

Child Care and Head Start Organizer's Toolkit



CHILDREN'S DEFENSE FUND 2005



Children's Defense Fund

For additional information contact the Early Childhood Development Division
at (202) 628-8787 or dhoffman@childrensdefense.org

MISSION

The Children's Defense Fund's Leave No Child Behind® mission is to ensure every child a *Healthy Start*, a *Head Start*, a *Fair Start*, a *Safe Start*, and a *Moral Start* in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities.

CDF provides a strong, effective voice for *all* the children of America who cannot vote, lobby, or speak for themselves. We pay particular attention to the needs of poor and minority children and those with disabilities. CDF educates the nation about the needs of children and encourages preventive investment before they get sick or into trouble, drop out of school, or suffer family breakdown.

CDF began in 1973 and is a private, nonprofit organization supported by foundation and corporate grants and individual donations. We have never taken government funds.

MOVEMENT

For more than 30 years, CDF has been building a movement that stands for children. This means leading the way through research, education, advocacy, and organizing.

MEETING CHILDREN'S NEEDS

Child Health

Access to comprehensive, quality, affordable health care services for all children.

Child Welfare & Mental Health

Advocating for children who are abused, neglected, homeless, or suffer from emotional and other problems.

Early Childhood Development

Quality, affordable child care; pre-kindergarten programs; and after-school activities for working parents.

Education and Youth Development

Helping children avoid trouble, protecting them from violence, and ensuring them a productive learning environment.

Family Income and Jobs

Secure employment with livable wages; education and training to enable parents to compete for better jobs.

PREVENTING POVERTY

Tax and Benefits Outreach

Volunteer tax return preparers help lower income families claim Earned Income and Child Care Tax Credits.

Student Outreach

High school and college volunteers enroll children in federal health insurance and poverty-reduction programs.

Youth Leadership

A national network of servant-leaders ages 18 to 30 works to mobilize a new generation for community service and child advocacy.

ADVOCATING FOR CHILDREN

Black Community Crusade for Children

Leading clergy, educators, policy makers, and community leaders work in partnership with effective regional child-serving organizations.

CDF Freedom SchoolsSM Program

Literacy-rich programs directly serving students ages five to 18 in communities where opportunities are limited or nonexistent.

ENGAGING FAITH COMMUNITIES

Protecting and nurturing children is called for in the sacred texts, teachings, and traditions of every religion. CDF's mission is shaped by the same moral imperative, guided by the deep faith commitment of CDF's Founder and CEO Marian Wright Edelman, and reflected in the very words of our logo: "Dear Lord, be good to me. The sea is so wide and my boat is so small."

Religious people and organizations—with millions of Members, deep roots in communities across the continent, a history of caring for children, and moral authority—are indispensable to building a successful Leave No Child Behind[®] Movement.

CDF has worked in close partnership with national religious leaders and organizations, state and regional bodies, and local congregations, leaders, and lay people for more than 20 years. Join the faithful members of CDF's movement for children—as an individual or as a representative of a congregation or religious organization.

- Visit <http://www.childrensdefense.org> to add your name to **CDF's Religious Action mailing list** to receive twice-yearly updates and other communication about important children's concerns.
- Sign up to receive the monthly **Religious Action Listserv**, a brief email each month that highlights urgent issues, new resources, and opportunities to make a difference for children.
- Sign up to receive the **Government Affairs Listserv** to receive action alerts on urgent legislative issues affecting children so that you can make your voice heard.
- Organize a **Children's Sabbath** for your synagogue, church, mosque, or other place of worship to focus attention on urgent children's needs and our call to respond with compassionate service and to work for justice!
- Plan to attend the **12th annual Samuel DeWitt Proctor Institute for Child Advocacy Ministry, July 17–21, 2006**, if you are a minister, seminarian, Christian educator, or lay person who seeks inspiration, information, and strategies to incorporate child advocacy and children's concerns more effectively into your ministry and church life.
- Draw on the wealth of **faith-based resources** available to support and strengthen you and your efforts to improve the lives of our nation's children.
- Share your questions, ideas, resources, and experiences with other faith-based child advocates through the **Religious Action Message Boards**.
- **CDF's state and regional offices** work with thousands of faith-based organizations across the country every day. For a list of these offices, visit <http://www.childrensdefense.org>

M I L E S T O N E S

CDF has played a central role in countless key federal, state, and local success stories, including:

- Medicaid expansions and the State Children's Health Insurance Program covering millions of low-income children in working families
- The Vaccines for Children Program providing free immunizations to uninsured, underinsured, and Native American children
- The Child Care and Development Block Grant and At-Risk Child Care Program
- The Earned Income Tax Credit, generating billions of dollars in federal tax relief for low-income families
- A ground-breaking adolescent pregnancy prevention campaign
- A dramatic expansion of Head Start to serve millions of additional preschoolers
- The Education for All Handicapped Children Act, which helped pave the way for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

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Stand for Justice for Children and the Poor

If there was ever a time to stand up, speak out, and act courageously to defend our children from fear and want, this is it. The very future and soul of America are at stake.

In America:

- Every 40 seconds a baby is born into poverty;
- Every 2 minutes a Black and Latino baby is born into poverty;
- Every 51 seconds a baby is born without health insurance;
- Every 35 seconds a child is abused or neglected;
- Every 10 seconds a high school student drops out; and
- A Black baby boy born in 2001 has a one in three chance of ending up in prison.

These facts are not acts of God. They are our moral and political choices as men and women and as Americans. We can change them. We have the money and power. We have the know-how and experience. We have the vision. And we have the moral and social responsibility. Together we can and must build the civic and spiritual will of enough citizens and political, faith, youth, and community leaders to protect and invest in all our children. It's time to do better! We hope you will help build the Leave No Child Behind® Movement to ensure every child a *Healthy Start*, a *Head Start*, a *Fair Start*, a *Safe Start*, and a *Moral Start* in life and successful transition to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities.

Time is running out for America's children.

The 2005 federal budget and appropriation bill presents a moral and fiscal crossroads for America. In the coming months Congress will make decisions that could harm millions of children for years to come. If they adopt the proposed appropriations bill, they will sacrifice health care for millions of children, end legal guarantees of protection for abused and neglected children, cut child care programs and deny children Head Start services. These decisions are being made not out of a sense of fiscal responsibility or to reduce the deficit, but to grant additional tax breaks for millionaires.

America's children and families did not create the deficit and shouldn't have to pay for it. Tax cuts passed since 2001 cost three times the cost of all domestic social programs increases passed during the same period. This year, these tax cuts will account for half of the spending on legislation passed since 2001 and are the major source of this year's federal deficit. When fully phased in, millionaires will receive an average tax cut of \$136,298 a year. A working family earning \$30,000 a year will receive just \$532.

As a representative of your community entrusted with the care of our nation's children and the commitment to defend America's values, we ask you to preserve, protect, and defend the most vulnerable among us—children and the poor. The proposed budget lays out a stark choice: Either invest in our children and our future or give more tax cuts to the wealthiest and most privileged Americans. We consider this a moral choice.

Therefore, we ask your commitment to do the following:

- Make it a priority to lift children out of poverty and to fight efforts to make tax cuts for millionaires permanent.
- Champion the safety net for the most vulnerable children by maintaining the legal federal protection for abused and neglected children, the commitment to health care services, and the investment in Head Start opportunities.

- Fund children’s health insurance, Head Start, and child care programs instead of additional tax cuts for millionaires.

We can ensure that no child is left behind in the richest nation on earth by building a powerful grassroots movement across America through Wednesdays in Washington and at Home® events and other public awareness and engagement efforts.

Wednesdays in Washington and at Home

Wednesdays in Washington and at Home® events are the centerpiece of the Children’s Defense Fund’s efforts to mobilize a critical mass of people from all walks of life to demand action from our leaders to protect and invest in all of our children. We seek to build a persistent, powerful voice and witness of presence for children on Wednesdays somewhere in America including visits, emails, phone calls, and faxes to Members of Congress in Washington and in their local offices. We also seek to engage state and local public officials in support of our vision and specific annual goals to Leave No Child Behind.

Wednesdays in Washington and at Home events were inspired by the 1964 “Wednesdays in Mississippi,” a moral witness of women during the Civil Rights Movement. White and Black northern women traveled to Mississippi to develop relationships with southern women, bear witness for racial justice, and build bridges of understanding between White and Black women across income and racial lines. Wednesdays in Washington and at Home also were inspired by the New Testament parable describing an unjust, powerful judge who ignored a powerless widow’s pleas for justice. But she did not give up. “Because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice so that she may not continue coming forever and wear me out,” the judge finally said. So must we wear out our leaders with our relentless insistence until they commit and act to *truly* Leave No Child Behind.

In addition to *Wednesdays in Washington and at Home* events, we will use every means possible to raise public awareness about children’s needs and what can be done including: Stand For Children Day events in all 50 states on June 1st; Child Watch visits to expose community leaders and policy-makers to children’s needs and what they can do; TV, radio, and print media campaigns; town meetings; prayer vigils and study circles; and house parties. Coalition building, nonviolence, and media skills training to build a critical mass of effective spokespeople and advocates will be an ongoing and integral part of our movement building.

Each year, we will establish specific goals to achieve for children. We know how to make a difference for our children and to build stronger communities for all Americans. Now it’s time to build the spiritual and political will to do it.

For more information on how you can join the Leave No Child Behind® Movement, go to <http://www.childrensdefense.org> or call (202) 628-8787.

Sign up at <http://www.capwiz.com/cdf/mlm> to receive timely alerts from the Children’s Defense Fund Action Council about when action is needed on behalf of children.

How to Use This Kit

Thank you for joining the effort to help families work and children learn by improving the quality and affordability of child care, Head Start, and school-age programs for America's families.

We hope this kit provides all of the information and materials you need to help organize your community in support of quality child care, after-school programs, and Head Start experiences for every eligible child.

The list of important federal actions set to take place in 2005 around early education programs include: renewal of the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, the national Head Start program, and funding for these and other major programs. We must work not only on early childhood programs, but also strive to defeat the Bush Administration's tax proposals that, if made permanent, will have a destructive, long-term impact on our nation's ability to finance early childhood supports for children and families. Therefore, it is imperative that advocates work against these harmful tax proposals as well as for child care and Head Start improvements. With the support of advocates like you, we hope that Congress will make the right choices for children and *truly* Leave No Child Behind.

By taking a few steps each week and sharing information with others, you can help make a real difference!

Enclosed are materials that will help you spread the word to other concerned citizens and get the message to Congress that America's families need quality child care and early education experiences that they can afford.

All of us, working together, will make this effort a true success for children and families!

Please take the following steps to get started:

- Review all materials in your 2005 Child Care and Head Start Organizer's Kit. Start by reviewing the Primers and Fact Sheets in the *Know the Concerns* section. The Checklist for Advocates in the *Take Action* section outlines the key steps you then can take to engage your community, work with the media, and urge Congress to take appropriate action for children. Each section of this kit gives you the instructions and materials you will need for each step.
- We recommend that you subscribe to our Action Council email alerts if you are interested in receiving timely, targeted alerts about a range of concerns impacting children, including child care and Head Start. To subscribe to the CDF Action Council alert list, go to <http://www.capwiz.com/cdf/mlm> and input your contact information.
- Become a part of CDF's Leave No Child Behind® Movement at <http://www.capwiz.com/cdf/mlm/>.
- Complete and return the enclosed Organizer Profile Form in the *Take Action* section.
- Begin planning the action steps recommended on the enclosed Checklist for Advocates and 2005 Action Calendar in the *Take Action* Section.

Please feel free to reproduce all materials in this kit. They are yours to use. For additional information, contact the Early Childhood Development Division at (202) 628-8787 or dhoffman@childrensdefense.org.

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KNOW THE CONCERNS

The 2005 Federal Agenda: A Primer for Early Childhood Advocates

This is a challenging year for child advocates. At the same time that key child-related programs are scheduled for reauthorization by Congress, including the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and Head Start, the effects of the Bush Administration's past four years of lavishing billions of dollars in tax cuts on millionaires are leaving children behind by dismantling, eliminating and cutting critical children's programs.

In 2005, President Bush will urge Congress to pass legislation reauthorizing the federal welfare program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), in line with his recommendations which included increasing the work requirement for parents receiving TANF to 40 hours a week and requiring a higher percentage of them to work, while offering not one dime in increased funding for child care. In fact, as many as 300,000 families would lose child care assistance by 2009 under the President's proposal for child care. This proposal is even more egregious this year, as states and families face tough economic times of their own.

The federal government provided \$4.8 billion for CCDBG in 2004—the same level of funding since 2002. The Administration's proposed budget did not account for inflation and did not ask for one more dime for child care funding for 2005 or 2006.

CCDBG served approximately 1,751,300 children per month in FY 2003. There are additional funding streams that, when combined with CCDBG money, allows more low-income working families to receive child care assistance. The federal government estimates that 2.5 million children received child care assistance from the various funding sources in 2003. The Administration itself projects that the number of children receiving help has declined by 200,000 million in 2004 and will decline by 500,000 in 2010.

On the Head Start front, the Administration has effectively frozen spending on Head Start funding, as the minimal increase in funding is not even enough to cover the cost of inflation. The Administration's choice to provide an inconsequential increase in funding not only lowers the number of children the program serves, it also effectively freezes the salaries of Head Start teachers and staff that make this program the success it is. There is some good news regarding Head Start. The Head Start re-authorization bills introduced to the House, H.R. 2123, and the Senate, S. 1107, in early 2005 maintain the integrity of the program as well as its performance standards.

At the same time, the President's proposal to make tax cuts permanent, if passed, would severely limit the availability of funds for essential supports for children and families. Twenty-seven children could receive child care for the \$136,298 that the President's tax cuts will eventually give every millionaire each year. The same proposal includes more than \$21 billion every two weeks for military spending next year; the same amount of money could provide Head Start services for every eligible child!

Congress should reject these damaging tax cuts and other aspects of the appropriation bill that disproportionately benefit the wealthy at the expense of children. Rather, CCDBG should be increased to allow more than one million more children to receive child care assistance and to bolster the quality of care that children receive. Building on its successful record, Head Start should be expanded and fully funded to serve all eligible children with continued efforts to further strengthen its quality.

Review the following “issue primers” for essential information that will help you make the case for rejecting the President’s proposed tax and budget plans and for strengthening and expanding these critical programs.

Tax and Budget Cuts

“The President’s proposal provides strikingly irresponsible tax cuts, borrowing money we don’t have to spend where it isn’t needed. Our responsibility to our children requires that we reject the billions in tax giveaways masquerading as economic stimulus. In a time of important choices, this greed is shameful in the face of other needs.”

– Marian Wright Edelman, President of the Children’s Defense Fund

In 2001, President Bush signed a tax cut bill that will cost the federal government more than \$1.3 trillion over the next ten years. The majority of the tax cuts will go to the richest Americans—those with average incomes exceeding \$1 million a year. In January of 2005, President Bush proposed yet another trillion-dollar ten-year tax cut that also targets most of its benefits to the richest Americans. These tax cuts are draining the federal treasury, increasing budget deficits and the nation’s debt, worsening state fiscal crises, and starving vital investments for children and families and other national priorities.

The Bush tax cuts heavily favor the richest Americans. When the 2001 tax cuts are fully in place in 2010, more than half (52 percent) of the benefits will go to the richest 1 percent of taxpayers—individuals whose average annual incomes exceed \$1 million. This means that the richest 1 percent of taxpayers will get more help than the other 99 percent of taxpayers combined. The President’s new 2005 tax plan also heavily favors the rich and hands \$89,000 in new tax cuts to every millionaire in 2005 alone.

These tax cuts cost far more than our nation can afford. Since the 2001 tax cuts, the federal budget has gone from surplus to deficit, and the President’s new tax plan will further deepen the deficit and pass on mountains of new debt to the next generation. The new tax plan, according to preliminary estimates, will cause states to lose more than \$4 billion a year, worsening already serious state fiscal crises.

At the same time that the Bush Administration singles out the rich for massive new tax cuts, it singles out programs and services for children and families for cuts, freezes and dismantlement. The President’s FY 2006 budget proposes to freeze funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant for another five years, causing states to drop services for about 300,000 children over the next five years. It freezes funding for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program—a critical school-age care program—at \$991 million, under-funding the program by nearly \$1.3 billion below the authorized level for 2006 and leaving close to 1.7 million children without after-school services.

We should invest in children, not pass more tax giveaways for millionaires. For the cost of the President’s plan to eliminate personal income taxes on dividends, the nation could provide child care help to all eligible children AND provide Head Start for all the eligible unserved preschoolers. The \$89,000 handed out to each millionaire in 2005 under the President’s new tax plan is roughly equal to the annual salary for five child care workers.

Child Care and Development Block Grant

In 2002, the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG)—our major federal child care assistance program—was due to be reauthorized with the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) legislation. Congress did not complete the reauthorization of these programs and will debate them again in 2005. This offers an important opportunity to increase federal spending on child care, which would help more families afford child care and improve the quality of care. With a slow economy and growing state deficits, new federal investments are **critical**. The President continues to support a TANF reauthorization bill with increased work requirements but no increase in child care funding.

CCDBG provides funding to states to help parents pay for the care of their choice, whether in a family child care home, with a relative or friend, or in a child care center. States have tremendous flexibility to design policies and determine eligibility guidelines, service priorities, provider reimbursement rates, and family co-payment amounts. States may not use the CCDBG to provide help to families with incomes above 85 percent of the State Median Income, and they must use 4 percent of the funds available to support efforts to improve the quality and expand the supply of child care. In FY 2003, CCDBG was funded at \$4.8 billion (\$2.1 billion in discretionary funds and \$2.7 billion in mandatory funds), serving just over 1.75 million children from low-income working families. Only one in seven children eligible for assistance through CCDBG currently receives it.

Through CCDBG, each state receives both “mandatory” funds, which are automatically available each year (although states must contribute a match to receive these funds), and “discretionary” funds, which are available without a match but must be appropriated by Congress each year. The reauthorization of CCDBG offers an opportunity to increase both mandatory funding for the next five years and discretionary funding for FY 2006. We are asking Congress to provide an increase of \$7 billion in mandatory funding for the CCDBG over the next five years.

In addition to a continued effort to increase the mandatory funding of CCDBG, advocates will support provisions to bolster the quality of care and to ensure that funds can continue to be used to help low-income working families struggling to remain independent as well as families receiving TANF.

The unique way in which CCDBG is funded—through both mandatory and discretionary funds—means that the legislation will once again be considered by two committees in both the House and the Senate. In the House, the committees with jurisdiction over this legislation are the Ways and Means Committee, chaired by Rep. William M. Thomas (R-CA) with Rep. Charles B. Rangel (D-NY) as the Ranking Minority Member, and the Education and Workforce Committee, chaired by Rep. John Boehner (R-OH) with Rep. George Miller (D-CA) as Ranking Minority Member. On the Senate side, the legislation will be heard by the Finance Committee chaired by Sen. Charles E. Grassley (R-IA) with Sen. Max Baucus (D-MT) as Ranking Minority Member and by the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, chaired by Senator Michael Enzi (R-WY) with Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA) as the Ranking Minority Member. The House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee determine the amount of mandatory funds. The House Education and Workforce Committee and the Senate HELP Committee decide most of the substantive elements of the program.

Head Start

Head Start is a federally funded, nationwide program that provides comprehensive services for low-income three- and four-year-old children and their families. In 1994, Congress expanded Head Start, creating Early Head Start targeted to low-income families with children under age three and pregnant women. Head Start programs, run by local grantees, typically operate a part-day program

during the school year, although many provide full-day care by coordinating with local child care programs or by using CCDBG funds. The federal Head Start program has been scheduled for reauthorization (or renewal) since 2003, and is once again scheduled for re-authorization in 2005.

Since it began in 1965, Head Start has helped more than 22 million children build the confidence and skills they need to succeed in school and life. Head Start is unique in its comprehensive approach to the needs of children and families; it offers early education, health care, social services, and nutrition services, has a strong focus on parent involvement and support, and builds upon the strengths of local communities.

The program targets children living at or below the federal poverty level (\$15,260 for a family of three in 2005). Regulations also require that programs reserve at least 10 percent of their slots for children with disabilities.

In FY 2005, the funding for Head Start is \$6.8 billion. In 2004, the Head Start program served 905,851 children; nearly 62,000 of these children were served in Early Head Start. However, in FY 2003 only about half of all eligible preschool children were served by Head Start and less than 3 percent of eligible infants and toddlers were served by Early Head Start.

We are asking Congress to fully fund both Head Start and Early Head Start so that all eligible three- and four-year-old children can be served, and to increase the funds dedicated to Early Head Start. Efforts also will be made to give Head Start programs increased flexibility to serve more families whose incomes may be above the federal poverty line (\$16,090 a year for a family of three in 2005). We support staff improvement policies which link heightened standards to appropriate funding and incentives and oppose allowing religious-based organizations to practice discriminatory hiring policies that violate civil rights protections. Finally, we encourage the suspension of the National Reporting System until the test has been fully evaluated and appropriate steps are taken to ensure its validity, reliability, purpose, and age, linguistic, and cultural appropriateness.

The committees with jurisdiction over Head Start are the Senate HELP Committee, chaired by Senator Michael Enzi (R-WY) with Senator Edward Kennedy (D-MA) as the Ranking Minority Member, and the House Education and Workforce Committee, chaired by Rep. John Boehner (R-OH) with Rep. George Miller (D-CA) as Ranking Minority Member. In addition, the Appropriations Committees in the House and Senate set the funding levels for Head Start each year.

Key Talking Points on Child Care and Head Start

It is important that advocates and concerned citizens fight to protect and expand both the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and the Head Start program this year. While each of these programs has its own distinct goal, both work to help support working families and children who need quality care and education to prepare for school. In addition to your own compelling testimony, the following talking points offer some ways to speak about these programs with the public, the media, and your Members of Congress. Should you encounter arguments not addressed by these talking points, please let us know, and we can help you develop additional points.

Child Care

- We cannot delay major new investments in child care. Making more quality child care available will help to support a vibrant economy, allow families to find and keep jobs, and prepare the workforce of the future.
- Studies repeatedly have shown that good quality child care—care that provides a loving, safe, and stable environment—helps children enter school ready to succeed, improve their skills, and stay safe while their parents work. The positive impact of quality care is even greater for low-income children. Yet in many communities, families cannot find quality affordable care.
- Child care is unaffordable for many families. Full-day child care can easily cost between \$4,000 and \$10,000 a year—at least as much as public college tuition. Yet one-quarter of America’s families with young children earn less than \$25,000 a year, and a family with both parents working full-time at minimum wage earns only \$21,400 a year.
- Many low-income parents who are unable to get help paying for child care are forced to make impossible choices—whether to pay for rent, food or child care; whether to choose less expensive (but potentially detrimental) care for their children; and for some, having no choice but to turn to welfare. The lack of child care assistance forces some families to place their children in unsafe situations while they work, such as leaving them home alone or in the supervision of older siblings.
- CCDBG—our major federal child care assistance program—is the primary source of support for families who cannot afford the quality child care that is critical to their ability to find and keep a job and to prepare their children to succeed in school.
- Most low-income families cannot get help paying for child care. Nationally, only one out of seven children eligible under federal law receives help. In almost two-fifths of the states, a family earning just \$25,000 a year would not qualify for assistance.
- At least one-third of states place eligible families who apply for help on waiting lists or turn them away without even taking their names because there are not enough funds to provide services.
- The situation is getting worse. States have begun to cut back on the help available for low-income families, and thousands of families are losing child care assistance. States also are cutting reimbursement rates for providers, raising parent fees, and sharply reducing investments in quality.
- We have an opportunity this year to invest in a stronger future for America’s children and families. CCDBG is due to be reconsidered by Congress in 2005. Despite the fact that currently only one in seven children eligible for child care assistance actually receives it, President Bush has proposed no new federal funds for the program.

Please urge your Members of Congress to support an increase in CCDBG to provide child care help to additional children and bolster the quality of care that children receive.

Head Start

- Since 1965, Head Start has helped 22 million children build the confidence and skills they need to succeed in school and to become the leaders, taxpayers, and productive citizens of the future. Head Start is unique in its comprehensive approach to supporting children and families, offering early education, health care, social services, and nutrition services, while emphasizing parent involvement and support and building upon the strengths of local communities. This approach has been a formula for success for 40 years and should be expanded—not diluted—and fully funded with continued efforts to further strengthen its quality. Head Start works!
- Head Start has demonstrated its success in preparing children for school and for life. This program has been subject to rigorous Congressional scrutiny and academic evaluations throughout its history. According to a recent study, Head Start narrows the gap between disadvantaged children and their peers in vocabulary and writing skills during the program year. Once in kindergarten, Head Start graduates demonstrate that they are ready to learn by making substantial progress in word knowledge, letter recognition, math skills, and writing skills relative to national averages. Other studies have shown that Head Start children are less likely to be placed in special education or held back a grade.
- Head Start reaches out to serve families with infants and toddlers. Since 1994, Early Head Start has worked to extend comprehensive services to very young children in this critical stage of development. Current research confirms that the program produces sustained positive impacts on children's cognitive and language development by age three. Early Head Start also has positive impacts on children's social-emotional development.
- Despite a proven track record in helping children and families succeed, Head Start and Early Head Start only reach about half of all eligible preschool children and less than 3 percent of eligible infants and toddlers, respectively.
- We have an obligation to protect this proven program, and continue to build on Head Start's successes. The Head Start program is up for reauthorization in Congress in 2005. The President has urged Congress to make dramatic changes to dismantle Head Start and eliminate its quality performance standards with no additional funds to expand services and make quality improvements.
- The President's proposal to move Head Start from a program that provides federal grants directly to community organizations to a state-controlled program with no quality performance standards gambles the futures of the nearly one million children who currently participate in Head Start. States are unprepared to continue Head Start's successful approach. They are grappling with huge budget deficits that are already forcing them to make drastic cuts to vital programs. Some states are reducing funding for their pre-kindergarten programs or replacing state funds with federal dollars. In this environment, states will be tempted to use Head Start dollars to fill the gaps in other programs and spread dollars more thinly.
- Head Start must continue its longstanding commitment to addressing children's full range of developmental needs. Head Start was founded on the principle that children cannot learn when they are hungry, sick, or too worried about their home situation to concentrate in school. Therefore, the program emphasizes not only children's cognitive development, but also their social, emotional, and physical development. Research demonstrates that all of these areas of development are intertwined. Yet most state pre-kindergarten initiatives do not provide the comprehensive services that are the hallmark of Head Start. With no new resources and no requirements to focus on children's comprehensive needs, states will likely water down the services currently available to young children in Head Start. Shifting responsibility would remove essential quality guarantees. Head Start has extensive quality standards and regular monitoring to ensure these standards are met. As a result, Head Start has maintained a generally high level

of quality; a study found that the average quality rating of Head Start programs was higher than that of other early care and education programs. Without federal performance standards, there would be no guarantees that this level of quality would be maintained. States have not demonstrated a commitment to strong standards in their programs for young children. For example, 37 states allow teachers in child care centers to begin working with children without receiving any training in early childhood development.¹ While Head Start standards require a comprehensive, on-site monitoring visit once every three years, about two-thirds of the states with preschool programs in 2002-2003 did not require site visits by state monitors at least once during the year.²

- Head Start children should not be relegated to an education which “teaches to the test” – especially when that test is as invalid, unreliable and inappropriate as the National Reporting System (NRS). The NRS, a standardized test that assesses the literacy, language and numeracy skills of all Head Start children (about 400,000 4- and 5-year olds) was implemented by the Bush administration in 2003 after only 18 months of development. Critics of the test have long questioned its cultural fairness as well as its age appropriateness. A Government Accounting Office report released in May 2005 found that the test is neither a valid nor reliable source for determining program performance. The NRS should not be used until it can be proven as valid and reliable, and steps much be taken to ensure that results are used appropriately to improve the Head Start program.
- Coordination is the Bush Administration’s code word for “cut.” If we were serious about ensuring that children get ready for school, we would not be diverting energy away from efforts to strengthen Head Start. Improving the quality of Head Start and expanding its enrollment is the fastest and easiest way to ensure that these children enter school ready to succeed. This only requires a single plan, much of which has been developed over the past several decades in Head Start. Why leave the fate of children who are at the greatest risk to 50 states currently struggling with staggering budget deficits? Why not build on the single plan that has proven successful for 40 years, rather than asking states that are already overwhelmed to write 50 separate plans?
- We have high expectations for young children and want to see Head Start improved and expanded to help children reach their full potential. We should be fully funding Head Start so that all eligible children are reached, expanding Early Head Start to help our poorest infants and toddlers, and ensuring that Head Start teachers are the very best by requiring and providing scholarships for BA degrees in early childhood.
- Please urge your Members of Congress to fully fund both Head Start and Early Head Start so that all eligible three- and four-year-old children can be served, and to increase the funds dedicated to Early Head Start. Efforts also will be made to give Head Start programs increased flexibility to serve more families whose incomes may be above the federal poverty line (\$16,090 a year for a family of three in 2005). We support staff improvement policies which link heightened standards to appropriate funding and incentives and oppose allowing religious-based organizations to practice discriminatory hiring policies that violate civil rights protections. Finally, we encourage the suspension of the National Reporting System until the test has been fully evaluated and appropriate steps are taken to ensure its validity, reliability, purpose, and age, linguistic, and cultural appropriateness.

Child Care: Answers to Tough Questions

1. Why is child care a national concern?

Child care and early education are critical to meeting two of our nation's highest priorities: Helping families work and ensuring that every child enters school ready to learn. Parents can only be good, productive workers and help make our nation's economy run if they have safe, reliable care for their children. And children can only succeed in school if they have good early learning opportunities in their early years that help them get a strong start. When children get this strong start on the path toward becoming productive learners, workers, and citizens, it benefits us all. There are 12 million preschoolers—including six million babies and toddlers—spending all or part of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents. This is only about half the number of preschoolers in child care every week. Millions more school-age children are in after-school activities while their parents are at work, and more than six million children are left home alone on a regular basis.

All of these children in child care should be receiving the best care possible. Children in high quality early care and education score higher on reading and math tests, are more likely to complete high school and go on to college, while being less likely to repeat a grade or get charged in juvenile court, according to several long-term studies. Children in poor quality child care have been found to be delayed in language and reading skills and to display more aggression toward other children and adults. The lack of quality after-school options leaves our children vulnerable to violence, crime, and early sexual activity.

Yet too many children are not receiving the quality early care and education they need to begin school ready to learn. Forty-six percent of kindergarten teachers report that half or more of their class have specific problems when entering kindergarten, including difficulty following directions, lack of academic skills, problems in their situations at home, and/or difficulty working independently.

2. Why do parents need help paying for child care?

Too many moms and dads simply cannot afford even average-priced child care, much less the higher prices better quality programs often charge. Child care can easily cost between \$4,000 and \$10,000 a year for one child—more than the cost of public college tuition. Yet one-quarter of America's families with young children earn less than \$25,000 a year. A family with both parents working full-time at minimum wage earns only \$21,400 a year.

Child care is difficult to afford not just for families in poverty, but for low-income families struggling to work their way up the job ladder. Many families have only recently entered the workforce and need time to accumulate some savings so that unexpected expenses—medical care if a family member becomes sick, a necessary car repair so a parent can continue to get to work—do not lead to major setbacks that could land families back on welfare or in debt. Providing these families with child care assistance gives them an opportunity to gain a stable financial footing before they are left to shoulder the full burden of child care on their own.

Child care assistance for moderate-income families is important because these families' access to good early care and education is often as limited as it is for low-income families. Only 46 percent of children ages three to five and not yet in kindergarten who are in families earning between \$30,000 and \$50,000 a year are enrolled in pre-kindergarten. This is much lower than the participation rate of children in families with incomes above \$50,000 a year (65 percent) and nearly the same as children in families earning less than \$30,000 a year (44 percent). A study of child care in California com-

munities found that supply was not only limited in low-income areas but also in moderate-income neighborhoods where families earned too much to qualify for child care assistance but not enough to afford high-priced care on their own.

3. Why are public investments in child care needed?

Investments by federal, state, and local governments and the private sector can help parents shoulder the burden of child care costs so that they are able to afford the quality care they want for their children. Parents currently pay the bulk of child care costs. The annual spending by parents accounts for 60 percent of the cost, compared to 39 percent for government and just 1 percent for business. In contrast, parents contribute only 23 percent toward the cost of a public college education, with government and the private sector paying the rest.

Furthermore, the child care industry has an enormous impact on the economy. In 2001, Americans spent approximately \$38 billion on licensed child care programs. These programs employed slightly more workers—934,000—than public secondary schools. The formal child care sector enabled parents to earn more than \$100 billion annually by making it possible for them to work. These additional wages, in turn, generated almost \$580 billion in total direct, indirect, and induced labor income and more than \$69 billion in tax revenues.

Just as public investments are crucial in supporting quality higher education, further public investments in child care are needed so that children can receive quality early care and education to help them get ready for school. Studies show that children in high quality early care and education score higher on reading and math tests, are more likely to complete high school and go on to college, while being less likely to repeat a grade or get charged in juvenile court.

Although many families need help so they can afford good quality care, most cannot get it. Nationally, only one out of seven children eligible under federal law receives help. In nearly two-fifths of the states, a family of three earning just \$25,000 a year would not qualify for assistance. Yet a 2001 study found that an income of \$28,300 for a family of three is generally not sufficient to support a safe and decent standard of living for a family. Over one-third of the states place eligible families who apply for help on waiting lists or turn them away without even taking their names. Families who are unable to get help end up making enormous financial sacrifices, choosing between paying the rent and paying for child care, worrying about their children's care while at work, and sometimes having no choice but to turn to welfare.

4. What does the current economy mean for families' needs for child care?

Parents need help finding and affording child care in the current economy just as much as ever, and possibly even more. More parents may be earning lower wages and are less able to afford child care. They may be forced to work second or third shift—the hours when good child care is particularly hard to find. Parents who lose their job will also continue to need child care so they have time to search for a new job. With help, they can afford to keep their child in the same stable setting and avoid creating disruption in their child's life.

Despite the overwhelming need for child care help, the lagging economy means that states have begun to cut back on the help available for low-income families, and thousands of families are losing child care assistance. States are also cutting reimbursement rates for providers, raising parent fees, and sharply reducing investments in quality. States must maintain and expand their commitment to helping families afford quality child care, and not balance their budgets on the backs of poor children. In order to ensure that this is possible, the federal government must step in to significantly increase funding for CCDBG.

5. Shouldn't mothers just stay at home?

We need to support all parents in their child care choices. Helping parents who need to find good child care so they can work, and helping parents who stay at home are complementary—not competing—efforts. But too many parents do not have a choice. One-quarter of America's families with young children earn less than \$25,000 a year, and the majority of working women provide half or more of their family's income. Six million young children live in single-parent families where working is essential to avoid dependence on welfare.

Child care is simply part of daily life for millions of parents today. There are 12 million preschoolers—including six million babies and toddlers—spending all or some of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents. Every week, only about half of all eligible preschool children are in child care. Millions of school-age children participate in after-school activities, but more than six million school-age children are home alone on a regular basis and need better options. All children deserve safe, high quality care. Their futures depend on it.

In addition to increasing investments in child care, it is also essential to take steps to make staying home a viable alternative for more parents. Many parents do not have the option of taking time off from work to care for their children themselves. The Family and Medical Leave Act, which requires businesses to allow their employees to take family leave, only applies to large employers, and as a result excludes one-third of American workers. Employers also do not have to offer family leave to the 45 percent of employees who have not been at their job for an extended period of time (at least one year and 1,250 hours). Parents who are allowed to take leave are often only offered unpaid leave, which is not feasible for the many families who need their income to cover the cost of basic necessities.

6. Is there support for new investments in child care?

There is widespread support for expanded investments to improve the affordability and quality of child care. In a survey of police chiefs, 85 percent agreed that providing high quality early care and education programs for low- and moderate-income families would help children succeed in school and significantly reduce crime and violence when children grow up. More than three-quarters (78 percent) of law enforcement officials surveyed said that expanding after-school programs would significantly reduce youth crime and violence. A poll of the general public found that 86 percent believe that investments in child care and school-age programs will help significantly reduce crime.

In a poll conducted in October 2001, 87 percent of Americans said they favor increasing child care assistance to help the newly unemployed. Support for expanded child care assistance was expressed by respondents of all political leanings. According to a separate survey, seven out of 10 voters would support increasing federal funding for after-school initiatives by \$800 million a year, and two-thirds also support increasing state funding for after-school programs.

Investing in child care and after-school care is a smart choice that we can and must make—we can't afford not to. Child care helps our economy today by making it possible for parents to work, and helps the economy of tomorrow by preparing the future workforce.

7. Why should we make new investments in improving the quality of care?

The quality of care children receive clearly makes a difference. Children in high quality early care and education score higher on reading and math tests, are more likely to complete high school and go on to college, while being less likely to repeat a grade or get charged in juvenile court, according to several long-term studies. Children in poor quality child care have been found to be delayed in

language and reading skills, and to display more aggression toward other children and adults. The lack of quality after-school options leaves our children vulnerable to violence, crime, and early sexual activity.

Yet several studies show that too many children are receiving poor quality care that doesn't provide what they need to grow and learn. A Philadelphia study found that only two out of 10 centers were rated as good, with the rest minimally adequate or inadequate. Only 4 percent of family child care programs were rated as good. Low-income children are often less likely to receive good care. A Massachusetts study found that over half of centers serving mostly moderate- to high-income children provided good quality care, compared to just one-third of centers serving mostly low-income children.

8. Why do we need to invest in child care when there are other programs such as Head Start and state-funded pre-kindergarten?

While Head Start, state-funded pre-kindergarten, and child care assistance are all extremely important in supporting children and families and sometimes overlap in their objectives, each plays a separate and distinct role. None of these programs currently receives adequate resources to fully achieve even its primary purpose, much less any additional goals.

Head Start and state pre-kindergarten programs focus on preparing children for school. Neither Head Start nor most state pre-kindergarten programs were originally designed to meet the needs of working parents. As a result, these programs generally only fund a part-day program. Instead, they often rely on child care funds to support additional hours of care for children with working parents. Parents working evenings or weekends—a common situation for low-income families—may need an entirely separate child care arrangement, since their work hours do not match the program hours of most Head Start or pre-kindergarten programs.

Head Start and state pre-kindergarten programs are more limited in which children and families they serve. Federal child care assistance is available to families with children from birth to age 13. In contrast, Head Start only serves children birth to age five whose parents are at or below the federal poverty guidelines, with most children served being age three or four. State pre-kindergarten programs are typically limited to three- and four-year-olds. States may provide child care assistance to families earning up to 85 percent of state median income. While states may set lower income cutoffs, only one sets it as low as the Head Start eligibility cutoff, 100 percent of poverty.

Even with their various restrictions on eligibility, none of these programs reach all children and families who do qualify. Head Start serves about half of all eligible preschoolers and less than 3 percent of infants and toddlers eligible for Early Head Start. Most state pre-kindergarten initiatives serve a mere fraction of even low-income three- and four-year-olds. Georgia is the only state that currently serves all four-year-olds whose families want them to participate.

9. What is the solution?

Parents need reliable, affordable child care that allows them to feel safe and secure about their children while they are working to support their families. No parent working hard to support their children should have to worry whether their children are safe and well cared for while they're at work. Safe, quality child care should be available and affordable for every family who needs it.

Congress should take the following steps when it reauthorizes the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG):

1. Increase funds to allow one million more children to receive child care assistance.
2. Make it easier for eligible families to get and keep child care assistance.
3. Significantly boost funds set aside to bolster the quality of child care.
4. Ensure that new funds are available to expand and improve infant and toddler care.
5. Offer new incentives to states to support initiatives to recruit and retain child care providers.
6. Make resource and referral services more accessible to families.
7. Increase reimbursement rates paid to providers serving children receiving child care assistance.
8. Ensure that providers have training in child development before working with children and receiving public funds.
9. Ensure that providers receiving public funds are visited to ensure that children are in safe settings.

Head Start: Answers to Tough Questions

1. Does Head Start work?

Yes, Head Start works. Head Start is one of the most researched and evaluated early childhood programs in America. These studies conclude that Head Start works.

According to FACES, the latest study conducted by the federal Department of Health and Human Services, Head Start is giving America's poorest children what it promises—a head start in preparing them for school. The data show that:

- The program narrows the gap between disadvantaged children and all children in vocabulary and writing skills.
- Head Start children are leaving the program ready to learn.
- Once in kindergarten, Head Start graduates make substantial progress in word knowledge, letter recognition, math skills, and writing skills relative to national averages.³

Numerous other studies confirm that Head Start is effective. They find that children who have graduated from Head Start are:

- Less likely to repeat a grade.
- Less likely to need special education services.
- More likely to graduate from high school.⁴

2. Do Head Start benefits fade over time?

No. Research clearly shows that Head Start benefits do not fade over time. When various studies that supposedly indicate “fade out” are re-examined, taking into account methodological problems, and when we examine a comprehensive set of measures for children (rather than just IQ), we find that Head Start children clearly demonstrate that they have obtained lasting educational benefits from the program.⁵

3. If Head Start works, why are the children participating not meeting national norms upon completion of the program?

In serving the most disadvantaged children, Head Start children enter the program significantly behind, but they catch up. Children coming into Head Start have so many barriers even before they enter the program:

- Nearly 28 percent of parents with children in Head Start—more than one in four—have less than a high school diploma or GED.
- Almost half of Head Start parents make less than \$12,000 a year.
- Almost one-quarter of children enrolled in Head Start come from homes where English is not the primary language spoken at home.⁶
- About one in five children “was reported to have been exposed to community or domestic violence in their lives.”
- Almost one in every six Head Start children has one or more disabilities—generally a speech or language impairment. Nearly half of all children's disabilities were identified after the child entered Head Start, indicating that Head Start is critical in both identifying and serving children with special needs.

- The early literacy skills of the average child entering Head Start are significantly below national norms—a full standard deviation below for the average child in the program.⁷

Despite these barriers, these children, with the help of Head Start, catch up.

- Head Start children are close to norms after kindergarten.
- The program narrows the gap between disadvantaged children and all children in vocabulary and writing skills.
- Children who enter Head Start with the lowest scores in cognitive development show the greatest improvements.
- Head Start graduates in kindergarten continued to make substantial gains in word knowledge, letter recognition, math skills, and writing skills compared to national norms.
- Children who were behind in a specific skills area continued to gain ground in these skills in elementary school.⁸

4. Haven't Head Start studies shown that children only know one letter of the alphabet?

No, in fact, most studies show that they are on track for entering kindergarten ready to learn. The most recent comprehensive study shows that the children are learning the letters of the alphabet and on average are leaving the program knowing nearly nine letters. Researchers conclude that children catch up on literacy skills and by the end of kindergarten, 83 percent of Head Start graduates recognize most or all of the letters of the alphabet.⁹

Are we satisfied with Head Start's progress? Head Start has always worked to improve the quality and services it provides our most vulnerable children. While no program is perfect and we should continually be improving programs for children, the solution is more resources and continuing to raise the bar for teachers, not questionable schemes that distract from serious efforts to help the program to improve.

5. Isn't Head Start an old program stuck in its ways?

Head Start has been a dynamic program—constantly working to improve services for children. For the past four decades, Head Start has worked to increase the quality of programs while expanding the number of children served. Over the years, funding has been reserved for improving quality, raising teachers' salaries, and helping teachers improve their education. Education requirements for teachers have been increased several times. An intensive system of monitoring local programs has been put in place, and programs that are not meeting standards lose their funding. In fact, since 1993, over 160 programs that failed to correct performance problems promptly were replaced with new grantees.¹⁰

Program quality standards have continually been updated and strengthened. A careful process was put in place to develop outcome measures to ensure that children were succeeding. Teachers were asked to assess children's progress against these measures three times a year. In the last two years, the program expanded its focus on literacy and language development to help children enter school ready to read. With increasing evidence demonstrating that the earlier children and their parents are reached, the better their chances of success, Head Start responded. In 1994, Early Head Start was created to serve infants and toddlers.

Head Start remains as important as ever—helping millions of children in poverty get the learning opportunities, nutritious meals, health care, and social and emotional support that they need to

enter school ready to learn. The founding principles of Head Start—that disadvantaged children need comprehensive, quality early education to start school ready to learn along with their more advantaged peers—are just as critical today as they were 40 years ago.

6. Should Head Start be block granted to the states? Can't they do a better job of coordinating the program with other services?

Block granting Head Start without performance standards and without additional funding will not improve services for poor children and families.

Improving the quality of Head Start and expanding its enrollment is the fastest and most efficient way to ensure that our poorest children enter school ready to succeed. Why create chaos by dismantling the program and leaving the fate of our poorest children to 50 states currently struggling with staggering budget deficits? Many states continue to face significant deficits in 2006. At least 26 states now project shortfalls averaging roughly 7.3 to 8.3 percent of their general fund spending. The combined deficit is approximately \$32 to \$36 billion.

States' commitment to pre-kindergarten, at \$2.5 billion, is much less than the federal contribution. In 2002-2003, 12 states did not have a state-funded pre-kindergarten program.¹¹

More responsibility to states in pre-kindergarten will go the same way as the President's education reform bill—states will be asked to come up with resources they don't have to do the job while the federal government passes the buck.

The President vowed to make educating every child a number one priority, but his latest budget would cut education funding for the first time in a decade. The President's budget underfunds the Title I program—the largest source of federal aid to low-income students—by \$9.4 billion. If this budget becomes law, the total shortfall for Title I will reach \$30.8 billion since the No Child Left Behind Act was passed. The President's budget also cuts funds for state and local teacher quality programs, despite the fact that improving the quality of teachers is perhaps the single most important factor in closing the achievement gap between low – and high-income children.

This year's budget makes similar empty promises to young children. It does not increase funding for Head Start—leaving 25,000 children behind, cuts child care assistance to 300,000 children over five years while increasing work requirements for poor mothers, and strips basic health protections for millions of children. How does this budget get children ready for school?

As states try to meet the enormous demands of the education reform without adequate resources, they may be tempted to focus their early education programs on narrow academic measures that do not truly represent what children need in order to enter school ready to learn.

There is no guarantee that strong performance standards and accountability measures would be maintained if states took control of Head Start. While Head Start standards require a comprehensive, on-site monitoring visit once every three years, about two-thirds of the states with preschool programs in 2002-2003 did not require site visits by state monitors at least once during the year.¹²

Head Start has maintained a generally high level of quality; a study found that the average quality rating of Head Start programs was higher than that of other early care and education programs. But, without federal performance standards, there would be no guarantees that this level of quality would be maintained. States have not demonstrated a commitment to strong standards in their programs for young children. For example, 37 states allow teachers in child care centers to begin working with children without receiving any training in early childhood development.¹³

7. Isn't there a lot of funding in the program already?

Yes, but there are even greater needs. Head Start is currently funded at \$6.8 billion a year, enabling 905,851 children living in poverty to participate. However, only about half of all eligible preschoolers are enrolled in Head Start, and less than 3 percent of infants and toddlers eligible for Early Head Start are served. Additional resources are needed not only to reach more children but also to support continued enhancements to meet the changing demands of children and families and provide the highest quality services. For example, many Head Start programs operate on a half-day schedule, though parents often need full-day care to accommodate their work schedules. Programs also report serving more children with behavior problems and more children from families where English is not spoken. These challenges often mean that programs must adapt teaching practices and services to meet the particular needs of children.

Head Start programs need additional resources to promote continued improvements in teacher education requirements and teacher salaries. Retaining teachers will require higher salaries, which currently average \$21,907 per year. Additional resources also will be needed to provide ongoing training to all teachers to continue to support children's learning.

8. Couldn't we serve more children if Head Start, Child Care and Pre-kindergarten services were coordinated better?

Coordination can—and does—help, but it is no solution for the lack of resources in all of the early childhood programs. Child care and pre-kindergarten programs already coordinate, with many Head Start programs providing full-day services by leveraging child care subsidy funds. Similarly, pre-kindergarten and child care programs often co-locate with Head Start programs to provide extended education and comprehensive health and nutrition services to a larger group of children in need. Coordination is working in these early childhood programs without devolving Head Start, and its high quality standards, to the states.

However, coordination will not remedy the fact that all of these programs are severely under-funded. Head Start serves only about half of all eligible preschool children and less than 3 percent of eligible infants and toddlers. Investments in state pre-kindergarten programs are much less; often these programs target low-income four-year-olds exclusively, and still state budgets serve just a fraction of those eligible for services. In child care, only one out of seven eligible low-income children receives a subsidy to help their parents pay for services.

Finally, Head Start, child care, and state preschool programs must often serve the same children in order to meet the demands of working parents. Many programs are half-day, and many state pre-kindergarten programs provide services for only three hours a day. Even if parents enroll their children into one of these programs, their work schedules demand that they find care to cover the additional hours that they are at work. This means that, in addition to Head Start or state pre-kindergarten, parents need child care assistance to help them pay for care for the rest of the day, or into the evenings and on weekends. These services are not duplicative—in fact, they are all needed in order to address the diverse and demanding schedules low-income parents work to make ends meet.

9. Why do we need comprehensive services for Head Start children?

Comprehensive services are critical to early learning. Head Start targets the nation's poorest children, those living in families at or below the federal poverty level as well as children with disabilities or other special needs. Preparing children to learn is about more than just learning numbers or letters. It is also about giving children the skills and abilities—curiosity, an interest in learning, and the

ability to pay attention in class—that will make them good learners throughout their school careers. Therefore, Head Start emphasizes not only children’s cognitive development but also their social, emotional, and physical development and has a very strong parent involvement component.

Regardless of their innate abilities, children learn better when they have good physical and mental health and families whose own needs are met so they can devote their energies to nurturing and educating their children.

- Researchers show that even mild undernourishment, the kind most frequently found in the United States, impairs cognitive function and can do so throughout the life of a child.¹⁴
- One study found that children participating in a quality early childhood program that included a strong health as well as a parent involvement component had higher rates of high school completion and lower rates of school dropout.¹⁵
- Recognizing that children do not come in pieces, Head Start—along with early educational experiences—provides health screenings, immunizations, mental health counseling, dental services, nutritional meals, and parental supports.

While the Bush Administration’s plan claims that states will have to offer comprehensive services, it eliminates the standards that require them, skimps on the resources to prove them, and includes no enforcement mechanism to ensure that states would provide children these supports.

10. Shouldn’t the program just focus on literacy?

We should be doing more on literacy for Head Start children. Head Start has never been satisfied with the status quo. We should be asking for more resources for children’s literacy and language development. Dismantling the program and giving it to states does not accomplish this goal. Instead, we should be expanding the program to serve more children, ensuring that the teachers have a degree in early childhood education and know how to teach children early literacy skills. **Yet everything we know from the research says that literacy alone is not the answer.** All parents know that for children to learn, they must also have their basic needs met—they must be healthy, well-fed, and have parents who are actively involved in their lives and their learning. This is the Head Start model of success.

11. What do parents say about Head Start?

Most parents support Head Start. The American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) released by the President’s Management Council (2000) showed that over 98 percent of parents were satisfied with how the program helped their children grow and develop, 96 percent of parents were satisfied with their child’s preparation for kindergarten, and over 97 percent were satisfied with the program’s openness to their ideas and participation.¹⁶

The survey for federal government programs found that Head Start’s rating was the highest out of 29 other public agencies. Head Start parents scored the program higher than the private sector’s average.¹⁷

12. Why should teachers have a bachelor’s degree? Is it true that Head Start teachers are poorly trained?

Head Start children deserve to have the highest qualified teachers in their classrooms. Researchers have concluded that a teacher with a bachelor’s degree in early childhood education is key to achieving positive child outcomes for three- and four-year-olds. One of the largest national studies on early care and education, conducted by the National Institute for Child Health and

Human Development, showed that caregiver education and training were the strongest predictors of quality in programs for preschoolers. Further, in the National Research Council's report, "Eager to Learn," early childhood researchers reviewed the evidence from numerous studies and recommended that all children have access to a teacher with a bachelor's degree related to child development and early education.

Many Head Start teachers already have extensive formal education as well as training in early childhood education. In the 1998 reauthorization, Head Start was mandated to require all teachers to have at least a child development associate credential and half of all teachers to have at least an associate degree by 2003. Head Start programs have worked steadily to achieve these goals, and at the end of 2002, 51 percent of all teachers in Head Start had at least an associate degree in early childhood education or a related field.¹⁸

13. Why shouldn't we test children in Head Start; what current accountability measures are there?

Experts agree that child assessments, when done correctly and used for the right purpose, can support better child outcomes and program quality. But, as the National Research Council reports in *Eager to Learn: Educating our Preschoolers*, "Few early childhood teachers or administrators are trained to understand traditional standardized tests and measurements."¹⁹

The National Reporting System (NRS) tests all 4-year-olds enrolled in Head Start on literacy, math, and language skills at the beginning and end of each program year. Early childhood experts and researchers conclude that assessments for preschoolers can help to strengthen programs for young children if they are based on on-going teacher observation of children's development rather than a single test performed on one given day, which may not truly capture a child's ability. This single test assessment designed by the Bush Administration fails to consider children's progress in emotional, behavioral, or physical domains, and it disregards the needs of limited English-speaking children or disabled children (who represent a significant number of children enrolled in Head Start). Early childhood experts are concerned that a focus on academic outcomes as the only measure could undermine the contribution of important services, including health, nutrition, social services, and parent involvement, that are the hallmark of Head Start and crucial to later success in school.

Head Start already assesses children in their programs. Currently, Head Start programs are required to assess children three times a year in order to strengthen classroom teaching and evaluate children's progress. These assessments are performed using multiple techniques, as the research suggests—gathering information through teacher observations, analysis of children's work samples, documentation of performance, parent reports, and direct assessment. The assessments also must cover all eight aspects of child development: language, literacy, math, science, art, social-emotional, approaches to learning, and physical health and development.

Further, program evaluation and monitoring—not young child assessments—have proven to be successful tools in holding programs accountable and supporting their improvement. The Head Start Outcomes Framework currently defines strong performance standards for programs and mandates that all Head Start programs undergo PRISM (Program Review Instrument for Systems Monitoring) once every three years—a thorough, week-long performance monitoring conducted by outside, independent evaluators.

Head Start children should not be relegated to an education which "teaches to the test" – especially when that test is as invalid, unreliable and inappropriate as the National Reporting System (NRS). The NRS, a standardized test that assesses the literacy, language and numeracy

skills of all Head Start children (about 400,000 4- and 5-year olds) was implemented by the Bush administration in 2003 after only 18 months of development. Critics of the test have long questioned its cultural fairness as well as its age appropriateness. A Government Accounting Office report released in May 2005 found that the test is neither a valid nor reliable source of determining program performance. The NRS should not be used until it can be proven as valid and reliable, and steps much be taken to ensure that results are used appropriately to improve the Head Start program.

14. Are Head Start programs under-enrolled?

Most programs are not under-enrolled. In many communities, children are on waiting lists to enter the local Head Start program. However, with changes in welfare in a few communities, mothers returning to work may find that their incomes now exceed Head Start's very low eligibility—set at the federal poverty guideline (\$16,090 a year for a family of three in 2005). This does not mean, though, that Head Start services are not needed. Many parents with incomes slightly above the federal poverty guideline have children who would benefit from Head Start's valuable programs.

We should provide more flexibility where there is under-enrollment. Providing programs with more flexibility to serve families with incomes slightly above the poverty guideline could remedy under-enrollment in many of these communities. In addition, allowing programs to serve more infants and toddlers would also allow programs to fully enroll eligible children in the program. Currently, less than 3 percent of eligible children under age three are served through Early Head Start.

15. What are the benefits of Early Head Start?

Early Head Start significantly improves children's outcomes. Research clearly demonstrates that to have a positive impact on the lives of children, we must start early. Recent findings from brain research show that the first three years of life are critical in children's brain development, and that their brain development is far more susceptible to adverse influences than had been realized. What these studies clearly show is that the earlier the investment, the greater the pay-off. Early Head Start has demonstrated the ability to make a positive impact on the lives of children and families. For example:

- Early Head Start programs produce positive cognitive impacts for children at age two.
- The program also showed significant impacts on language development from ages two to three.
- The program had favorable impacts on several aspects of social-emotional development at age three. Children were more engaged with their parents, more attentive to objects during play, and were rated lower in aggressive behavior.
- Early Head Start also benefits parents. Research finds that parents participating in the program are more emotionally supportive, more supportive of early language development, and more likely to report reading daily to their child.²⁰

16. How could Head Start be improved? What should Congressional priorities be for the reauthorization of Head Start in 2005?

- **Over the next five years, move toward full funding of Head Start.** The Head Start program provides comprehensive early education to more than 900,000 low-income children every year. Yet only about half of eligible preschool children find a slot in a Head Start classroom. We must ensure that by 2010, no preschool child who needs Head Start is turned away from the program.
- **Expand Early Head Start.** Research clearly demonstrates that to have a positive impact on the lives of children, we must start early. The earlier the investment, the greater the pay-off.

Currently, almost 62,000 children under the age of three—less than 3 percent of those eligible—are served in Early Head Start. Early Head Start is the only comprehensive federal program that targets children this young. We must continue our national commitment to our youngest, most vulnerable citizens. At a minimum, the number of children participating should double over the next five years.

- **Further improve the quality of Head Start.** Head Start has been a leader in advancing the quality of early educational programs for low-income children. Over the last five years, Head Start implemented the most comprehensive set of performance standards for the education of young children in the nation. Programs worked to ensure that at least half of all teachers in Head Start had, at a minimum, an associate degree in an early childhood or related field by 2005.

The National Research Council recently recommended that teachers of all preschool-age children have a bachelor's degree related to early childhood development. With additional funding for teacher education and salaries, Head Start should work toward this goal.

- **Preserve a focus on Head Start's comprehensive services.** To ensure that vital, comprehensive services remain a part of Head Start, the program must remain a federal program housed within the Department of Health and Human Services.

Head Start is the nation's only program that works to address the needs of the whole child. The creators of this initiative understood that in young children, cognitive development cannot be separated from the development of social skills, emotional growth, physical health, and nutrition. Along with early educational experiences, Head Start provides health screenings, immunizations, mental health counseling, dental services, nutritional meals, and parental supports. Without these vital services, early learning will be severely impaired.

- **Provide additional flexibility to local programs.** Welfare-to-work initiatives in recent years have meant that families who would have been eligible for Head Start are now earning enough to put them just over the income requirements. Communities should be allowed more flexibility to serve children from families with slightly higher incomes. This will ensure that in these communities, more low-income working families can participate in the program and that no space in Head Start goes unfilled.

Similarly, many programs throughout the country find that the demand for services for infants and toddlers continues to expand. We recommend that Head Start programs be allowed to retool and serve younger children if they can demonstrate a strong demand for Early Head Start services and show that all the eligible three- and four-year-old children who need Head Start in their community are being served.

- **Encourage the suspension of the National Reporting System until the test has been fully evaluated and appropriate steps are taken to ensure its validity, reliability and purpose.** Head Start should not be forced to offer an education which “teaches to the test” – especially when that test is as invalid, unreliable and inappropriate as the National Reporting System (NRS). The NRS, a standardized test that assesses the literacy, language and numeracy skills of all Head Start children (about 400,000 4- and 5-year olds) was implemented by the Bush administration in 2003 after only 18 months of development. Critics of the test have long questioned its cultural fairness as well as its age appropriateness. A Government Accounting Office report released in May 2005 found that the test is neither a valid nor reliable source for determining program performance. The NRS should not be used until it can be proven as valid and reliable, and steps must be taken to ensure that results are used appropriately to improve the Head Start program.

Quality Child Care Helps Parents Work and Children Learn

The need for quality child care and after-school activities is a daily concern for millions of American parents.

Every day, 12 million preschoolers—including six million infants and toddlers—are in child care. This is only about half of all eligible preschool children.²¹ Millions more school-age children and youth are in after-school activities while their parents work. Yet more than six million children are left home alone on a regular basis,²² often during the afternoon hours when juvenile crime peaks and children are vulnerable to risky behavior like smoking, drug and alcohol use, and sexual activity.²³

Parents need child care to work and support their families.

- Sixty-five percent of mothers with children under age six, and 79 percent of mothers with children ages six to 13 are in the labor force.²⁴
- In 2001, just one-quarter of all families with children younger than six—and only one-third of married-couple families with young children—had one parent working and one parent who stayed at home.²⁵
- Women bring home half or more of their families' earnings in the majority of U.S. households.²⁶
- One out of three children of working mothers are poor, even though their mother works, or would be poor if their mother did not work.²⁷

Good care is unaffordable for many families, and not enough help is available for them.

Full-day child care can easily cost between \$4,000 and \$10,000 a year—at least as much as public college tuition.²⁸ Yet one-quarter of America's families with young children earn less than \$25,000 a year,²⁹ and a family with both parents working full-time at minimum wage earns only \$21,400 a year. Most low-income families cannot get help paying for child care. Nationally, only one out of seven children eligible under federal law receives child care assistance.³⁰ In nearly two-thirds of the states, a family earning just \$25,000 a year would not qualify for assistance.³¹ Twenty-four states place eligible families who apply for help on waiting lists or turn them away without even taking their names.³² States have begun to cut back on the help available to low-income families, and thousands of families are losing child care assistance. These families face serious hardships. They struggle to meet their basic needs, often go into debt or may turn to welfare, and are frequently forced to use poor quality child care because they cannot afford better options.³³

Child care is hard to find.

Parents in communities across the country have difficulty finding the child care that they need. Families with infants, parents working the second or third shift, and parents whose children have special needs face particular challenges finding care.

A Philadelphia study found that only two out of ten child care centers were rated as good, with the rest minimally adequate or inadequate. Only 4 percent of family child care programs were rated as good. Low-income children are often less likely to receive good care.³⁴

A Massachusetts study found that over half of centers serving mostly moderate- to high-income children provided good quality care (57 percent) compared to just one-third of centers serving mostly low-income children (36 percent).³⁵

In California's low-income communities, the number of slots in child care centers per 100 children under age five is about one-third lower than in higher-income communities, according to one study. Slots are also limited in moderate-income areas, where families earn too much to qualify for child care assistance but not enough to afford high-priced care on their own.³⁶ Overall, the supply of child care has barely kept pace with the growth in the child population.³⁷

Child care helps shape children's futures, yet the quality of care for many children is inadequate.

Research on early brain development and early childhood demonstrates that the experiences children have and the attachments children form early in life have a decisive, long-lasting impact on their later development and learning.³⁸ High quality care beginning in early childhood improves children's school success.³⁹

Many children are not getting the good quality care and education they need in their early years to start school ready to learn. Forty-six percent of kindergarten teachers report that half of the children in their class or more have specific problems when entering kindergarten, including difficulty following directions, lack of academic skills, problems in their situations at home, and/or difficulty working independently.⁴⁰

Good quality child care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care workers earn an average of just \$17,610 a year⁴¹ and typically receive no benefits or paid leave.⁴²

Cosmetologists must attend as much as 2,000 hours of training before they can get a license,⁴³ yet 30 states do not require teachers in child care centers to have any early childhood training before they begin working with children.⁴⁴

Congress and the President can help now!

Congress must come together in a bipartisan way to reauthorize the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) with significant new investments in child care. This will enable families to receive the help they need to pay for child care and support improvements in the quality of care, helping parent's work and children learn.

Head Start Gives Our Most Vulnerable Children the Skills They Need to Succeed in School and in Life

Head Start is the only national, high quality early education program that provides comprehensive educational, health, nutrition, and social services to the country's neediest children and their families.

Head Start began in 1965 to address the critical needs of children in the United States. Since that time, it has successfully served 22 million of America's poorest children.⁴⁵

Many Head Start programs operate on a part-day school-year schedule. However, 42 percent of families who reported a need for full-day, full-year early care and education received this extended care either directly through the Head Start program or through collaboration between Head Start and child care providers.⁴⁶

In 1994, responding to increased awareness of the importance of children's very early development, Congress created Early Head Start. This program expanded Head Start to include comprehensive services and supports for low-income families with children under age three and to pregnant women. As of FY 2005, this successful program served only 62,000 infants and toddlers.

Head Start targets America's poorest children with the goal of helping them overcome the disadvantages of growing up in poverty.

Head Start targets the poorest children and families—those from families with incomes at or below the poverty guideline (\$16,090 a year for a family of three in 2005) or from families receiving public assistance. More than half of the children served in Head Start in 2002 came from families with incomes between \$9,000 and \$11,999 a year.⁴⁷

Up to 10 percent of the children served by a local program may have family incomes that are above the poverty guideline. Programs also are required to reserve at least 10 percent of their enrollment for children with disabilities.⁴⁸

Head Start supports and funds comprehensive services as well as early literacy experiences for the nation's poorest children and families.

Head Start provides a full range of pre-literacy and literacy experiences for children. Performance standards—established in 1998 and based on scientific research of children's early learning—guide teaching in Head Start classrooms and ensure that children are developing the literacy, vocabulary, and numbers skills needed to enter school ready to learn.

In addition to addressing children's cognitive development, Head Start acknowledges that children in low-income families have many needs that are critical to their ability to learn. Head Start also addresses families' unmet needs (for housing, job training, health care, emotional support, and family counseling) that may stand in the way of a child's full and healthy development. Specifically, every program offers:

- **Health Services** – Head Start coordinates with health and nutrition resources in the community to ensure children's medical, dental, and mental health needs are met. Head Start also ensures that children are immunized and receive hot meals.

- **Social Services** – Head Start staff provide community outreach, referrals, family needs assessments, emergency services, and other crisis interventions.⁴⁹ In 2001, more than one-quarter of families in the program experienced an emergency with food, shelter or clothing. Head Start programs had the resources to address the vast majority of these needs.⁵⁰
- **Parent Involvement** – Head Start programs acknowledge parents’ critical role in their child’s education. Programs work to engage parents both in the classroom as volunteers and at home through home visits. Parents also can serve on policy councils, which give them the opportunity for direct contribution into how their child’s program is administered. In addition, through Head Start, parents gain access to job training, literacy and language classes, and other supports that help them attain economic stability.

Head Start funds flow directly to the local, community-based organizations serving children and families.

The funding structure of Head Start, which provides federal funding directly to local programs, allows for local flexibility so that programs can meet the diverse needs of their communities while maintaining extensive quality and performance standards.

There are currently 1,604 grantees running nearly 20,050 Head Start centers across the country.⁵¹ Grantees include a wide range of agencies—including community action agencies, local governments, nonprofits and for-profits, and public school districts.

Funds are set aside for Migrant Head Start and American Indian Head Start programs. Direct funding is provided to local programs that work with migrant children and families and to tribal communities working to address the needs of Native American children and families.

Head Start provides critical supports and educational experiences to hundreds of thousands of young children and families living in poverty, but the program serves only a fraction of those children eligible to participate.

In FY 2004, Head Start’s funding was \$6.84 billion, allowing programs to serve 905,851 children, including nearly 62,000 infants and toddlers in Early Head Start.⁵²

The program primarily serves children between the ages of three and five, with the majority of the children being age four; in FY 2004, for example, 52 percent were age four and 34 percent were age three.⁵³

Current funding allows Head Start to reach only about half of all eligible preschool-age children and less than 3 percent of eligible infants and toddlers in Early Head Start.⁵⁴

Research has clearly shown that Head Start programs are successful in preparing poor children for school.

Head Start is one of the most researched and evaluated early childhood programs in America. This research demonstrates that Head Start works. According to the FACES study, Head Start is giving children what it promises—a head start in preparing them for school. The data show that:

- The program narrows the gap between disadvantaged children and all children in vocabulary and writing skills.

- Head Start children are leaving the program ready to learn. Once in kindergarten, Head Start graduates make substantial progress in vocabulary, letter recognition, math skills, and writing skills relative to national averages.⁵⁵
- Numerous other studies confirm that Head Start is effective. They find that children who have graduated from Head Start are less likely to repeat a grade, less likely to need special education, and more likely to graduate from high school.⁵⁶
- Head Start classrooms are consistently rated high in quality.⁵⁷
- Head Start programs also are more likely to meet national accreditation standards for good quality early childhood development programs and tend to have lower turnover rates than many other early childhood and child care settings.⁵⁸
- An evaluation of Early Head Start found that the program produces sustained positive impacts on children's cognitive and language development at age three and has positive impacts on children's social-emotional development. In addition, Early Head Start parents provide more support for language and learning at home, are more likely to read daily to their child, and are less likely to engage in negative parenting behaviors.

Congress and the President can help now!

We are asking Congress to fully fund both Head Start and Early Head Start so that all eligible three- and four-year-old children can be served, and to increase the funds dedicated to Early Head Start. Efforts also will be made to give Head Start programs increased flexibility to serve more families whose incomes may be above the federal poverty line (\$16,090 a year for a family of three in 2005). We support staff improvement policies which link heightened standards to appropriate funding and incentives and oppose allowing religious-based organizations to practice discriminatory hiring policies that violate civil rights protections. Finally, we encourage the suspension of the National Reporting System until the test has been fully evaluated and appropriate steps are taken to ensure its validity, reliability, purpose, and age, linguistic, and cultural appropriateness.

**TAKE
ACTION**

Checklist for Advocates

1. Build/Grow/Maintain Support

- Reach out to existing networks, colleagues, and other organizations to ask for their support and action.
- Write newsletter articles about the CCDBG and Head Start debate in my organization's newsletter. [See the Sample Newsletter Articles in the Build Support section].
- Seek out community allies in search of support. Meet with and offer to speak at the events of other groups such as those listed on the Community Allies list in the Build Support section.
- Convene a meeting of coalition leaders and determine specific roles and responsibilities for each. Plan to meet when necessary and communicate regularly.
- Implement a communication system to reach the coalition and all networks quickly (i.e. a phone tree or email list).
- Disseminate campaign materials, including this checklist, to my network and community allies. Take action flyers and campaign materials to all meetings and briefings.

2. Work with Your Elected Officials

- Call your Members of Congress to introduce yourself to the staff person responsible for child care and Head Start in your district office and in Washington. Communicate regularly with the local office to track legislative developments, Members' visits home, and any Town Hall meetings or other events.
- Share information with your Members of Congress about the need for increased funding for child care and Head Start to help families work and help children start school ready to succeed. Make sure they understand all of the implications of the President's child care and Head Start proposals, and express your views. Call, write, and visit your Members of Congress and encourage your network to do so as well.
- Encourage your state and local elected officials to urge Congress to increase funding and quality improvements for the CCDBG and Head Start and to reject proposals to dismantle Head Start and eliminate its quality standards. Urge them to pass a resolution or issue a proclamation to that effect. Call, write, and visit your local elected officials and encourage your network to do so as well. [See the Community Allies list in the Build Support section for contact information for state and local government officials.]
- Take groups of parents and supporters to visit Members of Congress in their home offices during Congressional Recesses. With community allies and parents, be a vocal presence at Elected Officials' Town Hall meetings or other high-profile events, such as hearings.
- Plan a child care or Head Start program visit for policymakers so they can see local children affected by their decisions and hear about the need from those who know best: parents, providers, and teachers.
- Invite elected officials to speak at your organization's meetings or conferences.

3. Plan Community Action Events

- Plan early childhood events or participate in other organizations' events to provide educational materials for parents or other interested groups. [See the 2005 Action Calendar and the Organize Community Action Events document in this section for more information.]
- Arrange to have a table or booth at the local meetings/conferences of groups such as teachers associations; National Association of Elementary School Principals, etc. [See the Community Allies list in the Build Support section for contact information for these and other groups.]

4. Generate Media Coverage

- Schedule a visit with the editorial boards of local papers to discuss the need for quality, affordable child care in your community and the need to protect and expand Head Start and Early Head Start. [See Visiting Editorial Boards in the Generate Media Coverage section.]
- Schedule a breakfast or other event for local reporters to brief them on child care and Head Start. [See the Sample Editorial Memorandum in the Generate Media Coverage section.]
- Draft press releases or media advisories to respond to timely developments, new research or education publications, or to encourage the media to attend your Community Action Events. [See the Sample Media Advisory and Press Release in the Generate Media Coverage section.]
- Write letters to the Editor and op-eds to local papers, preferably in response to child care or Head Start articles or timely federal movement on child care or Head Start. Ask your network to write as well, and provide a sample letter containing the pertinent talking points. [See the Sample Letter to the Editor and Sample Op-ed in the Generate Media Coverage section.]
- Offer to write child care/Head Start articles for community papers. [See the Sample Newsletter Article in the Build Support section as a possible starting point for a community paper article.]
- Gather stories from parents in your state and community who need Head Start or child care assistance, or who have benefited from Head Start or child care assistance; share those stories with the media.

2005 Action Calendar

PLAN AHEAD FOR THESE IMPORTANT DATES
(All Congressional Recesses Are Tentative Dates)

March 21 – April 1: Lay the Ground Work

ACTION NOTES:

- Plan a Week of the Young Child event in your community. [See Organize Community Action Events in this section for a description of this event and contact information.]
- Schedule district office visits or child care/Head Start program visits during congressional recesses.
- Be a vocal presence at Members' Town Hall meetings or other high profile events.
- Remember to engage multiple constituencies: parents, providers, business leaders, etc.
- Share parent stories as well as policy information to illustrate the need for increased investments in child care and Head Start.
- Be sure to leave your member with packet of information that includes your talking points, fact sheets, and parent testimonials.

April 3 – 9: Lay the Ground Work

ACTION NOTES:

- Call to speak with Child Care/Head Start staff in the local district and Washington, D.C., offices.
- Visit with editorial boards, reporters/feature writers about covering child care and Head Start.
- Collect support for an organizational-level sign-on letter from the child care and Head Start communities in your state.
- Engage the field in a letter to the editor campaign.
- Encourage the field to call and email Representatives and Senators about the need for increased investments in child care and Head Start. Stress how important it is to PERSONALIZE your message, whether it's on the phone or in an email.

May 1: Worthy Wage Day

ACTION NOTES:

- Plan a Worthy Wage Day event in your community. [See the Organize Community Action Events section for a description of this event and contact information.]

May 8: Mother's Day

ACTION NOTES:

- As Mother's Day falls on a Sunday, you might stage parent or child care provider appreciation events and collect parent stories to share with the media or your Members of Congress.
- Ask your local papers to run a feature article on the need for child care as part of their Mother's Day edition.

May 28 – June 5 (Senate): Congressional Recess

May 30 – June 19 (House): Congressional Recess

ACTION NOTES:

- Schedule district office visits or child care/Head Start program visits during congressional recesses.
- Be a vocal presence at Members' Town Hall meetings or other high profile events.
- Remember to engage multiple constituencies: parents, providers, business leaders, etc.
- Share parent stories as well as policy information to illustrate the need for increased investments in child care and Head Start.
- Be sure to leave your member with a packet of information that includes your talking points, fact sheets, and parent testimonials.

June 1: Stand For Children Day

ACTION NOTES:

- Plan a Stand for Children Day event in your community. [See Organize Community Action Events in this section for a description of this event and contact information.]

June 19: Father's Day

ACTION NOTES:

- As Father's Day falls on a Sunday, you might stage parent or child care provider appreciation events and collect parent stories to share with the media or your Members of Congress.
- Ask your local papers to run a feature article on the need for child care as part of their Father's Day edition.

July 2 – 10: Congressional Recess
(House & Senate)

ACTION NOTES:

- Schedule district office visits or child care/Head Start program visits during congressional recesses.
- Be a vocal presence at Members' Town Hall meetings or other high profile events.
- Remember to engage multiple constituencies: parents, providers, business leaders, etc.
- Share parent stories as well as policy information to illustrate the need for increased investments in child care and Head Start.
- Be sure to leave your member with a packet of information that includes your talking points, fact sheets, and parent testimonials.

August 1 – September 5: Congressional Recess
(House & Senate)

ACTION NOTES:

- Schedule district office visits or child care/Head Start program visits during congressional recesses.
- Be a vocal presence at Members' Town Hall meetings or other high profile events.
- Remember to engage multiple constituencies: parents, providers, business leaders, etc.
- Share parent stories as well as policy information to illustrate the need for increased investments in child care and Head Start.
- Be sure to leave your member with a packet of information that includes your talking points, fact sheets, and parent testimonials.

Late Aug – Early Sept: Back-To-School

ACTION NOTES:

- Back-to-school time is a great opportunity to remind your elected officials through calls or postcards of the need for quality, affordable child care. Volume is important! Generate as many calls or postcards as possible.

October 14 – 16: Children's Sabbaths

ACTION NOTES:

- Plan a Children's Sabbath event in your community. [See Organize Community Action Events in this section for a description of this event and contact information.]

Please check the following Web sites for changes in congressional recess dates:
<http://democraticwhip.house.gov/docuploads/WhipCalendarBW05.pdf>
http://www.senate.gov/legislative/resources/pdf/2005_calendar.pdf

Organize Community Action Events

Well-organized community action events are key to raising the visibility of child care and Head Start and gaining the attention of Congress and the media. The 2005 Action Calendar and the Checklist for Advocates in this section provide an overview of the key events during 2005.

Stand for Justice for Children and the Poor

CHOOSE TO LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD! TAKE ACTION!

If there was ever a time to stand up, speak out and act courageously to defend our children from fear and want, this is it. The very future and soul of America are at stake.

Visit the Children's Defense Fund's and the Children's Defense Fund's Action CouncilSM Web sites regularly for regularly scheduled Wednesdays in Washington and at Home[®] events. <http://www.childrensdefense.org>.

Be sure to sign up to receive CDF's Action Alerts at <http://www.capwiz.com/cdf/mlm>.

Program Visits for Members of Congress

(Throughout the Congressional Session)

For tips on how to set up a program visit for Members of Congress, see the Planning a Visit to Child Care/Head Start Programs document in the Work with Congress section or call the Early Childhood Development Division at (202) 628-8787.

The Children's Defense Fund also operates a program called Child Watch, in which volunteers and advocates in local coalitions across the country organize visits that move executives, clergy, legislators, and other community leaders out of their offices into the real world to see first-hand what is happening to children and families in their communities. Training and technical assistance are available. For more information, call (202) 662-8787.

Week of the Young Child (April 3-9)

The Week of the Young Child (WOYC) is an annual celebration each April sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The purpose of the Week of the Young Child is to focus public attention on the needs of young children and their families and to support the early childhood programs and services that meet those needs. For information and resources on organizing events for WOYC, visit NAEYC's Web site, or contact NAEYC's national headquarters:

National Association for the Education of Young Children
1509 16th St., N.W.
Washington, DC 20056
Alan Simpson, Communications Coordinator (202) 328-2605
<http://www.naeyc.org>

Worthy Wage Day (May 1)

Local communities across the country are encouraged to gather and celebrate child care providers by holding rallies, job-shadowing activities, and provider appreciation events. For more information on how to start a local worthy wage campaign or to locate the worthy wage campaign in your area, contact:

Center for the Child Care Workforce: A Project of the AFT Educational Foundation
555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001
Marci Young, Executive Director (202)-662-8005
<http://www.ccw.org>

Stand for Children Day (June 1)

Each year, Stand for Children Day provides local communities with the opportunity to raise awareness about the needs of children locally and nationwide. Stand for Children Day is a great way to get the attention of policymakers and demonstrate the widespread support for this important issue. It is also a good tool for educating the public, recruiting new supporters, and broadening state and local coalitions. For more information about Stand for Children Day and to locate existing activities near you, contact:

Stand for Children
1420 Columbia Rd., N.W., 3rd Floor
Washington, D.C. 20009
(800) 663-4032
<http://www.stand.org>

National Observance of Children's Sabbaths (October 14-16)

Each Fall, during the third week in October, the National Observance of Children's Sabbaths is celebrated. The Children's Sabbath is an opportunity for religious congregations to hold special worship services, education programs, and congregational activities to inspire people of faith to respond to children's needs through outreach and advocacy. To find out more, visit CDF's Web site at <http://www.childrensdefense.org> or call (202) 628-8787.

Advocacy 101

Speak up!

Use all of the tools available to you—phone calls, the media, letters, in-person visits—to inform legislators and the public about the problems children face. In communicating your message to elected officials and the public, be clear about what you are asking for. Make your message brief and to the point. Explain why the issue is important.

Call Your Elected Officials

Ask to speak to the aide who handles children's concerns. Identify yourself and tell the aide why you are calling. List your reasons for your support or opposition to a certain position and be clear about what you want your Senator or Representative to do.

- To find contact information for congressional, state, or local elected officials and the White House, visit capwiz.com/cdf/dbq/officials.
- The U.S. Capitol Switchboard can connect you to your U.S. Representative's and Senators' offices in Washington, D.C.: 202-224-3121.
- The government pages of your telephone directory have local phone numbers for your local, state, and federal elected officials.

Write Letters to Your Elected Officials and Newspapers

Many tips apply equally, whether you are writing to your elected official or a letter to the editor of a local or national newspaper. Your letter should be courteous and to the point. Your purpose for writing should be stated in the first paragraph. If you are writing on a particular piece of legislation, make sure to identify the bill number. Explain why the issue is important to you. Always include your complete name and mailing address.

Tips for letters to elected officials:

- Personalize, personalize, personalize! The more personal your letter, the more compelling it is. If you use a sample letter, always include your own story or experience to make the letter more personal.
- Due to heightened security, many U.S. Senators' and Representatives' offices continue to experience a delay in receiving mail at their Washington, D.C. offices. If possible, please consider sending your letter via email. The CDF Action Council Web site has several sample email letters on a variety of concerns at <http://www.cdfactioncouncil.org> that can be automatically directed to your elected officials. Remember to personalize!
- If you choose to mail your letter, you can find the mailing address of your elected officials at capwiz.com/cdf/dbq/officials.

Tips for Letters to the Editor of local or national newspapers:

- Keep it short. Most letters to the editor that make it to print are very short and direct. In a maximum of 250 words, identify the news story that you are referring to, identify the problem with the story or the way that it was covered, and then present your viewpoint and any specific examples to illustrate your position.
- Do a little research. Good letters to the editor reflect recent articles or opinion pieces that have appeared in that paper. If you can't relate your message to a recent article, you can refer to the current state of affairs for a particular issue and the need for the editors and the public to pay attention to it.

- Once you've located an article that you'd like to reply to, send your letter to the editor to that newspaper directly (the contact information is listed on the Editorial page). Or, to send multiple letters on-line to many media outlets on an issue that is particularly timely, visit capwiz.com/cdf/dbq/media to find sample letters to the media on a variety of concerns affecting children. (Don't forget to personalize the samples.)

Visit Your Elected Officials

Meeting personally with your elected official is often the best way to communicate your interest in children's concerns. Plan your visit carefully and **determine in advance what you want to achieve from the meeting**. You don't need to be a policy expert—your own experience can be a powerful testimony about the needs of children.

Tips for planning a visit or an event with your elected officials or their staff:

- Make an appointment to meet either in Washington, D.C. or in your local district office. Members are likely to be in their district offices when Congress is not in session.
- Do your homework. Review how your U.S. Senators and Representative have voted on children's concerns in the past. If you are bringing along other people, decide in advance the role each person will play in the meeting.
- On the day of the appointment be prompt and patient. Members have busy schedules, so be flexible if you are asked to wait or if you are asked to meet with an aide instead.
- Present your case. Show that what you are asking for is in the best interest of the elected official and other voters in the district or state. Bring materials to support your position. If the Representative or Senator asks you questions that you can't answer, simply admit you don't know and promise to get back to him or her.
- Keep your goal in mind and don't leave the meeting without making your request (e.g., a commitment to a position, an agreement to co-sponsor a bill).
- Follow up after the meeting. Get the name and phone number of the children's concerns aide. Send any additional materials the elected official requests. Send a thank you letter. Keep your elected official or his/her staff aware of any new developments.

Plan a Wednesdays in Washington or Wednesdays at Home® Event

To plan a visit with your elected officials or another Wednesdays in Washington or Wednesdays at Home® event, visit <http://www.childrensdefense.org> or contact CDF at (202) 628-8787.

Here are a few more ways to advocate for children...

Involve Others!

Enlist the help of your colleagues, neighbors, family, and community. Start small, with your personal networks. Then reach out to other potential allies to build your advocacy network.

Vote!

The voting booth is the most important place to hold your elected officials to their promises. Visit capwiz.com/cdf/election to find out about individuals running for election in your area and to register to vote.

Keep at it!

Successful advocates know that policy change can come slowly but persistence pays off. Celebrate and share your victories, even the small ones. **Every step forward counts!**

E-Advocacy

Email is an ever-growing method of communication, and more and more often we get our news and other vital information from the Internet. But how important are electronic communications to expressing an advocacy message or staying informed about a political issue? Clearly, email is an important tool for advocates to convey timely messages to Members of Congress. However, emailing Members is not the only aspect of staging an e-advocacy campaign. You can also communicate legislative and non-legislative alerts to your networks through your Web page and/or email listserv, you can make publications and fact sheets available on your Web site for public education purposes, and you can link to non-partisan voter education guides and biographical information about your elected officials and how they vote on important concerns. You can also link to local media outlets for submitting letters to the editor and op-eds.

It is critical for you to weigh your capacity as an individual or an organization to determine what you can accomplish in the way of e-advocacy communications. However, at every level you can use e-advocacy to quickly and inexpensively augment other traditional advocacy efforts. As with all types of advocacy, your central question is the same: Who is my target audience and how will I move them to act? Here are some general tips for developing and implementing an e-advocacy campaign, and some resources to help you find more detailed information.

E-Advocacy Quick Tips

*These tips are based on the experience of the Children's Defense Fund as well as Stateside Associates' "The Online Advocate" newsletter, E-Advocates' publication, The Net Effect, and publications of the Congress Online Project and the Pew Internet & American Life Project. (See E-advocacy Resources for full citations.)

Preparing

- Identify an individual (staff person or volunteer) to manage your e-advocacy efforts who is versed in policy (not just technology), and who can participate in strategy sessions and be a consistent contact for your network.
- Do an online advocacy audit before planning your campaign or modifying your Web site. Get a sense of what other sites that deal with concerns of child care and early education in your state offer (be sure to track supporters and dissenters to your position). What advocacy tools are available to advance the issue in your state? How can your organization's Web site fill some of the gaps?

Developing and maintaining your Web site

- Make sure your online content consistently reflects your organization's overall issue management strategy.
- Perform regular audits and maintenance to keep your site current and responsive to the political environment.
- Consider offering a message board on your Web site to communicate with grassroots and allies. Message boards, if strategically maintained, can also be an informative resource for the public, media representatives, and policymakers. (For more information on message boards, see "The Online Advocate" newsletter.)

- Remember to ask visitors to your site to do something! In addition to posting policy updates and newsletter archives, offer multiple opportunities to take action (e.g. send a letter to policy-makers, subscribe to an alert listserv, or link to another group's page that offers action functions.)
- Above all, make your Web site user-friendly. Minimize the number of "clicks" it takes to get to your policy/action section. Avoid jargon, and solicit feedback from your site's visitors to maximize ease of use.

Activating your network

- Promote your Web site so that your current network becomes accustomed to using it and checking it often, and so that you are able to expand your audience. Refer people to your Web site in all of your offline communications, press releases, interviews, and PSAs or other advertisements.
- Avoid over-taxing your field with constant "alerts," and coordinate mobilizations with coalition members to maximize efficiency. Don't neglect phone trees or other traditional communication methods.
- Reach out to non-traditional allies to access their listservs or message boards for alert postings. For more information on message boards, see E-Advocacy Resources.

Crafting email messages

- Train your field (as a part of any outreach or advocacy trainings you do) to write effective emails to targets by 1) only emailing their own elected officials, 2) personalizing sample messages and subject lines, 3) keeping messages short—two short paragraphs max, and on topic—stick to one issue per email, and 4) including a specific "ask" and indication that you intend to follow up.
- When using an online advocacy service to send messages to policymakers, stress to your site users how important it is to do all of the above. Keep your subject line blank and your sample message to a brief "ask" to encourage personalization. Include links to fact sheets, position statements, etc. in your sample messages.

Following up

- Thank e-advocacy participants on your Web site, through your listserv and through individual emails if possible (Online advocacy services can capture the email addresses of those sending emails from your site. Thank you emails are a good way to encourage ongoing involvement and subscription to your listserv or newsletter.)
- Send email alerts with links to favorable press on your issue to your listserv AND policymakers.
- Follow up press on your issue (favorable, unfavorable, neutral, or even marginally related) with a letter to the editor or op-ed that directs the debate in your favor. (Note: Online advocacy services, such as Capwiz, allow visitors to your site to post a letter to the editor or contact other media outlets from your Web site.)
- Encourage your network to follow up after you have asked your members to take action. Send a thank you (if they have acted favorably) or a reminder that the need continues to exist (if action has not taken place).
- Be sure to post progress and victories to your Web site as well as alerting your listserv and the media.

Special tips for state and local e-advocacy

- Check the National Conference of State Legislators' Web site, <http://www.ncsl.org>, for a Web capability checklist for your state officials.
- Utilize state-based or local online policy forums. Regularly monitor these forums to post pro-active comments or reply to opposing arguments. (For more information on message boards, see "The Online Advocate" newsletter.)

E-Advocacy Resources

Publications

Rosenblatt, Alan J., PhD, "The Online Advocate," monthly newsletter published by the consulting firm, Stateside Associates. Retrieved from <http://www.stateside.com/publications/onlineadvocate/index.shtml>.

Bennet, Daniel and Pam Fielding (E-Advocates), "The Net Effect: How Cyber Advocacy is Changing the Political Landscape," E-Advocates Press: Merrifield, VA, 1999. Retrieved from http://www.e-advocates.com/media_news.html

Congress Online Project, "Email Overload in Congress: Managing a Communications Crisis." Part of a project conducted by the Congressional Management Foundation and George Washington University. Retrieved from <http://www.congressonlineproject.org/email.html>, March 2002.

Congress Online Project, "Congress Online Special Report: Email Overload in Congress – Update." Part of a project conducted by the Congressional Management Foundation and George Washington University. Retrieved from <http://www.congressonlineproject.org/080702.html>, August 7, 2002.

Kingsley, Elizabeth, et al., "E-Advocacy for Nonprofits: The Law of Lobbying and Election-Related Activity on the Net," Alliance for Justice Publication: Washington, DC, 2000. Available Retrieved from <http://www.hp advisors.com/newcontent/100047.asp>

Larsen, Elena and Lee Rainie, "The Rise of the E-Citizen: How People Use Government Agencies' Websites," Part of the Pew Internet & American Life Project. Retrieved from http://www.pewinternet.org/report_display.asp?r=57, April 3, 2002.

Web sites

Online advocacy and Web site development:

Capitol Advantage (Capwiz services)
<http://www.capitoladvantage.com>

E-Advocates (Free chapter from The Net Effect available)
<http://www.e-advocates.com>

Network for Good (Helpful links to online advocacy sites)
<http://www.networkforgood.org/npo/advocacy/>

National advocacy organizations' sites:

Children's Defense Fund Action Council
<http://www.cdfactioncouncil.org>

Child Welfare League of America, Kid's Advocate online
<http://www.cwla.org/advocacy/kidsadvocate.htm>

National Association for the Education of Young Children, Children's Champions
www.naeyc.org/childrens_champions

National Head Start Association
<http://www.nhsa.org>

National Women's Law Center
<http://www.nwlc.org/takeaction.cfm?section=takeaction>

State organizations integrating E-advocacy components into their Web sites:

Utah Children (Salt Lake City, UT)
<http://www.utahchildren.org>

Early Education for All Campaign (Boston, MA)
<http://www.strategiesforchildren.org>

Center for Public Policy Priorities (Austin, TX)
<http://www.cppp.org>

Web sites for posting action alerts or generating “buzz”

Remember to look for message boards or discussion forums that target the audience you're trying to reach. Here are a few suggestions:

General:

- Working Assets: Act for Change – <http://www.workingforchange.com/activism/index.cfm>
- Connect for Kids – <http://www.connectforkids.org> (post by topic and by state!)

Parents:

- iVillage – <http://www.ivillage.com/boards> (See their In the News, Politics Today, and Feminism Today boards)
- Parents Magazine Online – <http://www.parents.com/community/index.jsp> (See their Working Moms board under Family Time)
- BabyCenter.com – <http://www.babycenter.com/bbs/#family> (See their Working Moms board under Parent Groups)
- Child Care/Early Education Field: NACCRRA – <http://www.earlychildhoodfocus.org>
- Lawmakers and staff (federal, state, and local): Members' own Web sites are best!
- State-based Policy Forums (These sites allow the public to post position statements, comment on impending policy decisions, etc., and are often frequented by policymakers and their staff):
e.g. Massachusetts – <http://www.policynetwork.org>

Remember...you can create your own message board, too!

Don't forget to review all rules and restrictions before posting to a site's message board, and look for local and state versions of the above sites.

BUILD SUPPORT

Building Support

To improve the quality and affordability of child care and after-school activities and to protect and expand Head Start, we will need to enlist the support of a range of committed individuals and organizations all around the country. Involving concerned members of your community is critical to spreading the word about the need for quality early education and school-age care and helping to get the job done. Disseminate widely the Checklist for Advocates in the Take Action section to your existing child care and early education networks and to the groups below. Work with these groups throughout the year to build support for child care and Head Start and to carry out advocacy projects. [See the Community Allies list in this section to find Web sites for many of these groups.]

Existing Child Care, Head Start, and School-Age Care Networks

Whether your community is a small town or a large city, think about ways to involve everyone you know both professionally and socially. There may be a staff person in your organization or other local organizations, who has a burgeoning interest in advocacy who wants to get involved. If you belong to a group that is part of a broader coalition, urge the coalition to make rejecting the President's budget and tax proposals, child care, and Head Start priorities for 2005. Use its fax network, newsletter, email lists and Web site to distribute information and updates on a regular basis. [See the Sample Newsletter in this section, and future alerts to be provided by the CDF Child Care Email Newsletter, for updates and advocacy opportunities to share with your networks.]

If you are primarily involved with the child care community, make sure that you reach out to local Head Start programs, your state Head Start Association, and your state Child Care/Head Start Collaboration Office to work together on these concerns. If you work mostly in Head Start, reach out to Child Care Resource and Referral groups, Family Child Care or Center-Based Child Care Associations, For-Profit Child Care Provider Associations and other child care groups in your state. Whether you are part of the child care or Head Start community, you should seek to include multi-issue children's organizations and coalitions, state Associations for the Education of Young Children, and other early education groups in your state.

Parents

Go places where you can reach parents—child care/Head Start programs, PTA meetings, school board meetings, and places of worship—and hand out information or talk informally about child care and Head Start. You will find that most parents, regardless of their income level, have had some experience with these concerns and understand the importance of quality, affordable care. Parents may be especially willing to lend a hand, because the outcome of your work could directly impact their lives. When parents share their experiences with the media and elected officials, it adds a face to the statistics, and can have a powerful impact on public opinion and policymakers. Many parents also find advocacy projects to be very empowering experiences, and welcome the opportunity to share their story.

Experts

If you are not a child development expert or an economist, you may want to contact members of the faculty at local colleges and universities to work with you on some of your advocacy projects. While it is critical to include parents, providers, and other “on the ground” experts when talking

with the media or Members of Congress, often the research perspective adds an added dimension, helping make the case for increased investments in child care and protecting and expanding Head Start. These experts are also good to include in projects such as op-eds and sign-on letters.

Business Leaders

Businesses have a vested interest in quality early childhood programs in the community. Early childhood programs help their current employees work, and build the basic skills of their future workforce. Businesses that have invested in family-friendly policies, ranging from on-site child care to flexible work hours and child care subsidies, are powerful allies in making the business case. They can not only attest to the impact of these policies on their bottom line and productivity, but can also share the negative impact that the lack of sufficient funding for state child care subsidies and other supports has on their workforce and overall business productivity and profitability.

Many businesses and Chambers of Commerce have paid lobbyists who work on behalf of their business interests. Engaging these lobbyists to work on the broad early childhood agenda maximizes both their business and political expertise. Contact the staff person assigned to work on Governmental Affairs or Community Relations at your local businesses or Chambers of Commerce.

Cultivating individual business champions to be spokespeople for early childhood investments has been an effective strategy in many communities. These champions are unlikely messengers, and often have political connections that can be helpful to early childhood concerns. Identifying potential allies can occur through working with business leaders who are already friendly to children's concerns through Board engagement on non-profits or the United Way, or through connections made through working with the Chamber of Commerce or other business groups such as Rotary or Kiwanis. Being clear in your message and having specific requests is crucial to effectively engaging business leaders.

Retirees/Students

Retirees are likely candidates for campaign work, particularly office work that needs to be done during the day. Retirees can be reached through a local senior citizens group, or through a local union. Students are another group that has a strong interest in assisting in campaign efforts. Often, both high school and college students can receive school credit for volunteering. Contact your local high school's government teacher or the local university's volunteer or community affairs office to get in touch with interested students.

Community Allies

Also explore meetings held by other community organizations. Who else in the community cares, why do they care, and how can you get them involved? You may not belong to the local seniors' or women's organizations or a labor union, but it's likely that you know someone who does. Approach these individuals about speaking on child care at a future meeting or helping you get onto the organization's agenda. A well-known community leader could also volunteer to support your campaign efforts by speaking to the press about child care.

Many organizations within the community care about whether or not children are in safe environments while their parents work. Parent, women's, senior citizen, and law enforcement organizations, congregations and religious groups, teacher organizations and education groups, neighborhood and civic groups, labor unions, and civil rights organizations all care about the well-being of children in the community.

Make a list of all of these groups and devise a plan for how you can get them involved in the campaign. [See the Community Allies list in this section.] Some groups will come because it is the right thing to do and others will come because you worked with them on their last campaign. Other organizations might join for a variety of reasons—such as publicity for their organization, shared resources, or the chance to strengthen relationships with other organizations. Recognize each group’s motive or interest for joining, and approach organizations accordingly.

Remember

Keep the following things in mind to make your outreach effort a success.

1. **Ask.** The best way to get someone to do something is to ask him or her personally.
2. **Be organized.** Know exactly what you need done and when. Have the project ready when help arrives. Give specific, reasonable projects.
3. **Be friendly and proactive.** When an individual or organization offers to help, be sure to actively encourage and support their involvement.
4. **Make everyone feel included.** While everyone may not be involved in day-to-day decision making and planning, it is important to explain the larger context of their efforts and keep everyone informed of the status of the campaign.
5. **Say thank you.** Thank everyone possible in person for his/her work. Also, write notes thanking them again for their assistance.
6. **Ask again.** Show appreciation for good work by assigning more responsibility.

Inform Supporters

Once you have a strong list of who you think is interested in working with you, begin talking with them about the need for quality child care and Head Start and what can be done to help. Send a letter to all of the organizations you have identified. In the letter, introduce yourself and invite them to a planning meeting. As mentioned above, you may have to approach some groups differently to convince them to lend support.

At the meeting, give an overview of the campaign and hand out materials which provide factual information and outline your goals: to pass legislation to improve the affordability, quality, and availability of child care and after-school activities and to protect and expand Head Start.

You could decide to have a formal coalition or keep the group informal, and continue to provide information and hold meetings as necessary. The next step is getting individuals and organizations to take action. Use your organization’s newsletter to keep your network updated and utilize email or phone trees for quick mobilization.

Mobilize supporters

Clearly some individuals and groups will be able to play a larger role in the campaign than others. You will have to rely on past experience and your own good judgment to know who can do what. Everyone can help with the following:

1. **Contact Members of Congress.** Every coalition partner should contact his/her Members of Congress about the need for quality, affordable child care and the importance of protecting and expanding Head Start. Distribute sample letters at meetings. Take paper and envelopes with you and encourage others to create letters that incorporate their own experiences. Volunteer to mail the signed letters.

2. **Recruit others.** Each organization should use their resources (newsletter, fax list, monthly mailing, email network, or Web site) to share your message with as many people as possible. Ask groups if they know of other organizations that should be involved in the effort.
3. **Participate in other campaign activities.** There are a variety of other activities described throughout this Organizer's Kit that organizations can participate in or help promote. If your coalition needs any additional assistance, please contact the Early Childhood Development Division at (202) 628-8787 or dhoffman@childrensdefense.org.

You can't do it all alone.

Again, the participation of committed organizations and individuals is critical to our work. Remember to disseminate widely the Checklist for Advocates provided with this kit and other campaign materials. As you already know, you can't do it all yourself. By cultivating relationships and encouraging the involvement of other individuals and organizations, you will be able to accomplish significant gains in improving the lives of children.

Community Allies

Early Childhood Groups:

- National Association for the Education of Young Children
<http://www.naeyc.org/affiliates/default.asp>
- Head Start Programs
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsb/hsweb/index.jsp>
- Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies
<http://www.childcareaware.org/en/findcare.html>
- United Way – Success by Six
<http://www.unitedway.org/uwsearch>
- National Child Care Information Center
<http://www.nccic.org>
- Zero to Three
<http://www.zerotothree.org>
- Children’s Defense Fund State and Local Offices:
 - Los Angeles and Oakland, CA <http://www.cdfca.org>
 - Haley Farm, Clinton, TN <http://www.haleyfarm.org>
 - St. Paul, MN <http://www.cdf-mn.org>
 - Albany and New York, NY <http://www.cdfny.org>
 - Columbus, OH <http://www.cdfohio.org>
 - Austin, Houston, & McAllen, TX <http://www.cdftexas.org>
 - Southern Region (601) 321-1966
 - Freedom Schools <http://www.freedomschools.org>

Service Organizations:

- Rotary Clubs
<http://www.rotary.org/services/clubs/index.html>
- Kiwanis
<http://www.kiwanis.org>

Women’s Groups:

- League of Women Voters
<http://www.lwv.org/about/state.html>
- National Council of Jewish Women
<http://www.ncjw.org>
- American Association of University Women
<http://www.aauw.org>

- National Council of Negro Women
<http://www.ncrw.org/digest/ncnw.htm>
- Jack & Jill
<http://www.jack-and-jill.org>
- Association of Junior Leagues
<http://www.ajli.org/contact.html>
- Business and Professional Women
<http://www.bpwusa.org/Affiliates.cfm>
- National Organization for Women
<http://www.now.org/chapters/states.html>
- Women's Faith Community Groups (United Methodist Women, Presbyterian Women, Sisterhood of Jewish Women)

Religious Institutions:

- Ecumenical Child Care Network
(773) 693-4040
- Industrial Areas Foundation
<http://www.industrialareasfoundation.org>
- Local/Community religious institutions

Business Organizations/Leaders:

- Chambers of Commerce
http://www.uschamber.org/chambers/chamber_directory.asp
- Society for Human Resource Management
<http://www.shrm.org/chapmemgrps>
- National Council of Latino Executives
<http://www.cwla.org/programs/cle>
- National Association of Manufacturers
<http://www.nam.org>
- Local Business Leaders

Unions:

- General Information
<http://www.laborproject.org>
<http://www.unions.org>
- American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees
<http://www.afscme.org/about/council/index.html>
- Coalition of Labor Union Women
<http://www.cluw.org/localchapters.org>
- AFL-CIO
<http://www.aflcio.org/aboutunions/unions>

- Service Employee International Union
<http://www.seiu.org/lookup>
- United Auto Workers
<http://www.uaw.org/about/where/uawmap.html>

Educational Organizations:

- Community Colleges
<http://www.aacc.nche.edu>
- Elementary School Principals
<http://www.naesp.org>
- Kindergarten/Elementary Teachers
<http://www.nea.org>
<http://www.aft.org/teachers>
- National Association of State Boards of Education Student Organizations
http://www.nasbe.org/SEA_Links/SEA_Links.html
- Local Colleges & Universities (Service Learning, Community Partnerships, etc.)
- Local College Presidents

Senior Citizen's Groups:

- AARP
<http://www.aarp.org/statepages/home.html>
- Alliance for Retired Americans
<http://www.retiredamericans.org>
- Gray Panthers
<http://www.graypanthers.org>

State and Local Government:

- National Conference of State Legislators
<http://www.ncsl.org/public/sitesleg.htm>
- National Association of Counties
<http://www.naco.org/counties/index.cfm>
- Conference of Mayors
http://www.usmayors.org/uscm/meet_mayors

Other:

- Fight Crime, Invest in Kids
<http://www.fightcrime.org>
- YWCA
<http://www.ywca.org>

- YMCA
<http://www.ymca.net>
- American Academy of Pediatrics
www.aap.org/bpi/Chapters.html
- Healthy Child Care America
<http://www.aap.org/advocacy.html>
- RESULTS
<http://www.resultsusa.org>
- US Action
<http://www.usaction.org/affiliates/php>
- Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids
<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org>
- Mexican American Legal
<http://www.maldef.org/about/offices.cfm>
- Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF)
<http://www.prldef.org>
- National Council of La Raza
<http://www.nclr.org>

Sample Newsletter Article

Please feel free to use the following sample in your organization's newsletter to help the field prepare to take action when Congress considers the federal budget in March and early April. For future newsletter updates, refer to the CDF Child Care Email Newsletter.

The President's budget includes a long list of cuts, freezes, and new block grants in children's programs such as child care, Head Start, Medicaid, and child welfare.

Obviously, we must mobilize against all of these individual proposals. However, as a community working for children and families, our first test will come early this month when Congress votes to approve or reject the President's budget and tax plan. While they will have a separate vote on taxes later on in the year, their approval of the plan in the budget would make it exceedingly difficult to defeat the President's tax plan later in the session.

This vote is so crucial because it will decide the amount of funding available to support low-income families and children for decades to come. Congress will not only be debating a plan that provides the majority of benefits to wealthy individuals but also one that guarantees that there will be significantly less revenue coming in to the federal government for the foreseeable future. As a result, federal funding for children's programs would be jeopardized. Given growing state deficits, it is not likely that states will fill in the gap. It is more likely that states will be forced to make even deeper cuts to programs that help children and families. Many believe that the Administration's budget and tax proposals have been developed precisely to limit the role of the federal government especially as it relates to meeting the needs of low-income families and children.

In addition to deep tax cuts that would place the burden of a huge deficit squarely on our children, President Bush has urged Congress to quickly pass legislation reauthorizing the federal welfare program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), in line with his recommendations from last year—namely, increasing the work requirement for parents receiving TANF to 40 hours a week and requiring a higher percentage of the caseload to work while offering not one dime in increased funding for child care. In fact, 300,000 families would lose child care assistance by 2009 under the President's proposal for child care. This proposal is even more egregious this year, as states are looking at huge budget deficits and families face tough economic times of their own.

On the Head Start front, the President's budget contains an untested, radical proposal to give nine states more leeway to shape Head Start programs while providing no increase in funding. The proposal would replace federal grants in nine states, provided directly to community organizations with state control of the program, and would eliminate the performance standards that are the core of the program's success. Such a change would gamble the futures of the nearly one million children who currently participate in Head Start.

Meanwhile, the ten-year cost for one item in the President's newest tax plan—the elimination of taxation on dividends paid to individuals, at a cost of \$364 billion over ten years—would more than cover the cost of fully funding Head Start and child care for every eligible child who needs it.

Congress should reject these damaging tax cuts that disproportionately benefit the wealthy. Rather, the Child Care and Development Block Grant should be increased to allow over one million more children to receive child care assistance and to bolster the quality of care that children receive. Building on its successful record, Head Start should be expanded—not dismantled—and fully funded with continued efforts to further strengthen its quality.

In order to pass a budget that benefits children and not millionaires, Congress—our Senators especially—must hear from constituents who can communicate the importance of these programs for the children in our state. We must make it clear that we are not willing to pay for a tax cut with our children’s futures.

Call, write, or email Senator _____ and Senator _____ today!

[Insert Senators’ contact information here.]

WORK WITH CONGRESS

Contacting and Meeting with Your Members of Congress

Contacting Your Members of Congress

It is very important to be in regular contact with your Members of Congress. To identify your Members and Senators, call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121 or visit <http://www.capwiz.com/cdf/dbq/officials> on the Web.

Please call and introduce (or reintroduce) yourself to the staff people who work on child care and Head Start. Clearly explain why you are contacting the Member or Senator and why child care and Head Start are important to you and your community. [See the Key Talking Points in the Know the Concerns section to help develop your message.] Be sure to provide staff with information on how to contact you, including your full name and address. Regular communication with your Members and Senators will make them more responsive to your requests.

Here are some helpful tips on contacting your Members of Congress:

- **Mail**

Members of Congress closely track the number of letters they receive on a particular issue. The more personal the letter, the more compelling it is. If you use a sample letter, always include your own story or experience to make the letter more personal. Be sure to include your complete name and mailing address, so your Member or Senator can respond. To reach U.S. Representatives, mail to: The Honorable _____, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515. To reach U.S. Senators, mail to: The Honorable _____, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510. [See sample sign-on and individual letters in this section.]

- **Phone**

The U.S. Capitol Switchboard, at (202) 224-3121, connects callers with their Representatives and Senators. Every Member of Congress has a direct line to their office, as well as numbers for local offices. Look in the government pages of your phone book to find the local number for your Senators and Representative. The local office can give you the Washington, D.C., office number and staff contact names.

- **Fax**

The fax machine is rarely the most effective way to contact your Member about an issue, but sometimes it may be the best way to quickly get information to the Member and the staff before a vote. For example, if you have been circulating a sign-on letter on an issue that is up for a vote, use the fax machine to get the most current version to the Member's office. (Always follow up with an original in the mail and a phone call to alert them to the arrival of an urgent fax). Also, if a favorable article, letter to the editor, or op-ed appears in your local paper on an issue you are concerned about, fax it to your Members with a brief message included.

- **Email**

Email provides a fast and simple way to deliver your message to a Member in a brief and concise way. While you can ask a staff person in the office for the email address, an even easier way to find the address is on the Web. With most sites, you can email a Member directly from their Web page. Simply type in your message, sign your name and address, and send it off to your Member or Senator. The U.S. Senate has a Web site, <http://www.senate.gov>, as does the House of Representatives, <http://www.house.gov>.

In addition, the CDF Action Council Legislative Action Center Web site, capwiz.com/cdf, allows you to enter your zip code to locate your Members of Congress. Store the email addresses and Web sites in your files so you can easily access them when urgent action is needed. [See the E-Advocacy document in the Take Action Section for more tips on using the Web for advocacy.]

Meeting with Your Elected Officials

One of the best ways to sway your Members of Congress is to meet with them in person. These visits can take place in the Washington, D.C., office or the district office. A personal visit gets your Member's attention and shows your strong support for the issue. Such meetings take advance planning and preparation. The better prepared you are, the more receptive Congressional offices will be to your concerns and requests.

- **Schedule a Meeting**

Members of Congress return to their home state often throughout the year. [See the 2005 Community Action Calendar in the Take Action section for congressional recess dates.] The congressional schedule is also available from either the local or Washington, D.C., office. Several weeks before your Representative or Senators plan to travel home, request a meeting in writing with his/her office. If you plan to lobby an elected official about specific legislation, schedule a meeting before any action is taken in Congress. Clearly state what issue you would like to visit about and who else will be participating in the meeting. Follow up with the staff person responsible for the Member or Senator's schedule to arrange a specific date and time. Of course, meetings can also take place in Washington, D.C. If you are planning a trip to Washington, be sure to contact your Representative and Senators in advance to make an appointment.

- **Plan Ahead**

Once you have a meeting scheduled, begin preparing both participants and materials to ensure the meeting goes smoothly. The participants should be representative of the community and of the broad coalition actively working on child care and Head Start. Preparing for a face-to-face meeting may require a few preparatory meetings to assign tasks and ensure everyone participating is delivering the same message.

Set an agenda at the first meeting. Think about what topics need to be covered, who can most effectively deliver the message, and who can answer tough questions. Divide up the agenda and decide what materials need to be prepared.

- **Do Your Homework**

Appoint one person to research the Member's voting record and positions. This way you can know how to best present your case for supporting child care and Head Start. Research both sides of the issue and know your opposition's arguments. Find out about recent legislation that has been introduced, where it is in the legislative process, and the bill's co-sponsors, supporters, and opponents. Check for alerts from the Children's Defense Fund Child Care email newsletter, visit the CDF Action Council Web site: <http://www.cdfactioncouncil.org>, or contact the Early Childhood Development Division at (202) 628-8787 to stay up-to-date on federal action.

- **Personalize the Issue**

Assign a person to compile information about child care and Head Start in your community. Collect stories about the need for quality, affordable child care and Head Start. Real family stories are a powerful tool. Use local or state statistics. Let your Members of Congress know how the issue affects real children, families, and other constituents.

- **Present Your Case**

The day of the meeting, hold a preparatory meeting to once again make sure everyone feels comfortable with their role and to update the group on any recent developments. Arrive on time for the meeting and be confident. Remember, your Representative and Senators are elected to serve you and they need to hear from their constituents—it's their job.

A few things to keep in mind: If your Member or Senator strongly disagrees with your point of view, simply ask him/her to look over the materials you prepared and to consider your point of view. Try to search for common ground. Be specific about what you want him/her to do. Try to keep your group on track and prompt those assigned to make the point for the group. Stay positive. If your Member or Senator asks you questions you don't have the answers to, simply say you will look into the issue and reply back right away. Leave a fact sheet and other materials reinforcing your position with him/her and the appropriate staff person.

- **Follow Up**

After the meeting, get together with the group to discuss the concerns raised by the meeting and to thank everyone for participating. If necessary, assign follow-up tasks such as sending a thank you note, providing additional materials, and answering specific questions. Send the thank you note right away and forward other materials as soon as possible. Continue to keep your Members of Congress and their staff informed about new developments in the community, as well as action you would like him/her to take in Washington.

Planning a Program Visit to Child Care and Head Start Programs

A congressional recess is a perfect opportunity to bring the message about child care and Head Start to your Members of Congress while they are visiting their home district. While it is valuable to secure time on your representative's calendar for an office meeting, you can strengthen your case by inviting your representative to visit a local program as well. The concept behind a site visit is a simple one: **Seeing is believing**. Site visits (such as the Children's Defense Fund's Child Watch® Visitation Program*) allow elected officials and other community leaders to look into a child's eyes and see concerns first-hand. They provide an opportunity for your elected officials to move out of their legislative chambers and into the world of the real children and families whose lives they affect every day with their decisions. The following are some tips and guiding principles that will help you to craft an effective visit.

Scheduling

- Plan the visit to maximize attendance and attention. Legislators are not likely to have much more than an hour for a visit when home for a short recess, so plan according to their scheduling constraints. You may also find that the morning hours afford more scheduling flexibility for your Members of Congress.
- You can help people who are not used to young children feel more comfortable if they have a specific focus for the visit. Trying to get adults to interact with children during free time is difficult, and the children may not be very welcoming if you are interrupting their "work." Send a letter from the children of the program site inviting legislators to share 30 minutes with the children for a light breakfast. Legislators are likely to stay longer if they wish, but keep the official invitation to 30 minutes.

What Makes a Good Site?

It is critical to select a site that best illustrates the core message you want to relay to your legislator.

Avoid intrusiveness by selecting a site that can comfortably accommodate the size of your group. What makes a good site?

- Programmatically sound services. Select a site that is respected in the field so that it is beyond the reproach of a critical eye.
- Opportunity to interact with children. Seeing children's faces gives the greatest urgency to arguments for policies that can improve their lives.
- Articulate, enthusiastic, personable directors. An interesting site quickly can become an awful visit if the program director does not do a good job explaining the program, answering questions, and addressing policy concerns.
- Programs serving a mix of children. Make an effort to visit programs that serve a diverse group of children. This will avoid generalizations about services only being needed by one group of people.

Activity

- Attendees can be brought closer to the issue through interactive experiences. For example, sitting in little chairs with children in a structured time (such as breakfast) is more effective, and visitors can always start a conversation with children about the food.
- If all visitors cannot be seated with the children at breakfast, take part of the group on a tour of the facility before bringing them back to interact with the children.

Message

- All planning for a site visit must be firmly rooted in a clear and concise message. It is critical to develop a uniform message that transcends any single site, so that your Member walks away with a greater understanding about local or state child care and Head Start needs, not just a specific opinion about one program they visited.
- Don't plan a big presentation or focus a lot of time on talking. Instead, let visitors know you can answer any questions they have, as they are likely to ask questions when they arrive and when they leave.
- Give legislators written materials as they leave, or while taking them on a tour. Keep materials brief—i.e., a brochure about the program and a one-page fact sheet that highlights the message you want the legislator to take away.
- What happens when concerns are raised that you did not expect? Always neutralize potentially negative or distracting concerns by connecting back to the message of the day. All written materials and site directors must be prepared in advance to “be on message” with the central theme of the day to make sure the focus stays where it is most needed. Do your homework and know your attendees and their concerns.
- Thank participants for taking the time to visit and thank them for their past support, if appropriate.

Follow Up

- It is important to incorporate visits by local officials, business leaders, and community leaders as part of a regular routine. Children and staff can begin to get comfortable with “dignitaries” visiting and you will learn how to make the visits less stressful for all.
- The important element in visits with legislators is to establish a constructive connection with you and the program that will continue in the future. This should not be a one-time event.
- In order to maximize effectiveness, there should be a plan as to how this site visit fits into a more extensive advocacy agenda. The impressions and experiences felt during a site visit should be revisited at a time when your Member is called upon to show leadership for child care.
- Please call the Children's Defense Fund for more information about the **Child Watch® Visitation Program** at (202) 628-8787. Child Watch is a national initiative that combines on-site visits, briefings, written background materials, and experiential activities to provide a complete picture of what is happening to children and families in our communities. The Child Watch staff is able to provide technical assistance, training, and networking opportunities.

Lobbying Rules for Tax-Exempt Nonprofits

Adapted from: *An Advocate's Guide to Lobbying and Political Activity for Nonprofits*,
Children's Defense Fund

Tax-exempt, private, nonprofit charities can spend some of their resources lobbying Members of Congress and state legislatures.

To follow is a short, simplified guide for tax-exempt charities whose activities include legislative advocacy by Members, staff, or clients. Lobbying is any attempt to influence federal, state, or local legislation, either by 1) direct lobbying—contacting any Members of a legislature, legislative staff or government employee to persuade her/him to influence legislation, or 2) grassroots lobbying—attempting to get the public to act on behalf of particular legislation. The following rules are federal regulations that apply to groups that have the benefit of tax exemption under Section 501(c)(3) of the federal tax code.

Publicly-funded programs also must consider the additional, very strict limitations that generally bar the use of public funds to lobby Members of Congress or state legislatures. Also, 501(c)(3)s may not conduct any partisan political (election) campaign activities. For more detailed information about federal tax and program requirements, see the Alliance for Justice publications: “Being a Player: A Guide to the IRS Lobbying Regulations for Advocacy Charities” and “E-Advocacy for Nonprofits: The Law of Lobbying and Election-Related Activity on the Net.” You can order both on the Alliance for Justice Web site: <http://www.afj.org>. Be sure to check state laws in your own state. Some states have no additional restrictions on lobbying by charitable organizations, but others do.

Within reasonable limits, your organization can:

- Visit your Members of Congress, state legislators, and local elected officials.
- Write your Members of Congress, state legislature, and local elected officials on organization letterhead.
- Call long distance at agency expense.
- Take a carload of people to meet a legislator or staff and get mileage paid by the agency.
- Engage in other activities generally considered lobbying or grassroots lobbying.

The limits are:

- Without filing any special forms, you are allowed to do some lobbying as long as it is not substantial, generally up to about 5 percent, which permits most groups to do all the lobbying they need and want to do. Beyond that amount, small agencies can spend up to 15 percent to 20 percent of the agency's total resources on lobbying, if the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is informed in advance and certain simple forms are filed. As the size of the organization's budget grows beyond \$1 million per year, the 15 percent to 20 percent figure decreases according to the formula described in *An Advocate's Guide to Lobbying and Political Activity for Nonprofits*.
- There is a special, smaller limit on grassroots lobbying—lobbying to get the general public to contact legislators and ask them to act on a specific bill. It is capped at one-fourth of your overall lobbying limit.
- Lobbying activities must fall within the organization's general charitable or civic purposes.

Under IRS rules, the following activities are not considered lobbying and no limits apply. You can:

- Inform your membership, if you are a membership organization, of legislative concerns critical to the goals of the agency and state your positions on them. Telling members to write Congress, state legislators, or local elected officials, however, is considered lobbying.
- Invite legislators or their staffs to visit your program to learn about your work.
- Research and conduct nonpartisan analyses of legislation and state your position on such concerns in the analysis, as long as you give complete information so that people can draw their own conclusions.
- Attend or conduct workshops that provide general information on how to lobby.
- Respond to official written requests by legislative bodies for advice or testimony.

As a private citizen, you can:

- Work on legislative concerns during lunch hours or after work. In public you should state explicitly that you are speaking as a private citizen, although your argument can be based partly on your experience with the agency.
- Put bumper stickers on your personal car even if it is used for business.
- Participate on your own time in another group that actively discusses politics and concerns and lobby in that group's name.

What happens if an agency breaks the rules?

The IRS can always audit your organization to see if you are spending too large a portion of your funds on lobbying activities. If the IRS substantiates such overspending and your agency's limit is the 5 percent for groups that do not elect to file their expenses, it can rescind your tax-exempt status. If this happens, contributions to your agency would no longer be tax-deductible. If it substantiates such overspending and your agency's limit is based on the IRS formula for filing groups, the IRS can levy a 25 percent tax on the money spent above the limit. If it determines that your agency has exceeded the limits by a substantial amount, that is, by an average of 50 percent over four years of expenditures, the IRS can rescind your tax-exempt status.

Budget and Appropriations Process Basics

Overview

The federal budget process takes about nine months to complete, in some years longer. First, the President submits his budget to Congress in the beginning of February. Second, the Congress passes a budget resolution, which sets targets for other committees to follow in making their spending or tax decisions. (The budget resolution is a blueprint for the Congress and is not a law, therefore, the budget resolution does not go to the President for his signature). Third, Congress passes appropriations bills to provide funding for federal programs, which require annual approval. Fourth, if the budget resolution includes savings from programs or decreases/increases revenues (taxes), then Congress tries to meet budget resolution targets by passing a reconciliation bill. The President can always alter the process by vetoing appropriations bills or the reconciliation bill. To override a veto, each chamber must pass the bill again by a two-thirds majority, or begin again with a new bill.

If Congress does not complete action on all 13 appropriations bills by the end of the fiscal year (September 30th), Congress must pass a continuing resolution (CR) to keep the federal government open and federal programs operating. When the federal budget process has been completed, the nation has its fiscal priorities for the year. Obviously, many important fiscal decisions are made at the state and local levels regarding how federal funds are spent. Advocates need to become knowledgeable about how budget decisions are made at all three levels of government.

President's Budget

On the first Monday in February the President submits a budget to Congress. It covers everything from spending recommendations for federal programs in every agency to proposed tax cuts or tax increases. Generally, both the House and Senate Budget Committees hold hearings on the President's proposals, hearings that look at the overall budget impact. Other hearings are held by committees with jurisdiction over the subject matter; for example, the Senate Finance Committee and House Ways & Means Committee with jurisdiction over taxes, Social Security, welfare spending, and some child care, among other concerns, may hold hearings on related proposals.

Budget Resolution

The first step by Congress to put together a budget is to pass a budget resolution, which is the blueprint for committees to follow in developing their spending, program savings, and tax proposals. The budget resolution does not require the President's signature and does not become law. It is passed by the House and the Senate and serves as an internal budget management tool for Congress.

What is a budget resolution? Since a budget resolution never becomes law, you're probably wondering what is in it that makes it a management tool for Congress. The budget resolution sets broad targets for committees to follow. It says how much generally will be spent for all areas of the federal budget (i.e., education, defense, foreign aid, health and human services, etc.). It also makes assumptions—for example, child care spending will be increased by 5 percent or some other program will be cut or eliminated. When the budget resolution includes cuts to be made in mandatory programs (programs like Medicare and Medicaid) or increases or decreases in tax revenue, the resolution includes "reconciliation" instructions to the committees with jurisdiction over those programs or tax policy

telling them to meet targets for program savings or revenue changes. The budget resolution is a management tool because it sets targets, but the actual decisions within the targets will be made by various committees later in the budget process (i.e., the budget resolution may set a \$100 billion target for tax relief, but the Senate Finance Committee and House Ways & Means Committee will determine exactly how the target is reached—across the board tax relief, separate specific proposals like reducing the marriage penalty or increasing the earned income tax credit, etc.).

The budget resolution is drafted by the House and Senate Budget Committee chairmen and is referred to as the chairman's mark. It's possible for both chairmen to come up with the same plan, but it's not likely. Once the chairmen draft their plans, the full membership of the House and Senate Budget Committees must approve them. When committees meet to consider the budget plan, it's called a "mark-up," which literally refers to a meeting of the committee members to make changes to the proposed resolution (or document or chairman's mark). Members who disagree with the chairman's plan offer amendments to modify it or add new items. Once all amendments are completed, there is a vote on the final package. If approved, the budget resolution is then "reported" to the full Senate. In the House, the budget resolution is reported out, but is sent to the House Rules Committee before it goes to the House floor for all Members to debate it.

In the Senate, most bills are debated until there are no more amendments. The budget resolution is subject to special rules: There is a 50-hour overall time limitation and all amendments must be related to the budget. At the end of the time limit, if there are amendments remaining that have not been debated and Members still want a vote on their amendment, then votes are stacked to occur right after each other, generally with one minute for the proponents and one minute for the opponents to quickly sum up the arguments for and against the amendment. Sometimes there can be 20 or more of these amendments and the sequence of voting is sometimes referred to as a "vote-a-rama." It sounds silly to have these votes with such little time for consideration, but many times Members feel that they have important amendments and time does not allow debate. Therefore, they want a public record of the vote and the only way to achieve that is to get in the list of amendments voted on after all time (the 50 hours of debate) has expired.

The House Rules Committee determines the amendments and duration of debate for each House bill (or resolution). Unlike the Senate where any Member can offer an amendment, in the House the Rules Committee decides what amendments will be considered, the length of time that each amendment will be considered, and generally the overall amount of time that will be spent considering any bill or resolution. Because the majority party controls the Rules Committee, generally the majority party can gain leverage over the process by writing a rule that is favorable to a measure passing.

Once the House and Senate have each passed a budget resolution, the differences in the two measures must be worked out so that each chamber can pass the same measure. To hammer out the differences, House and Senate Members are appointed to a special conference committee that meets to negotiate a final budget resolution. Hence, the final version is called the budget resolution conference report.

Appropriations Bills

Appropriations bills are spending bills that actually provide funding for federal programs in compliance with the broad spending targets included in the budget resolution. Once the budget resolution is adopted, there is a finite amount of money available to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees. Each chamber's Appropriations Committee has 13 subcommittees divided by subject. A certain amount of spending called for under the budget resolution is given to the full Appropriations

Committees and then further subdivided to each of the 13 subcommittees. In effect, this gives each subcommittee a limited amount of money to further divide among competing programs within its jurisdiction.

That is why it is so hard to increase funds for a program like child care and reduce funds simultaneously from a Defense Department program like the F-22 fighter jet or the B1 bomber. These programs are split in different subcommittees. Child care comes under the Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education (Labor/HHS) funding, and the F-22 and B1 bomber come under the Defense Subcommittee. By the time the process reaches the appropriations point, child care competes against other domestic programs under Labor/HHS, and all defense programs compete against each other. Again, you see the importance of the budget resolution. The time to shift priorities between defense and domestic spending is during consideration of the budget resolution when broad spending targets are set. Otherwise, proponents of some programs completely lose out because the budget resolution locks in the aggregate levels of spending for each broad area.

Each of the 13 Appropriations subcommittees holds hearings on its subject matter and holds a mark-up to approve and report to the full committee individual subcommittee bills. The full committee meets to modify or approve the subcommittee bills. The full Senate and full House consider each bill (the Constitution requires the House to pass appropriations bills first). In both chambers, Members can offer amendments. Once the House and Senate have passed appropriations bills, conference committees are appointed for each bill to work out the differences. Finally, both the House and the Senate agree to a conference report on each appropriations bill and individually the bills are sent to the President for his signature so that they become law.

Reconciliation

The reconciliation bill is generally a savings bill, a measure that incorporates savings that were called for (or “reconciled”) under the budget resolution. The budget resolution assumes savings in various areas and sometimes assumes tax cuts or increases. These instructions from the budget resolution are given to the committees of jurisdiction. The committees then must find savings (i.e., a reduction in the interest rate subsidy on student loans would result in savings from that program) or must provide tax cuts. (The Senate Finance Committee and House Ways & Means Committee determine the exact method of providing tax cuts.) As each committee meets its instructions under the budget resolution, its actions are reported or sent to the Senate or House Budget Committee. The House and Senate Budget Committees bundle all their respective committee recommendations into one bill called the reconciliation bill.

In the Senate, the reconciliation bill is subject to special rules: 20 hours of debate are allowed and amendments must be related to the content or purpose of the reconciliation bill. Also, to make the reconciliation bill hard to block, in the Senate the bill cannot be filibustered. (A filibuster is a delaying tactic used by opponents of a measure to get more time to work out problems or delay consideration of a measure. A filibuster can only be stopped by 60 votes). In the House, the Rules Committee determines the procedure. Ultimately, a conference committee will meet to work out the differences.

The final reconciliation bill, which is the reconciliation conference report, must be signed by the President to become law.

Continuing Resolution

The fiscal year begins on October 1st. Sometimes it is not possible to complete action on all of the appropriations bills before October 1st. In this case, the House and Senate need to approve a continuing resolution also referred to as a “CR.” A CR keeps federal programs operating until regular appropriations bills are enacted. You may remember that the government actually shut down in 1995 when the various appropriations bills had not been passed and Congress was not able to pass a CR. (A CR can be amended, and filibustered, and if the two chambers pass different versions, a conference committee must work out the differences).

Generally, while a CR is in place, Congress works to complete action on any appropriations bills left outstanding. Sometimes, action happens quickly and appropriations bills are sent individually to the President. At times, the remaining appropriations bills are consolidated into one bill to further expedite the process. At this point, the mega-measure may be called an “omnibus” appropriations bill.

Budget & Appropriations Timetable: 2005

February	House & Senate Appropriations Committees and House and Senate Budget Committees hold hearings on the President's budget
March-April	<p>Congress prepares its budget resolution. The resolution will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • total for discretionary spending • targets for revenues and entitlement spending • “reconciliation” instructions to cut entitlements and/or taxes <p>(This could slip until later in the spring if Congress has difficulty getting consensus.)</p> <p>Congress could also pass stand-alone budget process bills that could include entitlement caps, domestic discretionary caps, and pay-go requirements that could require that program improvements be paid for by cuts in programs and could require that tax cuts be accompanied by revenue increases.</p>
April 15 May June July	<p>Congressional Recess from March 19-April 4</p> <p>Deadline for House-Senate Budget Resolution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriations process starts • Budget Reconciliation legislation that could include cuts in entitlement programs (such as Medicaid) and program reforms (Medicaid and Child Welfare) such as converting programs to block grants <p>Congressional Recess from May 28-June 6 Congressional Recess from July 2-July 10</p>
August	Congressional Recess from July 30-September 5
September October November	<p>Appropriations bills to be complete by beginning of 2006 Fiscal Year* (which begins October 1, 2005)</p> <p>Completion of Reconciliation legislation if not completed before the August recess</p>
December	Congressional Recess (no firm date set)

[***Note:** Theoretically, all appropriations bills must be approved before October 1st, the beginning of the new fiscal year. If that is not possible, “stopgap” measures (called “Continuing Resolutions”) are enacted to continue funding until legislation for the year is passed.]

How a Bill Becomes a Law

Introduction of a Bill

Any Member of Congress can introduce a “bill” and a bill can be introduced in either the House or Senate. Bills can be considered first by either the House or the Senate, but all spending and tax bills must originate in the House. Once a bill is “introduced,” the bill is assigned a bill number. In the House, the bill begins with “H.R.” In the Senate, the bill begins with “S.” In most cases, the bill is referred to one or more committees for consideration. Every year, thousands of bills are introduced in the House and Senate. Yet, few bills actually become law. Sometimes the text of a bill may be offered as an amendment to a pending bill either in committee or on the floor during debate. The measure may then become part of a larger bill enacted into law.

Committee Consideration

Referral

After a bill is introduced it is referred to one or more committees with jurisdiction over the subject matter of the bill. The bill can then be considered by the committee(s) that received the referral. In the House, many bills are first considered by a subcommittee. In the Senate, some committees do not draft and approve bills at the subcommittee level.

Hearings

Committee and subcommittee chairs schedule and hold hearings throughout the year, often on legislation that has been referred to their committee or subcommittee. At congressional hearings, testimony is given in order to gather information and opinions on proposed legislation.

Mark-up

After hearings have been held, the committee or subcommittee chair will hold a meeting to consider amending and passing legislation. This meeting is called a “mark-up.” At the “mark-up,” members of the committee or subcommittee offer amendments to the bill and at the end of the mark-up, members vote to approve or not approve the bill. Once a bill is approved at the subcommittee or full committee level, a subcommittee or full committee report is filed. The committee report provides an overview of the bill, the need for the bill, how it differs from current law, the amendments that were voted on, and comments from the members of the committee or subcommittee. If a bill has been “marked-up” by a subcommittee, the same process is repeated at the full committee level.

House and Senate Consideration

Once a bill has been approved, or “reported out” of committee, the bill can then be considered by the full House if the bill was approved by a House committee, or the full Senate if the bill was approved by a Senate committee.

House

Prior to full House consideration, the Rules Committee establishes how much time is allotted for debate on the bill on the House floor and what amendments may be offered. Amendments not adopted in committee during the mark-up can be offered on the House floor with the consent of the Rules Committee. The Rules Committee also can allow new amendments to be offered. The Rules Committee also can keep any amendments from being offered on the House floor.

The House leadership decides when a bill can be considered on the House floor. If a bill is not controversial or is expected to be approved by a wide margin, a bill may be considered, at the discretion of the leadership, under an expedited procedure called “suspension of the rules.” Under this procedure, debate is limited to a short time, no amendments can be offered, and often the measure passes on a voice vote (meaning there is no recorded roll call vote or record of how individual Members voted). For a measure to pass “under suspension,” it must be approved by a two-thirds vote. Major or controversial bills, however, are considered on the House floor under “regular order” and can receive larger blocks of time for debate. The House first considers the “rule” on the bill (the amount of time allotted for debate and the amendments that can be offered), then considers amendments to the bill, and then considers the bill itself.

Senate

The Senate leadership decides when a bill will be considered on the Senate floor and decides, with the consent of both party leaders, approximately how much time will be allowed for debate on legislation. While the Senate does not have a Rules Committee that sets the rules under which every bill will be considered on the Senate floor, there are overall operating rules that guide consideration of legislation. In general, the Senate operates by consent. For a bill to be considered on the Senate floor, the Majority Leader asks for consent to proceed to a bill. Most of the time, consent is granted and the Senate proceeds to debate a bill. Often at the beginning of debate on a bill, there is no limitation on debate (i.e. no limit on how long an individual Senator can speak or on the duration for floor debate overall). Senators can offer amendments to any piece of legislation that is under consideration on the Senate floor. In general, any Senator can offer an amendment to any bill at any time. In order to limit the number of amendments, restrict the content of amendments, or limit the time for debate on amendments or bills, the Senate must gain consent. In general, the Majority and Minority Leader try to garner consent by running a “hotline” (a recorded message that is received on a dedicated phone line in each office that proposes what is referred to as a “consent agreement” to limit debate, set a vote, or restrict amendments, etc.). If there are no objections, “unanimous consent” is reached, announced on the Senate floor, and the proposed action is taken (i.e., a vote on an amendment at a certain time). If there is an objection, then “consent” is not reached and the Leaders may try again with a different proposal. Senators also can put a “hold” on a bill, meaning that the bill cannot be considered by the Senate until the hold is released. Senators can choose to “filibuster” legislation once it is on the floor, in effect delaying or completely holding up the bill from passage in the Senate by consuming lengthy amounts of time debating the bill. It takes 60 votes in the Senate to end a filibuster.

House-Senate Conference

When the House and Senate have passed different versions of a bill, the House and Senate leadership appoint “conferees” to serve on a joint House-Senate conference committee to work out a final version of the bill. During the conferencing of a bill, the House and Senate can approve “motions to instruct conferees,” which provide direction to the conferees on what to include or not include

in the final version of the bill. Motions to instruct are not binding on the conference committee. After the final version is developed, the conference committee files a report and the bill is sent to the House and Senate for a final vote. Amendments are not permitted.

Enactment

Once the conference report on a bill is approved by the House and Senate, the bill goes to the President's desk for signature. The President can sign the bill into law or veto the bill and return it to the Congress. If the President vetoes a bill, Congress can override the veto by a two-thirds majority vote in both chambers.

Once the President signs the bill into law, it is given a number and designated as "P.L.," signifying "public law." For example, P.L. 109-3 means the third bill signed into law in the 109th Congress.

Each Congress lasts for a two-year period. The 109th Congress began in 2005 and will last through 2006. The first year of each Congress is called the 1st Session and the second year of each Congress is called the 2nd Session. For example, the 109th Congress began in January 2005 and for the year will be in its 1st Session. During 2006 the 109th Congress will be in its 2nd Session.

Glossary of Legislative Terms

Act

Legislation approved by the House and Senate in identical form, and signed into law by the President, or approved over the President's veto.

Amendment

Proposal to change the language of a bill or a law (offered in committee or on the floor of the House or Senate).

Appropriation

Allows for spending from the U.S. Treasury for specified purposes; for example, the operations of federal agencies.

Appropriations Act

Law providing spending for federal agencies and programs from the U.S. Treasury. The three major types of appropriations acts are regular, supplemental, and continuing.

Continuing Appropriations

Stop-gap measures that fund programs and agencies between the beginning of the fiscal year (October 1) and the date on which the President signs the regular appropriations bill into law. In the absence of Continuing Appropriations, the government would shut down because there would be no authority to spend money without a funding bill in place.

Regular Appropriations

Measures that fund agencies or programs for a full year.

Supplemental Appropriations

Spending that is approved outside the normal annual appropriations process either to pay for unanticipated or extraordinary expenditures (e.g., emergency earthquake relief for California) or to fund activities authorized too late for normal budgetary deadlines. Supplemental appropriations bills are usually considered mid-year, well after the approval of the regular appropriations bills.

Authorization

Provision in law that establishes an agency or program and allows for spending for that agency or program. An authorization may be effective for one year, a fixed number of years, or for an indefinite period. An authorization may be for a definite amount of money or for "such sums as may be necessary."

Authorization Act

A law that establishes or continues one or more federal agencies or programs, establishes the terms and conditions under which they operate, allows for spending, and specifies how funds appropriated are to be used.

Block-Grant

Federal money provided in a fixed sum to states or localities for a specified purpose, usually with broad flexibility in determining how to deliver the services outlined in the block-grant.

Balanced Budget

A budget in which revenues equal spending.

Budget Authority

Provision in law which permits federal funds to be spent and designates the amount of funding to be spent.

Budget Deficit

The amount by which spending exceeds revenues.

Budget Outlays

Spending that is recorded when spending obligations are paid, usually in the form of cash. Outlays during a fiscal year may be for payment of obligations incurred in prior years or in the same year. For example, an appropriations bill may provide \$500 million in budget authority to be spent to build a bridge over a river. The bridge could take three years to complete. In the first year, if only \$100 million is spent, \$100 million is the budget outlay (even though the budget authority provided is \$500 million).

Budget Resolution

The “Blueprint” for the federal budget that establishes budget priorities for federal spending and taxation. The Budget Resolution does not hold the force of law and does not go to the President for signature.

Committee

A subdivision of the House or Senate that considers legislation. Committees also undertake investigations within their areas of expertise. Most Committees are divided into specialized subcommittees. Committees and subcommittees hold hearings and debate legislation. Most amendments to legislation occur at this level.

Conferees

Senate or House Members appointed to serve on Conference Committees, also called “managers.” Conferees are usually appointed from the committee or committees that reported the legislation, and they are expected to try to uphold their Senate or House position on measures when they negotiate with conferees from the other body.

Conference Committee

A temporary, ad hoc panel composed of House and Senate conferees that is formed for the purpose of working out differences in legislation that has passed both chambers.

Conference Report

The compromise product negotiated by the Conference Committee. The Conference Report is submitted to the House and Senate for approval, on a yes or no vote, and cannot be amended.

Continuing Resolution

Legislation, also known as a “CR,” enacted by Congress when the new fiscal year is about to begin or has begun, to permit spending for federal agencies and programs to continue in operation until the regular annual spending bills are signed into law.

Discretionary Programs

Spending for programs appropriated by Congress every year.

Discretionary Spending

Funding in the budget for a specified purpose that is subject to annual appropriations. Discretionary spending represents less than 40 percent of all federal spending. Head Start and after-school programs are examples of discretionary spending.

Discretionary Spending Cap

An overall limit on the dollar amounts permitted under law for expenses in discretionary programs.

Entitlement/Entitlement Programs

Programs that guarantee benefits to eligible beneficiaries (e.g., Social Security, Food Stamps, Medicare, Medicaid, etc.) and are not subject to annual appropriations. Entitlements constitute a binding obligation on the part of the Federal Government, and eligible recipients have legal recourse if the obligation is not fulfilled.

Capped Entitlement

A capped entitlement is a guaranteed level of funding not subject to annual appropriations that is allocated to states or localities for a specified purpose.

Fiscal Year

The fiscal year for the federal government begins on October 1st and ends on September 30th, and is designated by the calendar year in which it ends. For example, fiscal year 2000 begins on October 1, 1999 and ends on September 30, 2000.

Filibuster

A time-delaying tactic that is used in the Senate to prevent a vote on a bill or an amendment. Sixty votes are needed to end a filibuster.

Hearing

Committee session, usually open to the public, to take testimony in order to gather information and opinions on proposed legislation, to conduct an investigation, or review the operation of any federal agency or program.

Legislative History

The public record and deliberations on a bill prior to its enactment. Courts and administrative agencies may look to the legislative history for guidance in interpreting legislation and congressional intent. Federal agencies also look at the legislative history for guidance in developing regulations to implement the law.

Mandatory Spending

Funding guaranteed by the budget for a specified purpose that is not subject to annual appropriations. Mandatory spending represents over 60 percent of all federal spending. Social Security, Medicare and Food Stamps, as well as interest payments on the national debt are examples of mandatory spending.

Mark-up

The process by which congressional committees and subcommittees debate, amend, and rewrite proposed legislation. A mark-up is generally a meeting where Members go through a proposal line-by-line.

Pay-as-you-go (Pay-go)

A provision of the Budget Enforcement Act of 1990, which requires that any proposal to increase an entitlement or reduce taxes include provisions for financing—either by raising new revenues or cutting existing entitlement programs—in order to remain budget neutral.

Public Law

A bill or resolution that has passed the House and Senate and been signed into law by the President.

Reconciliation Bill

A bill containing changes in law recommended by the instructions in a Budget Resolution. If the instructions relate to only one committee in the House or Senate, that committee reports the Reconciliation bill. If the instructions relate to more than one committee, the committees approve legislation to comply with the instructions and forward their actions to the Budget Committee, which then reports an Omnibus Reconciliation bill.

Reconciliation Instruction

A provision in a Budget Resolution directing one or more committees to report (or submit to the Budget Committee) legislation changing existing law in order to bring spending, revenues, or the debt-limit into conformity with the Budget Resolution. The instructions specify the committees to which they apply, indicate the appropriate dollar changes to be achieved, and usually provide a deadline by which the legislation is to be reported or submitted.

Reconciliation Process

A process established in the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 by which Congress changes existing laws to conform tax and spending levels to the levels set in a Budget Resolution. Changes recommended by committees pursuant to a reconciliation instruction are included in the Reconciliation bill.

Recision

The cancellation of spending that was previously provided by Congress.

Unfunded Mandates

Any provision in legislation, statute, or regulation that imposes a responsibility on a state, locality, or tribal government, for which adequate funding to carry out the responsibility is not appropriated.

Veto

The procedure established under the Constitution by which the President disapproves a bill or joint resolution and thus prevents its enactment into law. A regular veto occurs when the President returns the legislation to Congress. The President usually returns a vetoed bill with a message indicating his reasons for rejecting the measure. The veto can be overridden only by a two-thirds vote in both the Senate and the House.

Important Acronyms and Idioms

ACF	Administration for Children and Families
ACYF	Administration on Children, Youth, and Families
AFDC	Aid to Families with Dependent Children
CACFP	Child and Adult Care Food Program
CCDBG	Child Care and Development Block Grant – also known as CCDF
CDA	Child Development Associate
FPL	Federal Poverty Level
HHS	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
Labor/HHS	Appropriations bill for departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
PRWORA	Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act
SMI	State Median Income
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
Title XX/SSBG	Social Services Block Grant
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture

Key Committees in Congress for Children

Senate Budget Committee

The Budget Committee is charged with determining the size and scope of the federal budget each fiscal year. Working from the President's budget recommendations, the Budget Committee develops a non-binding congressional budget resolution that sets the overall congressional priorities for tax and spending for the fiscal year. It is the congressional budget resolution, for example, that determines whether Congress will set aside substantial new funding for the mandatory portion of the Child Care and Development Block Grant.

Republicans

Judd Gregg, NH (Chair)
Pete V. Domenici, NM
Charles E. Grassley, IA
Wayne Allard, CO
Michael B. Enzi, WY
Jeff Sessions, AL
Jim Bunning, KY
Michael D. Crapo, ID
John Ensign, NV
John Cornyn, TX
Lamar Alexander, TN
Lindsey Graham, SC

Democrats

Kent Conrad, ND (Ranking Member)
Paul S. Sarbanes, MD
Patty Murray, WA
Ron Wyden, OR
Russell D. Feingold, WI
Tim Johnson, SD
Robert Byrd, WV
Bill Nelson, FL
Debbie Stabenow, MI
Jon Corzine, NJ

Senate Finance Committee

The Finance Committee is the tax-writing committee in the Senate. It also has jurisdiction over trade, Social Security and many health and social services programs, including Medicaid, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, and federal child support, foster care and adoption assistance programs. With jurisdiction over the mandatory portion of the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), the Finance Committee sets the annual mandatory funding levels for the program.

Republicans

Charles E. Grassley, IA (Chair)
Orrin G. Hatch, UT
Trent Lott, MS
Olympia J. Snowe, ME
Jon Kyl, AZ
Craig Thomas, WY
Rick Santorum, PA
Bill Frist, TN
Jim Bunning, KY
Michael D. Crapo, ID

Democrats

Max Baucus, MT (Ranking Member)
John D. Rockefeller, WV
Kent Conrad, ND
Jeff Bingaman, NM
John Kerry, MA
Blanche Lincoln, AR
Ron Wyden, OR
Charles Schumer, NY
Gordon H. Smith, OR
Independent Jim Jeffords, VT

Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee

The Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee has jurisdiction over a broad range of federal legislation regarding children and families, health, education and training, and the workforce. The oversight and authorization of such key children's programs as Head Start, the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and others fall within the jurisdiction of the HELP committee

Republicans

Michael B. Enzi, WY (Chairman)
Judd Gregg, NH
Bill Frist, TN
Lamar Alexander, TN
Richard M. Burr, NC
Johnny Isakson, GA
Mike DeWine, OH
John Ensign, NV
* Orrin G. Hatch, UT
Jeff Sessions, AL
Pat Roberts, KS

Democrats

Edward M. Kennedy, MA (Ranking Member)
Christopher J. Dodd, CT
Tom Harkin, IA
Barbara A. Mikulski, MD
Jeff Bingaman, NM
Patty Murray, WA
Jack Reed, RI
Hillary Rodham Clinton, NY
Independent
Independent Jim Jeffords, VT

Senate Appropriations Committee

The Appropriations Committee holds the federal purse strings. Each year its 13 subcommittees develop appropriations bills that set annual funding levels for all federal agencies and discretionary spending programs. The Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services and Education sets the annual spending level for most children's programs, including Head Start, the discretionary portion of the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), the 21st Century Learning Centers program, and all education programs.

Republicans

Thad Cochran, MS (Chairman)
Ted Stevens, AK
Arlen Specter, PA
Pete V. Domenici, NM
Christopher S. Bond, MO
Mitch McConnell, KY
Conrad Burns, MT
Richard C. Shelby, AL
Judd Gregg, NH
Robert F. Bennett, UT
Larry E. Craig, ID
Kay Bailey Hutchison, TX
Mike DeWine, OH
Sam Brownback, KS
* Wayne Allard, CO

Democrats

Robert C. Byrd, WV (Ranking Member)
Daniel K. Inouye, HI
Patrick J. Leahy, VT
Tom Harkin, IA
Barbara A. Mikulski, MD
Harry Reid, NV
Herb Kohl, WI
Patty Murray, WA
Byron Dorgan, ND
Dianne Feinstein, CA
Richard Durbin, IL
Tim Johnson, SD
Mary Landrieu, LA

House Budget Committee

The Budget Committee is charged with determining the size and scope of the federal budget each fiscal year. Working from the President's budget recommendations, the Budget Committee develops a non-binding congressional budget resolution that sets the overall congressional priorities for tax and spending for the fiscal year. It is the Congressional budget resolution, for example, that determines whether Congress will set aside substantial new funding for the mandatory portion of the Child Care and Development Block Grant.

Republicans

Jim Nussle, IA (Chair)
Rob Portman, OH
Jim Ryun, KS
Ander Crenshaw, FL
Adam H. Putnam, FL
Roger F. Wicker, MS
Kenny C. Hulshof, MO
Jo Bonner, AL
Scott Garrett, NJ
J. Gresham Barrett, SC
Thaddeus G. McCotter, MI
Mario Diaz-Balart, FL
Jeb Hensarling, TX
Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, FL
Dan Lungren, CA
Pete Sessions, TX
Paul D. Ryan, WI
Mike Simpson, ID
Jeb Bradley, NH
Patrick McHenry, NC
Connie Mack, FL
Mike Conaway, TX

Democrats

John M. Spratt, Jr., SC (Ranking Member)
Dennis Moore, KS
Richard E. Neal, MA
Rosa DeLauro, CT
Chet Edwards, TX
Harold E. Ford, TN
Lois Capps, CA
Brian Baird, WA
Jim Cooper, TN
Artur Davis, AL
William J. Jefferson, LA
Thomas H. Allen, ME
Ed Case, HI
Cynthia McKinney, GA
Henry Cuellar, TX
Allyson Y. Schwartz, PA
Ron J. Kind, WI

House Ways and Means Committee

The Ways and Means Committee is the tax-writing committee in the House. It also has jurisdiction over trade, Social Security, Unemployment Insurance and many social services programs including the federal child support, foster care and adoption assistance programs. The Ways and Means Committee shares jurisdiction over the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program and the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) with the Education and Workforce Committee.

Republicans

William M. Thomas, CA (Chair)
E. Clay Shaw, Jr., FL
Nancy L. Johnson, CT
Wally Herger, CA
Jim McCrery, LA
Dave Camp, MI
Jim Ramstad, MN
Jim Nussle, IA
Sam Johnson, TX
Rob Portman, OH
Phil English, PA
J.D. Hayworth, AZ
Jerry Weller, IL
Kenny C. Hulshof, MO
Ron Lewis, KY
Mark Foley, FL
Kevin Brady, TX
Thomas Reynolds, NY
Paul Ryan, WI
Eric Cantor, VA
John Linder, GA
Melissa Hart, PA
Bob Beauprez, CO
Chris Chocola, IN

Democrats

Charles B. Rangel, NY (Ranking Member)
Fortney Pete Stark, CA
Sander M. Levin, MI
Benjamin L. Cardin, MD
Jim McDermott, WA
John Lewis, GA
Richard E. Neal, MA
Michael R. McNulty, NY
William J. Jefferson, LA
John S. Tanner, TN
Xavier Becerra, CA
Lloyd Doggett, TX
Earl Pomeroy, ND
Stephanie Tubbs Jones, OH
Mike Thompson, CA
John B. Larson, CT
Rahm Emanuel, IL

House Education and the Workforce Committee

The Education and the Workforce Committee has jurisdiction over a broad range of federal legislation regarding children and families, education and training, and the workforce. The oversight and authorization of such key children's programs as Head Start, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and many others fall within the jurisdiction of the Education and Workforce Committee. The Committee shares jurisdiction over the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program with the Ways and Means Committee.

Republicans

John A. Boehner, OH (Chair)
Thomas E. Petri, WI (Vice-Chair)
Howard P. McKeon, CA
Michael N. Castle, DE
Sam Johnson, TX
Mark Souder, IN
Charlie Norwood, GA
Vernon J. Ehlers, MI
Judy Biggert, IL
Todd Russell Platts, PA
Patrick J. Tiberi, OH

Democrats

George Miller, CA (Ranking Member)
Dale E. Kildee, MI
Major R. Owens, NY
Donald M. Payne, NJ
Robert E. Andrews, NJ
Bobby Scott, VA
Lynn C. Woolsey, CA
Ruben Hinojosa, TX
Carolyn McCarthy, NY
John F. Tierney, MA
Ron Kind, WI

Ric Keller, FL
Tom Osborne, NE
Joe Wilson, SC
Jon C. Porter, NV
John Kline, MN
Marilyn N. Musgrave, CO
Bob Inglis, SC
Cathy McMorris, WA
Kenny Marchant, TX
Tom Price, GA
Luis Fortuño, PR
Bobby Jindal, LA
Charles W. Boustany, Jr., LA
Virginia Fox, NC
Thelma D. Drake, VA
Randy Kuhl, NY

Dennis J. Kucinich, OH
David Wu, OR
Rush D. Holt, NJ
Susan A. Davis, CA
Betty McCollum, MN
Danny K. Davis, IL
Raul M. Grijalva, AZ
Denise L. Majette, GA
Chris Van Hollen, MD
Timothy J. Ryan, OH
Tim Bishop, NY

House Appropriations Committee

The Appropriations Committee holds the federal purse strings. Each year its 13 subcommittees develop appropriations bills that set annual funding levels for all federal agencies and discretionary programs. The Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services and Education sets the annual spending level for most children's programs, including Head Start, the discretionary portion of the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), the 21st Century Learning Centers program, and all education programs.

Republicans

Jerry Lewis, CA (Chair)
C.W. Bill Young, FL (Chair)
Ralph Regula, OH (Vice-Chair)
Harold Rogers, KY
Frank R. Wolf, VA
Jim Kolbe, AZ
James T. Walsh, NY
Charles H. Taylor, NC
David L. Hobson, OH
Ernest J. Istook, Jr., OK
Henry Bonilla, TX
Joe Knollenberg, MI
Jack Kingston, GA
Rodney P. Frelinghuysen, NJ
Roger F. Wicker, MS
Randy "Duke" Cunningham, CA
Todd Tiahrt, KS
Zach Wamp, TN
Tom Latham, IA

Democrats

David R. Obey, WI (Ranking Member)
John P. Murtha, PA
Norman D. Dicks, WA
Martin Olav Sabo, MN
Steny H. Hoyer, MD
Alan B. Mollohan, WV
Marcy Kaptur, OH
Peter J. Visclosky, IN
Nita M. Lowey, NY
Jose E. Serrano, NY
Rosa L. DeLauro, CT
James P. Moran, VA
John W. Olver, MA
Ed Pastor, AZ
David E. Price, NC
Chet Edwards, TX
Robert E. Cramer, Jr., AL
Patrick J. Kennedy, RI
James E. Clyburn, SC
Maurice D. Hinchey, NY

Anne M. Northup, KY
Robert B. Aderholt, AL
Jo Ann Emerson, MO
Kay Granger, TX
John E. Peterson, PA
Virgil H. Goode, Jr., VA
John T. Doolittle, CA
Ray LaHood, IL
John E. Sweeney, NY
Don Sherwood, PA
Dave Weldon, FL
Michael K. Simpson, ID
John Abney Culberson, TX
Mark Steven Kirk, IL
Ander Crenshaw, FL
Dennis Rehberg, MT
John R. Carter, TX
Rodney Alexander, LA

Lucille Roybal-Allard, CA
Sam Farr, CA
Jesse L. Jackson, Jr., IL
Carolyn C. Kilpatrick, MI
F. Allen Boyd, Jr., FL
Chaka Fattah, PA
Steven R. Rothman, NJ
Sanford D. Bishop, Jr., GA
Marion Berry, AR

Sample Letters to Congress

Sample Joint Sign-On Letter for Child Care and Head Start Communities

Feel free to use the following sample, as is, with appropriate state information added, or as a model for developing your own coalition letter. Organizations should sign, rather than individuals, listing the full contact information for each organization.

Dear Senator/Representative:

We are writing because we are alarmed that the budget resolution passed by Congress cuts critical services for vulnerable children while giving extravagant tax benefits to the wealthiest Americans. We believe that the appropriations bill currently being debated in Congress for Head Start and child care will neither help children enter school ready to succeed or ensure that families have the quality child care they need to work and remain independent. Furthermore, while the Administration's welfare plan significantly increases work requirements for mothers receiving welfare, its budget does not include any new funds for child care for five years. This would mean that 30,000 children would lose child care assistance next year and at least 200,000 fewer children would be helped by 2007. These proposals collectively leave millions of children behind.

Head Start works for children in our state. Its comprehensive approach recognizes that children must be healthy, well-nourished, and have their parents actively involved in their lives and learning in order to be successful students. Despite Head Start's success, it only reaches about half of all eligible three- and four-year-olds while Early Head Start helps less than 3 percent of eligible infants and toddlers. We believe that Head Start can be strengthened, but are confident that this can be accomplished through meaningful consultation with parents, communities, and early childhood experts when Congress reauthorizes the program this year.

Head Start is funded in many communities as a part-day program. Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funds help programs to expand their day to reach the needs of the increasing number of Head Start families who now work. These funds also help millions of families with infants and toddlers and school-age children go to work knowing that their children are safe. However, nationally only one in seven children eligible for federal child care assistance receives it. In (name of state), _____ families are on a waiting list for child care assistance (or our state is proposing to or has just eliminated child care assistance for ___ families).

Please stand up for the children and families of (state) by asking Congress to fully fund both Head Start and Early Head Start so that all eligible three- and four-year-old children can be served, and to increase the funds dedicated to Early Head Start. Efforts also will be made to give Head Start programs increased flexibility to serve more families whose incomes may be above the federal poverty line (\$16,090 a year for a family of three in 2005). We support staff improvement policies which link heightened standards to appropriate funding and incentives and oppose allowing religious-based organizations to practice discriminatory hiring policies that violate civil rights protections. Finally, we encourage the suspension of the National Reporting System until the test has been fully evaluated and appropriate steps are taken to ensure its validity, reliability, purpose, and age, linguistic, and cultural appropriateness. Instead, Head Start should be strengthened, and put on a path towards full funding with a significant expansion of Early Head Start. We also urge you to support an increase of \$11.25 billion over five years for the Child Care and Development Block Grant to allow over one million additional children to receive child care help and improve the quality of care that children receive.

We urge you to visit both Head Start and child care programs when you are home to see what a difference quality care makes for (name of state)'s children.

Sample Individual Letter

Please take the time to personalize your letter. Individuals should let their Members of Congress know who they are and why they are concerned about issues affecting children. Check the CDF Action Council's Legislative Action site often for updated letters to Congress at <http://www.capwiz.com/cdf>

Dear _____:

I am a voter, a constituent and a supporter of children, and I am writing to urge you to the Congress to stop tax cuts for wealthy and protect funding for critical program for our most vulnerable children.

Over the past four years Congress bestowed \$3.0 trillion in tax cuts to benefit primarily the most affluent among us. And now Congress wants to provide \$106 billion more in tax cuts that will go mostly to millionaires and billionaires.

At the same time that the rich are getting huge tax breaks, children could lose their health care, programs for abused and neglected children, child care, Head Start and food stamps.

Millions of our children will suffer twice from this unjust action! First, they will be denied vital investments in their futures, and when they grow up they will be saddled with a crushing debt resulting from our nation's steadily increasing deficit.

It is unjust to give more money to the wealthiest among us while our most defenseless children suffer. STOP providing tax breaks for the rich. Protect funding for programs that serve vulnerable children and families—support new investments for child care and Head Start and expand these programs to move towards serving all eligible children.

Sincerely,

GENERATE MEDIA COVERAGE

Generate Media Coverage

Working with the Media

It is critical to garner broad-based public support for children's concerns. If our efforts are to be truly successful for children and families, the public must hear the child care and Head Start messages, understand the importance of protecting and expanding these programs, and help fight for children and families. The media plays a key role in getting information to the public. Working with the media is also a very effective way to get your message across to opinion leaders in your community and state.

Media efforts can be as big or as small as your organization has time to manage. A letter to the editor can be mailed to local papers without considerable time and effort. In fact, building relationships with the media usually begins with small steps, such as mailing out an editorial memorandum with some key facts about child care and Head Start in your community and the action needed in Congress. As your comfort level grows, you can begin to take on more media and public education activities.

Cultivate relationships with the press.

Developing good relationships with reporters and other media contacts is an important part of developing a media strategy. You want them to value what you say and give you favorable press. By keeping in contact with reporters who cover child care and Head Start, you will be more likely to have them take the time to come to your events, write an extra article, and keep you informed of press opinions on child care concerns that arise.

When the media calls you, be ready to give them reliable information and to put them in contact with parents and providers who are prepared to articulate their own experiences as they relate to broader policy concerns. You want to become known as a reputable source. Having ready materials to send to reporters will facilitate your communication with them. Also, you need not always wait for the press to call you. When you have an issue that you want to discuss, feel free to call the local editor or reporter that covers your issue, introduce yourself and explain why they might be interested in your issue. [See the fact sheets and talking points in the Know the Concerns section for information to share with the media. State fact sheets are available from the Early Childhood Development Division of the Children's Defense Fund by calling (202) 628-8787.

In working with the press, remember to think about what they need—facts, local angles, short pithy arguments, and real stories. Gather stories from parents, child care providers, and Head Start directors and teachers in your community and share them with the media and with the Children's Defense Fund. Except in particular instances, members of the press seldom want long, detailed explanations of the concerns.

Distribute an editorial memorandum and a press briefing kit.

As soon as possible, an editorial memorandum and a press kit should be sent to all local media contacts. Press kits should contain key facts and information on various aspects of your issue. Press kits may include fact sheets, key concerns and local impacts, parent/child stories, recent publications, summaries of key legislation, press clippings showing favorable press received in recent months, and contact names for more information. [See the Sample Editorial Memorandum in this section.]

Also, contact the newspaper's feature editor with your idea for a story. Feature stories present

events, trends, and news through the eyes of participants. The object is to show how individuals are affected by recent events in the world. Keep in mind the audience of the paper, and think about which concerns will be important to readers. Be prepared to give the names of individuals who will be involved, or who would be willing to be interviewed and/or photographed for the paper. [See Simple Steps to Interviewing Success to help you prepare.]

Meet with newspaper editorial boards to brief them on the concerns.

It is helpful to find out how local and regional newspaper editors view child care and Head Start, and to encourage them to develop a position in favor of our efforts. Newspapers do take editorial positions on concerns, and these decisions are made by an editorial board consisting of the publisher, editor-in-chief, managing editor, editorial page editor, and editorial writers. A reporter or feature editor who writes on your issue may have a contribution as well.

Editorial meetings can be set up to brief papers about upcoming federal or state legislation or other pending policy decisions. The meeting functions as a briefing with about 15 to 20 minutes for you to present your facts and message, offer solutions, and answer questions. Have written material (a press briefing kit) that you can leave behind so the board can have background information for future use. If you cannot answer a question, admit that you cannot, but pledge to send an answer promptly. If possible, try to have a prominent Member of the community who supports the concerns with you when you meet with the editorial board. [See Visiting Editorial Boards in this section.]

Write a letter to the editor of your daily and/or weekly newspaper.

A letter to the editor is a simple way to draw attention to the need for quality child care and Head Start in your community. Letters should highlight local concerns and ask readers to think about solutions. You should write periodically, but also encourage other advocates to write in order to give readers a new perspective, and to show broad support. [See Sample Letters to the Editor in this section.]

Find out the newspaper's submission deadlines, and try to submit letters in a timely fashion so that the concerns will be current. Letters to the editor are frequently shortened, so keep your letter to fewer than 250 words to help ensure that your letter is published in its entirety.

Write an op-ed for your daily or weekly newspaper or ask someone in your community to do so.

The op-ed page usually appears opposite the editorial page in the newspaper. The length of an op-ed is usually between 700 and 1000 words, and may take the form of an expanded letter to the editor. Op-eds usually have added credibility because of the author's professional background and familiarity with the subject.

Begin by calling the op-ed page editor to discuss your desire to write an op-ed about child care and/or Head Start. Ask for suggestions as to what kind of information to include, and things to avoid. It may be most effective to have a well-recognized local person submit the op-ed. You may want to approach others in your community, such as business leaders or pediatricians, to write an op-ed on the need for quality child care and Head Start. If they are willing, offer to write a draft that they can tailor to meet their needs. Papers are often more likely to publish op-eds submitted by local community leaders or experts whose names are well known. [See Sample Op-Eds in this section.]

Send out media advisories and press releases to all local media: print, radio, television, and the Internet.

Media advisories and press releases are useful tools for quickly alerting the media to an upcoming event or to release a statement from your organization about proposals affecting child care and Head Start. Media advisories are sent to the press to provide the who, what, when, where, and why about events such as child care or Head Start program visits by your Representatives or Senators, press conferences, rallies, etc. At the event, you should hand out a press release that provides talking points, a concise quote from someone with your group, important statistics, and brief stories to illustrate your points. Press releases also can be used on their own to announce a new publication, express an official statement, etc. [See the Sample Media Advisory and Sample Press Release in this section.]

Call talk radio programs to highlight the need for child care, send stations information on the concerns, and keep them informed of local activity.

Talk radio increasingly has become a popular way of expressing opinions and sharing information. Usually, a station will focus on current concerns (local and national) and “hot” topics that get the public upset, excited, or scared. Timing is key to getting attention. If key proposals or legislation are being considered, use the opportunity to contact the station and encourage program producers to give time for you to present your side.

Contact hosts or producers and introduce yourself and the concerns, tell them why you are involved, and why you think the public would be interested. Suggest a guest that could join the host in taking calls, and offer to go on the air to take a position, make a statement, or answer calls. Offer yourself as a source for future programs, and send the station information periodically to keep them informed of your issue. If you are a guest on a call-in show, be prepared for tough questions, for the host to play devil’s advocate, and for antagonizing callers. Handle these situations calmly by remembering your key message and not letting them anger you. Note that there are some programs or hosts that should be avoided. If a program is particularly sensational or negative about key children’s concerns, it may be wise not to accept an invitation to appear.

Keep track of upcoming speakers on talk radio in your area, including areas where your views are seldom heard. When you hear about a speaker who is likely to address children’s concerns, plan to call in and ask the speaker a question and voice your opinion. You may want to contact others to call in as well. All too often, progressive voices are not heard on talk radio; it is critical to make voices for children and families heard in a range of forums. [See Simple Steps to Interviewing Success in this section and the questions and answers provided in the Know the Concerns section to help you prepare.]

Use your media attention well.

Expand the impact of good coverage by sending copies of any favorable pieces to your Members of Congress, state and local legislators, and influential community leaders. Also, include the clippings in your press kit for future use. Send copies to the Children’s Defense Fund to keep us informed of your local activities.

Simple Steps to Interview Success

Adapted from: *Working with the Media* by Phil Kavitz

How to Prepare for Your Interview

Find out what the reporter is after.

- Ask directly
- Discuss background
- Research recent coverage of topic
- Hone/develop your key messages

If you requested the interview, you should already have your message and goals in mind. If not, develop a message starting with identifying the short- and long-term goals to be served by doing the interview. [See Talking Points and Questions and Answers.]

Your message should be stated in affirmative terms: Talk about what will or has happened, versus what won't or didn't happen. Fashion messages based on IMPACT (what is the effect?), PROXIMITY (what is the local angle?), and MEMORABILITY (will they remember it?).

- Where possible, look for “quotable” ways to state your case.
- Line up confirming facts.
- Use examples to humanize points.
- Be truthful—deception will come back to haunt you.

For “sound bite” interviews, plan to emphasize the key messages in every response. In longer interviews, use anecdotes and statistics to underscore main and secondary messages and return to summarize them frequently. When summarizing following a long answer, frame the message (i.e. “what this means is...” or “the real point is...”).

If the interview will not offer the opportunity to communicate these key messages, consider declining to participate (if possible). Note that there are some programs or hosts that should be avoided.

- List anticipated questions.
- Practice integrating your message into responses to a range of questions. Remember, your job is to communicate your message, not just answer questions.

Use the **ABC** technique:

A Acknowledge the question.

B Bridge to key message.

C Case—state and amplify your message. (Humanize and highlight your message.)

Keep answers 10 – 15 seconds in length.

Evaluate the responses as you practice.

- Were they comfortable/conversational?
- Were they an appropriate length?
- Could they be misunderstood/used out of context?
- Make notes. Do not write out full answers—you do not want to read prepared statements during the interview.

Dress correctly

- Dress appropriately for the situation and to project the desired image.
- Avoid white, busy patterns, and flashy jewelry.

You're On!

Relax

- Make sure to talk to the interviewer prior to taping; let them know where you are coming from. Get a sense of what they are after. Try to make the surroundings as comfortable as possible. If seated, sit forward and erect in your chair. Do not restrict your hands; let them do what comes naturally.
- Focus only on the interviewer—maintain eye contact.
- Don't say anything you do not want reported. Provide “background,” “not-for-attribution,” and “off the record” comments only when you have an established relationship with the reporter and have confirmed your mutual understanding of the conditions in advance.
- Remember, if you know your stuff, you will do fine.
- Respond to questions with key messages and the **ABC** technique in mind (page 94).
- Just talk. Don't make a speech.
- Get to the point quickly.
- Use **ABC** technique to avoid being manipulated.
- If you don't know something, say so.
- Feel free to take time to think—avoid saying “That's a good question.”
- If you failed to get your message out, force it in at the end (i.e., “I think we've missed the real critical issue here, which is...”).

Follow Up

Every interview is a chance to build/strengthen a relationship, pitch a new story, or frame a better understanding of your issue/organization.

Visiting Editorial Boards

Adopted from: *Strategic Media*, Communications Consortium

To Set up the Editorial Board Meeting

- Begin by calling the publisher, editor-in-chief, managing editor, editorial page editor, editorial writers, or the secretary to the editorial page editor. Describe the issue and why you think it is important for the newspaper to support child care. If the paper is fairly large, you should make your first contact to set up the meeting a week to 10 days before you wish to meet.

Before the Meeting

- The meeting will most likely take place at the newspaper's office. You will have the opportunity to talk to the key people who deal with your issue and who potentially will become your key media contacts.
- Get old clippings of positions taken by the paper in the past. The newspaper librarian can be helpful in finding back articles pertaining to your issue. Most papers now have Web sites where you can search for editorials and news stories.
- Prepare a press briefing kit to leave with the board after your meeting.

At the Meeting

- Begin your meeting by introducing yourself, your position on the issue, who or what organization you represent, and what you hope to accomplish.
- Explain the current situation and your ideas on how to work toward solving or alleviating the problem.
- Proceed by summarizing the newspaper's history of coverage on your issue (citing old clippings), and how you would like to build on this coverage in the future. Share upcoming events that are planned, and invite the paper to attend.
- Let your spokespeople (prominent community leaders and/or your organizational leaders, limit to two or three) present their information about the importance of the issue, and then let the board question them. Share why the general public would be interested in child care and how it could end up affecting them.
- Be prepared for hard questions by practicing answers before the meeting. If there is a question you cannot answer, admit it, but pledge to send an answer promptly.
- End the meeting by giving the board press kits, recent publications, and names and numbers of spokespeople they can get in contact with for interviews. Ask them directly to editorialize in support of child care.

After the meeting

- Send a thank you note after the meeting.
- If the paper writes a favorable piece, send a thank you note to the writer. Also, share the article with others, including your Members of Congress.
- Even if the paper does not write an article on child care, ask them to print an editorial or an op-ed for you.

Sample Op-Eds and Letters to the Editor

Op-Ed #1

When you've got limited resources, you've got to make some hard choices. We all do it every month. With each paycheck, we set priorities and do with it what we can. Our leaders in Washington have to do the same thing. The federal treasury is like the nation's family budget. President Bush and Members of Congress have to make difficult choices and decide what the American people can and cannot afford. A budget is, after all, just a statement of priorities.

Unfortunately, the domestic priorities set forth in the 2006 budget proposed by President Bush would hurt America. At a time when our resources are stretched thin by the cost of wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, President Bush continues to choose tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans at the expense of family priorities, such as education and health care. **[State name]** is especially at risk because of **[specific cuts for this state]**. And, unfortunately, the Republican leaders in Congress are following the president's lead. They are paving the way for major cuts in critical services for low-income children. These policies would cut and dismantle the framework and protections of Medicaid, child welfare, and Head Start and pass more than \$100 billion in tax breaks for the wealthy.

This is an unusual time for our nation. Never before has an American president cut taxes during wartime. Not Lincoln during the Civil War. Not Eisenhower during the Korean War. Not Kennedy during the Vietnam War. Not George H.W. Bush during the first Gulf War.

But the total cost of President Bush's tax cuts through 2015 will be \$3.0 trillion—nearly twice the amount of the president's budget for the federal government next year. Is this the right time to choose huge tax cuts for the people who need them least while making it harder to provide prenatal care for mothers, vaccinations for infants, and good schools for our children?

President Bush proposes to make it easier for the children of millionaires and billionaires to inherit their family fortunes. The repeal of the estate tax would bestow \$256 billion in unneeded tax breaks on the wealthiest 2 percent of Americans. Meanwhile, millions of children in poverty are being asked to sacrifice the health insurance that makes it possible for their parents to take them to the doctor's office instead of an emergency room.

The president's budget would cut at least \$45 billion from Medicaid over 10 years—enough money to provide health coverage to more than 2.4 million children. More than one million families with children who live in subsidized low-income housing are being asked to sacrifice their security and live with the real possibility of becoming homeless. Abused and neglected children in foster care are being asked to sacrifice the emotional and physical security they get from the families caring for them because of cuts in federal spending on their room and board.

Working parents are being asked to sacrifice their child care, as the president's budget would cause 300,000 families to lose their child care subsidies. Low-income families are being asked to sacrifice the heat in their homes next winter, as the president's budget cuts nearly 500,000 households from the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program. While other Americans are being asked to sacrifice their basic needs, the wealthiest among us are being given huge handouts and told that the needy will get along just fine, thank you.

[Insert information on the number of millionaires in your state and the value of their tax cuts.]

Two of the tax-cut measures scheduled to take effect next year give 54 percent of the benefit to only the 0.2 percent of American families with annual incomes greater than \$1 million. That's more than half of the benefits going to only the richest two out of every 1,000 families. Nearly 97 percent of these tax cuts will go to the 4 percent of households with incomes of more than \$200,000 per year. Almost none of these cuts will go middle-income or working-class families in **(state name)**.

Someday, America might be able to afford big tax cuts for every American while we improve the lives of our most vulnerable children. But that time isn't here yet, and we have to make choices to protect those who cannot vote or be heard in the halls of power. If we don't choose well, real children and families will suffer.

Op-Ed Sample #2

We've all seen the heartbreaking television ads depicting the plight of children in a far off land struggling with malnutrition and disease. The ads ask for money to help improve the life of a child whose needs are not being met. These images touch all of us because we all feel a powerful responsibility to help vulnerable children.

Now we are confronted with difficult decisions about the vulnerable children in our own country, because President Bush has proposed cutting back the programs that serve them. In his 2006 federal budget proposal, President Bush requests a \$45 billion cut in federal Medicaid funding. At today's costs, \$45 billion would fund health coverage for 2.4 million of the 9 million children who are uninsured today.

Unfortunately, the Republican leaders in Congress are following the president's lead. They are paving the way for major cuts in critical services for low-income children. These policies would cut and dismantle the framework and protections of Medicaid, child welfare, and Head Start and pass more than \$100 billion in tax breaks for the wealthy.

Since 1965, Medicaid has provided medical services to low-income families. The program is the largest source of funding for health-related services for low-income people in the United States and currently serves 25 million children—nearly one quarter of all Americans younger than 18 years old. **[Insert your state and figures on its medicaid enrollment]**

Medicaid is also the single most important source of coverage for maternity services, paying for more than one-third of births in U.S. hospitals.

Every other wealthy industrialized nation considers health care a basic right of all children. But instead of trying to find ways to cover more than nine million children in America without health care, President Bush is proposing a budget that will add to their ranks.

A child without health insurance may be forced to suffer through minor illnesses that turn into major health problems. A child without health insurance often must wait a dangerously long time before being examined by a specialist who will take him as a charity case. And children without health insurance are least likely to be screened for treatable conditions that can be controlled or eased with proper medical care.

Parents know how often kids get sick—and we know how they get better with proper care. It's clear that keeping children healthy is in everyone's financial interest. In addition to being a moral commitment to children, proper health care for children is a wise investment. It is far more cost-effective to treat a child's ear infection during a doctor's office visit than to provide years of special education services if that child becomes deaf from lack of medical care. Every dollar invested in vaccinating children against measles, mumps, and rubella saves \$16 in treating those illnesses.

The great irony of all this is that children are inexpensive to insure. Children make up half of Medicaid's enrollment, yet they account for only about one fifth of its costs.

Because Medicaid is a partnership between the federal government and the states, every dollar not coming from Washington must be made up by the states—or the number of children served will be cut. Because most states do not have the option of running a deficit, governors are forced to choose between cutting the number of children who have access to doctors and reducing funding for other valuable programs.

The president is essentially passing the buck to our governors. The American people elected him to solve problems, not to create bigger ones for the next generation.

Why is protecting the health of children not a priority? Is it because children don't hire lobbyists and contribute to political campaigns? Is it because children are too young to vote? Whatever the answer, a budget that makes it harder for millions of children to see a doctor is a warning sign that we ignore at our peril. America must give voice to its real values and right itself.

Op-Ed Sample #3

Conventional wisdom tells us, "If it's not broken, don't fix it."

Sadly, President Bush is proposing to "fix" a program that is anything but broken—a program that has successfully given 22 million of America's most vulnerable children a head start on the path out of poverty.

Head Start is the high quality preschool program that has provided comprehensive educational, health, nutrition and social services to low-income children across the nation for 40 years. Head Start emphasizes parental involvement and builds on the strengths of local communities. It helps pre-kindergarten children build the confidence and skills they need to succeed in school and to become the leaders, taxpayers, and productive citizens of the future.

And it works. Thanks to rigorous federal quality standards, Head Start consistently receives the highest customer satisfaction ratings of any government program. Nearly one million youngsters are participating this year—including **[number in your state]**.

But President Bush is trying to change a successful formula. In his 2006 budget proposal, the president supports replacing the current structure with a state-controlled program that would not keep the federal performance standards in place. If that approach were adopted, there would be no guarantee of preserving Head Start's high quality. The president would essentially be gambling the futures of millions of children yet to be born.

President Bush's 2006 budget would freeze funding for Head Start and Early Head Start, cutting an estimated 25,000 children nationwide and following with more reductions in future years.

The Bush Administration has steadily decreased funding for Head Start since taking office. In 2001, about 60 percent of eligible children were served by Head Start. But the number of children who live in poverty has increased, and today only about half of all eligible children are enrolled in Head Start.

We know this program works in **[your state name]**. It has helped vulnerable children overcome the disadvantages of poverty.

In addition to hastening children's cognitive development, Head Start recognizes that poor children have additional needs that must be addressed if they are going to be able to learn. The program works to help the children's families with housing assistance, job training, health care, emotional support, and family counseling.

Head Start is one of the most thoroughly researched and evaluated early childhood programs in America. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Head Start delivers what it promises—a competitive advantage for young children preparing for school. The program narrows the gap between disadvantaged children and all children in vocabulary and writing skills.

Head Start kids leave the program ready to learn. In kindergarten, they make substantial progress in vocabulary, letter recognition, math skills, and writing skills relative to national averages.

Many other studies confirm that Head Start is effective. Children who have graduated from Head Start are less likely to repeat a grade, less likely to need special education, and more likely to graduate from high school.

Our legislators in Washington must reject President Bush's budget proposal and help poor children get the Head Start they deserve. They need to hear that Head Start works and that we should not fix something that is fine the way it is.

Sample Letters to the Editor

To the Editor:

There's a very good reason why Head Start is one of the most treasured federal programs ever created—it works. Studies of adults who went through the program 40 years ago show that they benefitted from its valuable preparation for kindergarten and elementary school. Across the country, nearly one million children are enrolled in Head Start this year, including **[number in your state]**.

But the Bush Administration's 2006 budget proposal threatens to undermine the time-tested formula for this successful program by taking it in the wrong direction. Rather than make Head Start available to more poor children, President Bush wants to freeze out thousands of them and then change the way Head Start money is allocated. In 2006, there would be 25,000 fewer children in Head Start than this year.

The president wants to wreck a model program that has helped vulnerable children for 40 years.

Each year, the federal government sends a set amount of Head Start funding to each community, and local providers deliver the services to the children while meeting federal quality performance standards. The Administration wants to take a different approach in at least nine states, cutting total Head Start funding by \$45 million and then taking the money that's left and giving it to state governments in the form of so-called "block grants." Block grants are Trojan horses. They would reduce the available pot of money while allowing states to set lower quality performance standards.

The Administration wants to bring that risky approach to all 50 states. Without federal performance standards, there would be no guarantee of Head Start's high quality. In order to give huge tax breaks to **[number of]** millionaires in **[name of your state]** while reducing a deficit that wasn't created by government spending on poor children, the Bush Administration is shortchanging an entire generation of our children. This is short-sighted and morally bankrupt, and Congress should reject this idea.

To the Editor:

President Bush's proposed 2006 budget fails to invest new funds in existing programs designed to prevent child abuse and neglect and to protect children from serious harm. Even at current funding levels, more than four in 10 abused and neglected children (about 370,000 children nationwide) receive *no services*. **[Insert your state's share of this population.]** This is unthinkable.

To just provide these children and their families with a basic set of services, such as home visiting, would cost an additional \$1.1 billion annually—less than the president would spend on one day's worth of military costs.

Unfortunately, Republican leaders in Congress are following the president's lead. They are paving the way for major cuts in critical services for low-income children. These policies would cut and dismantle the framework and protections of Medicaid, child welfare, and Head Start and pass more than \$100 billion in tax breaks for the wealthy.

This obscene budget should be swiftly rejected by Congress. If we don't defend these most vulnerable children from budget cuts and tax cuts designed to pump up the bank accounts of millionaires and billionaires, then I fear our nation has truly gone astray.

To the Editor:

The President's budget calls for spending cuts to rein in the growing deficit. As a parent, one American value I hold dear is living in a place where our kids do better than we do—where each new generation can fulfill the American dream of a better life. If this budget passes, our children will be the first generation to be worse off than their parents.

And, unfortunately, Congress is following right along. Republican leaders are paving the way for major cuts in critical services for low-income children. These policies would cut and dismantle the framework and protections of Medicaid, child welfare, and Head Start and pass more than \$100 billion in tax breaks for the wealthy. They add up to an abhorrent picture: Kids will get sick more often and stay sick longer. Kids will go to bed hungry. Kids will enter kindergarten not ready to learn and will never catch up.

Cutting services to children may save us some money at first, but it will cost a lot more money later. Children who don't get preventive health care end up in expensive emergency rooms. Kids who don't get high quality child care are less likely to graduate from high school. They're more likely to need special education and to end up in trouble with the law. This is penny-wise and pound-foolish.

I hope that we all will take a good hard look at whether the President's budget will give our children a better future or just leave them with a bigger debt—and less prepared to pay it off.

To the Editor:

We all want to use our money wisely, but President Bush's 2006 budget proposal makes the wrong choices for America. It slashes programs like child care, health care, and education—the programs that help children to become productive citizens and taxpayers.

This budget will create huge new problems in **[state name and any specific examples]**.

The Bush Administration is taking an irresponsible approach to solving the nation's money problems. The president is trying to pass the buck to states and cities in the form of huge federal budget cuts, and no doubt states will be forced to do more with less. It's a bleak outlook.

The leaders in Congress are trying to make it even worse with actions to attack the Medicaid program, which serves 25 million children, and child welfare programs for abused and neglected children. At the same time, they are trying to deliver more huge tax cuts to their wealthy friends.

Every cut in children's programs will create larger costs down the road. Preventive medical care costs a fraction of emergency room care. Mothers who lose their child care may have to quit their jobs and go on welfare. It's wrong to cut health care for children when fewer parents are able to get insurance through their jobs.

Most of all, it's reckless for the president to cut taxes so much that we go into debt and cannot invest in our children. Surely, our nation can make better choices.

To the Editor:

The President's 2006 budget proposal calls for holding so-called "discretionary" spending increases below the rate of inflation. That means that if all programs are held to the same funding level as the population and costs increase, fewer children can be served. That is a true cut in services.

Republican leaders in the House and Senate agree with the president and want more than \$200 billion in discretionary spending. To the Bush Administration, "discretionary" spending means the funding

of programs such as Head Start, child care, maternal and child health programs, after-school programs and training programs. Some key senators are also calling for cuts in mandatory spending programs, like Medicaid, food stamps, school lunch, and other child care funding. It's hard to think of such services as optional.

There is a danger that if some programs are spared the budget ax, others will be subjected to even deeper cuts.

The cost of this meat-ax approach will be severe: More kids won't be able to see a doctor when they're sick. More kids will go hungry and suffer from malnutrition. More kids will be unprepared for school and unable to catch up to their classmates. More kids will be in unsafe care while their parents work. And more kids who have been severely abused will be less likely to get a safe foster home.

This budget proposal is breathtaking in its irresponsibility and a sad commentary on our country. I don't know what kind of values system such choices represent, but it's certainly not one that I want anything to do with.

Actual Letter Published in Nebraska on Feb. 28

To the Editor:

It is interesting to examine how President Bush's budget proposals would affect Nebraskans, who pride themselves on living in a state that provides the "good life" for its residents.

According to the Children's Defense Fund, a child in Nebraska is born into poverty every three hours, and there are 33,000 Nebraska children (and nine million children in the United States as a whole) who do not have health insurance.

Instead of trying to ameliorate this problem, President Bush is proposing to cut at least \$45 billion over 10 years in Medicaid nationally, which results in a loss of \$238 million in health care funding for Nebraska's neediest children and families.

The Children's Defense Fund also reports that in this state, a child is abused or neglected every two hours. Nationally, a child is abused or neglected every 35 seconds.

Instead of supporting effective programs that would help these children, Bush is proposing to give states the option to spend federal funds for services for abused and neglected children in a way that holds the states less accountable and ends the guarantee to provide a safety net for them.

What are Bush's priorities?

He wants to make permanent his tax cuts for millionaires. In Nebraska, each of the 636 millionaires will receive an average of \$136,298 in tax cuts annually. The total giveaway in Nebraska alone will be \$87 million each year (Children's Defense Fund, 2005).

That would be enough to provide health insurance for 12,209 uninsured Nebraska children. People in this state who are concerned about moral values and basic human decency should be outraged by these proposals and by what they say about the priorities of this administration.

Jessica Wiederspan, Lincoln

RESOURCES

Resources

Organizations and Data Sources

American Public Human Services Association (Aphsa)

810 First Street, NE, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20002-4267
(202) 682-0100
Fax: (202) 289-6555
<http://www.aphsa.org>

Annie E. Casey Foundation Kidscount Project

701 St. Paul Street
Baltimore, MD 21202
(410) 547-6600
Fax: (410) 547-6624
<http://www.aecf.org/kidscount>

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

820 First Street, NE, Suite 510
Washington, DC 20002
(202) 408-1080
Fax: (202) 408-1056
<http://www.cbpp.org>

Center for the Child Care Workforce

A Project of the AFT Educational Foundation
555 New Jersey Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 662-8005
Fax: (202) 662-8006
<http://www.ccw.org>

Center on Law and Social Policy

1015 15th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 906-8000
Fax: (202) 842-2885
<http://www.clasp.org>

Child Care Action Campaign

330 Seventh Avenue, 14th Floor
New York, NY 10001

Child Care Law Center

221 Pine Street, Third Floor
San Francisco, CA 94104
(415) 394-7144
Fax: (415) 394-7140
<http://www.childcarelaw.org>

Child Trends, Inc.

4301 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 100
Washington, DC 20008
(202) 572-6000
Fax: (202) 362-8420
<http://www.childtrends.org>

Child Welfare League of America, Inc.

440 First Street, NW, Third Floor
Washington, DC 20001-2085
(202) 638-2952
Fax: (202) 638-4004
<http://www.cwla.org>

Children's Defense Fund

25 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 628-8787
Fax: (202) 662-3560
<http://www.childrensdefense.org>

Economic Policy Institute

1660 L Street, NW, Suite 1200
Washington, DC 20056
(202) 775-8810
Fax: (202) 775-0819
<http://www.epinet.org>

Education Commission of the States

700 Broadway, #1200
Denver, CO 80203-3460
(303) 299-3600
Fax: (303) 296-8332
<http://www.ecs.org>

Eric Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education (ERIC/EECE)

University of Illinois
61 Children's Research Center
51 Gerty Drive
Champaign, IL 61820-7469
(877) 275-3227
(217) 333-1386
Fax: (217) 333-3767
<http://www.ericcece.org>

Families and Work Institute

267 Fifth Avenue, Second Floor
New York, NY 10016
(212) 465-2044
Fax: (212) 465-8637
<http://www.familiesandwork.org>

Fight Crime: Invest in Kids

2000 P Street, NW, Suite 240
Washington, DC 20056
(202) 776-0027
Fax: (202) 776-0110
<http://www.fightcrime.org>

The Finance Project

1401 New York Avenue, NW
Suite 800
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 587-1000
Fax: (202) 628-4205
<http://www.financeproject.org>

Food Research and Action Center

1875 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 540
Washington, DC 20009
(202) 986-2200
Fax: (202) 986-2525
<http://www.frac.org>

Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center

National Center for Early Development and Learning
CB #8185
Chapel Hill, NC 27599
<http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~NCEDL/index.htm>

Kaiser Family Foundation

Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured
1330 G Street
Washington, DC 20005
<http://www.kff.org>
<http://www.statehealthfacts.org>

Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.

Princeton Headquarters
P.O. Box 2393
Princeton, NJ 08543-2393
(609) 799-3535
Fax: (609) 799-0005
<http://www.mathematica-mpr.com>

National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA)

1319 F Street, NW, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20004-1106
(202) 393-5501
Fax: (202) 393-1109
<http://www.naccrra.net>

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

1509 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20056
(800) 424-2460 or (202) 232-8777
Fax: (202) 328-1846
<http://www.naeyc.org>

**National Association for Family
Child Care (NAFCC)**

5202 Pinemont Drive
Salt Lake City, UT 84123
(801) 269-9338
Fax: (801) 268-9507
<http://www.nafcc.org>

**National Association for Regulatory
Administration (NARA)**

Lynn L. White, Executive Administrator
National Association for Regulatory
Administration
1016 Rosser Street
Conyers, GA 30012
(770) 388-7771, Ext. 14
Fax: (770) 388-7772
<http://www.nara-licensing.org>

National Black Child Development Institute

1101 15th Street, NW, Suite 900
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 833-2220
Fax: (202) 833-8222
<http://www.nbcdi.org>

**National Center for Children
In Poverty**

215 W. 125th Street, 3rd Floor
New York, NY 10027
(646) 284.9600
Fax: (646) 284.9623
<http://www.nccp.org>

National Child Care Association

1016 Rosser Street
Conyers, GA 30012
(800) 543-7161
Fax: (770) 388-7772
<http://www.nccanet.org>

National Child Care Information Center

243 Church Street, NW, Second Floor
Vienna, VA 22180
(800) 616-2242
Fax: (800) 716-2242
TTY: (800) 516-2242
<http://www.nccic.org>

**National Conference of State Legislatures
(NCSL)**

7700 East First Place
Denver, CO 80230
(303) 364-7700
Fax: (303) 364-7800
<http://www.ncsl.org>

National Governors' Association (NGA)

Hall of States
444 North Capitol Street
Washington, DC 20001-1512
(202) 624-5300
Fax: (202) 624-5313
<http://www.nga.org>

National Head Start Association

1651 Prince Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 739-0875
Fax: (703) 739-0878
<http://www.nhsa.org>

National Indian Child Care Association

279 East 137th Street
Glenpool, OK 74033

**National Institute for Early Education
Research**

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
120 Albany Street, Suite 500
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
(732) 932-4350
Fax: (732) 932-4360
<http://www.nieer.org>

**National Institute on Out-Of-School Time
(NIOST)**

Wellesley Centers for Women
106 Central Street
Wellesley, MA 02481
(781) 283-2547
Fax: (781) 283-3657
<http://www.niost.org/>

**National Resource Center for Health and
Safety In Child Care**

University of Colorado Health Sciences Center
Fitzsimons Campus Mail Stop F541
P.O. Box 6508
Aurora, CO 80045-0508
(800) 598-KIDS
Fax: (303) 724-0960

National Afterschool Association

1137 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02124
(617) 298-5012
Fax: (617) 298-5022
<http://www.naaweb.org/>

National Women's Law Center

11 Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20056
(202) 588-5180
Fax: (202) 588-5185
<http://www.nwlc.org>

**Policy Analysis for California Education
(PACE)**

University of California at Berkeley
School of Education
3653 Tolman Hall
Berkeley, CA 94720-1670
(510) 642-7223
Fax: (510) 642-9148
<http://www.pace.berkeley.edu>

The Trust for Early Education

1250 H Street, NW
Suite 700
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 293-1245
Fax: (202) 293-1798
<http://www.trustforearlyed.org/>

Urban Institute

2100 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20057
(202) 833-7200
Fax: (202) 331-9747
<http://www.urban.org>

USA Child Care

297 Herndon Parkway, Suite 104
Herndon, VA 20170
(703) 875-8100
<http://www.usachildcare.org>

**U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and
Nutrition Service**

3101 Park Center Drive, Room 926
Alexandria, VA 22302
(703) 305-2060
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns>

**U.S. Department of Commerce
Bureau of the Census**

Department of Commerce
Washington, DC 20233-7400
(301) 457-1128
<http://www.census.gov>

**U.S. Department of Education National
Center for Education Statistics**

1990 K Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006
(202) 502-7300
<http://www.nces.ed.gov>

U.S. Department of Health And Human Services/Administration for Children and Families

370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW
Washington, DC 20447
Child Care Bureau:
(202) 690-6782
Fax: (202) 690-5600
<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ccb>

Head Start Bureau:
(202) 205-8572
<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/hsb>

**U.S. Department of Labor
Bureau of Labor Statistics**

Division of Information Services
Postal Square, Building 2
Massachusetts Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20212
(202) 691-5200
Fax-on-demand: (202) 691-6325
<http://www.stats.bls.gov>

Women's Bureau

National Resource and Information Center
200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room S-3317
Washington, DC 20210-0002
(800) 827-5335 or (202) 219-4486
Fax: (202) 219-5529
<http://www.dol.gov/wb>

U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO)

441 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20548
(202) 512-4800
<http://www.gao.gov>

Welfare Information Network

1401 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 587-1000
Fax: (202) 628-4205
<http://www.financeprojectinfo.org/win/>

Wheelock College Institute for Leadership and Career Initiatives

200 The Riverway
Boston, MA 02215
(617) 879-2227
Fax: (617) 879-2156
<http://www.wheelock.edu/cieli/cieli.htm>

Zero to Three: National Center for Infants, Toddlers & Families

2000 M Street, NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20056
(202) 638-1144
Fax: (202) 638-0851
<http://www.zerotothree.org>

Source Notes

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