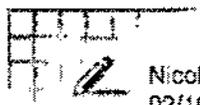


Adoption



Nicole R. Rabner
02/10/97 05:26:51 PM

Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
cc: Jill M. Pizzuto/OMB/EOP, Cathy R. Mays/OPD/EOP
Subject: HHS adoption report

Please expect delivered to you within the hour a draft copy of HHS' report to the President on adoption. The text is 27 pages and it has numerous appendices. We have scheduled 2 meetings for tomorrow -- at 5:15pm, we will have an internal WH meeting in Room 100 OEOB to discuss our reactions to the draft and at 5:45pm, HHS officials (including Olivia Golden, Ann Rosewater and Carol Williams) will join us to hear our comments. I will forward an agenda tomorrow. Please call me at ext. 67263 with any questions.

Message Sent To:

- Kenneth S. Apfel/OMB/EOP
- Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP
- Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP
- Lester D. Cash/OMB/EOP
- Matthew McKearn/OMB/EOP
- Pauline M. Abernathy/OPD/EOP
- Lyn A. Hogan/OPD/EOP

February 10, 1997

MEMORANDUM

TO: Distribution
FROM: Nicole Rabner
RE: HHS Adoption Report

Enclosed please find a draft copy of HHS' report to the President on adoption. Please join a meeting tomorrow, 2/11, in Room 100 OEOB -- at 5:15pm we will meet for an internal discussion on our reactions to the report, and 5:45pm, HHS officials will join us. Please call me at ext. 67263 with any questions or comments.

Distribution:

[Bruce Reed, DPC]
Elena Kagan, DPC
Lyn Hogan, DPC
Ken Apfel, OMB
Lester Cash, OMB
Matthew McKearn, OMB
Melanne Verveer, OFL
Pauline Abernathy, OFL

THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

DRAFT



The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

I am pleased to submit to you Adoption 2002, the Department of Health and Human Services' response to your December 14, 1996 adoption directive. This report represents the culmination of an intensive 60-day consultation process with over 600 foster and adoptive parents, professionals, policy experts and advocates at the national, State and local levels. Participants reached consensus on three significant principles. First, every child deserves a safe, permanent, and loving family. Second, a child's best interests should be the paramount consideration in permanency decisions. Finally, timeframes for decision making must be respectful of a child's developmental needs and the child's sense of time.

The Department has outlined, in this report, a series of policy and practice-related action steps that will be implemented to achieve the goal of finding permanent placements for 54,000 children by the year 2002. Adoption 2002 responds directly to your challenge to overcome barriers to permanency and to double the number of adoptions. The child welfare system's capacity to accelerate permanent placements for children in foster care can be achieved only through a recognition of the long-range impact of decisions that are made when children first enter the system.

The Department would like to thank the many individuals who participated in the consultation process, and we look forward to further developing those partnerships in the near future. We are fully committed to working with States, communities, organizations, and adoption advocates as we implement the recommendations made in this report.

Sincerely,

Donna E. Shalala

Enclosure

DRAFT

ADOPTION 2002

A Response to the Presidential Adoption Directive
Issued December 14, 1996



U.S. Department of Health
and Human Services

February 1997

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
Executive Summary	i
I. Introduction	1
II. Overview	3
III. Adoption in the Context of the Child Welfare System	4
IV. Recommendations for Action	9
V. Conclusion	27

Appendices

- A - Text of Presidential Directive on Adoption
- B - Adoption Correspondents
- C - Adoption 2002 Focus Group Questions and Participant List
- D - Themes Emerging from the Adoption 2002 Consultation Process
- E - State Letters of Support
- F - Federal Programs to Support Adoption

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Currently, 100,000 of the 450,000 American children in foster care will not be able to return home. Yet, in 1995, only 20,000 children were adopted; another 7,000 children were placed in permanent guardianships. In recognition of the urgent need to provide permanent placements for children in foster care, the President issued a directive to the Secretaries of Health and Human Services, Treasury, Labor, and Commerce and the Director of the Office of Personnel Management to launch efforts to double the number of children from the foster care system who are adopted or permanently placed by the year 2002.

The President asked the Department of Health and Human Services, in consultation with State and civic leaders, to report to him in 60 days regarding strategies that can be deployed to accelerate permanency for children in foster care. The Department conducted a broad-based consultation with professionals, policy experts, advocates, and foster and adoptive parents at the National, State and local levels to prepare the *Adoption 2002* report in response to the President's directive.

Adoption 2002 examines the issues regarding adoption and permanency in the context of the child welfare system. The report outlines some of the barriers to permanency and some of the challenges that face child welfare agencies and courts as they strive to achieve permanent placements for children. In order to keep the adoption initiative grounded in an understanding of the complexities of the child welfare system, the Department has committed to a set of guiding principles, also highlighted in this report, to direct implementation.

Adoption 2002 presents strategies for the Federal government to work with States to develop numerical targets for the number of children who are adopted or placed in permanent guardianship each year. To help States reach their targeted goals, the Department will provide expanded technical assistance, recognize States' successes, and reward them with financial incentives. Included is a proposal to provide funding to States to help them dismantle the barriers to permanency, while the government simultaneously reduces barriers in the areas of Federal law and regulations. The Department will reexamine a number of policy issues, including the reasonable efforts requirements and the timing and purpose of dispositional hearings, in order to reduce procedural barriers. The Department will promote and research alternative permanency arrangements which may be appropriate when children are unable to be adopted. In addition, the Department will continue to aggressively implement the Multiethnic Placement Act, as amended by the Small Business Job Protection Act, to ensure that no placement for a child is delayed or denied due to race or ethnicity.

The President emphasized in his directive that placing children in nurturing families is a national priority and responsibility that requires a commitment from Federal, State, and local government, as well as community, business, and religious groups. The Department has developed *Adoption 2002* as a blueprint for Federal leadership in adoption and permanency activities, as we redouble the National efforts to ensure safety, permanency, and well-being for every American child.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Presidential Directive on Adoption

On December 14 1996, President Clinton issued a directive to the Secretaries of Health and Human Services, Treasury, Labor, and Commerce and the Director of the Office of Personnel Management to promote efforts to increase the number of children who are adopted or permanently placed each year, to move children more rapidly from foster care to permanent homes, to increase awareness about the tens of thousands of children waiting for families and to encourage all Americans to consider the rewards and responsibilities of adoption. (See Appendix A for the text of the directive.) The directive focuses most specifically on children in foster care who, often because of abuse or neglect, cannot return home safely. The President's attention to this issue reflects the urgent need to find safe, permanent, loving homes for our Nation's most vulnerable citizens.

The President directed the Department of Health and Human Services to double, over the next five years, the number of children from the foster care system who are adopted or placed in other permanent homes. This ambitious goal would mean an increase in adoptions from 20,000 to 40,000 and an increase in other forms of permanent placements from 7,000 to 14,000, resulting in 54,000 children achieving permanency by the year 2002.

The President also identified key issues to be examined in meeting the target goal. Strategies identified included working with States to eliminate barriers to finding children permanent placements; setting annual numerical targets; rewarding successful performance; and raising public awareness. Recognizing the need to move quickly, the directive called upon the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with State and civic leaders, to prepare a report within 60 days. This report recommends actions to be taken to move children more rapidly from foster care to permanent placements and to meet the target goal of placing 54,000 children from foster care, by the year 2002, in adoptive homes or other permanent placements.

The Department Responds to the Directive

Consistent with the directive, the Department of Health and Human Services undertook an intensive consultation process, which included:

- Mailing copies of the directive to over 2,000 adoption and foster care professionals, placement agencies, child welfare advocates, adoptive and foster parents, and national organizations. Recipients were invited to submit comments on specific steps that can be taken to implement the directive. Over 200 thoughtful responses were received via mail, fax and the internet. (See Appendix B for a list of the respondents.)

- Conducting consultations with a wide range of organizations and individuals. Included were line workers, program managers, administrators from the eight States with the largest foster care populations, child welfare administrators and staff from large urban areas, representatives of Tribes and Tribal Organizations, and representatives from national child welfare and adoption-related organizations, advocacy groups, intergovernmental organizations, and several foundations. (The questions that guided the consultations and the list of individuals and organizations consulted appear in Appendix C.)

In addition, each of the ten ACF Regional Offices conducted a series of focus groups with key State and local adoption advocates and child welfare professionals. Over 300 people were contacted through this regional outreach process.

This broad based consultation with a wide range of professionals, policy experts, advocates, foster and adoptive parents and other interested individuals, provided the Department with some of the best thinking from the field and ensured that our examination of strategies and issues to be addressed would be grounded in the daily experiences of agency staff. The Department gained many useful ideas and suggestions through this consultation process. Many of these ideas are reflected in the recommendations outlined in this report. (A more complete summary of themes and issues raised during the Department's external consultation process appears in Appendix D.)

II. OVERVIEW

Subsequent sections of this report have been organized in the following manner:

III. ADOPTION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

A discussion of some of the issues and challenges in doubling the number of adoptions and in overcoming barriers to permanency. This section also places the adoption-specific issues in the broader context of the challenges facing the child welfare system.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

A restatement of each of the elements in the President's directive and the Department's recommended action steps. Recommendations include possible legislative or regulatory changes. Accompanying each element is a brief discussion of critical issues, major issues raised in consultations, and additional information that is needed to set the context for the recommended action step.

V. CONCLUSION

Final thoughts on the report and how the process of broad consultation has helped to energize and mobilize the field around the shared goal of helping children find stable, permanent, nurturing families.

III. ADOPTION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

The President's directive focuses attention on a special group of children waiting to be adopted -- the approximately 60,000 children in the public foster care system who cannot return safely to their own parents and homes and for whom State agencies have determined that adoption is the appropriate goal. These children waiting for adoption have often been in the foster care system for an extended period of time. They are often "children with special needs," which means that they have characteristics that make them more difficult to place. Effective strategies to move these children to permanence must be grounded in an understanding of the broader child welfare system and the barriers that face children, especially children with special needs, waiting for permanent placement.

A Continuum of Child Welfare Services

The child welfare system is designed to keep children safe and to assure their permanence and well-being. The concept of permanence is best defined as a stable, legally-sanctioned relationship with caring, protective adults. This may be achieved in a child's birth family, but, for children in foster care, it may occur through adoption or guardianship. Children attain permanence in a more timely manner when sound child welfare practices are deployed from the time that the family initially comes to the attention of the child welfare system. In order to meet the individualized needs of children and families, a range of child welfare services are required, including:

- Community-based prevention programs that support adults in their roles as parents to help resolve problems before they lead to children being abused or neglected;
- Effective investigation and assessment procedures in order to assess risk and provide an appropriate level of intervention;
- Services for families who are in crisis, but can be safely strengthened and maintained through the provision of intensive, but time-limited, services;
- Foster care services that provide a temporary safe home for children and services to their families, while parents resolve crises in their lives and agencies and the courts decide whether the parents can care for their children safely; and
- Adoption and guardianship opportunities for children who cannot be reunified and/or whose parents' rights to custody have been terminated.

The ability of child welfare agencies to make timely determinations about permanency is dependent upon the quality, availability and accessibility of services at any point on this continuum. The principal goal of the child welfare system is to provide a temporary safe haven for children while parents get their lives back on track and develop the ability to

protect their children. Each year, about sixty percent of the children in foster care will safely return home, most within one year. However, some children will be unable to return to their birth families safely. For these children, adoption or guardianship can be the key to a permanent, loving family and the security necessary for healthy development.

Characteristics of Children Waiting for Adoption

The children waiting for adoption are primarily those whose parents have been unable or unwilling to resolve the issues that precipitated placement. Of the 698,000 children who were served by the foster care system during 1994,¹ about nine percent (60,000) had a goal of adoption, meaning they could not return home without jeopardizing their health, safety and development. Among them, only 27,000 were legally free and immediately available for adoption.

Most foster children awaiting adoption are considered "children with special needs" because they are older children (not infants), children of minority heritage², children who are part of a sibling group, or children who have physical, intellectual or emotional disabilities. The median age of children who are legally free and awaiting adoption is almost nine years old. Slightly over half of the children are of minority heritage. Two-thirds of the children in the special needs category have medical problems, developmental delays and disabilities, and/or behavioral and psychological problems. The most recent data, though preliminary, suggest that the proportion of legally free children who have special needs is increasing.

Barriers to Adoption and Permanence

In addition to the placement challenges posed by the characteristics of children with special needs, there are a number of barriers to permanence spanning the social service and judicial systems. Some of the most significant barriers that delay permanence include:

- **Delays in Child Welfare Agency Practices:** Federal statute requires States to provide "reasonable efforts" to make it possible for a child to return to his or her home. These efforts often take the form of actual services offered and/or provided to the family, such as family counseling, respite care, and substance abuse treatment. If an agency has not offered or provided these services in a timely fashion, the permanent plan for a child will be impeded.

¹Data are from the American Public Welfare Association. Foster care entrances: 254,000; exits: 230,000; number served: 698,000.

²Children of minority heritage remain in care longer and are over-represented among the children in care who are seeking permanency and require special attention; therefore, they are included among children with special needs.

Delays also result from well intended practices to preserve families through prolonged and extensive reunification services without adequate consideration of the permanency needs of children. In these situations, adoption or an alternate permanency plan is rarely considered until the 18-month dispositional hearing.

Cross jurisdictional barriers exist within State child welfare systems which result in delays in implementing permanent plans for children. At times, there is an unwillingness on the part of State agencies to effectively coordinate services to families and share limited resources.

- **Delays in Court/Judicial Practices:** Delays throughout the judicial process, from the initial determination of abuse or neglect through the resolution of the dispositional hearing, often result from court practices and procedures. The court's inability to attend to the permanency planning needs of children result from variant practices such as the backlog of cases on a court's calendar; strict evidentiary requirements established by State's Attorneys; and the extensive time and resources required for an agency to prepare cases for termination of parental rights. In addition, some States' adoption laws include timelines or other family reunification effort requirements that may preclude an appropriately early termination of parental rights.
- **Delays Related to Staff Beliefs and Attitudes:** Researchers in California have determined that many child welfare staff and judges believe that children are not disadvantaged by remaining in foster care for long periods of time. They apparently believed that foster families would be just as stable as adoptive homes, despite evidence that children in foster care frequently move between placements. For example, one-third of infants remaining in care for two years in California had three or more placements during that time; for older children, multiple placements were even more common.

Many judges have a relatively narrow view of which children are adoptable and are reluctant to terminate parental rights outside that range. In addition, child welfare workers are reluctant to move toward adoption quickly in any but the most egregious cases. If no adoptive home has been identified, workers and judges may be reluctant to terminate the parental rights of the child's biological family because no permanent alternatives exist.

Further, some workers and agencies have delayed or denied adoptive placements because their priority is to seek families with backgrounds similar to those of the children needing permanent homes.

- **Limited Pool of Permanent Families for Children with Special Needs:** Despite the requirement in title IV-B to recruit potential foster/adoptive families able to meet the needs of children requiring out-of-home placement, the pool of permanent families

for children of minority heritage, older children, members of sibling groups, and children with emotional, developmental, or physical challenges remains insufficient.

This report outlines an agenda to overcome these barriers to adoption and to accelerate the path to permanency for all waiting children.

Guiding Principles for the Adoption Initiative

Based on a firm understanding of the challenges that face children who await permanence in the child welfare system, the Department will pursue the President's goals in a manner that reinforces best practices throughout the system and which focuses on changing the outcomes for those children who are hardest to place and improving decision-making for children currently entering the system. From the Department's extensive external consultation and vigorous internal discussions, a set of principles has emerged to provide a foundation upon which we can build the important work of the Adoption 2002 Initiative.

- Every child deserves a safe, permanent family.
- The child's best interests, particularly the child's safety and well-being, should be the paramount consideration in all placement and permanency planning decisions.
- The timeframes for placement and permanency planning decisions must be respectful of the child's developmental needs and the child's sense of time.
- Permanency planning efforts for children should begin as soon as a child enters foster care and should be expedited by the provision of services to families.
- Permanency cannot be achieved for children without the partnership of child welfare agencies, the courts and other service-providing agencies (e.g., housing, mental health care, and substance abuse treatment).
- Foster care is a temporary situation; it is not an appropriate place for children to grow up.
- Adoption is one of a number of pathways to permanency which also includes reunification, guardianship, and permanent placement with relatives.
- Adoptive families often require services and supports long after legalization to meet the ongoing challenges of caring for their children.
- Communication and information sharing about effective strategies, innovative programs, and collaboration opportunities is critical to the success of this initiative.

- The diversity and strengths of all communities must be tapped to create permanency for children.

The Department is committed to working with all sectors of the American community to implement the activities of the Adoption 2002 Initiative in a way that adheres to the principles of sound child welfare practice. The next section of this report presents a series of recommendations to remove the barriers to permanency for children in foster care and support improvements throughout the child welfare system. The Adoption 2002 Initiative will be a powerful tool to help the Nation realize the goals of safety, permanence, and well-being for every child.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Today, therefore, I direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with State and civic leaders, to report to me within 60 days on actions to be taken to move children more rapidly from foster care to permanent homes and at least to double, by the year 2002, the number of children in foster care who are adopted or permanently placed out of the public foster-care system.

-- William Jefferson Clinton
December 14, 1996

President Clinton's directive laid out specific areas in which he requested recommendations from the Department of Health and Human Services. In this section of the Department's report, each element of the President's directive is cited and specific proposed actions are outlined and discussed.

Increasing the Number of Adoptions - To increase the number of children who are adopted or permanently placed each year, this report should include, but should not necessarily be limited to, recommendations in the following areas:

The first section of the President's directive speaks to increasing the number of children adopted or placed in other permanent arrangements, with the overall goal of doubling the number of children adopted or permanently placed from the public child welfare system in the year 2002. In his directive, the President outlined areas in which he believes work must be done to provide new tools and strategies to achieve the goal. Many of the strategies highlighted in the President's directive focus on activities that the Federal government can undertake. However, the President also emphasized that placing children in nurturing families is a national priority and responsibility that requires efforts on the part of Federal, State, and local governments as well as community, business, and religious groups. The Federal role in this initiative is one of supporting States and communities as they strive to achieve the goals by providing financial incentives, technical assistance, policy and programmatic leadership, and recognition of successful efforts.

Setting Goals

(a) Plans to work with States on setting and reaching State specific numerical targets, ...

Proposed Action Steps:

To set numerical targets leading to a doubling in the number of children who are adopted or placed in alternative permanent homes by the year 2002:

- The Department, through its Regional Offices, will work collaboratively with the States to establish preliminary numerical targets for adoption and guardianship. All States will establish both preliminary baseline data for fiscal year 1997 on the number of adoptions and guardianships and proposed annual incremental targets for fiscal years 1998-2002, leading to a doubling in the annual number of adoptions and guardianships completed by the States by fiscal year 2002.
- Data supplied by the States to the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) will be the primary source of information for establishing baseline data and measuring progress toward the goals. Where reliable AFCARS data have not yet been submitted by a State, the State may supply data from another source to establish a baseline, subject to the approval of the Secretary. If necessary, preliminary estimates of baseline data and targets will be revised no later than July 1998, based on corrected information submitted to AFCARS. After the fiscal year 1997 baselines are established, all subsequent progress will be measured based only on AFCARS submissions.

Discussion:

The President's directive calls upon the Department to establish numerical targets with States, including annual benchmarks to move States to the goal of doubling the number of adoptions from the foster care system by the year 2002. State targets provide an outcome-driven framework for the Adoption 2002 Initiative, and offer a way to link adoption efforts at the Federal, State, and community levels in pursuit of specific results for children.

During the Department's consultation with the field, State officials were supportive of the goal of doubling the number of adoptions. They expressed concern, however, about the accuracy of the data that would be used to measure the achievement of the numerical targets. Recognizing these concerns, the Department is committed to working with the States to improve data resources and to set reliable baseline figures. In partnership with the States, the Department has been working to improve the collection and reporting of child welfare data. With the implementation of the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) now underway, information about the number and characteristics of

children adopted in each State is rapidly improving. As many States complete development of new or revised information systems under the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) initiative, the quality and timeliness of the data should be further strengthened.

In order to establish baselines and targets, the Department will form partnership agreements with the States, building on the work already underway between the Department and the States. In December 1995, the Children's Bureau organized a national meeting of State adoption managers, national advocacy organizations, private non-profit organizations, adoptive parents and Federal staff. The participants produced an outcome-focused, holistic framework for adoption services for children with special needs. Because of its emphasis on results, this framework can be the foundation upon which to base results-oriented activities under the President's directive.

The Regional Offices of the Administration for Children and Families have launched discussions with the States about the President's directive and more goal-directed methods to increase the number of children who are permanently placed. Some States have already strongly endorsed the President's initiative with letters of support. (See Appendix E.)

Technical Assistance

(a) . . . using the technical assistance of the Department of Health and Human Services National Resource Centers to make information on best practices available to States and to engage community leaders, parents, and the business and faith communities;

Proposed Action Steps:

To assist States and communities to reach their targets for increased numbers of adoptions and alternative permanent placements for children in foster care:

- The Department will provide the best adoption expertise in the nation to State agencies, courts and communities to improve the timeliness of permanency decisions and to increase the number of adoptions and other permanent placements for children in foster care unable to be reunified with their families.
- Technical assistance will support the development of collaboratives that encourage placements across geographical boundaries; models to improve the recruitment of families for children with special needs; and the development and dissemination of model legislation, best practice guidelines, multi-disciplinary training curricula and implementation guides on the Multiethnic Placement Act (as amended) and the Indian Child Welfare Act.

- As reflected in the President's fiscal year 1998 budget, the Department is requesting \$10 million annually for three years (FY 1998-FY 2000) to support these efforts.
- The Department will also revise the title IV-E training regulations to assure a holistic approach to child welfare training with a focus on the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve timely permanency planning.

Discussion:

To achieve the goal of doubling the number of adoptions and other permanent placements achieved by children in the foster care system, the Department is committed to providing the highest level of expertise to the States, courts and communities. The Department's proposed strategy recognizes the need to provide the best information available to agencies, courts, institutions and professionals who every day make key decisions about children's futures. Respondents in the Department's consultation frequently cited the need for the Federal government to foster the sharing of information and best practices across the country.

Some of the specific activities the Department expects to undertake include:

- Providing technical assistance to courts to implement an outcome-focused approach related to the best interests of the child, permanency, timeliness, and quality of care.
- Developing and disseminating materials such as:
 - model guidelines for family assessment;
 - guidelines for State legislation relating to terminating parental rights and guardianship;
 - curricula for collaborative training with agencies, attorneys, and judges;
 - effective judicial and agency practices;
 - recruitment and family development models;
 - information for courts and agencies related to the Multiethnic Placement Act (as amended) and the Indian Child Welfare Act;
 - guidelines for conducting administrative reviews.
- Convening Regional forums to encourage peer-to-peer exchanges of information and successful strategies.
- Awarding grants to multi-State and intrastate collaboratives (operated by the States or other entities) that encourage placements across geographical boundaries; and to local collaboratives designed to recruit families for children with special needs.

Financial Incentives

(b) Proposals to provide per child financial incentives to States for increases in the number of adoptions from the public welfare system. Options considered should have little to no net costs, as increases in the number of adoptions from the public system will reduce foster care costs, thereby offsetting much if not all of the incentive payments;

Proposed Action Steps:

To encourage States to meet their adoption goals and to reward them when they do:

- The Department recommends passage of legislation to provide a per-child bonus to each State that increases the annual number of adoptions from its foster care system. An extra financial incentive would be provided to States that increase the number of children with special needs (i.e., children receiving benefits under the title IV-E Adoption Assistance program) who are adopted.
- The bonuses would be established as an amendment to the title IV-E Adoption Assistance program. Funds would be guaranteed to States based on their actual performance. The program is projected to be cost neutral for title IV-E through anticipated reductions in title IV-E foster care expenditures. States could use their bonus funds to improve or increase services, including post-legal adoption services, to children and families in the child welfare system.

Discussion:

A key item in the President's directive instructs the Department to develop a financial incentive to reward States that succeed in increasing the number of children adopted. This performance-based financial incentive would encourage States to meet and exceed goals for increasing adoptions, and would provide additional funds to help support increased services to children and families.

The Department is proposing a system that would provide a per-child bonus to each State that increases its annual number of adoptions from the State's foster care system. This proposal places an emphasis on special needs children by providing an extra incentive for increasing the number of special needs children (i.e., children receiving benefits under the title IV-E Adoption Assistance program) who are adopted.

The baseline or starting point for determining each year's incentive funds will be determined based on data submitted by the States to the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), the federally-mandated foster care and adoption data collection system. For the purposes of establishing baseline data only, a State that has not yet

submitted reliable AFCARS data may produce data from an alternative source, provided that it can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Secretary that the alternative data provided are reliable.

The bonuses would be paid to the States in the year following the year in which they were earned. Therefore, the first bonuses would be paid in fiscal year 1999, based on States' improved performance in fiscal year 1998. The bonus money would be available for use by the State for any activity or service which is allowable under title IV-B, subparts 1 or 2 of the Social Security Act. These include a wide range of services to children and families, including post-legal adoption services.

Based on this proposal, each State would receive a bonus for every child adopted from the State foster care system above the baseline or the annual starting point. An additional supplement will be added to the bonus for every child adopted from the State foster care agency who is also eligible to receive assistance under a title IV-E adoption subsidy agreement (i.e., a special needs child). This bonus is only available in a given year based on the number of title IV-E children adopted in excess of the baseline or annual starting point.

The Department's proposal provides a concrete reward to States for good performance, without increasing the expenditures of Federal dollars. Furthermore, through the enhanced financial incentive for children with special needs, the proposal maintains a focus on finding more adoptive homes for the children who are the hardest to place.

Implementing the Multiethnic Placement Act

"(c) A proposal to ensure continued aggressive implementation of the Multiethnic Placement Act, as amended by the Interethnic Adoption Provision of the Small Business Job Protection Act;..."

Proposed Action Steps

To continue the Department's aggressive implementation of the Multiethnic Placement Act (MEPA), as amended by the Interethnic Adoption Provision (IEP) of the Small Business Job Protection Act:

- The Department will issue guidance regarding the amendments to MEPA contained in the IEP within 60 days. This guidance will focus on the implications of the deletion of permissible consideration language, the new penalty structures, and the approach the Department will take to implementing systematic compliance review protocols.
- The Department's Office of Civil Rights (OCR) will expedite the revision and implementation of on-site compliance reviews. In addition, the Administration for

Children and Families (ACF) within HHS will include in its monitoring review process a focus on MEPA compliance.

- The ACF will provide States with technical assistance over the next several months regarding compliance with MEPA.
- The OCR will continue its expeditious review of individual complaints.

Discussion

The Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994 (MEPA) was designed to decrease the length of time that children wait to be adopted, prevent discrimination in the placement of children on the basis of race, color, or national origin, and facilitate the identification and recruitment of foster and adoptive families who can meet children's needs. The MEPA, as amended by the Interethnic Adoption Provisions (IEP) of the Small Business Job Protection Act of 1996, prohibits delaying or denying the placement of any child solely on the basis of race, color or national origin; requires States to diligently recruit prospective adoptive and foster care families who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the State for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed; and requires the Federal government to impose fiscal penalties for States not in compliance with the anti-discrimination prohibition.

After the passage of MEPA, the Department worked aggressively to ensure that State laws and policies conformed to the statute's provisions. The Department issued guidance in April 1995, notified States of their non-compliance, and worked with 27 States and the District of Columbia to achieve compliance. In fiscal year 1997, the OCR has also begun reviewing agencies for practice compliance. Beginning in 1995, Regional Offices reviewed State title IV-B plans to ensure that child welfare services programs included recruitment plans for adoptive and foster care parents. The Department will undertake a similar course of action to ensure compliance with the IEP.

Since the enactment of the IEP, the Department has issued an Information Memorandum (ACYF-IM-CB-96-24) to the States and title IV-E agencies informing them of the changes to the MEPA. The Department is presently drafting guidance to address how the changes to the discrimination prohibition (particularly the repeal of the "permissible consideration" language that accommodated the consideration of cultural, ethnic, or racial background as one of a number of factors used to determine the best interests of a child) should be implemented. The Administration for Children and Families also is developing processes for assessing penalties, implementing corrective action plans, and conducting systematic monitoring of State practices. The Office of Civil Rights is revising its compliance review instrument that focuses specifically on transracial adoptive and foster care placements.

Tracking Progress of the States

(d) Plans to compile and publish an annual State-by-State report on success in meeting the numerical targets:

Proposed Action Steps:

To publicize the progress made by each State and the Nation as a whole in reaching numerical targets:

- The Department will issue an annual report, beginning in the Spring of 1999, on the Nation's progress in meeting the goals of the President's directive. The annual report will provide State-by-State figures on key measures of success including not only the number of children in foster care who are adopted or placed in guardianship, but measures that reflect the experience of children in the child welfare system, such as the length of time in care and the timeliness of permanency decisions.
- The report will be disseminated widely to national and State policy-makers, advocates, State agencies and courts and other interested individuals through targeted mailings and distribution by the National Adoption Information Clearinghouse. The report will also be made available electronically through the Department's homepage on the World Wide Web.

Discussion:

In order to track national progress in increasing adoptions and alternative forms of permanency such as guardianship, the President asked that the Department of Health and Human Services prepare an annual State-by-State report on the progress being made toward numerical targets. The focus on collecting and using quality data to measure outcomes contained in the President's directive will advance our national efforts to strengthen the collection, reporting and use of data in child welfare services. To ensure that the public stays focused on how well the nation and the individual States are meeting established goals, the Department is committed to disseminating timely information as widely as possible.

Recognizing Success

(e) Plans to recognize successful States.

Proposed Action Steps:

To foster public recognition of successful, innovative practices:

- The Department will work in collaboration with foundations and intergovernmental organizations to establish annual awards to be made each November during the commemoration of National Adoption Month. Beginning in 1997, these awards will recognize States, local agencies, courts, private organizations, employers and others who are making key contributions to national efforts to support adoption and to promote permanency for children in the child welfare system.

Discussion:

In addition to publishing annual findings on how the States are progressing toward numerical adoption and guardianship goals, the Department is enthusiastic about the prospect of recognizing innovations in adoption and permanency planning practices by States, and other public and private entities. This will be an opportunity to identify and publicly recognize outstanding practices and will help provide a means to publicize successful actions that can be replicated in other parts of the country.

Moving Children Who Cannot Return Home More Quickly Toward Permanent Homes - *To move children more rapidly from foster care to permanent homes, the report shall also recommend changes to Federal law and regulations and other actions needed to emphasize the importance of planning for permanency as soon as a child enters the foster care system. The Secretary's report should include, but should not necessarily be limited to, recommendations in the following areas:*

The second section of the President's directive focuses on the need to move children more rapidly from foster care to permanent homes. Too many children today wait too long for decisions to be made about their future. Myriad barriers stand between these children and a permanent home, including a child welfare system that is overwhelmed with serious cases, procedural delays in child welfare agencies and the judicial system, an inadequate pool of potential adoptive families, and the sheer complexity and gravity of the placement decisions that must be made in each case. The Department's consultation with the field revealed consensus that Federal, State and local governments, agencies, and courts must work together to identify and dismantle these barriers.

In response to the President's directive, the Department has examined a number of policy issues in an effort to reduce procedural barriers and encourage practices that promote the best interests of children. The following section outlines specific legislative, regulatory and administrative steps that are recommended to overcome barriers to permanency and to improve the timeliness of decision-making for children.

Removing Barriers to Permanency

(a) Plans to provide States with funding to identify barriers to permanency and to develop targeted strategies to find permanent homes for children who have been in foster care a particularly long time;

Proposed Action Steps:

To assist State child welfare agencies, courts and nonprofit organizations to identify and overcome barriers to permanency:

- Through its annual discretionary grant award process, the Department will award new and continuing grants under the Adoption Opportunities Act to assist in overcoming barriers to adoption for special needs children. Grants made under the Adoption Opportunities Act address a variety of issues such as: improving the recruitment of minority families; encouraging collaboration to strengthen services to children with disabilities; developing non-adversarial options for permanency, such as concurrent planning, voluntary relinquishment of children and family mediation; and developing training and resource materials to help adoptive parents meet the needs of adopted children who are of a different race or ethnicity.
- For fiscal year 1998, the Department is requesting \$10 million in additional funds for the Adoption Opportunities Act to support a special cluster of barrier reduction grants to the States. These grants would be awarded competitively to State agencies to develop model strategies to reform permanency planning and adoption services, both for children currently in foster care who are unable to return to their families and for children just entering the foster care system. To be eligible to compete for these grants, applicant States would need to participate with the Department in the setting of numerical targets to double the number of adoptions and permanent placements by the year 2002, develop a goal-oriented plan for meeting their goals, and involve the courts in developing their applications and strategies. Up to 15 Grants would be awarded.
- The Department will also continue to work with the States to fully implement the Court Improvement Program, authorized in conjunction with the Family Preservation and Support Act. This program provides a grant to the highest court in each participating State to assist in assessing and addressing barriers to permanency from the perspective of the courts. The program has helped to bring courts and agencies together to examine barriers to permanency and to develop a plan to address these issues. States are now completing their assessments, and are ready to move forward in implementing changes in the court's handling of child welfare cases.

Discussion:

Identifying and addressing barriers is crucial in our national efforts to move children in foster care more quickly to permanent homes, whether this be through reunification, adoption, or placement in an alternative permanent home. Many different factors can serve as a barrier to permanency, ranging from worker decision-making, to the availability of needed services for families, to court delays, to the supply of adoptive families. Addressing barriers to permanency, therefore, requires a multi-part strategy.

The Federal government can make a number of important contributions in this area. For example, during the Department's consultation with the field, many individuals mentioned that the Court Improvement Program has been helpful both in focusing the judicial system's attention on child welfare issues and in bringing courts and child welfare agencies together to identify and address barriers to permanency.

To augment the important work already begun, the Department is proposing the awarding of competitive grants to up to 15 States that form an effective collaboration between the State agency and the State court and that involve other key stakeholders, including Tribes, community representatives, and citizen review boards. These grants will be used to develop model strategies to reform permanency planning and adoption services, not only for children currently in care needing adoptive homes, but also for children just entering the foster care system, to ensure that timely decisions, reflecting the best interests of the child, will be made, and that appropriate services will be provided to support moving children more quickly from foster care to permanent homes.

Addressing Permanency Planning Earlier Through Timely Hearings

(b) Proposals to shorten the period of time between a child's placement in foster care and his or her initial hearing at which a permanency determination is made;

(c) A proposal to clarify that the purpose of "dispositional hearings" is to plan for permanency and, as appropriate, to consider referrals for family mediation, termination of parental rights, adoption, legal guardianship, or other permanent placements;

Proposed Action Steps:

To encourage more timely permanency planning and improved judicial decision-making for children in foster care:

- The Department recommends that the Federal statute requiring an 18-month dispositional hearing be amended to require that this hearing be held no later than 12 months after a child's placement in foster care.

- The Department further recommends amending the Federal statute to change the name of the "dispositional hearing" to "permanency planning hearing."
- The Department will provide guidance to:
 - Clarify the purpose of the dispositional hearing (whether the proposed initial 12-month dispositional hearing or the existing 18-month hearing is required);
 - Clarify the purpose of the 6-month administrative review; and
 - Clarify that States have the flexibility to increase the frequency of the dispositional hearing as well as the 6-month administrative review.
- The Department proposes several additional activities specifically addressing court-related barriers to permanency:
 - Convening a forum of leaders in the legal profession, judges, attorneys, agency administrators and advocates to develop strategies for adding to the courts' focus on improved outcomes for children.
 - Identifying and disseminating information about innovative reforms and model practices derived from the assessments of the Court Improvement grants and other efforts.
- Finally, the Department encourages the President to communicate with State chief justices and national legal organizations to emphasize the importance of elevating the status of child welfare proceedings (including child protection, permanency planning, termination of parental rights and adoption proceedings) within the courts.

Discussion:

The President's directive called on the Department to examine issues around the timeliness of judicial hearings affecting the duration of a child's stay in foster care and his or her movement towards permanency. Specifically, the directive instructed the Department to examine ways to shorten the period of time between a child's placement in foster care and the initial dispositional hearing at which permanency planning issues are addressed.

The Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-272) created the framework for existing Federal child welfare programs and requirements. Among the provisions of the law are requirements for administrative and court reviews to ensure that children's needs for permanent homes are addressed. The law requires that, within 18 months of placement, and every 12 months thereafter, a dispositional hearing must be held to determine the child's permanent placement and, specifically, whether:

- the child should be returned to the parent;
- the child should be continued in foster care for a specified period;
- the child should be placed for adoption; or
- the child should (because of the child's special needs or circumstances) be continued in foster care on a permanent or long-term basis.

This hearing was intended to be the time when a definitive permanent plan for the child would be set by the court. However, these permanent plans are not always set within the 18 month timeframe, sometimes because of the confusion surrounding the purpose of the dispositional hearing.

The Department's proposals for action reflect themes heard during the Department's outreach and consultation process. There was significant agreement that the permanent plan for a child should be set earlier than 18 months after a child's entry into foster care. We also heard support for providing guidance that would clarify the purpose of the dispositional hearings. While the Department believes that the changes outlined above will encourage more timely decisions regarding permanency planning for children, it must be emphasized that the expedited timeframe for the dispositional hearing and other proposed changes can only be effective if services addressing the needs of the child and his or her family are provided from the time that the child enters substitute care.

In addition, to addressing the timeliness of hearings, there is widespread support for reviewing and strengthening court practices to achieve better outcomes for children in the child welfare system. The Department proposes several steps to bring attention to this issue.

Clarifying "Reasonable Efforts"

(d) A proposal to clarify the "reasonable efforts" requirement and other Federal policy as it relates to permanency and safety;

Proposed Action Steps:

To ensure the protection of children and to make certain that Federal laws regarding reasonable efforts, reunification of children with their families and termination of parental rights are understood by all involved in permanency planning:

- The Department is committed to taking all necessary steps to clarify that the best interests, including the safety, of children must be of paramount concern in making decisions about when to remove children from their families and when to reunify them.

- The Department recommends that the "reasonable efforts" provision of title IV-E be clarified in the statute to emphasize that efforts either to prevent the removal of children or to reunify them with their families are only "reasonable" if they are consistent with the best interests of children, including keeping children safe. Several existing Congressional proposals serve as examples of how this might be accomplished. Section 471 of title IV-E of the Social Security Act could be amended by adding language that states either (a) that "in determining reasonable efforts, the best interests of the child, including the child's health and safety, shall be of primary concern;" or (b) that reasonable efforts are required "except when to do so would jeopardize the child's safety."
- The Department will also work with the States to implement provisions in the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), as amended by the Congress in 1996. These provisions require that, as a condition for receiving funds under the Basic State Grant program, (1) the State may not mandate the reunification of a surviving child with parents found to have aided or abetted or committed murder, voluntary manslaughter, or serious bodily injury to their children; and (2) conviction of any of the above mentioned felonies constitutes grounds for the termination of parental rights. The Department has already issued an Information Memorandum to the States advising them of these changes, and will provide any needed technical assistance to the States to help them implement the new provisions.

Discussion:

Since 1980, Federal law has required that "reasonable efforts" be made both to prevent the unnecessary removal of children from their families and to reunify children who have been placed in foster care with their families. The goal of this provision was to reduce the phenomenon of children languishing unnecessarily in foster care. The Federal "reasonable efforts" requirement has been both heralded as being essential to effective child welfare practice and criticized for being unclear and a barrier to child safety and permanence.

Consultation with the field revealed that there is wide variation in how the current "reasonable efforts" law is interpreted by caseworkers, agencies and judges around the country. There was a strong consensus that some clarification of the reasonable efforts requirements is needed to allow for better, more timely decision-making in individual cases, although there were divergent opinions on what degree of specificity would be useful from the Federal government.

The proposals outlined above will send the clear message that Federal law requires that the safety of children be the primary consideration in making decisions about when to remove or reunify children with their families, as well as when to terminate parental rights, while providing State agencies and courts with the flexibility needed to make sound individualized decisions for children in the child welfare system.

Standards for Securing Permanency

(e) Plans to ensure that States give appropriate weight to permanency planning by establishing standards for securing permanency through adoption or guardianship, once a decision has been made that a child cannot be returned home:

Proposed Action Steps:

To ensure that States give appropriate attention to permanency planning for children in foster care unable to return home to their families:

- The Department recommends that title IV-E of the Social Security Act be amended to require "reasonable efforts" to secure a permanent home for children in foster care when adoption or another permanent placement is the goal for the child.
- The Department will propose regulatory changes to clarify that States may simultaneously work toward reunification and develop an alternative plan for children in the event that they are not able to be reunified. The Department will also disseminate effective models of practice in this area of "concurrent planning."
- The Department will work with States to encourage use of the Federal Parent Locator Service at the time a child enters foster care to locate absent parents and other relatives who may be able to provide permanent homes for the child.

Discussion:

As discussed above, there is a Federal standard that requires States to make reasonable efforts to prevent the removal of children and to reunify families when consistent with child safety. However, there is currently no comparable standard or requirement to find alternative permanent homes for children once the decision has been made that they cannot safely be reunified with their families. Too often, children are made to wait in foster care for long periods of time, even after the decision has been made that adoption is the most appropriate permanency option for the child. Passage of legislation to require reasonable efforts to secure a permanent home for children will help to ensure that States give priority attention to the issue of permanency.

In addition to setting a standard for permanency in the law, the Department will clarify its policies to ensure that States understand that they may concurrently work with families to help them safely resume care of their children and develop an alternative plan for permanency in the event that the child and family cannot be reunified. This practice of concurrent planning was frequently endorsed during the Department's consultation with the

field as an effective means to ensure timely decision-making for children. In addition to clarifying Federal policy on this issue, the Department will share information and best practices with the States on how to conduct concurrent planning.

An additional step the Department proposes to assist States in making timely and informed decisions about permanency is to work with State child welfare and child support enforcement agencies to facilitate use of the Federal Parent Locator Service to identify and locate absent parents or other relatives who may be interested in providing a permanent home for a child in foster care. (The Federal Parent Locator Service is currently used by State child support enforcement officials.) Even if an absent parent or other relative is unable to provide a home for the child, ruling out this alternative early in a child's placement will allow the agency and court to move expeditiously towards adoption or another permanent alternative.

Alternative Forms of Permanency

(f) Plans to examine alternative permanency arrangements, such as guardianship, when adoption is not possible.

Proposed Action Steps:

To gain a better understanding of alternative permanency arrangements:

- The Department proposes to continue to study and evaluate guardianship as an alternative form of permanency when adoption is not possible.
- The Department will work with the States of Illinois and Delaware in evaluating the assisted guardianship efforts being undertaken as part of these States' child welfare demonstration waivers.
- In order to foster continued development and evaluation of guardianship and other alternative permanency arrangements, the Department also will request an expansion of the child welfare demonstration waiver authority from the maximum limit of 10 to 15 States in fiscal year 1998 and to 20 States in fiscal year 1999.
- The Department will also continue to explore relative and/or kinship care as a means of ensuring permanency for children. Demonstration grants regarding kinship care are permitted under the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, as reauthorized in 1996. The Department intends to fund projects in the future under this authority to improve our knowledge of the use of kinship care in ensuring children's safety and permanency. Examples of topics that might be addressed under this demonstration

authority include the development of best practices for the licensing and approval of relative homes and the development of training curricula around permanency for children in relative care.

Discussion:

For some children who cannot return home, adoption may not be the most appropriate permanency plan. Examples include some children placed in long-term kinship care arrangements and some older children with special needs without realistic adoption prospects. This is also an important issue for American Indian children under Tribal jurisdiction. Many Tribes consider kinship care the cultural equivalent of adoption.

When adoption is not appropriate, children still need stable, permanent living arrangements. Therefore, the President asked that the Department report on plans to examine alternative forms of permanency, such as guardianships, when adoption is not possible.

Many people with whom the Department consulted recommended that the Federal government help pay for the cost of subsidized guardianship arrangements, as it does for adoption, under title IV-E of the Social Security Act. The Department does not recommend this step at this time. Because guardianships are easily revoked and, therefore, do not offer the legal protection of adoption, the criteria for the use of guardianship as a form of permanency must be carefully examined. There is limited understanding of the factors which shape decisions about adoption and guardianship by relatives. Premature changes in title IV-E reimbursement policies might result in unintentional incentives to shift children into guardianship arrangements when an adoption could be achieved.

Several current and proposed activities will expand our knowledge and experience regarding guardianship and its relationship to relative care. Using demonstration authority, the Department will work with the States to gain better information on how guardianships are currently used; the relationship between guardianships, relative care and adoption; and the important ways in which guardianships differ from adoption. Based on these demonstration efforts, the Department will consider whether criteria might be developed regarding when and for which children such alternatives are appropriate. Co-guardianships (which are being used in several places for children with incarcerated or terminally ill parents) and family mediation methods which emphasize permanency options for children will also be explored.

Under the child welfare waiver demonstrations, Illinois and Delaware are currently exploring alternative permanency options that include support for subsidized guardianships (similar to adoption assistance agreements) primarily for kinship care providers. Several other States have applied for similar demonstrations for which negotiations are pending. All waiver demonstrations will be rigorously evaluated. Because we believe that this approach allows for a careful and thorough examination of alternative permanency arrangements and other emerging topics in the field of child welfare, the Department is also requesting an expansion in the number of child welfare demonstration waivers that may be granted.

Finally, it should be noted that the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (P.L. 104-193) included a provision requiring the States to consider giving preference to relatives as caretakers for children eligible to receive foster care maintenance subsidies under title IV-E of the Social Security Act. Policy guidance for the States is currently under development. This is the first Federal legislative preference for placing children with relatives. We hope that it will lead to an earlier identification and location of relatives who are willing and able to provide permanent, nurturing homes for children in the child welfare system.

V. CONCLUSION

The *Adoption 2002* report to the President presents a number of recommendations for statutory, regulatory, and administrative actions necessary to double the number of children placed into permanent homes annually by the year 2002. Presidential attention to the needs of children who have been abused and neglected and are languishing in foster care has the potential to change the life experiences of thousands of children.

The Adoption 2002 Initiative builds on the concerns reflected by States and communities in their efforts to increase adoption and permanency outcomes for children. States are moving to reform their systems by streamlining administrative and judicial procedures to move children more quickly to permanence as well as by amending their laws governing the termination of parents' rights. Foundations are working with the States to ensure that the experience of children in foster care is time limited and results in stability for children. Innovations in the recruitment of adoptive families continue in both community efforts, such as One Church, One Child, and the development of Internet listing services for waiting children.

We view this report as the beginning of a five year change process with the immediate goal of increasing adoptions and a long-range goal of strengthening the child welfare system.

As a Nation, we have an important opportunity to focus the energy of Federal, State and local governments with that of professional organizations, faith communities, and neighborhood leadership to make a difference for our most vulnerable children.

The time is now. The chance is ours.



Appendix A

Text of Presidential Directive on Adoption

WASHINGTON, Dec. 14 /U.S. Newswire/ -- Following is a memorandum from President Clinton to the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Secretary of the Treasury, Secretary of Labor, Secretary of Commerce and the director of the Office of Personnel Management:

During this Holiday Season, as we reflect on the importance of family in our own lives, let us remember the tens of thousands of our Nation's children in the public child welfare system who live without permanent and caring families. Foster care provides temporary shelter and relief for children who have been abused or neglected.

I am committed to giving the children waiting in our Nation's foster care system what every child in America deserves -- loving parents and a healthy, stable home. The goal for every child in our Nation's public welfare system is permanency in a safe and stable home, whether it be returning home, adoption, legal guardianship, or another permanent placement. While the great majority of children in foster care will return home, for about one in five, returning home is not an option, and they will need another home, one that is caring and safe. These children wait far too long -- typically over 3 years, but for many children much longer -- to be placed in permanent homes. Each year, State child welfare agencies secure homes for less than one-third of the children whose goal is adoption or an alternate permanent placement. I know we can do better.

I believe we should increase the number of children who are adopted or permanently placed from the public foster care system each year toward the goal of at least doubling that number by the year 2002. Returning home is not an option for about 100,000 of the over 450,000 children in the Nation's foster care system, yet only approximately 20,000 were adopted last year and approximately 7,000 were permanently placed in legal guardianships. While the number of adoptions each year has been constant for many years, I believe that by working with States to identify and break down barriers to permanent placements, setting annual numerical targets, rewarding successful performance, and raising public awareness, we can meet the target of at least 54,000 children adopted or permanently placed from the public foster care system by the year 2002.

Today, therefore, I direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with State and civic leaders, to report to me within 60 days on actions to be taken to move children more rapidly from foster care to permanent homes and at least to double, by the year 2002, the number of children in foster care who are adopted or permanently placed out of the public foster care system.

- I. To increase the number of children who are adopted or permanently placed each year, this report should include, but should not necessarily be limited to, recommendations in the following areas:
 - (a) Plans to work with States on setting and reaching State specific numerical targets, using the technical assistance of the Department of Health and Human Services National Resource Centers to make information on best practices available to States and to engage community leaders, parents, and the business and faith communities;
 - (b) Proposals to provide per child financial incentives to States for increases in the number of adoptions from the public welfare system. Options considered should have little to no net costs, as increases in the number of adoptions from the public system will reduce foster care costs, thereby offsetting much if not all of the incentive payments;
 - (c) A proposal to ensure continued aggressive implementation of the Multi-ethnic Placement Act, as amended by the Inter-ethnic Adoption Provision of the Small Business Job Protection Act;

(d) Plans to compile and publish an annual State-by-State report on success in meeting the numerical targets; and

(e) Plans to recognize successful States.

II. To move children more rapidly from foster care to permanent homes, the report shall also recommend changes to Federal law and regulations and other actions needed to emphasize the importance of planning for permanency as soon as a child enters the foster care system. The Secretary's report should include, but should not necessarily be limited to, recommendations in the following areas:

(a) Plans to provide States with funding to identify barriers to permanency and to develop targeted strategies to find permanent homes for children who have been in foster care a particularly long time;

(b) Proposals to shorten the period of time between a child's placement in foster care and his or her initial hearing at which a permanency determination is made;

(c) A proposal to clarify that the purpose of "dispositional hearings" is to plan for permanency and, as appropriate, to consider referrals for family mediation, termination of parental rights, adoption, legal guardianship, or other permanent placements;

(d) A proposal to clarify the "reasonable efforts" requirement and other Federal policy as it relates to permanency and safety;

(e) Plans to ensure that States give appropriate weight to permanency planning by establishing standards for securing permanency through adoption or guardianship, once a decision has been made that a child cannot be returned home; and

(f) Plans to examine alternative permanency arrangements, such as guardianship, when adoption is not possible.

Last month, I signed a proclamation designating November as National Adoption Month -- a time to increase awareness about the tens of thousands of children waiting for families and to encourage all Americans to consider the rewards and responsibilities of adoption. However, adoption must be a national concern throughout the year. Therefore, I direct:

(a) The Secretary of Health and Human Services to develop and lead a public awareness effort, including use of public service announcements, print materials, and the Internet;

(b) The Secretaries of Health and Human Services and the Treasury in consultation with State, civic, and private sector leaders to develop and disseminate information about the new adoption tax credits and other adoption benefits;

(c) The Secretaries of Labor and Commerce, in consultation with State and civic leaders, to identify and recognize companies in the private sector with model policies to encourage and ease adoption among employees; and

(d) The Director of the Office of Personnel Management to direct all Federal agencies to provide information and support to Federal employees who are prospective adoptive parents.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON



Appendix B

Adoption 2002 Responses Received
via Mail, Fax, and the Internet
by January 31, 1997
Adoption Responses by Category

A. Service Providers:

1. Hope for the Children, Rantoul, IL
2. Northeast Ohio Adoption Services, Warren, OH
3. Tressler Lutheran Services, York, PA
4. Tressler Lutheran Services, Baltimore, MD
5. Lutheran Adoption Service, Southfield, MI
6. Family Builders By Adoption, Oakland, CA
7. Children's Home Society of Florida, Jacksonville, FL
8. Common Sense Adoption Services, Mechanicsburg, PA
9. Maine Adoption Placement Service, Bangor, ME
10. Center for Family Connections, Inc., Cambridge, MA
11. Lutheran Social Service of Kansas and Oklahoma, Wichita, KS
12. Society for Seamen's Children, Staten Island, NY
13. Miami Valley Adoption Coalition, Inc., Dayton, OH
14. Marian Adoption Services, Plymouth Meeting, PA
15. Lutheran Social Services of Indiana, Fort Wayne, IN
16. Adoption by Gentle Care, Columbus, OH
17. Adoption Horizons and the Birth Parent Center, Eureka, CA
18. Catholic Charities, Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Fort Wayne, IN
19. Open Adoption and Family Services, Inc., Portland, OR
20. Boys and Girls Aid Society, Portland, OR
21. Welcome House Social Services of the Pearl S. Buck Foundation, Inc., Perkasie, PA
22. Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany, Albany, NY
23. Children's Adoption Network, Richboro, PA
24. Ennis Center for Children, Inc., Detroit, MI
25. Adopt a Special Kid/Texas, Inc., Hurst, TX
26. Children and Family Institute, Fort Worth, TX
27. Minnesota Adoption Resource Network, Minneapolis, MN
28. Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange, Inc., Boston, MA
29. Christian Cradle, Lansing, MI
30. Children's Hope International, Franklin TN
31. Los Ninos Children's International Adoption Center, The Woodlands, TX, includes 9 different letters
32. Jewish Family Services, New Haven, CT
33. LDS Social Services, Ogden, UT
34. LDS Social Services, Amherst, NH
35. Community Maternity Services, Albany, NY
36. Lutheran Social Services of Indiana, Griffith IN
37. The Attachment Center, Evergreen, CO
38. Catholic Charities of Tennessee, Nashville, TN

39. Small World Ministries, Inc., Hermitage, TN
40. St. Christopher-Ottillie Services for Children and Families, Long Island, NY
41. Respond, St. Louis, MO
42. Families Are Special, North Little Rock, AR
43. Children Awaiting Parents, Rochester, NY
44. Dependent Care Connection, Westport, CT
45. Respond, St. Louis MO
46. Leake and Watts, Yonkers, NY
47. Spence-Chapin Services to Families and Children, New York, NY
48. Project STAR, The Rehabilitation Institute, Pittsburgh, PA
49. Heritage Adoption Services, Inc., Portland, OR
50. Urban League-Rhode Island, Providence, RI
51. Tarzana Treatment Center, Inc., Tarzana, CA
52. Daniel Memorial Adoption Information Center, Jacksonville, FL
53. Jewish Child Care Association of New York, New York, NY
54. Mentor Clinical Care, Indianapolis, IN
55. The Northwest Adoption Exchange, Seattle, WA
56. Placement Services Agency, Dallas, TX
57. New Beginnings, Adoption and Counseling Agency, Columbus GA
58. United Methodist Family Services, Virginia Beach, VA
59. Adoptions From the Heart
60. University of Chicago School of Social Work
61. Washington State Families for Kids, Seattle, WA
62. Child Development Unit, University of Kansas Medical Center, Kansas City, KS
63. Arlington Diocese Catholic Charities, Burke, VA
64. The Family Service Association of Wyoming Valley, Wilkes-Barre, PA
65. Ohio Families for Kids, Akron, OH
66. Delaware Valley Adoption Council, Philadelphia, PA
67. Michigan Federation of Private Child and Family Agencies, Lansing, MI
68. Mississippi Families for Kids, Jackson, MS
69. Beech Brook, Cleveland, OH
70. Cooperative Adoption Consulting, San Anselmo, CA
71. D.C. CASA Unit, Washington, DC
72. School of Public Affairs, Department of Justice, Law and Society, American University
73. Kinship Center, Monterey, CA
74. International Social Service, American Branch, Inc., New York, NY
75. TIES for Adoption, UCLA Department of Pediatrics and School of Public Health, Los Angeles, CA
76. Child Study Center, Yale University, New Haven, CT
77. Resources for Adoptive Parents, Minneapolis, MN
78. Iowa Foster and Adoptive Parents Association, Ankeny, IA
79. Hope for the Children, Rantoul, IL
80. LDS Social Services, Idaho Falls, ID, includes 8 different letters

B. Government Agencies

1. Program Supervisor, Administrative Office of the Courts, Arizona Supreme Court, Phoenix, AZ
2. Social Worker, Franklin County Children Services, Louisburg, NC
3. County of Los Angeles, Department of Children's Services, Peter Digre, Los Angeles, CA
4. Licking County Department of Human Services, Newark OH
5. Louisiana Department of Social Services, Assistant Secretary, Office of Community Services, Baton Rouge, LA
6. Minnesota Department of Human Services, St. Paul, MN
7. Missouri Department of Social Services, Director, Division of Family Services, Jefferson City, MO
8. Massachusetts Department of Social Services, Executive Office of HHS, Director of Public Relations, Boston, MA
9. Massachusetts Department of Social Services, Adoption Supervisor, Boston MA
10. Indiana Family and Social Services Administration, Director, Division of Family and Children, Indianapolis, IN
11. Secretary, Kansas Department of Social Services, Topeka, KS
12. Massachusetts HHS, Department of Social Services, Acting Commissioner, Boston, MA
13. Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, Secretary, Madison, WI
14. North Carolina Department of Human Resources, Director of Social Services, Raleigh, NC
15. Virginia Department of Social Services, FP/FC & Adoption Manager
16. Department of Health and Human Resources, Adoption-Homefinding Unit, Charleston, WV
17. New Jersey Department of Human Services, Director, Division of Youth and Family
18. Services Department of Social Services for Henry County, VA senior social worker, Collinsville, VA
19. Judge, San Ildefonso Pueblo Tribal Court
20. Administrator, Division of Family and Community Services, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
21. Director, Family and Children's Services Division, Minnesota Department of Human Services
22. Commissioner, Social and Rehabilitation Services, Vermont Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services
23. Director, Division of Family Services, Delaware Department of Service for Children, Youth and Families, Wilmington, DE
24. Acting Commissioner, Bureau for Children and Families, West Virginia Department of HHR
25. Director, Iowa Department of Human Services
26. Isaac Palmer, Office of Family and Children's Services, Ohio Department of Human Services
27. Assistant Secretary for Children, Washington Department of Social and Health Services, Olympia, WA
28. Department of Children, Youth and Families, Rhode Island

29. Secretary, Maryland Department of Human Resources, Baltimore, MD
30. San Mateo County Youth and Family Services Agency, Belmont County
31. Director, Child Welfare Services, Colorado Department of Human Services, Denver CO
32. Chair, Adoption Development Outreach Planning Team, Department of Social Services, Chesterfield-Colonial Heights, Chesterfield, VA
33. Secretary, Florida Department Children and Families Tallahassee, FL
34. Director of Social Services, Alexandria City Department of Human Services, Alexandria, VA
35. Cabinet for Families and Children, Frankfort, KY
36. Chair, Black Adoption and Foster Care Advocacy Board, Louisiana Department of Social Services, Lafayette, LA
37. Acting Director, Michigan Family Independence Agency, Lansing, MI
38. Director, Wyoming Department of Family Services, Cheyenne, WY
39. Director, New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families, Department of Health and Human Services, Concord, NH
40. Utah, Adoption Council, Utah Division of Child and Family Services, DHS, Salt Lake City, UT
41. Director, Loudoun County Department of Social Services, Leesburg, VA
42. Executive Director, Mississippi Department of Human Services, Jackson, MS
43. Director, Department of Children and Family Services, State of Illinois, Chicago, IL
44. Commissioner, Division of Family and Youth Services, Department of Health and Social Services, Juneau, AK
45. Chief, Adoptions Branch, California Department of Social Services, Sacramento, CA
46. Nebraska Director of Health and Human Resources, Omaha, NE
47. Director, Services to Children and Families, Oregon Department of Human Resources, Salem, OR
48. Project Director, Children Services Board of Summit County, Akron, OH
49. Regional Director, Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families, Providence, RI
50. Deputy State Director, Office of Program Policy and Oversight, South Carolina Department of Social Services, Columbia, SC
51. Deputy Commissioner, Division of Services and Community Development, New York State Department of Social Services, Albany, NY
52. Secretary, Department of Public Welfare, Pennsylvania Commonwealth, Harrisburg, PA
53. Placement Director, Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services, Austin, TX
54. Commissioner, Vermont Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, Waterbury, VT
55. Kentucky Cabinet for Families and Children, Frankfort, KY
56. Howard Metzenbaum, Retired Senator
57. Executive Director, Nebraska State Foster Care Review Board, Lincoln, NE
58. Judge, Family Court of the Fifth Judicial Circuit, South Carolina, Camden, SC
59. Hualapai Tribe of Arizona, Santa Fe, NM
60. Jicarilla Apache Tribe, Dulce, NM
61. Muscogee Creek Nation, Division of Community Services, Okmulgee, OK

62. Adoption Social Worker. Hennepin County Children and Family Services Department. Minnetonka, MN
63. Governor, Santa Ana Pueblo, Bernalillo, NM
64. Juvenile Justice Center of Philadelphia. Philadelphia, PA
65. Eagle Village, Hersey, MI
66. Office of Child Support Enforcement, ACF/DHHS

C. Advocacy Groups

1. Coalition for Adoption Reform and Education, San Diego, CA
2. National Court Appointed Special Advocate Association, Seattle, WA
3. The Adoption Institute, New York, NY
4. The Independent Women's Forum, Washington, DC
5. Independent Adoption Center, Pleasant Hill, CA
6. National Council for Single Adoptive Parents, Chevy Chase, MD
7. Children, Remembered, Inc., Northbrook, IL
8. Adoption Exchange Association, Denver, CO
9. National Indian Child Welfare Association, Portland, OR
10. Family Builders Network, Boston, MA
11. Casey Family Program, Seattle, WA
12. National Association of Foster Care Reviewers, Atlanta, GA
13. Heritage Foundation, Washington, D.C.
14. National Adoption Center, Philadelphia, PA
15. New York State Citizens' Coalition for Children, Inc., Ithaca, NY
16. Voice for Adoption, Washington, DC
17. National Resource Center for Permanency Planning, New York, NY
18. Child Welfare League of America, Washington, DC
19. Generations United, Washington, DC
20. National Association of Social Workers, Washington, DC
21. Adoption Advocates, Minneapolis, MN
22. National Council for Adoption, Washington DC
23. American Academy of Pediatrics, Elk Grove Village, IL
24. Spaulding for Children, National Resource Center for Special Needs Adoption, Southfield, MI
25. Coalition for Family & Children's Services, Des Moines, IA
26. Institute for Children, Cambridge, MA
27. Common Ground Network for Life and Choice, Washington, DC
28. Family Research Council, Washington, DC
29. Child Welfare League of America, Washington DC
30. National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, Reno NV
31. Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, Washington, DC
32. The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc., New York, NY
33. National Foster Care Resource Center, Ypsilanti, MI
34. Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore, MD
35. In Harmony on Behalf of Our Nation's Children, Monmouth, OR
36. Adoption Advocates, Minneapolis, MN and Columbus, OH

37. Center for Law and Human Services, Chicago, IL
38. North American Council on Adoptable Children, St. Paul, MN
39. California Association of Adoption Agencies, Aptos, CA
40. Adopt A Special Needs Kid, San Francisco, CA

D. Private Citizens/General Public/Adoptive Parents

1. Kathryn B. Creedy, adoptive parent
2. Betty Charmatz
3. Hector and Susan Badeau Family, adoptive parents
4. Carole Adlard, executive director, Adoption Option, Cincinnati, OH
5. Christopher Unger, Ph.D., psychologist
6. Adoree Blair, Child Advocate
7. Julie Jarrell Bailey, adoptive parent and birth mother
8. Dave Bushnell, adoptive parent
9. Allan Neustadt
10. Jack Marvin, VP, American Adoption Congress, Inc.
11. David Wazdatskey, adoption supervisor
12. Kathy Casey, adoptive parent
13. Elizabeth Barholet, adoption advocate
14. Peter Winkler, ACSW
15. David and Susan Distel, foster parents
16. Vicky Payne
17. Jackie Hampton, LMSW
18. Susan Levitzky, MD, FAAP
19. jsqui10177.aol.com
20. Jerrri Ann Jenista, MD
21. Marie Dolfi, MSW
22. Marlou Russell, Ph.D., clinical psychologist
23. Cheryl Reidy
24. Jane M. Coleman, Adoption worker
25. Cindy A. Youngblood, FSW Clinician
26. Dottie Klemm, Constance Walker, Terri Ali, Cleveland, OH
27. Brenda R. Louise, MSW student
28. Janelle Peterson



Appendix C

ADOPTION 2002 FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

ELIMINATING BARRIERS TO PERMANENCY & INCREASING ACCESS TO ADOPTION

- **Removing Barriers to Permanency**

What are the barriers to permanency?

What stands in the way of timely decision-making throughout the system?

- **Multiethnic Placement Act/Interethnic Placement provision**

The directive mandates that the Federal government ensure continued aggressive implementation of MEPA and the Interethnic Placement provision. In the context of this mandate, how can the Federal government best promote more rapid compliance with MEPA and the Interethnic Placement provision?

MOVING CHILDREN MORE PROMPTLY

- **Reasonable Efforts Requirements**

What ought to be the goals of the reasonable efforts requirements?

What are the concerns and issues surrounding the reasonable efforts requirements?

Should there be a reasonable efforts requirement related to permanency?

What principles or factors should the Federal government consider in an attempt to clarify the relationship between safety and reasonable efforts requirements?

- **Dispositional Hearings**

What should be accomplished with dispositional hearings?

What barriers, if any, stand in the way of accomplishing the goals with regard to dispositional hearings?

DOUBLING THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN WHO ACHIEVE PERMANENCY

- **State Numerical Adoption Targets**

What supports, other than monetary support, can the Federal government provide to States to help them reach the goal of doubling the number of children who achieve permanency?

More specifically, what kinds of technical assistance would be most helpful to States as they pursue the permanency goals?

- **Financial Incentives to States to Increase Adoptions**

Can financial performance incentives help States move toward the permanency goals? If so, how?

In addition to the per child financial incentive outlined in the directive, what other kinds of performance incentives could help States reach the targets?

PROMOTING INNOVATION IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

- **Alternative Permanency Arrangements**

What are effective alternative permanency arrangements for children? What concerns would you have about them?

- **Opportunities for Systemic Change**

How does the directive fit with efforts to promote systemic change in the child welfare system?

CROSS-CUTTING PRINCIPLES

What principles should guide the Federal planning for this initiative to help achieve the permanency goals?

**ADOPTION 2002 DIRECTIVE
FOCUS GROUPS**

**Intergovernmental
January 22, 1997**

Melissa Baker
American Public Welfare Association
810 First Street, N.E.
Suite 500
Washington, D.C. 20002
202-682-0100

Susan Golonka
National Governors Association
444 North Capital Street, N.W.
Suite 267
Washington, D.C. 20001
202-624-5300

Marilyn Sanz
National Association of Counties
440 First Street, N.W.
8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20001
202-393-6226

Sherry Steisel
National Conference of State
Legislatures
444 North Capital Street, N.W.
Suite 515
Washington, D.C. 20001
202-624-5400

Joe Dimas
Nation League of Cities
1301 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004
202-626-3020

Laura Waxman
U.S. Conference of Mayors
1620 Eye Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006
202-293-7330

Gene Flango
National Center for State Courts
300 Newport Avenue
P.O. Box 8798
Williamsburg, Va. 23187-8794
804-253-2000

**National Council for Adoption
(NCFA)
January 27, 1997**

Dortha Tilly
Adopt A Special Kid
1060 West Pipeline Road
Suite 106
Hurst, Texas 76053
817-595-0497

Kent Pulsipher
LDS Social Services
9978 Marble Street
Sandy, Utah 84094
801-572-0452

Nathan Samuel
Childplace
2420 Highway 62
Jeffersonville, IN 47130
812-282-8248

Kent Brand
Hope for Children
1507 Johnson Fairy Road
Suite 190
Merritt, Ga 30062
770-977-0813

Jim Savely
Small World Ministries
401 Bonnaspring Drive
Hermitage, TN 37076
615-883-4372

Tomniee Harding
Christian World Adoption
270 West Common Blvd
Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464-3489
803-856-0305

Gary Weir
Refugee Maternity Home
499 Walnut Street
Winfield, MO 63389
314-668-8192

Ruby Lee Piester
Texas Governor's Committee on
Adoption
5413 Ledgestone Drive
Ft. Worth, TX 76132
817-346-8630

Maureen Hogan
Adopt A Special Kid
226 4th Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
202-544-3603

**National Council for Adoption
(NCFA)
January 21, 1997**

Elizabeth Bartholet, Harvard Law
School
Houser Hall
422
1575 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138
617-495-3128

Carol Coccia
National Committee to End
Racism in America's Child
Care System, Inc.
22075 Koths
Taylor, MI 48180
313-295-0257

Phoebe Dawson
New Beginnings Adoption &
Counseling Agency
1316 Wynnton Court
Suite A
Columbus, Georgia 31906
404-571-3346

Jane Edwards
2926 Parkland Drive
Vradenton, Florida 34209
941-795-1802

Patrick Fagan
Heritage Foundation
214 Massachusetts Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20002
202-546-4400

Rene Garfinkel, Adoption Studies
Institute
2924 M Street, N.W.
Suite 101
Washington, D.C. 20007
202-338-1550

Richard Gelles
University of Rhode Island
Department of Sociology
Kingston, RI 02881
401-874-4138

Beverly Jimmerson
Governor's Office
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, Texas 78711
512-475-2340

Carol Olwen Reese
Partnership for Adoption Advocacy
2 Hudson Drive
New Fairfield, Connecticut 06812-3801

Mary Beth Style
c/o NCFCA
930 17th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009
703-502-7910

Woody Turner
Pennsylvania Adoptive Family Rights
Council
1500 Oliver Building
Pittsburgh, PA 15222
412-355-6478

National Association of Child
Advocates
January 17, 1997

Anne Arnesen
Director
Wisconsin Council on Children and
Families
16 N. Carroll Street
Madison, WI 53703
608-284-0580

Diane Benjamin
Director of Minnesota KIDS Count
Children's Defense Fund-Minnesota
550 Rice Street, Suite 205
St. Paul, MN 55103
612-227-6121

Jetta Bernier, Executive Director
Massachusetts Committee for
Children and Youth
14 Beacon Street, Suite 706
Boston, MA 02108
617-742-8555

Sheri A. Brady, Esq.
Program Associate
National Associate of Child
Advocates
1522 K Street, NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005
202-289-0777 ext. 215

Eve Brooks, President
National Association of Child
Advocates
1522 K Street, NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005
202-289-0777 ext. 210

Gary Brunk, Executive Director
Kansas Action for Children
715 Southwest 10th
P.O. Box 463
Topeka, KS 66601
913-232-0550

Suzanne Cambria
Social Work Intern
D.C. Action for Children
1616 P Street, NW, Suite 110
Washington, DC 20036
202-234-9404

Tonia Hunt
Public Policy Assistant
Children First for Oregon
921 SW Morrison Street, Suite 418
Portland, OR 97205
503-294-1456

Jann Jackson
Executive Director
Advocates for Children & Youth
300 Cathedral Street, Suite 500
Baltimore, MD 21201
410-547-9200

Jenniter Keith
Legal Director
Arkansas Advocates for Children and
Families
103 E 7th Street, Suite 931
Little Rock, AR 72201
501-371-9678

Gabrielle Kreisler, Esq.
Citizens' Committee for Children of
New York
105 East 22nd Street
New York, NY 10010
212-673-1800

Paola Maranan
Public Policy Coordinator
The Children's Alliance
172 20th Avenue
Seattle, WA 98122
206-354-0340

Tara T. Marshall
Director of Violence Prevention
Services
Agenda for Children
P.O. Box 51837
New Orleans, LA 70151
504-586-8509

Jim McComb
Advocates for Children & Youth
300 Cathedral Street, Suite 500
Baltimore, MD 21201
410-547-9200

Kathy Bigsby Moore
Executive Director
Voices for Children in Nebraska
7521 Main Street, Suite 103
Omaha, NE 68127
402-597-3100

John S. Niblock
President/CEO
Alliance for South Carolina's
Children
1330 Lady Street
Columbia, SC 29211
803-343-5510

Sharon Claytor Peters
President
Michigan's Children
428 W. Lenawee
Lansing, MI 48933
517-485-3500

Anne Roberts
Executive Director
Oklahoma Institute for Child
Advocacy
420 NW 13th Street, Suite 101
Oklahoma City, OK 73103
405-236-5437

Michael Tierney, Executive Director
Children's Policy Institute of West
Virginia
P.O. Box 3839
Charleston, WV 25338
304-344-3970

Linda Tilly
Executive Director
VOICES for Alabama's Children
P.O. Box 4576
Montgomery, Al 36103
334-213-2410

Jackie Town
Director of Case Advocacy
Kentucky Youth Advocates
2034 Frankfort Avenue
Louisville, KY 40206
502-895-8167

Patrick T. Villani, Ph.D
Executive Director
St. Ann's Home, Inc.
100-A Haverhill Street
Methuen, MA 01844
508-682-5276

Elie Ward
Director of Policy
Statewide Youth Advocacy, Inc.
17 Elk Street-5th Floor
Albany, NY 12207
518-436-8525

Judiths Watts
President/CEO
Agenda for Children
P.O. Box 51837
New Orleans, LA 70151
504-586-8509

Ceil Zalkind
Associate Director
Association for Children of New
Jersey
35 Halsey Street
Newark, NJ 07102
201-643-3876

**Casey and Clark Foundation
Grantees
January 17, 1997**

Anne Grunewald
4 Oaks
5400 Kurtwood Blvd, SW
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52404
319-364-0259

Jody Weigel
Human Services
411 3rd Street, S.E.
Cedar Rapids, Iowa
319-398-3950

JoAnn Harrison
Cabinet for Children and Families
I & I Unit B
7 East
908 West Broadway
Louisville, KY 40203

Karen Hawkins
Department of Community Services
City of Louisville
200 South 7th Street
Louisville, KY 40202
502-574-1369

Diane Seymore
Department of Childre and Families
5920 Arlington Express
Rm. 232
Jacksonville, Fl 32231
904-723-5335

Tena Thompson
Child Service
11 North 7th Street
St. Louis, MO 63101
314-340-7007

Marsha Rose Wickliffe
Anne E. Casey Foundation
701 St. Paul Street
Baltimore, MD 21202
410-223-2961

**Kellogg Foundation Families
for Kids Grantees
January 16, 1997**

Karen Ahmann
Arizona Families for Kids (FFK)
AZ Children's Home Association
2700 South Eighth Avenue
Tucson, AZ 85713
520-622-7611

Sarah Anderson-Mims
North Carolina Families for Kids
NC Division of Social Services
325 North Salisbury Street
Raleigh, NC 27603
919-733-2580

Judge William Byars
Circuit Family Court Judge
Kershaw County Courthouse
Camden, SC 29020
803-425-1500, ext. 390

Don Duquette
Clinical Professor of Law
University of Michigan Law School
Child Advocacy Law Clinic
313 Legal Research Building
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1215
313-763-5000

Brenda Gadson
Massachusetts FFK
Children's Services of Roxbury
8th Floor
105 Chauncy Street
Boston, MA 02111-1726
617-542-2366

Susan Ignelzi
Families First Council
Ohio Family & Children First
Initiative
Office of the Governor
77 South High Street, 30th Floor
Columbus, OH 432-15
614-752-4044

Marie Jamieson, Director
Children's Home Society of
Washington
PO Box 15190
Seattle, WA 98115
206-527-6067

Gloria Hochman
National Adoption Center
1500 Walnut Street, Suite 701
Philadelphia, PA 19102
215-735-9988

Jacquelyn Kidd
NACAC
970 Raymond Avenue - Suite 106
St. Paul, MN 55114-1149
612-644-3036

Wendy Lewis Jackson, Director
Families for Kids - Kent County
c/o The Grand Rapids Foundation
209-C Waters Building
161 Ottawa Avenue
Grand Rapids, MI 49503-2703
616-545-1751

Anotoinette Nelson, Director
Families For Kids Crusade
Administration for Children's
Services - 5th Floor
150 Williams Street
New York, NY 10038
212-676-9207

Renay Sanders, Director
Ohio Families for Kids
Summit County Children's Services
264 South Arlington Street
Akron, OH 44306
330-996-1028

Joan Wagon, Executive Director
Kansas Families for Kids
Suite 206
603 SW Topeka Avenue
Topeka, Kansas 66603
913-354-4663

Linda West
Mississippi Families for Kids
MS Children's Home Society
1900 N. West Street, Suite B
Jackson, MS 39202
800-241-5437

Ying-Ying Yuan
Walter R. McDonald & Assoc., Inc.
Suite 310
12300 Twinbrook Parkway
Rockville, MD 20852
301-881-2590

Valora Washington
W.K. Kellogg Foundation
One Michigan Avenue East
Battle Creek, MI 49017-4058
616-968-1611

**National Organizations
January 16, 1997**

Peggy Soule
Children Awaiting Parents
700 Exchange Street
Rochester, NY 14608
716-232-5110

Zena Oglesby
Institute for Black Parenting
9920 LaCienega Blvd - Suite 806
Inglewood, California 90301
310-348-1400

Carolyn Johnson
National Adoption Center
1500 Walnut Street
Suite 701
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102
215-735-9988

Mary Ford
NACAC
970 Raymond Avenue
Suite 106
St. Paul, MN 55114
612-729-1735

Judith McKenzie
Spaulding for Children
16250 Northland Drive
Suite 120
Southfield, MI 48075
810-443-7080

Terry Cross
National Indian Child Welfare
Association
3611 Southwest Hood Street
Suite 201
Portland, Oregon 97201
503-222-4044

Delois Caldwell
Families Independence Agency
Family Services Administration
Suite 1414
235 Grand
P.O. Box 30037
Lansing, MI 48909
517-373-4558

Robert Ortega
University of Michigan
School of Social Work
4062-Frieze Building
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1285
313-763-6576

Shane Satter
For Love of Children
1711-A 14th Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20009
202-462-7080

Mark McDermott
American Academy of Adoption
Attorneys
1300 19th Street, NW - #400
Washington, DC 20036

Samuel Totaro, President
American Academy of Adoption
Attorney
4 Greenwood Square - Suite 100
Ben Salem, Pennsylvania 19020
215-244-1045

**National Organization Focus Group
January 15, 1996**

Mary Lee Allen
Children's Defense Fund
25 E Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001
202-628-8787

Mark Harden
American Bar Association
740 15th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005
202-662-1000

Karabelle Pizzigati,
Pam Day and Ann Sullivan
Child Welfare League of America
440 First Street, N.W.
Suite 310
Washington, D.C. 20001-2085

Tom Birch
National Child Abuse Coalition
733 15th Street, N.W.
#938
Washington, D.C. 20005
202-347-3666

Bill Pierce and Patrick Purtill, Jr.
National Council for Adoption
1930 17th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009
202-328-1200

Mary Sullivan
National Adoption Information
Clearinghouse
10530 Rosenhaven Street - Suite 400
Fairfax, Va. 22030
703-246-9095

Brenda Russell Nordlinger
Dan Drolet
National Association of Homes and
Services for Children
1701 K Street, N.W., Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20006
202-223-3447

Christine Koucher
Washington Metropolitan Council of
Governments
777 North Capitol Street, N.E.
Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20002-4239
202-962-3200

Caren Kaplan
National Association of Social
Workers
750 First Street, N.E.
Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20002
202-457-0492

Judy Leavitt
Generations United
C/O CWLA
440 First Street, N.W.
Suite 310
Washington, D.C. 20001-2085

**Conference Call with "Big 8 States"
Tuesday, January 14, 1996**

Don Smith
Associate Deputy Commissioner
Services and Community
Development Division
New York Department of Social
Services
40 North Pearl Street
Albany, NY 12243

Dee Richter, Program Manager
Florida Department of Health and
Rehabilitative Services
Bldg. E, Rm 227
1317 Winewood Blvd
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0100

Isaac Palmer
Deputy Director
Ohio Department of Human Services
30 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43266-0415
614-466-5214

Marjorie Kelly, Deputy Director
Children and Family Services
Division
California Dept. of Social Services
744 P Street
Sacramento, California 95814

Richard Hoekstra, Manager
Division of Adoption Services
Michigan Family Independence
Agency
235 South Grand Avenue
Lansing, MI 48909

Joe Loftus
Executive Deputy Director
Illinois Dept. of Children and Family
Services
406 East Monroe Street
Springfield, Illinois 62701-1498

Warren Lewis
Office of Children, Youth and
Families
Pennsylvania Dept. of Public Welfare
DPW Bldg. - Complex #2 - Rm 220
Harrisburg, PA 17105

Jim Hine
Executive Director
Texas Dept. of Protective
and Regulatory Services
Mail Code E-557
P.O. Box 149030
Austin, Tx. 78714-9030

**Conference Call with Urban
Child Welfare Administrators
Wednesday, January 15, 1997**

Sara Webster, Regional Director
Texas Department of Protective
and Regulatory Services
Mail Code E-557
P.O. Box 149030
Austin, Tx 78714-9030

Nicholas Scopetta, Commissioner
New York City Administration for
Children's Services
40 North Pearl Street
Albany, NY 12243

Dr. Imran Ali
District Program Manager
District 11
Florida Dept. of Health
and Rehabilitative Services
Bldg. E, Rm 227
1317 Winewood Blvd
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0100

Renee Powers
Deputy Director
Department of Children and Family
Services
144 P Street
Sacramento, Ca 95814

Joan Reeves
Commissioner
Department of Human Services
Willow Oak Bldg - #42
Harrisburg, Pa 17105

Joe Loftus
Executive Deputy Director
Illinois Dept. of Children and Family
Services
406 East Monroe Street
Springfield, Illinois 62701-1498

**Tribal Conference Call
January 23, 1997**

Pat Serna
Jicarilla Apache Tribe
P.O. Box 100
Jemez Pueblo, NM 87024

Billye Leitka
Seminole Nation of Oklahoma

Virginia Hill, Co-Chair
National Congress of American
Indians
2010 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.
2nd Floor
Washington, D.C. 20036
202-466-7764

Marien Skunkcap
Fort Hall Reservation

Albert Long
Navajo Nation
P.O. Box 4590
Window Rock, Arizona 86515

Polly Sharp
Human Service Policy Director
Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc.
4205 N. 7th Avenue - Suite 200
Phoenix, AZ 85013
602-248-0071

Region I - January 13-14, 1997

Michele Benkis
Director of Clinical Services
30 Mystic Street
Arlington, MA 02203
617-643-6205

Patricia Byrd
Department of Social Services
1537 Main Street
Springfield, MA 02203
413-781-0323

Sharon Castellina
141 Main Street
Brockton, MA 02203
505-587-8110

Christy Chamberlin
1537 Main Street
Springfield, MA 02203
413-781-0323

Donna Eaton-Mahoney
1537 Main St
Brockton, MA 02203
508-584-0980

Lisa Funaro
Boston Children Services
271 Huntington Avenue
Boston, MA 02203
617-267-3700

Mary Gambon
24 Farnsworth Street
Boston, MA 02203
617-727-3171 ext. 589

Eileen Griffin
340 Main Street
Worcester, MA 02203
508-791-1200

Dottie Hollis
430 N. Canal Street
Lawrence, MA 02203
508-685-5930

Maxine Kreikamp
1 Arch Place
Springfield, MA 02203
413-774-5546

Nancy Powers
30 Mystic Street
Arlington, MA 02203
617-643-4783

Donald Roy
33 East Merrimack Street
Lowell, MA 02203
508-452-8970

Rita Schein
24 Farnsworth Street
Boston, MA 02203
617-727-3171 ext. 559

Sharon Silvia
1061 Pleasant Street
New Bedford, MA 02203
508-996-8572

Deborah Wingard
123 Morton Street
Jamaica Plain, MA 02203
617-524-5474

Maria Magoiers
Supreme Judicial Courthouse
1400 New Courthouse
Boston, MA 02108
617-557-1194

Judge Baker
3 Blackfan Circle
Boston, MA 02115
617-232-8398

Brenda Gadson
MA Family for Kids
105 Chauncy Street
8th Floor
Boston, MA 02111
617-542-2366

Dean Putnam
Office of Civil Rights
U.S. Dept. Health & Human Services
Room 1875
JFK Federal Building
Boston, MA 02203
617-565-1344

Dick Richardson
2400 Washington Street
Broxbury, MA 02115
617-445-6055

Karen Parciak
100 Comstock Road
Manchester, CT 06073
860-646-4744

Patty Marchand
1320 Main Street
Willimantic, CT 06073
860-450-2018

Alice Wisten
9 Mott Avenue
Norwalk, CT 06073
203-855-8765

Rosalyn M. Kinno
72 Tryon Street
South Glassbury, CT 06073
860-633-7935

Doris E. Kinder
P.O. Box 1052
Mitchfield, CT 06759
860-567-0285

Patricia Cobb
682 Prospect Avenue
Hartford, CT 06105
860-236-0001

Pam Schneider
P.O. Box 451
Southport, CT 06149
203-255-5520

Vicki Hill
Office of Civil Rights
U.S. Dept. Health & Human Services
Room 1875
JFK Federal Building
Boston, MA 02203
617-565-1340

Felicia Gray
5 Old Orchard Road
Bloomfield, CT 06002
860-243-8441

Elizabeth Johnson-Tyson
DCF - 1 Long Wharf
New Haven, CT 06331
203-786-0691

Richard Vaillencourt
103 Kitt Road
Canterbury, CT 06331
860-546-9655

Carolyn Goodridge
827 Wethersfield Avenue
Hartford, CT. 06114

Helen G. Keegan
P.O. Box 505
Litchfield, CT 06759
860-567-8065

Anne Facis
55 Kelly Green
New London, CT 06320
203-855-8765

Janel Jackson
The Village for Family & Children
1680 Albany Avenue
Hartford, CT 06105
860-297-0581

Joseph Shiptley
7 Vauchall Street
New London, CT 06320
860-442-2797 ext. 335

Dora Hale
CARE
52 Whitehall
Meriden, CT 06451
203-238-6640

Karen Caffrey
17 South Highland Street
West Hartford, CT 06119
860-236-6009

**Region II - New York
January 16-17, 1997**

Jane Barowitz
Jewish Child Care Association of NY
575 Lexington Avenue
NY, NY 10022
212-303-4613

Asari Inniss
Committee for Hispanic Children and
Families
104 West Street
NY, NY 10011
(212) 206-1090

Terri Jackson
Federation of Protestant
Welfare Agencies
281 Park Avenue South, 2nd Floor
New York, New York 10010
212 777-4800

Ms. Cecilia Rivera Healy, CSW
Associate Executive Director,
Saint Joseph Services for
Children and Families
540 Atlantic Avenue
Brooklyn, New York 11217-1982
718 797-6090

Chester Jackson
Adoption Action Network
1220 Neptune Avenue
Brooklyn, New York 12224
800-601-1779

Ms. Maris Blechner
Executive Director
Family Focus Adoption Services
54-40 Little Neck Parkway
Suite 3
Little Neck, New York 11362
718 224-1919

Juana Miranda-Salzman
Coalition for Hispanic
Family Services
315 Wyckoff Avenue, 4th Floor
Brooklyn, New York 11237
718 497-6090

Ms. Marlene Halpern, Esq.
Director, Family Law Task Force
Legal Services of New York
350 Broadway
New York, New York 10013
212 431-7200

Ms. Halpern
Children's Defence Fund - New York
200 Church Street
New York, NY 10013
212-233-4000

Ms. Janice Shudier
National Association of
Black Social Workers
New York Chapter
1969 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10035
212 831-5181

Ann Vankipool-Brown
Miracle Maker
33 Somers Street
Brooklyn, NY 11233
718-455-1331

Lynette Brown
Council of Family & Child
Caring Agencies (COFCCA)
220 E. 23 Street - Suite 905
New York, NY 10010
212-929-2626

Sheryl Dicker
Executive Director
Permanent Judicial Commission
on Justice for Children
c/o Pace University School of Law
78 North Broadway
White Plains, NY 10603
914-422-4425

Barbara Salmanson
Senior Policy Adviser
Office of Policy Management
Comptroller Office for the City of
NY
1 Centre Street - rm 517
New York, NY 10007-2341
212-669-3740

Martha Raman
C-Plan: Child Planning and Advocacy
Now
c/o The Office of the NYC Public
Advocate
1 Centre Street
New York, NY 10007
212-669-4955 and 669-4678

Patricia Warren
Harlem Dowling - Westside Center
for Children & Family Services
2090 Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Blvd.
New York, New York 10027
212-749-3656 Ext. 406

Ms. Betsy Mayberry
Children's Aid Society
105 E. 22nd Street - Suite 517
New York, NY 10010
212-949-4379

NATIONAL ADOPTION STRATEGY FOCUS GROUP

Debbie Martin
The Adoption Institute
6 East 94th Street
New York, NY 10128
212-369-0300 or 360-0278

Patricia Fearon
WE CARE
Foster and Adoptive Parent
Association
135-B West 168th Street
Bronx, New York 10452
718-538-9328

Jessica Watson-Crosby
National Association of Former
Foster Children
P.O. Box 874- Wall Street Station
New York, New York 10268-0874
212-332-0078

Kathy Watson
NYC Administration for Children
Services - Kellog Project
150 William Street - 4th Floor
New York, New York 10038
212-676-7397

Donna DelCielo
NYC Administration for Children
Services - Kellog Project
150 William Street - 4th Floor
New York, New York 10038
212-676-7423

Everton Taibott
NYC Administration for Children
Services - Kellog Project
150 William Street - 4th Floor
New York, New York 10038
212-676-7382

Cathy Amirsar
NYC Administration for Children
Services
80 Lafayette Street - 18th Floor
New York, New York 10013
212-266-2579

Mary Coogan
Association for Children of New
Jersey
35 Halsey Street
Newark, NJ 071102
201-643-3876

Donna Younkin, ARA
Division of Youth and Family
Services
Placement and Permanency Services
CN 717
Trenton, NJ 08625
609-984-2380

Marie Pirog
Administrative Office of the Courts
Hughes Justice Complex
Family Division
CN 983
Trenton, NJ 08625
609-984-4228

Pam Hasegawa
New Jersey Coalition for
Openness in Adoption
29 Hill Street
Morristown, NJ 07960
201-292-2440

Valerie Kelly, Manager
Division of Youth and Family
Services
Adoption Resource Center
Metro
100 Metroplex Drive
1st Floor, Suite 106
Edison, New Jersey 08817
908-819-7272

Joan Wheeler
Adoptive Parent
77 Tuckerton Road
Shamong, NJ 08088
609-268-2422

Patricia Balasco-Barr
Director
Division of Youth and Family
Services - CN 717
Trenton, NJ 08625
609-292-6920

Region III - January 17 & 22, 1997

Mariann Kenville
Adoption Program Specialist
Delaware Division of Family Services
1825 Faulkland Road
Wilmington, Delaware 19805-1195

Gwen Bridges
Office of Social Services
WVa. Department of Health and
Human Resources
Capitol Complex
Bldg. 6 - Room 850
Charleston, West Virginia 25305
304-558-2982

Christine Craig
Planning Office of Social Services
WVa. Department of Health and
Human Resources
Capitol Complex
Bldg. 6 - Room 850
Charleston, West Virginia 25305
304-558-7980

Laura Goodman
Administration
Office of Social Services
WVa. Department of Health and
Human Resources
Capitol Complex
Bldg. 6 - Room 850
Charleston, West Virginia 25305
304-558-7980

Mae Best, Chief,
Adoption Unit
LaShawn General Receiver's Office
609 H Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
202-724-8602

Allicia Walker
Adoption Unit
LaShawn General Receiver's Office
609 H Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
202-724-8602

William Johnson
Adoption Unit
LaShawn General Receiver's Office
609 H Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
202-724-8602

Judy Hutchenson
Adoption Unit
LaShawn General Receiver's Office
609 H Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
202-724-8602

Ruth Smith Stewart
Adoption Unit
LaShawn General Receiver's Office
609 H Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
202-724-8602

Barbara Nalls
Adoption Unit
LaShawn General Receiver's Office
609 H Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
202-724-8602

Sylvester Judge
Adoption Unit
LaShawn General Receiver's Office
609 H Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
202-724-8602

Stephanie Pettaway
Office of Family and Children's
Services
Social Services Administration
Department of Human Resources
311 West Saratoga Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
410-767-7506

Region IV - January 15, 1997

Chris Kendall, Director
Alabama Department of Human
Resources
S. Gordon Person Building
50 Ripley Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-1801
(334) 242-9500

Dee Richter
Permanency Planning Director
Florida Department of Children and
Families
1317 Winewood Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0700
(904) 487-2383

Sarah Brownlee
Acting Child Welfare Director
Georgia Department of Human
Resources
Division of Family and Children
Services
Two Peachtree Street NW
Suite 12-100
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-3180
(404) 657-3400

Vale Henson, Director
Georgia Council of Juvenile Judges
230 Peachtree Street NW
Suite 1625
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
(404) 657-5027

Forrest Burson, Director
State Office of Adoptions
Georgia Department of Human
Resources
47 Trinity Avenue SW
Room-522-H
Atlanta, Georgia 30336-5600
(404) 657-9920

Lorraine Adams, President
Foster Parents Association of Georgia
P.O. Box 155
Douglasville, Georgia 30133
(770) 942-0219

Brooke Thomas, Bureau Manager
Department of Social Services
Cabinet for Families and Children
275 East Main Street
Frankfurt, Kentucky 40621
(502) 592-4303

Carey Durrant, Supervisor, Foster
Care
Department of Social Services
SNAP
908 West Broadway
Louisville, Kentucky 40203-2015
(502) 595-4303

Sue Perry, Director
Division of Family and
Children's Services
MS Dept of Human Services
P.O. Box 352
Jackson, Mississippi 39205
(601) 359-4999

Bridgett Williams
Office of Special Assistant
Attorney General
P.O. Box 220
Jackson, Mississippi 39205
(601) 359-4247

Jamie McBride
Administrative Office of Courts
P.O. Box 117
Jackson, Mississippi 39205
(601) 354-7397

Osborne Shamberger
Child Placement Services
Division of Social Services
325 North Salisbury Street
Raleigh, North Carolina 27603
(919) 733-7672

Ramona Foley, Director
Family Preservation and Child
Welfare Services
South Carolina Department of Social
Services - P.O. Box 1520
Columbia, SC 29202-1520
(803) 734-5670

Gail Yvette Crawford
Foster Care Director
Programs Operations
Department of Children's Services
7th Floor - Cordell Hull Building
436 Sixth Avenue North
Nashville, Tennessee 37243
(615) 532-5597

Region V - January 22, 1997

Mary Anne Kren, Chief
Division of Clinical Services &
Training
IL Dept of Children & Family
Services
100 W. Randolph Street, Rm 6-200
Chicago, IL 60601
312-814-6836

Cathleen Graham
Bureau of Family
Protection/Preservation
Indiana Family and Social Services
Administration
402 West Washington, Rm W364
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2739
317-232-4423

Janet Rhodes-Carlson
 Division of Families and Children
 Bureau of Family
 Protection/Perservation
 Indiana Family and Social Services
 Administration
 402 West Washington, Rm W364
 Indianapolis, IN 46204-2739
 317-232-4622

Anne Fuller
 Division of Families and Children
 Bureau of Family
 Protection/Perservation
 Indiana Family and Social Services
 Administration
 402 West Washington, Rm W364
 Indianapolis, IN 46204-2739
 317-232-4432

Dolores Reid, Chief
 Bureau of Children and Family
 Services
 Office of Child Care & Family
 Services
 Ohio Department of Human Services
 65 East State Street, 5th Floor
 Columbus, OH 43215
 614-728-6983

Annette Hall-Murch
 Planning and Analysis
 Office of Child Care & Family
 Services
 Ohio Department of Human Services
 65 East State Street, 5th Floor
 Columbus, OH 43215
 614-466-9303

Suzanne Ignelzy
 Families First Council
 Ohio Family & Children First
 Initiative
 Office of the Governor
 77 South High Street, 30th Floor
 Columbus, OH 43215
 614-752-4044

Judy Labovitz
 Office of Children's Services
 Child and Family Services
 Family Independence Agency
 235 South Grand Avenue
 P.O. Box 30037
 Lansing, MI 48909
 517-335-6159

Henry Hofstra
 Division of Adoption Services
 Child and Family Services
 Family Independence Agency
 235 South Grand Avenue
 P.O. Box 30037
 Lansing, MI 48909
 517-335-6159

Christopher Marcel
 Bureau for Children, Youth and
 Families
 Division of Children & Family
 Services
 Department of Health & Family
 Services
 P.O. Box 8916
 Madison, WI 53708-8916
 608-266-3595

Region V - January 9, 1997

Marge Bergliand, Director
 Central Baptist Family Services
 122 S. Mich. Ave. Suite 1300
 Chicago, IL 60603

Larry Drury, Executive Director
 Catholic Charities of Springfield
 800 South Fifth
 Springfield, IL 62703

Ray Fannings, Executive Director
 Chicago Child Care Society
 5467 University Avenue
 Chicago, IL 60615

Dan J. Pennell, Executive Director
 Goldie B. Floberg Center
 58 West Rockton Road
 Rockton, IL 61072

Harriett Sadauskas, Executive
 Director
 Association House of Chicago
 2150 West North Avenue
 Chicago, IL 60647

Bob Longo
 Illinois Mentor
 1827 Walden Office Square
 Suite 840
 Schaumburg, IL 60173

Susan Bernstein
 DCFS
 310 South Michigan
 15th Floor
 Chicago, IL 60604

Lynn Gottfret
 LSSI
 610 Abington
 Peoria, IL 61603

Roland Kutla
 DCFS
 100 West Randolph
 Chicago, IL 60601

Marilyn Panichi
 AICI
 100 West Randolph
 Chicago, IL 60601

Marilyn Burguveski
 DCFS
 406 East Monroe
 Springfield, IL 62710-1498

Marikay Hampton
 1177 South Taylor
 Oak Park, IL 60304

Carol Lemieux
 DCFS
 100 West Randolph
 Chicago, IL 60601

Judy Pence
 2426 Austin Drive
 Springfield, IL 62704

Karen Taylor
 DCFS
 2125 S. First Street
 Champaign, IL 61820

Mary Debose
 CHASI
 217 N. Jefferson
 5th Floor
 Chicago, IL 60660-1171

Rosemary McElroy
 Catholic Charities
 541 West Lake
 Chicago, IL 60601

Mary Ann Pullin
The Baby Fold
108 E. Willow Street
Normal, IL 61761

Sylvia Kagena
CCCS
5467 S. University
Chicago, IL 60615

Rosetta Webb
LSSI
600 West Jackson
Chicago, IL 60661

John Schmier
LSSI
600 West Jackson
Chicago, IL 60661

Pat Dreibelbis
Lutheran Child and Family Svc.
322 S. Green, 4th Floor
Chicago, IL 60627

Sylvia Flory
Catholic Charities
901 West Jackson
Chicago, IL 60607

Shaun Lane
CHASI
125 S. Wacker
11th Floor
Chicago, IL 60606

Mike Sakolsky
Catholic Charities/Springfield
800 South Fifth
Springfield, IL 62703

Heidi Jessmain-Darville
Catholic Charities
651 West Lake Street
Chicago, IL 60661

Kelly Berardelli
Aunt Martha's
333 West Joe Orr Road
Chicago Heights, IL 60411

Melinda Woods
Human Services Technologies
901 W. Jackson, Suite 201
Chicago, IL 60607

Sandra Davis-Ross
Cabrini Green Youth & Family
Services
900 N. Franklin, Suite 300
Chicago, IL 60610

Uelich Children's Home
217 N. Jefferson Street
Chicago, IL 60601

Ed He
Lawrence Hall Youth Services
16 N. Wabash
16th Floor
Chicago, IL 60602

Deborah Harris-Johnson
HRDI
9204 S. Commercial
#310
Chicago, IL 60628

Dr. Karanja
Centers for New Horizons
4150 South King Drive
Chicago, IL 60653

Mary Sue Morsch
DCFS
160 North LaSalle, 6th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60601

Alice Castillo
DCFS
100 West Randolph, 6th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60601

Ken Taylor
DCFS
100 West Randolph, 6th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60601

Don Vacca
DCFS
5415 N. University
Peoria, Illinois 61614

Tom Ward
DCFS
227 South 7th
Springfield, IL 62701

Region VI - January 15, 1997

June Flye, Manager, Adoption Unit
Division of Children and Family
Services
Little Rock, AR
501-682-8666

Ada White
Adoption Program Specialist
Department of Social Services
Baton Rouge, LA 70821
504-342-4086

Carmen Weisner, Assistant Director
Field Services Division
Baton Rouge, LA 70821
504-342-4035

Andrea Poole, Senior Associate
Shaening & Associates
Santa Fe, NM 87501
505-474-8500

Robert Klein, Management Analyst
Supreme Court of New Mexico
Santa Fe, NM 87501
505-827-4800

Lorie Levison, Program Manager
Child-Rite (Private adoption agency)
Santa Fe, NM 87501
505-758-0343

Susan Washam, Supervisor of
Placement
Children Youth Families Department
Santa Fe, NM 87501
505-524-6400

Diane Garrity, Attorney for Adoption
Children Youth Families Department
Santa Fe, NM 87501
505-827-8482

Jan Stanley, Supervisor Central
Adoptions
Children Youth Families Department
Santa Fe, NM 87501
505-827-7444

Maryellen Strawniak
Children Youth Families Department
Santa Fe, NM 87501
505-823-3991

NATIONAL ADOPTION STRATEGY FOCUS GROUP

Patricia Lowry, Post Adjudication
Review Board Coordinator
Oklahoma City, OK 73105
405-521-4016 (ext. 127)

Jane Morgan, Adoption Specialist
Department of Children and Families,
DHS
Oklahoma City, OK 73105
405-521-2475

Region VII - January 8, 1997

Charlie Parrish
Adoption Program Manager
Iowa DHS
Hoover State Office Building
5th Floor
Des Moines, Iowa 50319
515-281-5388

Patty Dawson
Adoption Contract Manager
Children & Family Services
300 Southwest Oakley
West Hall
Topeka, KS 66606
913-296-4645

Arlend Oney
Adoption Specialist
P.O. Box 88
Department of Family Services
Jefferson City, MO 65103
573-751-8942

Mary Dyer
Adoption Program Manager
P.O. Box 95026
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-5026
402-471-9331

Region VIII - January

Arta D. Banks
Adoptive Parents
564 Florence St
Aurora, CO 80010
303-367-4128

Karen Beye
Managing Director
Dept. of Human Services
1575 Sherman
Denver, CO 80203-1714
303-866-3063

Eileen B. Bisgard
The Family Extension, Inc
Executive Director
525 3rd Ave.
P.O. Box 1458
Longmont, CO 80502
303-776-1224

Peggy Calloway
Adoptive and Foster Parent
20661 E. Scott Circle
Denver, CO 80249
303-371-7986

Irene Cooke
Executive Director
Denver CASA
225 16th Ave #640
Denver, CO 80203
303-832-4592

Ray Curtis
Social Services Director
Forest Heights Lodge
P.O. Box 789 Forest Hill
Evergreen, CO 80437-0789
303-674-6681

Sue Eliertsen
El Paso County DHS
105 N. Spruce
P.O. Box 2692
Colorado Springs, CO 80901
719-444-5979

Suzette Ellington
Lutheran Family Services
363 So. Marian
Denver, CO 80226
203-922-3433

Elise Flesher
Colorado Juvenile Firesetter
Prevention Program
University of Colorado
Campus Box 345
Boulder, CO 80309-0345
303-492-4580

LaWanda Giron
Lutheran Family Services/CCC
3707 Parkmoor Village Drive #101
Colorado Springs, CO 8091
719-597-0700

Betsy Holland
Alternative Homes for Youth
9201 W. 44th Ave
Wheat Ridge, CO 80033
303-940-5775 ext. 109

Carol Holliday, Director
Adoption Options
2600 S. Parker Road X2-320
Aurora, CO 80014
303-695-1610

Phyllis Lee, Adolescent Svcs Supv.
Mesa County Dept of Social Services
2952 North Avenue
P.O. Box 20000-5035
Grand Junction, CO 81502-5035
970-248-2798

Forrest Lien, Director Clinical
Services
The Attachment Center at Evergreen
P.O. Box 2764
Evergreen, CO 80437-2764
303-674-1910

Joyce Jennings, Executive Director
Colorado Children's Trust Fund
110 16th Street, Third Floor
Denver, CO 80202
303-446-8860

Barbara Killmore, Adoption Specialist
Department of Human Services
1575 Sherman Street
Denver, CO 80203-1714
303-866-3209

Ann MacDonald
The Family Extension
525 Third Avenue
Longmont, CO 80502
303-776-1224

Greg & Denise McHugh, Director
Colorado Association of Family
and Children's Agencies
P.O. Box 10067
Denver, CO 80210
303-698-1876

Daniel Moore
Arapahoe County DSS
1690 W. Littleton Blvd
Littleton, CO 80120-2069
303-728-5661

NATIONAL ADOPTION STRATEGY FOCUS GROUP

13

Dena Neujahr, Adoption Supervisor
Mesa County DSS
2952 North Avenue
P.O. Box 20000-5035
Grand Junction, CO 81502-5035
970-248-2798

Jenelle Peterson, CEO
Loving Homes, Inc.
212 West 13th Street
Pueblo, CO 81003
719-545-6181

Paula Pickle, Executive Director
The Attachment Center at Evergreen
P.O. Box 2764
Evergreen, CO 80437-2764
303-674-1910

Melody Roe, Program Director
The Adoption Exchange
925 So. Niagara #100
Denver, CO 80224
303-33-0845

Peggy Rudden, Volunteer Director
Arapahoe Advocates for Children
3000 S. Jamaica Court, Suite 175
Aurora, CO 80014-4601
303-695-1882

Jacquelyn D. Stanton
The Bridging Group
1350 Chambers Road, Suite 108
Aurora, CO 80011
303-341-0014

Karen Studen
Director, Child Welfare
Dept. of Human Services
1575 Sherman Street
Denver, CO 80203-1714
303-866-4365

Judy Rost
Dept of Public Health &
Permanency Planning Specialist
Human Services
220 Lamme, Suite 2-E
Bozeman, MT 59715-3579
406-585-9984

Fielding M. McGehee
Adoptive Parent
503 Hamline Street
Grand Forks, ND 58203

Linda Schell
Administrator Adoption Services
Dept of Human Services
Children & Family Services Division
State Capitol - Judicial Wing
800 E Boulevard
Bismarck, ND 58505-0250
701-328-4805

Don Schmid, Director
Dept. of Human Services
Children & Family Services Division
State Capitol - Judicial Wing
800 E. Boulevard
Bismarck, ND 58505-0250
701-328-4811

Rev. Keith D. Ingle, President
Lutheran Social Services of ND
1325 South 11th Street
Fargo, ND 58107-0389
701-235-7341

Roger Schwinghammer, Executive
Director
Catholic Family Service
2537 South University
Fargo, ND 58107-0389
701-235-4457

Gary Wolesky, Executive Director
Village Family Service Center
1201 25th Street South
Fargo, ND 58106-9859
701-235-6433

Paula Davis
Dept of Social Services
Child Protection Services
Box 670
Watertown, SD 57201
605-882-5050

Dede Good
Lutheran Social Services
600 W. 12th Street
Sioux Falls, SD 57104
605-336-3347

Julie Klinger
Lutheran Social Services
600 W. 12th Street
Sioux Falls, SD 57104
605-336-3347

Deb Riley
Child Protection Services
P.O. Box 1300
Aberdeen, SD 57402-7300
605-626-2388

Department of Social Services
Office of Field Management
300 E. 6th Street
Sioux Falls, SD 57103-7020

Tom Baxter
LDS Social Services
10 East South Temple Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84150
801-240-6500

Ron Boyce
Children's Service Society
of Utah
1245 400 East - South 400
Salt Lake City, UT 84111
801-355-7444

LeRoy Franke, Adoption Specialist
Dept of Human Services
Division of Child & Family Services
120 North 200 West, Suite 225
Salt Lake City, UT 84103
801-538-4100

Marty Shannon
Children's Service Society
of Utah
1245 400 East - South 400
Salt Lake City, UT 84111
801-355-7444

Pat Worthington
Foster Care Citizens
Review Board
P.O. Box 45490
Salt Lake City, Utah 84110
801-524-9068

Elizabeth Groom, Director
Catholic Social Services
of Wyoming, Inc.
Diocese of Cheyenne,
P.O. Box 425
Cheyenne, WY 82003
800-788-4606

NATIONAL ADOPTION STRATEGY FOCUS GROUP

Bill Rankin
Department of Family Services
Social Services Consultant
Hathaway Building
Cheyenne, WY 82002
307-777-3570

Region IX - January 14, 1997

Carole Rourke-Linker,
Arizona Department of Economic
Security
P.O. Box 6123
Phoenix, Arizona 85005
602-542-2359

Mary Black
Black Family Children's Services
522 East Southern Avenue
Phoenix, Arizona 85040
602-243-1498

Marcy Valen
Arizona Children's Home Association
P.O. Box 7277
Tucson, Arizona 85725-7277
520-622-7611 Ext. 1331

Jim Brown, Chief
California Department of Social
Services
744 P Street, MS 19-69
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-445-3146

Graham Wright
Future Families
3233 Valencia Avenue
Suite A-6
Aptos, CA 95003
408-662-0202 ext. 19

Lansing Wood
1009 Forest Court
Palo Alto, CA 94301
415-328-6832

Sara Berman, Chief
L.A. County Department of Children
and Family Services, Adoptions
695 South Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90005

Danna Fabella
Assistant Director
Contra Costa County Social Services
40 Douglas Drive
Martinez, CA 94553-4068
510-313-1584

Wanda Scott
Division of Family Social Services
6171 West Charleston
Bldg. 15
Las Vegas, Nevada 89158
808-586-5709

Linda Maisel
Catholic Community Services of
Northern Nevada
P.O. Box 5099
Reno, Nevada 89513-5099
702-322-7073

Region X

Roseanne Hardin, Administrator
Family and Community Services
P.O. Box 83720 - 5th Floor
Boise, ID 83720-0036
1-208-334-5700

Kathy James, Bureau Chief
Family and Community Services
P.O. Box 83720 - 5th Floor
Boise, ID 83720-0036
1-208-334-5700

Meri Brennan, Adoption Program
Specialist
Family and Community Services
P.O. Box 83720 - 5th Floor
Boise, ID 83720-0036
1-208-334-5700

Chuck Halligan
Foster Care Program Specialist
Family and Community Services
P.O. Box 83720 - 5th Floor
Boise, ID 83720-0036
1-208-334-5700

Linda Rodenbach, Program Manager
Region IV Family and Children's
Services
4355 Emerald Street
Boise, ID 83704
208-334-6800

Tim Sanders, Clinical Supervisor
Family and Children's Services
107 Poplar
Caldwell, ID 83605
1-208-454-0421

Mary Johnson
Human Services Supervisor
Family and Children's Services
P.O. Box 4166
Pocatello, ID 83205
1-208-235-2952

Donna Euler
Adoptions Supervisor
Lutheran Social Services
2201 Government Way, Suite J,
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814
1-208-667-1898

Janice Kroeger
Deputy Attorney General
Department of Health and Welfare
P.O. Box 83720- 10th Floor
Boise, ID 83720-0036
1-208-334-5537

Claudia Hutchison
Program Coordinator
Boys and Girls Aid Society
018 S.W. Boundry Court
Portland, OR 97201-3985
1-503-222-9661, ext 110

Nancy Miller
Administrator, Citizen Review Board
325 13th Street NE, #404
Salem, OR 97310
1-503-348-5430

Mary Ickies
Adoption Program Specialist
State Office for Services
to Children and Families
500 Summer Street NE, 2nd floor
Salem, OR 97310-1017

Beth Meyers
Services to Children and Families
7825 North Lombard Street
Portland, OR 97203
1-503-731-4646

NATIONAL ADOPTION STRATEGY FOCUS GROUP

Jan Knowles
 Permanency and Adoption Specialist
 State Office for Services
 to Children and Families
 500 Summer Street, 2nd floor
 Salem, OR 97310

Gloria Silas Webster
 Delores Brown
 Linda Wang
 DHHS/OCR - Region X
 2201 Sixth Ave RX 11
 Seattle, WA 98121
 206-615-2588

Barbara Pearson
 Northwest Adoption Exchange
 Director, NW Adopt Ex
 1809 7th Ave
 Suite 409
 Seattle, 98101
 206-282-0082

Kathy Tibbles
 Division of Family and Youth
 Services
 PO Box 110630
 Juneau, AK 99811-0630
 907-465-3633

Linda West
 Judy Mukpik
 DFYS
 3025 Clinton Drive, 1st Floor
 Juneau, AK 99801

Norma Acevedo-Kohout,
 Wilhelmenia Simpson
 Brunhilde Eska
 Linda Gonzales
 DFYS
 550 W. Eighth Ave
 Anchorage, AK 99501

Mary Marte
 Catholic Social Services
 225 Cordova St Bldg B
 Anchorage, AK 99501

Melody Jamison
 Fairbanks Counseling
 and Adoption Agency
 PO Box 71544
 Fairbanks, AK 99708

Susan Arts
 DFYS
 751 Old Richardson Highway Suite
 300
 Fairbanks, AK 99701

Guy McMinds
 Director of Social Services
 Quinault Indian Nation
 PO Box 189
 Taholah, WA 98587

Lisa Guzman
 Coordinator
 Native American Commission
 on Children and Families
 Muckleshoot Tribe
 39015 172nd Ave SE
 Auburn, WA 98092
 206-939-6648

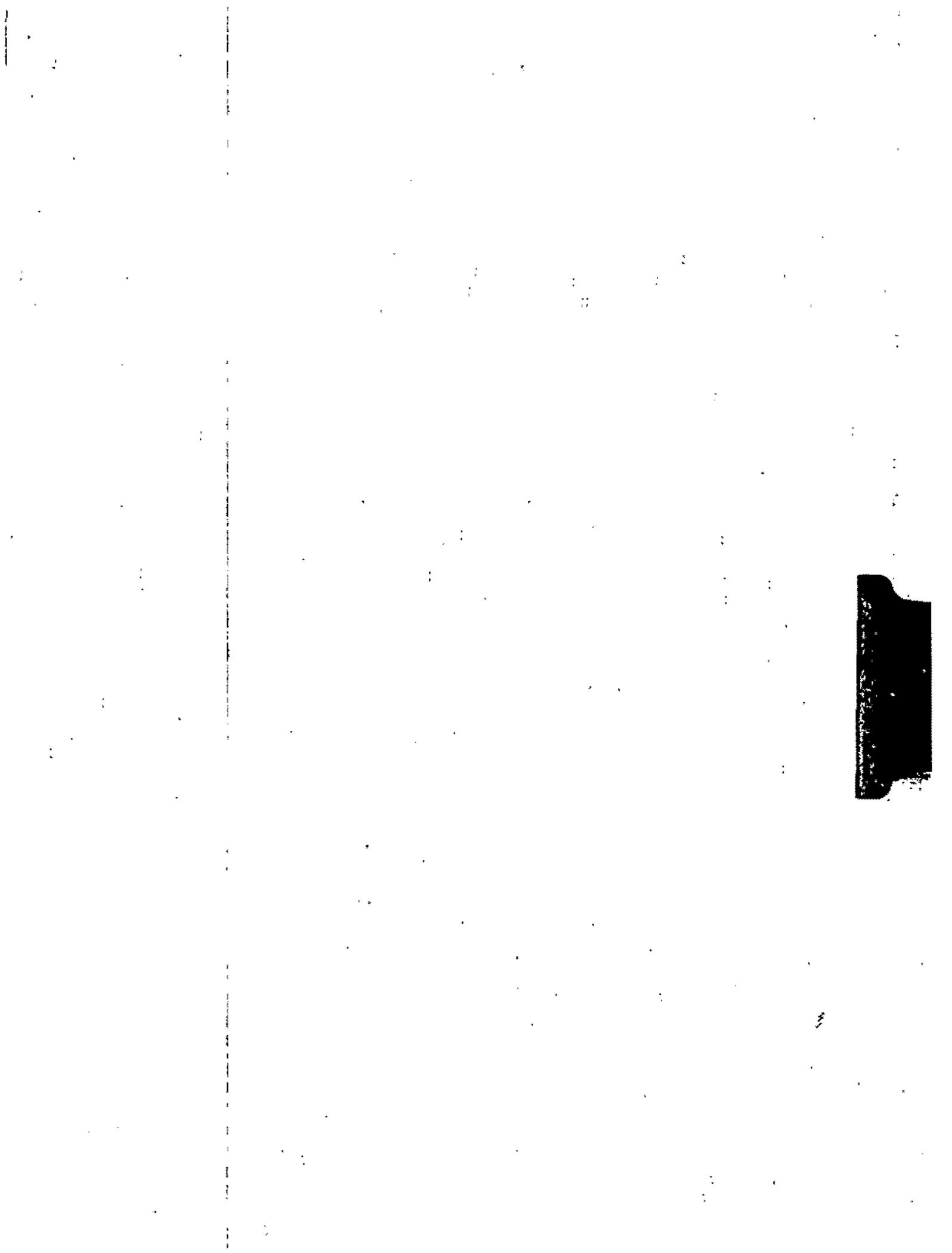
Chris Robinson
 Supervisor
 DSHS/Div of Program & Policy
 Children's Administration
 PO Box 45710
 Olympia, WA 98504-5710
 360-902-7953

Marie Jamison, Director
 Families for Kids Project (Kellogg
 grant)
 Children's Home Society
 PO Box 15190
 Seattle, WA 98115
 206-524-6020

Norma Nelson
 Permanency Specialist
 Families for Kids
 Children's Home Society
 PO Box 15190
 Seattle, WA 98115
 206-524-6020

David Simmons
 ICW Program Specialist
 National Indian Child Welfare
 Association
 3611 SW Hood Suite 201
 Portland, OR 97201

Gwen Townsend
 Executive Director
 One Church One Child
 451 SW 10th St Suite 120
 Renton, WA 98055-2981



Appendix D

THEMES EMERGING FROM THE ADOPTION 2002 CONSULTATION PROCESS

ELIMINATING BARRIERS TO PERMANENCY

● The Elimination of Geographical Barriers

A number of geographical barriers to the placement of waiting children were identified, including the lack of dissemination of information on waiting families and children, a reluctance on the part of agencies to conduct home studies to place children who are outside of their jurisdictions, a reluctance of agencies to accept home studies conducted by agencies in other jurisdictions, difficulties in transferring Medicaid benefits, and issues with the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children.

● Lack of Adequate Services to Prevent Out-of-Home Placement, to Efficiently Serve Birth Parents, and to Support Adoptive Families

Participants and correspondents expressed concern that the supportive services required for good child welfare practice are unavailable or inadequate. The lack of substance abuse and mental health treatment was specified repeatedly as a major factor that delays permanency. If no services are made available to the family, caseworkers and judges cannot accurately assess parental progress and whether there have been reasonable efforts to prevent placement and/or reunify the family, thereby delaying placement decisions for the child.

Participants also strongly felt that a lack of post-legal adoption services jeopardized many adoptions. In addition, potential adoptive parents may be deterred from adopting by the fact that they cannot be assured post-legal adoptive services, which are particularly critical to facilitate the placement of special needs children.

● Current Funding Streams

Some participants stressed a need to provide more flexibility to spend money in the front end of the service continuum for better family assessment, placement prevention, and reunification activities. Some participants felt that the system currently provides rewards to States to keep children in foster care or reunify them, but not to place them in adoption. In addition, they felt that potential adoptive parents are often not informed about the availability of adoption subsidy which further impedes the movement of foster children into adoption. The funding stream problems are exacerbated by fragmentation and separation of foster care and adoption in the child welfare system.

- Multiethnic Placement Act (MEPA)/Interethnic Adoption Provision

In discussions about MEPA and the Interethnic Adoption provision, groups repeatedly placed a strong emphasis on the recruitment provisions of MEPA. Most participants volunteered no information or opinions on how to better ensure compliance with the nondiscrimination provisions. One group of participants insisted that States continue to ignore MEPA/Interethnic Adoption Provision and that HHS needs only to enforce the current law.

MOVING CHILDREN TO PERMANENCE MORE PROMPTLY

- Reasonable Efforts Requirements

Participants indicated that the safety of the child was of paramount concern and that the child's best interests should be at the heart of all decisions. In general, participants felt that the reasonable efforts requirements need clarification. In general, the focus groups reacted positively to proposals to add a requirement that a reasonable effort for permanency standard is needed.

- Improvements in Court Processes

All focus groups and many correspondents emphasized that the courts are as crucial as the child welfare system to ensure timely decision-making. They repeatedly called for the education of attorneys and judges about the importance of permanency for children. They further suggested that the training of legal and child welfare staff be combined, when possible, in order to build a common knowledge base that would enable them to better work together. They cited the Court Improvement Projects, currently underway, as examples of the kind of technical assistance and leadership that the Federal government can undertake with the judiciary.

- Research, Training, and Technical Assistance to Develop New Child Welfare Tools

The groups offered specific proposals to develop new child welfare tools including family mediation, voluntary relinquishment counseling, and open adoption, particularly for relative placements. The most common suggestion was for more work in the area of concurrent planning. Participants in focus groups and correspondents advised that the Federal government should take a leading role in the areas of research, model development, and training and technical assistance.

- Support for Alternative Permanency Arrangements

The groups and correspondents widely agreed that adoption is the most legally secure and developmentally beneficial permanency arrangement. However, many tribal participants dissented from

this view and cautioned that adoption is frequently culturally inappropriate for Indian children. In addition, even though participants generally recognized the superior benefits of adoption for children, they also felt that it was important to develop other permanency options including guardianship, kinship care, and even co-parenting. Particularly with regard to guardianship and kinship care, participants suggested that Federal and State governments provide more financial support and services to families. Tribal representatives were especially vocal regarding the need to explore other permanency options.

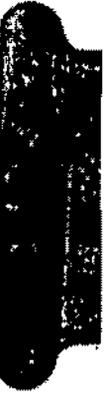
DOUBLING THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN WHO ACHIEVE PERMANENCY

- Focus on the Children who are Hardest to Place

The participants repeatedly expressed apprehension that numerical targets and financial incentives might drive States to focus on children who tend to be easier to place (e.g., very young children) and those who merely lack legal finalization (e.g., those in adoptive placements with foster parents). They cautioned that attention should not be diverted from the problems of children with special developmental needs, older children, or children in sibling groups, who are the least likely to find permanency in a timely manner.

- The Incentive Structure Inherent in Adoption 2002 Bonuses

Participants discussed their concerns that the Adoption 2002 financial bonuses may affect or distort the incentive structure in the child welfare system. The participants wanted to use the Adoption 2002 fiscal incentives to benefit the children who are hardest to place, without resulting in the separation of sibling groups, a disproportionate focus on younger children, or an increase in adoption disruptions. In addition, they indicated that the bonuses should be implemented in ways that are respectful of the rights of birth families and that improve the functioning of the entire child welfare system over the long-term. The groups also were concerned that fiscal penalties might accompany the bonuses, such as reductions in Title IV-E funds for children who remain in foster care for extended periods of time.



Appendix E

**This Appendix is designated for
Governors' Letters of Support**

Appendix F

Federal Programs to Support Adoption

With the passage of P.L. 96-272, the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980, the Federal government established a clear focus on the need for permanency for children in foster care and the importance of permanency planning and timely decision-making for these children. The law increased protections for children in foster care by requiring case plans that included a description of the placement and its appropriateness, and a plan for services to facilitate the child's return home or to another permanent placement. An 18 month initial dispositional hearing requirement was legislated and an administrative or judicial case review was required at least every six months.

Several important Federal laws and programs promote the adoption of children with special needs. These include:

- Title IV-E Adoption Assistance - Title IV-E of the Social Security Act provides funds to States to facilitate the adoption of children with special needs who were or would have been eligible for AFDC; thereby preventing long or inappropriate stays in foster care. Federal matching funds are available to States for a one time payment for the non-recurring costs of adopting a special needs child, and for monthly subsidies to adoptive families to assist them with caring for a child with special needs. Federal funds also are used to assist States with the administrative costs of managing the program (e.g., for the recruitment and assessment of adoptive families), and for staff training.
- Adoption Opportunities Program (Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment and Adoption Reform Act of 1978) - The Adoption Opportunities Program works to eliminate barriers to adoption and provide permanent homes for children who would benefit from adoption. It does so by: (1) promoting adoption legislation and procedures in the States and territories of the United States in order to eliminate jurisdictional and legal obstacles to adoption; (2) promoting quality standards for adoption services, pre-placement, post-placement, and post-legal adoption counseling, and standards to protect the rights of the children in need of adoption; and (3) demonstrating expeditious ways to free children for adoption for whom it has been determined that adoption is the appropriate plan. This discretionary program awards grants and contracts to public and private non-profit agencies.
- The Adoption Tax Credit - In August 1996, President Clinton signed into law the Small Business Job Protection Act of 1996 which authorizes a \$5,000 tax credit (\$6,000 in the case of a child with special needs) for qualified adoption expenses. This tax credit is designed to help alleviate

some of the financial barriers to adoption.

- Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994 (MEPA/IEP) - The MEPA, as amended by the Interethnic Adoption Provisions of the Small Business Job Protection Act of 1996, was designed to prohibit denial or delay in the foster or adoptive placement of children on the basis of race, color, or national origin; increase the number of adoptive and foster care families for children in foster care; and increase the number of children who are adopted. These laws seek to ensure that the adoption process is free from discrimination and delays on the basis of race, culture and ethnicity.
- The Court Improvement Program (CIP) - The CIP provides State courts with the opportunity to collaborate with the other organizations and individuals responsible for promoting and protecting the well-being of children and families to review laws and procedures designed to provide rights and protection to parents, families, and children. It provides State courts with the flexibility to design assessment tools which identify ineffective laws or procedures and barriers to effective decision-making, highlight practices which are not fully successful, examine areas found to be in need of correction or added attention, and then implement reforms which facilitate the timely execution of plans for permanency.
- The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) - ICWA established requirements and standards for child-placing agencies to follow in the placement of Indian Children for the purpose of protecting the cultural heritage of these children. These standards include: the provision of remedial, culturally appropriate services for Indian families before a placement occurs; notification of tribes regarding the placement of Indian children; and, when placement must occur, it requires that children be preferentially placed in Indian homes.



THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

I am pleased to submit to you Adoption 2002, the Department of Health and Human Services' response to your December 14, 1996 adoption directive. This report represents the culmination of an intensive 60-day consultation process with over 600 foster and adoptive parents, professionals, policy experts and advocates at the national, State and local levels. Participants reached consensus on three significant principles. First, every child deserves a safe, permanent, and loving family. Second, a child's best interests should be the paramount consideration in permanency decisions. Finally, timeframes for decision making must be respectful of a child's developmental needs and the child's sense of time.

The Department has outlined, in this report, a series of policy and practice-related action steps that will be implemented to achieve the goal of finding permanent placements for 54,000 children by the year 2002. Adoption 2002 responds directly to your challenge to overcome barriers to permanency and to double the number of adoptions. The child welfare system's capacity to accelerate permanent placements for children in foster care can be achieved only through a recognition of the long-range impact of decisions that are made when children first enter the system.

The Department would like to thank the many individuals who participated in the consultation process, and we look forward to further developing those partnerships in the near future. We are fully committed to working with States, communities, organizations, and adoption advocates as we implement the recommendations made in this report.

Sincerely,

Donna E. Shalala

Enclosure

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 12/13 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: 12/14 8:00 am

SUBJECT: Radio address on adoption

	ACTION	FYI		ACTION	FYI
VICE PRESIDENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	McCURRY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PANETTA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	McGINTY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
McLARTY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NASH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ICKES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	QUINN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
LIEBERMAN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	RASCO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
RAINES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	REED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BAER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SOSNIK	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CURRY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	STEPHANOPOULOS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
EMANUEL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	STIGLITZ	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GIBBONS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	STREETT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HALE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	TYSON	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HERMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	HAWLEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HIGGINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	WILLIAMS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HILLEY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Weldman</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KLAIN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Bowles</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
LAKE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Verveer</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
LINDSEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Rabner</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS: Comments to David Shipley

RESPONSE: _____

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
WEEKLY RADIO ADDRESS
THE WHITE HOUSE
DECEMBER 14, 1996

*She has been so instrumental in this
issue for so long. I'm also pleased*

Good morning. I am here in the Oval Office with Hillary and a remarkable group of children and parents to make a special announcement. Today, we are taking important new steps to make adoption easier and to move children out of foster care faster. These efforts will help give even more children what every child needs and deserves -- loving parents in a strong, stable home.

I am especially pleased to be able to take this action now -- in this season of hope and light. The holidays we celebrate this month teach us that, through faith and love, we can truly repair the world. I can think of no better way to fulfill the promise of the season than to bring a child to a family and a family to a child.

There are more than 450,000 children in the nation's foster care system. They are placed there because of abuse, neglect, or a homelife that is neither safe nor secure. While most of these children eventually return to their original homes, nearly 100,000 of them simply do not have that option. These children wait far too long -- typically 3 years or more -- to find permanent homes and families to love them.

I know we can do better. And with today's steps, we will. But before I describe our efforts to speed up adoptions, I was hoping we could hear a few words from someone who has worked long and hard on this issue: The First Lady. Hillary?

During this holiday season, as we make time to be with our families, we recognize how much we cherish and rely on our parents, spouses, children, and other relatives. But too many children across our country -- children with tremendous capacities to love and bring joy and energy into a new home -- are still waiting for the love of a mother, a father, a great cat like Socks. A permanent family.

The only way to make sure that no child languishes in our foster care system, is for all of us to get involved. We all need to work together to unite America's waiting children with loving, permanent families.

And I am proud of the great efforts the President and his Administration are making to encourage and streamline the adoption process in our country.

Promoting adoption has been at the heart of my Administration's efforts to protect our children and strengthen our families. Earlier this year, I signed a \$5,000 tax credit to help

families adopt children. We put an end to racial preferences for adoption -- no longer will laws keep children of one race from the nurturing arms of adoptive parents of another.

Anthony Byrne
This is a good start, but we must do more. That is why I just signed a Presidential Directive with a clear goal: ~~By the year 2002, we will double the number of children we move from foster care to permanent homes -- from 27,000 last year to 54,000 in 6 years.~~ ^{a year} With this effort, we are saying: No child should be trapped in the limbo of foster care. No child should be uncertain what the words "family" or "parents" or "home" mean -- particularly when there are open arms waiting to welcome these children into safe households where they can build good, caring lives.

As part of this initiative, I am directing the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Donna Shalala -- who is with us today -- to launch an extensive effort to determine what steps we must take to meet our goal. I want the Secretary to report back to me with her recommendations in 60 days.

This report must tell us how we can help states set -- and meet -- urgent, new adoption targets. It must describe how we can improve coordination among local, state, and federal authorities, so that every community has access to the best ways to encourage adoption. And it must outline what sensible financial incentives we can provide states to raise adoption rates.

I also want the Secretary to determine what additional changes we can make in federal laws and regulations to ensure that children won't get trapped in foster care. And I want to know if there are new provisions we can put in place to move children through the system faster and to protect them when they leave.

There are other steps we are taking immediately. I am instructing the Departments of Treasury, Labor, Commerce, and Health and Human Services to launch an all-out effort to heighten public awareness about adoption and to recognize those in the private sector who are committing themselves to this important cause.

Let me also say how grateful I am to those in Congress -- of both parties -- who are working so hard to make adoption a reality for America's most vulnerable children. I want especially to thank Senators Rockefeller and DeWine and Representatives Kennelly and Camp for their efforts.

The fact that we are commemorating the birth of a child who began his life in a manger and became the Prince of Peace should remind us of the promise God has placed in every child. We must work tirelessly to make sure that every boy and girl in America who is up for adoption has a family waiting to reach out to him or her. No child should be in foster care any longer than they have to be. This is a season of miracles. And perhaps there is no greater miracle than finding a loving home for a child who needs one. Thanks for listening.

LANGUAGE FOR AFTER RADIO ADDRESS:

Thank you for coming -- and I'd like to welcome the people who are listening from the Roosevelt Room. I thought we might take a moment to have a more detailed discussion about foster care, adoption, and what we can do to find good homes for even more children. And I was hoping the First Lady would start us off.



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Melissa T. Skolfield

Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs

Phone: (202) 690-7850 Fax: (202) 690-5673

To: Nicole Rabner
Bruce Reed

Fax: 456-6244 Phone: _____

Pages: 456-5331 Total number of pages sent: 6

Comments:

Q + A. on adoption.

Please let me know if you have questions/comments. These are also going through a quick internal clearance process here.

Thanks,
Joly

200 Independence Avenue, S.W., Bldg. HHH, Room 647-B, Washington, D.C. 20201

12/13/96

12/13/96

12/13/96

12/13/98 FRI 17:48 FAX 2026908073

DHHS/ASPA

003

Q. Why didn't the President take this step earlier?

A. Since taking office, President Clinton has made increasing adoption and improving the foster care system a priority. He has signed critical legislation that have removed significant financial and racial barriers to adoption, including the Adoption Promotion and Stability Act of 1996 and the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act, which provides a \$5,000 tax credit for families who adopt children and ensures that the adoption process is free from discrimination on the basis of race, culture and ethnicity. He has championed programs like the Family and Medical Leave Act which supports adopting families and preserved resources for child protection and adoption by signing the welfare reform law. The President and the First Lady have promoted and encouraged the importance and benefits of adoption through speeches, events and public service announcements. This directive builds on the President's strong commitment to and accomplishments on this issue.

Q. Are you trying to preempt Congress on adoption?

A. No. We are committed to working with Congress in a bipartisan manner to develop a plan to increase the number of children adopted or permanently placed from foster care and move children from foster care to permanent homes more quickly. Finding safe and permanent homes for all children is a goal to which we know everyone is committed and should be addressed in a bipartisan way. The President's directive presents an extraordinary opportunity for the Federal government, Congress, states, communities, and advocacy organizations to work together toward giving the 450,000 children in foster care what every child in America deserves -- loving parents and a healthy, stable home.

12/13/98 FRI 17:48 FAX 2026908073

DHHS/ASPA

002

Questions and Answers on Adoption

Q. What is the purpose of the President's directive?

A. The purpose of the President's directive is to develop a new plan to move children more rapidly from foster care to safe, permanent homes, and to at least double, by the year 2002, the number of children in foster care who are adopted or permanently placed from the public foster care system. The directive focuses on securing homes for the tens of thousands of children in the foster care system who cannot return safely to their homes and for who adoption is a goal. It also will increase public awareness on the importance and benefits of adoption.

DHHS

Q. Which Cabinet agencies are involved in implementing the President's directive on adoption?

A. The Departments of Health and Human Services, Treasury, Commerce and Labor and the Office of Personnel Management were directed by the President to develop a new plan to move children more rapidly from foster care to safe, permanent homes, and to at least double, by the year 2002, the number of children in foster care who are adopted or permanently placed from the public foster care system.

Q. What role do you see for States in implementing the President's directive on Adoption?

A. States are the operators of the public welfare system and therefore are critical to ensuring the President's goals of moving children more rapidly from foster care to safe, permanent homes and doubling the number of children adopted and or permanently placed by the year 2002. We plan to work extremely closely with states, consulting with them on every aspect of the President's directive. We know that the states share the President's commitment to increasing adoption and improving the foster care system and we are counting on them to directly assist HHS in the formulation and implementation of the new action plan on adoption.

Q. What role do you see for advocacy groups and foundations in implementing the President's directive on adoption?

A. We have worked closely with advocacy groups and foundations on past adoption initiatives and we plan to consult with them on the President's new directive. We welcome advocacy groups and foundations' participation in developing and helping states implement new strategies on adoption, as they have immense knowledge and experience in this area.

Q. What were the adoption-related provisions in the Small Business Job Protection Act?

A. The Small Business Job Protection Act does three things:

- Strengthens the language of the Multiracial Placement Act (MEPA) to make it even clearer that neither foster placements nor adoptions may be delayed or denied solely on the basis of the cultural, ethnic or racial background of the child or the prospective foster or adoptive parents;
- Imposes financial penalties for States (and other agencies receiving federal funds) which fail to comply with MEPA; and
- Provides an adoption tax credit for all adoptions, with a premium for special needs adoptions.

FR:JPM

FR:JPM

FR:JPM

12/13/95 FRI 17:47 FAX 2028805873

DHS/ASPA

005

Congress left in place other provisions of MEFA, including the State Plan requirement for States to provide for the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the State for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed.

Q: What has HHS done to implement these new provisions?

A: On November 14, the Department issued an Information Memorandum to give the States and the public the details of the inter-state adoption legislation. That issuance (ACYF-IM-CB-96-24) which also announced the new kinship preference which Congress added to the child welfare laws, informed the public that the procedures for applying the penalty would be published at a later date.

The Department has taken or begun a number of other actions to implement the provisions of the Small Business Job Protection Act. These include meeting with the Internal Revenue Service to develop a public information strategy on the adoption tax credit, and establishing a working group of Children's Bureau and Office of Civil Rights staff to begin work on a procedure and protocol to ensure consistent application of the new penalty provisions.

Q: What is the National Adoption Strategic Plan and how does it relate to the President's Directive?

A: Last year, HHS's Children's Bureau organized a national meeting, which included State adoption managers, representatives from national advocacy organizations and private non-profit organizations, adoptive parents and Federal staff to draft a strategic plan to increase the number of children adopted from the public child welfare system. This Plan was written as a draft or working document to provide an outcome-focused framework for all those involved with the adoption of special needs children from the public child welfare system.

The meeting was conducted under the GPR process, which has been used successfully by other agencies within the Department. The draft Plan, viewed overall, is intended as a holistic framework for adoption services for children with special needs and the families who adopt them and will no doubt be used as a foundation for the activities under the President's Directive. This directive presents an extraordinary opportunity for the Federal government, Congress, States, communities, and advocacy organizations to work together toward securing loving adoptive homes on behalf of America's waiting children. It represents as well an opportunity to capitalize on the work begun on the Adoption Strategic Plan, and advance the contributions made by the many contributors to the draft plan.

11/22/96

11/22/96 10:11 AM



STATE OF WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

P.O. Box 40002 • Olympia, Washington 98504-0002 • (360) 753-6780 • TTY/TDD (360) 753-6466

December 13, 1996

The Honorable Bill Clinton
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I applaud the effort you are spearheading to help children move from foster care to permanent families. This is an issue of great importance in Washington State, and I know that other Governors join me in welcoming any assistance the federal government can share with potential adoptive families.

More than twenty years ago, Washington was one of the first states to provide financial assistance to families to remove barriers to the adoption of children from the child welfare system. More recently, we have implemented the Families for Kids program, a joint effort of public and private agencies and the courts, to move children from long-term foster care into adoptive families more quickly.

I look forward to hearing more about your plans, and applaud your leadership and commitment to helping children find stable, loving homes.

Sincerely,

Mike Lowry
Mike Lowry
Governor

Washington

State will

be coming.

STATE OF COLORADO

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

130 State Capitol
Denver, Colorado 80203-1702
Phone: (303) 866-2471



December 13, 1996

Roy Romer
Governor

President William Jefferson Clinton
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Clinton:

I congratulate you on your policy on adoption, particularly your efforts to expedite the placement of children with supportive families. This is an issue which is critically important to the State of Colorado and I welcome the support of your office as we attempt to deal with this vital issue.

Colorado is anxious to work with you as you develop a national forum for planning and implementation of state and federal systems to better serve children and help to move them quickly out of foster care to permanent and supportive families. We are very concerned that we minimize the disruption in the lives of children when they experience difficulties in their families of origin.

In Colorado, we are focusing intently on these issues. We are working with our state judicial system, with the assistance of the chief justice of the Colorado Supreme Court, with the Colorado General Assembly, and with representatives of county governments, private providers, and representatives of the juvenile corrections, mental health, substance abuse treatment and developmental disability systems to develop a procedure that will minimize disruption in the lives of children, assure their safety, and see that they do not languish in foster care. Your emphasis on strengthening and supporting adoptions for children who cannot be reunited with their families of origin is a most important effort.

Again, I welcome your national leadership on the issue of adoption and on the broad issue of helping children find and flourish in permanent, supportive families.

Sincerely,

Roy Romer
Governor



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
RALEIGH 27603-6001

JAMES G. HUNT, JR.
GOVERNOR

December 13, 1996

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I have been made aware that you will be spearheading an initiative in the near future to focus attention on reducing the time children are in foster care and removing the existing barriers that impede adoption. I applaud your concern for children who need permanent, loving families.

In North Carolina, this is a priority for us. We are now implementing a Child Welfare Demonstration Project that seeks to reduce the number of children who stay in foster care for longer than a year. This cooperative effort involves county departments of social services, local officials and representatives from private organizations. It takes the concerted effort of all sectors of the community to help ensure that children grow up healthy and safe.

We look forward to hearing more about your initiative and are anxious to work with you in addressing the needs of these children. All children deserve to be raised in nurturing, loving homes.

My warmest personal regards.

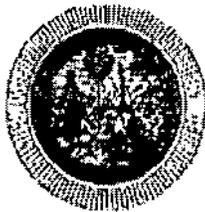
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Hunt".

James B. Hunt, Jr.

JBH:atl

END



THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF FLORIDA

LAWTON CHILES

December 13, 1996

The Honorable Bill Clinton
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Rhea and I want to commend you and the First Lady for your personal efforts to promote adoption initiatives in our country. Florida shares your deep concern about the well-being of our children. In fact, my top priority, as governor of Florida, is strengthening our children and families. Helping the nearly 1,700 Florida foster children awaiting adoption find a permanent home is an important part of my Children's Initiative.

I'm committed to promoting adoption because I believe every child deserves a place to call home — a home where someone will remember their birthdays and a home to celebrate the holidays. That's why I'm pleased by your strong commitment to set an agenda, goals and strategy to weave the benefits of adoption into the nation's overall children's policies and programs. I know your leadership on this issue will help enrich the lives of countless adoptive families and children in our country.

In our home, we know the joy adoption can bring to a family. About 30 years ago, my wife and I adopted a beautiful little girl and named her Rhea. In the years since she joined our family, I've had the satisfaction of watching her grow from a child to a young woman. She is now a mother and a strong advocate for adoption. I'm very proud of her and I cherish the joy she has brought into our lives. Today, my daughter Rhea is playing a leading role in helping our foster kids find permanent homes by spearheading the Governor's Partnership for Adoption.

We're working hard to promote adoption in Florida. Thanks to our partnership with churches and private organizations we've increased Florida's adoption rate by more than 80 percent over the past five years. One project that we're excited about is our Internet adoption home page that we established in July.

The Honorable Bill Clinton

December 13, 1996

Page Two

Our adoption home page provides our foster children in need of a permanent home with an address on the World Wide Web. It also gives prospective parents an easy way to consider adoption by featuring photographs and brief biographies of children in need of a loving home. Since our adoption effort went "on line" we've had nearly 8,000 visits to our home page -- and we receive about 100 requests each month for further information about how to adopt a child. Thanks to our Internet effort we currently have people going through the process to adopt a child featured on our home page.

Again, thank you Mr. President for being a strong champion for our children. Your work to encourage adoption will help enhance the lives of the families and children all across our country. Please know that we in Florida stand ready to work with all states and the federal government to ensure every child has a loving family and home.

With warmest regards, I am

Sincerely,


LAWTON CHILES

Questions and Answers on Adoption

Q. What is the purpose of the President's directive?

A. The purpose of the President's directive is to develop a new plan to move children more rapidly from foster care to safe, permanent homes, and to at least double, by the year 2002, the number of children in foster care who are adopted or permanently placed from the public foster care system. The directive focuses on securing homes for the tens of thousands of children in the foster care system who cannot return safely to their homes and for who adoption is a goal. It also will increase public awareness on the importance and benefits of adoption.

Since 1993, the Clinton Administration has taken several important steps to promote and encourage adoption. President Clinton is committed to giving the 450,000 children in foster care what every child in America deserves -- loving parents and a healthy, stable home. This directive builds on these commitments and accomplishments.

Q. Now that the President signed the directive, what will happen?

A. The Departments of Health and Human Services, Treasury, Commerce and Labor and the Office of Personnel Management will conduct an intensive consultation process on a bipartisan basis with Congress, states, civic and business leaders to develop a plan to meet the President's goals of moving children more rapidly from foster care to permanent homes and increasing the number of children adopted or permanently placed. The Secretary of Health and Human Services will report back to the President in sixty days on specific steps to reach the directive's goals.

Q. Is this directive ambitious enough?

A. Today there are 450,000 children in the nation's foster care system. These children are placed there because of abuse, neglect or a home-life that is neither safe or secure. While most of these children eventually return home, 100,000 of them do not have that option. These children wait typically 3 years or more to find permanent homes. More than half of waiting children have special needs.

Given these circumstances, the President's goal in this directive to at least double, by the year 2002, the number of children in foster care who are adopted or permanently placed from the foster care system is extremely ambitious and exciting. Of course, our ultimate goal is that all 450,000 children in foster care find what every child in America deserves -- loving parents and a healthy, stable home.

Q. Why didn't the President take this step earlier?

A. Since taking office, President Clinton has made increasing adoption and improving the foster care system a priority. He has signed critical legislation that have removed significant financial and racial barriers to adoption, including the Adoption Promotion and Stability Act of 1996 and the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act, which provides a \$5,000 tax credit for families who adopt children and ensures that the adoption process is free from discrimination on the basis of race, culture and ethnicity. He has championed programs like the Family and Medical Leave Act which supports adopting families and preserved resources for child protection and adoption by signing the welfare reform law. The President and the First Lady have promoted and encouraged the importance and benefits of adoption through speeches, events and public service announcements. This directive builds on the President's strong commitment to and accomplishments on this issue.

Q. Are you trying to preempt Congress on adoption?

A. No. We are committed to working with Congress in a bipartisan manner to develop a plan to increase the number of children adopted or permanently placed from foster care and move children from foster care to permanent homes more quickly. Finding safe and permanent homes for all children is a goal to which we know everyone is committed and should be addressed in a bipartisan way. The President's directive presents an extraordinary opportunity for the Federal government, Congress, states, communities, and advocacy organizations to work together toward giving the 450,000 children in foster care what every child in America deserves -- loving parents and a healthy, stable home.

Q. How much will this initiative cost?

A. The directive does not carry any cost right now, as it simply directs members of the President's Cabinet to consult with Congress, states, and civic leaders to develop a plan to increase adoptions and move children from foster care to permanent homes more quickly. The President will address the budget implications of the adoption initiative when he announces his budget proposal in February.

The provision of offering financial incentives to states will likely pay for itself, as increasing the number of adoptions will reduce expenditures in the foster care system.

Q. Which Cabinet agencies are involved in implementing the President's directive on adoption?

A. The Departments of Health and Human Services, Treasury, Commerce and Labor and the Office of Personnel Management were directed by the President to develop a new plan to move children more rapidly from foster care to safe, permanent homes, and to at least double, by the year 2002, the number of children in foster care who are adopted or permanently placed from the public foster care system.

Q. What role do you see for States in implementing the President's directive on Adoption?

A. States are the operators of the public welfare system and therefore are critical to ensuring the President's goals of moving children more rapidly from foster care to safe, permanent homes and doubling the number of children adopted and or permanently placed by the year 2002. We plan to work extremely closely with states, consulting with them on every aspect of the President's directive. We know that the states share the President's commitment to increasing adoption and improving the foster care system and we are counting on them to directly assist HHS in the formulation and implementation of the new action plan on adoption.

Q. What role do you see for advocacy groups and foundations in implementing the President's directive on adoption?

A. We have worked closely with advocacy groups and foundations on past adoption initiatives and we plan to consult with them on the President's new directive. We welcome advocacy groups and foundations' participation in developing and helping states implement new strategies on adoption, as they have immense knowledge and experience in this area.

Q. What were the adoption-related provisions in the Small Business Job Protection Act?

A. The Small Business Job Protection Act does three things:

- Strengthens the language of the Multiethnic Placement Act (MEPA) to make it even clearer that neither foster placements nor adoptions may be delayed or denied solely on the basis of the cultural, ethnic or racial background of the child or the prospective foster or adoptive parents;
- Imposes financial penalties for States (and other agencies receiving federal funds) which fail to comply with MEPA; and
- Provides an adoption tax credit for all adoptions, with a premium for special needs adoptions.

Congress left in place other provisions of MEPA, including the State Plan requirement for States to provide for the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the State for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed.

Q. What has HHS done to implement these new provisions?

A. On November 14, the Department issued an Information Memorandum to give the States and the public the details of the inter-ethnic adoption legislation. That issuance (ACYF-IM-CB-96-24) which also announced the new kinship preference which Congress added to the child welfare laws, informed the public that the procedures for applying the penalty would be published at a later date.

The Department has taken or begun a number of other actions to implement the provisions of the Small Business Job Protection Act. These include meeting with the Internal Revenue Service to develop a public information strategy on the adoption tax credit, and establishing a working group of Children's Bureau and Office of Civil Rights staff to begin work on a procedure and protocol to ensure consistent application of the new penalty provisions.

Q: What is the National Adoption Strategic Plan and how does it relate to the President's Directive?

A: Last year, HHS's Children's Bureau organized a national meeting, which included State adoption managers, representatives from national advocacy organizations and private non-profit organizations, adoptive parents and Federal staff to draft a strategic plan to increase the number of children adopted from the public child welfare system. This Plan was written as a draft or working document to provide an outcome-focused framework for all those involved with the adoption of special needs children from the public child welfare system.

The meeting was conducted under the GPRA process, which has been used successfully by other agencies within the Department. The draft Plan, viewed overall, is intended as a holistic framework for adoption services for children with special needs and the families who adopt them and will no doubt be used as a foundation for the activities under the President's Directive. This directive presents an extraordinary opportunity for the Federal government, Congress, States, communities, and advocacy organizations to work together toward securing loving adoptive homes on behalf of America's waiting children. It represents as well an opportunity to capitalize on the work begun on the Adoption Strategic Plan, and advance the contributions made by the many contributors to the draft plan.

THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION RECORD ON ADOPTION

Our Nation has no greater responsibility than to ensure that every child has the chance to live up to his or her God-given potential. We can help meet that challenge by identifying a permanent, loving family for every child waiting in the foster care system.

-- President Clinton, National Adoption Month Proclamation, November 1996

President Clinton is committed to giving the over 450,000 children in foster care what every child in America deserves -- loving parents and a healthy, stable home. The Clinton Administration has taken several important steps to encourage and increase adoptions of special needs children and to support the families that choose to open their hearts and their homes to these children. The President has championed programs that find and assist adopting families, and has committed his Administration to breaking down barriers, including high adoption costs and complex regulations.

Today the President announced a new directive to the Departments of Health and Human Services, Treasury, Labor and Commerce and the Office of Personnel Management to develop a plan to: increase the number of children who are adopted or permanently placed each year, move children more rapidly from foster care to permanent homes, and create a new public awareness campaign on the importance of adoption. These actions build on previous initiatives, including:

MAKING ADOPTION AFFORDABLE FOR FAMILIES

In August, President Clinton signed into law the Adoption Promotion and Stability Act of 1996 which provides a \$5000 tax credit to families adopting children, and a \$6,000 tax credit for families adopting children with special needs. This policy will alleviate a significant barrier to adoption, helping middle class families for whom adoption may be prohibitively expensive and making it easier for families to adopt children with special needs.

BREAKING DOWN RACIAL AND ETHNIC BARRIERS TO ADOPTION

Strengthening the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act which the President signed in 1994, the Adoption Promotion and Stability Act of 1996 also ensures that the adoption process is free from discrimination on the basis of race, culture and ethnicity.

PROVIDING SUPPORTS FOR CHILD PROTECTION AND ADOPTION

President Clinton signed into law the Family and Medical Leave Act which enables parents to take time off to adopt a child without losing their jobs or health insurance. In addition, the welfare reform bill that the President signed into law maintains current law on child protection and adoption, and does not reduce funds for child welfare, child abuse, foster care and adoption services.

GIVING STATES THE FLEXIBILITY AND SUPPORT THEY NEED

The Clinton Administration has granted child protection waivers to Delaware, Illinois, North Carolina, and Oregon, giving the states more flexibility in tailoring services to meet the needs of children and families. Up to six more states will receive approval for waivers. In addition, this administration has provided states with enhanced technical support and improved court operations so they can focus on successful outcomes. To prevent children from entering foster care in the first place, in 1993 the Clinton Administration secured federal funding to work with states, local governments and service providers to develop effective programs to serve children and families at risk.

RAISING PUBLIC AWARENESS

Through speeches, writings, events and public service announcements, the President and First Lady have promoted the importance and benefits of adoption.

A CHALLENGE TO THE NATION: SAFE AND PERMANENT HOMES FOR ALL CHILDREN

Today, President Clinton issued a challenge to the nation and signed a directive to members of his Cabinet to take new actions to move children more rapidly from foster care to safe, permanent homes. The goal of the President's ambitious new initiative is to at least double, by the year 2002, the number of children in foster care who are adopted or permanently placed in homes from the foster care system. The directive focuses on securing homes for the tens of thousands of children in foster care who cannot return safely to their homes and for whom adoption is a goal. After consulting with Congressional, state and civic leaders, agencies will report back to the President within 60 days on steps to reach the directive's goals, which include:

I. Doubling the Number of Children Adopted or Permanently Placed by 2002:

Create Incentives for States: To shift the focus from paperwork to successful outcomes, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will work with states to set specific targets for increases in the number of children adopted or found permanent placement. In return, the federal government will provide a new financial incentive to states to increase the number of adoptions from the public welfare system. This action should nearly pay for itself, as increasing the number of adoptions will reduce expenditures in the foster care system. Progress in meeting the numerical targets will be compiled and published in a state-by-state annual report. Successful states will be recognized for their accomplishments.

Build on Recent Legislation: HHS will continue to aggressively implement the laws signed by President Clinton in 1994 and 1996, which prohibit adoption agencies from denying or delaying placement of a waiting child based on race, color, or national origin, and encourage recruitment of adoptive parents.

II. Moving Children More Rapidly From Foster Care to Permanent Homes:

Decrease Procedural Delays: President Clinton is directing HHS to consult with Congress, states and civic leaders to propose changes to federal laws, policies and regulations and clarification of the "reasonable effort" requirement, to help states focus on finding permanent homes for children from the moment they enter the foster care system.

Help States Identify and Address Barriers to Permanency: As part of his budget proposal in February, the President will propose financial assistance for states to identify barriers to permanency and to develop strategies for children who have been waiting for a particularly long time. The President's initiative also directs HHS to encourage alternative permanency arrangements, such as guardianship and kinship care, for children for whom adoption is not a viable option.

III. Increasing Public Awareness:

Call to American Families, Communities and Business: The Clinton Administration will launch a new campaign in partnership with state, civic and business leaders, to increase public awareness about children waiting for adoption and to encourage all Americans to consider the rewards and responsibilities of adoption -- in new public service announcements, print materials, and on the Internet.

Provide Information on the Benefits of Adoption: Federal agencies will form partnerships to inform people of the new adoption tax credits, the Family and Medical Leave Act benefits, and other supports for adoptive parents, as well as recognize private sector companies with model policies to encourage adoption. The Office of Personnel Management will provide support and information to federal employees who are interested in becoming adoptive parents.

December 12, 1996

MEMORANDUM

TO:) Melanne Verveer
Bruce Reed
Lyn Hogan
Lester Cash
Samara Weinstein
(for HHS distribution)

FROM: Nicole Rabner
Pauline Abernathy

RE: Radio Address on Adoption

Attached please find drafts of 3 documents: 1) the President's remarks (which you may already have seen), 2) the fact sheet on the directive, and 3) the fact sheet on the President's accomplishments on adoption. Please forward comments to Nicole (ext. 67263) no later than noon on Friday, December 13, 1996. Thank you.

*Bruce -
I know you've
seen POTUS remarks,
but pls review fact sheets
when you have a chance
& call forward the draft
remarks in p.m.
NSW*

DRAFT 12/12/96 5:45 P.M.

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
WEEKLY RADIO ADDRESS
THE WHITE HOUSE
DECEMBER 14, 1996**

Good morning. I am here in the Oval Office with Hillary and a remarkable group of children and families to make a special announcement. Today, we are taking important new steps to make adoption easier and to move children out of foster care faster. These efforts will help give even more children what every child needs and deserves -- loving parents in a strong, stable home.

I am especially pleased to be able to take this action now -- in this season of hope and light. The holidays we celebrate this month -- Christmas and Hanukkah -- teach us that, through faith and love, we can truly repair the world. I can think of no better way to fulfill the promise of the season than to bring a child to a family and a family to a child.

There are more than 450,000 children in the nation's foster care system. They are placed there because of abuse, neglect, or a homelife that is neither safe nor secure. While most of these children eventually return to their original homes, nearly 100,000 of them simply do not have that option. These children wait far too long -- typically 3 years or more - - to find permanent homes and families to love them.

I know we can do better. And with the action I am announcing today, we will. But before I describe our efforts to speed up adoptions, I was hoping we could hear a few words from someone who has worked long and hard on this issue: The First Lady.

Hillary? [First Lady speaks & ends w/ something like: President has been a leader on this issue...]

Promoting adoption has been at the heart of my administration's efforts to protect our children and strengthen our families. Earlier this year, I signed a \$5,000 tax credit to help families adopt children. We put an end to racial preferences for adoption -- no longer will laws keep children of one race from the nurturing arms of adoptive parents of another.

This is a good start, but we must do more. That is why today I will sign a **Presidential Directive with a clear goal: By the year 2002, we will double the number of children we move from foster care to permanent homes -- from 27,000 last year to 54,000 in 6 years. With this effort, we are saying: No child should be trapped in the limbo of foster care. No child should be uncertain what the words "family" or "parents" or "home" mean -- particularly when there are open arms waiting to welcome these children into safe households where they can build good, caring lives.**

As part of this initiative, I am directing the Secretary of Health and Human Services to launch an extensive effort to determine what steps we must take to meet our goal. I want the Secretary to report back to me with her recommendations in 60 days.

This report must tell us how we can help states set -- and meet -- urgent, new adoption targets. It must describe how we can improve coordination among local, state, and federal authorities, so that every community has access to the best ways to encourage adoption. And it will outline what financial incentives we can provide states to help them find homes for children whose best hope is adoption.

I also want the Secretary to determine what changes we can make in federal laws and regulations to ensure that children won't get trapped in foster care. And I want to know if there are additional provisions we can put in place to move children through the system faster and to protect them when they leave.

There are other steps we are taking immediately. I am instructing the Treasury, Labor, and Commerce Departments -- in addition to the Department of Health and Human Services and the Office of Personnel Management -- to launch an all-out effort to heighten public awareness about adoption and to recognize those in the private sector who are committing themselves to this important cause.

Let me also say how grateful I am to those in Congress -- of both parties -- who are working so hard to make adoption a reality for America's most vulnerable children. I want especially to thank Senators Rockefeller and DeWine and Representatives Kennelly and Camp for their efforts.

The fact that we are commemorating the birth of a child who began his life in a manger and became the Prince of Peace should remind us of the promise God has placed in every child.

We must work tirelessly to make sure that every boy and girl in America who is up for adoption has a family waiting to reach out to him or her. No child should be in foster care any longer than they have to be. This is a season of miracles. And perhaps there is no greater miracle than finding a loving home for a child who needs one.

Thanks for listening.

LANGUAGE FOR AFTER RADIO ADDRESS:

Thank you for coming -- and I'd like to welcome the people who are listening from the Roosevelt Room. I thought we might take a moment to have a more detailed discussion about foster care, adoption, and what we can do to find good homes for even more children. And I was hoping the First Lady would start us off.

CHALLENGE TO THE NATION: SAFE AND PERMANENT HOMES FOR ALL CHILDREN

DRAFT December 12, 1996

Today, President Clinton issued a challenge to the nation and signed a directive to members of his Cabinet to move children more rapidly from foster care to safe, permanent homes, and at least to double, by the year 2002, the number of children adopted or permanently placed. The directive focuses on securing homes for the tens of thousands of children in foster care who cannot return safely to their homes and for whom adoption is a goal. Agencies will report back to the President within 60 days on steps to reach the directive's goals, which include:

I. Doubling the Number of Children Adopted or Permanently Placed by 2002

- Set Annual Targets for Increases in the Number of Children Adopted or Permanently Placed: To help shift the focus from paperwork to outcomes, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) will work with states set state-specific targets for increases in the number of children adopted or permanently placed. The DHHS will compile and publish an annual state-by-state report card on progress made in meeting these targets.
- Establish a Financial Bonus to States for Increasing Adoptions: The DHHS will develop a proposal to provide new financial per child incentives to states to increase the number of adoptions from foster care. This action should nearly pay for itself, as increasing the number of adoptions will reduce expenditures in the foster care system.
- Break Down Racial Barriers to Adoption: The DHHS is to aggressively implement the laws signed by President Clinton in 1994 and 1996, which prohibit adoption agencies from denying or delaying placement of a waiting child based on race, color, or national origin.

II. Moving Children More Rapidly From Foster Care to Safe and Permanent Families

- Emphasize Permanency and Safety: After consultation with states, advocates, and Congress, the DHHS will propose changes to federal law and regulations and clarification of the "reasonable effort" requirement to focus on securing safe and permanent homes for children from the moment they enter the foster care system.
- Help States Identify and Address Barriers to Permanency: The President will propose financial assistance for states to identify barriers to permanency and develop strategies for children who have been waiting a particularly long time. The DHHS will explore alternative permanency arrangements for children, such as guardianships.

III. Increasing Public Awareness of Children Waiting for Permanent Homes

- Call to American Families, Communities, and Businesses: The Clinton Administration will launch a new campaign in partnership with state, civic and business leaders, to increase public awareness about children waiting for adoption and to encourage all Americans to consider the rewards and responsibilities of adoption -- in new public service announcements, print materials and on the Internet.
- Provide Information on Adoption Assistance: Federal agencies will form partnerships to inform people of the new adoption tax credits, the Family and Medical Leave law benefits, and other support for adoptive parents, as well as to recognize private sector companies with model policies to encourage adoption. The Office of Personnel Management will provide support and information to federal employees who are interested in becoming adoptive parents.

DRAFT

THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION RECORD ON ADOPTION

Our nation has no greater responsibility than to ensure that every child has the chance to live up to his or her God-given potential. We can help meet that challenge by identifying a permanent, loving family for every child waiting in the foster care system.

-President Clinton, National Adoption Month Proclamation, November, 1996

In addition to issuing an executive memorandum on increasing adoptions, President Clinton has throughout his Presidency taken important steps to move children more quickly from foster care to safe, permanent homes and to support families who choose to open up their hearts and their homes by adopting children in need. For tens of thousands of children who are in foster care because of abuse or neglect, adoption offers them the chance to become a part of a permanent and loving family. The President has championed programs that find and assist adopting families and is committed to breaking down barriers, including adoption costs, complex regulations, and outdated assumptions. The President has:

- Protected the Guarantee of Child Protection and Adoption Resources: Rejecting proposals to block grant funding for foster care and adoption assistance, the President preserved in the final welfare reform law the federal guarantee of protection for children at risk of child abuse and neglect and assistance to parents who provide them with adoptive homes.
- Helping Families Afford Adoption With a New Tax Credit: In August 1996, the President signed into law, as part of the Small Business Job Protection Act, the Adoption Promotion and Stability Act of 1996, which provides a \$5,000 tax credit to families adopting children, and a \$6,000 tax credit to families adopting children with special needs.
- Breaking Down Racial Barriers to Adoption: In 1994, the President strongly supported and signed the Multi-ethnic Placement Act and, in 1996, signed legislation to strengthen the law, preventing adoption agencies from denying or delaying placement of a waiting child based on race, color, or national origin.
- Supported Adoptive Parents with the Family and Medical Leave Law: The President signed the Family and Medical Leave Law, which enables parents to take time off to adopt a child without losing their jobs or health insurance.
- Increased Investment.... -- HHS/ACF -- STILL no information for this piece
- Improved Court Operations: The Clinton Administration is working with state courts in 49 states to improve the timeliness and quality of decision-making that leads to adoption.
- Promoted Special Needs Adoptions: During the Clinton Administration, the number of children who have been historically hard to place -- are minorities, older, have siblings

who also need to be adopted, or have a disability -- who have been adopted with Federal adoption assistance has increased by over 60 percent.

- Reducing Paperwork and Focusing on Outcomes and Accountability: The Clinton Administration has devoted time and resources to enhancing computer automated systems for 48 states and reducing paperwork burdens so that caseworkers can spend more time with children and families.
- Increasing State Flexibility to ???: The Clinton Administration has granted child protection waivers to Delaware, Illinois, North Carolina, and Oregon, giving states more flexibility in tailoring services to meet the needs of children and families -- DO WE NEED THIS? -- Is this a Wavier program or a pilot program?
- Helped Raise Public Awareness: Through speeches, writings, events, and public service announcements, the President and First Lady have promoted and encouraged adoption.
- Working to Keep Children from Entering Foster Care in the First Place: In 1993, the Clinton Administration secured federal funding to work with states, tribal communities, local governments and service providers to prevent families from breaking down by designing effective programs to reach children at risk and their families.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 9, 1996

MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION

FROM: Nicole Rabner, OFL
Pauline Abernathy, DPC

RE: Directive on Adoption

Enclosed please find the latest and what we expect is the final version of the directive on adoption that the President will issue this Saturday, December 14. This version incorporates changes received from OMB, Staff Secretary, DPC, and HHS. Please call Nicole at 456-7263 with any additional comments or concerns.

Thank you.

DISTRIBUTION:

Todd Stern, Staff Secretary
Carol Rasco, DPC
Bruce Reed, DPC ✓
Jeremy Ben-Ami, DPC
Lyn Hogan, DPC
Ken Apfel, OMB
Lester Cash, OMB
Mac Reed, OMB
Samara Weinstein, DHHS
(for HHS distribution)

DRAFT 12/7

December xx, 1996

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY
THE SECRETARY OF LABOR
THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE
THE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

SUBJECT: Steps to Increase Adoptions and Alternate
Permanent Placements for Waiting Children in the
Public Child Welfare System

As we enter this Holiday Season and reflect on the importance of family in our own lives, let us remember the tens of thousands of our nation's children in the public child welfare system who live without permanent and caring families. Children are placed in the foster care because of abuse, neglect, or because, for some length of time, their homes are not suitable.

I am committed to giving the children waiting in our nation's foster care system what every child in America deserves -- loving parents and a healthy, stable home. The goal for every child in our nation's public welfare system is permanency in a safe and stable home, whether it be returning home, adoption, legal guardianship, or another permanent placement. While the great majority of children in foster care will return home, for about one in five, returning home is not an option, and they will need another home, one that is caring and safe. These children wait far too long -- typically over three years, but for many children much longer -- to be placed in permanent homes. Each year, state child welfare agencies secure homes for less than one-third of the children whose goal is adoption or an alternate permanent placement. I know we can do better. *only a quarter?*

I believe we should increase the number of waiting children who are adopted or permanently placed from the public foster care system each year toward the goal of at least doubling that number in the year 2002. Returning home is not an option for about 100,000 of the over 450,000 children in the nation's foster care system, yet only approximately 20,000 were adopted last year and approximately 7,000 were permanently placed in legal guardianships. While the number of adoptions each year has been constant for many years, I believe that by working with states to identify and break down barriers to permanent placements, setting annual numerical targets, rewarding successful performance, and raising public awareness, we can meet the target of at least 54,000 children adopted or permanently placed from the public foster care system in the year 2002.

double the # —

Today, therefore, I direct the Secretaries of Health and Human Services, Treasury, Labor and Commerce and the Director of the Office of Personnel Management to take the following actions to move children more rapidly from foster care to permanent homes and at least to double, by the year 2002, the number of children in foster care who are adopted or permanently placed from the public foster care system:

Within sixty days, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with state and civic leaders, shall report to me on actions to be taken to move children more rapidly from foster care to permanent homes and at least to double, by the year 2002, the number of children in foster care who are adopted or permanently placed out of the public foster care system.

- I. To increase the number of children who are adopted or permanently placed each year, this report should include, but should not necessarily be limited to, recommendations in the following areas:
 - (a) Plans to work with states on setting and reaching state specific numerical targets, using the technical assistance of the National Resource Centers to make information on best practices available to states and to engage community leaders, parents, the business and faith communities;
 - (b) Proposals to provide per child financial incentives to states for increases in the number of adoptions from the public welfare system. Options considered should have little to no net costs, as increases in the number of adoptions from the public system will reduce foster care costs, thereby offsetting much if not all of the incentive payments;
 - (c) A proposal to ensure continued aggressive implementation of the Inter-ethnic Adoption Provision of the Small Business Job Protection Act;
 - (d) Plans to compile and publish an annual state-by-state report on success in meeting the numerical targets; and
 - (e) Plans to recognize successful states.
- II. To move children more rapidly from foster care to permanent homes, the report shall also recommend changes to federal law and regulations and other actions needed to emphasize the importance of planning

for permanency as soon as a child enters the foster care system. The Secretary's report should include, but should not necessarily be limited to, recommendations in the following areas:

- (a) Plans to provide states with funding to identify barriers to permanency and to develop targeted strategies to find permanent homes for children who have been in foster care a particularly long time;
- (b) Proposals to shorten the period of time between a child's placement in foster care and his or her initial hearing at which a permanency determination is made;
- (c) A proposal to clarify that the purpose of "dispositional hearings" is to plan for permanency and, as appropriate, to consider referrals for family mediation, termination of parental rights, adoption, legal guardianship, or other permanent placements;
- (d) A proposal to clarify the reasonable efforts requirement as it relates to permanency and safety;
- (e) Plans to ensure that states give appropriate weight to permanency planning by establishing standards for securing permanency through adoption or guardianship, once a decision has been made that a child cannot be returned home; and
- (f) Plans to examine alternative permanency arrangements, such as guardianship, when adoption is not possible.

Last month, I signed a proclamation designating November as National Adoption Month -- a time to increase awareness about the tens of thousands of children waiting for families and to encourage all Americans to consider the rewards and responsibilities of adoption. However, adoption must be a national concern throughout the year. Therefore, I direct:

- (a) The Secretary of Health and Human Services to develop and lead a public awareness effort, including use of public service announcements, print materials, and the Internet;
- (b) The Secretaries of Health and Human Services and the Treasury in consultation with state, civic, and private sector leaders to develop and disseminate information

about the new adoption tax credits and other adoption benefits;

- (c) The Secretaries of Labor and Commerce, in consultation with state and civic leaders, to identify and recognize companies in the private sector with model policies to encourage and ease adoption among employees; and
- (d) The Director of the Office of Personnel Management to direct all federal agencies to provide information and support to federal employees who are prospective adoptive parents.

DRAFT 12/7

December xx, 1996

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY
THE SECRETARY OF LABOR
THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE
THE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

SUBJECT: Steps to Increase Adoptions and Alternate
Permanent Placements for Waiting Children in the
Public Child Welfare System

As we enter this Holiday Season and reflect on the importance of family in our own lives, let us remember the tens of thousands of our nation's children in the public child welfare system who live without permanent and caring families. Children are placed in the foster care because of abuse, neglect, or because, for some length of time, their homes are not suitable.

I am committed to giving the children waiting in our nation's foster care system what every child in America deserves -- loving parents and a healthy, stable home. The goal for every child in our nation's public welfare system is permanency in a safe and stable home, whether it be returning home, adoption, legal guardianship, or another permanent placement. While the great majority of children in foster care will return home, for about one in five, returning home is not an option, and they will need another home, one that is caring and safe. These children wait far too long -- typically over three years, but for many children much longer -- to be placed in permanent homes. Each year, state child welfare agencies secure homes for less than one-third of the children whose goal is adoption or an alternate permanent placement. I know we can do better.

I believe we should increase the number of waiting children who are adopted or permanently placed from the public foster care system each year toward the goal of at least doubling that number in the year 2002. Returning home is not an option for about 100,000 of the over 450,000 children in the nation's foster care system, yet only approximately 20,000 were adopted last year and approximately 7,000 were permanently placed in legal guardianships. While the number of adoptions each year has been constant for many years, I believe that by working with states to identify and break down barriers to permanent placements, setting annual numerical targets, rewarding successful performance, and raising public awareness, we can meet the target of at least 54,000 children adopted or permanently placed from the public foster care system in the year 2002.

Today, therefore, I direct the Secretaries of Health and Human Services, Treasury, Labor and Commerce and the Director of the Office of Personnel Management to take the following actions to move children more rapidly from foster care to permanent homes and at least to double, by the year 2002, the number of children in foster care who are adopted or permanently placed from the public foster care system:

Within sixty days, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with state and civic leaders, shall report to me on actions to be taken to move children more rapidly from foster care to permanent homes and at least to double, by the year 2002, the number of children in foster care who are adopted or permanently placed out of the public foster care system.

- I. To increase the number of children who are adopted or permanently placed each year, this report should include, but should not necessarily be limited to, recommendations in the following areas:
 - (a) Plans to work with states on setting and reaching state specific numerical targets, using the technical assistance of the National Resource Centers to make information on best practices available to states and to engage community leaders, parents, the business and faith communities;
 - (b) Proposals to provide per child financial incentives to states for increases in the number of adoptions from the public welfare system. Options considered should have little to no net costs, as increases in the number of adoptions from the public system will reduce foster care costs, thereby offsetting much if not all of the incentive payments;
 - (c) A proposal to ensure continued aggressive implementation of the Inter-ethnic Adoption Provision of the Small Business Job Protection Act;
 - (d) Plans to compile and publish an annual state-by-state report on success in meeting the numerical targets; and
 - (e) Plans to recognize successful states.
- II. To move children more rapidly from foster care to permanent homes, the report shall also recommend changes to federal law and regulations and other actions needed to emphasize the importance of planning

for permanency as soon as a child enters the foster care system. The Secretary's report should include, but should not necessarily be limited to, recommendations in the following areas:

- (a) Plans to provide states with funding to identify barriers to permanency and to develop targeted strategies to find permanent homes for children who have been in foster care a particularly long time;
- (b) Proposals to shorten the period of time between a child's placement in foster care and his or her initial hearing at which a permanency determination is made;
- (c) A proposal to clarify that the purpose of "dispositional hearings" is to plan for permanency and, as appropriate, to consider referrals for family mediation, termination of parental rights, adoption, legal guardianship, or other permanent placements;
- (d) A proposal to clarify the reasonable efforts requirement as it relates to permanency and safety;
- (e) Plans to ensure that states give appropriate weight to permanency planning by establishing standards for securing permanency through adoption or guardianship, once a decision has been made that a child cannot be returned home; and
- (f) Plans to examine alternative permanency arrangements, such as guardianship, when adoption is not possible.

Last month, I signed a proclamation designating November as National Adoption Month -- a time to increase awareness about the tens of thousands of children waiting for families and to encourage all Americans to consider the rewards and responsibilities of adoption. However, adoption must be a national concern throughout the year. Therefore, I direct:

- (a) The Secretary of Health and Human Services to develop and lead a public awareness effort, including use of public service announcements, print materials, and the Internet;
- (b) The Secretaries of Health and Human Services and the Treasury in consultation with state, civic, and private sector leaders to develop and disseminate information

about the new adoption tax credits and other adoption benefits;

- (c) The Secretaries of Labor and Commerce, in consultation with state and civic leaders, to identify and recognize companies in the private sector with model policies to encourage and ease adoption among employees; and
- (d) The Director of the Office of Personnel Management to direct all federal agencies to provide information and support to federal employees who are prospective adoptive parents.

December 11, 1996

NOTE TO NICOLE RABNER AND BRUCE REED:

RE: Adoption

Attached are drafts of the fact sheets on adoption for Saturday's radio address. They are still going through internal clearance here, but we will have comments from within the Department by COB today. Please send your comments to Toby Graff by tomorrow morning so we can get you a final version by noon.

Also, Secretary Shalala recently received a letter from a man in Texas commending two HHS employees for their assistance in reuniting two children with their family (see attached). It would be great to invite the two employees to the radio address and perhaps even have the President make reference to them, as an example of some of our accomplishments.

In addition, if possible, I would really like to have the following people on my staff who have been working on this -- Amy Busch, Sarah Gegenheimer and Toby Graff -- be at the radio address to help the press office, get a tape of the address, etc.

I'm very sorry that I haven't been able to go to the planning meetings, but please call me or Toby Graff if we can help you in any way.

Thank you very much.

Melissa Skolfield

DRAFT

A CHALLENGE TO THE NATION: SAFE AND PERMANENT HOMES FOR CHILDREN IN NEED

Our Nation has no greater responsibility than to ensure that every child has the chance to live up to his or her God-given potential. We can help meet that challenge by identifying a permanent, loving family for every child waiting in the foster care system.

--President Clinton

Today, President Clinton directed the Departments of Health and Human Services, Treasury, Labor and Commerce and the Office of Personnel Management, to take new actions to move children more rapidly from foster care to permanent homes. The goal of the President's ambitious new initiative is to at least double, by the year 2002, the number of children in foster care who are adopted or permanently placed in homes from the foster care system.

The Clinton Administration is committed to giving the 450,000 children in foster care what every child in America deserves -- loving parents and a healthy, stable home. Since 1993 the Clinton Administration has made important progress in increasing adoption and alternative placements for children in foster care by preserving critical supports for adoptive families, removing barriers to adoption, increasing public awareness, and giving states the flexibility they need to improve outcomes in the foster care system.

However, there are still thousands of children in the nation's foster care system who cannot return safely to their parents, and wait far too long to be placed in permanent homes. And even as more children are waiting for adoptive families, many people are not getting the information or the encouragement they need to open their hearts and their homes.

In consultation with state and civic leaders, the Departments of Health and Human Services, Treasury, Labor and Commerce and the Office of Personnel Management will develop a plan for the President within sixty days to: increase the number of children who are adopted or permanently placed each year; help move children more rapidly from foster care to permanent homes; and create a new public awareness effort on the importance of adoption. Details of that blueprint include:

I. Increase the Number of Children Adopted or Permanently Placed:

- Providing Enhanced Technical Assistance: By sharing information with states on effective strategies and engaging community leaders, parents, and the business and faith communities, HHS will work with the states to set specific targets for the numbers of children who will be adopted or found permanent placement. This new way of doing business will allow states to focus on successful outcomes rather than paperwork.
- Creating Incentives for States: In return, the federal government will provide a new financial incentive to states to increase the number of adoptions from the public welfare system. Not only will this action encourage more adoptions, but it will have little or no costs, as increases in number of adoptions will reduce expenditures in the foster care system.

- Measuring and Rewarding Successful Outcomes: States' progress in meeting the numerical targets will be compiled and published in an annual report. Successful states will be recognized for their accomplishments.
- Building on Recent Legislation: Building on recent legislation to encourage inter-ethnic adoption (part of the Adoption Promotion and Stability Act of 1996), a plan will be developed to ensure the continued, aggressive implementation of provisions to end the long-standing bias against interracial adoption.

II. Help Move Children More Rapidly From Foster Care to Permanent Homes:

- Decreasing Procedural Delays: Currently, federal law requires states to prevent foster care placement of children and to return children to their family when appropriate. However, there is no requirement that ensures that states work expeditiously to place children with permanent families when children cannot or should not return home. Therefore, the President is directing HHS to propose changes to federal law and new regulations to help states focus on finding permanent homes for children from the moment they enter the foster care system.
- Providing Additional Assistance to States: As part of his budget proposal in February, the President will propose financial assistance for states to identify barriers and to develop strategies to help children who have been waiting for a particularly long time.
- Exploring Alternatives: The President's initiative also directs HHS to encourage alternative permanency arrangements, such as guardianship and kinship care, for children for whom adoption is not an option.

III. Increase Public Awareness:

- Creating a New Public Awareness Campaign: The Clinton Administration will launch a new campaign to increase public awareness about the tens of thousands of children waiting for families and to encourage all Americans to consider the rewards and responsibilities of adoption -- in new public service announcements, print materials, and on the Internet.
- Providing Information on the Benefits of Adoption: In partnership with state, civic, and business leaders, the Departments of Health and Human Services, Labor and Commerce will work to inform people of the new adoption tax credits, the Family and Medical Leave law, and other supports for adoptive parents; and identify and recognize private sector companies with model policies to encourage adoption among employees. The Office of Personnel Management will provide similar information and support to federal employees who are interested in becoming adoptive parents.

DRAFT

ADOPTION: HELPING CHILDREN AND PARENTS
THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION RECORD

Promoting adoption is one of the most important things we can do to strengthen American families and give more children what every child in America deserves -- loving parents and a healthy home.

-- President Clinton

For many children in the United States, adoption is their only opportunity to become part of a permanent and loving family. Adoption assistance programs help thousands of children and parents each year to form new and happy families.

Adoption enriches the lives of adults by enabling them to become parents and share their love with children who desperately need the support that can only be provided by nurturing parents. Because strong, loving families are the cornerstones of stable and caring communities, adoption also strengthens our nation.

Today, there are tens of thousands children in the nation's foster care system who can not return safely to their homes, who need permanent placement in new families and for whom adoption is a goal. Almost one third of these children are legally free and are waiting to be adopted. Almost half of these waiting children had been waiting for more than two years. More than half of waiting children have special medical, developmental, behavioral or psychological needs; they are minority children, older children and/or sibling groups.

President Clinton has taken key steps to encourage and increase adoptions of special needs children and to support the families that choose to open their hearts and their homes to these children. He has championed programs that find and assist adopting families, and is committed to breaking down barriers, including high adoption costs and complex regulations. For example:

- o Developing a New Action Plan to Increase Adoption: Today the President announced a new directive to the Departments of Health and Human Services, Treasury, Labor and Commerce and the Office of Personnel Management to develop a plan to: increase the number of children who are adopted or permanently placed each year, move children more rapidly from foster care to permanent homes, and create a new public awareness campaign on the importance of adoption.
- o Preserving Resources for Child Protection and Adoption: The President stood firm in the budget and welfare reform debates to preserve the critical supports for states and families to protect children at risk of child abuse and neglect, in the foster care system, and with adoptive families. President Clinton vetoed welfare reform legislation (H.R. 4) submitted by Congress partially because it would have threatened Medicaid benefits for special needs children and dissolved the guarantee to states for open-ended funding for foster care and adoption assistance. The Republican welfare plan would have put the most vulnerable children at risk of danger and harm. Instead, the welfare reform bill that the President signed into law, maintains current law on child protection and adoption, and does not reduce funds for child welfare, child abuse, foster care and adoption services.

- o Removing Barriers to Adoption: President Clinton also signed into law the Adoption Promotion and Stability Act of 1996 which provides a tax credit to families adopting children, prohibits discrimination based on race, color or national origin in all federally funded programs. This policy will alleviate a significant barrier to adoption and allow middle class families, for whom adoption may be prohibitively expensive, to adopt children to love and nurture. By providing a \$5,000 tax credit, parents seeking to build a family through adoption will be on a more equal footing with other families and encourages families to adopt children with disabilities or take in two siblings, rather than seeing them split up.
- o Expanding Funding: [ACF, Please fill in stats.]
- o Improving Court Operations: The Administration is working with state courts in 49 states to improve the timeliness and quality of decision-making that leads to adoption. More timely decisions will ensure children do not languish in foster care and can more quickly be placed in permanent, stable families that can nurture and protect them.
- o Increasing Special Needs Adoptions: During this Administration, the number of children with special needs who have been adopted with Federal adoption assistance has increased by over 60 percent.
- o Focusing on Outcomes and Accountability: This administration has devoted time and resources in enhancing computer automated systems for 48 states to reduce paperwork burdens so caseworkers can spend more time with children and their families, issuing grants to improve the working relationship between courts and child protective systems, and working directly with states to focus on positive outcomes for children.
- o Supporting Parents: The President signed into law the Family and Medical Leave Act, the first bill he enacted, which enables parents to take time off to adopt a child without losing their jobs or health insurance.
- o Giving States the Flexibility They Need: The Clinton Administration has granted child protection waivers to Delaware, Illinois, North Carolina, and Oregon, giving the states more flexibility in tailoring services to meet the needs of children and families. Up to [] more states will receive approval for waivers.
- o Raising Public Awareness: Through speeches, events and a public service announcement, featuring the First Lady, that aired in over 50 major cities across the country, the Clinton Administration has promoted the importance and benefits of adoption. In addition, President Clinton signed a proclamation designating November as National Adoption month.

1626 Lipscomb Street
Fort Worth, TX 76104-4767
November 7, 1996

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
ATTN: Honorable Secretary, Donna E. Shalala
200 Independence Avenue, Room 615F, Southwest
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Shalala,

My name is Albert Epps, an honorably retired USAF Veteran. I am writing to request that you help me recognize and to laud the tireless efforts of two agents in your department: Ms. Lucille McCluney, Administration for Youth and Families, Children's Bureau, Washington, D.C., and Ms. Onedia Little, Administration for Youth and Families, Federal Building, 1961 Stout Street, Denver, CO.

13 months ago I wrote to Ms. Mary Jo Bane, your Assistant Secretary, requesting that she monitor the state of Colorado as they conducted an investigation dealing with my grand nephews, Monray and Kwane Ryan. I expressed outrage at the fact that a year following their mother's death, these children were still in the system separated from family and each other when there was immediate family willing, ready, and able to receive these children. Further, that extensive efforts to obtain legal custody of these children were met with considerable resistance from the Arapahoe County Department of Social Services. On receipt, Ms. McCluney made contact with me while she studied my request. She also made contact with Ms. Little so that a preliminary investigation of the facts could be determined at the local level.

Our family residing in TX, both Ms. McCluney and Ms. Little continued to communicate openly, honestly, and candidly with me. Besides being a joy to work with, both of these distinguished professionals have demonstrated to me a personal dedication, perseverance, and sensitivity I consider rare among government officials. Their support included format, protocol, and clarification of procedure on how to properly handle our request for custody of the children. Because of the high level of expertise they possess, they were able to instantly ascertain errors in policy, judgement, and performance while ferreting out and removing confusion whenever it occurred. Throughout this most trying ordeal they have exhibited a very keen sense of innovation, especially when guiding us through the many complexities and irregularities we experienced. Finally, I observed that Ms. Little graciously accepts unpleasant tasks even though it may result in personal inconvenience. Allow me to explain. When Arapahoe County made arrangements for the children's release to me, I contacted Ms. Little requesting that she accompany me in these proceedings. At the time I requested

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
ATTN: Honorable Secretary, Donna E. Shalala
November 6, 1996

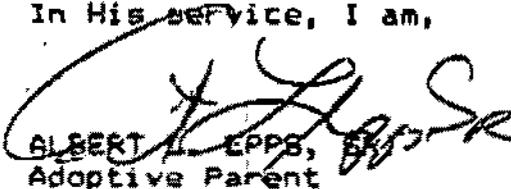
-2-

her presence and support, I was unaware that she was recovering from a significant medical condition. She was, however, aware that the weather in Colorado was turning cold. Still, without hesitation, and with absolutely no regard for her medical situation, she quickly availed herself to me and remained until all the details were complete, to my satisfaction, and with the best interest of the children in mind.

When I studied business early in my career, a wise old mentor once shared with me these words: "Performance at the execution level oftentimes permeates the attitudes of its leadership." I consider that to be an apt and fitting description of what has transpired in this case. In turn, Madam Secretary, you should be aware that you, your department, as well as the President's and Vice President's position on family and family values have been superbly represented in the personages of Ms. McCluney and Ms. Little. I would be honored and most grateful if you were to take this information to the President and Vice President asking them to share my thanks with Ms. McCluney and Ms. Little personally. When you are at the White House, please give them this message for me: "It has been my distinct privilege in watching their political promises being transformed into physical reality." I do not believe this would have been possible without the hands-on, ceaseless efforts of Ms. McCluney and Ms. Little.

Thank you for allowing me to share this information with you.

In His service, I am,


ALBERT L. EPPS, Sr.
Adoptive Parent

cc: President Clinton/fax
cc: Vice President Gore/fax

11-08-96-0003

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

To: Pauline Abernathy
Ken Apfel
Nicole Rabner
✓ Bruce Reed
Melanne Verveer

From: Lyn Hogan

Date: November 11, 1996

Re: Background Material For Child Welfare Meeting

Attached please find background material for the Thursday, November 14 child welfare meeting scheduled for 9 a.m. in Carol Rasco's office.

On Oct. 31 the DPC completed a series of seven small two hour child welfare discussion sessions that took place over the past four months. We talked with a total of 35 child welfare experts from around the country for a total of 14 hours of discussion. In addition, in October we visited the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges in Reno, NV during the Fall training session, sitting in on classes and meeting with faculty and participants; participated in the child welfare reform project run by Cross-National Studies Research Program of the Columbia University School of Social Work; and toured innovative child welfare programs in Los Angeles county.

We would now like to begin working to propose steps for reform in the child welfare system. We would like to use this meeting to discuss with you what we have learned over the past four months and how we might proceed from here.

The following attachments consist of a brief overview of the state of the child welfare system, the five key reform challenges we face, and a more detailed outline of the problems and solutions we might consider.

I request that at this time we not distribute these materials beyond those of us listed here.

cc: Carol Rasco
Jeremy Ben-Ami
Elizabeth Drye

Since 1976, reports of child abuse and neglect have risen fourfold. Now, over 3 million child abuse and neglect cases are reported annually, with roughly one million cases confirmed. About 1,300 of those cases end with a child's death. About half-a-million children are in foster care on any given day, a number that is growing rapidly.

This country's child welfare system is failing the children it is designed to serve. The system has been in a downward spiral for more than a decade and there are few indications it will improve without intervention.

To date, there have been two major responses to the system's failure: the family preservation movement and the court takeover of state systems. While both have certainly been positive steps forward, these interventions offer only a partial approach.

First, in the 1980s into the 1990s, academics and practitioners alike forced a paradigm shift by stressing family preservation and reunification as an answer to the failing child welfare system. The family preservation movement has produced results and remains a key ingredient of child welfare reform. However, family preservation offers only a treatment model when more is needed. Family preservation does not work for those for whom no amount of family preservation will help.

Second, in response to the continually worsening system, the courts began to intervene. Currently, there are over 35 child welfare jurisdictions operating under court order, and many more pending class action suits.

Litigation has forced states to think about aggressive and creative system reforms and to act on those ideas. But the approach and results have been unsystematic. Consent decrees are structured to satisfy the judge. A state must meet *the letter of the law* for every provision in a consent decree. Instead of promoting system change, consent decrees are creating compliance mechanisms that stifle meaningful change. There is no collective definition of problems and solutions for states to follow, so there has been only a piecemeal approach to reform to date.

Further, and equally important, long-term, multi-placement foster care stays are the precursor to a host of social problems. Children who remain in foster care long-term are more likely than the non-foster care population of becoming unwed parents, ending up on welfare, becoming substance abusers, committing violent acts, and becoming abusers themselves.

Several states are moving forward with some reforms, the most popular of which are subsidized guardianship/kinship care, forms of managed care or capitated payments, and community-based casework. However, during the 14 hours of discussions we have held with child welfare experts across the country, we heard time and time again that a) there is a desperate need for Federal guidance (not regulation) and leadership on child welfare reform, and b) child welfare reform cannot move forward one piece at a time, but rather requires a comprehensive approach.

Following is an outline of what such an approach might look like as well as a brief description of the key problem areas.

DETERMINED TO BE AN ADMINISTRATIVE
MARKING PER E.O. 12958 AS AMENDED, Sec. 3.2 (c)
Initials: DK Date: 10/5/05

Establish a New Federal Goal for Child Welfare: Permanency

Challenge: The system's present focus on family preservation/reunification leads too many children to remain in foster care even though reunification may be neither appropriate nor possible.

Approach: Rapid, appropriate placement in permanent healthy and safe arrangements should be a central goal of child welfare. To reach this goal we must support and encourage at the Federal level alternative permanency arrangements. Options for permanency might include: family preservation/reunification; various forms of subsidized guardianship with a focus on kinship care; quicker termination of parental rights when reunification is not possible followed by adoption.

Improve the Court Process Through Federal Leadership

Challenge: The judicial system is not adequately equipped or organized to deal with the flow of foster care and adoption cases, although model systems do exist in places like Grand Rapids, MI and Cincinnati.

Approach: The Federal government should undertake a systematic look at court practices around the country, develop a consensus on court improvements, and court evaluation, and offer states technical assistance to implement the improvement.

Restructure Federal Funding of the Child Welfare System

Challenge: Current funding structures create the wrong incentives, for example rewarding foster care over adoption, and result in wasted money and misdirected funds.

Approach: Financial incentives should encourage rapid movement to permanent placement rather than lengthy stays in foster care. Other financing strategies including the appropriate application of managed care principles should also be explored.

Improve and Expand Federally Funded Prevention Efforts

Challenge: The child welfare system continues to disproportionately spend dollars addressing abuse once it occurs, rather than on preventing the initial abuse.

Approach: A reformed child welfare system must support coordinated, community-based prevention efforts. Changes in the structure of funding incentives may help encourage prevention. Coordination and simplification of federal support for community based efforts in other disciplines should be part of the reform agenda. Improved and expanded data collection is also necessary.

DETERMINED TO BE AN ADMINISTRATIVE
MARKING Per E.O. 12958 as amended, Sec. 3.2 (c)
Initials: RJS Date: 10/5/15

Challenge: Barriers to adoption are leaving adoptable children in foster care too long and driving adoptive parents away.

Approach: The First Lady is working to encourage and ease adoption.

DETERMINED TO BE AN ADMINISTRATIVE
MARKING Per E.O. 12958 as amended, Sec. 3.2 (c)
Initials: ROS
Date: 11/5/05

Critical Problem Areas in the Child Welfare System and Starting Points for Reform

Issue 1: *No consensus on goals of the child welfare system or measurements of success.* There is no generally accepted definition of what a good child welfare system should look like, what its end goals should be, or how to measure those goals.

Solution: Create a national definition of the mission of the child welfare system, a Federal definition of the broad goals states should target, and a consensus on how to measure success.

Issue 2: *An inadequate definition of "reasonable efforts."* P.L. 96-272 requires that reasonable efforts be taken to prevent placement of a child in foster care, or make it possible for that child to eventually return home. Determining reasonable efforts is left up to the states and varies substantially from state to state, creating incongruent approaches to treating abuse and neglect of the country's children. The result is often a singular focus on family preservation/reunification, even in cases where it is not appropriate or possible. In turn, lengths of stay in foster care are unnecessarily extended.

Solution: Create a tight national definition of reasonable efforts that expands beyond family preservation to include other permanency options such as forms of subsidized guardianship and subsidized kinship care. Ensure that states are congruous in their application of reasonable efforts.

Issue 3: *A judicial system not adequately equipped or organized to deal with flow of foster care and adoption cases.*

Solution: The Federal government should undertake a systematic look at court practices around the country, come to a consensus on court improvements, and use the bully pulpit, as well as offer technical assistance, to encourage states to adapt such improvements. Court reform might include reduced caseloads and organizational changes for judges (for example, a Judge today may have only approximately 15 minutes for an abuse or neglect case but over an hour for an uncontested custody case in a divorce proceeding); community-based caseloads to encourage same judge/same case approach; increased child welfare-specific training for judges and related professionals, and/or; a reorganization of court operations requiring all states to create separate family courts to address foster care, adoption, custody, and abuse and neglect cases. Good working models include Grand Rapids, MI court and the Cincinnati court. The Federal government has made small grants for court improvement and is reviewing this issue.

DETERMINED TO BE AN ADMINISTRATIVE
MARKING Per E.O. 12958 as amended, Sec. 3.2 (c)
Initials: RJS
Date: 10/5/85

DETERMINED TO BE AN ADMINISTRATIVE
MARKING Per F.O. 12958 as amended, Sec. 3.2 (c)
Initials: Rgs
Date: 10/5/05

- **Issue 4: *Wasted money, incongruent system goals, and misdirected funds driven by the structure of titles IV-E and IV-B.***

Solution: Once an overall vision, goals, and outcome measures are set, we should review and reshape the funding structures of title IV-E and IV-B. We might shift financial incentives so adoption is rewarded over foster care. We might make title IV-E money more flexible. We might target funds to localities with the highest rates of poverty and largest foster care rolls. We should also review the feasibility of applying managed care to the child welfare system. Forty-one states are currently considering forms of managed care for child welfare, but few have moved forward and there are no federal guidelines or suggestions for doing so. Instead of comprehensive managed care, we might consider independent management changes such as encouraging public/private partnerships; introducing performance-based contracts for the private sector; or targeting creative ways to use title IV-E funds.

- **Issue 5: *Failure to address prevention of abuse and neglect before the abuse occurs.***

Solution: A coordinated, community-based effort can target problems and help families before they are overcome by a crisis. This might mean re-evaluating where family preservation funds flow and reallocating them to early intervention. HHS is currently reviewing the family preservation program.

- **Issue 6: *Lack of professionalism in the child welfare field.***

Solution: Institute Federal standards for social workers (right now 21 year olds with a B.A. in history and one week of training are making life and death decisions); create incentives for training and professionalism; and offer guidance and encouragement to the private sector to create an accreditation and certification process for the profession.

- **Issue 7: *Insufficient public education on child welfare issues.*** While mandated reporting of abuse and neglect has improved both reporting and public awareness of abuse and neglect, the public incorrectly assumes that states have good processes in place to address the reported cases. In fact, of the substantiated abuse and neglect cases, only a small percent actually end up receiving services. The public needs to become more aware and knowledgeable about child welfare issues so they can help solve the problems.

Solution: Pursue an aggressive campaign to educate the public about child welfare issues.

- **Issue 8: *Failure of transition to independence programs for children who age out of the foster care system.*** Once foster children turn 18 most "age-out" of the system and are transitioned into independent or adult living. Federal funds for independent living are available, but funds are insufficient and programs inadequate. Often foster kids transitioning into independent living end up on welfare and/or homeless.

Solution: A system shift to permanency planning should reduce the number of children who age-out of the system. However, for those who do age-out, new and better support for independent living must be available.

- **Issue 9:** *Failure to adequately understand and address the role of substance abuse and mental health in child welfare.* Studies indicate that up to 60 percent of foster children suffer from moderate to severe mental health problems. Further, surveys indicate that alcohol and drug abuse is a serious problem for between 1/3 and 2/3 of families in the child welfare system. Finally, foster care entrants are becoming younger due to the crack baby epidemic.

Solution: Existing child welfare money must be targeted to substance abuse and mental health issues as they affect both the families and the children in the child welfare system.

- **Issue 10:** *A fundamental disconnect between the various professionals involved in the child welfare system.*

Solution: Support interdisciplinary training and coordination between mental health professionals, pediatricians, social workers, law enforcement professionals, probation officers, lawyers, and the like so they receive similar information regarding the child welfare population and are able to coordinate efforts and share information regarding the field. The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges in Reno, NV, and the CIVITAS initiative based in Chicago, IL have undertaken cross-training projects, but they reach only a small percentage of all the professionals who need cross training. The Federal government needs to encourage this sort of training, and help expand it.

DETERMINED TO BE AN ADMINISTRATIVE
MARKING Per E.O. 12958 as amended, Sec. 3.2 (c)
Initials:
Date: 12/5/85

Darby Libow

956-7650