

NEWS from **Kiwanis**

FIRST LADY HOSTS CHILD SERVICE GROUPS AT WHITE HOUSE LUNCHEON

The leaders of 35 organizations dedicated to serving the needs of young children were hosted at a White House luncheon today by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton.

"We must recognize the fundamental truth, that every adult has a responsibility for the most sacred trust we are given -- the nurturing and care of the next generation, our children," Mrs. Clinton said in remarks to the luncheon guests.

The child-welfare leaders were gathered in Washington for a meeting of Kiwanis International's Priority One Advisory Council. The participating organizations include such groups as the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Children's Defense Fund, National Association of Children's Hospitals, and National Head Start Association.

Since 1990, Kiwanis clubs around the world have sponsored a continuing service program to meet the special needs of young children called "Young Children: Priority One." The program targets children from prenatal development to age 5.

"Young children have more needs, and more potential, than any other age group," said Kiwanis International president Ian Perdriau. "Serving those needs, and helping children fulfill that potential, has become the most exciting and rewarding service program that Kiwanis clubs have undertaken."

The advisory council provides Kiwanis International with expert guidance on how volunteers can best serve the unmet needs of young children. The advisory organizations also form local partnerships with Kiwanis clubs at the community level.

One such partnership was represented by John D. Cuny, executive vice president of Anthem Health, Jacksonville, Florida. "As a member of the health

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insurance community and a Kiwanian," he said, "my company and I became involved to provide educational materials that create a greater awareness of the need to immunize children under the age of two."

"It is a great honor for us to gather here today as guests of First Lady Hillary Clinton to pay tribute to all of you who continue to do so much to help children," he told the organization leaders.

During the past year, Kiwanis club members have raised more than \$17.5 million and contributed 1.6 million hours of volunteer time to "Young Children: Priority One" projects.

Many Kiwanis clubs are supporting infant immunization campaigns at the state and local level under the slogan "All Their Shots, While They're Tots." President Clinton has assisted this effort by providing an immunization message for Kiwanis-sponsored television spots, billboards, posters, and public-service ads in national magazines.

During the past year, Kiwanis clubs also sponsored 1,540 parenting education projects and 1,100 child abuse awareness projects.