS OF VIOLENCE**

children in Baltimore: "We now see children who are overweight; exercise is not possible for them. They cannot go outside, they cannot get out of the house. It is too dangerous. We see children who come in with abdominal pain or headache and when you really get to the bottom of it you find out that their symptoms are very real to them but they are there because they are afraid to go outside to go to school. This is an emergency."

A survey of mothers at the Boston City Hospital pediatric clinic found that one in 10 children had witnessed severe violence, such as a knifing or shooting, by age six, and one in five mothers had been a victim of violence themselves, according to Betsy McAlister Groves, director of the hospital's Child Witness to Violence Project. As a result, "children live with a sense of anticipation that something dreadful is going to happen shortly," she said, and that often gets transformed into a "hostile and aggressive stance against the world."

Indeed, "what you see in adolescence can be traced back to what has happened, what they feel, what they believe, what they understand the world to be in their earliest years of life," said Beverly Roberson Jackson, director of public policy for Zero to Three at the National Center for Clinical Infant Programs. ■



**Put yourself in their shoes:** "Let your own experiences and emotions as you report and spend time in these neighborhoods help you understand the experiences and emotions of the children." When he was first reporting the book, he thought the children's bravado meant they had gotten used to the violence. He was taking Pharoah, then 10, home to his seven-story high-rise after a movie one night. The gangs had shot out the lights. "I thought to myself there is no way I am going into that building," he recalled. But when he looked over at Pharoah, expecting him to run alone into his apartment, he realized the boy "had the same fear that I had been experiencing."

**Spend time in the neighborhoods:** Visit schools, travel with police, play ball or shoot pool at a Boys or Girls Club, attend church services. Hang out. Spend time in institutions that serve children: juvenile courts, the city council, department of public aid, churches. Newspapers should open bureaus in urban neighborhoods.

Children require a lot of time to open up. Even though they are often quick to bond because they need attention, he says, they are very slow to really open up in communities where trust is a rare commodity. When he was working on the book, the boys asked him over and over whether he was going to leave when he finished. He promised them he would not leave, and kept his promise by staying in close touch with them. He says children are also quick to tell adults what they want to hear, so sometimes it takes a lot of time to get to a deeper level.

**Put away your preconceptions:** He wasn't prepared for the extent and kind of violence he witnessed when reporting the book. In two years, the two boys lost three young friends in violent ways. These children, said Kotlowitz, "see more than most of us will see in a lifetime." He saw evidence of post-traumatic stress disorders in the children: They were more aggressive, and acted out conflict in violent ways. They also had flashbacks, trouble sleeping, and depression.

Though he expected to find a strong sense of community, he found instead a community on the verge of collapse with weak political leadership and few social service agencies, where "residents distrusted not only outsiders but distrusted

*"My neighborhood is bad and good sometimes but it need to stop killing people and stop fighting so the kids can play, not die," wrote a girl.*

neighbors." The family he wrote about did not have a telephone, like 40 percent of other families in the community, which also led to isolation and distrust.

**Understand context:** Learn the history of the communities you report about because it shapes the way people view the world today. He was struck by the level of cynicism toward police and local politicians, but traced it back to turbulent times several decades ago when police battled the Black Panthers and when "white politicians in Chicago and elsewhere refused to have public housing built in their neighborhoods."

Kotlowitz also listed stories in which journalism has "missed the mark." "I have yet to see really penetrating journalism on the gangs, how they operate, about children who belong to gangs," he said. "I do not think we have done enough on the problem of drug abuse among teenagers and the difficulty for teenagers to find drug treatment. I do not think we have taken enough time to explore the aftermath of the violence for the survivors. I think it is also worth us spending some time taking a look at why some kids make it and others do not. Finally, I want to raise the issue of race. What does it mean to grow up black and poor in this country? We need to find better ways, particularly in writing about these kids, to deal with that issue."

Kotlowitz said there is no substitute for good reporting and exhorted journalists to be "good storytellers." "So what we need to do is go out and find good stories. It means a great deal of time at the front end to find that right story," he said. And he added that reporters must never deny their passion about the issues. "Passion. Passion. Passion," he said. "Do not be afraid of being passionate. That is what in the end makes good journalism."

**J**OURNALISTS AT THE CONFERENCE SPOKE ABOUT THE PRESSURE of daily demands and biases in their own news organizations about devoting much time to researching and delivering stories. Karen Houppert, a staff writer at the Village Voice, asked about "built-in institutional problems" that prevent reporters from spending a lot of time on stories. Kotlowitz advised reporters to take risks, to look for compelling stories while working on the daily stories. He said he earned the trust of his bureau chief at the Wall Street Journal

## GARBARINO'S LIST

1. Look for the psychological and philosophical consequences of violence on individual children, groups of children and the entire culture.

2. Be skeptical of demographic and sociological data.

3. Remember that the principal training ground for violence remains the family.

4. Consider the impact of trauma on kids' philosophy of life. In extreme forms, trauma produces expectations of

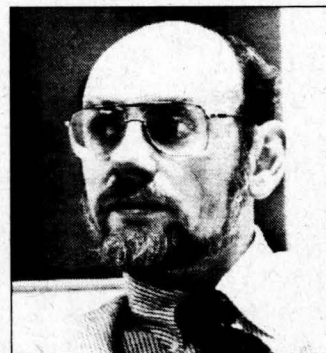
dying young. This is important in thinking about things like pregnancy and drug abuse, because they depend on teenagers having a sense of investment in the future.

5. Examine the decline in confidence in adults and an increase in juvenile vigilantism. More kids feel they have to take matters into their hands because they can't count on adults to protect them.

6. There is a growing "so-

cial toxicity" in the environment of children. The same behavior that 30 years ago would have elicited a shove or a punch in the nose today may well invite deadly violence.

7. Aggression and violence start early. Many kids are developing a mental construct in which they understand aggression and violence as the inevitable consequence of conflict. That shapes the nature of interaction among kids.



Cornell's James Garbarino

JOHN L. FATHALLAH

enough to work on research on his story for nearly three months—while also writing other stories—before formally submitting a proposal to the paper's front page for approval.

"When I talk to reporters I hear constantly complaints that their editors are not interested. They have a tough time selling these stories," he said. "It sounds like we have heard them all before. The challenge is to go out and find really compelling stories of individual kids, of situations." He also said editors need to get more involved in conferences and site visits. "Why not get an executive or an editor to go with you to a local school for a morning, or to a local Boys or Girls Club, or just sit down with a couple of police, or bring them into the newsroom," Kotlowitz suggested.

Journalists also spoke about the barriers they face in covering child welfare and juvenile justice systems because of state and federal confidentiality rules. Lipinski of the Chicago Tribune said her paper sued the state and established new state law on access to juvenile court records when reporting an earlier project.

Jack Kresnak, juvenile justice reporter for the Detroit Free Press, raised concerns about government confidentiality rules limiting access to child protective services records "when children are dying in these situations." "They are hiding behind this confidentiality, mandated by the federal government, not to protect children but to protect themselves," he said.

Some speakers countered that confidentiality rules were important because the public's right to know must be balanced against second-guessing social service workers without understanding the system.

Several other models of innovative reporting on children and violence were spotlighted at the conference. The Chicago Tribune's "Killing Our Children" series and its "Roots of Violence" series by Tribune science writer Ronald Kotulak both broke away from traditional journalism molds to cover the issue of violence in innovative ways.

The year-long "Killing Our Children" series, provoked by the sniper slaying of seven-year-old Dantrell Davis as he walked to school with his mother, resulted in more than 200 stories and editorials, involved 75 reporters, 35 photographers and graphic artists and almost the entire editing staff.

The idea for the project, according to Lipinski, the Tribune's deputy managing editor, was simple: "If a newspaper spent an entire year really getting behind each of these cases, what would be learned? Would it just sort of prove our assumptions about this violence, or would we learn something new?" She said the paper wanted to avoid the typical approach, which is to "go in and do the sad, maudlin feature on the kid's life and kind of get out and go on to the next story." Instead the paper approached it as an investigative project, giving reporters a lot of time to work on stories.

During the course of the project, reporters were surprised to learn how many cases of homicide were caused by child abuse. "So what we realized is that newspapers had gotten pretty good at covering public violence and guns had become an interesting and sexy subject in newsrooms," said Lipinski, but child abuse deaths were being virtually ignored.

"There were these little kids, one week old, two weeks old, six months old, dying at the hands of their parents or caregivers, shaken to death, thrown down the stairs, whatever the means, and all they would be were these names on the medical examiner's list every morning," she said. "And that list would come over our news wire and we never paid any

**T**HE DEBATE OFTEN BOILS DOWN TO THIS: PUNISHMENT versus prevention. Some experts said violence must be viewed as a health problem. Preventive efforts to enhance education and development must start early, and people must be educated about the risks of violent behavior. But tougher sanctions also are important, speakers said.

"Both sides seem intent on doing it alone, yet there is ample evidence that both of them have something to contribute," said Kenneth E. Powell of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. He noted that the average prison sentence for violent crime has nearly tripled in the last 15 years, with estimates that the violent crime rate is as much as 15 percent lower than it would have been without longer sentences. But efforts to reduce poverty, create jobs and enhance early childhood education are also important.

Solutions must be based on understanding the roots of violence. Stephen Buka, assistant professor at the Harvard School of Public Health, said research suggests there isn't a sole risk factor but "a whole sequence of events that will put a child at risk for being delinquent and violent."

## PREVENTION OR PUNISHMENT

Baltimore Mayor Kurt Schmoke said, "One of the major contributing problems" to violence in Baltimore is the national drug policy, which he says should be "primarily a public health policy rather than a criminal justice policy."

Fears about crime have spurred a wave of get-tough proposals. The crime bill, if passed, would shift responsibility to the federal government in a variety of ways and trigger "an immense but temporary infusion of federal funds for police and prisons," said Philip B. Heymann, a Harvard Law School professor and former Clinton administration deputy attorney general. He called it "a high-stakes gamble."

Fears are also driving tougher juvenile justice policies, but "the research is overwhelming that there is no evidence that trying more kids as adults has reduced juvenile crime anywhere," said Barry Krisberg, president of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency.

Though prevention efforts play a role, Peter Reinharz, New York City's chief Family Court prosecutor, called for tougher measures to protect people. "The primary purpose of the juvenile justice system is community protection and rehabilitation, but in our quest for rehabilitation," he said, "I have seen the compromise of community safety." Ninety percent of cases referred to him are felonies and felony assault is the fastest growing juvenile crime. "I have seen too many lives that have been shattered," he said. ■

**T**HE ROLE OF FIREARMS IN JUVENILE VIOLENCE WAS a strong theme among speakers. "In our state and in a number of other states now, firearm injuries rival motor vehicle occupant injuries and have surpassed motor vehicle occupant injuries as the largest killer of children," said Dr. Modena Wilson of Johns Hopkins. She noted a "very sharp rise in the number of young children with firearm injuries." And though unintentional injuries occurring in home accidents have been the traditional problem, now doctors are seeing a "shift toward children being injured by strangers, being shot in bystander situations, which is a very real shift in the kind of prevention strategy that is needed."

"We see 28,000 kids a year," said Dr. Allen R. Walker, director of Pediatric Emergency Medicine at Johns Hopkins Children's Center. "Violence keeps us in business, quite honestly." Where once pediatric trauma injuries were typically blunt trauma, car accidents, falling off the jungle gym and the like, now "more and more of it is penetrating traumas, gun shot wounds, knives, and it resembles more the adult battlefield kind of trauma," he said.

## THE ROLE OF FIREARMS

In New York City last year, 800 juveniles were arrested for gun possession alone, said Peter Reinharz, chief Family Court prosecutor. His office had to get a second evidence safe to hold all of the seized guns.

Public health experts are increasingly focusing on the firearms industry and the manufacture and design of firearms as a way to prevent gun injuries. "For many years we as a society have looked at trying to control gun injuries and trying to formulate policies that would control gun injuries by saying, 'How can we make the person who has the gun in his hand act in a prudent and kind manner?'" That has not worked very well," said Stephen Teret, head of the Division of Public Health of Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health. "So instead of focusing on the person who is about to pull the trigger, the suggestion has been made that maybe we ought to shift our attention backwards in time and focus on the person who is making the trigger."

He and others want to require that firearms be regulated like other consumer products. Firearms are exempt from regulation by the Consumer Product Safety Commission. Teret believes that safer firearms can be made and gun advertising must be monitored. He says the technology exists to make "personalized" guns which can be fired only by a person wearing an electronically coded ring. Such measures could dramatically reduce accidental shootings, suicides and crimes committed with stolen guns, he said. ■

attention to those for years."

To help readers better understand the complex web of problems that lead to violence and aggression, the Tribune stories often focused on a "theme," such as the involvement of maternal boyfriends and the prevalence of shaken baby syndrome in child abuse cases. "The project opened up a whole new vista in terms of reporting on these other issues," Lipinski said.

Now the Tribune is involved in another long-term project focused on reporting solutions to problems discussed in the first series. Because the problems are so complex, traditional journalistic formulas don't work very well, she said. "The standard series is six parts. Five parts to outline the problem and the sixth part to tell people how to solve it. That model does not fit this project at all. The problems are much more vast than we imagined."

**T**HE CHICAGO TRIBUNE'S RONALD KOTULAK LOOKED AT THE issue of violence and children through a different lens. His 1993 series on "The Roots of Violence," which won the Pulitzer Prize for explanatory journalism, examined how abusive and neglectful environments can alter a child's brain chemistry, making some susceptible children more prone to violence and aggression.

"What we thought we knew about the connection between the deprived or bad upbringing and the increased risk of criminal behavior is now being traced to the brain's chemistry," he said. "It is a biological smoking gun of violence."

He said new scientific research is helping "put to rest" the nature versus nurture argument, showing that in fact genes and environment are probably equally important. Though controversial, Kotulak said the new research is "enlightening and liberating."

Kotulak launched his investigations after then Tribune Editor Jack Fuller asked him if there was any brain research that might be applicable to the "Killing Our Children" series as it was being launched. "When the editor asks you something like that, it is like keys to the candy store," Kotulak said.

His subsequent series reported that researchers probing the biology of violence have pinpointed how aggression is triggered in the brain and how it might be prevented. "Underlying the scientific quest, which has revealed genetic and environmental links to abnormal brain chemistry," he wrote, "is the growing suspicion that society may unwittingly be feeding the nation's growing epidemic of murder, rape and other criminal acts by making childhood more dangerous than ever."

The stories described how new discoveries showed that genetic defects produce abnormal levels of serotonin and noradrenaline, two potent brain chemicals that have been linked in animal research to violent behavior. Studies also suggested that "threatening environments can trigger serotonin and noradrenaline imbalances in genetically susceptible people, laying the biochemical foundation for a lifetime of violent behavior."

"Such ominous trends as the collapse of the family structure, the surge in single parenting, persistent poverty and chronic drug abuse can actually tip brain chemistry into an aggressive mode," he wrote.

Another project discussed at the conference was the investigation by the Record in Hackensack, New Jersey, of

juvenile justice and juvenile violence, which resulted in an exhaustive series called "Delinquent Justice." Glenn Ritt, editor of the Record, said the paper committed 5,000 hours of reporting and editing time and more than \$500,000 to the project, which was spurred by a phone call from a mother "frantically asking us why the three boys who two weeks earlier raped her child are out of jail, walking back and forth in front of her house."

The Record began to dig into that case, and others like it, and found serious problems with the juvenile justice system. "When you are an editor and you realize that pointing fingers will not solve anything, you have to sit back and ask yourself, 'What next?'" Ritt said. "At the Record, we made a strategic commitment right from the word go that we would tackle the entire system. That it would be insufficient to simply put the stories out there." Market research, he added, shows that readers want the newspaper "to go beyond the headlines, to provide solutions, role models."

Ritt said the Record is engaging in "public journalism," acting as "the glue of the community, the connector, the empowering institution who will listen and then not just lay the problem out there but get involved in helping to solve it."

The paper stepped beyond traditional journalistic boundaries by holding seminars in its office for county prosecutors, judges and lawmakers. "We are going to accept, as hard as it is for many of us, the premise that we could be partners with government, in particular." The paper also hired a public relations firm to "get our message" on television and radio across the state.

Ritt described the effort as a "campaign" and says the paper will continue "until there are solutions."

**S**TEPHEN SHAMES, THE PHOTOGRAPHER WHOSE WORK ON children has been published in the Texas Monthly, Houston Post and a number of other publications, spoke about the need to understand children's lives today and the ethics of using their images in newspapers and on television. "I am very interested in the reaction of children," he said. "What are they seeing every day? What is normal to them. Some of these kids, literally when they are 12 and 13, it is nor-

mal for them to see somebody killed."

He also described the access children have to guns. "You would go out into the community and you kind of talk to kids. 'Do you have access to guns?' 'Oh, yes.' And then they walk into the house and they bring the gun out to show you."

The Chicago Tribune opened its "Killing Our Children" series with a front page photo of a boy's corpse in a hospital room. Though it served a purpose by "getting the readers attention very quickly," said Lipinski, "we thought about it very long and very hard."

Martha Shirk, a family beat reporter for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, acknowledged the importance of project reporting but wondered "where do you go after that and where should regular coverage be on these issues?" Ritt responded that he no longer sees the line between the two: The project becomes assimilated into the culture, the structure and the day-to-day process of coverage."

Anita Diamant, a freelance journalist who has written for the Boston Globe Magazine, Parenting magazine and others, said she finds the idea of changing the role of newspapers in the community "exciting" but noted that some journalists don't see being the "community glue" as their mission. Lipinski added that it makes her "uncomfortable" to hear journalists talk about being "in partnership with government." "The traditional role of journalism when done the best it can be done is still more than adequate," she said. "I am a little nervous about doing the other."

Ritt said his project was grounded, as it must be, "in good journalism" and the rest was "just sharing yourself and your information beyond the traditional scope of the front page" without losing any professional standards.

The issue is contentious, but the conference found many areas of common ground and hope for the future. Though Kotlowitz expected to find children in dead-end lives and criminal pursuits when he started on his book, he said, "What I found for the most part were kids who had a very strong sense of right and wrong. Kids who had a very strong sense of what they wanted to be and did not want to be when they got older. Children who still had a vision, however blurred it might be." The mission of journalists, he stressed, is "to get readers thinking about how we can provide a childhood from which these children do not feel they need to run." ■

*"My neighborhood is full of violence and coke. My hobbies are swimming and reading," wrote one boy.*

## CRIME QUIZ

Howard N. Snyder of the National Center for Juvenile Justice challenged journalists at the conference to take this test to show how their perceptions of crime often differ from reality. "Perception controls so much of what we see," he said. "You have a perception on how juvenile crime is headed...and you mostly discount the data to go along with your perceptions."

1. What was the percent-

age change in the U.S. murder rate from 1980 to 1992?

2. What percentage of murders resulted in an arrest in 1992?

3. What percentage of murders were committed by juveniles in 1992?

4. What was the percentage change in the U.S. robbery rate from 1980 to 1992?

5. What percentage of robberies resulted in an arrest in 1992?

6. What percentage of robberies were committed by juveniles in 1992?

7. What percentage of persons arrested in 1992 for a weapons offense were juveniles?

8. What percentage of persons arrested in 1992 for a drug offense were juveniles?

Answers: 1. -9% 2. 65% 3. 9% 4. 5% 5. 24% 6. 16% 7. 23% 8. 8%



Howard N. Snyder

*A report on a conference on the family  
beat, sponsored by the Casey Journalism  
Center for Children and Families.*

# COVERING CHILDREN



*Attorney General Janet Reno with Casey Journalism Center fellows*

The setting was a major university campus in Maryland: the first conference of the new Casey Journalism Center for Children and Families. Thirty journalists who cover children's and family issues gathered for three days of discussion about their specialty. Just a few miles away in Washington, D.C., urgent news was providing a tragic backdrop for the conference, "The American Family: A Tradition Under Siege."

Four youths were shot with handguns in a few hours' time over the course of a Saturday afternoon. One of the victims was a four-year-old girl, fatally shot in the head while watching a neighborhood playground football game.

The mission of the 30 journalists, chosen from 166 applicants and awarded Casey Center fellowships to attend the conference, was to better understand the complex forces that shape children's lives today.

But they also took a hard look at the way news organizations cover children's issues. More and more, newspapers, magazines and broadcast organizations are covering children and family issues as serious beats. The beat is on the front lines of pivotal national issues—and on the front pages. Some newspapers are even going a step further, launching "crusades" on behalf of disadvantaged children.

This summary of the conference was funded by the Casey Journalism Center and was written by its director, Cathy Trost, a former children's beat reporter for the Wall Street Journal. The 30 journalists and 27 guest speakers represented the first of an annual series of such conferences, conducted by the Casey Journalism Center for Children and Families at the University of Maryland College of Journalism.

*Photos by John De Fabbio.*

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### Conference Speakers

*(in order of appearance)*

**Janet Reno**, U.S. Attorney General

**Douglas W. Nelson**, executive director, Annie E. Casey Foundation

**Charles Bruner**, director, Child and Family Policy Center, Des Moines

**Susan Kelly**, program director, FAMILIES FIRST, Michigan Department of Social Services

**John R. Schuerman**, professor and faculty associate, The Chapin Hall Center For Children, University of Chicago

**Bert L'Homme**, executive director, City Lights School, Washington, D.C.

**Robin Keys**, caseworker, City Lights School

**Lisbeth B. Schorr**, director, Project on Effective Services, Harvard University

**Irwin Redlener, M.D.**, director of community pediatrics, Montefiore Medical Center in the Bronx, N.Y.; vice chairman of the Health Professions Review Group of the President's Task Force on National Health Reform

**Barbara Dafoe Whitehead**, research associate, Institute for American Values, New York City

**Norval D. Glenn**, Ashbel Smith professor of sociology and Stiles professor in American Studies, University of Texas at Austin

**Andrew Billingsley**, chair, department of family studies, University of Maryland at College Park

**Hope Hill**, assistant professor, department of psychology, and director, Violence Prevention Project, Howard University

**William A. Galston**, deputy assistant to the President for domestic policy

**Bruce Reed**, deputy assistant to the President for domestic policy, and co-chair, Clinton Administration Working Group on Welfare Reform, Family Support and Independence

**Jonathan Freedman**, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and author of "From Cradle To Grave: The Human Face of Poverty in America"

**Sister Mary Geraldine**, Center For Family Life, Sunset Park, N.Y.

**Edward Tetelman**, director, Office of Legal and Regulatory Affairs, and overseer, School Based Youth Services Program, New Jersey Department of Human Services, Trenton, N.J.

**Nancy Woodhull**, president, Nancy Woodhull & Associates, Pittsford, N.Y.-based media consulting firm, and a founding editor, USA Today

**Rebecca Chase**, correspondent, ABC World News Tonight's "American Agenda"

**Heath J. Meriwether**, executive editor, Detroit Free Press

**Steve Knickmeyer**, deputy city editor for special projects, Arizona Republic, Phoenix

**Leslie Baldacci**, family beat reporter, Chicago Sun-Times

**Kathy Williams**, Women/Family/Children editor, Virginian-Pilot and Ledger-Star, Norfolk

**Albert R. Hunt**, executive Washington editor, Wall Street Journal

**Nora Paul**, library director and faculty, Poynter Institute for Media Studies, St. Petersburg, Florida

**Eugene L. Roberts Jr.**, University of Maryland journalism professor and former executive editor, Philadelphia Inquirer

# THE CHILDREN'S BEAT

As the children's beat grows, journalists face vexing issues. Should the media be advocates for children, and if so, how far should they go? What are the ethical issues involved in interviewing children and families? How do journalists get past the "crisis story of the week" and develop richer, more complex stories about the interlinking web of problems facing children today?

Journalists at the conference also traded practical information about covering the beat, and expressed deep concerns about its status, longevity, management support and story play.

The message to journalists from conference speakers was candid and tough: Your stories are often too simple and narrow. You need to write complex stories that really educate the public about the underlying roots of the crisis facing children. Put their problems in context. Bust through stereotypes. Write about people and programs that work. Don't just swoop into impoverished neighborhoods after the latest drive-by shooting, but stick around to see what life is like on a daily basis.

"Accept complexity, embrace complexity," urged Lisbeth B. Schorr, director of Harvard University's Project on Effective Services. Added Sister Mary Geraldine, director of the Center for Family Life in Sunset Park, New York, a neighborhood-based family support program, "Quick and easy and fast stories that are sensational, you will never get from us. It is just not fair to the families and the children."

Douglas W. Nelson, executive director of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, said it is necessary "to push much more than we have for explanatory meaning. What makes these pregnancy numbers understandable? What is behind these abuse and neglect trends? Where does this growing violence originate?"

Schorr conceded that encouraging more complex stories "may be an impossible thing to say to journalists who are forever being pushed by their systems to make things simpler." But she said journalists make an "enormous contribution" when they conduct in-depth examinations.

Many speakers fretted that it takes the death of an abused or kidnapped child to get on the media's radar screen—and even then the reporting is often sensational and superficial.



**Above: the Philadelphia Inquirer's John Woestendiek, ABC's Rebecca Lipkin and Congressional Quarterly's Jeffrey Katz; right, Howard University's Hope Hill**

*"You have got to make your stories about children shorter.... There is a tendency of America not to read beyond the front page."*

**—Attorney General Janet Reno**

"When I was thinking about coming to talk to you I thought about, 'How do we get them not to write a big piece when a kid dies in foster care?'" said Schorr. "I decided the answer is you cannot. That is news." But she urged the journalists to "go back several steps" on the story to find out how and why the system failed the child. "Because when most people begin to understand it is not just rotten people that cause rotten things to happen, but it is the way we organize ourselves that is not working, maybe they would become more receptive to proposals for reform," she said.

Speakers voiced another common perception—no one wants to write about good news. Journalists generally



"would much rather hear about the problems than they would about the successes," said Edward Tetelman, who oversees New Jersey's School Based Youth Services Program.

Get out and talk to children, many speakers urged. "Get children's authentic experiences.... Try to see it in the child's eyes. Let them tell you," said Hope Hill, director of the Howard University Violence Prevention Project.

Attorney General Janet Reno echoed the call for more comprehensive reporting about children's problems. Then she waded hip-deep into the debate engaging newsrooms everywhere over story lengths and reader-friendliness. "You have got to make your stories about children shorter...." she warned. "There is a tendency of America not to read beyond the front page."

Journalists at the conference said their news organizations are increasingly recognizing the importance of the beat—and media audiences are responding. "There is a hunger out there for constructive news," said Rebecca Chase, a correspondent with ABC World

News Tonight's "American Agenda." "I think people want to know that there is something that can be done about these very, very tough problems."

But many spoke of the constant tension between daily demands and the need for longer-range thinking. "The big picture stories, the in-depth series, they are all luxuries to us. And when we are chasing a big story with daily developments it is very hard to see out of the trenches," said Leslie Baldacci, who launched the Chicago Sun-Times' families beat three years ago.

Many reporters said their organizations would simply never give them the time to do what Sister Geraldine said a reporter from Time magazine did before writing a story on her center. "He almost lived with us for two months," she said.

Shrinking resources and leaner staffs can limit coverage in other ways, too. "We do not have a single reporter in our city who exclusively covers juvenile court," added Baldacci, "and I bet that is true in most of your cities, too."

Despite the common perception that they're only after bad news, journalists said they are eager to write positive stories about model programs and policies that improve the lives of children and families. But they want to avoid endorsing trends that may not pan out.

At the same time, the journalists spoke about roadblocks that keep them from writing more complex stories about the nation's troubled child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

Child welfare and juvenile court officials are often barred from divulging information about children, but many reporters think confidentiality rules go too far. Child welfare officials "see us as the enemy," said Mary Loftus, assistant city editor of the Ledger in Lakeland, Florida.

"I think there are a lot of people protecting failures within the bureaucracy, and children are dying," said ABC's Chase. She added that there are ways to protect privacy while opening the system to "some sunshine."

Randi Bjornstad, a reporter with the Register-Guard in Eugene, Oregon, noted that problems in her state's child welfare system led to an overhaul, including less rigorous confidentiality rules and more oversight. Steve Knickmeyer, the Arizona Republic's deputy city editor for special projects, urged journalists to "be aggressive in fighting confidentiality abuses. If you think they exist, go after them. Hell, you have all got lawyers!"

And though many journalists said public response to their stories and projects has been positive, some described problems with apathetic readers. Sara Engram, editorial page director of Baltimore's Evening Sun, noted how difficult it can be to get readers—and society as a whole—to focus on children's problems. She recalled two stories that ran in the Sun on the same day: One was about the family of a child who had been battered to death; the other was a pet column about two abandoned kittens. "We had 80 calls about the cats and not a single call about the child's family," she said.

### BUST THROUGH STEREOTYPES

The political battle over family values has been a hot story in recent years as journalists chronicled the debate about

the changing American family and what it means for the healthy development of children. Vice President Dan Quayle's negative remarks last year about television's most famous single mother, Murphy Brown, touched off an explosion of stories about single-parent vs. two-parent families.

Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, research associate at the Institute for American Values in New York City, criticized the way the debate has typically been covered by reporters. (Whitehead's own Atlantic Monthly cover story last spring, headlined "Dan Quayle Was Right," summarized the growing social science evidence that, on average, intact two-parent families are better for children.)

She cited two "formulaic" stories favored by the media: Ozzie and Harriet vs. Murphy Brown, which usually pits a

## THE STATUS OF AMERICA'S CHILDREN

During hours of policy discussions at the Casey Journalism Conference there was no argument about one fact: The well-being of American children is declining. William A. Galston, deputy assistant to President Clinton for domestic policy, described some causes of this decline, including the fact that education levels have dropped sharply since the mid-1960s; violent crime and homicide among youths has significantly increased, as has the rate of child poverty.

Several speakers noted that roughly one-fourth of all births and about two-thirds of African American births are out of wedlock. But the out-of-wedlock birth rate is going down in the African American population, while it is rising sharply among the white non-Hispanic population.

There are also rising reports of child abuse and neglect. Charles Bruner, director of the Child and Family Policy Center in Des Moines, noted there has been a 53 percent increase in reported cases of child abuse and neglect in the past decade, and about one-half million children are now in out-of-home placements.

But many experts said it is important for journalists not to focus on single issues or statistics. Look at the whole fabric of a child's life in context, they urged, to avoid "the partialization of solutions." Look at causes and not just effects.

There was less agreement about how to solve problems facing children.

Barbara Dafoe Whitehead of the Institute for American Values said there is growing consensus that family disruption is harmful to children. But there is continuing debate over how much harm children suffer and how long the damage lasts, and whether it's best to cushion the effects on children by building a stronger social safety net, or by trying to change values and behavior.

Marriage is becoming less central in people's lives, said Professor Norval Glenn of the University of Texas. As a result, many traditional family functions "are simply not being performed as well today as they were 20 years ago, 30 years ago." He sees evidence, however, that negative marriage trends are about to reverse.

Andrew Billingsley, chairman of the University of Maryland's Department of Family Studies, held out little hope that family structural trends will reverse course. "I believe that we are not going to be able to go back to the time when married couple families with their own children are the dominant form," he said.

"So I think the way to go in the future is not to try to put, as [Daniel Patrick] Moynihan did in 1965, a man in every house." He said institutions and alternative structures must be built to help care for children. ♦

traditional 1950s family against a single working mother and "typically overstates and exaggerates some of the dramatic changes in American family life." She said this story usually includes "one of the most common phony statistics in journalism"—that the traditional Ozzie and Harriet-style family headed by an employed father and stay-at-home mother "represents only 10 percent or 8 percent, or I've even seen 6 percent, of all family households in America." In fact, it's closer to 25 percent or 30 percent, she said. The second story sets out "competing explanations for children's declining well-being" as economic change vs. cultural change, she said, when in fact "both play a part in the story."

Whitehead urged reporters to focus on real evidence of family trends, "rather than simply reflecting the political fault lines in the family structure debate."

Some speakers said the media can actually play a role in changing the cultural and moral values of Americans—a notion which makes some journalists

*"We want to be a part of a journalism that stands for something. We stand for children."*

—Heath J. Meriwether,  
executive editor,  
Detroit Free Press

uncomfortable. Journalists can and should work to bring about changes in the attitudes and values of readers "that will make things much better for children and American society," said Norval D. Glenn, professor of sociology at the University of Texas at Austin.

Indeed, Glenn believes the media "aided and abetted" changes in values in the 1960s and 1970s that were "destructive to families."

Many speakers urged journalists to look at strengths in communities, not just problems, and get beyond "us vs. them" thinking by showing how everyone in society has a stake in helping children grow into healthy, productive



**Left, the Detroit Free Press' Jane Daugherty, the Chicago Sun-Times' Leslie Baldacci; right, the University of Maryland's Andrew Billingsley and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead of the Institute for American Values**

citizens. If journalism doesn't explain why problems are occurring, there is a risk of people using racial and ethnic stereotypes as explanations.

Hope Hill of Howard University urged reporters not to go to neighborhoods only in times of trouble. "The nation has never seen those communities in any other time and never knows what...support systems exist there," she said. "Spend quality time with children and families who are making it despite the odds, and report on their stories."

At the same time, Hill called for a partnership between the press and researchers to communicate the devastating toll violence is taking on the physical and mental resources of America's youth. "I have seen a whole country of people become desensitized to death," she said.

"The major power you have is to make people feel uncomfortable," she told the journalists. "What you want to make people understand is there are children in Southeast Washington who witness 10 homicides a year. They have to grow up and your children are going to come into contact with them and it might be in the Safeway. When you bump up against them, they don't turn around and give you a nasty look, they turn around and do something. Somehow we have to tell people...that we are all interconnected."

#### NEW MODELS

The good news is that there is a surge of interest in reporting on children's and family issues all over the country. A Casey Journalism Center survey of 61 newspapers and news services shows that more than half have added children's and/or family beats in the last three

years, and these are cited as the newest, front-burner issues to which editors are trying to devote more space and resources. But many newsrooms still give the subject short shrift, and reporters struggle for space and attention.

Journalists at the conference wanted to know how to convince their newsrooms that children are a serious subject, worthy of serious coverage. There were other concerns. Should there even be a specific "children's beat?" Should it focus just on at-risk families, or the struggles of middle class families, too? What about the common perception that the "children's beat" is a low-status beat compared with covering politics or economics? Do reporters covering these issues have management support and good story play? Or do they fight turf wars every day for the right to space and stories?

And by the way, where are all the men? (Only 26 of the 166 applicants for fellowships to the conference were men; five of the 30 journalists attending the conference were men). The beat is dominated by women, sparking concern about marginalized status and pay. And what about their own children? Many journalists believe their jobs require them to spend too much time away from their own families.

Albert R. Hunt, executive Washington editor of the Wall Street Journal, told conference participants that coverage of children's and family issues is "incredibly important. It is going to affect what kind of society we have 20 or 30 years from now and it is every bit as important as writing about politics or current affairs or economics, and probably more so." Eugene L. Roberts Jr., a University of Maryland journalism

## THE PLAGUE OF VIOLENCE

**H**omicide has become the leading cause of death among young African American men, according to Hope Hill of the Violence Prevention Project at Howard University. "We are literally witnessing a holocaust in our midst. Primarily of young African American and Latino youth," Hill said.

But beyond that chilling statistic are the scores of children who routinely witness violence, and carry indelible emotional and developmental scars.

She outlined a string of interlinking causes for the rise in violence: "kids who may have never seen or had a supportive family, who for the most part have been raising themselves" combined with the fact that "young people see up to 43,000 homicides on television before the age of 17." In addition, "many kids simply do not think anybody else outside their neighborhood knows or cares."

Without a safe, secure environment, it is difficult for children to develop the trust and bonds needed to

form healthy adult relationships. "You will hear many adolescents say today, 'I do not have a best friend, I only have associates,'" she said.

"I think it will particularly touch your heart when you are counseling a 14-year-old who tells you that when he dies he is going out hard, meaning that he is going to kill as many people as he can because he knows that he is going to get killed," said Robin Keys, a caseworker at City Lights School in Washington, D.C.

Attorney General Janet Reno backs steps to limit guns but said that's not the only answer. "We have got to raise children to disdain guns," she said.

She and others stressed the need to prevent problems that contribute to violent outcomes by building a comprehensive "continuum" of support for children, ranging from good prenatal care to parenting classes, quality day care and education, while also developing businesses and jobs in communities to provide an economic base for families. ♣

professor and former executive editor of the Philadelphia Inquirer, called it "a rich beat," sweeping in scope and "intrinsically exciting."

"I think my job is the best job in network TV," said ABC's Rebecca Chase, who said she does stories about "cutting edge issues" like welfare, teen pregnancy, juvenile delinquency and child abuse. But the beat can be diminished by how it's defined, she warned. "You say 'family' and people think you are doing just tea parties and kids, you know, Barney stories or something."

Several models of innovative reporting on children's issues were spotlighted at the conference. They include ABC's "American Agenda," the Detroit Free Press' "Children First" project, the Arizona Republic's "Saving Arizona's Children" project and the Norfolk Virginian-Pilot and Ledger-Star's new Women/Family/Children team.

The Detroit Free Press and Arizona Republic have launched crusading newspaper campaigns in their states to draw attention to the plight of children and build a consensus for change. Some journalists think these crusades smack of advocacy and overstep traditional lines of objective reporting. But

editors from both newspapers vigorously defended the integrity of their work while calling for new thinking about journalism's role.

"There has to be room in our definition of journalism that allows us to get involved and to truly care about what we are writing about," said Heath J. Meriwether, executive editor of the Free Press. "I call it a journalism that stands for something. We stand for children. We stand for the voiceless, for the underrepresented, and we are unashamedly advocates for their cause."

But both editors insist that advocacy doesn't mean sacrificing aggressive reporting and objectivity.

The Arizona Republic's Knickmeyer said advocacy journalism increases a reporter's responsibility "to do an accurate, objective job. Your opinions are still in the opinion page."

"Crusades are okay, we can go for things, we can fix things and make them better."

Both projects were launched last January with prominent publishers' letters. Free Press Publisher Neal Shine wrote that the paper had decided "to be more than just a keeper of the statistics—that instead of only reporting

the problems, we needed to do something about making solutions happen." Both the Free Press and the Republic have mounted continuing, comprehensive newsroom efforts involving all news departments, plus the editorial page. Both papers encourage volunteerism and run boxes with stories outlining ideas for ways to help. Both papers are trying to be catalysts for change in their communities, too.

### A REAL ATTENTION SPAN

"In our newsroom, at news meetings everyone asks how a story would affect children," says Meriwether. As part of coverage of Detroit's hotly contested mayoral race last year, the Free Press ran a page one story detailing each candidate's proposals involving children. The paper also tries to include stories about solutions. When 11 children were shot in Detroit schools in one day, Meriwether noted that the paper also did a story about conflict resolution programs that seek to reduce violence.

"We have developed a real attention span," said Meriwether.

Both projects have touched a chord with readers, community leaders and politicians, the editors said. "It makes a connection to your community that is palpable, that your publisher will feel," said Meriwether.

But some journalists saw potentially dangerous conflicts.

Jeffrey Katz, social policy reporter for Congressional Quarterly, raised two concerns: "What is to keep journalists from using children as mascots, or poster children, if you will, for whatever the cause of the day is?" he asked. "And if journalists are supposed to be advocates for these causes...we are not always the most accurate arbiters of what works."

Jane Daugherty, associate editor for Detroit's "Children First" project, said she had been an investigative reporter for most of her career and "this is harder than that because you have to be vigilant all the time. You do not want to use kids and you do not want your news organization to get used."

At ABC News, the mission of "American Agenda" is to do "solution-oriented stories," according to Chase. But she said the news segment has learned that it isn't good enough to highlight model programs, and now is focusing on obstacles to change with stories about "why is it so hard to get people off welfare? Why is it we cannot get violence under control?" She noted



**Conference participants Celeste Williams, Barbara Vobejda, Deborah Cohen, Randi Bjornstad and Sharon Case Randall**

increasing pressures generated by tabloid-style television to do more dramatic stories.

Solutions to all kinds of problems are what really connect with readers. The Virginian-Pilot and Ledger-Star in Norfolk dispatched a team of reporters to do a massive investigation of Virginia's day care regulations. They spent five months collecting thousands of inspection and complaint records, doing interviews, and building them into a database to spot trends.

"Parents were really starved for this kind of in-depth information," said Kathy Williams, an editor on the project.

Out of that project came the idea for a permanent reporting team on children's issues. After repeated planning meetings, the reporters successfully pitched the idea to management. The new five-member Women/Family/Children team headed by Williams covers everything from troubled families to rating the best playgrounds in the area.

Though projects like these enjoy management support and prominent play, many reporters still feel the beat is viewed as less important than others in the newsroom.

David Fritze, the lead writer for the Arizona Republic's project, said it is important to get more men writing about children's issues but "the irony is that there is less of a status.... It certainly does not have the respect or esteem that most other beats do."

Sharon Case Randall, a feature writer for the Monterey County Herald in California, said management backs her stories but "most of the men I

work with in the newsroom have the mindset that we are doing these stories not because they are important issues but because they will sell papers."

But other reporters disagreed. "I do not feel marginalized. I do not agree at all that it is looked down on or is getting less attention," said John Woes-tendiek, a Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter with the Philadelphia Inquirer.

## SELLING THE BEAT

So you want to cover the children's beat, but your newspaper or broadcast station doesn't seem too interested? You write about the issues when you can, but you're loaded down already with two other beats. Developing these stories can be time-consuming. "Kids are not on Rolodexes," said Linda Matchan, a reporter with the Boston Globe.

Eugene Roberts advised reporters to build a case "before trying to sell the idea of a complete beat." Make the case first that there are a number of stories to be done for a considerable period of time, he said, while gradually getting editors more used to the idea. They'll eventually "be much more likely to embrace the idea of a full time beat."

He acknowledged that "getting any institution to do the right thing is sort of constant guerrilla warfare." But because the beat is so important, "I think you have a real shot of building it permanently into the structure of newspapers if you are given a chance."

Nancy Woodhull, president of a media consulting firm and a founding editor of USA Today, advised reporters to build a case for the beat "from a bottom line point of view." Because women's readership is declining, appeal to a news

## REBUILDING FAMILIES

Attorney General Janet Reno said communities working together with the federal government must come up with comprehensive approaches to establish "a national agenda for children." Her agenda would include reducing teen pregnancy, freeing parents to spend more time with their children, providing preventive medical care for children, investing in the critical first three years of a child's life with quality health care, child care, nurturing environments and school reform, and reducing domestic violence to break cycles repeated from generation to generation.

"I have become convinced that unless we focus on children we will never be able to build enough prisons 18-years from now," she warned. "We will not have a workforce 15 years from now with the skills necessary to fill the jobs or maintain America as a first great nation."

Many experts stressed the need for solutions that are community-based, collaborative and family centered.

Dr. Irwin Redlener, director of Community Pediatrics at Montefiore Medical Center in the Bronx, said it is urgent that we work quickly to accomplish change for children. "It is only at the greatest cost that you can get even a minimal return to where you should be if you try to make things up that were missed in early childhood," he said.

William A. Galston, assistant to the president, pointed to the Clinton administration's early success in winning passage of a family leave law, expanding the earned income tax credit to aid poor working families, expanding nutrition, food and Head Start programs, and a new immunization program, while laying the groundwork for health care, welfare and education reform. But he said a two-track approach is needed. "Family values will not feed a hungry child, the president said, but without personal responsibility all the federal programs in the world are likely to be of little avail." ♦

organization's self-interest.

"News is still defined by very much a traditional man's approach to news. It is a white man's world still," she said. "But what women feel about how the family and children fit in is tremendously important in whether a newspaper, TV show, magazine or radio show is connecting with them or not."

That doesn't mean "dumbing down" to women, she cautioned, but recognizing that they are interested in a broad array of issues, from health care reform to local school news. Woodhull also urged reporters to get involved in the ways their news organizations cover issues—and speak out about problems. "I say force yourself into news meetings if you are not invited," she said. "And go into that news meeting with your kid hat on."

"One of the things I hear when I go into newsrooms, especially from women, is that 'I hate to bring up stories to do with women or children because I feel as if I am being accused of being the resident feminist or resident mommy,'" she said. But she urged journalists to realize the importance of the beat. "You are writing about the future."

## WHAT ABOUT YOUR OWN KIDS?

"One of the great ironies of my life," said the Arizona Republic's Knickmeyer, "is that I am saving Arizona's children and I never see my own."

The more compelling the beat becomes to a newspaper, the harder it is for reporters to get home at night. Journalists at the Casey Conference spoke poignantly about how the demands of the news business restrict time with their own families and lead to burnout and stress.

Mary Loftus, the mother of a toddler, said she writes sometimes about her own life in her column for the Ledger in Lakeland, Florida. "I think I fictionalize most of it because I cannot remember what it is like to have a husband and son," she said.

Catherine Clabby, a reporter for the Times Union in Albany, New York, said people in her newsroom have left the paper in order to spend more time with their children. "We are losing their voices," she said. "If they had a more flexible schedule they might have stayed at the newspaper."

Norfolk's Kathy Williams said she was so busy on the paper's five-month-long day care investigation that she rarely saw her young son. Afterwards, she was reading him "Bambi" one night before bed. "Daniel," she asked him, "do you understand what happened to Bambi's mother?"

"He said, 'Yes, she went back to the newsroom.'"

Some talked about how the newsroom culture is slowly improving. The Detroit Free Press, for example, paid for a nursing reporter and her mother to fly to a children's conference so the reporter could take her infant with her. (It was also cheaper for two to fly and stay over a Saturday night.)

Journalists left the conference on a high note of optimism about the future of the beat.

"I think the most revolutionary idea that you could take back to your newsrooms in this sound-bite world is that on children, we are here to stay," said Detroit editor Meriwether. "If you do nothing else, convince your editors and publishers that...this is not just this year's hot subject but this is something enduring." ♣

## Thirty Fellows Selected for the Casey Journalism Center Conference

**Pam Adams**, Journal Star, Peoria, Ill.

**Leslie Baldacci**, Chicago Sun-Times

**Randi Bjornstad**, Register-Guard, Eugene, Ore.

**Matthew Bowers**, Virginian-Pilot, Norfolk

**Catherine Clabby**, Times Union, Albany

**Deborah Cohen**, Education Week, Washington, D.C.

**Claudia Hampston Daly**, WCAL-FM, Northfield, Minn.

**Jane Daugherty**, Detroit Free Press

**Alison Delsite**, Beaver County Times, Beaver Falls, Pa.

**Leslie Dreyfous**, Associated Press, New York

**Roberta de Boer Durham**, The Blade, Toledo, Ohio

**Sara Ingram**, Evening Sun, Baltimore

**Margie Fisher**, Roanoke Times & World News, Va.

**Beth Frerking**, Newhouse News Service, Washington, D.C.

**David Fritze**, Arizona Republic, Phoenix

**Diane Granat**, Washingtonian, Washington, D.C.

**Gail Stewart Hand**, Grand Forks Herald, N.D.

**Jeffrey Katz**, Congressional Quarterly, Washington, D.C.

**Rebecca Lipkin**, ABC World News Tonight's "American Agenda," Washington, D.C.

**Mary Loftus**, The Ledger, Lakeland, Fla.

**Charles Madigan**, Chicago Tribune

**Carla Marinucci**, San Francisco Examiner

**Linda Matchan**, Boston Globe

**Mary Mohler**, Ladies' Home Journal, New York

**Laurie Petrie**, Cincinnati Post

**Sharon Case Randall**, Monterey County Herald, Monterey, Calif.

**April Saul**, Philadelphia Inquirer

**Barbara Vobejda**, Washington Post

**Celeste Williams**, Milwaukee Journal

**John Woestendiek**, Philadelphia Inquirer

## WHAT'S THE CASEY JOURNALISM CENTER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES?

It's a new national resource for journalists who cover children and family issues. Its mission is to enhance reporting about the issues and institutions affecting disadvantaged children and their families. The center, which operates out of the University of Maryland College of Journalism, is funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the nation's largest philanthropy dedicated exclusively to disadvantaged children. The center is a nonpartisan, independent group with a national advisory board of journalists and experts on children's issues. The center conducts an annual conference for print and broadcast journalists, and administers a journalism awards program for distinguished reporting. The center also publishes a quarterly newsletter, "The Children's Beat," highlighting quality journalism on children's and family topics. It also assists journalists by providing information about programs and trends from a database of experts on a wide variety of children's issues. To apply for a fellowship covering most costs of attending the Casey Journalism Center's 1994 conference, write Cathy Trost, director, Casey Journalism Center, College of Journalism, University of Maryland, College Park, Md. 20742-7111. (301) 405-2482.

**THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON**

**Date** September 13, 1995

**MEMO FROM MAGGIE WILLIAMS**

**TO:** Karen Finney  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**The attached is for your:**

**Information** xx

**Advice** \_\_\_\_\_

**Action** \_\_\_\_\_

**COMMENTS:**

For your records.

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# COVERING CHILDREN'S WELFARE

A Report On A Conference On Protecting The Welfare Of Children



Sponsored by the Casey Journalism  
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Photograph by Stephen Shames/Matrix