

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 24, 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR BRUCE N. REED
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT
FOR DOMESTIC POLICY

FROM: JOHN H. GIBBONS 
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT
FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

SUBJECT: NSTC Children's Initiative Report

Attached is a copy of the newly released NSTC Report, *Investing in Our Future: A National Research Initiative for America's Children for the 21st Century*.

One of the important recommendations of this study is to form an interagency working group to review and prioritize multi-agency children's research programs. The decision to assign this responsibility to the Task Force created by the Executive Order (Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks) was timely and one with which I concurred. The Task Force is certainly structured to meet the requirements of both efforts.

Drs. Lynn Goldman and Duane Alexander, the co-chairs of the NSTC Children's Initiative study, will brief the Task Force on the study's findings when it is first convened. Environmental health and safety risk research is one of the technical areas detailed in the study along with health, development, cognitive and social needs and a closer link between research findings to policy decisions. Incidentally, both Goldman and Alexander are trained (M.D.) in Pediatrics.

Attachment

cc: Elena Kagan, DPC
Clifford Gabriel, OSTP
Bradley Campbell, CEQ
Carolyn Huntoon, OSTP

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Investing in Our Future

A National Research Initiative for America's
Children for the 21st Century

National Science and Technology Council

Committee on Fundamental Science

Committee on Health, Safety, and Food

Executive Office of the President

Office of Science and Technology Policy

April 1997

Pre-Publication Copy

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

April 21, 1997

EXECUTIVE ORDER

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM ENVIRONMENTAL
HEALTH RISKS AND SAFETY RISKS

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Policy.

1-101. A growing body of scientific knowledge demonstrates that children may suffer disproportionately from environmental health risks and safety risks. These risks arise because: children's neurological, immunological, digestive, and other bodily systems are still developing; children eat more food, drink more fluids, and breathe more air in proportion to their body weight than adults; children's size and weight may diminish their protection from standard safety features; and children's behavior patterns may make them more susceptible to accidents because they are less able to protect themselves. Therefore, to the extent permitted by law and appropriate, and consistent with the agency's mission, each Federal agency:

- (a) shall make it a high priority to identify and assess environmental health risks and safety risks that may disproportionately affect children; and
- (b) shall ensure that its policies, programs, activities, and standards address disproportionate risks to children that result from environmental health risks or safety risks.

1-102. Each independent regulatory agency is encouraged to participate in the implementation of this order and comply with its provisions.

Sec. 2. Definitions. The following definitions shall apply to this order.

2-201. "Federal agency" means any authority of the United States that is an agency under 44 U.S.C. 3502(1) other than those considered to be independent regulatory agencies under 44 U.S.C. 3502(5). For purposes of this order, "military departments," as defined in 5 U.S.C. 102, are covered under the auspices of the Department of Defense.

2-202. "Covered regulatory action" means any substantive action in a rulemaking, initiated after the date of this order or for which a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking is published 1 year after the date of this order, that is likely to result in a rule that may:

- (a) be "economically significant" under Executive Order 12866 (a rulemaking that has an annual effect on the economy of \$100 million or more or would adversely affect in a material way the economy, a

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sector of the economy, productivity, competition, jobs, the environment, public health or safety, or State, local, or tribal governments or communities); and

- (b) concern an environmental health risk or safety risk that an agency has reason to believe may disproportionately affect children.

2-203. "Environmental health risks and safety risks" mean risks to health or to safety that are attributable to products or substances that the child is likely to come in contact with or ingest (such as the air we breath, the food we eat, the water we drink or use for recreation, the soil we live on, and the products we use or are exposed to).

Sec. 3. Task Force on Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks to Children.

3-301. There is hereby established the Task Force on Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks to Children ("Task Force").

3-302. The Task Force will report to the President in consultation with the Domestic Policy Council, the National Science and Technology Council, the Council on Environmental Quality, and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

3-303. Membership. The Task Force shall be composed of the:

- (a) Secretary of Health and Human Services, who shall serve as a Co-Chair of the Council;
- (b) Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, who shall serve as a Co-Chair of the Council;
- (c) Secretary of Education;
- (d) Secretary of Labor;
- (e) Attorney General;
- (f) Secretary of Energy;
- (g) Secretary of Housing and Urban Development;
- (h) Secretary of Agriculture;
- (i) Secretary of Transportation;
- (j) Director of the Office of Management and Budget;
- (k) Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality;
- (l) Chair of the Consumer Product Safety Commission;
- (m) Assistant to the President for Economic Policy;
- (n) Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy;
- (o) Assistant to the President and Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy;
- (p) Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers; and
- (q) Such other officials of executive departments and agencies as the President may, from time to time, designate.

Members of the Task Force may delegate their responsibilities under this order to subordinates.

3-304. Functions. The Task Force shall recommend to the President Federal strategies for children's environmental health and safety, within the limits of the Administration's budget, to include the following elements:

- (a) statements of principles, general policy, and targeted annual priorities to guide the Federal approach to achieving the goals of this order;
- (b) a coordinated research agenda for the Federal Government, including steps to implement the review of research databases described in section 4 of this order;
- (c) recommendations for appropriate partnerships among Federal, State, local, and tribal governments and the private, academic, and nonprofit sectors;
- (d) proposals to enhance public outreach and communication to assist families in evaluating risks to children and in making informed consumer choices;
- (e) an identification of high-priority initiatives that the Federal Government has undertaken or will undertake in advancing protection of children's environmental health and safety; and
- (f) a statement regarding the desirability of new legislation to fulfill or promote the purposes of this order.

3-305. The Task Force shall prepare a biennial report on research, data, or other information that would enhance our ability to understand, analyze, and respond to environmental health risks and safety risks to children. For purposes of this report, cabinet agencies and other agencies identified by the Task Force shall identify and specifically describe for the Task Force key data needs related to environmental health risks and safety risks to children that have arisen in the course of the agency's programs and activities. The Task Force shall incorporate agency submissions into its report and ensure that this report is publicly available and widely disseminated. The Office of Science and Technology Policy and the National Science and Technology Council shall ensure that this report is fully considered in establishing research priorities.

3-306. The Task Force shall exist for a period of 4 years from the first meeting. At least 6 months prior to the expiration of that period, the member agencies shall assess the need for continuation of the Task Force or its functions, and make appropriate recommendations to the President.

Sec. 4. Research Coordination and Integration.

4-401. Within 6 months of the date of this order, the Task Force shall develop or direct to be developed a review of existing and planned data resources and a proposed plan for ensuring that researchers and Federal research agencies have access to information on all research conducted or funded by the Federal Government that is related to adverse health risks in children resulting from exposure to environmental health risks or safety risks. The National Science and Technology Council shall review the plan.

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4-402. The plan shall promote the sharing of information on academic and private research. It shall include recommendations to encourage that such data, to the extent permitted by law, is available to the public, the scientific and academic communities, and all Federal agencies.

Sec. 5. Agency Environmental Health Risk or Safety Risk Regulations.

5-501. For each covered regulatory action submitted to OMB's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) for review pursuant to Executive Order 12866, the issuing agency shall provide to OIRA the following information developed as part of the agency's decisionmaking process, unless prohibited by law:

- (a) an evaluation of the environmental health or safety effects of the planned regulation on children; and
- (b) an explanation of why the planned regulation is preferable to other potentially effective and reasonably feasible alternatives considered by the agency.

5-502. In emergency situations, or when an agency is obligated by law to act more quickly than normal review procedures allow, the agency shall comply with the provisions of this section to the extent practicable. For those covered regulatory actions that are governed by a court-imposed or statutory deadline, the agency shall, to the extent practicable, schedule any rulemaking proceedings so as to permit sufficient time for completing the analysis required by this section.

5-503. The analysis required by this section may be included as part of any other required analysis, and shall be made part of the administrative record for the covered regulatory action or otherwise made available to the public, to the extent permitted by law.

Sec. 6. Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics.

6-601. The Director of the OMB ("Director") shall convene an Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics ("Forum"), which will include representatives from the appropriate Federal statistics and research agencies. The Forum shall produce an annual compendium ("Report") of the most important indicators of the well-being of the Nation's children.

6-602. The Forum shall determine the indicators to be included in each Report and identify the sources of data to be used for each indicator. The Forum shall provide an ongoing review of Federal collection and dissemination of data on children and families, and shall make recommendations to improve the coverage and coordination of data collection and to reduce duplication and overlap.

6-603. The Report shall be published by the Forum in collaboration with the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. The Forum shall present the first annual Report to the President, through the Director, by July 31, 1997. The Report shall be submitted annually thereafter, using the most recently available data.

Sec. 7. General Provisions.

7-701. This order is intended only for internal management of the executive branch. This order is not intended, and should not be construed to create, any right, benefit, or trust responsibility, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or

equity by a party against the United States, its agencies, its officers, or its employees. This order shall not be construed to create any right to judicial review involving the compliance or noncompliance with this order by the United States, its agencies, its officers, or any other person.

7-702. Executive Order 12606 of September 2, 1987 is revoked.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

THE WHITE HOUSE,
April 21, 1997.

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

ADMINISTRATOR
OFFICE OF
INFORMATION AND
REGULATORY AFFAIRS

MAR 13 1997

Ek/CR -
I'm not a big fan
of this project, but
I could be wrong.
What do you think?
- BR

MEMORANDUM FOR BRUCE REED

FROM: Sally Katzen *Sally Katzen*

SUBJECT: Social and Demographic Indicators of Children's Well-being

As we discussed Tuesday night, the statistical agencies have -- after several years of effort -- agreed on 25 social and demographic indicators for monitoring children's status over time. These factors were vetted with various Federal policy officials and outside organizations, with the criteria for selection being that they are: easy to understand by broad audiences, objective, balanced, available regularly, representative of large segments of the population, and reliably estimated. Attached is a list of the indicators.

The group that has worked on this has already begun to prepare its first annual report, tentatively titled "Child Well-being 1997." A draft of this report has been reviewed by members of an interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, which also includes participants from private research organizations (incidentally, this Forum was created with Carol Rasco's blessing). The report is currently scheduled for release in May or June of this year.

The action-forcing event for me is not the release of the report, which will happen in any event, but the decision whether we want the President to place his imprimatur on this effort by including some reference to it, or even a directive to do it, in the Children's Executive Order that we are coming to closure on. Let me know what you think.

Proposed Indicators of Child-Well-being**Economic Security**

1. **Child Poverty**
Percentage of children in households with income below the poverty line by family structure (married couple families, female headed household, total)
2. **Health Insurance Coverage**
Percent of children covered by health insurance by type of insurance (private, public, total)
3. **Food Security**
Percent of children in households reporting that there is sometimes or often "not enough to eat" by household income (above 130 percent of poverty, below, total)
4. **Housing Problems**
Percent of households with children reporting housing problems (inadequate, crowded, cost burden, any problem, and any problem for low income households)
5. **Secure Parental Labor Force Attachment**
Percent of families with own children where at least one parent worked full time (married couple families, single mother households, single father households, total)

Health

1. **Summary Health Measure**
Percent of children in very good or excellent health by age (0-4 years, 5-17 years) and family income (under \$10,000, \$10,000-\$19,999, \$20,000-34,999, \$35,000 and up)
2. **Prenatal Care**
Percent of mothers with early prenatal care by race (white, black, Asian) and Hispanic origin
3. **Infant Mortality**
Infant mortality rates by race (white, black, total)
4. **Low Birth Weight**
Percent low birthrate by race (white, black, Asian) and Hispanic origin
5. **Child Immunizations**
Percent of children receiving recommended vaccinations by poverty status (at or above poverty, below)

6. **Activity Limitation**
Percent of children (0-4 years old) with activity limitation due to chronic conditions by family income (\$20,000 or less, over \$20,000) and race and Hispanic origin (white non-Hispanic, black non-Hispanic, Hispanic)
7. **Child Mortality**
Mortality rates among children (0-4 years old, 5-14 years old) by race and Hispanic origin (white, black, Asian, Hispanic, total)
8. **Adolescent Mortality**
Mortality rates among adolescents (15-17 years old), by race and Hispanic origin (white, black, Asian, Hispanic, total)
9. **Teen Births**
Birth rates for 15-17 year olds by race and Hispanic origin (white non-Hispanic, black, American Indian, Asian or pacific islander, Hispanic) Unwed

Behavior and Social Environment

1. **Regular Cigarette Smoking**
Percent of students who report smoking cigarettes daily in previous 30 days by grade (8th, 10th, 12th)
2. **Alcohol Use**
Percent of students who reported having an alcoholic beverage on more than 2 occasions in the last 30 days by grade (8th, 10th, 12th)
3. **Substance Abuse**
Percent of students who have used illicit drugs in the last thirty days by grade (8th, 10th, 12th)
4. **Youth as Victims of Violent Crime**
Rate: youth victims of violent crimes per 1000 youth by sex (male, female, total)

Education

1. **Difficulty Speaking English**
Percent of children (5-17 years old) who spoke a language other than English and who have difficulty speaking English
2. **Parental Reading to Young Children**
Percent of 3 to 5 year olds who are read to every day, by mother's education (less than high school, high school, vocational/technical or some college, college or graduate school)

3. **Early Childhood Education**
Percent of 3-4 year olds enrolled in nursery school and percent of 3-4 year olds enrolled in center-based early childhood programs by race and Hispanic origin (white non-Hispanic, black non-Hispanic, Hispanic, all other)
4. **Math and Reading Proficiency**
Math and reading proficiency scores by age (9, 13, 17 years old)
5. **High School Completion**
Percent of 18-24 year olds who have completed high school by race and Hispanic origin (white non-Hispanic, black non-Hispanic, Hispanic, total)
6. **Detached youth**
Percent of youth 16-19 years old who are neither in school nor working
7. **Higher Education**
Percent of high school graduates, 25-29 years old, who have completed a bachelors degree or higher, by race and Hispanic origin (white non-Hispanic, black non-Hispanic, Hispanic)

Children

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

April 4, 1997

cc Palmer/Blair

MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT

From: Gene Sperling
Subject: On Children: A Big Statement

Lot's discuss
w/ Thomas of summit
for - exempt?
PC

This is the memo I have always wanted to write to you. It may be more from the heart than from the mind, but I like to think it is from both.

I need to stress that this is not an NEC memo and the ideas here have not been vetted or gone through a process. I have discussed this memo only with Erskine, and he told me he thought I should simply send it to you as a personal memo.

I. AIM FOR A MAJOR STATEMENT: Confront the moral gap between our ideal of opportunity and the desperate conditions for the poorest of poor children.

You have an opportunity to make a compelling statement to the American people. Not just a swift tactical move on the budget, or one that impresses opinion leaders with your leadership, but the type of statement that Presidents are long remembered for.

There are no perfect recipes for a great statement. Yet, one recipe is when a President makes the nation come face to face with a moral gap between its timeless ideals and the harsh realities of a particular moment in history that contradicts those ideals.

Certainly racial discrimination is one of those harsh realities. Both Kennedy and Johnson are remembered for the moments where they used their platforms as President to force the nation to directly confront its contradictions between racial discrimination and our belief in the equality of all people. At this moment in time, the deepest contradiction in our national character is between our belief in equal economic opportunity based on individual hard work and merit, and the deplorable conditions of children in the poorest urban centers (and rural as well) of our nation. The American value is certainly one of equal opportunity and not of equal results. While we maintain a decent safety net so that people do not starve, we rightly allow and even encourage significant differences of wealth and fortune because we believe in giving people the opportunity to fail or succeed based on their hard work and individual merit. The stain on this ideal that creates the gap between our ideal and our reality, is the incredibly poor opportunities of the poorest of our urban (and often rural) children.

For the children born into the most hopeless crime-ridden areas -- where there is a lack of jobs, and health care and quality education -- the promise of opportunity is a false one.

Many people in our society have addressed this issue. But surely neither Nixon nor Ford nor Carter nor Reagan nor Bush ever used the Presidency to directly force the nation to grapple with this fundamental gap in our values. You have addressed this in a myriad of ways, from the EITC to our efforts to provide universal health care.

But I believe the step that will stir the conscience of the nation, and be remembered as such -- is a direct speech to the American people that solely focused on our belief that every American child should have a fair chance to make it; that the realities of our poorest urban centers now make that promise unreal for millions, and that you are willing to tell the nation that we have a moral imperative to direct our national will and our national resources to perfect the nation -- no matter how difficult the choices.

II. THE OUTLINE OF THE STATEMENT:

You should deliver a nationally televised address to the nation on the moral imperative for us to commit ourselves to making the American ideal true for even the poorest of poor children, while announcing a full-scale effort to move us there. This should be largely a tough challenge to parents, businesses, churches, government officials on their role.

But what will make it real and lasting, is to at the same time lay out politically bold steps to take us there.

1. A Pro-Children's Budget: State that our first obligation is to take care of our children: the way to do that is to balance the budget with a pro-children's budget. Pro-children because it saves for their future, but pro-children because it invests in them and in repairing this breach in our values. We can save more for our children's tomorrows, while taking bold steps to save a current generation of children today.

2. First Job is to Balance the Budget and Take Bold Action on Children:

To take care of our children we must focus on the four stages.

Stage 1: 0-5: Early learning, positive love, nutrition, health care, child support, two parents, and pre-school are the ingredients for allowing each child to enter school ready to learn.

Stage 2: Elementary Schools: Safety in the neighborhood; tough standards, individual tutoring and mentoring, access to education technology

Stage 3: 12-17: Hope and high expectations: Pell grants awarded to poor children in 6th grade. One million mentors; community schools that are open and give teens a safe place to learn after school hours. Safe school and youth anti-violence initiatives.

Stage 4: True College Opportunity: Dramatic increase in Pell Grants: strong college opportunity agenda.

3. First Step is to therefore pass a balanced budget that makes dramatic steps to help children. We can then vote for tax cuts later if that helps us reach the first goal.

4. Say clearly that this nations budget priorities go too much to people who don't need them, and too little to the poorest children. Particularly, we need to look at whether too much is going to elderly Americans who don't need it and too little to poor children who desperately need our help.

5. Make Clear that the Tough Choices to Make this Statement are Real -- But Make CLEAR THAT IT IS CONDITIONAL ON AT LEAST HALF THE FUNDS GOING TO CHILDREN AND HALF TO DEFICIT REDUCTION.

- **High Income Premium and Premiums on Home Health Shift over \$30,000 to raise \$12 billion:** As mentioned before, this could be dedicated to health care for poor children, and directly shows the commitment to more generational equity.

- **A .3-.5 CPI adjustment in the Cost-of-Living.** A unilateral endorsement of .3 would be significant and seen as a strong step toward getting to a balanced budget. A bolder move -- likely to secure opinion leader approval -- would be .5 with adjustments for poor Social Security Recipients. The problem is that it may be too much for Democrats and they could revolt, even though a guarantee of it not paying for tax cuts could help.

- **Tobacco Tax targeted for children.** Although it will lead to incredible manipulation that we are "taxing the world," the tax itself is good children's policy and it could be a great fight for us. The demagoguery we will receive should not be underestimated, but it is courage and good policy, and raises significant funds for both deficit reduction and children's health care.

Any two of these items together, would be seen as strong. All three would be bold.

6. With these savings we can balance the budget; Make structural progress on Social Security; and have the funds to:

- Give health care to over 5 million poor children
- New funding for childcare and pre-school/Head Start
- New nationwide initiative on 0-3
- Funding for America Reads/Mentoring/Educational Technology
- New Community Schools Initiative
- Even Greater Increase in Pell Grants

II. OUTCOME?

Risks: This would be a major political roll of the dice. Senior groups and labor might launch a campaign against the COLA adjustment. Labor will show how much we are reducing wages for the working poor; senior groups may do advertisements about seniors losing thousands of dollars over their retirement. Some Republicans will claim that all of the savings are needed to balance the budget under CBO and that we shouldn't be spending any new money. Some commentators will say that this was a move to keep Powell from getting leadership on children, and some editorial pages will still say that you have not made the hard choices on Social Security and Medicare yet. The biggest risk is that Democrats feel that we have made it too easy for Republicans to come up with funds to get out of their box of how to do a budget proposal that pays for tax cuts. They will admire your words, but may say that you have allowed Republicans huge funds they can pocket and that save them.

Yet, if you put the new savings in the context of paying for key children's initiatives, then the it is an offer conditional on Republicans accepting his priorities and Democrats will see these moves as tightly linked to accomplishing their key priorities and therefore harder to resist.

Rewards: While the risks are great, so are the rewards. This statement would give the second term of the Clinton Presidency a clear and concise moral foundation that makes clear that the good we are trying to do is far larger than any of the hits other are trying to impose on us. All of our proposals -- from education to safe streets to deficit reduction to tobacco to television violence -- will now be wrapped into a clear and understandable theme of giving all of our children a chance. We will have stepped up to the plate for the elite media who want to see middle-class entitlements shaved -- but we will step up not as "Eisenhower Republicans" or Bond Market Democrats, but as progressive reformers out to use government to help every child simply have an even break. For millions of Clinton supporters and even millions of Clinton doubters, the clear moral statement for children will win their hearts.

When all of the pain is put in the context of paying for this progressive agenda for children, the hits from our side will be more muted. Because half of the savings -- and a growing amount as time goes by -- goes to deficit reduction, Republicans and deficit hawks will find it harder to criticize the overall move as "big spending." Key senior groups might be able to be somewhat muted if we make clear that we would never go above .5.

While your initial speech must be on the poorest children to show clear moral leadership and the lack of any pandering, our initiatives around the nation could still maintain the great quality of disproportionately helping the poorest children while also appealing to the broad middle class. And if we fail; it turns out to be poor politics, then we did so in the best of causes and it will be remembered as such.