



DC Family Policy Seminar

“Strengthening Families: Parenting Programs and Policies in the District”



BACKGROUND BRIEFING REPORT

The DC Family Policy Seminar provides accurate, relevant, non-partisan, timely information and policy options concerning issues affecting children and families to District policymakers.

The DC Family Policy Seminar is part of the National Network of State Family Policy Seminars, a project of the Family Impact Seminars, a nonpartisan public policy institute in Washington, D.C.

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**“Strengthening Families: Parenting Programs
and Policies in the District”**

BACKGROUND BRIEFING REPORT

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Abstract

A child is born into this world with a great many needs—physical, emotional, and intellectual. Parents bear the primary responsibility for providing their children with basic material necessities, affection, and attention. When parents are unable to perform their parental responsibilities effectively, their children are less likely to achieve their full potential. Today, as in the past, parents need the support and cooperation of other institutions and their communities in order to fulfill their roles and responsibilities well.

The transformation of the U.S. economy in recent decades and the changing social and demographic realities of family life have increased the stress that families face and reduced the level of support traditionally available to them. While individual needs and circumstances differ, all parents need information and support—they may need advice on child-rearing issues, emergency assistance to cope with a crisis, or simply the camaraderie of other parents. Society benefits by supporting parents in their child-rearing roles and enabling them to fulfill their obligations to their children.

This report provides a brief introduction to the issues addressed by the DC Family Policy Seminar on April 11, 1996. The authors thank the numerous individuals in the District of Columbia government and in local and national organizations for contributing their time and efforts to this seminar. Special thanks are given to Valerie Gwinner and the staff of the National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health for their invaluable assistance in hosting this seminar, and to Richard Murphy and the staff of the Academy for Educational Development for providing space and technical assistance for this seminar.

“Strengthening Families: Parenting Programs and Policies in the District”

This seminar is the eleventh in a series designed to bring a family focus to policymaking. The panel features the following speakers:

- **Beverly Langford-Thomas**, Director, Head Start Program, DC Public Schools
- **Janice Melvin**, Acting Associate of Parent Involvement, Center for Systemic Educational Change, DC Public Schools
- **Lori Parker**, Counsel to the Judiciary Committee, Office of Councilmember Lightfoot
- **Mark Robinson**, Family Development Specialist, New Community Family Place
- **Costella Tate**, Project Director, Parent Empowerment Projects, National Black Child Development Institute

This seminar focuses on parenting programs in the District of Columbia, aimed at both providing support to parents and families and encouraging the healthy physical, educational, and emotional development of children. This background report summarizes the essentials on several topics. It provides an introduction to some of the key components of effective parenting, discusses current trends in family life, reviews current federal and District programs, and surveys relevant research on the efficacy and outcomes of these programs. The content of this briefing report are as follows:

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I. Introduction

Bringing life into this world is only the first of many tasks for a parent. For at least the first several years, parents provide the main setting in which children's development takes place and their fundamental needs are met. Parents play a central role in the child's acquisition of language, social skills, and attitudes. Research evidence affirms that the quality of parenting provided to children strongly affects how well they fare throughout their lives (Maccoby and Martin, 1983). Yet, Burton White, a child psychologist who has studied children and parents for more than 30 years, argues that "it is not at all inevitable" that children will learn and develop as well as they might (1993). Society has a vested interest in encouraging effective parenting and supporting parents in their child-rearing roles.

What is effective parenting?

Most would agree to a basic set of functions expected of parents. In addition to the provision of basic physical care and protection, The American Red Cross (1981, p. 3) articulates the following responsibilities for parents:

1. Meeting the child's need for love and security.
2. Protecting the child's health.
3. Responding to the child's needs for attention or assistance.
4. Acting as the child's first and most important teacher.
5. Guiding the child's emotional and moral development.
6. Providing consistent discipline.
7. Gradually "letting go" as the child becomes more independent.
8. Providing the child with many learning opportunities and experiences.

Moving beyond these general tasks to a definition of "effective parenting" may seem to be a daunting task. Parenting, in some ways, is an intensely personal matter, shaped by the values and culture of each family. As research indicates,

each child is unique in terms of temperament (which is largely genetic); not only are children influenced by their parents, they also exert influence on their parents (Thomas and Chess, 1977). Yet, it is possible to distill from the large body of research literature surprising consensus (particularly for the early years) about key components of effective parenting in contemporary American culture. These components fall into three general categories: developing strong emotional attachment, using discipline positively, and creating a climate that encourages learning.

Researchers studying the first component strongly agree that, during the early years of life, all children appear to have a special need to establish a strong attachment to one or more primary caregivers or in the words of Erik Erikson, to establish a sense of "basic trust" (White, 1993, p. 11). Mary Ainsworth (1979), who pioneered studies of different patterns of parent-child attachment, describes infants who form secure attachments as unhesitatingly using the parent as a secure base, exploring the environment when they are not afraid, and seeking the parent for comfort when they are afraid or upset (Fischer and Lazerson, 1984, p. 290). Children form secure attachments when their parents respond sensitively and reliably to their needs. This confidence in the reliability of others also should be coupled with the child's fundamental sense that he or she is worthy of this confidence (Erikson, 1963). The failure to form secure attachments in infancy has been increasingly linked to aggression in later life (Sroufe, 1979). Research has also revealed coherent strategies for helping parents to establish secure attachments (Bogenschneider, Morgan, Riley, and Lundeen, 1994).

A second key component of effective parenting involves providing the guidance and discipline that children need to become competent members of society. The origin of the word discipline—from the Latin root *disciplus* meaning "a learner"—corresponds to advice from child development experts, namely that discipline should be thought

of as more than correcting undesirable behavior; it should be an opportunity to help the child develop in a healthy way—mentally, emotionally, and physically (Stoppard, 1991). Psychologist Diane Baumrind (1971) identified three parental styles of discipline, distinguished by the ways in which parents combine support and control. Parents with a coercive or authoritarian style provide low emotional support and attempt to control their children's behavior using threats, punishment, or force. Those with a permissive style are warm and loving, but exercise little control or expectations for their children's behavior. Baumrind and others have shown that children whose parents exhibit either of these styles are less socially competent than children whose parents practice the third style of parental discipline—the authoritative style. Authoritative parenting is inductive, characterized by high levels of emotional support and firmly enforced limits that are explained to the child. Children who experience this combination of emotional warmth with firmly enforced rules are more likely to be independent, competent, and cooperative than their counterparts (Fischer and Lazerson, 1984).

In studying the third key component, researchers agree that parents, as the primary agents of socialization in young children, need to provide an environment that is safe, stable, consistent, and emotionally supportive, fostering the child's curiosity for learning. Mounting evidence points to the importance of environmental stimulation in the development of the brain and body (Healy, 1994). The type of environment that enhances learning varies according to the age of the child. Firsthand involvement with objects and experiences stimulates brain growth in infancy, whereas older children benefit from stimulating playthings and many and varied interactions with other people (Healy, 1994). Current research documents numerous environmental factors that contribute to optimal development; for example, we know that parents who speak to their children frequently, especially about specific objects in their

environment, help their children develop better vocabularies and score better on later tests of intelligence (Hart and Risley, 1995).

What are some of the current challenges to effective parenting?

The realities of family life have changed significantly in recent decades. Earnings have decreased due to shifts from the more profitable manufacturing-based economy to a less lucrative service-based economy (Hamburg, 1991), thus making it difficult for many families to make ends meet. Today, a larger proportion of mothers are in the workforce; thus, there are increased needs for child care and increased demands on the parents' time. A recent study documenting the time crunch faced by many modern parents showed that children, on average, spend five minutes alone with their fathers and 20 minutes alone with their mothers each day (The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 1994). With a divorce rate that has doubled since 1960 and increases in nonmarital childbearing, many parents face the challenge of raising their children alone—in many cases, without financial support by nonresidential parents.

Nationally and locally, potential signs of family stress are rising. The following statistics represent challenges to effective parenting:

Indicators:	US 1992	DC 1992
% of families with children living in homes headed by a single parent	25.3	56.6
% of women in the labor force who have children ages 6-17	75.0*	79.4
% of children with both parents (or only parent) in workforce	61.1*	61.6
% of families (headed by mother) who receive child support	31.8	14.5
Median income of families with children	\$35,100	\$24,300
% of men (ages 25-34) whose incomes are below the federal poverty level for a family of four	30.0	34.2

*1991 Data. Source: Kids Count Data Book, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 1994 & 1995.

Along with these demographic, social, and economic changes have come changes in the types of supports available to parents. In the past, help in rearing children could be found more often from nearby extended family members and at the grass roots level in the community; today, changing family structures and new economic burdens have insulated many parents from formal and informal support networks. Informal support networks that once provided information and support to parents (such as grandparents, friends, older parents in the neighborhood, and church networks) are often less available today as young parents become more geographically mobile, juggle job and child-rearing responsibilities, and experience divorce more often than their own parents. Increases in family stress and decreases in support networks have impacted family functioning (Stanton, Ooms, and Owen, 1991).

Although all families are affected by the changes and accompanying stresses of modern life, some families face additional difficulties that make effective parenting especially challenging. Teenage parents, for example, are often ill-prepared for the financial and emotional responsibilities of parenthood (McCarthy and Hardy, 1993). Violence, drugs, and social disorganization in the nation's poorest neighborhoods represent tremendous obstacles to effective parenting for those who live there (Weissbourd and Emig, 1989).

Providing Support to Parents

Despite well-documented connections between effective parenting practices and positive developments in children, "typical young parents are quite unprepared for the responsibility of educating their first child" (White, 1993 p. 115). Research-based knowledge about effective child-rearing practices is not routinely conveyed to parents. White (1993) asserts that, despite progress in the last 20 years, our society still does not educate its parents to assume the role of first teachers of their children.

All parents, regardless of their circumstances, need the support of the community in carrying out their child-rearing responsibilities. Whether it be practical advice, emergency assistance during a crisis, or the simple camaraderie of other parents, parents benefit when they have access to solid information and support when they need it. Researchers (Stanton et al, 1991) have identified several of the specific needs of parents in rearing a family:

1. Emotional support and practical help.
2. Specific information.
3. Advice and feedback about child health and development.
4. Basic child-rearing practices and information.
5. Information on links for specific information.

Implications for Public Policy

Parents today face many challenges to building a strong family life that promotes positive development in children. Though individual needs and circumstances differ, all parents need practical child-rearing advice and community support in their child-rearing role. Parents with few economic resources who confront other challenges such as parenting alone or rearing a child with special needs, or who are "at-risk" in terms of abuse or neglect are of most serious concern. One direction public policy has already taken is to support the parent-child link via parent education programs. National and local governments are already involved in developing programs and policies to support parents in the task of effective parenting. Examples include Head Start, home-visiting programs, and family preservation and support programs.

The purpose of this briefing report is to summarize current parenting education movements on both the local and national level and to identify proven practices. This report will conclude with a discussion of government's role in parenting education and questions for policymakers and program designers to consider as they assess target groups and participants.

II. Current Parenting Programs and Philosophies

The term “parent education” has many meanings. Over the years, our understanding of parent education has evolved to encompass a wide variety of relationships (Cataldo, 1987). In some instances, parent education refers to knowledge transmitted to parents to help better prepare their children for school; in other instances, parent education means parenting and child-rearing skills imparted to parents from the first prenatal visit. For the purpose of this briefing report, “parenting” will refer to the action of child rearing, and “parent education” will refer to programs and practices that provide information and guidance to parents in the entire parenting process (e.g., health and safety, school readiness, food and nutrition, and cognitive, emotional, and physical development).

Examples of Parent Education Programs

Parent education programs come in a variety of designs and formats and have disparate goals. While some programs focus on high-risk parents (e.g., teenage parents, parents who abuse alcohol and other drugs) and the basics of rearing children, other programs target families and neighborhoods to strengthen the parent-child bond in the hope of building stronger communities. According to accepted research (Carnegie Task Force on Meeting the Needs of Young Children, 1994; Cataldo, 1987; Children’s Defense Fund, 1992), programs can be categorized in the following five types:

- General parent education
- Parent training
- Parent participation and observation
- Home visiting
- Family support centers

General parent education is characterized by the delivery of various child-rearing advice on child development, learning, behavior, and child care from experts in the field. The goal of this education is to enhance children’s development and

behavior by informing parents about how to handle child-rearing activities and responsibilities. General parent education can target various populations such as high-school students, middle-class families, high-risk parents, schools for the children with disabilities or other special needs, low-income programs, programs serving minority populations, and programs for new parents.

Parent education can be delivered in various forms (such as lectures, media displays, books, and group meetings) and sponsored by various organizations. Many hospitals and health maintenance organizations, for example, have parent support groups or classes for their new parents. In the District of Columbia, the DC Public Schools work with the Comprehensive School Health Education Program to provide seminars and workshops on rearing healthy children. Missouri’s Parents as Teachers (PAT), a nationally recognized parenting education program, focuses on *all* families via the school district. Parent educators provide home visits, group meetings, regular monitoring of a child’s health and development, and referrals. The goal of the program is to give children the best possible start in life and to help them be better prepared for school (Children’s Defense Fund, 1992).

Parent training is provided for parents whose children need a specific skill or experience. Parents may need to know how to care for a child with special health needs, or may need a step-by-step guide on how to teach a particular preschool skill, and will seek out a specialist focusing in that particular area.

Parent training is geared toward diverse participants. Special education schools, for instance, are set up to work with parents to strengthen their capacity to handle their child’s emotional or physical disability. Programs for high-risk parents such as adolescent parents focus on teaching specific play, child care, and social interaction skills for these parents. Other programs that focus on specific behavioral or learning issues might target

broader populations of families of various ages and classes. The Mega Skills program, begun in the District of Columbia, focuses on parents and teachers, providing workshops and training that help families to help their children build achievements in school and beyond.

Parent participation and observation is distinguished from other forms of parent training in that parents are direct participants and observers in their child's school program, thus contributing to the child's school experiences. The goal is to link the child's life at home with life outside the home. Parents become familiar with teachers, curriculum, and school policy and may gain a wide range of understanding that could help the child in the future.

Parent participation and observation programs began as early childhood education programs through preschools and child care settings. Some federally funded programs such as Head Start have evolved to rely on parents for taking on the responsibilities of day-to-day activities.

Home visiting programs aim to provide preventive help and support to families via planned visits from nurses, outreach workers, or other professionals. The goal of home visiting is to create a link between individual family needs and available community services in order to strengthen the overall functioning of the family. Prenatal home visits emphasize healthy habits for the pregnant mother and help the family prepare both physically and emotionally for the upcoming birth. Postnatal home visits may focus on providing support for new parents; preventing child injury, abuse, or neglect; and promoting positive parenting and school readiness.

Home visiting is proving to be both a valid and cost-effective strategy for educating families about parenting issues as well as linking them to other services and resources in their communities (Olds, 1995).

Family support centers or family resource centers are relatively new to the arena of parent education

programs. These community-based service organizations administer a wide range of programs designed to fulfill diverse family needs. According to Allen, Brown, and Finlay (1992), the goal of family support programs is to strengthen families to ensure the health and well-being of the next generation. Family support programs do this by:

1. Helping parents cope with the stresses of daily life;
2. Giving parents new information and ideas about child development and child rearing to make parenting more rewarding and help them nurture and support their children better;
3. Reducing the isolation many parents feel by bringing them into contact with other parents in similar circumstances; and
4. Linking families with other social services and supports that can help meet their basic needs, ideally before the needs intensify and reach crisis proportions.

This family approach differs substantially from traditional services that focus more on the parent or the child, but rarely focus on both or on the family as a unit. Throughout the DC Public School System, 40 grants have been awarded to schools to start Family and Parent Resource Centers. The drop-in centers are staffed by either volunteers or a school counselor and offer guide books and support for parents in improving their parenting skills. The District's Bancroft Elementary School, for example, currently sees 20 parents a day who "drop in" to share parenting ideas, recipes, and job prospects. The program has become the model for all schools receiving the grants.

Maryland has received national acclaim for its Friends of the Family network of family support centers. The centers were begun in 1985 in an effort to roll back the rising tide of teen pregnancy and child abuse and neglect. Today, 20 centers provide drop-in services to young parents and their children from birth through age three. Core ser-

vices include parenting education; child care services for infants and toddlers while their parents are on site; health education and referral; educational and employability services; recreation for parents and children; service coordination with other agencies; developmental assessments for children; advocacy; adolescent pregnancy prevention services; and in-home services for “hard-to-reach” families (Family Facts).

III. Federal and District Government Parenting Programs

The federal government has shown interest in parenting programs for specific target populations. Money has been appropriated to serve adolescent parents, parents who abuse alcohol and other drugs, low-income families, and parents at risk for child abuse or neglect. While the majority of funding for family support and parent education programs has been private, the federal government does, in fact, provide numerous research and project grants for this movement. The following is a partial listing of programs and projects currently funded via the federal government.

Head Start

Head Start is a national program providing comprehensive developmental services for low-income children between the three and five years of age, and social services for their families. Started in 1965, Head Start is administered through the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) and has served over 13.8 million children thus far. In FY 1994, Head Start programs were reauthorized and funded at \$3.3 billion. Head Start served 714,000 children nationwide in 1994.

The cornerstone of the program is parent and community involvement in the development of their children. Although the program provides health and educational services for preschool age children, Head Start also serves parents and families via child development classes and home visits. Additionally, parents are expected to be involved

through participating in policy councils, planning programs, and operating activities of the individual Head Start centers. The Comprehensive Child Development Act gives time-limited priority to certain entities under Head Start, including Parent-Child Centers.

Funding is awarded to local public or private nonprofit agencies by 10 ACF regional branches. Twenty percent of the cost of a Head Start program must be contributed by the community. In 1992, 2,863 children in the District of Columbia participated in Head Start programs (District of Columbia Government, 1993).

Family Preservation and Family Support Services

Family Preservation services are activities that help families alleviate a crisis that might lead to out-of-home placement of children due to child abuse or neglect. Family Support Services are voluntary, preventive activities to help families nurture their children. Both of these services are funded through the Administration for Children and Families. While each of these services sponsors different programs, parenting information classes are considered both a family preservation and family support service.

As of FY 1994, states were encouraged to develop five-year plans for 1995–99 to improve the coordination of programs serving families with children. The goal is to design and deliver family and children’s services that are stronger and better integrated. Funding was \$60 million in FY 1994 and \$150 million in FY 1995.

Child Abuse and Neglect

The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, under Title IV of the Human Services Reauthorization Act of 1994, provides funds for various child abuse and neglect programs to improve prevention and treatment activities of states. In 1992, states reported 2.7 million cases of child abuse or neglect. In the District of Columbia,

13,000 children were reported for child abuse or neglect in 1992. Reports of child abuse and neglect nationwide come from all communities, income levels, and racial and ethnic groups. Of the substantiated cases of child maltreatment, about 46 percent involved neglect, 22 percent involved physical abuse, 13 percent involved sexual abuse, and 19 percent involved other forms of maltreatment (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families).

The National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect (NCCAN), located within ACF, allocates funds and coordinates the federal government's child abuse and neglect activities. Funds are available for preventive programs via both the Basic State Grants (\$19.9 million available in 1994) and the Community-Based Prevention Grants (\$5.3 million available in FY 1994). Funds are also available to support demonstration projects to identify the best means of preventing maltreatment and treating troubled families. Approximately \$15.6 million in discretionary funds was available in FY 1994. The District of Columbia has a number of child abuse and neglect prevention programs. One such program, Families Together, provides short-term, home-based services to families in cases where the removal of a child is imminent due to physical abuse or neglect.

SPRANS Demonstration Projects

Special projects of regional and national significance (SPRANS) funded by the Health Services and Resources Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, provide support for national maternal and child health activities. In this geographic area, examples of current parenting projects receiving funds include: Healthy Tomorrow's Parenting Program at Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center in Baltimore, DC Healthy Families and Thriving Communities Project at the DC Department of Human Services, and Maryland's Integrated Home Visiting Project in Maryland's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

Young Unwed Fathers Project

The Department of Labor operates various pilot, demonstration, research, and evaluation programs geared to promote long-term stability of families. The Young Unwed Fathers Project investigates various approaches to helping unwed fathers improve their earnings capacity and parenting skills. An important component of the project is the parenting and fatherhood curriculum targeting young fathers ages 16–25 years. The Department of Labor funding for this program was \$200,000 in FY 1993, with most sites using additional funds from the Job Training and Partnership Act (JTPA).

Special Education Programs

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in the Department of Education is responsible for administering programs and monitoring state compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Within that mandate, OSEP operates a Parent Training program to provide training and information to parents of children and youth with disabilities to enable them to participate more effectively in meeting the educational needs of their children. In FY 1993, funding for this program totaled approximately \$12.4 million.

IV. Research Findings: Do Parenting Programs Work?

In an age of fiscal restraint and responsibility, program funders and developers must ask whether parent education and family support programs improve the short-term and long-term well-being of the children served by them. Documenting programmatic success is often difficult, however. Cataldo (1987, p.15) states that "often subtle shifts in mothers' and fathers' attitudes and understandings, produced at least partly through programs, cannot be detected. Results may be far reaching yet elusive for the professional or the parent to identify on such evaluation measures as questionnaires, behavior scales, or observations of child-

rearing activities.” Even so, Cataldo points out, there is some empirical evidence that programs provide some benefits for children, parents, agencies, and schools.

Benefits for Children

Available evidence suggests the potential for significant benefits for children from parental participation in parenting programs. When developmental gains are noted, they appear to be explained by both characteristics of the programs and of the parents. Parents gain information in the program setting that allows them to successfully deal with the child’s behavior. Cataldo (1987) summarizes research findings on the effects of parent programs on children:

1. Gains in children’s development, intelligence, achievement, and socioemotional well-being (Beller, 1979; Brown, 1978; Goodson and Hess, 1978).
2. Gains in children’s cognitive functioning, language development, curiosity, cooperation, and resourcefulness (Stevens, 1978).
3. Improvement in family mental health in programs where parents learn how to better handle children’s needs and behaviors (Croake and Glover, 1977).
4. Intellectual gains (perception, task completion, thinking) and social benefits (attachment, independence, role expectations, self-concept) for children through parental support (Cochran and Brassard, 1979).

Benefits for Parents

Indirect benefits for parents have also been noted by researchers. Programs that provide support to families through mothers and fathers are important, in the long run, to family and parent development. Cataldo (1987) notes that research on parents has shown benefits from programs in the following areas:

1. Career development for parents via programs such as Head Start—possibly because parents

are making social contacts that may improve their employment prospects (Gordon, Olmstead, Rubin, and True., 1979, Sigel, Secrist, and Forman, 1972; Zigler and Valentine, 1979).

2. Family management and emotional relief when children attend a preschool program (Cataldo and Salzer, 1982).
3. Improvements in parents’ attitudes and effectiveness in managing child behavior when parents are involved in group parent education programs (Croake and Glover, 1977).
4. Special benefits for younger parents, in particular, from participating in parent education programs (Stevens, 1978).

Benefits for Schools and Agencies

Although there may be initial costs to schools and agencies in providing these services, research findings (as listed in Cataldo, 1987) indicate that the long-term gains may be significant:

1. Fewer grade retentions and fewer remedial classes (Lazar, Hubbell, Murray, Rosche, and Royce, 1977);
2. Improvements in home-school relationships as well as improvements in schools and communities (Gordon et al., 1979; Zigler and Valentine, 1979); and
3. Better adjustment to the special needs of children with disabilities (Lillie, Torhanis, and Goin, 1977).

Research on recent programs, such as Missouri’s Parents as Teachers (PAT), shows that children in this program scored higher on standardized measures of math and reading than did first graders not participating in the program (Harvard Family Research Project, 1992). Locally, Maryland’s Friends of the Family is initiating a review to evaluate how well its family support centers work. In particular, the project will investigate whether the centers have helped in developing good parenting skills as an indicator of successful family/child development (Family Forum, 1995).

Trademarks of Successful Programs

While the research cited above showcases various outcomes for parenting programs, research studies have also identified elements of successful parenting programs. Findings (Bogenschneider et al., 1994) indicate that parenting programs must have the following features:

1. An ecological (or holistic) approach: The most successful programs affect the systems surrounding the parent and child as well, rather than focusing on just one issue or aspect of the problem.
2. Collaborations: These programs require that community organizations and agencies become partners to provide more intensive and communitywide efforts for service and referral.
3. Long-term focus: One-session workshops may work with simple issues, but there is no evidence that one-session workshops with parents have consistent or lasting effects upon serious child-rearing difficulties.
4. Terrific staff: Characteristics of program staff (such as Interpersonal sensitivity, a sense of emotional well-being among individual staff, and skill at leading small groups) are crucial to building successful programs.
5. Target critical periods: Successful programs intervene at critical periods in the life of a family during times when parents need more help (e.g., during the child's first year of life, at parental divorce, or at step-family formation).
6. Ability to build on parent's strengths: Focusing on deficits produces defensive feelings, whereas focusing on strengths builds on new ideas and capabilities.
7. Affirmation of individual differences: The best programs are flexible in meeting parents' needs. Parents' needs may differ, for instance, depending on whether they are parenting their first child or their second child .

The basic principle for providing parenting services is to ensure that they are adaptable to the needs of families and children who use them.

Borgenschneider et al. (1994) also note that programs should fit, at minimum, the following four categories:

1. The age of the child. Parenting programs must be developmentally sensitive to the age of the child. Teens, for example, have very different needs from those of infants or children.
2. The issue or outcome. Programs must have a clear goal. Whether this goal is to decrease child abuse or neglect or to increase the educational outcomes of the child, the parenting skills taught need to match the desired outcome.
3. The locale and subculture. Parenting programs need to carefully assess the needs and developmental appropriateness of their curriculum and to reflect cultural competency.
4. The family structure. Changing demographics of the American family show varying arrangements of living patterns. High rates of divorce and the high incidence of two-income families and step-families indicate the need for varying types of programs.

In summary, programs come in an assortment of shapes and sizes to fit the variety of family arrangements in the United States. Successful programs recognize the need for a range of tools and practices to ensure that parents are receiving necessary support in their parenting endeavor.

V. Conclusion

Parents bear an awesome responsibility for rearing their children to their fullest potential. All families rearing children benefit from outside support for their child-rearing role, whether the support comes from relatives, friends, neighbors, or outside sources. While parenting education and support programs are clearly important components of family support strategies, many questions remain concerning the policy formulation and implementation stage here in the District of Columbia. Given scarce resources, action by

District government and agencies could take various courses in shaping family policy in District.

A plethora of options exists if the government wishes to expand services. For instance, officials can expand funding for parental and family support programs by creating more family support centers; government can encourage companies to adopt family-friendly work policies that include parent training; and more demonstration projects can be funded to teach mothers and fathers how to discipline more effectively, form secure attachments with their children, and provide enriched environments to enhance their children's learning potential.

For policymakers, the question remains: What kind of policy should be enacted for the District of Columbia? Should programs target high-risk populations only (teenagers, substance abusers), or will *all* parents be invited to participate? Where should the majority of the funding come from—federal or local sources? Should programs be family focused? Or should programs be provided that support only the parent and/or the child?

Society clearly has a large stake in providing services for parents and families to encourage positive emotional, social, and physical development of our children for today and for the future. How our nation and the District of Columbia choose to formulate policy to provide a mainstay for parents will have a long-term impact on the strength of our families, our communities, and our country. ■

Appendix A

District Resources

The following section presents a brief description of resources available within the District of Columbia for children and families. This list is based on information obtained through informal surveys with local organizations and advocates. It does not represent a comprehensive analysis of local resources. Descriptions are included for purposes of reference rather than recommendation.

ASPIRA Association, Inc.

1112 16th Street, N.W.
Suite 340
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 835-3600

Contact: Julia Howell-Barros

ASPIRA Parents for Educational Excellence (APEX) reaches out to Latino parents who desire to become involved in their children's education but may not be sure where to start. The main goal of APEX is to train parents to improve education in their communities and to help them mobilize other parents to join in their efforts. The APEX Program is made up of two basic components—the APEX Workshop Series and technical assistance on a one-to-one basis. The ASPIRA Association hopes that the APEX model of what parents do in their communities and schools will build a growing core group of parents who advocate for their children's education.

Bright Beginnings, Inc.

901 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 332-6160

Contact: Judi Farber

Bright Beginnings Child Development Center provides quality services to preschool children of

homeless families. Bright Beginnings offers a safe, nurturing, caring environment designed to promote self-confidence and self-esteem. The educational curriculum, supported by in-depth supervision and stimulating recreational facilities, offers a loving setting for homeless children. A parent support group helps the families deal with the stress that accompanies homelessness. The program also gives parents an opportunity to assess their parenting skills, socialize with others, and enhance their job search skills. When children are well cared for during the day, parents have the opportunity to seek jobs, training, and permanent housing.

Center for Applied Research and Urban Policy

University of the District of Columbia
4200 Connecticut Avenue NW
Suite 510
Washington, DC 20008
(202) 274 -5599

Contact: Vijaya Melnick

The Center for Applied Research and Urban Policy (CARUP) conducts research on problems that affect the social and economic health of urban areas, particularly the District of Columbia. CARUP provides technical assistance to urban managers and policymakers. The center places special emphasis on interdisciplinary approaches to problem solving. Activities include research on issues such as homelessness, housing, public education, transportation, and maternal and infant health; technical assistance to clients such as government agencies, school systems, organized community groups, and nonprofit organizations; training; and dissemination of research results for educational and informational purposes. The

center's research findings on a variety of issues are disseminated through publications, seminars, conferences, and media programs. CARUP's extensive list of research projects (e.g., studies on homelessness, infant/maternal health, retail food services, housing, public education, transportation) reflect the breadth of its resources and the versatility of its research fellows.

Center for Child Protection and Family Support, Inc.

714 G Street, S.E.
Washington, DC 20003
(202) 544-3144
Contact: Felecia Holley

This community-based, family-centered, child-focused facility provides multidisciplinary, prevention services to young families. The Family Support Center focuses on parenting and life management skills education, home visiting, client-planned social/recreation activities, and substance use and violence prevention activities for young children and their families—all in a culturally relevant atmosphere that draws on inherent family and cultural strengths.

Center for Youth Services

921 Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E.
Washington, DC 20003
(202) 543-5707
Contact: Samuel Tramel

The Center for Youth Services is a private, nonprofit corporation established to offer multiple services to disadvantaged inner city adolescents. CYS works with high-risk young people ages 14–21 to help them become productive adults. The center offers a multifaceted program that includes mentoring, education, job counseling and training, health care, family planning, male outreach programs, developmental child care and screening, child care referrals, parent education, athletic and cultural recreational activities.

Concerned Black Men

1730 K Street, N.W.
Suite 304
Washington, DC 20006
(202) 783-5414
Contact: John Wilson

The DC Chapter of Concerned Black Men, Inc., (CBM) was founded as a nonprofit organization to provide creative independent outreach. CBM members are African-American men motivated by cultural pride. The organization's volunteers are results-oriented, spiritually inspired, and dedicated to improving and advancing the lives of African-American children by providing hope; shaping values; providing opportunities for cultural, social, and academic enrichment; and promoting children's successes. Adhering to the motto "Caring for Our Youth," CBM sponsors various programs and activities promoting educational, cultural, and social development. CBM's youth programs provide black youth with positive adult role models who endeavor to instill cultural awareness; economic independence; and emotional, intellectual, physical, and spiritual strength. Concerned Black Men sponsors a wide range of programs, including the Adopt-A-School/Project 2000 programs, and the Self-Development and Teenage Pregnancy Prevention programs.

DC Action for Children

1616 P Street, N.W.
Suite 110
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 234-9404
Contact: Diane Bernstein

DC Action for Children (DC Act) is an independent, nonprofit, multi-issue advocacy group dedicated to improving the lives of children and families in the District of Columbia. DC Act advocates for building communitywide support for preventive, comprehensive, and integrated services delivered at the neighborhood level. DC Act works with local providers, policymakers, and citizens on

behalf of District children and families to ensure that their basic needs are met and their rights are protected.

DC Commission on Social Services

609 H Street, N.E.
Fifth Floor
Washington, DC 20002
(202) 727-5930
Contact: Pamela Johnson

The DC Commission works with community collaboratives of service providers, parents, and government representatives to articulate a continuum of services in support of children and families, to identify the services currently available, and to articulate and strategically plan the development of “missing pieces.”

DC Public Schools

Office of the Superintendent
Center for Systemic Educational Change
Parent Involvement
North Dakota and Kansas Avenues, N.W.
Washington, DC 20012
(202) 541-5929
Contact: Janice Melvin

The mission of the Parent Involvement office of the DC Public Schools is to strengthen the home-school ties that promote student success by providing information and technical assistance to parents and families. As a resource group of the Center for Systemic Educational Change, Parent Involvement offers many direct services, but also brokers the services of other groups that support student efficacy. Parent Involvement acts as an information clearinghouse and referral service for parents/families and community members; makes training available to parents, teachers, administrators, community members, and business representatives; and provides technical assistance to parent centers in schools, and to individuals and community organizations.

Edward C. Mazique Parent/Child Center of DC

Parenting Education Program
1719 13th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20009
(202) 462-3375

Contact: Charlene Walker

The center is a private, nonprofit, community-based organization involved in early intervention, early education, and family support. The center offers 13 programs at five sites in the District, and center serves 500 families in center-based and home-based care. One program provides pregnant and parenting teens with mentors to help them develop strong parenting skills; the program also tutors the teens so they can continue their education.

Families Together

65 I Street, S.W.
Room 104
Washington, DC 20024
(202) 727-1835
Contact: Toussaint Jones

Families Together is a program designed to preserve the family unit by providing short-term, intensive, home-based services to families in cases where the removal of a child is imminent due to physical abuse or neglect. Families Together works with families during a crisis period when they believe there is a significant opportunity for change. The program works to keep families together in a safe environment by providing intensive intervention focused on helping parents gain a level of functioning that will strengthen problem-solving skills and ultimately prevent separation.

Family Health Program

Center for Mental Health
2041 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, S.E.
Fourth Floor
Washington, DC 20020
(202) 889-5255
Contact: Johanna Ferman

The Center for Mental Health’s Family Health Program, a national demonstration model, is a

comprehensive family-centered program designed to meet the needs of substance abusing women and men, prepartum and postpartum women and their children. The program provides cost-effective treatment and rehabilitation by integrating mental health services, substance abuse services, and health-related services into the overall treatment recovery plan for the individual and/or family. These services include family therapy, parent psychotherapy group programs, and parent training programs.

Head Start Program in Washington, DC

United Planning Organization
810 Potomac Avenue, S.E.
Washington, DC 20003
(202) 289-9100

Contact: William Hughey

Established in 1965, the Head Start Program provides comprehensive child development services for low-income preschool children (ages 3–5 years). All local Head Start programs offer four major components: education, social services, parent involvement, and health services (including medical, dental, nutrition, and mental health services). Local programs are administered through grants from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. The authorizing legislation specifies that at least 10 percent of Head Start's national enrollment must consist of children with disabilities. The District has 39 Head Start facilities in the District, serving 1,665 children.

Kingsbury Center

2138 Bancroft Place, N.W.
Washington, DC 20008
(202) 232-5878

Contact: Brenda Wilkes

The Kingsbury Center addresses the needs of young children, adolescents, and adults in the Washington area who have average to above-average intelligence but also have a learning disability. The center sponsors several urban tutoring

programs, including the I Have A Dream Foundation and The Friends of Tyler School Tutoring Program. The center also operates the Kingsbury Day School, which is attended by more than 50 children and preadolescents ages 5–11. The setting allows the children to undertake an innovative academic program in small groups to maximize their learning potential. The collaboration and teaming of psychologists, diagnosticians, and tutors in the assessment, tutoring, and day school division of the Kingsbury Center make it possible to offer a program that encompasses the whole spectrum of services related to learning disabilities. With all of these services offered in a single setting, and a large role for parents, children with learning disabilities are offered the opportunity to succeed.

Mayor's Advisory Committee on Early Childhood Development

c/o Office of Early Childhood Development
717 14th Street, N.W.
Suite 730
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 727-1839
Contact: Beverly Jackson

The Mayor's Advisory Committee on Early Childhood Development is composed of representatives from private organizations in the field of early childhood development, directors of child care centers, parents of children in both center-based and home-based child care centers, public agencies, and appropriate government agencies. The Committee advises the mayor on early childhood development programs in the District of Columbia and serves as an advisory council in the implementation of the federal government's requirements related to early childhood development. The committee serves as an advocate for improving the quality of early childhood development programs and recommends methods of upgrading services.

New Community Family Place

1312 8th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 265-1942
Contact: Mark Robinson

New Community Family Place offers the Early Childhood STEP program to provide the information and practical skills needed to help children from the start. STEP, the Systematic Training for Effective Parenting, is a practical program that teaches helpful techniques to improve family communication and encourage cooperation, in addition to teaching effective discipline strategies that promote both self-esteem and respect.

Office of Early Childhood Development

DC Department of Human Services
717 14th Street, N.W.
Suite 730
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 727-1839
Contact: Barbara Ferguson Kamara

The Office of Early Childhood Development (OECD) facilitates citywide coordination of public and private efforts to expand and improve child development services to better meet the changing needs of the community. OECD activities include advocacy; collaboration and coordination; consumer education and public information; data development and analysis; early care and education service; financial assistance; policy, legislation, and regulation review and development; public/private partnership development; and training and technical assistance. Through OECD, the Department of Human Services contracts with the DC Hotline to provide PhoneFriend, a telephone support service for latchkey children. PhoneFriend is provided by the DC Hotline in cooperation with the DC Public School's Department of Guidance and Counseling. PhoneFriend staff also make presentations to schools and community groups on topics relating to school-age child care.

Parklands Community Center

3320 Stanton Road, S.E.
B-Level
Washington, DC 20020
(202) 678-6500
Contact: Brenda H. Jones

The Parklands Community Center is a community-based, nonprofit organization serving residents of Ward 8. The mission of the center, which offers children and families positive alternatives in the form of recreational activities, is to enhance the quality of life for children, youth, and families living in at-risk communities. The center offers activities such as pool, ping-pong, table box games, outdoor sports, talent shows, and regular field trips to museums, skating rinks, bowling alleys, cultural activities, and other places. The center's Road to Success Program in substance abuse prevention provides a number of activities, including human and social support services to the parents of children who abuse alcohol and other drugs. Weekly group meetings provide parents with child-rearing methods, health awareness, household budgeting strategies, and substance abuse awareness information.

Washington Child Development Council

2121 Decatur Place, N.W.
Washington, DC 20008
(202) 387-0002
Contact: Bobbi Blok

The Washington Child Development Council (WCDC) is composed of concerned representatives from child development centers and family day care homes, as well as parents and other interested persons, focusing on the developmental needs of the children living in the District of Columbia. The council encourages the District government to establish policies promoting the nurturing of children so that all children may reach their full potential. The council is committed to working with teenage mothers and homeless families by serving as an advocate to promote much-needed child care services for the at-risk population.

**Washington, DC, Association for the Education
of Young Children**

4680 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, S.W.

Washington, DC 20003

(202) 563-5303

Contact: Deborah Hall

The Washington, DC, Association for the Education of Young Children is the local affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. The local association is a professional organization incorporated for the purpose of bringing together people interested in the education, rights, and well-being of young children; sponsoring activities and projects that will further the understanding of the needs of young children; determining the essentials of adequate group care of young children; interpreting these standards as needs arise; being informed of and cooperating with other groups concerned with the welfare and education of young children; and investigating new trends in early childhood education.

Washington Free Clinic

Box 43202

Washington, DC 20010

(202) 667-1106

Contact: Nitza E. Segui-Albino

The Washington Free Clinic is unique in offering comprehensive health care at no charge to its clients. Targeting underprivileged women, the prenatal program enables women to gain access to pregnancy testing, physical and pelvic examinations, nutrition counseling, social service referrals, sonograms, and prenatal health education classes. Additionally, classes in breastfeeding and in infant care are offered. The clinic is staffed primarily by volunteer doctors and nurses, nurse midwives, and physician assistants. Providing prenatal care in a comfortable environment is very important. Staff speak Spanish as well as English to make communication easier for their patients.

Appendix B

National Resources

Academy for Educational Development

Center for Youth Development and Policy
1875 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20009-1202
(202) 884-8000

Contact: Richard Murphy

The Academy for Educational Development (AED) is an independent, nonprofit organization that addresses human development needs throughout the world. In 1990, the Academy established the Center for Youth Development and Policy Research in response to a compelling need to define and promote national and community strategies for positive youth development. The center works to ensure the well-being of disadvantaged children and youth in the United States. It searches for new solutions to youth problems by strengthening national, state, local, and community leaders' capacities to develop policies, programs, and standards for practice that are supportive of young people. Publications include *Building Life Options: School-Community Collaborations for Pregnancy Prevention in the Middle Grades*, *A Stitch in Time: Helping Young Mothers Complete High School*, and *In School Together: School-Based Child Care Serving Student Mothers*.

Black Community Crusade for Children

25 E Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20001
(800) 275-2222

Contact: Brian Watt

The Black Community Crusade for Children (BCCC), coordinated by the Children's Defense Fund, works to mobilize the African-American community on behalf of black children and fami-

lies. The organization promotes local, state, and national initiatives and policies that ensure a healthy start for every black child and that support efforts to revitalize communities. Activities include a public education campaign, child feeding and immunization programs, the Ella Baker Leadership Training Institute, the Black Student Leadership Network, and a clearinghouse that disseminates information on successful program models.

Center for Law and Social Policy

1616 P Street, N.W., Suite 450
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 328-5140

Contact: Paula Roberts

The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) works to establish effective linkages between the nation's welfare and education systems in order to address the problems of America's poor families. The center provides information and technical assistance to state and federal officials, school personnel, and legal and policy advocates to achieve compliance with the Family Support Act of 1988.

Center for the Study of Parent Involvement

John F. Kennedy University
370 Camino Pablo
Orinda, CA 94563
(510) 254-0110

The Center for the Study of Parent Involvement (CSPI) is a clearinghouse dedicated to bridging the gap between home and school by providing information on parent involvement to school districts, parent and community organizations, students, practitioners, and state and national education agencies. CSPI conducts

research, provides training and consultation with educators, parent leaders and administrators, and sponsors conferences at which parents and educators share ideas and experiences. CSPI publishes a newsletter that cites outstanding parent involvement programs and reviews books and articles on parent involvement.

Center for the Study of Social Policy

1250 Eye Street, N.W.
Suite 503
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 371-1565
Contact: Julie Farber

The Center for the Study of Social Policy seeks to promote systematic reform in human services through changes in financing, administration, and delivery of services. The center's mission is to effect change through the analysis of existing policies and the development of new policies reflecting both intergovernmental and interagency perspectives. The center prepares publications on income maintenance, social services, health care, disability, long-term care, and services to children, youth, and families.

Children's Defense Fund—National Office

25 E Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 662-3576
Contact: Debra Weinstein

The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) exists to educate the nation about the needs of children and to encourage preventive investment in children before they get sick, drop out of school, suffer family breakdown, or get into trouble. CDF analyzes federal and state policy issues and works with members of Congress and state legislators to develop child care policy. In addition, CDF conducts research in child care issues; gathers data and disseminates information on key issues affecting children; trains child care advocates; and provides a leadership program for individuals in the early childhood field. CDF also monitors the development and implementation of federal and state

policies, and provides information, technical assistance, and support to a network of state and local child advocates, service providers, and public and private sector officials and leaders.

Clearinghouse on Infant Feeding and Maternal Nutrition

American Public Health Association
1015 15th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 789-5600
Contact: Dorothy Jones

The Clearinghouse on Infant Feeding and Maternal Nutrition was established in 1979 to support efforts in developing countries to improve the nutrition and health of women and children. The clearinghouse is supported by the Office of Nutrition, U.S. Agency for International Development. Its collection includes more than 12,000 books, documents, and educational materials on breastfeeding promotion and ways to improve weaning practices and maternal health. The database also contains materials on related subjects including legislation and policies, education, food production, training, and primary health care. The clearinghouse publishes the bulletin *Mothers and Children* in English, French, and Spanish for health practitioners and policymakers worldwide.

Consumer Information Center

18th and F Streets, N.W.
Room G142
Washington, DC 20405
(202) 501-1794
Contact: Nancy Tyler

The Consumer Information Center (CIC) distributes publications on topics such as prenatal care, parenting, nutrition, exercise, weight control, and child safety. The center also offers the Consumer Information Catalog and a list of Federal Information Centers. Publications are available at the center or from Consumer Information Catalog, Pueblo, CO 81009.

Cooperative Extension System

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Extension Service
Room 3328 South Building
Washington, DC 20250-0900
(202) 720-4241
Contact: Judith A. Bowers

The Cooperative Extension System (CES), a national educational network established through legislation, is a partnership of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, state land-grant universities, and county governments. The system is committed to providing comprehensive, flexible, and responsive programs that meet the needs of families who have young children and limited resources. Objectives of the network are to create community coalitions and build on successful paraprofessional models that support children, provide access to comprehensive education, and improve families' skills in nutrition, money management, and parenting in order to rear children who are physically, intellectually, socially, and emotionally ready for school and life. The system also serves as a catalyst for the creation of collaborative efforts with other community groups, and supports and participates in these efforts.

Creating Opportunities for Parent Empowerment

810 Potomac Avenue, S.E.
First Floor Rear
Washington, DC 20003
(202) 543-6482, (800) 515-COPE
Contact: Ana Bonilla

Creating Opportunities for Parent Empowerment (COPE), a parent-run organization, enables parents of children with disabilities to make greater use of entitled services under existing federal, state, and local laws. The organization provides culturally sensitive information, referral, and training services that help these parents to identify and meet the special needs of their children as well as their own needs for support. Special attention is given to parents who have been unable to learn how to deal with service delivery systems

that can be unfriendly toward them. COPE receives funding from the Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education.

Family Research Council

700 13th Street, N.W.
Suite 500
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 393-2100
Contact: William Mattox

The Family Research Council (FRC) is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that analyzes issues affecting families and works to ensure that the interests of families are considered and respected in the development of public policy. Publications include the bimonthly magazine *Family Policy* and the monthly newsletter *Washington Watch*.

First Things First

Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Inc.
1120 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 785-3351
Contact: LuAnn Dickie

First Things First is a nationwide pregnancy prevention program that offers guidance and materials to Planned Parenthood affiliates and other participating organizations. The program's strategy includes (1) educational assistance to parents and caretakers in communicating with children and adolescents about sexuality; (2) male involvement, highlighting effective programs that involve, educate, and provide services to adolescent males; (3) outreach to youth in communities of color who otherwise have limited access to services, education, and information; (4) a national panel of paid youth advisors to review program materials and methods; (5) a media campaign for print, radio, and TV, employing hard hitting messages targeting adolescents; and (6) assistance in community-based program development and implementation by providing an information clearinghouse and technical assistance.

Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition

409 12th Street, S.W.

Washington, DC 20024-2188

(202) 863-2458, (800) 673-8444, ext. 2458

Contact: Leslie Dunne

The Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition (HMHB) is an association of more than 100 national professional, voluntary, and government organizations with a common interest in maternal, infant, and child health. The coalition fosters education efforts for pregnant women through collaborative activities and sharing of information and resources; conducts outreach and legislative advocacy activities; and sponsors a biennial fall conference. Publications include the quarterly newsletter *Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies*.

Home and School Institute

Mega Skills Education Center

1500 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.

Washington, DC 20005

(202) 466-3633

Contact: Harriet Stonehill

The Home and School Institute (HSI) is an independent nonprofit educational organization that contracts with corporations, associations, and school districts, and with federal, state, and local agencies to provide programs for public benefit. The institute develops partnerships in support of schooling and student achievement, family literacy, and at-risk students. It publishes materials for parents, teachers, and policymakers and offers systematic training protocols and materials to promote total community involvement.

Human Service Collaborative

2262 Hall Place, N.W.

Suite 204

Washington, DC 20007

(202) 333-1892

Contact: Sheila Pires

The Human Service Collaborative (HSC) helps agencies and communities to develop policies and programs to achieve effective, individualized, comprehensive, family-centered, community-based,

and culturally sensitive human services for children, youth, and families; collaboration and service integration across agencies and jurisdictions; and cohesive, flexible systems of care for children, youth, and families at risk. HSC specializes in the integration of child and family service systems (including health, mental health, child welfare, substance abuse, juvenile justice, and education) at the federal, state, and local levels.

Institute for Responsible Fatherhood and Family Revitalization

1090 Vermont Avenue, N.W.

Suite 1100

Washington, DC 20005

(202) 789-6376

Contact: Charles Ballard

The approach of the Institute for Responsible Fatherhood and Family Revitalization is based on modeling and interventions to support fathers to achieve positive self-esteem. Fathers establish paternity and strengthen fathering skills while improving work ethics and employment. They seek to attain educational goals and to provide financial support for their children. The institute provides the father with nontraditional one-to-one counseling; group counseling; and family outreach for the mother of his children as well as for other family members. Sessions address the father's perceptions and feelings about himself; his attitudes concerning the parenting provided by his own father; and his feelings and attitudes about his family members, the educational system, the welfare system, the justice system, law enforcement, and the courts. Additional services include fathering support groups, an outside referral process, and postpartum visits.

National Black Child Development Institute

1023 15th Street, N.W.
Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 387-1281
Contact: Costella Tate

The National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI) works to improve the quality of life for African-American children and youth. The institute provides and supports program workshops and resources in child care, health care, education, parenting, and welfare for African-American children, their families, and their communities. NBCDI also monitors public policy issues that affect African-American children and educates the public by publishing periodic reports and two quarterly newsletters, as well as convening an annual training conference and other public education forums.

National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Services Organizations (COSSMHO)

1501 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 387-5000
Contact: Jane L. Delgado

COSSMHO sponsors community-based programs and interventions, supports university-based research, identifies policy concerns, develops and adapts materials, and trains Hispanic professionals and leaders. Ongoing national programs for youth include AIDS education, alcohol and other drug abuse prevention, child abuse and sexual abuse prevention, and adolescent pregnancy prevention. COSSMHO conducts national demonstration programs, serves as a source of information and technical assistance, and conducts policy analysis. The coalition works with community organizations in targeting local problems and in crafting culturally sensitive solutions. COSSMHO maintains Hispanic Health Link, a computer bulletin board, to disseminate information to over 350 agencies throughout the United States.

National Coalition of Title I/Chapter 1 Parents

National Parent Center
Edmonds School Building
Second Floor
9th and D Streets, N.E.
Washington, DC 20002

The National Parent Center administers the National Coalition of Title I/Chapter 1 Parents programs and serves as a clearinghouse for information concerning parent involvement and education for disadvantaged children.

The National Coalition helps economically disadvantaged parents to develop the necessary skills and abilities needed to make sound decisions that result in improving the quality of their children's education.

National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education

1201 16th Street, N.W., Room 810
Washington, DC 20036
(800) 695-0285
Contact: Susan Ferguson

National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education (NCPIE) is a membership coalition dedicated to the development of family/school partnerships in schools throughout the United States. NCPIE members, who include the major education associations and advocacy groups in the country, enable the coalition to present information about a broad range of training, publications, and other services that are available to promote community involvement, family education, family support, and school/family partnerships. Publications include *A Guide to Parent Involvement Resources* (available through the National Council for Citizens in Education); this publication, which is designed for parents, teachers, school administrators, and parent and community groups, identifies a wealth of resources and services available from member organizations.

National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities

P.O. Box 1492
Washington, DC 20013-1492
(202) 884-8200, (800) 695-0285
Contact: Suzanne Ripley

The National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY) assists parents, educators, caregivers, and others in ensuring that all children and youth with disabilities have better opportunities to reach their full potential. The center provides personal responses to specific questions, referrals to other organizations, information packets, publications, and technical assistance to parent and professional groups. *NICHCY News Digest* is published three times a year.

Parents as Teachers National Center

10176 Corporate Square Drive
Suite 230
St. Louis, MO 63132
(314) 432-4330

The Parents as Teachers (PAT) National Center serves parent educators and parents of children ages birth to five years. PAT issues a research-based curriculum providing age-appropriate information to parents on child development and ways to encourage development and learning.

Urban Institute

2100 M Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20037
(202) 833-7200
Contact: Demetra Nightingale

The Urban Institute is a nonprofit policy research organization that investigates the social and economic problems confronting the nation, as well as the government policies and public and private programs designed to alleviate the problems. The institute's objectives are to sharpen thinking about society's problems and the efforts to solve them, to improve government decisions and their implementation, and to increase citizens' awareness about important public choices. Institute researchers evaluate existing policy

options on a wide range of issues and offer conceptual clarification and technical assistance in the development of new strategies.

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About the DC Family Policy Seminars

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To receive additional information about the DC Family Policy Seminar, or to request copies of the following briefing reports or highlights, please contact Tobi Printz or Helena Wallin at (703) 524-7802.

- *Transitioning from Welfare-to-Work in the District: A Family-Centered Perspective.* February 1996
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- *Caring for our Children: Meeting the Needs of Low-Income, Working Families in the District.* September 1995.
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