

WR
Fathers

SERVICES
TO
NONCUSTODIAL
PARENTS

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DHHS/August 1993

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SERVICES TO NONCUSTODIAL PARENTS

"...We pay little attention to fathers as fathers, even less to the fact that many of the men absent from their children's lives have been shoved aside, not just by the mothers of those children but by the courts and the social agencies, buttressed by the growing cultural notion of the superfluous father.

Is it possible to reconnect fathers to their children? To reverse the societal trends that produced the separation in the first place? To fashion government policies and reshape social attitudes regarding fathers? To change the attitudes of fathers themselves?

Probably. But not until we reconvince ourselves of what used to be common sense: Children need their fathers."

William Raspberry
Washington Post
May 17, 1993

How could one disagree with this conclusion? But, why is it important? Why do we even think about the development of possibly expensive services to reconnect fathers and their children?

Efforts at welfare reform traditionally focus on disadvantaged women to enable them to become self-sufficient so that help only needs to be provided on a temporary, intermittent basis. Similarly, attempts to revamp the child support enforcement program aim at increasing the money available for the care and raising of children, especially those whose mothers are on welfare. Both of these efforts are meritorious and needed.

But, both these efforts ignore the other half of the equation. What about the fathers, and it is primarily the fathers who are noncustodial parents? Where do they fit? At the risk of sounding hackneyed, if they are a part of the problem, they must be a part of the solution. If

we are to address the problems of welfare reform and child support, we must address the problems and the potential of the fathers of these children. Increased child support will not come from a teenage dropout nor from a severely disadvantaged partner of a longterm welfare recipient. Absent attempts to address the problems of this diverse population, they will continue to contribute to the high rate of out-of-wedlock births and the growth of the welfare rolls.

There is another argument however, which also reflects our introductory quote and places the discussion at a more fundamental level. Recent research by Dr. Michael E. Lamb has confirmed observations that fathers play a critical role in determining their families societal, economic and emotional climate. He found that with more and more women working fathers were spending more time with their children and playing an increasing role in the development of the child. He has also found that a child's attachment to the father begins at an early age (Arnaudo, 1993).

He found the beneficial effects of a healthy father child relationship where the father is present in the family to include a healthy sexual identity and greater enthusiasm for school and achievement, the latter especially for girls. As might be expected he found that a dysfunctional parent present in the family resulted in weaker sexual identity, less intellectual and academic achievement and lower aspirations. Where the father was absent and/or there was no relationship, he found intellectual and academic achievement and aspirations to be even lower. And, the earlier the departure of the father, the more negative the effect (Arnaudo, 1993). Thus, we see that fathers also play an important role which can prevent or at least inhibit subsequent at-risk behaviors in their children.

Ronald Ferguson's work provides a bridge between these two discussions. He has analyzed data the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth and drawn some interesting conclusions. He found that males who had two parents when growing up, a strong fatherly influence and working adults in the home were at less risk of becoming noncustodial fathers who do not work, are not in school and are not paying child support than people who grew up in more favorable conditions. In addition he found that the early initiation of sexual activity is associated with later non-payment of child support (Ferguson, 1990). This finding supports a National Academy of Sciences finding of a strong link between a lack of educational goals and achievement motivation and early sexual activity.

But what do we know about noncustodial parents today? First let us limit the discussion. While enforcement may be effective for noncustodial parents with steady income, it is not for many other noncustodial parents. And, since we are talking in the context of welfare reform, we are primarily discussing these other low-income parents. Often, they are the partners of long-term welfare recipients and are likely to be severely disadvantaged (Lah, 1993). We recognize that middle-income noncustodial parents often have problems too and, interestingly, some of the solutions to their problems coincide with what we are discussing. Yet, at this point we will limit ourselves to the low-income group.

Public perceptions of this group may be based on a set of negative assumptions that may not be completely true. First, as we will see below, this is not a homogeneous group, yet we tend to dismiss them as such. Second, we also tend to dismiss them as not benefitting from education and training efforts. Yet more recent information indicates that men and women tend to benefit almost equally from such programs, but that both evidence only marginal gains (Lah, 1993). Finally, we assume that these men are not interested in providing support to their children and partners; yet, as we will see below, the literature from various programs addressing these men shows that they are often there and providing support through informal systems.

One thing that we do know is that these men are all fathers. This provides us with some guidance on points of intervention. A first approach is to look at the continuum of paternity establishment.

THE NEXUS BETWEEN PATERNITY ESTABLISHMENT AND YOUNG UNWED FATHERS

INTRODUCTION

Research has shown that welfare presents an intergenerational problem, with young mothers who are the daughters of welfare mothers giving birth to additional children, who if they are women, may continue to depend on the AFDC system for the periodic support of themselves and their children. Unfortunately, most research and discussion reflects our introductory quote. It excludes the men who share responsibility for producing, and, it is

perceived, are not paying for and not participating in the lives of their children

We have little else than negative information about this group, perhaps because they are not easily reached (and therefore, studied) by traditional agencies. To the outside agency with limited resources and no real credibility or ties into the community, these men do not appear to be well-connected with society, missing the visible anchors of school, church and home.

One way of both reaching them and involving them in both the financial and non-financial support of their offspring is through the social services systems which surround birth and paternity establishment. While these systems either through design or operation, primarily serve women, they could and can include the men. There are points here where there is, or could be, positive contact between the mother and father and the institution. This contact can be built upon if we work with the institutions involved and with less traditional organizations.

First we must look at where this happens surrounding birth and paternity establishment and what forces are operating to draw the father in or to drive him away from familial responsibility. Paternity establishment is most easily viewed as a series of points which occur along a continuum. A first point is when the decision is made not to prevent a pregnancy or, in the absence of a decision, the failure to prevent occurs. Then, there is the period when prenatal care should be provided by systems operating in hospitals, clinics, community centers and elsewhere. This is followed by the birth of the child, generally in a birthing hospital or institution where there is often a hospital-based program or other opportunity to establish paternity. This is followed by a period of postnatal care often with institutional support. Then there is the period of time when the infant becomes a toddler and starts school and, finally, when the child becomes an adolescent and reaches the age of majority.

BIRTH CONTROL

Because teens tend to use male methods of contraception (condoms and withdrawal), it is important to understand the male role and attitudes toward teenage pregnancy. The research here is limited, one reason being that these young men are difficult to find (Smollar and Ooms, 1988). However, an ethnographic study of young low-income urban males confirmed that the

major sources of information about birth control for these young men were school health and sex education programs and that the knowledge derived while important to the participants did not translate into contraception. The non-use of condoms resulted from lack of knowledge of the connection between sexual intercourse and pregnancy, learned attitudes toward sexuality and women, and the types of relationships and negotiations with females (Sullivan, 1985).

The Vera Institute (1990) found non-use to result from ignorance, lack of access and motivation. As with the women Furstenberg studied, "parenthood was unplanned..., if not unforeseen" for these young men (Furstenberg 1976 in Vera Institute, 1990). Sullivan found that early sex, as early as age 12, can be a source of pride. However, the possibly ensuing pregnancy could be a cause of depression and anxiety for these young men (Vera Institute, 1990).

But are there not family planning or pregnancy prevention programs designed to address these issues? Yes and no. The first problem is that this is not one cohesive group. A national survey found that 89 per cent of males were sexually active by the age of 19 while some innercity males were active as early as 12 (Sonenstein, Pleck, Ku, 1987). In addition, 1985 National Center for Health Statistics show that 18 per cent of the fathers involved with teen mothers were between 15-19, 35 per cent were between 20-24, 9 per cent were over 25 and 37 per cent were unidentified (cited in Vera Institute, 1990). While school based programs may reach both genders, they will not reach all of this group and will not even reach all of the school age members of this group given their weak ties to educational systems.

A recent study focused on integrated school-based efforts to educate young males about sex and AIDS and produced similar findings. Researchers found that young men who were instructed about AIDS, contraception *AND* (emphasis added) resistance skills were less likely to encounter AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases as well as unintended pregnancies. Early instruction limited to biology and birth control could increase early intercourse, but the addition of instruction regarding AIDS and resistance delayed sexual activity (Ku, 1992). This may be the sole positive aspect of the AIDS epidemic.

Some interventions, which are not school-based, reflect shifts in approaches to contraception. Before the pill, male methods were the primary form of prevention of pregnancy. However, with the pill, reliance on condoms decreased apparently because males believed that

this shifted the responsibility for birth control to women (Scales and Beckstein, 1982 cited in Vera Institute). With the advent of AIDS, the use of condoms has been actively promoted by social workers and has increased, yet it is doubtful that the responsibility, or the perception of responsibility, for contraception has shifted back to men.

With this shift in birth control methods and responsibility, family planning clinics have tended to focus on the women. Studies have shown that as a result of inadequate resources, lack of training and negative policies and staff attitudes, clients have been primarily female and that men have been treated as an adjunct of the women not a partner (Swanson and Forrest, 1987 cited in Vera Institute; Smollar and Ooms, 1988). Dryfoos (1988) also found that despite efforts to draw males into clinics, lack of funding, lack of male staff and negative attitudes by female staff prevented success. In addition, as with paternity establishment, funding incentives can work against involving young men. Financial support for male programs is almost non-existent and current Office of Family Planning funded clinics cannot count males as patients.

However, one study cites the example of a family planning clinic that actively tried to recruit males by encouraging women to bring in their partners: almost 90 per cent of the women did! (Levine and Thornton, 1985 cited in Vera Institute). This lone example contains possible implications for changing the attitudes of health and social services professionals and the impact that such a change could have. There may be a parallel here with the start up problems that hospital based paternity establishment programs have faced and their potential solution.

Finally there have been a number of experimental programs designed to improve prevention of teenage pregnancy. Some have emphasized the use of condoms, a method of birth control which has been effective among teens in other developed countries. Others try to address broader issues through linking sex education, education and other services in a field called life options expansion. In addition, there have been experimental programs dealing with the field of adolescent medicine and comprehensive health services. Robert Johnson in Newark, New Jersey; Kaiser Permanente in California; and Bruce Armstrong through Columbia Presbyterian in New York have all developed interesting approaches. All have emphasized aggressive outreach and varied program delivery, such as in a high interest context, i.e. sports.

Multi-service youth agencies have also been active with in and out-of-school youth. The Door in New York and STEP, a national demonstration sponsored by Public/Private Ventures,

are good examples of this type of programming. STEP reported that clients experienced educational gains and increased knowledge of sexuality and that they reported increased abstinence. This would tend to reinforce the observation that young males feel responsible for pregnancy prevention but do not know how to discuss it with their partners (Dryfoos, 1988). In addition, school based health clinics have worked in this area and major media campaigns have been launched by the National Urban League, the Children's Defense Fund and the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity. (This is a summary of a discussion of programs in Vera Institute.)

None of these programs has been subjected to a rigorous evaluation and each should be examined for possible duplication and adaptation. All of them have had to overcome social pressure against making contraception available to teens and have connected with a population that is very difficult to reach.

One program that has been evaluated is the National Institute for Responsible Fatherhood and Family Development in Cleveland, Ohio. The program does not limit itself to birth control issues. Rather it places a broad emphasis on paternity establishment as an assumption of responsibility. The evaluation found that 70 per cent of the men formerly enrolled in the program had not had additional out-of-wedlock children (Washington Post, June 7, 1993). Presumably, birth control was a factor.

One pair of researchers point out that these types of programs are "uniquely positioned" to reach both partners and involve them both early in the process of pregnancy counseling, decision-making regarding adoptions and parenting classes, in explaining the rights and responsibilities of paternity establishment, and in dealing with parents from both families and other issues (Smollar and Ooms, 1988). All of these options present the possibility of changing negative attitudes held by health and social services professionals who are charged with responsibility for dealing with these young parents-to-be.

THE PRENATAL PERIOD

During the period before the birth, the father-to-be may be drawn into the mother's life or pushed out of it by prenatal programming, his own decision or by the mother-to-be and her

family. Prenatal care programs are very important, especially for low-income women, and perhaps as a result staff tend to place a heavy emphasis on supporting and helping the mother without including the father. As was seen above, health and social service professionals have limited time and resources and tend to push the father-to-be out of the picture to concentrate on the mother (Leitch and Gonzalez in Smollar and Ooms, 1988; Vera Institute, 1990).

Smaller community-based efforts tend to develop the same theme, with, perhaps, an additional women's rights agenda. Often the father is left out or excluded. In addition to the negative attitudes often found, staff involved in these programs appear to know little about the child support system and paternity establishment. This lack of knowledge can be a factor in a later decision not to pursue paternity establishment and child support. It also clearly influences what expectant mothers and fathers learn in this setting with regard to their rights and responsibilities as parents.

In addition, a number of researchers have found that staff involved in programs providing services to young mothers (and mothers-to-be) tend to discourage interaction with child support enforcement agencies due to fears that continued involvement with the father may bring harm to the mother and child (Wattenburg, 1990; Sullivan, 1985; Hofferth, 1987 in Vera Institute). This fear is heightened by the doubt that any needed protection would be provided.

There are some exceptions. The Healthy Start program, funded by the Public Health Service, tries to involve the partners of the women they serve, starting with explanations of the development of the fetus and the need for proper nutrition, although male and female staff did not always agree on the emphasis to be put on paternity establishment (Interview, July 1993). In addition, Family Works, a part of Cleveland Works, a P/PV participant has been emphasizing partner involvement in the prenatal period.

Outside this institutional setting, it is possible that the father may also decide to stay involved or remove himself from the situation. There is limited information in this area but what there is is very interesting.

One study found that once a young man was certain of his responsibility for the pregnancy, self-esteem and community reputation work to require him to be involved. Interviews showed that, in addition, he risked the "loss of rights to a relationship with the child

and the mother" if he did not assume an appropriate role. Further, interviewees expressed "strong feelings of paternity." Perhaps these feelings emerge from their own experience without a father present, an emotion which apparently influences their opposition to abortion (Sullivan, 1985).

Additional studies also found that an intricate social network comes into play during the prenatal period. Negotiations are conducted on the rights and responsibilities of fatherhood and the families involved, thereby developing the components of an informal support system. (Sullivan, 1985; Stack, 1974) Sullivan notes there is not pressure to marry, nor is there discussion of legal responsibilities. As other researchers have noted the decisions regarding marriage are related to employment, not a belief that marriage impacts the definition of fatherhood (Vera Institute, 1990, Danziger, 1987).

Here it must be noted that these negotiations are about custody and visitation and that failure to meet one's responsibilities, as negotiated, can lead to loss of these rights with concurrent effects on status in the community and self-esteem. Under the informal system, the noncustodial parent is expected to bring gifts and in-kind support (e.g., pampers) when he visits. Payment of a official child support obligation may impact his ability to provide support which is visible to the community. Thus the noncustodial parent may fail to meet the requirements of the informal system. In addition, the mother will only receive the \$50 passthrough under the formal system. If child support policy fails to recognize aspects such as this in the informal system, it is possible that by imposing agency defined responsibilities it could deprive a father of these rights and possibly drive him away from open participation in the life of his child.

A different view of young African-American males is presented by Elijah Anderson. He emphasizes the importance of peer groups to young men in the city. He posits that fellow members of the peer group are the most important people in the lives of these young men and that group members place a high value on "casual" sex as a measure of worth within the group. They live in a value system which works against assuming responsibility for a child although there are situations where the peer group may reward the acknowledgment of fatherhood if it meets group standards. While the young man may have some ambivalent feelings toward his paternity, many of the urges toward responsible behavior are quashed by the limited economic opportunity available to him (Anderson, 1989).

Anderson discusses the complex decision making that goes into admitting paternity and finds the same denial and rationalization that Sullivan does. He also notes, and this may be important, that the presence of a father in the girl's home has a major effect on both the girl's and the boy's behavior and on the boy's assumption of responsibility should pregnancy occur. Elsewhere the absence of a father in the boy's home has been found to be a predictor of young unwed fatherhood (Ferguson, 1990). Clearly, the presence of a father in the home is a major predictor of teenage behavior and attitudes toward responsibility for both sexes. Therefore, as child support seeks to increase the financial contribution of the noncustodial parents to improve the financial status of mother headed families while children are young, it should not ignore the effects of such efforts on the presence of fathers or their relationships with their children later in the child's life.

Anderson also describes what he calls the "conventional inner city family unit." This unit more clearly resembles some of the families described by elsewhere. There is an extended family, it is fairly stable, it is a "survivor" of urban ills and provides a good defense against teenage pregnancy, drugs and crime. It also serves as a lever for social mobility. It is family units toward this end of the spectrum that become involved in the negotiations of the informal support system.

The young father may also be driven away by the mother-to-be and/or her family. As noted above, Danziger among others has found that a man's work behavior is a major factor in the woman and her family's determination of his marriageability. Sullivan (1985) echoes this. Furstenberg presents a slightly less optimistic picture of the factors involved in decision-making by the woman's family. He cites "cynical evasion" as an expectation by women of male responses to the situation (Furstenberg et. al., 1992).

Other researchers have found that marriage is not "a good solution" in the eyes of the girl and her family, an idea also apparent in the attitudes of many social workers (Wattenburg, 1990 and Pirog-Good and Good, 1990). Wattenburg points out that these teenage relationships tend to be volatile, that connections to schooling and the job market are tenuous and housing situations tend to be unstable for the couple. Faced with this situation, it is not surprising that the girl's family may push the young man away. But, it is also possible that she/they welcome informal involvement.

Thus, there appears to be some slightly contradictory information surrounding young low-income parents to be. This thinking could reflect the diversity in the life circumstances of the men. There are wide variations in their age and experience. In addition, each of these situations is individual, reflecting the nature of the relationship between the young people involved and their ability to assume responsibility within it. What is apparent, however, is that young males encounter predominantly negative reactions to their presence and responsibility in the pregnancy from social and health services professionals. What for a slightly older, slightly less poor couple could be an exciting and positive experience of the period leading up to the birth may be a negative experience and very damaging for these young men.

BIRTH

Most unwed fathers are involved with their partners at the time of birth (Wattenburg, 1990; Lerman, 1986; Furstenberg et. al., 1992). Yet, this happy time is often the first institutional contact with the father. One study found that teen fathers are present at the time of birth two-thirds of the time and that these out-of-wedlock children tend to be the product of a relationship, not a "one night stand" (Wattenburg, 1990). The various forces which act against the father's involvement in the pre-birth period have been noted above and help to explain the lack of institutional interaction. Smollar and Ooms noted that research on young fathers is limited because they are difficult to find. Thus, we arrive at the hospital at the time of birth with a young father who is involved with the mother and has strong paternal feelings.

Here is a positive event that presents a positive opportunity to involve the father with his child. One study found that while both the mother and father viewed the presence of both names on the birth certificate as important, racism and lack of knowledge of the system tend to work against formal paternity establishment for teens (Wattenburg, 1990). During the period leading up to the birth, there is little information presented on the value of paternity establishment or on the child support system. This is still the case at most hospitals and the problems resulting from limited resources and negative attitudes also continue to prevail.

Proposed legislation on paternity establishment will probably drive an effort to broaden the approach to paternity establishment. Attitudes can be turned around here. As yet there is

limited data available on hospital-based paternity establishment efforts (See METS, 1992). However, social services staff working with these projects do appear to have positive and aggressive attitudes toward paternity establishment.

One researcher points out the need to make paternity establishment a simple and positive event, unconnected to the imposition of a financial support requirement (Wattenburg, 1990). An attempt to make paternity establishment more universal could require a step in this direction.

Sullivan found a number of young men who had doubts about their actual responsibility for a pregnancy, but were willing to assume responsibility in case they were the fathers. Genetic testing could play a positive role in eliminating these doubts and perhaps should be required for teenagers.

Other studies noted that teen mothers want to "protect" the father. This may be a factor in teen mothers decision-making regarding signatures on the birth certificate. Wattenburg found that teen mothers were in favor of having the father's name on the birth certificate and favored legally established paternity. However, they did not necessarily connect these wishes with the legal obligations for child support in the welfare system (Wattenburg, 1990 and Pirog-Good and Good, 1990). This positive desire - to establish paternity - is often expressed by both parents and must be handled carefully under new laws and procedures or the number of paternity establishments may actually decrease (Berlin, 1993).

Of all the points on the continuum of paternity establishment, the period immediately surrounding the birth at the hospital offers the most potential for positive interaction and drawing the father in. Staff at hospitals where such programs already operate are aware of this and act positively. The situation presents a unique opportunity to promote a positive relationship between mother and father, their respective families and between father and child.

POSTNATAL PERIOD

This is a crucial period for both the parents and the infant. Bonding is said to occur within the first year after birth. If the father is not involved, he will forever miss this

opportunity. In addition, young and poor parents are confronted with major financial burdens related to child bearing. During this period too, the institutional biases operate against the involvement of the father. The situation is complicated by the fact that value systems and gender roles for parents are in flux.

Many teen mothers marry the fathers, then divorce or separate (Polit, Quint and Riccio, 1988). While this solves the paternity establishment "problem," the decision to marry can have negative implications. It can disrupt schooling; more often the case for white mothers than for African American ones. In addition, these marriages are fragile and tend not to last - a potentially negative experience for all involved. Hence, many view marriage as not "a good solution" (Wattenburg, 1990).

For many teen mothers and their children, the informal relationship with the father is much more significant. He may provide support "under the table" and she and her family may "protect" him from the "system." While this clearly presents public policy problems, it does present an opportunity that can be built on.

Initial findings from the Public/Private Ventures (P/PV) Young Unwed Fathers Project found positive attitudes maintained by young fathers. Initial data show that 23 percent of the unwed fathers interviewed actually lived with their children. Of those who did not, 39 percent saw their children almost every day of the previous month and 70 percent saw them once a week. A large percentage of the fathers reported involvement with their children in both a nurturing and/or financial capacity. Fifty percent of fathers took their children to the doctor, 81 per cent fed them, 73 per cent dressed them, 46 per cent bathed them and 87 per cent played with them. Although their employment was sporadic, these fathers appeared to spend what resources they have on their children. A large majority reported spending money for food, books and toys, clothing, diapers and medicine. The median amount reported for the previous month was \$100, not including formal child support payments. Thus, despite their poverty and lack of employment, many were providing both financial and non-financial support. A preliminary conclusion reached was that, even allowing for the biases involved in self-reporting, these young men are willing to take on responsibility and be a part of their children's lives (Watson, 1992).

These findings corroborate other evidence on young fathers. A 1987 study showed that

one-third of the children in families formed as a result of teen child bearing had regular contact with the father over a twelve year period: 17 per cent because they were living with him and 16 per cent saw him weekly (Furstenberg et. al. in Vera Institute, 1990). Here it must be noted that in the focus groups conducted by MDRC in preparation for Project Parents' Fair Share, it was found that men often were also capable of rationalizing their non-participation, claiming that it was not their child, etc (Furstenberg, et. al., 1992). Yet, Wattenburg also found that in the year following birth, 80 per cent of young unmarried fathers took care of their baby in some way (Wattenburg in Ellwood and Legler, 1993). Ooms and Owen also found that many young unwed fathers provide support. They note results from a 1984-85 survey that more than one-half of the young absent fathers surveyed reported visiting their child once a week and 41 per cent paid some child support and in-kind contributions (Lerman, 1986 and Lerman and Ooms, 1988 in Ooms and Owen, 1990).

We have seen that the presence of the father and his role in caretaking is positive and has been found to have a positive impact on the development of the child. In addition, we see that his informal support can be both material and in-kind. The Teen Parent Demonstration focus groups found that "women tended to be more satisfied with the fathers' involvement when they provided emotional support for the children (visits, baby sitting) than when they provided only material goods." These young women emphasized the importance of the father-child relationship. Many believed that because of the emotional commitment, the father's support would continue (Teen Parent Demonstration, 1992). Perhaps this explains their reluctance to become involved in a formal support arrangement which might jeopardize something that is working.

Sullivan found that negotiations between the two families on informal arrangements continue during the postnatal period. If the father continues his involvement, the entire kinship network can become involved in the care and support of the child. The positive picture presented here may be overly rosy since part of it is based on self-reported data. However, they are positive aspects that may be present in many young unwed parent relationships and that can be built upon.

Unfortunately, public and private agencies and private individuals rarely support or recognize this type of activity. One reason is the fear that father involvement will jeopardize official benefits. People who work with young parents and young parents themselves continue

to display ignorance and fear about the child support system. Also, social workers have often discouraged mothers from seeking child support because they fear that continued involvement may harm the mother and child and they doubt the ability of the system to protect the mother in good cause situations (Wattenburg, Sullivan and Hofferth in Vera Institute, 1990). These interventions, while well-intentioned, can be unnecessarily negative for the mother and for the father who is not dangerous and does want to be involved. Finally, in a similar manner, child support enforcement agency staff have exhibited ignorance about what programs are out in the community to assist young mothers (Smollar and Ooms, 1988). So here again, what could be positive, mobilizing all possible resources to support a young infant and his parents becomes negative. Young people have to interact with an unsympathetic and overworked system at a time when they are undergoing great stress and major changes in their lives.

Several researchers warn that in these situations, the IV-D system, may appear at its worst - inflexible, incompetent, negative. A North Carolina study found that men who could not afford to pay the support that was ordered had a tendency to drift away (Haskins in Smollar and Ooms, 1988). Furstenberg also found that men resented the inflexibility of the system which they felt was unable to deal with the "unevenness" of their lives (Furstenberg et. al., 1992). It must be noted that this is as reported by the individuals involved and may involve some self-serving talk. Another study warned that overzealous imposition of support may cause the young father's household to slip into poverty in order to support the young mother's household and child (Pirog-Good and Good, 1990). In addition, Sullivan (1985) warned that to try to enforce child support without addressing the employment problem could lead to the father becoming invisible and increase the pressure on young men to avoid marriage and coresiding with the child and the child's mother. Finally, by jeopardizing support, whether formal or informal, child support enforcement action could also affect the custody and visitation arrangements negotiated under the informal system.

Programming focused on unwed fathers, as such, has not been extensive. While some projects include paternity establishment as a requirement for entrance, these programs have not all emphasized the rights and responsibilities of fatherhood. However, they have found that relationships with their children and the mothers of their children often become issues for unwed fathers. Service providers in the Teen Fathers Collaboration Project and in the Family Investment Project in Maryland found that they could draw the father to the project by offering job training and education; once they were in the project, fathers would ask for assistance in

child care, relationships, etc. (Levitan, Magnum and Pines, 1989). The Teen Alternative Parenting Project (TAPP) has allowed teen fathers to provide some of their child support in the form of in-kind contributions. However, this is for teens only and relies on referrals from within the IV-D system rather than outreach for recruits.

The Healthy Start program, which is funded by the Public Health Service, has developed father oriented curricula. The program in Baltimore has spawned a fathers' support group which focuses on family stability and includes community development activities and family outings. The Baltimore site is one of the oldest programs. Clearly, these programs merit examination for possible replication.

The P/PV Young Unwed Fathers Project includes father development activities including parenting, fatherhood values and personal growth. P/PV encourages the use of local resources to involve fathers in other development activities that include the children and encourage leadership. In Philadelphia, these efforts are part of a specific program to help fathers re-engage themselves with their children. Some sites offer mediation and legal assistance, especially where, as in Ohio, the paternity establishment process when contested requires legal representation.

P/PV sites are required to try to establish paternity and child support payment. Three sites specifically chose not to require paternity establishment for entrance into the program although they made it a part of the program process. P/PV offers the following view of paternity establishment based on staff and participant interviews:

"Establishing paternity is not a simple process. It can take up to six months, and if the mother does not cooperate, legal complexities and expenses increase. Also, once the father has established paternity, a child support order is entered and in most cases, payments become due very quickly. Some project staff and fathers who have gone through the process describe it as a potential financial disaster for the father and, in some cases, for the mother and child." (Watson, 1992)

Clearly, this perspective on paternity establishment focuses on the rigidity of the child support enforcement system as currently constituted. Interestingly, the preliminary data from

the P/PV sites with the highest job retention rates also have the highest paternity rates. It is not yet clear whether there is a connection. One conclusion that is drawn from the early period of the P/PV program is that "young men have responded to efforts to engage them as fathers." Staff credit the fatherhood focus for the initial retention rate of 81 per cent across sites and 40 per cent of fathers said that this was a major factor in their response to recruitment efforts. Even allowing for self-reporting, there appears to be something here.

THREE TO FIVE YEARS LATER

This can be a particularly difficult period for young mothers, because it is when they often decide that they need help. Perhaps this is because they are older and no longer at home and the relationship with the father has ended (Wattenburg, 1990). Project Redirection found that the majority of their clients were living in poverty five years after their entrance into the program. While 25 per cent were married and nearly 40 per cent had been married, (Polit, Quint and Riccio, 1988) this leaves up to 60 per cent with possible paternity establishment problems.

Unfortunately, it may be very difficult to establish paternity now. While the mother may be interested, if the relationship is over, she may not know where the father is. He may know enough about the system to know how to avoid it, especially if he lacks the capacity to support the child. One study found that young men want to be good fathers and work off the books and that the longterm failure to support their children is due to immaturity and poor preparation for work (Sullivan, 1985). This may not be the case with all young men but surely maturity, training and employment opportunities play a role.

The effectiveness of the child support enforcement system in establishing paternity wanes with every birthday of the child. From the mothers perspective, the process can be invasive and negative, further discouraging a young mother from participating.

We have little longitudinal data, so other than what has been cited above we are not sure what happens with this group as the child becomes a toddler and school entrance looms. In the State of Washington, where there is an actively promoted voluntary paternity establishment

program, they are receiving numerous affidavits for children who are three years old and up. They have posited that this is because the couple has decided to part and they want to change the child's name or they just want to establish paternity. Other states report similar events. This is responsible behavior in response to an open system and merits examination.

LATER

By now, the absent father may have completely disappeared for purposes of paternity establishment and child support and is not involved in the adolescent child's life. However, a mentoring program in Kentucky found that when they provided mentors to a group of "fatherless" adolescent children, that at least one father was jealous and came forward. An in-prison program was recently described in the Washington Post which worked with prison inmates to make them assert their paternity and begin to act as fathers in their children's lives. The National Institute for Responsible Fatherhood and Family Development has also had notable success: ninety percent of the young men formerly enrolled in the program are involved with and providing financial support for their children (Washington Post, June, 7, 1993). These are possibilities for this late time period.

Research provides for varied interpretations. As noted above, Furstenberg (1987) found there is regular contact over a twelve year period between father and child for one-third of the children in families formed as a result of teen child bearing. Pearson (1993) found there was a low level of contact. She cited a Baltimore study of teenage child bearing in which one-third of the fathers saw their adolescent child once a month. This may be a case of viewing the glass as half full or half empty. Pearson also cites the 1981 National Survey of Children to show that 21 per cent of Black youth and 6 per cent of white youth between 11 and 16 had seen their father once a month or more in the last year. Whatever interpretation is accepted, this time period is the last chance to reach these at-risk young men before they too become young fathers.

SOME CONCLUSIONS ON PATERNITY ESTABLISHMENT

A continuing theme through this paper is the lack of knowledge which governs the experiences of young men and women from the time they become sexually active until the time their child is born and beyond. Social service and medical professionals who work with this population tend to be ignorant of the importance of paternity establishment and the rights and responsibilities surrounding it. This ignorance as well as ignorance of the child support enforcement system are translated to these young parents and parents-to-be. This usually results in negative attitudes toward the child support program, and by extension, toward the establishment of paternity under this program. To compound the problem, child support staff are uninformed about available support services for young parents and thus do not provide assistance in this area, another factor which generates negativism on both sides and works against cooperation.

Unfortunately, negativism is particularly the case when it comes to dealing with young males. Even for those who would like greater involvement, we have seen how they are pushed out of the way all along the continuum of paternity establishment until it is too late for them to become involved in the lives of their children. The absence or presence of a father is one of the most important factors in the development of a young man. The absence often results in the young man himself becoming a young, and absent, father. The intergenerational aspects of poverty and out-of-wedlock birth problems have a devastating effect on this group resulting in low educational achievement, a tenuous attachment to the labor market, drug abuse and criminal activity.

Yet there do appear to be some bright spots. Informal support systems operate parallel to formal ones, complete with potential custody and visitation problems. They involve the young man in his child's life. And, they provide support. The father is often present at the moment of birth, as are the families. This is a time of pride and joy. In hospitals where there already are hospital-based paternity establishment programs, staff have learned to work with these families to establish paternity as a positive thing to do. This leads to some recommendations.

SOME RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO PATERNITY ESTABLISHMENT

A Child-Based Approach to Policy and Programming

All of this discussion suggests the need for strong, early interventions. One possibility is to adopt a child-based philosophy, similar to Esther Wattenburg's research approach which she referred to as child-focused. This was used in her recent study on decision-making and paternity establishment which has been amply cited here. She focused her efforts on the child by interviewing both of the parents, reflecting the belief that parents have a mutual and equal responsibility for support of their children. It is possible to adopt this philosophy in reviewing existing programs for unintended effects and in proposing new ideas to work with young parents, especially in the area of child support and paternity establishment. Other longer range strategies are designed to strengthen and assist young men and how they interact with society.

Here we will focus on the child and the parents and, by extension, the young parents' families. We can build on the positive environment of the hospital where there are hospital-based programs. Here, if prenatal and, especially postnatal services are focused on the child and through the child on both parents, we can begin to try to make the informal and the formal systems work together to reinforce each other instead of in conflict with each other. We could also attempt to build on the existing strengths of these young people rather than driving them, especially him, away for the child.

There are numerous examples of programs in the last decade that have emphasized the care of children from the age of 0 to 4 and home visiting as well as other support services. There is the Early Childhood and Family Education Program in Minnesota that includes home visits, discussion groups and special events to help young parents raise their infants. The Parents as Teachers program in Missouri also includes home visits by specially trained parent educators and group meetings. This program has spread throughout the United States. There is also a set aside program called the Maternal and Child Health Community Integrated Service System. At the sites where this is being tried, nurses make maternal and infant home visits and case management is provided in the home. Baltimore also hosts a medical outreach and home visit program as did Elmira, New York. Michigan has a Family Learning Center for teenage

mothers. New Haven may have had one of the earliest programs in this area and was the only one that appeared to emphasize fathers. The others only seemed to refer to intact families or single mothers.

However, the ideas behind them and the knowledge they provide could serve as the basis for a demonstration. None of these programs provides for visiting of both parents if they do not live together and many start from a narrower medical base. A demonstration could show how to expand in both these areas. It would also be useful to examine longitudinal data to see what happens to these young families over time (see below)

Informal Support

Child support policies would also have to be examined to determine where it might be possible to insert informal support into the system. While there are valid and compelling arguments for requiring direct financial support, we also need to look at the experiences of programs such as TAPP where some in-kind support has been allowed. Rather than putting the informal system in conflict with the formal one and putting low-income parents in conflict with the child support enforcement agencies, we need to find a way to build bridges and use the strengths that are out in the community. This would require additional funding for child support enforcement staff too. Caseloads are so high that attention to people, especially young parents, as other than case numbers is nearly impossible. (GAO indicates that the average is 1000 cases per staff worker.)

Longitudinal Research

Once again using sites that have hospital-based paternity establishment programs, we can ask them to look at what happens to these young parents after they leave the hospital. Both the Program Improvement Grant in Denver and the State of Washington Paternity Acknowledgment Program have been collecting data on paternity establishment prior to the programs, on the couples who establish paternity in their programs, and in the case of Denver, those who do not.

Presumably other sites are too. What is happening to these young people after they leave the hospital? Who are the couples who decide to voluntarily acknowledge paternity later on? How can this inform programming efforts? Alter existing programming? Community-based organizations, particularly those with programs for unwed fathers, may provide a likely avenue for following-up with this population.

Outreach

Outreach and more interaction between welfare, child support and other social work and medical professionals needs to be mandated. This young population is vulnerable and yet no one person or place seems to possess all the information needed to help. Ignorance breeds frustration and frustration generates negative attitudes. These attitudes drive young fathers away from the children and the mothers of their children. We need workers to help these babies and their young parents. To do this we need to use people who are grounded in the community. Recruitment efforts in a number of the programs for young fathers have shown us that we need to use people who are familiar with the communities involved. Perhaps if we pursue this course, we will find more strengths out there that can be used positively.

A thread runs through this entire discussion: fathers are involved with their children, often in spite of existing social systems, because they want to be involved. This is positive and responsible behavior on their part and is important. If we are successful in changing attitudes and policies, we can expect that more fathers will be involved with their children and for a longer time. Yet, fathers and mothers, young and old, rich and poor often experience stress and conflict in their relationships. One area where this emerges is in access and visitation arguments.

ISSUES SURROUNDING CHILD ACCESS AND VISITATION BY NONCUSTODIAL PARENTS

Moderation of conflict and stress surrounding access and visitation issues through mediation and counseling provides another possible area for services to noncustodial parents. The purposes of these services are to increase cooperative parenting and to increase support payments by divorced and never-married parents who are experiencing problems with their ex-partners. These issues are usually raised in the middle class context and most of the literature is based on studies of divorced couples: couples who have undergone an adversarial procedure in order to legally terminate their relationship. The bitterness of the divorce can easily spill over into the post-divorce period to the detriment of the children. While never married parents may not directly encounter the court system in the process of ending their relationship, the termination can still be bitter, can have a negative effect on their offspring and can push them out of their children's lives. Further, if the changes to encourage fathers' participation are adopted, more of these conflicts will occur.

The existing literature on access and visitation problems for divorced and separated parents indicates that this is not as serious a problem as it has been presented to be. This literature shows that approximately 20 per cent of divorced parents believe they have a problem in this area and that only half of this group was willing to accept free help to deal with it (Maniha, draft 1993). Obviously, this latter conclusion is an oversimplification and deserves more attention. But, perhaps the most salient point in the literature is that fathers who have a sense of control over factors which affect their children's lives are significantly more likely to pay child support and to visit their children (Braver et al.). We have already seen that father participation is important to healthy child development.

But where does this leave us? While this may appear to be a small problem, it is not small for the people involved, especially for the children who are deprived of a two parent family as well as a parent who visits and supports them. Further, with the growth of non-traditional families, we do not know how far this problem extends.

How do we address access and visitation issues positively and incorporate them into services to noncustodial parents that will encourage support, both financial and non-financial?

Clearly, a primary emphasis must be on building the bonds that fathers experience when they have a good relationship with their children. It has been posited that the lack of bonding may be a more important factor for the non-married group than for the married one. The experience of the P/PV projects with young unwed fathers is that they have bonded with their children and are involved. Given the diversity of this population group, both ideas may have some validity.

In any case, low-income unmarried fathers are at a disadvantage when confronted with access and visitation disputes. First, if paternity has not been established, they have no legal standing to assert custody and visitation rights or to prevent adoption. Second, even if they have established paternity, they often lack the funds to pay the legal fees to present their arguments. There are services for this group that are designed to encourage their involvement with their children and their financial support of them. The P/PV projects, which encourage but do not require paternity establishment for entrance, offer a parenting curriculum that includes peer groups for support and problem solving as well as mediation services. Presumably, such a program would serve to prevent access and visitation problems from arising.

Finally there is a program which focuses more directly on visitation, the Teen Alternative Parenting Program. This program has been operating since 1987 and allows teen fathers to pay child support both in cash and in-kind. Visitation is correctly ranked as a important paternal function and thus the court allows credit for it in the child support obligation. The data in this area is difficult to compare but this allowance does appear to promote visitation by these young fathers.

There are also some preliminary results from the techniques being used in the access and visitation demonstration grants funded by OCSE to encourage and maintain noncustodial parent involvement and support. While these grants address middle-income fathers' groups, some of the techniques are also applicable to low-income fathers with access and visitation problems. In Idaho, parents work together on the development of visitation plans. In Iowa, counseling has been provided to define options and the use of neutral drop-off and pick-up points and supervised visitation services has been introduced. A number of these options, especially the last, could easily be sponsored by community-based organizations serving low-income parents. In addition, peer counseling and support groups to encourage positive involvement and support by low-income men appears to be an effective tool in both the P/PV projects and the Parents Fair Share Demonstration. This is an interesting phenomenon for a group that has been characterized as

difficult to reach and something that is being adopted by fathers groups elsewhere.

Preliminary results from these projects point to several possible initiatives. Among the options available are visitation guidelines, mandatory mediation and visitation credits for low-income young fathers to prevent the unbounded accumulation of arrearages and a possible Expedited Visitation Enforcement Program. This latter could build on the initial success of a telephone monitoring program in Arizona where a neutral party provides impartial monitoring of access and visitation agreements.

Another area of services falls more into the preventative category. During the past twenty years, there has been a dramatic growth in the number of children born to parents who never marry. Yet, we have not learned how to design education and training programs that increase these parents' capacity to support their children nor have we learned to intervene on a large scale to change this behavior. Some smaller scale efforts are described below.

MENTORING, GUIDING, COACHING, COUNSELING, CARING, TRUSTING AND MORE

Some researchers have posited risk for early adolescents as a function of negative antecedent conditions (including poverty, family environment and poor school performance) which create vulnerability and specific negative behaviors (such as early sexual activity) (Resnick and Burt, 1992). We have already seen that partners of long term welfare recipients tend to be very disadvantaged. And yet we now know little about how to improve the effectiveness of education and training programs targeted at this group (Lah, 1993). Together these points suggest that greater emphasis be placed on prevention. The risk markers for having a child who ends up on welfare occur during early adolescence. Thus, it might prove useful to briefly examine some of the program models that might help lessen risk. We will leave a thorough analysis to the Prevention group.

Among the nontraditional programs that have emerged to deal with young people at-risk is a series of efforts grouped under the rubric of "mentoring." These programs are designed to

provide some substitute for the absent competent caring figure. Often these approaches are a part of other programs, or they may stand on their own. However, they do seem to have some similar characteristics. They are "user friendly," they can be identified with by the youth who are targeted. They often use peer counseling to provide valid feedback and help participants assume responsibility. And, they can offer a less traditional curriculum more attuned to the current problems of life in the inner city.

From Lamb (Arnaudo, 1993) and Ferguson (1990), we gain a sense that an achievement orientation is important in avoiding high risk behavior, that adult influence appears to shape youths' perceptions of themselves and that these two factors influence future paternal behavior. Can this orientation be nurtured?

Most studies of "mentoring" efforts involve small-scale diverse programs which have not been subject to evaluation. But, they do provide interesting input into the development of a strategy. A thirty year study of natives born on Kauai in Hawaii found that overall rearing conditions were more powerful determinants of outcome than perinatal trauma. Among the factors in promoting a "resilient" child was the presence of at least one person in his life who accepted him unconditionally, regardless of temperamental idiosyncracies or physical or mental handicaps. (Werner, 1989). This study preceded the development of the present mentoring strategies, and it appears to be a basis for the movement to provide positive interventions to nurture the development of a strong sense of self.

Since low academic achievement is generally recognized as a predictor of at-risk behavior, there have also been evaluations of some of the small-scale mentoring programs addressing academic achievement at the college level. One study measured the effect of one-on-one mentoring by a faculty member for a minority population at the junior college level. It found that while grade point averages were not high, students stayed in school. It was posited that the project met with success as the mentors probably emphasized staying in school over grades (Mendoza and Samuels, 1987).

Another study involved a team approach using teachers at Brooklyn College. Here, there was greater achievement by the experimental group while the retention rate was almost the same (Obler, Francis and Wishengrad, 1977). Finally, bilingual teams served as mentors at a junior college in California. Here, while there was self-selection for participation and thus motivation

was assumed, there were remarkable achievements - a fact which supports the notion of the importance of motivation and self-perception to achievement (Atondo, Chavez and Regau, 1986).

A final example involved community mentors and peer support combined with assistance in locating skills training and employment services. The CLUB in Boston is community-based and focuses on low-income minority males. While the numbers on achievement - job retention, training and earnings - were too small to be statistically significant, the evidence would seem to indicate the importance of a strong sense of self to positive response to external events (Sum and Williams, 1990).

Thus, we have an increasing amount of evidence that "mentoring" is a valid approach to the problems of young minority males who lack a strong self-image and thus a way of addressing their premature fatherhood and problems in becoming productive, supportive fathers. Further work needs to be done to define mentoring and to study the explosion of programs aimed at assisting young males.

CONCLUSION

This paper reviews a range of services that are available or that could be available to noncustodial parents to involve them in their children's lives, not just financially but also emotionally and psychologically. It also examines a number of the barriers to noncustodial parent involvement and assumption of responsibility and makes some proposals to overcome these barriers.

The review started with services and attitudes that occur along the continuum of paternity establishment. It is here that we begin to see the exclusion of young noncustodial parents. All along the spectrum a lack of resources, staff shortages and insensitivity exclude the partners. Prevention programs, for a variety of reasons, have not involved young men. The increased use of condoms, a side effect of the AIDS epidemic, appears to be drawing them in with some effect

but with an unclear connection to birth control. Community-based organizations have developed some workable programs and it has been noted that these programs are "uniquely positioned" to address pregnancy prevention. They need to be examined.

During the prenatal period, we see the same factors operating to exclude expectant fathers. At this stage the informal systems also come into play. Studies of these systems indicate that they can provide informal support to the young couple, outside the welfare system. Studies also show a less positive view under which young men value their peer group's opinions and count pregnancies as "notches on their guns". This wide range of opinion helps to explain some of the exclusion, but certainly not all.

The period immediately surrounding the birth presents a real opportunity to involve the new parent in the life of the child. It is here that the barriers often drop away, if only temporarily. This is a crucial time during which to reach and involve both parents and their families. We have seen that workers in hospitals that have paternity establishment programs recognize this opportunity and capitalize upon it. During the postnatal period and later on, negative attitudes and exclusion resume. We also see the informal system working against the formal one. With the passage of the new paternity establishment legislation, we need to look carefully at all areas to see where we can change attitudes and enhance male participation all along the paternity establishment continuum.

We then examined services to moderate conflict and stress surrounding access and visitation through mediation and counseling. These services have two main goals: to increase cooperative parenting and to increase support payments by both divorced and never married parents who are experiencing problems with their ex-partners. These issues have received a great deal of attention; some say an inordinate amount. However, they are not limited to the middle class groups that have raised them and the techniques that have emerged for addressing some of these problems are also useful and are being used by lower income parents who may be experiencing similar problems.

Finally, with mentoring and other related programs, we have examined approaches to young males who are noncustodial parents, or are at-risk of becoming noncustodial parents. These interventions accept the young person where he is. The premise of most of the mentoring efforts is that a trusting, caring presence will help young men to assume responsibility as they

gain maturity and responsibilities are thrust upon them. Most of these programs include the goal of delaying early sexual activity and premature fatherhood, but it does occur.

We have primarily addressed the non-financial aspects of parental involvement. Many of the services, particularly in the case of younger males, are geared toward development of a positive self-image and the prevention of pregnancies and, where this fails, toward assumption of a responsible role in the life of the child. These services can be viewed as providing the foundation upon which noncustodial parents develop themselves and their capacity to support their offspring. Other papers will address the financial aspects of support. Here we have focused on building the ability to contribute and to assume and share responsibility for a child.

Finally, we must emphasize once again that every child has two parents. To improve the welfare system, to reform the child support enforcement system and to allow each child to know and to benefit from knowing his parents we must work with both parents. To focus solely on the mothers, while potentially more immediately cost effective, ignores the other half of the equation. If we do not address the issues of fatherhood and connecting men with their children, we will continue to address the effects rather than the causes of growing welfare rolls and child poverty.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- I. CONDUCT A THOROUGH STUDY OF EXISTING PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO SERVE YOUTH AT-RISK OF PREMATURE PARENTING
- II. ESTABLISH A DEMONSTRATION OF CHILD-BASED PROGRAMMING TO BEGIN IN THE HOSPITAL SETTING COORDINATING ALL PROGRAMS - PUBLIC AND PRIVATE, FORMAL AND INFORMAL - TO FOCUS ON THE CHILD AND THE NEW FAMILY UNIT
- III. USING DATA FROM EXISTING VOLUNTARY ACKNOWLEDGMENT

PROGRAMS, EXAMINATION OF LONGITUDINAL DATA REGARDING WHO ESTABLISHES PATERNITY AND WHO DOES NOT, AND WHY

- IV. LAUNCH A THOROUGH OUTREACH PROGRAM TO BROADEN THE MEANING OF PATERNITY ESTABLISHMENT FROM A THREATENING CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT TOOL TO A POSITIVE SOCIAL GOOD - THIS IS DUPLICATED IN THE PATERNITY ESTABLISHMENT WORK GROUP
- V. ESTABLISH A EXPEDITED VISITATION ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM WHICH WOULD INCLUDE A NEUTRAL MONITORING COMPONENT TO BOTH PARENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES
- VI. MEDIATION AND VISITATION CREDITS FOR LOW-INCOME NONCUSTODIAL PARENTS
- VII. IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS BY YOUNGER NONCUSTODIAL PARENTS IN ORDER TO AVOID THE UNBOUNDED ACCUMULATION OF ARREARAGES

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

W.R. Fathers

November 10, 1999
(House)

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

(THIS STATEMENT HAS BEEN COORDINATED BY OMB WITH THE CONCERNED AGENCIES.)

H.R. 3073 - Fathers Count Act of 1999
(Rep. Johnson (R) CT and 14 Cosponsors)

The Administration supports House passage of H.R. 3073. The President is deeply committed to helping parents of low-income children work and honor their responsibilities to support their children. H.R. 3073 is an important step in this direction.

The Administration especially is pleased that H.R. 3073 would incorporate critically needed changes to the Welfare-to-Work program's eligibility requirements to allow it to serve more effectively both non-custodial parents of low-income children and hard-to-employ welfare recipients. In addition, the Administration is pleased that H.R. 3073 would establish an alternative penalty that is tough, but fair for States that have not implemented certain child support enforcement requirements. The Administration, however, is concerned that the bill would:

- Allow the use of maintenance-of-effort funds from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program toward the required non-Federal match for receiving fatherhood grants. As a matter of principle, State expenditures should not be "double-counted" for the purposes of receiving distinct Federal funds. The Administration urges that the bill be amended to preclude this practice.
- Establish Fatherhood Grants Recommendations Panels that include congressional appointees. While the Administration welcomes vigorous oversight of its activities, the review and awarding of grants is a core Executive branch function. This provision should be deleted.

The Administration continues to urge the Congress to fully reauthorize, with additional resources, the Welfare-to-Work program. This program is already investing over \$350 million in projects helping non-custodial parents of children on welfare to work and support their families. Additional investments in this effort, with the eligibility changes contained in H.R. 3073, are essential to addressing the Nation-wide need for fatherhood employment programs, while promoting long-term economic self-sufficiency for the hardest-to-employ welfare recipients.

The Administration looks forward to working with the Congress to address its concerns and enact legislation to help children get the support they need from both their parents. In addition, the Administration will work as H.R. 3073 moves through the Congress to ensure that the bill includes appropriate offsets for the bill's direct spending and revenue provisions and ensure that the current level of privacy safeguards continues to be included in any data matching activities.

Pay-As-You-Go Scoring

H.R. 3073 would affect direct spending and receipts; therefore, it is subject to the pay-as-you-go requirement of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990. The Office of Management and Budget's preliminary scoring estimate for the bill indicates that it would reduce Federal net direct spending in FY 2000 by \$903 million and by a total of \$934 million during FYs 2000 through 2004.

White Fathers

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Absent in Bradley's Equation and Absent in Poor Families: the Father

By RONALD BROWNSTEIN

When Bill Bradley detailed his views on childhood poverty earlier this month in Los Angeles, two words were conspicuously missing from his speech. One was the word "fathers." The other missing word was "missing"--as in, missing fathers.

Bradley came no closer to the subject of missing fathers than some fleeting references to the stresses confronting single parents. As a senator from New Jersey, Bradley had worked to toughen child support collection from absent fathers, but in his speech he casually dismissed those who believe that childhood poverty cannot be addressed without attacking the broader cultural problem of fragmenting families--a much more explosive issue on the left.

"We cannot return to a remembered past, a past I'm not certain ever really existed," declared Bradley, Vice President Al Gore's sole competitor for the Democratic presidential nomination.

That's far too flip. Today, childhood poverty is at least as much a problem of values as of economics. That means any effort to reduce childhood poverty solely with the economic policies Bradley stressed is doomed to frustration. Without increasing the number of children in two-parent families, the United States is unlikely to make the progress it wants at reducing the number of children in poverty.

"Historically," says David Blankenhorn, president of the centrist Institute for American Values, "whether or not a child was poor depended on what her mother and father did for a living [and] whether they had a job. Increasingly, whether a child is poor or not depends on whether she has a father in her life."

Census Bureau numbers tell the story. More and more, childhood poverty is concentrated in families where the father (or far more rarely) the mother is absent. In 1997, the latest year for which census data are available, 62% of all children in poverty came from single-parent families.

Just 34% of poor children live in families with two married parents. (The rest live in assorted other conditions, including foster care.) That's despite the fact that the number of married couples raising children is still more than double the number of single parents.

To some extent, this decade's rising economic tide has lifted all these boats. In his speech, Bradley charged that the number of children living in poverty hasn't decreased under President Clinton. But census figures show that the number of children in poverty declined from 15.3 million when Clinton took office to 14.1 million in 1997, a drop of 1.2 million. That

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reduced the share of children living in poverty from 22.3% to 19.9%.

Bradley's aides now admit that his charge in the speech was wrong but say the actual decline is "negligible." Clintonites counter that the decline in the children's poverty rate since 1993 is the largest sustained drop since the 1960s. But the biggest story in the numbers is that even a booming economy can't fully overcome the impact of family breakdown on children.

Since 1993, the poverty rate has fallen slightly faster among female-headed households than those with married couples. But even after that progress, a staggering 41% of single-parent families remain trapped in poverty (compared with 7.1% of married parents). A single white mother is still nearly five times as likely as a married black couple to be poor.

That disparity defies easy solution. Most parents without a partner make great efforts, but they are forced to stretch one set of resources over a job that demands two. That leaves many in an inherently tenuous situation, particularly economically.

Bradley was right to urge more support for all parents struggling to stay out of poverty. But Washington hasn't been as oblivious as he suggested.

With the 1993 expansion of the earned income tax credit (which cuts federal taxes for the working poor), the 1996 increase in the minimum wage, the new program of health insurance for children in low-income families and the \$500-per-child tax credit approved in 1997, Clinton and Congress have already taken important steps to bolster families--with one or two parents--straining at the margin of the economy.

More can be done, such as raising the minimum wage again. But it will be difficult to root out childhood poverty solely with such economic support because the vast majority of parents who work already earn enough to lift their families out of poverty. For married couples with children, when either partner worked full time in 1997, just 2.8% were poor. Even nine of 10 single mothers who worked full-time escaped poverty.

Those numbers suggest part of the answer to endemic childhood poverty might be to help more single mothers enter the work force (as welfare reform is already aiming to do with

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work requirements, training and subsidies for day care). But there are natural limits to that process; the real lesson may be that the best way to reduce childhood poverty is to encourage more men to marry the mothers of their children and help sustain the families they have created.

Not much is known about how to promote marriage. But interesting experiments are emerging. On the same day that Bradley delivered his fathers-free speech, an extraordinary collection of largely African American scholars convened by Morehouse College and Blankenhorn's institute released a manifesto urging a broad national effort aimed at "reuniting fathers and children," especially in the black community.

Among their recommendations was that Congress provide grants to help fund grass-roots, often religiously based, initiatives now springing up with three goals: to help absent fathers find work; to inspire them to rebuild ties with their sons and daughters; and to encourage them to marry the mothers of their children.

Rep. Nancy L. Johnson (R-Conn.) will introduce a \$2-billion program to support such efforts later this year, and Clinton officials have expressed interest in the idea.

Reconnecting absent fathers to their families won't be easy, but it's essential to the cause of giving more children a chance. Bradley was only partly right when he said that the persistence of childhood poverty "is an issue of justice."

It's even more an issue of personal responsibility: the obligation of men and women to jointly support the children they bring into the world. Washington can surely do more, but, without that personal commitment, justice for poor children will remain elusive.

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Program Needs Political Parenting to Break Cycle of Fatherless Families

Research shows that children growing up without fathers in the home are twice as likely to abuse drugs, commit crimes or drop out of school as those with two parents to support them.

By RONALD BROWNSTEIN

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INDIANAPOLIS--For the seven young African American men sitting in a classroom here one crystalline afternoon last week, the subject on the table was fatherhood. They were there to talk about strengthening their relationships with their children. But the long shadow in the room was the absence of their own fathers from their lives.

"I knew how I felt when you had father-and-son things at school and I couldn't just call my dad and say, 'Let's roll up,'" said Isreal Burgess, a voluble 20-year-old who spent most of the day with his head buried in a thick directory of career options. "My whole view is that, with my son, I want to be better than my dad . . . and do all the things I wanted to do with my pop with my shorty."

There are many ways to measure the price America pays for the huge number of children--about one-third overall--who live in families without fathers. When the Census Bureau releases its annual report on poverty in the next few days, it will surely find, as it now does every year, that most poor children live in fatherless families. Research shows that children growing up without fathers in the home are twice as likely to abuse drugs, commit crimes or drop out of school as those with two parents to support them.

But the greatest price may be the pattern of pain and loss that cascades through the years as sons repeat the mistakes and relive the absence of their fathers--leaving another generation of children adrift. "There is a cycle we have to stop," says Wallace McLaughlin, director of the innovative Father Resource Program, which has gathered these young men for six weeks of intensive instruction and counseling on fulfilling their responsibilities as fathers.

The 5-year-old program, which serves primarily black men ages 17 to 27, is at the forward edge of a fragile grass-roots movement laboring to break the cycle of separation. Around the country--typically in modest circumstances like this--programs are springing up to help men, usually unmarried young men, reconnect with their families.

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Congress could give these shoestring efforts a huge boost in the months ahead. Sens. Evan Bayh (D-Ind.) and Pete V. Domenici (R-N.M.) recently introduced legislation with an impressive, bipartisan list of co-sponsors that would provide about \$75 million a year in grants (to be partially matched by states) to launch and enlarge fatherhood programs. Similar legislation is being developed in the House. And senior administration officials--starting with Vice President Al Gore--like the idea.

"We spent a lot of time dealing with problems like poverty, juvenile violence [and] drugs, which are really symptoms for a deeper underlying problem--the epidemic of fatherlessness," says Bayh. "Rather than just deal with the symptoms, I think we need to deal with the root cause."

That's exactly what McLaughlin and his colleagues have aimed at since opening their doors in April 1994. Four or five times a year they gather groups of 20 young men--almost all unmarried, most recruited by word of mouth or radio advertising--for a six-week, all-day fatherhood boot camp.

Part of the day, the young men (who are paid weekly stipends of about \$90) are counseled on parenting skills, anger management, the role of fathers and the need to avoid additional pregnancies without marriage. A visiting psychologist works with them on managing their relationship with their child's mother. The rest of the day they learn job readiness skills: how to write a resume and conduct themselves in the workplace. Many stay late to study for their high school equivalency diploma. At the end of the six weeks--once they pass a drug test--an employment counselor helps them find work.

The goal is to stabilize their lives to the point where they can not only pay child support but also support their children emotionally. "Before I got here, I was out in the world doing anything," says Tighe Bibbs, a lithe young man whose coiled energy seems poised between great things and disaster. "Now I know I've got to live to see my kids grow old."

Even with those good intentions, just a day in the program's offices makes clear that this is hard and often frustrating work. As much as half of a typical class drops out. Those who remain must still cross many miles to connect with a 9-to-5 world of work, family and responsibility. Several have criminal records; few have finished high school. Complicating the problem, most are no longer romantically involved with the children's mothers; that means the mothers sometimes don't want them around, especially if either is seeing someone else. One young man in the class has another common problem: He's being blocked from seeing his child by the mother's mother, who doesn't approve of him.

In many cases, it's hard to see how these young men can form the relationship they want with their children without

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marrying the child's mother. Yet marriage typically isn't even on their radar. McLaughlin says that, while programs such as this "must reintroduce marriage as an option in our community," they must be realistic enough to focus on building "working relationships" between young parents unlikely to ever marry each other.

To that end, he wants to hire more counselors to negotiate "contracts" between these young couples clarifying each's role in raising their children. McLaughlin's greatest ambition is to open the program's own facility--it now operates inside a somewhat inaccessible hospital--where he could reach more fathers and mothers alike. But that requires more than the \$500,000 annual budget he patches together primarily from foundation grants. "The possibilities are limitless, but we need funds," says McLaughlin, in a lament that many activists running similar programs would echo.

The great theologian Reinhold Niebuhr taught that man's imperfection doomed any human endeavor to disappointment--but that awareness did not absolve us of responsibility to work for a better world. That counsel applies well to these fatherhood initiatives. This work isn't like paving roads or building dams; progress doesn't come in reliable installments. We may never be entirely satisfied with our ability to forge loving fathers from hard young lives. But the need is so great that we have no real alternative but to try.

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HOW ARE YOU MANAGING WITHOUT ONE?



Shortly after President Clinton released his proposed 2001 budget, a friend of mine called from a governor's office in the Midwest. "You must be pretty pleased," he opened confidently. "He's proposing a bunch of new money for fatherhood programs."

"Actually," I answered, "I think his fatherhood initiative does more harm than good."

"Really?" my friend replied incredulously, "But I thought you were in the fatherhood business."

My friend, of course, is correct. As president of the National Fatherhood Initiative, I am in the fatherhood business. And President Clinton did propose a bunch of new money for fatherhood programs — \$125 million to be exact. So why am I not jumping up and down with excitement over his new fatherhood program?

Let's begin with the good news. The president's budget, as have all presidents' budgets since, I think, George Washington's, includes a lot of "get tough on deadbeat dads" initiatives, including "booting" the cars of delinquent payers, intercepting gambling winnings to collect past-due child support, and denying passports to parents who owe \$2,500 or more in child support.

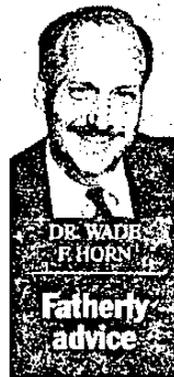
Nothing wrong with getting tough on deadbeat parents. Any noncustodial parent who has the ability to help support his or her children financially and does not get no sympathy from me. Children don't ask to come into this world. When we become parents, we incur an obligation to do all we can to support our children, and that includes financial support. That obligation doesn't end simply because a marriage does — or because a marriage

President's program for fathers misses mark

doesn't happen in the first place.

But life is more complicated than is suggested by "deadbeat dad" rhetoric alone. Some noncustodial parents are more "dead broke" than "deadbeat." Others have not so much "walked away" as they have been "pushed away."

Interestingly, the president's budget takes a giant step toward recognizing these complexities, for in addition to efforts to "get tough on deadbeat parents," it also includes a



program to help low-income, noncustodial parents — mostly fathers — get jobs, pay child support and reconnect with their children.

So what's my problem? Sounds like a pretty good idea, doesn't it?

Well, not really. The problem with the president's

fatherhood proposal is this: It punishes fathers who get married. Here's how:

Suppose you are running a program under the president's proposal and a 24-year-old unwed father walks into your office. He grew up in a low-income neighborhood, is undereducated and marginally

employed. But he is now a father and wants to do right by his child. He asks for your help getting a steady job so he can better fulfill his child-support obligations and learn how to be a good dad. Can you help, he asks?

You bet, you reply. Why, we have a wonderful program for you. We will help you improve your job skills and find you a decent job. Once employed, we will give you an ongoing supportive employment program to increase the likelihood you will keep your job. And we also have a peer support program to help you learn the skills necessary to be an involved father.

Great, this young man says, sign me up.

Now imagine that soon after this young father leaves your office, another young man comes into the room. He, too, is 24 years old and from a low-income neighborhood. He, too, is undereducated and marginally employed. He, too, is now a father and wants to do right by his child. Can you help, he asks?

Before you answer, "of course," imagine there is this one little difference between these two men. Imagine this second is married to the mother and is living with his child. Under the president's proposal, you would have to say there's nothing you can do for him.

What, the man answers, but my buddy was just in here. We live in the same neighborhood, earn the

same amount of money, and our children are the same age. How come you can help him, but not me?

Well, you answer, you're married. He's not. This program is for low-income, noncustodial fathers only.

What do I have to do to get the same services? this second man asks. Your reply — if you are honest — would have to be this: Divorce the mother and move out.

The reason you would have to answer this way is because the president's proposal, well-meaning though it might be, limits eligibility to low-income, noncustodial fathers. Programs funded under such an approach would have to hang up a sign at the door saying, "Married fathers need not apply." Can't think of anything that would be worse for fathers, women and children than that.

To be fair, the president has not yet submitted legislative language for his fatherhood initiative. There is still time for the president and his advisers to rethink this ill-conceived idea to restrict eligibility to unmarried low-income fathers.

But unless a fix is made, making married and single low-income fathers eligible, this proposal is worse than nothing. We have seen the devastation 70 years of welfare largely restricted to unmarried mothers has wrought. It would be a shame if we spend the next 70 years repeating that mistake with fathers.

Dr. Wade F. Horn is a clinical child psychologist, president of the National Fatherhood Initiative and co-author of several books on parenting. Send your questions about dads, children and fatherhood to: The National Fatherhood Initiative, 101 Lake Forest Blvd., Suite 360, Gaithersburg, Md. 20877; or send e-mail to NFI1995@aol.com.

WR -
Fathers

Democrats battle in effort to learn how West is won

Bradley appears bracing for Gore win

DENVER (AP) — Bill Bradley steeled himself against potential disappointment in the Northwest yesterday, while Democratic rival Vice President Al Gore campaigned as if he were already his party's nominee, accusing the Republicans of pandering to "right-wing extremists."

Mr. Bradley, who has invested nearly a week in Washington state in preparation for today's nonbinding primary there, said in Seattle, "I knew it would be difficult and it has been."

He promised to plow ahead to the March 7 "Super Tuesday" primaries no matter what.

Mr. Gore, popping into Colorado for 16 hours, accused all the other candidates of ignoring the state. Meanwhile, Mr. Gore ignored Mr. Bradley as he campaigned in sunshine and springlike breezes under the open-air, arched glass pavilion of the Denver Performing Arts Center.

The Republicans "don't know who they are," Mr. Gore said, offering his take on the nomination battle between John McCain and George W. Bush.

Mr. Gore said he shares Mr. McCain's views on "some things ... campaign finance reform and taking on the tobacco companies and taking on special interests." But both Republican contenders would try to destroy abortion rights, he contended.

"The Republicans want to pander to the right-wing extremists and get the government to come in and order a woman to do what the right wing says is the right thing," Mr. Gore said.

Even as he campaigned in Denver and Pueblo, Colo., — and late last night in Phoenix — Mr. Gore

"The Republicans want to ... get the government to come in and order a woman to do what the right wing says is the right thing."

— Vice President Al Gore

kept an eye over his shoulder on Washington state. From his Denver hotel suite, he phoned in five drive-time interviews to radio stations in Seattle. His campaign manager, Donna Brazile, was staying in the state until the voting gets under way.

Mr. Bradley has hoped for an invigorating — if symbolic — win in Washington today. During a visit to a women's health center yesterday he said, "If we win overwhelmingly, it would send a message. But I didn't come here expecting we would do that. I knew it would be difficult and it has been."

Mr. Bradley started the day before dawn in Seattle, searching for votes among commuters at the ferry terminal. He left state on a high note after a rainy but spirited rally at the University of Washington that drew about 1,000 supporters.

He said that whatever happens today is "not determinate of March 7."

From Washington, Mr. Bradley headed to California for a day-and-

a-half courtesy call. Mr. Gore leads by a whopping 5-to-1 margin in the latest polls gauging California's March 7 jackpot primary.

Mr. Bradley then planned to turn his focus for the final days before "Super Tuesday" to New York and New England, where he has shown stronger appeal.

Mr. Gore made only a brief visit to Colorado, which has 51 Democratic delegates up for grabs in its March 10 primary. Standing on the back of a pickup truck at a rally in Pueblo, Colo., Mr. Gore reminisced about visiting the city with his young wife Tipper just after he returned from Vietnam.

"We put a tent in the back of our Chevrolet and camped in the Great Sand Dunes," which Mr. Gore said should be made a national park.

Despite the brevity of his appearance, he told Denver's KMGH-TV, "This is a place I've spent a lot of time in. I don't know why the other candidates have been ignoring Colorado."

WR - Fathers

KEY FATHERHOOD FACTS

-with sources-

June 12, 2000

One in three children live without their father. 27.3 percent of children live in single mother households (Source: March 1998 Census data), and 37.4 percent of children live without their biological father (Calculated using 14.6 percent of children live with biological mother and step-father, according to 1990 Census, page 1255 of 1998 Greenbook; and applied to March 1998 Census data).

The proportion of children living with only one parent has doubled since 1970. [cited in Theodora Ooms, Toward More Perfect Unions: Putting Marriage on the Public Agenda, July 1998; reference is to U.S Bureau of the Census, March 1998]

About 40 percent of the children who live in fatherless households have not seen their fathers in at least a year. [National Fatherhood Initiative, Fathers Facts - Third Edition, 1998]

There is compelling evidence that fathers matter:

- Children who live apart from their fathers are five times more likely to be poor than children with both parents at home are. [National Center for Children in Poverty, Young Children in Poverty: A Statistical Update]
- Girls without a father in their life are two and a half times more likely to get pregnant and 53% more likely to commit suicide. [HHS, Press Release on Launch of Parental Responsibility Campaign, March 26, 1999]
- Boys without a father in their life are 63% more likely to run away and 37% more likely to use drugs. [HHS, Press Release on Launch of Parental Responsibility Campaign, March 26, 1999]
- Boys and girls without father involvement are twice as likely to drop out of school, twice as likely to abuse alcohol or drugs, twice as likely to end up in jail, and nearly four times more likely to need help for emotional or behavioral problems. [HHS, Press Release on Launch of Parental Responsibility Campaign, March 26, 1999; see also, HHS Fatherhood Initiative Fact Sheet, June 21, 1999; for alcohol or drugs statistic, see National Opinion Research Center for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, The Relationship between Family Structure and Adolescent Substance Abuse cited in fact sheet provided by Senator Bayh with July 14, 1999 press release]

CHILD SUPPORT

Child support helps reduce poverty: custodial parents who received child support were more than one and a half times less likely to be poor (22% are poor) than those who did not have a child support award and did not receive a child support payment (36% are poor).

[Child Support for Custodial Mothers and Fathers: 1995, report by U.S. Census Bureau, March 1999]

Child support is especially important for poor children. The average poor child whose family received child support from a nonresident parent received \$1979 in 1996, an amount representing over one-quarter of their family income. [Elaine Sorensen and Chava Zibman, Child Support Offers Some Protection Against Poverty, March 2000]

Receipt of child support helps families stay off welfare: Women who do not receive child support had a 31% chance of returning to welfare after 6 months while women who received even small amounts of child support had only a 9% chance of returning to welfare. [Elaine Sorensen, Ron Mincy, and Ariel Halpern, Redirecting Welfare Policy Toward Building Strong Families, March 2000]

Despite record increases in child support collections since 1992, two-fifths of custodial parents do not have a child support order in place and only one of four parents in the publicly funded child support system who owe child support actually pay it. [HHS, Temporary Assistance for Needy Programs, Second Annual Report to Congress, August 1999] Child support collections nearly doubled from \$8 billion in 1992 to \$15.5 billion in 1999. [HHS Press Release, January 27, 2000]

Non-custodial parents who continue to be involved with their children are more likely to pay child support: 74% of non-custodial parents with joint custody or visitation agreements made support payments compared with 35% for parents without such arrangements. [Child Support for Custodial Mothers and Fathers: 1995, report by U.S. Census Bureau, March 1999]

Most fathers can afford to pay child support – 85 percent of non-custodial fathers have income above the poverty level. [Elaine Sorensen, "A National Profile of Noncustodial Fathers and Their Ability to Pay Child Support", Journal of Marriage and the Family, November 1997.]

There are about 2.7 million 'deadbroke' non-custodial fathers who are impoverished and do not pay child support. [Elaine Sorensen, Urban Institute]

FRAGILE FAMILIES

Half of unmarried parents live together and another 30 percent are romantically involved at the time the child is born. Eight of ten fathers provided support during the pregnancy and 90 % of mothers want the father to be involved in raising their child. [Initial data results from Oakland and Austin in the Fragile Families and Wellbeing Study, Sara McLanahan and Irwin Garfinkle, The Fragile Families and Child Well-Being Study: Questions, Design, and a Few Preliminary Results, May 2000.]

However, from the time of the baby's birth the relationship between the father and the family tends to weaken. [Elaine Sorensen, Urban Institute]

Welfare Reform

Work requirements and financial incentives that make work pay are found to both increase work effects and have powerful social impacts. Minnesota's welfare reform program succeeded in increasing employment of long term welfare recipients by 35%, and earnings by 23%, while

reducing domestic abuse of mothers by 18% and improving children's behavior and school performance. The program also dramatically increased the percentage of parents who were married at the end of the three-year study by 38 %. [MDRC, June 2000. Final results from an evaluation of the Minnesota Family Investment Program]

Young Men Put Family First:

Unlike men in older age groups, eight-two percent of men ages 21-39 put family time at the top of their list of job characteristics (ahead of money, power, and prestige). Seventy one percent of men in that age group would give up some of their pay for more time with their families. [Life's Work: Generational Attitudes Toward Work and Life Integration, Radcliffe Public Policy Center, June 2000]

PRESIDENT CLINTON PROMOTES RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD
New Actions to Help More Fathers Participate in Their Children's Lives [?]

June 17, 2000 – Draft as of 6/14

Today in his weekly radio address, President Clinton will highlight the critical role that fathers play in their children's lives by providing both emotional and financial support, and take new actions to help more fathers succeed in this most important job by participating in their children's learning and spending time with their children at birth. As we honor fathers on Fathers Day, we must also recommit to helping fathers provide the love and support their children need every day of the year. The President will call on Congress to enact his budget initiatives to promote responsible fatherhood and support working families including helping low-income fathers work and support their children, allowing more of the child support fathers pay to go directly to their children, and continuing to crackdown on those absent fathers who can afford to pay child support. These actions build on the Clinton-Gore Administration's long-standing commitment to promote responsible fatherhood and strengthen the role of fathers in their children's lives.

FATHERS MATTER

Fathers play a critical role in their children's lives – beginning at birth, continuing through their school years, and as mentors and role models later in life.

[fill in key stats]

NEW EVIDENCE THAT CHILD SUPPORT MEASURES ARE WORKING

The President will release new data showing that the Administration's child support enforcement strategies continue to pay off. The latest FY 1999 data from HHS shows child support collections increased another 10 percent in the past year [CHK w/ HHS], reaching a record of nearly \$16 billion, double the level in 1992. This progress includes success with tough and effective new tools including a new program put in place in 1999 to match records of delinquent parents with financial institution records that has already identified nearly 900,000 delinquent parents with financial accounts valued at about \$3 billion. This encouraging news builds on a strong record of accomplishments in making sure that parents who are not living with their children provide the financial support their children need and deserve, which are detailed in a new report from the Department of Health and Human Services.

RELEASE NEW GUIDE TO INCREASE FATHERS' INVOLVEMENT IN CHILDREN'S LEARNING

There is strong evidence that when fathers are involved in their children's education and learning, children learn more, perform better in school, and exhibit healthier behavior. To help more fathers participate in this vital aspect of their children's life, the President will release a new report from the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services that offers educators, Head Start and child care providers, and other providers of children's services information, strategies and tools to successfully involve fathers in children's learning. The report, called "A Call to Commitment: Fathers' Involvement in Children's Learning" is part of a series of efforts by Secretaries Riley and Shalala to help increase father's participation in their children's learning, including readiness to learn at home, at school, and in the community. It

summarizes research findings, discusses strategies for improving and extending fathers' involvement in their children's education – whether they are living with their children or not, highlights model programs around the country, and provides resource information for practitioners.

Direct federal agencies to provide guidance on SUPPORTING responsible fatherhood EFFORTS

The President will direct the Secretaries of Agriculture, Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Justice and Labor to develop coordinated interagency guidance on federal resources and opportunities for promoting responsible fatherhood. This will help the growing number of states, local governments, community- and faith-based organizations, and fatherhood practitioners working to help fathers address issues such as employment, parenting, and child support.

Announce new tools to help Head Start programs connect fathers and children.

Acknowledging paternity is a crucial first step to securing an emotional and financial connection between a father and his child. Legal establishment of paternity is needed to enforce a child support order, provide children with access to health care under their father's plan, provide rights of inheritance to social security benefits, establish a father's access and visitation rights, as well as to help children know their father, connect with extended family, and gain access to medical history and genetic information. Thanks in large part to measures promoted by this Administration, the number of fathers legally acknowledging paternity has tripled since 1992 and the percentage of all children born out of wedlock who now have paternity established has increased by one-third (from 44 percent to 60 percent) over the same period [CHK]. To further increase the number of fathers voluntarily acknowledging paternity, the Office of Child Support Enforcement recently developed a video to be used by hospitals, vital records offices, and child support staff to help unwed parents understand the benefits of establishing paternity and emphasize the importance of father involvement. The video can be customized to fill in locality-specific information. Next week, HHS will distribute this video, along with a brochure on child support services for families, to over 2,500 Head Start and Early Head Start programs around the country to help parents of children in Head Start understand the benefits and legal rights and responsibilities of paternity establishment and child support. This builds on other efforts underway to promote father involvement in Head Start.

Challenge the Private Sector to HELP FATHERS SPEND TIME WITH THEIR CHILDREN

For the past seven years, the Clinton-Gore Administration has taken actions to give parents the flexibility they need to balance their obligations at home and at work. Since the President signed the Family and Medical Leave Act into law in 1993, more than 20 million Americans have used it to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave to care for a newborn or sick relative without fear of losing their job. Last week the President took important new steps to give working parents (both mothers and fathers) time off to care for their families without losing income. The Federal government has been a leader in providing paternity as well as maternity leave [chk]. However, at a time when more fathers are recognizing the importance of spending time with their children, and in the face of evidence showing the importance of father involvement in a child's early years,

mothers are 4.5 times more likely to receive some form of paid leave than fathers and fathers are 7 times more likely than mothers to say that the lack of pay is the key reason they don't take leave. A less quantifiable but equally powerful factor is the lack of support or approval that many fathers feel from their employers or colleagues if they do take time off. The President challenged the private sector to help fathers – as well as mothers – balance work and family responsibilities and spend time more time with their children, including taking paternity leave. [this still needs to be fleshed out w/ OPM and DOL]

URGE CONGRESS TO ENACT RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD INITIATIVES

The Clinton-Gore Administration's Fiscal Year 2001 budget substantially expands efforts to promote responsible fatherhood and strengthen families. The Budget proposes \$255 million for the first year of a new Fathers Work/Families Win initiative to promote responsible fatherhood and support working families, allows states to simplify child support distribution rules, provides incentives to states that pass through more child support payments directly to families, and extends Welfare-to-Work grants to help more non-custodial parents move into lasting unsubsidized jobs. In addition, the Administration's proposal to expand the Earned Income Tax Credit (by nearly \$24 billion) would provide an additional work incentive of as much as \$1,200 in tax relief to an estimated 6.8 million hard-working mothers and fathers.

CLINTON-GORE ADMINISTRATION HAS A LONGSTANDING COMMITMENT TO PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD/FATHER INVOLVEMENT

Both President Clinton and Vice President Gore have long recognized that committed fathers are essential to strong families and communities. They recognize that strengthening fathers' involvement with their children cannot be accomplished by the Federal Government alone; many solutions rest in communities, families, and with individual fathers themselves. However, to ensure that the Federal government does all it can, in June 1995 President Clinton directed all federal agencies to review their policies, programs, and their research agendas to ensure that they support and incorporate men in their role as fathers. Under the leadership of Vice President Gore, agencies have made significant progress in promoting greater father involvement, within the federal workforce as well as through federal programs and resources, and through partnerships with states and communities, foundations, and the research community. [will have separate background paper with examples]

Michael Kinsley

The GOP's Abortion Trap

Here's the deal: If George W. Bush will say publicly that he supports the Republican Party's official position on abortion, I will vote for him. But almost no one else will. The man in charge of writing the party's 2000 platform, Wisconsin Gov. Tommy Thompson, says he plans no change in the abortion language from 1996 and no public discussion about it either. He might as well go all the way and say he won't even read it, because I doubt even he agrees with it.

The official position of the Republican Party is that women who have abortions should be executed. The platform doesn't say this in so many words, but it's not a fanciful interpretation. In fact, it's an unavoidable interpretation.

The platform says: "The unborn child has a fundamental individual right to life which cannot be infringed." No exceptions. And: "we endorse legislation to make clear that the Fourteenth Amendment's protections apply to unborn children." It's the second bit that's the killer.

On one level, it's gibberish. Legislation cannot "make clear" the meaning of the Fourteenth Amendment because it is a constitutional provision, whose official meaning is up to the Supreme Court, not Congress. Second, the Fourteenth Amendment begins, "All persons born or naturalized in the United States"—so if anything is "clear" it is that the 14th Amendment's protections do not apply to the unborn. In fact, neither position is "clear" and a second reference to "any person" has sometimes been held to cover resident aliens. (Of course, the most recent Republican platform also complains about judges who "invent new rights as they go along, arrogating to themselves powers King George III never dared to exercise.")

What is undeniably clear from the abortion language is that the Republican Party stands for the principle that fetuses are "persons" as that term is used in the Fourteenth Amendment. Among other famous provisions, that amendment forbids "any state" to "deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

In other words, according to the Republican platform, the law should treat the abortion of a one-month-along fetus exactly like the killing of, say, a 5-year-old child. In every state it is considered a rather serious crime for a mother to hire someone to kill her innocent child. In states with a death penalty, this is just the kind of killing—premeditated, commercial, often remorseless, a betrayal of humanity's deepest bond—that qualifies for the death penalty.

Interpreting the "equal protection" clause has been the Supreme Court's main line of business for decades. What kinds of unequal treatment qualify? How much does the government have to be involved? But there are no complications here. Nothing could be more unequal than the difference between being executed and not being executed, and there's no ambiguity about the government's role.

So the abortion provisions of the Republican platform would give states a choice: either execute women who have abortions, along with doctors who perform them, or don't execute other premeditated murderers and their hired gunmen. And there's really no choice, because elsewhere in this steamy document, the platform is quite enthusiastic about the death penalty, explaining repeatedly that it isn't used nearly enough.

Right-to-life Republicans generally say that while doctors who perform an abortion should be punished, the woman who procures one should be seen as a victim. Not only does this make no sense—under the language the party plans to readopt this year, it would be flatly unconstitutional. Even leaving aside capital punishment, a state could not send one woman to prison for murdering her child, do the same to a doctor who performs an abortion, but let another woman who scheduled an appointment, wrote a check and had the abortion go free.

The full implications of the platform's abortion language also make a mockery of the GOP's "big tent" efforts to find room for pro-choicers in the party. The '96 platform precedes the abortion passages with some fairly desperate lemons-into-lemonade guff about being the "party of the open door," which sees "diversity of views as a source of strength" and is "committed to resolving our differences in a spirit of civility, hope, and mutual respect."

Obviously the Republican Party isn't the Communist Party, with an official "line" everyone must follow. Any party in a democracy must appeal to voters who agree with it on some issues and not on others. And an acknowledgment that issues are complex and reasonable people can disagree is always welcome. But it's a little silly to talk about mutual respect and tolerance in the context of what you define as child murder, then revert to nasty high indignation when discussing, say, the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House.

It is simply not coherent to tell believers in abortion rights: "We think you're slaughtering children—and, no, we're not prepared to discuss it—but hey! We don't care. Come on in anyway, and try to make yourself feel at home." Moral clarity is the great strength of the extreme pro-life position: Abortion is killing a baby, period. But it's a position that's hard to fake, as the GOP continues to learn.

Michael Kinsley, editor of Slate (www.slate.com), writes a weekly column for The Post.

WR -
Fathhood

Paul Offner

Welfare: Now for The Men

From the beginning, welfare in this country has been a woman's business. Benefits typically went to mothers with young children, and fathers were discouraged from sticking around because their presence might well jeopardize the continuation of aid.

In the 1996 reforms, this focus remained unchanged. The goal was to motivate women to work and to avoid having additional children. Yet as James Q. Wilson noted years ago, "it is fathers whose behavior we most want to change." Most Americans would be happy to let poor mothers stay at home with their children if the fathers were supporting their families.

None of this is new, of course. What is new is the dramatic way the situation has deteriorated over the past few years, particularly for African Americans. Even though unemployment has now dropped to 3.9 percent, and the poverty rate has reached its lowest level in 19 years, the labor force participation of out-of-school African American men between the ages of 20 and 24 is lower today than it was at the start of the expansion seven years ago. Meanwhile, the labor force participation of African American women of the same age has increased by almost a quarter, from 64.2 percent to 78.8 percent. In fact, among young black adults, more of the women are now working than the men, even though half of the women are mothers who have young children to look after!

Why this striking difference? Welfare reform is part of the explanation, as is the expanded earned income tax credit, the changing structure of the labor market and the fact that many black men have criminal records. But the bottom line is that, as Harvard sociologist William Julius Wilson suggested several years ago, young women are not going to settle down with men whose lives are stagnating. Unfortunately, however, that won't stop them from having children. Four of every five births to 20- to 24-year-old black women are now out-of-wedlock. And that's a problem, because most of the increase in child poverty over the past 30 years is associated with single-parent families.

Among the general population, 32 percent of all births are now out-of-wedlock. Indeed, last year was the highest on record. It is worth underscoring this point because it is so widely misunderstood: While birthrates are declining across-the-board, the proportion of births that are to unmarried women remains constant or is inching upward. And welfare reform, by widening the gap between low-income men and women, may actually be making matters worse.

Five years ago, congressional conservatives sought to address this problem through a series of harsh initiatives, such as denying increased benefits to welfare families that had additional children or cutting off benefits for teenage parents. "Placing millions of single mothers in work and training programs will have little positive effect for society as long as the illegitimate birth rate remains over 30 percent," wrote Robert Rector of the Heritage Foundation at the time. Now Rector is promoting a more moderate agenda: pro-marriage education in the schools, larger financial rewards for states that reduce out-of-wedlock births and bonuses for young women from disadvantaged backgrounds who defer child-bearing until after marriage. While there is no evidence any of these proposals will do much good, we might as well try some of them (the worst that can happen is they won't work). But it is hard to see how much progress can be made as long as a third of young black men are unemployed.

What we need is a serious jobs program for these men. It will be expensive, and there is no guarantee it will work. Pilot programs designed to employ low-income men so they can pay child support have had mixed results, as reported by the Manpower Demonstration Research Corp. There is already some small federal funding for such services, but more is needed.

So the job of reforming welfare is not done. Indeed, one might say that we have done the easier part—putting poor women to work. The problem now is that the women are making it without the men. Fortunately, both liberals and conservatives agree that something must be done. For years, liberals were defensive about the subject, fearing the stigmatizing of single mothers, but that is changing as the evidence accumulates concerning the effects of absent fathers on children. So we need to get cracking. We can't ignore the fathers any longer.

The writer, former D.C. Medicaid director, is a professor at Georgetown University.

WR Fathers

For Some Dads, a Day to Protest

*Fathers Seek New Laws,
Saying They Are Deprived
Of Rights as Caregivers*

By CHRIS JENKINS
Washington Post Staff Writer

Ken Yolman came from the Virgin Islands seeking words of comfort. Heather Smiler drove from Brooklyn to support her brother who says he hasn't seen his daughter in 10 months. Richard Brooke, from Chicago, said he just wanted to talk with other fathers who have struggled to see their children after a messy divorce.

They were among nearly 100 people gathered in front of the Capitol yesterday as part of "FathersDay2000," an effort to support the tens of thousands of dads nationwide who, organizers say, are kept from participating in the rearing of their children.

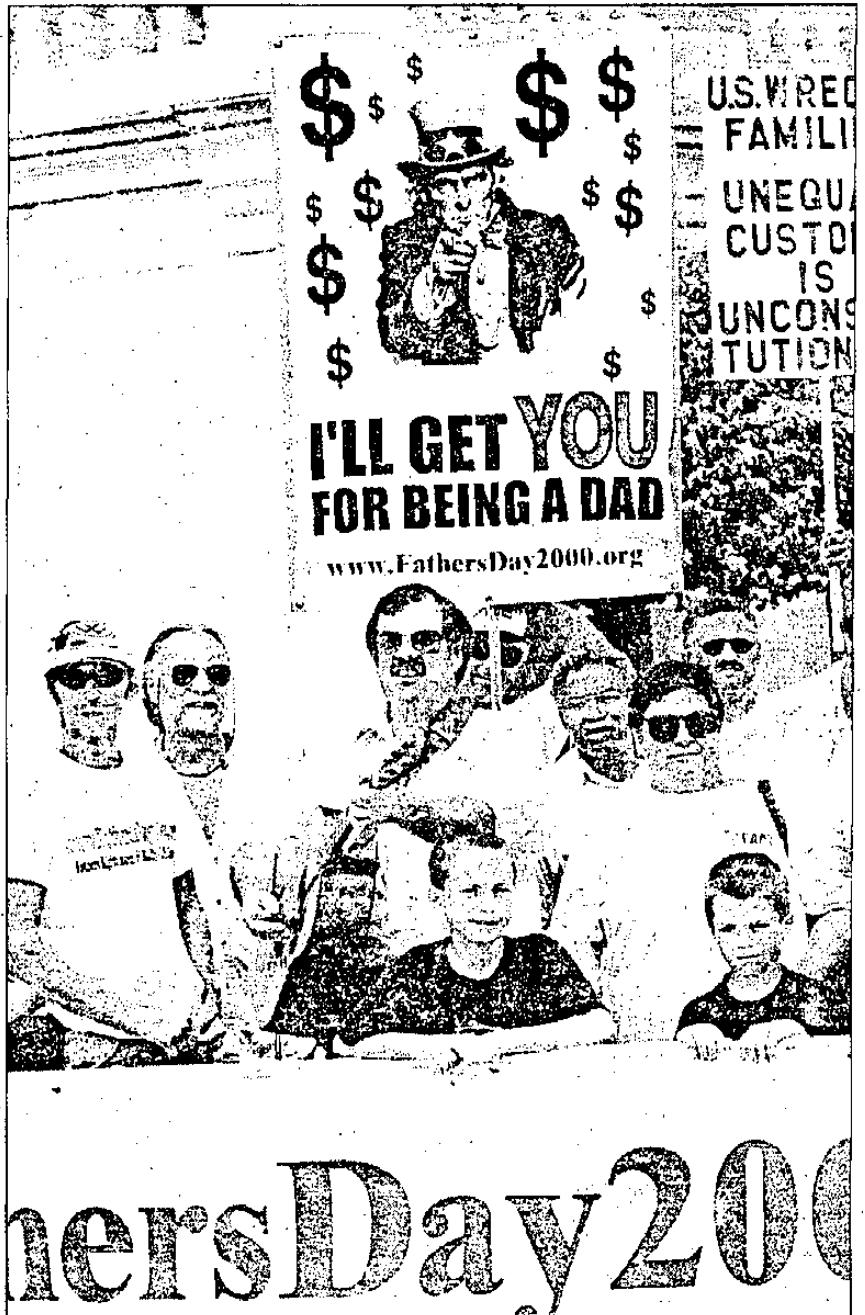
Wearing shirts that read: "I'm Not Just A Pay Check," "Dead Beat or Beat Dead?!" and "Time to Change the System," dozens of men, some carrying young children on their shoulders, rallied across from the White House, then marched down Constitution Avenue to the Capitol in the early afternoon heat, calling for new laws to protect their rights as caregivers.

"There are fathers out there who have had it," said Greg Romeo, an aircraft mechanic from Nashville and a march co-organizer. "We are tired of not being treated right by family court judges and caseworkers and being deprived of our rights to help raise our children."

Many were divorced fathers, some still locked in lengthy custody battles. They came with new families and old friends and talked, sometimes through cracked voices and falling tears, about their experiences navigating family courts.

"We are not opposed to the laws that protect women from men who batter and abuse," said Dean Tong, the rally's keynote speaker and a lawyer from Tampa, Fla., who advises fathers in divorce and custody hearings. "But there are too many instances where men are denied due process when they are unfairly prevented from seeing their children."

Yesterday's event marked the third time the march's organizers have gathered at the Capitol. The event has grown each year since the first rally, arranged by David Wilson, a longtime fathers right's activist and a landscaper in Cocoa Beach, Fla. But unlike last month's "Million Mom March," or 1997's Promise Keepers rally, both of which drew tens of thousands, yesterday's gathering was subdued. Many marchers said while there are hundreds of small groups advocating for fa-



Guitarist Phil Fox of Kensington leads a group in song at a rally on the west front of the Capitol of fathers protesting what they say are unfair child-custody laws.

thers, they lack a consolidated network.

But the marchers, some of whom came from as far away as St. Paul, Minn., and Santa Fe, N.M., seemed mostly buoyed by the experience.

"For a long time I thought I was the only

person who was going through these kinds of problems in the courts," said Matt Schuzer, who traveled with his wife and stepdaughter from Lexington, Ky. "But just knowing there are other fathers out here makes the trip worth it."

The Washington Post

MONDAY, JUNE 19, 2000

Abroad at Home

The State Department

Pressuring Argentina on 'Disappeareds'

By JOHN LANCASTER
Washington Post Staff Writer

Noga Tarnopolsky was 10 years old and living in Geneva when her cousin Daniel turned up from Buenos Aires. He had lost his family: his mother, his father, his older brother—even Betina, his 15-year-old sister. Armed men had taken them in the night. Daniel, only a teenager himself, didn't know where or why.

Now a 34-year-old freelance journalist, Tarnopolsky has been haunted ever since by the story of Daniel and his family, victims of the "dirty war" waged against dissidents and their perceived sympathizers by the military junta that ruled Argentina from 1976 to 1983. And she wants the Clinton administration to do something about it.

With help from Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.), Tarnopolsky is urging the administration to use its influence with the Argentine government to secure the release of documents that could shed light on the fate of Argentina's 30,000 "disappeareds." Last Monday, Kennedy wrote to Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright asking her to raise the issue with Argentine President Fernando de la Rúa during his state visit here last week.

"I feel the United States should have a much more important role, a role of moral leadership, and I genuinely believe it would make a big difference," Tarnopolsky said in an interview from Amherst College, where she is on a fellowship to write a book about the case.

Albright, as it happens, was traveling abroad and missed the opportunity to meet with de la Rúa, although she did have lunch with Argentine Foreign Minister Adalberto Rodríguez Giavarini on Wednesday. State Department spokesman Philip Reeker said notes from that luncheon make no reference to the subject of Kennedy's letter. Nor did the matter arise during a meeting between President Clinton and de la Rúa at the White House on Tuesday. Reeker said Kennedy's concern had been transmitted to the Argentine delegation "at appropriate levels."

Guillermo Gonzalez, the Argentine ambassador to Washington, said he was unaware of Kennedy's letter. He said, however, that his government is committed to gathering whatever evidence it can relating to the victims of Argentina's military rulers, adding, "We are on the same side."

The issue came to Kennedy's attention after Tarnopolsky faxed his office a copy of an article she

wrote on her cousin that appeared in the New Yorker last fall. An Argentinian American who was born in Jerusalem and spends much of her time in Israel, she described in chilling detail how Daniel's family was virtually erased out of existence on a single, harrowing night in 1976. Armed men snatched his parents from their luxury apartment, which they then destroyed with a bomb. They abducted Daniel's elder brother, Sergio, who was completing his military service. They forced Daniel's father to lead them to his daughter, who was at her grandmother's, waking the girl by throwing a glass of water in her face.

Daniel, who was away from home at the time of the abductions, spent the next month in hiding before fleeing into exile in France. Last year, in a case that went all the way to Argentina's Supreme Court, Daniel won a \$1.25 million civil judgment against the government of Argentina and one of the leaders of the junta, Adm. Emilio Massera.

But the fate of his family after they disappeared is still a question mark. Although the military government collapsed in 1983, Tarnopolsky suggests that Argentina's democratically elected government is reluctant to open archives that could shed light on the junta's crimes for fear of provoking the country's still-powerful



military.

In an April 17 letter to Albright, Kennedy and Sen. Patrick J. Leahy (D-Vt.) wrote, "We share her concern about the contradictory claims by government, military and judicial officials in Argentina about government records for that period. . . . We urge the Department to encourage the Argentine Government to search its archives for records from this difficult period of Argentine history so that the families of the 'disappeared' can finally know what happened to their loved ones." They also urged State to declassify its own records on the era of military rule in Argentina.

Barbara Larkin, the assistant secretary of state for legislative affairs, responded on May 24 that "the Argentine government is aware of our interest and support for uncovering the truth in cases such as the one involving the Tarnopolsky family."

But Tarnopolsky is distressed that de la Rúa apparently left town last week without hearing a word on the subject from any of his American hosts.

Said Tarnopolsky: "If Mr. de la Rúa felt that it was important for the United States that he conduct a serious search for documents, I think he would do it, period."

Close, But No Cigar

WR -
Fathers

We're Not Helping Children by Settling For Pseudo-Fatherhood

By BARBARA DAFOE WHITEHEAD

A couple of months ago, amid the Elian Gonzalez controversy, U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno issued a remarkable statement on the nature of fatherhood. The United States, she told a news conference, is a nation "whose law and whose very moral foundation recognize that there is a bond, a special, wonderful, sacred bond between father and son . . ."

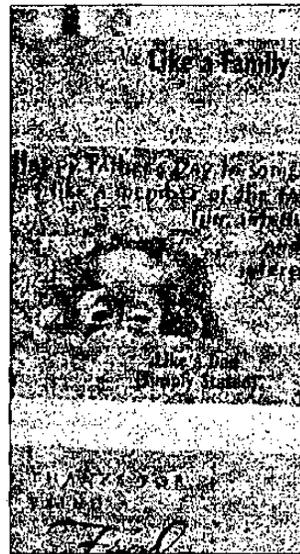
A tender sentiment? Sure. A true description? Hardly. Reno's statement is remarkable chiefly because of how thoroughly at odds it is with fatherhood as we now know it.

America no longer has a "special" model of fatherhood—let alone one buttressed by legal, moral and religious opinion. In a well-intentioned effort to make up for vanishing fathers and disintegrating families, and to give support to the legions of foster fathers and stepfathers and mentors and Big Brothers and role models out there, American law and civil society have diluted the concept of fatherhood until it is almost unrecognizable. What began as a conscientious response to a crisis is hardening into something like the new status quo. We once saw sometime, part-time or once-upon-a-time fathers as inadequate substitutes for a full-fledged father; now we are selling ourselves on the idea that they are all kids really want or need.

Unfortunately, while fatherhood has changed, childhood has not. Children still need love, protection, security and, perhaps most of all, stability in their lives. Many of the new varieties of fatherhood don't give that to kids. They're too geographically remote, too emotionally distant, too legally fuzzy or circumscribed, or too fleeting to do so.

No one would dream of trying to convince children that their mother could be replaced by several different kinds of mothers, all playing different roles at different times in their lives. But that is exactly what we are communicating to the many children whose fathers are absent, distant or unknown.

Take a look at the Father's Day cards in any neighborhood drugstore. There, alongside the classic greetings for fathers and stepfathers, are cards aimed at the alternative dads. For the last few years



THE WASHINGTON POST

Like, whatever: The greeting card scene at a D.C. drugstore shows how thin we've spread the concept of fatherhood.

See FATHERS, B2, Col. 1

Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, co-director of the National Marriage Project at Rutgers University, writes frequently on family issues.

The Washington Post

SUNDAY, JUNE 18, 2000

1/2

We've Squandered the Essence of Fatherhood

FATHERS, From B1

there have been cards for children to send to fathers who don't live with them. They carry sentiments like this one: *I miss you more than ever Daddy, now that it's Father's Day/and even though I'm too far away to hug you with my arms, I just want you to know I'll be hugging you in my heart.*

This year, at my local CVS, there are two new sections of Father's Day cards. One is under a sign reading "Like a Father." The cards feature such messages as: *Just wanted to thank you for all the ways you've been a daddy.* The second section, poignantly labeled "Anybody," contains greetings aimed at a generic good guy, including one Father's Day message for the *Good Man who spreads happiness everywhere he goes.* These cards suggest that Father's Day might be morphing into Positive Male Role

Model Day. There's even a Positive Male Role Model card for Mom, *A woman who's done all the things a father usually does.*

You don't find a parallel range of Mother's Day greetings. Despite all the dramatic changes in women's lives over recent decades, little has occurred to shake what Janet Reno might call the moral and legal foundations of motherhood.

Consider how different the Elian case would have been if it had been the boy's father who had died, and his mother who wanted him back. Few would have questioned the mother's right to her shipwrecked son. To state what is painfully apparent to many children today, the bond to a mother is rock solid; but the bond to a father isn't.

Although both motherhood and fatherhood have both biological and sociological dimensions, these dimensions are virtually fused in motherhood, especially during a child's early years. To an infant, a mother's body is both life and food, nature and nurture. This isn't true of fatherhood. Biologically, a father is a one-minute parent. (Consider sperm donors.) Indeed, a man can become a father and be the last to know, sometimes years after the fact.

What's more, his biological

contribution does not naturally dictate his sociological role. Sociological fatherhood is a lot like being a designated driver. Men can choose to take on the role and the effort it involves, either through the institution of marriage or through other kinds of ties to the mother and her family—and they can also choose not to. Because of this more tenuous connection, fatherhood is universally problematic. All societies face the challenge of connecting biological and sociological fatherhood in some fashion in order to make sure children are protected and supported over time.

Within living memory, of course, there was a single prevailing model of fatherhood in America. In it, a father was connected to his children by three ties. The first was blood, or its legal equivalent, adoption. The second was a shared household with the mother of his biological or adopted children. The third was marriage to the mother of these children. In this model, marriage was the most important of the three because it bound the other two ties together.

With the new dads, one or more—or even all—of these ties may be missing. For example, some men have a blood tie to their children but have never had a residential, marital, or any other meaningful tie to them. Others have a blood tie to their children but are divorced from the mother and no longer share the children's primary residence. Still

others are married stepfathers who live with their wife and her biological children, voluntarily contribute to supporting and raising the children but have no blood tie to them. A fast-growing father group includes cohabiting men who live with the children but are not married to their mother; some have blood ties to the kids but others are "step-fathers" who are unrelated. And then there are the exes—ex-stepfathers, ex-foster dads or ex-boyfriends—who have no biological or legal tie to the children but once played some kind of father role in their lives. There are also the father figures—mentors, Big Brothers, coaches, clergy—who have no biological, legal, marital or residential tie to the children.

This tangle of father types creates all kinds of problems over nomenclature—what do you call the man who lived with your mother for a while and still comes by now and then to take you to ball-games?—which probably explains why "Anybody" is a growing niche in greeting card market.

As marriage has faded, fatherhood has split along the seam between biology and sociology. For example, the state defines the biological male parent as the father, and if paternity is established—either voluntarily by signing a birth certificate or involuntarily with a DNA test—he can be compelled to support his child. Other forms of paternal support and contact may be desirable, even encouraged, but nowhere does the state require a biological father to do anything more than enter into a financial arrangement. This is an essential but breathtakingly minimalist model of fatherhood. It defines daddy down to a name on a birth certificate and a signature on a child-support check.

Other segments of the society, from families to churches to child advocates, define fatherhood functionally as the provision of constancy, caring and affection. Men other than a biological father—stepfathers, cohabiting fathers, unrelated cohabiting partners, neighbors and male relatives and friends—can play the role of the social father. So can male mentors who are not romantically involved with the child's mother but volunteer for the role of social father out of the goodness of their hearts.

In a best-case scenario, you can patch together both kinds of fathers and come close

to meeting the requirements of full-fledged fatherhood. A biological father contributes money and perhaps some time; a sociological father or two picks up the slack. And, indeed, for some fortunate children, a combination of fathers adds up to more paternal time, money, and attention, not less.

But face it—in many more cases, these attempts to attach children to a variety of fathers aren't panning out. Fathers are now increasingly less likely to live with their biological children—35 percent of children today live apart from their biological fathers. And when they live apart, the father's involvement tends to diminish over time. As for the idea that we can replace biological fathers with father-surrogates, it's a comforting notion but recent experience suggests just how hard it is to pull off. Mentoring programs are particularly struggling to keep pace with growing caseloads of fatherless boys, a task requiring endless recruitment campaigns, background checks and training sessions and still falling short.

As it turns out, finding and keeping a father for every child who lacks one is a tall order. It takes money and lavish amounts of effort and invention—not to mention DNA tests, hospital birth registration programs, child support orders, visitation agreements, public service announcements and community fatherhood campaigns—to scrape together what are still more term-limited and fleeting forms of fatherhood.

But more than anything else, this project of trying to cobble together one father from several kinds of daddies is contrary to what kids want and need. Anyone who raises children knows that they are natural social conservatives. They like order (except perhaps in their bedrooms), stability, constancy, permanence and the security of having fathers worry about them rather than having the reverse responsibility of worrying about their father. And as much as they may benefit from and enjoy their relationships with other male role models, they aren't likely to confuse coaches or mentors with a "real dad." Retrograde as it may sound, most kids still want one father who fulfills multiple roles all of the time rather than several fathers who fulfill a few roles some of the time. But today, too many kids have to content themselves with a kind of fatherhood that is as paper-thin as the sentiment on a Father's Day greeting card.

2/2

Making Dad Matter

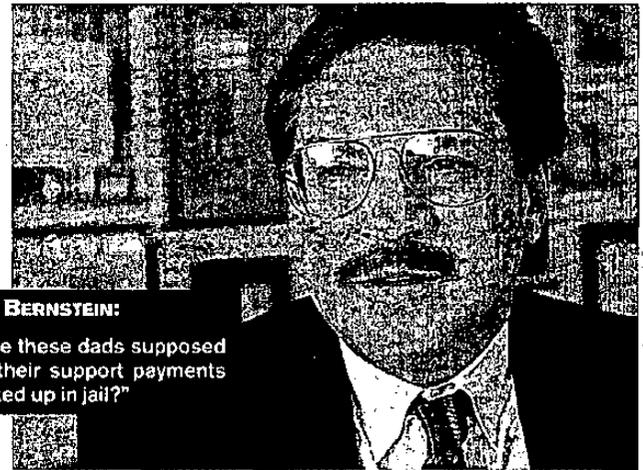
BY DAVID BYRD ■

**AS THE DEBATE
ON DEADBEAT
DADS INTENSIFIES,
AN INNOVATIVE
FLORIDA PROGRAM
GETS SURPRISING
RESULTS.**

TAMPA, Fla.—Tucked along a side road in a run-down industrial section in the northeast part of town, National Fisheries strikes first-time visitors as a run-of-the-mill small business in a no-frills, cinder-block warehouse. Every day this wholesale distributor supplies a stunning array of fresh Gulf seafood to the area's upscale hotels and restaurants. With annual revenues of barely \$12 million, it employs only 26 hourly workers, just enough for the business to be covered by the many federal and state employment laws.

Despite its small size and unassuming facade, National Fisheries is helping to reshape the debate on how the nation deals with the segment of society contemptuously called "deadbeat dads." Three of its 26 hourly workers are fathers who have repeatedly failed to meet their child-support obligations. All of them were ordered by the court to get a job and to make their support payments—or else face six months in jail. National Fisheries participates in one of the first programs in the nation to focus attention and services on this long-ignored component of the welfare and poverty debate.

As time limits on welfare kick in this year, states and the federal government have stepped up efforts to recover billions of dollars in unpaid child support and ease the transition of single mothers from welfare to the working world. While tremendous effort has been made to move welfare mothers into sustainable employment, comparatively little has been done to assist fathers who want to work and pay child support. Getting dads to pay support has the added benefit of re-involving them emotionally in their children's



MICHAEL BERNSTEIN:

"How were these dads supposed to make their support payments while locked up in jail?"

lives. Vice President Al Gore calls the drive for responsible fatherhood "the next generation of welfare reform." He cites the Tampa program in campaign speeches and says he wants to replicate it nationally. In the past couple of years, responsible fatherhood has become policy chic. In Congress, there are a number of bills promoting responsible fatherhood. During his State of the Union address, President Clinton invited Carlos Rosas, a former deadbeat dad who participated successfully in a Minnesota program, to

join first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton in the House Gallery. The President introduced Rosas and recounted his success story to a standing ovation from Congress.

But despite state and federal efforts, \$50 billion in child support went uncollected in 1997 (nearly four times as much as the \$12.7 billion that was collected). And with 2.7 million noncustodial fathers too poor to pay child support—they make up about one-quarter of fathers who have been ordered to pay it—the total amount that goes unpaid will only grow over time.

"With welfare quickly running out for a lot of single mothers, child support is now the only remaining safety net," warns Ron Mincy, a welfare policy expert at the Ford Foundation. "For the children of poor fathers, though, that's no safety net at all."

Although government can't force people to be good parents, it can help these dead-broke dads who want to support their children and fulfill not only their financial obligations, but also their parental responsibilities.

AN ALTERNATIVE TO JAIL

Joe "Catfish" Wallace, until recently the plant supervisor at National Fisheries, knows a thing or two about deadbeat dads: His father was one. "I grew up in low-income housing and never knew my dad," Wallace recalls. "Mom and us never got the support of a dad. I don't like a father who doesn't take care of his child."

But this tall, affable 36-year-old didn't let that sentiment stop him from going out of his way to hire men who are behind in their child-support payments. Wallace hired 15 men out of the Noncustodial Parent Employment Project, or NCEP, a local social service program started in the Tampa/St. Petersburg area in 1996 to help low-income fathers (and some mothers) become gainfully employed and able to pay their child support. "It was really a struggle for my mom. I really take this personally," Wallace explained. "By getting this money to the mothers, it helps out these single mothers—a kid's getting a check if I put one of these guys to work."

At the heart of the program is the recognition that many of these fathers want to do the right thing. "What we've seen is that there is a large subclass of these out-of-work fathers who fall behind in their support payments who truly want to meet their financial obligation to their kids," says Michael Bernstein, the president of Gulf Coast Jewish Family Services, which initiated the program and runs it. "But



STEVE BENIGNO:

His role, notes a man in the program, is that of a "big brother to us. He calls and checks up a lot."

often they can't because they're unemployed or underemployed, uneducated, lacking in skills, or have criminal records, which make it difficult to land a job."

In Florida, as in most states, fathers who fall far behind in their child-support payments face court orders to pay. Some states, including Florida, will jail violators. Such laws are part of a recent crackdown on delinquent fathers that followed welfare reform legislation in 1996. In 1998, Clinton signed a bill that made it a felony for a parent to owe more than \$10,000 in support for a child in another state, or to be two years behind in payments.

Although jail time for deadbeat dads was expected to be a powerful deterrent, judges in Florida saw their dockets becoming clogged with cases. Under state law, Bernstein notes, those fathers who didn't pay, even if they couldn't because they were poor, were sent to jail for six months and then released. But many were being recycled back through the courts and into jail a number of times. "It became a real drain on the system," Bernstein says. "On top of that, how were these dads supposed to make their support payments while locked up in jail?" And locking up a deadbeat dad created a double drain on the state: It had to pay for the jail space while missing out on thousands of dollars in child support. "The taxpayer takes a double hit when we send a deadbeat dad to jail," notes Michael Coffee, a state district court judge.

Bernstein responded with the Noncustodial Parent Employment Project, which began as a \$750,000 pilot program established and funded by the state Legislature. It is designed for unemployed and underemployed parents (90 percent are fathers) who are not making their support payments and who have children receiving public assistance. When a deadbeat dad ends up in court in Tampa for not paying child support, the judges now give him this option: Complete the NCEP program or go to jail.

Bernstein's staff of 11 employment specialists acts as a liaison with the courts and essentially takes these fathers under its wing to provide job development and placement, educational and vocational assessment, support services, and case monitoring. The specialists help the dads establish a regular pattern of child-support payments. To avoid jail, the fathers are required to remain in the program until they have worked full time for six consecutive months. Participants can remain in the program for as long as they want to.

One critical function of the program is to persuade employers to hire workers who are likely to be unskilled and undereducated, on top of having dubious work histories.



RICHARD A. BLOOM

LYNN WOOLSEY:

"Our children should be as important to the nation as our taxes."

"These aren't computer jobs with IBM," cautions Steve Benigno, an NCEP employment specialist who oversees a caseload of 65 under the program. "We're talking manufacturing and service jobs, hopefully that pay a little above minimum wage so the dads can both live off what they earn and meet their child-support obligation." The courts require participating employers to withhold part of each participant's paycheck for current and back child support. The money—which averages one-third of a paycheck—is sent directly to the state, which in many cases provides support to the mother in the form of a welfare benefit.

"I love it," said Alton Roberts, a 47-year-old Vietnam veteran whose 15-year-old son, Marquies, lives with his mother. "The fact that my boss pays directly to the state takes a lot of the headache out of the process." Roberts started in the program nine months ago, earning \$7 an hour performing manual labor for a small manufacturer called Nut & Bolt Inc. He has since received a raise to \$8 an hour. "With Gulf Coast Family Services behind me, I think my boss was more comfortable taking a chance on me." Each week, Roberts' boss withdraws \$50 of his \$250 paycheck to send to the state for child support. Roberts uses part of the money he has left to buy his son athletic shoes and sports equipment. "Now I've been able to feel better about myself and earned his respect since I'm there for him financially," Roberts says. "We've become a lot closer."

The NCEP employment specialists monitor each parent's job status closely, making weekly visits to the worksites, checking in with the employers, and troubleshooting. Indeed, when Roberts' car broke down, Benigno, who is his case monitor, bought him a new starter with program funds. The program's employment specialists also provide bus passes and help arrange other transportation. Lack of transportation is often an obstacle when poor fathers look

for jobs. "Steve is like a big brother to us," Roberts says. "He calls and checks up a lot. He can intervene for me if I'm having a problem at work. If I'm ever late for work, Steve will hear about it quickly to deal with the problem and me immediately."

REAPING REWARDS

Joe Wallace liked the fact that he could keep workers at National Fisheries for at least six months. The jobs aren't glamorous: Working in a chilled warehouse filled with fish guts, blood, and stench, employees start at \$6.50 an hour and get a raise to \$7 after 90 days. They start work each day at 3 a.m. to get that night's catch cut, boxed, and shipped for delivery by lunchtime.

Because he knew that a chunk of each check went to the state for child support, Wallace tried to get the fathers some overtime work to cushion the blow. He also gave one of his NCEP fathers a ride to work each day. "They can use this job as a stepping-stone," Wallace reasons. "It re-establishes them back as solid citizens. It's a form of rehabilitation in a sense."

But it also makes remarkable economic sense. William Blount, who heads the Department of Criminology at the University of South Florida, was stunned when he evaluated the program for the state. "I didn't believe what I saw. I had to go back and do the numbers three times," recalls Blount, who teaches statistical methods at the university. "They're able to generate more money than the program costs. It just blew my mind."

For every 25 cents the state has invested in the program this year, it has recouped a dollar in child-support payments, Blount found. "This is the only social service program I've studied that actually makes money for the state," he said. "They've created a whole new revenue stream going to the state." In fact, Blount adds, NCEP took a mere 31 months to break even and pay for itself. "With the increased child-support payments, the program has collected \$1.2 million over the costs of running the program," he says. "All that's gravy for the state." That's not even taking into account the additional income taxes generated or the welfare costs saved by finding these fathers jobs.

The success continues even after fathers graduate from the six-month program. Blount found that 55 percent of them continued to pay their child support after moving on. He also found that 73 percent fewer received food stamps after they'd been through the program. And he found that 24 percent fewer mothers received public assistance after their children's fathers finished the program. Blount said that the participants reported seeing their children twice as often as they saw them before entering the program. "Once a person is regularly paying child support," Judge Coffee points out, "everything else seems to fall into place. There's a better relationship with the child, with the child's mother, even a better sense of one's own self-worth."

But Blount cautions that success may not necessarily translate to other parts of the country. "The economy here in Tampa Bay has been doing very well since this program started; we've got a solid jobs base. But in other times it may not be so easy to find willing employers," Blount says. "Also, we have some mass transit that helps out with this effort, which may not be the case in more-rural areas." And the policy is "political dynamite," he adds. The program is spending limited state dollars on a group of people that many in society

believe don't deserve such efforts. "Some may ask why focus on these bad guys, when we should focus on the mothers who haven't done anything wrong to start with?"

TOUGHER ENFORCEMENT

Gore's interest in the Tampa program takes a page from his boss's playbook: President Clinton has made enforcement of child support a key component of his domestic policy. He signed two bills making it a federal offense to refuse to pay child support. A 1994 bill made it a misdemeanor, and the 1998 bill made it a felony.

Under the 1996 welfare reform law, Congress created two national databases that have made finding deadbeat dads markedly easier. One is a federal case registry that compiles all child-support orders imposed by state courts around the country. The other is the National Directory of New Hires, which records all newly hired employees and allows states to find deadbeat dads employed in other states. The states use the two national databases to match child-support court orders with the names of people recently hired, in hopes of finding wages that can be garnished. Even though the systems are not yet fully implemented, states are using the databases with increasing success. In 1999, for example, states were able to find 2.8 million delinquent parents, up from 1.2 million in 1998.

Clinton has tried to give federal teeth to measures initially enacted in the states, such as revoking the driver's licenses of fathers who owe child support. Now professional licenses, such as a license from the bar, can also be revoked. Seizing bank accounts and withholding income tax refunds are two other enforcement measures employed by the Administration. Indeed, last year, a record \$1.3 billion in support was collected from federal tax returns.

As part of a joint effort between the Health and Human Services Department, the Justice Department, and state and local law enforcement agencies, the Administration set up Project Save Our Children in 1998 to prosecute the extreme cases of unpaid support. To date, 800 case investigations have produced 210 convictions and \$5.3 billion in court-ordered payments.

The Administration proudly cites a record \$15.5 billion in child-support collections nationwide in 1999, up from \$8 billion in 1992. "Clinton has done a really good job of spotlighting child support," says Vicki Turetsky, the senior counsel at the Center for Law and Social Policy, a Washington-based social-policy advocacy group. "They've highlighted the importance of child support to the extent that other



VICKI TURETSKY:

"Clinton has done a really good job of spotlighting child support."

Administrations haven't. It's an issue of high importance to low-income families that is usually overlooked in policy discussions."

But the \$15.5 billion collected last year is a mere fraction of the overall amount of unpaid child support. Comparison figures are unavailable for last year, but in 1998, only an estimated 23 percent of children entitled to child support received some form of payment, despite federal and state efforts, according to Debbie Kline, the national projects director for the Association of Children for Enforcement of Support, a clearinghouse and advocacy group promoting tougher child-support enforcement. "Yes, they are able to collect more and more child support that is owed each year," Kline agrees. "But what they are not telling you is that the percentage of what they've collected from the overall amount due has remained stagnant."

"Look at it this way," Kline says. "The Internal Revenue Service is able to collect 84 percent of the money owed to the federal government. But we're only able to collect 23 percent of the money owed to our children under child-support orders. This is owed to our children."

In fact, a bill sponsored by Reps. Henry J. Hyde, R-Ill., and Lynn Woolsey, D-Calif., seeks to put enforcement of child support under federal jurisdiction by transferring it from state social service agencies to the IRS. Support payments would become part of an employee's federal withholding and would be collected just as FICA taxes are by the IRS.

Woolsey, who was forced to go on welfare 30 years ago because the father of her three children failed to pay child support, characterizes the current collection system as an "ineffective patchwork of state and local collection systems." "Our children," she argues, "should be as important to the nation as our taxes." But after recent contentious hearings on IRS abuses, there is little sentiment in Congress to expand the scope of the agency.

The issues of child support and responsible fatherhood aren't likely to go away. Although Clinton is not seeking more money in his fiscal 2001 budget to help states collect payments, he has proposed additional measures to crack down on delinquent dads. He wants to nationalize a Virginia program that directs police to put "boots" on the wheels of vehicles operated by deadbeat parents. The boots remain until the parents begin to pay. The Virginia program collected an average of \$5,000 from each deadbeat dad.



RON MINCY:

"The child-support system has to stop pretending that the only issue is money."

Clinton also wants to require casinos to check the names of big winners against the national database of court orders to pay support. When names match, winnings can be intercepted and used for support payments. He would also deny passports to parents owing more than \$2,500 in back child support. The current level for denying passports is \$5,000; an average of 30 to 40 passports are denied each day.

Congress is broadening its effort to encourage fathers' participation in their children's lives. Last year, for example, the House passed the Fathers Count Act, a bill pushed by Rep. E. Clay Shaw Jr., R-Fla. Under the bill, Congress would set aside \$2 billion in grants for community-based organiza-

repeat their fathers' mistakes, but they wanted to do the right thing." Jones set up peer support groups where men can share their experiences. "These guys wanted manhood development," Jones says. "They didn't come from households where there were fathers or male figures in their lives besides basketball players or entertainers."

Jones' group also helps fathers who are still involved with the mothers of their babies, but who are not married or who are far behind in their child support. "Our goal is to help these guys get back on the right track, help them stay current in their child support, get them cleaned up, into high school degree programs, and get them into work,"

Jones says. Some of these fathers, Jones adds, owe as much as \$10,000.

But a more significant problem is that the money paid by the fathers goes to the state—not directly to the mother or child. The rules of federal child-support enforcement require the father to pay the state, which often provides financial assistance to the mother in the form of welfare benefits.

"What happens then is that these fathers don't have much of an incentive to continue with their child support since the mother and children don't ever see the money," says Mincy of the Ford Foundation. "The mother is not seeing the father's efforts in helping pay for the child. It doesn't help with the father's relationship with the mother or the child."

There is near-unanimous consent from those working with welfare reform that this aspect of child-support payments should change. "This is a real disincentive for poor and low-income fathers to go into these programs to pay their child support, only to see it go to the state and not to the children," says Vicki Turetsky of the Center for Law and Social Policy.

In Wisconsin, a pilot program has found that mothers who received the support payments directly from the father were more likely to leave welfare—and stay off it. "By removing this disincentive of having the money go to the state," Mincy says, "these fathers actually see their labors go directly to benefit the child, and he can see that his efforts have a positive effect on the child. The mother sees this, and it helps with the overall family relationship."

Capitol Hill is taking note. A bill introduced last year by Sen. Herb Kohl, D-Wis., would allow 100 percent of the child-support payment to go directly to the family, while Bayh's bill would allow up to \$75 a week. But the sticking point may be the states. Both bills would essentially force the states to give up these collections, which they now treat as revenues. "While everyone agrees with this policy in general, it's an expensive policy," acknowledges Turetsky. "We're asking the states to divest these recovered costs."

Money aside, the real potential advantage is the opportunity for fathers to reconnect with their children and possibly the mothers. "The child-support system has to stop pretending that the only issue is money. It's a collection agency, but it needs to be a children's agency," Mincy argues.

"With such programs that help collect the money, you can collect the father," he adds. "If you ask kids most what they want, they aren't saying they want their dad's money, they're saying they want their dad."



SUPPORT GROUP:

"These guys wanted manhood development," says the group's founder.

tions that help fathers re-establish themselves in the lives of their children.

The money would go toward premarital counseling, job training, parenting skills, and family support services that would encourage two-parent families. The bill passed the House by a large margin and is awaiting Senate action.

Sens. Evan Bayh, D-Ind., and Pete V. Domenici, R-N.M., are sponsoring the Responsible Fatherhood Act, a bill that would fund efforts by state and local governments, as well as nonprofit, charitable, and religious organizations, to promote responsible fatherhood. "More than 17 million children today are living in households without their fathers," Bayh told a House subcommittee in October. "We know that the best predictor of violent crime and burglary in a community is not poverty, but the proportion of fatherless homes in that community."

One program that could benefit from such legislation is the Center for Fathers, Families, and Workforce Development. It was started in Baltimore by Joe Jones, who grew up without his father. Jones, a former heroin addict and school dropout, was working with pregnant women who were substance abusers when he noticed how few services were available for fathers who wanted help. Since 1993, he has been working with inner-city dads.

"If you think about it, there are no public funding streams for men other than criminal justice and child support," says Jones, who is now married with two children. "One of the most pervasive threads we were seeing is that these men didn't have fathers themselves when they were growing up. They were harboring a lot of anger and resentment about this, and without help, they were doomed to

Issues -- Section 202
2/29/00 DRAFT

WR
~~Section 202~~
Full band

Ensure Government Funds Aren't Used for Religious Worship

Section 582(f)(5)(B) allows federally-funded programs to require program participants to participate in religious practice, worship, and instruction or to follow rules of behavior that are religious in content or origin.

Section 583(b) allows federal funds to be used for sectarian worship or instruction in certain situations.

Treat Religious and Non-Religious Organizations Equally

Section 582(g)(2) provides special audit procedures for religious organizations. [Checking to see if similar procedures apply to nonreligious organizations under current law.]

Section 582(a)(1) makes clear religious organizations can be award recipients, make designated subawards, and provide services either through vouchers or other means, but does not make clear the same options are available to nonreligious organizations and that the state decides the program structure and extent of involvement of nongovernmental organizations. [Checking to see if other parts of SAMSHA statute make clear nonreligious groups already have these options.]

Make Clear Programs Must Adhere to Establishment Clause

Section 582(c) makes clear that the program cannot discriminate against religious organizations, but does not state that the program must be implemented consistent with the Establishment Clause; also includes possibly confusing findings regarding the meaning of the Establishment Clause.

Section 581(c)(9) defines "religious organization" without citing Supreme Court standard that government funds not be provided to "pervasively sectarian" institutions.

Other Possible Issues

Section 582(e)(2)(A) says religious organizations receiving federal funds can require employees to adhere to the religious beliefs and practices of their organizations.

Section 581(c)(5) explicitly authorizes substance abuse treatment and prevention funds to be distributed via vouchers.

Section 584(b) and 585(b) allows federal law to preempt state laws or constitutions.

Fox Cardin mtg
WR - Fathers

Welfare-to-Work Reauthorization/Fathers Bill
9/21/99

Outline of possible Johnson/Cardin fathers proposal

- WtW eligibility changes – \$45 - \$65 M. [#1, 2, and 5 on the attached side-by-side.]
- Fathers grants – about \$200 M over 5 (mandatory money). Rs want broader focus – fatherhood, employment, marriage. Ds more targeted, work-focused to increase employment/child support/connection with kids. Competitive grants/demo projects – Rs current thinking is 8 person review board from DOL and HHS, with final decision by HHS, with no grants made until January 1, 2001. Ds open on jurisdiction.
- Pass-Through (Ds want for those in fatherhood demo program; Rs undecided).
- Lower priority, if funds available: national projects (maybe clearinghouse), paid media campaign [Cardin concerned about subsidizing broadcasters]

Possible Offsets:

- \$135 M for using NDNH for student loans (in our budget at \$1 B)
- \$ 50 M from WTW HPB (50% cut in this one-time bonus to be awarded in FY 2000)
- \$150 M clarify definition of “foster child” for EITC eligibility (in our budget)
- Cut EITC for childless worker (\$\$ unknown) (Rs may propose, Ds oppose)

Our Priorities:

- Enacting WtW technical
- Focusing fathers’ grants on employment and child support (with personal responsibility contract if possible)
- DOL as lead agency, as in our budget
- Oppose cuts in EITC for childless workers
- Don’t change TANF high performance bonus statute (leave definition to regulation)

Other things we may want:

- Give grantees more time to spend current funds (currently 3 years) – will score
- Allow unused state grants to be awarded to nonprofits and tribes in state – will score
- Simplify data reporting requirements

How President’s proposal (introduced by Cardin) helps fathers work and support their children [see attached side by side]:

- Requires all states to use at least 20% of their WtW formula funds for low-income fathers (\$150 M in a \$1 B bill) – build on and expands the efforts of some states and communities.
- Strong emphasis on employment and child support through a personal responsibility contract.
- Expands and streamlines eligibility for a broader group of low-income dads -- basically any non-custodial father who is unemployed, underemployed or having difficulty meeting child support and whose child is poor (eligible for TANF or left TANF within the past year or eligible for food stamps or Medicaid/CHIP).

How current WTW funds are supporting fatherhood efforts:

- States and communities currently investing over \$100 M in formula and competitive grants in fathers. This includes grants to local workforce boards, cities, national non-profits (including Charles Ballard's Institute for Responsible Fathers), local community-based groups, and Governor's 15% funds (in CO, IN, IA, KA, MD, NJ, TX). The Round 3 competitive grants to be released shortly target fathers as one of five priority groups so we're likely to see a number of additional innovative WTW-funded fathers programs soon.

Arguments for using current WTW structure:

- WtW is strengthening ties between welfare and workforce systems (confirmed by GAO, Mathematica and Urban). This means welfare recipients and noncustodial parents are more likely to get connected to and come back to the ongoing one-stop employment services of the Workforce Investment Act. There's also encouraging evidence that the workforce system is now beginning to pay attention to fathers and build closer ties with the child support system. Now is not the time to unravel this progress.
- If fathers bill has no new funds for state WtW formula grants, and only funds a few fatherhood grants, we lose the momentum that is building to get the state and local workforce systems throughout the country focusing on fathers.
- WtW funds flow to locals -- this complements the TANF funds that go to Governors.

Mayors' priorities:

- They want our reauthorization proposal, including immediate eligibility changes, with \$1 B over one year. They are not thrilled with our budget amendment to stretch \$1 B over two years (\$750 M in FY 2000, \$250 M in FY 2001) which they perceive as weakening WH support. Other key themes in USCM resolutions: reinvest unused funds back in the program and extend time for which funds can be used.

Spending trends/Background:

- WtW Formula grant funds have been expended by States, and over 76,000 welfare recipients have been served (over 90,000 counting competitive grantees). These numbers represent substantial improvements over the preceding quarter, which was the first full quarter of WTW data. States have now spent about 15% of their formula funds compared with approximately 8% in March 1999. Expenditures have increased by over 76% and the number of participants has risen by 64% since March.
- States are still in an early stage of implementation and they have three years to spend their grant funds. Twenty-four states, including large states like CA, NY, and FL, didn't receive their FY 98 formula funds until the last quarter of FY 98. Once each state receives its grant, it allocates most of the funds to local workforce boards, who in turn contract with local service providers. It takes time to develop new partnerships between welfare and workforce agencies, enter into contracts with providers, recruit participants, deliver services, pay bills, and report expenses for these services. The first 12 states to get their formula grants have already spent 30% of their funds, which indicates spending is likely to continue to accelerate for the later states.
- Demand for Welfare-to-Work funds continues to be strong. In FY 1998, 48 states and territories (44 states) applied for formula funds and the Department of Labor received 1,400

applications for competitive grants totaling \$5 billion and only had funds to award grants of \$468 million. This year, 45 states and territories (42 states) have applied for formula funds.

- TANF spending: Not all states have unspent TANF funds -- 19 states have obligated all of their FY 1998 TANF dollars, including large states such as California, Illinois, Ohio and Texas and small states such as Connecticut and Delaware. Many states that have TANF reserves are prudently saving funds for a rainy day. States have spent or obligated 90% of their FY 97 and FY 98 funds.
- Child Care: there is still a great need for child care funds -- the Child Care and Development Block Grant serves only 1.25 million of the estimated 10 million children eligible for child care assistance under federal law and states have many more applicants than they can serve.

Non-Fatherhood Issues which may be added to Johnson/Cardin

- Non-supplantation – restriction on using federal TANF funds to supplant state spending. There's bipartisan interest in sending a signal to states but so far, no one has come up with an enforceable mechanism that doesn't have bad unintended consequences.
- Revise penalty for states not complying with child support single disbursement unit (SDU) (may put in separate bill)
- Ron: funds to collect marriage/divorce data (HHS estimates \$750,000 to assess status in FY 2000, \$4 - \$10 M annually)
- \$13-\$15 M to improve response rates for Census data cohort
- \$20 - \$25 for Adoption bonuses
- High Performance Bonus: Rs want to put in family formation/2 parent family measure, Ds want FS/medicaid – we prefer to not change statute, handle in regulations
- OWL bonus: Ron wants to allow 5 states to get the bonus – so if a state is knocked out based on abortion increase, go to next state with largest OWL reduction.

SIDE-BY-SIDE

To ensure the success of welfare reform for individuals who face the greatest challenges, President Clinton has proposed to reauthorize the Welfare-to-Work (WtW) program in FY 2000, with several program modifications including a stronger focus on increasing the employment of low income fathers so they can better meet their responsibilities to their children. The President's budget will include \$1 billion for the Welfare-to-Work initiative in FY 2000. This side-by-side chart explains the current WtW program provisions and the modifications included in the WtW Reauthorization Bill, H.R.1482.

ISSUE	PRESENT WELFARE TO WORK PROGRAM	H.R. 1482 "WELFARE TO WORK AMENDMENTS OF 1999"	RATIONALE
<p>1. Eligibility for Hard to employ Long-Term Welfare Recipients</p>	<p>(a) An individual has been receiving assistance for at least 30 months or is within 12 months of reaching time limits; AND</p> <p>(b) meets 2 of 3 of the following characteristics:</p> <p>(1) lacks a high school diploma or GED AND has low math or reading skills;</p> <p>(2) has a poor work history; or</p> <p>(3) requires substance abuse treatment for employment.</p>	<p>(a) An individual has been receiving assistance for at least 30 months or is within 12 months of reaching time limits; AND</p> <p>(b) The individual meets at least 1 of the following characteristics:</p> <p>(1) lacks a high school diploma or GED; or</p> <p>(2) has English reading, writing or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level; or</p> <p>(3) has a poor work history; or</p> <p>(4) requires substance abuse treatment for employment; or</p> <p>(5) is homeless; or</p> <p>(6) has a disability; or</p> <p>(7) is a victim of domestic violence.</p>	<p>The eligibility criteria as originally written did not accurately reflect the characteristics of the hardest to employ. For example, many individuals who have a poor work history and who have low math or reading skills have been socially promoted and have a high school diploma and therefore cannot be served under the existing program.</p>

ISSUE	PRESENT WELFARE TO WORK PROGRAM	H.R. 1482 "WELFARE TO WORK AMENDMENTS OF 1999"	RATIONALE
<p>2. Eligibility for Noncustodial Parents</p>	<p>Presently, noncustodial parents are eligible under both the Hardest to Serve (70%) Category and those who have Characteristics Associated with Long-term Welfare Dependency (30%).</p> <p>Under the Hardest to Serve, 70% category, noncustodial parents must meet 2 of 3 of the following characteristics:</p> <p>(1) lacks a high school diploma or GED AND has low math or reading skills; (2) has a poor work history; or (3) requires substance abuse treatment for employment.</p>	<p>The noncustodial parent is eligible if the Noncustodial parent is:</p> <p>(1) unemployed, or underemployed or has difficulty in paying child support payments. AND</p> <p>(2) At least one of the following applies to the minor child of the noncustodial parent.</p> <p>(a) the minor child or custodial parent has been on public assistance for over 30 months, is within 12 months of becoming ineligible for TANF, or due to a time limit.</p> <p>(b) the minor child is receiving or eligible for TANF; or</p> <p>(c) the minor child has left TANF within the past year; or</p> <p>(d) the minor child is receiving or is eligible for food stamps, SSI, Medicaid, or CHIP.</p> <p>Preference will be given to those noncustodial parents who have children under (a).</p>	<p>The legislation provides a greater focus on service to noncustodial parents (primarily fathers) to better enable such parents to contribute child support payments and other assistance to their children. The majority of children on welfare live with a single custodial parent and only about 20% receive child support from a noncustodial parent. The vast majority of such noncustodial parents are either unemployed or only able to obtain intermittent, low wage employment. Assisting these noncustodial parents in find and keeping employment and increasing their earnings is therefore critical to enhancing child support payments.</p>

ISSUE	PRESENT WELFARE TO WORK PROGRAM	H.R. 1482 "WELFARE TO WORK AMENDMENTS OF 1999"	RATIONALE
<p>3. Personal Responsibility Contracts for Noncustodial Parents</p>	<p>Present law does not require a noncustodial parent to enter into a personal responsibility contract.</p>	<p>The noncustodial parent is required to enter into a individual responsibility contract with the service provider and state child support enforcement agency.</p> <p>The noncustodial parent commits to:</p> <p>(1) cooperate in the establishment of paternity and in the establishment or appropriate modification of a child support order; and (2) to make regular child support payments; and (3) to work.</p>	<p>This contract makes clear the expectations and responsibilities of the parties involved and provides a framework for attaining the program's objectives.</p>
<p>4. Funding for Noncustodial Parent</p>	<p>Present law does not require a certain percentage of formula funds be allotted to serve noncustodial parents.</p>	<p>The legislation provides that at least 20% of formula funds allotted to a State are to be used to serve noncustodial parents.</p>	<p>Some states are using their WtW funds to serve noncustodial parents and to strengthen their families. The Administration believes all states must dedicate resources to increase the employment of noncustodial parents to they can better support their children.</p> <p>The State may submit a waiver request and provide sufficient justification to the Secretary to reduce or eliminate the 20% threshold. However, it is expected that waivers would only be granted under unusual circumstances, with the elimination of any threshold unlikely to be approved.</p>

ISSUE	PRESENT WELFARE TO WORK PROGRAM	H.R. 1482 "WELFARE TO WORK AMENDMENTS OF 1999"	RATIONALE
<p>5. Hard to Employ Recipients with Characteristics of Long-term Dependency</p>	<p>Up to thirty percent of all funds are targeted to this group.</p> <p>Characteristics are those such as school dropouts, teen pregnancy, or poor work history.</p> <p>Noncustodial parents are also eligible.</p>	<p>Up to thirty percent of all funds are targeted to this group.</p> <p>Under this category, Congressman Cardin has proposed to focus on foster care children who are aging out of the foster care system. The legislation will target those between 18 and 25.</p>	<p>About 20,000 children leave foster care each year without having found another source of support. There have been a few studies on what happens to these children, but no comprehensive studies nationwide.</p> <p>The most recent study found that about 60% of the young women had a baby within two to four years of leaving foster care and that somewhere between 32% and 40% receive some kind of government assistance including: general assistance, food stamps or welfare within the first 18 months after leaving.</p>

ISSUE	PRESENT WELFARE TO WORK PROGRAM	H.R. 1482 "WELFARE TO WORK AMENDMENTS OF 1999"	RATIONALE
6. Resources to Native Americans	Present law provides for a one percent set aside, which is \$15 million in both FY 1998 and FY 1999.	The proposed legislation would increase the set aside from one percent to three percent. With a \$1 Billion reauthorized program, the Native American set aside would be \$30 million.	Several states that did not apply for formula WtW funds have large Native American populations that experience high poverty rates and high unemployment, particularly on reservations. Without the WtW Native American grants program, many of these individuals would not otherwise have been served. The goal of this provision is to enhance the access of competitive grant funds to local areas. An increase in funding specifically targeting this population could double the number of Native Americans served and make serious gains in the employment prospects of these individuals. Under the current funding, Native Americans receive only one percent of the total WtW funds while they constitute 3.2 percent (source: HHS WtW Evaluation) of the participants in the current WTW program.
7. Flexibility to Native Americans	The present law requires all competitive grantee applicants to submit applications in conjunction with the local private industry council.	The proposed legislation allows Indian and Native American tribes to submit competitive applications without sign off from the private industry council.	This provision recognizes and promotes the sovereignty of Indian and Native American tribes.

ISSUE	PRESENT WELFARE TO WORK PROGRAM	H.R. 1482 "WELFARE TO WORK AMENDMENTS OF 1999"	RATIONALE
8. Competitive Grants/Unallotted Formula Funds	Currently all unallotted formula funds revert back to the federal Treasury.	Under the proposed legislation, unallotted formula funds would move into the competitive pool with preference given to applicants from states that did not draw down their formula funds.	In FY 1998, six states (ID, SD, UT, WY, MS, and OH) did not come in for formula funds. However, in two rounds of competitive grants, more than 1,400 applications were submitted seeking \$5 billion, more than 10 times the amount that was available for the grants.
9. Integration with the Workforce Investment Act	Under current law, a state's WTW plan is a supplement to the state's TANF plan.	The proposed legislation would have the WTW state plan become part of a state's 5 year strategic state workforce investment plan. It would still be part of the TANF plan	WTW is a mandatory partner under WIA. This will also enhance WTW's role as a bridge between the welfare system and workforce investment system.
10. Technical Assistance	Under current law, there is no funding available for technical assistance efforts.	The proposed legislation would established a 1% reserve of FY 2000 funds for technical assistance.	This technical assistance provision would include the sharing of innovative and promising practices for accomplishing the program's objectives, such as strategies for effectively serving noncustodial parents. The Secretary of Labor, in consultation with the Secretary of HHS, is to develop a technical assistance strategy that ensures coordination and promotes partnerships among States, local areas, TANF and child support agencies, and CBOs.

ISSUE	PRESENT WELFARE TO WORK PROGRAM	H.R. 1482 "WELFARE TO WORK AMENDMENTS OF 1999"	RATIONALE
11. Reporting Requirements	Under current law, responsibility for participant and financial reporting requirements is divided between the Department of Labor and HHS.	The proposed legislation would consolidate all reporting functions to the Department of Labor as well as simplify the reporting requirements.	<p>The purpose of this provision is to streamline and simplify reporting requirements in response to feedback from States, local communities and service providers.</p> <p>The Secretary of Labor will examine ways to simplify these requirements, considering both the needs of the TANF program and consistency with the requirements under WIA.</p>
12. Allowable Activities	Presently, stand alone training is not an allowable activity.	Congressman Cardin's legislation would permit job skills training, vocational educational training, and (in the case of recipients who have not completed secondary school or received a certificate of general equivalency) basic education.	<p>Despite a 46% decline in welfare rolls over the past 6 years, those individuals that are left on the welfare rolls are those that will need the most intensive interventions.</p> <p>This provision is also consistent with the training activities that are allowed under TANF. These training activities, however, do not count towards TANF work participation rates.</p>

looking for long-term trends in hurricane frequency using the limited data available have been inconclusive.

There is increasing evidence of a relationship between the incidence of hurricanes and El Nino. The 1997-98 El Nino was one of the most intense on record. This phenomenon, due to the buildup of warm water in the Pacific, influences weather patterns around the world by intensifying and redirecting the high-altitude winds known as the jet stream. El Nino played a substantial role in last year's wacky weather, particularly the downpours that wreaked havoc in California during 1998.

El Nino has a friendlier effect in the Atlantic, however, reducing the incidence of hurricanes because strong jet-stream winds make it more difficult for thunderstorms to coalesce into large-scale cyclones.

The flip side of El Nino, known as La Nina, has the opposite effect. The jet stream is less intense and farther north, leaving ideal conditions for hurricanes to form in the tropical Atlantic. Toward the end of last year, El Nino gave way to La Nina, paving the way for Mitch and Floyd. How will global warming influence the El Nino-La Nina cycle? This is an area of active research. Some studies find little relationship, but El Ninos would still be more intense because they would come on top of a warmer baseline. Other researchers believe global warming could cause a kind of permanent El Nino, bad news for the West Coast and much of the rest of the world, but good news with respect to the frequency of Atlantic hurricanes. Most troubling are studies, such as the one by Mojib Latif of Max Planck, that suggest the cycle itself will intensify, implying that both El Ninos and La Ninas would become stronger. Though this may sound strange, it is plausible: If you give a swing

a hard push, both the upswing and backswing will be higher.

Even if the frequency of hurricanes does not change, damage is likely to increase. This is partly due to the additional energy and moisture added to the atmosphere by global warming. In addition, sea levels are rising, as ocean water expands and as glaciers melt. This implies that storm surges created by hurricanes, which often do most of the damage, will come on top of seas that are a foot to three feet higher than today. Because one foot of sea-level rise can cause more than 100 feet of coastal retreat, this synergy is extremely powerful.

Meanwhile, more and more people are moving into harm's way. More than half the U.S. population live within 50 miles of the coast, and that percentage is increasing. Similar trends are found around the world, leading the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to predict an era of superdisasters. Last year, declining soil fertility, drought, flooding and deforestation created 25 million environmental refugees, more than wars and conflict, according to the Red Cross. "Everyone is aware of the environmental problems of global warming and deforestation on the one hand, and the social problems of increasing poverty and growing shantytowns on the other. But when these two factors collide, you have a new scale of catastrophe," said Astrid Heiberg, president of the International Federation.

In response to warnings that a massive storm was bearing down on us, governments and citizens responded swiftly and effectively. Damage from Floyd was minimized by a combination of precautionary action and good luck. Though the time frame is years rather than days, we have been put on notice of the threat from global warming. We can't count on our luck holding. It is time to respond and begin

BROWNSTEIN COMMENT: Grants Would Boost Fatherless Families Program

By Ronald Brownstein
Los Angeles Times

INDIANAPOLIS For the seven young black men sitting in a classroom here one crystalline afternoon last week, the subject on the table was fatherhood. They were there to talk about strengthening their relationships with their children. But the long shadow in the room was the absence of their own fathers from their lives.

"I knew how I felt when you had father-and-son things at school and I couldn't just call my dad and say, 'Let's roll up,'" said Isreal Burgess, a voluble 20-year-old who spent most of the day with his head buried in a thick directory of career options. "My whole view is that, with my son, I want to be better than my dad ... and do all the things I wanted to do with my pop with my shorty."

There are many ways to measure the price America pays for the huge number of children about one-third overall who live in families without fathers. When the Census Bureau releases its

annual report on poverty in the next few days, it will surely say it now does every year, that most poor children live in fatherless families. Research shows that children growing up without fathers in the home are twice as likely to abuse drugs, commit crimes or drop out of school as those with two parents to support them.

But the greatest price may be the pattern of pain and loss that cascades through the years as sons repeat the mistakes and relive the absence of their fathers leaving another generation of children adrift. "There is a cycle we have to stop," says Wallace McLaughlin, director of the innovative Father Resource Program, which has gathered these young men for six weeks of intensive instruction and counseling on fulfilling their responsibilities as fathers.

The 5-year-old program, which serves primarily black men between the ages of 17 to 27, is at the forward edge of a fragile grass-roots movement laboring to break the cycle of separation. Around the country typically in modest circumstances like this programs are springing up to help men, usually unmarried young men, reconnect with their families.

Congress could give these shoestring efforts a huge boost in the months ahead. Sens. Evan Bayh, D-Ind., and Pete V. Domenici, R-N.M., recently introduced legislation with an impressive, bipartisan list of co-sponsors that would provide about \$75 million a year in grants (to be partially matched by states) to launch and enlarge fatherhood programs. Similar legislation is being developed in the House. And senior administration officials starting with Vice President Al Gore like the idea.

"We spent a lot of time dealing with problems like poverty, juvenile violence (and) drugs, which are really symptoms for a deeper underlying problem the epidemic of fatherlessness," says Bayh. "Rather than just deal with the symptoms, I think we need to deal with the root cause."

That's exactly what McLaughlin and his colleagues have aimed at since opening their doors in April 1994. Four or five times a year they gather groups of 20 young men almost all unmarried, most recruited by word of mouth or radio advertising for a six-week, all-day fatherhood boot camp.

Part of the day, the young men (who are paid weekly stipends of about \$90) are counseled on parenting skills, anger management, the role of fathers and the need to avoid additional pregnancies without marriage. A visiting psychologist works with them on managing their relationship with their child's mother. The rest of the day they learn job readiness skills: how to write a resume and conduct themselves in the workplace. Many stay late to study for their high school equivalency diploma. At the end of the six weeks once they pass a drug test an employment counselor helps them find work.

The goal is to stabilize their lives to the point where they can not only pay child support but also support their children emotionally. "Before I got here, I was out in the world doing anything," says Tighe Bibbs, a lithe young man whose coiled energy seems poised between great things and disaster. "Now I know I've got to live to see my kids grow old."

Even with those good intentions, just a day in the program's offices makes clear that this is hard and often frustrating work. As much as half of a typical class drops out. Those who remain must still cross many miles to connect with a 9-to-5 world of work, family and responsibility. Several have criminal records; few have finished high school. Complicating the problem, most are no longer romantically involved with the children's mothers; that means the mothers sometimes don't want them around, especially if either is seeing someone else. One young man in the class has another common problem: He's being blocked from seeing his child by the mother's mother, who doesn't approve of him.

In many cases, it's hard to see how these young men can form the relationship they want with their children without marrying the child's mother. Yet marriage typically isn't even on their radar. McLaughlin says that, while programs such as this "must reintroduce marriage as an option in our community," they must be realistic enough to focus on building "working relationships" between young parents unlikely to ever marry each other.

To that end, he wants to hire more counselors to negotiate "contracts" between these young couples clarifying each's role in raising their children. McLaughlin's greatest ambition is to open the program's own facility it now operates inside a somewhat inaccessible hospital where he could reach more fathers and mothers alike. But that requires more than the \$500,000 annual budget he patches together primarily from foundation grants. "The possibilities are limitless, but we need funds," says McLaughlin, in a lament that many activists running similar programs would echo.

...ants this past year have placed basic issues in sharp relief, underlining the fragile relationships among the states of the region and their separate, precarious paths toward sovereignty and stability. The future of universal political participation, the place of Islam in the state and the role of small countries in this vast region all challenge the tolerance of states and the ingenuity of civil society as these nations step delicately around deeply divisive issues on the road toward democracy.

One month ago, where the borders of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan meet, armed guerrillas raided several villages in Kyrgyzstan and took hostages. Kidnapping and hostage-taking turned into cross-border bombings and population displacements, transforming a peaceful corner of Central Asia into the newest casualty of post-Soviet politics. The place this occurred, in the shadow of the Pamir mountains, where state boundaries bisect old tribal and ethnic communities, symbolizes the permeable perimeters of contemporary Central Asia.

Composed primarily of disaffected Uzbeks belonging to Islamist parties outlawed by Uzbekistan's President Islam Karimov, the guerrillas reportedly included Tajiks and a small contingent of Afghans and Arabs. In short order, the Kyrgyz military stepped in to surround the guerrillas, the police undertook surveillance and arrests of ethnic Uzbek citizens of Kyrgyzstan, and the government called on Russia for support.

The short-term aim of the guerrilla action was to secure safe passage to Uzbekistan, presumably to foment a popular uprising, and the release of Islamist leaders held by the Uzbekistan government. In the past year, which witnessed an attempt on Karimov's life that he attributed to Islamist militants, Tashkent has imposed order by limiting civil-rights protections.

The virus of creeping authoritarianism has spread throughout the region: Most governments have modified democratic rhetoric to favor actions to dampen popular discord and reinforce central power. If the death knell has not yet rung for dissent, opposition politics have taken new forms. One is the rising reach of Islamist groups whose very existence seems an affront to the region's stridently secular leaders.

In a cavalcade of mutual blaming, the Uzbek government accused Tajikistan of supporting the guerrillas; the Tajiks cast aspersions on Uzbekistan for destabilizing the region; and Kyrgyz President Askar A. Akayev held Osama bin Laden and neighboring Afghanistan's Taliban movement accountable for sacrificing secular democracy on the altar of a prospective Islamist Central Asia. The small Kyrgyz and Tajik states co-exist uneasily with their far-larger Uzbek neighbor, but their attempts to use Russia as a counterweight have complicated regional relations. Kyrgyz authorities fear that Uzbekistan may move into their southern region, ostensibly to protect ethnic Uzbeks, but really to control a border area already penetrated by drug traffickers.

The specter of the failed Afghan state, where many Central Asians fought in the Soviet army, looms large. Many of today's guerrillas fought in Afghanistan and Tajikistan after leaving repressive Uzbekistan in the 1990s. All the states in the region ranging from Taliban-supporting Pakistan to Taliban-opposing Iran and Central Asia fear uncontrollable transnational groups and the lethal mix of drugs and armaments that often fuel antistate activities.

Ultimately, it is the state that is at risk in Central Asia, as it is in the Caucasus, the Balkans and many parts of Africa, where plural populations encounter the state as either an unfulfilled promise or an obstruction to political and economic progress. The reluctantly independent states of Central Asia, which lived in relative prosperity under subsidized Soviet rule, have embraced sovereignty in vastly different ways. Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan, large and resource rich, have traded on their future profits with a mix of nationalism and authoritarianism that alternately lures and provokes investors and trading partners. Tajikistan stubbornly survives its own civil war and, with regular exchanges of refugees and militants, Afghanistan's, too. Pluralist Kyrgyzstan, unwitting host to discord and rebel actions, has embraced every Western tutorial on economic liberalization with the sad knowledge that its investment potential is inadequate for its needs and ambitions.

The result is the lure of political and economic advantages available for some, but still eluding the grasp of many. Opportunities exist, absent the distributive equity to which civil society was accustomed, and the promise of political participation has faded as governments seek to control resources and power. Optimists look for silver linings in the long term, hoping foreign trade and investment may bring wealth to the many and political voice to all. Pessimists, mired in short-term debt and even shorter

patience, fear the longer term may come too late: Governments and states will disappear into the chasm between idealism and realism.

Under these circumstances, caricature has replaced open debate. The Uzbekistan government, condemning opposition as Muslim extremism, offers little room for dissent; Islamist groups, excluded from political discourse, target the state as the ultimate enemy. Both are right, and wrong. Central Asia's states are creatures of an international political economy in which they are tangential. Without political pluralism, their continuing peripheral status will exacerbate domestic tensions, fostering a familiar spiral of discontent. But insurgency, with or without the veil of religion, threatens the state and citizens who still want it to endure, forcing countries like Kyrgyzstan, relatively open and open-minded, to negotiate around guerrillas rather than risk validating their means and ends.

Islam is not the problem in Central Asia, but economic, social and political dislocations may make it seem like a solution. The problem is not religion in politics, so feared by the former communists who now rule every state in the region, but a dangerous brew of terrorism and ideological intransigence that so easily infects politics in the name of populism. The shadow of Afghanistan is a close and potent reminder of what it means for political society to implode.

Hurricanes: Is This the Calm Before the Storm?

By Daniel A. Lashof

Special to the Los Angeles Times

America's response to the threat posed by Hurricane Floyd was exemplary. Faced with satellite images of one of the largest and most powerful Atlantic Ocean hurricanes ever seen, governments ordered the largest peacetime evacuation in U.S. history.

Fortunately, Floyd's track shifted slightly to the north and much of the storm's energy dissipated over colder water before it made landfall in North Carolina. Things could have been far worse. Last year, Mitch slammed into Central America, killing 10,000 unprepared people. In 1992, Andrew caused almost \$26 billion in damage.

While most evacuees sighed with relief, a disgruntled resident of Jackson Beach, Fla., complained, with 20-20 hindsight, "If we can put a man on the moon, why can't we predict the path of hurricanes?"

It turns out it is harder to predict hurricanes than it is to send astronauts to the moon. There are far more variables involved in the circulation of the Earth's atmosphere than there are in a moon shot.

What we do know about hurricanes suggests that Floyd, Mitch and Andrew could be harbingers of more to come. Hurricanes get their power from the energy contained in warm, moist air over tropical oceans. They form only where sea-surface temperatures are above 80 degrees Fahrenheit, and their maximum destructive potential increases with increasing sea-surface temperatures.

The world is getting warmer and wetter. Global temperatures have increased by about one degree over the last century, and the warming has accelerated during the last two decades. The 10 hottest years on record have all occurred since 1980. Last year was probably the hottest this millennium.

Warming increases evaporation, intensifying both droughts and floods. The link between these facts and the increasing pollution of the atmosphere with carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases is still disputed by die-hard skeptics, but their ranks are dwindling.

If global warming continues unchecked, we may look back on the 1990s as the calm before the storm. A study by Massachusetts Institute of Technology scientist Kerry A. Emanuel suggests that global warming could increase the maximum destructive potential of hurricanes 40 percent to 50 percent by the middle of the 21st century. While many factors can prevent hurricanes from forming or prevent them from reaching their maximum potential intensity, recent studies by scientists at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Max Planck Institute for Meteorology in Germany predict that the incidence of intense hurricanes will increase with global warming.

These predictions are not easy to confirm. Because intense hurricanes are extreme events, it's difficult to detect trends. According to the National Hurricane Center, there were 33 hurricanes from 1995 through 1998, the most ever for a four-year period, despite 1997 being an average year. Furthermore, insurance payouts for weather catastrophes are at an all-time high. Part of this is due to population growth in vulnerable areas and increased property values, but some of the world's largest insurance companies, like Munich Re and Swiss Re, believe that damage is on the rise, even controlling for these factors. Nonetheless, studies

Inflation Rate Steady in May

Stock, Bond Markets Rally on Small Rise in Consumer Price Index

By JOHN M. BERRY
Washington Post Staff Writer

After a sharp jump in April, consumer prices were unchanged last month, allaying fears among investors and government policymakers alike that the nation's inflation outlook had taken a big turn for the worse.

The Labor Department reported yesterday that prices of the goods and services that contributed most to the 0.7 percent increase in the April consumer price index—gasoline, apparel, lodging away from home, tobacco products and airline fares—all declined last month.

The report produced sighs of relief on Wall Street as both stock and bond markets rallied, partly on the grounds that the good inflation news makes it less certain that Federal Reserve policymakers will raise short-term interest rates at the end of this month. Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan is scheduled to testify this morning before Congress's Joint Economic Committee on the economic outlook and monetary policy and is expected to signal whether he feels a rate increase is needed to keep the economy from overheating.

The Dow Jones industrial average rose 189.96 points, or 1.79 percent, to close at 10,784.95. The Nasdaq index, which is heavily weighted with high-tech and Internet company stocks, soared 103.16, or 4.3 percent, to 2517.83. Fear that interest rates were about to go up had recently pummeled Internet stocks, which carry high price-to-earnings ratios and could face steep sell-offs if bonds become more attractive.

At the same time, yields on 30-year U.S. Treasury bonds fell to 6.06 percent from 6.11 percent as the price, which goes up when yields go

See ECONOMY, E2, Col. 1.

down, rose \$6.25 per \$1,000 face amount.

Greenspan and several other Fed officials have expressed concern that inflation eventually will worsen if U.S. economic growth—led by particularly strong consumer spending—doesn't slow down to what they regard as a more sustainable pace. For the past three years, the economy has grown at about a 4 percent rate, while the officials willing to pick a number have said that growth of 3 percent or less is all that can be sustained without rising inflation on a long-term basis.

Several forecasters said the economy likely is expanding at about a 4 percent pace in the current quarter, about the same as the 4.1 percent rate of the January-March period. However, the same forecasters generally expect somewhat slower growth in the second half of the year.

"The complete lack of inflation puts the Fed in a bind," said Bruce Steinberg, chief economist at Merrill Lynch & Co. in New York. "Recent remarks by Fed officials make it seem that they are hell-bent on tightening.

"But there is not much of a rationale that comes out of recent [economic] data. Not only is inflation nonexistent, but job growth is clearly slowing," Steinberg said. Over the past three months, payroll employment rose an average of 146,000 a month, down from 260,000 for the six months ended in February.

Ken Mayland, chief economist at Key Corp., a large Cleveland-based regional banking firm, echoed Steinberg.

"The May CPI results bolster the case that what happened in April was a one-time occurrence, not a continuing phenomenon," Mayland said. "If the Fed ultimately decided to lift rates on June 30, it will be out of fears of future inflation problems—on a 'fast growth leads to price pressures' line of thinking—not based on actual inflation results."

The concern at the Fed is not just

that growth is fast but that unemployment is already so low—4.2 percent last month—that continued rapid expansion will drive the jobless rate down to the point that wages start rising in an inflationary fashion.

J. Alfred Broaddus, president of the Richmond Federal Reserve Bank, warned in a recent speech, "Most post-war business expansions have ended because excessive growth in consumer and business demand, underwritten by expansionary monetary policy, has set off inflationary pressures," which eventually had to be countered by interest rate increases "that produced recessions."

"The risk of overheating is out there," Broaddus said.

That view was bolstered yesterday by the results of the Fed's latest nationwide survey of economic conditions conducted for use at the central bank's June 29-30 policymaking session.

"District reports indicate that the U.S. economy remains strong, with

gains in activity widespread," the survey summary said. "Retail activity in most districts has shown little sign of slowing, and consumers remain upbeat about the economy. . . . Manufacturing activity continues to improve in most areas from the sluggish conditions of the past year and a half."

"Labor markets remain very tight in almost all districts, with increased reports of upward pressure on wages in many parts of the country. . . . Prices, however, with the exception of several construction materials, remain well behaved," the summary said.

The housing sector was red hot during the winter with housing starts running at about a 1.75 million unit annual rate from December through March. Yesterday the Commerce Department reported that after a dip to a milder 1.58 million rate in April, starts rose again to a 1.68 million rate. However, the number of new building permits issued, which fell in both March and April, recovered only slightly last month.

A key factor taking some steam out of housing construction has been a sharp rise in mortgage interest rates. Rates on 30-year fixed-rate mortgages, which were well below 7 percent last fall are now well above 7.5 percent, and a survey of home builders found they expect sales and construction to slow soon.

Investor concerns in recent weeks about inflation and the prospect of a Fed move to raise its 4.75 percent target for overnight interest rates have driven up longer-term interest rates that are determined by market forces. That increase has spilled over

into mortgage rates.

Meanwhile, the Fed also said that the output of the nation's factories, mines and utilities rose a small 0.2 percent last month. Still, it was the fourth monthly increase in a row following an extended period last year when faltering export orders put manufacturing in the doldrums.

However, from an inflation point of view, there were few bottlenecks or shortages pushing up prices of industrial products. Despite overall strong economic growth, only 80.5 percent of the nation's total industrial production capacity was actually in use last month, the Fed report said.

The Washington Post

THURSDAY, JUNE 17, 1999

Coalition Pushes Initiatives for Black Fathers

By MICHAEL A. FLETCHER
Washington Post Staff Writer

When Daniel Patrick Moynihan called black fatherlessness "the fundamental weakness of the Negro community" in a report 34 years ago, he was excoriated by many black leaders, who felt the issue only distracted attention from the more pressing problems of racism and the lack of opportunity for blacks.

Times have changed. Yesterday, a diverse coalition of policymakers joined forces behind a policy statement calling for a range of new initiatives aimed at reconnecting estranged African American fathers to their children, providing fresh evidence of a growing consensus around an issue that once fostered only division. It is just one of a number of recent proposals from across the political spectrum to address an issue once deemed too sensitive for public debate.

The statement, which grew out of a conference late last year at Morehouse College, urges Congress to provide \$2 billion to support the wide range of grass-roots fatherhood programs proliferating around the country. It also calls on African American leaders to "recognize the high priority of restoring the black family" and called on civil rights organizations to move the issue to the top of their agendas.

At the time of the Moynihan report, a third of black children lived in single-parent homes. Now, 70 percent of African American children are born to unmarried

mothers and 80 percent will spend substantial time without a father present. Regardless of race, some 40 percent of all American children live in homes without their biological fathers, the Morehouse report says.

Such statistics have long been a source of fractious debate. Conservatives tended to blame the problem on cultural and moral failures, while liberals have typically argued that the situation is more complex and largely attributable to shrinking economic opportunities in poor neighborhoods.

But the gap between these views appears to be narrowing, as activists of varying political views focus on pragmatic solutions. "You can be about fathers without signing on to a whole conservative agenda," said Ronald Mincy, a Ford Foundation vice president, who oversees the foundation's funding of fatherhood programs and is a supporter of the Morehouse statement.

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The role of fathers, particularly among the poor, began taking on new importance after Congress rewrote the federal welfare laws in 1996. Since then, fatherhood programs have developed into a crucial component of the nation's social policy, with hundreds of programs aimed at fathers springing up across the country.

"We catalogued maybe 200 fatherhood programs around the country about five years ago. Now

easily there are 2,000," said Wade F. Horn, president of the National Fatherhood Initiative.

The issue of single-parent households is also one that top policymakers and civil rights leaders are becoming more comfortable addressing.

In a speech to formally kick off his presidential campaign yesterday, Vice President Gore said, "The crisis in the American family today knows no boundary of class or race."

NAACP President Kweisi Mfume

said his group is aggressive about "promoting the value of values," noting that the group's branches across the country sponsor parenting, mentoring and father-and-son programs. Rep. Nancy L. Johnson (R-Conn.) is working to build bipartisan support for a bill to be introduced in coming weeks that would address many of the issues raised in the Morehouse report. The legislation would fund grass-roots fatherhood programs, pay for a public relations campaign to promote the virtues of fatherhood and support job training for poor,

unskilled fathers.

Those efforts are being buttressed by new research indicating that poor, single fathers often are more intimately involved in the lives of their children than is commonly assumed.

Preliminary findings from a study being done by Princeton University's Center for Research on Child Well-Being, found that four of five single fathers are "romantically involved" with their partners at the time of childbirth. Half of the couples actually live together, and 85 percent of the men provide financial support during

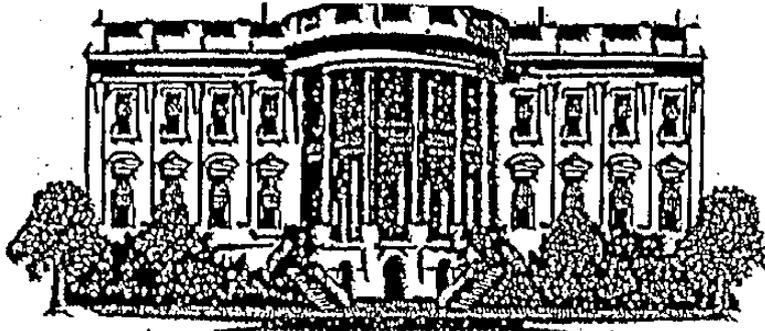
pregnancy and say they plan to continue supporting their children. Moreover, the study is finding that most single parents are at least contemplating marriage.

"The problem is when you look at many of these guys five, six years down the road, they aren't there, they aren't involved, they aren't married," said Horn.

One reason is that often they cannot afford families. And while states have stepped up measures to make deadbeat fathers pay child support, there is no clear strategy for

dealing with what the Morehouse report calls "dead-broke" fathers, who simply can not afford to pay.

Efforts to improve what the statement's authors call the "marriageability" of poor, single men are likely to prove difficult. Last year, a study found that the nation's most ambitious effort to help the fathers of children on welfare, called Parents Fair Share, failed to increase the men's employment or earnings and, as a result, had only modest success at getting them to make child support payments.



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THE WHITE HOUSE

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NUMBER OF PAGES (INCLUDING COVER): 3

COMMENTS: In case you hadn't seen it, here's response from Ron Minney (Ford Foundation) + Zebie Clayton (Morehouse) to Michael Kelly article blasting national leaders for not caring about fatherhood issues.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Doing Something About Fatherlessness

Michael Kelly's June 16 op-ed column, "A National Calamity," credited David Blankenhorn, who joined with us in what The Post called "a diverse coalition of policymakers" with the observation "that the crisis of fatherlessness is calamitous to the nation and that the people who run the nation should do something serious about this" [news story, June 17].

He's right, but as two of the three principal co-editors of the statement, we take issue when Mr. Kelly uses this as a springboard to attack the presi-

dent, vice president, the administration and the leadership of both parties.

This crisis cuts across American society, but is most severe among African Americans, and we as members of that community have a special responsibility to end it, as we made clear. Second, the administration and many in the congressional majority support our efforts.

President Clinton ordered federal agencies to examine their policies and practices to see if they encourage responsible fatherhood, and se-

rious efforts are underway to strengthen support for fathers. Vice President Gore's annual family reunion conferences have been the site of significant developments in the fatherhood movement since 1994, and since then the Department of Health and Human Services and major foundations have been in close collaboration, involving fatherhood and women's groups.

HHS supports a responsible fatherhood demonstration project and is considering a major expansion of the Partners for Fragile Families (PFF) demonstration. The Department of Labor has made welfare-to-work grants to PFF sites in Milwaukee, Indianapolis, Los Angeles and Racine, Wis. Labor Secretary Alexis Herman encouraged several states to devote most or all of their welfare-to-work money to job training and counseling for poor fathers.

On the Hill, Rep. Nancy Johnson (R-Conn.), who chairs the Ways and Means subcommittee on human resources, and Rep. Benjamin Cardin (D-Md.) are working to channel significant welfare-to-work money toward getting noncustodial welfare fathers back to work so they can pay child support.

The gist of our report was a call for united action based on reality, not a shoot-from-the-hip, poorly aimed blast.

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The Washington Post

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 16, 1999 A37

Michael Kelly

A National Calamity

So now we are four, as along comes Jack, 8 pounds, 4 ounces, to join Tom, who for the record welcomes this development; and now I know what my job will be for the remainder of my days. I will be the man sitting behind the driver's wheel saying: Boys, listen to your mother.

This is a good job, and one of the better things about it is the nice clarity it lends to life. Fathers (and mothers) relearn that the world is a simple enough place. They discover that their essential ambitions, which once seemed so many, have been winnowed down to a minimalist few: to raise their children reasonably well and to live long enough to see them turn out reasonably okay. This doesn't seem like a great deal to ask for until you find out that it is everything to you. Because, it turns out, you are everything to them.

We know this not just emotionally but empirically. We know—even Murphy Brown says so—that both fathers and mothers are essential to the well-being of children. Successive studies have found that children growing up in single-parent homes are five times as likely to be poor, compared with children who have both parents at home. They are twice as likely (if male, three times as likely) to commit a crime leading to imprisonment. They are more likely to fail at school, fail at work, fail in society.

What, then, would we say about a society in which the overwhelming majority of children were born into homes without fathers and who grew up, in significant measure, without fathers? We would say that this society was in a state of disaster, heading toward disintegration. We would say that here we had a calamity on a par with serious war or famine. And, if that society were our own, we would, presumably, treat this as we would war or famine, with an immediate and massive mobilization of all of our resources.

Of course, this society is our own. Of black children born in 1996, 70 percent were born to unmarried mothers. At least 80 percent of all black children today can expect that a significant part of their childhood will be spent apart from their fathers.

Millions of America's children live in a state of multiplied fatherlessness—that is, in homes without fathers and in neighborhoods where a majority of the other homes are likewise without fathers. In 1990, 3 million children were living in fatherless homes located in predominantly fatherless neighborhoods—neighborhoods in which a majority of the families were headed by single moth-

ers. Overwhelmingly, those children were black.

These figures, and most of the others that follow, come from a report, "Turning the Corner on Father Absence in Black America," released to no evident great concern this week by the Morehouse Research Institute and the Institute for American Values.

As the report notes, things were not always thus. In 1960, when black Americans lived with systemic oppression, 78 percent of black babies were born to married mothers, an almost mirror reversal of today's reality. In the 1950s, a black child would spend on average about four years living in a one-parent home. An estimated comparable figure for black children, born in the early 1980s is 11 years. According to the research center Child Trends, the proportion of black children living in two-parent families fell by 23 percentage points between 1970 and 1997, going from 58 percent to 35 percent.

The disaster of black fatherlessness in America is part of a larger crisis. In every major demographic group, fatherlessness has been growing for years. Among whites, 25 percent of children do not live in two-parent homes, up from 10 percent in 1970. Overall, on any given night, four out of 10 children in America are sleeping in homes without fathers. (True, in the past few years, the number of out-of-wedlock births has begun to fall, but that trend is too nascent and too modest to much affect the situation.)

Some people think all of this matters. One is David Blankenhorn, a liberal organizer who learned realities, as a Vista volunteer and who 11 years ago founded the Institute for American Values, co-author of this week's report. It is Blankenhorn's modest suggestion that fathers are necessary to children, that their abdication on a large scale is calamitous to the nation and that the people who run the nation should do something serious about this.

The man who currently runs it is not a factor here; he does not do serious. What about the men who would run it? Al Gore says nothing; he is too busy fighting the loss of green spaces in Chevy Chase. Bill Bradley preaches about racism but is silent about the ruination of a race. George W. Bush is full of compassionate conservatism, but he won't say quite what that is. And so on. History will wonder why America's leaders abandoned America's children, and why America let them do so.

Michael Kelly is the editor of National Journal.

the lottery ritual and has named its
many Tibetans reject.

Will Seek Claimants In Holocaust Case

...ved to be the most ambitious effort ever to notify
beneficiaries of a legal settlement is scheduled to launch
The effort will seek people eligible for \$1.25 billion in
...-related claims.

The worldwide campaign involves the settlement reached last
August of a massive class action suit against Swiss banks accused
of withholding money deposited during the Nazi era by Jews and
other Holocaust victims.

Advertisements seeking potential claimants will be published in
500 newspapers in 40 countries, using just as many languages, plus
Yiddish.

In addition to the advertisements, the notification program,
instituted by Jewish organizations and plaintiffs lawyers, includes
an extensive direct mail campaign as well as a Web site and a free
call-in number to help people determine if they are eligible for
settlement money.

The number is 1-888-635-5483, and the Web site is at
<http://www.swissbankclaims.com>.

Ads will appear in Los Angeles and Latvia, Azerbaijan and
Australia, Belarus and Brazil, Chile and the Czech Republic,
stressing that people may be entitled to compensation even if they
or their families did not have a Swiss bank account. The settlement
calls for compensating a broad class of people Jews and others
who were subjected to Nazi persecution.

Potential claimants have until Oct. 22 to notify a federal court in
New York whether they have any objections to the settlement and
whether they wish to opt out. U.S. District Judge Edward R.
Korman has scheduled a Nov. 29 hearing on whether the settlement
is "fair, adequate and reasonable."

New York attorney Judah Gribetz, serving as a special master for
Korman, is expected to announce a plan for distributing the funds
late in 1999 or early in 2000.

When the settlement was announced last August, some attorneys
expressed the hope that the first \$250 million could be distributed
within a year. But since thousands of potentially eligible claimants
are spread around the globe and a number of complicated issues
were involved, that goal clearly will not be met.

Elan Steinberg, executive director of the World Jewish Congress,
one of the organizations that has played a key role in the Swiss bank
campaign, said he expects that funds will start to be distributed in
the second half of next year. However, Melvin I. Weiss, one of the
lead lawyers for the plaintiffs, said he would not predict when
distribution would begin.

Nonetheless, both Steinberg and Weiss said the launch of the
outreach campaign marks a significant development in the Swiss
bank matter, one of several Holocaust reparations issues that has
arisen in the past three years.

Currently, there are also major class action suits pending on
allegedly unpaid insurance claims of Holocaust survivors, as well as
other suits seeking compensation for people compelled to work as
slave laborers for corporations allied with the Nazi regime. Still
other cases seek recompense for persons who were subjected to
cruel medical experiments in the World War II concentration
camps.

The newspaper ads that are to appear Tuesday state that the
potential beneficiaries of the settlement are "targets and victims of
Nazi persecution." That term includes Jews, Jehovah's Witnesses,
homosexuals, physically and mentally disabled people, persons
commonly known as Gypsies and who:

1. Had assets on deposit with any Swiss bank or investment prior to May 9, 1945; or
2. May have claims against Swiss entities relating to assets looted or taken by the Nazi regime; or
3. Performed slave labor for entities that may have deposited money derived from that slave labor with Swiss entities or passed profits through them; or
4. Unsuccessfully sought refuge in Switzerland to avoid Nazi persecution or were mistreated in Switzerland after gaining entry there.

Among the thorny issues facing special master Gribetz is what to
do with any funds that are left over after individual claims are paid.
There are a variety of proposals circulating on what to do with any
residual funds such as Jewish education, resurrecting Jewish

communities that were destroyed during Adolf Hitler's reign and
restoring Jewish cemeteries in Eastern Europe.

WR-Fathers

BROWNSTEIN COMMENT: Bradley's Speech Absent Missing Fathers

By Ronald Brownstein
Los Angeles Times

When Bill Bradley detailed his views on childhood poverty earlier
this month in Los Angeles, two words were conspicuously missing
from his speech. One was the word "fathers." The other missing
word was "missing" as in, missing fathers.

Bradley came no closer to the subject of missing fathers than
some fleeting references to the stresses confronting single parents.
As a senator from New Jersey, Bradley had worked to toughen
child support collection from absent fathers, but in his speech he
casually dismissed those who believe that childhood poverty cannot
be addressed without attacking the broader cultural problem of
fragmenting families a much more explosive issue on the left.

"We cannot return to a remembered past, a past I'm not certain
ever really existed," declared Bradley, Vice President Al Gore's sole
competitor for the Democratic presidential nomination.

That's far too flip. Today, childhood poverty is at least as much a
problem of values as of economics. That means any effort to reduce
childhood poverty solely with the economic policies Bradley
stressed is doomed to frustration. Without increasing the number of
children in two-parent families, the United States is unlikely to
make the progress it wants at reducing the number of children in
poverty.

"Historically," says David Blankenhorn, president of the centrist
Institute for American Values, "whether or not a child was poor
depended on what her mother and father did for a living (and)
whether they had a job. Increasingly, whether a child is poor or not
depends on whether she has a father in her life."

Census Bureau numbers tell the story. More and more, childhood
poverty is concentrated in families where the father (or far more
rarely) the mother is absent. In 1997, the latest year for which
census data are available, 62 percent of all children in poverty came
from single-parent families.

Just 34 percent of poor children live in families with two married
parents. (The rest live in assorted other conditions, including foster
care.) That's despite the fact that the number of married couples
raising children is still more than double the number of single
parents.

To some extent, this decade's rising economic tide has lifted all
these boats. In his speech, Bradley charged that the number of
children living in poverty hasn't decreased under President Clinton.
But census figures show that the number of children in poverty
declined from 15.3 million when Clinton took office to 14.1 million
in 1997, a drop of 1.2 million. That reduced the share of children
living in poverty from 22.3 percent to 19.9 percent.

Bradley's aides now admit that his charge in the speech was
wrong but say the actual decline is "negligible." Clintonites counter
that the decline in the children's poverty rate since 1993 is the
largest sustained drop since the 1960s. But the biggest story in the
numbers is that even a booming economy can't fully overcome the
impact of family breakdown on children.

Since 1993, the poverty rate has fallen slightly faster among
female-headed households than those with married couples. But
even after that progress, a staggering 41 percent of single-parent
families remain trapped in poverty (compared with 7.1 percent of
married parents). A single white mother is still nearly five times as
likely as a married black couple to be poor.

That disparity defies easy solution. Most parents without a partner
make great efforts, but they are forced to stretch one set of
resources over a job that demands two. That leaves many in an
inherently tenuous situation, particularly economically.

Bradley was right to urge more support for all parents struggling
to stay out of poverty. But Washington hasn't been as oblivious as
he suggested.

With the 1993 expansion of the earned income tax credit (which
cuts federal taxes for the working poor), the 1996 increase in the
minimum wage, the new program of health insurance for children in
low-income families and the \$500-per-child tax credit approved in
1997, Clinton and Congress have already taken important steps to
bolster families with one or two parents straining at the margin of
the economy.

More can be done, such as raising the minimum wage again. But
it will be difficult to root out childhood poverty solely with such
economic support because the vast majority of parents who work
already earn enough to lift their families out of poverty. For married

couples with children, when either partner worked full time in 1997, just 2.8 percent were poor. Even nine of 10 single mothers who worked full time escaped poverty.

Those numbers suggest part of the answer to endemic childhood poverty might be to help more single mothers enter the work force (as welfare reform is already aiming to do with work requirements, training and subsidies for day care). But there are natural limits to that process; the real lesson may be that the best way to reduce childhood poverty is to encourage more men to marry the mothers of their children and help sustain the families they have created.

Not much is known about how to promote marriage. But interesting experiments are emerging. On the same day that Bradley delivered his fathers-free speech, an extraordinary collection of largely black scholars convened by Morehouse College and Blankenhorn's institute released a manifesto urging a broad national effort aimed at "reuniting fathers and children," especially in the black community.

Among their recommendations was that Congress provide grants to help fund grass-roots, often religiously based, initiatives now springing up with three goals: to help absent fathers find work; to inspire them to rebuild ties with their sons and daughters; and to encourage them to marry the mothers of their children.

Rep. Nancy L. Johnson, R-Conn., will introduce a \$2 billion program to support such efforts later this year, and Clinton officials have expressed interest in the idea.

Reconnecting absent fathers to their families won't be easy, but it's essential to the cause of giving more children a chance. Bradley was only partly right when he said that the persistence of childhood poverty "is an issue of justice."

It's even more an issue of personal responsibility—the obligation of men and women to jointly support the children they bring into the world. Washington can surely do more, but, without that personal commitment, justice for poor children will remain elusive.

The Historic Power of Special Interests

By Bruce J. Schulman

Special to the Los Angeles Times

The machinery of American democracy ground to a halt recently. Despite overwhelming public support for new restrictions on firearms, the National Rifle Association and its allies again stymied gun-control legislation on Capitol Hill. In the past, cataclysmic events and national crises allowed the nation to surmount organized interests and enact much-needed, much-demanded reform. But even after the massacre in Colorado and school shootings in Georgia, the majority appears powerless against the money and influence of the gun lobby. The stalemate has flummoxed even Vice President Al Gore; on the campaign trail he wondered how he might rouse "the 80 percent of the electorate" who favor safer gun laws.

Of course, the gun lobby is hardly the only special interest to squeeze Capitol Hill in a chokehold. Nor is it the first to paralyze Washington by diverting attention from effective reform onto other, vaguer issues like violent videos, creepy Internet chat rooms and schools that do not prominently display the Ten Commandments. But the lessons of history and the astonishing intractability of the current Congress, even in the face of national uproar over schoolyard violence, raise serious questions about the ability of cynical, well-heeled minorities to suffocate the will of the majority.

After World War II, President Truman introduced a national health insurance plan. Truman's proposal, especially medical coverage for the elderly, enjoyed broad popular support in the United States. At that time, every other industrial democracy in the world was adopting a similar policy.

But fearing a loss of income and prestige for doctors, the American Medical Association launched a relentless effort to spike the plan. The AMA lobbied Congress and ran a vicious advertising campaign against the bill. It even fabricated a quotation from Vladimir I. Lenin, purporting that the architect of Soviet communism had called national health insurance "the keystone to the arch of the Soviet state." The AMA triumphed, and the United States remained the only Western democracy not to provide its citizens with guaranteed medical care.

A generation later, amid the double-digit inflation of the 1970s, the federal government maintained price supports and import quotas to protect Big Sugar. The program benefited a handful of sugar producers but pummeled millions of U.S. consumers victimized by skyrocketing food prices. Asked to defend the sugar supports, President Carter's inflation czar, economist Alfred E. Kahn, remained speechless. Although everyone understood, he could not confess before a congressional committee that the Carter administration dared not offend the sugar lobby. After a long,

awkward pause, Kahn replied, "Let me sit in that embarrassed silence." Sugar subsidies

But not just economic interests have dominated. Party organizations, religious groups and interest groups also maintained strangleholds on the political process, subverting the general welfare to their narrow, particular interests.

During the 1880s, Americans became increasingly disillusioned with corruption in public office. A decade of high-profile scandals reminiscent of today's campaign-finance imbroglios, convinced many that the excesses of the spoils system needed to be tamed. The nation should no longer condone the rewarding of political supporters with sinecures and lucrative contracts or the practice of requiring public employees to kick back part of their salaries to the machines that had provided their jobs. Still, the party organizations, particularly the national Republican Party, which controlled the White House and its rich stores of patronage, repeatedly blocked civil-service reform. The spoils system remained intact until a disappointed office seeker assassinated President Garfield. Then clamor for action finally became irresistible and Congress passed the Pendleton Civil Service Act in 1883. This "Magna Carta of civil-service reform" forbade mandatory kickbacks and awarded many public offices by competitive examination rather than cronyism. Still, civil-service reform proved a rare and partial victory.

During the late 19th century, however, no issues so exercised the electorate as moral reform—temperance, Sabbatarianism, birth control. Most parts of the nation enacted Sunday "blue laws," closing shops and offices on the Sabbath, and enforced restrictions on the sale and use of contraceptives. However popular these measures were during the Gilded Age, they were outmoded by the 1960s. But while vast majorities of Americans opposed these restrictions, a committed vocal minority kept them on the books.

For example, when Massachusetts scientists conducted clinical tests for the birth-control pill, contraception was still illegal in that state. Legislators simply would not risk the wrath of churches and other religious organizations, despite the wishes of constituents. Only after the Supreme Court invalidated bans on contraceptives in 1965 and the cultural turmoil of the '60s eroded support for blue laws, did Congress and the state legislatures begin to retire these relics of the Gilded Age.

Half a century ago, Americans first surveyed the alarming rise of special interests such as the NRA and the AMA. Analysts such as John Kenneth Galbraith and David Reisman conceded that U.S. voters possessed little real influence on the political process. Policy-making had become so arcane and complex that ordinary citizens could barely keep track of deliberations in Washington, much less surmount the power of organized interests.

But 1950s observers remained confident about the resilience of American democracy. In their minds, the opposing interest groups seemed to counteract each other: Labor checked business, veterans groups balanced professional organizations, civil-rights lobbies monitored church groups. A democracy of interest groups flourished in the modern United States, even if citizen voices grew faint. In the last analysis, in times of crisis—a presidential assassination, an international incident, a cultural rebellion—Americans would break through the gridlock that stalled legislative action.

Recent events cast doubt on that sanguine view. The interests do not cancel each other out and produce a harmonious, functioning democracy. After Littleton, it seems that even a national disaster cannot pry a congressional majority free from the tentacles of a well-financed, well-organized lobby.

Right Attacks Software, Left Trumps With Hardware

By Kevin Phillips

Special to the Los Angeles Times

The gun-control proposals strangled in the House of Representatives a week ago are being resurrected as powerful issues in the incipient national elections. This will be to the detriment of Republicans, whose pro-gun tactics have left even sympathizers wondering about their electoral acumen.

Not only is the old Nixon- and Reagan-era law-and-order coalition just a memory, but GOP Capitol Hill leaders, especially unofficial House boss Rep. Tom DeLay, R-Texas, seem to think the average American voter lives in rural Oklahoma instead of in the huge, gun-skeptical belt of suburbs that stretches from Long Island, N.Y., to Long Beach, Calif. Nothing else could explain their legislative tactics.

In the long run, the GOP can look forward to some Democratic problems. The Clinton administration's gains in the crime arena owe

Program Wins Grant to Help Fathers Become Men

By JOHN W. FOUNTAIN
Washington Post Staff Writer

One heart at a time. One mind at a time. One man at a time.

That is the aim of a national organization working to build strong African American families by leading fathers back down the road of responsibility.

The Institute for Responsible Fatherhood and Family Revitalization announced yesterday that it has received a \$4.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor

to train about 500 non-custodial fathers across the country over the next year and to help them find jobs or, in some cases, better jobs.

At a news conference at a Northeast Washington housing complex, Charles A. Ballard, the institute's CEO and founder, said the federal welfare-to-work grant gives a boost to the group's existing Employment Opportunities Program.

"The whole idea here is to reduce the welfare roll," Ballard said. "This is a put-men-to-work program. It's not just finding him a job, but finding him a new attitude."

The new campaign will focus on men who live in targeted "high-risk" areas of the six cities where the institute has offices. In addition to the District, the cities are Cleveland, Milwaukee, San Diego, Nashville and Yonkers, N.Y.

Many of the men who will receive training are without steady employment experience and lack education or job skills. Some are ex-offenders and former drug addicts.

Ballard said the \$4.5 million price tag is a fraction of the cost to incarcerate for a year the same number of men it intends to train.

The campaign's kickoff was announced at Paradise at Parkside Apartments on Hayes Street NE. Among those in attendance was Mayor Marion Barry, who commended the group for its effort to help at least 80 jobless or unemployed fathers in Ward 7 qualify for and find gainful employment.

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The end result, organizers insist, is not simply to help men find better jobs, but to help them begin to see themselves through the prism of possibility.

"There are jobs out there. The problem is with the heart," said Bruce M. Jenkins, 42, who manages the institute's office in Northeast, which has been targeted. "Employers say: 'People we can get. But people with the right mind is what we're looking for.'"

Organizers say their Employment Opportunities Program aims to succeed where similar job-training programs have fallen short. In some similar programs, Ballard said, men have completed training courses and received certificates only to find no jobs waiting.

The institute will provide the link to employment, working with the American Institute for Full Employment, a national organization that provides support for job placement.

Part of the initial task in training participants is to create a "comprehensive master plan" for each man in the program after he has undergone a needs assessment, officials said. The training will incorporate such topics as professional attire and etiquette, in addition to placement assistance and follow-up counseling once a person lands a job.

Although the program's welfare-to-work campaign wasn't announced officially until yesterday, officials said they began working under the new mandate in July and already have helped 10 men get jobs.

The institute, which is based in Washington, has gained national recognition for its success in encouraging men to be good fathers and in reuniting fathers with their children.

The program provides counseling, support groups and mentoring by successful fathers. Under the program's guidelines, men who participate must establish paternity, finish their high school educations and get jobs.

Its office in Northeast Washington opened in May 1995 and has worked with more than 100 men, 75 women and 150 children, officials said.

"My relationship with my son is better. I got in touch with myself," said Leroy Ware, 47, an ex-offender who sought the services of the institute two years ago.

"Some of the teachings made me more aware of the situation with myself," said Ware, adding that he now counsels female ex-offenders. "It's like a light bulb."

WR - Fathers

Christian Coalition Attacks FEC Suit

Group Accused of Improperly Aiding Republican Candidates

Associated Press

The Christian Coalition is asking a federal judge to dismiss a lawsuit accusing the organization of improperly aiding Republican candidates through its voter guides and other activities.

The group filed papers Tuesday with U.S. District Judge Joyce Green. The Federal Election Commission, which brought the suit in July 1996, planned to file its own motion as well.

The FEC accused the Christian Coalition of spending thousands of dollars to promote the candidacies of Republican politicians, including former president George Bush, Sen. Jesse Helms (N.C.), Virginia Senate candidate Oliver North and House Speaker Newt Gingrich (Ga.).

The Christian Coalition called the FEC's actions "groundless," saying that its activities did not specifically urge a vote for or against a

particular candidate and therefore cannot be regulated by the federal government.

"The only basis for the FEC's vilification of the coalition and the burdensome and intrusive investigation into its internal affairs is that the coalition has boldly exercised its rights to free speech and association and has refused to remain confined in the ghetto ordinarily reserved for religious speakers," the coalition said in its filing.

The Washington Post

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1998

spouse. This distinction is vital to the masculinity of men and to the future of fatherhood.

That's why, Blankenhorn says, it is crucial that society provide men with the right cultural script, because successful fathering depends more on societal codes of conduct than on biology. If we get those codes wrong, we'll see "the continuing decline of fatherhood and a deepening ambivalence and skepticism toward masculinity." We must get them right, because "fatherhood, more than any other male activity, helps men to become good men."

Your Man—Frog or Prince?

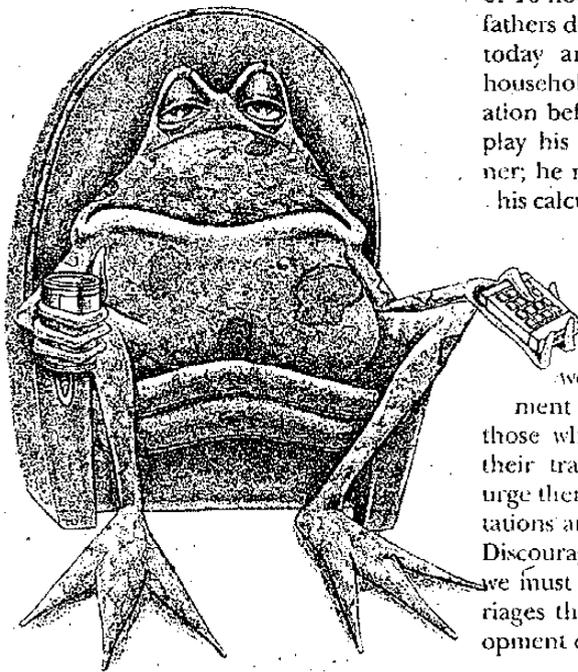
If you want to be a good father, the single most important thing you can do is to be a good husband. In a landmark study of marriage and parenting styles, Jay Belsky, professor in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies at Pennsylvania State University, has found that men whose marriages were in decline tended to exhibit parenting traits that undermine child development.

"Men appear much less likely than women to distinguish between their feelings about their child and their feelings about the marriage," writes Belsky in *The Transition to Parenthood: How a First Child Changes a Marriage; Why Some Couples Grow Closer and Others Apart*. (The book, by Belsky and John Kelly, is available in paperback from Dell.) "If a man is dissatisfied with the latter, he will usually stay away from his family, even if it means sacrificing the opportunity to get to know and form a close bond with his youngster."

Sadly, it seems marriages tend to be most vulnerable just when they need to be strongest—when children are very young. Belsky found that when children entered the picture, a little over half of all marriages declined. Only 20 percent of couples thought their marriages improved, and the remaining 30 percent of couples found their level of marital satisfaction to be about the same. Research by the National Center for Fathering also shows a "U-pattern" of marital satisfaction. It is high before the birth of the first child, declines when children are young, and tends to rise again as the children grow older and leave home.

Belsky writes that a major area of

marital discord is the division of responsibility for child care and house-keeping. Babies are a lot of work, and the mother generally finds she bears most of the burden—by choice or by default. Because a woman will tend to



measure her husband's share in domestic duties against her own (she typically does three times more than he does), that perception of unfairness breeds resentment. But men measure their contribution (which averages 15 or 16 hours a week) against what their fathers did. By this yardstick, husbands today are doing 40 percent more household work than men did a generation before. Also, she tends to downplay his contributions as a breadwinner; he regards them more highly. By his calculations, he's a prince; by hers, he's a frog.

The arrival of children provokes spousal conflict in other areas as well, Belsky writes, including money, work, social life, and commitment to the relationship. Obviously, those who would counsel couples in their transition to parenthood must urge them to address unrealistic expectations and conflict over gender roles. Discouraging divorce is not enough; we must foster strong and loving marriages that nurture the healthy development of children.

Leading the Fatherhood Brigade

Thousands of men gather in football stadiums around the country to recommit themselves to their wives and children. Vice President Albert Gore attends a national summit on fatherhood, with major news media in tow, and chastises men for walking away from "the most important role that any of us will ever play in life." Hundreds of thousands of African-American men convene in Washington, D.C., to pledge responsibility to their families. Is fatherhood making a comeback in the nation with the world's highest rate of father absence?

"There's not a movement," says the Reverend Donald Burwell of Fathers' Education Network in Detroit. "But I do think there is a fatherhood revival or Renaissance."

Whatever we call it, something is going on. In recent years, several new groups dedicated to promoting fatherhood have sprouted, and older organizations have reoriented their efforts to this cause. Here are some of the leaders in the fatherhood field—a mix of

liberal and conservative, religious and secular—all united in a belief that fathers are vital to their children's well-being.

National Fatherhood Initiative

Tel.: 717-581-8860/800-790-DADS

Fax: 717-581-8862

Web site: <http://www.register.com/father>

"What reduces crime, child poverty, and teen pregnancy, and requires no new taxes?" asks the National Fatherhood Initiative. The group's answer, of course, is good fathers. The nonprofit organization was founded in 1993 to spread the "news" that fathers are indispensable to their children's development.

Its goal is ambitious: broad cultural and social change. But it has widespread support, savvy, creative and committed leadership, and a national advisory board that includes William J. Bennett, James Earl Jones, congressman Steve Largent, Willard Scott,

Illustration by Chris Cahill

Louis Sullivan, and George Gallup. NFI's aggressive media outreach has garnered more than 650 mentions in publications nationwide. With backing from the Advertising Council, NFI will start a blitz of public-service announcements this year to reintroduce fatherhood as a vital concept.

NFI has become a nerve center for various fatherhood groups, sponsoring national and local meetings. Last summer and fall, NFI chairman David Blankenhorn led a "National Fatherhood Tour" to 30 cities to meet with community activists and promote the NFI "fatherhood pledge."

The organization plans an interfaith summit in Washington, D.C., in May, to convene various religious leaders—a more modest version of its 1994 National Summit on Fatherhood in Dallas, which brought together national and local religious, civic, business, and entertainment leaders. Also in the works is a summit addressing the needs of the African-American community, to be chaired by Louis Sullivan, the secretary of health and human services under President George Bush.

NFI president Don Eberly, a former top aide to Jack Kemp, is based in the national office in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, while director Wade Horn, a former U.S. Commissioner of Children, Youth, and Families, works out of Gaithersburg, Maryland. Originally conceived as a public-education campaign, NFI has also become a membership organization in response to popular demand. Membership benefits include a quarterly newsletter, a media kit, a guide for community activists, and a catalog of fatherhood-related books and videos. With three full-time and three part-time staff members and a budget of about \$600,000, the institute's challenge now is to find the funding to carry out its many ambitious initiatives.

National Center for Fathering

Tel.: 913-384-4661/1-800-593-DADS
Fax: 913-384-4665

Considered one of the leaders in

the field, the National Center for Fathering is a Kansas-based nonprofit organization that trains individuals in the fundamentals of fatherhood. Founded in 1990 by scholar Ken Canfield, the center holds seminars based on Canfield's *The Seven Secrets of Effective Fathers* (available from NCF in paperback and as an audiocassette or a video seminar).

"Where National Fatherhood Initiative is the strategic bomber of the fatherhood movement, we are the infantrymen in the trenches," says NCF spokesman David Warnick. With a budget of \$560,000 and 10 full-time staff members, NCF runs programs for fathers from all backgrounds,

including corporate personnel, prisoners, military dads, and inner-city fathers, and is actively involved in minority outreach. More than 15,000 fathers around the country have participated in its two-day training sessions.

Its national training program, "Operation Domestic Shield," is often disseminated through church networks, and Canfield works as a trainer for the evangelical Christian group Promise Keepers. But NCF prides itself on being a nonpartisan, nonsectarian organization, working with everyone from California governor Pete Wilson to Vice-President Al Gore.

The National Center for Fathering publishes a quarterly magazine, *Today's Father: For Men Who Want To Be Better Dads*, which contains parenting advice and lists of books and other resources, and also produces a three-minute radio program carried on more than 300 stations nationwide.

Promise Keepers

Tel.: 303-964-7772/1-800-888-7595
Fax: 303-433-1036

Although technically not a "father" group, this Christian evangelical organization, founded by former University of Colorado head football coach Bill McCartney, keeps popping up on the lists of leaders in the fatherhood-renewal movement because it promotes the building of strong marriages and families. It has been drawing tens of thousands of men, for \$55 a ticket,

into sports arenas from Seattle, Washington, to Washington, D.C., for two-day conferences featuring Christian music and inspirational speakers. Men make a series of promises to God, wife, family, friendships, church, and community.

Headed by president Randy Phillips, Promise Keepers now has a staff of 250 and a budget of \$64 million, and its 1-800 number averages 20,000 calls a day during its summer registration season. Such success has alarmed some women's groups. In October 1995, for instance, a *Glamour* magazine editorial referred to Promise Keepers as "among those who still think men can't keep up unless women are kept down." In response, the group contends that being a leader means being a servant to one's family, not a tyrant.

Father to Father

Tel.: 612-626-1212
Fax: 612-626-1210

On Father's Day last year, Vice President Al Gore announced a new nongovernmental initiative to promote paternal involvement through community-based mentoring programs. The goals and structure of Father to Father are so ill-defined that it is difficult to tell where this initiative is going, but Gore's high-profile support will bring welcome attention to the issue. This loose federation, under the direction of Martha Farrell Erickson of the Children, Youth and Family Consortium at the University of Minnesota, offers kits to communities and organizations that want to reach out to fathers, providing lists of resources and strategies for starting their own mentoring group.

An electronic version of this effort is called FatherNet, a free 24-hour-a-day electronic meeting place that provides the latest information and resources about and for fathers. Web site: <http://www.fsci.umn.edu/cyfc/cyfc.html>

The Fatherhood Project

Tel.: 212-465-2044
Fax: 212-465-8637

Under the mantle of the liberal Families and Work Institute since 1989, the Fatherhood Project was founded in 1981 by director James A. Levine as a national research and education pro-



gram to increase male involvement in childrearing.

Programs include the Male Involvement Project, directed by Edward W. Pitt, which works with Head Start and other early childhood and family support programs. The MIP sponsors community-based social programs in Baltimore; Minneapolis, and the San Francisco Bay area, and a national training program for early-childhood administrators such as pre-school directors.

Publications include *Getting Men Involved: Strategies for Early Childhood Programs* and *New Expectations: Community Strategies for Responsible Fatherhood*. The Fatherhood Project also oversees a program called Fathers and Work, which promotes family-friendly workplaces and presents seminars on how to deal with "daddy stress."

A caveat: Critics argue that the project's emphasis on separating men from the role of breadwinner could inadvertently erode paternal involvement and provision. Some claim that directors Levine and Pitt have bought into a feminist agenda that aims to turn fathers into substitute moms.

The Institute for Responsible Fatherhood and Family Revitalization

Tel.: 216-791-8336 (Cleveland office)
Tel: 202-789-6376 (national office)
Fax: 216-791-0104

Hailed as a "modern-day prophet" and a "visionary" by others in fatherhood circles, Charles Augustus Ballard began the institute 13 years ago to help young, directionless black men in Cleveland, Ohio, become involved in their children's lives. (See his article, "Prodigal Dad: How We Bring Fathers Home to Their Children," in the Winter 1995 *Policy Review*.) Most fathers who have gone through Ballard's program finish high school, get jobs, and legally establish their paternity.

Ballard's emphasis on reuniting fathers with their children—grounded in thoroughly biblical themes of family and responsibility—has appeal across the political spectrum. The institute's national office is housed in the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, a nonpartisan liberal think tank. His urban program got a tremendous boost in early 1995 when the Ford

Foundation gave the group \$2 million to reproduce its efforts nationally. The institute has opened five new centers: in Milwaukee, Washington, D.C., San Diego, Atlanta, and Yonkers, N.Y., each to be headed by a married couple. The institute's strategy is to saturate one blighted neighborhood at a time.

Some question whether a group headed by a single charismatic leader can replicate and institutionalize its programs. We'll see: Each new location will be headed by men and women who have been trained by Ballard in Cleveland.

M.A.D. D.A.D.S.

Tel.: 402-451-3500
Fax: 402-451-3477

Six years ago, 18 African-American men in Omaha, Nebraska, decided they would no longer tolerate gang violence and drug-dealing in their neighborhoods. So they created M.A.D. D.A.D.S. (Men Against Destruction—Defending Against Drugs and Social Disorder), a community-based group that organizes street patrols, paints over gang graffiti, confronts drug-dealers and gang members, sponsors activities for youth such as block parties and car shows, and to counsels young people in local jails.

"We started out of pain—the pain of our children dying in the streets of their own communities," says a recent M.A.D. D.A.D.S. publication. "We realized that we could hold no one responsible but ourselves. . . . So we united as a handful of community fathers who now know that we must be the force behind change."

From this handful grew an organization of more than 25,000 volunteers, with 41 chapters in Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, Nebraska, New York, Ohio, Tennessee, and Texas.

The group has logged more than 87,000 volunteer hours on the streets—more than half after midnight. For its work on the front lines of impoverished minority communities, M.A.D. D.A.D.S. has won national recognition from Presidents Bush and Clinton, the National Education Association, and *Essence* magazine.

Fathers who want to open a chapter of M.A.D. D.A.D.S. in their community can contact the national office in Omaha and ask for John Foster, Bishop Robert Tyler, or Eddie Staton.

Fathers' Education Network

Tel.: 313-831-5838
Fax: 313-831-6353

Can ex-cons be good dads? The Reverend Donald Burwell, whose organization works with fathers newly returned from prison or first-time offenders hoping to avoid jail time, has answered that question at least 5,000 times. Since 1990, that's how many men his Detroit-based group has trained in the interpersonal skills they need to reconnect with their families. In the process, the organization has cut recidivism rates in half for its participants. FEN also offers instruction to women to help them reinforce at home what their husbands or boyfriends have learned in class.

A tax-exempt nonprofit funded solely by donations, FEN will soon be taking Burwell's innovative curriculum to four new locations in Michigan, and opening branches in Chicago, Brownsville, Texas, and near Memphis, Tennessee.

A Father's Library

The Father Factor: What You Need to Know to Make a Difference, by Henry B. Biller and Robert J. Trotter (Pocket Books) Examines the contributions that only a father can make to parenting.

Fatherhood: An Owner's Manual, by Doug Soangler (Fabus Publishing) Aimed at fathers of children up to age five.

The Gift of Fatherhood, by Aaron Hass (Simon & Schuster) Explains how men's lives are transformed by their children.

The Five Key Habits of Smart Dads, by Paul Lew (Zondervan) Offers a simple model of effective fathering.

From the 1995 *Fatherhood Resource Catalog*, published by the National Fatherhood Initiative. For more information, call 717-581-8860.



2000 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Ste. 148
Washington, D.C. 20006
703-255-2428 : 206-272-2152

COPY

WR -
Fathers

September 8th, 1994

President Bill Clinton
The White House
Washington DC, 20500

RE: H.R. 4605 - WELFARE REFORM
Support of American Fathers Coalition

Dear President Clinton:

This letter is to formally announce for the record the American Fathers Coalition is supporting Congressional approval of H.R. 4605. This proposal is a major beginning in a long process leading to major welfare reform. For unmarried fathers, the legislation in the paternity area alone justifies our support. By including the concept of due process rights for fathers, including joint parenting classes, that could lead to fairness and equity in all areas of parenting, H.R. 4605 represents a winning situation for children. These are children whose parents may have never lived together, but they are still the parents, and the child can benefit from parental involvement with each parent. This new policy represents a cultural breakthrough and can lead to more parental involvement and a reduction in direct governmental support of dependency children.

Attached is our newest Statement for the Record on welfare reform addressing a variety of positive father-friendly welfare reform proposals. We urge your review of these proposals and hopefully give these proposals your support as a way of reducing the AFDC caseload by 33% up to 50% within one year through positive father parenting. These are major proposals that not only offer new opportunities for millions of children for non-dependency lifestyles, but reduced AFDC caseloads, reduced AFDC bureaucracy, and enormous tax relief for American taxpayers who want parents to raise children, and not the government.

We support H.R. 4605, but we also support major substitutions in a few critical areas as indicated in our Statement.

Meeting with President Clinton - 1

You deserve immense credit for putting welfare reform on the national political agenda and keeping it there. We have seen a great national debate and policy discussion so far and it can only get better once you are able to focus on it as a Congressional priority. Our country needs and wants serious welfare reform, and with you continuing leadership, it can happen.

Our focus is on the role of fathers as involved parents, in all aspects of parenting. Such fathers, of whom there are many, cannot provide quality time with their children unless they have quantity time. H.R. 4605 provided startup monies for a national campaign to enforce parenting time between children and their fathers. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN AMERICAN HISTORY, BOTH SIDES OF A DIVORCE DECREE CAN NOW BE ENFORCED. !!! We thank you for your support as this is a major breakthrough in national policy.

We wish you well in your legislative battles, and we want to work with your staff to determine which areas of father-friendly welfare reform proposals the Clinton Administration can support.

Thank you again for your leadership on welfare reform as we have begun another national debate that must be concluded with legislative approval. Our millions of troubled children deserve no less than a much improved welfare system than the one now in operation.

Any written response to our father-friendly policy proposals would be much appreciated.

Sincerely,

BILL HARRINGTON
NATIONAL DIRECTOR



2000 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Ste. 148
Washington, D.C. 20006
703-255-2428 : 206-272-2152

H.R. 4605
WELFARE REFORM
TWO YEAR TIME LIMIT FOR WORK REQUIREMENT

PUBLIC HEARING
TUESDAY, AUGUST 16TH, 1994
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES

STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD

BILL HARRINGTON, NATIONAL DIRECTOR
AMERICAN FATHERS COALITION
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WASHINGTON DC, 20006
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PRESIDENT OF FATHERS RIGHTS OF WASHINGTON STATE
BOX 5345, TACOMA, WASHINGTON 98415
206-272-2152

COMMISSIONER - U.S. COMMISSION ON CHILD & FAMILY WELFARE
APPOINTED BY SPEAKER FOLEY ON MARCH 22, 1994

LEGAL ASSISTANT
KELLEHER LAW OFFICES
1904 THIRD AVE. SUITE #-435
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98121
206-587-4714 FAX 206-587-4715

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES
HON. HAROLD FORD, CHAIRMAN
AUG. 16TH, 1994

TWO YEAR TIME LIMIT ON
CASH ASSISTANCE

The American Fathers Coalition supports the effort of President Clinton and the Clinton Administration to impose time limits on grants for cash assistance where welfare mothers are able to work but either refuse to work or fail to work for unacceptable reasons. We fully support the concept of "TOUGH LOVE" and the proposition of focused parental responsibility. Fathers accept the notion that it is primarily up to parents to raise children, and not the government. Fathers are simply requesting that government roadblocks to day to day father parenting without entitlement funding, as an alternative to automatic welfare for mothers regardless of time limits or other new conditions imposed by welfare reform, be repealed and removed. Children have two parents and we need new policies that give the other parent support for their role in children's lives.

MR. CHAIRMAN, when fathers with children on AFDC already have jobs, as most do, and they already have incomes above the poverty level as does the majority, and if these fathers are able to care for their children full time without any public welfare, and these fathers want to raise their children as does one third up to one half, YES 33% up to 50%, and government policy does not provide for this option AT ANY TIME, 2-years or any other time, then

MR. CHAIRMAN, we are not doing what we can to really help children in dependency lifestyles. The American Fathers Coalition policy proposals on FATHER CUSTODY and FATHER AS BABYSITTER OF FIRST RESORT are the policy options that represent real and meaningful choices that directly benefit children, and these options are available immediately, without any 2-year wait.

In reality MR. CHAIRMAN, existing anti-father government policy is really oriented, intentionally or not, to KEEP children on welfare, to KEEP children in dependency lifestyles, to KEEP children living in at-risk home environments for abuse and neglect, and to KEEP fathers away from day to day parenting of their children. The net result is that fathers KEEP all the blame and receive no support for their desire to be involved as responsible parents. This happens through existing discriminatory practices that favor mothers as automatic custodial parents and which treats all fathers as deadbeats. This isn't a pretty picture, but it is the view from the perspective of responsible fathers from all over America.

TIME LIMIT DEBATE

As previously stated MR. CHAIRMAN, the American Fathers Coalition strongly supports the concept of strict time limits for cash grants for AFDC cases. We know that for some welfare mothers, where no fathers are honestly identified or involved, and the mothers lack any and all necessary social skills to move into independent and responsible lifestyles, or are living in households with chronic unemployment, that a two year limit may seem arbitrary and even punitive. For the large majority of welfare mothers, however, a 2-year limit is far too long to wait for pressure to change their attitudes about independence.

From the perspective of fathers, we see this issue of jobs and a time limit as only one sided. The reality is that the majority of fathers with children on AFDC already have jobs. If our goal is to place children with full time working parents, the American Fathers Coalition favors an IMMEDIATE transfer of custody to fathers who are full time employed and have incomes above the poverty level. This proposal is for mothers who have been on welfare for 6-months or longer. IMMEDIATELY, the children are removed from dependency lifestyles, IMMEDIATELY the children are removed from living in at-risk home environments, IMMEDIATELY the children are off welfare and the associated stigma.

WORK ETHIC NOT FACTORED INTO WELFARE REFORM

The BIGGEST and MOST SIGNIFICANT UNMET NEED for welfare mothers is obtaining the work ethic. This personality trait is usually received from fathers in intact 2-parent homes. None of the proposals offered through welfare reform for mothers provides for this important psychological factor. Failure to do so renders make-work programs unlikely to succeed and unreliable as a means of helping children out of dependency lifestyles.

WELFARE MOTHERS BENEFIT FROM FATHERS POLICY PROPOSALS

Also, IMMEDIATELY, the mothers are totally able to pursue solving their drug or alcohol dependency problems, completing their high school educations, enrolling in job training programs, or seeking gainful employment with incomes above the poverty level. They will have full time to devote to taking care of themselves. They will also know that when they are self sufficient, that presumptive Joint Custody will be there for them to resume a major part of their children's lives. The mothers will know in the interim, the children are living with their father, and are no longer at-risk for foster programs or adoption. The three years for the children primarily with their fathers will only be temporary, unless the mother fails to become self sufficient by not having a job with an income above the poverty level for at least one taxable year.

EDUCATION PROGRAMS NEEDED - NOT MAKE WORK PROPOSALS

The fathers position is that welfare mothers are most in need of counseling for assertiveness training and esteem building at the beginning of an AFDC case and then completion of formal high school education or enrollment in a job training program. For those mothers really wanting to escape the welfare system, post graduate education is needed to prevent re-enrollment in welfare which happens generally four or five times over the course of a welfare mother's case history. What is needed is technical training or education so that parent will have the total ability to stay out of the welfare system, that if one job is terminated for whatever reason, that the person has the ability to obtain new employment to avoid re-entering the welfare system.

Children are most in need of adult supervision and role modeling by parents who are independent, full time employed, and who have total responsibility for their lives. While these characteristics are generally understood and accepted, they are not a factor in the existing social welfare system. Excitement and serious discussion of the 2-year time limit is being treated like shock therapy. It is not. It is only a modern dose of reality that society cannot, and will not, afford to totally support single parent households without a responsible adult who possesses the work ethic, someone who sees welfare programs as only an emergency measure, and not as a lifestyle.

CLINTON PROPOSAL COMPARISON WITH THE FATHERS PROPOSAL

The AFC proposal for IMMEDIATE relief, within one year, through positive father parenting, affects up to 50% of the AFDC caseload. At best, The Clinton Administration proposal reduces the AFDC caseload by 1% per year up to the year 2000.

The AFC proposal for policy options with IMMEDIATE effect, kicking in at 6-months after a mother is on welfare, is a reasonable compromise between President Clinton's 2-year limit and the total shock policy of ending welfare NOW, advocated by Charles Murray and others.

DOUBTERS ARGUMENTS

For those who automatically argue against this proposal either because they believe that fathers are really incapable of parenting full time, or because they feel that fathers with children on welfare really don't care at all, we say that it is time to find out. If fathers really do not come forward, nothing changes, and we know that anti-father biases are well based. If fathers really do come forward and request daily parenting for their AFDC children, everyone wins and we know that fathers really want to be involved. The worst we have to fear is destroying one of the big anti-father myths. The American Fathers Coalitions says it is time to find out.

The tragic reality is that for nearly half of welfare mothers, a positive father option is a realistic option that has never been researched, and in effect, has been totally ignored. Our government has no understanding of the motivations and commitment of fathers. What is needed is a positive parenting option, an option with parental dignity as the anchor of the policy proposal. This is the policy option the American Fathers Coalition has to offer, and the research to back it up. The missing financial statistic is what is the harm to children from missing out on positive father parenting? We cannot begin to even calculate the lifetime damage to fatherless children so we just ignore it and settle for just blaming all the fathers, as if they fit one psychological profile represented by deadbeat dad myths.

FATHER LOVE AS A POLICY OPTION

FATHER LOVE is an immediate option that doesn't take any time to put into effect. FATHER LOVE is IMMEDIATE and UNCONDITIONAL. FATHER LOVE is TOTALLY TAX FREE. FATHER LOVE is a policy that does not need six months, and certainly not two years, to warm up, consider the benefits, and evaluate. FATHER LOVE is emotional and psychological support every child needs as much as they can receive. YET, MR. CHAIRMAN, FATHER LOVE between fathers and children is a much sought after social result that existing government policy goes out of its way to prevent, especially for children in AFDC programs.

GREATEST DAMAGE IS TO CHILDREN BY FAILING TO ENACT WELFARE REFORM

PATERNAL DEPRIVATION is a social disease that needs to be stamped out if we are to have any chance of helping millions of children. New legislation is needed if positive father parenting is to have any chance to flourish. This is especially true for the necessity of positive father parenting by unmarried fathers. These fathers need official support for their desire to be involved parents, and the only way it is going to happen is through new legislation originating with a federal mandate to the states. The states have failed miserably to accept any notion of positive father parenting. They just focus on automatic custody for mothers and child support for the fathers. They do not even fathom the desire of fathers to be involved as day to day functioning parents. This is the continuing harm to children, without new legislation focusing on fairness in paternity identification procedures, nothing changes.

The Absent Fathers Syndrome is America's greatest social catastrophe. As stated again for the umpteenth time in Parade magazine on Sunday August 14th, 1994, that children in single parent maternal homes, are at the greatest risk for child abuse and neglect, government policy acts to effectively KEEP children in these destructive environments, as if that is in their best interest, even when we know it is not.

Instead of working mightily to sympathize automatically with all welfare mothers, as if that is our only policy option, and they are

all deserving of official support just because they are mothers, and then create new programs to KEEP these children in dependency lifestyles with their mothers, America needs new programs to get children out of dependency lifestyles and off of welfare roles.

The following proposal is intended to be a major alternative and begin the debate on a positive role for fathers in national family policy issues.

AMERICAN FATHERS COALITION WELFARE POLICY PROPOSAL

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST POVERTY

CHAIRMAN FORD, the American Fathers Coalition believes that in those welfare cases where one parent is on welfare for six months or more and is also able to work but fails to do so, and the other parent is able to support the children financially out of welfare and off of entitlement funds IMMEDIATELY, and the other parent cannot make that same guarantee, that the parent who can avoid welfare for the children IMMEDIATELY and remove children IMMEDIATELY from dependency lifestyles, should be favored for custody temporarily for three years. The other parent can then enroll in AA or other anti drug dependency programs, enroll in self esteem building and assertiveness training classes, complete their high school education, enroll in a job training program, obtain an advanced educational degree, or get actual work experience. Then after one taxable year of full employment above the poverty level, that parent could then petition the Court for significant or equal time with the children under presumptive Joint Custody.

We understand that in normal contested custody proceedings between non-welfare working parents, that money is not and should not be a decisive factor. However, in welfare cases, where poverty is the main issue, or at least is argued as the priority to avoid for children, and avoiding dependency lifestyles for the children is our national goal, then it is not only reasonable but mandatory, that America face the fact that positive father parenting, where fathers with children on AFDC want to assume primary responsibility for the children, that a national campaign of discrimination against poverty be instituted, and working fathers be favored and supported for a three year period of custody, over non-working, non-supporting mothers. We believe non-dependency lifestyles should be a national policy as in the BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILD. In these instances, a working income for one parent should be a positive decisive factor to a Court official determining a change of temporary custody of children.

If America can set a goal as we did in 1961 of going to the moon by 1970, America can set a domestic goal of cutting AFDC cases by 50% by the year 2000. H.R. 4605, to be effective, and to "END WELFARE AS WE KNOW IT" such a goal is needed. The failure to include such a goal means we intend to fail in making any real changes in the AFDC system.

Without the above policies in place, and without the benefit of positive father parenting in legislation as a serious option, WELFARE REFORM IS DOOMED TO OUTRIGHT FAILURE OR LIMITED SUCCESS !!! Our country, and millions of needy children, deserve better.

FATHERS WITH CHILDREN ON AFDC PROGRAMS HAVE INCOMES OVER \$15,000.00

The average incomes of fathers with children on AFDC programs is \$15,300.00. This is compared to mothers with average incomes under \$4,000.00. This statistic was first revealed in a Congressional report by Congressmembers: Clay Shaw, Fred Grandy, and Nancy Johnson. If the issue is poverty for children, and one parent has the financial ability to raise the children out of poverty and off of welfare, that parent should be favored on the basis of the best interest of the children and tax savings to American taxpayers. The failure to support the father option for temporary custody is simply gender discrimination in favor of mothers keeping their children, even if it means the mothers preference is dependency lifestyles and a life on welfare with the children. Paying more child support is not the issue. Again, for AFDC cases, even if the child support orders were paid in full and on time, less than 5% of mothers would be off welfare without the mother also working. Therefore, a more realistic policy option is needed, and that option is positive father parenting.

FATHERS AS BABYSITTERS OF FIRST RESORT

A national policy of fathers, and family members of fathers, as babysitters of first resort, would be a great national benefit to children on AFDC programs, as well as their mothers. Child care was identified during House Human Resources Subcommittee hearings on July 26-27-28-29 of 1994, as one of the two greatest obstacles for welfare mothers to deal with in finding private employment to overcome the benefits of publicly supported welfare. The other major factor was health care.

Loving fathers and family members of fathers as babysitters should be made a mandatory option for welfare mothers to pursue before they are allowed to file for paid child care. Here is a family option that has great family policy benefits, at no social or taxpayer cost. Many unmarried fathers, like the recent unmarried teenage father in Michigan who won custody of his infant daughter, have no idea of their legal rights to be involved as parents in their children's lives, until a later time, if ever. A policy of father as babysitter of first resort, along with written informational materials provided to mothers in pre-natal checkups and prepared childbirth classes, as proposed by the Clinton Administration in H.R. 4605, would greatly benefit children and assist the mothers in seeking private employment or enrolling in job training programs.

A policy of FATHER AS BABYSITTER OF FIRST RESORT could serve as an icebreaker for some fathers in being actively involved in the physical care of their children. This could result in more father

participation in the lives of their children, reducing the likelihood that taxpayers would be forced to totally support the child until age 18.

ACCESS, VISITATION, AND PARENTING TIME ISSUES

CHAIRMAN FORD, throughout the series of hearings you have held, beginning on March 15th, and then again on July 26-27-28-29, you have asked witnesses to comment on the linkage between visitation and payment of child support. We support the policy that the two issues are interconnected and inseparable. Custody cannot remain solely a state issue while child support is both a federal and state issue, with the federal government playing a greater role.

FIRST, the American Fathers Coalition requests that we stop using the term "visitation" in its entirety. In legal proceedings, a parent only with visitation rights means a parent without all other legal rights. In reality children have two parents, and in most cases, children spend time in two homes. Children visit neighbors and friends, not one of their parents. It is true that children may spend a majority of time in one home, but they live in two homes. Children have their names on the doors of both homes. A term such as visitation applies to VISITING PRISONERS in jail, and not to children spending residential time with the other parent. It is a denigrating term against a parent, and it should no longer be used, not in an era where both parents are assumed to have both legal rights and legal responsibilities.

MR. CHAIRMAN, the American Fathers Coalition supports the Clinton Administration in its recommendation for serious funding for enforcement of parenting time between children and their parents, in most cases between children and their fathers. Sadly, many mothers treat their children as personal property and arbitrarily withhold them from residential parenting time with their fathers. This is wrong and proveably harmful to children. The pain and suffering can last a lifetime from not knowing or seeing a parent.

FATHERS NEED HELP TO ENFORCE THEIR LAWFUL PARENTING TIME WITH THEIR CHILDREN. Fathers need help with counseling, mediation, appointment of Guardians Ad Litem, to see their children and to communicate with mothers to allow this voluntarily. However, in some cases, fathers also need assistance of law enforcement agencies to enforce their residential parenting time with their children. Today, the states do not provide money nor do they support enforcement of Custodial Interference laws. In effect we have a tolerance policy on parental kidnapping. The Parent Locator Program should be available to fathers to locate their missing children. Some attorney time for fathers will be needed in cases where Writs of Habeas Corpus or Motions for Contempt may be needed to get the children away from the mothers.

Serious funding is needed, on a par with child support enforcement funding, to minimize parental kidnapping of children and holding children as financial hostages, as happens in too many cases. The

mothers feel the only way they can have control of their troubled lives, is to have total control of their ex-husbands or boyfriends. And the only way that can happen is for mothers to have absolute control of the children. Then, the mothers can obtain automatic sympathy for their desperate situations, and they have no father around to challenge their actions. This is the destructive cycle of fear and control that needs to be broken to stop children from being caught in the middle between conflicting parents.

The American Fathers Coalition will offer a proposed amendment to increase funding for years after the first two years. We have no problem with the initial funding that is proposed in H.R. 4605 as it will take some time for local organizations to develop plans with local governmental authorities and make grant proposals. But after the initial period, fathers will make big demands for services as this is a major problem that has not been seriously investigated and the exact number of likely cases is unknown. Again, we commend President Clinton for beginning this first ever program for enforcement of parenting time between children and their parents. For the first time in American history, both sides of a divorce decree will now be enforced. !!!

7 POINT AFC PLAN

Our intent is to take the President's Plan, H.R. 4605, and reshape it into legislation that can seriously improve the lifestyle opportunities for millions of children. OUR AMERICAN FATHERS COALITION PLAN, IS THE ONLY WELFARE REFORM PLAN, THAT GIVES CHILDREN A FATHER, AND A REALISTIC OPPORTUNITY TO ESCAPE A LIFELONG DEPENDENCY LIFESTYLE. For this reason alone, this proposal deserves serious consideration.

FATHER LOVE is the cheapest investment in the lives of AFDC children. The AFC 7-point plan, attached to this statement, is a plan for survival with dignity for one third to one half of all children on AFDC grants. This means IMMEDIATE relief with non-dependency lifestyles, within one year, for between 3,500,000 and 5,000,000 children. This means IMMEDIATELY, children are out of dependency lifestyles, IMMEDIATELY out of AT-RISK home environments, and IMMEDIATELY taxpayers not financially supporting unnecessary welfare caseloads. This policy allows fathers raising their children without even a penny of entitlement funding on a temporary three year plan. THIS IS A WIN-WIN-WIN plan at taxpayer savings of up to \$100 Billion annually through reduced caseloads.

RESEARCH SUPPORT FOR POSITIVE FATHER PARENTING

On June 23, 1994, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities made the following comment on the destructive nature of welfare lifestyles for children. They said:

"There is, however, strong evidence that poverty harms children. Poor families often live in substandard housing and have difficulty purchasing basic necessities such as food and clothing. Research has demonstrated that poor children

are more likely than nonpoor children to be too short and too thin for their age. Poor children also tend to develop academic skills than nonpoor children. And poor children who live in poor neighborhoods are less likely than more affluent children to complete high school....."

The 1990 census showed that 1,400,000 fathers are single parent heads of households, and is the fastest growing family unit in America. Fathers can do the job. And 44% of the children living with their fathers are girls.

Research shows that children living with their fathers compares favorably in all other areas of parenting to children in 2-parent homes, in stark contrast to under achievement levels with children living with their mothers in single parent households.

Books by Dr. Henry Biller, Fathers and Families and the Father Factor discuss in detail the importance of father\child relationships. Father Hunger, a book by Dr. Margo Maine goes into the detail about girls suffering from loss of positive father parenting. The Atlantic Monthly article, April of 1993, Dan Quayle Was Right by Barbara Whitehead continues unchallenged as a piece about the disadvantages of our current divorce system.

CHILD SUPPORT MISINFORMATION

Instead of the government destroying a middle class or working class parent, like a father, with a job and income above the poverty level, our existing CHILD SUPPORT system enforced by OCSE, makes money the only issue and degrades fathers into working poor parents, while the other parent remains on AFDC.

The reality, MR. CHAIRMAN, is that even if child support is paid in full and on time to welfare mothers, that more than 95% will stay on AFDC and not rise above the poverty level. This is why a new approach is needed.

DEMOCRATS have a hard time with this issue, but it is time the myth is challenged. DEMOCRATS boast support for unemployed men, especially laborers in many critical areas of employment all over the United States. DEMOCRATS offer support for these men through job training and unemployment programs. YET, when one of these unemployed MALE LABORING DEMOCRATS, is also a divorced or paternity father, HE SUDDENLY BECOMES A DEADBEAT DAD AND THE OBJECT OF HATRED AND ANIMOSITY. H.R. 4605, for the first time, begins to offer a new attitude about these fathers, and a more realistic need for assistance to assist the fathers into financial support for their children and\or including payment alternatives.

DEMOCRATS are also having a hard time with accurate statistics on unpaid and\or uncollected child support. Clinton Administration officials, beginning with President Clinton on June 14th in Kansas City, and Secretary Shalala in her Congressional testimony, and Mary Jo Bane of the Administration for Children and Families in her

testimony have all mis-quoted and mis-stated the research of the Urban Institute.

Elaine Sorenson, the report author, said the \$34 BILLION unpaid child support statistic was just a guesstimate, not a fact that should be quoted by anyone as a statistic, yet that is exactly what has occurred. The \$34 BILLION DOLLAR guesstimate includes payments by dead fathers, unemployed fathers, disabled fathers, teenage fathers unable to work, and also fathers with equal legal and physical custody where no child support payments could even be legally ordered. Additionally, these numbers include paternity fathers where the mothers have never even identified the fathers names, so this statistic also includes fictional fathers.

This terribly misquoted statistic is wrong by a factor of nearly \$700%. President Clinton has often made a general comment that bad facts-make bad policy-make bad law, or words to that effect. Here we have the President himself, misled by poor staff work, misleading the American people that unpaid child support is a (Court Ordered) \$34 BILLION DOLLAR problem when it is only a \$5 BILLION DOLLAR problem per year. Worse yet, there is nothing Court Ordered about the \$34 BILLION DOLLAR number. The Clinton Administration needs to offer the public a statement of clarification on this number.

America's responsible fathers are being subjected to legislative terrorism based on this bad statistic, as almost every member of Congress wants tougher child support legislation even without knowing what negative effects it will really have. The tragic reality is that tough enforcement legislation already exists and has shown poor results, not from lack of aggressive enforcement, but they are trying to collect from people, who for the most part, just don't have it. Instead, we continue to harass the fathers who are already meeting their child support obligations.

But, armed with statistics like \$34 BILLION DOLLARS NUMBERS, Congress can easily be stampeded into new legislation that will have counterproductive results. NEW, TOUGHER, CHILD SUPPORT LEGISLATION IS NOT NEEDED !!! What is needed is positive father parenting options. The 1990 Census showed that when fathers have JOINT LEGAL CUSTODY that child support payments are made in over 90% of cases, in full, and on time. This compares to overall records with fathers paying in full and on time in about 35% of the cases. These are fathers with little or no contact with their children. The cheapest way to voluntarily increase child support payments is simply to:

LET THE FATHERS SEE THE CHILDREN !!! STOP THE KIDNAPPING BY MOTHERS WHO HOLD CHILDREN AS FINANCIAL HOSTAGES !!!

WELFARE REFORM COSTS AND SAVINGS

President Clinton deserves credit for raising the issue of time limits and severe consequences for parents not supporting their

children, financially and otherwise. Our fathers general position is that positive father parenting is the cheapest and most effective solution to nearly half of pending AFDC cases. In areas of temporary unemployment, or areas where a father can function and support the children, it is positively cheaper and more effective for the government to support the AFC plan for welfare reform than to continue supporting the existing system with only minor modification of programs and policies. YET, MR. CHAIRMAN, there is serious talk of spending millions of additional tax dollars pursuing marginal results like license revocation schemes, just for the benefit of political headlines about cracking down on deadbeat parents, even when statistics show that mothers are far worse in not seeing their children and also not supporting them than fathers.

Congressman Rick Santorum also deserves significant credit for establishing the certainty of total welfare costs annually of combined State and Federal revenues in excess of \$200 Billion. Congressman Santorum provided this breakdown for the record in the July 26-27-28-29, 1994 hearings. This isn't just the cash grant program, but the full litany of services available for the support of welfare mothers.

The AFC proposals for 33% to 50% caseload reduction could seriously result in annual taxdollar savings of \$67,000,000,000 up to \$100,000,000,000. We wonder aloud how this option can continue to be avoided when the need for consideration is so great?

What is needed for the mothers though, is a clear policy, that physically having a child is not an absolute entitlement to keeping that child when totally dependent upon taxpayer financial support. On any cost/benefit assessment, FATHER CUSTODY is a more positive economic option by any measure than continuing with the existing anti-father program. The taxdollar savings scream out for attention and action.

CRIME AND WELFARE

The key factor in Congressional debate over the Crime Bill and Welfare Reform is absent fathers and fatherless children. Overwhelmingly, the children who are committing crimes, and also who are crime victims, are children from fatherless homes. America is paying a terrible price for forcing fathers away from their children. Supporting the American Fathers Coalition proposals for FATHER CUSTODY and BABYSITTER OF FIRST RESORT can have long term and wide ranging social benefits. It is time we come face to face with anti-father discrimination in our Family Law Courtrooms, because our failures are showing up every day in police reports and Criminal Law Courtrooms. And it is welfare funding that is the driving force in too many of these cases.

SUMMARY

America is facing a welfare crisis driven by the Absent Father

Syndrome. American parents are stretched to the maximum trying to raise children in an environment where there is greater pressure to purchase and consume new products, and take priority to please themselves, than to take proper care of their children. The role of fathers has been pushed to the periphery of family life, and new values combined with new social policies are needed to bring fathers back into the social and family dynamic mainstream. Children are suffering immeasurably without positive father parenting.

Where one parent is a working parent, and able to support that child without entitlement funding, and the other parent files for welfare with the children and is unable to independently financially support the children, the working parent should be favored by written social policy over the non-working parent for temporary custody of the children. Positive struggle and national debate over new policy options will be of benefit for millions of children living in dependence lifestyles.

Even though the Clinton plan talks tough about joint financial support, they do not put policy behind it for the mothers, and in the written proposals included in H.R. 4605, fathers continue to bear the total financial burden of financially supporting their children along with the government, but not the mothers. This is not equal rights and equal responsibility that women's groups protest about !!!

CONCLUSION

The American Fathers Coalition policy proposals of FATHER CUSTODY in selected cases, and the general FATHER AS BABYSITTER OF FIRST RESORT as applied in all cases, should be adopted by Congress as part of any approved Welfare Reform legislation. Any proposal that could possibly reduce the AFDC caseload by 33% up to 50% in one year is deserving of special consideration. Any proposal that would reduce AFDC costs to taxpayers at \$100 BILLION per year, combined State and Federal taxdollars, is especially deserving of consideration.

A 2-year time limit may be reasonable for selected cases where working fathers are not involved, but quicker action is needed where active fathers are involved if we are have any hope of reducing AFDC caseloads. When fathers are already employed and earning incomes above the poverty level, fathers should receive IMMEDIATE temporary custody, and allow the mothers total freedom to get their lives in order where someday they can earn above the poverty level and share equally in all areas of childrearing.

The Seattle Times

CLOSE-UP

Inattention to fathers will hurt welfare reform, advocates fear

BY VANESSA GALLMAN
Knight-Ridder Newspapers

WASHINGTON — In President Clinton's welfare-reform proposal, one group was largely left out of the plan to make more families self-sufficient: fathers.

The inattention to fathers illustrates a lack of appreciation for their role and will frustrate efforts to get families off welfare, say those who work with young fathers.

The legislation, aimed at getting welfare recipients into private-sector or community-service jobs in a two-year period, outlines more aggressive efforts to collect child-support payments. But it does little to encourage job-training or parenting programs for those not receiving the checks, namely the fathers.

"I think it's by design," said Derwin Brown, an Atlanta police lieutenant whose Fathers Foundation Inc. teaches young men how to raise their children.

"I don't think the system is set up to help the family unit. The goal is to relieve the tax burden but not so much to put the family back together. They have a place for black men and boys, and that's prison."

The reform proposal would let states channel 10 percent of welfare money into demonstration projects to train non-custodial parents, said Bruce Reed, Clinton's deputy assistant for domestic policy.

But with a tight budget, demonstration projects are not ensured, said Charles Ballard, founder of the National Institute of Responsive Fatherhood and Family Development in Cleveland. To be taken seriously, specific programs have to be outlined in the legislation, he said.

"The welfare system doesn't need reforming — it needs transforming," said Ballard, whose program counsels 200 fathers, including some imprisoned. "It needs a family focus with the father as the head. That's nothing against the mothers. But the mothers can't do it all."

The prime welfare program, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), was created to help children in female-headed households. Since then, rules have been liberalized to allow families to receive aid if both parents have been unemployed for a long period. Even so, men make up less than 4 percent of welfare beneficiaries.

Fathers'-rights advocates say the government encourages welfare dependency by giving unemployed mothers sole custody of children.

"Fathers have no roles in their children's lives other than 'cash cow,'" said Stuart Miller, senior legislative analyst for the American Fathers Coalition. "The taxpayers are really subsidizing a maternal preference."

Child support is one way the administration expects fathers to increase their contribution to the 9 million children supported by AFDC. The program hopes to increase the \$14 billion collected annually to \$25 billion by 2000.

Eighty percent of non-custodial fathers spend less than 15 percent of their income on child support, according to an Urban Institute study.

"We concluded that the average father can pay more child support," said Elaine Sorensen, the senior research associate who conducted the study.

"The fathers' coalition says that

even if all child-support payments were collected, they would barely make a dent in getting mothers off welfare. The coalition proposes giving working fathers custody of children so the mothers can pursue an education or job training. Once she maintains a job paying more than \$15,000 a year, she could petition the court for joint custody.

"Children living with their fathers would totally eliminate the necessity of any entitlement spending," said Bill Harrington, national director of the coalition of 17 groups.

With high unemployment among black males, the government has to give some attention to fathers who have no jobs or job skills, say those who work with them.

"They are talking about training the mothers, but they need to train the fathers," said Brown. "They could even put them in government service like they are doing with the students. That way, they know they can collect the child support."

A recent study by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Change that looked at 37 black-male-only programs in six cities found them floundering with little funding and limited training.

Some financial and technical help for these efforts, at the same time teenage mothers are being pushed toward self-sufficiency, could be a more comprehensive approach to the problem, said Ballard and others.

"Nobody can change the welfare system unless fathers become more responsible," Ballard said. "We have to change how the man thinks and feels about himself, his children and their mother."

THE SEATTLE TIMES NEWS SATURDAY, JUNE 18, 1994

A 3

Fathers' welfare reform: Take custody from mothers

Group cites savings from keeping kids off public aid

By Cheryl Weitzstein
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

As child-support enforcement emerges as a key part of welfare reform, a fathers' group is challenging the presumption that children must enter the welfare system with their mothers.

"Let the fathers have the children if the mother is going to go on welfare with them," said Bill Harrington, national director of the American Fathers Coalition (AFC), based in Tacoma, Wash.

A welfare reform proposal by the coalition says "the father should be the placement of first choice if the mother applies" for Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC).

Placement of the child with the father would allow the mother to

support enforcement, said: "These deadbeats are trying to divert the issue."

Men who do not pay their court-ordered child support "make victims of their children" by forcing their ex-wives and children onto welfare, she said.

If the fathers want custody, she said, "they should go back to the divorce court and make a case for custody."

On Tuesday, President Clinton said he would introduce "the toughest child-support-enforcement measures in the history of the country" as part of welfare reform.

"An awful lot of people are trapped in welfare because they are raising children on their own when the other parent... has refused to pay child support that is due, payable and able to pay," he said.

"It is estimated that there [is] \$34 billion worth of ordered but uncollected child support today in America," the president said in his Kansas City, Mo., announcement, repeating the "\$34 billion" for effect.

Mr. Clinton presumably was referring to a background paper on child support produced by the White House working group on welfare reform and released last week by the Department of Health and Human Services.

That report, citing a study by the Urban Institute, said there was a "theoretical" gap of \$33.7 billion between what was paid in child support in 1990 and what could have been collected.

The American Fathers Coalition, however, disputes the use of that number. "The \$34 billion amount is not court-ordered amounts that are unpaid," the group said.

"The \$34 billion is what could have been paid: It's an estimate," Elaine Sorensen, author of the Urban Institute report, said last week.

In her September report, Ms. Sorensen had estimated that \$47.6 billion in child support could have been collected in 1990 if a child-support order had been issued and paid in full in every custody case.

The actual amount paid in 1990 was \$13.9 billion, leaving a gap of

\$33.7 billion. "But that is definitely not court-ordered payments," Ms. Sorensen said, adding that she hopes her findings will be "used properly."

According to the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement, about \$10.9 billion was owed in court-ordered child support in 1992. Of that, a little more than \$6 billion was collected.

Past-due child support from previous years was \$23.9 billion in 1992. Of that, about \$1.8 billion was paid, the agency said.

If the \$4.9 billion in 1992 unpaid child support was added to the \$22.1 billion of previous arrearages, the total amount of unpaid support approaches \$27 billion.

Many fathers' groups blame the overdue child support on court backlogs and other systemic prob-

If the fathers want custody, Rep. Marge Roukema said, "they should go back to the divorce court and make a case."

Many fathers are "willing and able" to have custody of their children and would not go on welfare, said Mr. Harrington.

finish school or go through job training until she could support herself, the proposal says.

"The child should be placed in a welfare situation with the mother only if the father declines custody or proves unfit," the AFC proposal says.

Fathers of children on welfare earn an average of \$15,000 or more, and many fathers are "willing and able" to have custody of their children and would not go on welfare, said Mr. Harrington, who was in town this week for an AFC symposium on fathers' issues and a Father's Day rally on the Mall.

Such father-custody arrangements, he added, could eliminate 30 percent to 50 percent of the welfare caseload in one year and would result in "real welfare reform."

Asked about the AFC idea of paternal custody, Rep. Marge Roukema, New Jersey Republican and a veteran advocate of child-

lems.

But many members of Congress see the numbers as evidence of gross irresponsibility.

The Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues recently unveiled a child-support bill that would have child-support obligations reported on an employee's W-4 form, collections coordinated across state lines and stiff penalties for nonpaying parents.

"We decided it was time for women to speak with one voice on child-support enforcement.... We want to hold children harmless in the economics of divorce," Rep. Patricia Schroeder, Colorado Democrat and co-chairwoman of the women's caucus, said when introducing the bill last week with House Democrats Lynn Woolsey of California, Barbara B. Kennelly of Connecticut and Anna G. Eshoo of California and House Republicans Mrs. Roukema and Olympia J. Snowe of Maine.

NATION

The return of Ozzie and Harriet?

Poll says teen-age boys desire an American family of the '50s

By Tamar Lowin
The New York Times

A nationwide poll of teen-agers found that boys are substantially more traditional than girls in their expectations of the family life they will have as adults.

The girls surveyed were more likely than the boys to say that they could have a happy life even if they did not get married and that they would consider becoming a single parent. And 86 percent of the girls expect to work when they are married, while only 7 percent said they expect to stay home.

Among the boys, 58 percent said they expected their wives to work outside the home and 19 percent said they expected her to stay home.

A majority of the boys surveyed said that most of the boys they knew considered themselves better

than girls. But most of the girls surveyed said the girls they knew saw boys as equals.

The telephone poll of 1,055 teen-agers aged 13 to 17 was conducted by The New York Times and CBS News from May 26 to June 1 and has a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

In follow-up telephone interviews with teen-agers who had taken part in the survey, the gender differences were pronounced.

Many of the boys said they believe strongly in a traditional 1950s-style marriage, in which the wife stays home, raises the children, cleans the house and does the cooking, while the husband is responsible for making the money and mowing the lawn.

"I think girls should do the cooking and cleaning because they're better at it, and boys should do the yard work and the planting," said Breton Stout, 15, of Clovis, Calif. "I know a lot of girls think it's real sexist to say they belong in the kitchen, and they think we should kick in on cleaning, but I think they're wrong. It's not a boy's job."

Seventy-one percent of the teen-agers surveyed had mothers employed outside the home, and 80

percent had fathers employed outside the home. But the belief that a 1950s-style marriage is the natural order seems to have a firm hold, even among many teen-age boys whose mothers work outside the home.

The girls surveyed were overwhelmingly committed to having careers — and far less so to making and maintaining a marriage. "I think a career is the most important thing, then children, then marriage," said Nicole Leesnan, 16, of Atlanta, Ill. "I've always wanted to succeed in a work field, maybe something like being a marine biologist.

"I know I will work. If I get married, I would want it to be with someone who did as much of the housework as me. I think girls are more liberated and guys are going to have to compromise. If they say they want their wives at home, I think it's because they want more power in the relationship."

Nicole, like 55 percent of the girls surveyed, said she would consider becoming a single parent if she did not get married.

"If I weren't married, I could imagine being a single mother," she said. "I know it's hard, but it's worth it. I just know I want children."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Parents Who Abuse Children

Sen. Paul D. Wellstone's "Breaking the Cycle of Violence" [letters, March 29] illustrates the fallacies in his misnamed "Child Safety Act." This act will deny funds to almost all centers now offering supervised "visitation" services, including those in his own state of Minnesota.

While Sen. Wellstone writes eloquently of his concern about the violence committed against women, the language in his bill seems oblivious to the violence that women commit against their children. Statistics compiled by almost every state child protective service agency indicate that mothers abuse their children at a rate approaching or exceeding twice that of fathers: In Texas, 68 percent of parental child abuse is committed by mothers; Alaska, 66 percent; New Jersey, more than 70 percent; and in Virginia, 67 percent. Even in Minnesota, 61.6

percent of the parental child abuse is committed by mothers. A study of inner-city child abuse in Michigan found that 49 percent of the state's total confirmed child abuse was committed by single-parent mothers. It is the children in these very homes that Sen. Wellstone's bill would claim to protect. Protect from whom?

A recent Wall Street Journal article perhaps explains why men's and women's violence against children receives so little congressional attention. During hearings on legislation purported to address domestic violence issues, persons concerned about violence against women were invited to testify, while persons concerned about the violence perpetrated by women against men and children were denied that right.

When Congress is allowed to hear

only one side of the story, distorted legislation can follow. Sen. Wellstone's "Child Safety Act" is an example of what can go wrong when only one side of an issue is heard.

We are quick to support any legislation that will protect our children. Sen. Wellstone's bill fails to do so.

STUART A. MILLER

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Breaking the Cycle of Violence

I was disappointed to read The Post's first editorial [Nov. 16] on the Senate crime bill, which expressed the view that my amendment to establish children's safety centers should not be part of the bill. And I was surprised to see this same view expressed in a second editorial [March 3]. As the chief sponsor of the amendment, I want to answer the rhetorical questions posed in the Nov. 16 editorial and also clarify the purpose of these centers.

Yes, of course, the federal government should be in the business of funding programs that prevent crime and help victims of crime. By helping support centers that help families with a history of violence, the federal government helps break the cycle of violence that is spilling into the streets. This is a national problem requiring a national solution. As in other cases of this magnitude, we need to marshal our resources from federal, state and local government to restore peace in our cities, in our streets and in the home.

Violence that ends in the street often begins in the home. I can't tell you how many police chiefs, sheriffs and judges I have talked with who tell me that the people they deal with all too often have been abused at home or have witnessed abuse in their home. If we address the violence at home, we will be on the road to ending the violence in the streets.

My amendment, the Child Safety Act, is a step toward breaking the cycle. It would provide funds for child

safety centers across the country for families with a history of violence. These centers are far more than just places for "divorced parents [to] hand their children back and forth." They would provide a place for parents who have a history of violence or abuse to have court-ordered supervised visits with their children. These centers would provide a place for parents who have custody of their children to transfer the children to the non-custodial parent in a way that prevents violent or abusive encounters. They would be an extension of the Minnesota model of supervised visitation centers. My state has been a leader in addressing the issue of family violence. And my amendment would bring this successful approach to all states in the nation.

The statistics are startling. The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges reported that more than half the men who batter their wives also abuse their children. Even children who are not physically abused themselves often witness the violence committed against a parent. Often children witness the violence in the context of visitation, when parents are separated or divorced. And, according to the Department of Justice, 75 percent of women who are battered are divorced or separated from their batterers at the time of the incident.

Providing a place where separated parents can exchange and visit their children without fear of a violent confrontation is a logical, effective way to begin to break the cycle of violence. It

would be a place for families to begin to build positive relationships.

In attempting to reduce crime in this country, we should not focus our efforts entirely on building prisons and increasing penalties. We must begin to address the violence in our homes as well. For it is only then that we will begin to reduce the crime in the streets.

PAUL D. WELLSTONE

U.S. Senator (D-Minn.)
Washington

The Washington Post

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PHILIP L. GRAHAM, 1915-1963

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Published by The Washington Post Company

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Sole custody disastrous for children

One of the most destructive features of our time is the breakdown of the family. Nearly everyone recognizes that this development, snowballing since the 1960s, generates a wide range of social trauma. The insidious side effects of welfare, like the outdated obsession of family courts with single-parent "custody," have stripped a whole generation of children of one of their parents.

Eugene Narrett

Although the single-parent lifestyle option pleased Murphy Brown, there is no question that it is a disaster for children.

The sole-custody option causes intense suffering to parents and children, and the scope of the carnage is enormous. One and a half million children a year in this country are separated from one of their parents by a court system gone astray. As with welfare, society absorbs the costs of the individual traumas, and trauma is not too strong a word.

The most thorough study of the effect of sole custody on children and parents was conducted by researchers Judith Wallerstein and Joan Kelly. They record the struggles of the non-custodial "visitor" parent to provide a portion of nurturance under near-impossible constraints of time.

They note how the visitation model often leads to decline in contact between the children and non-custodial parent whose visits themselves can be, and often are, undermined with impunity by the custodial parent.

And with this loss of contact, comes further loss of grandparents and extended family. As a result, the authors observe that "single-parent custody may eventually truncate half of a child's kinship network."

Modern American culture alone fails to recognize how damaging this is to children's sense of well-being.

The terrible similarity between the effects of welfare and our family courts can be simply summed up. Both show contempt for the relationship of children with fathers. Both systems destroy what they should promote, and reward behaviors they should prevent.

But there are signs that these terrible situations at last are being constructively addressed. While the president and Congress, and our own Legislature, wrestle with reforming welfare so that it encourages rather than undermines family bonds, there are some local heroes, a hero and heroine to be precise, who are working to make our family courts less destructive in dealing with divorce.

State Rep. Karen O'Donnell, D-Waltham, understands that the

needs of children in divorce go far beyond the political sloganeering of deadbeat wanted posters. She cares enough to have done the research.

The 1993 reports of the National Census Bureau, for example, shows that 91 percent of parents who have shared ("joint") custody of their children pay their child support in full. This compares with about 70 percent compliance by those who have visitation only, and 43 percent by those with little or no visitation.

The evidence is clear: kids need not only material support, they need their parents, both Mom and Dad, after divorce perhaps even more than before. And as the evidence shows, the best way to ensure that they get material support, is to ensure they get the parenting they need as well.

So O'Donnell has sponsored H3081, to make shared parenting the rule rather than the exception in our family courts. And because kids love and need their grandparents too, she has followed through with H3980, to provide visitation rights for grandparents of children whose parents are divorced.

Similar healing work is being done by the Children's Rights Council (CRC) and its tireless director, Michael Pitts.

"I've seen the inequities and adversariality of the divorce system," Pitts recently remarked. "I've seen the damage it needlessly in-

flicts on families. I know there's a better approach in giving both parents responsibility to care for the child."

CRC currently is organizing parenting education workshops to meet Aug. 6. The class, which includes certification from the National Safety Council in Infant and Child First Aid, is modeled on a successful program for reducing stress during divorce. Focus areas include building positive working relationships with school officials; child nutrition and pediatrics; and the importance of both support payments and unimpeded access for the non-custodial parent.

The class and others like it are a model for the Act to Improve the Economic Security of Children, which the Legislature approved.

There are signs that these voices of healing are finding their counterparts in Washington. On taking office, David Gray Ross, the recently appointed director of Child Support Enforcement, stated that "this administration is committed to trying new ways. Children need and deserve two parents, four grandparents, and extended families."

Eugene Narrett teaches literature and writing at Framingham State College. His writings on art and cultural issues have appeared in numerous publications in the Boston area.

Welfare Reform -- No Room for Daddy?



American Fathers Coalition - 703-255-2428 - 2000 Pennsylvania Avenue, Suite 148 - Washington, DC 20006

Welfare reform proposals being offered by Congress and the White House contain an unfortunate omission -- they fail to give children a father. Welfare reform cannot be accomplished unless reformers are willing to put fathers back in the home.

7 Steps to Welfare Reform and Healthy Children

The AFC plan gives children a father, and makes mothers and fathers both financially responsible for the children they bear. Under the present system and under all "reform" proposals, mothers collect benefits for having children out of wedlock and bear no responsibility for repaying those benefits. Until the person who actually receives the benefits is held responsible for repaying the cost of those benefits, welfare will continue to be an incentive for having children out of wedlock. And, until children are allowed to have fathers, they will continue to be at high risk for school drop-out, delinquent behavior, and unwed, teenage parenthood.

The AFC makes the following proposals:

- 1) **Custody**: The father should be the placement of first choice if the mother applies for AFDC. This simple change in procedure will immediately cut the AFDC rolls in half, save government 100s of millions of dollars, and provide children with solid, loving homes.
- 2) **Paternity establishment**: Establish a legal link between mother, father, and child at the time that paternity is established.
Forms used to establish paternity should also lay the groundwork for a custody / visitation arrangement.
- 3) **Financial Child Support**: Both parties should be held responsible for supporting the child according to their ability to earn.
Financial child support obligations should be assigned to both parties based on their ability to earn. This means that mothers who now receive AFDC-related benefits will bear some of the responsibility of repaying government for those benefits, making the AFDC / welfare lifestyle less desirable.
- 4) **Accountability**: Recipients of AFDC benefits should face some form of accountability for how those benefits are spent. AFDC benefits should accrue to the benefit of the children, as should financial child support payments. Some form of accountability is required for all other government third-party payments.
- 5) **Incentives for payment of financial child support**: States should be required to implement custody and visitation presumptions that are proven methods of encouraging voluntary compliance with financial child support laws. Mothers report in census data that fathers who have joint custody pay child support at rates exceeding 90%. Fathers who have "visitation" pay at rates approaching 80%.
- 6) **Inability to pay financial child support**: Due to unemployment or underemployment, many obligors fall behind in financial child support payments. Giving those obligors preference at employment agencies enhances the possibility that they will resume support payments. A system of prioritizing should also include any person who is the sole support of a family.
- 7) **Financial child support -- poorly trained and uneducated parents**: Job training and skills enhancement programs should be provided to parents who are unable to meet their financial child support obligations. These parents should be required to reimburse government for the cost of their training. The federally funded Parents Fair Share program has been very successful -- 90% compliance in AFDC cases.

The AFC Welfare Reform Program gives the child a Father, a Family, and a Future!

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Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy

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WR-Fathers

JUN 23 REC'D

Shalala Press Conference, June 23, 1994

Questions One Might Ask about Welfare Reform

1) It is estimated that close to 50% of fathers whose children are on welfare could raise their children without resorting to public assistance. Allowing these father to take custody of their children would cut the welfare budget almost in 1/2. This would allow the children to live with dignity and allow the mother to gain needed job training and education so that she could begin to support herself. Present policy assumes, even encourages mother custody regardless of the financial condition of the respective homes and focuses on insuring that fathers pay financial child support (which govt. keeps to balance its welfare budgets, see attached).

Why doesn't the Clinton administration recommend that children be placed with the parent that does not have to resort to public assistance!

2) President Clinton has talked about "equal responsibility" by parents in support of their children. Under the present AFDC system, mother collects benefits valued up to \$25,000 per year (pre-tax) but bear NO responsibility for repaying those benefits -- full responsibility for repayment if given the father. This means there is no 'downside' to out-of-wedlock births -- even if benefits are limited to 2 years in the future, the mother will still net 2 years' benefits + job training + educational benefits +++. Daddy will have to reimburse govt. for all those benefits.

In order to discourage unwed births, why doesn't the Administration require that mothers bear at some responsibility for repaying the benefits they receive?

3) On Tuesday, June 14, President Clinton said that "... there are \$34 billion worth of ordered but uncollected child support today in America ...". The Congressional Women's Caucus has used the same figure. Apparently that figure is based on a "what if" assumption by the Urban Institute. The author of that group has said, "... that is definitely not court-ordered payments" and that she hopes her findings will be "used properly." (Elaine Sorenson, see attached news article.) Custodial mothers report that 79.1% of them receive all or part of the financial child support owed. When the father has joint custody, mothers report that 90.1% of financial child support is paid. (see attached chart)

Will the Administration issue a corrected statement and will that statement be based on solid research?

Will the Administration encourage states to adopt policies such as a presumption of joint custody which encourage the payment of financial child support? If not, why?

Federal government, through "carrot and stick" approaches, controls the speed of vehicles on the highways and the age that a person can buy a beer, and will soon require that states adopt draconian punitive measures against parents who, for whatever reason, fall behind in financial child support payments -- why not also require the states to adopt policies

which insure payment of financial child support without the need for government prodding? Like joint custody (except when one parent is unfit)?

4) The 15 member U.S. Commission on Child and Family Welfare was created by Congress under PL 102-521 on Oct. 25, 1992. Members were to be appointed by the Speaker of the House, the minority leader of the House, and by the two leaders in the Senate -- and 3 members to be appointed by President Clinton. The Commission is to recommend policy having to do with "visitation" and certain other issues. The 12 members to be appointed by the House and the Senate have been named.

Why hasn't President Clinton appointed his 3 members to the commission?

5) President Clinton cut the amount of proposed funding for enforcement of "visitation" from \$155 million to \$5 million in the Administration's welfare reform plan. Researchers, including those working under HHS grants (Survey of absent Parents) have determined that the 2 most accurate predictors of payment of financial child support (other than joint custody) are 1) full employment and 2) "visitation" with the child.

If "visitation" almost certainly insures payment of financial child support, why was the \$155 million for "visitation" lowered to \$5 million in the budget.

6) A Congressionally-ordered GAO report (see attached) found mothers reporting that 66% of the fathers who do not pay court ordered financial child support do not pay because they are unable to pay. The recovery of AFDC payment through collection of financial child support from the father have increase only .2 of one % over the past 10 years.

How can you justify even more expensive, punitive collection measures when, according to GAO and Census Bureau data most fathers who fall behind on financial child support payments are underemployed or unable to pay? Wouldn't job training and education programs work better?

7) Present policy does nothing to insure that fathers can "visit" their children or gain at least joint custody of their children. Children who are raised without a father's influence are at high risk for juvenile delinquency, unwed births, school drop-out, and a myriad of other social pathological conditions. It would certainly seem to be in society's best interest for fathers to be allowed to function as a parent instead of just as a pocketbook. The Administration is requiring that states develop paternity forms for unwed fathers to sign while at the hospital to see their children. That acknowledgment of paternity is then used to collect financial child support.

What will the President's welfare proposal do to allow fathers to be involved with their children?

Why doesn't the Administration develop paternity forms which allow the parents to "check" which custody / visitation arrangement they want?

NOTE: You will note that we use the term "financial child support" instead of the Administration's "child support." We recognize that children need both "financial" child support and "emotional" child support. We wish that the Administration and Congress would also recognize that need.