



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20500

## FAX TRANSMITTAL SHEET

RUSHDATE 12/5/96

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ADDITIONAL MESSAGE:

Co-chaired - Duane Alexander  
- Lynn Goldsmith

- Hasn't gone through Agencies

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20500

December 4, 1996

MEMORANDUM TO THE VICE PRESIDENT  
THE FIRST LADY

FROM: JOHN H. GIBBONS   
SUBJECT: NSTC Children's Initiative

The multiagency "Children's Initiative" study sponsored by the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC), with collaboration from the Domestic Policy Council (DPC), has assessed the current scope of research on child and adolescent development, identified significant gaps in the research agenda, and developed recommendations for needed efforts not only in the research area but also in linking research and policy development. I believe these define an important initiative for the second Clinton Administration.

One immediate advantage of the NSTC exercise was to develop, for the first time, the entire portfolio on children's research for the benefit of the research managers in the different agencies. In fiscal year 1995, 15 departments and agencies in the federal government spent an estimated \$2 billion on behavioral, medical, and cognitive research and development directly related to children and youth. This was only 1.3% of the federal funds spent overall on delivery of services to children.

The nearly completed report recommends interrelated research themes requiring multidisciplinary approaches to fill important knowledge gaps. These include:

- A children's health research initiative to understand how chronic health problems that emerge in later life can be better prevented;
- A research effort to develop public health guidelines regarding environmental health and safety risks to children;
- A cognitive development research initiative to understand how children learn and expand their mental capacities by interacting with new technologies and how such technologies can be better designed to promote learning among children;
- A research effort to better understand what factors influence children and adolescents to avoid or engage in risky or adverse behaviors (e.g., smoking, drug abuse, teen pregnancy); and

- A formal interagency working group led by the DPC and the NSTC to conduct a state-of-the-art assessment of health and social priorities relevant to children and youth's well-being, including data quality and their scientific underpinnings.

Establishing stronger links among researchers, policy makers, and service providers is recommended to develop policies and programs that better meet the needs of children and adolescents.

I think this is an important initiative and I would like to meet with you to discuss the study. In the meantime, I have asked the Children's Initiative co-chairs, Lynn Goldman (EPA) and Duane Alexander (NIH), to meet with members of your staff to discuss the study's findings and recommendations.

cc: Carol Rasco  
Greg Simon  
Melanne Verveer