

Family Re-Union Outcomes

Family Re-Union 12: Families & Education

5 grants of \$10,000 each were awarded to the following schools to improve student success and close the achievement gap:

Chuckey Elementary – establish an afterschool tutoring program. They did not submit a final report.

Cowan Elementary – purchased books to begin an Accelerated Reading Program. 326 children ages 5 – 11 were served by the program in the first year. In addition to the \$10,000 grant, parents and businesses donated \$7,000 and a fundraiser called Bulldog Boogie raised \$14,000 to sustain the program. The school was recognized by the Educational Consumers Foundation for demonstrating outstanding value-added growth. The school ranked 9th statewide out of 755 schools and 2nd in Middle Tennessee. Volunteers spent 1500 hours on the reading program reading to and helping children increase their reading skills. Evaluation methods used were the Star Early Literacy, Star Reading and the TCAP. All sources of test data showed substantial growth in reading skills.

DeKalb County Schools – established an after school Academy to assist students with reading and homework. 96 students ages 11 – 13 participated in the program in the first year. The grant funds purchased 15 sites of Academy Reading. Additional grant funds were raised to purchase additional sites and to add Academy of Math. Teachers were paid to stay after school to supervise the tutoring. Pre and Post tests were utilized for evaluation. The biggest challenge was getting students to stay after school due to transportation issues. This led to a grant that would provide after tutoring transportation and that helped increase regular attendance. The program resulted in an overall gain of 1 year in math and .5 year in reading. One student improved 2.9 grade levels in math and another student showed a 3 grade level improvement in reading.

Maury City Elementary – established a Parent Involvement Program. Several events were held throughout the year to increase the number of parents who visited the school. Teachers used these events to inform parents of classroom activities, encourage parents to be involved in student learning through homework, etc. Over 600 students and parents attended the events.

Tennessee State University – implemented tutoring sites at 3 locations to assist high school student prepare for college entrance exams and help younger students with homework. The grant purchased ACT/SAT prep software, calculators, reading materials, spelling cards, and SRA software. 287 students ages 4 – 18 were served. College students from Tennessee State University and Americorps Vistas staffed the sites for a total of over 459 volunteer hours. Over \$68,000 in additional funds were raised to support this project. High school students preparing for college entrance (ACT) reported 23% improved their

scores by 1 -2 points and 11% improved by 3 – 4 points. The majority of students only took the ACT once.

For the Reading Tutoring program pre and post-tutoring surveys were administered. On the post tutoring survey 75% of the students reported that they now use a skill learned during tutoring to help them comprehend unfamiliar words. Students also reported on post-tutoring surveys an increased interest in reading and improved attitude toward school. Their teacher reported that the students became more engaged in their learning and asked more questions. 100% of the students in the after school tutoring program progressed to the next grade level at one site.

Family Re-Union 11: Families and Youth

Family Re-Union 11 was designed to listen to the voices of impressive young leaders, all of them reflecting the developing strengths available to the United States. Family Re-Union 11 embraced the rich diversity of the United States and communities. It listened as an impressive, diverse, coalition of young people talked about how they were improving their communities through programs to improve housing, recreation, public safety, and the environment. It put the leadership of 22 different working groups into the hands of moderators who were college students. It explored how one desperately poor community in the Southwest had organized itself to send a remarkable number of its low-income Hispanic students to Ivy League universities. And it grappled with the reality that adults find it easy to agree on the importance of creating partnerships with youth but difficult to create effective partnerships with them.

Participants agreed that the challenge is to move beyond making decisions about what is in the best interests of children and youth without consulting them. Youth should be partners in the process, in on the take-offs as well as the landings. This needs to be an on-going process of building relationships, from childhood on. According to Andy Shookhoff, Associate Director of Vanderbilt's Child and Family Policy Center: "Relationships sustain us all, in families and in communities." Shookhoff's observation received a powerful endorsement from Moises Perez, Executive Director of New York City's Alianza Dominicana: "Relationships are primary. Everything else is derivative."

"Families and Youth" was grounded in the conviction that young people have an important leadership role to play in their families. Although tradition holds that youth should follow the lead of adults, both experience and emerging research provide strong evidence that young people have many assets to contribute to their communities. "It's important to understand," said Mr. Gore, "how best to prepare young people to be leaders for the future." "And it turns out," he said, "that a continuing truth is that the communications process with adolescents is better or worse depending upon the quality of the relationships that were built and sustained from childbirth on."

Judging from the conversations at Family Re-Union 11, youth development policy today is in the same ferment that early childhood underwent 20 years. At one point, infants and children were considered largely inert, incapable perhaps of grasping their own environment. Today, thanks to research on early childhood development, very young children are understood to be active agents of their own development, undergoing enormous changes as the neurons in their brains are wired and they develop physically and emotionally. Scientific understanding of adolescent development is undergoing a similar transformation, one in which young people are coming to be understood as assets, not problems.

Participants in Family Re-Union 11 included parents and students, researchers and community developers, filmmakers and local leaders. A high school sophomore from the Crow Nation described how she and her classmates had won national recognition for a program that promises to improve housing on her reservation. A former prison inmate spoke about a youth development program he heads that starts with the assumption that life should not be taken for granted. And a teenager in a wheel chair who created a program that has established 45 accessible playgrounds around the nation described his efforts to make sure that every child has the opportunity to have fun.

Following an opening experts' colloquium on the afternoon of the first day, the meeting began with welcomes and a video collage developed by Jeffrey Cole, Director of the School of Communication Policy, UCLA. The video was followed by a session on "Families and Youth: Actions for Positive Change" led by Mr. and Mrs. Gore. During this session, the former Vice President discussed the importance of adults drawing on the experience of young people as policymakers struggle to help young people take leadership roles in their communities while holding on to the values and traditions of the past. Tipper and he then led eight students, ranging from 6th grade to college, in a discussion of their leadership efforts at the local and national levels.

Next, Al Gore moderated a panel of experts and practitioners on youth development and families. This panel explored emerging research on youth and adolescents in family contexts. It also began an investigation of practical, hands-on, community-based efforts, an investigation that was extended in the eleven workshops that followed.

The workshops, moderated by students from the California Association of Student Councils, were split into two sessions each, for a total of 22 sessions. They covered:

1. Families and Youth: A New Alliance?
2. Youth and the Media
3. Youth and the Workplace
4. Youth and Learning
5. Youth and Health

6. Youth and Community
7. Youth Bridging the Generations
8. Youth, Families and Recreation
9. Youth in Rural and Small Town America
10. Youth Around the World
11. Youth and Families in Transition

Following the workshops, the closing session was devoted to commitments to the future, during which a panel of student leaders, researchers, foundation officials, and associations outlined what they planned to do next in response to the day's discussions.

Although generalizations about this complex meeting are hard to make, several common themes emerged. First was excitement around the awareness that new research is radically transforming perceptions about American teenagers generally, and their leadership capacities more specifically. Adolescents are not problems to be managed, but resources and assets to be drawn on. Second was the palpable evidence at the meeting of the ability of quite typical youth to pull off remarkable leadership feats within their communities. There can be no doubt that many lives have been improved (even saved) and cultures have been preserved because of the efforts of the young people at Family Re-Union 11. Many adults would be hard-pressed to make the same claim. Finally, the conclusion was unavoidable that when pressed American young people always rise to the occasion. On the evidence presented at Family Re-Union 11, the United States can look to the future confident that it will be in good hands.

Family Re-Union 10: Back to the Future: Accomplishments & Next Steps

Family Re-Union 10 brought together leaders in the fields addressed by previous conferences and pioneers in these fields who are committed to on-going learning about family focused policy and practice. Key figures from those conferences described their progress in the intervening years. Working groups covered each of the previous topics and outlined action steps for the future. In the final session there were numerous commitments to enhance work highlighted in previous re-unions and to expand efforts in the future.

Community Cousins

Formed in 1992 in response to the Los Angeles race riots, Community Cousins recruits families of various backgrounds who volunteer to be matched with two other families of different origins. The families are offered cultural, social and educational opportunities that enable them to form long term "extended family" relationships.

Community Cousins collaborates with local faith-based organizations, ethnic specific community based organizations, schools and municipalities. At Family Re-Union 10 a partnership between Community Cousins, the YMCA and the NCCJ was announced. The YMCA of Orange County, CA in cooperation with the National

YMCA will make the program available to the national network of over 2000 Y's by developing a program manual, providing training curriculum, and tracking demonstrated outcomes. The National Conference for Community Justice, (formerly the National Conference of Christians and Jews), will work to expand the program through the national network of the 65 NCCJ chapters. The California Endowment announced a \$100,000 grant to enable this expansion.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation

The foundation announced a continued commitment to supporting programs that enhance family-centered youth development and work, to identify and create technical supports and resources, to work with academics to study the intersection between youth development and family development, and to assess the policy implications of this work. Dr. Debra Delgado described the importance of involving families in working with youth. Annie E. Casey will support Family Re-Union 11, which will focus on Families and Youth.

Tufts University

Tufts provided support and the lead-in event for Family Re-Union 11, by hosting a Symposium on Positive Youth Development at Tufts University in Medford, MA in January 2002. The Applied Developmental Science Institute, Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Development, of Tufts University will co-sponsor Family Re-Union 11.

Education for Family-Centered Community Development

A commitment was made to the continuation of the national curriculum entitled, "Family-Centered Community Building". The course was piloted in February - May 2001 and expanded in the academic year 2001-2002 at various colleges and universities, including UCLA, Columbia, Fisk University, and Middle Tennessee State University. Vice President Al Gore and national experts in child and family development, family policy, law, medicine, and journalism have worked together to design this interdisciplinary curriculum, based on findings from the first nine years of Family Re-Union conferences.

This curriculum was developed in response to a suggestion by Richard Baron CEO of McCormack, Baron Associates, who described the ongoing initiative of the Vashon Education Compact targeting 10 low-performing schools in St. Louis.

The Boston Community Building Network and Cambridge College

Cambridge College accepted the challenge of Family Re-Union 8 to create a community building curriculum. The College is offering community residents a community building curriculum and training designed to increase the impact of their community work. The key principles of this work include; incorporating those who are directly affected by the policies, valuing racial and cultural diversity, promoting active citizenship, building on community strength, ensuring access to opportunity, supporting and enhancing the well-being of children and their families, and fostering sustained commitment, coordination and collaboration based on shared vision and mutual respect.

By Youth for Youth

A second national By Youth for Youth conference was announced at the conference. It was held in Los Angeles in 2002.

Boundless Playgrounds

Young Matt Cavedon described the expansion of these fully accessible playgrounds. Since his previous presentation, Matt has successfully lobbied for an additional one million dollars in grant money and Boundless Playgrounds technical assistance to communities throughout Connecticut.

Family Re-Union 9: Families and Seniors: Across Generations

Family Re-Union 9 focused on families with seniors and on intergenerational strategies. The conference highlighted ways to support families caring for seniors, seniors caring for others and helping to educate children, grandparents raising grandchildren, active seniors creating stronger communities, life-span health and mental health strategies, helping seniors maintain independence and productivity, good design for intergenerational living, end of life issues and civic engagement and life-long learning.

Family Centered Community Building Course

Work continues on this outcome of Family Re-Union 8, and is now strengthened by an intergenerational component. The course recognizes that a wide variety of disciplines and skills are needed to educate and train the next generation of community leaders. Faculty members in the Community and Academic Consortium of universities that came together after Family Re-Union 8, have worked with Al Gore to create a syllabus and course that is being taught at Fisk University in Nashville, TN and Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. As a Visiting Professor Al Gore is teaching two sessions each week on both campuses and has held planning symposia at UCLA and Columbia University. The course is interdisciplinary and pulls together all relevant departments in each university. At each class an academic expert and an expert in the community services lectures together with Al Gore. Other universities such as Vanderbilt University and Tufts University will be offering their own versions of the course and further symposia are in the planning stages.

On a topic specific to Family Re-Union 9, in the pioneering course on Family-Centered Community Building a session on families and seniors focused on the power of intergenerational programs, and was co-taught by Dr. Brenda Eheart whose work was featured at the conference. Also speaking to the class was Jeanette Laws, a resident of the Generations of Hope project highlighted by Family Re-Union 9. This material is being taught again this year in the same course and at other universities in the National Community and Academic Consortium.

Work has continued on development of the Consortium inspired by Family Re-Union 8. Member universities formed the National Community and Academic Consortium

which will enhance the capacity of universities to teach family-centered community building, convene member universities to develop action-oriented programmatic agendas and maintain a clearing house resource directory and network for course materials and innovative university-community partnerships. The three initial projects that the NCAC is sponsoring are:

- 1) The design, development and implementation of the Family Centered Community Building course mentioned above.
- 2) A Community Youth Development Training Program. The goal of this program is to increase the capacity of community-based youth organizations to design and evaluate their work, and to train individuals using a family-centered community development framework. The program will create new graduate training programs in community youth development at several universities through a collaboration with the National Network for Youth, Community Partnerships for Youth, the Center for Child Wellbeing, Girls Incorporated, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Girls and Boys Clubs of America, 4-H, and Big Brothers and Big Sisters, among others. Richard Lerner, the Bergstrom Chair in applied Developmental Science, leads the program at Tufts University along with Donna Butts of Generations United, and Lorna Lathram of the Omidyar Foundation.
- 3) Community Scholars Program which will provide training for graduate and post-doctoral students from the fields of law, business, public policy, economics, psychology, human development, education, social welfare and other disciplines. This training will take place in community settings and will also provide re-training of community leaders. The program will establish public service career paths for professionals from differing disciplines and advanced academic training for community leaders. Over 250 new scholars and leaders will be trained in a 10 year period.

A National Teleconference on Intergenerational Issues

Al Gore keynoted a national teleconference sponsored by Generations Together and the Association of Gerontology in Higher Education on intergenerational issues in October of 2001. This satellite event involved approximately 15-20 universities. It was an important step in building an infrastructure within AGHE to support and expand the teaching of intergenerational service learning in gerontology in sixty-six higher education institutions by 2004. The course includes input from the following disciplines; psychology, family and consumer science, early childhood, urban studies, community development, health-related studies, and gerontology. Each of the participating institutions has integrated into a specific gerontology course a service learning component in which students are actively engaged in direct service with older adults (dependent and independent) while also learning about the older population and aging. As students partner with older adults, the faculty partners with the social service systems serving the older adults. Unique to the service learning teaching is collaboration in curriculum development and teaching

between university departments and agencies serving the communities' older adults and active involvement of students with the communities' older adults. A new 3-year service-learning initiative began in September 2001 and targets historically black and tribal colleges and on a regional mentoring component to support the new awardees. From 2001-2004, 36 new higher education institutions will receive awards to support and institutionalize their service learning initiatives.

The University of Minnesota's Vital Aging Initiative

The initiative was formed just prior to Family Re-Union 9, and hosted a roundtable in January 2002 and a statewide Summit on March 26, 2002 to articulate the role of higher education in supporting policies and programs that strengthen opportunities for the state's burgeoning population of older adults. The University of Minnesota's Children, Youth & Family Consortium is on the steering committee for this new University-community initiative that draws upon the national relationships formed through Family Re-Union 9, and partners with Minnesota's well-established social service, volunteer, and civic infrastructures for seniors and families.

Town Hall On Youth Violence Prevention

As a continuation of the work of Family Re-Unions 6 and 8 SafeCities, the Department of Justice COPS Office, and ATF sponsored a town hall multicast on youth violence prevention on September 13, 2001. The national teleconference featured a school resource officer, youth, school official, minister, and national experts talking about the different innovative school safety and afterschool programs. It featured short video clips from innovative programs around the country. The multicast was shown on the Law Enforcement Television Network that reaches police departments around the country and Channel One reaching thousands of schools. There were local community discussion centers around the nation watching the multicast and discussing action steps in their community immediately afterwards. The stakeholders convened included school resources officers, youth, ministers, school officials, community leaders, parents and others.

<http://www.safecities.gov/Text/welcome.htm>

<http://www.safecities.gov/Text/topics.cfm?ID=52>

Project DOCC

Highlighted in Family Re-Union 7, Project DOCC and its family-centered approach have continued to flourish. As of spring 2000 the project is in 19 Medical Centers coast-to-coast and 2 in Australia. A geriatric adaptation of DOCC will be "test piloted" at NY Hospital/Cornell Medical Center with Dr. Ron Adelman. Dr. Rubin at Emory School of Public Health is drafting a two-year survey as to the outcomes of patients who experience Project DOCC studying the extent to which family input creates true family-centered/family-responsive physicians.

<http://www.aamc.org/newsroom/reporter/august99/family.htm>

<http://www.uhfnyc.org/archive/press/pr000522.html>

Family Re-Union 8: Family & Community

This conference explored the interdependence between healthy family life and strong communities. Major themes included community safety, economic vitality, housing, schools as centers of community life, family friendly workplaces, well designed housing and public spaces, active faith-based organizations, comprehensive community programs, and opportunities for community service.

Education for Family Centered Community Building

Then Vice President Al Gore challenged the university community to educate a new generation of community builders with the skills needed to build communities for the 21st century and to promote service learning and partnerships between communities and institutions of higher education. In response to this challenge UCLA hosted an October 29-31, 2000 kick-off meeting with teams from 15 Universities, including Columbia, Cornell, University of Miami, University of Minnesota, Tufts, Vanderbilt and Washington University. They agreed to work together to create cross-university training programs, develop a policy agenda to support new university community partnerships, and involve other research universities as the initiative moves forward. A new curriculum produced by the Boston Foundation and Cambridge College was also announced.

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SafeCities Network

The Vice President announced the Safe Cities Network, a network of communities working together with federal agencies to reduce gun violence. Each partner has a variety of community representatives—mayors, community groups, law enforcement officials, public health officials, leaders of the faith and business communities and educators—and each has a federal point of contact that works with them to reduce gun violence in their community.

Partnership with Faith-Based Organizations

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development Center for Community and Interfaith Partnerships renewed its efforts to strengthen the effectiveness of faith-based organizations in community building. Since Family Re-Union 8, the Center has co-hosted an Appalachian Summit, which brought together 800 government, business and non-profit leaders to identify strategies to address the problems of the

region. It has also moderated a Community 2020 Symposium on Faith and Public Policy and convened 8 Regional conferences with Faith-Based and Community groups to help revitalize their neighborhoods and create greater economic opportunity.

COPC Expansion

The federal government increased the amount of funding for the Community Outreach Partnership Centers to \$8 million in FY 2000 and FY 2001. The program, administered by HUD's Office of University Partnership, promotes collaboration between colleges and universities and residents to solve neighborhood problems.

HUD Expansion of Technical Assistance for Community Building

The administration proposed a HUD plan to expand community development skills by expanding the number of technical assistance providers and by reaching out to disadvantaged and under-served communities and organizations. HUD set aside forty percent of the grants for providers who had never participated in the program. In 1999, The National Congress of Black Churches became a new service provider. Other prominent providers include ICF Incorporated, Corporation for Supportive Housing and Development Training Institute.

Boundless Playgrounds Partnership

The HUD HOPE VI Program revitalizes distressed public housing communities, razing obsolete public housing and replacing it with mixed income communities. As a result of Family Re-Union 8, HOPE VI has developed a Boundless Playgrounds partnership to develop 100 percent accessible parks at future HOPE VI sites for children whose mobility is impaired.

Boost4Kids Network

In order to help communities engage in youth violence prevention, advancing school safety and afterschool programs Boost4Kids held a nationwide conference call in the summer of 2001.

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Family Re-Union 7: Families and Health

This conference convened leaders in family centered care, mental health, public health, managed care as well as family members and physicians involved in the care of chronically ill children. Sessions reviewed the research and practice showing that family involvement in health-care decision making, including prevention, reduces mortality, reduces health costs and improves patient outcomes. Roundtable topics included: strategies to improve the training of health care professionals; hospital and protocol design; dissemination of information; the impact of managed care and public health policy; and the support needed for whole families of chronically ill dependents. The predominant theme was the importance of treating family members as full partners in health care. Announcements and outcomes included:

Launch of “BOOST4Kids”

Vice President Gore announced an effort, now called “BOOST 4 Kids”, with the *National Partnership for Reinventing Government* and pilot communities to build on San Diego County’s flexible, interagency, results-focused health care strategies and “outcome measures” of success.

Expanded Efforts to Insure Children’s Health

A Presidential Memorandum directing the Departments of the Treasury, Agriculture, Interior, Labor, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Education and the Social Security Administration to implement over 150 initiatives designed to enroll eligible but uninsured children in the State Children’s Health Insurance Program and Medicaid.

Building on this effort to insure eligible but uninsured children, the administration launched “Insure Kids Now” with the toll free number 1-877-KIDS-NOW and a public/private educational campaign.

Vanderbilt University’s Commitment to Family Centered Health Care

The design and planning process for Vanderbilt University’s new Monroe Carell Jr. Children’s Hospital was strongly influenced by the conference. The hospital is one of the nation’s most family-centered facilities. Families and pediatric patients have been directly involved with the staff and architects in planning the new facility. Excavation is in progress, and the project is on schedule for a 2003 opening.

Vanderbilt hosted the first international conference on Family Resource Centers in pediatric health care settings in March 1999 with over 90 centers in the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand attending. The Second Conference on Family Resource Centers in Pediatric Health Care Settings, cosponsored by the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, Ontario and the Children’s Hospital at Hamilton Health Sciences in Hamilton, Ontario will be held June, 2001.

At Family Re-Union 10 in 2001, Terrell Smith stated that 27 design teams were involved in planning the new facility. A pediatric advisory council and the

architects worked directly with parents. Innovative features resulting from this effort include; drop-in care for siblings, private rooms with sleep-in capacity for parents for all children in intensive care including neo-natal IC, laundries, kitchens, lap-top plug-ins, and private sleeping areas will be on every floor. More storage space and touch-screen food service will be in each room.

New Medicare Tests for Diabetes and Osteoporosis

Vice President Gore announced new Medicare coverage of tests and education for diabetes and osteoporosis.

New Medicare Alliance and Website

Vice President Gore announced the creation of a nation-wide public/private Medicare alliance of over 80 national organizations to help families understand the new options, preventive benefits, and consumer protections

The Health Care Financing Administration announced a new Internet site www.medicare.gov including an interactive database on health plan options.

Foundation Alliance

Major foundations including Robert Wood Johnson, Annie E. Casey, and Nathan Cummings recognized the need to address the intersection of family, health and community programming and philanthropy.

Child Mental Health and Parental Illness

The federal Center for Mental Health Services and the National Cancer Institute co-sponsored a historic meeting to formally acknowledge the mental health impact of a parent's physical or mental illness on a child.

Long Term Care Proposals

President Clinton proposed new measures to help Americans care for family members with long term care needs. These included long-term care tax credits, a family caregiver support program, a new national network to help states create one-stop shops so caregivers can better access community resources. He also proposed that the federal government use its market leverage to set an example by offering private long-term care insurance to federal employees.

Federal Government Initiative to Provide Family Centered Care to Employees

The Institute for Family Centered Care helped the federal Office of Personnel Management design focus groups to assess how well the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program meets the family needs of its 9 million federal employees and retirees and their families.

Project DOCC

Project DOCC arranges for families of children with severe chronic illness to participate in medical education so that medical personnel will have a clearer understanding of the impact that the illness has on the whole family and the

importance of involving the family in plans for treatment and care. Featured in Family Re-Union 7 as a new program, as of 2002 it is in 24 pediatric residency programs in the US and one program in Australia. Project DOCC is teaching family practice residents in about half a dozen programs. Medical students at Weill Cornell Medical School/NY Presbyterian Medical Center (used to be called New York Hospital) are being introduced to a four component/seven hour geriatric curriculum. Project DOCC hopes to fine tune the program and share it with other training programs. Project DOCC also offers a three hour continuing education nursing seminar and a three hour program for teachers and teaching assistants, focusing on the transitions through the education system that families with children with chronic illnesses and/or disabilities have to negotiate.

Family Re-Union 6: Families and Learning

This conference showcased remarkable examples of family/school partnerships which are transforming children's learning, parents' lives, family job prospects, teacher and administrator understanding of students, a school's connection to the community, and ultimately school governance. Three strategies to help families become involved in their children's education were identified:

(1) Improve parent-teacher communication and partnerships:

A national teleconference on family involvement in education, led by Vice President Gore in the fall of 1997, brought together thousands of parents, teachers and educational leaders to identify ways to better prepare teachers to work in partnership with parents on their children's education. Follow up conferences have provided training and materials for teachers, Partners for Learning: Preparing Teachers to Involve Families.

Approximately 5,000 national and local representatives of education associations have signed on to the Partnership for Family Involvement which helps increase opportunities for family involvement in their children's learning and supports family/school/community partnerships.

The Family Education Network, a private sector effort, provides free services to 700 school districts and nearly 6,000 schools to improve teacher-parent communication through technology.

(2) Secure new funding for quality after-school programs. Since Family Re-Union 6, the Administration has expanded its support for afterschool programs, for example, it has:

Proposed \$1 billion in federal funding to give 2.5 million children access to quality after-school programs.

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program has grown from a \$1 million demonstration program in 1997 to a nationwide \$453 million program that helps communities provide afterschool and summer school programs to more than 850,000 children.

Launched www.afterschool.gov, a website with afterschool resources for providers, parents and youth.

Private sector commitments and public support for afterschool activities have skyrocketed: for example, a poll conducted for the C.S. Mott Foundation documented that nine out of 10 Americans think that there should be some type of organized activity or place for children and teens to go every day after school.

As part of a nationwide effort to encourage new local partnerships to support after-school programs, Vice President Gore led a national teleconference in April 1998 to discuss how communities can work together to expand quality after-school programs.

(3) Involve parents and communities in designing new schools:

Supports \$25 billion in bonds to help local communities build and modernize 6,000 public schools across the country.

Vice President Gore has led parents and communities in a series of forums to discuss how they want their schools built and modernized.

Vice President Gore and Secretary of Education Richard Riley convened a National Symposium on Designing Schools as Centers of Community in October 1998 to bring together parents, teachers, community leaders, education reformers, and architects.

Family Re-Union 5: Family and Work

This conference tackled the tension and connection between the demands of work and family. Families, corporate and labor leaders, workers and academics addressed the difficult balancing act that families experience and its impact on the workplace and the home. The conference explored strategies such as telecommuting, flexible work schedules, job sharing, the role of quality childcare, and workplace attitudes and productivity. Announcements and outcomes included:

- A proposal to expand the Family and Medical Leave Act so families can participate in their children's schools and take them and elders in the family to medical appointments.
- A "comp time" proposal that would allow workers discretion to take time off in lieu of compensation for overtime work.

A Presidential Memorandum required all federal agencies and programs to re-examine and rewrite personnel policies to create a "Family Friendly Federal Workplace." The report, "Turning The Key: Unlocking Human Potential in the Family-Friendly Federal Workplace," was released in 1997.

First Day Festival

Nashville's Mayor Bill Purcell was inspired by the Hemmings Motor News CEO the late Terry Erich to declare a "First Day Festival" for the City of Nashville, giving employees the day off to accompany their children to the first day of school. In 2001 over 10,000 people participated and the largest number of children ever

attended the first day of school. There was also the highest PTO participation in history. Vanderbilt University has joined the City of Nashville in giving its employees time off each year to attend important school events with their children.

Family Re-Union 4: The Family and the Media

The previous conference raised concern that men and fathers were too frequently depicted in the media as violent, destructive or absent. Family Re-Union 4 focused attention on the positive and negative roles that media plays in the lives of children and their families. Bringing together families, industry leaders, educators, psychologists and experts in technology, the conference broadened the options for families concerned about the impact of media. Announcements and outcomes included:

- At this conference Al Gore called for "V-Chip" legislation to give parents a new tool to help them screen out television programs that they believe are inappropriate for their kids. The legislation was passed with bipartisan support and signed into law by President Clinton. Now all new television sets 13 inches and larger have a V-Chip installed. Parents can now block television programming based on its rating for violence, sex, mature dialogue, or adult language.
- Striving to protect children from violent and adult content on television, Al Gore garnered a breakthrough agreement from the television industry to create a new content based voluntary rating system that works with the V-Chip. The new system went into effect on October 1, 1997, giving parents an age and content based rating system for television programming.
- At a White House Summit on Children's Programming, the industry agreed to provide a minimum of three hours of quality children's programming a week. This plan was adopted by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and went into effect in September 1997.

The National Institute on Media and the Family, inspired by the conference, was founded in Minnesota and has become an internationally recognized resource on this issue.

Family Re-Union 3: The Role of Men in Children's Lives

The first two Family Re-Unions noted that men were frequently excluded from policies affecting the lives of children and families, leading to a self-fulfilling prophecy that damaged family life. This conference focused on these issues.

Announcements and outcomes included:

- The National Practitioner's Network for Fathers and Families formed to encourage father involvement in fragile families and to support communication among father-focused programs.
- Conference attendees took up the Vice President Gore's challenge to begin a Father to Father network to support ways men reach out to one another with the intention of becoming better fathers. Intended not as a new

program, but as a tool to help organizations reach out to fathers, the network influenced hundreds of community organizations over the ensuing years.

- A Funder's Collaborative formed among Danforth, Ford and C.S.Mott foundations. These foundations alone have invested over \$20 million in new funding for father-focused programs and research, and the issue has grown in importance throughout the grantmakers' community.
- The National Center on Fathers and Families issued a report on Family Re-Union 3 and hosts a Round Table Series on research, policy and practice.
- FatherNet, an on-line resource, started up at the University of Minnesota.

A Presidential Memorandum directed all federal agencies to work to strengthen fatherhood through their policies, programs, research and personnel practices. An Interagency Working Group led changes that included:

1. Changes in federal housing regulations and efforts to educate Housing Authorities about these changes;
2. Redesigned research which actively seeks data on fathers;
3. Redesigned requests for proposals that encourage father participation;
4. Changes in personnel policies that encourage fathers' active participation in their children's lives;

Department of Defense strategies to involve absent fathers and encourage father involvement in local schools;

Increased Head Start efforts to involve fathers in young children's education and in Early Head Start research; and a strong focus on fathers in the Welfare to Work program.

Vice President Gore chaired a May 1996 conference of federal workers to review progress, suggest additional strategies, and learn from best programs and practices.

Father to Father

Vice President Gore issued a challenge to 1,000 community leaders who gathered in Nashville to participate in "Family Re-Union 3: The Role of Fathers in their Children's Lives." "... I am asking you to join me in launching a nationwide Father to Father movement. There are new, young fathers struggling with every facet of their role, from changing diapers to finding the job that can support their sons and daughters. There are mature experienced fathers who would love to volunteer to help them. Let's bring them together." Since that time technical assistance and printed materials have been provided to over 600 organizations that developed fathering initiatives in their communities. From Fort Wayne, Indiana to Orlando, Florida, from Seattle, Washington to Worcester, Massachusetts a diverse group of community based organizations receive packets of information which included strategies to reach, equip and connect fathers in their respective communities.

A Father to Father website was designed and established at www.fathertofather.org to promote regular communication between fathers and communities. A Father's Matter teleconference was hosted on October 28, 1999 by former Secretary of Education Richard Riley and Secretary of Health and Human

Services Donna Shalala. Two resources for educators and practitioners were published and distributed to over 5000 organizations. The works were "Father's Involvement in Children's Learning" and "Noncustodial Father Involvement in Their Children's Learning". The Father to Father efforts have been supported by a non-sectarian and non-partisan Board of Directors. The administrative office for material distribution and technical assistance has been maintained by the National Center for Fathering in Kansas City.

Family Re-Union 2: Reinventing Family Policy

Adopting the perspective of the first Family Re-Union, Vice President and Mrs. Gore and representatives of federal, state and local government held a day-long series of roundtables. Their goals were to consciously listen to families and consider how programs and policies would work if they officially used a family-focused approach. They discussed how government would measure and reward success if the strength of the whole family were the goal and how policies would have to change as a result. Participants identified specific strategies for changing programs and policies so they would be driven by the needs of families not bureaucracies.

Announcements and outcomes included:

- A federal, state and local government effort known as "Partnerships for Stronger Families" looked at greater local flexibility along with greater accountability for results. These partnerships provided greater government flexibility for the Indiana Step-Ahead Councils and the Oregon Option.
- At Vice President Gore's request, senior officials of the Departments of Health and Human Services, Education, Housing and Urban Development, Justice, Labor and Agriculture met to determine how this work applied to their agencies.

Family-focused principles were used to design the application process for the Community Empowerment initiative, led by Vice President Gore, where local communities could define their own goals and strategies.

Family Re-Union: The Original

The first Family Re-Union was designed to listen carefully to families and local leaders describing how programs and policies affected them. Vice President Gore, then Senator from Tennessee, and Mrs. Gore moderated this conference in Nashville. Participants concluded that government programs and policies generally focused on the pathology of individuals while ignoring the strengths of the whole family. This conference firmly established the importance of building programs and defining policies based on the strengths of whole families. Announcements and outcomes included:

Local groups within Tennessee took up the idea of "Care Fairs" - gatherings held each year before the opening of school that bring together all services for families in one location, giving families better access and giving communities an opportunity to build networks.

Building on the idea of Care Fairs, communities throughout the country held afterschool resource fairs to help parents and providers find out about local programs and get assistance for expanding high quality afterschool activities (from signing up for the snack program to ideas for science and technology curriculum). The afterschool resource fairs drew on resources from the federal, state and local governments, for-profit and not-for-profit providers, businesses, philanthropic organizations, and foundations.

The Worthy Wage Campaign in TN promoting decent salaries for child care workers gathered momentum from networks developed at Family Re-Union. The 800 participants agreed that major changes are essential if policies and programs are to support families and not just treat individual problems. Senator Gore promised to reconvene the conference the following year to pursue this policy shift.