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ABSTRACT

A report from the 1988 Aspen Institute Conference reports that Hispanic youth are more likely to work at full-time jobs and are slightly more likely to work year-round than either Blacks or Whites, regardless of gender or age. But although jobs are available and Hispanics want to work, fundamental changes in the nature of the economy, low wage scales for unskilled labor, and low educational achievement are keeping the American dream out of Hispanic reach. Public/private strategies that address the specific problems of the following age groups are examined: (1) 0 to 6; (2) 7 to 13; (3) 14 to 18; and (4) 19 to 24. In order to break the cycle of poverty the following recommendations should be implemented: (1) build on Hispanic strength in local neighborhoods; (2) support Hispanic institutions dedicated to the overall development of Hispanic communities; (3) develop flexible strategies to prepare young Hispanic men and women for the new work place; (4) provide the crucial support young Hispanics need to enter or reenter education and training programs or to work; (5) promote fundamental restructuring of schooling and the use of schools to make them more responsive to the year-round learning and caring that poor youth and their families require; and (6) encourage mainstream and Hispanic media to play an active role in disseminating information and reinforcing the goals described in this report. Tables and figures illustrate the data. A list of references is included. Conference participants are listed. (BJV)

CLOSING THE GAP FOR U.S. HISPANIC YOUTH

Public/Private Strategies

Report from the
1988 Aspen Institute Conference
on Hispanic Americans and
the Business Community

CALL TO ACTION

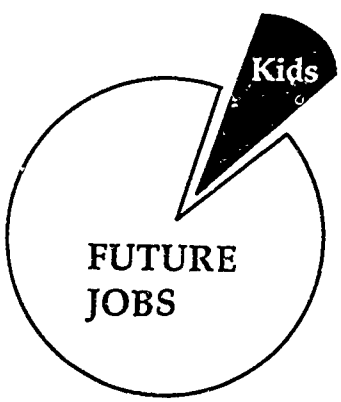
Partners in Education
—*PIE*—

The participants and sponsors of the Ninth Annual Aspen Hispanic Business Seminar call upon the next President of the United States to spearhead a national initiative—Partners in Education—to mobilize the will and resources of Business, Labor, and Government. Together, these partners must close the education and employment gaps that condemn alarming numbers of non-college bound youth—Hispanics, Blacks and others—to bleak futures outside the economic mainstream and, as a consequence, endanger the future security of the nation.

Leadership at *all* levels in *all* sectors must act to implement strategies—and in some instances undertake sweeping reorganizations and changes—that will support the family and prepare the nation's children, starting with the youngest, to participate in the new workplace.

The gravity of the education gap must not be underestimated. Conference participants agreed that without improved educational opportunities, all other actions would, in the end, be of no avail. At stake is the availability of a prepared labor force, the nation's competitive position in international trade, the health of domestic consumer markets, the stability of neighborhoods, the quaiity of life in our cities: in essence, the very nature of our democratic society.

Protecting the United States demands nothing less than a long-range, nation-wide commitment. All our children must be included in all our tomorrows.



How Would *PIE* Work?

Partners in Education can marshal a sustained nationwide effort to overcome the lack of quality preschool care and parent assistance, the lack of effective education, and the lack of opportunities to work that are placing mounting numbers of U.S. children and youth at-risk and denying the nation their economic participation.

- PIE, modeled along the lines of the National Alliance of Business, would be led by a Presidentially-appointed corporate leader and a 15-member National Council drawn from Government, Labor, Business, Education, and the Community.

- PIE's national staff, housed in the Department of Education, would include representatives detailed from the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and other relevant agencies.

- The PIE National Council would designate PIE state councils of parallel composition and structure. In turn, PIE state councils might designate PIE councils for the larger metropolitan areas.

- PIE would not supplant collaborative efforts already in place; it would build on them.

- The national, state, and local PIE councils would assess needs, set goals, and develop public/private partnerships to meet those goals.

- **PIE would rely heavily on a volunteer system motivated by recognition and competition. The enterprise would operate as one on-going corporate sales campaign, marshaling the will and the resources necessary to undertake fundamental restructuring of the ways in which human services, opportunities for education, and job experience are delivered, in order to assure that, in the long run, all U.S. citizens contribute to and share in the rewards of the 21st century.**

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CLOSING THE GAP FOR U.S. HISPANIC YOUTH

Public/Private Strategies

Report from the 1988 Aspen Institute Conference on Hispanic Americans and the Business Community

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BECAUSE OUR SOCIETY has always assumed that willing workers will be able to enter the workforce and prosper, policy makers have paid scant attention to the diminishing prospects of today's non-college-bound youth. In consequence, most young people in this nation remain unaware that an alarming proportion of their number face serious obstacles to achieving success in the adult world. Some of these obstacles relate to changes in the structure of the labor market and the state of the national and world economies. Others stem from educational unpreparedness and the continued exclusion of some populations from easy entry and full participation in the social and political lives of communities in which they live.

The problem, however, is not exclusively racial or ethnic. Increasingly, non-college-bound White youth lack the opportunity to earn a living wage. And the situation will not self-correct; private and public sector leadership must take firm action, or prepare themselves to face the alienation that will emerge as growing numbers of young Americans realize that they are likely to be trapped — permanently — in the ranks of the working poor.

If this nation ignores the far-reaching consequences of inadequate educational preparation, inudequate job training, insufficient support systems for today's two-income families, and widespread and permanent underemployment for the majority of its non-professional young people,

it will be ignoring its future workforce needs, the future of its consumer markets, the stability of its communities, and the welfare of its citizenry. The long-range price of inaction is beyond our ability to pay and survive. Action, on the other hand, requires that all sectors of society pay their share of the cost.

For a variety of reasons which will be explored in this paper, poor Hispanics are particularly vulnerable. Too few Hispanic youngsters, handicapped by poverty or inadequate adult support in

The Power, the Potential, and the Impact of the 18.8 Million U.S. Hispanics

Consumer Power
- U.S. Hispanics represent a rapidly expanding $120-billion domestic market of brand-loyal consumers.
- The Hispanic population is expected to double within 30 years and triple within 60.

Labor Force Potential
- Hispanics are expected to represent nearly 29 percent of the labor force growth of 21 million jobs during the 1986-2000 period.
- Hispanic youth are more likely to work full time and slightly more likely to work year round than either Black or White youth.

Social Security Impact
- In 1950 each retiree relied on 17 workers to pay for his or her social security benefits. By 1992 each retiree will be dependent on only *three* workers—and Hispanics will be a growing part of that supportive workforce.

Voter Power
- Three million Hispanic voters are concentrated in six states—California, Texas, New York, Florida, Illinois, and New Jersey—that together account for 173 of the 270 electoral votes needed to win a presidential election.
- There has been a dramatic increase in registered Hispanic voters in recent years. As this young population reaches voting age, Hispanic strength as a political force will increase even more dramatically.

their earliest years, are ready to learn when they start school. Too few succeed in the classroom once they get there; 45 percent drop out before finishing high school. Too few of those who do graduate have sufficient skills to command more than dead-end jobs, and too few of the already tiny fraction who do enter college ever take their degrees. This pattern of being ill prepared at every level grows all the more disabling in an economy that offers fewer and fewer jobs with futures to workers who may be willing, but under-educated.

Despite the fact that they desire to work and that Hispanic males do work more hours while attending school than any other group — and even though many do manage to find entry-level jobs — poor Hispanics are seriously and adversely affected by the following realities:

- *The mismatch between their skill levels and the skills required for most of the available jobs.*
- *The mismatch between the need for basic skills education and training relevant to Hispanic youth, on the one hand, and the availability of such training.*
- *The mismatch between their needs and the availability of support services, such as day care and transportation, that many Hispanics require if they are to take advantage of educational and employment opportunities.*
- *The growing mismatch between the cost of living and the going wages paid to non-college-bound youth of all races and backgrounds — even when they have mastered basic skills.*

The picture outlined above will not respond to easy fixes. It will take the full weight of the wisdom and experience of private and public sector leadership — educators, business people, and local, state, and federal policy makers — to develop the strategies and policies and to allocate

the resources that can preserve this nation's values, support the growth of the economy, protect our worldwide competitive position, and provide Hispanic and other youth who are non-college-bound with dignified and satisfying ways to live their lives.

Public giving today to protect and insure tomorrow has never been a particularly appealing concept for Americans, except in time of war. The proponents of action therefore must be individuals of courage and resolve. In the short term their recommendations will garner them small favor, and, in the case of the elected, few votes. We are a young country of immigrants, a country that grew with wild enthusiasm and pushed against a frontier that was expected to last forever. We are a people who, with certain deliberation, submerged our many pasts in a mythical melting pot. The future was expected to take care of itself in this land of opportunity and individualism. The harsh lessons of the Great Depression were obscured by the great victory of World War II and further blanketed by the international power and expanding economy that followed in victory's wake. The Me Generation that so distressed us in the 1970s, together with its 1980 materialistic cousins, the Yuppies, were in many ways the natural outgrowth of the Now Nation. The Now Nation must now stop short and examine the validity of old assumptions.

***Closing the Gap** looks at the circumstances of non-college-bound youth and focuses specifically on Hispanics — one of the nation's largest, youngest, fastest growing, and most at-risk populations. **Closing the Gap** presents data on the potential and status of Hispanic youth, and explores a number of options and practical next-steps for the consideration of the public and pri-*

vate sectors to ensure that Hispanics are integrated into the new workplace.

The health and stability of a pluralistic society is based on the promise of inclusion, not exclusion. As this nation goes about the business of reordering its priorities and adjusting to shifting economic realities in both the domestic and international arenas, it cannot be unmindful that maintaining large numbers of Americans as a permanent class of working poor represents a grave danger to national cohesion and confidence.

The sponsors urge the nation's leadership to address the education, family, and employment needs that non-college-bound youth are struggling to meet before our children discover that the unique incentive that motivated past generations, that welded together a nation of immigrants and that kept our Union strong — upward mobility — does not apply to them.

Lodwrick M. Cook
Chairman, ARCO
Trustee, Aspen Institute

Solomon D. Trujillo
Vice President and General Manager
General Business
U S West
Trustee, Aspen Institute

Contents

Overview of Recommendations

The sponsors and participants in the 1988 Aspen Institute Conference on Hispanic Americans and the Business Community strongly call for the initiation, development, and replication of Public/Private Partnerships that can—

Build on Hispanic family strength in local neighborhoods:

- Life skill and child development training for parents
- Parent/School partnerships
- Resettlement assistance for immigrants
- Grassroots neighborhood improvement efforts

Support Hispanic institutions dedicated to the overall development of Hispanic communities:

- Health, education, job training, and social services
- Housing
- Entrepreneurship
- Affirmative action
- Voter registration

Develop flexible strategies to prepare young Hispanic men and women for the new work place:

- Flexible work/study options
- Flexible learning methodology
- Flexible entry and exit to and from education and training
- Flexible sites and hours for education and training
- Flexible coordination and regulation to permit the *combined* use of available education and training dollars—regardless of their source—in furtherance of dropout prevention and second-chance training initiatives
- Flexible arrangements with employers in the public and private sector and with unions in furtherance of on-the-job training and apprenticeship opportunities

Provide the crucial support young Hispanics need to enter or reenter education and training programs or to work:

- Stipends
- Transportation
- Childcare

Promote fundamental restructuring of schooling and the use of schools to make them more responsive to the year-round *learning* and *caring* that poor youth and their families require:

- Year-round programming in school buildings to meet the education, recreation, and childcare needs of children and parents
- Full-day programming in school buildings to serve the childcare needs of parents who work or are preparing for work
- Evening programming for adults in language, literacy, and orientation for the newly arrived, as well as job skills and life skills
- Restructuring of middle-school programs to make them truly *transitional* for the younger students, and appropriate to the very different social, educational, and economic needs of the middle-school students *who are over-age for grade*

Encourage mainstream and Hispanic media to play an active role in disseminating information and reinforcing the goals of the programs outlined above:

- Recognition and visibility for local Hispanic efforts
- Public service announcements for local initiatives
- Print and broadcast media stories and programs that support the education and training efforts that are being undertaken in the community

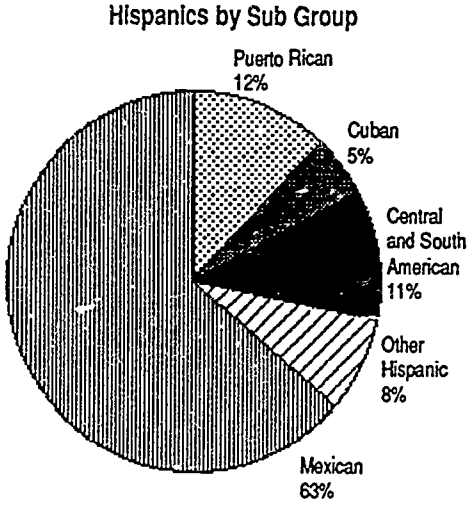
BACKGROUND

Hispanics: Willing, Eager Workers

Young Hispanics want to work. Indeed, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, regardless of gender or age, Hispanic youths are more likely to work at full-time jobs and are slightly more likely to work year-round than either Blacks or Whites. In fact, the overall labor force participation of Hispanic youth is high. Sixty-six percent of Hispanic youth are active in the labor force, compared to 57 percent of Black and 71 percent of White youth.

- Hispanics are the youngest population group in the nation, with a median age of 25 years, compared to 32 years for the general population.

- In the year 2000, just 12 years away, Hispanic youth aged 15-24 will constitute 14 percent of the total youth population. And some states, such as California and New York, will have much higher percentages.



Source: Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 416.

The U.S. Hispanic population—which in March 1987 numbered 18.8 million, almost 8 percent of the U.S. population—is conservatively expected to double within 30 years and to triple within 60.

Mexican Americans constituted 63 percent of the Hispanic population, Puerto Ricans 12 percent, Central and South Americans 11 percent, Cubans 5 percent, and Other Hispanics 8 percent. An additional 3.27 million Puerto Ricans lived on the island of Puerto Rico in 1986.

- Annual net immigration to the United States from Spanish-speaking countries is expected to remain at 250,000.

These Hispanic immigrants are learning English as rapidly as other immigrants to the United States. After 10 to 15 years, U.S. Hispanic immigrants use English as their daily language, and native-born Hispanics speak English fluently.

- U.S. Hispanics are an urbanized population with 88 percent living in metropolitan areas.

- U.S. Hispanics comprise a $120-billion consumer market.

- U.S. Hispanics are highly concentrated. About 76

percent live in five states, California (33 percent), Texas (21 percent), New York (11 percent), Florida (6 percent), and Illinois (5 percent).

- **In those regions, as the general population ages, Hispanics will represent a growing proportion of the available labor force.**

Why Aren't Non-College-Bound Hispanics Making It?

Although jobs are available and Hispanics want to work, fundamental changes in the nature of the economy and in wage scales for unskilled labor, as well as low educational achievement, are keeping the American Dream out of Hispanic reach. The road that historically brought immigrant groups into the economic mainstream—relatively well-paid manufacturing and unskilled job opportunities—is closing.

The New Jobs

- Only 4 percent of new jobs — in contrast to 9 percent of current jobs — can be filled by individuals with the lowest levels of math and reading skills.

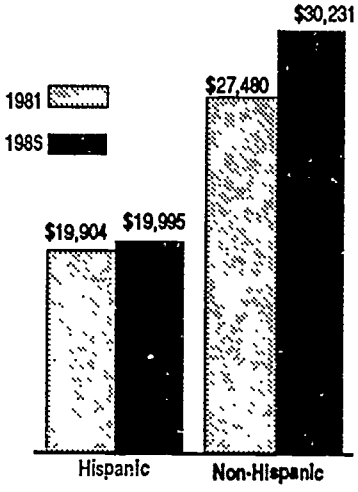
- It is estimated that 21 million new jobs will be created between 1986 and 2000, and more than half will demand education beyond high-school.

- In the decades ahead, professional openings requiring high levels of skill will increase rapidly, while the number of jobs demanding few skills will continue to decline.

- Middle and low-skill jobs will be concentrated in industries in which wage gains and growth have been weak.

Hispanics are expected to represent nearly 29 percent of the labor force growth of 21 million jobs during the 1986-2000 period, but lack of education will limit their represen-

Median Income Level
In 1981 and 1986



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, March 1987 Current Population Report (advance), Series P-20, No. 416.

tation in the fast growing, best paying positions that business and industry will be offering. Two-thirds of this nation's Hispanic youth lack the basic skills required to fill the new jobs that are being created.

Thus, many of the Hispanic workers will be limited to the low-wage, fragile and unstable sectors of the market that offer neither adequate benefits nor opportunity for advancement. Job-related discrimination is another obstacle to their participation in the healthy sectors of the economy. The low skills level of non-college-bound Hispanics will trap them in poverty.

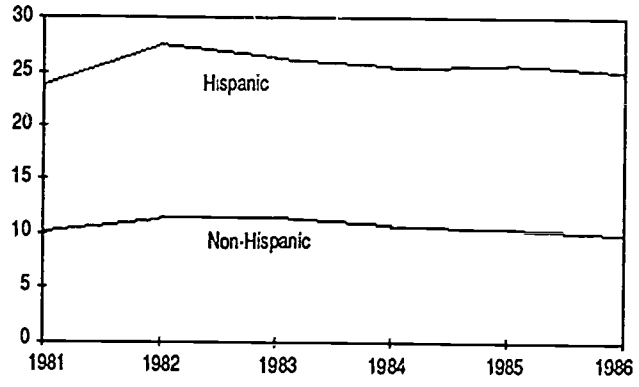
Hispanics Are Poor

Hispanic poverty is now comparable to that of Blacks, and is expected to exceed it by the end of this decade. Hispanic per-capita income fell below that of Blacks in 1985, with $6,613 for Hispanics, $6,840 for Blacks, and $11,671 for non-Hispanics.

- In 1985, 40 percent of all Hispanic children — which included 59 percent of all Puerto Rican children — lived below the poverty level. The rate for Anglo children is 17 percent.

- Hispanics receive the lowest weekly wages of any major group in the labor force, and Hispanics are getting poorer. Real income—income adjusted for inflation— of Hispanic male high school graduates declined 34.5 percent between 1973 and 1986.

Poverty Rates over Time for Hispanics and Non-Hispanics, 1981-1986



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, March 1987 Current Population Reports (advance), Series P-20, No. 416.

• In March of 1988, 8.2 percent of Hispanics were unemployed, compared to 4.7 percent of Whites.

Education and Training Troubles

The U.S. Department of Education tells us that in 1986, only 4.9 percent of college and university enrollees were Hispanic. That few Hispanics enter and graduate from college directly affects the kinds of professional and technical positions Hispanics can expect to fill.

Worse, 45 percent of Mexican American and Puerto Rican students who enter high school never finish, compared to 17 percent of Anglo students. Another 25 percent of all Hispanics graduate with a very low level of basic skills.

And, in fact, alarming numbers of young Hispanics are lost to education in the middle school years. Forty percent of all Hispanic students who leave school do so before reaching the 10th grade, and 25 percent of Hispanics who enter high school are over-age.

• Being over-age for grade in middle school and high school is a phenomenon often rooted in elementary school experiences. Many poor children enter school with delayed language development.

• Poor Hispanic youngsters whose first language is Spanish enter school and immediately confront *two* language barriers. Simultaneously they must accelerate their general language capacity and learn a second language.

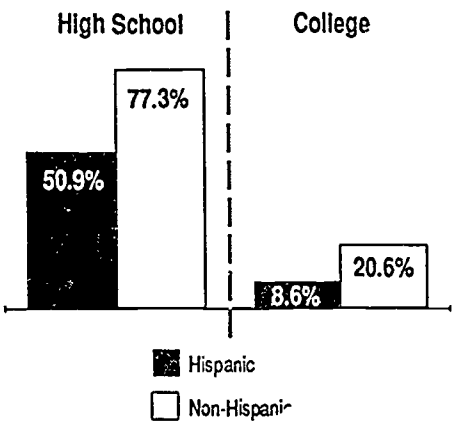
• Less than a quarter of eligible Hispanic children are enrolled in programs that teach them English and, at the same time, keep them on grade by providing course content classes in their native languages.

Job training programs for unskilled Hispanics who have dropped out are practically non-existent. A recent survey of 30 Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) Service Delivery Areas indicates that at-risk clients — Hispanics and others — are not being served, although JTPA is the only significant job program currently available.

If second chance training is not made accessible, male and female Hispanic dropouts and poor achievers whose skills do not mesh with the new labor market requirements will continue to face long-term unemployment or underemployment. This will delay or preclude stable family formation.

Educational Attainment

Percent of Persons 25 years old or more who have completed 4 years or more of:



Source: Bureau of the Census, March 1987 Current Population Reports (advance), Series P-20, No. 416

Dollars for Degrees

The average monthly income for individuals who have earned a:

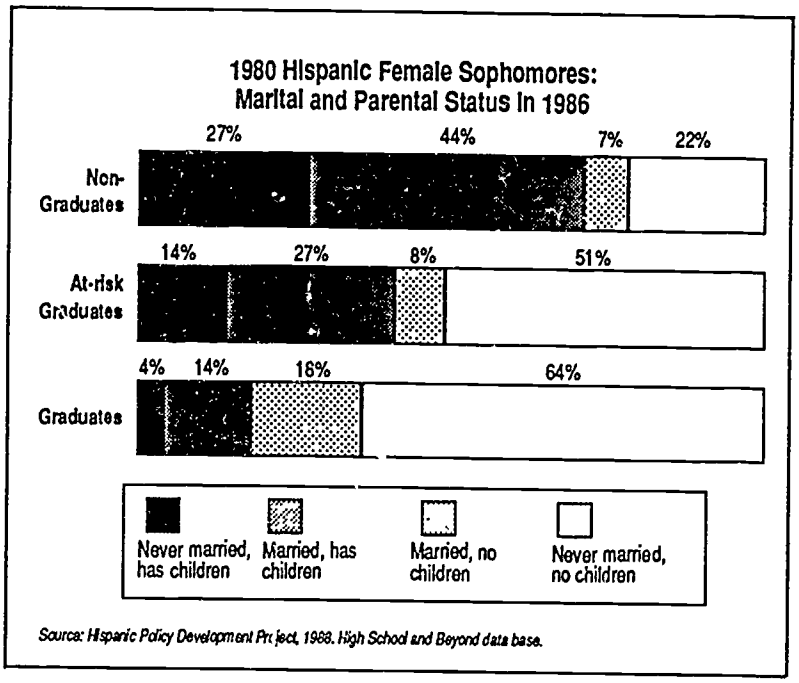
Professional degree	$3,439
Doctoral degree	2,747
Master's degree	1,956
Bachelor's degree	1,540
Associate degree	1,188
Vocational degree	990
High-school diploma	415

Marriage and Babies

Married or unmarried, young Hispanic women will continue to bear children at an early age, and the lot of unwed mothers is bleak. They face welfare dependency and have limited access to job training or to the childcare that could make training and working possible. Single mothers and their children have little chance of escaping the cycle of poverty, and their numbers are increasing at an alarming rate. In 1986, 51.2 percent of all Hispanic families living below the poverty level were headed by single females. In 1985, nearly four of every five Hispanic children in female-headed households lived in poverty.

- When Hispanics do marry, low wages and few benefits alter the traditional family structure and roles. Mirroring the national trend, both mothers and fathers are entering the labor force. Moreover, the inadequacy of childcare and after-school care for working parents places at risk yet another generation of Hispanic latch-key youngsters.

The young couples who form families will work, and work hard, but they will gain few of the expected rewards for a lifetime of hard work. Their better tomorrow probably will not include ownership of a home. They will not be able to save for the future. They will not be in a position to send their children to college. Even with two incomes, many Hispanic families can expect to remain among the "working poor."



Marriage and Babies: How many Hispanic girls who were high-school sophomores in 1980 had had children by 1986? As these figures indicate, non-graduates are far more likely to have babies, whether married or not, than either at-risk graduates (those students making C or below grades) or non-at-risk graduates (students making A and B grades.)

NO QUICK FIX

Ages 19-24,
0-6,
7-13,
14-18

No Quick Fix

Business, labor, and economic policy makers are grappling today with a wide range of complex issues to ensure that the nation's full-time workers do not earn at the poverty level and that they are not pushed into part-time jobs that deny them benefits. This paper assumes that business, labor, and economic leaders will restore the opportunity to work for a living wage and thereby achieve economic security in the new workplace.

The attention of the report, therefore, is directed to another aspect of the poverty equation. How does this society make sure that Hispanics and other at-risk youth are incorporated into the new workforce? How do we help poor Hispanic children master the basic skills? How do we help young unskilled parents help themselves and, at the same time, help their children achieve? What steps must be taken to avoid the perpetuation of a growing number of poor Hispanic families who exist on the outer fringes of society?

This nation cannot waste Hispanic human resources; it cannot ignore the potential purchasing power of Hispanic consumers or the votes of Hispanic citizens; and it cannot afford the social costs and losses that will mount as direct consequences of benign neglect and inaction.

The traditional way of looking at the plight of the poor is to identify their diverse problems and assign responsibility for solutions to a wide variety of specialized helping agencies. Education issues are forwarded to the schools, work issues are considered to be the responsibility of the employment and job training agencies, crime goes to the law enforcement authorities, health to the clinics, and so forth. In the process of dealing out the problems it is traditional to call firmly for *coordination*, and — alas — it is traditional to ignore the call with equal firmness. The interagency coordinating committee may well be the most universally ineffective device bureaucracy has ever created.

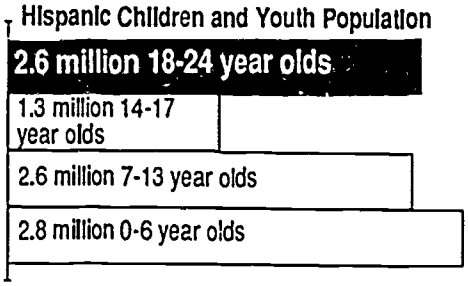
In fairness the traditional methodology of segmenting problems and clients has a certain institutional neatness and logic about it. Its weakness, however, is that it ignores the complexity of the related factors that affect human existence and behavior. Individuals are in part the sum of their family, education, health, environment, and economic realities. Moreover, where they are today has a great deal to do with where they were yesterday and where they will be tomorrow. This report, therefore, departs from tradition and considers the Hispanic at-risk population in terms of age groupings. It explores the status, problems, and needs of the young adults, 19 to 24; their children—the preschoolers, 0 to 6; the elementary school youngsters, 7 to 13; the teen-

agers, 14 to 18. And this report suggests what business can do in partnership with the public sector to help each group as it passes through the family/education/economic nexus.

Long-range concern for the stability of the nation's economy and the welfare of its citizenry requires clear recognition of the fact that today's young adults are the parents of tomorrow's workforce. We cannot intervene here and there, now and again; only a sustained effort will make a difference.

There are no quick fixes.

Nineteen to Twenty-four: Trapped Without Skills



The overwhelming majority of Hispanics 19 to 24 years old — males and females, immigrant and native-born alike — face lifetimes of poverty. Seventy percent lack the skills necessary to secure stable employment that pays a living wage; they have dropped out of school or have graduated with an inadequate education. Both immigrants and the native born confront serious barriers to stable employment.

The Immigrants

About a third of the youth population, aged 19-24, are foreign born. Although recent immigrants are eager to work, less than a quarter of them have high school educations, and their successful integration into the job market is further complicated by the need to learn English and adapt to an unfamiliar society simultaneously. Jobs that require little more than brawn or good eye/hand coordination are disappearing. Consequently, Hispanic immigrants face diminishing opportunities to make quick entries into productive and stable employment.

Most Hispanic immigrants and Puerto Rican migrants are considered to be "self-settling," which is to say that there are almost no large-scale formal government programs in place to help them learn how to function in the United States. Adult refugees such as Cubans, Hungarians, Soviet Jews, and Indochinese — as distinct from immigrants or migrants — are usually offered, indeed may be required to accept a comprehensive package of programs which usually include 6 to 12 weeks of intensive English language instruction, orientation to U.S. social norms and institutions, housing assistance, skills training, and help in finding employment.

Puerto Rican migrants and non-Cuban Hispanic immigrants, on the other hand, rely on informal family and kinship networks to learn how to function and to locate housing and jobs. Overcrowded adult education classes with long waiting lists are the major available resource for learning English. Rarely do these Hispanics have access to the intensive instruction, the audio/visual labs, and the Walkman tapes to reinforce daily lessons that speed the learning process of many refugees.

There are no programs to prepare them for the realities of a pluralistic society. They may have experienced class discrimination in their native lands but most do not know how to cope with the racial and ethnic prejudice they encounter here.

Job training programs virtually ignore them. Their lack of English, plus low skills levels, places them in the "hard-to-

serve" category that JTPA— the only major job training resource available— cannot reasonably address under the Act's present regulations.

And finally, few Hispanic immigrants or migrants in this age group are candidates for schooling. They often have family obligations in the home country; many have family obligations here. In any case they almost always lack the financial resources necessary to take time out to study. They came to work; they need to work.

The Native Born

The native-born Hispanics should be better off. Many, however, are not. Living in dangerous neighborhoods and deteriorating housing, poor Hispanics are physically isolated, and current education systems have been unsuccessful in providing them with the skills that could unlock their intellectual potentials. They are bombarded, via mass media, by a vision of "the good life" that seems forever beyond their grasp. Desires are created that cannot be fulfilled. Rock bottom financial need, plus a sense of intellectual inadequacy that may have reared its head as early as third grade, drives large numbers of young Hispanics to working while they are in school or to leaving school to go to work. In both cases the jobs they find increasingly are dead-end jobs. The real income of all Hispanic males is declining. Mounting numbers of native-born Hispanic youth perceive a "we" and "they" world in which "we" are the victims.

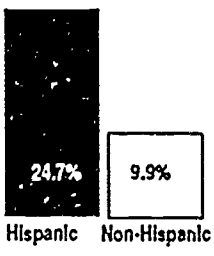
As a consequence, while young Hispanic immigrants are "adjusting," alarming numbers of young native-born Hispanics are "maladjusting," suffering an anger and frustration and a lack of hope that are evidenced in family abuse, desertion, drugs, alcohol, and finally extra-legal activity which may seem the only way out for individuals who are stuck in dead-end jobs, part-time jobs, or unemployment From a bottom-line point of view, a minimum-wage, no-future job is no match for "the hustle."

It is important to note that despite their limited options for advancement, the majority of young Hispanics do not opt for lives outside the law. They toil away for scant rewards and fall deeper and deeper into the depression and frustration that leads to troubled family and neighborhood relationships. Injuries and violence constitute the major cause of death for young and middle-aged Hispanic men.

Needless to say, any extra-legal activity can lead to incarceration, and drug addiction these days carries with it the added risk of AIDS. Infected males who share needles spread the disease among themselves. They also propagate the virus through sexual relations. In New York, AIDS is now the leading cause of death among Hispanic women in their early twenties. More and more Hispanic babies are being

The 1986 poverty level for a family of four was $11,502. Nearly two out of every five Hispanic children are poor.

Percent of Families Living Below the Poverty Level in 1986



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, March 1987 Current Population Reports (advance), Series P-23, No. 416.

born with the disease.

The vast majority of poor young Hispanic women in this age group see no alternative to the traditional role of mother. Some opt for childbearing, others find themselve pregnant. By the time they are 25, Hispanic young women may have four children — children they began bearing when they themselves were children. These children bind their mothers to the home and frequently to welfare and almost always to poverty.

What Will Help?

Focus on Families in Their Neighborhoods

Reaching Young Parents Through Their Children

The older that individuals become, the harder it is to change the course of their lives. It is difficult to make a significant impact on the future of 24 year olds who dropped out of school at 16. It is particularly hard to place welfare mothers in the workforce when the minimum wage jobs for which they qualify provide them with less take-home pay than the welfare check, and deprive them of Medicaid benefits. However, *the most effective strategy may be to reach older youths—particularly the young mothers—through programs that serve their children.* Because the early academic achievement of children is tied directly to the knowledge and achievement of their mothers, concentrating on the mothers produces a double benefit. Even when training does not lead to employment, expanding the mothers' horizons, providing information on child development, explaining the mysteries of balanced nutrition and preventive medicine, and drawing the mothers into partnership with the schools their children attend, can greatly advance the next generation's chances for success and upward mobility. Often fathers are motivated to participate in programs after the mothers have been involved. Fathers are more reluctant than mothers to join neighborhood programs but they are frequently motivated to participate when they recognize the benefits the women and children are enjoying.

Avancé in San Antonio, Texas, is an example of a hands-on program that has assisted intact families as well as single parent families through outreach to children and parents. Another example is WSNS-TV (Chicago) which sponsors twice-weekly education programs in prime time where parents and students can have their questions answered by a panel of experts.

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Settlement House Programs for Immigrant Families

The historical self-sufficiency of Hispanic immigrants and migrants may be eroding as the nature of the available jobs changes. Hispanic newcomers may need more help than they presently are receiving if they are to incorporate themselves into the new labor force. It may be time to dust off an old idea and give it new life.

Settlement houses, like those which flourished in the East and Midwest and eased the transition of wave upon wave of immigrants, can play an important role in assisting Hispanic immigrants and migrants by providing them with many of the services that are now available to refugees — language training, orientation, job training, employment referrals, housing assistance, and the like. In addition, such centers can sponsor daycare, after-school, and summer care, and offer tutoring and social and cultural activities. In some areas, local Hispanic community organizations are offering such assistance and could provide more comprehensive services if they were adequately funded; in others, new institutions may be required. Grand Street, the Community Service Society, and the Puerto Rican Family Institute are examples of such organizations in New York; Plaza de la Raza, Las Familias del Pueblo, and the Mexican American Opportunities Foundation in Los Angeles; Latino Institute in Chicago; MAUC in San Antonio; Chicanos por La Causa in Phoenix. These organizations not only offer traditional social services, they are beginning to deal with overall community problems.

The settlement house concept also might provide an opportunity for well-settled Hispanics to volunteer their time and energy to help the less settled. Beyond their immediate families, poor people are offered little opportunity to perform the community service that gives individuals a sense of citizenship, pride, and a stake in society. Business, in conjunction with the public sector, could provide the moral and financial resources to make settlement house programs the centers of community life and assistance they once were.

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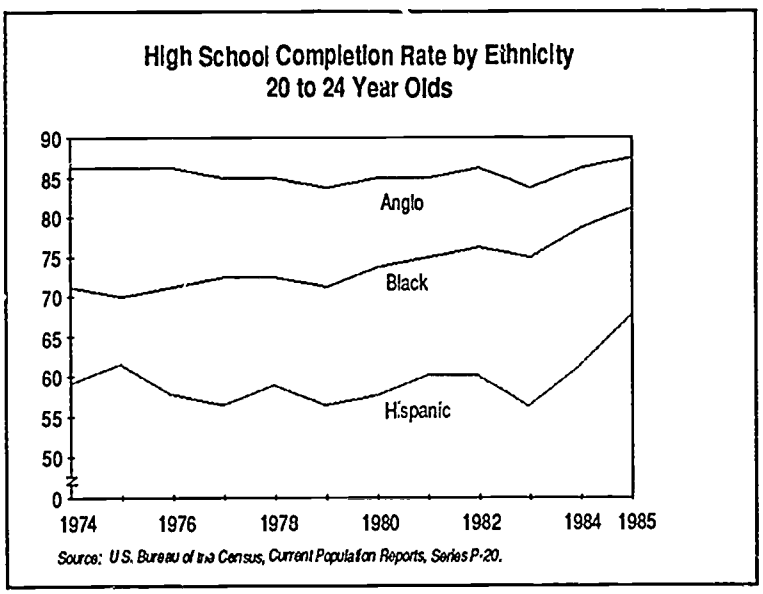
Community-Based Programs

The companions to the neighborhood-based programs are community-based institutions that serve the overall de-



velopmental needs of Hispanic populations. They cannot be neglected nor allowed to languish. Financial support is important but business can make significant contributions of time as well; business persons can volunteer technical service, and as board members they can build bridges to other sectors of society.

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Decent Affordable Housing For Low-Income Families

Providing decent, safe, affordable housing for young families is a must. Hispanics are three times more likely than Whites to live in physically inadequate or overcrowded housing. Some equitable balance must be established between direct housing subsidies for the poor and the tax expenditures that benefit middle- and upper-income home owners. (Only one in four renter households with incomes at or below the poverty level live in public or other subsidized housing; three-fourths of poor renters must compete for a dwindling supply of low-cost units in the private sector.) The innovative public/private strategies for low-income housing financing and production that are being developed by the Enterprise Foundation, LISC, and the Chicago Equity Fund should be examined for lessons and models that can be replicated. Corporations might even consider adopting-a-neighborhood.

Flexible Routes to the World of Work

Post-School Follow-up

Of course, not all poor 19 to 24 year olds who are trapped in deteriorating barrios dropped out of school at age 16. Some graduated with A and B grades. Others did less well but earned diplomas, while still others abandoned school some months short of graduation. This is a group that can logically be targeted for second-chance interventions. School systems and job training networks, for example, could mount cooperative follow-up programs. Out-of-school youth could be personally interviewed one year after graduation, and again a year later, to ascertain what they are doing, and to offer them counseling and assistance, when appropriate, in finding alternative pursuits. Students who qualify could be urged to consider post-secondary training. Others could be directed to job training or apprenticeship opportunities. These young people lack access and knowledge of what is available. Many feel alienated and forgotten and could profit from the sense of personal concern that a sensitive follow-up campaign would transmit.

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Easy Re-entry to School and Training through Age 25

Schools and job training networks should rethink how youths who are over 16 exit and enter school and training. There is value in squarely recognizing both their need to earn money and the fact that many are older than their classroom peers. Some form of combined work, training, and academic instruction, open for enrollment until the youths are over 25,

is in order, and we strongly urge that such training not take place solely in the high school environment in which so many of these youths have already experienced failure. All young people need to acquire the same basic skills. *They may gain these skills, however, in different ways.*

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Second-Chance Programs in Non-traditional Settings

It is highly unlikely that older Hispanics will or can return to their former schools. *Programs lodged in community colleges that offer high school or GED diplomas and classes at flexible evening or early morning hours offer a much more hospitable, dignified, and practical setting for mature students who must study while they hold down full-time jobs.* In addition, the college environment and the opportunity to take college and high school equivalency courses simultaneously may motivate some to stay with their education and work to obtain college degrees. Business could develop ties with such institutions; they could encourage their employees to attend classes, and such institutions could "custom train" *for* business.

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Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships in business or industry may represent an attractive and productive alternative to the traditional four-year, in-school route to a diploma. It is true that business does not generally want employees until they are over 25 and have established an employment track record; understandably business seeks the mature, stable worker. But Hispanics assume adult responsibilities earlier than others. Hispanic males work more hours while in school than any other group; they hold more full-time jobs while in school, and marry earlier. Apprenticeship and study contracts, with jobs guaranteed upon successful completion of the contracts, could be established as companion programs to the school/business collaborative model programs, like the Boston Compact or Portland Investment, *specifically to serve those older youths whose circumstances require that they support themselves and their families while they learn.* The study components could take full advantage of self-paced computer learning that has proved successful with individuals who consistently failed in the regular classroom environment.

* * * * *

Conservation Corps

The Conservation Corps has shown itself to be a successful vehicle for at-risk youth. The best of the programs have instilled discipline and a sense of self-worth along with good work habits and citizenship. Several bills have been introduced in Congress to support Conservation Corps programs and to explore a voluntary national youth service. The legislative package that is expected to pass would include $150 million to double the number of 18 to 24 year olds in full-time, year round civilian service programs like the California Conservation Corps and the New York Volunteer Corps.

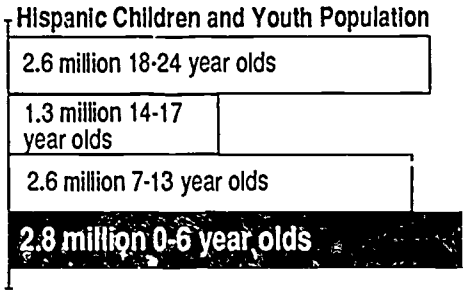
Support Systems

Stipends *Transportation* *Childcare*

All manner of second-chance options require *stipends* of some nature for poor participants. *Transportation* is often a problem as well. Poor Hispanics live in inner cities; increasingly jobs are created in the outer rings and suburbs of the metropolitan areas. Poor workers cannot get to the suburban jobs or the community colleges or the job training sites when they cannot afford public transportation and do not have private cars. *Childcare* is a problem for mothers, and so is after-school care and summer care. If it is deemed important to get women to work; if poor families require two incomes; if employment is deemed more beneficial than welfare dependency; then women must be provided with the support systems that make their employment possible.

It is true that older youths—19 to 24—are the hardest to help. But they are the parents of tomorrow's adults. The cost benefit cannot be calculated simply on the income and employment statistics that are the visible outcomes of the interventions. We must assume an uncharacteristically patient posture and look ahead. **If these young parents can be helped today — even marginally — the big payoff will come in the improved health, achievement, and stability of their children.**

From Birth to Six: A Long Time To Be Non-Verbal



On average, each year a child lives in poverty increases the likelihood by 2 percentage points that he or she will fall behind a grade level. *Forty percent of Hispanic children are living in poverty.*

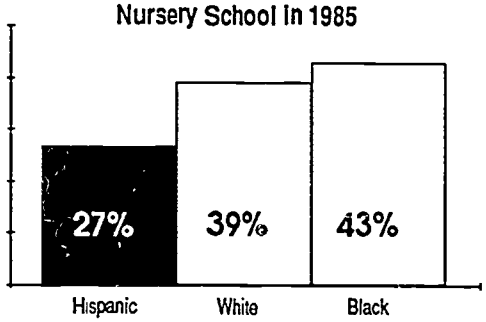
Few of their young parents have any knowledge of or training in child development—many of them, in fact, are themselves still developing. The traditional parenting practices of many poor mothers and fathers—Hispanics included—do not encourage curiosity or experimentation with verbal skills: the good child is the quiet child. Parents tend to talk *at* children; they do not generally engage them in conversation. Parents command and children are expected to obey.

Terse, authoritarian styles of communication in the family support the development of respectful and well-disciplined children — a "good thing" highly appreciated by teachers when these children arrive in school — but the lack of child/parent verbal interaction seriously hampers overall language development. As a consequence significant numbers of Hispanic youngsters enter kindergarten with a language facility and development that is well behind that of their middle-class peers. This language delay equally affects poor Hispanic monolingual Spanish speakers, poor Hispanic monolingual English speakers, and poor Hispanic bilingual children. The monolingual Spanish speaking children's introduction to school carries with it, however, a double burden — simultaneously they must develop *general* language facility while they learn a *new* language — no mean feat at age six or 60.

But language disability is not the only burden that poverty inflicts upon the very young. Poor nutrition impedes development and contributes to frequent illness. In 1985 an estimated 20 million Americans experienced hunger at some point each month, and malnutrition affects almost 500,000 American children. The leading cause of infant mortality and childhood disabilities is low birth weight, and *in 1985 the percentage of babies born at low birth weight increased for the first time in 20 years.* Poor children are more likely to suffer severe functional disabilities, compared to children in families with higher incomes.

Poor parents have less access to medical assistance to help them deal with disabilities or other health-related problems. Hispanic parents are frequently ignorant of the benefits of preventive medicine. Doctors are seen when an emergency arises; dentists are rarely visited unless there is a painful problem. One-third of the U.S. population with family incomes below the poverty level has no health insur-

Percent of Hispanic, White, and Black 3-to-4 Year Olds Enrolled in Nursery School in 1985



Benefits to Taxpayers from Investing in High Quality Childcare for At-Risk Children

Results of the Perry Preschool Program in Ypsilanti, Michigan, indicate the following estimated *reduced costs per participant for:*

special education	$5,000
crime	3,000
welfare	16,000
miscellaneous	4,000

This represents an approximate benefit of $28,000 per participant* compared to a $15,000 program cost over a three-year period per student.

*Participants are followed from the time they are three until they are 19 years of age.
Source. HPDP, derived from information presented in the Wall Street Journal, March 21, 1988.

ance. Uninsured, low-income children receive 40 percent less physician care and half as much hospital care as insured children.

Poverty, combined with the parents' own limited experience, severely restricts opportunities for infant stimulation. Moreover, the struggle to survive with insufficient money in dangerous surroundings produces depression, hopelessness, and high levels of stress. The resulting instability and despair sometimes leads to child neglect or abuse.

Clearly, poor Hispanics are among the children who most need childcare and preschool programs with strong enrichment and parent training components. Yet only 27 percent of the 3 and 4 year olds are enrolled in pre-school programs of any nature. In part this stems from the paucity of affordable resources. In part it grows out of a strong feeling in the Hispanic community that mothers should stay at home with their children until they are of school age. Fear of child abuse is often cited as a reason to avoid institutional care. The isolation of the barrio plus limited support for enriched childcare all too often restricts family opportunities to receive assistance until the child actually starts school — far too late. Most poor Hispanic parents love their children and want the best for them. When they maintain traditional outdated practices, it is because they are unaware of the alternatives, not because they are unconcerned about their children's welfare.

What Will Help?

Quality Childcare/Parent Training

The children of poor Hispanics are a future resource that the nation cannot afford to waste. The most effective time to reach them to assure that they have an even chance of succeeding in school is *before* they arrive in kindergarten. The report of the Committee for Economic Development, "Children in Need," makes the point loud and clear — *prevention through intervention is cost effective.*

Supplemental Food Programs

Research has consistently shown the effectiveness of federally-funded WIC, or Special Supplemental Food Programs for Women, Infants, and Chidren. WIC has been shown to reduce the incidence of both low birthweight babies and fetal deaths, and to reduce medical costs in the first 45 days after birth. In light of these undeniable benefits, Congress should increase appropriations for WIC; at the same time, it is imperative that those counties which are *not* currently taking advantage of WIC begin to do so. Local businesses could encourage public officials to implement WIC and other successful nutrition programs in counties where they are not now available.

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Adopt-A-Care

Imaginative corporations are beginning to think about ways to support daycare for these at-risk children who will be the managers and the workforce in the years 2010. If corporations can Adopt A School, can they not Adopt A Daycare Center and offer enrichment components that public subsidy cannot provide? They might, for example, increase the parent training and involvement components of existing daycare centers, or create job training or community service opportunities for poor mothers. Corporate add-ons might stretch daycare dollars and provide more service for the at-risk children who are most in need of help before they enter school.

* * * * *

Employer-Sponsored Childcare

Some businesses have instituted enriched childcare on their premises or near their offices to serve the needs of their employees. The Union Bank in California is an example of a company with a large number of entry-level Hispanic employees that has established a model on-site childcare center at its Monterey Park facility to promote the children's development and to assist parents both in terms of childcare and instruction in child development. Businesses with such centers might consider opening them up to accommodate a number of children of unemployed mothers. The children would be helped and the mothers would gain the benefit of the parent training — as well as the opportunity to relate to Hispanic women with children who had entered the workforce and were "making it."

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Childcare Vouchers with Work

Mothers of about 26.5 million children work outside the home. Some 64 percent of these mothers are employed full-time. Increasingly, programs targeted to the poor are putting emphasis on placing mothers in jobs. As these programs gain currency, more and more poor women will enter the labor force. It is important that there be sufficient dollars available for the support services that working mothers require. Proponents are looking to the successful GAIN program in California, which provides welfare recipients with literacy classes, job training, and childcare to make the training possible. A voluntary work program in Massachusetts, ET, devotes half its budget to daycare vouchers. *Since 1986 Massachusetts estimates that it has saved $100 million through reduced welfare payments and increased tax and social security revenues.*

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Improve the Availability and Quality of Childcare

The quality of childcare varies widely, and programs must be brought up to high standards across the board. New evaluations, such as the study of the High/Scope Perry Pre-School Program, the work of Ounce of Prevention in Chicago, Isleta Pre-Kinder in El Paso, and Avancé in San Antonio, are focusing attention on the need to establish enriched,

sensitive programs *that treat the child and the child's family as a unit before the child enters kindergarten.*

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Improving and Expanding State-Supported Childcare

More and more states are recognizing the importance of childcare and pre-school programs and are allocating state funds to support such efforts. Many states are establishing formal linkages between state programs and Headstart. State mechanisms for funding vary—some accept proposals from school districts or private providers, others limit their funding to school districts — some target low income, non-English-speaking children or the academically at-risk. The major problem is that most school-based care is not full-day care and therefore it does not adequately serve the needs of working parents. Business could play a role in urging implementation of full-day care.

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Recruitment and Intervention Strategies

A 1986 Lou Harris survey shows that there is a receptive market for preschool childcare among the general public. A majority of the respondents (54 percent) strongly approve of the government providing childcare services for children of poor working mothers, while another 34 percent somewhat approve the notion. A majority of the public would be somewhat willing to increase its taxes for childcare programs. The *need* is evident and the *will* to do something about it appears to be gaining momentum. It is important now that policy makers seriously consider ways to reach out to Hispanic parents to ensure that they take advantage of the preschool opportunities that are being created.

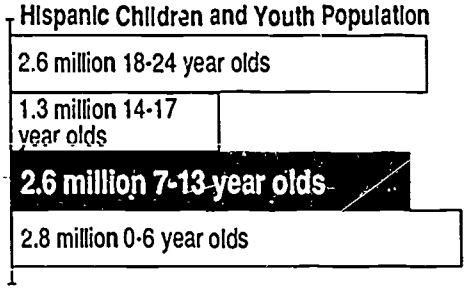
There is a need to think through and test strategies. Grandparents, for example, may be a significant audience for child development education. Many Hispanic children are in the care of grandparents while their parents work.

Welfare offices, hospital clinics, churches, laundromats may well be sites to explore. Recruitment could take the form of everything from posters to videotapes on loops. Parents who themselves have participated in parent involvement projects can be an excellent source for door-to-door recruiters.

Media Role

Certainly the Hispanic media can play a central role in promoting formal childcare as an option and providing information on health and child development in general. Television and radio are the major communication sources for poor Hispanic families. Entertaining spots and programs featuring local Hispanic leaders or well known Hispanic personalities could be mounted as a public service or sponsored by local business.

Seven to Thirteen: The Crucial School Years



The stresses on at-risk Hispanic children are many and complex, involving their parents' unfamiliarity with school, the school's unfamiliarity with Hispanics, the poverty of their families, and the quality of life in their communities.

Most poor Hispanic parents feel that school is the province of teachers and administrators. They believe that they have no place in the school, just as teachers have no place in their homes. Some are embarrassed by their limited English and education, and many feel that school is a forbidding place. It is not their responsibility to teach their children, but the school's.

Home life surrounded by poverty can be dismal. Families are increasingly overcrowded, with as many as 10 people living in one- and two-room apartments. Overcrowding, along with parental reluctance to become involved in school work, makes studying at home difficult, often impossible.

Preschool children are not stimulated to be curious, and their older siblings receive little cultural or recreational experiences to supplement school. Unlike middle-class children, they do not go on trips to the zoo or to the puppet show; there are no family vacations, and few summer camping experiences. Poverty and lack of awareness of what is available are the major reasons children lack opportunity, but parental protectiveness plays a role as well. More must be done to include Hispanic parents in field trips to overcome their reluctance to let their children participate.

Malnutrition also plagues the children of the barrio. A quarter of all Hispanics suffer from anemia, and Vitamin A and C deficiencies are prevalent in children 10 to 12 years old. Hungry children do not excel in school.

It goes without saying that homelessness exacerbates all problems, in school and out, for at-risk children. But even some poor Hispanic children who have homes are living in substandard conditions, and they can suffer neglect because parents work or are escaping the grim realities of life through drugs and alcohol. Tired, downcast, frustrated at trying to make ends meet, mothers and fathers may not be available for their children emotionally or physically.

Families in poverty are becoming more isolated from each other and from helping agencies as they move to find jobs and are pushed out by gentrification. Hispanic families move more than any other group. As a consequence, the support of the extended family is breaking down, and social constraints are diminishing. Not surprisingly, the incidence of reported child abuse is on the rise.

The stress of poverty and deprivation experienced by many children aged 7-13 leads to emotional problems that

either go unnoticed because the child is passive or, too often, are thought to be discipline problems because the child acts out: "All this kid needs is a swift kick in the pants and he'll stop his mooning." "If I *ever* catch you playing with fire again I'll beat you black and blue." These are not uncommon responses to behaviors that are symptomatic of much deeper problems.

In school, a child is labelled, formally or informally, by the time he or she is 7. Children who enter school with limited English proficiency or underdeveloped verbal skills are often labelled "slow," no matter how bright they are. Less is expected of them than of their peers, and subtle messages about being "dumb" are clearly transmitted.

The mid-elementary school years prove to be a critical watershed for many at-risk children. At the fourth grade level, school work shifts from simply learning the basics into more sophisticated applications of these skills. As reading becomes more content-oriented, poor children, many of whom began with delayed language development and most of whom have not been exposed to the same experiences as their middle-class peers, are handicapped. At this point a child who has not mastered the basic skills is left behind.

Foreign-born children are particularly likely to be left back in the mid-elementary school years. Often, in fact, they are placed a grade behind when they enter school. And often they are left back again, because their lack of English has made it impossible for them to keep up with their peers. Less than 25 percent of LEP (Limited English Proficiency) students are in programs that teach English while they teach regular courses in the child's language.

School also fails at-risk, foreign-born Hispanic children because the school lacks sympathetic advisors who can speak to them in their own language. An often difficult home life, adjustment to a new culture, and academic problems make these children more needful of attention, one-on-one instruction, and counseling. But overcrowded classes make this an impossible task for teachers. Few teachers or aides, even in predominantly Spanish speaking schools, are bilingual. And so Hispanic children slip behind.

In fourth grade many children first experience the frustration and loss of self-esteem that makes school a penitentiary. Instead of being associated with the pleasure of learning, the school environment becomes associated with failure.

Summer compounds the problem. Summer learning loss is high for all at-risk children, more so for Hispanics. The children leave school in June with a shaky grasp of the year's lessons and come back in September to begin the next grade knowing less than when they left.

In addition, without the resources available to middle class families, summers are long, hot, and empty for poor

children. Without childcare, or safe, entertaining activities, they must fill their days hanging out in a dangerous environment or staying indoors.

If home life is difficult and school is frustrating, urban street life is dangerous. Elementary school children, aged 7-12, experience their first autonomy. No longer tied to their mothers all day, they walk alone or take the bus to school, and far too often take care of themselves and younger siblings after school. Though the street may be exciting and a relief from home life, it holds many perils for a child. In inner-city neighborhoods you can get mugged for your lunch or pocket money or beaten up because your brother is hanging around with the wrong crowd. Beyond these dangers to a child's person and property are the dangers of drugs, alcohol, sex, and gangs—illicit activities that affect younger and younger children. It is not uncommon for children as young as 7 and 8 to be used as lookouts. By age 10 or 11 these children can be more than passively involved in activities that are far beyond their years.

For many children the future already looks bleak—school is viewed as an irrelevance or as a sentence to be served; boys look forward to becoming blue-collar workers and girls to becoming mothers. Some, by the time they are 13, are clearly moving into crime, early pregnancy, and life on the fringes of society.

What Will Help?

For school-age children, intervention between 7 and 13 is the most productive and cost effective. At this age children are malleable and reachable—essentially a captive audience in school—and they are not yet damaged beyond repair. It is nothing short of a national tragedy to let these children slip through the cracks until rescue operations must be employed or until it is too late to do anything but incarcerate or support them on welfare.

Parent Support Groups

Parent Awareness

In discussing possible remedies, it is logical to begin with the parents. *Parent awareness programs* offered through institutions that are familiar to parents—clinics, churches, social service agencies—can provide information that many parents lack on critical subjects such as child development, nutrition, child abuse and family violence, and education. Media can play an important role. In Chicago, WSNS-TV's *Su Salud* program, sponsored by Marion Labs, offers half-hour programs on subjects such as nutrition and child abuse. Parenting classes can also provide a sense of community and create informal support groups for parents who feel essentially alone with their problems.

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School/Parent Involvement

The education bottom line is literacy; parental involvement in school is also known to improve children's achievement. Although Hispanic parents value education, many of them do not feel comfortable in approaching the schools. *Parent/School involvement programs,* like those sponsored by Readers Digest Foundation and The General Foods Fund, that test new strategies to recruit and help parents become actively involved in their children's education have changed the way some families view school.

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After-School and Holiday Care For the Children of Working Parents

As more and more businesses are becoming involved with employer-sponsored daycare, it behooves them to turn their attention to the working parents of older children. *Business-sponsored after-school care and holiday care* for the times school is not in session are options for keeping children off the street. Such strategies also foster good relations between business and the community.

Stay Ahead Programs
Business/School Partnerships

Adopt-A-School

Corporate America has exhibited deep concern about the current educational crisis, but individual corporations are frequently at a loss to know what to do. *The most direct action that can be taken by a corporation is to "adopt-a-school."* The most effective programs are those that provide more than financial assistance—many companies loan executives and other staff members to teach electives and provide role models, take students on field-trips or invite them into the office or factory, and expose them to options for the future that they may not have considered. Being adopted by a business, whether it is a major corporation, a local store, or—like one California school—a baseball team, can give students a sense of pride and something or someone to look up to and to work for. Corporate volunteers are rewarded doubly by the partnership: they get great satisfaction from sharing themselves with the children, while learning about the real issues in local education, issues that ultimately affect business. For the smaller business it is possible to adopt-a-class, even to adopt-a-student.

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School Breakfasts

A new study has linked the federal school breakfast program with improved school achievement and better attendance. The program assists states in providing a nutritious morning meal to low-income children. Many schools have resisted offering breakfast because of the costs involved and the difficulty of scheduling and serving breakfast to young children. Businesses can take the lead in helping schools secure funds to cover the complete costs of the breakfast program, costs which are not always reimbursed by federal funds.

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Counselors/Mentors

All students, particularly those with troubled home lives, need one trusted adult outside the home in whom they can confide. Schools must provide on-site, trained personnel to offer the sustained personal attention at-risk students and their families require. Furthermore, students need both guidance and hard information on drugs and sex, in grades as low as the third, to help them navigate the troubled waters of pre-adolescence and adolescence.

It is difficult for an outsider to grasp the isolation of the barrio. The majority of poor Hispanic children have never seen a successful, professional Hispanic in person except — perhaps — a social worker or teacher. In most cases they do not dream because they are totally ignorant of what they might dream about. Programs like Las Madrinas in New York that bring professional Hispanics into direct communication with barrio youth can motivate a child to aspire. Television tapes highlighting local Hispanic leaders, such as those produced by KMEX in Los Angeles, can backup and reinforce the hands-on effects of mentoring efforts.

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Adjustment Programs for Immigrant Children

Newly-arrived children have special needs. Increased numbers of transitional and special language education classes are required to help recently arrived immigrants adjust to a new culture and language.

In the past most immigrant groups were assisted by a network of religious and/or ethnic-pride institutions supported by established members of the group. However, though 90 percent of Hispanics are baptized Roman Catholic, the Catholic Church has not played its historically strong role with this group because few clergy are Hispanic. Nor have enough ethnic-pride institutions been established, because the Hispanic middle class is new and small, and public funding for neighborhood centers is evaporating. Both the church and the growing Hispanic middle class and business communities must look for ways to increase support for community-based service groups.

School /Community Partnerships

Expanded School Year; Expanded Use of School Facilities

Summers can be disastrous for at-risk children and their families, both in terms of summer learning losses and the lack of childcare or activities to keep children out of trouble while their parents are at work. *Expanding the school year to eleven months*, with a summer program which is enrichment oriented but includes an academic component to maintain achievement levels and strengthen academic weaknesses, would eliminate the need for parents to search for the rare affordable childcare or summer activity.

The school summer vacation was never rooted in the notion that children require time to let their minds and bodies run free. To the contrary, it was a practical way of assuring child labor during the harvest. We no longer have

a widespread harvest, but we do have the tradition that teachers need a two- to three-month vacation to cool off lest they burn out. We also have an elaborate tradition and an established infrastructure of camps and other enrichment opportunities geared to keeping the middle-class child entertained from June to September. In recent years that infrastructure has begun to include summer sessions in private schools specifically to serve the childcare needs of middle-class working mothers.

Private schools staff these summer sessions with a "summer squad" of teachers and young counselors. Public schools in cooperation with business might consider this strategy and experiment with some recreation and learning models that could erase summer school's punitive reputation and give it a good name. If regulations were relaxed, summer schools could use the services of fewer credentialed supervising teachers so long as they were backed up with student teachers and older members of the community — paid and volunteer. Summer school could create jobs and income as well as community service opportunities; it could give children supervised learning and play, and increase the links between school, family, and community. Older youth might feel differently about school if, over the summer, they were part of it from the "inside."

* * * * *

Summer School and Junior College

Another model that has shown promise is the "Sleep Away Summer School" lodged in community colleges whose facilities are unused in June, July, and August. Supervised experience outside the neighborhood can have a significant impact on children who's lives have been "barrio-bound."

* * * * *

Grassroots Programs: Business/City/Neighborhood

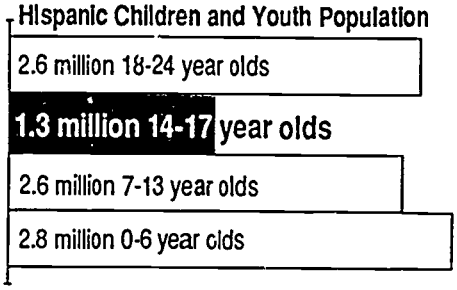
Grassroots programs generated by and for the community have proven to be successful vehicles for turning around individuals' and neighborhoods' sense of powerlessness. They are also ideal forums for public school/private school/community partnerships. A community garden, for example, can involve the city government (land-use permission, water, etc.), local industry (donation of supplies and expertise), and community leaders. The project provides useful activity for all non-working members of the community, including young school children and the elderly, while producing fresh fruit and vegetables and beautifying the neighborhood. Other community-pride projects targeted to the 7-13 age group include clean neighborhood campaigns, mural painting, and reading competitions.

The Media Role

Finally, Spanish language media, both broadcast and print, can be engaged to raise awareness and spirits. Television is a very powerful tool that validates information and experience. Yet poor children rarely, if ever, get to see themselves or their community in a positive light on TV. Business-sponsored television programs that cover neighborhood competitions and other positive events in which children see themselves and their neighbors raise self-esteem and community pride, both sorely lacking in most poor areas.

Fourteen to Eighteen: "Life is Real, Man"

The Early Teens



The teen years frequently are years of personal turmoil, particularly for Hispanic 9th and 10th graders. The physical and emotional changes that assail these young people as they pass from childhood into adolescence, and the fragmented school day, the increased freedoms and responsibilities encountered when they leave the structured confines of elementary school, are enough to engender problems for even the most self-disciplined and self-directed youngsters. Add the growing availability of drugs, alcohol, and sex, the fact of pregnancy, a characteristic obsession with group conformity, an increasing awareness of poverty, and the tribal instincts which lead to gang formation, and it becomes clear that here indeed is a time of testing and trouble for schools, Hispanic communities and parents, and their children.

In part because they are *poor*, many of these Hispanic junior high schoolers and middle schoolers are already over-age for grade, and many are doing badly in school; at this time alienation and absences increase sharply. It is interesting to note that the U.S. Department of Education in 1986 found that 16 year olds who spend eight or more years in poverty are almost twice as likely to be over-age for grade level as are children who spend two or fewer years in poverty.

The mentors and counselors Hispanic students lack in elementary school are absent in middle and high school as well. At many inner city schools, a single guidance counselor may serve as many as 700 children. Few of these youngsters see Hispanic role models — teachers, principals, community leaders, office holders - – to emulate. Worst of all, perhaps, is the fact that most of these young people have no exposure to "what might be," little or no knowledge of the multitude of occupations and professions that might engage them or the detailed steps that they must take to succeed.

Being over-age for grade strongly influences poor students' decisions to drop out of school and, without education or training, to assume adult responsibilities. To prevent this sequence, many dropout prevention programs designed to upgrade basic skills and instill self-esteem can be instituted in the elementary school years; *for those in junior and senior high school, different strategies are required;* traditional remediation will usually fail.

What Will Help?

Rethinking Middle School

More Structure in Middle School for Younger Students

In general, junior high schools, especially schools serving poor Hispanic children who are *not over-age* should provide more structure and certainly more guidance than they do at present. Too often, junior high schools are just that — *little* models of high schools, places of confusion and fear in which not much learning takes place. *These schools, midway between elementary and senior high schools, instead should be truly transitional, resembling elementary schools in some respects, using team teaching in place of fragmented daily schedules, and providing guided curriculum choices.*

* * * * *

Student Self-Government and Youth Helping Youth

Students in junior and senior high school should be given increasing degrees of responsibility for self-government, including setting the standards for behavior and deportment, monitoring compliance, and helping each other in a variety of ways, including academically. Recent experiments in various parts of the country indicate that wearing uniforms appeals to junior high schoolers — *if the decision to do so is theirs, and if they are allowed to determine what the uniform will be.*

In fact, youth-helping-youth programs have been shown to be uniquely effective in harnessing the energies of young people in constructive ways and raising their self-esteem. In San Antonio, Texas, for example, the Coca-Cola Bottling Company of the Southwest is working with the Intercultural Development Research Association in the Valued Youth Partnership Program, a project in which at-risk high school students tutor younger children.

* * * * *

Counseling and Life Skills Classes

Counselors are crucial in these years, as are classes in nutrition, drug abuse, health, and especially child development. Few junior or senior high schools teach young people how the human child grows physically and mentally. Children know more about amoebas and trees than they do about people. Child development courses are lodged almost exclusively in colleges. Yet parenthood is a role that almost all these Hispanic young people will assume, whether they are college-bound or not.

* * * * *

STEP

One promising pilot program which addresses work, life counseling, and the need to stem summer learning losses is the Summer Training and Education Program—STEP, developed by Public/Private Ventures. It tries to maintain basic skills and to reduce dropout and teen pregnancy rates.

It consists of an intensive two-summer program of academic instruction, life-skills training, and job experience along with support and personal contact provided during the intervening school year.

* * * * *

Opportunity to Earn While They Learn

For a variety of reasons, educational, developmental, and economic, children in the junior and senior high school years should be given the opportunity to earn money. Middle-class youngsters in suburban settings can trim hedges, mow lawns, walk dogs, baby sit. These are not usually options for inner-city youngsters. Working with an Adopt-a-School program, a senior high school might assume the role of employment clearinghouse, developing job opportunities with institutions, agencies, businesses, homeowners, and the like, and referring high schoolers and students from feeder junior highs to after-school or weekend job opportunities. Attending school and maintaining a satisfactory academic standing should be required, of course, in return for the privilege of earning, and a close connection should be maintained between school and job supervisor.

* * * * *

Employment/Study for the Over-age Middle Schooler

Over-age students become discouraged and feel stupid in classes of younger students, who in turn may be influenced in negative ways by their older, more physically developed classmates. We suggest, therefore, that those who are 16 or over be given the option to participate in programs that combine academic work, occupational training, and paid employment, instead of being forced to attend classes with younger students. Establishing non-traditional programs for over-aged students lies with the educators, of course, but their success depends upon the cooperation of the job training establishment and the business community if job training is to be relevant to the local labor market.

* * * * *

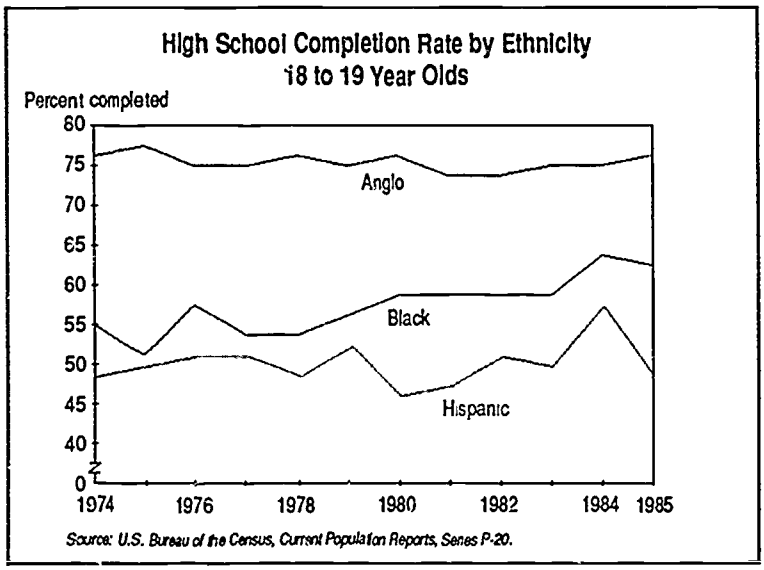
Volunteer Community Service

Both junior and senior high schoolers also need opportunities to engage in volunteer community service, and if the volunteers receive recognition and praise — preferably on a local television show — so much the better. Business organizations can develop teen community-pride projects and opportunities for community service; giving young people a chance to be useful, to gain recognition for their service to others, is an immense boost to their self-esteem, and it creates a sense of accountability to neighbors and neighborhood that is often lacking in those who feel they have no stake in society or who consider themselves victims of it.

Business has many roles here, in recognizing and developing both the for-pay and the volunteer activities into which youngsters can be recruited. In addition, business can sponsor athletic programs, social clubs, activities clubs — music, drama, dance — which can widen horizons and build self-esteem.

The Older Teens

In the later teen years, the tendencies that began to be evident earlier are now more pronounced, and differences widen between the in-school and the dropped out, between



male and female. Some are in deep trouble; some need only a little help; some are succeeding. No single program or approach can meet such divergent needs. Flexibility must be the hallmark of successful school administration and instructional strategies.

For many young people, 16 and older, unhappy in full-time school and eager to begin earning, a new set of education options may be required. Such people ought to be able to learn at their own pace, attending night school, or dropping out and then dropping back in, or attending alternative schools. Such an arrangement would of course require real coordination between the schools, the adult education programs, the vocational education programs, and the job training establishment.

Again, many of the economically disadvantaged Hispanic young people who are still in school are over-age for grade; some of these older teens, in fact, may be still in middle school. Many are drifting, doing poorly, cutting classes. Some of the young male students have obtained their first jobs. Others are now enmeshed in drug and alcohol abuse. Self-esteem is abysmally low — although this fact

may be hidden by cocky behavior.

In these later teen years, however, many have dropped out of school, the men to accept jobs demanding few skills and little education, the women — married and unmarried — to bear babies and ultimately seek welfare or poorly paid employment.

For some, gang membership and crime offer what neither school nor work can provide: excitement, a sense of identity and purpose, and more money than unskilled workers can earn.

And for all, men and women, in school and out, operating within or outside the law, *poverty is an intense reality*. This is the age group characterized by no achievable dreams. According to High School and Beyond, the longitudinal data base developed for the Center for Education Statistics, Hispanic high schoolers from low socioeconomic families believe that finding a steady job and being successful in work are very important, and that having children is very important; many expect to be married and living in their own homes by age 19. But the future that they realize is plainly grim: males will work for low wages in jobs with few benefits, females will produce children and keep house — and work — and both are powerless to change the grinding poverty of their presents and futures.

What Will Help?

Facilitating Entry into the World of Work

Because the 16-18 year olds are beginning to go their own separate ways, efforts to help them must take a number of diverse approaches.

Counseling

It is clear that school systems serving poor Hispanic communities must provide remediation services to young and older teenagers— presented, however, as an opportunity and not as a penalty — and must be given the resources to upgrade their counseling services. The major function of the counselor is to inspire, to open the student's eyes to the opportunities which do exist, to persuade the student to work toward those opportunities, and to clearly *care* what the student does and says and thinks; experience has shown that the *caring* is the single most important ingredient. In the counseling process the counselor must assess the young person's weaknesses and strengths and build on the strengths, using referrals to appropriate social agencies and all the other resources that can be called upon.

* * * * *

Jobs

Poor children need money. Flexible work/study programs must be devised in a cooperation between local employers and the school system. The student who takes an 8-to-4 job, for instance, may need a chance to continue his or her

education in the late afternoon or evening; the full-time student, in order to remain a full-time student, may need opportunities to work after school. Roosevelt High School in New York is a particularly successful demonstration of how schools can devise a number of concurrent programs to adapt to the diverse needs and schedules of students. The four-year, nine-to-three formulation is not sacred.

* * * * *

Mentoring

Young people are unlikely to invest in their futures if they do not believe they have futures. The business community must play a major role in inspiring students of this age to look and plan ahead. Business representatives who meet — more than once, perhaps — with small groups of students, or even with single students whom they "adopt," can reveal open doors to satisfying occupations wholly new to the imaginations of barrio youngsters.

* * * * *

Involvement in JTPA Youth Components

And businesses can involve themselves more actively to assure that the youth component of the Job Training Partnership Act's Private Industry Councils are implemented. Experience, in fact, has shown that business involvement is essential. Private industry can be especially helpful by supporting work-and-training programs, and by pressing for a stipend provision in the Act. The majority of the 16-18 year olds *must* earn money — they cannot afford to spend months in training with no income.

* * * * *

Expansion of Job Corps and Conservation Corps

But business cannot be solely responsible for the transition from school to work. Federal, state, and local agencies and community leaders can provide a vast amount of help to the 16-18 age group. Business should support the expansion of two programs which have proved their worth — the Job Corps and the Conservation Corps.

* * * * *

Non-traditional Learning Opportunities for Out-of-School Youth

Out-of-school youth should be actively recruited, by social agencies, community organizations, and school systems, to attend non-traditional classes — particularly classes in English As a Second Language, preparation for the GED examination, and child development and parenting. It is interesting to note that some of the most effective non-traditional training has used young, out-of-work performing artists. They make effective role players and language teachers who capture the imaginations of students.

* * * * *

Videos

Finally, a great deal of help can be provided via videos — bilingual videos — in the places where poor people must spend so much time waiting to be served: welfare and employment departments and clinics. Here again use can be made of performers — individuals trained to hold the stage. Looped video programs that present clever, entertaining

dramas and cartoons can painlessly carry information about health and nutrition, drugs, AIDS, parenting, and child development and child abuse, for instance, as well as agency outreach messages about available resources and services that can improve the quality of many lives.

For the older teenagers, one final word needs to be said about wages and work incentives:

If welfare and AFDC payments, which are not particularly generous, are nevertheless greater than or equal to the going wage minus child care and transportation costs, there is indeed little incentive to work — unless advancement opportunities promise a far better future.

BREAKING THE CYCLE

Breaking the Cycle

The alarming growth in the number of young citizens who are alienated by the failure of our society to educate and train them for rewarding employment is a serious threat to our national security. The recommendations offered in this paper are designed to promote the business sector/public sector partnerships that will encourage the inclusion of at-risk youth in the nation's economic mainstream. Many require fundamental reorganization as well as new levels of cooperation and coordination among businesses and agencies that historically functioned independently. They call for action and a generosity of spirit that society endorses but rarely implements when it is time to decide *who* will give up *what* for the greater good.

Inaction, however, is no longer an option. There are no passive, wait-and-see solutions in an increasingly high-tech world that has dramatically changed the nature of the labor market. The nation cannot sit back and assume that an expanding economy is bound to come along and solve the problems of unemployment and underemployment.

Financial resources are of course an issue. But the deliberate and coordinated action that the nation must take to turn around the life circumstances of its poor and its non-college-bound youth requires more than an open pocketbook.

- It requires that business direct its personal attention, time, and effort as well as dollars to social and education matters that historically it has delegated to others. Business cannot avoid its responsibility to become involved in community affairs.

- It requires that both the educators and the minority leadership cease seeing as *suspect* the business community's interest in education. The education establishment, business, and the Hispanic community have a mutual interest in the creation of a prepared workforce. The future of growing numbers of poor Hispanics and other non-college-bound youth depends upon their capacity to fill the slots that business and industry are creating.

- It requires that labor and management be open to negotiating arrangements — where such do not already exist — to make it possible to place youthful part-time trainees alongside mature workers. Increased union support and sponsorship of such programs — together with management's respect for labor's concern that such strategies not be used to displace workers or reduce wages —could open a new and needed transition route from school to work.

- It requires that the public sector's education and helping agencies emerge from behind the walls that protect their turfs. Comprehensive service is an achievable goal — if we abandon the notion that *the way we always did it is the only way to do it*. Educators, job trainers, and welfare and health officials and practitioners must increase their efforts to work together and learn from one another. The latest label for this cooperation is *case management*. Under a number of other labels it has failed. It cannot be allowed to fail again.

- It requires that the growing Hispanic middle class make a strong commitment to support Hispanic institutions morally and financially. Those who have achieved upward mobility must not leave the next generation behind.

- It requires that poor, young Hispanics not slip into the debilitating trap of seeing themselves as helpless victims. They must demand performance and accountability from others, and they must deliver performance and accountability in turn.

Breaking the cycle of poverty requires the national mobilization embodied in the call to action—*Partners in Education*—which precedes this report. Breaking the cycle will cost money. But more painful than the budgets will be the reshuffling of responsibility, power, and turf that must inevitably take place as new procedures and strategies are explored. The process will not be struggle-free. But leaders in government, business, labor, education, social services, and Hispanic community affairs, with sincere concern for the nation's future, cannot doubt that fulfilling our traditional social contract with the nation's youth — a contract that promises *upward mobility*, a job at a living wage, and an opportunity to build a rewarding life, in return for diligence and hard work — is worth the fight.

Epilogue

A Family View: Good People—Harsh Realities

The scene is a clean, bare kitchen. Center stage there is a cracked formica table, unadorned except for a glass vase containing a single geranium. There is no table cloth.

Three women are seated on well-worn dinette chairs around the table. Two similar chairs are at left stage. Seated at the table:

Consuela, 44, a warm, gentle-hearted mamacita. She is comfortable and at ease. This is her home. Her kitchen. Her domain.

She is married to a domineering, macho husband whose frustration and despair about his inability to earn enough money so that his family can live well is translated into anger at his wife and children. She accepts this as "the will of God," just as she accepted the death of two infants, the first of her five children, and the disappearance of her third child — a boy who ran away at 15 in angry rebellion against his father. Two children remained; they are now young women.

Juanita, 24, Consuela's eldest, dropped out of school at 16 to get married. She adores her authoritarian father, "understands" his weaknesses, but is impatient with the fatalism of her mother. She has assumed her father's rigid attitudes and sees them as her own strength of character. She sees herself as happily married, a devoted wife and mother who loves her hard-working husband — employed by a street paving company — and her two children (a boy, [illegible] and a girl, 7), all of whom she dominates. In effect, she has never left home, and now lives two houses away from her parents.

Graciela, 34, a neighbor, a widow who lost her husband in an industrial accident some years ago and was left in poverty with two young children, now teenagers (14 and 17). She is strong, direct, pragmatic, using all her innate capabilities in fighting the poverty of the barrio and the dangers of the street that are luring her kids. She has little education but a quick intelligence that makes use of ideas and resources as she finds them. She lives in the poorest section of the barrio, next to an empty lot which serves as the area's dump.

Standing together at left stage, in front of the empty chairs:

Beatrice, 20, Consuela's youngest, a strong, self-directed person with the loving warmth of her mother, but none of the passivity. She is determined not to be snared in poverty, like her parents and older sister. A student leader, she earned excellent grades in high school, won a scholarship, and went away to college over her father's strong objections. Now in her junior year, she lives at college, 600 miles away. She will graduate with honors and go on to a successful professional career — marriage and babies will have to wait.

Lilia, 16, a next-door neighbor. She became pregnant, dropped out of school, and married at 14. Diego, her husband, now 18, dropped out of school at 16 to go to work. A hard worker, with strong family values but no skills or higher expectations, he scrambles from one marginal, short-term job to another. The strongest influence in Lilia's young life has been her traditional and loving parents who taught her that a girl should not concern herself with anything but marriage and children. But Lilia has another influence in her life: Beatrice. And now, with a baby in her arms, Lilia is beginning to listen to Bea — what she hears disturbs her, but she listens.

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Bea: (warmly) Gee, Lil, it seems like just a couple of years ago I was baby-sitting you, and now . . .

Lilia: Well, now you can baby-sit Eduardo for me. He's so sweet, and so good — and he's so quiet!

Bea: You know, it's nice for him to be quiet, Lil — but not *too* quiet. Be sure and talk to him a lot, and play with him. Babies need to be stimulated. That's the way they learn . . .

Juanita: (loudly interrupting) Don't listen to her, Lil. She's just showing off! Just because she goes to college, she thinks she knows it all! Wait until she has kids of her own — if she ever does! Men don't respect single girls who leave home, you know. Believe me, Lil, the only good kids are quiet kids. Like my kids. They never give me any trouble. Conchita's only seven, but already when she gets home from school she goes right up to her room without a word, just like Alfredo. You don't hear him yelling and screaming around the house or running around. My kids are good kids — they never bother me. I tell them what to do, and they do it, that's all!

Consuela: (gently) ¡Eh, m'hijitas! ¡Cállanse! *(apologetically, to Graciela)* Sometimes I don't know what to do. They still quarrel like they did when they were children . . .

Juanita: Oh, *Mom*! *Papa* always knew. He'd make us stand real still in the closet for five or ten minutes, or . . .

Bea: Oh, sure. He knew what to do. He was so mean to Carlos that he ran away on his 15th birthday! *(sadly, softly)* We haven't seen our kid brother since.

Juanita: That's not Papa's fault. You know how Carlos was — sabes que? — running around with that gang of punks, always getting in trouble, cutting classes at school. What he needed was *more* discipline!

Bea: (tensely) What he needed was more love and understanding . . . and he needed *help* in school . . .

Graciela: (tryng to change the subject) I joined that Learning Center you wrote to me about, Bea.

Bea: (enthusiastically) That's wonderful, Graciela! But I'm not surprised — do Alicia and Hector go too? Do you like it?

Graciela: I love it. So do the kids, especially Alicia, who meets several of her friends there — all 13 and 14. But even my know-it-all 17 year old likes it. You know, he was talking about dropping out even though he's a senior?! Kept saying he had to go to work to help the

(Continued)

family. I wanted to spank him, big as he is. *(laughs).*

Well, you know, it's tough to be so poor — but I told him he'll go right on being poor all his life if he doesn't stay in school and go to college — like you. Don't tell him I told you, but he says you're his inspiration — brainy and beautiful.

Bea: Oh, he's silly. But he really likes the program? Alicia, too?

Graciela: They sure do, both of them. You'd be surprised who goes there. Parents, teachers, kids — even principals and supervisors show up. We have a good time eating dinner together, we take turns doing the cooking, you know, then all the parents go into a room to meet with the teachers — they teach us a lot, and we teach them plenty! And the kids go into another room and do their homework, with some teachers sitting in to help. It works, it really does. I feel a lot better about the school and the teachers — I used to go there just to fight with them about my kids.
(Pausing, pensive) You know, Bea, I never ate with Anglos before.

(Off stage, right, a door slams loudly. Consuela stiffens and looks frightened. She pushes quickly out of her chair and hurries off stage, right, without a word.
A muffled, angry male voice is heard.)

Juanita: (worriedly) It's Papa. Excuse me . . . *(exits right)*

(An awkward silence is broken by Bea, trying to pick up her conversation with Graciela.)

Bea: Graciela, did you ever contact the Housing Assistance Agency I told you about?

Graciela: About the lot next door?

Bea: The Pit, yes. It's nothing but a garbage dump.

Graciela: That's what they said. I went to see them. One of the guys got mad. An Anglo. He said he was the director — an architect.

Bea: He got mad at *you*?

Graciela: Oh no, no. He got mad about the lot and the dump. Said nobody should have to live there, especially families with kids, and they were doing something about it. Said he was going to start right now to get us out of there. He did, too. He put me on — what did he call it? — a *priority list* for a new place.

(Consuela and Juanita return, walking slowly. Juanita has an arm around her mother's shoulders; Consuela looks sad. She sits down next to Bea, who has taken Juanita's chair. Juanita remains standing. After a short silence during which everyone sympathetically watches Consuela, Bea gently covers her mother's hand and speaks firmly.)

Bea: Mama! You've *got* to do something about it!

Consuela: ¿Qué puedo hacer, m'ijita? It's God's will . . .

Bea: Mother! You *can* do something about it! First thing Monday morning I'm going to call a counseling center, and I'm going to make an appointment. For both of us. I'm going with you.

Juanita: (angrily) Oh, Little Miss Do-Gooder! A lot you know about it! It just so happens that Papa just got fired . . . and remember this, Bea, we do *not* take our family business to a government agency. You learn new things in school but you forget *respeto* and *dignidad*!

Bea: (momentarily stunned by the news and Juanita's anger) Papa got fired *again*?

Juanita: And he had a couple of drinks, that's all! He's sleeping it off. Mom will be o.k, she always is.

Graciela: (starting to rise) I think I'd better go . . .

(A telephone rings, off-stage, right. Juanita turns and dashes off, right)

Juanita: I'll get it, before it wakes up Papa — don't go, Graciela!

(Graciela slowly sits back down, looking questioningly at Bea, who smiles and nods at her.)

Bea: I mean it, Mama. We're going to go. The center won't hurt Papa. It will help both of you.

(Juanita enters slowly, crying, Her sister, Bea, springs up and embraces her.)

Bea: What happened, 'Nita? What's wrong?

Juanita: (still crying) Alfredo — it's Alfredo. M'ijito. My son.

Bea: What about Alfredo?

Juanita: At the police station. He was picked — they said he had drugs. *(suddenly, angry)* He never told me! He never talks to me!

Bea: (crisply but gently) All right! ¡Cálmate! ¡Vámanos!

Juanita: (immediately accepting Bea's lead) ¿A dónde vamos?

Bea: ¿Dónde? First to the Barrio Legal Defense office, and then to the police station. Where else?

(Bea and Juanita exit right, arm in arm. The remaining women silently watch them go.)

Lilia: (patting her baby and sighing) You see? Bea's wonderful! I'd love to be like her.

Consuela: (lovingly, proudly) Oh, sí. Bea says she's really going to change things around here!

Lilia: You know what, Doña Consuela, she *will*.

(The curtain falls.)

—Henry Santiestevan

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Participants at the 1988 Aspen Institute Conference on Hispanic Americans and the Business Community, held at Wye Plantation in Maryland, May 11-13, 1988:

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THE HISPANIC POLICY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT is a non-profit organization—a 501(C)(3)—which encourages the analysis of public policies and policy proposals affecting Hispanics in the United States.

HPDP directs its efforts in particular to the problems of Hispanic youth: education, employment, and family formation. Compared to other segments of the U.S. population, the Hispanic segment is young. This youthful population is often inadequately served by schools and social service agencies, and many Hispanic young people are insufficiently trained to compete effectively in the job market. To attack these problems, HPDP supports high-level public policy commissions composed of prestigious Hispanics and non-Hispanics; conferences, seminars, and debates around central education and employment issues; both lay and professional analysis and evaluation of specific policy options; and policy analysis competitions open to Hispanic and non-Hispanic scholars as well as Hispanic organizations. HPDP places major emphasis on supporting the work of Hispanic organizations and increasing their access to policy-making networks.

The communication of data and policy options is a major part of HPDP's program. Using publication and dissemination of data analyses and reports, as well as extensive contacts among representatives of the business and corporate world and among policy makers on both state and national levels, plus frequent briefing sessions, conferences, and seminars, HPDP seeks to bring its findings to the attention of key groups and leaders throughout the United States.

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