

Bull-

R4I

-Shaban

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What Are the Benefits?

Opportunities for Children:

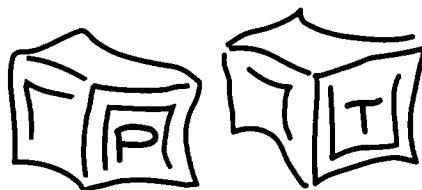
- support of early learning
- interaction with other children
- development of social skills necessary for relating to others
- additional benefits that come from child's awareness of parent's involvement and interest

Opportunities for Families:

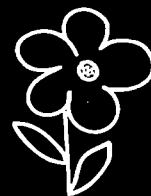
- detection of special needs of children
- gain and use of parenting skills that support and guide child's growth
- involvement with other parents and educators early in child's development
- participation in programs and events designed for families with young children
- growth among members in becoming advocates for young children

Opportunities for Communities:

- unified efforts in securing needed services for young children
- support systems for families with young children
- strong linkages between early childhood educators, public schools, and families



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The National PTA®

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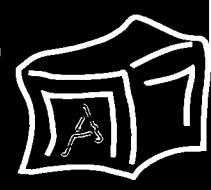
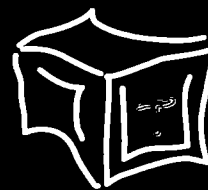
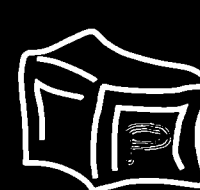
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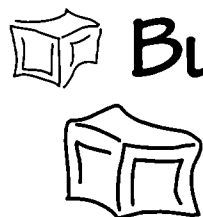
BUILDING BLOCKS



For Early Childhood PTAs

The National PTA®

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Building Blocks:

Early Childhood PTAs

Young children are active learners, always building on their experiences and relationships. Parents and caregivers of young children also learn by doing and by sharing their experiences with each other.

The National PTA recognizes the importance of providing support, opportunities, and resources for parents, educators, and caregivers of young children. Early childhood PTAs are encouraged as a unique expression of PTA's commitment to parents and the growth and healthy development of children.

123 What Is an Early Childhood PTA?

An early childhood PTA is for all individuals interested in the education and development of children from birth to age 5. Through its programs, members address common concerns and participate in activities that benefit and enrich the lives of young children and their families. An early childhood PTA offers a foundation for affirming young children as they grow and for building parental support of children as they enter the formal school years.

Although PTAs are traditionally associated with schools, an early childhood PTA may be organized in preschool or nursery school facilities, day-care centers, places of employment, kindergartens, or other community settings such as libraries or recreational facilities. The group can be affiliated with an existing PTA or be organized as a separate PTA unit.



Why an Early Childhood PTA?

Children's early experiences are important. Their success in school and beyond depends to a large extent on their development during the early years. During this vital time, children need opportunities to build skills and attitudes that will help them learn and relate well to others. The role of families and communities is crucial in this process. An early childhood PTA furnishes the framework and resources to provide nurturing experiences for young children.

In addition to helping a parent understand a child's early years, PTAs provide activities to assist families of young children. The programs, resources, and activities of an early childhood PTA are determined by the interests and needs of each PTA group.

As families and communities join together in meaningful activities in an atmosphere of mutual respect and unity, all children benefit.



How Does One Get Started?

- It's simple. Contact your state PTA, where a representative will guide you in getting started. The procedures for organizing an early childhood PTA unit are the same as those for organizing any PTA.

Early childhood PTA members may decide to affiliate with an existing PTA and function as a committee of the larger group, or they may decide to become a separate PTA unit. The choice is made by the members based on their needs and priorities.



PTA Resources

available through the National PTA Catalog*

Brochures:

THE BUSY PARENT'S GUIDE TO CHILD CARE

THE BUSY PARENT'S GUIDE TO INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION

DISCIPLINE: A PARENT'S GUIDE

HELPING YOUR CHILD BECOME A GOOD READER

HELPING YOUR YOUNG CHILD LEARN

MAKE ART A PART OF YOUR CHILD'S WORLD

MIRRORS: LEADING CHILDREN TO SELF-ESTEEM

TALKING WITH YOUR CHILD ABOUT SEX

TELEVISION & YOUR FAMILY

WHAT TO TELL YOUR CHILD ABOUT PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION

Kits:

BE SMART, INCLUDE ART: A PLANNING KIT FOR PTAs

PTA PARENTING GUIDE: PROGRAMS & RESOURCES

Leader's Guides:

A LEADER'S GUIDE TO PARENT AND FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

PARENTING: WHAT YOUR PTA CAN DO

Video:

MIRRORS: A FILM ABOUT SELF-ESTEEM

*For a copy of the catalog, send \$1, with your request, to:

National PTA
135 S. LaSalle St., Dept. 1860
Chicago, IL 60674-1860

Credit card orders:
phone (312) 549-3253
fax (312) 267-2730

For further information on PTA early childhood resources, contact your state PTA office.



Bruce N. Reed
03/12/97 11:12:51 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Michael Cohen/OPD/EOP
cc: William R. Kincaid/OPD/EOP
Subject: Re: Early Education? A Choice and Competition Approach. See # 3

fyi

----- Forwarded by Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP on 03/12/97 11:11 AM



KRDimond@aol.com
03/12/97 09:55:00 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Bruce N. Reed
cc:
Subject: Re: Early Education? A Choice and Competition Approach. See # 3

P.S. Bruce,

Three very good things about Head Start:

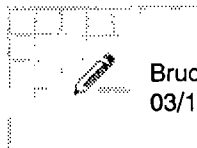
First, there are many religious-affiliated providers so that we already have the basis for building a choice and competition model based on financial aid for tuition that is closer to higher ed diversity than public school monopoly trying to exclude religious-affiliated providers from public financial support.

Second, Head Start has added to the supply of providers, which include non-profits, for-profits, firm-provided as employee benefit. Are there any public schools that are open to three- and four-year old programs?

Third, Head Start's popularity assures that there will be support for more general federal, state, local, employer support for early childhood education -- if we can invent the right lever to get there.

See, not all doom-saying from your eternal optimist. does that means there is light at the end of the pile of crap?

Paul



Bruce N. Reed
03/12/97 11:18:48 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Michael Cohen/OPD/EOP, William R. Kincaid/OPD/EOP

cc:

Subject: Re: Early Education? A Choice and Competition Approach. See # 3

----- Forwarded by Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP on 03/12/97 11:17 AM



KRDimond@aol.com
03/12/97 09:18:00 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Bruce N. Reed

cc:

Subject: Re: Early Education? A Choice and Competition Approach. See # 3

Bruce,

1. Tax Credit, Deduction, and Individual Grant for Early Childhood Education for 3 and 4-year olds. I recognize this would have to be in addition to the \$500 Child Credit (although perhaps taxpayer could choose between the two). What is the average cost of daycare/education per 3 or 4-year-old? Assume for purposes of analysis that the credit/individual grant would mirror Hope Scholarship/Pell Grant -- i.e., \$1500 tax credit and \$3,000 individual grant. Is \$3,000 per 3-4-year old enough to buy daycare-early childhood education? Maybe, the credit could be 50% or 33% rather than 100% credit so that there is more parent co-investment? What is the budget cost? Perhaps, it's out of the ball-park, but you ought to be able to get Barry White to cost out for you just so you know what you are dealing with. In figuring the budget cost, remember that the individual grant would replace Head Start. (See 2 below.). Presumably this would have to be an FY99-2000 initiative if POTUS could find a way to pay for it within balanced budget framework. [An alternative approach is summarized in 2 below -- just voucherize Head Start.]

2. Standards for Head Start. There are two problems with standards for Head Start: substance and process. As to substance, there is an excellent book by Harold Stevenson from UofM that evaluates case study of early childhood nurture/education in U.S., Japan and China: what he finds that is that in Japan and China, early childhood is reserved for play and nurture -- the kind of supportive interactions that POTUS described in his speech in Michigan,

with no concern for any "education" at all; than, at age 6, the Japanese and Chinese focus on the basics of reading and communication and, voila, their kids are all literate and eager to learn more by age 8. In the U.S., Stevenson's evaluation suggests that all of the emphasis on "education" in early childhood may detract from play and nurturing support that may be more important to intellectual development of 3-5-year olds. So, beware of the "educationese" on any substance of early childhood "education." [You may want to call Mike Smith on this; he is a real knowledgeable expert on all of the literature and may not share my skepticism of "educational" standards.] Second, as to process, remember that the basic flaw with Head Start is that it is a contracting system (just like JTPA for adult training or project-based housing) rather than a market system: this means that any standards, review, "enforcement" or "improvement" depends primarily on bureaucratic action -- a non-starter that won't work. You need to think about an analogy to the approach that you're using for K-12 here: pick a single bright line that makes common sense, have a single test with national comparison and progress for each child and provider -- and then give every parent the right to choose the early childhood care that will work best for them and for their children. By definition, this means that you will have to voucherize Head Start -- just like we're proposing for skill grants, Pell Grants, Hope Scholarships, etc. This would at least join low- and moderate-income parents to the demand of middle-income parents for the purchase of early childhood daycare/education. [The alternative is to "devolve" Head Start to states that will promote universal "public" early childhood education. You could require as conditions of federal participation in such State support: single bright standard, the national comparison of every child and provider, and the right of every parent to choose the early childhood education-daycare they believe will do best for their children.] The baggage you have here is that Head Start has a constituency -- much like project-based housing -- that is vocal, distrusts public schools and state-local support, hates the federal bureaucracy but will still defend it, and doesn't understand a market-based system. This is an old-OEO, anti-poverty mentality that has thus far -- in my humble opinion -- served to take the political and market heat off of federal, state, local and employer support for universal day-care for three- and four-year olds at the place that is most convenient for the parents (e.g., near work rather than home) and will do best by the parents' children. How else can we explain the lack of universal daycare for 3- and 4-year olds when in most families parents are at work rather than at home?

If you're serious about doing something here, don't bet on some governmental contracting-bureaucratic review-standards approach. You will just embed HeadStart deeper into the quagmires that also drag down all similar approaches in project-based housing, JTPA, even public schooling. The purpose of the standard has to be to provide a bright-line of information which parents can then use to choose the early childhood education/daycare that will do best for their own children. Without that, you will be stuck with another anti-poverty program that will forever be isolated from the mainstream, provides mediocre service in a government contracting system, and drains political and market support for family choice with financing from a mix of tuition, family financial aid, and state-local and employer support.

Hope this helps -- rather than complicates your thinking. But my crap detector really starts buzzing if the purpose of the standard is for some bureaucrat to improve the quality of service through review of thousands of contracts with thousands of monopoly providers who don't have to compete for their clients. I really think it's time to go to a whole new level on early childhood education/daycare. If you're going to start with some brightline standard, you've got to tie it to information and parental choice in some way or you'll just be providing another way to prop-up the existing system with no chance for the constant improvement possible in a well-informed market system. Wasn't it the President who said, we could put choice and competition to work implementing national policy? If we're willing to do this for K-12, and post-secondary education and training, then we certainly should find it a way to do this in early childhood education and daycare where -- except for Head Start -- we are writing on a much cleaner slate for the vast majority of American families.

Paul