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CAUSES OF POVERTY, WITH A FOCUS ON OUT-OF-WEDLOCK BIRTHS

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FOURTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

MARCH 5, 1996

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CAUSES OF POVERTY, WITH A FOCUS ON OUT-OF-WEDLOCK BIRTHS

TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 1996

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES,
Washington, DC.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 1:07 p.m., in room B–318, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. E. Clay Shaw, Jr. (Chairman of the Subcommittee) presiding.

[The advisory announcing the hearing follows:]

ADVISORY

FROM THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 5, 1996
No. HR-10

CONTACT: (202) 225-1025

Shaw Announces Hearing on the Causes of Poverty, with a Focus on Out-of-Wedlock Births

Congressman E. Clay Shaw, Jr. (R-FL), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Human Resources of the Committee on Ways and Means, today announced that the Subcommittee will hold a hearing on the causes of poverty, with a focus on illegitimacy. **The hearing will take place on Tuesday, March 12, 1996, in room B-318 of the Rayburn House Office Building, beginning at 1:00 p.m.**

In view of the limited time available to hear witnesses, oral testimony at this hearing will be heard from invited witnesses only. However, any individual or organization not scheduled for an oral appearance may submit a written statement for consideration by the Subcommittee and for inclusion in the printed record of the hearing.

BACKGROUND:

The welfare reform debate has focused national attention on illegitimate births, which now constitute more than 30 percent of all births.

Witnesses are expected to describe the consequences of illegitimate births on children and families: children born into never-married families fare worse than any demographic group in our country; and a mother's long-term physical health suffers as a result of early sexual activity with multiple partners. The Subcommittee also will hear testimony about policies designed to reduce the rate of illegitimate births. Finally, the Subcommittee will receive testimony from representatives of family groups and others who believe that poverty can best be fought by focusing on abstinence and returning to two-parent families.

In announcing the hearing, Chairman Shaw stated: "Out-of-wedlock birth is the driving force behind surging welfare caseloads and long-term dependence. Children, mothers, communities, and taxpayers all suffer as a result of welfare policies that subsidize irresponsible and self-destructive behavior. Welfare reform will not work if illegitimacy continues out of control. In order to solve the problem, we must face facts and deal with one of the nation's greatest problems. Ignoring it won't make it go away."

DETAILS FOR SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN COMMENTS:

Any person or organization wishing to submit a written statement for the printed record of the hearing should submit at least six (6) copies of their statement, with their address and date of hearing noted, by the close of business, Tuesday, March 26, 1996, to Phillip D. Moseley, Chief of Staff, Committee on Ways and Means, U.S. House of Representatives, 1102 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. If those filing written statements wish to have their statements distributed to the press and interested public at the hearing, they may deliver 200 additional copies for this purpose to the Subcommittee on Human Resources office, room B-317 Rayburn House Office Building, at least one hour before the hearing begins.

(MORE)

FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS:

Each statement presented for printing to the Committee by a witness, any written statement or exhibit submitted for the printed record or any written comments in response to a request for written comments must conform to the guidelines listed below. Any statement or exhibit not in compliance with these guidelines will not be printed, but will be maintained in the Committee files for review and use by the Committee.

1. All statements and any accompanying exhibits for printing must be typed in single space on legal-size paper and may not exceed a total of 10 pages including attachments.

2. Copies of whole documents submitted as exhibit material will not be accepted for printing. Instead, exhibit material should be referenced and quoted or paraphrased. All exhibit material not meeting these specifications will be maintained in the Committee files for review and use by the Committee.

3. A witness appearing at a public hearing, or submitting a statement for the record of a public hearing, or submitting written comments in response to a published request for comments by the Committee, must include on his statement or submission a list of all clients, persons, or organizations on whose behalf the witness appears.

4. A supplemental sheet must accompany each statement listing the name, full address, a telephone number where the witness or the designated representative may be reached and a topical outline or summary of the comments and recommendations in the full statement. This supplemental sheet will not be included in the printed record.

The above restrictions and limitations apply only to material being submitted for printing. Statements and exhibits or supplementary material submitted solely for distribution to the Members, the press and the public during the course of a public hearing may be submitted in other forms.

Note: All Committee advisories and news releases are now available over the Internet at GOPHER.HOUSE.GOV, under 'HOUSE COMMITTEE INFORMATION'.

*****

Chairman SHAW. OK. If the meeting will come to order. This afternoon should be a most interesting hearing. I am looking forward to the witnesses. I will give the opening statement for the majority and Mrs. Kennelly will follow me and give the opening statement for the minority.

The rise in births outside marriage is a specter haunting our Nation. I think we all agree on that. The rates are unacceptably high and the consequences are severe for both mother and child.

H.R. 4, the congressional welfare reform bill that was vetoed by President Clinton contains many provisions addressed to out-of-wedlock births. We have provided a list of these provisions in the members' folders and copies have been provided for our guests and members of the press.

Today's hearing will explore consequences of this surge in out-of-wedlock births. The sad truth is that the fastest ticket to poverty is to have a child without being married.

Too often, out-of-wedlock births, especially for our Nation's poor, mean homes in which fathers are absent, mothers struggle, and children suffer. The data is clear and it is stark. Sixty-four percent of children born to single parents live in poverty, while only 8 percent of children born to two-parent families live in poverty. That is why I have reached the conclusion that the best thing we can do to fight poverty is to encourage marriage and to discourage out-of-wedlock births.

How do you do that? The first action the government and compassionate people must take is to recognize that you do not fight poverty by spending more money; you fight poverty by changing values. A primary cause of the trend toward births outside of marriage is the dramatic increase in sexual activity outside marriage that has afflicted the culture since the sixties.

As shown by survey data, this increase has been especially evident among adolescents. According to recent research, for example, the percentage of women who have had intercourse by the age of 18 has more than doubled in the last 30 years. As witnesses on our first panel will show, those trends have led to disastrous increases in out-of-wedlock births, an epidemic of sexually transmitted disease and dire long-range health effects on young girls who are sexually active at an early age.

A decade ago, calls for abstinence were met with derision or laughter. Now, we have prominent Americans, and even television commercials urging young people to save themselves for marriage. Several of today's witnesses will discuss projects designed to promote sexual abstinence among adolescents.

For now, I think it is fair to characterize these programs as hopeful, but we would be wrong to assume that they produce large immediate impacts on either rates or consequences of birth outside of marriage. Despite the fact that most Americans abhor both sex among teenagers and births outside of marriage, Congress nevertheless continues programs that provide billions of dollars in subsidies for precisely these behaviors.

Here is what we do. If a young girl has a baby and keeps it, we provide her on a guaranteed basis, cash, food stamps, and medical care. In the median State, this package of benefits is worth $12,000 per year. The traditional view has been that this approach for re-

warding young mothers for violating the rules is compassionate. Indeed, any politician who questions this policy is accused of all sorts of evil motivations.

House Republicans are now challenging the conventional wisdom by trying to end the use of Federal dollars for cash payments to unmarried minor mothers. These mothers could retain their Medicaid and food stamps and States can provide the mothers with vouchers to help care for the children's needs. States would be barred from providing minor mothers with cash, the biggest incentive for unacceptable behavior.

The bill that finally passed this Committee and Congress, but vetoed by the President, made it a State option to change that.

Federal policies can no longer have it both ways. We cannot continue to say that we are against out-of-wedlock births and then turn around and provide a substantial set of subsidies for precisely the behavior we condemn. Sooner or later, the Nation's rate of births outside marriage and the terrible consequences of these births will force States to cut back on government subsidies. More and more people will conclude that it is false and self-deluding compassion to continue subsidizing failure.

Finally, the House and Senate agree that States should not be able to use Federal dollars to increase the cash welfare benefits of mothers already on welfare who have additional children. Because the States objected to a Federal mandate of this type, we gave the States the option of exempting themselves if they do not agree with this policy. We continue to think that it is disastrous social policy to provide more welfare for families who already rely on the taxpayers for their support. The correct birth rate for mothers already on welfare is zero.

Today's hearing is addressed to calling the Nation's attention to the consequences of early sexual activity and of childbearing outside of marriage. We have also invited a wide variety of witnesses to testify about what should be done to reduce out-of-wedlock births.

Above all, we want the public to know that if the President continues to defend the status quo, the small but important steps taken in welfare reform to combat births outside of wedlock will die and the dreadful problems outlined in such graphic detail during today's hearing will continue unchecked.

I want to thank all of our witnesses for taking time out of their busy schedules to appear before our Committee and I look forward to the testimony.

[An attachment to the opening statement follows:]

Provisions to Combat Rising Out-of-wedlock Birth Rates
Conference Report on H.R. 4
March 1996

Cash welfare block grant

- Creates a $127.6 billion cash welfare block grant for states to use to "prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies," among other purposes.

- Requires state plans to *establish goals and take action to prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies, with special emphasis on teenage pregnancies, and establish numerical goals for reducing the illegitimacy ratio of the State for calendar years 1996 through 2005.*

Added grants for reducing out-of-wedlock births

- Provides additional grants for states that reduce out-of-wedlock birth rates without increasing abortions (5% increases for reductions of one percentage point; 10% increases for reductions of two or more percentage points).

Family cap

- Allows states the flexibility to end the practice of increasing cash welfare benefits when mothers on welfare have babies (20 states currently have applied for or are operating family caps; under the new block grant, states can use family cap savings to pay for more child care or child protection services or save funds for use in a recession).

Combatting teen pregnancy

- Allows state flexibility on limiting cash welfare for unmarried teens.

- Requires teens to be in school and living at home or with an adult to receive assistance.

- Allows states to use block grant funds to provide, or assist in locating, adult-supervised living arrangements, such as second-chance homes, for teen mothers.

Added funds for abstinence education

- Provides $761 million for abstinence education.

Encouraging paternity establishment

- Allows states to reduce cash welfare for families that include a child whose paternity has not been established. As with the family cap and teen provisions, states have an incentive to reduce benefits both to deter out-of-wedlock pregnancy and to save money for use elsewhere.

National goals to prevent teen pregnancy

- Within one year, the Secretary of Health and Human Services must implement a strategy for preventing teenage pregnancies and assuring that 25 percent of U.S. communities have teen pregnancy prevention programs in place.

Annual ranking of states and review regarding out-of-wedlock births

- The Secretary of Health and Human Services must annually rank the five most and five least successful states in reducing out-of-wedlock births.

Congressional findings

- Includes section of findings on the crisis out-of-wedlock births pose for children, families, and the nation, which concludes: *It is the sense of the Congress that prevention of out-of-wedlock pregnancy and reduction in out-of-wedlock birth are very important Government interests and the policy contained in...this Act is intended to address the crisis.*

Chairman SHAW. Mrs. Kennelly.

Mrs. KENNELLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, let me thank you for convening this hearing. This is a problem that vexes us all, we all are looking for better answers. I also thank you for bringing so many people who are interested in this situation together today.

For the past 50 years, out-of-wedlock births have increased dramatically. In this country and others around the globe, this is the situation. This a trend that we cannot ignore. We need to look beyond this basic fact and understand more about why it is happening. This hearing gives us that opportunity.

When you take the time to look more closely, you learn some startling facts. As several of our witnesses today will tell us, many of the myths and stereotypes that seem to drive much of public policymaking today are misleading. If we simply accept the stereotypes, we would have to conclude that most out-of-wedlock births are to minority teenagers on welfare. What are the facts?

In the past 50 years, the rate of nonmarital childbearing has been steady for teenagers. As one of our witnesses, Sister Mary Rose, will point out many of the single women giving birth are not poor, have completed high school, are not teenagers, and do not get welfare. There is no consistent evidence—and each of us here today who have worked on this problem over the years can cite various evidences and various reports—that the decision to have a child out of wedlock has a tie with what one is getting on welfare.

In fact, I will quote one of our Nation's finest researchers who says the best social science research suggests that welfare programs are not among the primary reasons for the rising number of out-of-wedlock births. Dr. Frank Furstenberg will report that in the past 30 years, the so-called illegitimacy rate has risen only among whites. Among African-Americans, the rate has declined. Better education and employment opportunities for men are linked to a higher proportion of births taking place within marriage.

Our task this afternoon is to learn facts like these. Even more importantly, to start discussing constructive solutions. My bottom line is this; it is in the best interest for a child to be raised in a loving and nurturing family that includes both parents. The question becomes, what outcome can Federal and State governments be reasonably expected to bring about?

I also hope this hearing might offer some explanations for three unanswered questions. First, if welfare is fueling the growth in out-of-wedlock births, then why do so many of the States with the lowest AFDC, Aid to Families With Dependent Children, payment levels have some of the highest out-of-wedlock birth rates? Second, why have out-of-wedlock births increased as the relative value of welfare benefits have gone down over the last 20 years? Third, why do other nations, with more generous welfare benefits, have lower teenage birth rates?

I thank you for letting me make this statement, Mr. Shaw, I would like to mention that I am also speaking for Mr. Ford who is on his way.

Chairman SHAW. Thank you very much.

We have a number of Members to testify.

Mr. Hutchinson, do you want to come to the table?

Our first witness this morning will be Charles Rangel, a Member of this Committee, from the State of New York.

Mr. Rangel.

STATEMENT OF HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK

Mr. RANGEL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for allowing the Members an opportunity to share their views. I do not come as an expert in this area, but being a politician I recognize that this issue has become a political issue rather than merely a social issue and I would like to share my views on that.

What I would like to say first is that I do not know anyone I have met in the Congress who has more of a sincere desire than you do to improve the quality of life for all Americans. You and I know that at election time people prescribe remedies for these types of things in order to get broad-based support from their constituents and people who do not work and receive public funds are not liked by most people who do work hard every day. The working people expect other people to do the same.

I know that this is America, one that would not condemn immigrants whether they are legal or illegal. I also know that some people emotionally feel that it is better to beat up on the weak than on others who are more powerful. I know that affirmative action has not displaced any white males from any jobs. It sounds unfair to some people and they feel the need to get involved politically.

Quite frankly, as we try to reach some agreement on the budget, I get the impression that we are pretty close to agreement and the President wants to make certain that he provides the "leadership" to change welfare as we know it. Of course, the Republicans are very anxious to embarrass him if he does not fulfill his campaign commitment.

All of this stuff about reform, however, politically to me is not really about reform. It means that some people truly believe that the Federal Government shouldn't be involved in health or Social Security, that it could be better handled by the private sector.

These problems that we are talking about, even though you and I know that they are national in nature, in an effort to downsize government, many people in the Congress are prepared to say, let's get out of that and turn it over to the Governors. Trust them. They are good people, and whatever they do not do, then decrease the taxes for the rich and the corporations. Americans are good-thinking people, they will fill in the gap with charity of Boys Town or adoption centers, but get the government out of it, because we do not do a good job.

I do not argue. If we are getting out of it, can't we have some guarantees that somebody is going to do it better? We are going to have to accept the fact that 1 or 2 million kids may not get any guarantees and the States just may not be able to deal with the problem, and nor will the cities, or charitable organizations.

I am really shocked that none of our national spiritual leaders, Jews and Christians, both Catholic and Protestant, would not say, hurt somebody, but not these kids, they are just born, they do not know. Do not cut off food, nutrition, and health to these kids because their mothers were dumb, stupid, and indifferent.

Somehow we should, I think, get a guarantee that no matter who we hurt, it is not going to be the kids. Somehow in the negotiation, even my President will not tell me that, do not worry about it, no matter what deal we cut, the kids will be protected. Hey, that is politics.

I want to commend the Chairman, too, because sometimes we hear all these things about illegitimate births and not supporting kids born out of wedlock, but he did say that is what they are. No matter what God we worship, we won't believe he is involved in illegal activity in allowing these kids to be born. The kids are legitimate. Kids are very legitimate, they are very real. They feel pain. They are American kids. I appreciate that.

Now, we have to ask what are some solutions? Some of the solutions are just, give a definite amount of time, if the mother is not working, then cut off the welfare. You know, options, no options. Or, make certain that they are all working at a given period of time.

Mr. Chairman, without coming up with a solution, I want to give you the benefit of my experience and trust that in our conversations, outside the Committee, we might find some agreement that this is not a welfare problem alone. Providing for the mothers or the grandmothers or the kids, that's not just the problem.

We would have to reach out to get Committee and staff who deal with the problems of education, job training, and a variety of other subjects to see whether or not we could find out why we are having this explosion of these births?

You can cut off all the funds you want to these children who are untrained and do not realize or care about the devastating effect of poverty. What is getting into these kids? Why can't we talk with them? There is no relationship between punishing them and stopping out-of-wedlock childbirth. These kids are just having babies like they are having dolls.

If we concentrate in the areas throughout the United States where most of these babies are being born, we need to take a look at who is impregnating them. It is not just kids, you know. A lot of these drug dealers on the street are older men attracting these teenage girls with a couple of dollars and trips to the Caribbean.

Even if you take a look at the male kids, these are basically stupid kids. Many of them are involved in drugs. Oh, we are against the drug dealers, as long as they are poor, on the street, addicted, and pushing drugs. You look at the drug dealers in my district, and if you were to discuss with them the problem of money laundering they think you have to go to a laundromat. They do not know how to count, much less launder money. They cannot count money with a money counter. When police arrest them, they find carloads full of money, they find closets full of money. It is corrupting my police department. I mean good policemen just cannot resist the temptation of seeing hundreds of thousands of dollars in these bums' apartments and in a low-rent area.

After they buy a boom-box and a Jeep and get mom a television, they would not know how to travel. If you asked them to go to Colombia for a deal, they would be down in the District of Columbia. If you asked them to go to Rome or Paris and enjoy the money, they would not know how to buy a ticket.

Take a look at these communities, take a look and see whether there is a relationship between drugs and out-of-wedlock births, as I know exists. The Congressional Black Caucus did not come together with this problem because of our color or some unique interest in it. This is our district. Why?

We have the highest unemployment. We have schools that are not producing trained people. We have the highest amount of hopelessness that even if you did go to school, you are not going to get a job. We have the highest number of professionals who are unemployed. When the President says, sign NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement, and move on to high tech because America is going to be richer as a result of the international trade, these are the communities that know you do not mean them.

In these districts, there is no relationship between school and job. Everybody who talks about a more prosperous America or drug-free America, have to qualify it, of course, not in the areas of hardcore drug addiction. Hardcore drug addiction means what? Do you think our kids love shooting each other up?

Do you really think that in these neighborhoods where children attend more funerals than they attend graduations that this is something exciting? Do you really think that making a couple of thousand dollars a month is worth not knowing what day someone is going to come and shoot you down in the streets and not be arrested?

I suggest to you that if you want kids to get married they would not even understand the concept. People who talk about marriage, homes, a picket fence, an IRA, their children's and their grandchildren's future; they are the ones that have hope.

Being poor in this country is no big deal. Most of the Members that I am the closest with come out of poverty, white or black, but they had hope that they could beat it. Not everyone beats it, but everyone can survive better with hope. Even if you die poor, you fight to do better, your kids can see that you want better.

What I am suggesting is to see these young mothers with young children visiting the fathers in jail. They are talking about loving each other, but they are not talking about marriage. Marriage is not even there. When you take a look at the millions of young people who are in jail and see the relationship between the inability of the schools to produce, the lack of employment opportunities and the fact that these kids do not care—because 70 percent of them are going to return after they are discharged in 3 to 10 years—but we get a kick out of building more prisons.

My former Governor built more prisons than houses in the State of New York. We pay $60,000 a year to keep a kid at Riker's Island in New York City. You have never heard my mayor complain about prison budgets.

You hear people talking about the $6,000 a year that it takes to keep a kid in elementary school. Mr. Chairman, if we can pull together a committee and see what gives a community hope, if we can find out the relationship between graduating from school and not just getting a diploma, but getting a job, if we can do what we are doing in the empowerment zones and bring a partnership between business and schools giving businesses incentives to work with the schools and not just complain about what they are produc-

ing. Tell the schools what you need and make certain that they produce students with job skills and make certain that tax dollars are working and give businesses tax incentives to be involved, if necessary.

Mr. Chairman, I conclude by saying that if you show me a community that is proud of its public school system or vouchers or private school system, if you show me a community where people can get a job if they are trained, if you show me a community where people have hope for the future, then no matter whether we are going through recessions or what not, they know darn well in America, the greatest country on the face of the Earth, that they are going to do better.

Why is it that I can promise you that I am not going to show you a bunch of young addicts? Why is it that I can promise you statistically that you are not going to see all of these children born out of wedlock? Why am I going to show you kids that are more anxious to be producing Americans than to risk their lives and go to jail?

What I am saying, Mr. Chairman, is that I am going to be in this political battle to cut them off.

All these things we have to do, liberals/conservatives and Democrats/Republicans, and try go to the mat in November. While we are doing those things that people are going to force us to do, I hope you will consider bringing in the best Members, Republicans and Democrats, from the Education Committee, from the Labor Committee, from the taxwriting committee, those that have dedicated their lives to education, those that are dealing with economic development, those that are working with the empowerment zones and say that it takes a village to raise a kid. You do not have to always need a father, it really helps, but in my community I did not have a father and everyone acted like they were my father. They pushed me around, the grandmothers of someone else said you are going to go to jail before you go to Yale. It was all right.

Some of us have been able to survive because the community had hope. I was the dope. I did not understand it. They had hope that every bum kid would make it. We need more of that, Mr. Chairman, instead of the animosity and the emotion that goes into this.

I am not an expert in why these little kids feel the necessity to have these little babies that, as you said, are going to end up in poverty. What difference does it really make when they do not believe that they will ever get out of poverty? What difference does it make?

I hope that you and I and the Members of this Committee, once the political deal is cut, can get together and make a difference to help people to believe that having children when you are not ready is immoral and it is wrong.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman SHAW. Thank you, Mr. Rangel.

Mr. Hutchinson.

STATEMENT OF HON. TIM HUTCHINSON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ARKANSAS

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for calling the hearing today. I want to express my appreciation for your

leadership on this issue and for your very articulate and outstanding opening statement which you, I think, very well articulated what we face in this whole area.

It is obviously not an easy subject. You have spent years on it and I have spent the last 2 or 3 years learning about this and studying it. There are no easy answers. It is complex and I would not pretend otherwise.

Clearly, the policies that we have had in place for 30 years have failed and failed miserably and we must find alternative solutions. I admire my friend, Charlie Rangel, and I appreciate so much of what he said, but I would suggest that the hopelessness that he described is one of the outcomes of a welfare system that has contributed to that hopelessness.

That hope is necessary if we are going to see people rise out of their circumstances and situations, but we have got a welfare system that acts to extinguish that hope and the issues are not primarily budget-driven.

The issues are not who is going to get the credit, it is not primarily political. It is whether or not we are going to do more of what we have done in the past, of whether we are going to make some fundamental transformations in a system that is clearly not working to the benefit of those involved in it and to the taxpayers of America who are paying for it.

I believe the single greatest cause of the ills of our society is the breakdown of the American family. It may take a village, but it sure takes a father and there maybe many examples of those who survived without that father or that intact home, but it sure helps if he is there. There is no better institution in America or in the world to provide for the needs or our Nation's children.

Whether it is education, health care, moral and spiritual guidance, the building of self-esteem, or just the basic necessities of life, the family can do it better than the village, the family can do it better than any other entity in our society.

It is incumbent upon those of us in government to do all that we can to enact laws and policies which encourage and strengthen the families of our Nation. It is tragic that we have developed a welfare system which does just the opposite.

President Roosevelt warned us when we started down this path 60 years ago, that we would, "Induce a spiritual and moral disintegration fundamentally destructive to the national fiber." That is what has happened.

We have replaced mothers and fathers and, for that matter, we have replaced the village and put in their stead an all-encompassing welfare state. We have done this in the name of compassion, and I do not doubt the motivation that it has been one of compassion. What we have ultimately done is to encourage the breakdown of those families that are so important.

What else can we call it when we tell a young woman that if you get pregnant and you do not marry the father, or get a job we will give you housing, food stamps, health care, and in some cases, child care and a cash allowance, and then we tell her that if she will have additional children we will give her more cash money.

What else can you call it when we tell a young father that he, ultimately, is not responsible for the children that he helps bring

into this world because the government will do it instead of him. It is little wonder that welfare recipients reasonably conclude that work and marriage are not rational. We have contributed to that thinking by developing this system.

What else can you call it when government stands in the way of families and communities helping young unwed mothers? I have had people in my office who told me of a mother who wanted her minor unwed daughter to remain in her home once that child gave birth to her own baby. In fact, this grandmother wanted to take care of her grandchild and let her daughter finish high school. The daughter wanted to move out and why not? The government was going to set her up in her own home and so this grandmother was told by social services that if her daughter wanted to move out, it was her right.

I think there is something inherently wrong with that type of a system. A little more than 30 years ago, only a little more than 2 percent of all births occurred out of wedlock. Today, almost one out of three of all births occur out of wedlock. There are many reasons for that increase and I do not pretend that all of it is welfare, not at all.

I am concerned that our current welfare system has contributed to this national tragedy. Children born out of wedlock—Mr. Chairman, you have pointed this out—are seven times more likely to be poor than those born to couples who stay married.

Girls raised in single-parent homes on welfare are five times more likely to give birth out of wedlock compared to girls from intact nonwelfare families. A boy from a single-parent home in the inner city, is twice as likely to engage in crime compared to a similar boy who is poor, but is living with a father and mother.

A child who grows up absent a father is more likely to live a troubled life. He is more likely to end up in prison. He is more likely to use drugs, to drop out of school, to join a gang, and more likely to end up back on welfare.

Out-of-wedlock births, illegitimacy is at the core of most social pathologies—crime, drugs, illiteracy, and poverty. To claim that we are going to address welfare reform and not make the problem of out-of-wedlock births the primary focus is to repeat the failed reforms of the past.

Instead of lifting people out of poverty and despair, we have developed a cycle of dependency that is now entering its third generation. I think it is time for us to say it is enough. This system has failed. It has failed those whom it was designed to help.

When President Kennedy sent his welfare package to Congress more than 30 years ago, he stated it and stated it well. He said, "Welfare programs must contribute to the attack on family breakdown and illegitimacy. Unless such problems are dealt with effectively they fester and grow sapping the strength of society, as a whole, and extending their consequences and troubled families from one generation to the next."

He said it right. Our welfare policies have failed to fulfill the goal that President Kennedy articulated.

Mr. Chairman, whatever final welfare reform bill is enacted it will, in my opinion, be a sham if, at its core, it does not address the issue of out-of-wedlock births. We can give all the flexibility we

want to the States. I am for it. If we ignore the breakdown of the family and the contribution of our government's policies to that breakdown we are going to do a disservice to our citizens.

At the very least we should include a family cap with an opt-out for the States, at the very least. This will at least, and at last force States to discuss the issue and debate the issue. If they wish to not have a family cap, they can pass legislation opting out. However, if the family cap is changed to an opt-in, States can continue to completely ignore the issue and many will.

They do not even have to debate it. Isn't the breakdown of the family and the cycle of dependency important enough that, at a minimum, a discussion of the family cap and the issue of out-of-wedlock births take place in all 50 legislatures? The opt-out family cap provision will force a long overdue national debate on the problem of out-of-wedlock births.

I think Jennifer Marshall, with the Family Research Council said it very well. She said, "Given the consequences for the individual child, the surrounding community and the national policy, bringing a baby into this world without a sense of sacred responsibility cannot long be regarded as a morally neutral act. Congress should now recognize that it is also wrong to sanction such activity by subsidizing it."

Out-of-wedlock births, I believe, are at the very core of the welfare debate and must be the central focus of welfare reform. Education is not enough, we have seen that. Because as we have increased our stress upon sex education, we have continued to see out-of-wedlock births increase in our society over the last 30 years. State flexibility is not enough. Work requirements, as important as they are and the great contribution they will make, that is not enough. More of the same will not work. We must fundamentally change this system and chart a new course for our Nation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement follows:]

THE HONORABLE TIM HUTCHINSON

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

MARCH 12, 1996

THANK YOU MR. CHAIRMAN. I APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO APPEAR BEFORE YOUR COMMITTEE TODAY. I WOULD FIRST LIKE TO COMMEND YOU FOR ALL YOUR HARD WORK ON THE WELFARE ISSUE. THIS IS NOT AN EASY SUBJECT AND THERE ARE NO EASY ANSWERS. BUT THE POLICIES THAT WE HAVE HAD IN PLACE FOR THIRTY YEARS HAVE OBVIOUSLY FAILED MISERABLY AND WE MUST FIND ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS THAT BREAK THE CYCLE OF DEPENDENCY AND EMPOWER OUR CITIZENS TO REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL.

MR. CHAIRMAN, I BELIEVE THAT THE SINGLE GREATEST CAUSE OF THE ILLS OF OUR SOCIETY IS THE BREAKDOWN OF THE AMERICAN FAMILY. THERE IS NO BETTER INSTITUTION TO PROVIDE FOR THE NEEDS OF OUR NATION'S CHILDREN. WHETHER IT IS EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE, MORAL AND SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE, THE BUILDING OF SELF-ESTEEM, OR JUST THE BASIC NECESSITIES OF LIFE, THE FAMILY CAN DO IT BETTER THAN ANY OTHER ENTITY.

THEREFORE, IT IS INCUMBENT UPON THOSE OF US IN GOVERNMENT TO DO ALL WE CAN TO ENACT LAWS AND POLICIES WHICH ENCOURAGE AND STRENGTHEN THE FAMILIES OF OUR NATION. UNFORTUNATELY, WE HAVE DEVELOPED A WELFARE SYSTEM WHICH DOES JUST THE OPPOSITE.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT WARNED WHEN WE STARTED DOWN THIS PATH SIXTY YEARS AGO THAT WE WOULD "INDUCE A SPIRITUAL AND MORAL DISINTEGRATION FUNDAMENTALLY DESTRUCTIVE TO THE NATIONAL FIBER."

WE HAVE REPLACED MOTHERS AND FATHERS, AND FOR THAT MATTER REPLACED ENTIRE COMMUNITIES, AND PUT IN THEIR STEAD AN ALL ENCOMPASSING "WELFARE STATE." WE HAVE DONE THIS IN THE NAME OF COMPASSION -- BUT WHAT WE HAVE ULTIMATELY DONE IS ENCOURAGE THE BREAKDOWN OF OUR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES.

WHAT ELSE CAN YOU CALL IT WHEN WE TELL A YOUNG WOMAN THAT IF YOU GET PREGNANT, AND DON'T MARRY THE FATHER, AND DON'T GET A JOB, WE WILL GIVE YOU HOUSING, FOOD STAMPS, HEALTH CARE, IN SOME CASES CHILDCARE, AND A CASH ALLOWANCE -- AND OH YEAH, BY THE WAY, IF YOU HAVE ANOTHER CHILD, WE'LL GIVE YOU A RAISE.

WHAT ELSE CAN YOU CALL IT WHEN WE TELL A YOUNG FATHER THAT HE IS ULTIMATELY NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CHILDREN HE HELPS BRING INTO THIS WORLD BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT WILL DO IT INSTEAD OF HIM. IT IS LITTLE WONDER THAT WELFARE RECIPIENTS REASONABLY CONCLUDE THAT WORK AND MARRIAGE ARE IRRATIONAL.

WHAT ELSE CAN YOU CALL IT WHEN GOVERNMENT STANDS IN THE WAY OF FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES HELPING YOUNG, UNWED MOTHERS. I HAVE HAD PEOPLE IN MY OFFICE WHO TOLD ME OF A MOTHER WHO WANTED HER MINOR, UNWED DAUGHTER TO REMAIN IN HER HOME ONCE THAT CHILD GAVE BIRTH TO HER OWN BABY. IN FACT, THIS GRANDMOTHER WANTED TO TAKE CARE OF HER GRANDCHILD AND LET HER DAUGHTER FINISH HIGH SCHOOL. BUT THE DAUGHTER WANTED TO MOVE OUT -- AND WHY NOT -- THE GOVERNMENT WAS GOING TO SET HER UP IN HER OWN HOME. AND SO THIS GRANDMOTHER WAS TOLD BY SOCIAL SERVICES THAT IF HER DAUGHTER WANTED TO MOVE OUT, IT WAS HER RIGHT.

THERE IS SOMETHING INHERENTLY WRONG WITH THIS TYPE OF SYSTEM.

A LITTLE MORE THAN THIRTY YEARS AGO 2% OF ALL BIRTHS OCCURRED OUT OF WEDLOCK. TODAY APPROXIMATELY 32% OF ALL BIRTHS OCCUR OUT OF WEDLOCK. NOW, THERE ARE MANY REASONS FOR THIS INCREASE, BUT I AM CONCERNED THAT OUR CURRENT WELFARE SYSTEM HAS SIGNIFICANTLY CONTRIBUTED TO THIS NATIONAL TRAGEDY.

CHILDREN BORN OUT OF WEDLOCK ARE SEVEN TIMES MORE LIKELY TO BE POOR THAN ARE THOSE BORN TO COUPLES WHO STAY MARRIED. GIRLS RAISED IN SINGLE-PARENT HOMES ON WELFARE ARE FIVE TIMES MORE LIKELY TO GIVE BIRTH OUT OF WEDLOCK WHEN COMPARED TO GIRLS FROM INTACT NON-WELFARE FAMILIES. AND A BOY FROM A SINGLE-PARENT HOME IN THE INNER CITY IS TWICE AS LIKELY TO ENGAGE IN CRIME WHEN COMPARED TO A SIMILAR BOY WHO IS POOR, BUT LIVING WITH A FATHER AND A MOTHER.

A CHILD WHO GROWS UP ABSENT A FATHER IS MORE LIKELY TO LIVE A TROUBLED LIFE. HE'S MORE LIKELY TO END UP IN PRISON, TO USE DRUGS, TO DROP OUT OF SCHOOL, TO JOIN A GANG AND MORE LIKELY TO END UP BACK ON WELFARE. ILLEGITIMACY IS AT THE CORE OF MOST SOCIAL PATHOLOGIES -- CRIME, DRUGS, ILLITERACY AND POVERTY. TO CLAIM TO ADDRESS WELFARE REFORM AND NOT MAKE ILLEGITIMACY THE PRIMARY FOCUS IS TO REPEAT THE FAILED REFORMS OF THE PAST.

SO INSTEAD OF LIFTING PEOPLE OUT OF POVERTY AND DESPAIR WE HAVE DEVELOPED A CYCLE OF DEPENDENCY THAT IS NOW ENTERING ITS THIRD GENERATION.

I BELIEVE IT IS TIME TO SAY "ENOUGH." THIS SYSTEM HAS FAILED. IT HAS FAILED THOSE WHOM IT WAS DESIGNED TO HELP AND IT HAS FAILED THOSE WHO ARE FOOTING THE BILL -- THE MOMS AND DADS OF MIDDLE AMERICA.

WHEN PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY SENT HIS WELFARE PACKAGE TO CONGRESS MORE THAN 30 YEARS AGO, HE STATED THAT "WELFARE PROGRAMS MUST CONTRIBUTE TO THE ATTACK ON FAMILY BREAKDOWN AND ILLEGITIMACY. UNLESS SUCH PROBLEMS ARE DEALT WITH EFFECTIVELY, THEY FESTER, AND GROW, SAPPING THE STRENGTH OF SOCIETY AS A WHOLE AND EXTENDING THEIR CONSEQUENCES IN TROUBLED FAMILIES FROM ONE GENERATION TO THE NEXT." OUR WELFARE POLICIES HAVE FAILED TO FULFILL THE GOAL THAT PRESIDENT KENNEDY SO ELOQUENTLY ARTICULATED.

IS IT ANY WONDER THEN THAT WELFARE REFORM CONSISTENTLY PLACES AS ONE OF THE TOP ISSUES ON THE AGENDA OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. TRUE WELFARE REFORM -- NOT JUST TINKERING AROUND THE EDGES -- BUT REAL, MEANINGFUL REFORM. THE POLLS ALSO SHOW THAT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WANT TO HELP THOSE WHO TRULY NEED IT. THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE VERY GENEROUS AND RECOGNIZE THAT THERE ARE MANY INDIVIDUALS WHO AT SOME POINT IN THEIR LIVES WILL FIND THEMSELVES IN NEED OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE. HOWEVER, ABLE-BODIED INDIVIDUALS SHOULD NOT EXPECT TO REMAIN ON PUBLIC ASSISTANCE THEIR ENTIRE LIVES. AND AGAIN, WE HAVE A SYSTEM THAT ENCOURAGES THIS TYPE OF EXPECTATION.

I BELIEVE WELFARE REFORM LEGISLATION MUST ALSO INCLUDE STRONG WORK REQUIREMENTS. WE MUST RESTORE TO INDIVIDUALS THE DIGNITY OF WORK. WE MUST LET CHILDREN SEE THEIR PARENTS WORKING TO HELP PROVIDE FOR THEIR NEEDS. WHETHER THAT IS IN A PRIVATE SECTOR JOB OR A COMMUNITY SERVICE JOB, WELFARE RECIPIENTS SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO WORK FOR THEIR BENEFITS.

THE WELFARE REFORM BILL THAT PASSED THE HOUSE AND SENATE LAST YEAR FULFILLED OUR PROMISE TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE OF REAL WELFARE REFORM, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME PROVIDING A SAFETY NET FOR THOSE MOST IN NEED. UNFORTUNATELY, THE PRESIDENT HAS CHOSEN TO VETO THIS LEGISLATION TWICE.

HOWEVER, WHATEVER FINAL WELFARE REFORM BILL IS ENACTED, IT WILL CERTAINLY BE A SHAM, IF AT ITS CORE, IT DOES NOT ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF OUT OF WEDLOCK BIRTHS. WE CAN GIVE ALL THE FLEXIBILITY WE WANT TO THE STATES, BUT IF WE IGNORE THE BREAKDOWN OF THE FAMILY AND THE CONTRIBUTION OF OUR GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES TO THAT BREAKDOWN, WE WILL DO A DISSERVICE TO OUR CITIZENS.

AT THE VERY LEAST WE SHOULD INCLUDE A FAMILY CAP WITH AN OPT OUT FOR THE STATES. THIS WILL AT LEAST AND AT LAST FORCE STATES TO DISCUSS THE ISSUE. IF THEY WISH TO NOT HAVE A FAMILY CAP, THEY CAN SIMPLY PASS LEGISLATION OPTING OUT. HOWEVER, IF THE FAMILY CAP IS CHANGED TO AN OPT IN, STATES CAN CONTINUE TO COMPLETELY IGNORE THE ISSUE AND MANY WILL. THEY DON'T EVEN HAVE TO DEBATE IT. ISN'T THE BREAKDOWN OF THE FAMILY AND THE CYCLE OF DEPENDENCY IMPORTANT ENOUGH, THAT AT A MINIMUM, A DISCUSSION OF THE FAMILY CAP SHOULD TAKE PLACE IN ALL FIFTY STATE LEGISLATURES. THE "OPT OUT" FAMILY CAP PROVISION WILL FORCE A LONG OVERDUE NATIONAL DEBATE ON ILLEGITIMACY.

PERHAPS JENNIFER E. MARSHALL OF THE FAMILY RESEARCH COUNCIL HAS SAID IT BEST -- AND I QUOTE, "GIVEN THE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE INDIVIDUAL CHILD, THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY, AND THE NATIONAL POLITY, BRINGING A BABY INTO THIS WORLD WITHOUT A SENSE OF SACRED RESPONSIBILITY CANNOT LONG BE REGARDED AS A MORALLY NEUTRAL ACT. CONGRESS SHOULD NOW RECOGNIZE THAT IT IS ALSO WRONG TO SANCTION SUCH ACTIVITY BY SUBSIDIZING IT."

WE IN CONGRESS MUST HELP TO PROVIDE FOR THE NEEDS OF OUR MOST VULNERABLE CITIZENS. BUT WE MUST ALSO ENCOURAGE PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY. IF WE CONTINUE WITH THE FAILED WELFARE POLICIES OF THE LAST THIRTY YEARS, THE CONSEQUENCES TO OUR FAMILIES AND OUR COMMUNITIES WILL GROW MORE DEVASTATING. WE MUST CHART A NEW COURSE. THE VERY FOUNDATION OF OUR SOCIETY IS AT STAKE.

THANK YOU MR. CHAIRMAN.

Chairman SHAW. Thank you, Mr. Hutchinson.

Our next witness is Ms. Clayton, who is a Member of Congress from the State of North Carolina.

Ms. Clayton.

STATEMENT OF HON. EVA M. CLAYTON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

Ms. CLAYTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank you, Chairman Shaw, and Ms. Kennelly for allowing me to testify this afternoon and also to beg, hopefully, that we will debate this in a deliberate and thoughtful effort and not to find opportunities to scapegoat a very hot issue.

As politicians, we somehow can wrangle on about the perils of teenagers, not realizing we also are responsible. Most teens who become pregnant come from poor and disadvantaged families. Teenage pregnancy is just one marker of disadvantage, one result of growing up poor and poorly nurtured, both physically and emotionally, I would say.

Teen pregnancy is also a strong predictor of a new generation of disadvantaged. The equation is as simple as this. As poverty is the most accurate predictor of teen pregnancy, teen pregnancy is a near certain predictor of poverty.

While one in four American children are living in poverty, a 1991 report from the Casey Foundation compare children of two groups—those who finished high school and those who did not. The first group got married, and reached age 20 before having a child, but the second group did not. Of children in the first group, the poverty rate was 8 percent. In the second group, the poverty rate was 79 percent.

Among teens, more births occur out of wedlock today than occurred 35 years ago. This increase in out-of-wedlock births can be attributed to certain changes in marriage patterns, sexual behavior, contraceptive practices, abortion, and the composition of the teen population. Young men and women are increasingly delaying marriage, but not sexual activity.

Teens make three sets of choices about sexual behavior and its consequences. The first is whether and when to start having sex. The second is whether to use contraceptives. According to studies in making the third choice, whether to become pregnant, the distinction by income is very dramatic. In 1994, of all the women aged 15 through 19, 38 percent are defined as poor and low income. Of these same groups, 73 percent were projected to become pregnant.

Of the 1 million teens who become pregnant each year, about half give birth, about 40 percent choose abortion, and the remaining 10 percent miscarry. Actually teenage pregnancy is much larger than just those who have given birth.

Once a teenager becomes pregnant there is no good solution. There is pain in adoption. There is pain in abortion. There is pain and suffering giving birth and certainly there is pain in parenting.

The best solution is to prevent the pregnancy in the first place. Young people who believe that they have real futures to risk have real incentives to delay parenting. That is why, when we demand responsible behavior, we have a reciprocal obligation to offer a real future beyond early parenting and poverty.

Reducing teenage childbearing is likely to require more than eliminating or manipulating welfare programs, as much as we would like to think so. Experience tells us that threats and punishment are not the best way to get teenagers to believe or to behave in the way we would have them to behave. The most successful approach to reducing teenage childbearing is to design policies and procedures that are targeted to encourage positive developmental behavior through beneficial adult role models and job opportunities.

We must implement pregnancy prevention programs that educate and support school age children between 10 and 21 in high-risk situations and their family members through comprehensive social and health services with an emphasis on pregnancy prevention. On average, it takes teens 1 year after becoming sexually active to receive family planning services. This needs to be stopped.

The pregnancy rate among sexually experienced teenagers fell 19 percent from 1972 to 1990, suggesting that teenagers who have access to birth control and who are motivated have been successful at preventing pregnancies. Conducted by the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health, a study showed that the reproductive clinic and other health care providers had an opportunity to intervene and to provide contraceptive counseling to a group of sexually active teenage girls before they became pregnant. This study shows that spending more money on counseling these young girls, indeed, reduced pregnancies for a large percentage.

Teenage girls seeking pregnancy tests are already sexually active and we should understand when they seek information, we are not deterring sex or encouraging sex by simply providing information. Clinics struggling for funds have a distinctive mission to serve teenagers not to encourage them to become sexually active. Most teenagers cannot pay. We should provide funds for these clinics.

In addition, counseling teenagers is quite expensive. They need more attention than older women, it means understanding that you have to be involved in their lives. In the study, most girls who came for a test had reason to believe that they might be pregnant. Oftentimes, they had missed a period, so they are already in trouble when they come to these clinics.

A significant number, almost 14 percent, believed there was little chance that they were, indeed, pregnant. One has to wonder why are we not supporting these clinics to make sure there are equal opportunities? Perhaps, it is a way to get someone they want to trust. They want to understand that there is an opportunity for better services and better information. Devoting more resources to preventing teen pregnancy will not only save us money in the long run, but it is also healthy for the teenagers and our communities. It is an economical way of providing these teenagers with the opportunity to be productive citizens.

I thank you for the opportunity to participate.

Chairman SHAW. Thank you, Ms. Clayton.

Our final Member witness is Jim Talent from the State of Missouri.

Mr. Talent.

STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES M. TALENT, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MISSOURI

Mr. TALENT. I thank the Chairman and I would like to echo the other witnesses in expressing my appreciation to you for holding this hearing and the Subcommittee for coming and listening.

For the past several years I have spent much of my time on efforts to reform the welfare system. I concluded that reducing illegitimacy and restoring marriage and the family must be the central focus of that effort. The President vetoed a bill that began moving toward that end. Now, it seems we are back to the drawing board and I urge the Subcommittee to be careful and rewrite this bill so that the policies still accomplish what we set as our central goal.

We can call a bill reform if it gives Governors flexibility and provides additional day care funding. If the mission of welfare reform is to break the cycle of dependency, we must aim our policies at the heart of the problem—illegitimacy.

Our welfare system today rewards illegitimacy and creates an atmosphere conducive to its growth. The government pays welfare recipients approximately twice the minimum wage, provided that they have a child without being married. Some of these statistics have already been mentioned, Mr. Chairman, and I will go over a few of them again.

In nine States, welfare pays more than the average first year salary for a teacher. In 40 States, welfare pays more than an $8-an-hour job and in 6 States more than a $12-an-hour job. In your State of Florida, Mr. Chairman, a woman who receives AFDC, food stamps, Medicaid, housing, WIC, Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children, and so forth, makes, on average, $18,200 a year in pretax income, cash and inkind benefits. This is equivalent to a job worth $8.75 an hour.

The problem is not so much that people have children to get welfare, Mr. Chairman, the problem is that welfare lures poor people into having the children they would not otherwise have without being married. That is the reverse of the normal situation.

Apart from welfare, it would be economically irrational for a poor person, who only has the skills for a low-paying job, to have a child without the committed support of another parent. The welfare system has reversed this normal incentive and made illegitimacy a conventional lifestyle. In fact, in poor neighborhoods, illegitimacy is the conventional lifestyle. Nationally, one out of three children is born out of wedlock, up from 6 percent in 1965.

Even that figure is misleading. In lower income neighborhoods the figure is more like three out of four. It is not surprising that most people in these neighborhoods choose illegitimacy given the economic incentives in the system. What is surprising is that some people, notwithstanding the public policy of the government's welfare system, still heroically insist on marriage and work as a precondition to having children.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that the growth in illegitimacy is the single most important change in our country in the last generation. It is a fact so powerful that it annihilates all other facts. Nothing the government does in school, day care, job training, family plan-

ning or any of its other programs can overcome the damage done to our children by illegitimacy.

Children in single-parent families are three times as likely to fail and repeat a year in grade school than children raised in two-parent households. They are four times more likely to be expelled or suspended from school. By the way, as Mr. Hutchinson, said these are figures controlled for income level. The difference is not between poor people and nonpoor people. The difference is between poor people who come from families on welfare where illegitimacy was the rule and other people in poverty.

Girls raised in single-parent homes on welfare are five times more likely to give birth out of wedlock. Children born to a single mother are seven times more likely to be poor than those born to married couples.

Nor should those of us in comfortable, middle-class neighborhoods believe that the fallout from illegitimacy is limited to poor neighborhoods or poor areas of society. No culture can survive if it attempts to raise a large portion of its children entirely outside the institution of marriage.

Thirty years ago, Daniel Patrick Moynihan warned that a society which marginalizes the role of fathers in urban communities, "Asks for and gets chaos."

Mr. Chairman, there are only two things we can do to change the incentives in the welfare system, broadly speaking. We can change either the size or the structure of the package of benefits.

The bill which the President vetoed relied heavily on changing structure. It required work from those welfare recipients who are the closest to employability. Since this makes welfare less attractive, when compared to private sector employment, its effect is to reduce the welfare rolls and increase the work rolls.

In addition, the bill took some small steps toward getting cash out of the welfare system and replacing it with inkind benefits. The most important of these steps is the family cap which ends the practice of paying cash for additional children born out of wedlock. States could use these funds, which now effectively are a reward for illegitimacy, to encourage adoption or marriage or to care for single moms in a nurturing setting like a group home.

It is no accident that these structural changes, in addition to discouraging illegitimacy and, thereby, reducing welfare roles are also far better than the existing system for those who still enter or remain on welfare. The children in a family receiving welfare are better off if their parent is working in return for benefits.

Sending cash indiscriminately to young moms, while leaving them in an environment where they are quite likely being exploited by pushers, boyfriends or gangs is not a way of caring for them. It is a way of sweeping them under the rug.

Mr. Chairman, there is another way of reversing the effects of welfare and that is to rebuild the neighborhoods and institutions that give order and meaning to daily life. Fortunately, all across America, people in distressed areas are coming together to bring private sector jobs, home ownership, school choice, charity, and faith back to the center of their neighborhoods. The Federal Government cannot be a substitute for these groups, but it can en-

courage them in part by simply lifting the taxes and regulations that get in their way.

In the next month, Representative Watts and I will be introducing the community renewal act of 1996. That act is designed to put government on the side of moral and economic renewal, which is already present in these communities, like embers, just beneath the ash in urban America.

The bill does this by empowering faith-based and other private groups, funding school choice, encouraging private investment and home ownership, and assisting those neighborhood groups which are restoring structure to these communities.

We have ahead of us the task of not just reforming welfare benefits, but of renewing distressed communities. As we move forward in our efforts, let us keep in mind how important reducing the out-of-wedlock birthrate is to accomplish these goals.

I am very pleased, Mr. Chairman—that everybody testifying on this first panel has offered ideas as to how to do that. We may disagree on illegitimate policy, but at least we all seem to be agreeing on its importance. I urge the Committee to include, in its reform initiatives, strong provisions to curb the alarming increase in illegitimacy. Without them, we run the risk of merely making the current system a more efficient destroyer of our families and our neighborhoods.

Chairman SHAW. Thank you, Mr. Talent, and I thank all of the Members for their testimony. We have a long agenda this afternoon and in order to try to be as fair to the last panel as I am to the next panel, I am going to enforce the 5-minute rule. As a matter of fact, I think at future hearings I may enforce that against the Members, too. I am going to strictly enforce it as to each of the witnesses and as to the Members when they start the questioning process.

We have each of your full statements which will be put into the record, and I would ask the witnesses to summarize so that we will have adequate time for questions and we can finish the hearing this afternoon without prejudicing any of the later panels.

The next panel that we have is going to discuss the impact of out-of-wedlock births. We have Robert Rector, who is a senior policy analyst at the Heritage Foundation, right here in Washington; Nicholas Zill, who is a Ph.D., vice president and study area director of Westat, Inc., in Rockville, Maryland; Joseph McIlhaney, who is the president of the Medical Institute for Sexual Health from Austin, Texas; and Frank Furstenberg, who is a Ph.D., professor of sociology at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia.

Mr. Rector, if you would proceed, as our first witness, please.

STATEMENT OF ROBERT RECTOR, SENIOR POLICY ANALYST, THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. RECTOR. Mr. Chairman, I wish to commend this Subcommittee for holding these hearings today. I think the topic we are discussing is the most important topic before us as a Nation. The simple fact of the matter is that marriage in the United States is dying and the very survival of our society is at stake. By large, it is the current welfare system that is killing it.

When the war on poverty began, roughly 7 percent of American children were born out of wedlock. Today, that number has risen to 33 percent and continues to go up at a steady and relentless pace among both blacks and whites.

For my oral testimony today I would like to provide some visual charts that describe some recent research we have done on the consequences of out-of-wedlock births in terms of welfare dependency and poverty in the United States.

What we have here are children born in the United States divided into four categories. Those who were born out of wedlock whose mothers never marry. The second column, out-of-wedlock mothers who subsequently marry. The third column born in wedlock to mothers divorced after birth. Finally, on the right-hand side of the chart, born in wedlock to parents who remain intact in marriage.

If you look at children born out of wedlock where the mother never marries, they have spent 50 percent of their months since they have been born—and these children are, on average, about 9 years old on AFDC. If you compare them with a situation where the child is born in wedlock and the marriage has remained intact, the number is 3 percent.

Therefore, by contrast, out-of-wedlock births are AFDC dependent 1,700 percent more frequently. The red columns on the chart show a broader definition of welfare dependence. This includes receipt of AFDC, food stamps, Medicaid, WIC, and SSI. Looking at that broader definition we find children born out of wedlock whose mother never marries have spent 71 percent of their lives receiving some form of welfare benefit. In contrast, the family that has remained intact, within marriage, has spent 12 percent of the time receiving some form of welfare benefit.

The two other categories fall some place in between. I would emphasize that if, even once you have had an out-of-wedlock birth, the best way to reduce welfare dependence is to get the mother to marry subsequent to that birth. If you look at that column, we see that marriage reduces welfare dependence either way it is measured, it cuts it in half, just by having her marry. It is a much more effective strategy than simply stressing getting her employed.

Now, if we could go to the next chart we look at the percentage of time in which these children, in these four categories, have spent in poverty. We find that a child born out of wedlock whose mother has never subsequently married, has spent half the years, since the child's birth, in poverty. In contrast, if we go over to the other side, children born in wedlock, where the parents have remained in an intact marriage, the poverty rate is 7 percent.

The out-of-wedlock birth increases the incidence of poverty by 700 percent. Again, the other two categories, out of wedlock followed by subsequent birth, and in wedlock followed by divorce fall in the middle. Marriage, even if it is after the out-of-wedlock birth, has a very dramatic effect in terms of reducing the incidence of poverty.

I would particularly make reference to that vis-a-vis, the Governor's plan, that recently came out that has an almost exclusive focus on encouraging States to promote employment among single mothers, and penalizes those States that would put an em-

phasis either on reducing out-of-wedlock births or on increasing marriage. In doing that, it focuses on the least effective means for reducing poverty and increasing children's well being.

I think that even more striking than that are the social consequences on these children that are born out of wedlock. We find that a child being born out of wedlock and raised in a single-parent home triples the probability that that child will have emotional and behavioral problems, even when compared to other children who are poor.

Being born out of wedlock and raised without a father in the home triples the rate in which a girl will engage in teenage sexual activity and all the harmful consequences that flow from that. Being raised in a single-parent home and spending a long period of time on welfare can decrease a child's IQ by up to 24 percentage points. That is research from CBO Director, Dr. June O'Neill.

Finally, being raised in a single-parent home, even holding all other social variables constant, doubles or triples the probability that a young girl will go on, herself, and have a child out of wedlock. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, being born out of wedlock and raised in a single-parent home doubles or triples the probability that a young boy is going to be involved in crime.

This is the most important problem facing our society. The bill that was passed by Congress took several small, but significant positive steps to deal with this issue. Unfortunately, the President has vetoed that bill. I would ask that in any subsequent legislation that you take an even stronger effort to deal with this problem because it is the most important problem facing our children.

Thank you.

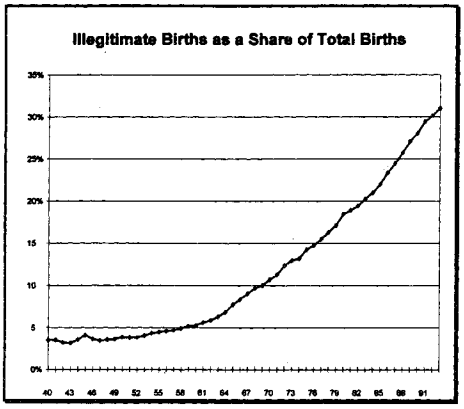
[The prepared statement and attachments follow:]

STATEMENT OF ROBERT RECTOR
SENIOR POLICY ANALYST, WELFARE AND FAMILY STUDIES
RISING ILEGITIMACY, POVERTY, AND DEPENDENCE
IN AMERICAN SOCIETY

THE GROWTH IN ILLEGITIMACY AND THE DECLINE IN MARRIAGE

According to the most recent statistics released by the Center for Health Statistics at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, illegitimacy continues to rise rapidly and marriage continues to decline across the U.S. According to the recently released HHS data, out-of-wedlock births represented 31.0 percent of all births in the U.S. in 1993 -- up from 30.1 percent just a year earlier in 1992. This rapid increase in illegitimacy, nearly 1 percentage point in a single year, follows the pattern of increasing illegitimacy which has occurred since the beginning of the War on Poverty in 1965. In that year, 7.7 percent of children were born out-of-wedlock. By 1993 the number had risen four-fold.

Chart 1



The percentage of births that are out-of-wedlock is expanding rapidly for both whites and blacks. Among whites in 1993, 23.6% of births were out of wedlock, up from 11 percent in 1980. Among blacks 68.7 percent of births were out-of-wedlock in 1993 up from 58 percent in 1980.

The most recent HHS data show that the absolute number of children born within marriage fell in the last reported year. In 1992, 2.84 million children were born to married couples; in 1993 the number had declined to 2.76 million. By contrast, the absolute number of children born out-of-wedlock rose from 1.22 million in 1992 to 1.24 million in 1993

The most useful tool in measuring the decline in marriage and the growth in illegitimacy is the illegitimacy rate (more formally called the illegitimacy ratio). The illegitimacy ratio measures the number of out-of-wedlock births in a given year as a percentage of all births in that year. Thus, if there were 100 births in a society in a year and 30 of those births were out-of-wedlock, the illegitimacy ratio would be 30 percent.

The illegitimacy ratio is important because it measures the extent to which illegitimacy is displacing marriage in our society. Since illegitimacy is a profound underlying factor contributing to most other social ills, the illegitimacy ratio is the best possible tool for measuring a wide array of future social problems. The continuing rise in the illegitimacy ratio is propelled by three factors:

1) the decline in the portion of women of child bearing age who are married;
2) the increase in the birth or fertility rate among non-married women; and
3) the decline in the birth or fertility rate among married women.

American society is now characterized by a growing number of non-married women who, as a group, have an increasing tendency to bear children out-of-wedlock.

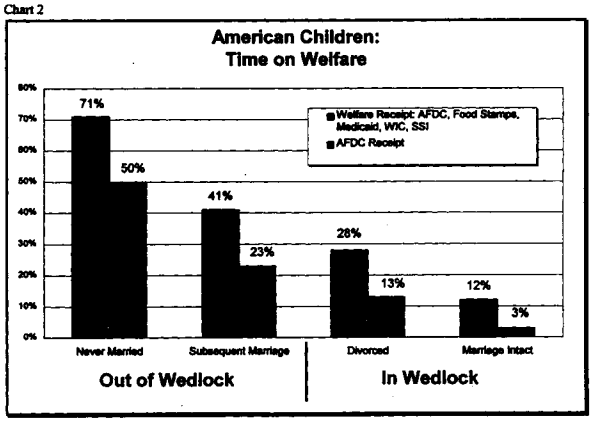
In contrast, while the birth rate among non-married women in the U.S. has increased, the birth rate among married women has gone in the opposite direction. Thus, not only has marriage among women of child bearing age declined but the birth rate among the shrinking pool of married women has also fallen.

RISING ILLEGITIMACY IS A MAJOR CAUSE OF WELFARE DEPENDENCE AND POVERTY

The most obvious consequences of the rising tide of illegitimacy and declining marriage are welfare dependence and child poverty. Charts 2 and 3 show data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY) which contains a national representative sample of young mothers and their children.[1] The charts divide children into four groups:

1. **Out-of-wedlock-Never Married** ---Children born out of wedlock whose mother has never married after the birth of the child;
2. **Out-of-wedlock-Subsequent Marriage**--- Children born out of wedlock whose mother marries subsequent to the child's birth
3. **Within Wedlock- Divorced** ----Children born to married parents who later divorce;
4. **Within Wedlock- Marriage Intact** ----Children born to parents who were married at the time of birth and remained married.

Chart 2



As chart 2 shows, children born out-of-wedlock whose mothers have not married have received AFDC benefits for fifty percent of the time since birth. By contrast, children who were born in wedlock and whose parents have remained married have received AFDC only 3 percent of the time since birth. Thus AFDC receipt is 1700 percent more frequent among illegitimate children of never married mothers than among legitimate children raised by intact married couples.

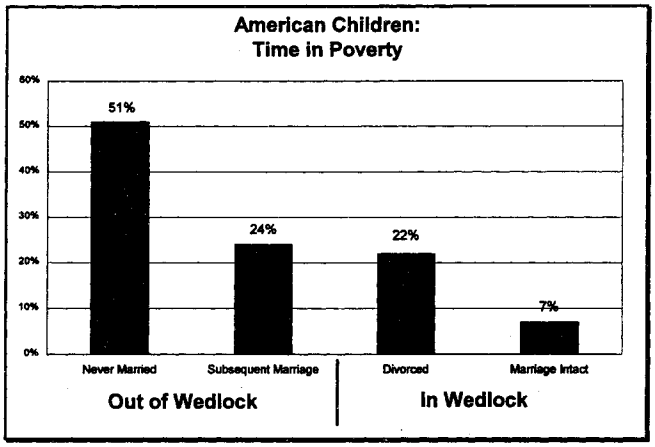
If a woman gives birth out-of-wedlock but subsequently marries the average length of time spent of AFDC will be cut in half, falling from 50 percent (for children of never married mothers) to 23 percent. Marriage even after an out-of-wedlock birth is thus

[1] The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY) contains a nationally representative sample of men and women who were aged 14 to 21 in 1979 when the survey began. In each year, the survey has tracked these individuals, compiling a detailed social and economic history of each ,including information on each child born to NLSY women. The youngest NLSY women have now reached age thirty; children of NLSY mothers had an average age of roughly nine years at the period of this analysis (1992).

quite effective in reducing dependence. Conversely if the parents of a legitimate child divorce, the length of time on AFDC will rise from 3 percent (for intact married couples) to 11 percent for divorced families.

Chart 2 also shows the portion of time which children in the four different categories received any of the following means-tested welfare benefits: AFDC, Food Stamps, Medicaid, SSI, and WIC. On average, children in the "out-of wedlock-never married" group received some form of welfare benefit for 71 percent of the months since birth. By contrast, legitimate children whose parents remained married have received some welfare for 11 percent of the time. Welfare receipt is seven times greater among the never-married group.

Chart 3



Poverty Chart three shows the amount of time since birth that a child has lived in poverty for the four different categories of children. Children born out-of-wedlock to never married women are poor fifty percent of the time. By contrast children born within a marriage which remains intact are poor 7 percent of the time. Thus the absence of marriage increases the frequency of child poverty 700 percent. However, marriage after an illegitimate birth is again relatively effective, cutting the child poverty rate in half.

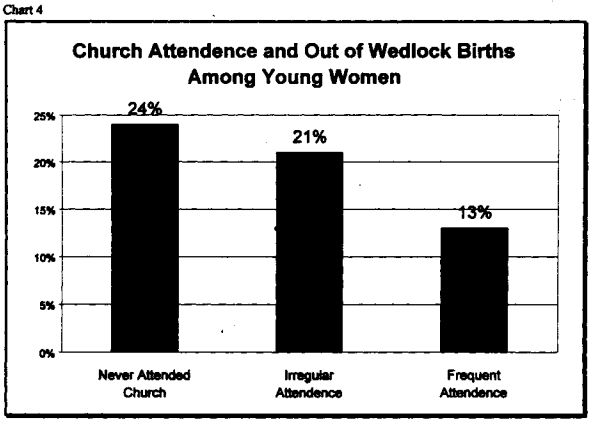
WHO HAS CHILDREN OUT OF WEDLOCK?

A common myth is that illegitimacy is primarily a problem of young teenage women. However, in 1993, only 13 percent of all out-of-wedlock births occurred to girls under age 18. Instead, as the chart shows, illegitimate births are most prevalent among young adult women in their late teens and early 20's. Seventeen percent of out-of-wedlock births occur to girls aged 18 and 19. Over half of all illegitimate births occur to women aged 18 to 24 with the absolute peak of out-of-wedlock child bearing coming at ages 19 and 20. Illegitimacy is predominantly a problem of young women, but not of women under age 18. The problems of "teen pregnancy" and illegitimacy are thus not the same. Attempts by the Clinton administration and others to substitute the issue of "teen pregnancy" for illegitimacy in the welfare debate are, at best, confused. At worst, they are deliberate efforts to quietly side-track and muffle the broader debate about the crisis of illegitimacy in hopes the issue will fade from public view.

Illegitimacy and Religion Another key factor in determining whether a woman will have a child out-of-wedlock is religious belief and practice. Chart 3 shows the percentage of NLSY women who have had a child out-of-wedlock based on the level of

church attendance in a single year (1982).[2] As the chart shows, 13 percent of women who frequently attended church (once or more per week) have had a child out-of-wedlock, compared to 24 percent among women who did not attend church at all. Thus, regular religious observance cut the probability of out-of-wedlock births roughly in half. The impact of religion is maintained when race and poverty status are held constant. Similarly, teenage girls who regularly attend church are two-thirds less likely to be sexually active than those who do not.[3]

Chart 4



Murphy Brown Despite stories in the popular press connecting the growing rate of illegitimacy with a new generation of "Murphy Browns", having a child out-of-wedlock is still a phenomenon which is largely found among less educated women. A examination of births to women in the NLSY survey in 1992 shows that among white women who had not finished high school, 24 percent of births were out-of-wedlock. Among women with a high school degree, the number was 14 percent. By contrast, illegitimacy is virtually non-existent among highly educated women; among white women with some graduate education, only 2 percent of births were illegitimate. Among black Americans, the picture is somewhat different. Within the black community, the erosion of marriage has become so pervasive that a large percentage of better educated black women now give birth outside of wedlock. Still the general pattern out-of-wedlock births remains the same;. black high school dropouts are more than twice as likely to have a child out of wedlock as were black women with graduate education.

THE SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF RISING ILLEGITIMACY

From the very beginning, children born outside of marriage have life stacked against them. While some single mothers work wonders and raise their children well despite the obstacles they encounter, for many others the challenge is too great and their children suffer the consequences. The impact on the child is significant and can be permanent. For many, out-of-wedlock birth and growing up in a single-parent family means the child is more likely to experience:

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[2] The NLSY church attendance survey has very rarely asked information on religious practice. It would be very useful to have church attendance data for each year. Nevertheless, even a single year's record of church attendance shows religica to be an important factor affecting illegitimacy.

[3] Research by The Heritage Foundation based on the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth

- Retarded cognitive (especially verbal) development;
- Lower educational achievement;
- Lower job attainment;
- Increased behavior and emotional problems;
- Lower impulse control;
- Retarded social development

Such children are far more likely:

- to engage in early sexual activity;
- to have children out of wedlock;
- to be on welfare as adults; and
- to engage in criminal activity.

The absence of married parents is related to retarded development in early childhood. Illegitimacy leads to delays in development. A study of black infants (aged 5 to 6 months) living in households of lower socio-economic status in America's inner cities found that male infants who experienced "minimal interaction with their fathers" had significantly lower levels of overall mental development, lower social responsiveness for novel stimuli.[4] Illegitimate children tend to have lessened cognitive development.[5 6 7] Many of these children have problems in controlling their activity (popularly called "hyperactivity"). This lack of control is usually an indication of problems in learning that will arise later in the child's development.[8] The effect on boys is greater, at least in the early years.[9 10]

Similar findings were enumerated again in the recent 1992 National Institute of Child Health and Development summary, "Outcomes of Early Childbearing: An Appraisal of Recent Evidence."[11] And such findings are in line with earlier studies. For instance, Project TALENT, a federal survey commissioned in 1960, which tracked the development of 375,000 high school students from 1960 through 1971, found that children born outside marriage were likely to have lower cognitive scores, lower educational aspirations, and a greater likelihood of becoming teenage parents themselves. Once again, all of these effects were greater for boys.[12]

The absence of married parents risks emotional and behavioral problems during childhood. The effects of illegitimacy continue to compound through childhood. National Health Interview Survey of Child Health (NHIS-CH) confirms that children born out-of-wedlock have far more behavioral and emotional problems than do children in intact married families. These problems include:

- **antisocial behavior:** disobedience in school; cheating and lying; bullying and cruelty to others; breaking things deliberately; failure to feel sorry after misbehaving;
- **hyperactive behavior:** difficulty concentrating or paying attention; becoming easily confused; acting without thinking; being restless or overactive;

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[4] Frank A. Peterson, Judith L. Rubenstein and Leon J. Yarrow, "Infant Development in Father-Absent Families" The Journal of Genetic Psychology, 1979, No. 135, pp. 51-61. The study finds the differences in development were due to the level of interaction with the father rather than the number of adults in the household or the household's socio-economic status.

[5] Walsh, "Illegitimacy, Child-Abuse and Neglect, and Cognitive Development," Journal of Genetic Psychology, Vol. 15 (1990), pp. 279-285.

[6] J.J. Card, "Long Term Consequences for Children Born to Adolescent Parents," Final Report to NICHD, American Institutes for Research, Palo Alto, California, 1977; and also, J.J. Card, "Long term consequences for children of teenage parents," Demography, Vol. 18 (1981), pp. 137-156.

[7] Wadsworth et al., op. cit..

[8] J. Brooks-Gunn and Frank Fustenberg Jr., "The Children of Adolescent Mothers: Physical, Academic and Psychological Outcomes," Developmental Review, Vol. 6 (1986), pp. 224-225.

[9] Card, op. cit.

[10] Brooks-Gunn et al., op. cit..

[11] Bachrach, et al., op. cit.,

[12] Card, op. cit.

- **headstrong behavior:** easily losing one's temper; being stubborn, irritable, disobedient at home; arguing excessively;
- **peer conflict:** having trouble getting along with others; being not liked; being withdrawn;
- **dependent behavior:** crying too much, being too dependent on others, demanding attention, clinging to adults.

Children raised by never married mothers have significantly higher levels of all of the above behavior problems when compared to children raised by both biological parents. When comparisons are made between families that are identical in race, income, number of children, and mother's education, the behavioral differences between illegitimate and legitimate children actually widen. Compared to children living with both biological parents in similar socio-economic circumstances, children of never married mothers have 68 percent more antisocial behavior; 24 percent more head strong behavior; 33 percent more hyperactive behavior; 78 percent more peer conflict; 53 percent more dependency. Overall children of never married mothers have behavioral problems score nearly three times higher than children raised in comparable intact families.[13]

Children born out of wedlock have less ability to delay gratification, poorer impulse control (that is, control over anger and sexual gratification). They have a weaker sense of conscience or sense of right and wrong.[14] Adding to all this is the sad fact that the incidence of child abuse and neglect is higher among single-parent families.[15]

Being Born Out-of Wedlock Increases the Probability of Teen Sexual Activity. Boys and girls born out-of-wedlock and raised by never married mothers are two and a half times more likely to be sexually active as teenagers when compared to legitimate children raised in intact married couple families. This finding applies to both blacks and whites. Children born out-of- wedlock whose mothers marry after the child's birth appear to be slightly less likely to be sexually active as teens but are still twice as active, on average, as legitimate teens of intact married couples.[16]

The absence of married parents is related to poor academic performance during school years. The risks and consequences of illegitimacy continue through the middle years of childhood and express themselves in poor academic performance. A 1988 study Sheila F. Krein and Andrea H. Beller of the University of Illinois finds that the longer the time spent in a single-parent family the lower the education attained by a child. In general, boy's educational attainment was cut by one tenth of year for each year spent as a child in a single parent home. Controlling for family income did not reduce the magnitude of the effect noticeably.[17] These findings are confirmed again and again in studies conducted in the United States and abroad. These studies demonstrate that illegitimacy is also associated with lower job and salary attainment.[18] [19] [20]

The absence of married parents leads to intergenerational illegitimacy. Being born outside of marriage significantly reduces the chances of the child growing up to have an

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[13] Deborah A. Dawson, "Family Structure and Children's Health and Well-being: Data from the 1988 National Health Interview Survey on Child Health," paper presented at the annual meeting of the Population Association of America, Toronto, May 1990.

[14] E.M. Hetherington and B. Martin, "Family Interaction," in H.C. Quay and J.S. Werry (eds.), Psychopathological Disorders of Childhood (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1979), pp. 247-302.

[15] A. Walsh, "Illegitimacy, Child-Abuse and Neglect, and Cognitive Development," Journal of Genetic Psychology, Vol. 15 (1990), pp. 279-285.

[16] Research by The Heritage Foundation based on the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth.

[17] Sheila F. Krein and Andrea H. Beller, "Educational Attainment of Children From Single-Parent Families: Differences by Exposure, Gender and Race," Demography, Vol. 25 (May 1988), p. 228.

[18] Eric F. Dubow and Tom Lester, "Adjustment of Children Born to Teenage Mothers: The Contribution of Risk and Protective Factors," Journal of Marriage and the Family, Vol. 52 (1990), pp. 393-404.

[19] Card, op. cit.

[20] Robert W. Blanchard and Henry B. Biller, "Father Availability and Academic Performance among Third-Grade Boys," Developmental Psychology, Vol. 4, No. 3 (1971), pp. 301-305.

intact marriage.[21] Children born outside of marriage themselves are three times more likely to be on welfare when they grow up.[22] Daughters of single mothers are twice as likely to be single mothers themselves, if they are black, and only slightly less so if they are white.[23] And boys living in a single-parent family are twice as likely to father a child out of wedlock as are boys from a two-parent home.[24] The TALENT study, noted earlier, had already found that children born to teenage parents are more likely to become teen parents themselves.[25]

Illegitimacy is a major factor in America's crime wave. Lack of married parents, rather than race or poverty, is the principal factor in the crime rate. It has been known for some time that high rates of welfare dependency correlate with high crime rates among young men in a neighborhood.[26] But more important, a major 1988 study of 11,000 individuals found that "the percentage of single-parent households with children between the ages of 12 and 20 is significantly associated with rates of violent crime and burglary." The same study makes clear that the widespread popular assumption that there is an association between race and crime is false. Illegitimacy is the key factor. The absence of marriage, and the failure to form and maintain intact families, explains the incidence of high crime in a neighborhood among whites as well as blacks. This study also concluded that poverty does not explain the incidence of crime.[27] This is a dramatic reversal of conventional wisdom.

University of Illinois sociologist Robert J. Sampson shows that violent crime among blacks, especially juveniles, is strongly driven by the collapse of the family. Sampson states," black family disruption has the largest effects on black juvenile robbery and homicide."[28] He finds similar effects among whites.

Research on underclass behavior by, Dr. June O'Neill, the current director of the Congressional Budget Office, confirms the linkage between crime and single-parent families. Using data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, O'Neill found that young black men raised in single-parent families were twice as likely to engage in criminal activities when compared to black men raised in two-parent families, even after holding constant a wide range of variables such as family income, urban residence, neighborhood environment, and parents' education. Growing up in a single-parent family in a neighborhood with many other single-parent families on welfare triples the probability that a young black man will engage in criminal activity.[29]

A major sociological review from the University of Wisconsin concludes that teens from single-parent families are much more likely to become delinquent than are teens from intact families. Family disruption drives up delinquency rates because of the way it "hampers the formation of attachments to parents and the transmission of anti-delinquent definitions from parent to child." Adolescents from broken homes often

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[21] Neil Bennett and David Bloom, "The influence of Non-marital Childbearing on the Formation of Marital Unions." Paper given at NICHD conference on "Outcomes of Early Childbearing," May 1992.

[22] Kristin Moore, "Attainment among Youth from Families That Received Welfare." Paper for DHHS/ASPE and NICHD, Grant #HD21537-03.

[23] Sara S. McLanahan, "Family Structure and Dependency: Early Transitions to Female Household Headship," Demography, Vol. 5, No. 1 (1988), pp. 1-16.

[24] William Marsiglio, "Adolescent Fathers in the United States: Their Initial Living Arrangements, Marital Experience and Educational Outcomes," Family Planning Perspectives, Vol. 19 (1987), pp. 240-251, reporting a study of 5,500 young men..

[25] Card, op. cit.

[26] Arthur B. Elsters et al., "Judicial Involvement and Conduct Problems of Fathers of Infants Born to Adolescent Mothers," Pediatrics, Vol. 79, No. 2 (1987), pp. 230-234.

[27] Douglas Smith and G.Roger Jarjoura, "Social Structure and Criminal Victimization," Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency, February 1988, pp. 27-52.

[28] Robert J. Sampson, "Urban Black Violence: The Effect of Male Joblessness and Family Disruption," American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 93 (1987), pp. 348-382.

[29] M. Anne Hill and June O'Neill, Underclass Behaviors in the United States: Measurement and Analysis of Determinants, New York City, City University of New York, Baruch College March 1990.

"associate with delinquents, learn definitions favorable to delinquency, and consequently, violate the law."[30]

These academic findings on the relationship between crime and illegitimacy are confirmed in government studies. For example, the U.S. Department of Justice reported in 1987 that 70 percent of juveniles in state custody did not live with both parents while growing up, and almost three-quarters of those lived primarily in a single-parent family.[31] The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY) presents a nearly identical picture. In general, young boys raised in single parent or blended families (where one parent is a step-parent) were four and a half times more likely to engage in criminal activity and end up in jail than were boys living in intact families with both biological parents Even after controlling for race and differences in mental ability, boys in single parent or blended homes were still twice as likely to engage in crime. Family income, in contrast, was not shown to be a factor.[32]

WELFARE PROMOTES ILLEGITIMACY

Three separate factors have been proposed to explain the decline in marriage and the rise in illegitimacy. These are: 1) economic changes leading to decline in earnings and jobs for low skilled males in certain parts of the country thereby, reducing their capacity as bread winners; 2) changes in cultural norms and values concerning non-marital sexual activity and child bearing, and ; 3) the impact of the welfare system in subsidizing out of wedlock births and single parenthood.

Any change as huge and momentous as the disappearance of marriage in society will not be driven solely by one factor. In truth, each of the factors mentioned above has played some role in the rise of illegitimacy. However, the evidence seems to point to welfare as the factor which has played the largest role as well as the one which most susceptible to corrective action.

Despite repeated claims to the contrary, the overwhelming majority of scientific studies conducted in the last decade and a half link concerning between welfare and illegitimacy confirm common sense, economic and psychological theory; they show that welfare promotes illegitimacy and discourages marriage. Many show that welfare has a dramatic positive effect in increasing the level of illegitimacy in U.S. society. The following is a list thirteen studies which have found a relationship between higher welfare benefits and increased illegitimacy.

1. Research by the Director of the Congressional Budget office, Dr. June O'Neill's has found that, holding constant a wide range of other variables such as income, parental education, and urban and neighborhood setting, a 50 percent increase in the monthly value of AFDC and Food Stamp benefits led to a 43 percent increase in the number of out-of-wedlock births. Hill, M. Anne, and O'Neill, June, "Underclass Behaviors in the United States: Measurement and Analysis of Determinants", Center for the Study of Business and Government, Baruch College, February 1992.

2. Research by Mikhail Bernstam of the Hoover Institution at Stanford University shows that childbearing by young unmarried women may increase by 6 percent in response to a 10 percent increase in monthly welfare benefits; among blacks the increase may be as high as 10 percent. Bernstam, Mikhail S., "Malthus and Evolution of the Welfare State: An Essay on the Second Invisible Hand, Parts I and II", working papers E-88-41,42, Palo Alto, CA, Hoover Institution, 1988.

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[30] Ross L. Matsueda and Karen Heimer, "Race, Family Structure and Delinquency: A Test of Differential Association and Social Control Theories," American Sociological Review, Vol. 52 (1987), pp. 826-840.

[31] Allen J. Beck and Susan A. Kline, "Survey of Youth in Custody, 1987," U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Special Report, September 1988.

[32] Heritage Foundation research based on NLSY data from 1979 through 1992. Criminal activity was measured by residence in jail.

3. A recent study of black Americans finds that higher welfare benefits lead to lower rates of marriage and higher numbers of children living in single parent homes. In general, an increase in roughly $100 in the average monthly AFDC benefit per recipient child was found to lead to a drop of over 15 percent in births within wedlock among black women aged 20 to 24. Fossett, Mark A., and Kiecolt, K. Jill, "Mate Availability and Family Structure Among African Americans in U.S. Metropolitan Areas", Journal of Marriage and Family, Vol. 55, May 1993, pp. 288-302.

4. Research by Dr. C.R. Winegarden of the University of Toledo found that half of the increases in black illegitimacy in recent decades could be attributed to the effects of welfare. Winegarden, C.R., "AFDC and Illegitimacy Ratios: A Vector-Autoregressive Model", Applied Economics 20 (1988), pp. 1589-1601.

5. Research by Shelley Lundberg and Robert D. Plotnick of the University of Washington shows that an increase of roughly $200 per month in welfare benefits per family causes the teenage illegitimate birth rate in a state to increase by 150 percent. Lundberg, Shelly, and Plotnick, Robert D., "Adolescent Premarital Child Bearing: Do Opportunity Costs Matter?", discussion paper no. 90-23, Seattle: University of Washington, Institute for Economic Research, 1990.

6. Research by Dr. Martha Ozawa of Washington University in St. Louis has found that an increase in AFDC benefit levels of $100 per child per month leads to roughly a 30 percent increase in out-of-wedlock births to women age 19 and under. Ozawa, Martha N., "Welfare Policies and Illegitimate Birth Rates Among Adolescents: Analysis of State-by-State Data", Social Work Research and Abstracts, 14 (1989), pp. 5-11.

7. Another recent study finds a 20 percent increase in welfare benefit levels across all states would increase the probability of teen out-of wedlock births by as much as 16 percent. (However, the authors state that these findings should be treated cautiously because they were not proven to be statistically significant.) An, Chong-Bum, and Haveman, Robert, and Wolfe, Barbara, "Teen Out-of-Wedlock Births and Welfare Receipt: the Role of Childhood Events and Economic Circumstance", The Review of Economics and Statistics, May 1993.

8. A recent study by Charles Murray finds positive effect of welfare on illegitimacy. Murray, Charles, "Welfare and the Family: The U.S. Experience", Journal of Labor Economics, Vol. 11, pt. 2, 1993, pp. 224-262.

9. Another study by Robert Plotnick finds a positive effect of welfare on illegitimacy. Plotnick, Robert D., "Welfare and Out-of-Wedlock Childbearing: Evidence from the 1980's", Journal of Marriage and the Family (August 1990), pp. 735-46.

10. A study by Paul T. Schultz finds higher welfare benefits significantly reduce marriage rates. Schultz, Paul T., "Marital Status and Fertility in the United States", The Journal of Human Resources, Spring 1994, pp. 637-659.

11. A study by Scott South and Kim Lloyd finds a positive relationship between welfare and the percentage of births which are out-of-wedlock. South, Scott J., and Lloyd Kim M., "Marriage Markets and Non-marital Fertility in the United States" Demography, May 1992, pp. 247-264.

12. A recent study by Phillip Robins and Paul Fronton finds that higher welfare benefits lead to more births among never-married women. Robins, Phillip K and Fronton, Paul, "Welfare Benefits and Family Size Decisions of Never-Married Women", Institute for Research on Poverty: Discussion Paper, DP #1022-93, September 1993

13. A recent Rand Corporation study finds higher welfare benefits increase illegitimate births. Jackson, Catherine A. and Klerman, Jacob Alex, "Welfare, Abortion and Teenage Fertility", RAND research paper, August 1994.

ISN'T LOW FAMILY INCOME THE REAL CAUSE OF PROBLEM BEHAVIOR?

A common liberal belief is that most social and behavioral problems are the result, not of collapsed family structure, but of low family income. According to this theory, crime and other dysfunctional behaviors emerge in young people raised in single parent homes, not because of the absence of the biological father, nor because of the norms within the family, but simply because single parent homes, on average, have lower incomes. Since a lack of money causes development problems, such problems can be reduced by providing ever larger welfare payments to single mothers.

This belief can easily be refuted by applying historical perspective. The typical family in the 1950's had an income roughly half of that of similar family today, after adjusting for inflation. But no one would really expect children raised in the 1950's to exhibit greater criminality, sexual promiscuity, and behavior problems simply because their families had less income. Similarly, the typical family living in the 1920's was "poor" by today's standards, adjusted for inflation. But lack of income did not generate greater behavioral problems among children of this earlier period.

Two principles seem to apply. First, children benefit greatly from the presence of a biological father and mother united in marriage. Second, in addition to family structure, it is the norms within the family (and also with he surrounding community) rather than income that make the difference in children's lives.

Finally, there is no credible evidence to support the belief that attempting to raise the incomes of single parent home through more generous welfare benefits will generate positive outcomes in children's development. Instead, more generous welfare promotes greater single parenthood and dependence, both of which have a sharply negative effect on children's well-being. In order to help children we must reverse the current national trend in which even greater numbers of children are being raised in welfare dependent single parent homes.[33]

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The primary goal of welfare reform must be to reduce illegitimacy and to save marriage. This will not be easy. Our current welfare system is like a giant ocean liner bound on a socially destructive course. It will take years to stop the behemoth and reverse direction. For example, even under the conference welfare reform bill, passed by Congress, the federal and state governments would spend nearly a half trillion dollars, over seven years, to subsidize and support illegitimacy and single parenthood through multiple welfare benefits, day-care, job training, and other services. Under the Congressional plan, government would spend $1,000 to subsidize single parenthood and illegitimacy for each dollar spent to reduce illegitimacy.

However, the conference bill, enacted by Congress, did take some initial first steps to combat illegitimacy. Congress should be commended for its leadership; unfortunately the president vetoed that bill. In the future Congress should broaden and improve its efforts to deal with illegitimacy. Steps which should be taken include the following.

1. Congress should clearly identify reducing illegitimacy as the key goal of welfare reform and should use the bully pulpit to publicize the issue.

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[33] Robert Rector, "Why Congress Must Reform Welfare", Heritage Foundation Backgrounder, No. 1063, december 4, 1995.

2. The national family cap with the state opt out provision should be retained in any future legislation;

3. The conference welfare bill creates an illegitimacy reduction bonus mechanism which rewards states which reduce their illegitimacy ratio without increasing abortions. However, the criteria for earning a reward under this fund are very stringent and, as a consequence, few if any states will actually obtain incentive payments under this provision. Bonuses which are nearly impossible to achieve will have little effect on state efforts. The criteria of "success" in reducing illegitimacy should be softened so states have a better chance of earning the reward;

4. The welfare reform proposed by the National Governor's Association contained a huge $6 billion "performance incentive fund" is really a job placement bonus fund. The NGA plan rewards only states that increase employment among welfare mothers; it is explicitly anti-marriage. In reality, welfare dependence can be reduced by the six following means: reducing illegitimacy; reducing divorce; increasing marriage among women who have had children out of wedlock and who have not yet enrolled in welfare; encouraging single mothers to take jobs before they ever enter AFDC; increasing marriage among welfare mothers; and last having welfare mothers obtain jobs. The NGA plan focuses on the last mechanism: employment of AFDC mothers, which is in fact the least effective means of reducing dependence and poverty. If included in future legislation, this performance fund should altered to reward all modes of reducing dependence evenly. Moreover, states should be rewarded only if caseload and illegitimacy are actually declining.

5. During the early 1970's, food commodity distribution programs were replaced by the nationwide Food Stamp program. The introduction of Food Stamps coincided with an explosive rise in illegitimacy and AFDC dependence. States should be given the option of providing a nutritionally balanced selection of food commodities rather than food stamp coupons to AFDC mothers and retaining any savings therefrom for other anti-poverty activity. Replacing food coupons with commodities will decrease the overall attractiveness of welfare and would have a significantly reduce future illegitimacy and dependence.

6. The amount of funding in the new abstinence program in the conference bill should be increased;

7. States should submit be required to submit a plan of how they are going to reduce illegitimacy.

8. Congress should create a new set aside of $300 million per year within AFDC for states to devise and operate their own programs to reduce illegitimacy without increasing abortion (with an firm evaluation requirement)

9. Finally in the long term struggle to save marriage in our society, steps outside of welfare reform must be taken. Congress should recognize that the church is the number one institution in our society for combating illegitimacy and poverty. Government policy must allow churches to play a far stronger role in rebuilding our broken society and in shaping the aspiring hearts and minds of young people at risk within our poorest communities. This can only be accomplished through real school choice, giving poor parents education vouchers and allowing them to choose to send their children to public, private, or private religious schools. Legislation to begin this process of renewal will soon be introduced by Congressmen J.C. Watts and James Talent.

The Heritage Foundation Backgrounder

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The Cultural Policy Studies Project

December 4, 1995

WHY CONGRESS MUST REFORM WELFARE

INTRODUCTION

The public is often told that the current welfare system does not promote long-term dependence. This is untrue.

- ✘ The 4.7 million families currently receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) have already spent, on average, six-and-a-half years on welfare.
- ✘ When past and estimated future receipt of AFDC are combined, the estimated average length of stay on AFDC, among those families currently receiving benefits, is an astonishing 13 years.
- ✘ Among the 4.7 million families currently receiving AFDC, over 90 percent will spend over two years on the AFDC caseload. More than three quarters will spend over five years on AFDC.

The current liberal system is based on the assumption that higher welfare benefits and expanded welfare eligibility are good for children. According to this theory, "poverty" is harmful for children, and welfare, by allegedly reducing poverty, will increase children's lifetime well-being and attainment. This is untrue. Higher welfare payments do not assist children; they increase dependence and illegitimacy, which have a devastatingly negative effect on children's development. It is welfare dependence, rather than poverty, which has the most negative effect on children.

- ✘ Recent research by Congressional Budget Office Director June O'Neill shows that increasing the length of time a child spends on welfare may reduce the child's IQ by as much as 20 percent.

Note: Nothing written here is to be construed as necessarily reflecting the views of The Heritage Foundation or as an attempt to aid or hinder the passage of any bill before Congress.

- ✘ Welfare receipt as a child has a negative effect on the earnings and employment capacity of young men. The more welfare income received by a boy's family during his childhood, the lower will be the boy's earnings as an adult, even when compared to boys in families with identical non-welfare income.
- ✘ Receipt of welfare and living in a single-parent family during childhood are strongly associated with criminal activity among young men and having illegitimate children among young women.

Overall, welfare operates as a form of social toxin. The more of this toxin received by a child's family, the less successful will be the child as an adult.

The House and Senate will soon pass welfare reform legislation based on three key principles:

1. **Reducing** the growth of illegitimacy;
2. **Reducing** dependence by requiring welfare recipients to work; and
3. **Limiting** the explosive growth of welfare spending.

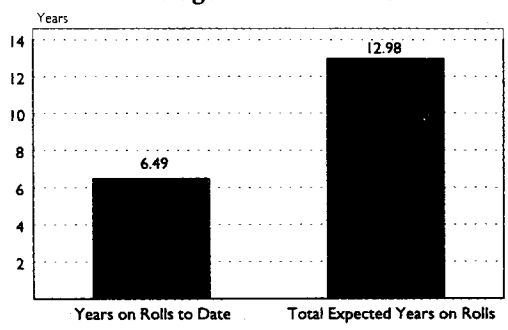
The public strongly supports the key provisions of the congressional reforms. According to recent polls:

- By a margin of 84 percent to 13 percent, Americans support a "family cap." Eighty-four percent "oppose increasing a welfare mother's monthly welfare check if she has another child out-of-wedlock."
- Three out of four Americans believe welfare encourages illegitimacy. By a ratio of two to one, Americans feel that reducing illegitimacy is a more important goal in welfare reform than attempting merely to make single mothers self-sufficient.
- Still, nine out of ten Americans feel that welfare recipients should have "to work for their benefits." However, they feel overwhelmingly that work requirements should be imposed on welfare mothers with older children before they are imposed on mothers with pre-school children.

THE PATTERN OF DEPENDENCE: LENGTH OF TIME ON WELFARE

The public is often told that the current welfare system does not promote long-term dependence. According to this picture, AFDC generally provides temporary aid, and very few recipients receive welfare for extended periods. This picture is inaccurate.

Chart 1



Source: Urban Institute.

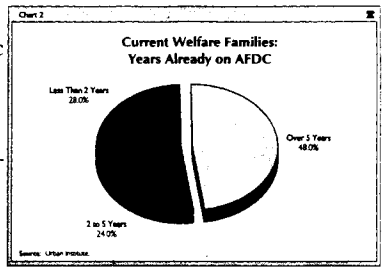
Of the 4.7 million families currently receiving AFDC, most will be dependent on welfare for very long periods of time. As Chart 1 shows, families receiving AFDC at the present time have already spent, on average, six-and-a-half years enrolled in AFDC.[1] When past receipt and estimated future receipt of AFDC are combined, the estimated average length of stay on AFDC among those families currently receiving AFDC benefits is an astounding 13 years.[2] Moreover, these figures actually underestimate the length of welfare dependence, since such families are very likely to receive other welfare benefits (such as food stamps, SSI, Medicaid, and housing) even after they leave the AFDC caseload.

As Chart 2 shows, among those families currently receiving AFDC, 72 percent have already spent over two years on AFDC, and nearly half have already spent over five years on AFDC.

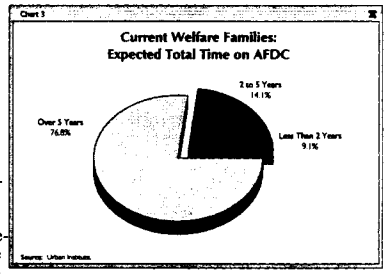
1 All figures in this section are taken from R. Kent Weaver and William T. Dickens, *Looking Before We Leap: Social Science and Welfare Reform* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1995), pp. 36-41. Figures are based on the work of LaDonna Pavetti of the Urban Institute.

2 All figures include multiple spells of AFDC receipt which may be interrupted by periods when the family is not on AFDC.

Looking into the future and making projections based on the historical patterns of AFDC receipt, it is clear that among the 4.7 million families currently on AFDC, over 90 percent will spend over two years on the AFDC caseload. And more than three quarters of current AFDC families will spend over five years on the AFDC caseload.



Long-term welfare dependence is most common among women who have children out of wedlock. Never-married mothers, in general, remain on AFDC twice as long as divorced mothers.



DOES WELFARE BENEFIT CHILDREN?

The current debate over welfare reform involves conflicting visions of society and the impact of welfare on human behavior. Real reform will not be achieved until specific core assumptions which form the foundation of the modern welfare state have been overturned and discarded. From its onset, the liberal welfare state has been founded on faulty logic. This flawed logic, embedded in nearly all liberal thinking about welfare, runs something like this:

PREMISE #1: Children in families with higher income seem to do better in life.

PREMISE #2: Welfare can easily raise family income.

CONCLUSION: Therefore, welfare is good for kids.

From this logic has sprung a relentless thirty-year effort to raise welfare benefits, expand welfare eligibility, create new welfare programs, and increase welfare spending. The current proposal from Congress to slow down the automatic growth of welfare spending violates these cardinal tenets of the liberal welfare system and thus has led to cries of alarm from the welfare establishment.

In fact, each of the central tenets of modern welfare is misleading and deeply flawed. Together they become a recipe for a disastrous system of aid which harms rather than helps, aggressively crushing the hopes and future of an increasing number of young Americans.

It is useful to examine each of these cardinal liberal tenets individually. The first is that raising incomes is crucial to the well-being and success of children. The common liberal corollary to this premise is that poverty "causes" such problems as crime, school failure, low cognitive ability, illegitimacy, low work ethic and skills, and drug use. Hence, reducing poverty through greater welfare spending will reduce most social problems. History refutes this belief. In 1950, nearly a third of the U.S. population was poor (twice the current rate). In the 1920s, roughly half of the population was poor by today's standard. If the theory that "poverty" causes social problems were true, we should have had far more social problems in those earlier periods then we do today. But crime and most other social problems have increased rather than fallen since these earlier periods.

History and common sense both show that values and abilities within families, not family income, lead to children's success. Families with higher incomes tend to have sound values concerning self-control, deferred gratification, work, education, and marriage which they pass on to their children. It is those values, rather than the family income, that are key to the children's attainment. Attempting to raise the family income artificially through welfare is very unlikely to do much to benefit the child, but it is likely to destroy the very values which are key to the child's success.

The second flawed liberal premise is that it is very easy to raise family income through welfare. This also is untrue. Because welfare reduces work effort and promotes illegitimacy and poverty-prone single-parent families, it actually may cause an overall decrease in family incomes. Welfare is extremely efficient at replacing self-sufficiency with dependence, but relatively ineffective in raising incomes and eliminating poverty.

This is borne out by experimental evidence. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, social scientists at the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) conducted a series of controlled experiments to examine the effect of welfare benefits on work effort. The longest running and most comprehensive of these experiments was conducted between 1971 and 1978 in Seattle and Denver, and became known as the Seattle/Denver Income Maintenance Experiment, or "SIME/DIME."[3]

Advocates of expanding welfare had hoped that SIME/DIME and similar experiments conducted in other cities would prove that generous welfare benefits did not affect "work effort" adversely. Instead, the SIME/DIME experiment found that each $1.00 of extra welfare given to low-income persons reduced labor and earnings by an average of $0.80.[4] The significant anti-work effects of welfare benefits were shown in all social groups, including married women, single mothers, and husbands. The results of the SIME/DIME study are directly applicable to existing welfare programs: Nearly all have strong anti-work effects like those studied in the SIME/DIME experiment.

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3 SRI International, *Final Report of the Seattle-Denver Income Maintenance Experiment, Vol. 1, Design and Result* (Washington, D.C.: SRI, May 1983).

4 Gregory B. Christiansen and Walter E. Williams, "Welfare Family Cohesiveness and Out of Wedlock Births," in Joseph Peden and Fred Glahe, *The American Family and the State* (San Francisco: Pacific Institute for Public Policy Research, 1986), p. 398.

The third liberal tenet is that higher welfare benefits and broadened eligibility will help children and improve their success in later life. In certain limited cases, such as when welfare is needed to eliminate serious malnutrition, welfare can help. But there is no evidence that enlarging benefits and expanding enrollments in most U.S. welfare programs will improve children's lives. While higher welfare payments and spending do not benefit children directly, they do increase dependence and illegitimacy, both of which have devastating negative effects on child well-being. Thus, overall, welfare operates as a system of organized, well-funded child abuse.

The available scientific evidence clearly refutes the liberal hypothesis that attempting to raise family income through more generous welfare payments will benefit children. For example, the average monthly value of welfare benefits (AFDC and food stamps combined) varies between states. The conventional liberal assumption is that children on welfare in states with lower benefit levels will be markedly worse off than children in states with higher benefits. Children on AFDC in high benefit states, according to the theory, should have improved cognitive ability when compared to children without access to more generous welfare. However, recently published research by Congressional Budget Office Director June O'Neill and Anne Hill of Queens College, City University of New York, demonstrates that this theory is incorrect. O'Neill and Hill examined the IQs of young children who were long-term welfare dependents, having spent at least half of their lives on AFDC. Contrary to the expected theory, they found that the higher welfare benefit did not improve children's cognitive performance. The IQs of long-term welfare-dependent children in low-benefit states were not appreciably different from those in high benefit states.[5]

Moreover, this picture is overly optimistic. In restricting the sample to long-term dependent children, the analysis ignores the effects of higher welfare benefits in encouraging welfare enrollment and lengthening the time spent on welfare. O'Neill and Hill have shown that a 50 percent increase in monthly AFDC and food stamp benefit levels will lead to a 75 percent increase in the number of mothers with children enrolling in AFDC and a 75 percent increase in the number of years spent on welfare.[6] Once the effects of increased dependence are included, it becomes clear that higher welfare benefits have a decisively negative effect on children.

Comparing children who were identical in social and economic factors such as race, family structure, mothers' IQ and education, family income, and neighborhood residence, Hill and O'Neill found that the more years a child spent on welfare, the lower the child's IQ. The authors make it clear that it is not poverty but welfare itself which has a damaging effect on the child. Examining the young children (with an average age of five-and-a-half), the authors found that those who had spent at least two months of each year since birth on AFDC had cognitive abilities 20 percent below those who had received no welfare, even after holding family income, race, parental IQ, and other variables constant.[7]

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5 M. Anne Hill and June O'Neill, "Family Endowments and the Achievement of Young Children With Special Reference to the Underclass," *Journal of Human Resources*, Fall 1994, pp. 1090-1091.

6 M. Anne Hill and June O'Neill, *Underclass Behaviors in the United States: Measurement and Analysis of Determinants* (New York: City University of New York, Baruch College, August 1993).

O'Neill and Hill conclude:

> Our findings of a negative impact of a welfare environment are particularly troubling. After controlling for the effects of a rich array of characteristics, a mother's long-term welfare participation is associated with a significant reduction in her child's [IQ] score and this effect is reinforced by the mother's having grown up in an underclass neighborhood, defined as one with a high proportion of welfare recipients. Although long-term welfare recipients are generally poor, persistent poverty does not seem to be the main reason for the poor performance of these children. Moreover, our analysis suggests that policies that would raise the income of children on welfare simply by increasing AFDC benefits are not likely to improve cognitive development. Children on welfare in high benefit states do not perform measurably better than their counterparts in low benefit states.[8]

A similar study by Mary Corcoran and Roger Gordon of the University of Michigan shows that receipt of welfare income has negative effects on the long-term employment and earnings capacity of young boys. The study shows that, holding constant race, parental education, family structure, and a range of other social variables, higher *non-welfare income* obtained by the family during a boy's childhood was associated with higher earnings when the boy became an adult (over age 25).[9] However, *welfare income* had the opposite effect: The more welfare income received by a family while a boy was growing, up the lower the boy's earnings as an adult.[10]

Typically, liberals would dismiss this finding, arguing that families which receive a lot of welfare payments have lower total incomes than other families in society, and that it is the low overall family income, not welfare, which had a negative effect on the young boys. But the Corcoran and Gordon study compares families whose average non-welfare incomes were identical. In such cases, each extra dollar in welfare represents a net increase in overall financial resources available to the family. This extra income, according to conventional liberal welfare theory, should have positive effects on the well-being of the children. But the study shows that the extra welfare income, even though it produced a net increase in resources available to the family, had a negative impact on the development of young boys within the family. The higher the welfare income received by the family, the lower the earnings obtained by the boys upon reaching adulthood. The study suggests an increase of $1,000 per year in welfare received by a family decreased a boy's future earnings by as much as 10 percent.

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7 Hill and O'Neill, 1994, *op. cit.*

8 Hill and O'Neill, 1994, p. 1094.

9 Higher levels of earned family income will tend to be correlated positively with better parenting practices and higher parental cognitive abilities. It is likely that these traits, rather than higher income, lead to improved earnings for sons.

10 Mary Corcoran, Roger Gordon, Deborah Loren, and Gary Solon, "The Association Between Men's Economic Status and Their Family and Community Origins," *Journal of Human Resources*, Fall 1992, pp. 575-601.

A further refinement of the Corcoran and Gordon study adjusted for differences in years spent by a family in poverty. The study showed that, in general, if two families had the same level of non-welfare income and spent the same amount of time "in poverty," the more welfare income received by the family, the worse the consequences for a boy raised in the family. For example, if two boys were raised in families with identical non-welfare incomes and spent the same time "in poverty," the more welfare received by one of the families, the lower the earnings of the boy raised in that family when he becomes an adult.

Other studies have confirmed the negative effects of welfare on the development of children. For example, young women who are raised in families dependent on welfare are two to three times more likely to drop out and fail to graduate from high school than are young women of similar race and socioeconomic background not raised on welfare.[11] Similarly, single mothers who were raised as children in families receiving welfare remain on AFDC longer as adult parents than do single mothers who were not raised in welfare families, even when all other social and economic variables are held constant.[12]

Boys raised in single-parent households receiving public housing aid are more than five times more likely to engage in criminal activity than are boys who are not raised in such conditions. Young girls raised in single-parent homes in public housing are roughly five times more likely to bear children out of wedlock themselves than are girls who are not raised in such conditions.[13] In short, welfare usually operates as a form of social toxin. The more of this toxin received by a child's family, the less successful will be the child as an adult.

In attacking the welfare reform legislation passed by the House and Senate, the Clinton Administration has embraced the central erroneous tenets of liberal welfarism. The Administration's report on welfare makes clear its belief that rapid automatic increases in welfare spending are essential to the well-being of children and that any attempts to slow the growth of future welfare spending will significantly harm children.[14]

The Administration report is founded unequivocally on the failed hypothesis that combating "poverty" through more generous welfare spending is crucial to children's future. This thinking is simply wrong. An expanded and more expensive welfare system will not benefit children. Instead, expansion of welfare leads to greater dependence and illegitimacy which, in turn, have devastatingly negative consequences on children. Those truly concerned with the welfare of children must seek a radical transformation of the welfare system aimed, not (as the Clinton Administration does) at increasing welfare spending and enrollment, but at reducing dependence and illegitimacy. That is the core of Congress's plan.

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11 R. Forste and M. Tienda, "Race and Ethnic Variation in the Schooling Consequences of Female Adolescent Sexual Activity" *Social Science Quarterly*, March 1992.

12 Mwangi S. Kimeny, "Rational Choice, Culture of Poverty, and the Intergenerational Transmission of Welfare Dependency," *Southern Economic Journal*, April 1991.

13 Heritage Foundation research based on the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth.

14 Office of Management and Budget. "Potential Poverty and Distributional effects of Welfare Reform Bills and Balanced Budget Plans," November 9, 1995.

PUBLIC SUPPORTS CONGRESSIONAL WELFARE REFORM

By overwhelming margins, the public supports the principal elements of the welfare reform passed by the U.S. House of Representatives, according to a poll conducted by Voter/Consumer Research, a Bethesda-based polling firm, for the Family Research Council in mid-October 1995.[15]

For example, by a margin of 84 percent to 13 percent Americans support the family cap. Nearly nine out of ten Americans "oppose increasing a welfare mother's monthly welfare check if she has another child out of wedlock."

In contrast to proposals by President Clinton, the welfare reforms agreed to in the House/Senate conference will contain modest but real steps to reduce illegitimacy. Three out of four of those polled agreed that the current welfare system makes it easier for women to choose to have children out of wedlock. By a ratio of two to one, Americans feel that reducing illegitimacy is a more important goal in welfare reform than attempting merely to make single mothers self-sufficient.

However, the public still believes overwhelmingly that welfare recipients should be required to work. Ninety percent of those polled stated that "recipients of government welfare programs should have to work for their benefits."

Since it would be difficult to require all welfare recipients to work immediately, the reform bills passed in the House and Senate urge states to impose work requirements on the most employable recipients first. Specifically, the bills urge states to focus work requirements on fathers in two-parent families and single mothers without pre-school children before requiring work of single mothers with pre-school children. (Roughly half of AFDC families have no children under age five in the household.) The public agrees overwhelmingly with these work priorities. Eighty-eight percent of the public feels that work should be required of fathers and mothers of school-age children before it is required of mothers caring for pre-school children.

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15 Family Research Council poll conducted by Voter/Consumer research, mid-October 1995. The poll surveyed 1,000 randomly selected American adults about their views on welfare and social issues and has a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percent.

Table 1

Polling Data on Welfare Reform

Question: In the case of a poor, single pregnant woman, who do you think is best able to help her economically, emotionally, and physically during and after her pregnancy?

Family and friends	66%
A religious or non-religious charity	20%
Government welfare programs	10%
Don't know	4%

Question: Do you believe recipients of government welfare programs should have to work for their benefits, or should they not?

Should have to work	90%
Should not have to work	4%
Don't know	6%

Question: If there aren't enough jobs for all welfare recipients who are required to work, which of the following different types of welfare recipients do you think should be required to go to work first --

Fathers with dependent children	76%
Mothers of school aged children	12%
Mothers of pre-school children	3%
Don't know	9%

Question: And of this list, who do you believe should be the last to be required to go to work?

Fathers with dependent children	3%
Mothers of school aged children	9%
Mothers of pre-school children	82%
Don't know	6%

Question: Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose increasing a welfare mother's monthly welfare check if she has another child out of wedlock?

Strongly favor increasing	5%
Somewhat favor increasing	8%
Somewhat oppose increasing	18%
Strongly oppose increasing	66%
Don't know	3%

Question: And thinking about America's welfare problems, which of the following two goals do you think would be easier to reach --

Getting single mothers with few job skills into jobs that will pay them enough to support themselves and their children	33%
OR	
Getting young people to delay having children until they are able to support themselves and a family	64%
Don't know	3%

Source: Family Research Council poll of 1,000 randomly selected adults, conducted by Voter/Consumer Research, mid-October 1995.

CONCLUSION

The welfare reform legislation which will be approved by the House/Senate conference proposes a reform of the current welfare system based on three central themes:

- ✔ **Reducing** the growth of illegitimacy;
- ✔ **Reducing** dependence by requiring welfare recipients to work; and
- ✔ **Limiting** the explosive growth of welfare spending.

Among the many elements of reform in the legislation, seven are crucial:

1. The bill will end the automatic entitlement nature of AFDC spending. Under the legislation, states which increase their welfare caseloads will no longer be rewarded by an automatic increase in federal funding. This change imposes a fundamental fiscal discipline at the state level which is essential to real reform.
2. The bill establishes a family cap. Under the bill, mothers already enrolled in AFDC will not receive an automatic increase in federal welfare benefits if they give birth to an additional child while on welfare. (However, states will be permitted to enact legislation to "opt out" of this requirement.)
3. The bill provides a funding mechanism to reward states which reduce out-of-wedlock births without increasing abortions.
4. The bill provides $75 million per year in funding for a new block grant for abstinence education.
5. For the first time in the history of AFDC, the bill establishes serious work requirements for welfare recipients. Under the bill, up to 40 percent of the AFDC caseload will be required to work or become self-sufficient by the year 2002.
6. In contrast to all previous "work" requirements, in the AFDC program, the work requirements in the proposed legislation are real. Recipients who do not obtain private-sector jobs will be required to perform community service in exchange for benefits according to a "pay after performance" rule. Recipients will not receive benefits until the required work has been performed satisfactorily. If the recipient fails to perform the required hours of work, benefits will be reduced pro-rata.
7. The bill properly recognizes that the goal of "workfare" is to reduce welfare dependence and welfare caseloads, not to maximize the number of welfare recipients in "make work" public service jobs. It recognizes that the best road to self-sufficiency is to reduce the number of persons who become dependent and get "hooked" on welfare in the first place. In contrast to President Clinton's plan, which rewards states for expanding "welfare addiction," the approach in Congress for the first time focuses on rewarding states that reduce the number of individuals who get "hooked" on welfare in the first place.

Overall, the proposed legislation represents a significant and badly needed first step in overhauling a bloated and destructive welfare system. The proposed reforms will be of great benefit to society, the taxpayers, and, most important, welfare recipients themselves.

Robert Rector
Senior Policy Analyst

Chairman SHAW. Thank you, Mr. Rector.
Dr. Zill.

STATEMENT OF NICHOLAS ZILL, PH.D., VICE PRESIDENT AND DIRECTOR, CHILD AND FAMILY STUDIES, WESTAT, INC., ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

Dr. ZILL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have prepared a rather lengthy lecture for you in the written testimony. I will have to try and condense it, but I hope that the full testimony can be put in the record.

Chairman SHAW. It certainly will for you and for all of the panelists.

Dr. ZILL. The family situations in which American children are born, cared for, and raised have changed dramatically over the last 30 years. As has been discussed, one of the most striking changes, and probably the one that has generated the greatest public concern, is the growth in the numbers of children who are born to unmarried mothers.

The reasons for the enormous increase since the sixties have been hotly debated. What I would like to focus on here is not the reasons for the increase, but the consequences for the economic well-being of the family that is so formed and for the development and well-being of the children involved.

Over the last decade and a half, social scientists have generated a considerable volume of solid research on family composition and children's well-being. Although there has been considerably more research on the effects of divorce than on those of nonmarital upbringing, there is a growing body of evidence on the latter topic, as well.

The more recent research has made use of data from epidemiological surveys and longitudinal studies based on large probability samples of children, such as the National Survey of Children which Frank Furstenberg and I have both worked on, the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, and the National Health Interview Survey on Child Health.

What the findings of these studies consistently show is that in our society the best thing for a child's well-being is to be raised by both biological parents, who live together in a reasonably harmonious—but not necessarily a perfectly fulfilling—marriage.

Growing up in a single-parent family, a stepfamily and, indeed, virtually any family type other than an intact two-parent family is associated with poorer health, lower achievement and an increased incidence of conduct and emotional problems in children. Only when there are high levels of open and persistent conflict between parents does the two-parent family pose a hazard to children comparable to that connected with family disruption or lone parenthood.

This is not to say that all children from single-parent families turn out badly or to deny that many single mothers are capable and responsible parents who do admirable jobs of raising their children in difficult circumstances. What I am talking about is a statistical risk, not an inevitability.

Furthermore, there are several other factors that can ameliorate or exacerbate the risk to the child. Factors such as parental com-

petence, warmth, and emotional stability, the parent's education level, family income, the presence or absence of strong moral values, support from other relatives and friends, and the child's own temperament and adaptability.

Being born to unmarried parents is only one, among a number, of risk or protective factors that help determine how a child turns out. It does represent a genuine and significant risk for a child's economic, physical, intellectual, and emotional well-being. Anyone who cares about the welfare of American children must hope that in the future fewer children, not more, will grow up having to confront this risk.

What I do in my written testimony is to present some of the research evidence presenting the link between unmarried parenthood and various aspects of children's well-being. There is a set of charts that you can look at and see some of the differences. Robert Rector has mentioned some of them.

I want to talk a little bit though about the link between poverty and welfare dependency. We have to understand that when there is no marriage, there is a less strong bond between father and mother and between the father and the child. This is evidenced by survey data on the lower frequency of contact and lower likelihood of financial support by never-married fathers than by divorced fathers.

Only 15 percent of unmarried women with children from an absent father report getting child support from that father compared to 54 percent of divorced women. A lack of marital ties or legal obligations also means that the father is less likely to be counted on for providing child care for the child while the mother might be out working or looking for work.

It should be noted that nonmarriage also has implications for the man. The lack of marital ties or legal obligations means there is less pressure on the father to work steadily, lead a regular lifestyle and keep out of trouble with the law. That's the kind of adult socialization that many men go through following marriage and fatherhood. As they said in "Guys and Dolls," marry the man today and change his ways tomorrow. That kind of socialization is not experienced by the many young men who now become fathers outside of marriage. It is perhaps not surprising, then, that many of them wind up with arrests and prison records.

It is important to note, also, that the financial inadequacies of mother-only families are not attributable solely to the absence of one parent or the factors just enumerated. Never-married mothers are not just lacking husbands, they also tend to be younger, to have lower literacy levels, lower education levels, less work experience and often other problems such as histories of depression, delinquency or drug abuse.

A typical elementary-school child, living with a never-married mother has a black or a Hispanic mother who is 29 years of age and has completed less than 1 year of college. The family lives in a rented apartment in the central city of a major metropolitan area. There is no grandmother or other adult present in the household.

The mother is likely to be working or looking for work. Her likelihood of not finding work or being laid off is twice that of a divorced

mother and four times higher than the risk of unemployment faced by parents in a typical married couple family. These characteristics are risk factors for poverty in themselves.

In other words, we have to think about those other factors as well and focus more on the multirisk family rather than just focusing strictly on unmarried parenthood, per se.

As you will see in the charts provided, children with never-married mothers are less likely to have a good quality home environment, they are more likely to live with an adult smoker in the household, to rarely or never use seatbelts when riding in a car, to have a late or irregular bedtime, to not have a regular provider of sick care, and not to have had a dental visit in the last 2 years.

Their health is less likely to be rated as excellent with no activity limitation. They are twice as likely to be in fair or poor health, and to have a limiting condition. They are apt to spend one more day in bed, due to illness, when compared to children in two-parent families and they have had twice as many hospital visits in the course of a year because of emergency conditions or because of inappropriate use of emergency rooms as health clinics.

When they reach school age, they are likely to be behind other children in terms of being able to do such things as recognize letters and count to 20. They are more likely to show hyperactive behavior. I am not going to read the numbers, they are all illustrated in the charts.

In school, they are more likely to be described as being in the lower half of the class when they are between 7 and 17 years old, twice the likelihood of repeating a grade. More than twice as likely to have had a parent conference because of behavior problems. Three times more likely to have been suspended or expelled from school at some point in their careers.

These differences are diminished, but remain significant when you consider for factors like parent education, family income, and other family compositional factors.

As Mr. Rector mentioned, the children in never-married mother families also had a higher incidence of emotional and behavioral problems. Perhaps most troubling, is that there also is an increase of risk in adolescence and young adulthood.

Let me talk briefly about what can be done to lower the incidence of unmarried parenthood in the future. The first thing that agencies, public and private could do——

Chairman SHAW. Dr. Zill, could you summarize. Our light is not working here for some reason that I am not aware of but——

Dr. ZILL. The first thing is to improve job training, apprenticeship, and early employment opportunities for those teenagers and young adults who are not college bound, the so-called forgotten half of students. Hedrick Smith, the journalist, said there are two tracks in American society, the track to college and the track to nowhere. Those young people who are on the track to nowhere are much more likely to have children outside of marriage.

Giving them a better track is one way to prevent out-of-marriage childbearing.

A second step is a public information campaign that teaches that all family forms are not equally viable. The kinds of facts that I have just presented should be made available to young people.

Without exaggerating the risks or putting down individuals who come from these families, we should be honest about the known drawbacks of single-parent families. As efforts to end smoking have shown, knowledge of risks can make a difference in people's behavior. The knowledge has to be communicated in order to have any effect.

A third step is to communicate clearly and consistently to teenagers and young adults that it is unwise to have children when you are emotionally and financially unprepared to care for them. Unmarried teenage parenthood before high school graduation is not a cost-free experiment with alternative lifestyles, it is a major cause of child poverty, welfare dependency, and school failure.

We should emphasize that young people are doing themselves and their offspring no favors by engaging in unprepared parenthood.

Chairman SHAW. Dr. Zill, we will have to put the conclusion of your report in the record.

Thank you very much.

Dr. ZILL. Thank you.

[The prepared statement and attachments follow:]

Unmarried Parenthood as a Risk Factor for Children

Testimony before the

U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Human Resources

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The family situations in which American children are born, cared for, and raised have changed dramatically over the last 30 years. One of the most striking changes, and probably the one that has generated the greatest public concern, is the growth in the numbers of children who are born to unmarried mothers. In 1993, the nationwide count of such births amounted to 1.2 million, or 31 percent of all births. This was triple the percentage of births that occurred outside of marriage in 1970. (Figure A).

Among births to white women, the percentage that occurred outside marriage quadrupled between 1970 and 1993, going from 5.5 percent to 24 percent. Among births to black women, the unmarried percentage rose from 38 percent in 1970 to 69 percent in 1993. There are signs that the rate of increase in unmarried childbearing is slowing down. Nonetheless, the facts that unmarried childbearing has grown so fast and, in several U.S. ethnic groups, a majority of births now occur outside of marriage (Figure B), are deeply troubling to many observers.

Not only are more American children being born outside of marriage, more are growing up in single-parent households, living with mothers (and, much less frequently, fathers) who have never married. According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, the number of children under the age of 18 living in single-parent families with never-married mothers doubled between 1984 and 1994, going from 3.1 million to 6 million. The ethnic composition of this population group has also changed. African-American children still constitute a majority of children living with unmarried mothers, but they now comprise a smaller majority (down from 67 percent to 55 percent), while white and Hispanic children form a larger minority (Figure C).

The reasons for the enormous increase in unmarried childbearing since the 1960s have been hotly debated. Clearly, the social imperative for all adults to get married has weakened, as have the ability and willingness of parents or the community at large to insist on "shotgun weddings" in cases in which a young couple produces a child outside of marriage. Critics of the welfare system contend that it has helped to fuel the growth of "illegitimacy" by subsidizing and, in effect, institutionalizing childrearing outside of marriage. Others argue that this is an overly simple view and that many other factors have played a role in the growth of non-marital childbearing, including worldwide cultural changes and macroeconomic shifts that have made it harder for low-skilled workers to earn enough to support a family.

What I would like to focus on, however, is not the reasons for the increase in unmarried parenthood, but the consequences for the economic well-being of the family that is so formed, and for the development and well-being of the children involved. This topic has also been a source of much contention, of course. Some have argued that unmarried parenthood is a major cause of child poverty and welfare dependency, and that coming from a single-parent family is a serious impediment to a young person's life chances. Others have countered that the fact that a child comes from a single-parent family has no particular bearing on how well he or she does in life. Single-parent families are simply different from, not necessarily more stressful or less supportive than two-parent families. If there are problems with such families, it is due to other factors, such as poverty or a lack of supportive community services. Or so the counter-argument goes.

Much of the debate between proponents of these conflicting positions has taken place on the anecdotal level, and has relied on evidence from limited studies based on small samples that were not necessarily representative of the general population. Over the last decade and a half, however, social scientists have generated a considerable volume of solid research on family composition and children's well-being. Although there has been considerably more research on the consequences of divorce, there is a growing body of evidence on the repercussions of nonmarital upbringing as well. The more recent research has made use of data from epidemiological surveys and longitudinal studies based on large probability samples of families with children, studies like the National Survey of Children, the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, the National Health Interview Survey on Child Health, the National Household Education Survey, and the National Education Longitudinal Studies. Studies that have made use of these large, representative data bases, though they have been conducted by different researchers from a variety of disciplines and perspectives, have produced generally compatible results.

What the findings of these studies consistently show is that, in our society, the best thing for a child's well-being is to be raised by both biological parents who live together in a reasonably harmonious -- but not necessarily a perfectly fulfilling -- marriage. Growing up in a single-parent family, a stepfamily, and, indeed, virtually any family type other than an intact two-parent family is associated with poorer health, lower achievement, and an increased incidence of conduct and emotional problems in children. Only when there are high levels of open and persistent conflict between parents does the two-parent family pose a hazard to children comparable to that connected with family disruption or lone parenthood.

This is not to say that all children from single-parent families turn out badly or to deny that many single mothers are capable and responsible parents who do admirable jobs of raising their children in difficult circumstances. What I am talking about is a statistical risk, not an inevitability. Furthermore, there are a several other factors that can ameliorate or exacerbate the risk to the child, factors such as parental competence, warmth, and emotional stability, the parents' education level, family income, the presence or absence of strong moral values, support from other relatives and friends, and the child's own temperament and adaptability. Being born to unmarried parents is only one among a number of risk or protective factors that help determine how a child turns out. But it does represent a genuine and significant risk for a child's economic, physical, intellectual, and emotional well-being. Anyone who cares about the welfare of American children must hope that in the future, fewer children, not more, will grow up having to confront this risk.

What I would like to do next is present research findings that illustrate the nature and magnitude of the economic and developmental difficulties unmarried parents and their children face, and give some reasons why having unmarried parents is a risk factor for children. I conclude by making some suggestions as to what we might do to reduce unmarried childbearing in the future.

A Greater Risk of Poverty and Welfare Dependency

To begin with, being born to unmarried parents substantially increases a child's risk of growing up in poverty and welfare dependency. In 1992, for example, the poverty rate for single-parent, female-headed families with children (46 percent) was nearly six times higher than the poverty rate for married-couple families with children (8 percent). A high proportion of female-headed families with children born outside of marriage rely on welfare or other forms of government assistance; 83 percent did so during a 32-month period from 1983 to 1986 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1989). Data from the 1993 Survey of Income and Program Participation show that 68 percent of women currently receiving welfare were unmarried at the birth of their first child, whereas 27 percent of mothers not on welfare had their first child outside of marriage (U.S Bureau of the Census, 1995). As the work of David Ellwood, Mary Jo Bane, and Donna Pavetti has shown, unmarried women with young children are more likely than other welfare recipients to remain on welfare for extended periods of time (Pavetti, 1995).

There are several reasons why mother-only families in general and those headed by never-married women in particular are likely to be poor. They include the following:

- It is inherently more costly for two parents to live apart and have to spend significant portions of their incomes on separate housing, separate appliances, separate transportation, and so on;
- When there is no marriage, there is a less strong bond between the father and mother and between the father and the child. This is evidenced by survey data on the lower frequency of contact and lower likelihood of financial support by never married fathers than by divorced fathers. For example, only 15 percent of unmarried women with children from an absent father reported getting child support from that father in the last year, compared with 54 percent of divorced women (Zill and Nord, 1994, p. 8). Even when nonresidential fathers do pay support, they typically do not pay much;
- The lack of marital ties or legal obligations also means that the father is less likely to be counted on for providing child care for the child while the mother might be out working or looking for work;
- Wage rates for women still lag behind those for men, even though the wage gap has been narrowing; and,
- When single parents must rely on welfare for support, the cash payments they receive are usually not sufficient to lift their families above the poverty level.

It should be noted that non-marriage also has implications for the man. The lack of marital ties or legal obligations means there is less pressure on the father to work steadily, lead a regular life style, and keep out of trouble with the law. Thus, the kind of adult socialization that many men go through following marriage and fatherhood is not experienced by the many young men who now become fathers outside of marriage. It is perhaps not surprising, then, that many of them wind up with arrest and prison records.

The financial inadequacies of mother-only families are not attributable solely to the absence of one parent from the household and the factors just enumerated. Never married mothers are not just lacking husbands, they also tend to be younger, to have lower literacy levels, lower education levels, less work experience, and often, other problems such as histories of depression, delinquency, or drug abuse. As shown in Table 1, a typical elementary-school aged child living with a never-married mother has a black or Hispanic mother who is 29 years of age and has completed less than one year of college. The family lives in a rented apartment in the central city of a major metropolitan area. There is no grandmother or other adult present in the household. The mother is likely to be working or looking for work, but her likelihood of not finding work or being laid off is twice that of a divorced mother and four times higher than the risk of unemployment faced by parents in a typical married-couple family. These characteristics are risk factors for poverty in themselves.

As also shown in Table 1, compared to never-married mothers, divorced mothers tend to be older, have more education, are more likely to be living in the suburbs, and are twice as likely to be working full-time. As was just mentioned, divorced mothers are three times more likely to be receiving child support from the absent father. It is not surprising, then, that the median cash income of children in divorced-mother families is twice as high as that of children living with never-married mothers (about $18,000 per year versus $9,350 in 1994), and that their poverty rate, though still high, is substantially lower than that for children with never-married mothers (38 percent versus 64 percent poor in 1993).

Quality of Their Home Environments

Children who grow up with never-married mothers are less likely than children in mother-father families to have home environments that are free from obvious hazards, that are reasonably orderly and predictable, and in which parents make sure that children obtain preventive health care. Several indicators of the quality of children's home environment were available in the 1988 National Health Interview Survey on Child Health (Figure 1). They show that, compared to children in mother-father families, children living with never-married mothers were:

- more likely to have an adult smoker in the household, 52 percent versus 39 percent;
- more likely to rarely or never use seat belts when riding in a car, 41 percent versus 26 percent;
- twice as likely to have a late or irregular bedtime, 30 percent versus 16 percent;
- twice as likely not to have a regular provider of sick care, 33 percent versus 15 percent; and,
- more likely not to have had a dental visit in the last two years, 25 percent versus 18 percent.

State of Their Health

Though most children living with never-married mothers are in reasonably good health, their health status is notably inferior to that of children living with both mother and father, and their frequency of illness is significantly greater. (Figure 2). The 1988 National Health Interview Survey on Child Health found that, compared to children in mother-father families, those living with never-married mothers were:

- less likely to be rated in excellent health with no health-related activity limitation, 41 percent versus 55 percent;
- twice as likely to be in fair or poor health or to have a limiting condition, 11 percent versus 6 percent;
- apt to have spent one more day in bed during the past year because of illness or injury, 4.8 days versus 3.9 days;
- had twice as many hospital visits because of illnesses or injuries that required emergency attention, or because the mother was inappropriately using the hospital emergency room as twice as an outpatient clinic, 8.2 visits versus 4.5 visits per 100 children per year.

School Readiness: Accomplishments of Preschoolers

Because their home environments often provide less intellectual stimulation and emotional support than those of children in two-parent families, when it is time to start kindergarten, children born to unmarried mothers have significantly fewer signs of emerging literacy and numeracy than children born to married mothers. The differences are even more striking if, in addition to not being born in marriage, the child has additional risk factors such as living in a single-parent household, having a mother who has not finished high school, living below the poverty line, or having a mother who does not have English as her primary language. Several indicators of emerging literacy and numeracy in four-year-old children who had not yet attended kindergarten were obtained from parent reports in the National Household Education Survey of 1993. They show that, compared to children born to married mothers, those born to unmarried mothers were less likely to have:

- identified the primary colors by name, 74 percent versus 87 percent (and only 59 percent of those with 3 or more risk factors);
- recognized most or all letters of the alphabet, 52 percent versus 59 percent (and only 40 percent of those with 3 or more risk factors);

- counted to 20 or higher, 56 percent versus 64 percent (and only 43 percent of those with 3 or more risk factors);
- pretended to read stories from a story book, 67 percent versus 75 percent (and 53 percent of those from multiple-risk families); and,
- written their own first names, 62 percent versus 73 percent (and 53 percent of those with 3 or more risk factors).

School Readiness: Hyperactive Behavior

When they are about to start kindergarten, children born to unmarried mothers are more likely to show a pattern of inattentive and overly active behavior that may create problems when they reach the classroom setting and has been found to be a predictor of later achievement difficulties. The 1993 National Household Education Survey found that among 4-year-olds who had not yet attended kindergarten, and compared to those born to married mothers, those born to unmarried mothers were more likely to be described as:

- being very restless and fidgeting a lot, 37 percent versus 26 percent (and 41 percent of those with 3 or more risk factors);
- having very short attention spans, 30 percent versus 21 percent (and 37 percent of those from multiple-risk families);
- often having temper tantrums, 31 percent versus 20 percent (and 32 percent of those with 3 or more risk factors);
- tripping or falling easily, 19 percent versus 11 percent (and 21 percent of those from multiple-risk families).

How They Do In School

When they reach elementary school and high school, children living with never-married mothers are significantly more likely than children from mother-father families to experience academic achievement difficulties and to exhibit disruptive behavior that results in disciplinary actions by the school. (Figure 5a). In the 1988 National Health Interview Survey on Child Health, among school-aged children aged 7-17, and compared to those from living with both birth parents, those living with never-married mothers were:

- more likely to be described as being in the lower half of the class, 60 percent versus 38 percent;
- more than twice as likely to have repeated a grade, 33 percent versus 13 percent;
- more than twice as likely to have had the school request a conference with the parent in the last year because of conduct problems the child was exhibiting at school, 30 percent versus 13 percent;
- three times more likely to have been suspended or expelled from school at some point, 17 percent versus 5 percent.

Differences Remain After Adjusting for Socioeconomic Disparities Between Groups

As mentioned earlier, children living with never-married mothers are likely to have additional risk factors, such as low parent education levels, poverty, and minority language status. Some of the differences I have been describing in children's health, school readiness, achievement, and behavior, are partly attributable to these factors, rather than to unmarried parenthood as such. With the data on school performance and disciplinary problems from the National Health Interview Survey I have just described, I carried out regression analyses that adjusted the differences between children from never-married and two-parent families for the effects of differences in parent education, race and Hispanic origin, family size, age or sex of the child, and other related factors. These adjustments reduced the size of the differences, but did not eliminate them. In particular, differences with respect to conduct problems and student suspension remained significant and substantial. The raw and adjusted differences are shown in Figure 5b.

Prevalence of Psychological Disorders

Data from the 1988 National Health Interview Survey on Child Health show that one child in four who lives with a never-married mother is reported to have had a developmental delay, learning disability, or an emotional or behavioral problem of significant duration. By contrast, 15 percent of children in mother-father families have had such a problem (Figure 6). Children of never-married mothers are more than twice as likely to have an emotional or behavioral problem (20 percent versus 8 percent), and one-third more likely to exhibit learning disabilities (8 percent versus 6 percent).

Problems in Adolescence and Young Adulthood

Analyzing longitudinal data from the National Survey of Children, Moore and Stief (1991) found that youngsters with unmarried mothers who were on welfare had lower educational achievement and occupational attainment levels and higher problem behavior levels as young adults than those who had not grown up in such families. Whether unmarried parenthood or some correlated set of factors accounted for these associations was not established. Analyzing data from the National Educational Longitudinal Study of

1988, Zill, Nord, and Loomis (1995) found that tenth-grade students from mother-only families were significantly more likely than students from two-parent families to drop out, become teen parents, report having been arrested, and to have smoked and used illicit drugs by the time of their senior years. When these associations were subjected to multivariate analysis, factors that are closely related to single-parenthood, such as low parent education level and low family socioeconomic status, proved to play significant roles in the genesis of these risk behaviors. However, even after these related factors were controlled, significant links between family welfare receipt and high school dropout, teen parenthood, delinquency, and illicit drug use were found.

Finally, Sara McLanahan and Gary Sandefur, analyzing data from several national longitudinal surveys found single-parenthood to be associated with increased risks of high school dropout, college non-completion, premature parenthood, and idleness in males in young adulthood. These effects remained significant when socioeconomic factors were controlled.

Preventing High-Risk Family Formation in the Future

I would like to conclude by suggesting three things that public and private agencies could be doing to help lower the incidence of unmarried parenthood in the future. Such efforts should not be aimed only at unmarried childbearing per se, but at preventing the formation of multi-risk families. These are families that involve not only single parenthood, but low parent education levels, low incomes, parental immaturity, and negative parental behaviors such as drug or alcohol abuse. The research findings indicate that young people who grow up in these kinds of families are the ones who are most vulnerable to academic failure, classroom misconduct, and later poverty, dependency, and deviant behavior.

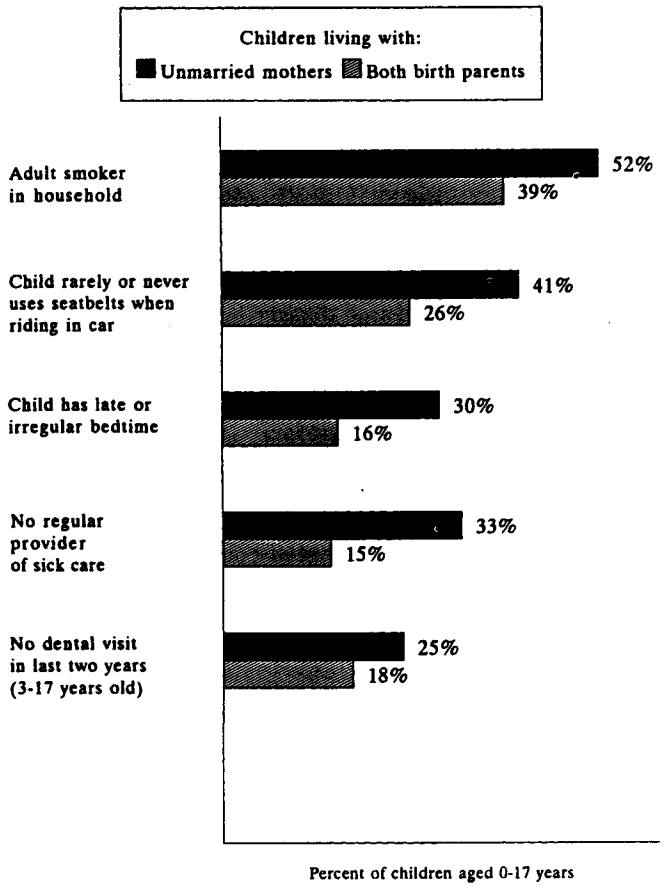
The first thing that agencies could do to help improve family stability in the future is to improve job training, apprenticeship, and early employment opportunities for those teenagers and young adults who are not college bound, the so-called "forgotten half" of students. The reason for emphasizing these programs is that research has clearly shown that limited employment opportunities, unstable employment, and low wages are important causes of nonmarriage and family disruption. The lack of career opportunities is also an important reason why young people become parents when they are financially not ready to support their children. Finding ways to provide young people who are not doing well in conventional academic studies with positive career alternatives should be given a high priority by public and private agencies.

A second step that may affect family life in the future is a public information campaign that teaches that all family forms are not equally viable. The facts that researchers have learned about how children do in different kinds of families should form the basis for what young people are taught about family life, parenting, and child development. Without exaggerating the risks, or "putting down" individuals who come from these families, we should be honest about the known drawbacks of single-parent families. As efforts to end smoking have shown, knowledge of risks can make a difference in people's behavior. But the knowledge has to be communicated in order to have any effect.

A third, related step is to insure that all adults but especially teachers and counselors communicate clearly and consistently to teenagers and young adults that it is unwise to have children when you are emotionally and financially unprepared to care for them. Unmarried teenage parenthood before high school graduation is not a cost-free experiment with alternative lifestyles, it is a major cause of child poverty, welfare dependency, and school failure. We should emphasize that young people are doing themselves and their offspring no favors by engaging in unprepared parenthood. Simply providing young people with condoms or other contraceptive technologies without a strong, consistent message about the reasons for making use of them is much less likely to be effective.

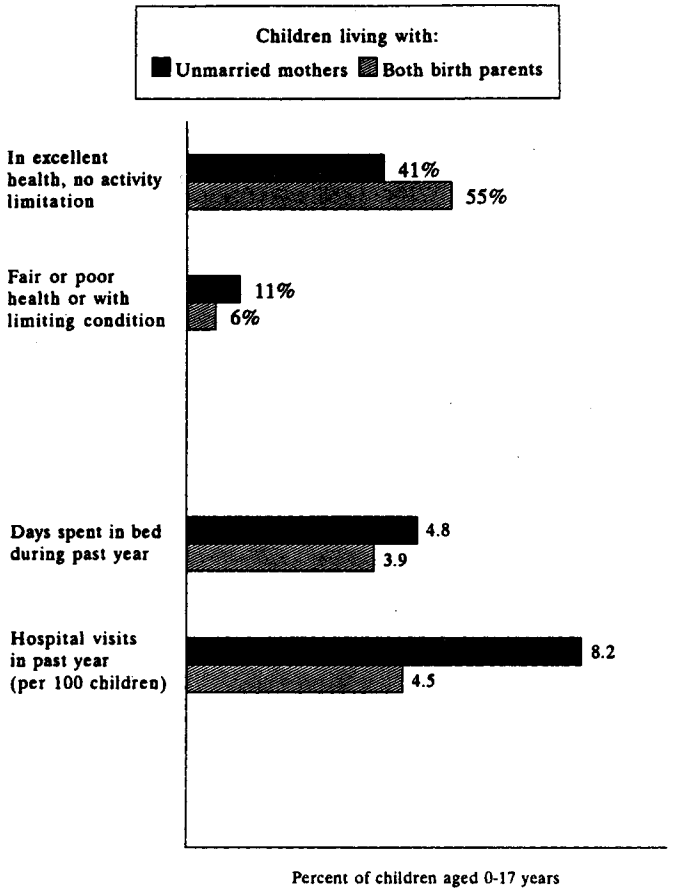
Implementing these recommendations will not be easy and the steps themselves will not work miracles. They will not, for instance, create jobs where none exist. But combined with efforts by other public and private institutions, such efforts may make a tangible difference in the lives of many young people, and hence have a beneficial effect on family life in the future.

Figure 1: Children of Unmarried Mothers in the United States: Quality of Their Home Environments



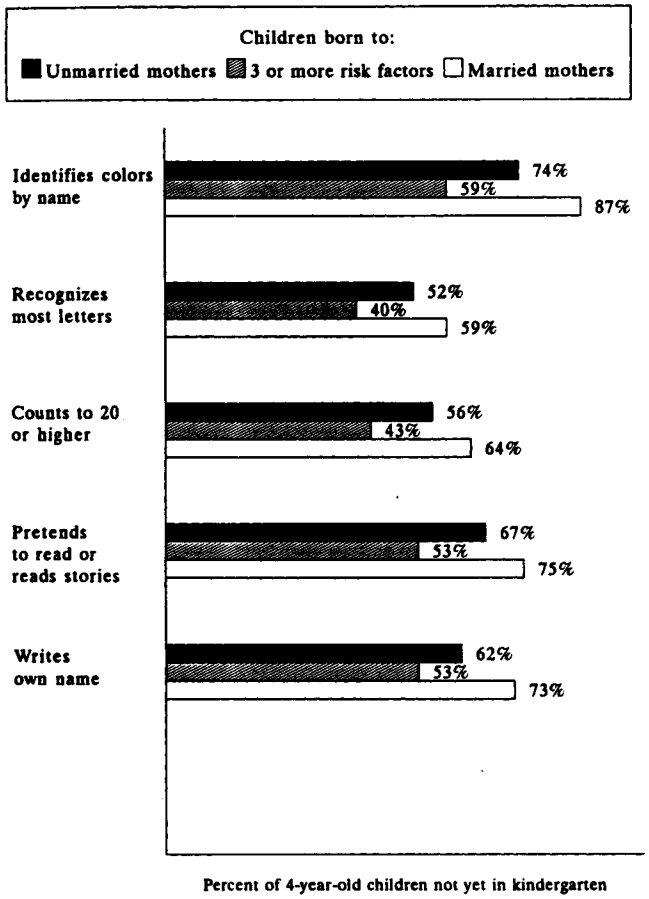
Source: Coiro, M.J., Zill, N., & Bloom, B. Health of Our Nation's Children (1994), and additional analysis of data from the 1988 National Health Interview Survey on Child Health.

Figure 2: Children of Unmarried Mothers in the United States: State of Their Health



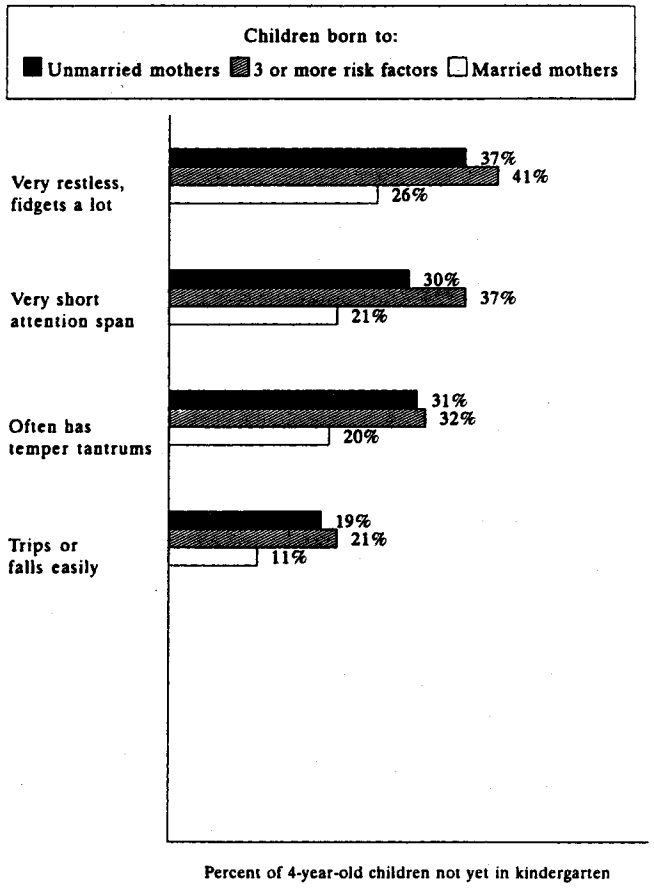
Source: Cotro, M.J., Zill, N., & Bloom, B. Health of Our Nation's Children (1994), and additional analysis of data from the 1988 National Health Interview Survey on Child Health.

Figure 3: School Readiness of Children of Unmarried Mothers in the United States: Accomplishments at Age 4



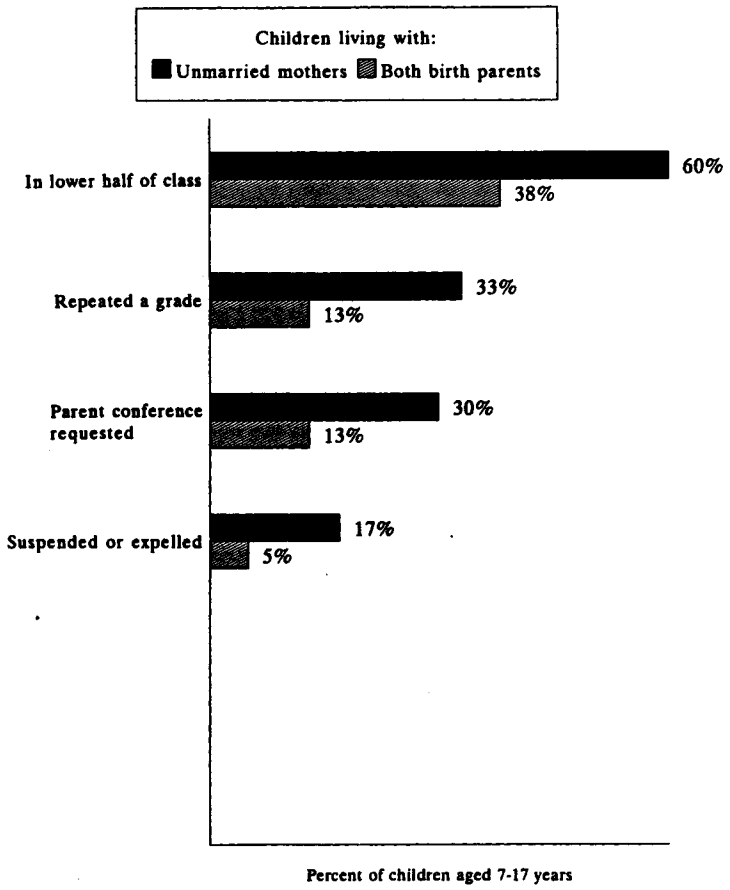
Source: Zill, N., Collins, M., West, J., & Hausken, E.G. (1995). Approaching Kindergarten: A Look at Preschoolers in the United States. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES 95-280). Washington, DC.

Figure 4: School Readiness of Children of Unmarried Mothers in the United States: Hyperactive Behavior at Age 4



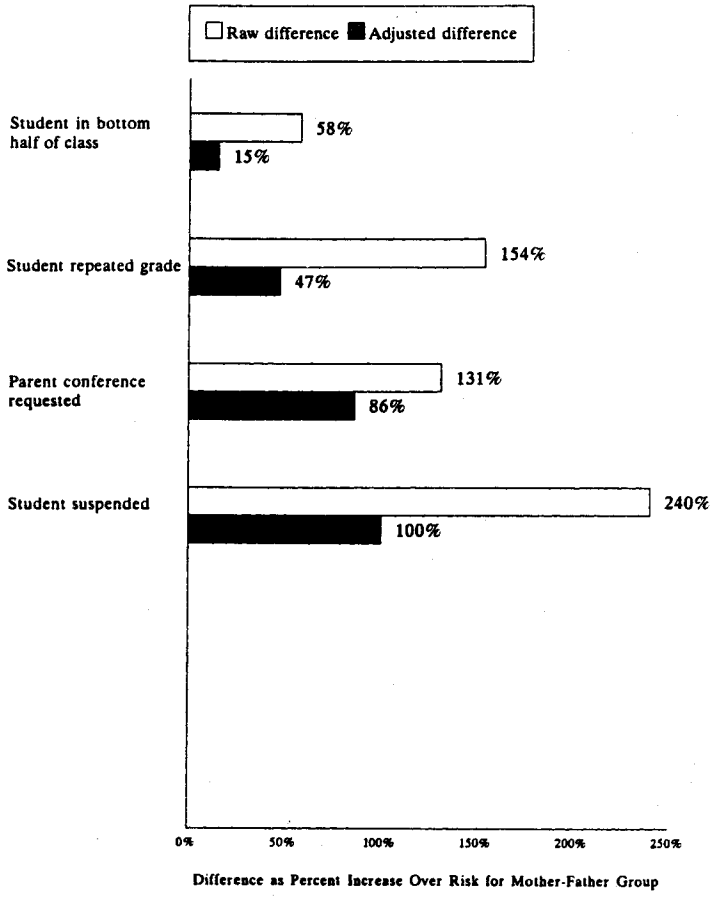
Source: Zill, N., Collins, M., West, J., & Hausken, E.G. (1995). Approaching Kindergarten: A Look at Preschoolers in the United States. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES 95-280). Washington, DC.

Figure 5a: Children of Unmarried Mothers in the United States:
How They Do in School



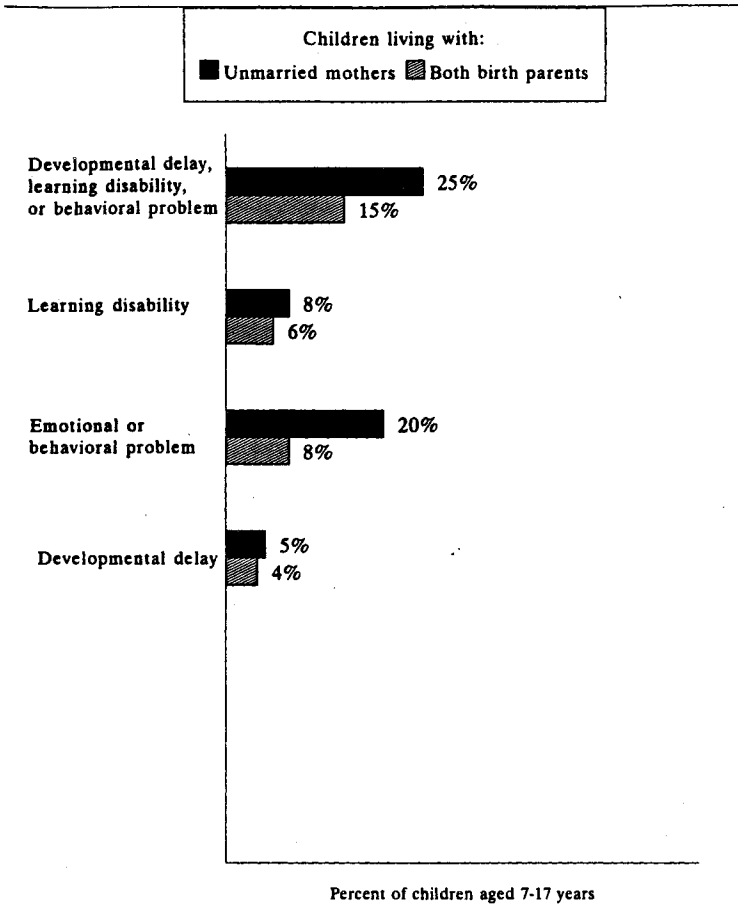
Source: Zill, N. (1994). Family Change and Student Achievement: What We Have Learned, What It Means for Schools. In Booth & Dunn (Eds.), Family-School Links: How Do They Affect Educational Outcomes? Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Figure 5b. Percent Increase in Risk of School-Related Problems for Students From Mother-Only Families Over Students From Mother-Father Families, U.S. Children Ages 7-17, 1988



Source: Zill, N. (1994). Family Change and Student Achievement: What We Have Learned, What It Means for Schools. In Booth & Dunn (Eds.), Family-School Links: How Do They Affect Educational Outcomes? Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Figure 6: Children of Unmarried Mothers in the United States: Psychological Disorders



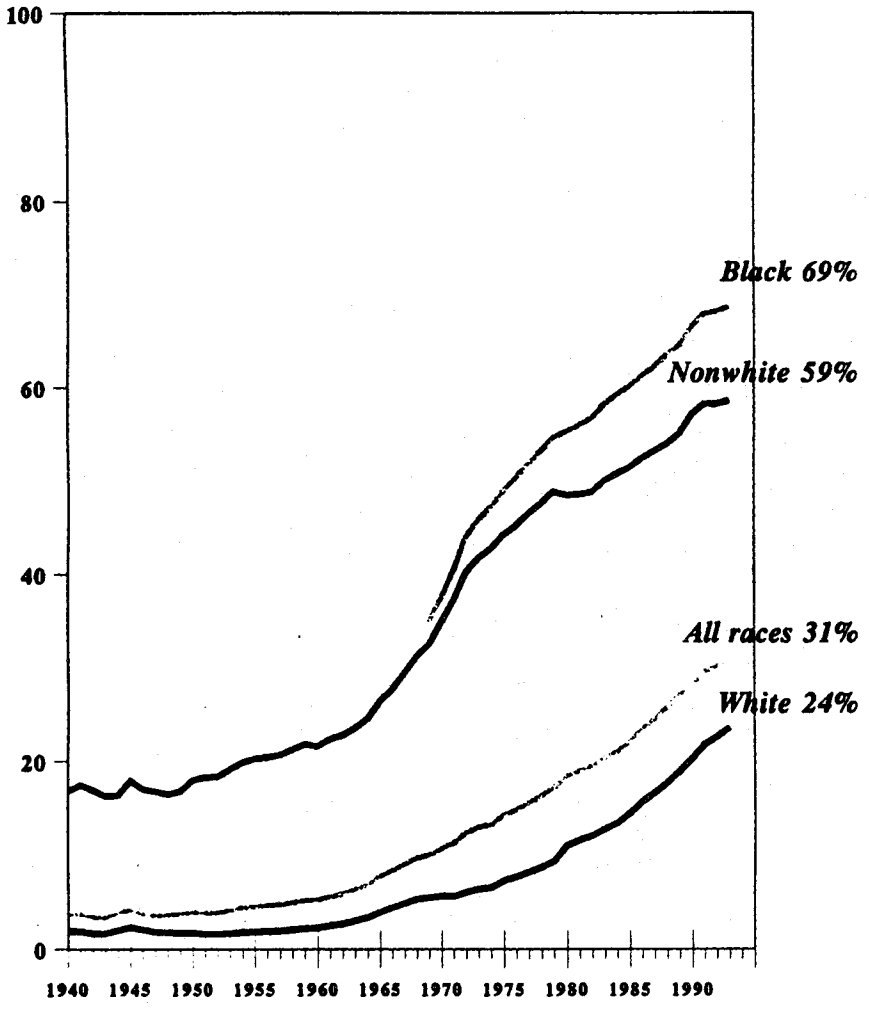
Source: Zill, N. (1994). Family Change and Student Achievement: What We Have Learned, What It Means for Schools. In Booth & Dunn (Eds.), Family-School Links: How Do They Affect Educational Outcomes? Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Table 1. Typical Family Circumstances of Children Under 18 Years of Age Living with Never-Married Mothers, Divorced Mothers, and in Two-Parent Families, United States 1994

	CHILDREN WITH NEVER-MARRIED MOTHERS	CHILDREN WITH DIVORCED MOTHERS	CHILDREN WITH TWO PARENTS
Number of children in population	6,000,000	5,799,000	48,048,000
Percentage of:			
All children	9%	8%	69%
Black children	30%	10%	33%
Hispanic children	11%	6%	63%
White, non-Hispanic children	3%	8%	79%
Children living with mothers only	37%	36%	--
INCOME & POVERTY			
Average family income (median)	$9,348	$17,951	$44,427
Below official poverty line	64%	38%	12%
PARENT AGE & EDUCATION			
Average age of parent (median)	29	36	38
Average educational attainment of parent (median)	Less than one of college	One year of college	More than one year of college
Parent has graduated from high school	62%	85%	86%
Parent has graduated from college	3%	14%	28%
PARENTAL EMPLOYMENT			
Parent working or looking for work	50%	76%	89%
Parent working full-time	28%	57%	79%
Both parents working	--	--	57%
Parental unemployment rate	22.2%	10.0%	4.8%
FAMILY COMPOSITION			
Average number of brothers or sisters in household (mean)	One	One	One
-- Only one or no sibs in household	64%	65%	58%
-- Three or more sibs in household	18%	11%	15%
Adults other than parents typically present in household	None	None	None
-- Adult relative present	30%	21%	16%
-- Non-related adult present	16%	17%	2%
FAMILY RESIDENCE			
Most common area of residence	Central city (56%)	Suburbs (44%)	Suburbs (53%)
Residence typically owned or rented	Rented (80%)	Rented (54%)	Owned (73%)

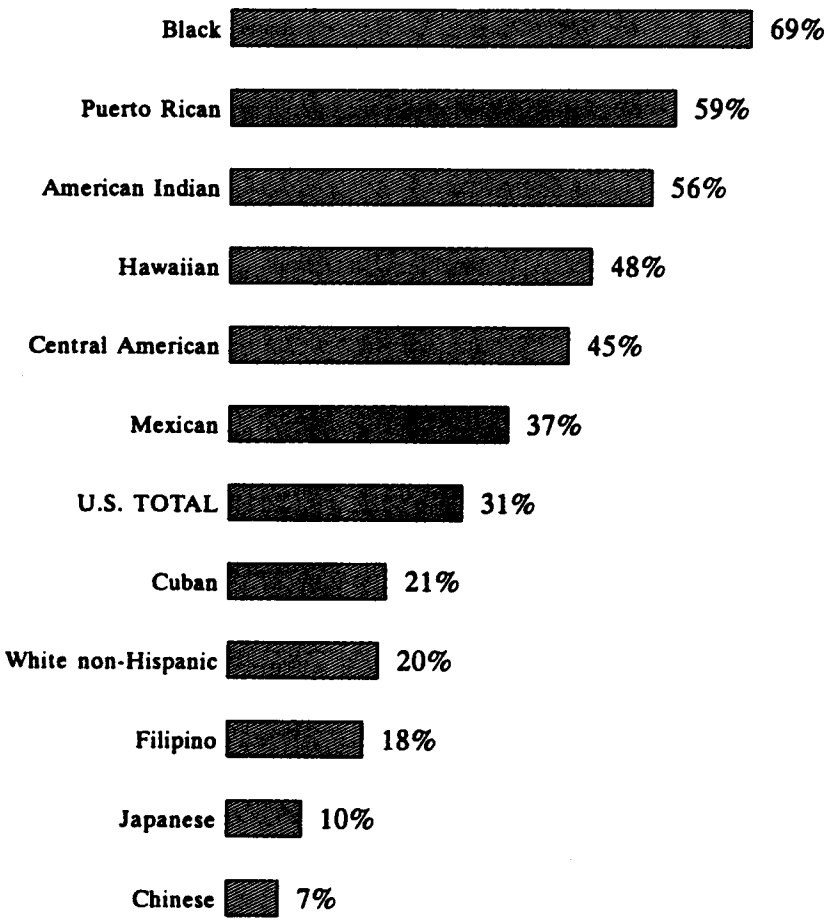
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, March 1994 Current Population Survey, calculated by N. Zill from data tables provided by the Marriage and Family Branch, 1994.

Figure A. Nonmarital Births as a Percent of All Births, 1940-1993



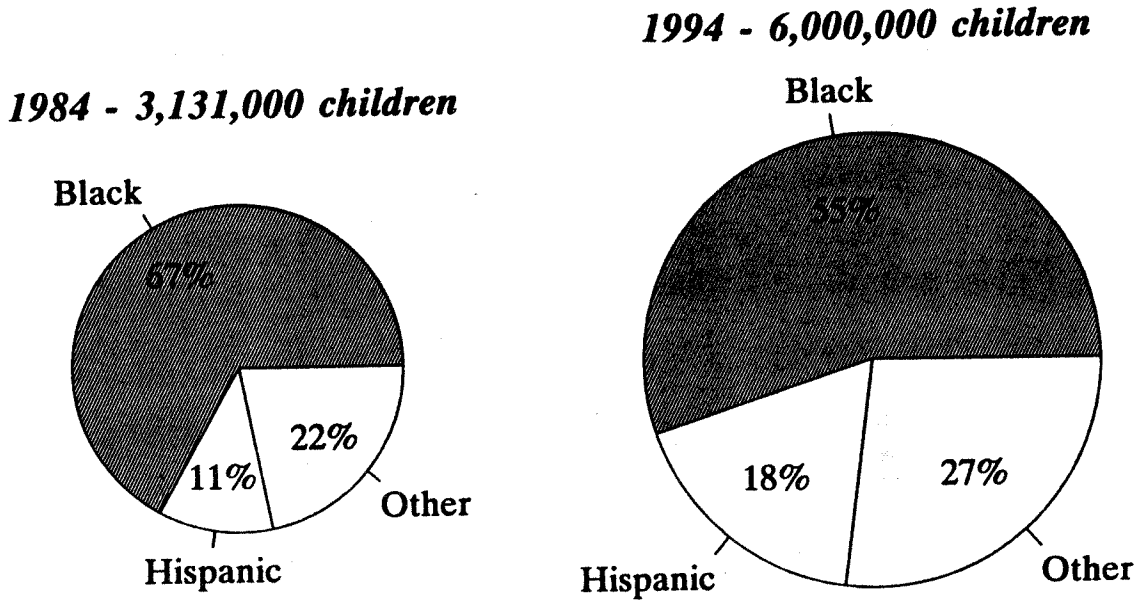
Source: National Center for Health Statistics (in press). Vital Statistics of the United States, 1993, Vol. 1, Natality. Washington, DC: GPO.

Figure B. Percent of U.S. births to unmarried mothers, by race and ethnicity of mother, 1993



Source: Ventura, S., et al. (1995). Advance Report of Final Natality Statistics, 1993. Monthly Vital Statistics Report, Vol. 44, No. 3 Supplement. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics

Figure C. Children living with never-married mothers, by race/ethnicity, 1984-1994



Chairman SHAW. Dr. McIlhaney.

STATEMENT OF JOE S. McILHANEY, JR., M.D., PRESIDENT, MEDICAL INSTITUTE FOR SEXUAL HEALTH, AUSTIN, TEXAS

Dr. MCILHANEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and other distinguished Members of the Committee. I am a gynecologist who has practiced medicine for 28 years. I have had a rewarding practice of in-vitro fertilization and surgery, but I left that practice recently to commit the rest of my medical career to helping prevent the two problems I think are the most profound medical problems of our day, out-of-wedlock pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease, working in and through a new organization called the Medical Institute for Sexual Health.

You have heard the statistics on teen pregnancy, and I would like to lead you to realize how seriously these same teenagers are being damaged by a terrifying epidemic of sexually transmitted disease, we will call STD.

This epidemic is not just HIV, human immunodeficiency virus. It includes at least 20 other dangerous sexually transmitted diseases that are ravaging the youth of our society because their bodies are far more susceptible to becoming infected than the bodies of adults.

For example, a 15 year old is 10 times more likely to become infected with PID, pelvic inflammatory disease, than a 24 year old involved in the same sexual encounter. One example is an 18 year old I took care of who had sex when she was 18, developed PID, had such severe pelvic pain because of it, that when she was 25 she demanded a hysterectomy. She had never been married, never had children. Now, of course, never will.

Chlamydia, which probably caused this woman's problems is found in 20 to 40 percent of sexually active teens who have sex outside of marriage, the highest prevalence rate of any group in our society. There is good evidence, for instance, that condoms do not give adequate protection from the infertility and tubal pregnancies that can be caused by this organism.

The most common sexually transmitted disease in the United States is HPV, human papillomavirus. It causes venereal warts. It causes almost all the truly abnormal precancerous Pap smears women have. It causes most of the genital cancer that women have, killing about 4,600 women from cervical cancer in the United States each year.

The HPV was found to infect 46 percent of coeds coming through the student health center at UC/Berkeley who were being sexually active. An example of this problem is a girl that I saw who was 24 years old. I saw her because of a growth on her vulva. It was precancer. I asked her about her sexual activity and she had had sex with five different guys, using condoms with every one of them. This growth, this precancer was caused by HPV. She had never been told, for instance, that condoms do not protect a person against HPV and essentially all authorities in the country agree with that.

Herpes infects about one-third of sexually active unmarried people. This prevalence is partly because it can be spread even when a sex partner does not have a sore and when a woman gets it she

can pass the herpes to her child. If the child gets infected, 60 percent of them will die.

We, of course, cannot forget HIV. If you realize the impact it has on our young people, 25 percent of newly diagnosed HIV positive people in this country are below the age of 22. Part of this is because when a person has another STD, such as herpes, bacterial vaginosis, the human papillomavirus, they are much more likely to become HIV infected.

This epidemic of teen pregnancy and of STD is being driven by two common problems among teens—the early age of initiation of sexual intercourse, and the number of sexual partners they have. Both of these have a profound influence on teens.

The Center for Disease Control, for instance, showed that if a teenager initiates sex before the age of 18 they have a 45-percent chance of having four or more sexual partners when they are interviewed later on. If they start sex after they are 19, they have a 1-percent chance of having had four or more sexual partners when they are interviewed later.

A very significant question in this discussion is why do teens have sex? It is not usually happening to two beautiful young people who maturely decide, after they fall in love, to have sexual intercourse. It is most often because they are victims. They are victims of loneliness, of peer pressure, of alcohol, of drugs. Remember, one-fourth of teen girls have been sexually abused and a common result of this is that they become sexually promiscuous.

The abuse, itself, is one of the destructive aspects of the sexually charged milieu that our teens are living in today. Remember also that recent studies, more than one, have shown that most teenagers, in high school and lower, have had sex with people older than high school age. The younger they are the more likely the men that they had sex with are to be outside of high school age or even in their twenties.

Our failure to break this cycle of teenage sexual activity will only allow further victimization of these young people. Clients of the present welfare system represent a large group of people whose lifestyle includes activity that increases risk of out-of-wedlock pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease.

These activities not only hurt the individual but they also hurt society. You have heard some examples of that, another example is that 82 percent of incarcerated individuals, by one study, are high school dropouts, most of whom are from low-wealth communities.

Therefore, as much as we might like to separate all of these things there is no way of separating this potpourri of welfare, medical, and societal problems.

For those in the welfare system, I think we need to provide a safety net for the extreme problems but we do not want to make it so comfortable that it induces people into the single parent family life that has helped produce two communities in our society.

First, the community of two people who love each other, live together for life, have children, and offer those children greater opportunities. The second community is of single parents, often forced to live in poverty with diminished hopes for their children and with all the diseases we have been talking about. The financial costs of

all of these problems, by the way, ranges into the multiplied billions of dollars.

I am not pessimistic. I believe that the situation now is so bad, and the old approaches so discredited, that men and women of wisdom will realize the necessity of new approaches and will do the hard work required to bring an end to this problem that is literally tearing apart the fabric of our society.

Thank you, Committee and Chairman Shaw.

[The prepared statement follows:]

TESTIMONY
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
J. S. McILHANEY, JR., M.D.
PRESIDENT, MEDICAL INSTITUTE FOR SEXUAL HEALTH
MARCH 12, 1996

Thank you, Chairman Shaw, and other distinguished members of the committee.

I am a gynecologist who has practiced medicine for twenty-eight years. I have had a rewarding practice involved with infertility care, in vitro fertilization, and surgery, but I left that practice two months ago. I left my practice to commit the rest of my medical career to helping prevent two of the most profound medical problems of our day -- out-of-wedlock pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease -- working in and through a new organization called the Medical Institute for Sexual Health.

Most of you know that one million babies are born to teens each year in the U.S.[1] Twenty years ago 31 percent of babies born to teens were born out-of-wedlock. Now 65 percent of them are.[2]

What most of you probably do not know is how seriously these same teenagers are being damaged by a terrifying epidemic of sexually transmitted disease. This epidemic is not just HIV. It includes human papillomavirus, chlamydia, herpes, and more than twenty other sexually transmitted diseases which are ravaging our youth because their bodies are far more susceptible to becoming infected with sexually transmitted disease than the bodies of adults.[3] For example a 15-year-old is ten times more likely to develop pelvic inflammatory disease than a 24-year-old involved in the same type of sexual encounter.[4] Pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) is the most common cause of hospitalization of U.S. women between the ages of 15 and 55 except for childbirth. Pelvic inflammatory disease is most often caused by chlamydia and it results in situations such as that of a young woman I took care of. At 18 she had had sex, developed pelvic inflammatory disease, and after seven years of severe pelvic pain finally demanded a hysterectomy. She had never married, never had children, and now never will. Chlamydia, which probably caused this woman's problems, is found in 20-40 percent of teens having sex outside of marriage, the highest prevalence rates of any group in our society.[5] There is good evidence that condoms do not give adequate protection from the infertility that can be caused by pelvic inflammatory disease.[6]

The most common sexually transmitted disease in the U.S. is human papillomavirus. It causes veneral warts. It also causes almost all precancerous Pap smears and most cervical, vaginal, vulvar, and penile cancer, killing about 4,600 women in the U.S. yearly. Human papillomavirus was found to infect 46 percent of sexually active coeds going through the Student Health Center at UC/Berkeley.[7] Not all of these girls will develop cancer, but an Oregon study of 18,000 women showed that 60-70 percent who had the wart virus present developed abnormal Pap smears.[8] This sexually transmitted disease is the most common reason for a woman to see a gynecologist in the U.S.[9] I had a 24-year-old patient see me with a vulvar growth. It was an early cancer caused by human papillomavirus. I asked her about sexual activity. She had had five partners and had used condoms with every one. She had not been told that all experts agree that condoms give almost no protection against human papillomavirus.[10]

Herpes infects about one-third of sexually active unmarried people. This prevalence is partly because it can be spread even when a sex partner does not have a sore.[11] A woman can pass this virus to her baby at delivery, and, if she does. the baby has a 60 percent chance of dying. One-half of the babies who do not die will be severely brain damaged.[12]

We, of course, cannot forget HIV. Do you realize its impact on youth? Twenty-five percent of newly diagnosed HIV is found in young people below the age of 22.[13] Seven thousand HIV positive mothers deliver each year.[14] Many of these mothers are young women. All their babies will be motherless and many of them will lose their fathers. Also, more than 1,000 of the babies will die.

The epidemic of teenage pregnancy and of sexually transmitted disease is being driven by two common problems of teen sexuality -- the early age of initiation of sexual activity and the number of sexual partners. Both of these have a profound influence on risk for teens. One researcher states, "Those adolescents who initiate intercourse at younger ages are more likely to report a history of sexually transmitted disease, more sexual partners, and having risky sexual partners."[15] The Centers for Disease Control showed that if teenagers initiated sex before the age of 18, 45 percent had four or more partners when interviewed later, if initiated after 19 only 1 percent had four or more partners. All studies show that the more lifetime sexual partners, the more risk of sexually transmitted disease.[16]

A very significant issue in this discussion is reasons that teens have sex. It is not usually happening because two young people fall in love and maturely decide to have intercourse. Most of the teens who have sex are victims:[17, 18]

> One-fourth of teen girls have been sexually abused. A common result of this is for them to become sexually promiscuous.
>
> Neglected teens -- most from single-parent homes
>
> Teens with little purpose in life
>
> Teens who respond to peer pressure
>
> Teens who drink excessively and use drugs

Our failure to break the cycle of teenage sexual activity will only allow further victimization of these people.

As a physician let me break the frustrating news that medicine does not have the answer. Why do I say this? Have you ever thought about the fact that syphilis is at a forty year high in this country and yet there are no syphilis "germs" resistant to penicillin?[19] Even if we get a cure for HIV, the epidemic will not disappear. This epidemic has actually developed during the past thirty years -- a time when U.S. citizens have had the finest medical care ever provided on the face of the earth.

Clients of the present welfare system represent a large group of people whose lifestyle includes activity that increases risk of out-or-wedlock pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease.

> 50% of all families receiving AFDC are headed by an unmarried parent.[20]
>
> 90% of these single parents are women.[21]
>
> 80% of adolescent mothers receive welfare within five years of becoming a parent.[22]
>
> 40% of long-term welfare recipients had their first child at age 17 or younger.[23]
>
> 39% of never married mothers who receive welfare will remain on the rolls ten years or longer.[24]

And the problem of their moms doom many of the children:

> 111% more likely to have children as teenagers.
>
> 164% more likely to have premarital birth.[25]

All of these things not only hurt the individual, but they also hurt society. For example, 82 percent of incarcerated individuals were high school dropouts, most of whom were from low-wealth communities.[26] Therefore, as much as one might like to, there is simply no way of separating:

> Welfare from sexually transmitted disease or from teen pregnancy
>
> Teenage pregnancy from single-parent homes
>
> Single-parent homes from damage to both the parents involved and to the children, and even more to all society.

I hope I have shown you that the threat to our society is so profound that we must be willing to take bold steps in solving the problem. Clearly the educational and social efforts of the past ten to fifteen years have not worked. Multiple reports in peer-reviewed journals document that failure, both in our current approach to sexuality education and in our approach to care for low wealth communities. These efforts seem not only to perpetuate the problem but also seem to be aggravating it.

For those in the welfare system, we need to provide a safety net, but we do not want it so comfortable that it induces people into single-parent family conditions.

If dramatic changes are not initiated, the medical and societal consequences are going to impact millions more of our citizens that we could have saved.

More than that, if the trends continue, we will see the trend toward two communities in our society be magnified, the community of the married providing greater opportunities to their children and the community of the single-parent often forced to live in poverty with diminished hope for their children.

I am not pessimistic. I believe that the situation is so bad and the old appraoches so discredited that men and women of wisdom will realize the necessity of new approaches. The federal government can take the lead in setting policy that encourages young people to delay sex until they are married. This can be a joint venture with all of society -- parents, schools, media, churches and others -- to bring an end to a problem literally tearing apart the fabric of our society.

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[1]Alan Gutmacher Institute, 1994.

[2]*Families First, Report of the National Commission on America's Urban Families*, John Ashcroft, Chairman, Annette Strauss, Co-Chair, January 1993, p. 28.

[3]Anderson, J.R., and Wilson, M., "Caring for Teenagers with Salpingitis," *Contemporary OB/GYN*, August 1990.

[4]Westrom, I., *Pelvic Inflammatory Disease*, New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1992.

[5]*JAMA*, June 1, 1994, vol. 271, No. 21, p. 1652.

[6]Cramer, D. W., et al, "The Relationship of Tubal Infertility to Barrier Method and Oral Contraceptive Use," *JAMA*, 257:18, May 8, 1987.

[7]Bauer, H. M. et al, *JAMA*, 1991; 265, 472-47.

[8]*Contemporary OB/GYN*, July 1995, p. 94.

[9]*OB/GYN News*, 28:15, 1993.

[10]*OB/GYN Clinical Alert*, Sept. 1992.

[11]*JAMA*, Jan. 19, 1990, Vol. 763, #3, p. 418-20.

[12]American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists Committee Statement, "Perinatal Herpes Simplex Virus Infections," July, 1987.

[13]CDC, *MMWR*, Vol. 44, pp. 1-15, 7/7/95.

[14]*NEJM*, March 17, 1994, Vol. 330, #11, p. 789.

[15]Rosenthal, et al, *Adolescent and Pediatric Gynecology*, 1994, p 210-213.

[16]Centers for Disease Control, *MMWR*, 39, January 4, 1991.

[17]Small & Luster, *Journal of Marriage & The Family*, Feb 1994, 181-192.

[18]OB/GYN News, "Abuse, Alcohol, Drugs Tied To Teen Pregnancy," March 1, 1996, p. 31.

[19]*American Journal of Public Health*, Vol. 85, #8, Aug. 95, p. 1053.

[20]U. S. House of Representatives, Committee on Ways and Means, *Overview of Entitlement Programs: Background Material and Data on Programs within the Jurisdiction of the Committee on Ways and Means (1992 Green Book)* (Washington, D.C.:U.S. Government Printing Office, 1991), p. 675; U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, *Characteristics and Financial Circumstances of AFDC Recipients*, FY 1990 (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1991), Table 14.

[21]Davis & McCaul, *The emerging crisis: Current and projected status of children in the United States*.. August, ME: Maine State Department of Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 348 434), p. 22. 1991.

[22]Nicholas, Zill, Kristen Moore, Christine Nord, and Thomas Stief, *Welfare Mothers as Potential Employees: A Statistical Profile Based on National Survey Data*, (Washington, D.C.: Child Trends, Inc.), Table 17.

[23]*Ibid.*

[24]*1992 Green Book*, p. 687.

[25]Irvin Garfinkel and Sara McLanahan, *Single Mothers and Their Children: A New American Dilemma* (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute Press, 1986), pp. 30, 31; and McLanahan, "The Long-Term Economic Effects of Family Dissolution," p. 12.

[26]Davis & McCaul, *The emerging crisis: Current and projected status of children in the United States*.. Augusta, ME: Maine State Department of Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 348 434), p. 89. 1991.

Chairman SHAW. Thank you, doctor, and our next witness is Dr. Furstenberg.

Doctor.

STATEMENT OF FRANK FURSTENBERG, PH.D., PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Dr. FURSTENBERG. I appreciate the opportunity to testify before this Committee on the question of why levels of nonmarital childbearing are changing and which policies will be most effective in countering this trend. My own work in sociology and demography has been devoted to understanding these trends and to understanding changes in family formation that have occurred in the past several decades.

In this regard, I have conducted a study of teenage mothers that has run on for 30 years, studying them, their children, and now their children's children. I will comment on that later.

As I understand it, the pending legislation on welfare reform and these hearings center on the role that public assistance has played in eroding marriage and encouraging nonmarital childbearing. The assumption is that moving women and their children off welfare and into the labor market will do much to reduce nonmarital childbearing and help break the cycle of poverty.

I, and many scholars, have deep reservations about this presumption and here is why. We have heard already today that the decline of marriages has occurred in all western nations. Related, I and many others believe, to changing economic roles and gender relations. No link has been established between these trends and public welfare policies or the generosity of family support systems cross-nationally.

Changes in the level of public assistance in the United States are not correlated with rates of nonmarital childbearing over time. The illegitimacy ratio, nonmarital births to marital births, has been steadily rising. However, the illegitimacy rate, births per thousand unmarried women, has risen only among Whites and not among African-Americans during the past several decades. Indeed, among blacks, the rate has declined rather substantially since 1970.

We have to distinguish between the illegitimacy ratio and rate because it has profound consequences for how we interpret the changes that are going on. I will come back to that.

State level trends in illegitimacy are weakly or uncorrelated with the generosity assistance. At the metropolitan level, a cross-sectional correlation exists between welfare benefits and marriage and childbearing but the direction of that causalty is not clear at all. In fact, it rather seems that poor people are less inclined to get married, therefore, more likely to go on welfare rather than the reverse.

My own detailed investigations on the consequences of illegitimacy produced some startling findings. I followed a large, fairly sizable group of teenage mothers over 30 years. Almost all the mothers spent some time on welfare. However, fewer than 10 percent were chronically on welfare.

Most worked most of the time, while their children were growing up. Even many of the ones who were on welfare every year, while

their children were growing up, also reported going in and out of the labor force.

The transmission of welfare across generations is a difficult process to study because welfare and poverty are linked together. We know that people who grow up poor are more likely to remain poor, regardless of their involvement on welfare. One of the most recent studies that I have seen on this suggests that largely—almost entirely—it is not welfare but poverty that is linked across the generations.

In my own studies I found virtually no evidence that there is a welfare mentality among the children. Most are committed to working. Most attempt to work. Most go to work and most cannot find stable and remunerative employment.

Will cutting the welfare rolls result in declining levels of nonmarital childbearing? I do not think so. I do not expect much impact, if any at all. Welfare is not a significant deterrent to marriage or an incentive to have children. Will work training and support increase the propensity of women to marry? I do not see why it should, unless we address the lack of training and available jobs for men. Men without stable and remunerative employment are not deemed eligible partners, especially by women who are self-supporting.

Changes in nonmarital childbearing largely have occurred not because more women are electing to have children out of wedlock but because marriage is becoming a more elusive goal for many young people. That, I can substantiate if I am asked to do so.

Public policies are largely about how to make single parenthood less attractive, not marriage more attainable. Unless and until we craft policies and programs that make it possible for young people to marry, we are unlikely to see a direction in the change of nonmarital childbearing.

I will just end with a couple of points. Here are some suggestions. Improve access to job training, higher education and most of all, job availability for low-income men, as well as women. Increase the availability of social benefits: child care, food stamps, educational support for couples so that it is truly cheaper for two to live together than for one, or two can live as cheaply as one.

Raise, not lower, as has been proposed in some legislation, the earned income tax credit. Provide a favorable status for parents who live together. Provide social support for young couples who frequently could use education counseling and community services. Most of these programs are being cut back by cost-conscious government and philanthropic agencies.

Unless we back up our rhetoric about the importance of marriage with real resources, we are unlikely to have success in bringing about a decrease in out-of-wedlock childbearing.

[The prepared statement and attachment follow:]

STATEMENT OF FRANK FURSTENBERG, PH.D.
PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Introduction

I appreciate the opportunity to testify before this committee on the question of why levels of non-marital childbearing are changing and which public policies will be most effective in countering this trend.

My own work in sociology and demography has been devoted to studying these trends and to understanding the changes in family formation that have occurred over the past several decades. I have conducted a thirty year longitudinal study of teenage mothers and their offspring in Baltimore as well as working on some of the national data sets that allow us to explore the consequences of poverty, welfare, and single parenthood.

As I understand it, the pending legislation on welfare reform-- and these hearings-- center on the role that public assistance has played in eroding marriage and encouraging non-marital childbearing. The assumption is that:

Moving women (and their offspring off welfare) and into the labor market will do much to reduce non-marital childbearing and help break the cycle of poverty.

The Link between Welfare and Out-of-wedlock Childbearing: Research Evidence

I and many other scholars have some deep reservations about this presumption. Here's why.

1. The decline of marriage has occurred in all Western nations, related, most scholars believe, to changing economic roles and gender relations. No link has been established between these trends and public welfare policies or the generosity of family support systems. France, Britain, Switzerland, and the Netherlands have all experienced a decrease in marriage and an increase in non-marital childbearing comparable to what has occurred in this country.

In this country non-marital childbearing has increased more sharply and steadily for whites and has occurred among women of all ages and educational status. Rising levels of illegitimacy have not been limited to the welfare population.

2. Changes in the level of public assistance in the U.S. is not correlated with rates of non-marital childbearing over time. The illegitimacy ratio (non-marital to marital births) has steadily risen over the past several decades. However, the illegitimacy rate (births per 1,000 unmarried women) has risen only among whites and not among African Americans over the past three decades. Indeed, among blacks the rate significantly declined from the 1970 rate.

3. State level trends in illegitimacy are weakly or uncorrelated with the generosity of welfare assistance. Most scholars, following Robert Moffit's review of the evidence, do not believe that welfare policy has influence childbearing trends.

4. There is a modest to moderate association in welfare patterns from one generation to the next. The most recent review of the evidence is in accord with the prevailing view that poverty begets poverty, but there is relatively little transmission of welfare dependency-- independent of poverty.

5. At the metropolitan level, a cross sectional correlation exists between welfare benefits and marriage and childbearing patterns, but no one has established whether a causal relationship exists or in which direction the causality runs-- from welfare to non-marital childbearing or the reverse.

6. My own detailed investigation of the consequences of illegitimacy produces some startling findings. I have followed several hundred teen mothers and their children over a period of nearly thirty years. Almost all of the mothers spent some time on welfare; however, fewer than 10 percent were chronically on welfare. Most worked all or most of the time their children were growing up. Of the small number who were on welfare every year, close to half were in the labor force as well.

The transmission of welfare across generations is a difficult process to study because welfare and poverty are associated. We know that people who grow up poor are likely to remain poor-- regardless of their involvement on welfare. Consequently, we must ascertain whether welfare-- as distinct from poverty-- is transmitted. The best evidence, including data from my study, suggests that it is, but much less than is commonly believed.

For example, the majority of the offspring of individuals who spent substantial time on welfare as children and adolescents had or were able to complete high school by their late teens. We could find no evidence either from the surveys or in-depth interviews that a "welfare mentality" was being passed on from parents to children.

Policy Recommendations

Will cutting the welfare rolls result in declining levels of non-marital childbearing? On the basis of the existing research data, I do not expect welfare policies to have much, if any, impact on patterns of family formation. Welfare is not a significant deterrent to marriage or an incentive to have children.

Will work training and support increase the propensity of women to marry? I don't see why it should unless we address the lack of training and available jobs for men. Men without stable and remunerative employment are not deemed eligible partners, especially by women who are self-supporting.

Changes in non-marital childbearing largely have occurred not because more women are electing to have children out-of-wedlock, but because marriage is becoming a more elusive goal for many young people. When asked why they are not marrying, many of the young people in my study indicate that they lack confidence about men's ability to help support a family.

Public policies are largely about how to make single parenthood less attractive, not marriage more attainable. Unless and until we craft policies and programs that make it possible for young people to marry, we are unlikely to see a change in the direction of non-marital childbearing.

Here are a few suggestions for consideration:

1. Improve access to job training, higher education, and--most of all-- job availability for low-income men as well as women.

2. Increase the availability of social benefits-- childcare, food stamps, educational support-- for couples so that it is truly cheaper for two to live together as one.

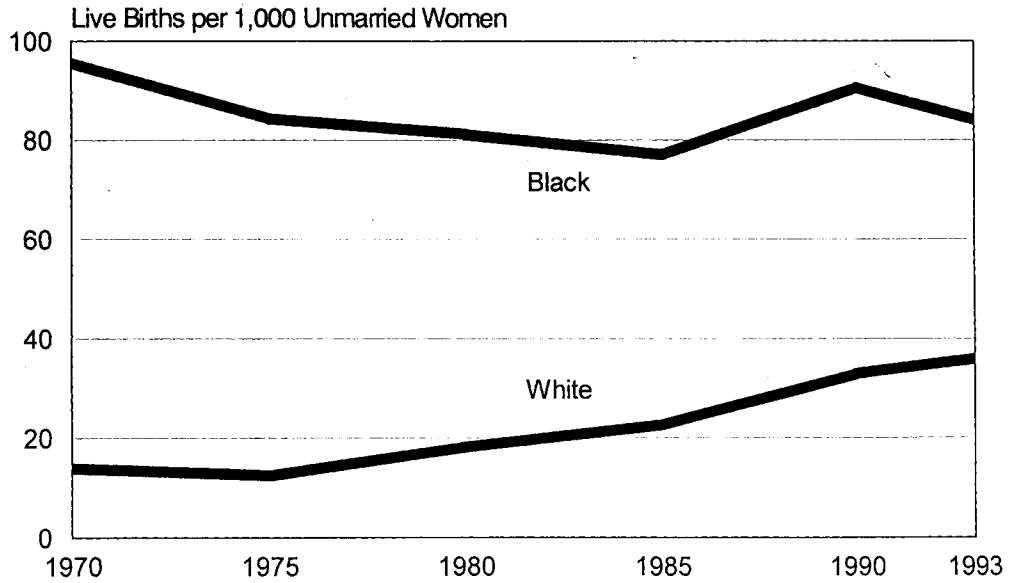
3. Raise, not lower as has been proposed in some legislation, the earned income tax credit. Provide a favored status for parents who live together.

4. Provide social support for young couples who frequently could use education, counseling, and community services. Most of these programs are being cut back by cost-conscious government and philanthropic agencies.

Unless we match our rhetoric about the importance of marriage with real resources, we are likely to have little success in bring about a decrease in out-of-wedlock childbearing.

Unmarried Birth Rate

1970-1993, By Race



Source: NCHS, Monthly Vital Statistics Report, Vol 44(3), pp. 48-49

Chairman SHAW. Thank you, doctor.

Mr. English may inquire.

Mr. ENGLISH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Rector, our staff so far has found 22 empirical studies that report correlations between some measure of welfare and some measure of birth outside of marriage. I was intrigued, 16 of these studies or roughly 75 percent report at least one significant finding that higher welfare benefits are correlated with higher rates of birth outside of marriage. Your testimony contains a variety of useful summaries of several of these studies. I wonder if you could, please, summarize your review of these studies for the Committee?

Mr. RECTOR. Yes. That's a very interesting point. I have listed 13 different studies, all of which show a very strong positive relationship between the generosity of the welfare system and the rate of out-of-wedlock births. I think also on this, it is very interesting to look at the trend.

If you went back 12 or 13 years ago, I think the sort of commonsense view that Dr. Furstenberg offered, most of the studies did not show that there was a strong relationship. Year by year by year as more and more studies come in, the overwhelming majority of them do show very strong effects. I would also say that if it were true that there was no effect, just by the very nature of this, you would expect then to see some studies that show some effect, some studies that show that welfare reduces illegitimacy—which is theoretically possible—and then a whole lot of studies in the center.

There has never been any study that shows that welfare reduces illegitimacy. They are all either in the narrow spectrum of those showing no effect or those that show very strong effects. I find the most compelling study that we have available is the one by Dr. June O'Neill, the current Director of the Congressional Budget Office, Dr. O'Neill found that holding a wide range of other variables constant, including family income, that a 50-percent increase in the AFDC and food stamp monthly benefit package produced a 43-percent increase in the percentage of out-of-wedlock births within a State.

The comment was made by Congresswoman Kennelly and by Dr. Furstenberg that over time welfare benefits have declined while the illegitimacy ratio was going up. It is simply not true that over time welfare benefits have declined. You can only reach that conclusion by throwing most of them out of the count.

If you look at the full range of welfare benefits—AFDC, food stamps, Medicaid, the increase in the percentage of households receiving public housing, WIC, and so forth—it is not at all true that the benefits have gone down.

I do not wish to say that the welfare system is the only cause for the increase in out-of-wedlock births. I do think that as Congressman Rangel pointed out, joblessness, lack of opportunity in the inner city is also an important factor.

I would comment that the increase in black out-of-wedlock births, Congressman, occurred most rapidly, precisely between 1965 and 1975, a period of dramatic and rapid expansion in the job opportunities available to black men. Even if you went into the inner city today and compared potential wage rates of young men, which are not good there, but compared them to what they were for black

men in the fifties, after adjusting for inflation, they still have a far better capacity to support families today.

Something came in and affected the black marital pattern, it was the welfare system saying, you do not need to get married any more, we have got a substitute for marriage, it is this combined welfare benefits package. That not only affects the woman's behavior but, the young man's as well. Now that the man is no longer a breadwinner, he is going to fall into the crime problems that Congressman Rangel talked about.

Mr. ENGLISH. Dr. Rector, in my remaining time, I note that your testimony and Dr. Furstenberg's are very hard to reconcile. I would like to give each of you a brief opportunity to comment on this.

I would like to say that the most shocking finding you present based on a national longitudinal study is that children born outside of marriage who stayed in never-married families spent 50 percent of their time on welfare, while children born to intact families and who stayed in intact families spent only 3 percent of their time on welfare.

I have seldom seen differences of this magnitude in the various issues of witnesses appearing before this Committee and I would like both of you to comment on whether this finding has implications for public policy and, if so, what they are?

Dr. Rector.

Dr. RECTOR. I think that the implication is pretty obvious. Most societies, in fact, almost all societies have recognized historically that it takes the work of two adults to support children and it is very difficult to support a child all by yourself, particularly if you happen to be, as many of these women are, women with very low educational attainment, very low cognitive skill levels. Therefore, it does not surprise me at all that a woman that has a child out-of-wedlock is going to spend 50 percent of her time on AFDC and 70 percent of her time receiving some broader array of welfare services.

I think that to believe that we are going to get out of that dependency trap without finding a way to increase the marriage rates so that there are two adults contributing both financially and, more importantly, psychologically to that child, is simply wrong. Marriage is the key here.

Mr. ENGLISH. Dr. Furstenberg.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. I appreciate an opportunity to respond. I think the confusion here is between a correlation and causalty. We are not conducting a random experiment where we randomly assign some people to marriage and some people to single parenthood. What is happening is people are selecting marriage or single parenthood depending on their circumstances. When we do these studies we really have to try to take account of the selective differences.

When we do, we find that welfare, single parenthood does not have the same kind of power that many believe because, marriages do not survive when people are poor and unemployed. In my study back in the sixties, the time that Mr. Rector was referring to—virtually all of the teenage mothers married. What do you see 10 or 15 years later?

Virtually all are divorced. They look like the last column, they have shifted out of marriage. He shows that, of course, when marriage is intact, there are very few people on welfare. That makes a lot of sense because marriages intact have a family income.

When you do not have a family income, you do not have marriage and that is the problem that I was referring to.

Mr. ENGLISH. In your view, this is a post-hoc, proper-hoc kind of an argument?

Dr. FURSTENBERG. Completely and the same for welfare. Mr. Rector reported that there was an increase in welfare used from 1965 to 1975 in black communities, referring to Congressman Rangel.

That was the time that the Moynihan report was written, in 1964, when he was very concerned about rising rates of unemployment.

He was noting trends that were occurring from the fifties onward. In fact, unemployment went up during that time. I do not know where you are getting your statistics, Mr. Rector, but that is not correct.

Chairman SHAW. Mr. English's time has expired.

Mr. ENGLISH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman SHAW. Mr. Levin may inquire.

Mr. LEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

It is difficult listening to everybodys individual perspective. It may be a little easier to detect where people are going.

I do not think there is that much of a quarrel today about effect, at least, from me and maybe I am old fashioned. I think there is a strong, preference for a two-parent family.

There are numerous advantages to a two-parent family and the economic advantages that have just been referred to are probably the lesser of the advantages.

We are all the products of our upbringing, I suppose and for me, it is a given. It is preferable in many respects. There is much disagreement, though, over causation.

The difference in cause has led people to try to tone down what the effect is.

Let us say that there is a very substantial effect. We still need to argue through what the causation is here. I think, Mr. Rector, you favor not only a family cap on a mandatory basis but the withdrawal of benefits from a mother who is under a certain age.

Mr. RECTOR. I favor the withdrawal of cash benefits.

Mr. LEVIN. OK. You would withdraw a cash benefit from a child whose mother is under a certain age. That must be based on the assumption that the cause of the pregnancy, in very substantial measure, was the lure of a cash benefit.

Mr. RECTOR. I would not say, Congressman, that there are women who are having children out of wedlock because they think they are going to make a windfall profit out of the welfare system.

There are women who look around them in their community and see that the norm for many other women around them, if not almost every woman they run into, is to raise children outside of wedlock. They do not regard it as unusual.

I was in this very room about a year ago and there was a witness here in which the woman said, no one ever told me that having a child out of wedlock was, in any sense, wrong.

Mr. LEVIN. Let me just interject because I think we need to try to get at the heart of this. I am sorry we did not have a chance to talk with some of our colleagues.

Mr. Talent said the problem is that welfare lures people into having their children without being married. The choice of language here, is of some importance, that welfare lures poor people into having their children. You would not say it quite that way.

Mr. RECTOR. I would say that what welfare does is that it serves as a substitute for marriage. It teaches people that it is acceptable and possible to have children without the necessity of marriage. It undermines marriage as a norm, and it facilitates what is, in essence, a terribly self-destructive choice.

Mr. LEVIN. You are saying that you are very sure that the withdrawal of the benefit will change the culture and prevent births in the first place?

Mr. RECTOR. Yes. I am very confident of that, particularly——

Mr. LEVIN. All right. Do any of you want to comment on that?

Dr. FURSTENBERG. I do not think Mr. Rector has spent a great deal of time in inner-city communities, talking to the people he purports to understand, whose motivation he purports to understand.

I have spent a great deal of time, and there are very few people who say that they got pregnant to get on welfare, to stay on welfare. The vast majority are like the women in my study. They go on welfare out of necessity, not out of desire. They share your view that welfare is a stigmatized status. They feel stigmatized by it.

There is not a great deal of talk about, "Well, if I can get on welfare, I can support my children," because every kid knows that welfare is not going to pay—most of the people on welfare have to work, and that has been established in one study after another. The family picks up the difference, and the family is really the welfare system, not the state.

Mr. LEVIN. Let me just say something to you, because this is an important difference here, and I think we need to get to the bottom of it.

Even if your position is correct—and a lot of people agree with you—I think it is a mistake, if I might say so, to conclude, if I can pick out your testimony—that will work, training, and support will increase the propensity of women to marry?

I say this as someone who thinks that the welfare to work linkage is a critical one. It may be that it may not increase the propensity of women to marry. It may, though, affect their propensity to have more children. Those two things are not the same.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. Most of the studies, Congressman, that I am familiar with, that have been done on women on welfare, show that women on welfare do not have more children after they get on welfare than women in comparable statuses. That welfare does not stimulate increases of childbearing.

In my own study, and I think Mr. Zill has some data that is similar to this, the vast majority of people on welfare and off welfare were voluntarily sterilized by their late twenties.

Mr. LEVIN. One last question, Mr. Chairman. The light is not working. I do not want to take advantage of it too much.

Do any of you know the percentage of children born out of wedlock in this country that are born to women on welfare?

Mr. Rector, you do not know that?

Mr. RECTOR. No, I do not, and it is compounded—I mean, that is a difficult—you also have to be aware that the woman can enter welfare while she is pregnant. I do not know the answer to that question.

Mr. LEVIN. Would it be a majority or a minority?

Mr. RECTOR. I do not know the answer to that.

If you are saying that only those women that are on welfare at the time the child is born, is welfare having that effect, I do not think that is right. I think what you need to look at——

Mr. LEVIN. No, no. OK. I would think we would want to look at that, would we not?

Mr. RECTOR. That is a good question.

Mr. LEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman SHAW. All right. Thank you, Mr. Levin.

I would guess that that would be an interesting figure, that this Committee would like to look at; but one of the things that you would have to measure in doing that is how the birth of these children has put many women on welfare. A woman having a child may not be on welfare, but would go on welfare as a result of that birth.

Mr. LEVIN. No, you would have to look—I do not mean necessarily that they were on welfare at the moment of birth. You would take some kind of a time sequence.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. Chairman Shaw, I may have a figure on that.

Mr. LEVIN. Dr. Zill, I think, has——

Chairman SHAW. Go ahead.

Dr. ZILL. I think it is important to know that if you look across ethnic groups, the groups that have very high rates of unmarried childbearing—African-Americans, American Indians, Puerto Ricans—are groups that tend to be socioeconomically not very successful. On the other hand, even within communities, the groups that are more socioeconomically successful have quite low rates of unmarried childbearing. Cubans, for example. Chinese. Japanese. There is a relationship there. To some extent, unmarried childbearing is a loser strategy.

Young people who have children outside of marriage, they are not a random sample. They are the kids who are not doing well in school, and you have got to deal with those problems, not just with welfare. The way the economy is changing makes it even more unlikely that they will have a meaningful role in our society.

If you go to my company right now, to hire a temp you need to know Excel, you need to know Word Perfect, you need to have flexibility—high cognitive skills and a great deal of adaptability. There just is not a place in many of our companies for people who do not have those skills. So often, those young people look to parenthood as a source of reinforcement that they have some role in our society. That is a much more complex issue you need to deal with than simply welfare.

Mr. LEVIN. I very much agree with you, and I hope Mr. Rector will listen to what you say.

Mr. RECTOR. I am sorry, Congressman. I did not understand your question. The figure you are looking for, I believe, is something like 70 percent. About 70 percent of the children that are born out of wedlock will end up on some type of welfare at some point——

Mr. LEVIN. No, that is not my question. That was not my question.

Chairman SHAW. Repeat the question and then we will go on.

Mr. LEVIN. Because I remember that statistic from your testimony.

Mr. RECTOR. Seventy percent will be on AFDC.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. We will get you the answer, but we do not have it right now.

Chairman SHAW. We will have to let that be the last word.

Dr. Ensign may inquire.

Mr. ENSIGN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to get a little bit to the idea about work and some things that Dr. Furstenberg talked about, because you have raised some issues in my mind. You talked about the idea that we have to provide jobs and that jobs are somehow the answer to a lot of the problems that we have in the inner cities.

You also talked about, Dr. Rector, being in the inner cities and maybe not talking to these people about why they got pregnant. Why do they get pregnant?

When you talked to the people in the inner cities, you gave reasons why they did not, but you never gave the reasons why they did get pregnant.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. I do not want to sound facetious, but they get pregnant because they are having sex, and if we could imagine a circumstance where the women that I have studied very closely——

Mr. ENSIGN. Why are they having out-of-wedlock births? That is the question.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. If we could imagine a circumstance where they had to take a pill, 30 days in a row, to get pregnant, you would see a sudden and dramatic drop in the rate of pregnancy.

Once they have sex, they use birth control improperly, most use it improperly, and that is related, largely in part, to their tangible sense of opportunity.

Once they get pregnant, the question is abort, have the child, give the child up for adoption. At that point——

Mr. ENSIGN. In poor areas the reasons for out-of-wedlock births are strictly improper birth control?

Dr. FURSTENBERG. No. I would say, as Marion Wright Edelman said some years ago, that opportunity is the best form of contraception, and in fact I think the drift into pregnancy——

Mr. ENSIGN. Poor people have more opportunity, is that what you are saying, to have more out-of-wedlock births?

Dr. FURSTENBERG. No, I am saying——

Mr. ENSIGN. That is what I am asking you. You were saying you have talked to these people in the inner city, and Dr. Rector had not talked to them, and you knew why, you gave us the reasons why they did not get pregnant.

I am just asking you for the reasons why they are having out-of-wedlock births.

You also, seem to be saying things about birth control.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. I said two things. I said that they are having sex, and they are using birth control improperly, that is, inconsistently.

You have to ask, why do they not use birth control more frequently? Or, why do they not abort when they——

Mr. ENSIGN. As compared to people who are——

Dr. FURSTENBERG. Once pregnancy occurs, there are a whole—you have to navigate a complex path to get, to have a child out of wedlock.

You have got to have sex, you have got to not use birth control, and you have got to not get an abortion, and you have got to not get married. Each of those decision points have different reasons to them.

Mr. ENSIGN. OK. Let us take a different tack. First of all, on your related work—and I thought that was kind of interesting.

During the Depression, was illegitimacy increased to a great degree, like it is, especially in the last 30 years?

Dr. FURSTENBERG. The rise in illegitimacy has been fairly steady throughout this century, but it started at a very low level. During the Depression, did illegitimacy increase? We did not have very good statistics before that. I cannot answer precisely. Certainly marriage decreased during the Depression. It went way down.

Mr. ENSIGN. You would think that people were still having sex back then, so illegitimacy should have gone dramatically up.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. People were not having sex in anywhere near the frequency that they have today. Especially young people. It was relatively uncommon for a 15-, 16-, or 17-year-old to have sex.

Mr. ENSIGN. OK. Let us get to other root causes other than just poverty, other than just lack of jobs,——

Dr. FURSTENBERG. I never said poverty was the only——

Mr. ENSIGN [continuing]. Other than just birth control.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. Yeah.

Dr. ENSIGN. Maybe a lack of morality in this country could be some of the reasons for that.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. No, I never said that poverty was the only cause of nonmarital childbearing.

Mr. ENSIGN. No, I know that——

Dr. FURSTENBERG. It is very clear, when we look across, nationally——

Mr. ENSIGN. Excuse me, doctor. When I asked you for the reasons that they were getting pregnant, you did not mention morality as a problem.

You did not mention that we were having a lot more sex today because of morality problems.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. You did not ask me.

Mr. ENSIGN. I asked you what the reasons were.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. If you had asked me, I would have——

Mr. ENSIGN. I asked you an open-ended question of what—I do not mean to make this confrontational, but I asked you an open-ended question of what the reasons were, and you did not offer that as one of your reasons.

Dr. ZILL. Congressman Ensign.

Mr. ENSIGN. Yes; go ahead.

Dr. ZILL. In line with what you are saying, there is a survey that is done every year of high school seniors, called Monitoring The Future. One of the questions they ask is, how acceptable is it for young people to have a child outside of marriage.

A very substantial proportion of American adolescents think that it is acceptable, it is not particularly bad.

Changing that attitude needs to have some work done on it. Part of what Dr. Furstenberg and I are saying, is that just changing welfare is not going to change that attitude.

Mr. ENSIGN. I agree. I agree with that.

Dr. ZILL. That attitude is held by young people who are not poor.

Mr. ENSIGN. I agree with that, and I do not think that welfare is the only thing that causes illegitimacy. I do think it is a contributing factor.

I do think that this whole welfare mentality, because—and you mentioned, getting back to this worth thing, Dr. Furstenberg—that if you just provide the jobs, that these people have the work ethic.

I would submit to you that they have lost it because of the welfare mentality in their culture. They have grown up with this culture.

The best example I can give is Tunica, Mississippi, that now has riverboat gambling. In Tunica, Mississippi, initially, they all went to work. Unemployment rates just bottomed out.

After 3, 4, 5 months of people working, they realized welfare is easier, "I do not want to work." The unemployment rates have gone back up.

It is not that people have moved in and displaced those jobs. Those jobs are now being replaced by people actually from Memphis and other places, because those people are willing to work, where the people in Tunica are not willing to work because it was easier just to sit back on the welfare roles.

I come from southern Nevada. If you do not work in southern Nevada, and you are an able body, it is because you do not want to work.

I mean, the jobs are absolutely available there, the same as they are in Tunica, Mississippi.

If we had an incentive for people, and it is called a time limit on welfare. In other words, after 2 years you have to go to work or you lose your welfare benefits.

Do you think that that might start changing the culture of this whole thing?

Dr. FURSTENBERG. I do not, and I think that we have a time limit that is in existence right now, that most of the people that go on welfare get in the labor force. Many of them hold jobs. Most of them hold jobs. Most of them are working. Most of them do not have a welfare mentality.

Mr. ENSIGN. Dr. Furstenberg, the welfare system is destroying people across this country.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. You can insist on that——

Mr. ENSIGN. It is destroying the inner-city families.

Chairman SHAW. I have an idea that we will not reach an agreement here between Dr. Furstenberg and Dr. Ensign, so time has expired.

Mr. Rangel.

Mr. RANGEL. I thank the Chairman.

Dr. Rector, we have these hearings so that we, as nonexperts, can make up our mind based on those that have done a lot of research into these areas.

It has been my experience, however, that certain of these research groups get reputations as being conservative research groups, and then liberal research groups.

Notwithstanding the expertise of the research staff, it always seemed to come to the same conclusions on most issues as to how the not-for-profit research group is. So that, if you say someone came from the ADL, you know, they would not be shouting a lot about illegitimacy.

They would talk about out-of-wedlock births, education, no gambling, and things like that. If you go to someone that is considered conservative, they would say cut the welfare, and you would cut illegitimacy, and things of that nature.

Do you agree that certain groups get a reputation, it really does not make any difference what the issue is, that you and I can guess 9 out of 10 times, what the conclusion would be with most of the social problems like immigration, affirmative action, longer jail sentences, capital punishment, or capital gains tax cuts?

I mean, we can kind of figure out what the testimony would be based on the group.

Mr. RECTOR. I think, unfortunately, that is often the case. I would say, however, if you look at the list of studies that I have put in——

Mr. RANGEL. I am going to get to that.

Mr. RECTOR. Yes.

Mr. RANGEL. No, I am going to get to that. If that is so——

Mr. RECTOR. There are actually several notable liberals there who actually have found the effect I am talking about.

Mr. RANGEL. No, no. No, no.

Mr. RECTOR. You do not like my policies at all.

Mr. RANGEL. No, no. Listen. Let us stick on where we agree, because I have the same problems. I am a lawyer, and lawyers do not care what the moral question is, how much money you have, and whatever the problem is, they will be able to be flexible enough to reach the conclusion that best satisfies their client.

In this particular case, I guess you, as a professional, would think your client is the Heritage Foundation.

Mr. RECTOR. No. The Heritage Foundation certainly does not, in any sense, dictate the conclusions of my research. I would simply say——

Mr. RANGEL. I am just asking.

Mr. RECTOR. No.

Mr. RANGEL. The answer is no.

Like Dr. Furstenberg, I would hardly think he would be a candidate to be hired by the Heritage Foundation.

Mr. RECTOR. I probably would not be a candidate to be on his faculty either, so I do not think that gets us very far.

Mr. RANGEL. Either you professionally had your ideas, and they hired you, or you knew what they were looking for, and you reached the conclusions.

I do not mean you, personally. I meant most of the people who do this type of research.

Mr. RECTOR. I think the——

Mr. RANGEL. Liberal or conservative, really.

Mr. RECTOR [continuing]. Reality here is—let me back up a little bit.

I think probably the most compelling teaching I ever got, in learning my research and statistical methods, and we have studies here, the majority of which do show effects, but there are others that do not, and so forth.

My graduate professor told me that if a theory and common sense tells you one thing, and your regression analysis tells you something else, almost certainly the theory and common sense is correct.

In this case, what we have is economic theory, psychological theory, and common sense, all tell us that in life you get what you pay for.

We have been paying to subsidize single parenthood.

Mr. RANGEL. Dr. Rector——

Mr. RECTOR. In this case, also, the empirical evidence backs that up.

Mr. RANGEL. I am not talking about your testimony, Dr. Rector. I am saying in all of the areas that I discussed with you, you agreed with me that before you hear the testimony, you and I, and Members of this Committee, whether it is a liberal group or your group, we can pretty much know how they are going to conclude. You agreed.

I am not saying that you change your opinion based on Heritage.

Mr. RECTOR. I think what would surprise you is, if you got all of the scholars in this field in a room, where we did not have the television cameras running, you would find far less disagreement than we find here before the cameras today.

Mr. RANGEL. God forbid we take away the cameras; but let me ask you this.

Did you get your doctorate in this type of stuff?

Mr. RECTOR. I do not have a doctorate. I have a master's degree.

Mr. RANGEL. You have a master's. OK. Listen, do you find any connection at all between the children that are born without their parents getting married and the education of the mother and the father? In other words, do you find that dumb people normally have these kids? I mean, untrained.

Mr. RECTOR. Women who are lower trained women, that have lower cognitive abilities, are more likely——

Mr. RANGEL. Now these dumb people that have——

Mr. RECTOR. Well, those are your words, Congressman. Do not——

Mr. RANGEL. I do not have any problem with my words. These uneducated, untrained people, do you find that normally they do not intend to get any further training? In other words, they have given up on becoming employable, generally speaking?

Mr. RECTOR. I think that they have, in general, bought into a vision of the future which does not aspire very highly, does not include marriage, and——

Mr. RANGEL. Those are my kind of words.

Mr. RECTOR. Yes.

Mr. RANGEL. OK. Do you find that most of the people that the mother and father associate with, that generally speaking, marriage is not a big priority in terms of where they want to end up in life?

Mr. RECTOR. Precisely. I think that is exactly it. The question is how did that come about.

Mr. RANGEL. I understand. Do you find that these people who really do not aspire to improve themselves, educationally, and marriage is not a priority, that having a child, whether or not that child is going to do better than them, that generally speaking, they do not even think about the welfare of that child?

In other words, they would want the child to love, or to have next to it, or make up for what they believe they never had. To say they wanted a baby to become a doctor, or a lawyer, you do not find that type of thinking, because it has been my experience, not as a professional—if they do not have it for themselves, it is hard to believe that just having a baby, that they can have this hope and dream for their child.

Dr. ZILL. That is not true. Actually, surveys show that the majority of parents, whether poor or wealthy, want and expect their kids to be able to graduate college. Educational aspirations are very high in our society, and they are universal. They are spread throughout. There is some variation——

Mr. RANGEL. That is totally unbelievable.

Dr. ZILL. Well, it is unbelievable, but it is true.

Mr. RANGEL. I am not knocking it. I am just saying in a community where unemployment is so high, that even with improved training, people do not have hope for a job, to believe that a child, 16 or 17 years old, that really can hardly communicate in the English language, would be sophisticated enough to know how important education is.

If they were wishing it for their child, how could they deny the thought that they would, if they got an education they could do better?

Mr. RECTOR. I think that the answer to that is that——

Mr. COLLINS [presiding]. Tell him his time is up.

Mr. RANGEL. The previous Chairman conducted this in a much more courteous way, and I do not think I have any further questions.

Mr. COLLINS. No further questions.

Do you have any questions, Ms. Dunn?

Ms. DUNN. I do. I do have a question.

I am still reeling from the testimony of Dr. McIlhaney. It really hit me right between the eyes. I have never heard anything so powerful. It makes me want to go back and get my kids from wherever they are, and keep them locked up till they are 30 years old.

Dr. MCILHANEY. Sorry.

Ms. DUNN. I guess what I wanted you to continue saying when your time ran out—is what do you have in mind that are potential public policy changes that we could make, that would change this whole attitude and begin solving this terrible problem?

Dr. MCILHANEY. Thank you. That is a very good question.

I think the testimony that we have even heard here today has pointed out the difficulty of accomplishing safety for our young people. It is my opinion that safety is the major problem in our society today.

I think that if we do not accomplish some type of solution to this, that we are going to have a whole generation or two generations of people that are sterile, dying, or diseased.

We already, I am sorry to say, have much of that.

I think that first, we have to realize that the problem is as bad as I have laid it out. By the way, these are not just my opinions.

Our organization has a national board of people who are true experts in these issues that I've talked about. They agree with me, that these things are this bad.

I first think that we have to realize that these issues are really destroying a generation of young people, probably two or three generations.

Second, we then have to commit to looking at the issue honestly. I just had a fleeting moment to say that the policies of the past have failed, and if we will take an honest look at the issue of, for instance, education, but not just education—the policies that American medicine has taken it, and the policies of other groups—we will see that those approaches, to this point, have literally been miserable failures.

I do not say that arbitrarily. I say that based on publications published in the medical and educational literature of the past 10 to 15 years, that even by people that wish the present system were working, affirm the fact that it has been a failure.

Sure, we will see articles that suggest that some sex education programs will increase the use of condoms from 10 to 20 percent, or from 30 to 50 percent. Might decrease the number of kids being abstinent from 50 percent to 60—I mean, increase the number of abstinent kids from 50 to 60 percent.

What we need, though, are programs that will literally make a dramatic change, and there are some out there that show real promise. Decreasing the instance of sexual activity by a factor of at least five. In other words, kids are one-fifth as likely to have sexual intercourse, or have babies, or to get disease.

I think it is an issue that you must take up here, you, who are policy makers, to encourage abstinence for young people until they get into one sexual relationship for life. If you want to call it marriage, fine. I do. I think most societies do. It is not a religious connotation.

Second, medical organizations need to be honest with themselves about the medical data.

Third, educational organizations need to do the same thing. Then of course we get into media, church, social organizations, and so forth, too.

It is a community wide thing. I think the first thing is that we just have to recognize that we have a huge problem.

One thing that you all have not been talking about, Representative Rangel, is when you talk about sexual activity and so forth, is the fact that—is why kids are having sex. Kids are not having sex because it is something that feels good to them.

As teenagers, they are victims of an environment that, because their parents are not paying attention to them, because their boyfriends are going to leave them unless they have sex, or because of sexual abuse.

Most of those youngsters having sex are being pushed into sex by older guys. Seventy-seven percent in a California study. Seventy-seven percent of the girls having sex, and I think it was below the 10th grade, or something like that, were having sex with people outside of high school.

It is a big job. I think we can do it. If we do not do it, we are going to end up with an STD epidemic, or an HIV epidemic, just like in countries that have had that epidemic longer than we have.

A third of the whole population infected with HIV. That is the direction we are heading.

Mr. COLLINS. The lady's time is up.

We appreciate this panel's testimony.

Chairman SHAW. Let me, if I can, just inquire, just a moment, of Dr. McIlhaney.

I was interested in your testimony, about something that I have not heard before, and that is a question of the increased instances of venereal disease among sexually active youngsters as opposed to the adult population.

I do not think that word is out, at least I had not gotten it, and I think probably most of the Members of the Committee were probably surprised to hear that.

If the CDC, Center for Disease Control, were to approach this problem like that of other diseases, what would be the steps that we could take to combat it?

In other words, what can we do now to get that word out, that people are really putting their whole reproductive future in danger as well as the danger, of course, of early pregnancy?

Dr. MCILHANEY. Well, I think that first, the CDC and medical professionals need to state the issue as I have stated it, and I think that we will see that happen.

If the medical people will state this, as it exists—and that is basically what our organization is dedicated to, is to bring the issue before medical organizations, to say, look, what has happened in the past has not worked in preventing these diseases. The epidemic is raging. It really is raging.

I mean, it is a crisis. It is a crisis that is basically—you know, it is tearing at me, personally, to see what is happening to patients I have taken care of through the years, enough to quit a practice that has been very successful, and get involved in this, full time, to basically bring this issue before the medical organizations.

I think the CDC should institute policy that points out especially the vulnerability of young people. These statistics I have shown you, if you start looking at your newspaper or information from CDC, you will see these numbers there all the time.

It is just that they have not decided to do something about it, and it is your children, and it is our grandchildren that are being affected by this.

Chairman SHAW. My grandchildren, too, I am afraid.

Dr. MCILHANEY. Yes.

Chairman SHAW. I think this is something that should be talked about.

You know, we see all of these little health segments on "Good Morning America" and the various other morning shows, it seems like this would be a segment that certainly should be handled.

I think the parents should know about it, to warn their kids, and the kids should know about this. I just do not see this word getting out, and I think it is very important.

Dr. MCILHANEY. Thank you.

Chairman SHAW. Thank you, doctor.

I hate to open up the discussion that you and Dr. Ensign had a few minutes ago, Dr. Furstenberg, but as I understood your testimony, you said by putting a fixed length of time on which someone could receive welfare without having to perform some type of work would not—what was it, exactly?

I do not want to put words in your mouth. I want to be careful not to do that.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. Well, I am not sure what you are asking, but I think I said it would not result in a decrease in nonmarital childbearing. It probably also would not be good for many of the women. The ones that, welfare records, that I am familiar with, suggest that many women—the vast majority of women who go on welfare cycle in and out of welfare over a long period of time.

Chairman SHAW. The average person on welfare today will be on the rolls for 13 years. I think you probably agree with that figure, do you not?

Dr. FURSTENBERG. Depending on how you count the——

Chairman SHAW. Total.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. Pardon me?

Chairman SHAW. In and out total of, you know, in 6 months, out 6 months, in 6 months, would amount to 1 year.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. I have not heard a figure that is as high as 13. You are saying that half of all people are 13 years, or over, or the mean number?

Chairman SHAW. I will send you the data. I am surprised you did not know that. The average person in welfare today will be on welfare for a total of 13 years. Some will be in a total of——

Dr. FURSTENBERG. You are saying the average person who enters welfare——

Chairman SHAW. I did not say the average person. The average stay on welfare is 13 years.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. I see. That is a little bit like saying that if we look at——

Chairman SHAW. That is right. Somebody who is on a month to month would bring that figure down; somebody who is on a lifetime will bring that figure——

Dr. FURSTENBERG. Congressman, it makes a lot of difference whether you study people who go on welfare, because the people who are on welfare a very long time represent a disproportionate share of the population of people on welfare, just as the chronic disease people would be a disproportionate number in a hospital.

You would not be able to calculate the average person by taking the——

Chairman SHAW. Have you looked at the Massachusetts statistics? Have you looked at the Wisconsin statistics, and the Michigan statistics?

I think it shows that certainly time-limiting welfare certainly works.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. It works to get people off welfare. Whether it works to improve—there is no question about that.

Chairman SHAW. Some people think that that may be funny, but I certainly do not, because I think it shows them that there is another way out there, and that they had better find a job and not use up the time that——

Dr. FURSTENBERG. Yes, as I understand it, those studies that have not followed those people for long periods of time, to ask the kinds of questions that I want to know—Are they living in poverty? Are their children living in poverty?

Are their children doing well, or better because they have been off welfare?

Those are the kinds of questions. I think we assume—I think the welfare system as it has evolved has numerous faults that need correction and I have spoken out on the need for welfare reform.

The idea that somehow anything is better than what exists now does not seem to me to be obvious, or well-founded, based on any evidence that we have.

Chairman SHAW. I do not know of anybody who has said or thought that anything is better than what we have today, but I can assure you that every welfare bill that I know of, that has been filed in the Congress, is certainly better than what——

Dr. FURSTENBERG. Will time-limited welfare decrease——

Chairman SHAW [continuing]. We have today, and I think is shown by the fact that not one person defended the status quo in the Congress when the question came up.

Everybody in the Congress voted for a welfare bill, time-limited welfare, by the way.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. Will that decrease illegitimacy or nonmarital childbearing? I think not.

Chairman SHAW. Well, only time will tell on that.

Dr. Zill.

Dr. ZILL. Some of our concern is that while there is broad agreement that there needs to be a change in welfare, this welfare culture has evolved over a long period of time. Some of us are concerned about making changes too precipitously, without knowing what the effects of those changes might be.

I think that what is more called for is genuine trying out solutions on a demonstration project basis, and looking at what the results of those are.

Chairman SHAW. We have done that in the States. Delaware is a fine example. Massachusetts is a fine example. Wisconsin is a fine example.

Dr. ZILL. Very few of those are really what we might call——

Chairman SHAW. Michigan is a fine example. You can even see where certain things are working, such as where there are only one or two counties, like in Florida, and you see that the States are gravitating more and more toward doing that.

Even the administration, where they keep vetoing the bills, they keep talking about time-limiting welfare.

I might say to you, Dr. Zill, and to all the others, the Congress is going to continue to study this subject, after welfare reform, we are not walking away from it.

To walk away from it would do a horrible injustice. We are going to have to study the problems in Charlie Rangel's district further. We have got to get the jobs. These are descendants of people who went to New York to find work.

They came from Ireland. They came from the South. They came from all over the world. For what? To find a job.

There is nothing basically wrong with these people. It is just a question that they have been paid to stay there, and there are no jobs, and now you have got a big, big problem.

I think that we owe it, as a Federal Government, to continue to study the problem and to do what we can to encourage jobs to return to the inner cities where you have these pockets of poverty which have to be worked out. We cannot walk away——

Dr. FURSTENBERG. Congressman, as long as there are jobs that pay a living wage, and a decent wage, I favor your——

Chairman SHAW. What do you call a decent wage, by the way?

Dr. FURSTENBERG. I would say enough for a family, two adults, to live on. The people that I am studying now typically will say that you need four jobs to have a decent living.

Chairman SHAW. Give me an amount.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. Why is that?

Chairman SHAW. Give me an amount.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. Because they are paid minimum wage——

Chairman SHAW. What is a decent wage?

Dr. FURSTENBERG [continuing]. Which $4.25, and that is not enough——

Chairman SHAW. That is why we have the earned income tax credit, and that is why we have Medicaid, and that is why we have child care.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. They do not have the benefits—are you talking about continuous benefits of Medicare and child care they will have? I understand that the bill will——

Chairman SHAW. Medicaid goes on for 1 year, under existing law, for someone that goes off of welfare. The child care needs to be beefed up, there is no question about it.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. Yes. How about the continuation of Medicare? I mean, I think if you billed the benefits, then I think you are getting real reform.

Chairman SHAW. Well, those are some of the things that we are going to have to continue to study.

I would like to know if you could give me what you think is a decent wage, so I will know where you are coming from. A dollar figure for a single mom.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. For a single mom, what would be a decent wage? I would say, if—with a child, or without a child?

Chairman SHAW. With a child. We are talking about AFDC.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. Well, poverty would be, what?, about $12,000 for a mother and child, so I would like to see whatever the benefits, be equal or above——

Chairman SHAW. Well, maybe we ought to look at that, but I think if you are talking minimum wage—that is around $9,000 a year—and if you put the earned income tax credit on top of that, with a child, you are getting close to that sum. I am not saying it is easy. No one says it is easy.

One of the toughest things that somebody can do is to go from welfare to work. We understand that. That is why people are not taking that final step.

We are going to have to change things. We have a different idea of where to come from, but all of us, I think, including the most liberal and the most conservative in this room, would certainly like to see people working rather than living on welfare.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Chairman, we will talk further. For example, in the conference report, Medicaid is not assured, and I hope we can change that. Also, the earned income tax credit does not change the gross income.

Dr. ZILL. Congressman Shaw, another thing that many of us would plead is not to forget to focus on the father. I mean, one of the ways to get people above poverty is to have more than one wage earner contributing to the support of the family.

Chairman SHAW. Oh, I can tell you, I think the best way to stop out-of-wedlock births is to get the dad, and we are going to have to address that, as we did in the welfare bill, as we are going to continue to do, because it is about time that we have the male responsible. I think what Charlie Rangel was saying in his testimony, was that these are not teenage boys that are getting these teenage girls pregnant.

Most of them are in their twenties, and that is absolutely horrible, and we are going to identify them, we are going to find them, and we are going to make them pay.

I think that is tremendously important, and that will be the best way, I think, of all the things that we are doing; and of all the things we might disagree on, I think that is one thing that we can agree on, that that is the best way to stop all of these out-of-wedlock births, or certainly have a big effect on it.

These guys are just walking away, fancy free. They think it is funny. They think it has in some way proven their masculinity, and they are destroying these young girls' lives, and they are bringing kids into the world who are going to be impoverished themselves.

I want to thank this panel.

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Chairman, may I ask a question?

Chairman SHAW. Yes; go ahead.

Mr. COLLINS. I would like to ask Dr. Furstenberg this. You mentioned the program should be designed so that the wage would be equivalent to a living.

Are you saying that the $12,000 would be ample for mother and child as a substantial living to replace the program currently provided as a welfare benefit——

Dr. FURSTENBERG. Congressman, I am a sociologist, not an economist, and I would leave it to the economists to say what an acceptable, modest standard of living. I am very encouraged, if I understood Congressman Shaw saying, that the medical benefits would continue, that you would beef up the child care benefits.

With that job, if you have a package of benefits, that really allow people to live at a modest style of living, I think you will find that most people on welfare want to work.

That is one of the big myths that has got to be exploded.

Mr. COLLINS. We understand and we agree on that. If I recall, in the welfare reform bill that we sent to the President on a couple of occasions, in the area of child care there were funds for child care. In the area of Medicaid, the child will continue to be covered under Medicaid.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. For how long, Congressman?

Mr. COLLINS. There will also be benefits there for food stamps for the child, nutrition programs for the child.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. Most of these people will not move into jobs with benefits. If you have one——

Mr. COLLINS. Let me finish.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. Yes; sorry.

Mr. COLLINS. The adults would have to fend for themselves under a job, and the job wages would supplant the cash benefits that the adult was receiving, but the programs to make sure that the child was provided for would stay in place.

Dr. FURSTENBERG. If you mean by 1 year, I think that is inadequate. It is clearly inadequate. If you are planning to keep those benefits in place, I think that would make the bill a lot more attractive from my point of view.

Chairman SHAW. OK . We are going to have to let that be the last word. We have got to move this hearing along. I do not want to keep the later panels here too late.

The next panel is going to be discussing reducing out-of-wedlock births.

We have Heidi Stirrup who is director of government relations at the Christian Coalition, here, in Washington; Andrea Sheldon, director of government affairs, Traditional Values Coalition, here, in Washington; Sister Mary Rose McGeady, who is the president and chief executive of Covenant House, one of my favorite organizations, with a very fine facility, in my own hometown of Fort Lauderdale. Audrey Rowe is executive vice president of the National Urban League of New York, whom I am told lives in Connecticut.

Welcome, and as I have said to the other panelists, we have your full statement which will be made a part of the record, and you may proceed and summarize as you see fit.

Ms. Stirrup.

STATEMENT OF HEIDI STIRRUP, DIRECTOR, GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, CHRISTIAN COALITION, WASHINGTON, DC

Ms. STIRRUP. Mr. Chairman, Members of the Subcommittee, I am Heidi Stirrup, director of government relations for the Christian Coalition.

Thank you very much for holding this hearing and for inviting me to offer some thoughts on the topic of poverty, illegitimacy and welfare reform.

Speaking on behalf of Christian Coalition, I would like to point out to this Committee that what is needed to combat the skyrocketing rate of out-of-wedlock births are bold policies that will discour-

age dependency, restore a sense of personal responsibility, and encourage stable two-parent families.

Programs that were once judged by the height of their aspirations now must be reconsidered by the depths of their failures and the magnitude of their casualties.

I do not think anyone here is prepared to defend the current welfare system as is. Over $5 trillion has been spent over the past 30 years, and as a result America has a larger poverty element that is more violent, more poorly educated, and includes many more single-parent households than ever before.

This is a national travesty, and it is time to try something different.

What has been swept to the sidelines in the current welfare reform debate, until this hearing, that is, are specific policies designed to save marriages and remove the economic incentives and rewards for single parenthood.

The central problem with welfare, in our view, is the fact that it subsidizes and therefore promotes self-destructive behavior.

Right now, the welfare system promotes nonwork, illegitimacy and divorce. It undermines the work ethic and family structure, and results in more and more people dependent on government aid.

Out-of-wedlock births are a strong predictor of poverty. Unwed mothers are not only more likely to rely on government aid to support their children, but are also more likely to spend years dependent upon welfare.

Because illegitimacy feeds both poverty and itself, there is no way we can reverse the dual trends of welfare dependency and family breakdown until we address illegitimacy.

Welfare cash and assistance provides a perverse economic support system for illegitimacy. A young girl on welfare can get a cash grant, food stamps, medical care, day care, a transportation allowance, and in many cases, a rent allowance.

To many, welfare is more attractive than entry level jobs. It subsidizes unwed motherhood and makes husbands quite dispensable.

Some will argue that while fighting illegitimacy may be a laudable goal, the Federal Government should not impose requirements on the States, and, if left alone, Governors will come up with their own innovative solutions.

To that I would say that the Governors proposed eliminating the one and only provision from the Welfare Reform Conference Report, which would have required a family cap, and instead offered no other alternative, suggesting to me that they are reluctant to effectively deal with this crisis.

At a minimum, Christian Coalition would advocate the following policy changes to combat illegitimacy.

Restore the requirement to prohibit States from using Federal funds to give additional cash benefits to welfare recipients who have additional children; but allow for vouchers for the care and feeding and material needs of the child.

Restore the requirement to prohibit States from using Federal funds to give additional cash benefits to unmarried teenage mothers, who have children out of wedlock; but again, allow for vouchers for the care and feeding and material needs of the child.

Provide reward incentives when welfare mothers marry and exit welfare? Require states to devise their own plans to reduce out-of-wedlock births.

Fix the existing illegitimacy bonus ratio plan so that States can more successfully lower their illegitimacy ratio.

Increase funding for abstinence education from $75 to $200 million.

Require establishment of paternity as a criteria for eligibility of benefits.

Provide tax credits for contributions to private charities to encourage greater reliance on private sector and faith-based organizations who can give prompt aid to those who need it most.

In short, what is needed for true welfare reform are policies which will discourage dependency and restore a sense of personal responsibility, control costs, and reduce the illegitimate birth rates by promoting stable two-parent families.

Instead of offering more Federal money to provide more social services to the ever-expanding dependency population, we must offer policies designed to save marriages and remove the economic incentives and rewards for single parenthood.

We commend the Congress and this Subcommittee for the tremendous effort it is making in attempting to change welfare as we know it.

We encourage you to include policies that will help people help themselves. If we do not save marriage so children can be raised in two-parent households, we will have done a great disservice to our children and our society.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement follows:]

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF CHRISTIAN COALITION
PRESENTED BY HEIDI STIRRUP, DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS
TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HEARING ON
"CAUSES OF POVERTY -- ILLEGITIMACY"

March 12, 1996

Mr. Chairman, members of the Subcommittee, I am Heidi Stirrup, Director of Government Relations for the Christian Coalition. Thank you very much for the opportunity to present testimony to the subcommittee on the topic of poverty and illegitimacy. Christian Coalition applauds Chairman Shaw for holding this important hearing. Illegitimacy is one particular aspect of poverty in the context of welfare reform that we believe is essential to address.

As a pro-family organization, members of the Christian Coalition are comprised of people of differing faiths who are all dedicated to strengthening families and restoring common sense values. Our members are concerned about the breakup of the family, the size and growth of government, and the higher tax burden imposed upon them. They expect government policies to look out for the family -- encourage marriage, reduce the crushing tax burden and promote policies which value families. The current debate over welfare reform offers a great opportunity to address some of these concerns and perhaps even accomplish some of these goals.

Few will dispute the fact that there is a moral and social decline in America today beginning with the decay of the very basic unit of our society -- the family. In fact, it seems there has been a steady decline -- even destruction -- of the family over the last thirty years. What worked for families in the first 190 years of this great nation has given way to what arguably has not worked. The basic family unit has been under attack from illegitimacy, promiscuity, adultery, divorce and homosexuality. It is the increasing rate of out-of-wedlock births that is particularly shocking and troubling and which demands some attention. Our federal public policies should encourage marriage, help families stay together and discourage out-of-wedlock births.

Programs that were once judged by the height of their aspirations now must be reconsidered by the depths of their failures and the magnitude of their casualties. The current welfare system is considered by many as a complete failure. Over $5 *trillion* dollars has been spent over the past thirty years and as a result, America has a *larger* poverty element that is more violent, more poorly educated and includes many more single parent households than ever before. It is time to try something different. Given an opportunity to change the welfare system without affirmatively addressing illegitimacy, we believe will result in an incomplete and inadequate effort. Social policy experts identify illegitimacy as the single most important social problem today largely because it contributes to many other social problems such as crime, drugs, poverty, illiteracy, welfare and homelessness.

Out-of-wedlock births are a strong predictor of poverty. Unwed mothers are not only more likely to rely on government to support their children, but are also more likely to spend years dependent upon welfare. According to a report issued by the Heritage Foundation, one in every three children were born out-of-wedlock last year. The illegitimate birth rate continues to rise about one percentage point every year. Children born out-of-wedlock are *seven* times more likely to be poor than those born to couples who remain married. Girls raised in single parent homes on welfare are five times more likely to give birth out-of-wedlock themselves when compared to girls from intact non-welfare families. Because illegitimacy feeds both poverty and itself, there is no way we can reverse the dual trends of welfare dependency and family breakdown until we address illegitimacy.

While some may question whether welfare *causes* illegitimacy, it is certainly true that welfare cash and assistance provides a perverse economic support system for it. A young girl on welfare can get a cash grant, food stamps, medical care, day care, a transportation allowance, and in many cases a rent allowance. This rapid expansion of welfare benefits makes welfare more attractive than entry-level jobs and subsidizes unwed motherhood making husbands quite dispensable. In fact, for many fathers, welfare provides an automatic escape hatch. They do not have to take responsibility for their children -- the government will.

Suggesting ways to combat illegitimacy requires a multi-faceted approach. First, let's consider some proposals designed to fight illegitimacy already included in the context of welfare reform as contained in the conference report to H.R. 4, Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1995.

Family cap: Allowing states to "opt-in" to a requirement restricting additional cash payments to welfare recipients having additional children while on welfare is really not much more than the status quo and is a minimal step. The financial support that "rewards" irresponsible behavior is in itself irresponsible. Taking away the cash incentive could be the single most immediate step to break the cycle of illegitimacy and dependency.

Cash welfare block grants: While it is true that current welfare reform proposals (both the conference report and the Governors' proposal) rely on block grants which the states *may* use to "prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies", there is no specific set-aside for *an exclusive* use of funds to combat illegitimacy. Right now, states have some flexibility with their funds but typically AFDC simply subsidizes divorce and very little if any funds are used to directly prevent and reduce illegitimacy.

Illegitimacy ratio bonus plan: The conference report proposal designed to reward states by providing additional block grant money if they successfully reduce out-of-wedlock birth rates without increasing abortion rates is a positive incentive. However, this reward will be very difficult to achieve. The bonus would apply only if states reduce their out-of-wedlock birth ratio by a full percentage point from the base year (1995). With illegitimacy rates rising one percentage point per year on average, even a vigorous effort to control this trend may not result in a net reduction of one percentage point.

Teen pregnancy: Again, allowing states to "opt-in" to requirements restricting cash to unmarried teen mothers is more of the status quo. Requiring teens to be in school or live "with an adult" to be eligible for assistance will not affect much new since most dependent teens already do this. Allowing states to provide "adult-supervised living arrangements" such as second-chance homes for teens, is nothing more than a welfare service add-on. This is another way to make it easier to be a single parent.

Encouraging paternity establishment: Again, *allowing* states to *encourage* paternity is helpful. Why not *require* states to *require* paternity in order to be eligible for benefits. Until there are significant consequences for certain behavior, we cannot expect much change.

National goals to prevent teen pregnancy: A proposal to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to implement a strategy to prevent teenage pregnancies must not be a condom distribution plan. Abstinence is essential and must be a national priority. It is the only fool-proof solution to prevent pregnancies.

Annual ranking of states regarding out-of-wedlock births: Requiring the Secretary of Health and Human Services to annually rank the five most successful and five least successful states in reducing out-of-wedlock births is useful, but not central to the fight of reducing illegitimacy.

What is striking about these proposals is how timid they are. America is faced with a skyrocketing rise in illegitimacy and what Congress and the National Governors Association recommend is more federal money to the states with added flexibility, but no *requirements* when it comes to fighting illegitimacy. When considering the amount of money this legislation will

authorize, it is astounding to see that for every $1000 the government will provide to essentially subsidize single parenthood, only $1 is provided to reduce illegitimacy. This is hardly a solution for the crisis we're facing.

Recommendations: At a minimum, Christian Coalition would advocate the following policy changes to combat illegitimacy:

- Restore the requirement to prohibit states from using federal funds to give additional cash benefits to welfare recipients who have additional children while on welfare, but allow for vouchers for the care, feeding and material needs of the child.
- Restore the requirement to prohibit states from using federal funds to give additional cash benefits to unmarried teenage mothers who have children out-of-wedlock, but allow for vouchers for the care, feeding and material needs of the child.
- Provide reward incentives when welfare mothers marry and exit welfare.
- Require states to devise their own plans to reduce out-of-wedlock births.
- Fix the bonus payment scheme for rewarding states that reduce their illegitimacy ratios by making the target reductions easier to achieve.
- Increase funding for abstinence education from $75 million to $200 million.
- Require establishment of paternity as a criteria for eligibility of benefits.
- Provide tax credits for contributions to private charities as a way to encourage private sector and faith-based organizations to step in for the failed welfare bureaucracy. These organizations can give prompt aid to those who need it most and encourage self sufficiency and personal responsibility.

In short, what is needed for true welfare reform, are policies which will discourage dependency and restore a sense of personal responsibility, control costs and reduce the illegitimate birth rates by promoting stable, two-parent families. Instead of offering more federal money to provide more social services to the ever expanding dependency population, we must offer policies designed to save marriages and remove the economic incentives and rewards for single parenthood.

We commend the Congress and this subcommittee for the tremendous effort it is making in attempting to "change welfare as we know it." We encourage you to include policies that will help people help themselves. If we do not save marriage so children can be raised in two-parent households, we will have done a great disservice to our children and our society.

Chairman SHAW. Thank you very much.
Ms. Sheldon.

STATEMENT OF ANDREA SHELDON, DIRECTOR, GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS, TRADITIONAL VALUES COALITION, WASHINGTON, DC

Ms. SHELDON. I would like to request that the full text of my statement be entered in the record.

Chairman SHAW. It will be for you, and for the other witnesses. Thank you.

Ms. SHELDON. Mr. Chairman, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today on the issue of illegitimacy.

My name is Andrea Sheldon and I am the director of government affairs for the Traditional Values Coalition.

We represent over 31,000 multiracial churches made up of various denominations and socioeconomic backgrounds. We believe that America's strength is in its churches.

My interest in the subject of illegitimacy is not merely political but is deeply personal. I have spent years working with people facing the very problems we are here today to discuss.

I have taken in and personally cared for homeless children, thrown birthday parties and baby showers for mothers on welfare, and assisted in job placement and training.

All of this was done through a ministry at my church, Church of the Apostles, in Fairfax, Virginia.

I have seen firsthand, the generational destruction of welfare, and in particular, how illegitimacy sets the course for a troubled life.

Today, there is a myth surrounding the welfare debate, that there is a safety net worth saving. For all practical purposes, there is no safety net. After 30 years and over $4.5 trillion, our country has more children in poverty, more illegitimacy, more teen pregnancies, and more urban blight now than any time in our history.

The collapse of the family is the most important issue facing American society because it is the root cause of a multitude of other social and economic problems.

It is important to recognize the time lag inherent in many problems associated with illegitimacy, and the effect on American society.

The soaring crime rate among urban youth today, in large measure is occurring among young males who were born out of wedlock, during the late seventies.

With nearly one out of three children being born out of wedlock today, the Federal Government must stop encouraging welfare dependency through subsidizing illegitimacy.

Today, I would like to focus on two key welfare reform themes—illegitimacy and the promotion of moral renewal.

Halting the escalation of illegitimacy must be the paramount goal of welfare reform, and simultaneously, policymakers must promote the formation of stable two-parent families. Any genuine welfare reform must reduce the illegitimate birth rate through a family cap.

It has been pointed out, time and again, that no other family in our society, except for those on government assistance, receives an automatic increase in their paychecks for having additional children.

Americans are kind and generous people; however, it is clear that taxpayers want to see an end to their hard-earned dollars being used to subsidize illegitimacy.

Another means of addressing the increasing rate of illegitimacy is through abstinence education. Funding should be used for abstinence only, with a focus on those groups which are most likely to bear children out of wedlock.

Additionally, and equally important, the government must assist in the process of moral rebuilding by allowing private social organizations such as churches and other community institutions to play a far greater role in educating and shaping the moral code of young people.

There is no question that parents, and in particular, low-income parents, must be given far greater choice in how their children are educated, including the right for their tax dollars to follow their children to the school of their choice. The Renewal Community Projects cosponsored by Congressmen Watts and Talent is an essential step in this direction.

Robert Rector of the Heritage Foundation has talked about the necessary role of morality by talking about behavioral poverty.

Behavioral poverty refers to the breakdown of values, and conduct, which lead to the formation of healthy families, stable personalities, and self-sufficiency.

There is no question that welfare spending, intended to alleviate material poverty, has actually led to a dramatic increase in behavioral poverty.

I have seen this in my own work with families who are on welfare. Let me share with you a personal experience.

One day while visiting one of the homeless motels, I had a conversation with two women who were cousins, about 20 years old. They asked me if I had any children, and I said no, that I was not married.

They both responded, almost in unison, and without much thought: "Oh, that does not matter." What was a very natural response for these two young women made a profound impact on me.

These young women had been raised in the system, and knew every benefit it had to offer. Tragically, they were caught in a generational cycle and mentality of behavioral poverty.

The negative consequences of an out-of-wedlock birth on the child, the mother, the family, and society, are well documented. Children born into families receiving welfare assistance are three times more likely to be on welfare when they reach adulthood than children not born into families receiving welfare.

Historically, it has been through social and faith-based institutions, such as churches and synagogues, not the value-free government institutions, that have best dealt with poverty and despair, because they can take into account the spiritual as well as the physical needs of individuals.

Research shows that inner-city children with religious values are 47 percent less likely to drop out of school, 54 percent less likely

to use drugs and 50 percent less likely to engage in criminal activities than those without religious values.

One of the most powerful of all factors in preventing out-of-wedlock births is the regular practice of religious beliefs.

Let me just say that the children who are pictured each night on our evening news, children lying shot on some Washington street, are our children. They are American kids.

Each of us, as individual citizens, need to take personal responsibility for recapturing some part of our country which has been negligently entrusted to government by day and criminals by night.

For too long, this great body has tried to hide from any discussions of morality, and as a result, Congress must face a Federal subsidy system gone awry, and ramifications of public policy that rewards illegitimacy.

[The prepared statement follows:]

STATEMENT OF ANDREA SHELDON
DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS
TRADITIONAL VALUES COALITION

Mr. Chairman, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today on the issue of illegitimacy. My name is Andrea Sheldon and I am the Director of Government Affairs for the Traditional Values Coalition. Traditional Values Coalition represents over 31,000 multi-racial churches made up of various denominations and socio-economic backgrounds. Traditional Values Coalition believes that America's strength is in her churches.

My interest in the subject of illegitimacy is not merely political but is deeply personal. I have spent years working with the people facing the very problems we are here today to discuss. I have taken in and personally cared for homeless children, thrown birthday parties and baby showers for mothers on welfare and assisted in job placement and training. All of this was done through a ministry, which I coordinated for six years, at my church, Church of the Apostles in Fairfax, Virginia. This ministry reaches out to homeless families, and in particular children, in an attempt to break the cycle of spiritual and economic poverty which plagues them. I have seen first hand the generational destruction of welfare and in particular how illegitimacy sets the course for a troubled life.

Today there is a myth surrounding the welfare debate, that there is a safety net worth saving. For all practical purposes there is no safety net. After 30 years and over $5.4 trillion, our country has more children in poverty, more illegitimacy, more teen pregnancies and more urban blight now than any time in our history.

The collapse of the family is the most important issue facing American society because it is the root cause of a multitude of other social and economic problems. It is important to recognize the time lag inherent in many problems associated with illegitimacy, and the effect on American society. The soaring crime rate among urban youths today in large measure is occurring among males who were born out-of-wedlock during the late 1970's. With nearly one out of three children being born out-of-wedlock today, it is obvious that successful welfare reform must reduce the epidemic rate of out-of-wedlock births. The federal government must stop encouraging welfare dependency through subsidizing illegitimacy. In order to have a healthy society, marriage between one man and one woman must be recognized and encouraged.

Unfortunately, in the last few months welfare reform has been sidetracked and now focuses on child care instead of the real issue -- illegitimacy. Unless Congress once again brings the focus back to policies that reduce out-of-wedlock births and encourage marriage you will not have fundamentally changed welfare and consequently Congress will have failed to pass genuine welfare reform.

In overhauling the failed welfare system, policy makers must continue to be guided by the following three key welfare reform themes:

1) reduce illegitimacy
2) real work requirements
3) promote moral renewal

I would like to focus on two of these today --illegitimacy and the promotion of moral renewal. Halting the escalation of illegitimacy must be the paramount goal of welfare reform and simultaneously, policy makers must promote the formation of stable two parent families. Any genuine welfare reform must reduce the illegitimate birth rate through a family cap.

Additionally, and equally important, the government must assist in the process of moral rebuilding by allowing private social organizations, such as churches and other community institutions, to play a far greater role in educating and shaping the moral code of young people. There is no question that parents, and in particular, low income parents must be given far greater choice in how their children are educated, including the right for their tax dollars to follow their children to the school of their choice.

In her historical study Poverty and Compassion, Gertrude Himmelfarb writes:

> After making the most arduous attempt to objectify the problem of poverty, to divorce poverty from any moral assumptions and conditions, we are learning how inseparable the moral and material dimensions of that problem are. And after trying to devise social policies that are scrupulously neutral and 'value-free,' we are finding these policies fraught with moral implications that have grave material and social consequences.

Robert Rector of the Heritage Foundation has reinforced the necessary role of morality further by talking about two separate concepts of poverty: "material poverty" and "behavioral poverty."

Material poverty is having a family income below the official poverty threshold, and thereby lacking financial resources to meet certain needs.

Behavioral poverty refers to the breakdown of values and conduct which lead to the formation of healthy families, stable personalities and self-sufficiency. Behavioral poverty is manifested by an eroded work ethic and dependency, lack of educational aspiration and achievement, inability or unwillingness to control one's children, increased single parenthood and illegitimacy, criminal activity, and drug and alcohol abuse. There is no question that welfare spending intended to alleviate material poverty has actually led to a dramatic increase in behavioral poverty.

I have seen this in my own work with homeless families who are on welfare. Let me share with you a personal experience.

One day while visiting one of the homeless motels I had a conversation with two women who were cousins, each around 20 years old. They asked me if I had any children and I said no, that I was not married. They both responded almost in unison and without much thought, "Oh, that doesn't matter." What was a very natural response for these two young women made a profound impact on me. These young woman had been raised "in the system" and knew every benefit it had to offer. Tragically, these young women were caught in a generational cycle and mentality of behavioral poverty.

Many advocate that welfare is compassionate, when in fact it has really created government dependence with grave generational consequences. What is compassionate about living in a government housing project with your mother, who lived there with her mother. What is compassionate about dropping out of school at age 14 because you have become pregnant, just as your mother became pregnant with you and dropped out of school, and just as her mother before her.

The negative consequences of an out-of-wedlock birth on a child, the mother, the family and society are well documented. Children born into families receiving welfare assistance are three times more likely to be on welfare when they reach adulthood than children not born into families receiving welfare.

Recent data from the National Longitudinal Survey on Youth show that young girls raised in single-parent homes on welfare are three times more likely to become unwed mothers themselves, as girls raised in two-parent, non-welfare families. Tragically, Uncle Sam is the only dad known to 57% of children whose single mothers are on Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC).

However, those who abide by three simple rules will not be chronically poor in the United States. These three rules for preventing or escaping from poverty are:

- finish high school;
- get a job, any job and stick with it;
- do not have children outside of marriage.

It has been pointed out time and again that no other family in our society, except for those on government assistance, receives an automatic increase in their paychecks for having additional children. Americans are kind and generous people, however, it is clear that taxpayers want to see an end to their hard earned dollars being used to subsidize illegitimacy.

The government must cap the growth of welfare and other spending. Traditional Values Coalition supports the "family cap" provision to cap benefits to mothers having additional children while on welfare. The government must stop encouraging out-of-wedlock births and subsidizing irresponsible choices.

Another means of addressing the increasing rate of illegitimacy is through abstinence education. We must help all youth, and in particular those at risk, to lead healthy, whole

lives. Funding should be used for abstinence only education with a focus on those groups which are most likely to bear children out-of-wedlock.

Much of the rhetoric on welfare reform focuses on government solutions to move individuals off the welfare roles without honestly acknowledging the self-destructive behavior that led them to dependence initially.

Historically, it has been through social and faith-based institutions, not the value-free government institutions, that have best dealt with poverty and despair. In dealing with the growing problems in our society today of family disintegration, substance abuse, crime and despair in low-income communities, there is no question that it is once again the faith-based organizations, churches and synagogues that will be the most effective because only they can take into account the spiritual as well as the physical needs of individuals.

The practice of religion has beneficial effects on behavior and social relations including illegitimacy. One of the most powerful of all factors in preventing out-of-wedlock births is the regular practice of religious belief.

Research by Dr. Richard Freeman of Harvard University shows that inner-city children with religious values are 47% less likely to drop out of school, 54% less likely to use drugs and 50% less likely to engage in criminal activities than those without religious values. Additionally,

- Young women who regularly attend church are roughly half as likely to have a child out-of-wedlock as are those who do not attend church at all.
- Religious belief and practice have also been shown to greatly reduce pre-marital sexual activity among adolescent girls.
- Children aged 10 to 18 who do not attend church are 30 to 50 percent more likely to exhibit anti-social and dysfunctional behavior than are those who regularly attend church.
- Studies show that young people who attend church have a positive affect on the behavior of other youngsters in their immediate neighborhood.

Over the years the government has become increasingly hostile, rather than accomodating, to faith-based organizations. inspite of the significant role they play in society. The government's attempts to thwart the activity of these organizations must be addressed and stopped.

One of the best ways for society to lower the illegitimacy rate is to ensure religious school choice, at the very least for those young people at risk. As we all know, education is about shaping the hearts and minds of children, and inculcating morals and values to these children and what better vehicle than faith-based education .

Traditional Values Coalition believes that the Renewal Community Project co-sponsored by Congressmen J.C. Watts (R-OK) and Jim Talent (R-MO) will be a giant step towards addressing illegitimacy by empowering parents and individuals to move from government dependence to independence. This will be done in a number of ways including through religious school choice.

It is unconscionable that President Bill Clinton, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Senator Ted Kennedy and Congresswoman Maxine Waters, and many other Members of Congress, who have the financial resources to provide private school education for their own children, would deny low-income children the same opportunities of a quality education. For all too many low-income children, religious schools will offer them the best opportunity to a quality education which is their best chance at reversing the cycle that has so entrapped their parents and grandparents.

Mr. Chairman, if we conducted a vote today in this committee on education issues and only allowed those whose children are in public schools or those who were educated in public schools to vote on this matter would we be able to get a quorum?

For too long this great body has tried to hide from any discussions of morality, and as a result you must face a federal subsidy system gone awry and the ramifications of public policy that rewards illegitimacy.

The most important point which needs to be made about the bankruptcy of our current welfare system is that it attempts to treat one dimension of poverty material poverty–while leaving behavioral poverty to run amuk.

Much work needs to be done in our communities and we need to look to each other before we look to HHS or some new federal grant program. The children who are pictured each night on our evening news -- children lying shot on some Washington street– are our children– they are American kids.

Each of us as individual citizens needs to take personal responsibility for recapturing some part of our country which has been negligently entrusted to government by day and to the criminals by night.

Mr. COLLINS. Thank you, Ms. Sheldon.
Sister Mary Rose.

STATEMENT OF SISTER MARY ROSE MCGEADY, PRESIDENT, COVENANT HOUSE, NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Sister MCGEADY. Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, in calling for this hearing to address the crisis of out-of-wedlock births and the impact of these births upon the good of American society as a whole, you are performing a significant service to all those people for whom the values of family life are matters of critical social and moral concern.

I am grateful for the opportunity to offer the recommendations of Covenant House regarding how we may best encourage our young people to put off having children until they can do so as responsible and nurturing parents in stable relationships.

I am the president of Covenant House, the largest privately funded shelter for runaway and homeless kids in this country. I am also a Daughter of Charity, the largest order of Catholic women in our church, and I have spent most of my lifetime serving the poor, and especially children and young teenage mothers.

I live in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn, a very poor and troubled neighborhood, and our Covenant Houses serve thousands of poor teenagers.

I would like to begin my brief remarks this afternoon by challenging what appears to me to be a "given" in this discussion thus far.

The point I wish to make is that while the welfare reform debate has focused national attention on illegitimate births in the United States, in fact, two-thirds of these single women having "illegitimate" children are not below the poverty line, not high school dropouts, not teenagers, and not on welfare.

My point quite simply is that our experience is that there is no correlation between dependence on public assistance by single mothers and the out-of-wedlock birth rate in this country.

This is all the more true, we find, of single teenage mothers.

Reductions in public assistance may of course impact the rate at which the innocent children of these mothers fall below the poverty line, or the rate at which pregnant women opt for abortions.

Any change in the current welfare program that discourages these young women, once they are pregnant, from having their babies, is, in my view, morally unacceptable. These are outcomes which this Committee must carefully consider.

Despite the fact, therefore, that large cuts in public assistance will not cause a decrease in out-of-wedlock births, it remains true that too many poor young women are caught in a cultural trap, in poor communities in which single-parent families are the norm.

For instance, recently, a 15-year-old caller to our crisis hotline asked how she could get pregnant, because all the "coolest" girls in her high school were having babies.

Those who have not lived in these poor communities simply must try to understand that when you are poor and have no options, no hope, little moral guidance, there is little reason to delay sexual gratification, particularly when you are desperately looking for someone to love and someone to love you.

A welfare check is simply not a decisive factor in determining a teenager's decision in this matter. So, what to do?

Covenant House believes that it has a program that is an alternative to these mistaken community norms. Our experience in dealing with young single women demonstrates that teens who develop self-esteem and clearly defined goals for the future are far less likely to seek immediate sexual gratification, or become a parent to make up for the lack of family, or if they are already a single parent, run the risk of a second pregnancy.

Currently, 120 young people, women between the ages of 18 and 21, including single mothers, reside in our New York City long-term residential program, what we call Rights of Passage.

While living here, each girl creates an individual plan designed to result in self-sufficiency. They maintain employment. We work hard with 600 companies in New York City that offer jobs to our Covenant House kids. It is a key element in our program, the cooperation between business and industry and Covenant House.

The girls attend classes. They pay minimal rent based on their income. They do not accept AFDC assistance, and they rely on our in-house vocational training programs, employment workshops, and the encouragement and support of our staff members to accomplish their goals.

Statistics indicate that only 5 percent of our young women become pregnant again while in our program. We preach and teach abstinence in an atmosphere of support, love, pastoral care, and values promotion. Having a future, we find, makes a difference.

The key elements of our program are genuinely marketable job skills for which we train kids, and for whom we give the support of mentors and a loving environment to help them reach their goals, and we work with the boys to develop in them a sense of responsibility in terms of sexual activity.

I realize my time is up. I only want to say two other quick things: there appears to be the belief that the proposed welfare budget cuts, when they take effect, will be made up for in the private sector; that the private sector will be able to step in and take up the slack, despite the fact that every one of the main-line religious agencies, deeply committed to the care of the poor, have denied their ability to do so.

Second, I believe government, church, business, and the community must all work together to make a difference in this teenage pregnancy issue.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement follows:]

STATEMENT OF SISTER MARY ROSE MCGEADY
PRESIDENT, COVENANT HOUSE

Mr. Chairman, Congressmen:

In calling for this hearing, Mr. Chairman, to address the national crisis of out-of-wedlock births and the impact of these births upon the welfare of young people across this country and upon the good of American society as a whole, you are performing a significant service to all those people in this country for whom the values of family life and the growth of our young people to healthy and responsible adulthood are matters of critical social and moral concern.

I am grateful for this opportunity to share the experience and recommendations of Covenant Houses throughout the United States regarding how we may best encourage our young people to put off having children until they can do so as responsible and nurturing parents in stable relationships.

I am the President of Covenant House, the largest privately funded shelter program for homeless kids in the country. I am also a Daughter of Charity, the largest order of Catholic women in the Catholic Church. I have spent my lifetime serving the poor as our founder, St. Vincent de Paul, called us to do.

Most of that time I have worked with children, many of them teen mothers, mostly from the poorest of families, and from some of our toughest neighborhoods. In fact, I live in the Bedford Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn, New York, a very poor and troubled neighborhood. So what I tell you today is a reflection of both my own experience and the experience of thousands of poor kids and their families with whom I work and live.

I would like to begin my brief remarks by challenging what appears to me to be a "given" in this discussion thus far. The phenomenon of skyrocketing single parent families is not only arousing troubling concerns in the United States; it is, in fact, a major problem throughout all of Western Europe. The causes of this breakdown in the traditional two parent family is the subject of enormous debate and analysis. However regrettable, and I say this from the perspective of my own Christian tradition of family life, such global questions are not resolvable within the limited context of our discussions today.

The point I wish to make is that while "the welfare reform debate has focused national attention on illegitimate births" in the United States, in fact fully two-thirds of these single women having "illegitimate births" are

- not below the poverty line,
- not high school drop outs,
- not teenagers, and
- not on welfare.

My point is, quite simply, that there is absolutely no correlation between dependence on public assistance ("welfare") by single mothers and the out-of-wedlock birth rate in this country. This is all the more true with teen single mothers.

Conversely, it is reasonable to argue that freezing public assistance, as is being proposed, for single mothers who have a second child, will have no impact on out-of-wedlock births. It may, of course, impact the rate at which the innocent children of these single mothers fall below the poverty line, or the rate at which pregnant women have abortions. Any change in the current welfare program that discourages these young women once they are pregnant from having their babies is in my view morally unacceptable. These are outcomes which this Committee must carefully consider as it goes about its deliberations.

Despite the fact, therefore, that draconian cuts in public assistance will not cause a decrease in out-of-wedlock births in our society, it does, indeed, remain true that many, too many, young women living at or near the poverty level are caught in what appears to

be a cultural trap in their communities in which single-parent families are the norm, and that there are no social stigma attached to being a single mother. For instance, recently a 15-year-old caller to our crisis telephone hotline asked how she could get pregnant because all the "coolest" girls in her high school class were having babies!

These young women are choosing to have their children. They want to do what's right for these babies and toddlers. We simply cannot punish the babies because of the actions of their mothers and fathers. And punish them we will if we don't help their mothers and fathers. I agree that they need a setting where the mothers are supervised and assisted in caring for their child. I am unalterably opposed to separating mother and father and child unless there simply is no other choice to protect the well-being of the baby.

Those who have not lived in these poor communities simply must try to understand that when you are poor and have no options, no hope, in this society, there is no reason to delay sexual gratification; particularly when you are desperately looking for someone to love and someone to love you. A welfare check is simply <u>not</u> a decisive factor in determining a teenager's decision in this matter.

Covenant House believes that it has a program that is at least as successful as anything being offered today by way of an alternative to these mistaken community norms. In sum, our experience in dealing with single young women demonstrates that teens who develop positive aspirations and perceptions, self-esteem, and clearly defined goals for the future, are far less likely to seek the immediate satisfaction of sexual gratification, or become a parent to make up for a lack of family, or, if they are already a single parent, risk the chance of a second pregnancy.

Currently 120 young people between the ages of 18 and 21 reside in our New York City long-term transitional living program called "Rights of Passage". This includes 20 young mothers and their children. Since 1986 more that 1,000 young men and women have participated in this 12- to 24-month program.

While living here each resident creates an individual plan designed to result in his or her self-sufficiency. They maintain employment, attend classes and pay a minimal rent based on their income. Participants do not accept AFDC assistance, and rely on in-house vocational training programs, employment workshops and the encouragement and support of staff members and mentors to accomplish their goals.

Statistics indicate that if given this opportunity, young mothers can succeed at a rate that is often higher than that of other program participants. Why? Because with a lot of work they begin to believe in themselves, that they themselves can have a better future and that they can give their child a better future. In other words, we give them *hope*.

What is even more impressive, only about 5% of these young women become pregnant again while in the program.

As we analyze the factors which make "Rights of Passage" a success, five elements surface: 1) the skills training programs, normally six months in length, prepare the participants for meaningful employment with <u>genuinely marketable</u> job skills; 2) the program itself was developed, and is partially staffed, by professionals from the relevant industries, who 3) agree to give our kids entry level jobs in their companies once the young people have successfully completed the program; 4) "Rights" relies heavily on volunteer mentors as role models, people established in their own business who agree to get involved in the life of a young person, and 5) for the single mothers Covenant House has an infant-toddler center allowing the young mothers (who pay a modest fee for this service) to work through the job training modules and maintain full employment.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Chairman, as I review the various Welfare Reform proposals before the Congress aimed at reducing the number of out-of-wedlock births, I am truly dismayed. This, for two reasons: first, because the very elements of our teen mother program which appear to account for its success, have, it appears, been systematically cut from these proposals: meaningful job training, job creation, quality day care, a long enough term commitment to the individual in need of assistance to give some genuine promise of success.

Second, there appears to be the belief in many quarters here in Washington that as these proposed welfare time limits and other budget cuts take effect, the private sector will step in and take up the slack, despite the fact that every one of the mainline religious agencies heavily committed to the care of the poor has denied their ability to do so.

Unless these punitive recommendations are reconsidered, far from encouraging these young people to responsible and productive adulthood, we will simply see more examples of the kind of frustration, and despair, and broken lives our band-aid Welfare System has produced in the past.

Mr. Chairman, I want to repeat what I said before the Senate Finance Committee last year: I believe it is the role of government, as it is the role of every decent person, to help poor families and to protect and nurture children in difficult circumstances - children who are at great risk! I believe it is the role of government, every bit as much as it is the role of the church, and businesses, and communities and neighbors, to offer hope to all our citizens. And let me tell you, the poorest and the neediest need an extra hand.

Government must convey a sense of hope, of concern, of caring about these neediest among us. This, ultimately is what this debate is really about. In the words of a colleague at Catholic Charities U.S.A.: "Real jobs, real paychecks, that's real welfare reform."

Thank you and God bless you.

Chairman SHAW. Thank you, Sister. I might say that you and the Covenant House are making a difference, and I congratulate you for that, and thank you for your testimony.

Ms. Rowe.

STATEMENT OF AUDREY ROWE, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE, NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Ms. ROWE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee. I appreciate this opportunity to present testimony on this very critical policy debate. I bring to my testimony almost 30 years of experience working on social welfare programs and policies, 12 years of which I have served as commissioner of social services in the District of Columbia, and in Connecticut.

As a parent who has successfully raised three children, one of whom is a recent graduate from the Kennedy School at Harvard University, and another who takes off tomorrow for Paris, France, to pursue some career goals.

I want to share my limited time to present some facts and data on strategies that we at the National Urban League believe this Committee should consider as you pursue your deliberations.

First of all, let's talk about the statistics.

The statistics show that this is a complicated and multidimensional issue. We know it's not just a poverty issue. Census data show that of the unmarried women who gave birth, between July 1993 and June 1994, 57.5 percent came from households with incomes above $10,000.

We know it's not just a teenage issue. Teenagers account for less than all one-third of out-of-wedlock births.

We know it's not a race issue. The National Center for Health Statistics and the Census Bureau show that of all unmarried women who gave birth in 1993, 39.5 were white, 36 percent were black, 21.1 percent were Hispanic, and 3.5 percent were Indian or Asian. It's not just a women's issue.

The Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies estimates that $33 billion of child support goes uncollected each year. It's not necessarily a choice issue.

The Alan Guttmacher Institute reports that the younger a sexually experienced teenager is, the more likely she is to have had involuntary sex.

This profile of out-of-wedlock births implies that a range of factors affect behavior, many of which stem from changes in social and economic structures, not just individual choices.

For example, the lack of educational opportunities. Lack of job and income opportunities.

In a 1994 report on unwed fathers, published by Public Private Ventures, the economic condition for young men has been rapidly deteriorating over the last 20 years.

Between 1973 and 1991, the average earnings of males fell by nearly 31 percent, and by more than 40 percent for males without a high school diploma.

Statistics published by our own Urban League, in 1993, consistently found a relationship between male joblessness, low wages, and marital dissolution or nonmarriage.

Social norms around marriage and childbearing have also evolved over the past 20 years, that may affect how we interpret these statistics.

We have delayed marriages, married women who are having fewer children, timing, and definition of marriages.

We think that all of these factors need to be considered, and we must recognize that simple solutions do not solve complex problems.

The National Urban League recommends strategies that we believe will help curb this problem for individuals living in low-income communities. In order to create long-term change in the area of out-of-wedlock births, particularly for low-income families, we strongly urge that we proceed carefully and incorporate evaluation and research to learn and understand more about the factors affecting behavior for both men and women.

We may also need to look at who is doing the research, or expand on people who are doing the research, given the makeup of our previous panel of research experts.

The National Urban League recommends that we develop strategies that address the increasing span of time between puberty and marriage. This time period represents the vital stage of transition from school to adult employment, and career.

It is a time span for which this Nation has been sorely lacking in public policies related to youth development.

The Urban League recommends expanding, and not retrenching our investment in school-to-work initiatives underway throughout this country.

Since we know educational levels play a key role, we need to look at programs that prevent students from dropping out of school, and programs that address those students who are already out of school.

Finally, the relationship between poverty and out-of-wedlock births requires a national focus on the labor market.

This issue of increasing wage and job opportunities, especially for women and minorities, must be addressed, as well as the role that racial and sex discrimination play in denying minorities and women access to jobs with a livable wage.

I would encourage you, Mr. Chairman, to seriously consider Congressman Rangel's suggestion to bring together the various Committees of cognizance in this Congress to develop comprehensive strategies that are cost effective, and that we believe can truly make a difference.

[The prepared statement follows:]

Testimony By
Audrey Rowe
Executive Vice President
National Urban League

Before

House Subcommittee on Human Resources
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives

Hearing on
Causes of Poverty, Focusing on
Out-of-Wedlock Births

March 12, 1996

Mr. Chairman and members of this Subcommittee, as Executive Vice President of the National Urban League, I appreciate the opportunity to offer our perspective on the issue of poverty and one of its related factors, out-of-wedlock births. Moving individuals, families, and children from poverty to economic self-sufficiency is one of three priority areas on the National Urban League's agenda, the other two being youth development and racial inclusion.

Founded in 1910, the National Urban League is a non-profit, non-partisan, national social service and civil rights organization with affiliates in 113 cities and the District of Columbia. For more than 86 years, both the National Urban League and its network of affiliates have worked to overcome poverty, racial discrimination, and the lack of jobs that pay a liveable wage.

The issue we are discussing today, the relationship between out-of-wedlock births and poverty, is a complex one that must not be approached from any one-dimensional perspective. We must be very clear about delineating the problem so that our proposed policies aimed at alleviating the problem are based on a clear examination of the data. Otherwise, policies and subsequent strategies based only on perceptions versus reality often lead to destructive stereotypes and ineffective programs.

OUT-OF-WEDLOCK BIRTHS: DISAGGREGATING THE DATA

Statistics show that this is a complicated and multi-dimensional issue. In examining the data on out-of-wedlock births, it is important that we carefully differentiate the various populations impacted by this life event. We know that:

1. This is not just a poverty issue.

- Census data show that of the unmarried women who gave birth between July 1993 and June 1994, 57.5% came from households with incomes above $10,000. Indeed, of these households, 2.9% had incomes $75,000 and up.

2. This is not just a teenage issue.

- While most births to teenagers occur outside marriage, teens account for less than one-third of all out-of-wedlock births, down from 50% in 1970;

- For more than a decade, out-of-wedlock childbearing has risen fastest among women age 20 and older, who now account for 7 of every 10 out-of-wedlock births;

- National Center for Health Statistics show that women age 20 to 29 accounted for the highest number of out-of-wedlock births in 1993; and,

- Studies show that almost two-thirds of teenage mothers age 15 to 19 have adult partners over age 20.

3. This is not just a race issue.

- The National Center for Health Statistics and the Census Bureau show that of all unmarried women who gave birth in 1993,

39.5 percent were white
36.0 percent were black
21.1 percent were Hispanic
3.5 percent were Indian or Asian

4. This is also a man's issue.

- The Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies estimates that $33 billion of child support goes uncollected each year. This suggests that, for whatever the reasons, non-custodial parents (most of whom are fathers) are not economically supporting their children.

- Paternity establishment is very important to children born out-of-wedlock. According to HHS's eighteenth report to Congress on child support enforcement, establishing paternity for such children and having that parent contribute financial assistance for the child's upbringing benefits society and the child (e.g., legal access to medical history, Social Security benefits, pension benefits, veterans' benefits, and other rights of inheritance).

5. And, it is not necessarily a choice or intended issue.

- The Alan Guttmacher Institute reports that the younger a sexually experienced teenager is, the more likely she is to have had involuntary sex. Some 74% of women who had intercourse before age 14 and 60% of those who had sex before age 15 report having had sex involuntarily. These young teens are therefore at great risk for unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases.

- Studies show that this nation has one of the highest rates of unintended childbearing in the industrialized world: the proportion of pregnancies that are unwanted or mis-timed ranges from 40 percent among married women to 88 percent among never-married women.

FACTORS RELATED TO OUT-OF-WEDLOCK BIRTHS

This profile of out-of-wedlock births implies that a range of factors affect behavior, many of which may stem from changes in social and economic structures and not just from individual choices. For example,

1. Lack of educational opportunities.

- Census Bureau data show that the odds of becoming an unmarried mother fall sharply as education rises. Almost 50 percent of births to high-school dropouts occur out of wedlock; among college graduates, the proportion is just over 6 percent.

2. Lack of job and income opportunities.

- A recent New York Times article noted that studies show most young adults say a man who wants to marry should be able to support a family and that young women are less likely to marry in places where young employed men are scarce.

- As noted in a 1994 report on un-wed fathers, published by Public Private Ventures, the economic condition for young men has been rapidly deteriorating over the last 20 years -- between 1973 and 1991 average earnings of males fell by nearly 31 percent and by more than 40 percent by males without a high school diploma.

- Statistical studies published in the National Urban League's State of Black America 1993 consistently found a relationship between male joblessness or low wages on marital dissolutions or non-marriage. Research published in this journal also note that the availability of "marriageable black men" is lower due to high rates of mortality, unemployment, incarceration, and substance abuse. These are particularly poignant statistics for African American families.

3. Social norms around marriage and childbearing have evolved over the past 20 years that may affect how we INTERPRET these statistics.

- **Delayed marriage:** Census Bureau data show that the median age of first marriage continues to rise. In 1993, the median age was 26.5 years for men and 24.5 years for women. Delayed marriage may increase the chance of out-of-wedlock childbearing.

- **Married Women are having fewer children:** A recent New York Times article notes that the fact that married women are having fewer children inflates the "share" of out-of-wedlock births. This trend needs to be carefully considered when interpreting statistics related to childbearing.

- **Timing and definition of marriage:** The same New York Times article points out that four out of every 10 mothers whose first birth occurs out of wedlock marry within five years. In addition, some unmarried mothers are only single in the legal sense: 1 in 4 has a live-in relationship with a man, often, though not always, the child's father. This factor may encourage marriage later on.

REDUCING OUT-OF-WEDLOCK BIRTHS REQUIRES MULTI-DIMENSIONAL STRATEGIES

As the research indicates, there are many factors to consider in developing sound policies and strategies for reducing out-of-wedlock births. Simple solutions do not solve complex problems. Moving forward too quickly on a large scale with untested strategies is not likely to resolve this issue. And some of the "solutions" currently under consideration could produce adverse effects on the well-being of low-income families and children. Bankrupting the future of any segment of our nation's children will have severe consequences for all Americans.

The National Urban League recommends the following strategies that we believe will help curb this problem for individuals living in low-income communities. But, in order to create long term change in the area of out-of-wedlock births, particularly for low-income families, we strongly urge that we proceed carefully and incorporate evaluation and research to learn and understand more about the factors affecting behavior for both men and women.

Recommendations:

1) Developing strategies that address the increasing span of time between puberty and marriage (if it occurs). What should be happening during this time span that could prevent out-of-wedlock births or reduce its occurrence?

This time period represents the vital stage of transition from school to adult employment/career. It is a time span for which this nation has been sorely lacking in public policies related to youth development. Initial ground has been broken under the School-to-Work legislation. Ongoing work in identifying common ground between youth development and school-to-work efforts reveals that both school-to-work and youth development perspectives emphasize preparing young people for adulthood, not simply deterring or controlling young people from engaging in problem behaviors.

The National Urban League recommends expanding, not retrenching, our investment in school-to-work initiatives underway throughout the country. We also recommend public-private investments in providing adult mentors, after-school activities and child care. Positive messages about postponing sexual activity must be coupled with access to health care for adolescents, including access to family planning services.

2) Educational levels play a key role in reducing the chances of out-of-wedlock births. Clearly, strategies must be targeted to preventing students from dropping out of high-school, as well as strategies for addressing the needs of high school dropouts before they join the out-of-wedlock statistics. Increasing the opportunities for higher education is another clear path to reducing births out of wedlock.

In addition to expanding school-to-work, the National Urban League recommends expanding, not retrenching, our national investment in Head Start, Title I for the educationally disadvantaged, Job Corps, and access to funds for higher education such as Pell Grants.

3) Providing services to reduce the occurrence of unintended childbearing also offer potential for reducing out-of-wedlock births.

Resources that can reduce the incidence of unintended childbearing clearly must include research on and better access to family planning services. Education about sexual involvement and its consequences must be made available to men and women, whether at home, in school, and through the health care system.

4) Increasing wage levels and job opportunities for men and women also represent a critical area for policy development.

The relationship between poverty and out-of-wedlock births requires a major national focus on the labor market. The issue of increasing wages and job opportunities especially for women and minorities must be addressed, as well as the role that racial and sex discrimination play in denying minorities and women equal access to jobs with liveable wages.

Our national focus must be on developing a **national workforce development system** that works for everyone, especially during these dramatically changing times regarding the requirements of a labor market that is driven by technology. This system must include a basic income entitlement for those who have been never-employed, temporarily unemployment, or under-employed, so as to provide an income while transitioning to the labor market.

Mr. Chairman, we have much to do. The National Urban League has and continues to do its part through its myriad of local community based programs. Our national policies and strategies for reducing out-of-wedlock births will only be effective if we fully examine the research, rather than basing them on perceptions and stereotypes about the children and their parents.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify. I will be happy to answer any questions.

Chairman SHAW. Thank you, Ms. Rowe.

Mr. Collins, you may inquire.

Mr. COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Sister Mary Rose, I wish you would have read the last paragraph of your statement. Well, next to the last. The last one was thank you and God bless you.

The next to the last one was government must convey a sense of hope, of concern, of caring about those neediest among us. This, ultimately, is what this debate is really about. In the words of a colleague at Catholic Charities U.S.A. "Real jobs, real paychecks, that's real welfare reform."

This issue is so broad, that you cannot just say welfare reform is going to take care of it.

That is the reason why, as we looked at the overall concept of the Federal Government and its budget, and tried to bring it into line, we placed provisions within that budget that would do some of the things that are in your next to last paragraph.

The intent was to encourage the private sector to save, encourage the private sector to invest, and encourage the private sector to create jobs. It is the best answer to poverty. It is the best answer for welfare.

We also must look at the environment that our children are being brought up in, and I am not talking about within the home itself or the structure of the home.

I am talking about what comes into that home from the outside.

You turn the television on. What do you see? You cannot watch a decent program on the television in the evening without seeing some type of foreplay, sex play, or insinuation of sex. You cannot listen and watch a movie without hearing words that you would not want your children saying.

You cannot leave your kids at home in the afternoon, after school, because of the soaps and the idiots that you see on there, and the lifestyle that they are trying to present to the American youth that they live, enjoy and are happy doing. It is wrong.

It is not just the youth. Murphy Brown, an adult, single parent, greatest thing since sliced bread. Is it right? Is that what we should be portraying to our children, to other adults? No. It makes it look like divorce is the thing to do. Swap around, shop around. Go from bed to bed.

No, that is not what we need to be showing our kids. It is not what we should be showing our adults. It is not just in the area of poverty, it is not just in the area of welfare, it is not just in the area of tax reform.

It is the overall society and what we have got to do to the values and the morals, and developing a conscience of the people of this country.

Thank you, Ma'am.

Sister MCGEADY. I agree

Mr. COLLINS. I thought you would.

Chairman SHAW. Mr. Rangel.

Mr. RANGEL. Thank you.

I do not see too much testimony, but certainly no programs that reach the conclusion that if a kid has an education and some hope

for a job, that statistically they will be less inclined to be irresponsible, including pregnancy.

Is there anyone that would challenge that?

Because it is going unchallenged, I never understand why we have all this welfare reform and no education.

Do you know there are some Christians in this Congress that would say, that after a certain number of years, a mother of a child should be cut off from Federal assistance if she is not working, even if there are no jobs available and she is unemployable. These are Christian people. They are mostly politicians, too, though.

Christians could never accept that, now, could we? That you would penalize a child and a mother, when you know, statistically, there are no jobs. We say you have got to stop somewhere.

Would a Christian support that? I do not think so.

I would like to know, too, since I do not get hung up with this religion thing too much. I was an altar boy, and very close to the church and understood all of this business about birth, and I was relatively clean before I became a lawyer.

Could you tell me what the miracle of birth of any child has to do with whether that child is legitimate or illegitimate?

I mean, I understand all the law, but a miracle of God passing on his image and likeness through the womb of a woman, made in his image and likeness, and the child is born, and smiles are everywhere.

What part of that exercise is illegitimate?

The Christian Coalition, I thought, would have more experience with this.

Ms. STIRRUP. All I would say to that is it is not so much that it is—that we are not trying to suggest that it is the child that is illegitimate. I guess it is the fact that the child was born outside of marriage, which, frankly, we find is in conflict with moral law and God's law, which says that children should be born within marriage.

Mr. RANGEL. Would you not believe that for this child, Christian or not, that we could be kinder if we just said that the child was born without the blessings of a marriage, rather than having this idea that there is something illegal about the child?

I mean, I would hate to know how a child would feel if a Christian would say, "You know you're illegitimate." I think they call the child—do they not call the child illegitimate?

Ms. STIRRUP. It is the birth that is——

Mr. RANGEL. No, but do not they call the child—I mean, "That is an illegitimate child." Do not we say that?

Ms. STIRRUP. I think what we are talking about, whether or not——

Mr. RANGEL. I know what we mean, but can we not stop talking about the child being illegitimate, and say the parents did not do what was legal? I mean, just to get off on the right foot with all of this stuff.

Ms. STIRRUP. Go ahead.

Ms. SHELDON. We would say that illegitimacy means outside of law, and we believe that morality needs to be brought back into this debate.

I work, as I have said in my testimony, I work with kids——

Mr. RANGEL. You do good work, but will you call a child being born outside of the law a child?

Ms. SHELDON. We are discussing in public policy that illegitimacy——

Mr. RANGEL. I am with you. I am a lawyer.

Ms. SHELDON. Part of the problem, with all due respect, Congressman, is that there is no longer any shame, there is no longer anything right and wrong.

You know what the problem is, that children suffer, the children suffer because of their parents actions.

Mr. RANGEL. Do not they suffer——

Ms. SHELDON. They suffer not only because of whatever name you want to put on it, or do not want to put on it. I have seen the total complete and utter destruction of the children, of their parents, because of the actions, and——

Mr. RANGEL. I agree with you.

Ms. SHELDON [continuing]. It starts at birth and it continues on.

Mr. RANGEL. I am just asking do you think it helps a child to be stigmatized as being illegitimate?

Ms. SHELDON. All the kids that I work with—I do not say, that "you are illegitimate." We talk about a variety of issues.

Mr. RANGEL. I am just trying to bring Christ's teaching——

Ms. SHELDON. Let us come back to jobs. You mentioned jobs also. Jobs are also very important. We believe that we need to talk about more than just jobs.

We need to bring back into the issue the debate of, as I talked about, behavioral policy. What does that mean?

Mr. RANGEL. I thought you were going to say education and training.

Ms. SHELDON. Well, no, let me go on.

Mr. RANGEL. You said more than jobs, because you cannot work in this country unless you know how to do something.

Ms. SHELDON. You are a great lawyer, but let me just also say that we do believe that education is important, and that is why we believe, that school choice is vital, and that parents should have a right to put their children in any school that they choose.

Unfortunately, your colleagues, including Maxine Waters, think it is OK for them to send their own children to private school, but do not want to allow these poor inner-city children the same opportunity. Or Ted Kennedy.

Mr. RANGEL. What would Maxine Waters and I have in common? She is from California.

Ms. SHELDON. I said a Member of Congress.

Mr. RANGEL. You mention her.

Ms. SHELDON. A Member of Congress, Maxine Waters, is someone that we have known for years. Maxine, Ted Kennedy. There are other people that choose to send——

Mr. RANGEL. Oh, Ted, he is Catholic, and I am Catholic. I can understand that. Your search for Maxine, you know, surprised me. [Laughter.]

Ms. SHELDON. Bill Clinton. There are a whole host of people.

Mr. RANGEL. Well, you certainly are getting a broader range. [Laughter.]

Ms. SHELDON. Let me ask a question. If we took a vote today of all the members on this panel, and we excluded those that send their own children to private school, or those that attended private school, would we have a quorum here to vote on educational choice.

Mr. RANGEL. I notice there is a Christian spirit to your testimony, and I want you to know I recognize it, and appreciate it.

I have to go visit with you in Bed-Stuy because, Sister, you nuns always seem to know how to do it right, and I assume you do not just take Catholic kids or those that went to parochial school. I assume because——

Sister MCGEADY. We have very few Catholic kids.

Mr. RANGEL. Yes. I really understand how that works. Even with the vouchers they somehow manage to get your care.

Sister MCGEADY. I would like to say a few words about the babies. The fastest growing group of homeless kids that Covenant House is seeing are teenagers with babies. These babies are very important to us, but they are also very important to these young mothers.

We do very well with these teenage mothers with babies, because they are so motivated to keep their babies.

We try to teach them how to be good mothers, how to discipline their children the right way, how to talk to their kids, how to play with their kids, because learning to be a mother is not something that is easy with these kids who have had very little mothering themselves.

Mr. RANGEL. One of the most exciting things I saw was these young mothers being taught how to teach their kids, and the excitement that they had in being involved in that process, and to see how both of them come out so much better than when they went in, when you do not just look at the kid in school, but you look at the mother who is a child herself, and to see the excitement they get when they feel that they are learning something.

Ms. Rowe, please—I want to work with the Urban League, and Dr. Price, in seeing whether we can attach your programs to the so-called empowerment and enterprise zone, because there is a lot of good work there, and if we can pick up the work that is being done by religious institutions as well as the Urban League, it strengthens the resources that are available for all of us.

I want to thank the Chairman for bringing this meeting here together. I feel a lot more Christian now than when I came in.

Chairman SHAW. Thank you, Charlie.

Mr. English may inquire.

Mr. ENGLISH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I am glad that the testimony is headed in this direction. For a while it seemed to be moving on to tenebrous waters.

Sister Mary Rose, I wanted to follow up on your testimony, which I thought was excellent, and I, too, want to say the work I understand you are doing at the Covenant House is extraordinary.

In your testimony you state there is absolutely no correlation between dependence on public assistance by single mothers and the out-of-wedlock birth rate in this country.

This is all the more true with teen single mothers.

I would like to read to you the conclusion of a 1993 study that was referenced in Dr. Furstenberg's testimony.

All else equal, higher levels of public assistance were associated with lower prevalence of marriage for black men and black women; lower prevalence of husband-wife families; lower percentage of marital births for black women; and lower percentages of black children living in husband-wife families.

These results differed from those reported in some previous aggregate level studies, but they are quite simply robust, and were substantively, as well as statistically significant.

In addition, as I had noted earlier in testimony, our staff has compiled 22 studies that were published on the relationship between welfare benefits and illegitimacy rates, of which 16 have reported at least one significant correlation.

You have a great deal of experience, on the street, as it were, dealing with this issue. Based on these studies, is it not fair for policy makers to think that perhaps there is some kind of relationship between welfare and out-of-wedlock birth rates?

Sister MCGEADY. This was discussed about an hour ago in terms of the studies that one of the presenters talked about. I took that sentence from the data that we have from the Coalition on the Prevention of Teenage Pregnancy.

I think there have been some studies that would support what I said.

Also, our experience would support that girls are not having babies to go on welfare. That they are having babies because they are looking for love. We can say, "Looking for love in all the wrong places" maybe, but they are not saying, "I am going to have a baby so I can go on welfare."

It may be the outcome, subsequent to the birth of the child, but we do not find the prebirth statistics being a correlation with being on welfare.

In other words, somebody asked earlier—I think it was Mr. Levin—was there a correlation between—or what percentage of babies born in this country were born to girls on welfare. Our experience is very low.

Mr. ENGLISH. I think your practical perspective has some weight here.

Is it not fair to say that a lot of the studies do suggest some sort of a correlation?

Sister MCGEADY. Maybe. I just have not seen them. I know that everybody is studying it right now.

Mr. ENGLISH. I appreciate that, Sister.

Ms. Sheldon, would you like to comment on whether you think there is adequate basis in scientific studies to suggest there might be a correlation?

Ms. SHELDON. I have dealt with teen mothers. I have dealt with women on welfare. I think it is important to point out that 13 percent of out-of-wedlock births are to women 18 and under. That means there are a significant number of women that are having children, not just teens.

I believe that with welfare—that they get all sorts of assistance, it comes in a lot of different ways, as you all know.

It continues the cycle. It makes it easier. Not every girl says, "I am going to have a baby to live a great life on welfare."

What I found is it is generational; it is cyclical. The people I have worked with in the motels—and that is why I pointed out that these two girls were cousins.

Different makeups of families are on welfare. Mothers, grandmothers, daughters. I would really encourage that there be some real significant study done to address the issue of generational welfare dependence.

Mr. ENGLISH. Ms. Stirrup, anticipating, if we were to pass in Congress an opt-out policy with regard to the family cap, how many States do you think, knowing the national picture, would you expect to opt out?

Ms. STIRRUP. I could not give you an exact number, but the good news is that if you were to include that policy, all 50 legislatures would have to discuss the issue, if, for example, they wanted to opt out.

You could be sure, that for those States that had the debate and felt strongly enough, that opting out was what they wanted to do. They would at least have to have that debate. It is difficult for me to assess how many would do that, but the important thing is to have the debate.

Mr. ENGLISH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My time has expired, but I am deeply grateful to all of the panelists for taking the time to come here, and provide a variety of perspectives.

Thank you.

Chairman SHAW. Thank you, Mr. English.

Dr. Ensign.

Dr. ENSIGN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Sister, I just want to address one of your—we were talking about the studies and the correlations. Some people say it is causal effect. Some people say it is just more of a correlation. Some people say that there is definitely no cause between welfare, and out-of-wedlock births.

Let me just ask a common sense type of a question, without getting into studies or statistics, or anything like that.

If you have a culture that has developed, where things become acceptable in that culture—premarital sex becomes acceptable, welfare becomes acceptable, not having the father around becomes acceptable. In other words, if someone gets pregnant, they are just going to have the child, because everybody else they see around gets pregnant, and has a child.

Do you think that may be a factor within the whole welfare mentality, the whole welfare culture.

Is it possible, that that has been a very significant contributing factor, because of this whole welfare mentality that can develop?

Sister MCGEADY. I have to say, I am not sure that I understand the concept of welfare mentality. We get girls who come to our Covenant Houses, and the usual story is this.

"I was not happy at home, I went to live with my boyfriend. I thought the way to hang on to him was to have his baby. I got pregnant, and he took off." Or, "I had the baby, and he abandoned me."

Here they are, without much education, without a job, without anybody to take care of——

Mr. ENSIGN. OK. Before you go on, let me paint it this way.

Do you think that—and what I mean by the welfare culture, to further define that, is because there used to be quite a lot of negatives associated with being a single parent—but there used to be

very much of a stigma associated with out-of-wedlock birth, that has, in a lot of our culture——

Sister MCGEADY. It is not there anymore.

Mr. ENSIGN. Exactly. OK. That is what I am saying. One of the reasons, perhaps, is that our welfare state has taken away the absolute need for a father.

Because the welfare state can supplant the father, financially, not obviously in any other way—but financially.

So, Because of that, can the mentality now be that—the consequences are not as great as they used to be, because I can, at least, have the father, by way of financial support from the government?

Sister MCGEADY. Well, that may be true, but I think what we are after in public policy is answering the question, what are the alternatives to that?

Mr. ENSIGN. I agree with you.

Sister MCGEADY. How do we turn this around?

When a girl comes to a Covenant House, and says to us, help me get on welfare. We say to her, we have a better idea. We are going to help you finish high school, we are going to help with your baby in day care, we are going to job-train you, we are going to help you get a decent job. My answer to the question that was asked earlier is I think a kid has got to make a minimum of $7.50 an hour to survive.

Mr. ENSIGN. OK.

Sister MCGEADY. We find that the way to begin to turn what you call the welfare mentality around, she comes to us seeing the only solution as going on welfare, and we say to her, there are better solutions.

I think that is where this country needs to go with people who are potential clients on welfare, to say to them, we have a better way to go. We are going to help you with child care, help you get a job.

Mr. ENSIGN. Sister, I think we would agree, once that person gets to that point. There is a tremendous organization that is not a religious organization, it is called Life-Line, and it is in Las Vegas. It was founded by a wonderful woman, Ruth McGoardy. She funded it for the first 25 years based on her inheritance. About 5 years ago she ran out of money, and now is looking for other sources of funding.

They have had a 98 percent completion rate, getting the girls the GEDs and doing all the things that you are talking about. I think that is terrific and should be encouraged.

What I am asking is, can we through public policy discourage those girls from getting in that situation in the first place? In other words, if we change our welfare system, will those changes that we are talking about have fewer and fewer people lead to where they have to come to see you?

Sister MCGEADY. OK. There may be some girls who will not have a baby or will choose to have an abortion because they cannot get welfare.

Mr. ENSIGN. No. I am talking about choosing to think first.

Sister MCGEADY. Choose not to get pregnant in the first place? Well, I will tell you if I had the answer to that I guess I could run for President, but——

Mr. ENSIGN. OK. I think this is just one of the factors, but one of the things I am talking about, we are talking about a much broader moral problem in this country. Welfare, I think, is just one of the factors, and I mentioned that earlier.

Sister MCGEADY. Oh, yes, you are right.

Mr. ENSIGN. I think that certainly we have to get back to people taking responsibility for themselves and we have to get back to teaching basic moral values in this country, and teaching that it is absolutely the best thing that you can do for yourself and your spouse and your children to wait until marriage to have sex. That is a societal problem that we have to get back to but I am just saying that perhaps welfare is one of the small pieces of the whole problem.

Sister MCGEADY. It is a significant piece of our culture now, but in order to turn the teenage pregnancy issue around we have to have impact on our culture. Our teenage culture is very accepting of sexual activity by the age of 15, 16 or 17. To turn the teenage culture around, I think, is the real challenge for this Nation.

Mr. ENSIGN. Well, Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and President Clinton is going to do something about the television shows in Hollywood, along with Bob Dole, so we are not going to have to worry about those people having that severe impact any more.

Thanks.

Chairman SHAW. Mr. Rangel, you wish to inquire for another moment?

Mr. RANGEL. I would ask the Sister one question because I have noticed a lot of stigmas being removed and changes in cultures since I was a kid. I do not drink hard liquor or gamble, but do you believe there has been a change in the culture of the United States where communities, and large communities can just drink and gamble, have girls running around half-clothed, and that this is being accepted?

Not only legally, in some States, but that morally it is acceptable?

Sister MCGEADY. I think we are in the midst, in this country, of an enormous values shift, and that the toleration of things that we have traditionally considered immoral, wrong, or just bad for the country and bad for kids, I think a lot of it has gone down the tubes, and this country really needs to put the skids on and ask ourselves, where are we going in terms of values?

There has been a lot of talk in the Congress and every place else in this country about values, but nobody is stopping to say, how do we begin to inculcate values in our kids again?

Mr. RANGEL. I would like to join in that struggle because I think too many people just drink away their wages and gamble unnecessarily and we can maybe turn some of those things around, back to the values we used to have.

Sister MCGEADY. The increase in prostitution in this country, if we really could present the statistics here, it would blow everybody's mind.

Mr. RANGEL. You find normally a correlation between drinking, gambling, and prostitution.

Thank you so much.

Chairman SHAW. Charlie, you say you are more Christian than you were when you came in here. I congratulate you for that statement, and I want to thank this very fine panel of witnesses for being with us this afternoon.

I would like to invite the final group of witnesses to the table, and their discussion will focus on reducing out-of-wedlock births. That will be Kathleen M. Sullivan, the director of Project Reality from Golf, Illinois, and I have got to know where Golf, Illinois is; Marion Howard, Ph.D., clinical director of the Teen Services Program at Grady Memorial Hospital and professor of gynecology and obstetrics at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia; Sarah Brown, director, National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancies, right here, in Washington, DC.

Ms. Sullivan, we will start with your testimony, if you would, please.

STATEMENT OF KATHLEEN M. SULLIVAN, DIRECTOR, PROJECT REALITY, GOLF, ILLINOIS

Ms. SULLIVAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In our experience of working in and studying the area of adolescent health, both emotional and physical, for the past 10 years, we have observed notable changes. First, the problems associated with adolescence becoming sexually involved have been compounded and have become a major public health cost and concern in areas other than pregnancy. The examples are, rampant sexually transmitted diseases, as we heard from Dr. McIlhaney, and severe emotional trauma caused by rejection, depression, stress, and loneliness resulting from broken physical unions.

There is hope on the scene. Abstinence-centered education, the only true solution, which was thought impossible 10 years ago, has been exceptionally well received by tens of thousands of students who have had the opportunity to participate in this innovative, reasoned, sensible approach.

Today, abstinence education is a national debate and organizations, such as Project Reality and others like Teen Aid of Spokane, Washington, which have developed true abstinence-centered materials can show statistically that it works very well. The national debate needs to be expanded, and we commend you for taking the leadership role in giving us this opportunity by holding these hearings.

For 25 years, public policy programs and funding have been concentrated under the category or heading of "teen pregnancy." Maybe it is time we reconsider the very concept of that category. When we speak about teen pregnancy the perception is that it is a female problem and in reality we know that is not accurate.

Pregnancy is not the problem. Becoming involved in sexual activity is the problem. Pregnancy is only one factor or result of the problem of sexual activity. Promiscuity's three paramount consequences are emotional trauma, STDs, and pregnancy, and each must be seriously and adequately addressed.

In most discussions and programs to date, teen pregnancy is the major focus. Let us deal with the consequences of the emotional trauma. I personally witnessed this about 3 years ago when speaking to a parent's group in Maryland. At the end of my presentation, a young, 30-something, very tall, athletic man came up and he said, "if I had heard you say what you said tonight 18 years ago I never would have done it. The reason I did it was peer pressure, and I have hated what I did to that girl ever since and I have hated myself ever since."

What that told me was that for 18 years he had this emotional trauma pent up in him. The emotional factor is what really gets the attention of the young males. The emotional factor can be summed up in our slogan which is becoming a real talking tool in schools, Condoms Don't Protect the Heart.

This type of physical relationship among adolescents seldom lasts, and it is often ended by the girl who has found an older guy. The girls are usually more mature at this age. We know that today many teen pregnancies are fathered by 20-year-olds, however the rejected young male's hurt is internalized. We ought to really study this situation—they adopt a macho impression—and we ought to study and analize—does early emotional hurt have a relationship to verbal abuse, sexual harassment and domestic violence?

The answer to this question is beautifully expressed by the letters attached from two of our eighth grade students from the city of Chicago public schools. They are representative of the thousands of positive comments we get, and 90 percent are positive comments. One summed it up, best in our 10 year's experience, "I didn't know I didn't have to do it." The emphasis on the emotional factor is stressed in order to show why policy and funding should be redirected to address prevention of the real problem; Adolescent sexual involvement prior to marriage, rather than only addressing continuing programs that address just one of the factors.

Dr. McIlhaney went through all the enormous number of STDs today. Referring to teen pregnancy is missing the point completely. It is too limiting and misleading in that it gives a female-only perception of the problem and exclude the emotional as well as the disease factors which really affect both males and females.

We should redefine the topic and school courses to be adolescent health, emotional as well as physical. This attracts not only the attention of both male and female, but it provides a much wider approach to their thinking and understanding of self control.

Self-control develops self-esteem. This approach is cost effective. We have a tremendous amount, a treasure of data but by the time the researchers research the research it will be 10 or 15 years down the line. I can just speak from our very current experiences, and tell you that in answer to the question "Can sexual urges be controlled?" The kids know instinctively it can. Only 4 to 5 percent of them answer that sexual urges are "never" controllable. That tells us they know it is something that can be controlled, what they want to know is, why should I control it and how do I control it?

I hope the rest of my testimony can be entered for the full record, but in summary, I would like to really urge that every effort be made in policy as well as funding to redirect our governmental programs at every level into the proven, 100 percent safe abstinence-

centered programs. We know they work in Chicago. We were in 88 schools last year in the city of Chicago. This year we have already serviced 90, and it is only March. We started 5 years ago with only 11.

The demand is tremendous, and the response of the kids is extremely gratifying.

[The prepared statement and attachments follow:]

TESTIMONY ON ABSTINENCE EDUCATION PRESENTED MARCH 12, 1996

BY KATHLEEN M. SULLIVAN-DIRECTOR OF PROJECT REALITY

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Subcommittee on Human Resources

HEARING ON CAUSES OF POVERTY WITH A FOCUS ON "OUT-OF-WEDLOCK" BIRTHS

In our experience of working in and studying the area of adolescent health, both emotional and physical, for the past ten years, we have observed notable changes:

A. The problems associated with adolescents becoming sexually involved have been compounded and have become a major public health cost and concern in areas other than pregnancy, e.g. rampant sexually-transmitted diseases and severe emotional trauma, caused by rejection, depression, stress and loneliness resulting from broken physical unions.

B. Abstinence-centered education, the only true solution, which was thought impossible ten years ago, has been exceptionally well-received by tens of thousands of students who have had the opportunity to participate in this innovative, reasoned, sensible approach.
Today, abstinence education is a national debate and organizations, such as Project Reality and others, like Teen Aid of Spokane, WA, which have developed true abstinence-centered materials, can show statistically that it works very well.

This national debate needs to be expanded and we commend you for taking a leadership role in holding these hearings.

For 25 years, public policy programs and funding have been concentrated under the category, or heading, of "Teen Pregnancy." Maybe it is time we reconsider the very concept of **this** category. When we speak about "teen pregnancy," the perception is that it is a female problem and, in reality, we know that is not accurate.

Pregnancy **is not the** problem. Becoming sexually involved **is the** problem. Pregnancy is only one factor or result of the real problem, Sexual Activity. Promiscuity's three paramount consequences, emotional trauma, sexually-transmitted diseases, and pregnancy, must each be seriously and adequately addressed.

Since, in most discussions and programs to date, teen pregnancy is the major focus, let us, for just a moment, deal with the consequence of emotional trauma. I personally became critically aware of this, approximately three years ago, when I gave a talk to parents in Maryland. At the end of my presentation, several people approached me including a husky, thirty-something, rather serious man. He waited until everyone had left and then remarked: "If I had heard what you said tonight 18 years ago, I never would have done it. I went along from peer pressure, but I have hated what I did to that girl ever since and I have hated myself. -----But I never thought there was anyone who understood what we guys go through." For 18 years this emotional hurt was bottled up.

The emotional factor is what really gets the attention of the young males. The emotional factor can be summed up in our slogan: "Condoms don't protect the heart."

This type of physical relationship seldom lasts and it's often ended by the girl who has found an older guy. The girls are usually more mature at this age. We know that today many teen pregnancies are fathered by 20 year-old men. However, the **rejected young** male's hurt is internalized, and he adopts a macho image as a defense mechanism. We should ask: "Does early emotional hurt have a relationship to verbal abuse, sexual harassment and domestic abuse so prevalent today?"

The answer to this question is beautifully expressed by the letters attached from two 8th grade students. They are representative of thousands of positive comments our teachers receive. One comment eloquently sums up the 90% positive comments received over the 10 years of evaluations: **"I didn't know I didn't have to do it."**

My emphasis on the emotional factor is to ask that policy and funding be redirected to address **prevention** of the real problem, adolescent sexual involvement prior to marriage, rather than only continuing programs that address just **one** of the fallout results, pregnancy.

Besides the emotional trauma suffered by our **young** girls and boys, we are faced with an extraordinary increase in Sexually Transmitted Diseases. Last week, the Associated Press proclaimed that "teenagers are contracting the AID virus at an average of more than one an hour." Then there's a new disease, Chlamydia, causing sterility in early adulthood. There are cancerous conditions resulting from HPV, and "antibiotic resistant STD's" seriously affecting the health of the teen population. Consider this cost to our future generations and the cost in dollars for health care.

Referring to teen pregnancy is missing the point. It is far too limiting and misleading in that it gives a "female only" perception of the problem and excludes the emotional and disease factors.

We should redefine the topic and school courses as Adolescent Health - Emotional/Physical. This attracts not only the attention of both male and female students but provides the wider approach to their thinking and understanding of **self-control** in all areas of their life.

Self control develops self esteem.

Abstinence Education works! In ten years of extensive evaluation, we have collected a treasure of data. Attached is a summary showing how even the "at risk" students respond to our abstinence-centered message. One of the questions we ask is: "Can sexual urges be controlled?" Only 4 to 5% answer: "Never." This very low negative response was tallied early in 1986 and has remained constant.

What this tells us is: Adolescents know instinctively that sexual emotions are something that can be controlled. What they want to know is "**WHY** should I control them and **HOW** do I control them?"

This is where a true Abstinence-centered program can result in building a commitment to adopt abstinence as **THE** healthiest lifestyle.

However, another highly visible program, Postponing Sexual Involvment (PSI), was one of the first to be evaluated in the '80's, when it was a straight abstinence program. That evaluation of the '80's showed very positive results. However, that program, today, has become a combination approach, and it does not appear to be effective. The State of California just terminated their ENABL (Education Now and Babies Later), which I understand was based on PSI.

For several years Project Reality has conducted a study in three levels of abstinence education in Illinois, funded by Illinois Department of Public Aid and supported by Governor Jim Edgar. A summary of our current year's operation is attached. I would like to draw your attention to a few specific items to demonstrate the degree of interest.

In a two part classroom presentation by a team of seven teachers, our Chicago Division started with eleven schools requesting services in '89. Last year they were invited into 88 City of Chicago Public Schools, completing 925 presentations. This year they are already up to 90 schools and it is only March.

Our middle school program, consisting of an 8 unit curriculum with a strong medical emphasis, had 9,000 students participating in the Illinois Pilot Project last year.

The high school program, consisting of a 15 unit composite approach of abstinence towards drugs, alcohol and sexual activity, has 1700 students in the Illinois Pilot Program.

In summary, we strongly recommend that Congress redirects policies and funding to address the best preventative medicine possible: **Abstinence-Centered Education**.

This approach is not just a theoretical idea, but a proven approach that is realistic. It is the **one** real solution to rebuilding the **respect** for each individual, including their sexuality, and directing our young people to complete adulthood.

CHOOSING THE BEST CURRICULUM 1994-1995

Students responding: 5807 *Average age:* 14

27. Do you think sexual urges can be controlled?

	1994		1995	
	PRE	POST	PRE	POST
ALWAYS	22%	26%	42%	49%
SOMETIMES	42%	39%	30%	32%
NEVER	5%	5%	3%	4%

35. Having sex before marriage is against my own personal standards of right and wrong.

	1994		1995	
	PRE	POST	PRE	POST
STRONGLY AGREE	18%	26%	21%	26%
AGREE	18%	24%	18%	23%
NOT SURE	25%	22%	19%	20%
DISAGREE	23%	17%	25%	19%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	12%	8%	12%	9%

55. The best way to avoid an unwanted pregnancy is to wait until marriage before having sex?

	1994		1995	
	PRE	POST	PRE	POST
STRONGLY AGREE	36%	49%	41%	47%
AGREE	35%	32%	37%	35%
NOT SURE	13%	7%	8%	8%
DISAGREE	11%	4%	8%	4%
STONGLY DISAGREE	4%	4%	3%	2%

34. The best way to avoid a sexually transmitted disease is to wait until marriage before having sex?

	1994		1995	
	PRE	POST	PRE	POST
STRONGLY AGREE	33%	54%	38%	53%
AGREE	31%	31%	29%	29%
NOT SURE	14%	6%	11%	7%
DISAGREE	13%	3%	12%	4%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	6%	3%	7%	3%

37. A teen who has had sex outside of marriage would be better off to stop and wait for marriage?

	1994		1995	
	PRE	POST	PRE	POST
STRONGLY AGREE	18%	33%	21%	30%
AGREE	32%	37%	32%	39%
NOT SURE	28%	18%	24%	17%
DISAGREE	16%	6%	14%	8%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	6%	3%	6%	4%

41. Even if there is no pregnancy, having sex can cause a lot of problems for unmarried teens?

	1994		1995	
	PRE	POST	PRE	POST
STRONGLY AGREE	29%	42%	30%	38%
AGREE	41%	38%	38%	39%
NOT SURE	16%	10%	15%	11%
DISAGREE	9%	4%	9%	5%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	4%	3%	4%	3%

42. In our world today, movies, TV, videos, music, and advertising influences our sexual behavior?

	1995	
	PRE	POST
STRONGLY AGREE	28%	37%
AGREE	43%	41%
NOT SURE	12%	9%
DISAGREE	9%	6%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	5%	4%

Thanks for Abstinence Education

Chicago, IL
2/6/96

Sex. Sex is a precious gift that everyone will one day most likely experience. It isn't something to rush into. The first time should be special and worth waiting for. If you have sex before you're married, it is something useless. If the person you give yourself to runs out on you, they have a part of you that you can never get back.

Abstinence is something I vow to have until my wife comes along. I will save myself for her and only her. Hopefully she'll do the same for me, Whoever she is.

Today's pressures can really bug you. They say: "Everyone is doing it." Well that's what they think. I am different. I'm someone who chooses to just wait. If one day I have a girlfriend, and she wants to have sex with me, she'll respect me when I say no. Love isn't just based on sex. Love is a relationship between two people that should be kept alive until the day of marriage. If someone loves me just for sex, they have something comming. I am the type of person that will stand firm behind what I believe. "Just wait." Those are the two words that lots of people forget to say.

I'm a present. I'm wrapped up and I have something special inside of me. If I let someone open it too soon, when marriage comes along, there will be nothing for my wife to say she got to open. My virginity is something for my wife, my partner for life. My motto: "Just Wait."

Letter from an 8th grade boy in Chicago Pub. S.

Thursday, 5/11/95

Today Mrs. Olson, a nurse, came to talk to us about sexual abstinence. She talked about STD's and pregnancy.

But she also talked about something I never really thought of:
hurt, and your feelings when you have sex.

She also talked about love and sex. I never realized how different they can be. Sex is just sex. It can be done without love. Love is when someone cares about you, and talks to you.

I've known all along the after you have sex with your boyfriend,you can't go back to just holding hands with him. Ms. Olson taught us about abstinence and she demonstrated with the tape that two abstinent people who got married can probably last longer than two people who have had a lot of sexual partners.

Not too long ago I was actually thinking of becoming sexually active with this one guy.

But just after listening to Mrs. Olson for one hour,I want to save myself for my husband.

It's not pregnancy or STD's that are stopping me from doing "it". Well, it's part of the reason, but most of the reason is that I don't want to end up getting hurt by my boyfriend. And when I do "it" with my husband I want "it" to be special.

Letter from an 8th grade girl in Chicago Pub. S.

Daniel Webster Elementary School
4055 West Arthington Street
Chicago, Illinois 60624
(312) 534-6925
Mr. James E. Sanders, Principal
Ms. Edith Allen, Assistant Principal

1/2/96

Dear Ms. Meyer,

Please share this newspaper article with Mr. Tyler. This student wrote an article for the Webster School newspaper completely on her own. I thought it was noteworthy.

Sincerely,
M. Macey
Counselor

Crystal Pierce



Abstain

On Nov. 9, 1995 a man by the name of Mr.Tyler made a visit to Daniel Webster.Mr.Tyler works with the organization called the South-West Parents Commitee.He goes to any Elementary, and High Schools in the Chicago area that invites him as well as civic and community organizations.

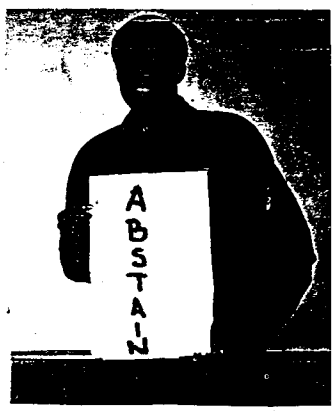
The reason why Mr.Tyler works with organizations because he thinks our young people are getting a raw deal towards the information about sexual behaviors.Beyond that he knows that these young people are the heritage and the future of America, and they deserve every chance we give them toward a happy, healthy, and productive life.

Mr.Tyler was discussing the issue of Abstinence. Abstinence means not doing.The reason why he talked to us about Abstinence is because there are a lot of sexual diseases, and one of those diseases, that we are all aware of is A.I.D.S. Mr.Tyler said that young girls think using Birth Control Pills is practicing safe sex. Yet Birth Control Pills do not protect girls from any sexually transmitted diseases.Other kinds of mechanical protection are also not free from danger and harm. Mr.Tyler said that the answer to the problem is manogomy (Waiting until married and have sex with that person).

About two weeks later Mr.Tyler made another visit at Daniel Webster. This time he showed us a tape. The name of the tape was called No SecondChance. I believe when they made the title they were referring to no second chance for avoiding A.I.D.S.

At the beginning of the tape there was a lady talking with the class about A.I.D.S. They talked about five ways you can catch this disease.They are through: I.V Needles,sex,blood tranfusion,Mother to child in child birth,and kissing.Then they showed an example of an entire family who had contracted A.I.D.S. The Father gave to his wife.then they had a baby who was born with the disease.

I asked students how they felt about Abstinence after they watched the tape. One student said that her thoughts had changed and that wanted to wait until she's married to have sex!



Illinois Pilot Schools 1995 - 1996

Project Reality has been a pioneer in the national field of adolescent health education. It has been teaching and evaluating abstinence-centered programs in the public schools since 1985.

For the current school year, 1995 - 96, Project Reality is administering a program with three divisions under a grant funded by the State of Illinois Department of Public Aid.

Two of these divisions have sites throughout the State. The third is concentrated in the City of Chicago.

Project Reality provides teacher training seminars for all three divisions. We also conduct an extensive evaluation through a pre-post survey of 69 questions in both high school and middle school programs. The analyses for these two divisions is done by Northwestern University School of Medicine, Psychology Department. The Chicago City program (which is more compact) has a 10 question survey (pre-post) and is analyzed by Dr. William C. McCready, Northern Illinois University.

The three divisions and a brief description are as follows:

Statewide:

Senior High School, Facing Reality, *Grades 9-11,*

15 units. A **composite approach**, abstinence towards drugs, alcohol and sexual activity. Instruction and questionnaire administration by in-school faculty.

Students: 3,000

Middle School, Choosing the Best, *Grades 7-9,*

8 units. **Strong medical emphasis** concentrates on sexual abstinence. Includes eighteen slides, from the Medical Institute for Sexual Health, and two videos. Is appropriate for AIDS education. Instruction and questionnaire administration by in-school faculty.

Students: 11,000

Chicago Division: *100 Schools*

City of Chicago, Southwest Parents Committee Division

A two-part series presented by a seven member team, whose credentials include medical, educational and bi-lingual training. The evaluations are administered by school faculty before and after abstinence presentations.

Students 12,000

Southwest Parents, started with 11 schools five years ago, served 88 schools last year with 925 presentations.

Total Students served in FY'95: 23,000

Chairman SHAW. Dr. Howard.

STATEMENT OF MARION HOWARD, PH.D., DIRECTOR, ADOLESCENT REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CENTER; CLINICAL DIRECTOR, TEEN SERVICES PROGRAM, GRADY HEALTH SYSTEMS; AND PROFESSOR OF GYNECOLOGY AND OBSTETRICS, EMORY UNIVERSITY, ATLANTA, GEORGIA

Dr. HOWARD. As far as my understanding of the statistics are about 85 percent of births to teens are unintended. Basically something else was happening to kids, 85 percent of them did not want it to, we would really take a good look at that and see why it is going on.

I think the wonderful thing about working with young people is that there is so much room for growth and change, that we can do a better job of helping them. I think the two things we need to get across to young people is that all people do two things about life. They either abstain or they protect themselves from unwanted consequences.

If you are happily married, if you do not want 12 children, you protect yourself from consequences of your behavior. If your husband goes off to Bosnia or your wife does or there is an illness in the family, you abstain from having sex during that time period, hopefully, if you are married.

Throughout life people do two things, they either abstain or they protect themselves from things they do not want to happen. What young people, I think, need are role models of people who basically do that. Children learn more by what we do than by just what we tell them to do. The media exploits sex. Daily kids hear about famous adults, business leaders, sports figures, religious leaders, even politicians who have not managed their sexual behavior very well, even princes and princesses now do it, too.

I think this bombardment of the media about all the mismanagement about so-and-so remained faithful to his wife for 20 years and they had a great sex life distorts what young people understand about what real life is about.

I certainly think that for many of the young women we work with that they are in circumstances that are beyond their control. They cannot control what housing project they live in or how bad the crime is. They cannot control their brother's drug habits. You can point out to them reproduction is something you can control, you can take charge of your life, and this is something that is yours alone.

Certainly young people need to know, nobody operates intelligently in a vacuum. If you do not know HPV or HIV is out there why would you change your behavior? If you do not know how you get pregnant, and 98 percent of teenage girls when surveyed said they did, and 2 percent said they did not know, and only 50 percent gave the wrong answer, so there is a lot of misinformation out there.

There is a joke about the two preschoolers who were talking and one said, my dad found a condom on the patio last night. The other one says, what is a patio? The reason I tell that joke is because we assume kids know a lot but they do not really know very much. They have as much misinformation as they do information.

They need knowledge, and then they need support to use that knowledge. If they do know about condoms they need to be under the guidance of health professionals. If they are going to use contraceptives they need to be guided by health professionals.

Young men and young women think everybody is doing it. They need role models their own age. We actually hired and trained 60 11th and 12th graders to come down to the 8th grade. These are young people who believe it is not appropriate for young people to have sex. They come down and actually teach young people skills to resist social and peer pressures to become sexually involved.

We also give young people information about how to protect themselves but these young men and women are such powerful role models that after we added that program we found that young people who did not have the program were five times more likely to become sexually involved in the eighth grade, and at the end of the ninth grade there was still a one-third reduction in sexual involvement and there were actually fewer teen pregnancies, just by seeing that there were kids who could be successful and popular in the teen world and not become sexually involved. Providing them with role models is a tremendously important thing to do.

I remember there was one young man who came to us who said that he had actually had sex before we came to the eighth grade with the team leaders. He said I was going to sit in the back of the room and nobody was going to tell me what I was going to do. I was just going to talk with my buddies and I was going to be real cool. Then he said, but the team leaders were so engaging, we just had to talk, and finally, as my buddies and I talked outside after school, we just decided that what you were saying made sense. I have not had sex since. He said, I couldn't wait to become an 11th or 12th grader so I could do for somebody else what was done for me.

Ultimately what do we need to do? We need to help young people understand throughout life that they will either abstain or protect themselves and help them to do both. We must give them knowledge and information to do that in ways that are meaningful to them. In other words, give them messages in ways that youth can understand and accept them, in this very sexually provocative world that we give them to live in. That has been mentioned before.

We have to give them support to do that. Programs that support abstinence, and if they choose not to abstain because young people exist all along a continuum, programs to support protection.

Finally, I put this in my prepared statement, we must recognize that the problem is not a welfare culture problem that has been discussed here today but, essentially, it is a total cultural problem. There are issues having to do with not recognizing and not adjusting the fact that young people are becoming fertile today so much earlier. Half of all girls now become fertile before the age of 12. That is unprecedented. Boys 1 year later. We have not adjusted to this change in biology, and because of that we have a problem.

Two, we have to recognize that poverty and racism do exist in this country, and do affect choices that young people make. Three, that we have enormously changed our attitudes in parenting. We do not exult parenting in this culture. Until we can make parents

feel that their job is worthwhile, and help them understand what parenting is, how can we help young people understand what it means to be a parent?

Finally, we have to recognize that perhaps we have not resolved the problems between the sexes. More women are battered in the United States than in any other country. Maybe we need to help young people understand what it means to be respectful of self, respectful of others, that men need to respect women and vice versa, and young people need to learn that from us.

There has been a value shift, but as I said, young people, no one sets out to make a mistake. Young people want what we want for ourselves, to be optimistic about their own life chances and the life chances of their children. With our help they can do a much better job of that.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement is being held in the Committee's files.]

STATEMENT OF SARAH S. BROWN, DIRECTOR, NATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO PREVENT TEEN PREGNANCY, WASHINGTON, DC

Ms. BROWN. Well, thank you for inviting me to this Subcommittee. As the last person here I think one of my problems is that most of the things that I wanted to say to you have been touched on by other people. I am going to soldier on anyway.

My name is Sarah Brown, and I am here in two capacities. One, as the director of a brandnew national campaign to prevent teen pregnancy. Second, as the director of a recently completed project with the Institute of Medicine on unplanned, unintended pregnancy.

My main message to you today is that the debate in recent months on the Hill about welfare reform has overlooked at least four important ideas and data sets. The first has to do with whether pregnancies among women on welfare are consciously desired and planned? The second concerns sexual abuse of young women. The third centers on the age differential between teenagers having babies and the men who father them. The fourth focuses on U.S/ Western European comparisons on a variety of demographic measures.

Now, as I said, a couple of these have been touched on already but let me go through them quickly, nonetheless.

With regard to the first point, national, State, and local data are crystal clear that the vast majority of pregnancies among women in poverty, including those who are teenagers, are neither planned nor actively desired. Somehow the picture has been painted in recent months that pregnancy and childbearing among welfare populations, and especially among unmarried teenagers are very purposefully undertaken. In particular, the small amount of money that an additional baby may bring is a clear incentive for childbearing.

National data show that most pregnancies and births to women in poverty and to unmarried teens, in particular, are unplanned, unintended, and often flat out unwanted altogether at time of conception.

For example, data from the National Survey of Family Growth shows that over 80 percent of pregnancies among unmarried teens

are unintended, as are a full three-quarters of pregnancies among women in poverty. This data obviously does not square with the current welfare debate image.

High levels of confusion, denial, and ambivalence, in fact, characterize the beginnings of most of these pregnancies that have been the topic of this hearing.

The second idea, new data—and I think this really is a new area that we are learning about—new data have clarified a hunch long held by practitioners that many of the youngest women who become pregnant and bear children were, the victims of sexual abuse in their own childhoods.

In one recent study in Washington State of pregnant teens, a full two-thirds of the sample of teen mothers had been sexually abused as children, significantly more than a comparison group of equally poor teens who were not pregnant. The growing understanding is that these kind of traumatic childhood experiences leave young women with very few personal resources to resist precocious sexual involvement or to resist pregnancy.

Please remember, as a number of people have stated, the younger the age of first intercourse, the higher the likelihood that sexual activity is involuntary.

Third idea, many of the fathers of babies born to teen mothers are over 20 and sometimes they are well over 20. This age gap furthers our growing sense that teen mothers in poverty and those close to it are more often victims of predatory males than willing participants.

Finally, with regard to the particular issue we have been discussing all afternoon, of whether welfare payments stimulate poor, often unmarried women, to have babies, I think that a look at Western Europe is very instructive.

Please puzzle over the following fact. Social welfare benefits in many Western European countries are far more generous than ours, and, yet, their rates of unintended pregnancy, teen pregnancy, and childbearing by poor women are appreciably lower than ours. Before we convince ourselves of the clear relationship between welfare payments and specific fertility measures, we need to understand this paradox, and we have to understand it in the context of the United States.

These data on United States versus Europe, incidentally, are very clear, much clearer than the sort of U.S.-based data that we have been discussing all afternoon.

The simple point in conclusion is that unfortunately things are more complicated than they seem. Pregnancy and childbearing by teens and by women in poverty are typically unintended and unplanned. There is an important overlay in this population that involves early histories of sexual abuse and relationships with men who are significantly older. Finally, U.S.-European data give us little reason to be absolutely certain that welfare payments dictate fertility.

What this means in a policy context is that unfortunately we are going to have to be more textured, we are going to have to be more complete and more complex in our discussions of underlying causes and remedies.

These kind of data and nuance make it much more difficult. I appreciate it, but I think, in fact, that is the way it is.

I am going to stop there. I thought I was going to beat the red light, I am sorry I did not. I would be happy to answer any questions you have, in particular, any you might have about the new teen pregnancy campaign.

Thank you for the opportunity to be here.

Chairman SHAW. Thank you, Ms. Brown.

Mr. Levin.

Mr. LEVIN. Tell us about the new national campaign.

Ms. BROWN. One of the ill effects of having too much publicity too soon, having the light shined on you in technicolor, is that it gave the impression that everything was settled, everybody was appointed, all the funding was in place, staff in place, and we were rearing to go. In fact, nothing could be further from the truth.

We have organized a new independent nonprofit, nongovernmental organization, a new 501(c)(3) totally separate from government. We have had one board meeting but we are still very much in the process of trying to figure out what might be best to do. We have a 17-member founding board but it is not complete. We have to line up funding.

I can give you some information about our early ideas, and the founding board, but I do not want to get off on that agenda because I know that is not your focus. I will tell you that our chairman is former New Jersey Governor Tom Kane, our president is Isabell Sawhill of the Urban League, and as of last week, I have been asked to be the director of the campaign.

Mr. LEVIN. If you would, put together the first and the four points that the vast majority of the pregnancies among teens are unplanned, unintended. Those women in poverty and unmarried teens most of all, and the fourth point about Europe. I mean if they are unintended and unplanned, then how does——

Ms. BROWN. Why do they do better?

Mr. LEVIN. Why, yes?

Ms. BROWN. Well, it is a very important question, and I get asked that all the time. There is a very limited scholarship in this area, but let me tell you what we think we know. There are about four reasons why Europe seems to do better in these issues of teen pregnancy, nonmarital births and so forth.

The first is that there seems to be a very strong social consensus in Europe that although sexual activity may be acceptable, getting pregnant when you are in no position to bear a child is not. Here, in this country, as we well know, we spend a lot of time arguing about sexuality, not only for teens, but for unmarried people in general. The television says one thing, our communities and families often say other things. What we end up doing is giving a very confusing message.

The observers of Europe say the message is very straight. It is not that sex is bad or wrong, unless you are very young, it is that what is wrong is bearing children when you are in no position to take care of them.

The emphasis is on protection, avoiding unwanted, unintended pregnancies, and avoiding STDs.

Now, is that the right message for us? I do not know. We are not Western Europe, we have a lot of differences in this country. The lesson to take home is consistency of the message, not even necessarily what the specific message is.

The second reason, very quickly, the belief is that contraceptive services are much more widely available through a wider variety of providers. Again, we are not just talking about teenagers, we are talking about men and women in their twenties, thirties, and forties. The financing for preventive services is in place more uniformly and systematically than it is in the United States It is this consistency of message of media, church, family, home, and school that seems to be behind the lower rates.

A last comment, I would love to see some more work in that area, though. What I am basing this on is a very limited series of observations, and it is a really important question. Their rates of sexual activity are the same as ours. The age of first intercourse is the same as ours, but the Europeans do not get pregnant in the same way we do.

Mr. LEVIN. Thank you.

Chairman SHAW. Mr. Stark.

Mr. STARK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am sorry I could not be here but we had corrections day which is not where you go to jail, but this Committee had a bill on the floor and I am sorry that I——

Chairman SHAW. Perhaps you could call this hearing corrections day.

Mr. STARK. Yes, I am sure I could have learned a good deal. I am most happy to see Sarah Brown, who has worked with many of us and with the country on children's issues for a number of years.

I would presume is, indeed, the recognized authority on this. I have just been looking at some of the testimony of the previous witnesses. Outside of the religious area, the modern-day pharisees who appear before us from time to time, may or may not be experts in intercourse and abstinence and the like.

There seems to be this idea that somehow single parenthood is directly related to births without benefit of sacraments. Do you have any statistics that show that that is true? Is there some relationship between single parents and out-of-wedlock births?

Or are many single parents there as the result of divorce, death? Which is the case?

Ms. BROWN. You know, I think I am going to punt on that one, which is uncharacteristic for me. I am not going to be able to give you quickly—I can certainly get it for you soon—the proportion of nonmarital births that are to never-married women as distinct from divorced or widowed women.

My strong sense is that the latter category is, by far, in the minority.

Mr. STARK. Which?

Ms. BROWN. The divorced or widowed, and so forth, previously married. I think what has been of concern in this Committee, and in the nation, is really the unmarried women giving birth. It has not been so much a woman who finds herself single later or a relationship collapses in her thirties and she has a nonmarital delivery.

Mr. STARK. Your suspicion is that they are apt to be unmarried and perhaps, unfortunately, very young people.

I am——

Ms. BROWN. Well, actually let me just clarify that. I think this issue of very young, people slip between nonmarital births and teen births as though they were one and the same. A number of witnesses have pointed out repeatedly this afternoon that only one-third or less of births to single women are teenage women.

We seem to think that——

Mr. STARK. Say that again?

Ms. BROWN. If you put all the babies in the room who have a single mother, less than 30 percent are teenage mothers. These are women in their twenties, also in their thirties, principally in their twenties. Teen childbearing is not the same as single women having babies. There is an overlap but they are not synonymous.

Mr. STARK. What you are suggesting is that less than one-third are of out-of-wedlock births?

Ms. BROWN. That is right.

Mr. STARK. Are with mothers under 20?

Ms. BROWN. That is correct, and let me give you——

Chairman SHAW. Could I ask you a question?

Mr. STARK. Sure.

Chairman SHAW. Do you have the statistics as to the age of the mother at the time of the birth of the first child? Because obviously a mother, you could have less than one-third if a mother was a teenager when she had her first child she was in her twenties when she had her second. So, that could prove your point right there. I am just wondering, in fact, I am surprised that the statistic you gave is as high as a third.

The question is, what percent of first child births are born to a teenage mom?

Ms. BROWN. I want to get you the precise number, and there are people in this room who have it, but your point is well taken. We do not just focus on first births. The issue is if the mother is 28 when she has her third, how old was she when she had her first birth?

There are two reasons to be concerned about adolescent childbearing. Not only that first birth, but also what sort of a sequence it sets off. You are absolutely right about that. It is a major issue but I think it is important to clarify that it is not just teenagers in this country who are having trouble managing their fertility. It is women in their twenties and their partners, and even in their thirties and forties. Seventy-seven percent of pregnancies among women 40 and over, are unintended. It is not just teenagers.

The stakes are particularly high for teenagers, but it is not just them.

Mr. STARK. I guess my next question is—I do not mean to be facetious, Mr. Chairman—but wouldn't it be more difficult to sell abstinence to a person over 20 who had already bitten the apple, so to speak?

I could see trying it with 10- and 12-year-olds who have yet to have their first encounter. It is difficult for me to remember when I might have been a good subject for this. I am not sure that abstinence is a very useful approach to what I would consider for an

adult legally, physically and emotionally, after they have already been sexually active.

Is there any evidence that you know of that this would be a good course, well attended?

Ms. BROWN. Well, let's talk about it a little bit. I think that a number of the witnesses here today who have talked about abstinence are performing an enormous public service by focusing people's attention on this. I think a witness a couple of panels ago pointed out that we did not use to talk about it as much, and now it is a topic that is more on people's minds and in their hearts when they think particularly about teenagers.

Here is the concern about abstinence. I am very utilitarian on this point. When you look at programs that have been evaluated, using very careful experimental designs, there is a very limited representation in that pool of abstinence programs. I am not saying that they do not work, I am saying we do not know whether or not they work.

We have very few, and actually they are rather interesting. If someone produced for a scientific body six or seven randomized trials that showed that a good, strong abstinence program particularly for young teens had measurable results in behavior over an extended period of time, I think most adults in this country, and many teenagers would be very interested. Our problem is that the evaluation dollars have not been directed to abstinence. They have been directed to a variety of other approaches, and generally with pretty discouraging results.

I think the general approach that at least the evaluation community takes is that abstinence is an extremely important option, really at all ages, but we need to learn far more than we do now about its proper place, how to teach it, how to combine it with other messages, sometimes about contraception for people who are already sexually active. It is a very important question, and I think it is largely something we need an evaluation on.

Again, you have to use good experimental designs with randomization and control groups to control for self-selection bias.

Mr. STARK. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman SHAW. Have the abstinence programs been evaluated?

Ms. SULLIVAN. Mr. Chairman, there has been very little money put into abstinence at all. That is the first point we need to pay attention to. In the State of Illinois, for instance, there is currently $21 million that goes into teen pregnancy, of which my organization gets less than 1 percent, and we handled 23,000 students in Illinois in the pilot programs last year. The State of Illinois, right now, is the only one, to my knowledge, that is funding abstinence programs. Just a small portion of that actually goes to the research but we are in the middle of a longitudinal study.

Unfortunately, we were part of a longitudinal study that was started in 1990, and we were just about to do the followup when the new administration took over and we were cut off. There has been very little. On the other hand, we do have extensively large numbers of prepost tests and it is very encouraging.

The bottom line to the whole thing is the demand. When we started 10 years ago, abstinence was not even talked about, the

media ridiculed it. Everybody said, oh, do not be ridiculous, kids won't listen. Today, it is a national debate everywhere. Now, the criticism is well, we have not been evaluated enough.

I really wonder about the numerous evaluations referred to today, as I said, the researchers evaluate the evaluations, a lot of those references are 10 or 15 years old. That is why you are not seeing answers to a lot of the questions you are asking, they cannot give the answers because the research is old research.

If I could take the liberty of just diverting slightly, for instance, one of the things I would like to suggest for welfare reform is that there is some interesting talk about added day care. If every welfare mother took in one other as a day care home project, that could create a tremendous decrease, and it would very likely teach those mothers to be better mothers.

We need some creative approaches, and this abstinence approach with the degree of success that we are seeing the interest in the schools. Hardly anybody has anything good to say about the Chicago public schools, yet, starting with 11 schools we now have up to 90 schools that say we want you to come in and teach our kids how to be healthy. I can give you anecdotal stories that are incredible.

One, in particular, our teacher was in the first part of the two-part Chicago session. The first program went great. The second week there was a student there that was not there the first time, and he was very disruptive. He kept saying, "it ain't going to work. You can't last with one person, you get tired of them, it just isn't going to work." This was eighth grade.

The teacher took our team teacher aside and said, there is something you ought to know about this student. The others in the class kept answering him, they were giving all the good answers to the disruptive student. The teacher pulled her aside and said, "that child lives with 6 siblings, but there are 20 children in this school that are fathered by his father." Sure, the point is those students had never had the opportunity to hear the disease factor, yet they were experiencing the emotional trauma.

Chairman SHAW. You were here during Dr. McIlhaney's testimony, and is that part of——

Ms. SULLIVAN. Of our program?

Chairman SHAW [continuing]. The teaching that young girls are more susceptible to the disease?

Ms. SULLIVAN. Oh, emphatically. Their tissue linings are not yet developed. They are extremely more vulnerable. The sad thing is they do not know that. They do not know that disease can be affected in other parts of the body not covered by a condom.

Chairman SHAW. Let me switch over to Dr. Howard now. Do you have anything to add to Dr. McIlhaney's testimony, with regard to the disease factor with young girls who are sexually active?

Dr. HOWARD. Well, one of the things we do know is that the inability to bear a child has tripled among young black women and doubled among young white women over the last decade or so because of having sex early over time and having a number of partners. As much as we are concerned about out-of-wedlock births I think we also have to be concerned about the infertility rates. It

is very important that we stress to young people all the consequences.

That is why I say no one operates intelligently in a vacuum, and we have to give young people this kind of information but not from a point of view of fear, but from a point of view of with knowledge we can empower them to make better choices.

Chairman SHAW. Dr. Howard, I want to focus on part of your testimony with regard to the fertility of women dropping and of men, too. Is that global? Second, what is causing that?

Dr. HOWARD. Some of the best thinking says that it is related to nutrition. In other words, our improved lifestyles and choices are an ability to protect ourselves and that is the reason that fertility is dropping, particularly among Westernized countries.

Chairman SHAW. Is that at all economic levels? I would guess that somebody from a middle-class or a higher income group would probably have a better nutrition program than somebody who is living in poverty?

Dr. HOWARD. Well, I think just generally nutrition across the board has been changing.

Chairman SHAW. Is this in other countries, too?

Dr. HOWARD. Yes, it is happening in other countries.

Chairman SHAW. How about countries without television?

I am curious because I am just wondering about the bombardment that these kids are getting on matters from television. I think Mr. Collins was talking about this a few moments ago. My mother broke her hip, and for the last few weeks she has been staying at our house down in Florida, the lady taking care of her watches the soaps, as I walk through the room, and this is during the time that the kids are home, I have seen things on television that I do not see at 8 or 9 o'clock at night. I am just very curious about whether the children having this available regularly to them—and many of them watch the soaps I am sure—whether this and other things that they can see through other entertainment could be affecting them, could be responsible for stimulating them early and, therefore, contributing to early fertility?

Dr. HOWARD. Well, I really think it really does relate more to better nutrition. I think a good example of that is that there was a period around the sixties and early seventies when we had an influx of Puerto Rican women coming to New York. The cesarean rate just zoomed, and the reason was because of the better nutrition they get in New York. They grew such bigger babies that their pelvic capacity just could not deliver those babies. Nutrition can have a tremendous role to play on reproductive health.

Chairman SHAW. Not television?

Dr. HOWARD. Not television.

Ms. SULLIVAN. We cover that in our questionnaire, do the movies and television have an influence on your behavior, and it is very interesting to see the movement because at the beginning the kids will say, oh, no, it doesn't really. At the end of the program, they realize from analyzing and discussing it they see very clearly that it does influence them.

Dr. HOWARD. I would agree with that. Kids say they do it because they see it on television but I just do not think that it biologically makes a difference.

Chairman SHAW. I want to thank this panel and the other panels for sticking with us today. It is now almost 5 o'clock, and I think it has been a very interesting day. I think all of us have learned something, and I hope that the final panel, by listening to the former panels, also learned something.

Thank you so much for being with us and giving us your time.

[Whereupon, at 4:55 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

[Submissions for the record follow:]

STATEMENT OF GARY L. BAUER
PRESIDENT, FAMILY RESEARCH COUNCIL

In the welfare debate last year, President Clinton himself stated that "the real source of [the] problem is the inordinate number of out-of-wedlock births in this country."[1] He also conceded that "there's no question that [ending welfare for unwed mothers] would work. The question is... 'Is it morally right?'"[2]

While the President's proposed policies leave much to be desired, he has formulated precisely the right question to frame the current debate over welfare reform in general and illegitimacy in particular. There can be no more important policy objective than the preservation -- or more properly in this day and age, the revitalization -- of our nation's moral capital. As James Q. Wilson wrote in his oft-cited article, "The Rediscovery of Character: Private Virtue and Public Policy":

> The essential first step is to acknowledge that at root, in almost every area of important public concern, we are seeking to induce persons to act virtuously.... Not only is such conduct desirable in its own right, it appears now to be necessary if large improvements are to be made in those matters we consider problems.[3]

There exists a striking public consensus that the welfare state's practice of subsidizing illegitimacy is not only a massive problem, but a moral problem at root.

Even so unlikely a source as Bruce Reed, President Clinton's leading aide on welfare reform, once acknowledged that the essential purpose of reform must be to reverse the alarming rise in out-of-wedlock births.[4] If not driven exclusively by AFDC "benefits," the increase has at least been sustained and perpetuated by the expansion of a system that pays recipients to bear illegitimate children. Current trends indicate that by the year 2015 -- some studies project as early as 2000 -- one of every two American babies will be born to a single mother, and illegitimacy will surpass divorce as the main cause of fatherlessness.

Already, according to the Census Bureau, approximately one of every three babies born in the United States is born to a single mother. In the black inner city, more than 80% of children are born without fathers. In many poor white communities, the figure is nearing 50% -- and illegitimacy is increasing more rapidly among whites than any other racial group. Illegitimacy ratios for the country's white population have now climbed higher than the illegitimacy ratios in the black community that compelled Senator Moynihan to issue his famous warning about the breakdown of the black family.

Even if a job program can succeed in putting more unmarried welfare mothers to work (which is unlikely),[5] we will still be left with roughly the same number of fatherless children. While Great Britain has already succeeded in implementing reforms that make work economically more attractive than welfare, the reforms of the 1980s have only served to underscore in both Britain and America the fact that little progress can be made without addressing the collapse of the family.[6]

When the Moynihan Report appeared over thirty years ago, liberal intellectuals excoriated the author for "defending middle class values." "What may seem to be a disease to the white middle class may be a healthy adaptation to the Negro lower class," Bayard Rustin intoned.[7] Today, however, overwhelming empirical evidence demonstrates that there is nothing at all "healthy" about the decay of families and that not all personal choices are equal in terms of their impact on children, families, and communities. The evidence itself has propelled illegitimacy to the forefront of the current national debate over welfare reform -- or at least, *had* propelled

illegitimacy to the forefront before President Clinton and the Governors signaled their retreat.

Retreat is inexcusable; for the fact remains that intact families bestow upon individuals and communities advantages that simply come no other way. We cannot repeat too often, in a climate rife with attempts to seize the moral high ground, that no moral judgment even need be adduced. The empirical evidence amassed by social scientists in the last ten years (and chronicled by Barbara Dafoe Whitehead in her April 1993 Atlantic article, "Dan Quayle Was Right") has confirmed in exquisite detail what those who have lived in broken families already know. A single woman with children is not a viable economic unit for the vast majority, but children need biological fathers for much more than the extra dollars they add to the family budget. As social scientist Charles Murray has written, single parenthood is "damaging to children in so many ways that to list them individually would be to trivialize them."[8]

Children born to single mothers are more likely to experience abuse or neglect; and they have higher infant mortality rates and lower birth weights regardless of the age or race of the mother. The proportion of low birth-weight babies, for example, increases by 50% if the mother is not married. Dr. Nicholas Eberstadt, author of "Why Babies Die in D.C." (*The Public Interest*, Spring 1994), observes that "so substantial are the differentials associated with illegitimacy that an American baby born to a teen-age mother is less likely to register low birth-weight if the mother is married and black than if she is unmarried but white."[9] In the early 1980s, black and white babies alike were less likely to survive the first year of life born to an unmarried college graduate than to a married high school dropout.[10]

For those children born out-of-wedlock who do survive, long-term life prospects are equally discouraging. According to data from the National Fatherhood Initiative, only 4.4% of children who live with both parents are expelled or suspended from school. By contrast, 15.5% of fatherless children will be dismissed or suspended. Among children living with a never-married mother, 29.7% repeat a grade in school as opposed to 11.6% of children overall. And a 1988 University of Illinois study of adults born outside of marriage found that the longer the time spent in a single-parent family, the less education the child ultimately attained -- regardless of the parent's income level.

Children born out-of-wedlock also have greater problems with behavioral development. The National Survey of Children found that children from single-parent families are two to three times more likely to have emotional problems -- three times as likely to find themselves in psychotherapy. Lack of self-control is a common failing.

Not surprisingly, Charles Murray has concluded that "illegitimacy is the single most important social problem of our time...because it drives everything else."[11] According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, more than 70 percent of all juveniles in state reform institutions come from fatherless homes. Raymond A. Knight and Robert A. Prentky have reported in the journal *Criminal Justice Behavior* that 60% of all violent rapists who were repeat offenders came from single-parent households. And a Michigan State University study reported in 1987 in *Behavioral Sciences and the Law* found that 75% of the adolescent murderers surveyed had come from homes where the parents were divorced or never married. *The relationship between crime and one-parent families is so powerful, in fact, that controlling for family structure erases the relationship between crime and race and between crime and low income.*

Compounding the cycle of despair, illegitimacy feeds itself too. Young white women who grow up without a father in the home are more than twice as likely to

bear children out-of-wedlock and to do so during their teenage years when they are most likely to form long-term attachments to AFDC.[12] Research by the Heritage Foundation, based on the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, found that young girls raised in single-parent homes in public housing are roughly five times more likely to bear children out-of-wedlock themselves than girls raised in two-parent homes.[13]

If those on the welfare rolls have suffered most conspicuously, it is also true that the welfare system has corrupted the ideals and narrowed the vision of many who live well beyond the bounds of the inner city -- even as it is now threatening our most cherished civic institutions. One obvious casualty is the weakening of our conviction that the so-called "bourgeois virtues" are available to all, regardless of race or class. Early American social workers, like Mary Ellen Richmond, understood the importance of middle class norm-setting. "The way to reintegrate the deviant into society, she argued, is to educate and indeed direct them toward the shared values of the mainstream culture."[14]

The role of the traditional two-parent family is essential in sustaining the institutions of a free society precisely because it is the vehicle by which values are transmitted from generation to generation. If the family fails to impart virtues that temper and restrain behavior, broad legal freedoms must give way. So, too, human dignity and equality, as the Founders understood them. Virtue, historian Gertrude Himmelfarb has said, is the only true basis of equality and the only requisite for citizenship.[15] As Charles Murray made clear in his now famous op-ed "The Coming White Underclass," either we act now to reduce illegitimacy and to reinfuse our public policy with a commitment to higher and nobler things -- or we run the risk of sabotaging the entire experiment in democratic self-government.

Or, as Michael Novak put it:

> [T]he project of self-government depends on the capacity of citizens to govern their own passions, urges, habits, and expectations. If they cannot govern their own lives individually, how can they be successful in self-government as a republic? The project of self-government is moral -- or not at all.[16]

The Founding Fathers and many succeeding generations understood that only a virtuous people can be free. Do we?

Given the consequences for the individual child, the surrounding community, and the national polity, bringing a baby into this world without a sense of sacred responsibility cannot long be regarded as a morally neutral act. In a report issued in December 1994, the Progressive Policy Institute, policy arm of the Democratic Leadership Council, joined others in acknowledging that "it is wrong -- not simply foolish or impractical -- for women and men to make babies they cannot support emotionally and financially."[17] Donna Shalala made the same concession a year earlier, however reluctantly, when she said in an interview, "I don't like to put this in moral terms, but I do believe that having children out-of-wedlock is wrong."[18]

Congress should now recognize that it is also wrong to sanction such activity by subsidizing it. Republican strategist Bill Kristol has said that "neither our politics nor our sociology can ultimately be neutral as to the content of the laws of Nature and Nature's God,"[19] chief among which is the fact that we were made to live in families. Charles Murray asks rhetorically: if "a social policy that induces people to believe that they are not responsible for their lives is one that inhibits the pursuit of happiness and is to that extent immoral[,] [c]an then a policy that fails to stigmatize be a moral one?"[20]

Historical experience, related by Marvin Olasky and others, does indeed demonstrate that the most effective social services have been offered by private community groups, without any illusion of moral neutrality. In her seminal historical study Poverty and Compassion, Gertrude Himmelfarb writes that:

> [a]fter making the most arduous attempt to objectify the problem of poverty, to divorce poverty from any moral assumptions and conditions, we are learning how inseparable the moral and material dimensions of that problem are. And after trying to devise social policies that are scrupulously neutral and value-free, we are finding these policies fraught with moral implications that have grave material and social consequences.[21]

George Liebmann says, more simply, in a recent issue of The American Enterprise, "Rescuing an underclass is by definition a highly moralistic undertaking."[22] While controlling welfare spending is a happy byproduct of terminating benefits to teen mothers, even more promising is the opportunity to begin reversing the message of the counterculture that has so eroded the character of our people, in part by assaulting the family.

Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan has used the phrase "defining deviancy down" to describe Americans' tendency to ignore excess levels of deviancy by normalizing what used to be considered pathology. Only by "defining deviancy down" have we been able to ignore until now all the signs of impending disaster that attend a burgeoning illegitimacy rate. Barbara Whitehead's 1993 Atlantic article heralded a real and significant change in the public mood, however; and the near-mythic ascendancy of Charles Murray's "Coming White Underclass" piece the same year seemed to confirm a general convergence of public opinion. In a recent Family Research Council survey of 1,000 Americans, a substantial majority (81 percent) of respondents indicated that "women having babies out of wedlock that they can't support financially" is a serious problem. The mounting public consensus presents a unique opportunity to implement more than symbolic change in the 104th Congress and to make sanctions against illegitimacy the focus of that change.

In sending his welfare package to Congress more than 30 years ago, President Kennedy articulated contemporary liberals' fundamental misunderstanding of the causal role welfare plays in boosting illegitimacy rates.

> [W]elfare programs, [he said], must contribute to the attack on . . . family breakdown [and] illegitimacy. . . . Unless such problems are dealt with effectively, they fester, and grow, sapping the strength of society as a whole and extending their consequences in troubled families from one generation to the next.[23]

Kennedy's insight about the consequences has proven historically accurate; but his "service" approach to curbing illegitimacy worked no better than the current President's will -- a fact which an unnamed aide on the Clinton welfare task force acknowledged last year.

While the President advocates a massive and expensive public relations campaign against teen pregnancy, the anonymous aide confided to Newsweek reporter Joe Klein: "We looked at a hundred different programs around the country that were trying to deal with this problem, and not one of them moved the needle. There just weren't any results."[24] Likewise, a formal study of the Teenage Parent Demonstration, sponsored by the Department of Health and Human Services in response to "persistently high rates of teenage pregnancies and births," found that "[t]he program had an unusual and disappointing pattern of impacts on pregnancy and birth rates . . . despite . . . the substantial efforts of the programs to empower [the] young mothers to take control of their fertility."[25]

Out-of-wedlock births, moreover, remain a strong predictor of poverty. A recent U.S. Census Bureau report on poverty found that the median household income for women householders with no husband present is only $19,872. For black Americans, the median single parent household -- which now represents the family structure of 48% of all black families -- is less than $12,000 per year. Married black families, by contrast, receive a median income of $45,041. Both Republican William Bennett and Democrat William Galston have noted that, according to the Census Bureau, the family income of black two-parent families is almost two-and-a-half times the family income of white single-parent families. Children of white single-parents are two-and-a-half times likelier to be living in poverty than children in black two-parent families. Today's major economic indicator, in other words, is family stability -- not race.

In a meticulously researched article in the January 6, 1996 issue of *World* magazine, Robert Rector of the Heritage Foundation demonstrates that it is neither easy to raise family income through welfare transfers nor historically true that higher welfare benefits and broadened eligibility have improved children's life prospects. It *is* true, however, that unwed mothers are not only more likely to rely on government to support their children, but are also more likely to spend years dependent upon welfare. Because illegitimacy feeds both poverty and itself, we cannot reasonably expect to address welfare dependency until we address illegitimacy.

Charles Murray anticipated the problem in his 1988 book In Pursuit of Happiness and Good Government. "The task," he concludes, "is not to devise a public relations campaign to discourage single teenage girls from having babies, but to neutralize whatever is impeding the age-old impulse of human beings to form families."[26] Eliminating grants to unwed teenage mothers will be necessary, but not sufficient, to restore the integrity of the family unit.

The primary argument is *not* that women have babies just to get the dollars -- although anecdotal evidence does exist to suggest that welfare checks can drive fertility directly. There is the story of a five-month-old girl named Ariel Hill who was born on Christmas Eve 1992 and died a brutal death in May of 1993. She lived with her 22-year-old mother and four other siblings in a squalid unit of public housing. The family's chief source of income was welfare. One day, her mother grew tired of her screaming and dumped her in a sink of scalding water as punishment. She died, weighing less than seven pounds. She had not been fed in days. When investigators examined the apartment, they found a scrap of paper with the name of each child and the dollar amount of welfare that child earned for the mother.

In all probability, however, Ariel Hill's mother is an aberration. The chief concern is simply that welfare *enables* men and women to indulge in irresponsible behavior by shielding them from the natural economic consequences of their actions -- actions that often do issue in tragic results for the children who are born of their thoughtlessness. "By lessening the costs attached to unwed reproduction," anthropologist David Murray argues, "welfare subsidizes choices that interfere with future opportunity. . . . A monthly increase in cash is usually not enough to 'cause' someone to bear a child. But by increasing the benefits and reducing the burdens of a choice that is desirable on other grounds, welfare becomes a catalyst in the timing and frequency of the decision. How could it be otherwise?"[27] -- unless one assumes that welfare recipients are less likely to be rational judges of their own self-interest.

Fealty to the premise that all individuals are morally autonomous creatures argues against such a premise. And the migration of welfare recipients to states with

higher welfare benefits provides empirical corroboration that welfare mothers are indeed capable of making rational decisions to govern their own lives. Welfare mothers are dependent, we believe, not because they are incompetent or morally deficient but because they have made rational decisions in an irrational system.

Moral concern, informed by empirical evidence, demands admission that the service approach to both family breakdown and welfare dependency has failed. Welfare reform that fails to curb the cash that subsidizes illegitimacy is, not a vision of reducing dependency, but a vision of administering "benefits" to an ever-expanding population that will always be mired in dependency. It is an abandonment of the conviction that people on welfare are fully human and fully capable of achieving self-sufficiency. And it is an insidious guarantee that welfare spending will continue to crawl steadily upward while illegitimacy continues to increase as well.

If the amount of money we are spending on welfare were buying healthy families and stable communities, we would raise no objection. Our concern is, not that we are spending too much, but that we are killing off marriage and all the blessings and safeguards marriage buys for women and children.

Admitting the failure of the service approach will require tough political choices. Those choices will undoubtedly offend both the welfare industry and feminist ideology. But politicians should take heart from polling data that demonstrate broad-based public support for modest but real steps to reduce illegitimacy.

According to a poll conducted by Voter/Consumer Research for Family Research Council in mid-October 1995, three out of four Americans believe welfare encourages illegitimacy. By a ratio of two to one, Americans feel that reducing illegitimacy is a more important -- and more realistic -- goal than "getting single mothers with few job skills into jobs that will pay them enough to support themselves and their children." Voters favor a preventative, anti-illegitimacy strategy, in other words, rather than a remedial workfare strategy. And by an overwhelming margin of 84% to 13%, they favor the family cap provision as a modest first step toward reversing the trend in illegitimacy.

Only by historical accident were unwed mothers -- of any age -- ever included in the AFDC program. Frances Perkins, President Roosevelt's Secretary of Labor and chief architect of welfare policy, opposed extending federal entitlements to unmarried mothers because she foresaw that subsidizing illegitimacy would escalate family breakdown. And, tragically, she was right. While less than 3% of the young beneficiaries of the program in the late 1930s were the children of unwed mothers, today the tables have completely turned. In the year between October 1991 and September 1992, only 1.6% of the children on AFDC qualified because a parent was deceased.

It would be ironic at best if the current majority in Congress were to find themselves to the left of the most liberal member of the Roosevelt Administration because they rejected her intuition, now confirmed by years of sad experience. It is the potential to reverse that sad experience that must define "compassion" in the present debate. As the one policy option that promises to effect change in the current system, restrictions on benefits by definition constitute the compassionate alternative.

Gertrude Himmelfarb notes that the word "compassion" once described "a moral sentiment, not a political principle, a sentiment evoked by misery or sorrow, not by poverty as such."[28] As political salvationism sought to preempt traditional morals in the last 30 years, it was only natural that moral sentiments should be confused with political principles. Likewise, that misery and sorrow should be equated with

material poverty; for the redefinition of compassion required a highly artificial view of man as no more than a material being.

If compassion is once again properly understood, perhaps then it will become more obvious that the object of our concern must be "misery" and "sorrow," not economic poverty, and that the "misery" most evident today is the spiritual and moral deprivation visited upon dependents of the welfare system. It is time that we stop suppressing the moral responsibilities that make life precious for a resident of the inner city just the same as for a middle-class suburbanite. It is time, in short, to secure equal access to the central satisfactions of family, virtue, and freedom.

In the end, our society will adopt answers by default only because there is no alternative strategy. There are two competing alternatives currently at play to define the future of the welfare state. Either we will treat welfare dependents as wards of a custodial state, and we will spend lavishly to keep them comfortable while we ask them simply to leave us alone. Or we can begin relimiting government and restoring social functions to neighborhoods, communities, and churches.

The family cap is a symbolic first attempt to begin reversing the big-government policies that have proven so obviously destructive to children and families -- and an important opportunity to begin dissolving the wall that separates welfare families from middle-class society.

We can't afford to wait any longer to act. Senator Moynihan, who led the charge against illegitimacy thirty years ago, has already fallen victim to despair. While candid about the human cost of the current system, he argues for the status quo simply because he believes there is no longer any alternative. Young males in the inner city "can be horrid to themselves, horrid to one another, horrid to the rest of us," he says. Dismantle the current system, and they will be unleashed on the rest of us.

It seems appropriate to us to subject Moynihan's "containment policy" to the test President Clinton formulated in the early days of the welfare debate -- "Is this morally correct?" We would have to answer "no." Surely the underclass is no less human and no farther beyond reclamation than the rest of us flawed individuals.

Moynihan also bases his opposition to reform on projections about the number of children who will be thrown into the streets. Social scientist Charles Murray responds that, "like all policy projections, this analysis reflects a set of assumptions"[29] -- namely, that limiting welfare will do nothing to change behavior.

But Father Robert Sirico has noted an interesting demographic trend that suggests otherwise. Food stamp rolls have fallen dramatically -- without any change in underlying economic data. And the bulk of the drop occurred since January 1995, when Congress convened to announce new limits on entitlements. During the previous four years, the rolls had steadily swelled, sometimes expanding by 40,000 recipients per week. Sirico concludes that food stamp recipients factored in expectations of what the new Congress would do and acted accordingly. "Poor people are a lot smarter than social scientists give them credit for being. Like everyone else, they plan ahead, with a view toward a certain amount of future financial stability, which sometimes leads them to the want ads and to churches and community organizations,"[30] he says.

Political opponents cannot merely claim that Republican reforms will cause suffering and expect to maintain their credibility. In addition to thinking creatively about the ways policy affects human behavior, we also have to come to terms with

the degree of suffering that is occurring now. Proponents of the status quo say that only the federal government has the resources to maintain existing welfare programs. But perhaps existing welfare programs should *not* be maintained precisely because they have caused so much duress for the children and adults mired in dependency. The degree of Senator Moynihan's despair is an argument that we can do no less than search for a radically different approach to welfare. The time to begin is now.

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March 5, 1996

Dear Mr. Moseley:

I have been reading and listening to reports about the budgeting for child care and low income families. Most of what I hear and read is a lack of funding due to budget cuts so as to balance the budget. I agree with making the necessary cuts to meet the requirements for a balanced budget. On the other hand, I see a need for child care in our society today and in the future. I'm sure you are aware of the statistics about how many households have two working parents or a single parent trying to support their family. Along with these figures are the families who have one or both parents who have been laid off and need re-training.Which is expensive and in many cases will require money the parents don't have. What will happen to the children?

I'm sure you have been feeling the pressures and you are well aware of all the concerns. I am concerned about our future -- our children. **But, I don't agree with continuing to put the pressure on the government to support child care with funding from our tax dollars.** I have a proposal that reflects the thinking of John F. Kennedy - **ASK NOT WHAT YOUR COUNTRY CAN DO FOR YOU! ASK WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR COUNTRY!**

MY PROPOSAL:

* stop funding child care through the government
* rewrite the tax law pertaining to businesses being able to get a tax write-off from donations and grants to non-profits only.
* **change that tax law by broadening it to include FOR-PROFIT CHILD CARE WITH A SLIDING FEE SCALE as well.**
* by broadening the tax law, the businesses can help to support child care in their area and the country.
* it would be up to the child care businesses to write for grants and take the pressure off the government for funding the low income families.
* it would be up to the private businesses to set the criteria that they would require for giving the grants and gifts-in-kind, with emphasis on high quality.
* with the tax write-off and larger amounts of money available, the businesses would be building a partnership with our future - our Children!!

* child care centers would become more competitive in developing higher quality programs

* it would help to eliminate the underground child care that doesn't even come close high quality child care, therefore, giving EVERY CHILD the opportunity to strive for the best they can be!!

* child care centers would be able to develop **SLIDING SCALE FEES** that would allow them to provide **HIGH QUALITY CHILD CARE FOR ALL CHILDREN** of **ALL ECONOMIC LEVELS!!!**

I have recently started a child care business, **TESSIE'S CHILD CARE, INC.** which is based on obtaining **PRIVATE GRANTS FROM BUSINESSES** to offset the Sliding Scale Fees for the low income families. I made it a for-profit corporation because I want to be in control of the operation of the business, not to get rich. My objectives are:

* to provide affordable, high quality child care for **ALL CHILDREN**

* to help low income families have an opportunity to increase their abilities to improve their quality of life

* to promote all people working together in a positive effort to improve the quality of life in America.

* to enhance the education of children by being an education based program that promotes learning for children by using many different learning strategies and hands-on projects

* to promote parenting training to help those parents interested in improving their parenting skills

* to improve training for all staff members so as to broaden their scope and understanding of children and activities to aid in their teaching of the children and work with the parents

* to improve the community by inviting volunteers to visit the classrooms to teach, tell and read stories, to share their work skills, and to show the children how we all work together to help each other

* to provide a professional and parent "Borrowing Center" so that materials, books, toys, and equipment can be made available to aid in teaching the children and increase adult understanding of children

* to provide child care at the highest level possible for **ALL CHILDREN** !!

Over the last two decades we have seen other countries meet and surpass our education standards. Our children haven't lost their inherent abilities to learn, they have been concentrating on learning things that promote the bad news in the media. Our children have become street wise and couch potatoes. What kind of a future is there for our children? How will they live and govern themselves and their children?

With high quality child care available only for those who can afford it we as a Nation are making a serious mistake. All children need and deserve to have good care and learn to RESPECT themselves and others as well as property. They don't learn that while they are home alone, crowded in a poor environment, or running the streets.

On the other side of the coin, for a family to be involved in a program as I have described, they would have to show proof of working, in training or going to school. It would be verified every six (6) months. The parents have to be truly interested in helping their families and our country.

This is all a positive step for our country and a simple solution to the child care reform of today. To change the tax laws to allow businesses to donate money and gifts-in-kind to **FOR-PROFIT** child care with a **SLIDING SCALE FEE** for families of low income.

This structure also promotes families to get off the welfare system if the parents are required to work a MINIMUM of 30 hours per week and no maximum. The parents going to school or getting training would have to carry a full load (12 units) or (8 hours) of training per day.

The government could also use this as an opportunity to create more jobs, and training centers for parents who wish to improve their quality of life and the standards of living for the United States.

Thank you for your consideration of my proposal. I would be happy to come to Washington and speak with the committee and further explain and demonstrate my ideas.

Yours truly,



Theresa E. Schneider

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