

NLWJC - Kagan

DPC - Box 025 - Folder 005

**Family - Child Care Policy:
Disabilities**

Family-child care policy - disabilities

The Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation

1325 G STREET, N.W., SUITE 500
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-4709
(202) 393-1250

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Every once in a
while we make
someone happy...

Jen

March 4, 1998

The Honorable Donna E. Shalala
Secretary of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Shalala:

I just received from the White House a letter from the First Lady addressed to advocacy groups indicating that provisions for specialized training for child care providers who work with children with disabilities and the inclusion of activities that link child care providers with health professionals and support the inclusion of children with special needs in quality child care settings have been added to the Child Care Initiative. I have to say that I was very pleased. Congratulations!

These provisions will help families with children with disabilities who have a particularly difficult challenge to find quality day care for their children. The specialized training will help correct misinformation and allay fears that child care providers may have in serving children with mental retardation and other disabilities. Making a provision for linking child care providers with health professionals as one of the allowable activities in the Early Learning Fund provides the potential for enhancing the overall system of child care. I would suggest, though, that the language in this provision be expanded to include other programs that serve children with disabilities such as the Infant and Toddler Program (Part C of IDEA) and Early Childhood Special Education to ensure that a comprehensive approaches to system improvement occur.

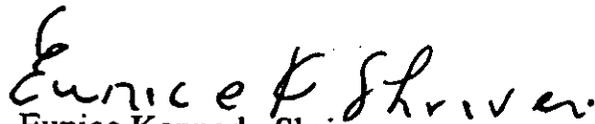
Specifically mentioning children with disabilities within the existing scope and structure of the child care initiative will provide greater access for low and middle income parents with children with disabilities to affordable

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to work and, thus, to be better able to meet the economic needs of their families.

It was also good news to see that the President's budget included \$5 million for the Families of Children with Disabilities Support Act. This program, now installed in many of our states, is just the type of flexible, family-driven program that will make it possible for families to meet the diverse needs they face in raising their disabled children. I understand that there is an exemplary Family Support program in your home state of Wisconsin.

Please keep up the great work! I firmly believe that the inclusion of provisions supporting children with disabilities will broaden and unify parents and advocacy groups in support of the Child Care Initiative. I look forward to seeing this initiative become a reality. Please let me know how I can be of help in the future.

Sincerely,

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Eunice Kennedy Shriver

The Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation

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March 9, 1998

Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton
The First Lady
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mrs. Clinton:

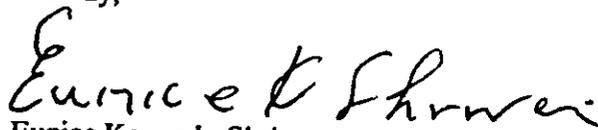
Congratulations to you and the President on the wonderful work you are doing for children and families in the Child Care Initiative. I know that it will help families across the country to obtain high quality, affordable care for their children.

I especially want to commend you for including provisions for addressing the needs of children with disabilities. So often children with mental retardation and other disabilities are excluded from generic programs. Your specific mention of their needs clearly demonstrates your commitment to access for all children truly meaning all. Providing specialized training to child care providers so that they may feel comfortable and knowledgeable about having children with disabilities in their homes or centers will significantly help parents of children with mental retardation and other disabilities find suitable, high quality care. Your inclusion of a provision for linking child care providers to health professionals and the intervention programs that serve children with disabilities will strengthen our entire child care system. I believe you have shown visionary leadership and embarked on a major step forward in the improvement of child care for all the nation's children. I also believe that the including provisions for children with disabilities will build an even broader base of support bringing parents, child care and disability advocates together behind this important initiative.

Lastly, I want to comment on the President's budget. I was very please to see that \$5 million dollars was allocated for the Families of Children with Disabilities Support Act. This program, now installed in many of our states, is just the type of flexible funding that will make it possible for funds to go directly to parents and help them cope with the many challenges they face.

I send you my whole hearted thanks your continued and innovative work on behalf of children and families. As always, please let me know how I can be of help.

Warmly,


Eunice Kennedy Shriver



Record Type: Record

To: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP, Jennifer L. Klein/OPD/EOP
cc: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
Subject: Child Care & Disability

We need to do a meeting with the disability child advocates regarding yesterday's child care announcement. Please let me know asap if you are available Friday afternoon or anytime on Monday.

Elena, I'm sorry that you were blind-sided on yesterday's call, but as you can see from the attached messages, we were trying to address the concerns of the disability community with our proposal, but did not have enough time.

----- Forwarded by William H. White Jr./WHO/EOP on 01/08/98 11:38 AM -----



Record Type: Record

To: Jennifer L. Klein/OPD/EOP
cc:
Subject: Disability Reference in POTUS and HRC Child Care Remarks

"This initiative is aimed at meeting the needs of all families, including families with children with disabilities." I'll include Katie Neas from Easter Seals on tomorrow's conference call, but would still like to bring in a few groups to meet with you when your schedule permits.

----- Forwarded by William H. White Jr./WHO/EOP on 01/06/98 08:37 PM -----



Record Type: Record

To: Jennifer L. Klein/OPD/EOP
cc: Robin Leeds/WHO/EOP, Nicole R. Rabner/WHO/EOP
Subject: Disability & Child Care

I apologize for being so late with this request, but I didn't know we were moving so fast with this announcement. The disability community has two questions:

- o Will the special child care needs of kids with disabilities be mentioned in tomorrow's announcement?
- o Are there any resources/dollars targeted at training child care workers on meeting the needs of kids with disabilities (as required by the ADA)?

----- Forwarded by William H. White Jr./WHO/EOP on 01/06/98 07:55 PM -----



Record Type: Record

To: Jennifer L. Klein/OPD/EOP
cc: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
Subject: Disability & Child Care 

First, a little background. The disability community is not looking for a separate initiative, but they feel strongly that kids with disabilities need to be specifically mentioned in our initiative so they will not be excluded on the local level. They primarily want funding so that child care providers can be trained to meet the needs of kids with disabilities, as required by the ADA. Katie has already met with HHS. I know the mandate issues is controversial, but they want strong language on training.

I'd like to set up this meeting anytime between Jan 5-9. I'll invite the following groups:

- National Easter Seals Society
- United Cerebral Palsy
- The Arc
- National Parent Network on Disability
- Learning Disabilities Association
- Council for Exceptional Children
- Bazalone Center
- University Affiliated Programs

Message Copied To:

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- Nicole R. Rabner/WHO/EOP
 - Barbara D. Woolley/WHO/EOP
 - Robin Leeds/WHO/EOP
 - Cheryl M. Carter/WHO/EOP
 - Marjorie Tarmey/WHO/EOP

Message Copied To:

-
- Laura Emmett/WHO/EOP
 - Diana Fortuna/OPD/EOP
 - Maria Echaveste/WHO/EOP
 - Marjorie Tarmey/WHO/EOP
 - Audrey T. Haynes/WHO/EOP
 - Robin Leeds/WHO/EOP
 - Cheryl M. Carter/WHO/EOP