

A NATIONAL SENIOR CORPS

Tapping the Power of Retired Americans to Solve the Nation's Critical Problems

The aging of America has prompted much commentary about looming crises – the threat to Social Security, the growing budget deficit and the strain on families. But this demographic revolution holds the key to solving so many of our critical problems. A typical American can expect to spend almost one-third of his or her life in retirement. This is an awesome untapped resource. For this growing cohort of “young old,” many of whom had tried to change the world as young men and women, “retirement” can mark the beginning of a new career of part-time voluntary service -- a second chance to give something back to their communities and their country.

We propose a major new effort to call these Americans into service. As the first key step, we propose a new senior service program with the twin missions of helping children to read independently and seniors to live independently.

The basic elements:

- 50,000 older Americans serving 15-20 hours a week tutoring young children as part of the America Reads Initiative.
- 50,000 older Americans assisting the frail elderly, helping to keep them out of nursing homes.
- Corps members would earn a small stipend – or a \$2,000 scholarship. They could use the educational aid themselves or give it to their children or grandchildren or pool them together to create scholarships for needy children.
- The corps would grow to 500,000 if evidence showed that the independent living corps saved money for Medicaid, Medicare or American families.

The Limits of Existing Service Programs

Several programs already provide opportunities for seniors to serve. The RSVP program matches 455,000 volunteers with service opportunities. The Foster Grandparent program teams low-income seniors with at-risk children. Roughly 12,000 Senior Companions help other seniors live independently.

These are outstanding programs that have shown the power of senior service. But because of their design, they do not, and cannot, tap the full power of retirees. Both Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions are means tested and recruit primarily low income seniors. The vast majority of seniors – from the retired school teacher to the former architect – are therefore excluded from “the ask.” The RSVP program is open to all incomes but these unstipended volunteers usually work a few hours a week and rarely in concert with other seniors.

Last year, the Corporation launched a pilot program in five cities called the Experience Corps that points the way. By deploying large teams of 15-30 volunteers in targeted schools -- and asking each senior to commit at least 15 hours a week -- the program seeks to ensure that the volunteers help not only individual students but actually transform the atmosphere of the school.

Unlike RSVP, the Experience Corps members make a serious time-commitment – usually at least 15 hours a week. This enables them to have much more powerful impact on the individuals they serve. Unlike the other service programs, they work in groups which makes them better able to have an impact on institutions like schools. Unlike Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions, the program is open to all retirees, not just the low income.

The Potential Impact Seniors Could Have

We propose dedicating one half of this national service corps to the President's America Reads Initiative, which attempts to mobilize one million volunteer tutors to help insure that all children can read independently by the Third Grade. These seniors could be ideal shock troops for this initiative because they would be dedicated and consistent—the keys to a successful tutoring program.

We propose that the other half of the corps be deployed helping other more frail seniors. A large service program helping seniors live independently would:

Save the government money. A typical older national service participant (serving about 20 hours a week through the Experience Corps or the Senior Companion program) costs the government \$2,000-\$4,000 per year. Under the current programs, most of that goes to pay a small stipend, but it could go to an education award that the senior could use or give to a child or grandchild to help them go to college. Since a typical stay in a

nursing home costs \$38,000, it's easy to see how a volunteer would save Medicaid money by enabling someone to live independently -- even if only for a few extra months. Volunteers can do just that by providing non-medical personal support such as shopping for groceries, taking a senior to a doctors' appointment and managing household affairs. States that have granted Medicaid waivers to pay for Senior Companions are convinced that it saves them money. The unstipended RSVP volunteers can also make significant contributions, particularly by providing respite care.

But there are other ways such an approach can reduce health care costs. Senior Companions make sure the frail elderly take medication on schedule thereby preventing relapses that require expensive hospitalization. Volunteers also ensure that seniors eat properly, avoiding hospitalization for malnutrition, another common and costly reason for acute care visits.

If this nation is to care for its growing pool of aging seniors without bankrupting itself, we have to make much better use of volunteers, national service participants and the entire informal care network.

Improve the quality of care -- Studies have shown that Senior Companion-type programs -- in which seniors help seniors -- are often more reliable than for-profit home care. Frail seniors tend to trust their peers more than paid home care aides and senior volunteers have a much lower turnover rate than home care aides. These national service volunteers show up not because they have to but because they really care -- and it shows in the sensitivity of the care delivered.

For these reasons, a study by the Visiting Nurses Association of America concluded that the presence of national service volunteers improved the quality of care. By focusing on routine but essential tasks -- preparing food, monitoring medication, cleaning, companionship -- the volunteers free up time for professional caregivers to work on more difficult problems.

Relieve the burden on working families -- Most in-home care for vulnerable older people is provided by members of the family -- but that system of informal care is under terrible stress. Working men and women are struggling to care for their parents at the same time they care for their children and, sometimes, spouses. And children who must pay for nursing home care can be financially devastated. Businesses also suffer. It is estimated that American companies lose \$17 billion because employees are absent caring for a sick parent.

Volunteers can help save the family money by keeping the senior out of a nursing home -- and provide an enormous emotional boost through respite care. That's why major corporations have shown strong interest in forming partnerships around a national service senior care initiative. Already, ATT has subsidized the Senior Companion program in Phoenix and we are working with a number of other companies to form similar alliances.

To: President Clinton
From: Harris Wofford
Re: New National Service Initiatives
Date: October 8, 1996

cc Tom Freedman
Jonathan Prince
Mike Cohen
Return to Diana Fort
Not Service
Serious Corp / debunking
to learn
Serious Corp
Tom endorses
606 5000
Serious news
Nov.

AmeriCorps is now funded through the class of 1998 – thanks to the growing strength of our non-partisan grassroots support, the breakthroughs with Congressional Republicans and, above all, your standing firm. Now one of our priorities is to get the word out that AmeriCorps is thriving so we can assure a high-quality pool for the next 25,000 recruits.

I am pleased that you decided to make AmeriCorps a central part of the America Reads initiative. It should help with our recruitment and strengthens the message that service is not an end in itself but a tool to directly help families and communities. As you may know, about two thirds of AmeriCorps programs already deal with the problems of children and youth -- and we have set the education of the next generation as our primary focus.

The opponents tried to shoot down the rocket you launched in your first year. They failed. But we do not yet have the thrust we need for the second stage that you and Congress intended. After the next election, there will be a brief, perhaps fleeting, opportunity for national service to take a quantum leap -- becoming not merely a worthy, sensible program like the Peace Corps but a major force in American society. In November, I will give you a full plan for how to expand opportunities for service. But there are three key components – and a general theme -- that you might want to announce before the election.

Here is the theme:

The era big government is over; the era of big, active-duty citizens solving problems through service has to begin. AmeriCorps has shown that national service can get things done, provide educational opportunity, instill a sense of patriotism and citizenship, and unite Americans. Now we should lift our sights even higher. Every young American who wants to perform substantial service in exchange for educational aid should have the opportunity to do so. This should occur not just through AmeriCorps but a range of efforts – public and private, secular and religious, in schools and outside of schools. Indeed, whether it's our approach to health care or housing or reading, we have to start viewing service as a key to solving this country's problems.

The three proposals:

1) Urge colleges and universities to use the major increase in Work-Study just approved by Congress to dramatically boost the numbers of young people doing service.

By proposing significant increases in the work-study budget, you have created an important one-time opportunity to expand educational opportunity and service activity. The 35 percent increase in funding recently approved at your urging could mean roughly 250,000 additional young men and women earning college aid by doing service.

In your Penn State commencement address you challenged schools to put this new money into service: "If it's good for students to earn money by putting books back in library shelves or working in the Dean's Office, surely it makes sense for them to earn money helping teen mothers handle their responsibilities, helping older people get around, helping young people to look to a brighter future."

Now you can make that challenge to colleges even sharper: *I worked with Congress to get you 250,000 more work-study jobs. Now give back to your communities; focus those assignments on helping disadvantaged children in your area.*

Indeed, you could ask them to target a significant number of the slots toward the America Reads initiative. The educational enrichment programs envisioned under America Reads tend to work better if the tutor is reliable and able to form a steady, long-term relationship with the child. They then become not only tutors, but mentors. Work-study students, who can be depended on throughout a school year, would be ideal for such an assignment.

In conversations with university presidents, I have discovered that their past resistance to requiring that work-study go into community service instead of campus work dissipates *if* we are talking about new money. They are even more interested if the service is to be focused on helping children in the schools or in the community. Work-study then becomes a way for colleges and universities to improve community relations as well as an exciting call to action for students.

2) Challenge religious institutions to dramatically increase their programs for community service – and offer their participants engaging in full-time service the educational scholarships now provided to AmeriCorps members.

There are already a few thousand full-time opportunities through outstanding programs like the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, the Lutheran Volunteer Corps or the Mennonite service programs. These full-time service participants do not proselytize but do demonstrate that being a good Christian, Jew or Muslim means serving one's neighbor.

Make these religious groups an offer: if you multiply the number of such community service participants, we will give all of them \$4,725 scholarships. The organizations would design the service projects and ways of providing week-to-week support for the members. Some might arrange for members of a local church to provide room and board; others might raise private money to subsidize stipends. Our role would be to provide a powerful inducement to service in the form of educational aid.

If religious institutions expanded the pool of full-time service opportunities to 10,000, that would require a government expenditure of roughly \$50 million.

This would be a powerful way to promote service – and strengthen the connection between young people and religious institutions. Indeed, religious organizations could use full-time service programs as a way of bringing young people through their doors in record numbers. You could discuss the connection between religion and service by referring to your exposure to the Catholic social tradition while attending Georgetown.

This would fit into your overall message that government should empower American communities – and America’s citizens – to solve their own problems. It would also enable you to undercut criticism of AmeriCorps by saying: *I love AmeriCorps and am so proud of what the members have done. But what’s important to me is not the expansion of AmeriCorps but the expansion of service. So to the great religious institutions – and faith-based organizations like YMCAs and Habitat for Humanity -- I make this challenge: if you take the lead in creating service opportunities, we will help you.*

Incidentally, the idea of offering the AmeriCorps education awards (without program support money) was championed by Sen. Grassley in his agreement with us earlier this year. They provide a relatively inexpensive way of priming the pump, and the Corporation is exploring a number of different possible uses for them. For instance, we expect that that these educational scholarships can be particularly useful in helping parochial schools in low income areas. A program called the Alliance for Catholic Education run by Notre Dame University provides \$4,725 AmeriCorps educational awards to college graduates willing to serve for a few years as teachers in disadvantaged private and public schools.

3) Viewing seniors as resources not burdens, we should dramatically increase the role of experienced citizens in solving our nation’s problems.

It is estimated that a typical American will now spend a third of his or her life in retirement. This creates enormous problems and opportunities. If we start viewing these experienced citizens not just as financial burdens but as resources, we will have “discovered” an awesome tool for social rejuvenation.

Right now, 500,000 seniors volunteer through the RSVP, Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions programs that are administered by the Corporation for National

Service. These are good programs that have shown the value of service to the seniors themselves and to the communities they serve. The White House Conference on Aging proposed doubling their size. But to do this well, we need a new approach that taps the talents of the growing pool of “young old” – men and women who have considerable skills and energy. For these Americans, many of whom had tried to change the world as young men and women, “retirement” is a second chance to give something back to their countries and communities.

Last year, the Corporation launched a pilot program in five cities called the Experience Corps that points the way. (The Texas Experience Corps was singled out for praise by Laura Bush in her address during the Republican convention.) By deploying large teams of 15-30 volunteers in targeted schools – and asking each senior to commit at least 15 hours a week -- the program seeks to ensure that the volunteers help not only individual students but actually transform the atmosphere of the school.

Under an expanded version of this program, these “AmeriCorps Seniors” might earn small stipends – or earn educational awards that they could pass on to their grandchildren. That would be an especially poignant way for retirees to help their communities and families.

The AmeriCorps Seniors would have two missions: 1) working with children as tutors and mentors and 2) helping other seniors live independently and stay out of nursing homes.

Putting 250,000 AmeriCorps Seniors in service with the young would further insure that the army of volunteer tutors would truly help the eight-year-olds. These seniors could potentially do much more than just tutor; they could be mentors, Big Brothers, and role models to troubled kids.

The need for the second function, the “independent living” program, is demographically obvious: baby boomers are retiring earlier; people are living longer; the over-80 segment of the population is growing fast; the cost to Medicaid will skyrocket; and all of this will increase the financial and emotional stress on American families.

On a smaller scale, the existing Senior Companion program has shown that service can allow countless older Americans to remain in their own homes instead of having to enter nursing homes prematurely. They provide respite to family members struggling to help their parents live at home; they assist professional caregivers; and, according to several studies, they improve the quality of care.

This approach saves the government and taxpaying families money. For example, our estimates are that each Senior Companion in our Decatur, Alabama program saved the government about \$76,000 in Medicaid costs. In fact, careful studies may demonstrate that the independent living part of the Senior Service Corps could “pay for” the entire corps through Medicaid savings. A corps of 500,000, at \$4,000 per participant, would

cost roughly \$2 billion, but you could propose making the program effectively self-financing, with its growth tied directly to the amount these AmeriCorps Seniors save Medicaid.

I would suggest that if you announce any of these new proposals you would want to renew your commitment to making national service non-partisan. We have quietly worked hard to make well-meaning Republicans comfortable with national service and I believe that, after the political dust settles, we can get more of them constructively engaged.

One idea in this vein would be to ask Norman Schwartzkopf to lead the effort to engage seniors in service. He supports the idea of national service and would be a symbol for Americans who are retired but still have much to offer their country.

These proposals embody the key themes you articulated in your convention speech and during the debate. By emphasizing volunteer-oriented solutions, this plan would reinforce your proposition that the era of big government is over – but it would show that your solutions are, indeed, part of a grander strategy.

By highlighting the role of faith-based institutions like the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, you show that you look to solutions not just in the public sector but the non-profit and religious sectors.

By making service a major way of paying for college, you would increase access to higher education and implant firmly the notion of reciprocity, that with rights come responsibilities.

By focusing these service efforts on a few areas you can show that service is not an end in itself but an effective way of solving real problems faced by American families.

By focusing on service in the closing days of your campaign – and the four years of your second term – you will be reaching above partisan politics and evoking a larger message of the common good.

President Kennedy had wanted the Peace Corps to come home to America on a large scale but his death and the Vietnam War made that impossible. The potential of domestic service was illustrated in the 1970s and 1980s through small experiments such as the California Conservation Corps and City Year. But in 1992, with your candidacy, the idea of national service ignited.

As is, AmeriCorps is on the road to becoming like the Peace Corps – a smart, worthwhile expenditure of taxpayer money. With bold leadership, however, national service can become far bigger -- an idea that, like the GI bill, transforms the country.

COST BREAK DOWN FOR PROPOSALS

TO EXPAND NATIONAL SERVICE AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Expand AmeriCorps to 100,000. The extra \$150 million proposed in FY 1998 for AmeriCorps would produce an 11,000 new AmeriCorps members dedicated to the America Reads initiative. Adding 10,000 new members each year thereafter – each increment to addressing a different pressing need – would mean adding \$150 million to each year's budget until year 2006 when we'd field 100,000 members.

Additional FY1998 CNS Cost: None -- beyond what's already budgeted.

Additional FY 1999 CNS Cost: \$150 million

Expand work-study's emphasis on service. All of the work-study money is already appropriated. Our proposal involves a shift from campus-based jobs to service jobs.

Additional FY1998 CNS Cost: None

Additional FY 1999 CNS Cost: None

Encourage Faith-Based Service. This would be done as part of our existing Education Award program using already appropriated AmeriCorps program and Trust Fund accounts.

Additional FY 1998 Cost: None

Additional FY 1999 Cost: None

Create summer service opportunities for another 100,000. We estimate that this could be done for roughly \$5000 per member. If we phased this in over four years, the ultimate cost in 2002 would be \$500 million.

Additional FY 1998 Cost: \$125 million.

Additional FY 1999 Cost: \$250 million.

Help Military Recruitment through a Smart Partnership with Civilian Service.

Providing service scholarships to some ROTC participants would be done through the existing Education Award program using already appropriated AmeriCorps program and Trust Fund accounts.

Additional FY 1998 Cost: None

Additional FY 1999 Cost: None

Expand National Service Scholars. We are paying for the first few thousand of the scholarships out of existing Subtitle H money. With a minor legislative change allowing us to use the Trust Fund surplus for the scholarships we could fund approximately 40,000 scholarships without any additional appropriations.

Additional FY 1998 Cost: None

Additional FY 1999 Cost: None

Mobilize the young to serve the young. The drive to mobilize the youth serving organizations largely involve use of existing resources and the bully pulpit.

Additional FY 1998 Cost: None

Additional FY 1999 Cost: None

Expand Senior Service. This would be a major initiative geared toward someday mobilizing 500,000 seniors in the twin missions of helping children read independently and seniors live independently. We believe this could be easily paid for by the savings generated to Medicaid and Medicare by the use of national service participants to help frail seniors stay at home. The Corporation's cost would be to pay for scholarships for those seniors who would prefer to earn transferable education awards instead of stipends. We would need new legislation to gain such authority. We proposed that the program start out at 100,000 and only expand if the presumed savings actually materialized. HCFA would pay the upfront costs for stipends and administrative support on the senior care component and the Corporation would pay for the scholarships.

Additional FY 1998 CNS Cost: \$200 million.

Additional FY 1999 CNS Cost: \$200 million

Together these proposals would ultimately provide opportunities for 500,000-1,000,000 Americans to earn college aid by doing service or volunteer work. Most of these proposals require no additional FY1998 money. The two that do require extra money are the senior corps expansion and the summer service proposal. The total additional FY1998 cost to do everything on this list would be \$325 million.

The Family Investment Package: A Modest Proposal

Twelve million pre-school children and 17 million school age children need child care for all or part of their day. They need good quality child care so they can succeed in school. Their parents need good quality care so they can work to support their children, confident that their children are safe and well-cared for. Yet, good quality care costs more than most working families can afford to pay. Good quality care costs between \$6,300 and \$8,500 per year per child. Parents pay, on average, \$3,700 per year. When employers and government invest to help parents bridge the gap between what they can afford to pay and what good quality costs, everyone benefits: children are more likely to enter school ready to learn, parents experience less stress on the job and at home, neighborhoods are safer and more welcoming, the nation's economy is stronger.

It is time to consider investing in families by supporting their child care needs.

Therefore, we are proposing that Congress and state governments consider a family investment package.

The key elements of the Package are:

- ***Expansion of the Dependent Care Tax Credit:*** Make the credit refundable, increase the maximum allowable expenditure and change the percentage formula so that low and moderate income working families get a greater benefit. Every state with an income tax can also provide a tax credit. Follow Arkansas's lead by providing a supplemental tax credit for families who choose licensed or accredited care. (Representative Cynthia McKinney introduced a bill containing most of these provisions during the 104th Congress.)
- ***Establish a scholarship fund for early childhood teachers,*** modeled after the Eisenhower teacher training grants for teachers of science and math. Improving the training and compensation of child care teachers is the surest way to improving the quality of child care.
- ***Create a community reinvestment fund*** to rebuild or create community centers that include child care, family resource programs, and Head Start. This could be tied to Empowerment Zones, and to the President's \$5 billion school rebuilding fund, which could include monies for school age child care.
- ***Expand Parental Leave*** to allow parents time to attend school meetings, look for child care, spend time volunteering in school (as the President has proposed); and expand coverage of the Family and Medical Leave Act to include employers of 25 or more workers.
- ***Double the Child Care and Development Block Grant*** to increase child care subsidies for the working poor and to ensure adequate investment in resource and referral services, training and compensation for child care providers, and

monitoring of the health and safety of child care facilities. (Senator Dodd has introduced S.19 which would authorize this element of the Package.)

- ***Establish a tax credit for employers that provide child care benefits to their employees.*** Senator Kohl has introduced S.82 that would create a business-related tax credit for employer-provided child care benefits. Because expenditures eligible for the credit would be capped at \$150,000, this credit would be particularly attractive to smaller employers.

Child Care Action Campaign
March 3, 1997

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Congressional Press Releases

April 30, 1997, Wednesday

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LENGTH: 438 words

HEADLINE: WEBWIRE-KOHL'S CHILD CARE BILL GETS BIPARTISAN BOOST

BYLINE: HERB KOHL , SENATOR , SENATE

BODY:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 30, 1997

Contact: Brad Fitch or Lynn Becker Phone: (202) 224-5653

KOHL'S CHILD CARE BILL GETS BIPARTISAN BOOST

Senator Orrin Hatch, Senior Republican, Signs on as Bill Sponsor WASHINGTON -- U.S. Senator Herb Kohl's "Child Care Infrastructure Act" today received a bipartisan boost when Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-UT) signed on as the bill's primary cosponsor. Senator Kohl's bill would provide private companies and Institutions with tax credits to encourage them to build on- or near-site day care centers to meet the rapidly growing demand for child care. Senator Hatch is a member of the Senate Finance Committee, which has jurisdiction over Senator Kohl's bill. "Gaining Senator Hatch's support for my bill is especially welcome. He is a responsible and respected legislator who was one of the earliest voices in the Senate for a federal role in child care. When I introduced my child care bill in January, I intended to make its passage a bipartisan effort; legislators on both sides of aisle agree on the importance of finding safe and stimulating places for our kids to spend the day when their parents are at work. Senator Hatch's support will enhance the likelihood that the Finance Committee will look favorably on the bill and bring us one step closer to enacting it into law."

In 1995, 62% of working women had children under six years old, and 59% had children under three. In Wisconsin, there are almost 6,500 children from 4,000 families on waiting lists for child care. Senator Kohl's legislation creates a tax credit for employers who get involved in increasing the supply of quality child care by, for example, building and subsidizing an entire child care center or reserving slots for employees in an existing child care center.

The credit is designed so that any company, small or large, has an incentive in providing child care to its employees. Studies show that organizations that

provide child care benefits to their employees tend to attract better qualified applicants, keep their employees longer, and experience lower levels of absenteeism. The credit is limited to 50% and capped at \$ 150,000 per year. Kohl said he would pay for the incentive by closing certain loopholes in the current tax system.

Senator Kohl's bill has been endorsed by the Children's Defense Fund, the National Center for Early Childhood Workforce, the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, and the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, and was lauded in the January issue of "Working Mother" magazine.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: May 1, 1997

Child
Care

FOR INTERNAL DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY

Child Care Policy Options Draft Working Paper

1. Make the Dependent Care Tax Credit Refundable for Child Care Expenses and/or Increase the Amount of Credit Available on a Sliding Scale to Reach Low and Moderate Income Working Families

The Dependent Care Tax Credit (DCTC) is an income tax credit for taxpayers who incur employment related expenses for child care or elder care. The credit is now available to single parents who work and to two-parent families in which both parents work. The maximum allowable credit, available on a sliding scale depending on income, ranges from \$480 to \$720 for families with one child and from \$960 to \$1440 for families with two or more children. Since the credit is not refundable, it cannot be used by most low income working families with incomes below the federal income tax threshold (approximately \$24,000 for a family of four).

2. Double the Number of Children from Working Families Receiving Child Care Assistance through the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) By Increasing CCDF Funds Over Five Years To Reach 2 Million Children by 2002

Low-income families face major obstacles in finding or affording child care services. While the average family spends about 7 percent of their income on child care, low-income families spend approximately a quarter of their income for child care services. An estimated 10 million children from working families will be eligible for federal child care assistance, yet only 1-1.4 million children currently receive assistance. Among working families earning 150% of poverty, 4 out of 5 do not receive federal child care assistance. Among working families earning at or below the poverty line, 2 out of 3 do not receive assistance.

3. Establish a Quality Incentive Grant Fund to Provide Grants to States (With Match from the Private Sector) to Improve Child Care for Young Children Based on the Military Child Care Model, Including Support for Achieving Accreditation

Research confirms that the quality of child care can impact children's language and cognitive development and can affect school-readiness. Yet study after study reveals a crisis in the quality of child care across the country. At the White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning, the President pointed to the military child care program as a model for the rest of the country. Of particular note is the military's focus on establishing family child care networks, achieving outside accreditation of its facilities, and tying professional training to compensation.

4. Launch an Infant/Toddler Family Child Care Initiative by Providing Additional Funds through CCDF or Another Funding Mechanism to Encourage Communities to Establish and Support Family Child Care Networks

As the number of infants and toddlers in care increase, many families are turning to small family child care homes to provide a more home-like setting for their children. One of the most effective strategies for improving the quality of these settings is the establishment of networks of support and training specifically designed for family child care providers.

5. Establish a Scholarship Program for Child Care Professionals By Exploring Loan Forgiveness and Scholarship Funds

Research confirms the importance of early childhood staff to the quality of child care services. Yet child care providers receive inadequate wages and there are limited resources to recruit and retain staff. When scholarships are provided, the quality of care improves (as seen in the TEACH scholarship program in NC).

6. Double the Number of School Age Children Who Have Access to Quality Child Care By Providing Incentive Funding to Stimulate Community-Wide School-Age Child Care Efforts, With Involvement of Schools and Community-Based Organizations

The need for after-school care has grown dramatically in recent years. With the vast majority of parents with school-age children in the workforce, millions of school-age children go home to an empty house after school. Yet most schools close at 3:00 pm and remain closed in the summer months. While the number of school-age programs has grown over the last decade, there are still dramatically few school-age programs for low-income working families, particularly for children aged 10-13. Despite poor access to quality programs, recent research documents the positive effects that school-age programs can have on academic achievement of low-income children. FBI studies report that crime rates increase between 3-6pm.

MEMORANDUM

TO: TOM
FROM: NEERA
RE: CHILD CARE IDEAS

Here are some ideas. They all differ in degree of political palatability.

PROPOSALS

1. Expansion of Empowerment Zones

- a. Allowing businesses in empowerment zones to take additional tax credits for providing child care.
- b. Giving businesses a tax credit for setting up and/or subsidizing day care centers in empowerment zones, even if the business itself is not in the empowerment zone.

Background

Colorado has developed state regulations to increase day care in business zones. Businesses sharing in the costs of a day care center will get tax credits for half of their contributions -- up to \$100,000 per tax year. The aim of Colorado's program is to increase day care and save energy through increased reliance on public transportation and carpooling by parents. Other cities have also begun to establish this linkage, including San Diego, Miami, and Orlando. SEE Colorado Project Works to Increase Child Care, Improve Energy Conservation, 4 Nat'l Rep. On Work & Fam. 1, 4 (1991)

In 1990, Colorado added child care to the list of program for which incentives are available through Colorado's 12 enterprise zones. In offering income tax credits, the state's goal was for businesses to donate money, real estate or property to establish child care centers within enterprise zones. Tax credits also are available for other child care support, including:

- * Donating money to establish a grant or loan program for parents requiring financial aid for child care.
 - * Donating money to train child care providers.
 - * Donating money, services or equipment to establish an information and referral service to help parents find child care.
 - * Pooling money among businesses to start child care centers. [The Denver Business Journal, 8/20/90]
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2. Provide Employers with a Tax Credit for On-Site Day Care Centers

Background

How
In 1987, Florida, Connecticut, Maine and Rhode Island had such legislation. There have been proposals in Congress for such tax credits as well, including a 1990 effort by Senator DeConcini. However, such efforts do not appear to have been successful.

Responding to employees' demands for changes in day care benefits, employers have been slowly increasing the amount of on-site or nearby day care they provide. But while the number of companies with on-site child care centers grew five-fold between 1984 and 1989, the relative number of centers is still low. Recent surveys have indicated that anywhere from 2 to 7 percent of employers provide on-site day care, though one source noted that in 1990 only 2,000 of the 6 million businesses in the U.S. had day care facilities.

3. Create a Voucher System

Idea

Although expensive, the mere idea of voucher may find greater political support than direct subsidy or tax code changes. For vouchers funded by the federal government, the government would be able to provide flexibility to day care users while maintaining substantial control over day care quality. In the voucher system, parents would select a licensed or registered day care provider and must only pay an income-tested fee for that day care. An administering agency would pay the balance of the day care cost directly to the day care provider after checking that the child has actually been in day care. The vouchers would only be used for licensed or registered caregivers. In addition to being flexible, vouchers would alleviate supply-demand discrepancies generally associated with subsidized care. With vouchers, parents can choose from a greater variety of providers outside of set geographical boundaries and are not limited to a specific number of slots within each center. Vouchers can also be targeted to middle income and lower income families.

4. Training Welfare Mothers to Become Child Care Providers.

This idea is developing in some states, including Colorado. It would alleviate the heavy demand for child care by lower income families by providing child care workers often close to where they live.

5. A National Registry.

Idea

Because so many child care providers are unlicensed and it is such a deregulated system, it may be more efficient and effective to create a national registry of providers who may have lost their licenses or have been cited for some health code violation, etc.

Background

Family day care, the care of children in the homes of providers, usually by mothers with young children of their own, is one of the most commonly used forms of out-of-home day care. In 1987, approximately three to five million children were in family day care. This indicates that approximately 20% of children under five with working mothers attend family day care. In fact, significantly more children are in family day care than organized day care. Although it is widely used, most family day care is unregulated. While a 1988 survey found that approximately 200,000 licensed day care homes exist, it is estimated that approximately 500,000 to 2 million unlicensed day care homes exist.

MEMORANDUM

TO: TOM FREEDMAN
FROM: RAVEN MONTGOMERY
RE: CHILD CARE
DATE: JUNE 18, 1997

Washington Post March 6, 1997
Cover the Kids

Edward M. Kennedy and John F. Kerry Proposal

- Their proposal would impose no new government mandates; and encourage family responsibility by offering health insurance for their children. The plan would be administered by the states, under federal guidelines to guarantee that coverage is sufficient and meets the special needs of children, including good preventive care and prenatal care.
- The federal government would provide grants to states to help families with incomes under 300% of the poverty level (\$39,000 a year for a family of 3) in purchasing private health insurance for their children if they did not already receive coverage under an employment-based plan or Medicaid.
- Families with incomes between 185 and 300% of poverty level would get assistance on a sliding scale. Assistance would be provided to uninsured pregnant women.
- States would contract with private insurance companies to offer children's coverage to any family that wants it. State will contract with private insurance companies to offer coverage for children and provide subsidies for families that can't afford to buy coverage of their own
 - Massachusetts has a similar program that was expanded so that most families are now eligible for financial assistance to buy insurance.
- The cost of the program is covered by an increase in cigarette tax, which would have the added benefit of reducing smoking among teenagers
- The plan would not guarantee all children insurance coverage but would give all families the opportunity to obtain such insurance at a cost they can afford

Washington Post December 13, 1996

Wisconsin Moves to Cover Welfare's Day-Care Costs; Landmark Reform Program Get \$25 Million Injection

Governor Tommy G. Thompson

- His initial plan says that families on welfare would have been required to pay up to 46% of their income for child care. Now government has another proposal that requires recipients no matter how many children they have, to pay no more than 16% of their pay check toward day care.
- The state will spend \$70 million on new funds on the working poor to help ensure that they are not squeezed out as welfare recipients are required to work. The remaining \$5 million will be used to increase the overall supply of day care slots around the state and to improve the quality of care being offered.

Washington Post November 17, 1996

Close to Home- Setback for Day Care

Panel appointed by Virginia Governor George Allen

- A solution to the shortage of day-care slots in the state is to lower the educational requirements of day-care workers, and increase student-teacher ratios
- Neither day care teachers nor the directors of day care centers should be required to hold a high school diploma

The Wall Street Journal April 26, 1996

Several Large Employers Join Forces to Solve Problems of Low-Wage Workers

Employer Group

- Some corporations within the group are developing new health and child care programs for example ConAgra.
 - This company is reducing infant health and child birth problems among meatpacking workers by making maternity benefits contingent on good prenatal care practices. It is also combining efforts with Headstart to provide subsidized child care for some shift workers

The New York Times December 9, 1996

Quiet New York Welfare Experiment Has Had Mixed Success

New York

- Idea of program was to help women who might otherwise be long-term welfare clients become independent by providing them a safety net of cash grants and other benefits like child care while they try to move into the workforce.
- People who enroll in New York program find welfare grants reduced gradually after they take jobs. The recipients can make more than they would solely on public assistance by taking low-paying

jobs and supplementing their wages with moderately reduced cash grants and other welfare benefits.

The New York Times November 11, 1996

Welfare Rules Intensify Need For Day Care

Under Governor Whitman's Proposals (New Jersey)

- Family of 3 with an income of \$25, 180 or less would qualify for child care subsidies

The New York Times January 15, 1997

What Pataki's Budget Would Do

- Would raise spending on child care for the very poor, mostly those on welfare, by \$54 million to \$383 million. It would also distribute block grants to states and cities instead of providing day care directly through state programs

The New York Times March 14, 1997

Hatch Joins Kennedy to Back a Health Program

Hatch-Kennedy Bill

- It would raise \$30 billion in revenue over 5 years. Two-thirds of money would be distributed to states for child health initiatives, and the remainder would go to the federal budget deficit.
- States that want federal grants would have to contribute money according to formula set by Congress. States would sign contracts with insurance companies to offer policies covering children.
- Benefits would be the same available under a states Medicaid program. Each state would establish own eligibility criteria, but the poorest children would be served first. The bill would increase the Federal excise tax on cigarettes to 67% a pack from 27%.

Los Angeles Times April 18, 1997

Justice Department Initiatives called Safe Start

- Clinton discusses this particular program that trains police officers, prosecutors, and parole officers in child development so they are better equipped to handle sensitivity cases that involve children.
- The article also described a plan to use the military's experience in running nurseries to improve civilian day care services.

Tulsa World April 18, 1997

President's initiatives:

- Would like the military to share its successful international day care system with the private sector; support universal health care for children; expand Headstart program to children 3 an younger; and make it a priority to protect all

children from abuse at home, in school, and in the community

The Washington Times April 18, 1997

- President Clinton suggested providing universal health care for children, pregnant women, and new mothers and day care for young working parents.
- He had a conference on child brain development and Bruce Reed said that the White House hoped to use the conference to get corporate America to provide on-site child care.
- In order to get communities and companies to provide quality day care the President instructed the military to share its knowledge with towns and local organizations near bases.
- President Clinton said that many European nations have better child care than the US.

Wisconsin State Journal

March 4, 1997

W-2

- Requires all heads of welfare families to obtain jobs in exchange for health insurance, job subsidiaries, child care assistance, and food stamps

Governor Tommy Thompson

- Wants to expand government health insurance to working poor so that a family of 3 receiving assistance could earn up to \$26,000 and still receive it.
- The problem is that the working poor whose employers offer private health insurance would be denied Medical Assistance. Also everyone in W-2 would have to pay a co-payment averaging \$20 a month to receive Medical Assistance.
- President Clinton does not approve of this plan because the end result is that the poor lose their health insurance.

Knoxville News-Sentinel February 4, 1994

Governor Don Sundquist

- State has allocated \$50 million to transportation and child-care needs of able-bodied welfare recipients taking mandatory jobs under the state's reform program (Families First)

The Courier Journal December 30, 1996

- Some states and private assistance funds are available, but state assistance cuts off after fixed period and waiting lists are lengthy
- Few centers offer night and weekend hours needed by many parents in entry level jobs.
- Currently the state helps with child care during job training and pays for up to 12 months of care once welfare recipients find work.

- During fiscal year '96, the state will spend \$55 million to help pay for child care through different programs

AIDS death rate continues to decline

By Anita Manning
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — The number of people who died of AIDS declined 19% in the first nine months of 1996 compared with the same period in 1995, continuing a trend that began early last year, federal health officials said Monday.

"We are entering a new era in this epidemic," says Helene D. Gayle of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta. At a forum sponsored by AIDS Action, an advocacy group, Gayle said the number of AIDS deaths between January and September 1996 was 30,700, vs. 37,900 in the same period of 1995.

Yet, Gayle says, "these trends are not equal across demographic categories."

Among racial groups, blacks now account for the largest proportion of AIDS cases, 41%, she says, and AIDS is "increasing most rapidly among women, particularly minorities."

Heterosexual AIDS cases are increasing at 15% to 20% a year, compared with increases of 5% or less among gay men and injecting drug users.

Gayle attributes the decline in deaths to a drop in the increase of new cases along with powerful new treatments that are helping people live longer. Protease inhibitors, which reduce HIV levels drastically in many patients, were not widely available in early 1996, she notes, so it's likely even a greater reduction in the death rate will become apparent later.

But the high cost of these drugs, estimated at \$10,000 to \$15,000 a year, keeps them out of the hands of many who need them, cautions Christine Lubinski of the AIDS Action Council. She notes that Congress will discuss this week whether to increase funding to provide drugs for indigent AIDS patients.

Such funding, she says, "could well contribute to reducing the disparity in death rates between men and women, white and black."

Child-care programs show improvement

By Karen S. Peterson
USA TODAY

Although many states lag behind in encouraging high-quality child care, the latest annual study by *Working Mother* magazine finds some improvements in day-care programs in almost every state, editor Judsen Culbreth says.

"We have seen a lot of new initiatives, a lot of imagination, a lot of states trying really hard," Culbreth says. Part of the reason, she says: additional federal funds for child care set aside for states as a result of legislation intended to move women from welfare to work.

The magazine names 10 winners, based on child-care quality, safety and availability, plus commitment by state leaders:

► **California.** Continues to support a large pre-kindergarten child-care program and to provide care to tens of thousands of children.

► **Colorado.** Created new funding source by allowing taxpayers to check a box and designate some of

their tax dollars for child care.

► **Connecticut.** Remains a leader, with governor and state lawmakers pledged to more child-care programs statewide by the year 2000.

► **Hawaii.** Remains a model for other states, with its plan for a universal system of child care.

► **Maryland.** Will expand its already impressive resource and referral service this year.

► **Massachusetts.** Allocated an additional \$10 million for pre-kindergarten and other early education programs; allocated \$25 million to improve salaries for caregivers.

► **Minnesota.** Enacted new laws to grant \$200 million to child care; 13,000 more families will get help.

► **Vermont.** Offers two hours of training and guidance to new caregivers and makes sure caregivers' homes are safe.

► **Washington.** Allocated \$100 million in new funds.

► **Wisconsin.** Boosted child-care funds to serve 17,000 more children.

The full survey appears in the July/August issue on newsstands today.

Texaco lawyer: No slurs on tapes

Outside investigator releases full report

By Ellen Neuborne
USA TODAY

The racial epithet which vaulted a Texaco discrimination lawsuit into the national spotlight, was never uttered on tape, an independent investigator says.

"Those words were not spoken," says Michael Armstrong, a lawyer hired by Texaco to investigate whether executives used racial slurs and plotted to destroy evidence in the case. A poor copy of the original tape

made by former Texaco executive Richard Lundwall was to blame for perception the racial slur was made, he says.

Last winter, plaintiffs in the case released tapes of what they said were executives using racial slurs and plotting to withhold evidence. Soon after, Texaco settled for \$176 million.

Armstrong released the report, finished in January, in full Monday. Portions of the report had been previously released. Among new details:

► **Armstrong** found no evidence documents were shredded, or even very well hidden. "The documents (personnel executives) did withhold they put in a file with a little sticky

on it labeled 'Documents withheld from legal,'" he says.

► A tape expert found deliberate erasures on recordings made by Lundwall. (Lundwall's lawyers say no tapes were made to hide evidence.)

Texaco fired executive David Keough and suspended benefits of Lundwall. Lundwall and Ulrich charged obstruction of justice.

Says plaintiffs' lawyer Darrell Berger: "There was evidence a much more widespread problem at Texaco. If saying the word was the only thing that happened, they would not have paid us \$176 million."

USA TODAY

TUESDAY, JULY 15, 1997

Child Care

COLORADO BRIGHT BEGINNINGS ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT FOR THE CARNEGIE CORPORATION OF NEW YORK

February 7, 1997

Prepared by Seth Grob, Director, Colorado Bright Beginnings



I. GOALS AND STRATEGY OF BRIGHT BEGINNINGS

In November 1995, Governor Roy Romer, Brad Butler, former Chairman of the Board of Procter and Gamble, and a statewide steering committee consisting of prominent civic, religious, government, business, media and nonprofit leaders launched Colorado Bright Beginnings. Bright Beginnings, part of the Colorado Children's Campaign, is a unique non-governmental private/public partnership designed to improve the lives of children in their most critical period of development: birth to age three. Its purpose is to mobilize every aspect of the community to better support young children and their families and to help change the way our state thinks and acts on behalf of this group. Ultimately, Bright Beginnings' goal is to "Make Colorado the Best Place in the Nation to Raise a Child."

As defined by the Bright Beginnings statewide steering committee, Bright Beginnings goals include the following:

- ▶ Form Steering Committees representing business, nonprofit, civic and religious groups to lead Bright Beginnings activities in every community statewide. In essence, Bright Beginnings seeks to establish a group of leaders representing every aspect of the community to take responsibility for ensuring that every newborn in their area receives appropriate nurturing, intellectual stimulation and health care in both the home and child care setting.
- ▶ Have a trained volunteer from a local neighborhood welcome every child born in Colorado and provide the family with a community gift, developmental information and information about local community resources that support the healthy development of their newborn.
- ▶ Assure that every child born in Colorado has access to affordable and high quality health care, including appropriate immunizations.
- ▶ Expand access to affordable and developmentally appropriate infant and child care for every parent. Where possible, encourage private and public employers to offer child care either in or adjacent to the work place.

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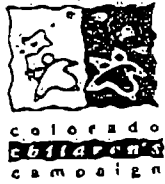
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- Promote child- and parent-friendly work places so that parents can balance work and family responsibilities.
- Identify, promote and expand proven programs serving the unique needs of children born to teen parents.

In a nutshell, Bright Beginnings seeks to give individuals, communities and businesses a series of concrete actions that they can do to enhance the security, stimulation and nurturing of newborns and young children. By encouraging active participation in this statewide initiative and educating individuals and communities about the importance of the early years to a child's healthy development, Bright Beginnings is helping to build the grassroots support for a statewide legislative agenda that better supports young children and their families.

Some of the distinct programs Bright Beginnings has formally developed and adopted include:

- **Warm Welcome:** A program that creates a spirit of celebration and welcome around each child's birth. At the parent's request, trained community volunteers meet with and support new parents within the first weeks after delivery. During these visits parents receive a gift from the community, a parenting booklet containing useful information about their baby's development and practical tips for promoting that development, information about choosing quality child care and a list of public/private resources in their neighborhood. When requested, volunteers help parents access these resources to better support the healthy development of their babies. As a follow-up to these visits, parents receive telephone calls from a volunteer phone counselor at 2, 4, 6, and 12 months of their child's life. The purpose of these calls is to remind parents every time an immunization is due, suggest games and activities that parents can do with their child to stimulate development, and connect parents to community-based resources that support the healthy development of their babies.
- **Child Friendly Work Places and High Quality Developmentally Appropriate Child Care:** Bright Beginnings, in collaboration with other groups, is striving to ensure that high quality and developmentally appropriate child care is available to the children of those families in which both parents (or a single parent) need to return to the work place during the child's first three years of life. In particular, Bright Beginnings is working closely with the employer community to invest in child care benefit options for their employees and to adopt work place policies that enhance the abilities of employees to be good parents as well as good employees. Through several publications, regional meetings with

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UIC Health Services

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Chairman of the Board
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employers and an annual statewide summit, Bright Beginnings expects to mobilize the employer community to better support young children and their families.



- **New Futures:** A special subcommittee has been formed to study and make recommendations about the best way to deal with the special needs of infants born to teen parents. Based on an in-depth analysis of programs around the state, the group recently contracted with the University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work to conduct an independent evaluation of the Genesis Project in Boulder, Colorado. This intervention program appears to be one of the most successful models in helping those children born to teen parents. If the evaluation is positive, Bright Beginnings will recommend and press for expansion of the program to other communities across the state.

- **Health Care for Young Children:** Bright Beginnings is continually working toward ensuring universal health care coverage for young children. In particular, through the Warm Welcome program every new parent is informed about the Colorado Child Health Plan, an innovative plan designed to meet the health care needs of children of the working poor.

II. FIRST YEAR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The following is a list of some of the accomplishments Bright Beginnings has achieved in its first year of operation. As a result of these successes, the extensive media coverage surrounding the Bright Beginnings initiative and the support and participation of thousands of people across the state, Bright Beginnings has contributed to helping move the early childhood legislative platform higher on the state's policy agenda. (See Section IV for a more detailed review of the state legislative proposals relating to early childhood.)

- Warm Welcome is now available in twenty-eight counties including Denver, Adams, Arapahoe, Jefferson, Douglas, Weld, Boulder, Yuma, Logan, Sedgwick, Washington, Morgan, Lincoln, Phillips, Kit Carson, Cheyenne, Kiowa, Prowers, Baca, El Paso, Teller, Pueblo, La Plata, Jackson, Routt, Moffat, Grand and Larimer counties. Gunnison and Delta Counties are expected to be up and running in the first quarter of 1997.
- More than 350 home visitor volunteers have been trained and are making Warm Welcome visits in their neighborhoods. Another 100 volunteers have been recruited and will soon be trained in communities around the state.

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- More than 1000 families have participated in the Warm Welcome program.
- Approximately twenty percent of families receiving Warm Welcome visits have been linked with community-based resources designed to support the healthy development of their babies. These services include intensive home visitation mentoring programs, parent support groups, nutrition programs and no-and-low cost health care providers.
- A training program and a handbook for volunteer home visitors have been developed.
- Ten Bright Beginnings Steering Committees have been formed around the state and are staffed by professional regional coordinators. Bright Beginnings affiliates around the state include: Baby Bear Hugs/Warm Welcome (Yuma); Bright Beginnings of Boulder (Boulder); Bright Beginnings in Mesa County (Grand Junction); Family Visitor/Warm Welcome (Durango); First Visitor/Warm Welcome (Colorado Springs); Bright Beginnings in Berthoud (Larimer); Mile High United Way (Metro Denver); Newborn Network/Warm Welcome (Steamboat Springs); Pueblo County United Way (Pueblo); and United Way of Greeley (Greeley). A manual detailing the Warm Welcome program has been provided to coordinators around the state to assist them in implementing the program in their communities.
- An attractive *Giving Your Child a Bright Beginning* parenting booklet has been developed in both English and Spanish for new parents visited in the Warm Welcome program.
- *Working Your Way Through the Child Care Maze: A Parent's Guide to Choosing Quality Child Care* booklet has been developed for new parents visited in the Warm Welcome program.
- Large Bright Beginnings community meetings have been held in almost every area of the state to raise awareness about the needs of young children and to mobilize every segment of the community to become involved in this initiative. Meetings have been held in Grand Junction, Durango, Colorado Springs, Gunnison, Loveland, Pueblo, Steamboat Springs, Alamosa, Frisco, Greeley, Ft. Morgan and Lamar.
- Many groups around the state have provided gifts for the newborns visited. Examples of groups include the Junior League of Denver, March of

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Dimes, Telephone Pioneers, Kiwanis Club, sheriffs' departments, churches and senior citizens organizations.



- Volunteer telephone "visitors" supported by advanced telecommunications technology are in place to make follow-up calls to every family visited when immunizations are due during the child's first year of life. Consumer Health Services, Inc., in Boulder, Colorado, is providing pro bono the technology and volunteer counselors to generate the proactive telephone calls.
- Mile High United Way is providing a backup "Warm Welcome" information and referral help line for parents wanting to learn more about public and community services available in the metro-Denver area.
- A series of regional meetings on child care and family friendly work issues has been held with the business community around the state. These meetings have taken place in Denver, Colorado Springs, Grand Junction, Loveland and Pueblo. The purpose of these meetings is to heighten awareness about work and family issues and to encourage employers to invest in child care benefit options for their employees. Over 700 public and private employers have attended these meetings. As a follow up to the regional meetings, Bright Beginnings has partnered with The Denver Post to sponsor the *Colorado Employer Summit on the Future of the Work Place*, scheduled for April 15-16, 1997, in Denver. The Summit is designed to bring together a number of national authorities and representatives from Colorado companies to discuss specific ways employers have implemented work/family programs, while simultaneously improving their bottom line and helping employees better balance work and child rearing responsibilities. In conjunction with the Summit, The Denver Post will be doing a series of articles, public service announcements and a special Sunday edition supplement around work/family issues.
- *Family Friendly Policies . . . Good for Your Business, Your Employees, & the Children in Your Community Resource Guide* has been developed and is being widely distributed to employers around the state. The guide outlines numerous child - and parent-friendly work policies that not only benefit the children of employees and the future of our society, but also result in higher employee retention rates, reduced absenteeism, greater employee loyalty and increased productivity and overall company profit. More than 2,000 copies have been distributed to Colorado employers.
- The Colorado Children's Campaign, Academy of Pediatrics, and several

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members of the Bright Beginnings Steering Committee worked with the State Legislature and the Governor to expand the Colorado Child Health Plan to all rural areas of the state. Since that expansion last legislative session, Bright Beginnings has actively promoted the program to all parents of newborns through the Warm Welcome program.

- Bright Beginnings, through an active outreach and media campaign, is helping change the way our state thinks and acts on behalf of young children and change the culture of Colorado to become "child friendly." Over 250 newspaper and magazine articles, television shows and syndicated columns featuring Bright Beginnings have appeared in Colorado and national media espousing the importance of the early years to a child's healthy development. This campaign, in part, has contributed to the Colorado General Assembly and numerous employers investing in the welfare of young children.
- More than 200 groups including churches, civic groups, health care providers and hospitals, schools, neighborhood groups, businesses, and preschool parent groups, among others, have heard presentations about Bright Beginnings and received information about how each can be involved in this community mobilization effort to better support young children and their families. Many of these groups have since become involved in this statewide initiative. Some examples of partnering organizations include: family resource centers, Kiwanis Clubs, hospitals, state universities, Head Start programs, Junior Achievement National Headquarters, Visiting Nurse Associations and school districts.
- A Bright Beginnings Home Page is now available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.unitedwaydenver.org/> (click "Bright Beginnings"). This home page, developed by Mile High United Way and Bright Beginnings, contains information about Bright Beginnings activities around the state, information about the status of Colorado's children, and legislative updates about pending bills in the Colorado General Assembly affecting young children and their families. The periodic legislative updates are provided by the Colorado Children's Campaign.
- The New Futures Subcommittee has reviewed and evaluated many of the programs around the state serving teen parents and their infants. Based on this extensive review, the subcommittee has arranged for the University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work to conduct an independent evaluation of the Genesis Project in Boulder. Genesis is a nationally recognized program which has successfully engaged 94% of pregnant and parenting teen mothers in Boulder County in prenatal care, parent training,



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high school completion, or job training. If the evaluation proves favorable, Bright Beginnings will promote its replication around the state.

III. LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

One of the primary reasons Bright Beginnings has experienced so much success and support from communities across the state is the tremendous leadership involved and the fact there is bi-partisan participation. Governor Roy Romer (Democrat), Brad Butler, and Tom Norton (Republican and President of the State Senate) have been extremely involved in this initiative, including making strategic and tactical decisions, meeting with multiple community groups and editorial boards across the state and soliciting participation and support from key stakeholders in both the public and private sector. In essence, these leaders feel a real sense of ownership of this effort and have been willing to extend their time, energy, resources and talent to ensure that every newborn in Colorado is given a "Bright Beginning." This Bright Beginning, as defined by these leaders, includes having communities welcome and support every parent and newborn (who requests it) on a voluntary, non-governmental basis, reengineering the work place to better accommodate parents of young children and allocating sufficient public/private resources to ensure every child has access to quality health and child care programs.

There has also been an incredible outpouring of support for this effort from members of the business sector, the media, faith communities, parents, service clubs, nonprofit organizations, health care providers and hospitals. While the list of names is far too extensive to include in this report, a few examples of the contributions that several of these sectors have made will suffice for purposes of demonstrating the broad-based support that Bright Beginnings has achieved.

Concerning the business sector, Consumer Health Services, Inc., Hewlett-Packard and Computer- Eze have teamed together to develop an advanced telecommunications system that enables parents of newborns involved in Warm Welcome to be contacted by telephone every time an immunization is due during their child's first year of life. This contribution has involved developing the parent and child database software, donating the computer hardware for every region of the state, linking the systems electronically and having employees donate their time to generate the proactive telephone calls.

Regarding the print, electronic and television media, they have done an incredible job covering the Bright Beginnings initiative and highlighting the importance of quality child care and health care to the overall healthy development of young children. In particular, more than 250 stories have appeared including First Lady Bea Romer's syndicated early childhood column entitled "Bright Beginnings."



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Executive Director
New America Strategic Public Relations

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The Public Relations

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BRIGHT
BEGINNINGS



Further, the local NBC affiliate, Channel 4, and the League of Woman Voters have produced several promotional videos and programs highlighting this initiative and the Warm Welcome program. These are being aired throughout the state. The incredible partnerships that have been forged with the media are due, in part, to the fact that the Bright Beginnings leadership and staff convened editorial board meetings with print and television media across the state prior and subsequent to the formal announcement of the initiative.

The faith communities and service clubs (i.e., Kiwanis, Rotary) have also been critical partners in promoting and expanding the Warm Welcome program. These groups have been instrumental in recruiting hundreds of volunteers for the home visitor program and in procuring gifts for the newborns visited. For example, the Telephone Pioneers at their annual conference in Denver last spring donated more than 1,000 reading kits for families visited in the Warm Welcome program. These kits included "baby's first book," information on the value of reading to children at an early age, a library card application and a "Read to Me" bib. In some regions of the state, service clubs have also taken responsibility for raising the dollars necessary to retain a volunteer coordinator to help administer the program.

Finally, the Warm Welcome program has been embraced by doctors and hospitals statewide. Pediatricians, obstetricians, family physicians, hospitals and clinics throughout the state are playing a critical role in encouraging new and expectant parents to sign up for the program.

Indeed, this segment has become one of the biggest advocates of Warm Welcome in particular and of a universally based home visitor program in general.

Ultimately, by partnering with these and other less "traditional" groups, Bright Beginnings is helping to create a broad constituency to support both its program goals and the more comprehensive goals of Starting Points. By involving and engaging hundreds of organizations and thousands of people across Colorado in the Bright Beginnings initiative, we have planted the seeds for communities to rally behind an early childhood agenda on both a non-governmental and a public policy basis. During the next several years, we expect these seeds to germinate and Colorado will surface as the *Best Place for a Child to be Born and Raised*.

IV. PUBLIC SECTOR POLICY REFORMS AND IMPROVING PROGRAM QUALITY

Bright Beginnings is intended to be a non-governmental public awareness/action campaign to mobilize individuals, businesses and communities to become a caring community for young children and their families. Notwithstanding, Bright Beginnings realizes the important role that governmental policies relating to tax,





health and early childhood education and care have on the healthy development of young children. For that reason, Bright Beginnings has included several key policy makers and individuals involved in shaping legislation and policy to serve on the statewide steering committee.

These key individuals and policy makers brief the committee on a quarterly basis about possible and pending legislation impacting young children. These briefings serve not only to educate key stakeholders about such legislation but also serve to generate ideas and policies that should be considered and proposed for the upcoming legislative session. Further, the briefings are often instrumental in mobilizing influential members of the steering committee to contact key legislators to support particular legislation.

While 1996 was an important year in the passage of a number of bills better supporting young children, 1997 promises to be even more exciting. The following is a list of bills that the Ad Hoc Children's Legislative Committee staffed by the Colorado Children's Campaign has decided to endorse. As more fully described below, these bills relate to: (1) investments in programs serving young children and their families; (2) tax relief for parents with young children and child care providers; (3) expansion and improved quality of child care and child health programs; and (4) coordinating policy for early childhood care and education in the state of Colorado.

Youth Crime Prevention and Intervention Fund

Sponsor: Representative Tony Grampsas

Status: Pending inclusion in State Budget Bill

This budget item will add an additional \$2.1 million to the fund to total just under \$10 million for community-based prevention programs. Twenty percent of the money is earmarked for programs serving young children.

HB 1212 State Income Tax Credit for Parents of Children Under Age 4

Sponsors: Representative Marcy Morrison and Senator Peggy Reeves

Status: Pending Introduction in House Finance Committee

The bill allows certain Colorado taxpayers to claim a credit against state income taxes for dependent children three years and under. The credit will be graduated in the following manner:

\$500 per dependent child for income of less than \$25,000

\$450 per dependent child for income of between \$25,000 - \$35,000

\$300 per dependent child for income of between \$35,000 - \$45,000

Any credit not taken can be carried forward for five years.

SB 68 State Income Tax Credit for Employees of Child Care Facilities

Sponsors: Senator Gloria Tanner and Representative Larry Schwarz



providing health services to students who receive Medicaid services. The bill also requires that 30% of the reimbursed Medicaid dollars be used to serve uninsured children through a variety of settings including child care facilities.

Colorado Basic Health Plan for Children

Sponsors: Representative Dave Owen; Representative Jim Dyer; Senator Sally Hopper

Status: In drafting; Pending Introduction in House Finance

This bill authorizes several actions to expand health insurance to uninsured Colorado children. The bill instructs the state to seek a federal waiver to allow more flexibility in constructing the Medicaid program for children. Specifically, the waiver will allow families making up to 185% of the federal poverty level to enroll their children in the program. It also allows a more modest benefit package to be offered and authorizes enrollment fees and co-pays. With these vehicles secured, the bill allows for the transition of children currently served in the Colorado Child Health Plan and the Medically Indigent Program into a Medicaid managed care organization. This transition will save dollars which can then be applied to serving more children.

V. PUBLIC EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION

Bright Beginnings and the Colorado Children's Campaign recently received a \$300,000 three-year grant from the Rose Community Foundation to launch a Colorado Early Childhood Public Engagement Campaign. Similar to the national engagement campaign, the Colorado engagement campaign seeks to inform families, child care providers, physicians, policy makers and others about startling new research on children's brain development; to build the capacity of the fields that serve young children; and to bring about important policy changes to support young children and their families. The Colorado engagement campaign will utilize the grassroots networks and affiliates that Bright Beginnings and the Colorado Children's Campaign have worked so hard to develop during the past year to ensure that the national information is received, understood and acted upon in communities across the state.

The Colorado engagement campaign will have a number of components. A brief listing of these activities is as follows (For a detailed review of these activities, please see the enclosed "Proposal to the Rose Foundation."):

- A Brain Development Conference will be held in Denver in the late spring or early summer of 1997. The purpose of this invitational conference is to educate a core group of local and state leaders about the new research on prenatal and early childhood brain development and to "kick off" the public engagement campaign



- ▶ A three-year media campaign will be developed to focus sustained attention on the recent research on brain development and the importance of family involvement in early childhood development.
- ▶ A slide show and speakers' bureau will be created to explain the brain research and lead discussions in communities around the state about its implications. This project will be modeled after a similar successful effort in Florida.
- ▶ Viewing parties with expectant and new parents and our volunteers will be held around the state the evening that the ABC prime time special is aired the week of April 21. The viewing parties will serve as educational forums and as a means to reduce the isolation that many parents of newborns face in the months following the birth of their babies.
- ▶ A direct mail campaign will be launched targeting new parents visited through the Warm Welcome program, parent education programs and child care providers statewide. The campaign will reinforce the recent findings about children's brain development and provide practical tips for helping young children reach their maximum potential.
- ▶ A set of creative materials will be developed that translate the science of brain development into tip sheets and training materials.
- ▶ Training materials will be created for child care providers using the new national TV and radio programs and incorporating the 1995 Diane Sawyer piece on children's brain development. Training materials will address the new information about child development, suggestions for classroom activities, and how to work with parents.
- ▶ Data will be collected about how young children are faring in Colorado and major policy recommendations will be proposed for improving the health and development of young children.

VI. OVERALL LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Bright Beginnings recently contracted with the University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work to conduct both an evaluation of the Warm Welcome program and the Genesis Project in Boulder. The Warm Welcome evaluation, conducted by Kathleen Ohman, Ph.D., will review how the program is being implemented across sites, who is being served and not served, who is being recruited to volunteer, and what the outcomes appear to be in terms of a number



of dimensions, including but not limited to parental and volunteer satisfaction, use of community services, immunization rates and enrollment of children in health care plans. The Genesis Project evaluation, conducted by Cathryn Potter, Ph.D., will review the impact that this project has had on both the children born to teen parents and the teen parents themselves. Both evaluations are expected to be completed by the fall of 1997 and will be widely distributed to funders, communities, project coordinators, policy makers and other interested individuals.

We anticipate that evaluation results will serve to fuel the media coverage on positive strategies that help children reach their full potential. It is expected that press conferences and community meetings across the state will continue to be organized on a regular basis to promote the impact of the Bright Beginnings initiative. Moreover, expanded coverage of both Warm Welcome and Genesis will highlight opportunities for individual action and encourage other communities that are considering implementing the program.

VII. MAJOR CHALLENGE IN THE UPCOMING YEAR

Perhaps the most important challenge facing Bright Beginnings in 1997 is a massive expansion of the Warm Welcome program and its various components and the implementation of the statewide engagement campaign relating to children's brain development. During 1996, considerable energy and attention was focused on developing the program and the partnerships necessary to begin offering Warm Welcome in communities across the state. Now that many of these partnerships have been forged, the program developed and the groundwork laid in terms of meeting with communities across the state, it is time to expand the number of volunteers and new parents involved in the program; the neighborhood support groups and the "Fathers: Now What?" piece.

Specifically, Bright Beginnings seeks to: (1) recruit 400 additional community volunteers; (2) visit with more than 5,000 parents and newborns; (3) generate 15,000 pro active telephone calls as reminders for immunizations; (4) convene hundreds of Warm Welcome parents in support groups across the state; (5) implement "Fathers: Now What?" in each of the regional sites; and (6) execute the state engagement campaign plan.

To accomplish these goals, Bright Beginnings anticipates launching an aggressive marketing campaign to publicize the Warm Welcome program. This campaign will target both recruitment of volunteers and expectant and new parents. Some of the many themes that will be emphasized are that this program is about neighbors supporting neighbors, that the program is available to every parent, and that it is important for communities and neighborhoods to celebrate, welcome and support every newborn and their family. All attempts will be made to closely align

Executive Director
Cathryn Potter, Ph.D.
Executive Director, Bright Beginnings

Executive Director
John F. Schuchman, CEO
Executive Director, Bright Beginnings

Secretary
Sharon Gentry, Jr.
Executive Director, Bright Beginnings

Director
John W. Hefner, Jr., CEO
Executive Director, Bright Beginnings

Executive Director
Sharon Gentry, Jr.
Executive Director, Bright Beginnings

State Director
M.D.
Executive Director, Bright Beginnings

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Executive Director, Bright Beginnings

State Director
M.D.
Executive Director, Bright Beginnings

State Director
M.D.
Executive Director, Bright Beginnings



this marketing campaign with the public engagement campaign. That is, a connection will be made between the human "dance" that takes place between adults and the little children who are entrusted to their care and the community environment that needs to be created to support children's optimal development.



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