

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS FOR HEAD START BILL SIGNING
THE WHITE HOUSE
MAY 18, 1994**

TALKING POINTS (NEW)

Acknowledgments

The nation owes enormous thanks to the visionaries whose energy and commitment led to the creation of the Head Start program: President and Mrs. Johnson, whose daughter Lynda Johnson Robb is here with us today; Mr. and Mrs. Sargent Shriver; Dr. Robert Cooke, who chaired the Head Start Planning Committee and has done so much work on behalf of children; Dr. Julius Richmond, the first director of Head Start; Ed Zigler and Urie Brofenbrenner [Broff-en-brenner], members of the original Head Start planning committee.

And we owe huge thanks to many others who have contributed so much to helping Head Start succeed over the years: Marian Wright Edelman, Dr. Bettye Caldwell, the 47 members of the Advisory Committee on Head Start Quality and Expansion.

Finally, thanks to the teachers, directors, children, parents, and volunteers from the first class of 1965, some of whom are with us today.

HISTORY

* The first Head Start ceremony -- back in 1965 -- was in the Rose Garden. Four children who were to be enrolled came and stood on the steps during that ceremony.

* Since then, nearly 14 million children and their families have participated.

* When Head Start was created, it was a time of great optimism and hope about our capacity to fight poverty and other social ills. We had the Peace Corps, the Job Corps, the civil rights movement. We were learning more about the development of children and the importance of their environments during their early years. And, partly because of the space program, there was a renewed commitment to education.

* Yet few programs focused on early childhood.

* Head Start was an immediate success, with communities eager to get involved. In the first summer in 1965, 560,000

preschoolers attended 13,400 Head Start Centers in 2,500 communities.

* The great success of Head Start over nearly 30 years stems from the vision and wisdom of its founders and backers -- from President Johnson on down. They understood that the problems of children should not be addressed piecemeal, but as a whole. They understood that every child's development depended on good health, nutrition, education, and a stable home life. And Head Start attempted to ensure that poor children had all of those.

LBJ QUOTE

* When President Johnson launched Head Start on this day in 1965, he said:

"Five-and six-year-old children are inheritors of poverty's curse, and not its creators. Unless we act, these children will pass it on to the next generation, like a family birthmark."

With Head Start, he said, "we set out make certain that poverty's children would not be forevermore poverty's captives."

LADY BIRD ROLE

* The First Lady at the time, Lady Bird Johnson, was honorary chair of the program and she launched a recruiting effort that turned out to be very successful in getting Head Start volunteers. A similar effort will get underway now when the Head Start Bureau and the Ad Council challenge our nation to get involved in a new generation of Head Start.

HEAD START IS A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITIES

* Head Start is proof that a single program can galvanize parents, teachers, health professionals, and government to help improve the lives of children.

* More than one-third of all Head Start staff are parents who once were in the program.

A DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL REVOLUTION MAKES HEAD START MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER BEFORE

* Head Start's longevity is based in part on the very basic, human needs it meets. As violence, poverty, broken families, lack of health care and poor nutrition continue to plague our children -- Head Start is an anchor of hope for the future.

* It literally saves lives. It saves futures. It saves families.

[Introduce Mrs. Gore]

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Administration for Children and Families



DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Head Start Bureau

Head Start:

A Child Development Program



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be special classes; there will be home visits; there will be field trips; and other ways of sustaining the head start that these children have made.

And so today, we have reached a landmark—not just in education, but in the maturity of our own democracy. The success of this year's program—and our plans for years to come—are symbols of this Nation's commitment to the goal that no American child shall be condemned to failure by the accident of his birth.

So, on behalf of a very grateful Nation, I welcome you here this morning, under the leadership of a man whom I trust a great deal, and of whom I am very fond, and to whom all the Nation and, yes, the world is indeed indebted to his leadership—Sargent Shriver.

I congratulate each of you, too, and I offer to him and to Dr. Richmond, and to each of you, my thanks and my very deep appreciation for what you have done for human beings.

Thank you.

Besides all you are doing for the Head Starters, you bring me some good news from the Hill. While I was talking, the Senate Labor Committee unanimously reported the higher education bill. So, if you'll start them right, we'll finish them right.*

Section 2: The Early Planners

Introduction

The original planning committee convened by Sargent Shriver in January of 1965 was composed of thirteen members. These individuals represented a variety of disciplines that have an ongoing concern for children and families—physicians, public health experts, psychologists, social workers, and early childhood educators. In the spring of 1977, we asked all the members of the committee to report on the memories of their work as members of the original planning committee for Head Start. Two members of the original planning committee, Mamie Clark and Edward Perry Crump, chose not to

* The President spoke at 10:34 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House before a group of officials of the war on poverty program. In his opening words he referred to Sargent Shriver, Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, and Dr. Julius B. Richmond, Program Director of Project Head Start. During his remarks the President referred to his daughter, Luci Baines Johnson, and to Francis Keppel, Commissioner of Education.

Following the President's remarks, Mr. Shriver held a meeting with reporters and distributed copies of a report entitled "Project Head Start" (17 pp. processed).

The Higher Education Act of 1965 was approved by the President on November 8, 1965....

participate in the oral history; a member of the original committee located. Edward Zigler was a member since he has contributed his reminiscences; his thoughts are not included in this section.

George B. Brain

Project Head Start was designed as a preschool readiness program. Its intervention into many aspects of basic objectives were the improvement of mental health, emotional and social skills, self-confidence and attitudes towards society and directed primarily at the child as well as to influence the family as well as the child.

Head Start was not a uniform program. In the various circumstances it was directed at children differing in age, ethnic origin, cultural impoverishment, physical handicap. Those who were involved in the program as a national effort directed at long-range changes in the population concept of Head Start.

There were many different members of the Planning Committee. It was primarily as an effort to improve the lives of children; some emphasized physical and academic success in later school years and intellectual development; others emphasized expression and social adjustment. The Committee agreed that the exclusion of others would defeat the purpose and full development of all children in which the child lives for part of the child receives the opportunity.

But there is one compensation—open nearly any door here in the West Wing and you are liable to run into Sargent Shriver, and sometimes you will find him in more than one room at the same time.

This is a very proud occasion for him and for us today, because it was less than three months ago that we opened a new war front on poverty. We set out to make certain that poverty's children would not be forevermore poverty's captives. We called our program Project Head Start.

The program was conceived not so much as a Federal effort but really as a neighborhood effort, and the response we have received from the neighborhoods and the communities has been most stirring and the most enthusiastic of any peacetime program that I can remember.

Today we are able to announce that we will have open, and we believe operating this summer, coast-to-coast, some 2,000 child-development centers serving as many as possibly a half million children.

This means that nearly half the preschool children of poverty will get a head start on their future. These children will receive preschool training to prepare them for regular school in September. They will get medical and dental attention that they badly need, and parents will receive counseling on improving the home environment.

This is a most remarkable accomplishment and it has been done in a very short time. It would not be possible except for the willing and the enthusiastic cooperation of Americans throughout the country.

I believe this response reflects a realistic and a wholesome awakening in America. It shows that we are recognizing that poverty perpetuates itself.

Five- and six-year-old children are inheritors of poverty's curse and not its creators. Unless we act these children will pass it on to the next generation, like a family birthmark.

This program this year means that 30 million man-years—the combined lifespan of these youngsters—will be spent productively and rewardingly, rather than wasted in tax-supported institutions or in welfare-supported lethargy.

I believe that this is one of the most constructive, and one of the most sensible, and also one of the most exciting programs that this Nation has ever undertaken. I don't say that just because the most ardent and most active and most enthusiastic supporter of this program happens to be the honorary national chairman, Mrs. Johnson.

We have taken up the age-old challenge of poverty and we don't

intend to lose generations of our children to this enemy of the human race.

This program, like so many others, will succeed in proportion as it is supported by voluntary assistance and understanding from all of our people. So we are going to need a million good neighbors—volunteers—who will give their time for a few hours each week caring for these children, helping in a hundred ways to draw out their potentials.

We need housewives and coeds. We need teachers and doctors. We need men and women of all walks and all interests to lend their talents, their warmth, their hands, and their hearts.

The bread that is cast upon these waters will surely return many thousandfold.

What a sense of achievement, and what great pride, and how happy that will make all of us who love America feel about this undertaking.

Thank you.*

The President spoke at 12:20 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his opening words he referred to Sargent Shriver, Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity.

On the same day the White House made the following announcement:

"President Johnson announced today that 2,500 Head Start projects which will reach about 530,000 children of the poor this summer in 11,000 Child Development Centers will be operated as part of the War on Poverty in every state in the Union. The program will cost \$112 million.

"The President made public the first 1,676 projects approved. They involve 9,508 centers at which 575,842 children will be given special training at a total cost of \$65,686,741. The remainder will be announced within two weeks.

"The centers will provide pre-school training to prepare youngsters to enter regular school in the Fall.

"President Johnson said the program will 'rescue these children from the poverty which otherwise could pursue them all their lives. The project is designed to put them on an even footing with their classmates as they enter school.'

"The Project will use the services of 41,000 professionals, including teachers, doctors, dentists, nurses, etc. More than 47,000 poor will be employed. As many as 500,000 part-time volunteers will be needed. Local contributions will be \$16 million.

"President Johnson emphasized that the program—administered by Sargent Shriver, Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity—is aimed to achieve the following:

- Strike at the basic cause of poverty.
- Assist the parents as well as the children.
- Assist children to face life.

—Treat known defects among the half million children, including 100,000 with eye difficulties; 50,000 with partial deafness; 30,000 with nutritional deficiencies; 75,000 with no immunizations.

"The President noted that the response of the communities to the invitation to submit proposals was so great the size of the program had been multiplied. At the outset, local projects involving \$17 million and 100,000 children were anticipated.

Remarks on Announcing Plans To Extend Project
Head Start, August 31, 1965

Director Shriver, Dr. Richmond, ladies and gentlemen:

First of all, I want to thank you, Mr. Shriver, for all the good that you are doing in this country and throughout the world in providing humanity some of the most dynamic and intelligent leadership that we have ever seen in this country.

I want to thank Dr. Richmond for his great contribution to our efforts in Head Start, and to every person that has come here this morning to attend this ceremony.

This summer some hope entered the lives of more than 500,000 youngsters, and those half million youngsters needed that hope the most.

Before this summer, they were on the road to despair. They were on the road to that wasteland of ignorance in which the children of the poor grow up and become the parents of the poor.

But today, after the first trial of Project Head Start, these children are now ready to take their places beside their more fortunate classmates in regular school.

Nearly 560,000 preschoolers attended 13,400 Head Start centers in 2,500 American communities. In each of those communities this program generated a new and a neighborly spirit. Nearly a million parents of Head Start children participated. Half a million volunteers [and] 100,000 teachers and doctors and dentists and neighborhood workers joined hands in preparing these children for school—and for life.

Through Head Start, children who had never spoken learned to talk. Parents who were suspicious of school authorities came to see the centers—and they stayed on to help the teachers. Volunteers gave millions of hours to children and proved to these children that somebody, after all, really cared. Teachers tried new approaches and they learned new techniques.

All the workers lived—lived time and again—through an infinitely rewarding moment: seeing a child open his eyes and his mind to the wonders of this world in which we live, seeing a child who had never

"Forty-nine percent of all applications are from rural areas. In West Virginia every county will be represented in the program. Of the 300 counties in the Nation having the largest number of poor families, 261 will operate projects under the program.

"The President congratulated the many thousands of civic leaders, businessmen, educators, housewives, labor leaders, welfare workers, minority group leaders and representatives of the poor who together developed the local projects to meet the high standards imposed by national planning groups."

seen a book, a child who had never held a pencil, a child who had never tasted a banana or one who had never even heard a fairy tale.

In New York City, where the Spanish-speaking population is hampered in by the language barrier, 95 percent of the Head Start children learned enough English to fit them for school.

In San Saba, Texas, Head Start reached beyond the children to touch their homes, and two-thirds of the parents of Head Starters attended classes designed to make them better parents and better homemakers.

In Staten Island, New York, a sixteen-year-old girl made a tiny Head Starter her very special project. This little girl would not talk, would not eat, would not react. But through the care and through the patience of just one volunteer, the child made such progress that now she is able to take her place in school. Without Head Start that child might well have been classified as mentally defective—and condemned to life in a dark and a very narrow world.

Project Head Start was concerned with the physical health of the child as well as with his mental growth. And through medical checks of 1,055 Head Start children in Jacksonville, Florida, the volunteers discovered that 52 percent of the children were anemic, 42 percent needed dental care, 31 percent had hearing defects, 25 percent had eye trouble, and 5 percent were partially blind.

Volunteers for Vision, an auxiliary of the American Optometry Association, examined the eyes of nearly 50,000 children. I know quite well the success of this group, because its chairman is a very special friend of mine—a young lady whom I left asleep on her bed this morning when I got up, Luci Baines Johnson.

These are only a very few of the many victories, though, that Head Start has finally won.

Project Head Start, which began as an experiment, is now battle tested and it has been proven worthy.

And I am very happy to announce today that I have instructed Sargent Shriver and Frank Keppel to carry out plans for extending Head Start, with the hope of making it a continuing part of the American educational system.

This fall, a three-part extension of the program will be launched.

First, year-round centers for three-year-olds and up. We expect to enroll 350,000 needy children in the first session, and many more within the next five years.

Second, summer programs for those not included in the year-round classes. These programs could involve over 500,000 children next summer.

Third, follow-through programs for children limited to summer sessions. These will begin with this year's Head Starters: There will

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Background Information
for the Head Start Bill Signing Event-May 18th
Provided to the Office of the First Lady

Early Landmarks in Head Start History

o The climate of the country leading up to the establishment of Head Start:

- There was increasing recognition of poverty, more than 30 million Americans were poor in the early 1960's, half of them children. Publication of The Other America, Michael Harrington, 1962.
- Passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964.
- We were in the post Sputnik era with an emphasis on education.
- There was increasing recognition of the impact of environment on child development and the critical importance of the early years to later development. (The work of J. McVicker Hunt and Benjamin Bloom).
- There was increasing recognition that children must be seen in the context of their families and families in the context of their communities. (The work of Urie Bronfenbrenner).
- Before Head Start, there were a few programs which focused on early childhood including early efforts by Susan Gray, Martin Deutsch and others.

o The Economic Opportunity Act was passed in 1964 launching the War on Poverty

The War on Poverty included Job Corp, to provide education and training for employment; Community Action Programs, to aid communities in planning and administering their own assistance programs for the poor; and VISTA.

o May 18, 1965 - President Lyndon Johnson announced the first Head Start programs

In 1965 nearly 560,000 preschoolers attended 13,400 Head Start Centers in 2,500 American communities for an eight week summer program. Congressional appropriation, 96.4 million.

People to recognize

NOTE- people listed below are on the invitation list but attendance not confirmed as on 5/16/94

o Lynda Johnson Robb (representing the Johnsons).

Mrs. Lyndon Johnson was the honorary Chair of the Head Start Program. She is quoted as saying that she wrote in her diary, "Head Start has such hope and challenge". In early 1965, she held a ceremony in the East Room, followed by a tea in the Red Room to announce the program and call for volunteers. (Since Mrs. Johnson's interests were in recruiting volunteers, an effort that turned out to be very successful, Mrs. Clinton may want to announce a new initiative that is being launched by The Head Start Bureau with the Ad Council to once again recruit volunteers, sending a challenge to the nation to get involved in a new generation of Head Start). SEE ATTACHED MATERIAL.

o Mr. and Mrs. Shriver Sargeant Shriver was the original Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity. He appointed Dr. Cooke to head the Planning Committee which designed the Head Start program (SEE attachment for planning document).

o The planning committee.

Dr. Robert Cooke, Chair of the Head Start Planning Committee, at that time he was chairman of Pediatrics and Pediatrician in Chief of John Hopkins Hospital.

Edward Zigler
Urie Bronfenbrenner
George Brain
Edward Davens
Mitchell Ginsberg
James Hymes
Reginald S. Lourie
John H. Niemeyer
Myron E. Wegman
Edward Perry Crump
Jacqueline Grennan Wexler

o The Early Administrators

Dr. Julius Richmond, The first Director and Jule Sugarman, the Associate Director. Mr. Sugarman also served as Executive Secretary of the Head Start Planning Committee. Dr. Richmond later served as Surgeon General.

o Joseph Califano, served as Special Assistant for Domestic Affairs to President Johnson, overseeing domestic programs including Head Start. Later served as Secretary of HEW under President Carter.

o Marian Wright Edelman, Early Head Start supporter in Mississippi and tireless advocate for the program in her role as President of the Children's Defense Fund.

o Dr. Bettye Caldwell- an early pioneer in early childhood education.

o Teachers, directors, children, parents and volunteers from the first class of 1965. Several have been invited.

o The 47 members of the Advisory Committee on Head Start Quality and Expansion, Appointed by Secretary Shalala and Chaired by Dr. Mary Jo Bane, Assistant Secretary for Children and Families.

Points of Interest

o We needed a bigger space to hold the event than in 1965, look at how Head Start has grown (In 1965, ceremony was in the Rose Garden, today on the lawn) During that ceremony, 4 children who were to be enrolled in the first program, stood on the steps of the Rose Garden. Since then, more than 13 million children and their families have participated in Head Start.

o The early planners were true visionaries. They designed a program that focused on the whole child in the context of family, a program of comprehensive services including education, health, parent involvement and education. Head Start lead the way for current efforts such as family support/ parent education, integrated services and school readiness, the first education goal. They designed a program that recognized diversity and the importance of community, concepts we value as critically important to children and families today.

o Health services have been a key component to Head Start success. Head Start provides critical linkages to Health and nutritional Services, including immunization, medical and dental screening and follow-up treatment.

o Parents were central from the beginning

- The key to Head Start success and a defining characteristic is parent involvement.

- "Maximum feasible participation" was an important concept which encouraged strong parent and community involvement.
- In the summer of 1965 about one million parents participated.
- Over the years millions more have participated as volunteers, on policy councils, in parenting classes and have received important social services.
- More than one-third of all Head Start staff are former parents.

o Head Start Changes Lives. Head Start has been successful in improving the lives of low-income children and families. Head Start is more than an institution, for millions of American children and families, Head Start is a relationship that provides support and a sense of community.

Attachments

- o Remarks by President Lyndon Johnson, May 18th, 1965
- o Remarks by President Lyndon Johnson, August 31, 1965
- o The Cooke Memorandum, February, 1965 (The original planning document).
- o Creating a 21st Century Head Start, The Final Report of The Advisory Committee on Head Start Improvement and Expansion, 1993 (SEE Page 7 for Parent Quotes)
- o The Head Start Fact Sheet
- o Material from The Ad Council Campaign to recruit volunteers (about to be launched)

Historical References

Zigler and Valentine (1979) Project Head Start: A Legacy of the War on Poverty, New York: The Free Press.

Zigler and Muenchow (1992) Head Start: The Inside Story of America's Most Successful Educational Experiment, Basic Books.

The Report of the Advisory Committee on Head Start Quality and Expansion

The voices of Head Start parents best tell the Head Start story. In comments to the Advisory Committee, parents said:

"Head Start has not only given my child a Head Start in life, but one for me as well."

"I have five children and I am a single parent. I came to live in my town after an 11 year abusive marriage, with no clothing, no housing, no money. We just picked up and left. ...It was my daughter's turn to go to school... I got involved in every aspect of the program... Head Start has not only given my child a Head Start in life, but one for me as well."

- Head Start Parent
Massachusetts

"I thought it was a bunch of bull that bureaucrats would let us help make the decisions. Low income people—no way—we have always been herded through the system by their rules. Rules made by people we didn't know. After all they had never lived as I had. Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus and Head Start really works."

- Head Start Parent
Oregon

The real workings and success of Head Start can also be heard in the stories told by staff. For example, Head Start staff have said:

"So many families who enroll in Head Start feel that their lives happen to them—what's going to happen to me today? We try to help them see that you have a say in what happens—you can set a goal, a direction, then go after it."

- Head Start Staff
New Hampshire

"Head Start has caused people to move from 'I can't to I can, just let me find the way'."

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- Head Start Staff
Louisiana

"The expectation and belief of parents that their child can succeed and is capable of learning and doing well as a member of the community and work force may be the most salient and long-lasting affect of the program."

- Head Start Staff
Iowa

94566244: # 6/10
nally, and morally. So I think Head Start is good for at least these reasons. They come first. Evaluating the program just in terms of IQ range, or how much better children do in the eighth grade after having been in Head Start at age four, is a hopeless effort. Third, children in Head Start do get chances to prepare themselves educationally for school. That helps. Fourth, a sense of community responsibility is developed among all Head Start participants. And that helps.

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I believe that the effort that is made with Head Start kids for two years should not end when they go into the primary grades. Regular schooling should be like Head Start. Head Start was a demonstration, just as Upward Bound and the Job Corps were demonstrations, of the failure of our American school system to provide many poor children with the kinds of education they need. The Supreme Court has ruled that, constitutionally, handicapped children must receive an education from the public school system which is suited to them. It has ruled that mentally retarded children must receive, as a constitutional right, an education suitable for them. The school system has not been giving the kind of education they need to either handicapped or mentally retarded, or poor children. I am not totally condemning the school system, which is grossly underfinanced. I am condemning all of us, including myself, for running a society in which we do not sufficiently husband our own resources, in which we do not sufficiently develop our own children, we do not sufficiently inspire or motivate or educate them, while we spend billions and billions of dollars doing a whole lot of things that, in fact, contribute to their bad education.

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This is why, allowing for the hindsight gained over ten years, I feel that with the knowledge available at that time, and the money we had at that time, Head Start was a fabulous success. This is not to say that it was perfect. Nor is it to say that we couldn't have done better. I am sure we could have done better. But none of these admissions denies the fact that it was a tremendous success.

SENT BY AEROSPACE BLDG.
All of the OEO programs brought fundamental changes and improvements in our society, so fundamental that even Nixon could not get rid of them in eight years of trying. He set out to demolish them, but even he, with all his power and all his henchmen, could not destroy them. The Nixon and Ford administrations should bear a tremendous burden of guilt for what they did to those programs. The American people must have appreciated their quality; otherwise they themselves would have risen up to discontinue them. But they never did.

Head Start was not and is not the final answer to poverty. OEO started many programs that covered health, justice, education, jobs.

It is hard to say which effort contributed most to alleviating poverty. The reality is that deficiencies in all these areas handicap the poor. A poor person in this society is a person who is suffering from multiple bruises and lacerations. And those bruises and lacerations are medical, psychological, and intellectual. From the time of conception onward, the poor suffer from multiple wounds to their egos, brains, and bodies. It is impossible to turn such victims into independent persons capable of earning their own way, of becoming fully participating members of a highly industrialized society, solely by giving them a job, a visit to a hospital, or a house, or an opportunity for an education. In fact, we've got to provide *all* those things. And nobody in this society likes that. Americans resent such efforts because we all share the obsolete notion that "I got to where I am by myself. I worked to get there. Why don't those other guys just work as hard as I do?" But the truth is that no one does it alone.

Of course every individual has to make an effort as well. The slogan of the War on Poverty was: "We give you a hand up, not a handout." No matter what anybody does for an individual, ultimately he or she has to do something for himself or herself. Everything in the War on Poverty was designed to offer the poor a chance. We were continually trying to maneuver things to induce people to lift themselves out of poverty. We would offer a job, an education, a little better place to live. The basic idea was to give an incentive. But it's true, however, that no matter how many incentives you offer people, a certain proportion of them, poor and rich alike, will do nothing.

In the final analysis one could ask, "Was Head Start enough?" The answer is obviously "No." Was it, is it as good as it could be? Again, the answer is "No." But Head Start still was a miracle. It has been and continues to be a terrific thing for families and children.

Speeches by Lyndon B. Johnson

Remarks on Project Head Start, May 18, 1965

Mr. Shriver, ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests:

On this beautiful spring day it is good to be outside in the Rose Garden. Of course, the White House is a place where when you go outside you are still inside.

In that same vein, I would note that the Rose Garden is a garden without roses today, and the Fish Room is now a room without fish.