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ABSTRACT

These hearings transcripts present testimony before a congressional committee comparing early childhood education and care in the United States with that of other industrialized countries, focusing on all arrangements for children under compulsory school age. The opening statement from the committee chair, Senator James Jeffords, notes the linkage between participation in preschool and numerous positive outcomes as well as the evidence that preschool participation benefits low-income children more than children from more economically advantaged families. Jefford's statement notes that: American children are not entering school ready to learn, especially children from inner cities; the child care workforce is undertrained and paid low wages; and some local and state governments have accepted a view of early education and care adopted in other industrialized nations and have devised a variety of ways to finance programs for 3- and 4-year-olds. Providing testimony regarding the early education and care systems of industrialized nations are representatives of the Institute for Child and Family Policy at Columbia University, the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, the Bristol (Vermont) Family Center, the Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children, and the director of educational programs of the French-American Foundation. The testimony focused on the models of early childhood education and care programs in the United States and elsewhere, and discussed their eligibility, coverage, financing mechanisms, staffing and compensation, and outcomes and impacts. Prepared statements also included information on selected findings from a 15-nation study of early childhood care and education programs, the French day care system, and the experiences of one family center in Vermont. (KB)

S. HRG. 107-30

EARLY EDUCATION AND CHILD CARE: DOES THE UNITED STATES MEASURE UP?

HEARING

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

EXAMINING AND COMPARING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE IN THE UNITED STATES AND ABROAD, INCLUDING ALL ARRANGEMENTS PROVIDING CARE AND EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN UNDER COMPULSORY SCHOOL AGE REGARDLESS OF SETTING, FUNDING, HOURS, OR CURRICULUM

MARCH 27, 2001

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EARLY EDUCATION AND CHILD CARE: DOES THE UNITED STATES MEASURE UP?

TUESDAY, MARCH 27, 2001

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:35 a.m., in room SD–430, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Jeffords (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Jeffords, Kennedy, Bingaman, Wellstone, Reed, and Clinton.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR JEFFORDS

The CHAIRMAN. Good morning. The Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee will come to order.

Our hearing today, which as far as I am concerned is one of the most important ones that we have held in the last few years, is entitled "Early Education and Child Care: How Does the United States Measure Up?"

I want to thank the witnesses for coming. I will have a brief opening statement and will then turn to Senator Wellstone for an opening statement; Senator Kennedy will be here later.

The title of today's hearing, "Early Education and Child Care: Does the United States Measure Up?" is almost a rhetorical question. America lags far behind all other industrialized nations in the provision of early education and child care for preschool-age children. Even the most cursory glance at the research leaves little doubt that the United States does not measure up.

The purpose of this hearing is to examine what other industrialized countries are doing in the hope of identifying possible solutions to improving early education and care for America's children. There is no question in my mind that we must make these improvements, and we must make them quickly.

There is a clear linkage between participation in preschool programs and cognitive gains, improved school performance, decreased grade retention, and achievement in math and reading. Those linkages are evident around the world. There is substantial evidence that participation in preschool programs benefits low-income children more than children from more economically advantaged families. We will see why, especially in that area.

Amazingly, the evidence demonstrates that the type of setting in which the early education and child care takes place is of little importance, as long as it is a quality program.

Our children are not entering school ready to learn. It is as simple as that. Our children are lagging behind almost all industrialized nations in math and science achievement. More than two out of three children in inner cities in the fourth grade cannot read at the basic level measured by the National Assessment for Educational Progress.

If we know that participation in two or more years of quality preschool education better prepares children for school and improves academic performance, why do we not view early care and education as an integral part of the Nation's educational system?

We know that the best predictor of quality education and care, and positive outcomes for children, is a trained, competent teacher. But we have a child care work force that has little education and training beyond a high school diploma, is paid an average of $6.12 an hour—less than parking lot attendants—with few, if any, benefits. Is it little wonder that the turnover rate is around 30 percent per year?

Federal, State and local governments have significantly increased spending for child care over the past few years, yet less than 15 percent of families eligible under Federal law to receive child care subsidies are receiving any assistance. Head Start is serving only about 40 percent of the children eligible for the program.

Although I have been around here for long enough not to believe everything I read in the papers, I am very disturbed with the report that the President's budget will include an 18 percent cut in child abuse programs, eliminate funding for the Early Learning Opportunities Act, and cut $200 million from the Child Care and Development Block Grant.

We know how to improve the quality of education and care. We need better trained and educated teachers, and we need to pay those teachers more. We need to integrate quality early learning and development into all caregiving. We need to make quality early learning programs more affordable and available to all children, particularly 3- and 4-year-olds. We need to encourage businesses to provide more on- and near-site child care for employees.

What we have to struggle with is how to make these improvements without increasing costs to parents. In most other industrialized nations, early education and care for 3- and 4-year-olds is universal, voluntary, and free to parents, similar to kindergarten in this country.

Some local and State governments have already accepted this view of preschool and have devised a variety of ways to finance early education and care for 3- and 4-year-olds. Even with these creative approaches, quality preschool programs are still out of the reach of many parents. Several States have enacted programs and tax incentives to entice the business community into assuming more of the costs of child care for employees. Participation levels in State business tax incentives are very low, even among companies that provide child care assistance for employees. We must work with the business community to devise incentives that are attractive to employers.

Government, business, and parents cannot do this alone. Providing quality early care and education must be a partnership of joint responsibility and cost-sharing.

Our witnesses today have studied the early education and care systems of industrialized nations and will also speak from their own experience. I look forward to discussing the lessons they have learned and how these lessons can be applied to improving early education and care in the United States.

[The prepared statement of Senator Jeffords follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR JEFFORDS

I want to welcome everyone here today. The title of today's hearing, "Early Education and Child Care: Does the U.S. Measure Up?" is almost a rhetorical question. There is no question that America lags far behind all other industrialized nations in the treatment and provision of early education and child care for pre-school aged children. Even the most cursory glance at the research leaves little doubt that the United States does not measure up.

The purpose of this hearing is to examine what other industrialized countries are doing, in the hope of identifying possible solutions to improving early education and care for America's children. There is no question in my mind that we must make those improvements, and quickly.

There is a clear linkage between participation in pre-school programs and cognitive gains, improved school performance, decreased grade retention, and achievement in math and reading. Those linkages are evident around the world. There is substantial evidence that participation in pre-school programs benefit low-income children more than children from more economically advantaged families. Amazingly, the evidence demonstrates that the type of setting in which the early education and child care takes place is of little importance—as long as it is a quality program.

Early education and child care have developed along separate tracks in the United States. Child care is primarily viewed as an accommodation for working parents. Early education is most often seen as a way to support a child's socialization and cognitive development. Two-thirds of our 3- to 5-year-olds ard in some type of care outside the home. For some, that care is part-day or part-year. But many of these children spend 35 hours or more in the care of someone other than their parents. A recent nationwide study found that 40 percent of the child care provided to infants in child care centers was potentially injurious. Fifteen-percent of center-based child care providers for all pre-schoolers are so bad that a child's health and safety are threatened; 70 percent are mediocre—not hurting or helping children; and 15 percent actively promote a child's development.

If we know that high quality pre-school education and care leads to increased school readiness, improved school performance, better socialization, and cognitive gains for our children, how can we, as a nation, continue to separate early education and child care? How can we continue to view it as a private matter among families, rather than a social imperative?

Our children are not entering school ready-to-learn. Our children are lagging behind most other industrialized nations in math and

science achievement. More than two out of three children in our inner cities in the fourth grade cannot read at the basic level measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

As I prepare for the Senate debate on the "Better Education for Students and Teachers Act," I do so with the knowledge that we can, and should, do more to equip our children to compete in the international marketplace. If we know that participation in two or more years of quality pre-school education and care better prepares children for school and improves academic performance, why do we not view early care and education as an integral part of our Nation's educational system?

We know that the best predictor of quality early education and care and positive outcomes for children is a trained, competent teacher. But we have a child care workforce that has little education and training beyond a high school diploma, is paid an average of $6.12 an hour—less than parking lot attendants, and have few, if any, benefits. It is little wonder that the turnover rate is around 30 percent a year.

Federal, state and local Governments have significantly increased spending for child care over the past few years. Yet, less than 15 percent of the families eligible under Federal law to receive child care subsidies are receiving any assistance, and Head Start is only serving about 40 percent of the children eligible for the program. The Dependent Care Tax Credit pays a maximum of 30 percent of up to $2,400 of eligible child care expenses for one child—but no families qualify to receive the maximum benefit because their incomes are too low to pay taxes, and the average costs of child care per family are $4,260 a year. Although I have been around here for long enough not to believe everything I read in the papers, I am very disturbed with the report that the President's budget will include an 18 percent cut in child abuse programs, eliminate funding for the Early Learning Opportunities Act, and cut $200 million dollars from the Child Care and Development Block Grant.

Parents are the primary source of funding for early education and care in the United States. Of the total funds spent on early education and care in the United States, government pays for 39 percent, private sources—one percent, and parents—60 percent. This is pretty much the reverse of the cost-sharing between parents and government in other industrialized nations. In all of the other industrialized nations, the costs of early education and care for 3- and 4-year-olds rests with government or employers, or a combination of both. Parents are responsible for a small percentage of the costs, generally in the 10- to 20-percent range.

In addition, much of the early education and child care in this country has been found to be of poor to adequate quality. High quality care is expensive, and few families can afford to pay any more. In every State, except one—Vermont, the cost of one year of child care for a 3- or 4-year-old is more than the yearly cost of tuition at a public 4-year university in the State. Unfortunately Vermont's distinction is more related to the cost of public higher education, rather than the cost of child care.

We know how to improve the quality of early education and care. We need better trained and educated teachers. We need to pay

those teachers more. We need to quit viewing child care and early education differently—and integrate quality early learning and development into all care giving. We need to make quality early learning programs more affordable and available to all children—particularly 3- and 4-year-olds. We need to provide child care and early education providers with funds to recruit and retain quality teachers, to upgrade facilities and equipment, and to provide staff training on a regular basis. We need to help States increase not only the number of low-income working parents receiving child care subsidies, but assure that those subsidies are high enough to allow families to afford quality care for their children. We need to increase the number of quality early education and child care progams by improving existing care and starting new programs. We need to encourage businesses to provide more on- and near-site child care for employees and more resources to support the child care arrangements of their employees.

What we have to struggle with is how to make those improvements without increasing the costs to parents. In most other industrialized nations, early education and care for 3- and 4-year-olds is universal, voluntary and free to parents, regardless of their income—similar to kindergarten in this country. Early education and care is viewed as good for children and an important part of the public education system, regardless of whether it is administered by the school system or the human service system. In the United States, families struggle to pay $4, $6, and over $10,000 a year for child care for their young children.

Many local and State governments have already accepted this view of pre-school and have devised a variety of ways to finance early education and care for 3- and 4-year-olds. Some counties in Florida have increased property taxes to pay for pre-school and child care services. Voters in Aspen, CO have approved a dedicated sales tax for that purpose. Maine has developed tax increment finance districts and identified child care as an approved development program cost. Missouri dedicates a portion of the funds received from the State lottery to the Early Childhood Development, Education, and Care Fund. North Carolina has done a remarkable job in subsidizing child care wages and benefits linked to participating in increased professional development activities. Rhode Island has extended health care benefits for child care providers through the State's publicly funded health insurance program.

Connecticut makes long-term, low-interest loans for the construction and renovation of child care centers available as tax-exempt bond funding and has initiated a school-readiness program to ensure that low-income children have access to high quality early learning experiences. New York has a generous refundable child care tax credit against State personal income taxes that are owed. Vermont provides increased subsidies for accredited care, and provides cash bonuses to child care providers that attain accreditation or specified academic degrees. Other States have created voluntary income tax check offs, car license plates, motor vehicle registration accounts, and other innovative means of financing high quality preschool programs. Even with these creative approaches, quality preschool programs are still out of the reach of many parents.

Several States have enacted programs and tax incentives to increase the commitment of the business community in assuming more of the costs of child care for their employees. While some companies, such as IBM, AT&T, Bank of America, and the American Business Collaborative, have clearly stepped up to the plate, but too many others have not. It is particularly difficult for small business owners. The participation levels in State business tax incentives is very low, even among businesses that provide child care assistance for employees. We must work with the business community to devise incentives that are attractive to employers.

Government, businesses, or parents cannot do this alone. Providing quality early care and education must be a partnership of joint responsibility and cost-sharing. Government needs to view early education and care as an integral part of the education system, and as such, provide additional funding to improve quality and decrease the costs for parents. The business community needs to view early education and care as necessary for recruiting and maintaining today's employees, and an investment in America's future workforce. Parents are already paying most of the costs of care, and find few choices that provide high quality care at a price they can afford.

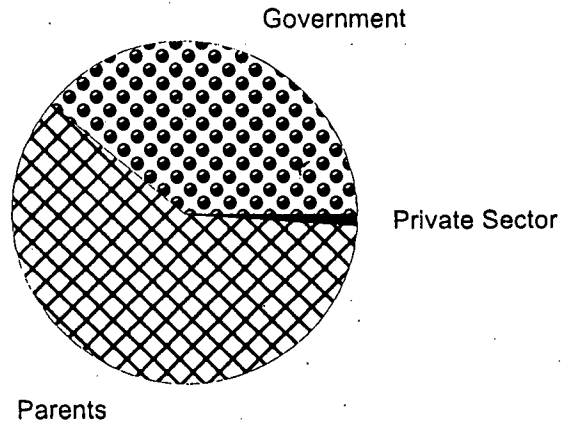
Our witnesses today have studied the early education and care systems of the industrialized nations. I look forward to discussing the lessons they have learned, and how those lessons can be applied to improving early education and care in the United States. I want to look at improving quality and financing mechanisms. Isabelle Sawhill of the Brookings Institute has estimated that a high-quality, 2-year program in the United States would cost about $8,000 annually per child. This translates to about $30 billion a year to serve all families with incomes under $30,000 a year. Even if those funds are made available, there is still much that will need to be resolved about how best to create a high quality early education and care system.

EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE

CONTRASTS BETWEEN U.S. AND FRANCE

UNITED STATES EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE (AGE 0-5)	FRANCE PRE-KINDERGARTEN (AGE 2 OR 3-5)
• Patchwork of services	• Coherent system; part of the national educational system
• Expensive Cost is $3,000-$10,000 per year; more expensive than public college tuition in all states but one	• Free to parents Cost of $5,500 per year shared by national and local governments
• Inadequate access Only 10% of low-income children eligible for subsidized care served Access depends on wealth	• Universally available and voluntary nearly 100% of 3-5 year-olds attend and 35% of 2 year-olds
• Uneven quality 75% of care is poor to mediocre	• Consistently high quality
• Training varies, often inadequate	• Highly qualified teachers (M.A.)
• Child care workers poorly paid, average $15,000 per year Average preschool teacher salary less than $20,000	• Teachers are well paid with benefits (same as elementary teacher)

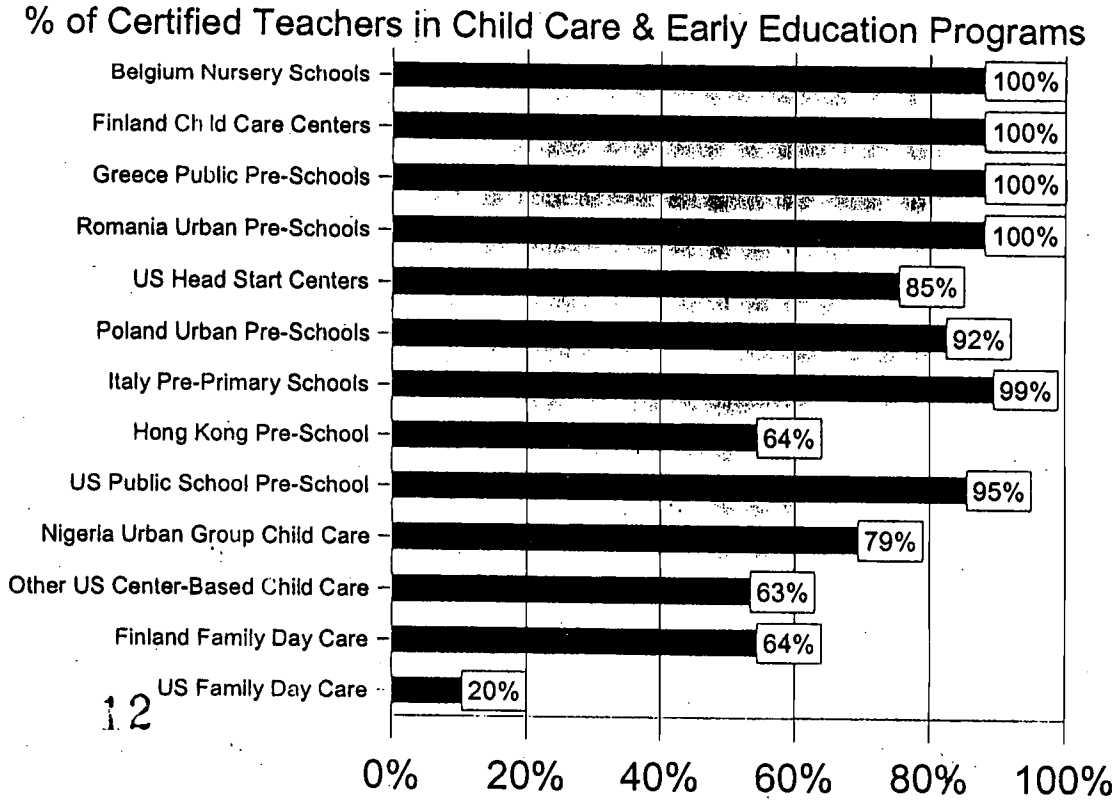
SOURCES OF FUNDS
FOR CHILD CARE AND EARLY LEARNING IN THE U.S.

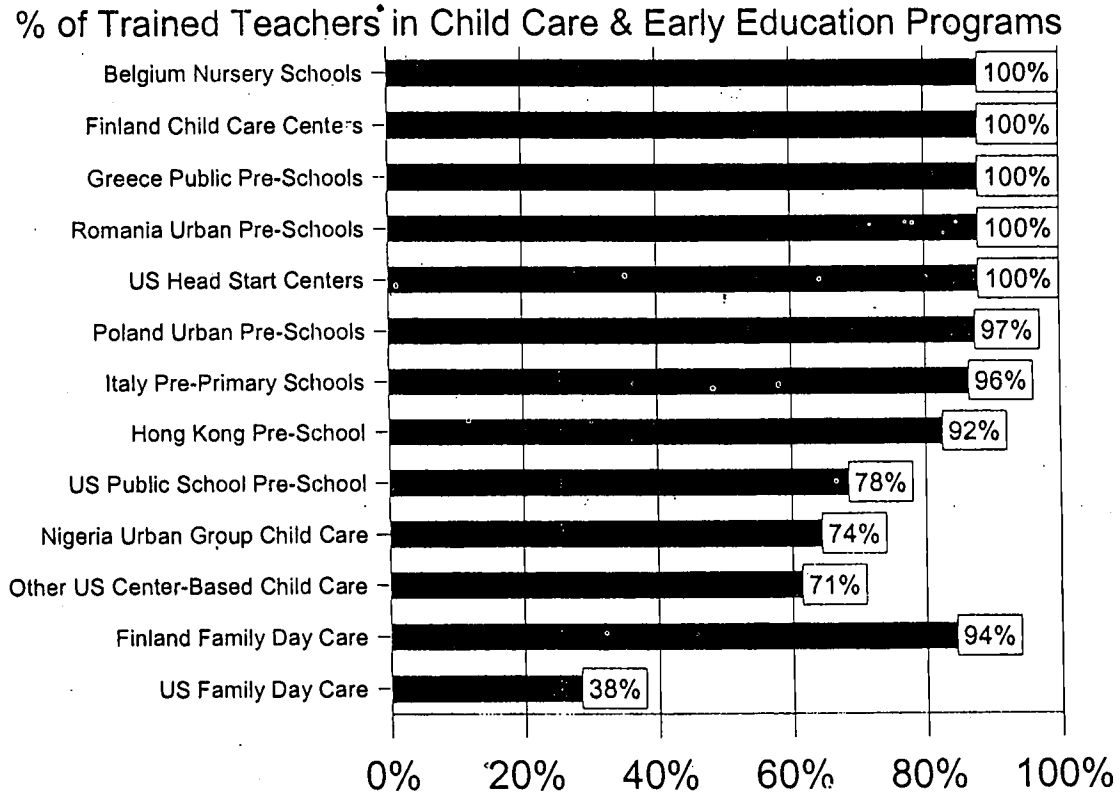


GOVERNMENT- 39%

PARENTS - 60%

PRIVATE SECTOR - 1%


% of Certified Teachers in Child Care & Early Education Programs
Belgium Nursery Schools
Finland Child Care Centers
Greece Public Pre-Schools
Romania Urban Pre-Schools
US Head Start Centers
Poland Urban Pre-Schools
Italy Pre-Primary Schools
Hong Kong Pre-School
US Public School Pre-School
Nigeria Urban Group Child Care
Other US Center-Based Child Care
Finland Family Day Care
US Family Day Care
100%
100%
100%
100%
85%
92%
99%
64%
95%
79%
63%
64%
20%
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%
100%


% of Trained Teachers in Child Care & Early Education Programs
Belgium Nursery Schools
Finland Child Care Centers
Greece Public Pre-Schools
Romania Urban Pre-Schools
US Head Start Centers
Poland Urban Pre-Schools
Italy Pre-Primary Schools
Hong Kong Pre-School
US Public School Pre-School
Nigeria Urban Group Child Care
Other US Center-Based Child Care
Finland Family Day Care
US Family Day Care
100%
100%
100%
100%
100%
97%
96%
92%
78%
74%
71%
94%
38%
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%
100%

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Wellstone.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR WELLSTONE

Senator WELLSTONE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be very brief.

First, I kept saying to Senator Bingaman that he should be the one who should be speaking, because he is really one of our leaders in education, but he is so gracious and has given me this opportunity, and I thank him.

And Senator Reed—everything that deals with education and children, he is always here; he was that way in the House, and he has been that way in the Senate.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for this hearing. I am going to say two things that are in complete contradiction to one another.

First, I think this is the most important hearing, and second, I must offer my "Jewish guilt" apology, because I will have to leave at about 9:55 to attend a press conference. But I have two people who work with me who will be here for the entire hearing.

I will not cite any statistics about the number of women working, the numbers of families with both parents working, and the need—I think we all know it.

I will not go into all of the heart-wrenching stories about all the people I have met in Minnesota and other parts of the country whose combined income might be $35,000 or $40,000 a year, and they have two children ages 2 and 3, and they might be spending anywhere from $8,000 to $12,000 a year, and they cannot afford it; and I will not go into the studies that say that a lot of this child care is adequate at best. In fact, there was a study by Yale-Berkeley on the, quote, welfare reform bill, pointing out that many more children are now in child care because of this bill, but the actual conditions are pretty frightening. These kids are basically stuck in front of TVs, and guess what—they are way behind when they go to school.

I guess my point is that this hearing is directly relevant to all the discussion we are having on education, because we are going to start doing all this testing and holding people accountable, but we had better make sure that these kids have a chance to achieve and do well, and if we do not get it right pre-kindergarten, we are not going to get it right for these kids.

My second point, Mr. Chairman—and you have already said it—if I could think of one really huge indictment of politics today, it is the way in which we have abandoned entirely too many children and the way in which we have devalued the work of adults who work with children.

I think that that is really what this is about. You gave the example of parking lot attendant. I can tell you that typically, in any given State, people who work in the zoos make twice as much money as people who work in child care.

The final thing—and you said it for me; I would have gone into an harangue about President Bush's proposed cuts, but I do not have to, because you said it with more eloquence than I could.

The CHAIRMAN. I thought a preemptive strike might be better.

Senator WELLSTONE. It was. So let me say in a very mellow way that you cannot realize the goal of leaving no child behind on a tin cup budget.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Senator Wellstone follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR WELLSTONE

Mr. Chairman, I would like to begin by thanking you for holding this hearing. I cannot overstate the enormous importance of early education and child care for the well-being of young children in this country, and I appreciate your willingness to explore some of the questions surrounding this issue. Particularly as we begin to consider reauthorization of the Child Care Development Block Grant—hopefully increasing rather than cutting its funding levels—it will be critical that we fully explore the problems families face as they struggle to find and afford quality child care. Because as has become a fact all too familiar to us, too many families in the United States do, in fact, continue to struggle with problems ranging from the prohibitively high cost to the lack of availability to the poor quality of child care.

But the need for child care has become a fact of life for the majority of families in this country. Nearly 60 percent of mothers of children younger than 1-year of age work for pay, and almost 80 percent of mothers with children younger than 13 are in the paid labor force. These women work because they have to, with the majority bringing home at least one-half of their family's earnings. It is a truism that working mothers in this country are a vital part of the paid labor force, making significant contributions to both the national economy and their families' well-being. And as more and more women have entered the paid labor force, either pulled into the market by labor shortages and rising wages or else pushed into the market by changes in the welfare laws, more and more young children are in child care.

The research is clear that the quality of early education and child care has a lasting impact on a child's social and intellectual development. The Children's Defense Fund reports that children in poor-quality care have been found to be delayed in reading and language skills, and display more aggression toward other children and adults. Children who receive high-quality care, however, have been found to demonstrate greater mathematical ability, greater thinking and attention skills, and fewer behavioral problems than children in lower-quality care.

Yet the research is equally clear that many children in the United States are receiving care that is of poor or moderate quality at best, particularly poor children whose families are trying to move from welfare to self-sufficiency. A recent study by research teams at Yale and Berkeley found that a million more children are in child care as a result of welfare "reform," and that all too often this care is of very low quality. This study found that many of these children have been placed in child care settings where they watch hours of television or wander aimlessly and have little interaction with their care givers.

Many of the toddlers from welfare families show developmental delays—for example, when asked to point to a picture of a book

from among three different pictures, fewer than 2 in 5 of the toddlers in the study pointed to the right picture, compared to a national norm of 4 out of 5 children.

We know that high quality early education and child care is vital to the future well-being of children, and that it is a key component of school readiness. Yet the earliest years of a child's life is the only time when her education is almost entirely unsubsidized. Tuition for full-day child care in the United States can easily cost more than college tuition, and many parents accrue significant debt—often on their credit cards at outrageously high interest rates—trying to pay for the cost of care. More than one in four families with young children earn less than $25,000 a year, and $4,000 or $6,000 or $10,000 a year for child care is just more than these families can afford.

The current system of child care delivery in the United States is simply not working. Families often cannot find the quality care that they need, and when they can find it, they can't afford it. We must look for new models that will work for the families of this Nation. One place we might look is to other countries, particularly those in Western Europe. In looking over the testimony that was submitted by the panel of experts before us today, I was both disappointed and encouraged. I was disappointed because I learned that a greater percentage of early education teachers in Poland, Romania, and Nigeria report having specialized training or certification than early education teachers in the United States. I was encouraged by the fact that it is clear that it is possible to provide universal, affordable, high-quality early education and child care, as countries like France clearly demonstrate.

I would like to conclude by thanking the panel for coming before us today to share with us their understanding of how the United States compares to other countries in the delivery of early education and child care, and look forward to hearing what they have to say.

QUESTIONS:

1. We already know that many working families in the United States struggle to find child care for their children, facing problems that range from high cost, to poor quality, to the limited availability of care. What are the most important lessons we can take from other countries that have had greater success in meeting the child care needs of families that might help address the problems that we face in the United States?

2. I know that many European countries provide paid parental leave for families with young children. What is the relationship between paternal leave policies and child care policies in these countries? Is paid parental leave an integral part of the success these countries have in meeting the child care needs of families with young children?

3. What level of investment would the United States need to make in order to provide the kind of universal, quality child care that other countries already provide for the families of young children?

[Please note: At press time the responses were not received. When received, they will be retained in the files of the committee.]

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Kennedy has arrived, and I will allow him to speak when he is ready.

Senator KENNEDY. Please go ahead, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Then, we will go to the panel. I will call on each witness and then have questions of that witness and then move on, because each of them deals with a specific area of importance I want to make sure we do justice to each.

Our first witness, Dr. Sheila B. Kamerman, is the Compton Foundation Centennial Professor for the Prevention of Child and Youth Problems at Columbia University School of Social Work. She is director of the recently-established, university-wide, interdisciplinary Columbia Institute on Child and Family Policy. She is also co-director of the Cross-Nations Studies Research Program. Her teaching areas are social policy, child and family policy, social services, and international social welfare. Her current research activities include a 20-country comparative study of family change and family policies since World War II, a study of early childhood care and education policies in the OECD countries, a study of parental leave policies in these countries, and a study of best practices in contracting for child and family social services.

Ms. Kamerman has consulted widely for U.S. and international organizations. She is the author and co-author or co-editor of more than 30 books and monographs and almost 200 articles and chapters. She was awarded honorary degree from York University in England in 1998.

I want to thank you for being with us. I cannot tell you how important your studies have been to me and I am sure to all of us who have had an opportunity to look at them. We look forward to your testimony and your guidance today.

Please proceed.

STATEMENT OF A PANEL INCLUDING SHEILA B. KAMERMAN, DIRECTOR, INSTITUTE FOR CHILD AND FAMILY POLICY, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, NEW YORK, NY; PATRICIA P. OLMSTED, SENIOR RESEARCH ASSOCIATE, HIGH/SCOPE EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION, YPSILANTI, MI; SHANNY PEER, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS, FRENCH-AMERICAN FOUNDATION, NEW YORK, NY; AND KATHI J. APGAR, DIRECTOR, BRISTOL FAMILY CENTER, BRISTOL, VT, AND PRESIDENT, VERMONT ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG CHILDREN

Ms. KAMERMAN. Thank you very much, Senator.

Of course, it is a great privilege to be able to testify here before you today and to join with those of you who are concerned about the well-being of children and the importance of this issue of early childhood education and care for children in the United States.

As the Senator indicated, I have been carrying out research on child and family policies in advanced industrialized countries for more than 25 years, and I have studied early childhood education and care policies and programs throughout the industrialized world.

The term "early child education and care" includes all arrangements providing care and education for children under compulsory school age, regardless of the setting—that is, whether it is in schools, centers, or caretakers' homes—regardless of the funding, public or private; regardless of the hours of the program, part-day, full school day, or full work day; and regardless of the curriculum.

There are three major models of early childhood care and education programs in the industrialized countries. One is a program that is designed to respond to the needs of working parents as well as children. It covers the normal work day and year, serves chil-

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dren from the end of a paid parental leave that lasts from one to 3 years, depending on the country, and is administered under social welfare auspices or occasionally under education auspices. Exemplary countries using this model are Denmark and Sweden.

Second is a program that includes preschool for children age 2 or 3 to compulsory school entry, typically age 6, and is administered under education auspices, provides supplementary service for children whose parents' work day and year do not coincide with the school day and year; and then a second program for children under age 3, usually under education auspices as well, that also begins when a child's paid maternity and/or parental leave ends—for example, France or Italy.

Third is a fragmented system that maintains two parallel systems or nonsystems of care and education but that is beginning to move toward integrating the two streams—for example, Britain and the United States.

The dominant model in Europe today is that of the preschool program for children age 3 to compulsory school entry and a separate program for the under 3's. A full understanding of European early childhood education and care programs, however, requires an understanding of the role played by paid parental leaves in providing infant care. I have described all three models including infant and toddler care programs and parental leave policies elsewhere and also on our international clearinghouse web site, but now I am going to focus on the preschool programs.

In Europe, these early childhood education and care programs are increasingly available to all children of this age because they are considered good for children regardless of their parents' employment status. They enhance children's development and prepare them for primary school as well as providing care for those children whose parents are in paid employment. Most important, they reflect the growing consensus within the OECD countries, the advanced industrialized countries, that care and education are inseparable in programs for preschool-age children.

This morning, I will comment briefly on several aspects of these programs, first, with regard to eligibility, coverage, and take-up.

Early childhood education and care programs in Europe are largely universal, available to all children age 3 to 6, regardless of family income or problem, and are voluntary. Some countries do give priority to employed or student parents. But where places are available, just about all children are enrolled in center or school-based programs—for example, about 98 percent of the 3- to 6-year-olds in Belgium and France are in these programs; 95 percent in Italy; and 80 to 85 percent in Denmark, Sweden, Germany, and Spain.

Next, with regard to financing and cost, in countries with the preschool model, the core program covering the normal school day is free, and the supplementary or what we call wrap-around services are heavily subsidized and charge income-related fees. In countries providing a full work day program, fees are also income-related, but heavily subsidized for all.

Countries use a range of financing mechanisms including direct funding, the primary financing strategy, and subsidies, tax benefits, and employer contributions. In almost all of these countries,

governments pay the largest share of the costs, with parents covering only about 11 to 30 percent of the costs in contrast to the 55 to 70 percent of costs that parents bear in the United States.

According to a recent study, public investment in early childhood education and care programs per child in 1996 ranged from a little over $4,500 in Sweden and $3,000 in France to $600 in the U.S. The programs are not cheap anywhere, and especially not in those countries desiring a quality system.

With regard to staffing and compensation, staffing is an important component of the quality of early childhood education and care programs. Although there is no consistent pattern of staff training and qualifications internationally, there is consensus that staff require specialized training and that compensation should be equitable across these early childhood programs and primary school.

With regard to quality, there is no agreed-on definition of quality of early childhood care and education programs cross-nationally. The current OECD 12-country study should provide more information about quality when the final report is issued.

Nonetheless all of these countries recognize the value of quality as it relates to subsequent child outcomes, and they all stress the importance of integrating care and education regardless of the administrative auspices of the program, and they emphasize the need for a stated, explicit educational mission.

Both public and publicly-funded private programs in Europe are subject to the same government regulations regarding quality, but countries do vary in the type and extent of regulations and whether they are imposed by the national government, the State government or local governments, and the degree of enforcement.

Of some interest, however, the standards that are specified for most of the European countries are very similar to those recommended by U.S. scholars.

Now with regard to outcomes and impacts of early childhood education and care programs. The research literature on this issue is enormous and well beyond what can be addressed here. The most extensive, systematic, and rigorous research has been carried out in the United States. I would emphasize that we know what should be done, we just have not gotten around to doing it.

Clearly, there is important and relevant research that has been carried out in many other countries, too. Among the most influential European studies is the research of a Swedish psychologist who followed several groups of children from infancy to high school and beyond and compared them on the basis of various tests and teacher observations and evaluations. Comparing early starters in day care centers—that is, those entering at 9 to 12 months of age—with those in family day care and home care and those entering at a significantly later age, he found distinct advantages by age 8 for early day care starters and those enrolled in center-based care.

Positive differences were found in language and in all school academic subjects. Teachers found the early starters more outspoken, less anxious in school situations, more independent, and more persevering. It must be remembered, however, that these children were in consistently high-quality programs.

French research has documented the value of the ecole maternelle, which you will hear about shortly, in particular the

value of the ecole maternelle in achieving readiness for primary school and reducing primary school problems and school failure.

French research has found that their preschool has particularly strong positive impacts on the most disadvantaged children, and as a result, they are expanding access to the maternelle for children from age 2, with priority being given to those living in disadvantaged communities.

In Italy, too, research has found that children ended up much better prepared for primary school if they had a preschool experience.

To summarize, the major current policy trends in Europe with regard to early childhood education policies and programs include the following nine developments: 1) the growing integration of care and education into one system under education auspices that stresses children's social and emotional development in addition to cognitive stimulation and preparation for primary school; 2) a stress on universal access, not limiting access to poor, disadvantaged, or at-risk children; 3) a goal of full coverage of all countries whose parents want them to participate, sometimes as a matter of legal right and sometimes out of societal conviction; 4) substantial public investment; 5) increasing emphasis on staff qualifications and training; 6) ongoing concern with quality; 7) increasing the availability of supplementary services to meet the needs of employed parents; 8) expanding the supply of toddler care, that is, care for one- and 2-year-olds; and 9; extending the duration of paid and job-protected parental leaves.

To conclude, the continued rise in labor force participation rates of women with young children coupled with the growing recognition of the value of good-quality early childhood education and care programs for children regardless of parents' employment status suggests that pressure for expanding supply, improving quality, and assuring access will continue in all countries despite variations in delivery.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Kamerman follows:]

Sheila B. Kamerman
Compton Foundation Centennial Professor, Columbia University School of Social Work
Director, Columbia University Institute for Child and Family Policy

I am Sheila B. Kamerman, a professor at Columbia University School of Social Work, director of the University-wide Institute for Child and Family Policy, and co-director of the Cross-National Studies Research Program. I have been carrying out research on child and family policies in advanced industrialized countries for more than 25 years and have studied early childhood education and care policies and programs throughout the industrialized world.

Early childhood education and care (ECEC) is high on the child and family policy agenda of all advanced industrialized countries today and many developing countries as well. Equitable access to good quality ECEC programs supports both the education and social needs of young children and their families. In more and more countries young children are spending two or three or even four years in these programs before entering primary school. In some countries access to these programs is a legal right – at age one in most of the Nordic countries, at age two in France, and age three in most of the other continental European countries such as Belgium, Germany, and Italy. In all countries there is stress on expanding supply unless there are already enough places to cover all children whose parents wish them to participate; and there is an ongoing stress on improving quality.

The term "Early Childhood Education and Care" (ECEC) includes all arrangements providing care and education for children under compulsory school age regardless of setting (schools, centers, or carers' homes), funding (public or private), hours (part-day, full school day, full work day), or curriculum. There are three major "models" of early childhood care and education programs in the industrialized countries:

- a program that is designed to respond to the needs of working parents as well as children, covers the normal workday and year, serves children from the end of a paid parental leave lasting 1-3 years depending on the country, and is administered under social welfare auspices (or sometimes, education) (for example, Denmark or Sweden);

- a program that includes preschool for children aged 2 or 3 to compulsory school entry (typically age 6), administered under education auspices, and provides supplementary services for children whose parents' work day and year do not coincide with the school day and year; and a second program for children under age 3 usually under a separate administrative agency but sometimes under education auspices as well, that also begins when a country's paid maternity and/or parental leave ends; (for example France or Italy)

- a fragmented system that maintains two parallel systems (or non-systems) of care and education, but that is beginning to move toward integrating the two streams (for example Britain or the U.S.).

The dominant model in Europe is that of the preschool program for children aged 3 to compulsory school entry, and a separate program for the under 3s. A full understanding of European early childhood education and care programs, however, requires an understanding of the role played by paid parental leaves in providing infant care. I have described all three models including infant and toddler care programs and parental leave policies elsewhere (Kamerman, 2000 and 2001), but now I will focus on the preschool programs

In Europe, these early childhood education and care programs are increasingly available to all children this age because they are considered good for children regardless of their parents' employment status. They enhance children's development and prepare them for formal primary school as well as

providing care for those children whose parents are in paid employment. Most important, they reflect the growing consensus within the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) group of countries that care and education are inseparable in programs for preschool-aged children. In many countries, these programs are free, at least for the core program covering the normal school day, while others charge modest income-related fees; and all are voluntary. Nonetheless, when places area available, all children attend.

This morning, I will comment briefly on some aspects of these ECEC programs:

- the extensiveness of the programs serving children aged 2 ½ or 3 to compulsory school entry, at ages 5-6-or 7 depending on the country;
- the general trend towards universal access for all children whose parents wish them to participate;
- the movement towards locating these programs under "education" rather than social welfare auspices;
- the interest in improving the quality of the programs;
- the conviction that these services are essential for all children, not just those with employed parents or those who are poor or otherwise disadvantaged; and
- the recognition that they are not cheap, but nonetheless worth investing in.

Eligibility, Coverage, and Take-Up: To repeat: ECEC programs in Europe are largely universal, voluntary, and available to all children aged 3-6 regardless of family income or problem. Some countries do give priority to employed or student parents. Where places are available, just about all children are enrolled in center or school-based programs, for example: about 98 percent in Belgium and France, 95 percent in Italy, 80-85 percent in Denmark, Sweden, and Spain. (See Table 1). (Coverage is lower for children under age 3, ranging from about 30 percent in France to almost 60 percent of 1 and 2 year olds in Denmark, and the services are delivered in centers or in supervised family day care homes.)

Financing and Costs: In countries with the preschool model, the core program covering the normal school day is free and the supplementary ("wrap around") services are heavily subsidized and charge income-related fees. In countries providing a full work day program, fees are also income-related but heavily subsidized for all. In almost all countries governments pay the largest share of the costs, with parents covering only about 11-30 percent (in contrast to the 55-70 percent of costs that parents bear in the U.S.) According to a recent study, public investment in ECEC per child in 1996 ranged from $4511 in Sweden and $2951 in France to $600 in the U.S. (Meyers and Gornick, 2001). Countries use a range of financing mechanisms including direct funding (the primary financing strategy), subsidies, tax benefits, and employer contributions. Affordability remains a barrier to equitable access, especially when parents bear the major share of financing these programs. The programs are not cheap anywhere and especially not in those countries desiring a quality system.

Staffing and Compensation: Staffing is an important component of the quality of ECEC programs. Although there is no consistent pattern of staff training and qualifications, there is consensus that staff require specialized training and that compensation should be equitable across ECEC programs and primary school. There is some concern regarding scarcity of males among staff, and some effort – in some countries – to actively recruit male staff. And there is some recognition, also in some countries, of the importance of staffing that reflects the ethnic and racial diversity of the children served.

Quality: There is no agreed on definition of – or standards concerning – quality of ECEC programs cross-nationally. The current OECD study of ECEC in 12 countries should provide more information about quality when the final report is issued. U.S. researchers have carried out the most extensive efforts designed to identify the variables that/ account for the most significant differences regarding program quality – and the consequences for children's socio-emotional-cognitive development. These variables have been identified as group size, staff-child ratios, and caregiver qualifications, in addition to health and safety standards. These criteria have been further refined and supplemented so that current indicators of quality would include caregivers' education and training, salaries, and turnover rates – among the dimensions of quality that can be regulated, and staff:child interactions and relationships among those variables that require direct observation..

Both public and publicly funded private programs in Europe are subject to the same government regulations regarding quality, but countries vary in the type and extent of regulations and whether they are imposed by the national government, the state government, or local, and the degree of enforcement. Of some interest, the standards specified for most of the countries are not far removed from the recommended standards of U.S. scholars.

Peter Moss, the coordinator of the former European Commission Network on Child Care, attempted to carry out a study of child care quality in the European Union in the early 1990s and concluded that quality is a relative concept, reflecting the values and beliefs of the society in which the programs are embedded. Nonetheless, all the countries discussed here recognize the value of quality as it relates to subsequent outcomes. The importance of integrating care and education regardless of the administrative auspice of the program, is emphasized as is the need for a stated, explicit educational mission.

The research literature on outcomes and impacts of ECEC is enormous and well beyond what can be addressed here. The most extensive, systematic, and rigorous research has been carried out in the U.S. But clearly there is important and relevant research that has been carried out in many other countries, too. Among the most influential European studies is the research of Bengt-Erik Anderson (1985; 1990), the Swedish psychologist who followed several groups of children from infancy to high school and beyond, and compared them on the basis of various tests and teacher observations/evaluations. Comparing "early starters' in day care centers (those entering at 9-12 months of age) with those in family day care and home care, those entering at a significantly later age, in family day care, and/or experiencing shifts in care, showed more negative results. The research found distinct advantages by age 8 for early day care starters and those enrolled in center-based care. Positive differences were found in language and all school academic subjects. Teachers found the early starters more outspoken, less anxious in school situations, more independent, and more persevering. (It must be remembered that these children were in consistently high quality programs.)

French research has documented the value of the *ecole maternelle* (the French universal preschool program) in achieving readiness for primary school and reducing primary school problems and school "failure," French research has found that their preschool has particularly strong positive impacts on the most disadvantaged children, and as a result are expanding access to the *maternelle* for children from

age 2, with priority given to those living in disadvantaged communities. In Italy, too, researchers found that children ended up better prepared for primary school if they had a preschool experience (and better prepared for preschool if they had a still earlier group experience).

To summarize: the major current policy trends include:

- integration of care and education under education auspices
- a stress on universal access, not limiting access to poor, disadvantaged, or at risk children;
- a goal of full coverage of all children whose parents want them to participate.
- substantial public investment
- increasing emphasis on staff qualifications and training
- ongoing concern with quality
- expanding the supply of toddler care (care for 1 and 2 year olds)
- extending the duration of paid and job-protected parental leaves.

CONCLUSIONS

I have summarized the highlights: What are the implications, the emerging issues?

The movement toward universal preschools has clearly emerged as the dominant model of ECEC in Europe. Several countries have already achieved full coverage, regardless of parents' employment status or income or problem; and this is clearly the goal in those countries that have not yet achieved it. These programs are viewed as good for children and access is assured, sometimes as a matter of legal right and sometimes out of societal conviction. These programs are increasingly viewed as a "public good". Regardless of the early focus on formal education, program goals have been broadened now to include socialization and enhancing development in addition to cognitive stimulation and preparing children for primary school. There is strong conviction regarding the value of these programs for all children and there is increasing recognition of the appropriateness of public financing for programs that should be available to all children, free of charge. The key issue for the future, in most countries with this model, is increasing the availability of supplementary services to meet the needs of employed parents.

Quality remains an issue everywhere and there appears to be growing consensus on the important dimensions even though the recommended standards have not yet been achieved in most countries.

Educational philosophy varies among countries but countries increasingly see these programs as "education" in the broadest sense, incorporating physical, emotional, and social development along with literacy and numeracy.

Public financing is the dominant mode in all countries. Parent fees play a minor role in meeting the costs. Costs are high for good quality programs but there appears to be growing recognition of their value and its importance. Government subsidies are generous and given to providers, in most countries.

Finally, the continued rise in labor force participation rates of women with young children coupled with the growing recognition of the value of good quality early childhood education and care programs for children regardless of parents' employment status, suggests that the pressure for expanding supply, improving quality, and assuring access will continue in all countries, despite variations in delivery.

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Table 1: Child Care by Auspice, Age of Child, Locus of Care, Quality, and Access/Coverage

Country	Auspice	Age	Locus of Care	Quality	Access/ Coverage (%)[a]
Austria	Welfare Public or private, non profit	3 - 6	Preschool	No national standards; Vary by state: Staff child ratios 3:20.	80%
		0 - 3	Centers	1.7:14 FDC Home, max 7 staff.	3%
Belgium	Education	2½ - 6	Preschool	1:19; 1.5:20-25.	97%
	Welfare Public or nonprofit	under 3	Centers	2½:7 (incl. .5 nurse) in centers; 3-4 ch. max in FDC Homes.	30%
Canada	Education Welfare Public; non-profit and for profit	5 - 6 under 5	Preschool Centers and FDC Homes	Set by Province.	50% 45%

[a] The age of entry and access/coverage need to be seen in the context of the duration of the maternity/parental leave.

Denmark	Education Welfare Largely public	6 - 7 6 mos. - 6 years.	Preschool Centers and FDC Homes (esp. for under 3s)	set locally. generally, 1:5.5, 3-6 1:2.7, under 3.	100%[b] 3-6: 83%[c] 0-3: 58%[a]
Finland	Welfare; largely public	1 - 7	Centers and FDC Homes (also for under 3s)	1:7, 3-7 year olds 1:4, under 3s FDC Homes, max 4 preschoolers	3-6: 73%[d] 1-3: 48%
France	Education Largely public health and welfare	2 - 6 3 mos. - 3 years.	Preschool Preschool, centers and FDC Homes	National health, safety, and staffing standards. 1:10 2 year olds 1:27 others staff = teachers 1:8 toddlers; 1:5 infants 1:3 FDC	3-6: 99% 2-3: 35% 0-3: 29%
Germany	Education, public and private non-profit Welfare; public and private non-profit	3 - 6 under 3	Preschool Center and FDC (largely)	1:10-14 1:5-7.5	85%[e] 5% (West German States) 50% (East German States)

Table 1 (continued): Child Care by Auspice, Age of Child, Locus of Care, Quality, and Access/Coverage

Country	Auspice	Age	Locus of Care	Quality	Access/ Coverage (%)[a]
Italy	Education Welfare, public and private non-profit.	3 - 6 under 3	Preschool Center	3:25 no national standards 1:3 under 3s is customary in most regions.	95% 6%
Spain	Education, public and private non-profit	0 - 6	Preschool Center	National standards 1:25 3-6 year olds 1:18 2-3 year olds 1:10 toddlers 1:7 infants 1/3 staff "trained"	3-6: 84% 0-3: 5%

[b] Some also attend child care center for part of day.
[c] All children one year old and older with working parents, now guaranteed a place in subsidized care.
[d] All children under 7 with working parents, now guaranteed a place in subsidized care if they wish.
[e] Coverage in kindergarten for all children 3-6 is the goal.
[a] The age of entry and access/coverage need to be seen in the context of the duration of the maternity/parental leave.
[f] Sweden has now lowered school entry to age 6.

Sweden	Education, largely public	0 - 6[1]	Center	No national standards; local government sets standards. 2: 3½ children 3-6	3-6: 80%
			Centers and FDC Homes	1:3-5 children under 3 FDC: 1:4-8	1-3: 48%[a]
U.K.	Education Welfare public, private, non-profit, and for profit	3 - 4 0 - 4[2]	Preschool Centers and FDC Homes	2:26 National standards 1:4 for 2-3s 1:3 for under 2s	3-4: 60%
U.S.	Education	5 - 6	Preschool	No national standards State standards vary widely	95% of 5 year olds @50% of 3-4 year olds in either preschool or center care
	Education and Welfare Largely for profit and private non-profit	0 - 4	Preschool and Centers; FDC for under 3s.	32 states require 1:4 ratios for infants. Half the states have 1:5 (or lower) ratios for toddlers.	0-3: 26%

Source: Kamerman, S.B. (Ed.) (Forthcoming). Early Childhood Education and Care; International Perspectives. NY: Institute for Child and Family Policy, Columbia University.

[1] Sweden has now lowered school entry to age 6.
[2] Compulsory school entry is age 5.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me turn now to Senator Kennedy for any statement he may have.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR KENNEDY

Senator KENNEDY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I apologize for being late. I was at a conference on brain injury earlier this morning.

I want to thank you very much for holding this hearing, Mr. Chairman, and commend your long-time commitment to early interventions in terms of children, and for the wonderful witnesses that we have today and the testimony that we will receive.

I want to join in expressing great frustration, in the face of these known needs, with the reduction in support of programs that reach out to help and assist children, whether in the early learning program, a very modest program that the chairman and I, Senator Dodd, Senator Reed, and other members of the committee, along with my colleague Senator Kerry, and the particular leadership of Senator Stevens of Alaska—we had just begun that program with the small funding of $25 million, and now that has been effectively eliminated. It is a very, very modest program indeed that was attempting to move in on the points that you are making here. It included support and help for training pediatricians whose work is becoming increasingly complex in terms of children's needs, and with the explosion in the life sciences today. It singled out, of all the trained professionals, those who are going to be looking after children. We held the hearings, we did the work, and built the case, and got a very small amount of additional support for the training of pediatricians. To emasculate that program and to see the serious reduction in terms of child care measured against the magnitude of the problem, we are still listening and echoing about no child being left behind, and here, we find out that these children are being left behind and will be left behind.

I have not even gotten into the range of problems that we face in terms of child abuse and prevention. Approximately one-third of all children who go to school in Boston come from homes where there is physical or substance abuse or violence. To think that we can somehow take a short-cut in these areas is just failing.

Then we are going to hear on the other end about what we can do in terms of apprehension and criminal activity.

So I thank the panel very much. I appreciate the chairman holding the hearing, and many of us are going to make an effort to change these priorities and wage battle on them, because I do not think they reflect a fair consideration of what the American people want.

But your testimony in particular on the early interventions is enormously helpful to us and will be very, very important as we try to develop a continuing responsible policy, understanding that we cannot solve all of these problems, but we can at least help and assist parents and those who in the local communities who are attempting to make a difference in these children's lives. I thank the chair very much, and I apologize for interrupting the sequence of witnesses, but I am grateful for the opportunity to say a word.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator.

We all have conflicting demands on our time at this time of the year, especially with the budget fast approaching. That is why I am holding the hearing today. The testimony we will receive today from these witnesses will provide Members with better information on which to make decisions on what I think is the most important priority we have in this country, that is, our young kids.

Dr. Patricia Olmsted is a senior research associate at the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation in Ypsilanti, MI. She holds a Ph.D. in research foundations of education and an M.A. in experimental psychology. Currently, Ms. Olmsted heads the international coordinating center for the Pre-Primary Project of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement. Wow, that is a title-and-a-half. This is a 15-nation study of early childhood care and education.

Dr. Olmsted is the author of numerous books, monograms, and articles on early childhood education-related subjects.

Following Dr. Olmsted, we will hear from Shanny Peer, who is a Ph.D. and director of education programs at the French-American Foundation. The Foundation recently published a report entitled, "Ready to Learn: The French System of Early Education and Care Offers Lessons for the United States." This is the third report published by the Foundation about early childhood policy in France. The first two reports focused on French day care and the French maternal and child health services.

Ms. Peer is currently leading an outreach effort to disseminate information on the French pre-kindergarten system in the United States. Previously, she taught French studies as a university professor for 10 years and published scholarly works on French cultural history.

Finally, Kathi J. Apgar is executive director of the Bristol Family Center, a nonprofit early care and education facility in Bristol, VT. She has been in this position for the past 7 years and is in the process of doubling the center's size and adding and infant and toddler portion to the NAEYC-accredited program.

A native Vermonter, Ms. Apgar studied English and political science at the University of Vermont before graduating with degrees in early education, elementary education and political science from Trinity College. Her desire to establish uniquely stimulating environments for young people led to graduate studies at Harvard University in architectural design. She also travelled to Reggio Amelia, Italy to observe and research the funding, social attitudes, classroom environments and practices governing Italy's care for its youngest citizens.

During the past 4 years, Ms. Apgar has served as president of the Vermont Association of Education of Young Children, Vermont's State affiliate of NAEYC.

Ms. Apgar serves on Governor Howard Dean's Child Care Advisory Board, the Child Care Fund of Vermont, and is a primary advocate for the Vermonters' Children Priority 1 Legislative Initiative.

Thank you all for being here for this very important hearing. I deeply appreciate and looking forward to getting information to help us solve this problem.

I just want to let you know that this is my number one priority. Just very briefly, if we have all of these surpluses, and we do not do something now, when will we ever do it? I believe that is the question we must ask ourselves, because the evidence is so strong and so overwhelming that this Nation far lags the rest of the world.

I met with the heads of the State educational systems some time ago and asked them what their first priorities were. The first was to fully fund IDEA. That is my charge and my desire. Some of the reasons they mentioned for why they need that extra money are that, first, they need to lengthen the school year, and the school day. The number two thing they mentioned was to take care of the 3- and 4-year-olds. They said that it would save a lot of time and money in later years if we would do that. The third thing they talked about were the problems with math and science and how we lag behind the rest of the world. It is embarrassing when the TIMSS exams come out, to see that we end up in the last group.

So there are a number of things that they are worried about, but most of all, they want to make sure that children have a good start so that we are not laggimg behind the rest of the world.

I remember going to a demonstration program on what happens to young children from birth to age 6. I remember the shocking example of the shriveled brain that we saw, which everybody guessed was that of an old man ready to die, and it turned out to be a young child desperately wanting to be loved.

When was that study done? When were those facts released that so startled everybody and started all of this?

Ms. KAMERMAN. The brain development research in relation to children was stressed in a report by the Carnegie Corporation that was issued, I believe, in 1994. That had an enormous impact, I think, on all the discussion with regard to early childhood.

The CHAIRMAN. And I think your study was done in 1995?

Ms. KAMERMAN. Actually, I and my colleague Alfred Kahn have been carrying out these studies of early childhood programs and their consequences for children for roughly 25 years. So there has been a whole series of studies as we have monitored developments in other countries and of course monitored developments in the United States as well.

We wrote a book a few years ago titled, "Starting Right: How America Neglects its Youngest Children and What We Can Do About It."

The CHAIRMAN. If I am correct, I think the report was dated 1995.

Ms. KAMERMAN. That is right.

The CHAIRMAN. And at that point, I think practically every industrialized Nation in the world had made big strides toward covering 3- to 4-year-olds, with the one exception being the United States. Is that fairly accurate?

Ms. KAMERMAN. The United States, and of course, the other Anglo-American countries for one reason or another, also tend to lag. But the extraordinary development really has been in the universality of the programs for 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds. We have accomplished it partially with regard to 5-year-olds, because in effect all 5-year-olds are now in kindergarten or primary school. We have

moved ahead somewhat with regard to the 3's and 4's, but we do not begin to compare with our peer countries, so to speak. And the differential is particularly dramatic if you look at variations in enrollment in the United States in pre-primary school programs by family income. For example, about 58 percent of the 3- and 4-year-olds are in early childhood education programs in those families with incomes above $40,000 a year as compared with 41 percent of children in families with incomes below $20,000 a year.

You would not see any picture like this in the continental European countries; there is just no question about it. And even where Britain is concerned, since they start compulsory school at age 5, all 4-year-olds are already in these programs.

So we are a laggard, shall I say, in kind terms, comparatively.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Let me turn now to Ms. Olmsted for her testimony. I get so excited about these issues, I sometimes forget where I am.

Ms. Olmsted, please proceed.

Ms. OLMSTED. Thank you, Senator.

As you mentioned, I am a senior research associate at the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation in Ypsilanti, MI, and I am sure that some of you are familiar with High/Scope's research in early childhood already, particularly our Perry Preschool Study, a study of the long-term effects of high-quality early childhood programs.

At the moment, it might be interesting for some of you to know that we are now doing another collection of data in the Perry School. We have now followed up the Perry Preschool subjects and the comparison group from age 4 to age 40. So we are now interviewing those same children at age 40.

Today I represent High/Scope's international early childhood research efforts. Several years ago, High/Scope was designated as the international coordinating center for the IEA Pre-Primary Project. This is the same organization that sponsors the TIMSS study, which I am also sure many of you are familiar with, but it is the first study at the pre-primary level ever undertaken by this organization.

The goals of the study and a discussion of its methodology are presented in the written testimony and will not be discussed here.

Besides the United States, the participating countries include several in Western and Eastern Europe, such as Belgium, Finland, Italy, Poland, and Romania; several in Asia, such as mainland China, Hong Kong, and Thailand; and we have one representative from Africa, Nigeria.

Although the project includes 37 different types of early childhood settings in 15 countries, my testimony this morning will focus on just 11 types of group settings in nine countries and family day care homes in two countries.

This group of settings includes one type each in eight countries and three types of group settings in the United States—Head Start centers, public school preschools, and a group that we call "other organized programs" which includes all group programs other than Head Start and public school preschool. This final group of "other organized programs" includes such things as for-profit programs, church-based programs, and so forth.

Out of the thousands of variables we have in the huge master study, I have decided to focus on five for this morning—the percentage of teachers who have attended teacher training; the percentage of teachers who are certified; the degree of government involvement; staff-child ratios; and the availability of equipment and materials.

The chart at the front of the room shows data from these 11 types of settings for the percentage of teachers who have attended teacher training.

The meaning of teacher training varies from country to country, but these findings provide at least a rough indication of the percentage of teachers who have had some specialized training.

The CHAIRMAN. Where is the United States on that chart?

Ms. OLMSTED. You will notice that one of the U.S. settings is pretty close to the top, the U.S. Head Start setting; but the other two types of settings in the United States are near the bottom of the chart, and I have to say that they are closer to Nigeria than they are to the Wester industrialized nations in Europe, which I know is the major interest of this set of hearings.

One of the reasons we wanted a wide variety of countries was to give us an idea of how countries clustered or gathered on different variables. So I have chosen this morning to include Romania and Poland and Nigeria on some of the visuals that we are using.

If we move to the next visual, you can see the percentage of teachers who are certified. Each of the countries in the study had a system for teacher certification, but once again, these systems vary from country to country. All these data say is that this is the percentage of teachers who have satisfied the certification criteria for that country. In order to seriously interpret what some of these data mean, you would have to know the content of that system.

In these findings, you will note that in these countries, 90 percent or more of the teachers are actually certified, and only the U.S. public school preschools are included among that group. The percentages for the other two American settings—the Head Start families and the other organized settings—are lower than that.

There are, then, three sets of data—and I had a handout, so I think most of the audience has the charts, and the are also included in my written testimony—and as this figure shows, it is developed the same way, and it shows the degree of sponsorship of the government at any level—national, regional, or local—of early childhood settings.

In eight countries, 96 percent or more of the settings indicated that the government was either their sole sponsor or one of multiple sponsors. The other settings below that number include settings from Nigeria, from Hong Kong, and the United States settings.

In my written testimony, I have included an example of how, although government sponsors zero percent of the settings in Hong Kong, the government yet participates in a teacher training program. And you will notice in the other two visuals that Hong Kong has a higher percentage of trained teachers and certified teachers than even the United States, sort of showing that government sponsorship does not need to be a prerequisite for government involvement in certain program aspects.

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Moving on to the fourth area, staff-child ratios, this is often used as one of the major indicators of quality, and one thing that you see when you look at median staff-child ratios for settings in different countries is that the United States is at the top. We have one of the lowest staff-child ratios in the world. Only Finland had similar kinds of findings. On that graph, it is not surprising to see that nigeria and the Eastern European countries are near the bottom, because having a sufficient number of trained teachers and a sufficient number of settings are major factors in determining the staff-child ratio.

Finally, if you look at availability of equipment and materials, we asked the centers about the presence and availability of more than 100 kinds of equipment and materials in such areas as nature and science, dramatic play, and so forth, and what the findings in this area show is that once again, the United States is right near the top. So when early childhood settings or child care settings are available in America, they often are fairly well-equipped with material and equipment compared to settings in most other countries.

Once again, Finland joins us at the top of the chart, as did Poland. This seemed surprising, but it seems to be one of the things they put a priority on, so they are extremely well-equipped. And we actually have videotapes from all of these countries, and that is confirmed in the videotape.

In summary, I would say that the United States early childhood settings do not compare favorably with other countries regarding the percentage of teachers who are trained, have specialized training, or who are certified; but we do compare very favorably regarding staff-child ratios and the availability of equipment and materials.

The picture about degree of government involvement is mixed, but as I mentioned, one of our countries, Hong Kong, has provided an example of how even low government sponsorship of settings is not necessary for government involvement to improve the quality of settings within a country.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Olmsted follows:]

Early Childhood Services in the United States and 14 Other Nations

Written Testimony Prepared for Hearings on Early Childhood Education and Care before the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

27 March 2001

Patricia P. Olmsted
Deputy International Coordinator
IEA Preprimary Project
High/Scope Educational Research Foundation

I. Overview of the IEA Preprimary Project

The High/Scope Educational Research Foundation is the designated international coordinating center for the IEA Preprimary Project, conducted under the auspices of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). The IEA Preprimary Project is a 15-nation study of early childhood care and education programs and has 3 major purposes: *(1) to identify the types of services that 4-year-old children attend in various countries, (2) to assess the experiences of children in these types of services, and (3) to determine how these services affect children's intellectual, social, and academic development at age 7.*

The following countries have participated in the study:

Western Europe	Eastern Europe	Asia
Belgium	Poland	China
Finland	Romania	Hong Kong
Greece	Slovenia	Indonesia
Ireland		Thailand
Italy	Africa	
Spain	Nigeria	North America
		United States

Methodology is one of the strongest features of the IEA Preprimary Project. Because the study focuses on preschool children and their families, it is different than the typical IEA project, in which data are collected on entire classrooms of middle-school or high school students.

Locating preschool-aged children and even preprimary settings has been challenging, with different strategies required in each country. Examples of some of the outstanding elements of the study's methodology are listed below.

- *Dr. Leslie Kish, one of the world's leading experts in sampling, was the sampling consultant for the study and assisted each participating country in the development and execution of its sampling plan. In most countries, the geographic area covered in the study included the entire country.*
- *All participating countries contributed to the development of all instruments, and all countries conducted extensive pilot-testing prior to data collection.*
- *As a group, the participating countries developed the training procedures and conducted testing of all data collectors at the conclusion of training.*
- *In nearly every country, response rates exceeded 80% for all instruments, with many countries having rates of 90% or higher.*

Although the IEA Preprimary Project includes 37 types of early childhood settings in 15 countries, this document presents information for 11 of these settings in 9 countries and family day care homes in 2 countries. The group settings include 1 type each in 8 countries (i.e., Belgium, Finland, Greece, Hong Kong, Italy, Nigeria, Poland, and Romania) and 3 types in the United States—Head Start centers, public school preschools, and other organized programs (which includes all group early childhood programs other than Head Start centers and public school preschools, such as for-profit centers, church-based centers, and so forth). The family day care home settings included are in Finland and the United States.

II. Selected Project Findings about Early Childhood Services in the U.S. and Other Nations

A. Teacher Training and Certification A teacher questionnaire asked early childhood education teachers if they had participated in teacher training and whether or not they were certified. Since "teacher training" is defined in a variety of ways in different countries—it could mean a few courses lasting several weeks or a 4-year college program in early childhood education—the findings reported here provide only a rough indication of the percentage of teachers who have had *some* specialized training relating to their work.

Figure 1 presents the percentage of teachers reporting specialized training in the 11 types of group settings in 9 countries and the 2 types of family day care homes (FDC). As the figure shows, 90% or more of the teachers in 8 settings reported that they had attended teacher-training programs. In the United States, only the Head Start centers have this high a percentage of trained teachers. The percentage of trained teachers in the remaining 3 types of group settings is between 70% and 80% and includes teachers in Nigerian group settings and those in the other 2 group settings in the United States (public school preschools and other organized programs). Thus, the percentages of teachers in 2 of the 3 types of U.S. group settings are lower than those in group settings in 8 other countries and similar to those in Nigerian group settings. The findings for the 2 types of FDC in Figure 1 indicate that 94% of Finnish teachers reported attending training, but that only 38% of those in the United States did so.

All countries participating in the IEA Preprimary Project have systems for teacher certification in early childhood programs. However, like teacher-training systems, certification systems vary from country to country. Some countries may require a minimum amount of training plus successful performance on an exam, while other countries may require no training, only a minimum score on an observation scale after 1-2 hours of observation. Thus, the overall percentage of teachers in different countries who are certified is only a rough indicator of this information; one would want additional information to accurately interpret such data.

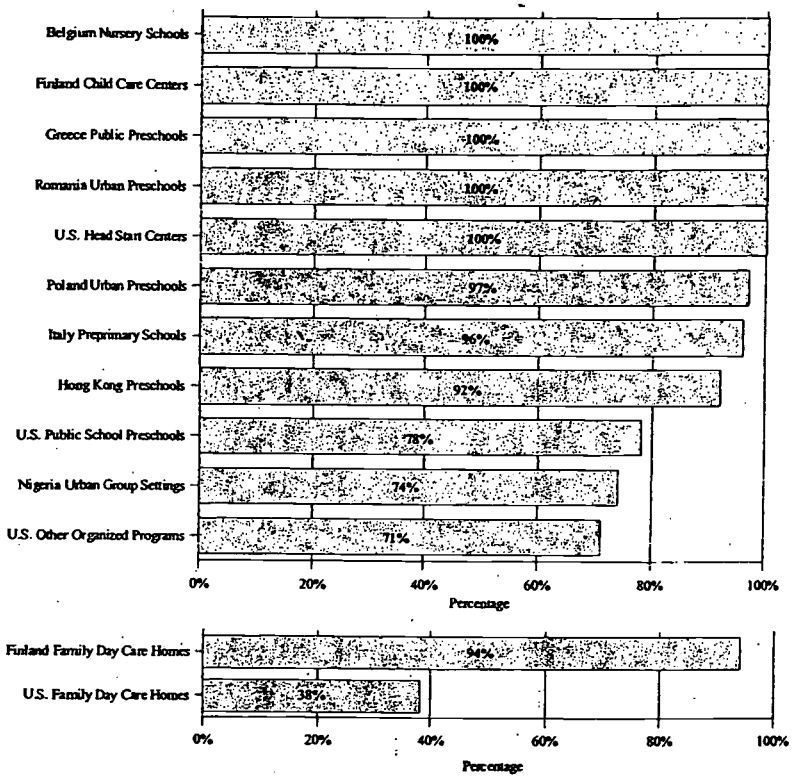

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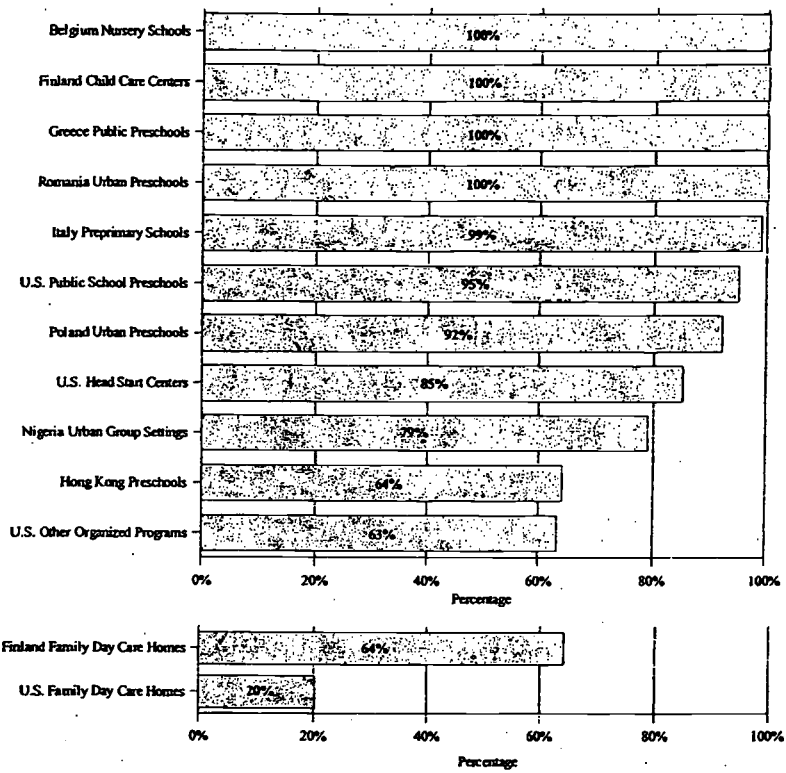
Figure 2 presents the percentage of teachers in each country who are certified. In 7 countries, 90% or more of the teachers in group settings noted that they were certified. In the United States, only the teachers in public school preschools are included in this group. The percentages for U.S. Head Start centers and U.S. other organized programs are 85% and 63%, respectively—fairly low percentages relative to the group settings in other countries. The FDC findings indicate that in Finland 64% of teachers reported being certified, while the comparable percentage in the United States is 20%.

For both of these important characteristics of teachers, the U.S. is found lacking compared to settings in other countries. In fact, for each characteristic (percentage of teachers trained and percentage of teachers certified), 2 of the 3 types of U.S. group settings are more similar to Nigerian group settings and lower than the two eastern European nations. The picture for FDC is similar, with the U.S. percentages far below those of Finland for both characteristics.

B. Degree of Government Sponsorship Directors of early childhood settings were asked to name the sponsor(s) of their program. The list of sponsors to select from included government (several levels), religious, employer, private, and so forth. If a setting had 2 or more sponsors, the director was asked to name each one. Figure 3 presents the percentage of group settings having the government either as a single sponsor or as 1 of a combination of sponsors. For 6 of the 11 types of group settings, 100% of directors identified the government (federal, regional, local) as a sponsor, and the directors of 2 other types of settings named the government as a sponsor of nearly all settings (i.e., 99%, 96%). Both the U.S. Head Start centers and the U.S. public school preschools are included among the 6 settings for which the government sponsors 100% of settings. As Figure 3 shows, the government sponsors between 0% and 27% of the remaining 3 types of settings. These include settings in the United States (27%), Nigeria (2%), and Hong Kong (0%).



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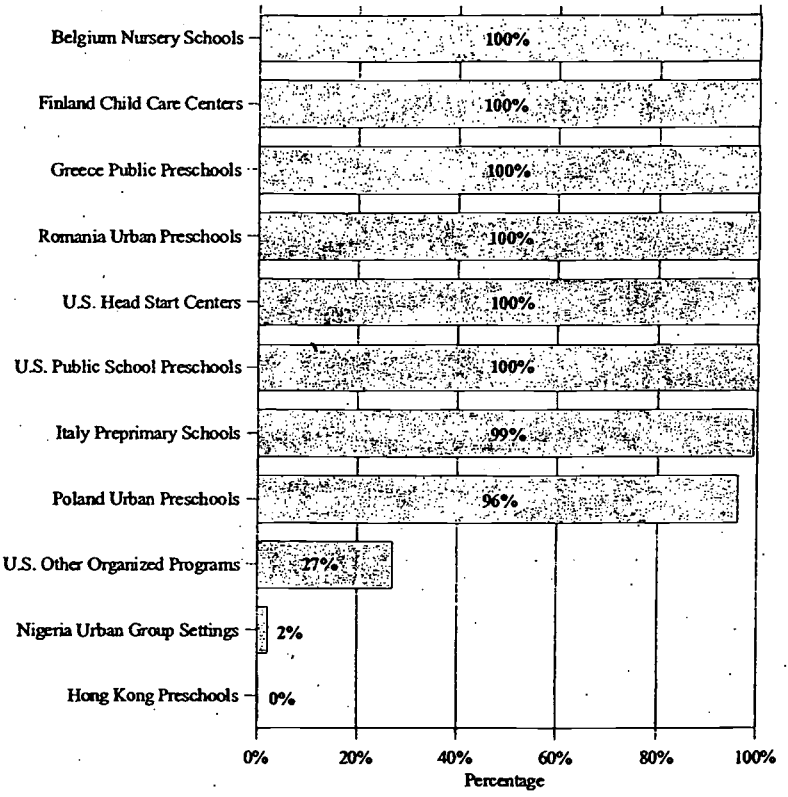
Together the findings in Figure 1 and Figure 3 indicate that government sponsorship of settings is not a necessary precursor for high percentages of trained early childhood teachers. Hong Kong presents a good example of this. In Hong Kong the government does not sponsor any type of early childhood setting (preschools or child care centers). However, the Hong Kong government has developed and sponsors teacher-training programs for teachers in both types of settings. This training program is fairly new and all teachers (new and experienced) are participating in the program. To date, 92% of the teachers have attended and within a few years the percentage will be closer to 100%.

There is a high degree of government sponsorship of early childhood settings in western European countries. However, even where the government does not directly sponsor programs, government agencies can still be involved in such program areas as teacher training.

C. Needs of Families The parent interview findings indicated that due to mothers working (or being out of the house for other reasons, such as to care for an ill parent), families in half of the countries need early childhood services for their 4-year-olds for an average of 30 hours or more during a typical week. In every country there are some families who need child care services for 40 hours per week or more, as well as parents who need these services during evening hours or weekends due to their hours of employment. While many countries offer child care services 40 hours a week, services are often available only during "regular" working hours on weekdays. Information from several of the participating countries provided evidence of efforts to better meet the needs of families who need care beyond these regular hours. The national study director in Finland stated that "according to the Day Care Law, day care centers and family day care homes offer services year-round according to the needs of parents. Day care centers also offer special services for children whose parents work evenings or nights." The Nigerian national director noted that "some group settings located in urban areas and patronized by working mothers open earlier and close much later in order to accommodate parents' schedules." Finally, Poland's director stated that "depending on parental needs, a number of preschools are open during holidays. The number of hours per day a particular preschool operates depends on parental needs."



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The match between the number of hours and the times that early childhood services are available and parents' needs for such services seems to be a universal problem. Many countries, including the United States, are working to better serve the needs of families with preschool-aged children.

D. Staff-Child Ratios Staff-child ratios are considered to be very important in many countries. In a majority of countries in the IEA Preprimary Project, sponsoring agencies issue regulations (or, at a minimum, provide recommendations) regarding staff-child ratios. Figure 4 presents the median staff-child ratios for the 11 types of group settings included in this document. Data from direct observation in each setting were used to develop the findings presented in this figure. As the figure shows, the group settings in Finland and the United States have the lowest staff-child ratios. It is not surprising to note that the countries sometimes referred to as "developing" nations (e.g., Nigeria and the eastern European countries) have the largest staff-child ratios (1:18 to 1:21). This may reflect the limited availability of eligible teachers or an effort to serve as many children as possible with limited resources.

The national coordinators in the participating countries provided information about the required (or recommended) minimum staff-child ratio for their country. For every country the findings from this study meet or exceed the requirements.

E. Availability of Equipment and Materials The equipment and materials in an early childhood setting are vital in assisting children in the development of specific skills and providing opportunities for children to learn about the world. For example, children use small blocks, beads, and play dough to practice their fine-motor skills. They use paper and crayons to practice drawing 2-dimensional representations of 3-dimensional objects in their environments. Children use dramatic play materials (e.g. dress-up clothes) to practice playing the roles of others, both real and imaginary (e.g., parent, superhero). It is important to have a sufficient *amount* of materials (i.e., enough dramatic play materials for several children to use at once) as well as a *variety* of materials. The teacher/director interview asked about the availability of more than 100 types of equipment and materials in various categories, such as science/nature materials, dramatic play materials, and gross-motor equipment.

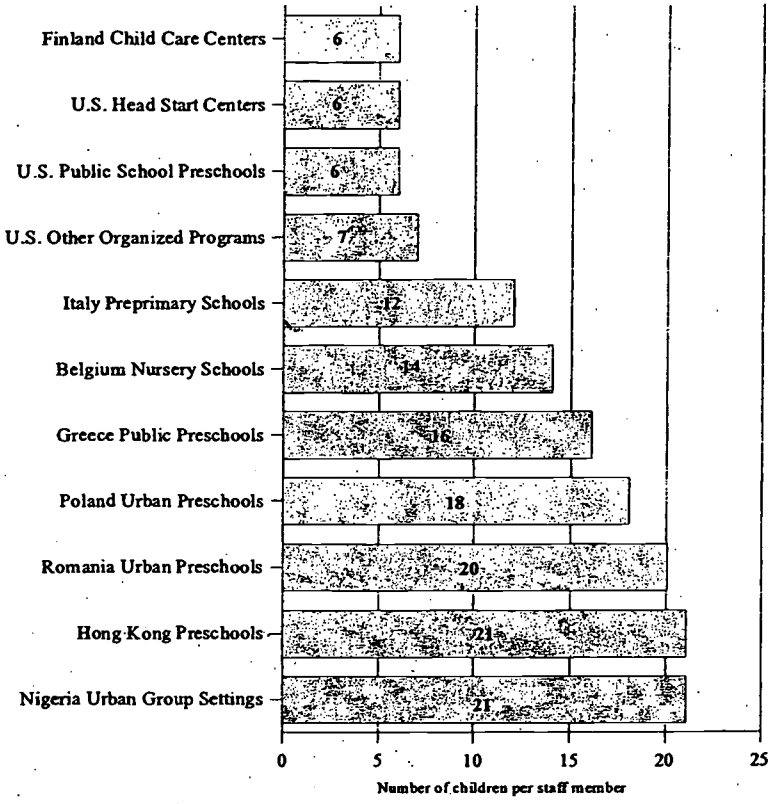
Using the data provided by teachers/directors, for each type of setting a total number of materials/equipment was derived for a hypothetical "average" setting. Figure 5 presents an estimate of overall availability of equipment/materials. On average, settings in Finland, the United States, and Poland report having the largest number of different types of materials/equipment, listing between 73 and 80 different types. Settings in Romania and Nigeria reported having the smallest number of different types of equipment/materials, ranging from 11 to 25 types.

In 9 different nations, U.S. early childhood settings compare favorably with those in the other 8 nations in the variety of equipment and materials provided. Educational and play equipment/materials in settings assist young children in the development of numerous skills that are important at this age.

III. Key Findings from the Various Components of the IEA Preprimary Project This section gives major findings from the different types of data collection used in the study.

Parent Interview

- In three fourths of the participating nations, 60% or more of 4-year-old children attend educational or child care settings. The highest percentages were reported by parents in Belgium (98%) and Hong Kong (95%).



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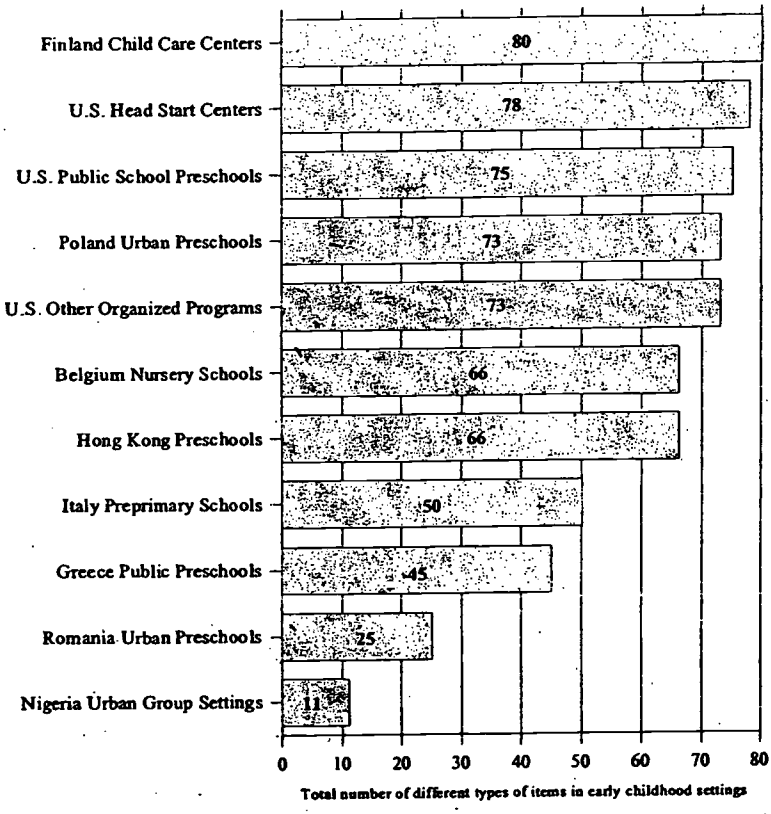

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- In every country some children attend more than 1 setting during a typical week. In Belgium and Germany, a majority of children attend 2 or more settings; percentages in other countries are lower. Small percentages of 4-year-olds in both Belgium and Germany attend 4 different settings during a typical week.

- In every participating country, the major reason for a child's attendance in an early childhood program is the mother's employment outside the home.

Teacher/Director Interview

- Group size (i.e., the number of children who generally remain together most of the time with 1 or more adults) for the 11 types of settings included in this document ranges from 11 children in Finland's child care centers to 29 in Hong Kong's preschools. For 7 of the 11 types of settings, including the 3 types in the United States, median group size ranges between 15 and 20 children. In every participating country, these group sizes meet the requirements set by sponsoring agencies.

- Compared to the 8 non-U.S. settings included in this document, the 3 U.S. settings reported more frequent teacher-parent contacts of 12 different types (e.g., meetings with individual parents, parent group meetings, home visits, parent participation on advisory boards, parents working in the classroom).

- In both Finland and the United States, the median staff-child ratio in family day care homes is 1:4, which is similar to that required or recommended in both countries.

Observation in Settings (Findings to be released in January 2002)

- In half of the types of settings in the study, teachers proposed whole-group activities for 80% or more of the time—indicating that most of the time, all the children were working on the same activity.

- In more than 80% of the types of early childhood settings included in the study, teachers spent 4% or less of their time listening to children. The maximum percentage of time spent listening to children was 7%. This included listening to children's answers to teacher-asked questions as well as to child-initiated comments/questions. Considering the heavy use of language by 4-year-old children, these percentages were lower than expected.

- In nearly every type of early childhood setting in the study, children were not engaged in any activity (i.e., they were staring around the room, wandering around, and so forth) for 8% to 12% of the time. In 1 type of setting, the percentage was 23%.

IV. Project Publications

Olmsted, P. P., & Weikart, D. P. (Eds.). (1989). *How nations serve young children: Profiles of child care and education in 14 countries.* Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press.

Lockhart, S., Weikart, D. P., & Olmsted, P. P. (1994). *International videotape series: Sights and sounds of children around the world.* [Set of 15 videotapes]. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press.

Olmsted, P. P., & Weikart, D. P. (Eds.). (1995). *The IEA Preprimary Study: Early childhood care and education in 11 countries.* Oxford, UK: Pergamon.

Weikart, D. P. (Ed.). (1999). *What should young children learn: Teacher and Parent views in 15 countries.* Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press.

Olmsted, P. P., & Montie, J. (Eds.). (In Press). *Early childhood settings in 15 countries: What are their structured characteristics?* Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press.

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Peer.

Ms. PEER. Thank you very much.

I would like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for taking such a strong interest in this topic, which I agree is a vital one for the United States, and for inviting me here to testify on behalf of the French-American Foundation.

I should mention that you have an in-house or in-Senate, as it were, expert of sorts on the French system in Senator Clinton, who participated in our first study tour of the French day care system about 12 years ago, so it may be of interest to speak with her about her impressions of the French system.

You have just heard about how the U.S. compares to other countries in providing care for its youngest children. I was asked to contrast one of the other national systems, the French one, more starkly with the United States, and in doing so, I would like to highlight some of the following problems with the American system. It is fragmented, costly to parents, access is inadequate, and quality is often lacking.

The board at the front of the room underlines some of the contrasts between the French and American systems. I have provided more detail in particular about the French pre-kindergarten system in my written testimony, and for even more detail, you can consult the report that was just published by the French-American Foundation and that was included in the briefing materials for this hearing.

Let us look first briefly at the United States. The United States does not have a coherent system of early education and care but instead offers a patchwork of services.

Three-year-old Anna, if she is like the 60 percent of children under 6 who are not at home with mom, might spend her week days in a family day care home, a day care center, a Head Start program, or in a private or public preschool; or Anna might be cared for by a relative, neighbor, or babysitter, usually untrained and undeclared.

Her parents pay anywhere from $3,000 to $10,000 per year if she is in center-based care and, I should add, far more if she is at home with a private nanny.

In every State but one, Anna's parents would pay more for 1 year of center-based child care than for a year of public college tuition. So in 49 States, parents are paying more for their 4-year-olds to be in day care than they are for their college-age child to be in a public college.

If Anna is poor, and her family qualifies for subsidized child care, she has only about a one in 10 chance of actually receiving that assistance. By contrast, Ben, whose parents earn more than $75,000 a year, is twice as likely to be enrolled in an educational preschool, as you heard a moment ago from Dr. Kamerman.

The quality of care Anna receives is very likely poor to mediocre, as is 75 percent of center-based care in the United States. Her day care center might be one crowded room in a converted storefront, with a faded curtain blocking the only window and no outdoor play space. And the person who takes care of her all week long is paid, as you have already heard, about $7 an hour, or $15,000 a year,

most likely without benefits—more than you pay the person who picks up your garbage or parks your car or stirs your drinks. She may well have only a high school diploma, and in more than half the States, she would have received no training at all before she began taking care of children.

Ben probably fares better than Anna. He might attend a private preschool where his teacher holds a teaching certificate. But even among preschool teachers—and the Bureau of Labor Statistics differentiates between child care workers and preschool teachers—the average salary is still only about $20,000 a year, which is less than the national average of $25,000 and considerably less than the average kindergarten salary of about $37,000.

So to recap, the U.S. has a patchwork system with no coordinated policy framework at either the Federal or the State level; it is expensive, often prohibitively so; access is inadequate, particularly for low-income children; quality is uneven and often mediocre; and child care workers are often poorly trained, if at all, and notoriously underpaid.

France, on the other hand, provides all children, rich and poor, with a coherent and comprehensive system of early education and care. I will tell you about a typical "Charlotte," living in Paris, but the story would be similar for "Mohammed" growing up in a poor suburb of Marseille or "Anike" in rural Brittany, because all children are entitled to the same services in a country that has comparable rates of maternal employment with the U.S., around 60 percent.

When Charlotte was born, her mother got 16 weeks of paid maternity leave, and then took one-and-a-half of the 3 years of unpaid, job-protected leave to which she was entitled so that she could stay home. During that time, she received a national parental allowance of about $450 a month, which is equivalent to about half of the national minimum wage in France.

A couple times a month, Charlotte's mother would take her to the neighborhood "altgarderie," a licensed drop-in center located outside, in the park just across from the Eiffel Tower. This is an actual drop-in center that we visited. Run by a parents' cooperative, this drop-in center only costs here about $1 an hour, with the rest of the cost being shared by the city and the National Family Allowance Fund.

When Charlotte was 18 months old, her mother returned to work and placed her in a "creche," or licensed day care center, run by qualified staff working under the direction of a trained pediatric nurse. The cost to Charlotte's middle-income family was just over $10 a day.

Other forms of subsidized care for children under 3 include licensed family day care, or a licensed babysitter at home. In both cases, those are subsidized by the government

When she turned 3, Charlotte started preschool. In France, preschool is part of the national education system created first in the 1880's, and it is free to parents. It is estimated that it costs about $5,500 a year, and the cost in France is shared between the national and local governments, with the national government paying teacher training and teacher salaries and the local government paying for support staff and materials and facilities.

It is also universally available. Although it is a voluntary system, nearly 100 percent of 3- to 5-year-olds attend preschool, and about 35 percent of 2-year-olds as well, because their parents, whether they work outside the home or not, unanimously recognize its value and importance.

Charlotte's preschool classroom is spacious, light, and well-equipped, with attractive child-sized furniture and a miniature cafeteria where children eat good French food, like roast lamb and a radicchio salad, using real dishes and glassware.

All French children receive a high-quality preschool education given by a well-qualified professional teacher who holds the equivalent of a U.S. master's degree.

Preschool teachers earn the same salary and generous benefits as their colleagues in elementary school. They average about $27,000 a year at the current exchange rate, which in fact is not very favorable to France at the moment, so to put that in a French context, that is higher than the average national salary of $23,000 and, unlike in the U.S. as I said earlier, is the same as what a kindergarten or elementary school teacher would make.

As a result, there is great stability among preschool teachers, and France has no problem with turnover of personnel, whereas in the U.S., 30 percent of child care workers leave their jobs every year, and research has shown that this has very bad consequences for the children under their care.

To summarize, in striking contrast with the U.S., French parents have 16 weeks of paid maternity leave and up to 3 years of unpaid, job-protected leave. French children from birth to age 3 may use various forms of regulated, licensed and subsidized care; and from age 2, or more often age 3 to age 5, France offers free, universal, voluntary pre-kindergarten education to all of its children, characterized by consistently high quality and taught by highly trained, well-paid teachers.

How does the U.S. measure up against other industrialized nations in providing education and care for its young? The picture is becoming increasingly clear—not very well.

So what can the government do to help ensure that America's youngest citizens have access to the kind of affordable quality care and education which, according to U.S. research, best prepares them to succeed in school and in life? I would like to briefly outline some possible elements for policy agenda which may seem very ambitious under the current circumstances, but anyway, here goes.

First, the government can support the primary role of parents as caregivers. Most comparable nations have a paid parental leave policy and in most cases, a longer leave that parents can also take as unpaid leave. We need to adopt one, too, so that parents can elect to care for their infants themselves, without sacrificing the income or earnings potential their families also need.

Second, the government should ensure that child care subsidies, especially those for low-income families, be protected and increased rather than cut and that all eligible children be served, but very importantly, that they be served in high-quality programs.

Third, the Federal Government can ensure that each State has adequate resources so that every child has access on a universal voluntary basis to quality preschool.

Fourth, studies in the U.S. have demonstrated that the most important factor in quality early education guaranteeing sound outcomes for children is a well-trained, qualified teacher. Federal initiatives should focus on increasing quality and, notably, on improving teacher training and compensation. The two cannot be considered separately.

In conclusion, there is much work to be done if the U.S. wants to do as well by its children as comparable nations do. On the other hand, I would like to end on a positive note. There are several examples of strong programs in the U.S. which can be looked to as models, notably, the U.S. military child care system which, according to a report by the National Women's Law Center, has shown that it is possible to take a woefully inadequate child care system and dramatically improve it over a relatively short period of time. The U.S. has produced some of the best research in this field. We only need to figure out how to apply it.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Ms. Peer.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Peer follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SHANNY PEER, PH.D.

Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for inviting me here today to testify, on behalf of the French-American Foundation, about the French system of early care and education. Much of the information I will be presenting, along with useful comparisons with the United States and a set of recommendations, is vailable in more detailed form in the French-American Foundation report, entitled Ready to Learn: The French System of Early Education and Care Offers Lessons for the United States, a copy of which is included in the written materials for this hearing.

At a time of increasing concern about the inadequacy of early learning experiences and other services for young children here in the United States, there is much that we can learn from other industrialized nations. The French system, highly regarded around the world, can offer lessons in the "art of the possible."

In strong contrast with the fragmented approach to early care and education in America, France provides all children, rich and poor, with a comprehensive system of education and care. French pre-kindergarten, called ecole maternelle, is free and universally available to all children ages three to five, with limited availability for two year-olds as well. For children under the age of three, various forms of subsidized care exist, including licensed day care centers, called creches, and licensed home day care provided by assistantes maternelles. I would like to briefly outline the most important features of these forms of care and underline salient contrasts with the United States.

The French Pre-Kindergarten system

The French pre-kindergarten system, or ecole maternelle is part of a national, centralized educational system first established in the 1880s. Although it is a voluntary system, ecole maternelle is attended by nearly 100 percent of three to five year-olds and 35 percent of two year-olds. French pre-kindergarten is of consistently high quality in schools throughout the country. Housed in impressive purpose-built facilities, each pre-school is complete with cafeteria, outdoor space, and a separate sleeping area for naps.

Preschool is free to parents. It is estimated that the annual cost per child per year is approximately $5,500. Expenses are shared between the national and local governments, with national government paying for teachers' salaries, and local government paying for facilities, materials, and support staff. Wrap-around services are also available for full-day, full-year care, and the cost of these services is largely subsidized by the government, with parents paying a portion of the costs on a sliding scale.

In contrast with this free, universal system, the cost for center-based early care and education in the U.S. is high, averaging $4,000 to $6,000 per year—which is more than the cost of a public college education in all states but one—and parents cover an estimated 60 percent of the total costs, with 39 percent covered by government subsidies for low-income families or tax credits. (By comparison, American families only pay 23 percent of the cost of public college tuition.) Furthermore, access to child care is woefully inadequate in the United States: only about 10 percent

of eligible low-income children have access to subsidized child care. When it comes to educational preschool, access is determined by wealth: children from higher income families are more likely to be enrolled than those from lower-income families, and only the wealthiest families can purchase high quality education in a country where a full 75 percent of early education and care programs have been found to be of poor to mediocre quality.

Another striking contrast between France and the United States has to do with the level of teacher training and qualification. In the United States, 31 states do not require providers caring for children in day care centers, where many preschool aged children are housed, to have any child development training at all. Fortunately, most states have higher standards for their burgeoning state pre-kindergarten initiatives (13 state initiatives require teacher certification, another 37 state initiatives require some other credential). But far too many children remain under the care of untrained or undertrained workers who may only hold a high school diploma.

By contrast, in France, teachers are selected and trained in a rigorous, competitive process. Teachers must first earn a three-year university degree (equivalent of a B.A.) in a subject area. This is followed by at least one year of training at a university-based teacher training institute, the Institut Universitaire de Formation des Mahres, to receive what would be the equivalent of a master's degree in early childhood and elementary education. In the French teacher training institutes, students receive, the same training to teach at the preschool or elementary school level; indeed, they only decide at the end of their training which level they prefer to teach.

The French government pays for the training at the teacher institutes, which is rigorous and competitive. Even before entering the training program, candidates possessing a B.A. must first pass a highly competitive national examination, which most of them spend a year to prepare. About half of those who take the exam fail it. Those who do succeed must apply for admission to a teacher training university, where the number of spots available is a function of the available teaching positions; in recent years less than half of those applicants (having successfully passed the national entrance exam) have been accepted. Those students who do meet these rigorous entrance requirements proceed to at least one year of course work and two months of practice teaching in schools. Not only do they not have to pay for these studies, but they receive a salary from the government during their training. But they must once again meet tough standards during their training in order to receive the teaching diploma which guarantees them a job.

Training does not end once teachers are employed. Teachers are eligible for 36 weeks of in-service training during their career, and they receive their full salaries to attend to raining. Most of the in-service training focuses on curriculum at the ecole maternelle. Throughout their career, pre-kindergarten teachers are assessed and reviewed by education inspectors from the National Ministry of Education; the school principal is not involved in assessing their performance.

Unlike their American counterparts, French pre-kindergarten teachers are well-paid, earning the same salaries, paid vacation and generous health, retirement and other benefits as school teachers at the elementary or secondary level. Teaching salaries for preschool and other teachers in France start at $17,400 and rise to $31,000 (these figures are based on the current exchange rate of 7 francs to the dollar, which is very unfavorable to France). To put these figures in a French context, the average French teacher's salary is around $27,000, more than 40 percent higher than the median income of $19,000. By way of comparison, in the U.S. the average salary for a child care worker is $7.00 per hour, or about $14,500 per year, less than half the national median income. And most of these poorly paid workers have no benefits. As a result, there is considerable stability among preschool teachers and France has no problem with turnover of personnel, whereas in the U.S., 30 percent of child care workers leave their job each year.

Preschool teachers are supported in the classroom by qualified teaching aids, who must earn a one-year vocational degree in early education. The support staff work with teachers in a supportive role in classroom: they set up art and other activities, supervise work in small groups, clean up, supervise outdoor play, help children eat, prepare them for naps, and so forth.

The average class size in the French preschool is 25 students, and the average adult to child ratio is 1 to 12.5. This is somewhat higher than the ratios recommended by American early childhood experts. But many French experts believe large groups help children develop social skills, self-assurance, and the ability to work independently and in small groups. Furthermore, a highly qualified, well-trained teacher is much more capable of delivering a quality education within a group setting. From an American perspective, this may also be viewed as an acceptable trade-off—more qualified, better trained and well-paid teachers with slightly

larger class sizes—which can help keep the cost per student within an acceptable range.

Because it is part of the national education system, French ecole maternelle follows a national curriculum, which sets general goals and guidelines (a copy of this curriculum is included with the briefing materials). But highly skilled teachers have the freedom to select developmentally appropriate materials and activities, and to devise lessons plans and projects following the general guidelines. The preschool and elementary school curriculum are built around three stages or "cycles of learning." The second of these cycles bridges the last year of preschool with the first two years of elementary school, facilitating the transition between the two levels. (The transition is also made easier by the fact, mentioned above, that preschool and elementary school teachers are given the same training and only decide at the end of their schooling which level they will teach.) As in the best American preschools, learning activities are often built around everyday experiences. For example, keeping track of days on the calendar introduces students to the concepts of numbers, sequences, and the passing of time. The French preschool curriculum is designed to develop seven areas: 1) social skills; 2) linguistic and pre-literacy skills; 3) motor skills, the senses, and physical exploration; 4) "discovery of the world," which includes exploration of objects, the elements, natural materials, and an understanding of human and other life forms, natural and built environments, and time cycles; 5) cultivation of the imagination, sensitivity, and creativity (this includes art, music, theater and creative movement); 6) drawing and graphic skills; and 7) the ability to classify, identify forms, and work with numbers (pre-math skills).

Educational Priority Zones

One dilemma we face in the U.S., where resources for early education are currently quite limited, is whether to place a priority on increasing access to child care and preschool education for low-income children (primarily through Head Start), or to consider adopting universal pre-kindergarten for all children regardless of income. (Georgia and New York have already adopted universal pre-kindergarten for 4 year-olds, and other states are moving in that direction).

In the case of France, where universal access is guaranteed for all to the same high "quality educational preschools, the approach has been to make additional resources available to children living in low-income areas. Thus students are not screened (or stigmatized) individually to ensure they meet eligibility requirements as they are in the U.S.; instead, low-income areas with a higher rate of school failure are designated as "educational priority zones" (zones d'education prioritaire, or ZEPS), and all the students in those communities benefit from additional resources. These resources include smaller class sizes; salary supplements for teachers to encourage stability; extra funding, materials and personnel; and partnerships developed with other institutions within the zone, such as social service agencies. In addition, there is a national priority of making preschool available for two year-olds in these educational priority zones, based on studies which have shown that an earlier start for lower-income students has a demonstrable impact on later school success. Currently about 40 percent of two year-olds in ZEPs attend preschool, compared to a national average of 35 percent.

Integration of Health Services

American observers in France are often impressed by the ways in which health services are integrated in the ecoles maternelles. Ecoles maternelles have a doctor and psychologist on their staff several hours per week or available for consultation as needed to provide evaluations and referrals. Preventive health exams are mandated for all four year-olds in ecoles maternelles. These exams allow doctors to identify medical, visual, hearing and behavior problems and recommend appropriate treatment. In addition, trained medical staff from the local French Maternal and Child Health Services center (part of the French public-private system of preventive health care for mother and child known as Protection Maternelle et Infantile) play a role in helping integrate children with congenital disorders, physical disabilities and behavioral problems into child care centers and preschools.

Wrap-Around Services

As in the United States, the regular school calendar in France does not match the schedule of the full-time working parent. The hours of French preschool correspond to regular school hours, usually 8:00 to 4:00 or 8:30 to 4:30, with a 2-hour break for lunch and nap. Children have the same school holidays as older students. So, to accommodate children who have two working parents, optional wrap-around services are available for full-day, full-year care. These wrap-around services include lunch provided in school cafeteria, before and after-school care, provided in the school building or in a nearby facility, and year-round care available during school holidays. The costs for wrap-around services are largely subsidized by the local government, with parents paying a portion of costs on a sliding scale according to in-

come. Wrap-around services are provided not by regular teachers but by a trained staff of educators.

There is broad public support for ecole maternelle in France, where early education and care are viewed not only as a private concern for parents, but as a public good and a public responsibility. The importance of pre-kindergarten and other services for young French children is unquestioned, taken for granted by parents, politicians, and the public alike. A consensus exists across the political spectrum about the importance of ecole maternelle, and it receives support from all political parties. Not to support it would be political suicide for a politician. "No one would dare" take away resources, according to one French mayor.

Subsidized Forms of Care for Children Under Age Three

In France, parents with children aged under three enjoy a generous national parental leave policy, which, in part, has lead to about half of children under three being cared for at home by a parent. The policy begins with 16 weeks of paid maternity leave, thereafter either parent is entitled to up to three years unpaid job-protected leave. After the arrival of a second child, working parents who decide, to stay home receive a parental allowance of about $430 per month (about half the national minimum wage) for the first three years. This allowance applies to about half of the children under three who are cared for by a parent at home.

All parents are offered several forms of subsidized care for their children under three. Families in which both parents work can use: licensed day care centers (crehes); licensed family day care providers (assistantes maternelles); or licensed babysitters at home (whose social security costs and salaries are subsidized by the National Family Allowance Fund). For families with one parent at home or working part-time, there are Haltes garderies (drop-in centers) which provide part-time, occasional, and drop-in care. These too are subsidized by the municipality and the National Family Allowance Fund, with parents paying a portion of the cost based on a sliding scale (parents pay an average of $1 per hour).

Before looking in more detail at the different characteristics of the forms of care available in France, it may be useful to give the percentages of children using the different options available. The most popular option is for the child to stay at home with a parent (usually the mother), enjoyed by 50 percent of the children; 15 percent are in a family day care run by a licensed assistante maternelle; 11 percent attend ecole maternelle (this represents 35 percent of two year-olds); 9 percent attend a licensed day care center (creche) (more parents would use this option if there were not a shortage of available slots); and 2 percent are cared for at home by a licensed babysitter. The remaining 13 percent are cared for without public help by private arrangements with family members, neighbors, or unlicenced babysitters, however, many of these children use drop-in centers (haltes garderies) part-time or occasionally.

Creches are regulated, subsidized day care centers for children aged 2 months to three years with two working parents. The overall creche system is operated under the auspices of the French Ministry of Health. Most creches are administered by the local municipality, and some are administered by private non-profit associations or parents' collectives. The staffing ratios are 1 adult to 5 children for infants (not walking) and 1 adult to 8 children for toddlers. Usually creches are directed by pediatric nurses called puercultrices who have special training in public health, child development, and program administration, but occasionally the director is a doctor or midwife. In all cases, then, the director has medical training. The educators who work with the children hold the equivalent of a B.A. degree plus a two-year professional degree in early childhood education and child development. They are assisted by qualified staff who hold a high-school level vocational degree with one year of specialized training in early care and education. Creches also have a doctor and psychologist available part-time for evaluation and referrals, and health care (including vaccinations) is integrated into the services they provided. Physicians from French Maternal and Child Health Services assess compliance with health, safety, nutrition and staffing standards.

Creches are open up to 11 hours a day on a year-round basis. There actual operating costs per child average around $51 per day (at the current exchange rate of 7 francs per dollar), or $12,240 per year. These costs are largely subsidized by the municipality and the National Family Allowance Fund which collects payroll taxes paid by employers and employees to fund social services. Parents also pay a portion of the costs on a sliding scale according to income and to number of children, the average payment is $11.20 per day which comes to $56 per week, or $2,670 per year.

Working parents may also use subsidized family day care providers (assistantes maternelles) who are licensed by the municipality after being screened and rec-

ommended by French Maternal and Child Health services. The licensing process is relatively demanding: providers are interviewed by a social worker, pediatric nurse, and psychologist; their homes must meet safety and health standards; and they receive 60 hours of training. Throughout their career they are monitorcd by specially trained pediatric nurses (puericultrices) who visit them regularly. The providers can care for a maximum of three children in their home, however they average less than two. Most providers are linked to a family day care network, which pools administration, training, advice and referrals, activities, and equipment-lending in the hands of a trained staff directed by a pediatric nurse. Individual salaries are negotiated between the parent and the provider, however the government sets a minimum of $20 per child per day plus payment for meals and materials. Compensation includes social benefits and in-service training, and parents receive financial support from the government to offset their provider's salary; all of the provider's social security costs are paid by the national family allowance fund.

To complement these forms of subsidized care, France also has a system of family allowances which helps offset the cost of rearing children. Beginning with the second child, whether the parents work or not, French families receive allowances for children from birth through to the age of 20. A family with two children receives $100 per month and then each additional child brings about $125 per month. This is in addition to the allowance offered to parents who remain at home to take care of the child during its first three years.

Other allowances available to all families include subsidies, previously discussed, for children in licensed family day care centers or cared for at home by a licensed babysitter. There are also needs-tested benefits available to low- moderate-income families, which include allowances for: single-parent families; families with children under the age of three; families with three or more children; families with adopted children; allowances given at the beginning of each school year; and housing subsidies.

These family allowances, along with the French tax structure, significantly reduce the number of children living in poverty in France. Based on wage income alone, nearly 25 percent of children are poor in both France and the U.S., however after taxes and benefits only 6 percent of French children live (remain) in poverty compared to 21 percent of American children.

Recommendations

Some of the best practices of the French system of early education and care can be adapted to our own. The French-American Foundation report identifies five key areas as critical to helping American children have opportunities for high-quality learning experiences, and makes the following recommendations: 1) promote preschool for every child; 2) clarify national, state and local roles and responsibilities; 3) train and adequately pay teachers of young children; 4) develop core principles for early childhood programs; and 5) respond to the needs of children and families.

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Apgar.

Ms. APGAR. Thank you, Senator. I would like to thank you and the committee for inviting me, and I would like to thank my fellow panelists here. I have learned a great deal this morning, and I think I am going to leave for France as soon as we are done here.

Most of today's panelists have related statistical information to you pointing to the crisis in early care and education, and I guess I am here to add the personal touch to help you face the harsh realities of maintaining a quality program under some pretty dire economic circumstances right here in the United States.

I am also here to add a passionate plea for adding new Federal dollars to the early care and education budget. We are not talking about redirecting funds here. I am a master at robbing Peter to pay Paul. It does not work. We cannot do it. We need to be talking about real dollars. Everything that you have heard this morning is a direct result of real dollar, significant contribution to early care and education. So let us make sure that we make that a priority.

I have been at the Bristol Family Center for going on 8 years. As you read in my bio, I started out as a high school English teacher, and I learned very early on that that is too late. Kids who cannot function, who cannot focus on splitting infinitives—it started at

birth, and their incapacities to study and to learn were fully formulated before the age of 5.

At the Bristol Family Center, I have retained most of my 11-person staff for almost the full 8 years, which is a retention rate almost unheard of certainly in the State of Vermont. And as you have heard today, we are looking at a national average of a 30 percent turnover. That is like your 6th grade child having three teachers in a year. It would be totally unacceptable, yet it is a reality that we face in early care and education every year.

Eight years ago, most of my staff started with me at or slightly above minimum wage, even though they are all credentialed, starting with a child development associate certificate, moving on through associate's, bachelor's, master's, and some of us are even finishing some doctoral work. We started at slightly above minimum wage; 8 years later, my salary range looks at $8.65 an hour for someone with a B.S., and I cap out with one of my teachers who is doing some doctoral research at $13 an hour. We still have no benefits for these folks. Eight years ago, I was able to offer them paid Federal holidays and 3 sick days. I can now offer them all of the paid Federal holidays, 3 sick days, 3 personal days, and 5 professional days, because that is a particular focus of myself—but no health, no dental, no long-term or short-term disability, no paid parental leave. We just cannot afford it.

What really scares me—and Senator Jeffords has been to my center a couple of times—we are expanding this year to add infants and toddlers—God only knows why—but we are looking at a huge deficit spending option here with infants and toddlers. It is unbelievable. In Addison County, which is a very small, agrarian-based county in Vermont, we have a waiting list in our county of 50 infants and toddlers for every one available slot. Where are those kids going if they are not in quality care? You have heard other panelists tell you. In a very fragmented society, they are going to very undesirable locations.

When you ask me why can't we afford early care and education for infants and toddlers, and why am I not going to be able to attract staff for the new program, and why can't we make great gains—well, let me tell you. Fifty-three percent of the children enrolled at my center are subsidized by State Child Care Services Division dollars, which to you, Senators, means child care block dollars—TANF moneys is basically what it boils down to.

For 55 hours of care, we receive $94.60. It costs me $209.79. I do not need the Congressional Budget Office to tell me that that is a huge deficit between what we are accepting for quality, nationally-accredited care for these young children and what it really costs.

It is a little bit frightening, but I spend a lot of time at the Daughters of the American Legion, at the Sons of the American Legion, at the VFW, and going to lots of different fundraisers, hoping that private philanthropic trusts in Miami will understand what it is like to provide quality child care to low-income Vermont Children.

People look at my budget, and they say, "Just cut your staff." I hear that all the time when I go to the Vermont State Legislature—just cut your staff. It makes perfect sense. Everybody does it

in business. You look at the bottom line, and take off the big, high-end dollars.

But take a look for a second—you heard it referred to this morning by other panelists—at higher education. In higher education, the quality and the quantity of the faculty and staff determines the success of a student's performance. Think about that for just a second. In higher education, the quality and quantity of faculty and staff determines the success of a student's experience. I am here to tell you that it is exactly the same thing when we are talking about children from birth to age 8. There is no disparity there. Quality and quantity of staff makes the difference.

In my center, I am looking at 35 percent of my population being special needs, ranging from social/emotional disorder to a high rate of autism—and I am sure that other countries have seen that as well. We are looking at significant special needs, but I am not paid any more, I am not reimbursed any more for providing those special needs. But we do it, and we do it well, because we know that early intervention and quality care between birth and age 5 makes a heck of a lot of difference, and I know it personally. I can tell you from teaching kindergarten, first, second, and third grades that if you catch these kids early, there is nothing you cannot do with them.

If you want children to enter kindergarten ready to learn, early literacy does not mean exposure to five books distributed through Healthy Child visits. It does not mean flashcards in front of your high chair. And it does not mean kindergarten curricula pushed down to 3-year-olds.

What it means, basically and forthrightly, is having honest-to-goodness human contact with highly trained professionals who are readily available through a very low child-to-teacher ratio. You heard that this morning, and I feel like I am preaching to the choir. You know that, and we know that.

Early literacy and early success truly means having a lap to snuggle on when a book piques the interest of the child, not when the teacher piques the interest of the child; having a child on your lap, looking at a picture book—you have all done that with children, with neighbors, nephews, grandchildren—look at the book and talking about the beginning, the middle, and the end of the book. Those are all basic reading skills, basic literacy skills. And sitting across the table from a 3-year-old where you actually end up wearing more than they eat, but sitting across the table from that 3-year-old, making eye contact and making some lovely rhymes and giggles and tongue-twisters—that is what creates success in early care and education from highly-skilled professionals.

Early literacy and early success really does mean that there is someone around to record a child's words, to accompany a treasured drawing so that they begin to see how letters and symbols really and truly do create the connection between thoughts and feelings. That is what basic communication is all about.

Kids must feel comfortable and safe and provided for and nurtured in their settings. There is no question about that and no doubt about it. But I cannot provide these quality opportunities for children on a recommended 10-to-one ratio. Ms. Olmsted referred to Nigeria, which has a ratio similar to ours. When you look at a

10-to-one ratio, 10 children to one child, could you stand it in a classroom with 10-to-one for very long? That is our national goal, 10-to-one, but I am telling you that you cannot provide quality care at that rate. We should be looking at five-to-one. That is what I maintain in my center, and that is why I operate on any given day between a $5,000 and $25,000 deficit in my budget.

But the kids who leave my program are successful learners; they are skilled at asking questions, and they are very, very comfortable knowing who they are and taking risks that make education a wonderful opportunity for them.

We must never try to supplant the important roles that parents play as their child's first and in most cases best teacher. This is not and never should be an "us versus them" rationale. We are not in competition with parents. We want parents to have the ability to stay home with their young children, but the economic viability of this option is not a reality in most cases. And it is absolutely pathetic to sit at my desk and listen to moms who call me, and dads now—and actually, I had a grandmother call me last week—looking for infant and toddler care, and there is nothing available for the next year. It is a horrendous position to be in. They do not like it, and we do not like it.

In Vermont, 87 percent of all of our children under the age of 6 live with working parents. This creates a tremendous burden on a system whose capacity has not significantly expanded in 10 years.

In Vermont, we have 35,000 children in regulated care. For some of you in much larger States, that will not seem like a lot; to me, sitting in the director's position, it is pretty tough to provide that kind of care. And I want to be very specific here—we are talking about regulated care. We are not talking about quality care necessarily. They are not necessarily the same thing.

Another hat I wear is with NAEYC, National Association for the Education of Young Children, as a validator for their accreditation program. This means I go into a lot of centers, and I am there to observe what they claim has met the very high standards that NAEYC has set. I know that there are a lot of centers that go through the process that just do not cut it, and that really, really hurts, but it is a reality that we can be consistent with a standard and hold people accountable to it.

While we have 35,000 children in Vermont in regulated care, the scary thing is that we have 25,000 age birth to age 8 in unregulated care, and believe me, as you have heard before, and I am sure you have heard Senator Wellstone refer to his own constituents having told him the horror stories of what happens to these kids when they are not in high-quality care.

Right now, we are only providing subsidized care for low-income and/or at-risk children. Increases in Head Start dollars target that same population. That is important for you to keep in the back of your mind when you are looking at budgetary constraints. Head Start still deals with al ow economic factor, and we are putting more money into the low-income, but we are looking at part-day, part-year programs when the need of working parents is for full-day, full-year, quality options for all children, especially those children whose parents are moving back into the work force as a result of the welfare-to-work initiatives.

Why do so many other children get left behind? No. 1, there simply is not enough capacity to meet the needs. You have heard it before, and you will hear it again.

No. 2, parents cannot afford high-quality care. We are talking about families who are at the lowest point in their economic earning years who may be spending up to 58 percent of their income, if they have an infant and a 4-year-old, just in child care expenses. These young parents absorb 87 percent of the cost of child care in the years that they can least afford it, compared to the years when the kids head off for college, when they are looking at absorbing only 42 percent of the cost. That is a huge, huge difference.

As I tell my staff, do not come to me and whine unless you have three things that can be part of the solution for that whining—and one of them cannot be chocolate. No. 1, bring businesses on board as partners. The ultimate economic gain is having a stronger work force whose potential is wasted because they are worried about the well-being and the safety of their children. It is not an option. I would be happy to expand on a new collaboration that we just finished with Middlebury College. It is a model and one of a kind, actually, I think, in the world, where three nonprofits teamed up with a postsecondary institution, and we have created an award-winning program for infants and toddlers. It can be done.

No. 2, forgiveness of student loans and access to higher wages and health care for providers—again, it is reiterated in every country that is successful with early care and education—you are providing a good, sound economic contribution when you are paying your early education teachers well.

If you are offering people a low wage, I absolutely hate to do interviews anymore. I see young people coming into the profession, I know the debt load that they are carrying, and if I can only offer them $9 an hour, I know they will walk out the door and go to WalMart, where they can make more as a greeter. I lost two staff members to COSTCO because they could make more money, and after 8 months, they got profit-sharing and they had a full load of benefits. I cannot compete with that. If they did not have to pay back that student loan, if they could contract with me and did not have to pay back that student loan, even the pitifully poor wages that I present would be a little bit more appealing to them if they did not have that hanging over their heads.

No. 3, quality incentives really, really work. Whether we are talking about guaranteed bonuses for extended personal credentialing or program-based bonuses tied to national accreditation standards, it works. We have seen it in Vermont, we have seen it throughout New England, and we have seen it throughout the country. The bottom line there is that children directly benefit from these upward movements.

No. 4, tax cuts are absolutely great, but we should only be looking at tax cuts after the needs of the Nation have been met. It is nice to hear over and over again, and I heard it again this morning on the news, that no child will be left behind. But as an early educator, as a parent, as a taxpayer and as a lifelong Republican, I am here to tell you that under the current budget recommendations, children will be left behind, and they will be left behind in droves.

You have a very difficult choice—save a little bit now by not funding early care and education to the level that the Senator has subscribed to; or you can pay a lot later. We know that for every $1 spent in early care and education, you save $7.47 in correctional costs later on. It is worth it, folks.

We can no longer afford to be a nation where only the poor or the rich have access to high-quality care. I think I have seen "Ben" and "Anna" come through my doors. Usually, children who have bounced from care provider to care provider in Bristol luckily end up in my center, and it takes us 2 years to undo what has been done by the five child care providers with no background that the child was with before.

We cannot afford to be a nation where only the poor and rich have access to high-quality care and education, and you need to commit precious resources to our most precious resource, our children.

A year ago, I had the wonderful opportunity to visit Reggio Amelia, Italy, to study their early care and education system and their philosophy. People kept asking me why can't we replicate that there; why can't we do that here in Vermont. Reggio Amelia is certainly a wonderful opportunity. I tried to figure out a way to describe to them why we cannot replicate everything that happened in Reggio. We can take pieces here, and we do have some success.

Every morning when I was at Reggio, I would walk the piazza for a little exercise, and I would go to one particular fruit vendor for a fresh piece of fruit every morning. The next to the last morning that I was there, I was speaking to an elderly woman and her husband who were the vendors, and across the piazza—the whole societal structure in Italy and in many of the other countries that have been mentioned this morning gives incredible value to young children and to families; that is not where our priorities are in this country, unfortunately. But in Italy, young children are nurtured and are created in the image of a perfect society by the parents and by a community that loves them and shares them and watches out for them.

I was waiting for the wife to give me my piece of fruit, and a little toddler, about 18 months old, was on the other side of the piazza—and the piazza is full of people; it is a very busy place, sort of like going to a corner of Union Station, I guess, at 7:30 or 8 o'clock in the morning, where there are lots of things going on—and this little toddler toddled across the piazza. His mother and grandmother are over there, talking to another vendor, very animated, and nobody seems to worry that this toddler has just taken off. Well, I was starting to get a little panicked, and I was watching the toddler.

In the center of this piazza was an absolutely beautiful, Adonis-type statue, and at the base where four lions from which water spouted. The toddler toddled over, and he squealed as he pointed to this water fountain.

The mother waved to him, and he squealed again and pointed to the water, and the grandmother blew him kisses. It was absolutely cute, and I was thinking isn't this nice, he is safe there. And he squealed again, and the elderly man at the fruit stand pulled himself up using the corner of the cart, took his cane, tottered across

the piazza, very painfully laid his cane down on a granite curb, and picked up that toddler so the child could put his finger in the water and experience it.

He did not know the child; he did not have a connection to the child, but he helped that child experience life. He put the child down and came back to the fruit stand and painfully sat down, and the child tottered back to his parents.

You all and all of us here who are early care and education professionals are really that older man. We must take responsibility for picking up every young child, not just the reich and the poor, but every, single child in this country birth through age 8, and making sure that they do get that experience, that positive experience that all of life has to offer.

You can do it. You have done it with the military, as Ms. Peer pointed out. You have done it successfully there. You will do it, and we are sure to make sure that you do.

Thank you, Senator.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Apgar follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KATHI J. APGAR

I would like to thank Senator Jeffords and the H.E.L.P Committee for inviting me to share some of the experiences of operating a non-profit early care and education facility. Expanded government support for our professional industry is an issue whose time has truly arrived both nationally and locally as we strive to enable our youngest citizens to become successful lifelong learners.

Most of today's panelists will relate statistical information pointing to the crisis in early care and education. I'm here to add a personal face to the harsh realities of maintaining a quality program under some dire economic circumstances.

Many years ago, I started my career in education by teaching high school English. It wasn't long before I realized that the die for my students had been cast long before they reached my classroom. Their ability to create complex sentence structures as high school sophomores had as much to do with how they viewed their roles in the world as it did with the lesson at hand. If they had little self-confidence in their ability to think creatively or they were uncomfortable asking for my help, their educational experiences were frustrating and unsuccessful. It was clear that I had to reach students at an earlier age to positively impact their positive potentials.

My final public school teaching experience was in a multi-aged grade 1-2 classroom with 42 children. This was a pilot program designed to demonstrate economic savings by having a master teacher in one room with multiple teaching assistants. Needless to say, this experience was never replicated! Above all, I knew that by those first few years of elementary school, it was a struggle to teach a curriculum if children and parents were not prepared for their roles as teachers and co-learners. When parents did not comprehend that children need love, support and appropriate direction . . . . my job was almost impossible. I needed to move into early childhood to create competent parents and confident children.

I have been the Bristol Family Center director for almost eight years. In that time, I have watched our 2½-6-year-olds develop from timid toddlers to energetic, motivated kindergartners who are ready to meet life's challenges. I have had the pleasure of helping parents grow from snuggly diaper changers to dedicated advocates for their children. But it has not been easy.

During my tenure at the Bristol Family Center, we have struggled to meet salaries, pay electric bills and insure that staff has access to the highest quality training available. We live from one philanthropic grant cycle to another hoping that people in Miami will understand the plight of children in rural Vermont and give us our funding request. We have never been without a substantial waiting list and over 50 percent of our current enrollment are students subsidized by State social service funding. This means we are receiving only 61 percent of the actual cost of providing care for over half of our students. We don't need the Congressional Budget Office to calculate the monumental burden this commitment to low income families places on our program.

When I taught in public schools, there was clear priority set on providing ALL children with equal educational opportunity. That is far from the case in early care

and education where it is more and more apparent that if you have the money, only then can you provide high quality care for your young child.

Many centers and most local home care providers refuse to take subsidized children because the financial loss is too great. Without centers like mine, these children bounce from house to house, neighbor to relative while their parents create a patchwork of child care options. This design DOES NOT meet the needs of the child! Building close relationships with few people at a young age creates stability, security and confidence in children and without consistent care, those bonds never form and the impact on children is forever. In Vermont, we know that there are approximately 25,000 children between birth and age 8 in unregulated, undocumented child care. We know that we need 1,200 infant/toddler slots in regulated care just to begin to meet the need for working parents yet we are helpless to provide for this population.

I wish you could sit at my phone for a week and hear the horror stories from parents at the breaking point as they struggle to find care for their children. They are so desperate that they are willing to take anything just so that don't lose their jobs. Infant child care is at such a premium that people are willing to pay for a slot a year in advance of becoming pregnant.

The child care crisis in Vermont and around the nation is multi-faceted and will only be resolved when:

- The United States recognizes young children as a valued portion of society and the needs of families no longer take a back seat to virtually every other segment of our economy.
- Early care and education viewed as a relevant, essential part of a child's educational development and federal contributions to the industry equal that of their current investments in elementary, secondary and post-secondary education.
- Early care and education professionals receive wages reflective of their education and experience. Professionals working for salaries just above minimum wage desert our profession in droves in search of livable wages at McDonald's and as greeters at Wal-Mart. Low wages result in high staff turnover—as much as 45 percent per year in some areas of the country. If public school suffered such a staff drain, state and national leaders would rise to arms to insure an immediate resolution.
- Child care is no longer viewed as a mother's problem and businesses recognize the difficulty in locating and retaining high-quality child care slots and sign on as contributors to creative solutions.
- Government accepts their role in forcing welfare parents into the workplace without expanding quality child care capacity to guarantee placement for the children of the newly employed. By elevating the demand for child care without increasing current capacity or quality the U.S. has created additional stress for families least capable of coping.
- Parents receive financial support to stay at home during those critical first years of their children. So many countries have found equitable ways to compensate parents for their lost salaries as they stay at home to nurture the young child that it is quite embarrassing.

There is nothing more frustrating that to sit in State and national legislative committees and hear solons tell us "you got some money last year so don't ask for anything from us this year." Each year in Vermont, our corrections budget jumps by 20 percent or more while early care and education is either level funded or given increases which do not begin to meet Cost of Living Increases. We know that every dollar spent in early education saves $7.14 in correctional costs later in life.

We also know that parents are unwilling to admit that their children may be in poor quality care with poorly trained providers because employers don't want to hear it nor do they want to admit that they have made bad choices for their children.

That is why I am here today. I am here to demand that teachers with credentials ranging from a Bachelor's Degree to pre-Doctoral studies be guaranteed student loan forgiveness when they choose to pursue a career in early education and those of us in the field already receive tax incentives and health benefits when we remain in our positions working with young children.

We are not "BABYSITTERS." Those are the young people you hire for $5.00 per hour on a Saturday night while you attend political fundraisers. We are highly trained professionals who understand the developmental needs of children and the severe shortage of appropriate modeling for parents. Unfortunately, we are paid scarcely higher wages than those teens dishing out pizza to children in front of a television.

If you want someone to sit here and tell you tax dollars are best spent on training programs for inmates or elaborate defense systems which may or may not protect

Americans . . . you've got the wrong person. I am here to tell you that you are doing Americans a grave injustice when you "wait until kindergarten" to build healthy, stimulating environments for children. You are treating them like prisoners when you fail to make universally accessible high-quality early care and education slots available and force children into environments where they are one of 10 children supervised by untrained providers. You are untrue to your constituents when you can guarantee that military bases all provide child care accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children yet their children are forced to spend up to 50 hours per week in settings with no building blocks, no play dough and a back yard littered with abandoned vehicles.

You are poised in a remarkable position RIGHT NOW. You have the ability to make firm your commitment to improve opportunities for young children and their families by supporting significant budgetary increase. Now is the time to entice businesses into sharing the cost burdens with you through expanded tax incentives that make quality child care the "right thing to do."

The chair of my board of directors asked me yesterday, "Why is it child care is only an issue during campaigns then we never hear or see those candidates again? Where do their true alliances lie?"

I would like to return to Vermont and tell this man that they lie within the focus of the H.E.L.P Committee and their dogged determination to make this the year when young children are made PRIORITY ONE.Q2

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you all for your very, very helpful and excellent testimony.

Senator Clinton.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CLINTON

Senator CLINTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing, and more than that, thank you for your years of concern and commitment to the youngest of our children. I know that that is not just a part of your mission as the Senator from Vermont but is something that you deeply feel about and act on personally as well.

I am very glad that we are having this hearing. I know each of the witnesses' work, and I am grateful to each of you. And I know that we are preaching the choir in a certain way, because these are issues that many of us have worked on and advocated about for a very long time.

I remember when I went on the French-American Foundation's first visit to France to look at the child care system, and I remember being so surprised to go from town to town, and regardless of what kind of local government they had, whether it was a far left socialist government or a far right Gaullist government, they were all united across ideology on behalf of providing the best possible care for their youngest children.

I remember asking a Gaullist, very rightist mayor of a community, "I am so surprised. In the United States, we argue about these issues, but here, you are united across political liens to make investments in the care of your young children. How can you explain that?"

And he looked at me like I was daft, and he said, "What is there to explain? They are all French; they are future French citizens. We have an investment to make in ensuring they do the best that they possibly can."

We have worked very hard to create that same sense in our own country, and we have made some baby steps. Family and medical leave was a baby step. The increase in our child care dollars was certainly a step forward. And I have been concerned in recent days to read that the steps forward that we have taken are going to be

reversed. And that is the result of 10 years in a bipartisan fashion, working hard to create a sense of investment in our children that is matched by dollars that go to local communities such as Bristol and others that will provide them the financial support that first-class quality caregivers and educators need to do the job that you have so eloquently described.

Each of you is a veteran, and you understand this issue. I would like to ask you if you could, briefly, tell us what is our hold-up; what is our problem—what is it that prevent us in America from seeing that it does take a village, that it does take all of us to support families?

I think that today it is harder raising children than it was when I was coming up. I think it is even harder than when I was a new young mother. I think the stresses on families, the economic pressures, the social stresses that families face make it even more important that we provide some of those supports that families at all levels of the income scale need. This is not pointing a finger at any one economic group of families. All families, all parents that I am aware of feel that they are somewhat at sea, and they do not have the support that they need.

Yet for a country that claims to love its children as much as we claim, we cannot seem to figure out how to make the match financially and back up those claims of love with the investments that will help every family be the best family and help all parents be the best parents they can be.

So I would be very curious as to what each of you quickly could say you think is the reason behind that. Maybe you could start, Sheila. You have been doing this for longer than any of us and know more than all of us and have all the comparative data to compare our culture with others.

Ms. KAMERMAN. I think there are several reasons that account for America's "exceptional" status—and I put "exceptional" in quotation marks—in this case. I certainly think that one factor has been ambivalence with regard to women's roles.

We have experienced dramatic changes in women's roles over the last 30 years, and one of the primary factors in providing generous support for early childhood education and care programs is the recognition that these programs not only serve children's needs, but they also serge parents needs. And until we are prepared to accept the fact that the vast majority of mothers at the present time are in the labor force and require some kind of care for their children, and if we are concerned and want it to be good quality, because that is what makes the difference, that issue of resolving ambivalence about women's roles I think is a critical one.

I think that a second factor has to do with our unwillingness for whatever the reasons are, or inability, to understand that we have an investment in other people's children, not just our own children. We have to recognize the fact that the future citizens of the country, the future work force of the country, the future of the country, has to do with how we invest in all children, not just in particular groups of children and not just in our own children.

Then, unfortunately, I also think it has something to do with Americans' attitude toward government. We have tended to be either suspicious of government, anti-government; we see it as hav-

ing an antithetical role, and yet every thing that we know historically in this country in terms of supportive policies for children and families does require a role of government, and in some way or another, we need to be able to address that.

I will stop there, but I could continue.

Senator CLINTON. Thank you.

Ms. Olmsted.

Ms. OLMSTED. As a person who does more international comparative research than research on the United States, we did gain some insights from those studies. I think one thing that we did see—and it is mentioned in the written testimony—is that the major reason in most countries why families were using child care for their preschool-age children was because the woman was working outside the home and therefore needed someone else to help care for the child during that period of time.

However, we did have a couple of selected examples of where 95 percent of the children ages 3, 4, and 5 would be enrolled in care and only 30 percent of the women were in the labor force. That in a way showed us a nation where there was a commitment to child care because it in itself was very important to the child's development even though the mother was at home to care for the child the entire time.

So although there is a strong connection between the two, we saw instances where there was such a strong belief that early education is important that people want it whether they are working and need it or not.

Another thing that I have seen as I have traveled in several of our countries is a commitment to children in deeds, like the one that Ms. Apgar described, as well as in words. I think one of the things that we see very much right now in America is how important children are—we hear a lot of people saying that particularly after one of our school shootings—and that we often blame almost everything but the parents—the television, the games, the time, the friends. We need to be much more concerned about our children much earlier than at those ages, and we also need to show our concern by supporting initiatives that will increase both the quantity and the quality of the early childhood services.

What we see in some of the other countries that have almost universal care or universal care is that to them, as you said when you were in France, this is just the way it is done. There is no other alternative. We at the moment are quite far from that here. I think we are very quick to say something about our commitment to children in words, but there is not very much behind those words yet.

Ms. PEER. I will just add a few things. I agree with everything that has been said so far, particularly with regard to the ambivalence about women's role. I think a lot of Americans feel that young children are supposed to be at home with their mothers. The fact is that 60 percent of them are not, and the question for us is how to provide the best possible care for those children who are not at home with their mothers. I think that that is a big barrier to addressing this as a public issue and an issue of public responsibility.

I also agree that there is here a wariness about government, and there is a strong individualist ethic. Particularly with regard to children below the age of 5 or 6, before they enter school, I think

there is a strong feeling that those children are solely the responsibility of their parents and families, that there is not a public responsibility for those children. And in fact, generally, the government intervenes with regard to young children only when the family seems to be doing a poor job—that they are too poor, they are abusing their children, there are other kinds of problems in the home—so government intervenes only when the family is not doing its job. So there is a kind of stigma as well to government intervention for the youngest children.

There are also—and this would be a much longer answer that I will not give here—historical reasons that help explain this. In the case of France, for instance, when the school system was first created in the 1880's, there was competition between the State and the Church in France at that point, and the Catholic Church did most of the education of young children. When the Republic was established, it was felt that it was very important to educate children at a young age so that they could instill republican values in those children, and there was an effort to reach children as young as possible. I should also add that even though preschool was part of the educational system and available to all children whose families wanted to enroll them, as far back as the 1880's, originally, really only poor families enrolled their children at that age. It was only after the Second World War when women in middle and upper-middle class began entering the work force in greater numbers that they also started enrolling their children, because they saw the educational value and also because it met their needs as working parents.

So there is an historical evolution over time which explains it as well. I will stop there. I could say more, but I will stop there.

Ms. APGAR. I would love to have you continue.

I think that first and foremost, we are a society that does not value young children and old people. It has been proven over and over again; we see it every day. We need to have a societal change that focuses on the quality that young children and old people bring to our whole world.

I think that one thing that drives it home for me is when I was trying to explain to some people at the University of Vermont about special needs children, and one of the directors of the child care center there said that they had a special needs child, and English was the second language. And I said that is really nice, but I said do you know what—English is a second language to about 25 to 30 percent of my kids; the first language is abuse. When you have a first language of abuse, that very clearly states that we do not value young children.

I think we are also a society that has a need for instant gratification. I saw it as a school teacher for many years, and I saw it as a parent. We try new curricula to create higher math scores, and when we do not see immediately results, we bag that system and find something else.

Child care and contribution to early care and education is not something that is measurable quantitatively quickly. We are talking about the impact on young children not being readily seen for at least 15 years. Many of the studies that have been done internationally prove that 20 years down the line, you know that the

kids who had the quality early care and education experience are the kids who are gainfully employed, who stayed in school the longest, and who are contributing members of their own communities.

We cannot expect immediate gratification from our contribution to early care and education.

And third, one thing that we have learned the hard way in Vermont is that business does not value child care. A good part of that is our own part as parents. There are very, very, very few parents who are willing to speak out and tell their employers that they have poor-quality child care or that they cannot get child care, period, and therefore, they cannot come to work.

When business does not hear it from parents—they only hear it from us outsiders—they do not place a value on it. We hear over and over again from State legislators and we have heard from our national legislators that it cannot be that much of an issue if business is not on board. Business is not on board because they do not realize the value.

I sat with the CEO of B.F. Goodrich, which does a lot of Federal contracts for aviation equipment, and he looked right at me and said, "Kathi, I do not understand why you need $60,000. We do not have a child care problem here."

I said, "How can you not have a child care problem when we did a needs assessment survey, and you had close to 100 employees who needed quality child care, for which there is no slot in Addison County?"

He said, "I did not know that. I have never heard that."

Until we get business on board, and we really view early care and education, as I tell business people, as the two I's—infrastructure and industry—that is exactly what we are—until we can look at that and be partners with business and look at early care and education as an economic endeavor as well as a social, social structure, we are not going to move ahead as quickly, Senator, as we would all like to.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Reed.

Senator REED. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for calling this hearing.

Let me echo your remarks about the frustration in looking at the President's budget this year, which really shortchanges investments in child care. It is particularly frustrating because not only do we have to keep pace with what we have been doing, we have to do much more. I think that that is the bottom line of this whole panel with respect to providing for our children.

I have been very interested over the last several years in trying to increase the subsidies that States pay their child care facilities. I have a Child Care Quality Incentive Act which would provide mandatory funding, a pool of money that would reward States that increase their reimbursement rates based upon their market surveys that we finally have most of them doing.

I wonder just as a first order of business, Ms. Apgar, do you think that if we increase the reimbursement rates to child care providers, we could affect positively the quality of child care in this country?

Ms. APGAR. I do not think there is a doubt about it, Senator Reed, but I think we also need to be very, very careful that when we increase that subsidy, we are also mandating quality at the same time. Certainly we know from practice—the numbers that I shared with the committee earlier—that the higher the reimbursement rate, the better off we are and the better able we are to provide that quality care, and we are able to offer better training for our staff. Also with the parents—we spend a lot of time with parents. I think it was sort of alluded to by the panel today that nuclear families are practically nonexistent any longer, and we fill that role for parents.

So the subsidy is not just directed at the child. We provide services for a whole family structure.

Senator REED. It would seem to me, too, based upon the comments that I have received from my child care workers and those individuals who are managing these facilities, that the first thing that typically goes under a tight budget is the training, the education. And again, I think what was indicated by the international surveys is that that is probably the single most important factor to determine the quality of child care in any country.

From your perspective, is that the first thing that is thrown out of the lifeboat, is the training?

Ms. APGAR. Actually, no. I look at buying more generic food products for a hot lunch, because I take training out of my own pocket. I make sure—because I make slightly more than most of my staff—if there is a wonderful educational opportunity, I make sure they get that. That cannot be said nationally. There are not a lot of people who can shortchange their own families if their training gets cut.

But I do agree with you that it is one of the perks that seems to for some reason be labeled as a "perk" with early care and education. It does get cut pretty frequently, but most importantly, I think that materials get cut as well, and developmentally appropriate materials in the hands of a good provider make a big difference.

So I would say that materials actually get cut first, training second.

Senator REED. Both of which are necessary to provide what we think is the quality care that every child in this country should be afforded.

Let me turn now, since we have all these international experts, and raise a line of concern or questions that has intrigued me. We are all in this country increasingly both frustrated and frightened by the level of violence that we are seeing in children. I wonder, since you are looking at international perspectives, it suggests to me that France is not immune to American motion pictures and all the mayhem that you see, and cultural forces in France and other European industrialized countries are not terribly dissimilar, but I wonder if the same level of violence exists there, and if it does not, could that be attributed to the fact that they care for their children in a much more systematic and effective way?

Ms. PEER. It is a good question, but it is a question that is difficult to answer.

Senator REED. Good questions always are.

Ms. PEER. Yes. In the United States, several studies on outcomes have tried to measure different social factors including teen violence and delinquency and teen pregnancy rates and so forth, and have suggested that quality early education, especially for low-income children, does have an impact on those factors later on.

In France, there is no such research, in part because almost 100 percent of children go to preschool, so there would not be a control group. Also, it is difficult to compare France to the United States. France has lower rates of juvenile delinquency and teen violence, but that is also because they have reasonable gun control laws, and it is much harder for a teenager to get hold of a gun. So it is harder to suggest that even though rates are lower there, that can be directly attributed to early education.

I thought that a question like that might come up, and unfortunately, it is difficult to say that there is lower teen violence in France because children there go to preschool, for the reasons that I have mentioned. But what we have seen and what French research has shown is that the earlier a child begins preschool in France—because children do enter at different ages—the earlier they begin preschool, the more likely they are to succeed in elementary school, the less likely they are to fail a grade—and in France, there is no social promotion; if a child is at the end of their grade not considered to be at a sufficient level, they do not pass on to the next grade.

To underline this point most starkly, a child who begins preschool at age 2 is three times less likely to fail a grade in elementary school as a child who begins at age 5.

That is the only kind of evidence that one can look to in France in terms of outcomes that I am aware of.

Senator REED. Dr. Olmsted or Dr. Kamerman.

Dr. Kamerman. I think one thing that you have to keep in mind is that the data with regard to such things as teen violence, child abuse, child neglect, and so forth is not truly comparable cross-nationally, so that even if you can look at certain studies, you are not really sure what is being reported and whether the comparison is valid.

Nonetheless, one obvious difference has to do with certain types of violence that involve guns. These are countries in Europe that all have gun control legislation of one form or another, and it would seem to many of us that any reasonable person would assume that if you want to minimize violence involving guns, you do not make them available to people to shoot.

One other area that I think probably needs attention has to do with other social problems, such as teen pregnancy, for example. As I am sure you all know, the U.S. has the highest rate of out-of-wedlock teen pregnancy of any industrialized country in the world. The rates have been going down slightly in more recent years, cut clearly, there are different kinds of interventions being used in other countries that are more effective in containing that kind of behavior.

Other aspects of violence really have to do also with societal attitudes toward accepting violent behavior versus not accepting it.

Senator REED. Dr. Olmsted.

Ms. OLMSTED. The one thing I would say is that I agree with her that data from those kinds of studies is not comparable, and in many countries, with the universality of the preschool experience, it would be very hard, as we say, to collect that. I do think the best data comes from the United States, and I have the feeling it probably would not be terribly different in at least some of the other industrialized European countries that you are most interested in, and that is the Perry Preschool study from High/Scope, which shows certainly that children being in a quality preschool program really does make a difference in their committing crimes and therefore the justice system cost for children, how many years they spend on welfare. And as I said, the kinds of things that we are collecting right now even at age 40 have to do with physical health, which certainly has national costs, and once again, stability of marriage, participation in the justice system, and so on.

Since there are so many things that are similar among the countries, I would think that you could infer to a certain extent that the findings would not be terribly different in some of the more Western European countries.

One thing that I will comment on that Sheila mentioned is the availability of guns. That was very clear when we would have a meeting in the United States, and the people from the other 14 nations would come here. People from most of the countries were just absolutely astounded when they would see a report on television that a child got a gun from inside the house and went out and did something. For them, guns are only for hunting. The person from Finland said, "no one would have a gun in Finland except to go hunting, and we do not even hunt for sport; we hunt for food."

So that as Sheila said, the attitudes about such things, and therefore the availability of weapons that are used, are really very different from country to country.

Senator REED. But your data over this longitudinal study up to age 40 suggest that good early child care minimizes contact with the legal system.

Ms. OLMSTED. Yes. I should say significantly decreases it; yes.

Senator REED. That is encouraging.

Thank you all very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Apgar.

Ms. APGAR. Senator, I have a statistic from the University of Bristol in Bristol, VT. We noticed a marked increase in aggressive violent behaviors, especially in young boys, following World Wrestling Federation nights on television—believe it or not.

So just for the heck of it, I had my staff track it, and we had a 48 percent increase of violent behaviors on the days following World Wrestling Federation "slam-a-thons"—that is all I can think of to call them—that totally mimicked what these kids saw on television.

I have to wonder what happens to those kids who do not come to a place like Bristol Family Center, where we have a five-to-one ratio, five children to one teacher, who can intervene and say, "This is not appropriate behavior." What happens to those kids when they go off to a neighbor or an inappropriate setting where there is no intervention and no clear limit-setting on what is okay?

Senator REED. But can we assume that you are able to deal with this effectively and be able to intervene, as you say, with these presumably young boys—not young girls, but young boys.

Ms. APGAR. Well, actually, the girls get into the hair-pulling thing.

Senator REED. That is right—there are female WWF wrestlers.

Ms. APGAR. Yes, there are. I do not want to be sexist. It is a predominantly male genre, but some of the girls get into it, too.

We are able to handle it. Actually, we have drawn in school psychologists to tell us what is the best avenue to try to curtail this violent behavior.

Senator REED. Thank you very much. Thank you all.

The CHAIRMAN. On the violence and the problems of pregnancy, studies have shown—I do not know who did the studies or how—but that 60 percent of teenage pregnancies and the occurrence of criminal activity take place in the hours of 3 to 6 p.m. Does that mean we should have longer school days like other countries, or what does that mean?

Ms. KAMERMAN. It certainly does mean that there is need for some kind of appropriate recreational activities that are supervised and available to kids after conventional school hours. What you will find in a number of other countries that have programs that cover the normal school day is increasing attention being paid to after-school programs or programs serving kids on holidays when the school is open and the workplace also is, and where there is a problem in terms of being able to provide some kind of after-school care.

But clearly there is an issue with regard to adequate supervision of kids when school is closed, and it requires some kind of attention and more systematic attention than we have been giving it thus far.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Stevens and I were able to get some funds for after-school programs, and I was able to create what is called the 21st Century Schools to try to handle some of those problems, but obviously, it takes money.

Let me get to some bottom-line questions related to what I have to deal with right now. I cannot tell you how much I appreciate your testimony. It is going to be incredibly important in the next few weeks as we try to decide what can be done under the budget rules. On the one hand, we have these amazing surpluses that are supposedly out there. I believe that we have an obligation to try to handle some of these problems. It is hard for me to conceive of any other time when we will again have an opportunity to address some of these problems. We are talking in terms of trillions of dollars of surplus. It is an "if not now, when" sort of thing.

What are our options, and which are the best ones to try to follow? I know that a lot of it will be politics, but as I mentioned earlier, when talking with the heads of the State education systems, they told me that the first thing was to fully fund IDEA. What that does is shift money back to the States, a large percentage of which goes to local governments. What kind of reliability do we have that it would be dedicated to child care and schools rather than whatever else it could be spent on? Do you think there is enough awareness, from your observations of people throughout the States that

the State school leaders who say that taking care of 3's and 4's should be a top priority, will, in fact, be willing and able to use any increase in funds caused by the Federal Government fully funding IDEA, to develop more early learning programs for 3- and 4-year-olds?

Ms. KAMERMAN. I wish I could say an unqualified yes, but obviously, I cannot. I think there is a variety of different strategies, and in some sense, I think there may be a window of opportunity with regard to preschool programs, because what I keep hearing around the country is strong public support for universal preschool programs, but I do not see adequate response and movement forward.

It seems to me there has to be something in the way of Federal incentives for States to move in this direction, and that does not seem to be what is being discussed at the present time.

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Peer.

Ms. PEER. As you are probably aware, there are several States that have adopted universal pre-kindergarten, notably Georgia, which has pre-kindergarten for all 4-year-olds funded by a State lottery; and New York State is also phasing in universal pre-kindergarten for all 4-year-olds. Several other States are considering it——

The CHAIRMAN. Is that all 4-year-olds or 3- and 4-year-olds?

Ms. PEER. Four-year-olds.

Delayne Easton, who is superintendent of instruction in the State of California, has advocated for that in her State, and the Governor of California is interested in the issue of school readiness.

So there are efforts being undertaken or at least considered in other States to move in that direction. It would seem to me that it is important in terms of the role of the Federal Government to encourage those State initiatives in whatever way possible and in particular to link Federal subsidies to quality enhancement. That is really important. And the quality enhancement has to be linked to increasing compensation for teachers.

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Olmsted.

Ms. OLMSTED. In the United States, we are now seeing State initiatives, many of which are even connected to quality teacher training programs that the State is sponsoring. That is true in many of the States that she talked about; I am thinking particularly about Georgia. We may even have to go back and examine how kindergarten has become so universal in the United States. I do not believe there is not a single State where it is not at least offered now in the United States. There may be a couple of States where it is not required yet, but it is offered, and as we say, somehow or another, everybody believes that that is what we should do, and families almost across the board enroll their children in it.

Perhaps one of the ways of thinking about proceeding is to begin to think of the formal school system—I mean that only in terms of financing, not in terms of what you do in the room with the child—starting at 4. I do not know that it would be possible to go down to 3 in one leap, but you could move down to 4. And I am not even sure how much of the American public is aware that this is very true in many other countries that the preschool program is really part of the formal school system. It has different-looking class-

rooms, and they do different things, but it is still a part of the central system. And in some European countries, even the classrooms where the 4's go are in the school buildings, so that all the kids go to school together.

I do not know how much Americans are aware of that and how they even see that as a possibility as opposed to the classrooms are just anywhere—someone turns a house into a preschool, or somebody else uses a garage. So it may be a system worth thinking about, and I am sure the data about how kindergarten developed and became almost universal, if not universal, and how we won the public over on that idea, because we seem to have done it, and we seem to have some of the funding, even though large parts of it at the State level—going back and looking at some of that historical information may offer a few ideas; I do not know.

Ms. KAMERMAN. However, I would point out that despite the universality of kindergarten in the United States at the present time, it has one limitation in terms of an early childhood program, and that is that it is largely part-day still in most of the country.

It becomes overwhelmingly important as we acknowledge the fact that we are talking about goals of school readiness at the same time as we are talking about goals of meeting the needs of working parents that a part-day or half-day kindergarten program or a half-day pre-kindergarten program for 4-year-olds is not sufficient. One needs to think of something that at least covers the normal school day and that has available supplementary services for after-school care in particular for young children.

Ms. OLMSTED. One thing that we have seen in many European countries is that half of the day is considered preschool and the other half of the day is sort of an outside experience but in the school building with a person; so it is not necessarily the same curriculum as the morning, yet there is child care provided for the families who need it. So even European families have had to face this kind of issue of more parents entering the labor force and more children needing full-day care, and they have met it by expanding their programs from half-day to full-day.

Ms. PEER. If I could just add to that with the specific example of France, there are wrap-around services available. The preschool day is the same length as a regular school day, from about 8 o'clock to 4 o'clock or 8:30 to 4:30, with a 2-hour break for lunch, of course—lunch and nap at that age. But for families in which both parents work, there are wrap-around services available during lunch and after school and during school holidays, and those are largely subsidized; the parents pay a portion of the cost on a sliding scale according to income and number of children in the family.

In terms of how one might approach introducing something like a universal pre-K system, one challenge when thinking about what Dr. Olmsted recommended in terms of making it part of the State education system, part of the formal school system, is that in a lot of places, that would be a tremendous task just in terms of school space, personnel, and so forth. So the model that has been adopted in both Georgia and New York is to use the existing network of providers and create a multiple provider system using day care centers, private preschools, and also creating some preschool classes as part of existing public schools—so using and expanding the

existing network of providers but requiring that those providers meet certain standards in order to become part of this system where they receive subsidies from the State. That is a model that may work a little bit better in terms of being realistic and matching what already exists and trying to improve the quality and accessibility of what exists already.

Ms. KAMERMAN. I would supplement with one other point. We have talked a lot about quality, but we have not talked about is the inability thus far to communicate to both the American public but also to the Congress that quality makes a difference. There has to be a way in which we can get this message across, because otherwise there is an implicit assumption that all care and all early childhood education is the same, and it clearly is not. And one of the lessons that one learns from looking at a number of the European countries is how dramatic is the recognition of the fact that quality makes a difference and is worth an investment, both for moral purposes but also for human capital investment.

Senator CLINTON. Mr. Chairman, I want to follow up on Dr. Kamerman's comment, because you really were an architect, along with your colleagues on both sides of the aisle, of the Early Learning Fund, which was the first time that we began to put quality characteristics and measurements into early childhood money and into the child care dollars that came from the Federal Government.

I worry that, as I understand from the leaks coming out, that is something that is being eliminated by the administration. And I have to echo what the panel has said, that the whole question of quality is one that we have really not put enough focus on. We have not had general appreciation in the public or among decisionmakers about what that entails, and we now know a lot more. If we were sitting here 20 years ago, we would have some excuses. We could say, well, you know, we are still working, we are not sure of the connections, we do not know what the criteria are.

But we have had some very good, solid research that has been done in this country as well as comparatively, so we do not really have the excuse now to say we are not sure that quality makes a difference, and we do not know what makes up quality.

It is my hope that we are able to keep the quality agenda in front of us and put into whatever legislation we pass the criteria and programs that we know work, that are best practice, that States and localities can choose from.

If I could, I would like to follow up on what the chairman asked, because the dilemma that we face is how we make this case and how we move forward from where we are. I liked Dr. Peer's suggestion about the network of providers and trying to build on what we already have.

We face a different sort of dilemma, though, because one thing that we have found is that if we focus only on the poorest, neediest, most disadvantaged of our children, we do not get as broad a political base of support as if we focus on a broader target audience.

That means, then, that the dollars for the special needs children, the dollars for the abused and neglected children, the dollars for therapeutic foster care, the dollars for children with disabilities get squeezed down pretty low in order to try to have a broader outreach of whatever dollars we have.

So it is a difficult issue, but if you were to prioritize—we only have a limited pot of dollars—I think it should be a much bigger pot than it is, but whatever the size of the pot, it does not look like it is going to get big enough in the foreseeable future—how would you prioritize? Would you go for universal pre-K, aiming at 4-year-olds? Would you go for more concentrated efforts on even younger children in families that are at risk? How are we going to deal with the welfare moms who have gone to work on the promise of many States that there would be child care, which is now beginning to disappear if it was ever there, and we are about to face the reauthorization of welfare without adequate resources to support those working moms, and we are going to put a lot of women who have pulled themselves out of welfare and are now gainfully employed in a terrible position if we do not continue to provide support for both child care and after-school care.

So, following up on the chairman's question, could you give us some idea of how you would prioritize among the needs that you see out there? I would just go back to what Ms. Apgar said, that so many of the children who are most in need and their parents, who require the kind of re-parenting that can come in part from a good child care program, are often the ones who could benefit the most from concentrated effort, but that is the most expensive kind of program. So how do we look at those competing needs?

Ms. KAMERMAN. You are requiring us to accept your basic premise, which is no more resources, and yet in some way or other, if Senator Jeffords point is correct about how terribly important this issue is at the present time, it seems to me that it is very hard to accept the fact that given the existing surplus, we should be talking about the fact that there are no more resources for this.

So I would first argue that since we have moved through welfare reform to require poor women with infants let alone toddler-age or preschool-age children to be in the labor force and to be employed, we certainly have an obligation to be able to provide adequate care.

There are other things, but there is no time to go into the other kinds of policies that are needed. But having said that, I also think that there is probably no more effective preventive early intervention with regard to children's problems than a good-quality preschool program and that at the very least, we also have to both move toward universal preschool for 4-year-olds with an eye to also supporting early Head Start expansion for the under-3's and beginning to pay attention to the fact that this is a major arena for investment in future human capital.

Ms. PEER. I will first point to how this question is addressed in France with regard to whether the system should be universal or targeted especially at a low-income or disadvantaged children.

In France, as you have heard and as you know from your own experience, the preschool system is universal, but there are also additional resources made available in what are called educational priority zones, so that resources are not made available for individuals who have to meet certain low-income criteria, but they are made available in whole ares that are low-income and where there are often high percentages of children in immigrant families.

Those additional resources include smaller class size, salary supplements for teachers to encourage stability, and notably, a na-

tional effort to make preschool available for children at the age of 2.

So there you have a combination of a system that is universal but that tries to make additional resources available for children who are most likely to have problems in school.

I would also echo Sheila's point that we do not really have a problem of limited—in reality, or in the political process, there is a problem of limited resources, but there should not be. Steven Barnett from Rutgers, who has looked at the economics of these questions, argues that what we need to do is make a shift in order of magnitude thinking about this issue; that it does require a significant public investment, and that that needs to be made, and it is not a question of shifting around existing resources but deciding that additional resources have to be allocated to this.

But again, I would also agree with Sheila—given that we are in fact dealing with how to use existing dollars, it does seem like the first priority should probably be children in low-income families, including working families where one or two parents may be working but still have great difficulty meeting the costs of child care. So I would agree that that should probably be the priority.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

We have a vote coming up pretty quickly, but there is one area that I need to touch on, because, I have to explore what the options are. One option that we have, when there are budget surpluses, is not just tax cuts but tax credits. What I would like to know is what would happen if we gave employers a 75 percent tax credit for their expenditures on child care? I think there are at least three countries that primarily utilize the employment tax system. What would happen if we did that—first, what is the kind of care that is available now? Do we have companies like IBM that are great examples of what is needed, or is there nobody out there? What could we expect if we told employers, hey, this is a great deal for you, you will keep all your employees happy, and Uncle Sam will pick up 75 percent of the tab?

Ms. KAMERMAN. First, I think in general the experience with on-site child care is one which, internationally and in the U.S., has declining interest. Essentially, parents want care provided near where they live, not near where they work, because they do not want to have to be arbitrarily linked to the workplace.

As far as the employer's response is concerned, we have had previously and do have a tax credit for employers if they want to establish child care programs, and we have not seen any significant increase certainly as far as that is concerned.

One problem is that it would not be used by small employers, because it would not be a viable kind of development, and one of the results, therefore, would be that since that is where most women are working, one would not be able to see any significant advantage as a result.

I think that what would help much more if we are talking about using the tax system would be taking the dependent and child care tax credit and making it a refundable tax credit. If we are going to use the tax system, that is a far more effective way to go, getting money to parents' and consumers' hands and making it a more viable option.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me modify that, then, that they would get reimbursed 75 percent by their employer for off-site child care.

Ms. KAMERMAN. I think that is a viable option, but I do not think you are going to find large numbers of employers who are going to respond significantly to that. Where employers' contributions have been significant in other countries is really where there has been a tax imposed on the employer that goes into a larger public fund that provides subsidies for early childhood programs.

For some years, there was such a tax imposed in Italy, but for a variety of reasons, it did not function very well. There has been historically also an employer contribution in France; that has been reduced more recently.

So I would not for myself, at any rate, be an enthusiastic advocate for increasing the tax credit to employers. On the other hand, if that is the only way to go that is acceptable, maybe it is a viable option.

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Apgar.

Ms. APGAR. I think this is where I would respectfully disagree with my colleague. I know that we have seen first-hand businesses' willingness to get involved in quality early care and education, but for those that are really hesitant, it is because the incentives to this point that have been referred to have not been significant enough for them to want to take that leap and really get involved.

What we have to be really careful about when we offer these tax incentives to business is that it comes back to the quality issue and back to collaboration with existing structures. If you start looking at having businesses receive a large tax incentive for putting, say, an on-site 4-year-old program, that leaves the rest of us with the highest, most extensive child care options being the infant to age 2½ on our doorstep, with no substantial funding.

I really do believe that businesses will come on board, and there are a lot of ways that they can contribute to child care centers that already exist, and with a tax incentive, it would work.

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Peer.

Ms. PEER. I was just going to add that it might be interesting to look at the report on the U.S. military child care system, because if you think of the military as an employer, one of the incentives for drastically improving that system was that there were great problems with performance of people in the military, with morale, with retention, so there was a feeling that the child care system had to be improved to improve the performance and morale of people working for the military. That is a case where there has been very, very dramatic improvement and increasing quality. So that might be looked to as a model.

The CHAIRMAN. I intend to. This is not going to be the last hearing, I assure you, but it has been a great start. I cannot thank you enough for your willingness to be here and share with us your vast knowledge in this area.

On the one hand, I am depressed about what we are doing now, and I am not overly enthusiastic about being able to get Congress to do what it ought to do. But with the help of the States'—and I am going to make it known that this is a top priority—we can make significant steps forward. Hopefully, we can fully fund IDEA and free up some resources for the States to address the needs of

our 3- and 4-year-olds. Whether we have to qualify that in some way to make sure it gets aimed in the right direction, or whether we just hope and pray, I do not know yet.

So this is not the last hearing we will have, but I can tell you that this is one of the finest groups of witnesses I have ever heard. You have really helped make us fully aware of the situations around the world and, unfortunately, the situation in the United States, which to me is intolerable. I am going to do everything I can to make sure we get ourselves out of the position that we are in now. We must do more to take care of our children, especially the 3- and 4-year-olds, when they can benefit the most.

Senator Clinton.

Senator CLINTON. I would just say amen. I am very grateful to the chairman for holding this hearing and look forward to the subsequent hearings.

I do not want anything that either the chairman says or that I say to suggest that we are settling for the situation that we have now. We are trying to really go on two different tracks simultaneously. I have been doing this for 30 years, as you know, trying to raise both awareness and commitment to early childhood issues, and I am must amazed that we have not gotten further than we have in all those years.

So we are well aware that we still have some struggles ahead of us, yet I think we remain committed to trying to do more to provide a first-class universal early childhood program for all of our children, yet we have to be realistic about where we are in the battles that we wage and try to figure out how much progress we can make, step by step.

So we need you to be out there talking about everything you have testified to today over and over and over again, and try to get the media to pay more attention to it so that they can understand where we rank in comparison to other countries.

I do not think American parents love their children any less than parents in Europe or elsewhere. I do not think that Americans in general are more callous toward our children. I think there are both attitudinal and historical reasons why we are not as committed to helping families do the best job they can do. We still have this kind of "every person for himself" attitude, and when it comes to children, I just do not think that that is the appropriate response.

So we need your help to educate people and to get the word out, and each of you has done a wonderful job, and we are grateful to you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

I would ask unanimous consent that all members be allowed to submit statements. We will leave the record open for that purpose for 1 week.

Hearing no objection, so ordered.

I thank all of you again for a very helpful morning, and I look forward to working with you and will reserve the right to give you a call.

Thank you all. The hearing is adjourned.

[Additional statements and material submitted for the record follow:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR ROCKEFELLER

Mr. Chairman: Child care is a priority issue for me, and for families in West Virginia. Therefore, I wanted to commend Chairman Jeffords for his longstanding commitment to quality child care. I appreciate his leadership on this issue, and his foresight in scheduling this oversight hearing about child care as we prepare to make critical decisions concerning the manner of federal funding investment for next year, and throughout the decade.

The Southern Regional Task Force on Child Care issued a report in December 2000 which carefully examines the importance of child care as a way to build workforce capacity and to promote school readiness. The report outlines the child care policies and needs for 16 states and the District of Columbia.

The statistic regarding working mothers is compelling. According to this report, sixty percent of mothers with children under six work, and seventy-eight percent of mothers with children over six work. These are families that need child care, and the study also points out that subsidized child care helps the service industry and small businesses. The report notes that many mothers would work for small businesses at jobs with hourly wages. In addition to helping families, subsidized child care helps small businesses by creating a larger, available workforce.

Child care is expensive. In a survey of the southern states, average annual child care costs are more than the cost of tuition at a public college. On average, child care is the third largest expense for all families with preschool-age children, after housing and food expenditures.

In West Virginia, we are proud to be serving 12,900 families with child care subsidies, but this only represents 24 percent of the families that could benefit from the Child Care and Development Fund if our state limit was increased to the federal maximum income for child care. Child care is a worthwhile investment for children,parents and our businesses.

In addition to the economic issues, quality child care can promote school readiness, which should also be a priority.

In 1996, I voted for the welfare reform legislation to dramatically enhance this program to move parents from welfare to work, and ultimately toward self-sufficiency. To meet these goals, our country must maintain and increase our investments in child care. Press reports that claim our new Administration may try to cut child care by $200 million for the coming fiscal year are worrisome. We should not cut back or such critical investments because it can rollback the clock on welfare reform. As this hearing makes clear, other countries are already investing in child care, and our nation must as well.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CYRUS J. CHINO, A.A., B.S.E., M.A., GOVERNOR, PUEBLO OF ACOMA, NEW MEXICO

I had the pleasure of attending the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee's hearing on Early Education and Care on March 27, 2001. TThe witnesses presented enlightening and valuable testimony regarding how the U.S. education system compares with that in other countries. I thought it would be valuable for the committee to also receive some brief comments about the education of Indian youth on Indian nations.

I am the Governor of the Pueblo of Acoma,a federally recognized Indian tribe located in New Mexico. We have occupied our homeland since time immemorial. Acoma Sky City has been continuously inhabited for over a thousand years. Despite the many forces of acculturation, we have retained our culture and spirutual beliefs intact. For example, most Acomas speak keresan, our native language, fluently. We are committed to the preservation of our heritage even while taking advantage of the learning of mainstream society. This, as you can imagine, is very challenging.

I am also an educator with degrees in elementary education and education administration. I serve on the Board of Trustees of the Principal Center at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and was, for many years, a principal in the Bureau of Indian Affairs school system. I have made education one of the top priorities of my administration.

There is an education crisis in Indian country that extends far beyond the dilapidated BIA school system into the public and other school systems that serve our people. The crisis is partly about funding, but it is also about the way our Indian children are educated.

I am sure that the Committee is familiar with the work of Howard Gardner, who has identified seven types of intelligence as part of his multiple intelligence theory. This new understanding of intelligence is very valuable in assessing why so many Indian students fair so poorly in mainstream educational institutions. I have known Acoma students who have shown an extraordinary capacity to learn and to use their intellect in their home environment, but who have faltered in the mainstream school environment. Their learning styles and skills, as well as their cognitive development were not deficient; however, they are different from what is demanded of them in the formalized education system.

I would like to see the committee focus not just on funding issues in Indian country (although those are terribly important), but also on underlying issues of education theory and what will work to make Indian students more successful. In this regard, I believe that it is important to:

- Develop Curricula on Tribal History and Culture. Especially for use in K–12, and not just in BIA schools but also in public schools.
- Provide Teacher Training in Cultural Diversity. To raise cross-cultural understanding in teachers working with native youth.

As a general matter, it is also important to provide scholarships for both undergraduate and graduate-level studies for native students. I would be remiss not to mention the Pueblo of Acoma's general support for the National Indian Education Association positions with regard to reauthorization of the Elenentary and Secondary Education Act, including:

- Elimination of the Impact Aid Loophole in the ESEA.
- Increased Section 815 school construction funding authorization.

I know that these comments are brief. I look forward to engaging the Committee in a more extended dialogue on Indian education in the future. I urge the Committee to hold a hearing on Indian education as soon as possible. I invite the Committee, should it be convenient, to hold a field hearing at Acoma. In many ways, Acoma represents a microcosm of the issues that face Indian students across the country. Although deeply steeped in our own culture, our students are also heavily influenced by modern media and pop culture. Acoma is served by a Bureau of Indian Affairs school, as well as public schools and private schools. All the issues are here. We encourage the Committee to visit Acoma and learn first hand about our efforts to educate our children.

Thank you for this opportunity to express some of my thoughts on early childhood education and care.

The CHAIRMAN. The hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:45 a.m., the committee was adjourned.]

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